

Comedia
Performance



Journal of
The Association for
Hispanic Classical Theater
Volume 1, Number 1, Spring 2004

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www.comediaperformance.com

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Comedia Performance is the journal of the Association for Hispanic Classical Theater, an organization devoted to the study of the *comedia* and other forms of early modern Spanish theater. *Comedia Performance* publishes articles on diverse aspects of performance of the Spanish *comedia* and other theatrical forms. Appropriate subjects for articles include, but are not limited to, historical or modern staging of the *comedia*, translating the *comedia* for the stage, performance theory, textual issues pertaining to performance, historical issues such as audience composition, *corral* design, costuming, blocking, set design, and spectator response. *Comedia Performance* does not publish text-based literary studies.

Comedia Performance publishes interviews with directors and actors, theater reviews and book reviews in special sections.

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Comedia Performance is distributed without additional charge to members of the ACHT at the annual conference in El Paso, Texas. Individual copies may be purchased for \$15. Please contact the Managing Editor at astoll@fire.scifac.csuohio.edu for additional information. Send other queries to Barbara Mujica at blm@comediaperformance.com.

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Editor's Note

Hispanic Studies a field already blessed with abundant journals. Even the specialized field of early modern Spanish theater has long enjoyed the contributions of a first-rate journal, *Bulletin of the Comediantes*. Why launch another?

Comedia Performance offers a particular perspective different from that of any other publication. It focuses on the performance aspect of the *comedia* and other early modern Spanish theater forms, an area of study largely neglected until the late twentieth century. The present issue demonstrates just how rich this field is. From prompter's notes to props, from costuming to stage technique, from general theoretical studies to analyses of particular plays, this issue offers an array of articles on an extraordinary range of subjects. The articles, reviews and interviews highlight *comedia* productions on three continents. In addition, we are honored to publish a newly discovered *entremés*, Lanini y Sagredo's *El parto de Juan Rana*, edited by Peter Thompson.

A publication devoted solely to *comedia* performance has long been a dream of mine, one shared with many members of the AHCT. I am especially to Don Dietz, president of the Association for Hispanic Classical Theater, the Board of Directors, our contributors, and you, the readers.

Barbara Mujica

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**EMBODYING TRANSCENDENCE:
GROTOWSKI'S *THE CONSTANT PRINCE***

DONALD R. LARSON
Ohio State University

During his relatively short lifetime, the Polish actor, director, and theoretician Jerzy Grotowsky achieved a prominence that was equaled by few others in twentieth-century theatre. Born in 1933 in the city of Rzeszów in southeastern Poland, Grotowsky began his theatrical career as a student at the Advanced School of Dramatic Art in Krakow, where he specialized in acting and directing. wishing to learn more about his craft, he decided to delay his graduation from the Advanced School, and in 1955, two years after the death of Stalin, he traveled to Moscow. There he immersed himself in the methods and techniques of the great Russian directors Stanislavski, Meyerhold, and Tairov. As he himself later acknowledged, his experiences in Russia were to have a profound effect upon his development. Stanislavski, above all, was important to him, and he came to refer to him as his "spiritual father."¹

Upon his return to Poland in 1956, Grotowski initiated his work as director and educator with a series of experimental productions, first in Krakow and later in Opole, where he assumed the artistic directorship of the pioneering Theatre of Thirteen Rows. During this period—which coincided with that relatively open time in communist Poland known as the Thaw—he continued to travel abroad to observe the theatrical activity of many different cultures, becoming particularly interested in Asian theatre during a visit to China in 1962. At the Theatre of Thirteen Rows, Grotowski collaborated frequently with the literary critic, Ludwik Flaszen, and their common effort on such pieces as Cocteau's *Orpheus*, Byron's *Cain*, and the ancient Indian Kathakali play *Siakuntala* soon secured for Opole a reputation as a leader in the avant-garde of the performing arts.

The company that Grotowski and Flaszen formed for the Theatre of Thirteen Rows was to remain stable for many years, although in time the focus of its activities gradually changed. Fewer new productions were staged annually, and more and more time was devoted to research and actor training. Then, in 1965 the company relocated to Wrocław, where it was given the status of Institute of Actor's Research. In accordance with its new orientation the group also acquired a new name, being known for the rest of its life as the Laboratory Theatre. Three stagings in particular became associated with the work of this extraordinary organization. The first was its production of Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*. The second was its acclaimed adaptation

of Calderón's *El príncipe constante*. And the third—which turned out to be its final collective presentation under Grotowski's direction—was *Apocalipsis cum figuris*, a kind of montage constructed upon an assortment of texts from the Bible, T. S. Eliot, Dostoyevsky, and Simone Weil. By 1980 Grotowski had severed most of his connections with the Laboratory Theatre, and by 1984 the Theatre itself had effectively disbanded. In the final decades of his life Grotowski lost interest in public performances, and devoted himself instead to working in private with small groups of actors and students, continuing in this manner the experiments with physical and psychophysical exercises that he had developed over the years in order to promote greater self-understanding and better communication among people. His premature death came in 1999.²

Although its existence was quite brief and its productions relatively few, the Laboratory Theatre, along with its antecedent, the Theatre of Thirteen Rows, gained a reputation throughout the world as one of the most important and innovative theatrical groups of the twentieth century. Often compared in its international influence to Stanislavski's Moscow Art Theatre and to Brecht's Berliner Ensemble, the Laboratory Theatre was dedicated to Grotowski's concept of the Poor Theatre. Such a theatre, as Grotowski explained in numerous talks, interviews, and manifestoes, was, like much of the art of its time, determinedly and unapologetically minimalist in its practices and materials. Standing at the opposite pole from "total" theatre, the Poor Theatre was one

in which all non-essentials of the medium have been stripped away, thereby allowing the actors and the public, the two elements that the Polish director regarded as basic to the theatrical experience, to enter into "communion" with each other (19).³

Performing, for the most part, without benefit of elaborate costumes, scenery, special lighting, incidental music, make-up, or artificially created sound effects—all those things that Grotowski regarded as unnecessary borrowings from other disciplines—the members of the Laboratory Theatre presented a series of productions that were to have a profound impact throughout the theatrical world. Evolving typically from what Peter Brook—an avowed admirer of Grotowski—famously called an "empty space," these productions filled that space with little besides the indispensable actors and audience, the latter always strictly limited in size and configured with regard to the playing area in such a way as to place a particular psychological frame around the performance.

The chamber-like productions that took place under these conditions had as their stated purpose the lifting of the spectators to new modes of perception and even new modes of being. Exactly what those new modes of perception and being might consist of was never articulated by Grotowski with absolute clarity, however. He spoke of the achieving of "secular holiness"(34), but he leaves the understanding of that term primarily to the interpretation of the reader. It seems to refer to a state of spiritual wholeness and innocence, the shedding of masks and defenses and the overcoming of divi-

sions within the self in order that the psyche may once more become pure, harmonious, and integrated, as it was, perhaps, in early childhood (46).

Such integration, Grotowski implies, can only come about when the spectators undertake acts of "self-penetration" (34), looking deep within their lives in order to confront their wounded and fractured selves. This self-examination, difficult and painful, but ultimately healing, results from the two kinds of encounter or confrontation that are central to the Polish director's concept of theatre. The first encounter is that which takes place between the dramatic text and the performance text. In this confrontation the dramatic text is deconstructed—profaned is the term that Grotowski uses—in such a way as to restore what he calls its "truth" (43). The second confrontation is that which occurs between the between the players and the spectators. This latter encounter can only happen, he believed, when the normal distance between the two is erased, bringing the spectators, as he states, "within arm's reach of the actor, [so that they] can feel his breathing and smell the perspiration"(42). One consequence of this close proximity is that the spectators are pushed to abandon their traditional stance of passive observation and to become something like co-participants in the performance. Like the actors themselves, and as the result of the spatial relations that Grotowski has designed for each particular "empty space," they come to assume a specific role in the *mise-en-scène*. In *Cain*, for example, they function as the descendents of Cain. In *Doctor Faustus*, they are the guests at Faust's baroque

feast. The result, as Zbigniew Osiński has observed, is that Grotowski as manager of the performance ends up “simultaneously directing two companies—actors and audience—or directing them as one collectivity participating together in theatre space-time.”⁴

In order to provoke the fullest involvement of the spectators in the performance, to encourage them to confront not just the actors but their own innermost selves, over a period of years Grotowski developed with the members of his company a particular style of acting.⁵ That style has been characterized by others as mannered, or expressionistic, or anti-naturalistic, but the term that Grotowski uses in his writings is “archetypical.” He means by this that it is focused particularly on plastic images, images that are created by the bodies of the actors, for him the most important of all theatrical signs. The origin of these images, which in performance sometimes serve to reinforce the meaning of the spoken text and sometimes to subvert it, is a matter of some uncertainty. In a number of places, Grotowski implies that that are drawn primarily from the collective unconscious of the actors (and of the spectators), hence the name “archetypical.” In other places, he acknowledges that at least some of them derive from identifiable sources: the traditions of pantomime, the various theatres of India and the Far East, popular hagiography, and, not least importantly, works of Western visual art, particularly paintings and sculptures of the Renaissance and Baroque periods that depict incidents from the life of Christ or from the lives of saints. Of course, one might say,

by way of resolving the apparent contradiction, that those traditions, that hagiography and those works of art are themselves expressions of the collective unconscious.

However they come into existence, these images are dependent for their forcefulness upon that kind of actor that Grotowski calls the "holy actor." The "holy actor" does not simply function as a kind of priest in the act of communion with the spectators but in some clearly observable fashion strips himself down, laying bare his most intimate self in order to make a "gift" or offering of that self to the public (16, 33, 210). Clearly the difference between this kind of actor and the traditional actor is enormous. The traditional actor endeavors to "create a role", an illusion, in other words, using various techniques in order to do so. He may, for example, as in the early theatre of Stanislavski, attempt to evoke the emotions of the character he is playing by searching in his "affective memory" for past experiences that aroused the same emotions. Or he may, as in the later theatre of Stanislavski, as well as in much modern theatre, try to bring forth those emotions by undertaking a series of physical activities that stimulate them.⁶ In either case, the actor aspires to "live" the part, to submerge himself in it. What Grotowski's actor seeks to do, on the contrary, is not to live the part, or submerge himself in it, but to make himself "transparent" in order that the part may live or become submerged in *him*. In the achieving of this kind of transparency, as Innes has noted, "the individual is transfigured into an image of the universal, and the whole of Grotowski's ap-

proach assumes that personality is superficial, artificial, while at its 'roots' humanity is generic" (162-63).

The result of this transfiguration is what the Polish director calls "translumination" (16), and the actor who is thus "transluminated" does not merely illustrate but, as Grotowski says, actually accomplishes acts of the soul (257). The creation of an illusion of reality has been replaced by reality itself. Nevertheless, the realization of "translumination" is by no means an easy feat. It results, first, from ridding oneself of all preconceptions, defenses, and previously taught techniques and gestures, and then from years of training in physical, emotional, and spiritual exercises. It consists, Grotowski has explained, not in doing something, but in refraining from doing something. The process, clearly similar to the practices of earlier mystics and ascetics, is what he calls a "via negativa—not a collection of skills but an eradication of blocks" (17). Through the "via negativa" the actor cleanses his body and mind of all restricting and distracting elements in order that the role may shine through him. The result, the director says, is that psychic "impulse and action are concurrent: the body vanishes, burns, and the spectator sees only a series of visible impulses" (16). In that moment, the actor is reborn, and with his rebirth, the members of the audience are reborn also.

This description of the actor who gives himself completely in order that the spectators may achieve catharsis and a more authentic existence, who "climbs upon the stake and performs an act of self-

sacrifice" (43), makes us think of Antonin Artaud,⁷ and Grotowski's Poor Theatre and Artaud's Theatre of Cruelty do, of course, have elements in common. Chief among these is the belief that myth lies at the heart of all theatre, that for the institution to survive it must return to its ritual roots, recovering something of its original sacred character.⁸ There are, nevertheless, important differences between the two. In contrast to Grotowski's Poor Theatre, Artaud's theatre was undeniably "rich" in its advocacy of all the resources at the producer's disposal: scenery, costumes, props, lighting, and so on. Moreover, Artaud favored the near or even complete elimination of the verbal text, something that Grotowski was never prepared to do.

Indeed, Grotowski always worked with a specific dramatic text, either one that he wrote himself or, more often, one that he encountered in existing dramatic literature. In the case of texts taken from previous literature there was never, of course, any intent to present them "faithfully," if such a thing is ever possible. Rather, as observed earlier, he confronted those works, deconstructed them, profaned them. As he has written, the dramatic text has in his theatre much "the same function as the myth had for the poet of ancient times" (57). This means that as producer and director he always felt free to alter the borrowed text in whatever ways seemed necessary in order to foreground what he calls its mythic core and in order to recreate for contemporary spectators something of the effect of the original performances.

Christopher Innes has written that all of Grotowski's productions "can be seen as variations on the single theme of self-transcendence"(164). That theme is fairly attenuated in early adaptations like those of Ionesco's *The Chairs* or Mayakovsky's *Mystery-Bouffe*, but it is the overriding concern of such later productions of the Laboratory Theatre as those of Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*, Wyspianski's *Akropolis*, and Calderón's *El príncipe constante*. In each of these works a central character is placed in a situation of physical, emotional or spiritual extremity, and it is in the manner of meeting that extremity that the character's essential nature is revealed and transcendence is achieved. What is involved in that transcendence is, more than anything, the overcoming of internal divisions, "the limitations placed on a fully realized and authentic self brought about by the ego principle" (Davy 133). Free of its divisions, the soul is able to be reborn, free, innocent, and integrated.

By common consent, it was in *The Constant Prince*, as this production is known in the English-speaking world, that the theme was expressed most completely, in part, perhaps, because it was woven so tightly into the fabric of Calderón's original text, and in part, surely, because of the brilliant visual and musical imagination that Grotowski brought to his adaptation, an imagination that was clearly inspired by Calderón's own preoccupation with visual and musical values.⁹ Indeed, so effective was the adaptation that the production enjoyed enormous success, even when exported from Poland to other countries. Hailed as a revelation when it was un-

veiled at the Théâtre des Nations festival in Paris in 1966, it subsequently played in a number of different cities both in Europe and in the New World, in most cases before audiences who understood little, if any, Polish, the language of all of Grotowski's stagings.

Although there is no film, video, or aural recording of this astonishing production, insofar as I know, it has nevertheless been quite well documented. In addition to accounts that are found in numerous reviews, it is discussed in Grotowski's own *Towards a Poor Theatre*, where the commentary is accompanied by several photographs that sear themselves into the memory. The most valuable source for our knowledge of how the work was performed is, however, a long monograph by one of Grotowski's disciples, Serge Ouaknine, that appeared in *Les Voies de la création théâtrale* in 1970. In addition to a rendering into French prose of the Polish dramatic text, it contains blocking diagrams, precise descriptions of the inflections used by the actors as they recited or sang their lines as well as of their facial expressions, gestures, and movements on stage, and a great number of photographs. Although specifically cited in Marco de Maranis's *Semiotics of Performance* (72-74) as an instance of the limitations of all efforts to transcribe a production, Ouaknine's article goes far beyond similar reconstructions in conveying the feeling of the actual *mise-en-scène*.

The dramatic, or literary, text of Grotowski's *Constant Prince* was adapted from a translation of Calderón's original by the Polish romantic poet and

playwright Juliusz Slowacki.¹⁰ Slowacki's translation was, however, extensively refashioned for this production. Grotowski reduced the cast of characters from fourteen major roles to seven, which were played by six actors, the normal complement of his company. Additionally, he eliminated some two-thirds of Slowacki's lines, many of them from sections of exposition or connecting narration, reassigned the remaining lines in numerous instances to characters to which they had not originally been given or placed them out of sequence, and removed most of the text's overt geographic and historical references, along with all of its battle scenes. Accretions to the dramatic text include a number of repeated passages, expansions of other passages, and such miscellaneous augmentations as a long quotation from the liturgy of the Polish Church. The effect of all these modifications is a text that often seems elliptical, mysterious and strange (in the Brechtian sense), but one that is at the same time gripping and powerful.

The most obvious dramatic result of the changes enumerated was a shift in the focus of the work. Calderón's play, a glorifying depiction of the capture, imprisonment, and martyrdom in the city of Fez of the crusading Portuguese prince, Don Fernando of Avis,¹¹ has been read by Bruce W. Wardropper (and others) as a kind of cross between a *comedia* and an *auto sacramental*, in other words a play with allegorical leanings that brings into opposition two cultures and two systems of value.¹² On one side of this opposition are the Portuguese, who stand for the West, Christianity, spirituality,

eternal values, and belief in Providence; on the other side are the North Africans, who stand for the East, Islam, sensuality, earthly values, and belief in Kismet. Each of these axiological poles is, of course, represented primarily by one of the work's major characters: the first of them by Don Fernando, the very model of Christian knighthood, who, as a result of his refusal to betray his countrymen and his faith, suffers a prolonged and excruciating death; and the second, by Fénix, the beautiful and melancholy Muslim Princess, who is the epitome of vanity, inconstancy, and egoism.

Grotowski's adaptation foregrounds the relationship of these two characters and makes explicit the erotic overtones of that relationship, overtones that were barely suggested in the original text, (although they form the centerpiece of Leo Spitzer's famous article).¹³ Along with her father, the King, Fénix (as she is called in the French text)¹⁴ dominates the life of the court where the action of the play occurs, a place largely without geographic and ethnic specificity that is portrayed as horrifyingly cruel and sadistic. Early on, Don Fernand, captured in war, becomes the willing victim of the barbaric court, refusing to exchange his freedom for the city of Ceuta, which the King hopes to wrest from the control of the Portuguese. The violence that the members of the court subsequently visit upon the Prince in the form of threats, blows, and starvation has no effect upon his patient acceptance of his captivity, for he has lost all interest in worldly power. Indeed, almost from the moment he falls into the hands of his enemies, he seems determined to die a

martyr's death, and through martyrdom to gain transcendence. Grotowski's text thus comes to seem less a celebration of Catholicism—he was, although profoundly spiritual, an avowed agnostic (34)—and more an illustration of how an individual, relying on inner strength alone, can turn to his own purposes the tyranny of a spiritually castrating society and gain liberation of the soul.

In order that spectators might have little choice but to involve themselves, emotionally and spiritually, in the violence, suffering and ultimate transcendence contained in the action, Grotowski designed for this production a particularly interesting configuration of the space of the buildings in which it was presented. The playing area was quite small, which gave a feeling of claustrophobia to the action, and toward one end of this “arena” there was placed a low wooden platform, which served variously as a throne, an altar, and a rack of torture. The approximately thirty members of the public were seated on benches around three sides of the playing area, but at a higher elevation, so that they were separated from, but still close to, the actors. As Jennifer Kumiega has pointed out in *The Theatre of Grotowski* (79), this placement forced them to look down upon the happenings before them as if they were onlookers in an operating room¹⁵ or spectators at a bullfight (see Figures 1 and 2). Even more pertinently, perhaps, they were made

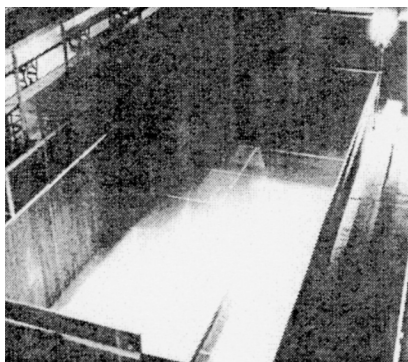


Figure 1: Looking into the arena from above

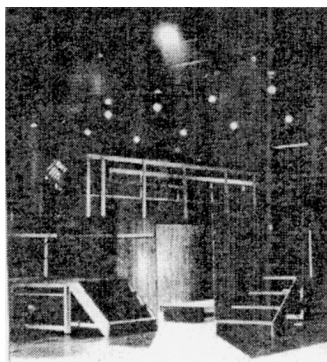


Figure 2: The entrance into the arena

to suppose that they had been cast in the role of witnesses to the slaying of some sacred, or semi-sacred being. As such, they had necessarily to sympathize with the suffering of the sacrificial victim, but they also could not escape their morbid fascination with the torments inflicted upon the victim by his persecutors. Indeed, they were made to feel collectively complicit in the torture, a feeling reinforced by the fact that in the lighted hall they were aware at all times of the presence of the other spectators.

In his production, Grotowski has reduced the three acts of Calderón's play to one, structured as seven musical "movements" which increase in intensity like one continuous crescendo. The play-script, which the director often referred to as a score, denominates these movements as follows: overture, divertimento, solo, rondo, solo, allegro, and solo. In what follows, I should like to give some

idea, however summary, of how each of these movements is constructed, focusing in particular upon the three solos, which together constitute the emotional and psychic core of the work. Each of these is comprised of a monologue delivered by Ryszard Cieślak, the actor who played Don Fernand. Unfortunately, as mentioned earlier, we have no recording of the production so that we are not in a position to judge the apparently extraordinary vocal technique that Cieślak brought to the recitation of the lines of these speeches.¹⁶ What we do possess, happily, are a wealth of photographs that document the extraordinary images that this superlatively gifted actor created with his body as he spoke, images that, however they came into being, whether as the result of spontaneous impulses or of the desire to imitate—and perhaps to blaspheme—Christological iconography, are indeed archetypal in their ability to stir the deepest feelings within us.

OVERTURE

Don Fernand's first solo is preceded by the production's overture, which serves as an introduction to the members of the court. They are, respectively, the King, Fénix, Mouley and Taroudant (here played by a woman), and when they first take the stage, as well as throughout the performance, all are dressed in gray and black attire that resembles military uniforms: boots, pants, and cloaks. The impression given by their appearance is, of course, one of menacing power¹⁷ Accompanying the members of the court on their entrance is the "first prisoner"

who is, in fact, Don Henri, the brother of Don Fernand. Wearing only a loincloth and shirt, he is placed upon the platform and ordered to sing for Fénix (see Figure 3). His body contracting with

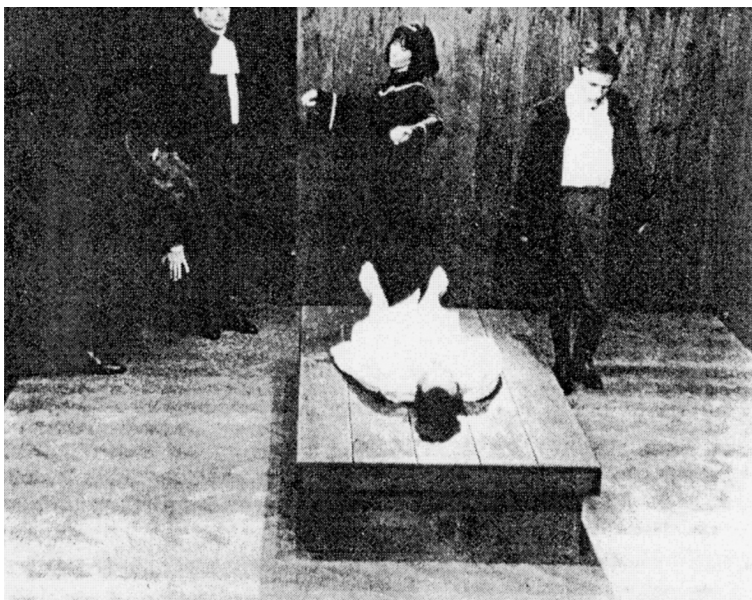


Figure 3: The entrance of the members of the court. Don Henri lies on the podium. In the background are, left to right, Taroudant (bent over and obscured), the King, Fénix, and Mouley.

pain, and with a “cavernous” voice, he cries out that someone in his position cannot sing for the pleasure of others. His manifestation of hurt is exactly what the members of the court expected and desired, for it confirms them in their position of powerful superiority.

Seeing that Don Henri accepts the rules of the court, a system based on oppression and the recognition of subalternity, the King now prepares Don Henri for absorption into the new order. Mounting the recumbent figure—throughout the performance demonstrations of unrestrained power are consistently grounded in expressions of sadistic sexuality—he recites a version of Don Fernando's speech in Act I of Calderón's play about the horse he has claimed in battle:

Je me suis choisi un coursier
dont l'étrier et la selle étaient libres,
dont le père était l'orage,
et la mère, une flamme (56)

As the King continues to "ride" his prisoner, his voice rises higher and higher, and Don Henri—his body seized with convulsions—emits a series of piercing cries. Within moments "climax" is reached, and there is a brief, shocked moment of silence.

Don Henri has now been "assimilated," but his assimilation must be confirmed. Thus, after a short pause, Fénix draws an imaginary knife from her robe, approaches Don Henri, who is still lying on the podium, and proceeds to castrate him symbolically. Following this second jarring incident, Don Henri is stripped of the clothes with which he entered, and dressed by the others in the same uniform worn by all the members of the court: gray pants, black boots, and so on. He has become one of them. The basic opposition of this production is thus not between Christians and Muslims, who are shown to be in some ways very much alike, but between

those who accept the laws of worldly authoritarianism and those who seek transcendence through ever greater spirituality.¹⁸

The play's introductory section is concluded by several short sequences focusing on Fénix's melancholy and vanity, her father's desire that she marry the Prince of Morocco, and Mouley's jealousy. Shortly, however, the second prisoner, Don Fernand, is brought in. He wears a white shirt and a white loincloth, and around his shoulders there is a strip of red fabric. The clothes in which he displays his body, minimal as they are, will be gradually divested in the course of the performance, resulting in an all but complete denuding that will associate him with popular images of the crucified Messiah. Their colors, of course, are symbolic: the white, which contrasts with the black worn by the members of the court, conveys the Prince's innocence and purity, while the red suggests his coming passion.

DIVERTIMENTO

After Don Fernand's entrance, the members of the court gather around him and observe him closely. They are clearly intrigued by his appearance and manner, and they express the interest he has aroused in them by breaking out momentarily into a lively polka. Suddenly, Don Henri recognizes the new prisoner as his brother, and cries out to him. Henri's exclamation leads the King's to order him to return to Portugal immediately to secure the ransom of Fernand. For the moment, however, Henri does not leave, even though Fernand assures him

that he will meet whatever may befall him in the court with “full serenity” (65).

The court’s fascination with Don Fernand now grows. Mouley and Fénix seat themselves on the podium where Fernand is lying and argue over Mouley’s jealousy. Fénix is clearly attracted to Don Fernand, and as her dispute with Mouley continues she drapes herself over the body of the captive. Within moments, her place at the side of Don Fernand is taken by the King, who makes clear that he also finds him desirable. As Don Fernand trembles, the King announces that the court has prepared a “divertissement” in his honor.

The entertainment that follows consists of a mock bullfight in which Fénix plays the part of the matador, while Mouley, Taroudant, and Henri take the roles of the three bulls that she fights. Brandishing the red cloth with which Don Fernand had entered as if it were a *muleta*, Fénix dispatches each of the bulls in turn, thus demonstrating her position of supremacy in this power-obsessed and bloodthirsty court.

SOLO

When the “divertissement” of the court comes to an end, its members arrange themselves in the same figuration with which the performance began and prepare to apply to Don Fernand the same tests to which Don Henri had earlier been subjected. First, Fénix orders the captive to sing, expecting him to cry out as had his brother previously. Fernand says nothing, however, nor does he react in

any way. Then, as before, the King “mounts” his captive, reciting word for word the same speech about the “coursier.” Once again, Don Fernand does not react in any way. Finally, Fénix approaches the Prince to undertake the symbolic castration. And once again, Don Fernand refuses to cry out. Instead, he raises his hand and places it upon Fénix’s head, causing her to drop the “knife” she was wielding. His Christ-like gesture startles and unsettles the members of the court and they now realize that, unlike his brother, Don Fernand cannot be assimilated into their company.

Moments later Don Henri—who in reality has never left the stage since his initial entrance—approaches the King with news from Lisbon, from which he has seemingly just returned (obviously, throughout the performance, levels of time, like particulars of space, are treated with great flexibility). The Portuguese King, Henri tells the court, has died of grief on hearing of the capture of Don Fernand, but before his death, he ordered that the Prince be exchanged for the city of Ceuta. Don Fernand, however, refuses to be ransomed, and at this point he begins the first of his three monologues, or solos, derived in this instance from lines 296-452 of Act Two of Calderón’s play.

The speech focuses both on the Prince’s humility—“Donc, pour une seule vie, / sacrifier autant de vies chrétiennes?”(81)—and on his determination to accept whatever awaits him with unprotesting resignation:

Que suis-je? qu’ai-je de plus qu’un homme?

.....
Eh bien, je ne suis plus Infant,
je ne suis qu'un esclave
prêt à vivre comme ces autres esclaves,
à vivre ici et enrichir mon maître. (81)

As the monologue proceeds, Don Fernand's words ring out, according to Ouaknine, like a "song of love," and his body contorts with unearthly joy (see Figure 4). At its conclusion, he collapses in ecstatic exhaustion (see Figure 5).

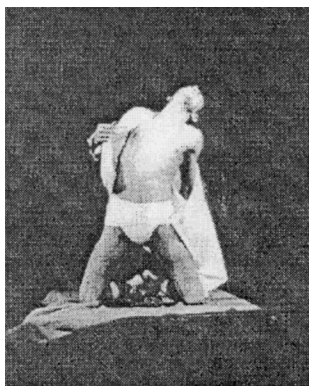


Figure 4: The Prince's joy



Figure 5: The Prince collapses in ecstasy

RONDO

Don Fernand's first solo is received with a cry of joy from Fénix, but the other members of court are angered, and, marching around the podium in lockstep, they begin to assail him with threats and insults. To their aggression the Prince responds with

nothing but gentleness and philosophical acceptance. Thus, when the King cries out, "Ton corps m'appartient," Don Fernand replies simply :

Oui, il est vrai, mais bien peu,
bien peu de pouvoir cela te donnera
de gouverner sur mes os :
car cette terre est un auberge
dans notre grand voyage. (85)

Shortly after this exchange, the King commands that Don Fernand be taken away, put in chains, and fed nothing but bread and water. In reaction to the King's order, the members of the court break into a strange litany based on the *Kyrie eleison*, a ritual that cannot help seeming sacrilegious in the present context. To add to the blasphemy, as the courtiers chant, Fénix beats the Prince's reddening and sweat-covered back with the red cloth, rolled into a kind of whip (see Figure 6). The martyrdom of Don Fernand has begun.

As the rhythm of the performance increases, the courtiers erupt into a bizarre minuet-polka, punctuated by various symbolic gestures and actions: Fénix kneels and is confessed by Don Fernand; weeping and crying softly, Don Fernand falls to the floor and flagellates himself with his rolled-up shirt; the members of the court twist their costumes into various shapes and enact a kind of masquerade; Don Fernand raises himself to the podium and, wiping his brow with the unfurled cloth, listens to the second confession of Fénix, who kneels at his side, weeps, and asks for his forgiveness ("Mea culpa,

mea culpa, mea maxima culpa" [92]) (see Figure 7); Don Fernand, physically spent but spiritually ex-

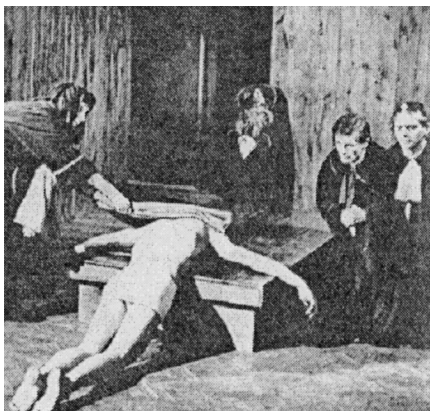


Figure 6: Fénix whips the Prince



Figure 7: Fénix confesses to the Prince

alted, falls into the arms of Taroudant (who, as earlier stated, is played by a woman) and the two of them recreate the Pietà (see Figures 8 and 9); the Prince kneels and an imaginary crown is placed upon his head; Fénix asks the King to have pity on Don Fernand; the King lies next to Don Fernand on the floor, and, taking the Prince's head into his hands, justifies himself to Fénix ("Mais qui l'oblige à souffrir? / Il est dans la misère, dis-tu, mais c'est

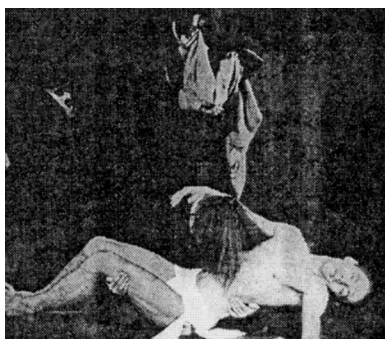
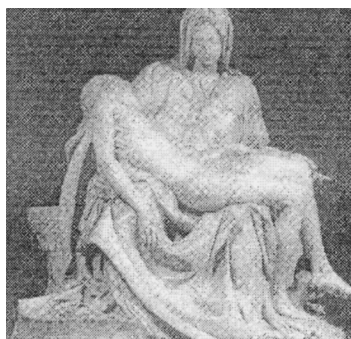


Figure 8: The Prince in the arms

Figure 9: Michelangelo's
Pietà of Tarouant

lui-même qui a sellé son sort" [95]); the members of the court pull their capes over their heads, and, as if in church, begin to chant a prayer for the Prince.

SOLO

After the Rondo sequence of the performance comes the Prince's second monologue, which is considerably shorter than either the first or the third. Its words correspond to those of lines 21-85 of Act Three of Calderón's text, where they are spoken, however, by the character Muley. The speech, in which Don Fernand refers to himself throughout in the third person, takes up the themes of physical suffering, humiliation, and compassion. With waning strength, but ecstatic spirit, person, the Prince recites:

Ses yeux, jadis sereins,

regardent aujourd'hui affamés,
rougis des larmes douloureuses,
secs, enflammés par la faim –
et ses mains implorent une aumône. (98-99)

Upon the conclusion of the Prince's words, the members of the court, both excited and mystified, rush forward to partake of his body, biting into it in a kind of savage parody of the sacrament of communion.

ALLEGRO

At this point, a new character, Alphonse (played by the actor who had formerly portrayed Mouley) enters the court, declaring that he is the King of the Lusitanians, and that he has come to release Don Fernand from his captivity. If the Moorish King refuses to give the Prince over freely, he says, he will be rescued by "sword and fire." His proud words are immediately challenged by Taroudant, who from this point on is apparently no longer one of the courtiers, but the King of Morocco, as in Calderón's play. There follows a protracted verbal combat between the two monarchs, after which the dying Prince, rising from the floor, gives thanks to God for the mercies that He bestows upon him in the midst of his suffering:

Mon Dieu! Grande est ta grâce!
Après que mon corps se soit figé dans la cave
tu me verses des sources de lumière,
tu fais chanter tes oiseaux,
tu ordonnes à ton soleil qu'il me chauffe.
Tu est bon et clément! (103)

Within moments this section comes to an end, with Taroudant declaring his intention to claim as his bride the reluctant Fénix, and Don Fernand crying out for mercy: "O, offrez une aumône à un mendiant! / Je meurs de faim ... / Que je ne tende pas mes mains en vain!" (104)

SOLO

Now come the final moments of the Prince's life and of Ryszard Cieślak's achievement of translumination. Seated on the podium, and speaking rapidly, melodically, and joyfully, Don Fernand begins his final monologue, based on lines 402-569 of Act Three of Calderón's play. He speaks of the vanity of all earthly things, and he calls upon the King to end his life (see Figure 10), not because, as he says, he abhors it, or fears suffering, but because he knows that only through death can he be liberated:

Je sais que je suis près de la tombe,
que la vie me quitte,
et une chaleur infernale me dévore ...
Je sais aussi que je suis mortel,
Comme vous, seigneur, comme le ver de
terre
et non comme un ange *orgueilleux*.
C'est pourquoi les formes du berceau
et du cercueil se ressemblent,
afin que les hommes sachent,
lorsqu'ils répondront à l'appel de Dieu,
que leur mère, la mort,
les couchera sur un même linceul.
.....
Celui que le sait, de quoi a-t-il peur ?
Celui que l'a entendu, qu'attend-il donc

encore ?

.....
Donnez-moi la mort, que je meure pour la
foi.

Me voici, levant les bras,
pour implorer la *mort*, Seigneur!
Non que je fuie devant la vie,
que je craigne de souffrir,
ou que je veuille mourir en désespéré :
ce n'est pas cela que me jette à vos pieds
Seigneur, mais j'aime
cette mort de martyr
qui ouvre le corps ensanglanté
et délivre l'âme à *Dieu*.

.....
Triomphez donc de ces os,
Ma gorge et mon sein vous appartiennent !
Dieu est mon recours et ma défense ! (107-
109)

The King reacts to Don Fernand's final monologue with disbelief ("Cela dépasse l'entendement! / Qu'un homme presque agonissant / puisse ... se réjouir de sa misère!" [110]), and Fénix, when the Prince asks her to have compassion on him, turns away in disgust: "Comme tu es horrible! (112). As death overtakes him, however, Don Fernand is grateful and serene (see Figure 11). With a

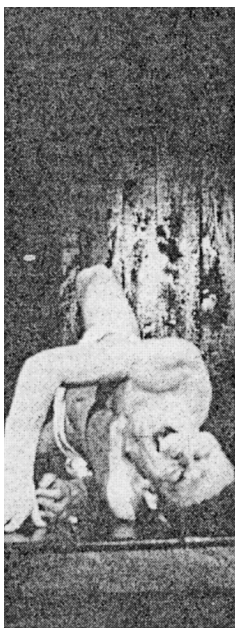


Figure 10: the Prince
begs to die

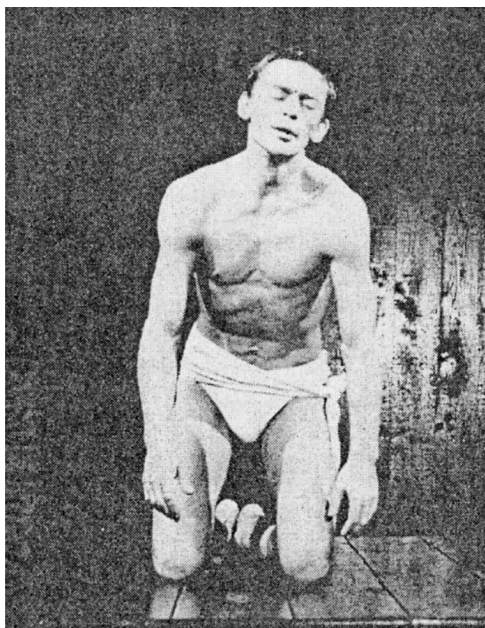


Figure 11: The last moments of the
Prince

smile on his face that several observers have described as beatific, he utters his last words:

Et ici, je meurs pour Dieu,
j'enrichis le chœur des anges
et paye la dette à mon Seigneur.
Je me meurs (112)

With these words, the Prince breathes his last. The play then concludes with a brief coda in which the members of the court, all their former aggressiveness dissipated, gather around the body of the dead Prince (see Figure 12) and glorify it, suggesting,

perhaps, the beginning of a new cult (see Figure 13).



Figure 12: The Prince is dead

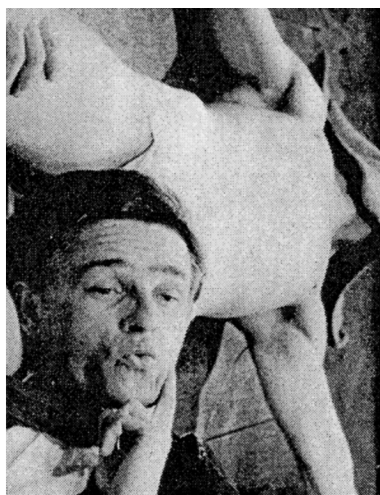


Figure 13: The apotheosis of the Prince

The final monologue of Don Fernand was punctuated by occasional bursts of laughter on the part of Cieślak which apparently were for some members of the audience profoundly disturbing, for they seemed to call into question the sincerity of the Prince's religious belief. As Christopher Innes has remarked, "the climax of translumination, ecstasy, was thus divorced from the divine stereotype, while retaining the parallels to Christ" (172). Others who have witnessed Grotowski's production were troubled by the extent of the complicity of the Prince in his own death, making him not just the willing victim of his tormentors, but also their manipulator,

using them to degrade and destroy his body in order to liberate his spirit.

Of those who have written in this vein, the most outspoken, by far, is Stefan Brecht who comments as follows:

Calderón's prince chooses to relate to the others as servant. Grotowski subverts this courtly gesture of a noble man into the contemptible stratagem of a saint—which (contrary to what Grotowski seems to think) will avail him nothing.... The hero's project is strictly egoist—his own salvation. It is loveless, for his subservience to the will of others is for his own sake and abets their evil-doing, thus it is not for their good. (121-22)¹⁹

There is, obviously, something to what Brecht says. But he surely exaggerates the differences between the altruism of Calderón's Prince—who also uses the torments of his captors for his own purposes—and the egoism of Grotowski's Prince. Furthermore, it may be that within the spiritual atmosphere within which Grotowski's production was created, one characterized by loss of faith both in traditional religion and in communism, personal salvation was the only kind of salvation that could be imagined.

How, then, should we understand this haunting, provocative, and puzzling production? Throughout his career, Grotowski was concerned with the figure of the outsider, the individual who, through whatever concatenation of circumstances, finds himself placed in the midst of hostile and uncomprehending outside forces. Some have seen in this concern a reflection of Grotowski's own early years, which were spent in a country whose Marxist government was repressive and authoritarian and whose theatre-

going public was profoundly antagonistic to all deviation from the status quo. Whatever the case, Grotowski's protagonists typically find themselves at the mercy of those who seek to possess them, to crush their spirit, by manipulating and torturing them. In this effort, the tormentors are singularly unsuccessful, for although—as in *The Constant Prince*—they may break the bodies of their victims, they cannot destroy their souls. Indeed, it is precisely through the suffering of his body that the soul of the typical Grotowski protagonist is strengthened and refined. In the end, it finds release, more often than not in death, and with that release comes transcendence in the highest degree.

In the final assessment, what seems clear is that, whatever the reactions of the spectators to the ideas that Grotowski was attempting to convey, the artistry of the actors, particularly that of Ryszard Cieślak in the role of the Prince, was universally regarded as astonishingly accomplished and powerful. Indeed, Findlay and Filipowicz write that in the wake of the production, Cieślak's performance was "declared by critics internationally as the most luminous and gifted of the 20th century" (219). More than any others who worked with Grotowski, Cieślak fulfilled the ideal of the Holy Actor, one who did not simply suggest acts of the soul, but through translumination actually accomplished them.

NOTES

¹Kumiega, "Grotowski's Laboratory Theatre" 191.

²The important events in Grotowski's life and the significant phases in his professional development are sketched in Osiński, Kazimierz Braun, and, most completely, Kumiega, *The Theatre of Grotowski*.

³*Towards a Poor Theatre* 19. Unless otherwise indicated, all citations of Grotowski throughout are to this text.

⁴Quoted in Wiles, 152-153

⁵It should be pointed out that throughout his life Grotowski was insistent that he should not be credited with having developed a "method," although others have had no hesitation in speaking of the "Grotowski method."

⁶Wiles 13-36.

⁷In the preface to *The Theater and Its Double*, Artaud wrote, famously: "Furthermore, when we speak the word 'life,' it must be understood we are not referring to life as we know it from its surface of fact, but to that fragile, fluctuating center which forms never reach. And if there is still one hellish, truly accursed thing in our time, it is our artistic dallying with forms, instead of being like victims burnt at the stake, signaling through the flames." (13)

⁸Grotowski's position with regard to the use of myth perhaps needs to be clarified. On the grounds that there no longer exists one single faith, he states that in contemporary times "the community of the theatre cannot possibly identify itself with myth Only a confrontation is possible.... [A] performance conceived as a combat against traditional and contemporary values (whence 'transgression')—this seems to me the only real chance for myth to work in the theatre. An honest renewal can only be found in this double game of values, this attachment and rejection, this revolt and submissiveness." (121-22)

⁹Since Curtius studied the matter in the *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages* (559-70), much has been written about Calderón's interest in visual effects and the pictorial arts. A recent study of particular interest is that of Regalado. On the topic of Calderón and music, see, particularly, Stein.

¹⁰Earlier in the century, the Polish actor and director Juliusz Osterwa had also mounted a production of *The Constant Prince*. As Kazimierz Braun has shown (235-36), this produc-

tion had a significant influence on Grotowski's, and Osterwa's ideas on the spiritual mission of theatre are strikingly similar to those of Grotowski.

¹¹A useful summary of what is known about the historical Don Fernando is given in Sloman.

¹²It should be pointed out that Wardropper rejects the more detailed and thoroughgoing allegorical interpretation of the play proposed by Entwistle in his commentary on the play, published jointly with that of E. M. Wilson.

¹³In their recent edition, Fernando Cantalapiedra and Alfredo Rodríguez López-Vázquez doubt that Don Fernando could have felt himself attracted to Fénix because, as Master of the Orders of Avis and Christ, he would have taken a vow of celibacy. But surely even those who are sworn to chastity can be attracted by the beauty of others.

¹⁴Hereinafter, all character names are given as they appear in Ouaknine's French version of the original Polish text of this production.

¹⁵In the program notes to the original production of *The Constant Prince*, quoted in Grotowski, 97-99, Ludwik Flaszen specifically mentions the parallel with the operating room depicted in Rembrandt's famous painting, "The Anatomy Lesson of Dr. Tulp"

¹⁶In setting down his reaction to a performance of *The Constant Prince* in New York, Peter Feldman has written: "I did not expect that words would be so important in the Lab Theatre's work. I expected a theatre of body-image, with strange cries in the night, not a chamber orchestra of rippling Polish. The effect of this theatre's unique use of vocal rhythm, pitch, dynamics, tonality, and careful orchestration is to enhance the word, to restore it from idea to image." (193)

¹⁷The uniforms of the members of the court inevitably bring to mind those of the police forces of the various totalitarian states of the 20th century. In recent decades such uniforms have, of course, become a kind of cliché in productions of classical works, but in the context of *The Constant Prince* they have undeniable force. Among other things, they give the work a subtext relating to the political climate of Poland in the 1960s

which Grotowski denied on some occasions and which he recognized on others: "I had to say that I was not political in order to be political. *The Constant Prince*, for example, was a very political work." (Quoted in Findlay and Filipowicz, 209.)

¹⁸Cf. Temkine: "When Henri ... is castrated, he rejoins the group and he is exactly like the others now. Moors and Christians merge because they belong to the same order, the temporal persecutor of the spiritual. This is a mainspring of *The Constant Prince*; its blasphemous intent runs counter to the apologetic purpose of Calderon." (135)

¹⁹A sampling of other opinions regarding *The Constant Prince*, including those of Stanley Kauffman (pro), Richard Gilman (pro), and John Simon (anti), is given in Davy's useful article.

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BETWEEN THE PAGE AND THE STAGE: PROMPTER'S COPIES AS PERFORMANCE HISTORY

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As Kier Elam points out, we usually distinguish between two texts of any play: the *dramatic* text produced FOR the theater and the *performance* text produced IN the theater (3). Obviously, the dramatic text and the performance text are not the same; the former is *un acto en potencia*, and the realization of a performance may not only add visual and auditory elements, but may also significantly change the literary text's wording as well. While the general idea of a *performance* text can refer to the performance itself rather than to a written or printed text, I would argue that prompters' copies of plays performed in Madrid theaters constitute an intermediate step between the page and the stage. Given the extreme economy of the Spanish tradition of stage directions, a prompter's text can help us to comprehend and interpret the execution of a particular performance. In addition, the availability of more than one "performance" text of the same play allows us

to trace a performance history, as well as to appreciate any textual evolution.

Generally, we base our analyses and interpretations on manuscripts or editions of literary texts, not on manuscripts of texts used as actual scripts in performance or on annotations to printed dramatic texts indicating changes made for the performance. In fact we generally ignore the existence of what has now come to be called a "director's text," in part because "director," as we have come to understand the term, is a fairly recent occupation. But it is also partly due to a lack of conservation of texts directly related to performance in the public theaters. According to Cotarelo, the *Ordenanzas de los teatros de Madrid* of 1608 required that a *comisario* named each year be in charge of keeping accounts of receipts as well as maintaining an archive of "los libros, escrituras y papeles, tocante a las comedias, todo por inventario" (622-625). From the beginning, the archives were of two separate natures and functions: administration and performance. The latter, housed today in the Biblioteca Histórica del Ayuntamiento de Madrid, contains copies of plays and music, some of which have never been printed. The *corrales* also had their own accounting and script archives, chiefly for the sake of convenience, which were under the care of a *contador*, usually an *apuntador*, who was part of the company (Aguerri and Castro 434-435).¹ Although prompters' copies cannot, of course, provide audiovisual witness to the staging carried out by a particular company of actors for a particular production, they do give us the only evidence we have of certain aspects of the per-

formance history of Golden Age plays; they are intermediate texts—between the text provided by the playwright and the spectacle text viewed by the theatergoer.

Recently, there has been increasing attention given to the study of actors on the Spanish Golden Age stage,² however, to my knowledge, there has not been equivalent consideration given to the function of the *autor* or director and to his or her role in maintaining the performance tradition of persistently popular works. Despite the plethora of studies of this kind devoted to the performance traditions of Shakespeare plays,³ I am not aware of parallel studies, for instance, of performance histories of Calderón or Moreto favorites. How, for instance, was *El desdén con el desdén* staged in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, when it was produced frequently? How persistent were certain non-textual elements? Were certain entrances always made from stage left? Downstage? How were certain scenes set? From a long perspective with many sets of wings? Or in front of a “short” curtain (*telón corto*)? Who played the leads? What speeches were cut? What new material was added and where and when? These are questions that can be asked of any play, and the answers—or hints toward finding the answers—lie in the archives of the Biblioteca Histórica Municipal de Madrid, formerly the Biblioteca Municipal de Madrid. From the interpretation of various handwritten or drawn symbols appearing throughout the prompters’ copies, we can adduce concrete information about the actual blocking of movement, timing of entrances, exits, special ef-

fects, and the inclusion of music. Similarly, an examination of the variants compared to printed texts conveys concrete information about changing public taste and sensibilities throughout the century-plus during which these plays were performed.

My first encounter with prompters' copies came in the course of preparing a critical edition of the *Don Juan de Espina* plays by José de Cañizares. I sought out any and all extant versions, edited or manuscript. Among the latter, I acquired several—five to be exact—from the Colección de Teatro de la Biblioteca Municipal de Madrid, which turned out to be much more than hand-written versions of the text. These prompters' copies are where those responsible for the staging of a play noted and marked information relevant to the *mise-en-scène*, thus constituting an intermediary step between the work conceived by the author and the play presented to the public. These manuscripts provide detailed information about the extra-textual effects involved in a public performance; additionally, the modifications discovered from comparing the published versions of a play with prompters' copies can also indicate, as Montserrat Ribao Pereira suggests, “la existencia de distintos tipos de escritura dramática por parte de los literatos, de diferentes modalidades de edición...” (7-8).

While Ribao Pereira studies prompters' copies of historical plays performed in Spain between 1834 and 1840, the same is generally true of earlier works. My insights and conclusions about the nature of prompters' copies markings are based on those of Ribao Pereira. I have also consulted the

invaluable documents made available to us by Varey, Shergold, and Davis, and have relied on information gleaned from the catalogue of the Biblioteca Histórica del Ayuntamiento de Madrid, as well as close examination of prompters' copies of the two *comedias de magia*⁴ with which I am best acquainted.

The late Baroque *comedias*, *Don Juan de Espina en su patria*⁵ and *Don Juan de Espina en Milán*, were both written around 1713, and were not performed before that date as far as I can tell. However, there were performances of one or the other of the plays throughout the rest of the century. As a matter of fact, Varey and Davis show that *Don Juan de Espina en su patria* was performed twice at the Teatro de la Cruz in the year 1714, for two days in February—the run was brought to an end due to the illness of the Queen—and nine days in November. *Don Juan de Espina en Milán* had a fifteen-day run at the Príncipe earlier in October and November of 1713 (Varey and Davis 392). While both plays were performed in the 1713-14 and 1714-15 seasons, they were eclipsed by Salvo y Vela's four-part powerhouse *El mágico de Salerno* until 1740, when *Don Juan de Espina* (Varey, Shergold, and Davis, do not specify which one, but other sources suggest it was *Don Juan de Espina en su patria*) was performed by the *compañía de Parra*, and later during Carnival of 1743, when a performance of *Don Juan de Espina en su patria* is recorded (Varey, Shergold, Davis 310, 325). René Andioc mentions *Don Juan de Espina en su patria* as a significant component of the 1748-49 season, and Antonietta Calder-

one cites runs in 1750 as well as 1752 and 1760. *Don Juan de Espina en Madrid*, a much altered version of *Don Juan de Espina en su patria* was the entertainment for the festivities surrounding the betrothal of Carlos III's son and heir in 1765, and was subsequently printed in a commemorative edition. The play reappears in 1773, 1776, 1783, 1787, and is still on the boards in the 1791-92 and 95-96 seasons, going strong into the next century, when it plays for only 2 days in 1807 (perhaps because it was not mounted as a *comedia de teatro*, and lacked the draw of the special effects), but runs for 7 days in 1831. *Don Juan de Espina en Milán* had nearly as many runs (1724, 1731, 1748, 1752, 1758, 1777, 1786, 1791, and 1795). By the 1786-87 season, it is becoming worn, but still brings in an audience: "obra ya muy 'rodada' y no obstante muy aplaudida todavía" (Andioc 48). The run was at the Cruz and lasted 13 days.⁶

The manuscripts I consulted from the Biblioteca Histórica of *Don Juan de Espina en Milán* were used in the performances of the 1786, 1791, and 1795 seasons, and correspond broadly to printed versions, but with numerous, lengthy, and significant changes. The *Don Juan de Espina en Madrid* prompters' manuscripts are from the 1827 season, and are based on the 1765 performance that was subsequently printed but which is significantly different from all other printed versions, so much so that I feel justified in calling the majority of edited versions by the original title, *Don Juan de Espina en su patria* to differentiate from this later, altered version.

PROMPTER'S COPIES

When an author finished his dramatic work, he had several options. He could cede all rights to an editor, who would print it up and circulate it to bookstores, or he could cede his rights to a theatrical company, which would include it in its repertoire, and would proceed to present it. Beginning with either of these—a printed edition or an author's manuscript—the theatrical company would make copies for use in the production of the work.⁷ In the case of a printed text, multiple copies of the same edition would be purchased to insure that all *apuntes* would start with the same text. In the Biblioteca Histórica Municipal de Madrid, according to handwritten notes on a 1769 Orga edition of Cañizares' *También por la voz hay dicha*, it was rejected for use due to the fact that the first *apunte* was the 1755 Sanz edition:

Por ésta no se puede apuntar a causa de no ser de la imprenta de Antonio Sanz como es la del 1º apt[unt]o. [. . .] Esta com[edi]a es mejor que la del 1º ap[un]to y todas las de impression de Valencia están mas bien corregidas que las de la impression de Antonio Sanz.

Although two separate cast lists are provided, neither has a date.

Prompters' copies have a series of marginal markings and indications having to do with staging, which neither a "literary" manuscript nor a printed edition contain. Companies used at least three prompters' copies, which were sometimes copies of the commercially printed play, and sometimes

hand-written copies. Markings were made by and for the *primer apuntador*, the *escenógrafo* or *maquinista*, or—in the case of some of the plays studied by Ribao Pereira—the author himself. These markings were handwritten, and included both textual variants and staging indications (sets, furnishings, entrances and exits, stage movements, intonation...). According to Ribao, some of these markings might find their way into a printed edition as stage directions, while some would not. In general, then there are two types of prompters' copies or *apuntes*: those based on a previously edited text and those entirely manuscript.

Manuscript prompter copies are little notebooks, one for each act, about 15 X 21 cms., unbound and hand sewn, each with a title page stating the complete title of the play, the author, the act, and the call number added later by the cataloger, as well as an indication of whether it is a first, second, or third prompter, and, sometimes, the initials of the prompter himself. The Cruz and Príncipe used different cataloguing systems. The former used a letter corresponding to the initial of the title, followed by a number. The Príncipe, however, used a system based on a *legajo*, as for example in the case of a *Don Juan de Espina* copy: *Magia-13* (Aguerri and Castro 441). [See Figure 1.]

At least three copies were used as a general rule for each act; in especially complicated acts, even four or five copies were used. I have three copies of *Don Juan de Espina en Milán* and two copies of *Don Juan de Espina en Madrid*. Among different

apuntes of the same play, there are notable variations, due to the purposes for which they were used.

- a) The *primer apunte* as a general rule has few crossings-out, few changes, and is written in one hand, as if it were a clean copy of what is going to be presented. Although sometimes the stage directions are lengthier than in the printed edition, the relative lack of technical information might indicate that this copy would have been used by the prompter, who would help the actors with their lines.
- b) The *segundo apunte* has specifications about setting and movements, but specializes in systematically marking the entrances of actors and the exact place from which they do so, one or two scenes before it happens. Often written in a different hand from the first copy, the second prompter's copies have crossings-out, messy handwriting, constant corrections and comments on the *mise-en scène*, evidently collected in the moment in which the production was being prepared. These notes (referring to position, entrances, exits) are never reflected in printed editions, but in some the stage directions are, according to Ribao Pereira, "precisamente algunas de las que se originan en los *apuntes*" (36). The second copy occasionally lists the cast on the first page of the first act, using the traditional categories of

galán, dama, gracioso, barba, etc. This is the copy where textual changes (additions and cuts) are registered, although as Ribao Pereira points out, these changes are not always reflected in printed editions, which are likely to produce the text before any modifications were made for performance (36). The nature of the information of the second copy might indicate that it would be used by the stage manager, in charge of making sure that actors enter on time from the correct wing and with necessary props. [See Figures 1 and 5.]

- c) The *tercer apunte* also signals entrances and exits, although not systematically. Rather it marks light and sound effects, movements of “*masas*,” set changes, and, in later performances, is the only one to mark the curtain ringing down. The handwriting is different from other two, and the markings do not pass on into the edition. This copy might have been used by stage hands but seems aimed at operators of stage machinery, either in the under stage area or in the fly loft.

Some plays have a fourth or fifth copy, for only one or two acts of the play, generally those with exceptionally complicated staging. This copy has generally the same content as the second copies (Ribao Pereira 37).

Leaving aside the first copy or *apunte*, which is essentially the same as the printed edition, we get most information about actual performances from second and third copies. Sometimes on the flip side of the cover of the second copy there is a cast list for the opening night. [See Figure 2.] If not, the cast can be reconstructed from *didascalias* preceding each act, which contain the names of actors appearing in the first scene of the act. Others will be marked in a sort of balloon which marks the moment when they must be ready, one or two scenes before their entrance. [See Figure 5.] The prompter copy generally specifies the side of the stage, and sometimes the place from which the actor will enter (*puerta, escotillón, al paño, or bastidor*). If there are a lot of people in the scenes, sometimes a strip of paper is added to the margin or to the right; sometimes several strips are added one on top of another, either because one wasn't long enough, or because the company decides to make its own notations in a subsequent performance using the same copy as was used in an earlier version. The same is true for changes to the script.

If a prompter's copy is based on a printed edition—or if the same manuscript has been used for several performances—square brackets are often used to indicate lines, dialogues or scenes which are cut. If the company later decides to include them, the word “*Si*” is written next to the brackets. If material is indeed cut, then often the surrounding lines of dialogue are rewritten to keep the metrical or narratological coherence. [See Figure 3.] I suspect that some changes might be required by the censors,

judging from the *Catálogo de la Biblioteca Municipal de Madrid*, which reproduces frequent amendments required by officials, especially in the latter part of the eighteenth century.

The prompters' copies of *Don Juan de Espina en Madrid* are based on a 1765 edition, which in itself is a reworking of the original *Don Juan de Espina en su patria* for the purposes of celebrating the marriage of D. Carlos Príncipe de Asturias and D^a Luisa Princesa de Parma in the Coliseo del Buen Retiro. This 1765 edition eliminates some special effects specified in the 1730 and 1745 edited texts, which were evidently either no longer in fashion or else not popular with the royal guests of honor, offering instead other effects evidently more to their taste. These, in turn, are substituted in the 1827 prompters' copies by effects less stately than slapstick, presumably more to the liking of the intended audience of children and other unsophisticated fans of the *comedia de magia* at the beginning of the nineteenth century. The performance texts in all of these cases are quite different from the printed versions which have been edited continually since the author's lifetime and thus offer a decidedly different version of the play.

When I first looked at the second and third prompters' copies, it was evident that they had a graphic code or shorthand. Some of this is quite simple to interpret. For example, triple diagonal or double diagonal lines crossed by double diagonal lines clearly indicate an entrance. [See Figures 3 and 5.] As I mentioned before, the little balloons indicate which actor enters and from where. How-

ever, there are other marks which are not readily decipherable, and were a mystery to me until Ribao Pereira clarified them. For example, a single diagonal line (top right to bottom left) signals emphatic pronunciation, while a double diagonal indicates an even more emphatic pronunciation (39-40). The copies of *Don Juan de Espina en Madrid* seem to bear this out. [See Figure 4.] Ribao Pereira explains that double diagonal lines with dots between them serve to mark action which takes place offstage. However, in *Don Juan de Espina en Madrid*, they are used to indicate when an effect requiring machinery will take place. [See Figure 4.]

This graphic code of the *apuntes* becomes indispensable in studying the movement of actors entering the stage, a circumstance not usually revealed in the *didascalias*. We can, for example, see how the movement of the actors reinforces the importance of the machinery in *Don Juan de Espina en Madrid*. In the first act, Don Juan's entrances are principally from the right, while in the second act, they are almost exclusively left, which is where the *escotillón* is located and on which he and other characters appear and disappear in this act.

Also important are indications about intonation, and which scenes should be declaimed with greater emphasis. For instance, in the scene of the disappearing staircase, Don Aniceto's lines are preceded with double diagonal lines, signaling that they must be shouted. This is true of most lines in which a character is suffering as the butt of one of Espina's jokes.

The quick scene change symbol is used, according to Ribao Pereira, “en el marco de una sala o una galería que ocupa únicamente la parte anterior del escenario, separada del resto por un telón que al levantarse descubre una decoración más amplia. La transición de una a otra se señala en los *apuntes* con una especie de croquis” (40). This is evidently the case in the Espina plays, when such a cross-like symbol often accompanies a *didascalia* such as “*salón corto*” or “*jardín corto*.” [See Figures 3 and 6.]

All of this leads to interesting conclusions. The place from which an actor enters the stage is not haphazard or aleatory. Doors of entrance or exit can be associated with concrete content and motives, often recurrent, which the spectator actualizes in the same moment s/he watches the entrance of the character. Furthermore, there are privileged spaces, such as the *foro*, the use of which warns the spectator of the imminence of the *desenlace*, of a particularly effective entrance, or of the entrance of a large group. The movements of these “crowd scenes” are calculated to provide the maximum decorative potential. The effects of sound become interpretative clues, and can indicate or anticipate to the spectator the meaning of what is happening on stage. There is often a mark indicating a stomp or a whistle to signal an impending magical effect. [See Figure 3.] Normal scene changes have no such signal. Thus, a stomp or whistle will prepare the public for the magic to follow shortly. This information is not passed on to the reader of an edited text, and it is not generally taken into consideration when a text is studied.

After closely studying the prompters' copies of the two *Don Juan de Espina* plays, I am certain that the performances represented by these scripts were very distant cousins of the originals. The consistently edited version of *Don Juan de Espina en Milán* is a tightly constructed and essentially military story, full of rousing scenes of soldiers and battles, with order resorted in a stately garden at the end. The version performed repeatedly at the end of the eighteenth century adds lengthy scenes of exaggerated oddity and opulence, evidently much to the delight of the audience, but certainly far from the author's original version. An example is at the beginning of the play. Don Juan promises to help Don César in a story which is essentially a reworking of Don Juan Manuel's *De lo que conteció a un Deán de Sanctiago con don Yllán* (1335), later brought to the stage by Ruiz de Alarcón in *La prueba de las promesas* (1634). The original Cañizares text moves quickly from the front door of Espina's house to the battlefield, where the magician promises César the fulfillment of his wishes. In the later versions, instead, César and Bróculi, the *gracioso*, are taken inside Espina's sumptuous house, where they are richly dressed and otherwise regaled by a small army of dwarfs, in an additional scene consisting of around one hundred twenty lines, which does absolutely nothing to advance the action. Not all changes are additions, though. Virtually any reference to the devil or to demonic powers, usually uttered by a *gracioso* or *criado* in the original, is changed in these copies, replaced, interestingly enough, by terms such as "*bruto*" or "*perverso*."

The overwhelming impression that these performance texts, these prompters' copies cause in this reader is of *admiratio*. The play the audience saw was so different from the text which was repeatedly edited that one begins to regard critical reception of the printed editions with heightened suspicion. The slashes, dots, hearts, and crosses reveal the machinations, mutations, and music which are not all evident in any printed edition of the play. The additions and cuts reveal an evolutionary process not manifested in any printed version of the supposedly "same" plays.

We know that a work often appeared in published form before a company acquired the performance rights. This printed text represents the author's conception of the work, both as literature and as spectacle, but gives us no information about the changes made by the impresario group at the moment of staging the work, nor the reasons for such changes. The prompters' copies can provide us with some of this information. In like manner, as is probably the case with the *Don Juan de Espina* plays, the printed copy which we read today may indeed derive from these prompters' copies, and thus is the result of a transformational process from text to spectacle, a combination of staging directions of the author and notes from the director added during rehearsals. Similarly, the dialogues which we read may derive from variants (additions, subtractions, rewritings) which an actor, a director, a censor, public taste or critical reception may have imposed on the original text. It might be the case, then, that the stage directions which appear in the

first edited versions of a play could to some degree reflect the realities of production. It might also be the case that this edited version could be a "rough guide" to future performances that would stray far afield from the text, no matter how little that text varied throughout its editorial incarnations.

We know that throughout the Golden Age playwrights resorted to publishers in self defense against mutilations of their works at the hands of *autores de comedia*. As José Yxart explains, "[L]a obra se representa, se imprime, se mutila, se corrige, se copia, sin pedir permiso al autor, y sin que a nadie se le ocurra que todo aquello sea una expoliación y un robo. Un reglamento hay que lo prohíbe, pero (...) esta es una de las muchas leyes que se acatan pero no se cumplen" (18-19). The same was evidently true in the eighteenth century; prompters' copies provide evidence that the printed word was not uniformly respected when it came time to produce a play. What is striking about the two plays I studied is that neither was printed before 1730, but had been performed many times in the sixteen or seventeen years preceding their appearance in print. There is almost no variation among the printed editions of the plays, from 1730 (during the lifetime of the author) to 1782, thirty-two years after his death. Yet in the half century between the debut and the performances represented by the earliest prompters' copies I examined (1786), *Don Juan de Espina en Milan*, for example, undergoes changes which amount to a caricature of its edited self. What we now read, study, and use as the basis of our performances might not have been even close to what

would have been seen by a contemporary audience—or even more important—by a contemporary critic.

An article in the *Memorial literario* in 1787 places *Don Juan de Espina en Madrid* in the contemptible context of all *comedias de magia*: “con ellas parece que hallan la piedra filosofal con el vulgo ignorante” (Andioc 48). Although critics had long registered their general disapproval of magic plays, they were, along with the *comedias de santo*, the favorite genres of the eighteenth century. They blended the essential ingredients of the *comedia áurea* with the special theatrical effects made possible by technological innovations. These and other plays written in this time frame have been dismissed as insignificant, decadent, or worse by unsympathetic and/or uncharitable critics since. Nonetheless, magic plays could be counted on to fill a theater company’s coffer; however insignificant or injurious magic plays might seem to the elite, the general audiences flocked to see them, perhaps charmed by the story, perhaps attracted by the staging. While contemporary critics could and undoubtedly did form their judgments on the basis of their presence at performances of these plays, we are left largely with textual evidence as opposed to performance records. We must base our opinions on reviews and literary editions available to us, which often lack information relevant to staging. The prompters’ copies are intermediate documents—between the page and the stage—and can give us a hint of what must have been in our attempt to trace a performance history.

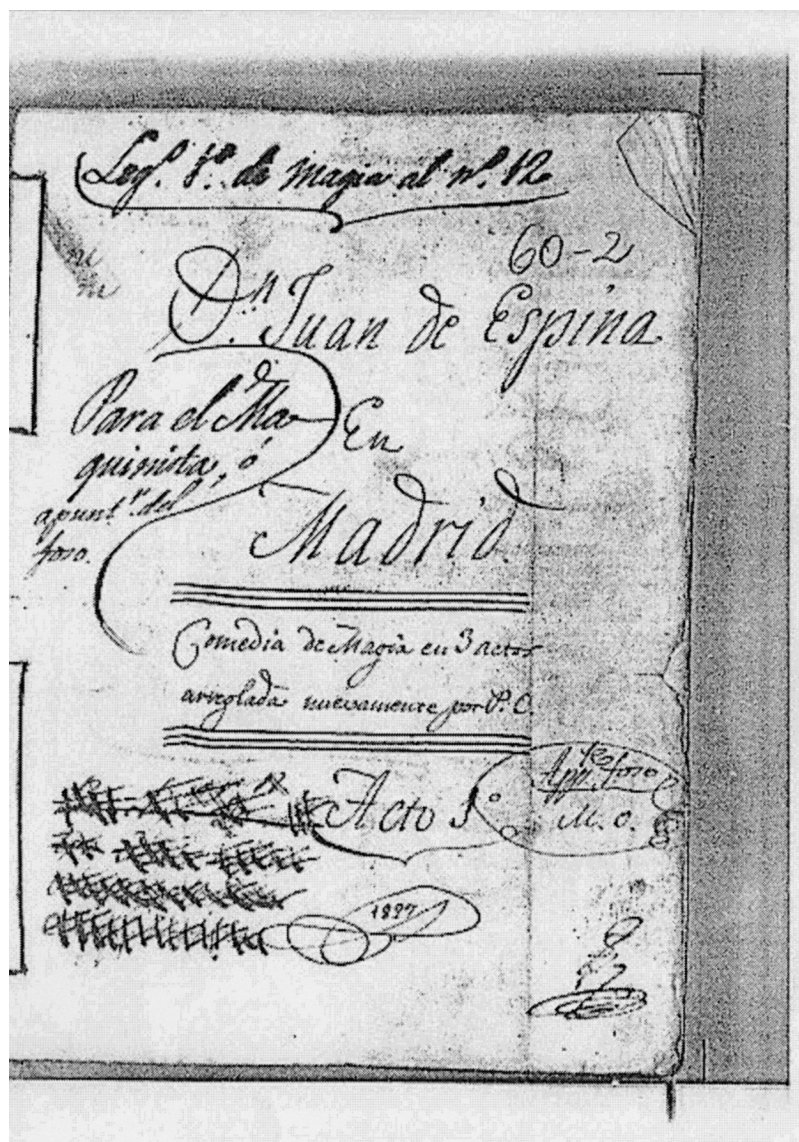


Figure 1: Don Juan de Espina en Madrid



Figure 2: Don Juan de Espina en Milán

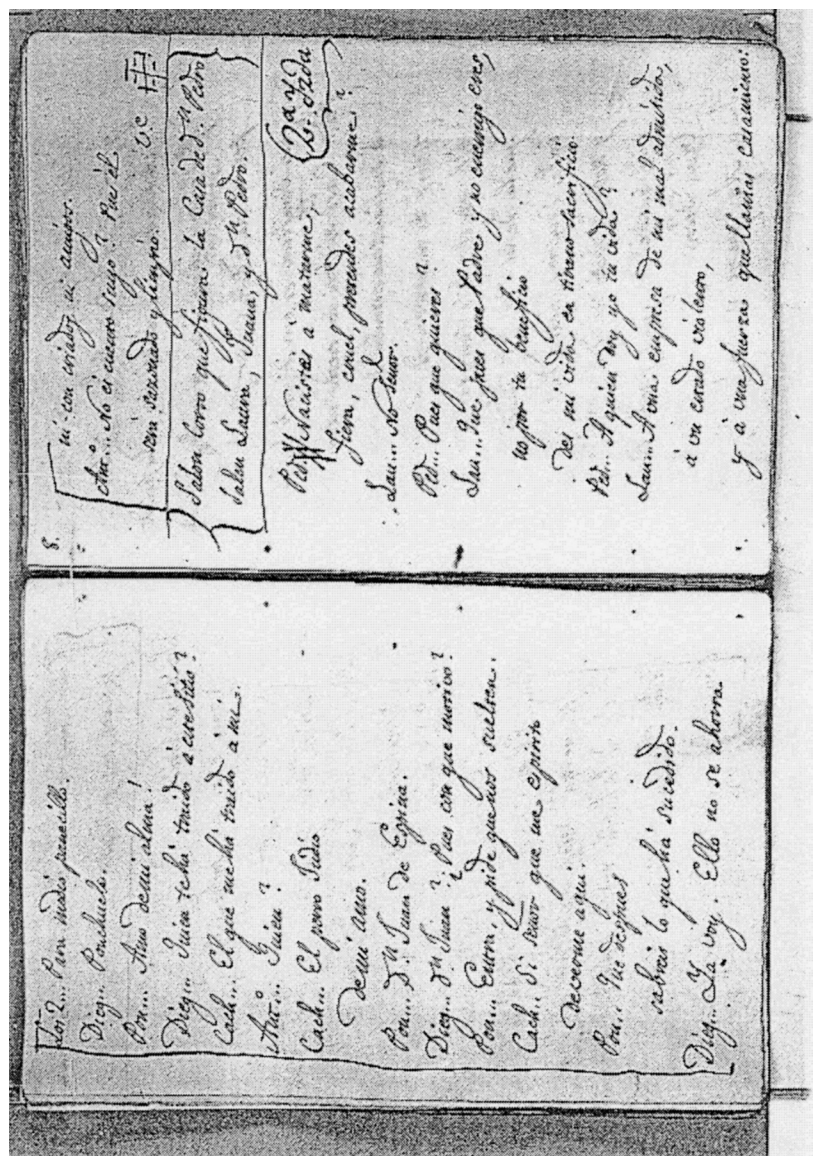


Figure 6: Don Juan de Espina en Madrid

APPENDIX**Performances of Don Juan de Espina en su patria/Madrid**

Madrid (Cruz) J. Prado	1714 4-5 feb	Sainetes de Cañi- zares
Madrid (Príncipe) J. Prado	1714 8-16 nov	Sainetes de Cañi- zares
Madrid Parra	1740	Entremeses Música de Coradini
Madrid	1743 Carnaval	
Madrid (Cruz) J. Parra	1749 7-9, 11-12, 14-18 feb	
Madrid J. Parra	1750 13-?? Nov.	
Madrid (Cruz) J. Parra	1752 31 ene – car- nival [with part 2 “por alterna- ción de un día una y otro otra”]	Sainetes de Nicolás Martínez
Madrid (Príncipe) J. Parra	1760 2-11 feb exoranda por Nicolás [Go- nález] Martí- nez	Sainetes
Madrid (Cruz) E. Ribera	1773 9-14 feb	Entremés: El car- nival Sainete: Los es- crúpulos de las damas
Sevilla	1773	

	6 días	
Madrid (Príncipe) E. Ribera	1776 22-30 ene	Entremés: El carnaval Sainete: Los escrúpulos de las damas
Madrid (Príncipe) E. Ribera	1783 13-18 nov	Sainete: El burlador burlado
Madrid (Príncipe) E. Ribera	1787 7-17 nov	Tonadilla: Los adutos Sainete: La diversion sin efecto
	1791-92	
Madrid (Príncipe) L. Navarro	1796 3-9 feb	2 tonadillas Sainete: De los escarmentados se hacen los cuerdos
Madrid (Cruz)	1807 3 enero, 8 enero	Not mounted as <i>comedia de teatro</i> .
Madrid (Príncipe)	1827 15 días	
Madrid (Príncipe)	1828 4 días	
Madrid (Príncipe)	1831 7 días	
Valencia	? 8 días	
Barcelona	? 2 días	

Performances of Don Juan de Espina en Milán

Madrid (Príncipe) J. Prado	1713 19-31 oct, 1-2 nov	Sainetes de Cañizares Música de Pablo Esteve
Madrid (Príncipe)	1714	

J. Prado	22-30 nov	
Madrid (Cruz) J. Prado	1724 30 ene - 6 feb	
Madrid (Príncipe) M. San Miguel	1731 25 ene - 6 feb	Sainetes de Vicente Camacho
Madrid (Cruz) J. Parra	1748 26-31 oct, 2-3 nov	
Madrid (Cruz) J. Parra	1752 31 ene – carnival [with part 2 “por alter- nación de un día una y otro otra”]	Sainetes de Nicolás Martínez
Madrid (Cruz) J. Parra	1758 27-31 ene.	
Madrid (Príncipe) E. Ribera	1773 12 nov. y siguientes	Entremés: El elefante fingido Sainete: El cortejo escarmentado
Madrid (Cruz) E. Ribera	1777 10-15 ene.	
Madrid (Cruz) E. Ribera	1786 4-16 nov	Tonadillas: El café de Cádiz y La astucia del amigo Sainete: El descenso del globo
Madrid (Cruz) E. Ribera	1791 1-8 mar.	Introducción de Vicente Rodríguez de Arellano 2 tonadillas
Madrid (Cruz) L. Navarro	1795 12-18 jun	2 tonadillas Sainete: Las dos bodas impensadas

Valencia	?	8 días
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NOTES

¹ For various reasons, explained by Aguerri and Castro in their article, and also by Agulló y Cobo in her survey of the collection, the Biblioteca Histórica Municipal de Madrid does not generally contain contemporary works by authors of the seventeenth century, but rather later copies. There are a few manuscripts of Calderón, and some works by Rojas Zorrilla, Pérez de Montalbán, Moreto, and Bances Candamo, among others. There are no *autos sacramentales* because they were not kept in the archives of the *corrales*. While there are many copies of early eighteenth-century plays and music, the vast majority of the collection is constituted by works from the second half of the eighteenth century and from the nineteenth century.

² See, for example, Shergold and Varey, eds. *Genealogía, origen y noticias de los comediantes de España* and Evangelina Rodríguez Cuadros, and Antonio Tordera. *La técnica del actor español en el barroco*.

³ An example of the way Shakespeare's unruly female characters have been portrayed in twentieth-century performances might be Penny Gay's *As She Likes It: Shakespeare's Unruly Women*, which contains a useful bibliography related to gender and performance.

⁴ For a brief explanation of the *comedia de magia*, see Alvarez Barrientos in *Diccionario de la comedia del Siglo de Oro*. For a more extensive discussion see *Teatro di magia*, edited by Ermanno Caldera.

⁵ There is some confusion regarding the title of this work. Although it appears on most manuscripts and printed editions as *Don Juan de Espina en su patria*, it is often referred to in passing as *Don Juan de Espina en Madrid*. There is a manuscript entitled *Don Juan de Espina en Madrid*, dated 1765, performed for the wedding of D. Carlos Príncipe de Asturias and D^a Luisa Princesa de Parma in the Coliseo del Buen Re-

tiro. This text is altered greatly from the original, so much, in fact, that it deserves its own name to distinguish it from its foundation text, which I call *Don Juan de Espina en su patria* in order to keep the two apart.

⁶ The performances I have found to date are listed in the appendix. Information is compiled from Calderone, Martín Moreno, Varey et al., and Andioc and Coulon, as well as my own observations of prompters' copies. I have not investigated performances in the Americas.

⁷ At times the copy bears the name of the copyist; at others it bears that of the *autor*; at still others it carries the name of the author. In the case of less familiar texts, this can lead to confusion about authorship. For example, on a manuscript copy of *La heroica Antona García* the following is written on the first page: "Esta comedia es de Joseph Parra, lo escribio Juan Lavenan. Anno de 1748". The playwright is not Parra; rather the copy belongs to him, and has been copied out by Lavenan. Parra was the *autor*, and Lavenan [Ladvenant] a member of the company.

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THE DIRECTOR'S CUT: BAROQUE AESTHETICS AND MODERN STAGINGS OF THE *COMEDIA*

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The last twenty-five years have witnessed a relative explosion in the number of staged productions of Spanish *comedias*. Whether the performances take place in Madrid, Almagro, New York, or El Paso, the experience has changed forever the way those who have attended performances view plays previously known only by reading the text. One cannot fail to have been affected by the interaction between literature and theater, between professors and directors, between text and performance. A debate that has arisen as a result of this spectator's experience, especially after the production of a particularly well-known *comedia*, is that between authorial intention and directorial vision. The differences between the two perspectives on any given play have led to a great deal of polemical criticism, usually focusing on the authority of the text versus the rights of the director, or the relative meaning of a

text for audiences in different cultures and eras. Unfortunately, advocates of neither side seem capable to win over converts, at least not quickly or easily, but the ongoing process of engaging this question year after year has definitely altered the way *comediantes* speak of both the text and the performance. Perhaps two notions put forth by Jonathan Miller in *The Afterlife of Plays* might be of use. First, works of art always change, whether by intentional reworking or the incidental wear and tear that inevitably occurs over time. For Miller, “the history of art is partly, not altogether, but quite significantly, the history of damage and injury and plagiarism and theft and robbery and violence of one sort or another” (41). Second, theatrical works of art are allographic rather than autographic in nature. Unlike the singular work that has a physical existence, such as a painting or a work of sculpture, theatrical art is always a representation subject to change even from one performance to the next. Miller is unconcerned by radical changes introduced by a director’s vision; after all, “the text continues to live to be performed another day” (41).

The purpose of the present study is not to reopen the larger debate that has been known to degenerate into a kind of professional name-calling in which professors of literature and directors accuse each other of high crimes and misdemeanors. (As an indication of the level of invective, consider the comment of John Igo, a famous local director and professor in San Antonio, who said during a meeting about the 1981 staging of Calderón’s *Celos aun*

del aire matan at Trinity University, "I came for the smell of grease paint, and all I got was embalming fluid.") Instead, the focus here will be on a rather limited area, specifically how *comedias* are cut when they are staged for modern audiences and the effects of those cuts on our aesthetic appreciation of the *genre*. While it is tempting to use the most exceptional stagings, updated versions, and *mélanges* as examples, in order for these remarks to have the widest currency, the attention will be on those productions that actually strive to present the plays as works of a certain place and time.

At the same time, a discussion regarding authenticity in general would be wide-ranging indeed, and many of the factors of original staging are either poorly known or completely beyond our knowledge and are probably lost forever. Among the myriad questions regarding *comedia* performance are a few that we are simply not prepared to answer at this time: How was a particular play acted? How did diction vary from performance to performance and over time? What did the costumes look like? How did the distractions of the audience affect performance? What text was actually used for any particular performance? This last factor is an exceptionally thorny issue given the generally suspect provenance of many of the most famous *comedias* and the role of the intervening *autor de comedias*. The text we read was almost assuredly not presented exactly as it was later printed; cuts and revisions are an inevitable part of the performance process. Modern productions also cut text, but I suspect that the cuts are

made for different reasons and have different results.

Conversations at Chamizal and other venues reveal that no matter how many *comedias* one has seen performed (and there are doubtless those who have seen 100 or more), it is safe to say that not one has presented all the text that traditionally read in the study of the plays as literature, and rarely is the text organized as it is in the original; at the very least, the plays are almost universally presented in two acts rather than in three. There are, of course, compelling reasons for textual cuts, and any director of older literature, in any language, will gladly recite a long list of exigencies: the competencies of the actors, the accessibility of the syntax and vocabulary, or the length of the audience's attention span (or, in the words of Gilbert Denman, another important figure in San Antonio theater put it, the mind's attention lasts only as long as the *derrière* holds out). Lee Mitchell, in *Staging Premodern Drama*, seems to agree: "Cutting of lines becomes necessary when the text is too long to be performed within comfortable limits" (13). As Sidney Berger of the University of Houston states it regarding his stagings of Shakespeare, "I do cut because sixteenth-century audiences were different from those in our time" (46). In a concrete sense, there can be simply no doubt that most modern audiences may not be accustomed to foreign theatrical experiences, whether from other cultures or other periods, especially in light of the increasing narrative expectations created by the more readily available and dis-

cursive cinematic media. A common belief is that modern audiences will not accept certain established conventions of baroque theater, with "baroque" used imprecisely as a cover term for the various artistic ideals of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century, including characteristics of both the baroque and mannerism, and not in the more limited definition proposed by Hatzfeld (224-33). The *comedia* performance was intentionally much more than just characters acting out a set plot. It was an event: a full afternoon of entertainment, made extremely long by the inclusion of short pieces performed during intermissions, and the occasional cessation of plot to showcase flights of poetry marked by *culteranismo*, *conceptismo*, anaphora, exaggeration, extension, expansion, reduction, distorsion, enigmatic imagery, metaphor, metamorphosis, opposition, hyperbaton, polysyllabic epithets, wit, paradox, *claroscuro*, echo, parallelism, long series of nouns, and the rhythm of the *correlaciones recolectivas* (Hatzfeld 159-82, 237-50). Given that the playwrights called themselves "poetas," one might be forgiven for thinking that they considered the poetry of their *comedias* at least as important as their ability to move the plot from one point to the next. In most modern stagings, plot and character (i.e., narrative) are preserved while structure and image (poetry) are sacrificed to the supposed demands of audiences more accustomed to television and film.

By way of example, let us focus on the previously mentioned 1981 production of Calderón's

fully-sung *comedia*, *Celos aun del aire matan* and the aesthetic consequences of performance cuts. For this modern premiere, Robert Baca of the University of Utah served as director, and I was the producer. By way of context, it is important to note that every effort was made to present *Celos* as it might have been presented in the Coliseo del Buen Retiro; we used Renaissance and baroque instruments for the music, made costumes based on contemporary paintings, and even built our own stage and proscenium arch in a room called the Great Hall in order to approximate the more intimate settings. Of course, some things were either simply beyond our control (the competence of the student performers) or we chose a modern adaptation rather than fetishize the state of technology in 1660 (in other words, we used electricity). Beyond any cuts that we could ascribe to situations beyond our control, we made additional cuts based strictly on aesthetic grounds, just to shorten the running time, a decision that I now believe to have been a mistake. Let us consider one scene in particular.

The scene in question opens Act III (1433-1508). Diana, furious at Eróstrato for having burned down her temple, sends the Furies out into the world to wreak her revenge. The original scene consists of nineteen verses of three heptasyllabic and one hendecasyllabic line, with an assonant rhyme (u-a) in the even-numbered lines of poetry. Although the rhyme might seem more appropriate to a lengthy narrative in *romance*, the regular pattern of lines of 7 and 11 syllables definitely gives the text a

strophic rhythm. In the case of this particular scene, the actress playing Diana (Karen Nickell) was one of the strongest we had, so the decision to cut verses was made almost exclusively to cut out “unnecessary” text and shorten the performance to three 30-minute acts. As a result, the first six verses were eliminated, as were verses 15-18 (most of the text sung by the Furies). From a perspective of strictly dealing with plot, not much was lost. The opening lines of Diana merely repeat that Diana is angry at Eróstrato and at Aura (also called Aurora), material familiar to the audience who has seen Act II. The missing lines of the Furies do foreshadow the action to come, that is, what will happen to Céfaló and Pocris, as well as Eróstrato, but the audience will miss nothing as these actions will be performed on stage in the next few scenes. This is the scene as performed at Trinity in 1981, with modernized spelling; the blocked-off text in italics is the text that was omitted.

<i>Diana.</i>	<i>Ya que aqueste peñasco,</i>	
	<i>cuya esmeralda bruta,</i>	
	<i>pedazo desasido</i>	1435
	<i>del venenoso monte de la luna,</i>	
	<i>es mi trono, después</i>	
	<i>que ni pompa más suma</i>	
	<i>ni dosel más excelso</i>	
	<i>ha de tener mi majestad augusta,</i>	1440
	<i>hasta que a su esplendor</i>	
	<i>el templo restituya,</i>	
	<i>que sacrílego fuego</i>	
	<i>en pardas ruinas convirtió caducas;</i>	
	<i>desde él de mi venganza</i>	1445
	<i>las leyes distribuya;</i>	

que tribunal es digno un risco a quien brutos delitos juzga. Y pues, como deidad de la esfera nocturna,	1450
vino a mi invocación en alas el terror de las tres furias; supuesto que de Aurora, a quien Venus ayuda,	1455
los dioses no me vengan más que en verla volar golfo de pluma;	

en Eróstrato el ceño
empieza. Tú le busca
en los montes adonde
le retiró el asombro de su culpa, 1460
¡o Megera!, y humana fiera,
le obliga a que huya
de las gentes, sintiendo
ansias, fatigas, cóleras i angustias.
Tú, Alecto, pues que Pocris 1465
con Céfalo me injuria,
pues apóstata mía,
con él de amor en las delicias triunfa,
en su rendido pecho
harás que se introduzca 1470
de los celos el áspid,
que entre las flores del amor se oculta.
Tú, Tesífone, a él
los sentidos perturba,
para que mi venablo, 1475
de quien ahora tan ufano usa,
le haga yo el instrumento
de sus tragedias, cuya
lástima sea el blandón
de deidad que a ser llama nació espuma. 1480
Y porque un vil castigo
no piensen que en mí dura
a vista de estos, cobre
Rústico la primera forma suya.

Megera.	...Tú verás que obedientes	1485
Tesífone.	...a las órdenes tuyas	
Alecto.	...hacemos que los tres...	
Las 3.	...padezcan, penen, giman, lloren, sufran.	

<i>Diana.</i>	<i>Pues antes que del día, que a mi pesar madruga, del monte y del alcázar corone el capitel, dore la punta. cada una por su parte a su ejercicio acuda.</i>	1490
<i>Megea.</i>	<i>Pues a los riscos, donde a las gentes Eróstrato se hurta.</i>	1495
<i>Tesífone.</i>	<i>A los bosques en que a Aura Céfaló adula.</i>	
<i>Alecto.</i>	<i>A los palacios, donde Pocris de amor la vanidad ilustra.</i>	1500
<i>Diana.</i>	<i>A la sagrada esfera, desde donde yo influya rigores, que los tres...</i>	
<i>Las 3.</i>	<i>...padezcan, penen, giman, lloren, sufran.</i>	
<i>Alecto.</i>	<i>Y pues soy la primera que de Pocris va en busca, desde esta parte haga que el palacio en que vive se descubra.</i>	1505

If the reception of performed spoken text is considerably different from the experience of reading the text, the difference between hearing reading text and hearing it sung by a competent voice is nothing less than striking. The music adds a complex and dense dimension of meaning and feeling to the text that is simply not appreciable if the words are only read or spoken. Moreover, one readily picks up on the strophic nature of the passage. The mere rhythmic poetic shift from heptasyllabic to hendecasyllabic lines becomes a concluding musical refrain to the previous three lines. Perhaps most importantly, one hears most clearly the baroque predilection for repetition. This opera was written before lyric theater allowed for set arias, so the artistry of both poet and singer was appreciated not in a brief burst of

virtuosity but in the repetition of a well-turned musical phrase. (One only need look at the vast repetitions in the architecture of El Escorial to see the same ideal worked out in a different medium.) By cutting half the verses of the song, we definitely undermined the baroque aesthetics that Calderón and Hidalgo worked so hard to incorporate into the play. The suppression of repeated musical verses is joined by the suppression of the most poetic lines. The plot is important dramatically, but Calderón, the *poeta*, was at least as well known for his brilliant poetic passages that served aesthetic purposes rather than, or at least in addition to, dramatic ones. The breathtaking gongorist imagery of the “esmeralda bruta,” “el venenoso monte de la luna,” and “verla volar golfo de pluma;” the structural repetition of *ni* (“ni pompa más suma / ni dosel más excelso”); the hyperbaton of “en pardas ruinas convirtió caducas;” and just the sheer force of the quantity and quality of the words were dropped only to accommodate a modern, impatient audience. It is no coincidence that the list of suppressed features reads like a textbook introduction to poetic style of the period. In short, what we were leaving out were all those elements that responded to baroque aesthetics. In short, we intentionally cut the “baroqueness” out of the passage.

Ours was a university production, but the errors and omissions are not limited to non-professional theater. Let us turn to another example, one by a well-respected and successful modern, professional company, one that was extremely well received by

the audience at the Chamizal Theater in El Paso. Any cuts made here cannot be attributed only to amateurish decisions made in ignorance by people trying to placate a Texas audience. In selecting the example to go here, one could have picked at random just about any video in the collection of the Association for Hispanic Classical Theater; the cuts that are the target here are virtually universal. The scene in question is from Act II (1335-1486) of Francisco Portes's superb 1991 production of Moreto's *El lindo don Diego*. The entire passage is one speech by Inés: 150 lines of *romance*, with an assonant rhyme in e-a. Here she is trying to get Don Diego to turn his attentions elsewhere, one of the many comic scenes with potentially serious overtones found in the play. Of the original 150 lines, Portes has cut out 112, or just under three-fourths of the original speech. (It should be noted that this was not the most egregious cut made in this production. In Act III [2683-2793], Portes cut out 87 of 90 lines, inventing three more to replace those cut. So little remained of Moreto's text that it wasn't even worth reproducing the scene.) Here is the scene as performed, with the omitted text blocked off and in italics:

Señor don Diego, si el lustre	1335
de la sangre que os alienta	
a su misma obligación	
se sabe pagar la deuda,	
ninguna puede ser más	
que la que agora os empeña,	1340
pues una mujer se vale	
de vuestro amparo en su pena.	

*La dificultad está,
para que más os suspenda,
en que, siendo contra vos,
os pido a vos la defensa. 1345*
*Mas cuanto puedo deberos
os pago en querer atenta
que, si habéis de ser vencido,
vuestro el vencimiento sea. 1350*

Mi padre, señor don Diego,
a cuya voz tan sujeta
vivo, que por voluntad
tiene el alma mi obediencia,
trató la unión de los dos 1355
tan sin darme parte della
que de vos y del intento
al veros tuve dos nuevas.

*Casarme sin mí es injusto:
mas dejo aparte esta queja,
porque al blasón de obediente
tiene algún viso de opuesta. 1360*

La aversión o simpatía
con que apartan o acercan
las almas pende en el cielo 1365
de influjo de sus estrellas.

*Esta es más o menos grave,
según es más la violencia
de los astros que la influyen
la sangre en que se engendra;
de donde la inclinación 1370
no puede ser acción nuestra,
pues sin albedrío un alma
o se inclina o se desdeña.*

Siendo así, cuando yo os diga 1375
que mi inclinación no es vuestra,
no os ofendo en la razón,
aunque en el gusto os ofenda.

*Esto supuesto, señor,
no sólo eso el alma os niega, 1380
mas a pecho y mis ojos
hace horror vuestra presencia.
Desde el instante que os vi
discurrió un hielo en mis venas*

<i>a que no halla el alma amparo,</i>	1385
<i>más que el que de vos intenta.</i>	
<i>Y advertid que ya os declaro</i>	
<i>mi aversión con tal llaneza,</i>	
<i>porque antes he prevenido</i>	
<i>que la inclinación no es nuestra;</i>	1390
<i>y estoy a vuestro decoro</i>	
<i>y a vuestro amor tan atenta,</i>	
<i>que os di primero el escudo</i>	
<i>por no ofender con la flecha.</i>	
<i>Casarme con vos, don Diego,</i>	1395
<i>si queréis, ha de ser fuerza;</i>	
<i>pero sabed que mi mano,</i>	
<i>si os la doy, ha de ser muerta.</i>	
<i>De caballero y de amante</i>	
<i>faltáis, don Diego, a la deuda</i>	1400
<i>si, sabiendo mi despecho,</i>	
<i>vuestra mano me atropella.</i>	
<i>De caballero, porque,</i>	
<i>por gusto o por conveniencia,</i>	
<i>no hacéis precio de la vida</i>	1405
<i>de una mujer sin defensa;</i>	
<i>de amante, porque en tal caso</i>	
<i>corre el cariño perezas,</i>	
<i>y aquí, sin mi voluntad,</i>	
<i>queda agravada la vuestra.</i>	1410
<i>Vencer mi aborrecimiento</i>	
<i>mi desdén, si lo fuera</i>	
<i>con porfías y festejos,</i>	
<i>fuera garbosa fineza;</i>	
<i>pero valeros de un medio</i>	1415
<i>donde no está la violencia</i>	
<i>de parte de vuestro amor,</i>	
<i>sino de quien me sujeta,</i>	
<i>y arrastrarme sin vencerme,</i>	
<i>es acción tan descompuesta.,</i>	1420
<i>que aja la galantería,</i>	
<i>el amor y la nobleza.</i>	
<i>Luego en dejarme, aunque ahora</i>	
<i>mi sentimiento os lo ruega</i>	
<i>más garbo en vos que en mi alivio</i>	1425
<i>vuestro decoro interesa.</i>	

*Pero aunque destas razones
 pudiera bastar cualquiera,
 no quiero yo que esta acción
 hagáis por ninguna destas, 1430
 sino porque yo os lo pido
 que pues la acción es la mesma,
 no os quiero yo malograr
 el mejor fin que hay en ella.*

Vos don Diego habéis de hacer 1435
 a mi padre resistencia,
 y escoged vos en la causa
 la razón que más convenga.
 Aborrecedme, injuriadme,
 que yo os doy toda licencia 1440
 para tratar mi hermosura
 desde desgraciada a necia.

*Despreciadme vos a mí
 que yo os doy palabra cierta
 de tenéroslo por bien, 1445
 aunque sepa que es de veras.*

Esto os pido, y el secreto
 que requiere acción como ésta;
 pues por último remedio
 a vos mi dolor apela. 1450

*Haced cuenta que una dama
 a vencer otro os empeña,
 que es lance que no le puede
 excusar vuestra nobleza.
 Teneos vos para venceros 1455
 por otro en la competencia,
 y lograd, de vos mandado
 a vos vencido, la empresa.
 Que si por el gran contrario
 más la vitoria se precia, 1460
 vos no podéis escoger
 enemigo de más prendas.
 Sabed, don Diego, una acción
 que es por entrambos bien hecha:
 por mí, porque yo os lo pido; 1465
 por vos, porque en vos es deuda.
 Y advertid que yo a mi padre,
 por la ley de mi obediencia,*

para cualquiera precepto el «sí» ha de ser mi respuesta.	1470
Si vos no lo repugnáis yo no he de hacer resistencia, y si desedáis mi mano, desde luego será vuestra;	1475
pero mirad que os casáis con quien, cuando la violentan sólo se casa con vos	
por no tener resistencia. Y ahora vuestra hidalguía, el capricho, o la fineza,	1480
corte por donde quisiere, que, cuando pare en violencia, muriendo yo acaba todo, pero no vuestra indecencia,	1485
pues donde acaba mi vida vuestro desdoro comienza.	

Again, more than anything else, what has been omitted includes *conceptista* poetry (“siendo contra vos, / os pido a vos la defensa,” “casarme sin mí”), philosophical ruminations (“sin albedrío un alma o se inclina o se desdeña”), statements and explanations (Diego’s failings as both “caballero” and “amante,” and Inés’s subsequent *razonamientos* to support her decision), and, as a result, the sheer time spent listening to poetry, the flow of words, and the aesthetic effect of a long speech on an audience (not to mention the show of virtuosity on the part of the actress). The Baroque has again been sacrificed to the modern; poetry has given way to drama; aesthetics loses to practicality.

The point is not that modern directors (and audiences) have no right to tinker with old texts. Rather, the trouble is that it is the artistry that mod-

ern director's want to cut first. Practically nowhere can one see all the actions and all the words in all their baroque splendor in the original language, boring as they may be to mainstream twentieth-century sensibilities. The text may live to be performed another day, but *all* modern productions seem to approach the text from the same discursive perspective. Despite Miller's correct assertion that all art changes, the radical changes in performance as dictated by fashion do not occur with such universality in other media. In music, a Mozart piece might be adapted as the theme song for *Elvira Madigan*, but one can still listen to the original. There are smaller orchestras around that play older works to sound much as they did in the eighteenth century, although one can also appreciate the richer sound of the nineteenth-century orchestra applied to the same work. Sidney Berger, who admitted cutting plays, is still concerned that cuts be made most cautiously: "What is at risk, however, particularly in cutting, is the play itself" (Luere 46).

Why is drama so susceptible to these changes that preclude forever the possibility of appreciating a presentation of a full, original text? Let's face facts. An audience is an important part of the theatrical experience. As too many directors and producers know, if you put on a play that no one attends or that the audience dislikes, the result is not a happy event for anyone involved. But there is a real fear that some directors woefully underestimate their audiences. There is a tension between "high culture," the text to which we historically, academi-

cally, adhere, and popular culture, which sells tickets and is considered, in fact, to be more universally enjoyable. It is clear that directors believe that academics are snobs out of touch with popular culture. Lee Mitchell sneers at the thought of an authentic production that "would of course yield nothing but an historical curiosity" (xii). The *comedia* is not Shakespeare, however, much less Neil Simon. At least part of the audience for a modern performance of the *comedia* comes *precisely* out of "historical curiosity"; otherwise, why not just catch the latest film at the cineplex? Moreover, as was cited earlier, Mitchell is willing to cut text solely for the comfort of the spectator. But is that attitude not likewise snobbish? Mitchell believes that he knows better than the audience what will please them and what works. What ever happened to the notion that art was meant to challenge, to expand one's intellectual horizons? When the comfort of the audience takes precedence over the content of the work, then all we will have is a homogenized, bourgeois medium. Usually we call this network television.

Television is full of plots like those found in the *comedia*. I have frequently referred to the *comedia* as the television of its day as far as plot and character are concerned. So why go see an old play when one can see the plot at home for free? Because one is looking for a different aesthetic vision from a different culture and a different era. Not every audience wants to see plays cut to highlight only the plot. At least occasionally, some people would like to hear all the text, all the

rhythms, all the narratives, and all the images that together form a *comedia* text. In this regard the *comedia* today resembles opera more than theater. For the full experience one ought to be able to see a baroque aesthetic on stage in full glory. If music lovers are still able to hear old pieces performed by contemporary instruments in settings similar to those of the original performances, we theatergoers should have the possibility of attending, at least once or twice, productions whose success depends not just on plot and character but also on capturing the essence of the aesthetic experience of the original.

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**ENTRE LA ESPADA Y EL ESCENARIO: THE
PRESENCE, ABSENCE AND MANIPULATION
OF STAGE PROPERTIES IN LOPE'S *EL CA-
BALLERO DE OLMEDO*"**

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The study of the staging of props presents distinct challenges when compared to other elements of theatrical performance. While visual characterization, gestures and body movement are actor-mitigated, stage properties stand apart from the actors themselves. The prop is an inanimate object that functions differently in the world than it does on the stage. The appropriation and manipulation of the stage object through a particular *mise-en-scène* transforms it from the ordinary to the dramatic. As an actor handles, mishandles, manipulates or even destroys it, the prop develops multiple layers of meaning. Thus, the prop functions on two levels: it has both a meaning unto itself as an inanimate object as well as a meaning in context—a meaning which is altered or emphasized by the actor's use of that object. Both playwrights and directors may ac-

tively manipulate what Frances Teague calls the "dislocated function" of a stage property toward a specific dramatic end.¹ Nowhere is this more evident than in the staging of the props in Lope de Vega's *El caballero de Olmedo*.

As Frances Teague states, "Properties do not operate in performance as they do in a non-theatrical context" (17). Teague illustrates this point through Sergei Obraztsov's observation: "by means of a box of matches one can demonstrate everything, except a box of matches. One can show a box of matches but then it is only a matchbox."² That is to say, in the words of Teague, during a performance, "if an actor wishes to call a matchbox a gun, he may do so" (17). Although the property has a "dislocated function," it is not the same function that it has offstage.³

There are many stage properties in the *comedia* that may take on dislocated functions. For example, as John Varey illustrates in his famous article, "Staging Night Scenes in the *Comedia*," certain props, when accompanied by verbal and gestural clues, can be used to indicate time and place. Cloaks and lanterns, for example, are key indicators that the actors are outside at night.⁴ Similarly, furniture can serve as a key marker of an indoor scene, and thrones can be used to indicate Court scenes.⁵

Ruano de la Haza defines scenic props as "todo objeto o utensilio movable o portátil ... utilizado por los actores con una función dramática" (101). Indeed, there is ample evidence that Spanish theatrical companies carried with them many of the most commonly used props, and that larger companies

even had their own prop master. Ruano cites a document from the manuscript of the first part of *La fundadora de la Santa Concepción* by Blas Fernández de Mesa which declares: "Necesítase de las cosas siguientes, demás de las que resultan por el teatro general," and proceeds to enumerate a long list of props specific to the play. Among these we find, "Una carta cerrada que sirve Disparate en el segundo acto...Dos candeleros que llaman bujías de cámara...Dos hachas blancas...Un puñal desnudo sin filos y una llave de que usa la Reina" (103).

According to Ruano, personal props can serve a variety of purposes, which are functional, symbolic, comic or thematic. A functional prop serves to make the action more realistic, such as the use of a table and chair onstage to facilitate writing. A symbolic prop, like the sword of an *hidalgo*, the staff of an *alguacil*, or the leg irons of a prisoner, can represent a character's social or occupational status. A prop takes on thematic status when it embodies or helps to develop a theme, for example the staging of Desdemona's handkerchief helps to develop the theme of jealousy in Shakespeare's *Othello*.

Conflicts and suspense frequently arise in the *comedia* from what Barthes calls "informational polyphony," in which a single signifier has at the same time a variety of meanings according to different sign systems and referents (28).

Added to the inherent ambiguity of nonverbal sememes is the tendency of the characters to assume too readily that they understand what they perceive...This excessive

faith in one's ability to deduce the truth from the natural environment (the referents) is a common theme in late sixteenth and early seventeenth century literature...There is a certain fatal hubris demonstrated by those who claim to know the truth, and it almost always has unfortunate consequences. (31-32)

“Informational polyphony” leads to conflict and increases suspense when characters are led to act based on information the audience knows to be false. This manipulation of signs is ubiquitous in the *comedia* and is even commented on by Lope in the *Arte nuevo*:

El engañar con la verdad es cosa
que ha parecido bien (17)

In *El caballero de Olmedo*, this manipulation of the truth is carried out through the manipulation of props. Ribbons, letters and swords are cut, exchanged and wielded to facilitate the development of characterization, plot and theme. This essay will examine the staging of these three props and the process by which they communicate dramatic meaning.

I. El listón

The staging of Inés's shoelace beautifully illustrates the transformation of a mundane object, seemingly a functional prop, into a symbolic one. The ribbon serves as a token of Inés's love for

Alonso and creates conflict as Alonso's rival intercepts it and thus complicates the love triangle. It does not, however, function as a ribbon normally does—as a decorative means to fasten something. In fact, we never even see the ribbon tied to her shoe although we hear tell of it. In addition to the dislocation of its function on stage, the ribbon is also imbued with informational polyphony as Rodrigo and Fernando both invest in it their own desired meanings.

Inés ties the shoelace to the garden gate as a love token for Alonso. If Alonso loves Inés, he is to come to the garden gate that night and tie the ribbon to his hat. Rodrigo and Fernando arrive first, however, and argue over whom the ribbon was left for—Rodrigo by Inés, or for Fernando by Inés's sister Leonor. They decide, in the end, to cut the ribbon in two, and each wears a portion. Of course, neither of them is correct. The audience knows this in advance, having heard Inés's response to Alonso's letter. That knowledge creates a comic and pathetic situation as the two suitors argue over the meaning of the prominent scenic placement of the ribbon on the garden gate.

The ribbon itself is first referred to verbally rather than visually. In *cuadro* 1 of act I, Alonso tells of the first time he saw Inés at the fair in Medina. Although she comes disguised as a peasant girl, her costume belies her graceful nobility. In the classic manner of a courtly lover, Alonso describes Inés piece by piece, garment by garment. Her shoes are noteworthy:

No pensaron las chinelas
llevar de cuantos la miran
los ojos en los listones,
las almas en las virillas.
(v. 107-110, p. 33)

On one level, the ribbon serves as a shoelace—a functional prop. However, we are also aware that this peasant's sign is one that Inés appropriates in order to deceive. We know that Inés is not a peasant because Alonso follows her the next morning to mass and sees her transformation:

Creí mi esperanza, Fabia;
salió esta mañana a misa,
ya con galas de señora,
no labradora fingida.
(v. 135-138, p. 34)

The *listón* gains sentimental meaning for the couple since Inés was wearing the *listón* when she and Alonso first met. Alonso's love poem to Inés is based on the motif of her shoe. The sonnet is a declaration of love that concentrates its energy on a single object, the *chinela* tied with the *listón*, which is representative of Inés. The poem idealizes Inés's beauty, objectifying her by comparing her to a beautifully sculpted column. The ribbon, however, is the strongest and most repeated image.⁶ Alonso's poem compels Inés to offer the *listón* as a love token. But it is the unusual linguistic emphasis on the inanimate object that transforms the prop into a symbolic one—a sign of Inés's love for Alonso. It is this transformation that assures the ribbon a prominent place in the *mise-en-scène*.

When Inés offers this token she hands over a symbolic “key” to her heart/body. In her letter, she bestows it upon her beloved, but by leaving the “key” tied to the (locked) garden gate, she leaves it vulnerable to theft, and her heart/body vulnerable to an undesirable marriage/rape. While Inés materializes her love in a concrete object, she also conceals its meaning from others. This act transforms the ribbon into a thematic device. As the ribbon both conceals and reveals love, it represents one of the principal themes of the play: the conflict between love and honor. She loves Alonso, yet she must conceal this love in order to protect her own personal honor, as well as the honor of her father and her family. The prominent staging of the ribbon thematizes the shifting interpretation of signs and the power of language both to persuade, and to mislead. Rodrigo and Fernando hear what they want to hear, see what they want to see and believe what they want to be true.

II. *Las cartas*

Letters appear in innumerable plays of the Spanish Golden Age. As we saw above, the presence of letters is specifically mentioned in the prop list for *La fundadora de la Santa Concepción*. The papers begin as functional props, making the action more “realistic,” (Ruano de la Haza 105). However, Lope transforms these into symbols and thematic devices. Their reading, handling and manipulation is featured throughout the dramatic and performance texts, and their content reveals their dislocated func-

tion, setting time and place as well as developing plot and characterization. A close reading of the dramatic text reveals a carefully crafted emphasis on the presence, absence, manipulation and vulnerability of the written word, and supports the principal role of the staging of letters in the communication of the play's key thematic elements.

The principal exchange of letters in the play takes place, of course, between the lovers, Alonso and Inés. From the beginning, the letters are couched in secrecy. They are lied about, hidden and spirited to their recipients with the utmost discretion. The first letter in the play is delivered by Fabia who, in order to maintain Inés's honor, must lie in order to gain entrance to the house. Fabia allows Inés to rifle through her basket so that she may find the "secret" message, supposedly destined for another young lady. Fabia provides Inés with enough hints so that she may glean the true origin of the letter.

INÉS: Deja, madre...

FABIA: Hay en la villa
cierto galán bachiller
que quiere bien una dama;
prométeme una cadena
porque le dé yo, con pena
de su honor, recato y fama.
Aunque es para casamiento,
no me atrevo. Haz una cosa
por mí, doña Inés hermosa,
que es discreto pensamiento.
Respóndeme a este papel,
y diré que me la ha dado
su dama.

(v. 373-385, p. 42)

At this point, Inés retires to her room to compose a response. When she reenters the stage with the reply in hand, she is surprised to see that Rodrigo and Fernando have arrived for a visit. Leonor and Fabia take over, having already fabricated a second lie to explain Fabia's presence.

Salga doña INÉS con un papel en la mano. [LEONOR le habla a ella]

- LEONOR: Mira que aguarda
por la cuenta de la ropa,
Fabia.
- INÉS: Aquí la traigo, hermana.
Tomad, y haced que ese mozo
la lleve.
- FABIA: ¡Dichosa el agua
que ha de lavar, doña Inés,
las reliquias de la holanda
que tales cristales cubre!

[Finja que lee]

Seis camisas, diez toallas,
cuatro tablas de manteles,
dos cosidos de almohadas,
seis camisas del señor,
ocho sábanas. Mas basta;
que todo vendrá más limpio
que los ojos de la cara.
(v. 430-444, p. 44)

Each paper is transformed. Alonso's letter becomes "someone else's letter." Inés writes what is ostensibly "someone else's reply." That reply is then transformed into the "laundry list." These

transformations illustrate Lope's brilliant manipulation of the natural function of stage properties. Not only are the papers not what the *actors* say they are, they are not even what the *characters* say they are. Because both Alonso's letter and Inés's response are read/written offstage, the content of the letters remains temporarily secret even to the audience. Nevertheless, just as Inés understands the true origin of the letter delivered by Fabia, the audience gets the hint as well. The manipulation of the letter creates a sort of "metaproperty" in which the transformation and transmission of the message at once comment on the stage object's dislocated function as well as delineate the contrived construction of public honor and reputation within Spanish Baroque society.

This point takes the audience even further as these "metaproperties" not only delineate self-referential qualities but also help to articulate characterization. Fabia, for instance, demonstrates her guile through her ability to transform Inés's response into a laundry list on the spot. When Alonso and Inés allow their messages to be "misread," they demonstrate the quality of their true love. Leonor's familial loyalty is manifested in her defense of Fabia's presence and of Inés's response. Interestingly, none of the play's antagonists displays the capacity for such property transformation. On the contrary, the props transform Rodrigo and Fernando into cowards and fools. The misappropriation of Inés's ribbon (intended for Alonso) and the abandonment of Rodrigo's cape are both instances in

which stage properties actively delineate characterization.

Lope takes advantage of this dramatic technique again in act II, *cuadro* 3 in which Alonso's reply to Inés's letter is subject to a similar double-transformation. Tello arrives at Inés's house disguised as a poor university student to teach her Latin. The letter he brings from Alonso becomes part of Tello's disguise as Inés "reads" her lessons aloud.

INÉS: ¿No me ha escrito?

TELLO: Soy un necio.

Ésta, señora es la carta.

INÉS: Bésola de porte y leo.

Don PEDRO [habla dentro]

PEDRO: Pues por el coche, si está
malo el alazán.

Sale

[Tello habla] aparte a doña INÉS

TELLO: (¡Tu padre! Haz que lees, y yo
haré que latín te enseño.)

Dominus...

INÉS: *Dominus...*

TELLO: Diga.

INÉS: ¿Cómo más?

TELLO: *Dominus meus.*

INÉS: *Dominus meus.*

TELLO: Así,
poco a poco irá leyendo.

PEDRO: ¿Tan presto tomas lición?

INÉS: Tengo notable deseo.

(v. 622-634, p. 79)

Again we find a character, in this case Don Pedro, ready and willing to misinterpret the presence, not only of an object (the message), but also of the messengers, Tello and Fabia. He cannot believe Inés to be capable of such a ruse. The “informational polyphony” is comic in this case—Tello doesn’t know Latin any better than Inés does. Even if he did, Alonso’s love letter certainly doesn’t contain any. Their deception though, however comic and unbelievable, is accepted by Inés’s father because it is what he wants to believe. His acceptance of Tello’s staged reading reflects not only Don Pedro’s gullibility, but also the effectiveness of the ruse.

In an interesting contrast, Lope immediately follows this scene with another in which Don Alvaro de Luna, the Lord High Constable of King Juan II, reads to the King from several documents. For the first time in the play, there are papers that the recipient has no desire to read. The King reluctantly agrees to listen.

*Vanse. Sale el REY don Juan, con
acompañamiento, y el CONDESTABLE*

REY: No me traigáis al partir
negocios que despachar.
COND: Contienen sólo firmar;
no has de ocuparte en oír.
REY: Decid con mucha presteza.
(v. 665-669, p. 81)

This definitive break in unity of action and place is typical of Lope’s work. In the case of *El caballe-*

ro de Olmedo, the staging of the court scene serves several purposes. First, it is a clear marker of time, setting the action of the play during the reign of Juan II. Secondly, the King himself plays an important role in plot development and characterization. It is the King who brings legitimacy and stature to the Medina tournament, and it is the King who marks Alonso as being worthy of knighthood. As was common in the *comedia* (e.g. *Fuenteovejuna*), the King brings closure to the plot as he dispenses justice in the end, sentencing Rodrigo and Fernando to death.

However, Lope could have achieved these dramatic goals without involving the reading aloud of documents. The choice of this dramatic device not only reflects on the action and characters in the play, but also comments on the vulnerability of the written word. In previous scenes, Lope contrasts the purported content of the missives with their "actual" content; "laundry lists" and "Latin lessons" with love letters. He establishes a conflict structure which opposes characters with hidden agendas. Within this specific context of deception, Tello, Fabia and Inés in the above scene (act II, *cuadro* 3), act within a strategic performance of concealment. They have a specific need to communicate messages in the presence of those who must not listen to them. Act III, *cuadro* 4, in contrast, is the first moment in the play in which the audience must take the reader's word that he is honestly imparting the text of the documents. The Condestable does not read the documents word-for-word, rather he paraphrases the salient points.

COND: Éstas son dos provisiones,
y entrambas notables son.
REY: ¿Qué contienen?
COND: La razón
de diferencia que pones
entre los moros y hebreos
que en Castilla han de vivir.
(v. 685-690, p. 81-82)

Clearly, that cannot be the full content of the document. It must be full of legalese, provisions, details and subsections. Why are these left out of the reading? One could argue that he paraphrases because the documents are not present onstage. However, if the Condestable brings documents to the King for his signature he must certainly have the documents with him. Practicality is an issue. It is neither practical nor dramatic to read aloud the entire content of a royal decree in the middle of a suspenseful *comedia* plot. And yet this “reading,” coming directly on the heels of the other deceptive readings in the play, seems purposeful. The opposition between these two scenes establishes a contrast between contextual utterances. Fabia and Tello manipulate props in order to deceive while the Condestable does not. The Condestable, according to Covarrubias, was one of the most prestigious positions and one of the most powerful.⁷ The king may trust his *privado* precisely because he is his right hand. There is, therefore, no danger of misrepresentation of the written word in this context precisely because of the special bond between both figures of power. This purposeful contrast of the staging of these props, the letters

controlled by Fabia, and the documents held by the Condestable help at once to highlight the Celestinesque qualities of Fabia and to legitimize the authority of the king.

The absence of letters is also of significant importance to the plot and characterization in the play. While acts I and II are moved principally by the exchange and reading of letters, such props are noticeably absent from act III. Act III is developed primarily by means of the use of gesture and physicality in the scenes of the tournament and Alonso's murder. Alonso and Inés have a farewell scene, but no letters or tokens are exchanged and the garden gate physically separates them. Rodrigo, Fernando and Don Pedro never hold or send letters in the play. They do not participate in the reading or writing process and are thereby excluded from the circle of trust that includes Alonso, Inés, Leonor, Tello and Fabia.

Sometimes everyone wants to read the letters and sometimes no one does (as in the King's business, for example). The presence of letters as stage properties in the play demonstrates how functional props can become thematic, comic and symbolic. The letters articulate cultural contrasts between revealing and concealing, between the worlds of the public and private, between love and honor. Their stage manipulation provides some of the most comic and suspenseful moments in the play, and the letters serve as clear examples of the transformation of stage properties from functional objects into symbols. Most importantly, however, the written word *moves*; it has the power to gain access to pro-

tected or far-away places. This mobility is staged through the parallel deliveries of the King's decrees which are distributed throughout the realm, and the lovers' letters, clandestinely delivered through the social boundaries of honor.

III. *Las espadas*

Another important prop in *El caballero de Olmedo* that serves multiple dramatic functions is the sword. In *El caballero de Olmedo*, Lope makes maximum use of the symbolic value of the sword, capitalizing on its cultural importance to Spanish Baroque society, and manipulating its traditional use to highlight characterization and thematic development. Since the 12th century's epithets of El Cid ("el que en buena hora çinxó espada"), the sword in Spain has invoked the valor, faith and honor of the knights of the Reconquest. Spain, in fact, became one of the world's finest producers of the weapon, with the city of Toledo recognized as a major European center of swordmaking. Covarrubias even claims that the sword in Roman times was "*arma peculiar de los españoles y assí le llaman gladius hispaniensis*" (549). The sword is the classic symbol of the *caballero*. It is a visual sign of class status, separating the nobility from the church and peasantry. Covarrubias writes that the sword is "*La común arma de que se usa, y los hombres la traen de ordinario ceñida, para defensa y para ornato y demostración de que lo son*" (549). The right to wear it and the accompanying responsibilities were earned, frequently, upon a man's commission

to one of the four Spanish military orders. As a result, the sword came to serve as an immediate visual distinction of a particular class. The Comendador in Lope's *Fuenteovejuna*, insulted upon his arrival by the absence of the young Maestre de Calatrava, remarks:

La obligación de la espada
que se ciñó, el mismo día
que la cruz de Calatrava
le cubrió el pecho, bastaba
para aprender cortesía. (act I, *cuadro* 1, v. 32-36)

The cultural importance placed on the sword is the frequent subject of commentary in Golden Age literature. The *escudero* in *Lazarillo de Tormes*, for example, uses his cape and sword to maintain the appearance of an honorable hidalgo of "clean blood." He dresses slowly and with care, obsessively admiring his sword, knowing that it is the only evidence of his respectability.

—¡Oh, si supieses, mozo, qué pieza es ésta! No hay marco de oro en el mundo por que yo la di-ese; más así, ninguna de cuantas Antonio hizo, no acertó a ponelle los aceros tan prestos como ésta los tiene.
Y sacóla de la vaina y tentóla con los dedos, diciendo:
—Vesla aquí. Yo me obligo con ella a cercenar un copo de lana. (136)⁸

For the *escudero*, the sword is a visual sign—the only thing he has that identifies him as a respectable *hidalgo*. In fact, it is the very thing that

belies his poverty and hunger. Lazarillo himself recognizes the advantages of such posturing and eventually dons the same costume himself, instantaneously lifting himself out of the lower class.

Fueme tan bien en el oficio, que al cabo de cuatro años que lo usé...ahorré para me vestir muy honradamente de la ropa vieja. De la cual compré un jubón de fustán viejo y un sayo raído...y una capa...y una espada de las viejas primeras de Cuéllar. Desde me vi en hábito de hombre de bien, dije a mi amo se tomase su asno, que no quería más seguir aquel oficio. (171)

Don Quixote takes special care of his sword "*que había sido de sus bisabuelos*" (I, 1) as he sallies forth as a knight errant. In chapter XLV of the first part of the novel, Don Quixote maintains that the knight errant is "*esento de todo judicial fuero*" and that for him "*su ley es la espada.*" His behavior, although portrayed in parodic terms, demonstrates the chivalric ideal symbolized by the weapon itself: the cross-shaped sword to be used against the infidel in defense of God and Christ. This representation of the sword reflects Covarrubias's impression that the sword was a "*símbolo de la justicia y de la potestad*" (549), an idea which can be confirmed easily through a brief review of the appearance of swords in the *comedia*.

In Tirso's *La república al revés*, for example, upon Constantino's coronation as Emperor of Greece, his mother gives him three symbolic gifts: a crown, a globe and a sword. Foreshadowing his failure as a ruler, he immediately falls, the globe

and crown crash to the floor and the sword breaks. By the end of act I, the Emperor and his servant have both fallen in love with the chambermaid, Lidora. The Emperor falsely accuses his intended, princess Carola, of striking Lidora and imprisons her. Carola remarks that this is a "*república al revés*" where servants rule their masters and the innocent are punished. The three gifts in this play serve clear dislocated functions. The falling of the crown, a traditional synechdochal symbol of rule and authority, and the globe, a miniature representation of Constantino's territory, transforms the props into visual signifiers of the weakness of the Empire. Constantino's broken sword reflects his miscarriage of justice and impotence as a ruler.

In Tirso's *La prudencia en la mujer* the Queen Doña María, who has installed her three-year-old son as king, staves off a challenge for the throne. The Queen mercifully pardons the traitors and frees them after they swear allegiance to her. In the final scene of act I, the Queen, her power now firmly established, appears seated on her throne wearing a breastplate and holding an unsheathed sword—again reflecting the weapon's symbolic representation of justice, power and masculinity.

The dislocated function of the sword in *El caballero de Olmedo* serves first and foremost to identify the noblemen in the play. Lope builds on this convention of *capa y espada* plays, but takes things to a new level by manipulating not only the onstage presence, but also the absence of swords to create theatrical meaning. Interestingly, the only explicit stage direction indicating the onstage presence of

their previous meeting, Rodrigo assumes a threatening posture with his hand placed on the hilt of his sword, "*puesta la mano en la espada*," ready to draw.¹⁰ He does not draw, however, but rather retreats again. Throughout the course of the play, Rodrigo repeatedly fails to use his sword. At the garden gate, Alonso overtly challenges him. Tello later tells of the outright insults he directs at Rodrigo receiving no response other than a threatening gesture. Furthermore, in the tournament scene in act III, Rodrigo's poor swordsmanship becomes a humiliating public display of his cowardice and impotence in battle.

Lope deftly contrasts the absence of Rodrigo's sword with the presence of Alonso's. Alonso, when necessary, challenges foes both human (in Rodrigo) and supernatural (in the *Sombra*). While the simple wearing of a sword provides a powerful mechanism for the visual identification of the *caballero*, the Comendador in Lope's *Fuenteovejuna* articulates the idea that a true *caballero* does not merely bear arms, but rather has shown that he knows how to use them.

Sacad esa blanca espada;
que habéis de hacer, peleando,
tan roja como la Cruz;
porque no podré llamaros
Maestre de la cruz roja
que tenéis al pecho, en tanto
que tenéis la blanca espada;
que una al pecho y otra al lado,
entreambas han de ser rojas.

(v. 126-134)

Lope's clever wordplay uses the term "*blanca espada*," or broadsword, to contrast an unused sword with both the *cruz roja*, the red cross of the order of Calatrava and the color and shape of a bloodied battle sword. Interestingly, this passage also denotes the distinct difference between the soldier's *espada blanca* and the *hidalgo*'s *espada de punta*. José María Campoamor describes these differences in his discussion of the sword of Don Quixote. The *espada de punta*, or rapier, was a dueling sword:

...hoja larga y muy flexible, muy estrecha, de dos o cuatro "mesas", con guarnición generalmente de cazoleta, honda como <<huevera>> o posterior; en suma la espada de que escriben Lope y Calde-rón y de que vemos en los retratos de Murillo o de Carreño de Miranda. (113)

Campoamor explains that the *espada blanca* was a true battle sword, a *cortadora*, broad with either a single or double blade, suitable for inflicting such wounds as el vizcaíno Don Sancho de Azpeitia on Don Quixote, taking off "gran parte de la celada, con la mitad de la oreja." Campoamor notes that such an injury would be "absolutamente de toda imposibilidad imposible con espadas de punta" (114).

In his treatise on European swords, Anthony North explains the increasing use of the "rapier" beginning in the sixteenth century.

First, public combat in the lists was replaced by dueling in private; this led directly to the devel-

opment of fencing which in turn affected the design of swords. Secondly, the tendency throughout the 15th century was for swords to be made lighter. As they had become an essential adjunct of civilian dress, they were consequently much more decorative. Thus the invention of the rapier—the civilian sword *par excellence* worn from the 1530s to the 18th century. The rapier was probably first developed in Spain, for early literary references describe the rapier as ‘a Spanish sword.’ The word ‘rapier’ probably derives from the Spanish term *espada ropera*—meaning a costume sword. The earliest rapiers of about 1530 had long two-edged blades which could be used for cutting and thrusting, short grips, and a guard formed of interlinked rings and bars. (8-9)

Which type of sword, then, would we have seen in *El caballero de Olmedo*? Although Campoamor claims that it is only the *espada de punta* that appeared in Baroque theater, Lope clearly understood and used both sword types in his plays. As we have already seen, the Comendador in *Fuenteovejuna* appropriately distinguishes the *espada blanca* as the weapon of battle: “Sacad esa blanca espada, que habéis de hacer, peleando, tan roja como la cruz” (v. 126-128). Obviously, the context of *Fuenteovejuna* is one of violent rebellion and therefore the staging of broadswords would be appropriate.

Upon closer examination of the Spanish rapier, however, fatal injury from its skillful manipulation does not seem so far-fetched as Campoamor imagines. The sword shown in Figure 1 is an excellent example of the size, quality and longevity of the Spanish rapier. This piece, housed in the West Point

Museum at the United States Military Academy, dates to circa 1650.

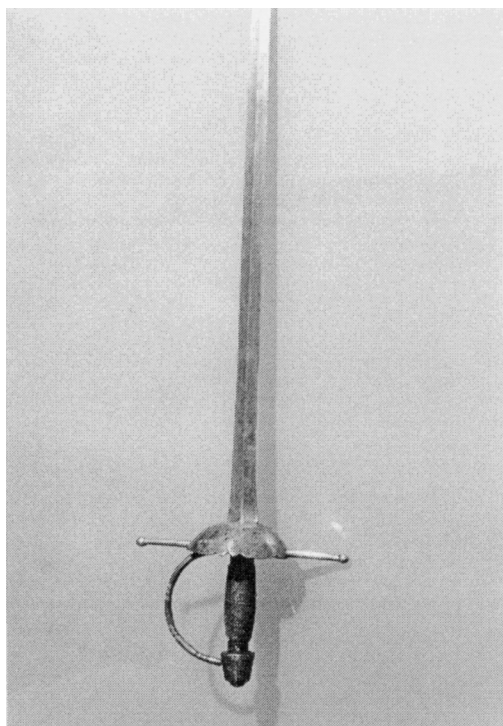


Figure 1: Spanish rapier, c. 1650, West Point Museum (gift of Mrs. W.R. Whitehead)

With a 32 ½ inch-long steel blade, 1¼ inches wide at the hilt, this sword is far from the “ridículo juguete” that Campoamor describes (113).¹¹ While smaller than the Museum’s Spanish broadsword in Figure 2 (which measures 35 inches long and 1 ½ inches wide at the hilt, c. 1650), the rapier is certainly a deadly weapon.

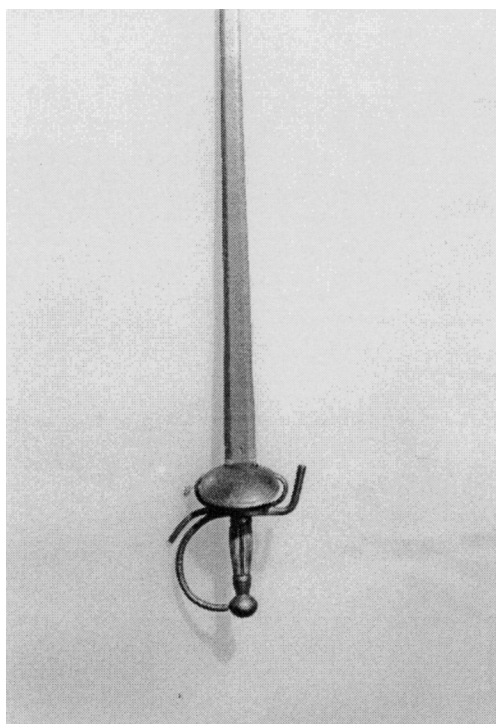


Figure 2: Spanish broadsword, c. 1650, West Point Museum (gift of K.L. Parker)

As in *Fuenteovejuna*, Lope has chosen for the subject of *El caballero de Olmedo* an “historical” event; one that takes place at a specific moment in Spanish history. *Fuenteovejuna* takes place during the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella (1474-1516), while *El caballero de Olmedo* takes place even earlier during the reign of Juan II (1406-1454). Did the 17th century staging attempt to reflect the historical moment through the reconstruction of such “accu-

rate" details as historical weaponry? If we consider Anthony North's above assertion, that private dueling fueled the invention of the rapier in 1530, then the prominent use of dueling as a plot-moving and thematic device that we see in *El caballero de Olmedo* (and in countless *comedias de capa y espada*) is a good clue that rapiers were used onstage in its first productions. If true, the appearance of rapiers in *El caballero de Olmedo* demonstrates that Lope took liberties with historical material, tending to privilege dramatic effect over historical accuracy.

Although the Council of Trent denounced the custom of dueling, the tradition was nevertheless tolerated.¹² It was traditionally believed that the outcome of a duel would reveal the righteous party, with God as judge. In spite of the fact that this belief was coming into question, the duel remained one of the few means of defending one's honor. In *El caballero de Olmedo* Lope develops the theme of honor through the prominent presence of swords as stage properties. Three times in the play Rodrigo fails to duel. At the garden gate he runs. In the tournament he is gored. Finally, in the denouement of act III, he draws his sword and begins to fight ("Riñan") but then declines, stating:

Yo vengo a matar, no vengo
a desafíos; que entonces
te matára cuerpo a cuerpo.

(v. 644-646, p. 110)

Rodrigo then orders Alonso shot in the back. Rodrigo's failure to use his sword in an honorable and

socially acceptable way demonstrates his cowardice and lack of honor.

At the end of the play, Tello's grief-stricken cry invokes the sword:

¡...pues habéis, infames, muerto
el más noble, el más valiente,
el más noble caballero
que ciñó espada en Castilla!
(v. 682-685, p. 111)

In contrast to Rodrigo's cowardice, this epithetic allusion to the *Cantar de mio Cid* elevates Alonso even above the great Cid himself in nobility and valor. Since A.A. Parker's famous essay, "Aproximación al drama español del Siglo de Oro," there has been a running debate over whether Alonso's death is poetic justice or preordained destiny. The staging of swords and swordplay in *El caballero de Olmedo* counters Parker's view that Alonso deserves to die. Lope establishes a binary opposition between protagonist and antagonist in part through their respective prowess with the blade. Alonso dies not by the sword, but by a cowardly sniper's bullet.

IV. Conclusion

El caballero de Olmedo provides a rich context for the study of the staging, use and manipulation of props in Golden Age theater because many of the props in the play are crucial to characterization and/or serve symbolic or synechdochal functions. Inés's shoe ribbon, the exchange of letters and

Alonso's sword are all visual, concrete representations of a character, social status or personal quality. Some of these props, the sword for example, are indelible elements of Spanish Golden Age culture. Others, like the ribbon, are both common literary *leit-motifs* and plot-specific symbols. Unlike Blas Fernández's *La fundadora de la Santa Concepción*, Lope's *El caballero de Olmedo* does not provide us with a detailed list of stage properties. Nevertheless, it is clear that props were common elements of *comedia* staging, and that Lope took fully developed their layers of meaning in his plays, manipulating props in conflicts of misinterpretation and mistaken identity and exploiting their informational polyphony.

NOTES

¹ Frances Teague, *Shakespeare's Speaking Properties* (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 1991).

² Quoted in Teague (17).

³ The term "dislocated function" describes the disparity between the "real world" function of an object and the dramatic function of the object onstage. Therefore, even though the ribbon was a common *leitmotif* used to signify love in Golden Age literature, this term should not be used in a comparison of that object's *literary* function versus its dramatic function.

⁴ See Varey, "The Staging of Night Scenes in the 'Comedia'." *The American Hispanist* 2.15 (1977).

⁵ See, J.M. Ruano de la Haza, *La puesta en escena en los teatros comerciales del Siglo de Oro* (Madrid: Editorial Castalia, 2000), p. 169.

⁶ The word *chinela* occupies two of the strongest positions in the sonnet structure: in the first hemistich of both the second

quartet and the first tercet. This asyndeton emphasizes the object's importance and is supported by other more oblique references with the words *basa*, *mina* and *pies*. Even more importantly, the *chinela* is opposed by *ojos*, ordinarily the "window to the soul" and considered to be the body part which most inspires and communicates love. In this case, however, the shoe is *victoriosa*, inciting the eyes' jealousy.

Yo vi la más hermosa labradora,
 en la famosa feria de Medina,
 que ha visto el sol adonde más se inclina
 desde la risa de la blanca aurora.
 Una chinela de color, que dora
 de una columna hermosa y cristalina
 la breve basa, fue la ardiente mina
 que vuela el alma a la región que adora.
 Que una chinela fue victoriosa,
 siendo los ojos del amor enojos,
 confesé por hazaña milagrosa.
 Pero díjele dando los despojos:
 'Si matas con los pies,
 Inés hermosa, ¿qué dejas para el fuego de tus ojos?'

(v. 503-516, p. 46)

⁷ Covarrubias's definition states, "*Dignidad militar grande...En Francia, el condestable tiene en las cosas de la guerra la primera potestad y autoridad, después del rey....Tiene mucha semejança esta dignidad en tiempo de paz con la del mayordomo mayor en la casa Real de Castilla*" (347).

⁸ Quotations are from *La vida de Lazarillo de Tormes y de sus fortunas y adversidades*, ed. Alberto Blecuá (Madrid: Castalia, 1989).

⁹ Tello tries in vain to provoke Rodrigo ("¡Cierra!") immediately before Rodrigo's retreat. There is no stage direction, "*Riñan*" as there is in act III.

¹⁰ Covarrubias identifies this posture as the "primer movimiento de la quistión," or duel (549).

¹¹ Campoamor's argument deteriorates even further if we keep in mind that Don Quixote's helmet was very fragile. It seems

that either rapier or broadsword would do the trick. The first time Don Quixote tests its protective qualities, the *celada* fails miserably: "sacó su espada y le dió dos golpes, y con el primero y en un punto deshizo lo que había hecho en una semana." See Miguel de Cervantes, *El ingenioso hidalgo don Quixote de la Mancha*, ed. Juan Bautista Avallé-Arce, 2 vols., vol. 1, *Alhambra Clásicos* (Madrid: Editorial Alhambra, 1988), p. 80.

¹² See Henry W. Sullivan, *Tirso de Molina and the Drama of the Counterreformation* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1976).

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META-IMITATION IN THE *COMEDIA*: *DON GIL DE LAS CALZAS VERDES*

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The dramatic devices contained in the written text of a play come to life during its performance, and the principal function of these devices becomes explicitly apparent as well. That is, the dramatic devices help to create and then sustain a direct channel of communication between the actor and spectator. For example, when Segismundo delivers one of his soliloquies in a performance of *La vida es sueño*, the actor portraying him can actually turn and address the audience directly. The range of dramatic devices is extensive, from brief asides to lengthy monologues, but this essay will be limited to a single variation (meta-imitation) of one device (metatheater). Before examining the use of meta-imitation in Tirso's *Don Gil de las calzas verdes*, the concept of metatheater will be clarified and meta-imitation, as a distinct variation of metatheater, will be defined.

The prefix 'meta' means within, about, or among, and it also refers to change or transformation.

Therefore, in its most basic interpretation, metatheater is a play within a play. In essence, a character can change identities or simply take on an additional role, or new characters can also enter, and then they participate in a performance within the play itself. That performance can be another play, a skit, or a scene, or virtually any event which the other characters attend, such as a concert or even a trial. The metatheatrical situation can be explicit, in that the other characters attend the performance as spectators, or it can be more elusive, such as when a character slowly develops a new dramatic dimension. The subtle metatheatrical variations include situations such as multiple and mistaken identities and cross dressing. In all its variations, metatheater creates multiple levels of situations where dramatic reality and dramatic illusions are dissolved into one entity. The quintessential example of a literal play within a play is Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, Act 3, Scene 2. Hamlet has invited a group of actors to the palace to perform a play in which the King is poisoned and the Queen is in love with the murderer. This metaplay is a rendering of events that took place before the dramatic action opened. The violent reaction to the metaplay on the part of Claudius proves his guilt to Hamlet, and Hamlet vows revenge. The dispensing of background information to spectators (and other characters) and exposing a character's secret thoughts or emotions are two of the numerous functions of metatheater. Metatheater can also be used to heighten or relieve dramatic tension and to advance or complicate the plot. Metatheatrical events create a complex structure of language, discourse, and action. In many cases, metatheater activates and encourages communication

between the spectator and the actor, such as when only the audience knows that a character has changed identities. Having this privileged information forms a bond between the actor and spectators, thereby allowing the spectators to feel they are participating in the play.

Lionel Abel published his seminal study *Metatheatre: A New View of Dramatic Form*, in 1963, and his work offered a significant source for the application of metatheatrical theory to *comedia* studies. He examines dramatic works ranging from the classic Greek tragedies to contemporary theater, as well as plays by both Shakespeare and Calderón. The plays that Abel analyzes are all “theatre pieces about life seen as already theatricalized. By this I mean that the persons appearing on the stage in these plays are there not simply because they were caught by the playwright in dramatic postures as a camera might catch them, but because they themselves knew they were dramatic before the playwright took note of them” (60). Many critics have used Abel’s theories to analyze Spanish baroque drama. For example, Wardropper finds that Abel’s basic theories about metatheater are well-formulated, and in “La imaginación en el metateatro calderoniano,” he agrees: “El metateatro es precisamente esta «imaginación interior» de los personajes deshonrados. Al crearse un papel dramático distinto del que les dio el dramaturgo, ellos nos hacen patente—dentro de la imaginación calderoniana—la fuerza imaginativa de sus vidas *cuasi* autónomas” (629). Truly, when a character changes roles halfway through a play, the audience (temporarily caught up in the world of illusion) might be led to believe that it was the character’s own imagination that provoked the

change, not the playwright's. In "Nuevamente la cuestión del metateatro: *La cisma de Inglaterra*," Alejandro Paredes appropriates Abel's metatheatrical theory for his analysis, concluding that Calderón "escribió metateatro dándose cuenta de ello y enteramente con el propósito de presentar en su teatro un arte que a la vez de ser estéticamente elaborado debía de contener temas de interés extrateatral" (547). Many critics have spoken of metatheater comprehensively but have not focused on the many variations of metatheater that can take place in one play.

Meta-imitation is a specific form of metatheater. It occurs when a character attempts to mimic another character precisely, but that other character is him- or herself already an imitation. A more frequent manifestation of meta-imitation is when one character adapts a new identity, and while in that role, takes on yet another identity. In short, meta-imitation is an imitation within an imitation. There are several ways in which a meta-imitational circumstance can develop. First, multiple identities: when a character assumes a new identity, or creates multiple subject positions for himself, the metatheatrical category is role-playing. If that character takes on a subsequent role in the play, or simply changes identities yet again, that is meta-imitation. Cross dressing is a similar metatheatrical situation: the character who changes gender through clothing, speech, and gestures assumes an additional subject position. If that character changes identity again, that would be a case of meta-imitation. Once a character has changed identities, if another character imitates that "new" character, it is a meta-imitational circumstance. In *Don Gil de las calzas*

verdes, the numerous cases of multiple and mistaken identity, double and triple role-playing, cross dressing, and reverse cross dressing, will all be analyzed under the rubric of meta-imitation. The implications that these meta-imitational scenes have on the spectator and the other characters will also be examined. Finally, I will demonstrate that meta-imitation is the dramatic device that ultimately constructs the framework of *Don Gil de las calzas verdes*, complicates the plot, and allows the glass (or fourth) wall between the characters and spectators to be shattered.

As this is a highly complex *comedia de enredo*, a brief summary follows. Doña Juana has been seduced by Don Martín, but he abandons her for doña Inés, a wealthy young lass in Madrid. He plans to use a false name to keep Juana off his trail, but she pursues Martín. Juana realizes that she must dissuade Inés from falling for Martín, so she goes to Madrid dressed as a Don Gil de las Calzas Verdes and proceeds to charm both Inés and her cousin Clara. Martín arrives, calling himself Don Gil de Albornoz, and finds out that he has a rival for Inés's affections. The tables have been turned on Martín, and furthermore, Juana is playing with his mind. She sends word to him that she is pregnant, in a convent, and on the verge of death. She is trying to make him feel guilty and keep him off her trail in Madrid. Meanwhile, Clara and Inés are in love with Don Gil de las Calzas Verdes and abandon their former flames. Don Gil de las Calzas Verdes makes a marriage promise to Clara, but then he declares his love for Doña Elvira. Juana subsequently adopts the identity of Elvira, to maintain her ruse. Clara becomes jealous and disguises herself as

Don Gil de las Calzas Verdes. Shortly thereafter, Don Juan, Inés's original suitor, dresses up as another Don Gil de las Calzas Verdes, in an attempt to regain Inés's love. Therefore, there are no less than four Don Giles running around the stage at various intervals, but not one is a real Don Gil. During the climactic scene, all four Giles are on stage together. Juana's father enters and she confesses to the entire scheme, knowing that Martín will be relieved to know that she is alive and will hence marry her.

In order to arrive at that supposedly joyful conclusion, the intricate spider web of plots and subplots must be carefully woven. On the simplest level of metatheater in the play, Martín sets out for Madrid disguised as another man, calling himself Don Gil de Albornoz. This is the first case of multiple identities in *Don Gil de las calzas verdes*. For a man to disguise himself as another man appears at first to be an easier and more successful way to change identity than to cross dress. Martín already owns the typical clothing that a male would wear. He already knows inherently how to talk like a man, and how to use the gestures and body language of the typical male. (However, we will see below that this task—adopting another identity of one's own gender—may not necessarily be a more successful hiding device than cross dressing.) Martín's desire to create another role for himself can be interpreted in two ways: first, Martín is a coward and cannot face Juana and tell her the truth, that he is abandoning her. Second, Martín is a shrewd scoundrel who is trying to get away with everything that he can, a la Don Juan Tenorio, as Matthew Stroud suggests (165). In terms of the personality

shifts in Martín, Margaret Wilson refers to the comic aspect of his situation: "The transformation of Martín from a cocksure, fortune-seeking young man into a nervous wreck in terror of the supernatural is one of the funniest things in the play" (50).

At the same time, Juana has set out for Madrid, in pursuit of her former lover. As

David Darst points out in *The Comic Art of Tirso de Molina*, there is "a highly structured contrapuntal disposition of male to female that continues in alternating rhythm throughout the play, with Juana, as in the opening scene, always one step ahead of her antagonist" (71). Martín seduced and abandoned Juana, she has lost her honor, but she does not want to enter a convent. Instead, she will win him back, at any cost. Juana's sad story is the first attempt to pull the spectators into the play. Theoretically, Emilio Orozco Díaz's approach can be applied to this situation: "Aunque resulte paradójico, cuanto más profunda sea la interiorización psicológica del personaje y más recóndito su sentir, tanto mayor será la fuerza y mucho más abultados los medios expresivos con que se exteriorice. Era necesario conmover sensorialmente hasta penetrar en lo más íntimo del alma del espectador y hacerle participar del conflicto que vive el personaje" (154). When Juana pulls her extreme stunts, the spectators will cheer her on more heartily.

In order to proceed with her plan to win back Martín, Juana dresses up as Don Gil de las Calzas Verdes. This is the first instance of meta-imitation in the play: her Don Gil is an imitation of Martín's Don Gil, and hence, it is literally an imitation of an imitation. Juana has chosen to disguise herself as a man for

many reasons. First, simply to have the freedom to roam about the country in her society, Juana must pretend to be a man. Second, she cannot be discovered by Don Martín, so she thinks that changing genders is the safest way to hide. Juana is right: cross dressing is the better way to conceal one's true identity rather than simply adopting another identity of one's same gender. It is more difficult to cross dress, in that one has to procure the other gender's clothing, adopt the typical speech and gestures, and temporarily add or hide parts of the body, but other people are accustomed to seeing an individual as a man or woman, so pretending to be the other gender may deceive others more quickly and completely. Additionally, as Stroud points out, "There are two reasons why other characters, both men and women, seem not to know that Juana dressed up as Gil is a woman in disguise...: the fluid nature of feminine sexual identity in general, and the importance of *engaño a los ojos*... The enormous fluidity of identity and sexuality demonstrated by Juana complements the others' inability to distinguish between appearance and reality" (166-67). The characters' difficulty with reality versus illusion parallels the spectators' enigma of demarcating the boundary between drama and metadrama (not to mention the boundary of the spectators' reality). The intersection of the characters' reality with the spectators' drama is where direct communication occurs, where dramatic puzzles can be solved. In *Don Gil*, the spectators and the servant Quintana are the only people who know who Juana really is, and they in effect become her accomplices.

Doña Juana must be further analyzed from sev-

eral perspectives, in terms of imitation and the audience. The play opens with a scene between Juana and Quintana, and she is dressed as a man, all in green. As the dialogue unfolds, Quintana addresses her once as Juana, and that is the only indicator that "he" is actually a she. Here, one notes the importance of the acting, as Constantin Stanislavski theorizes: "If actors really mean to hold the attention of a large audience they must make every effort to maintain an uninterrupted exchange of feelings, thoughts and actions among themselves. And the inner material for this exchange should be sufficiently interesting to hold spectators" (*An Actor Prepares*, 214). The actors must make an effort to communicate with the spectators, but likewise, the spectators must be willing participants. In this case, they must pay close attention because if they do not hear the name Juana, they may not realize that the character dressed in green is actually a woman. (Luckily for readers, they can always turn the pages back in the written text.) As Browning and Minelli point out, "Role-playing is the means by which Juana can actualize her new self. The masculine garb is a visual dramatization of her need to take action, traditionally a masculine characteristic" (48). This double identity is rather simple: she is playing the role of a man in order to achieve her goal, winning back her man. What begins the labyrinthine confusion about this identity is the fact that she calls herself Don Gil, the same name that Martín has adopted for his new identity. Juana is successful as a man: her Don Gil now has two women after him, but she realizes that her job is not done. She must totally eradicate the

other Don Gil—that is, her Martín—from doña Inés's mind. Thus, we will have an exquisite example of reverse cross dressing, which provides another instance of meta-imitation: from within her first imitation, Juana will morph into yet another identity.

As Don Gil de las Calzas Verdes, Juana disguises herself as a doña Elvira. Elvira lamentably tells Inés the sad story about a Don Miguel with whom she had a love affair and by whom she was abandoned. She tells Inés that Miguel is in Madrid, going by the name of Don Gil de Albornoz, and that he was sent by the father of Don Martín, who is already engaged to a doña Juana. The irony is that Juana is not lying! Juana-Gil-Elvira truly had been engaged to Martín-Gil-Miguel. The identity of Miguel that Juana creates for Martín is yet another example of meta-imitation in the play, but it is different from the other examples in that this is an identity that is forcefully imposed by one character onto another. Although Martín never acts under that identity, the mere mentioning of another identity for him serves to confound the spectators even more, and of course it underscores the importance of imitation in the play. As the plots thicken, the spectators must focus more sharply on the play in order to follow the twists, and therefore they become more involved in the entire experience. The alert spectator realizes that they are the only people who know each character's true and subsequent identities. Ignacio Arellano describes Juana's actions quite accurately:

Los niveles de la invención y los desvíos en el laberinto total se multiplican. Obligada por sus propias invenciones a llevar adelante numerosos hilos del engaño, doña

Juana alcanzará en algunas escenas una maestría en su metamorfismo proteico difícilmente igualable: ... doña Juana encarna con alternancias inmediatas a sí misma (cuando habla con Quintana), a doña Elvira (cuando habla con Inés), a don Gil de las calzas verdes (cuando habla con Clara)... la superposición de máscaras y el recital de habilidades teatrales de doña Juana no pueden ir más allá. (382)

Upon seeing a performance of *Don Gil de las calzas verdes* for the first time, it is extremely difficult to follow, even if one just tries to focus on doña Juana and Don Martín. While remaining in his gender, he arrogates an additional identity and he takes up the name Don Gil. Juana, on the other hand, changes gender, uses the same name (Don Gil), and then reverse cross dresses, becoming a woman again, but adopting the new identity of doña Elvira. If that is not complex enough, of course there is more! Don Gil is the greatest non-character of the Spanish baroque *comedia*, and that is precisely why imitation appears immediately and exists on several levels. Under the *dramatis personae* listed on the program, or on the written text, there is no Don Gil: he does not exist as a concrete character himself, but is created by the others. Up to this moment, two different Don Giles have been analyzed. To entangle the spectator even more, two more Don Giles de las Calzas Verdes appear on stage. Clara is in love with the original Don Gil (Juana), and in order to protect her interests, she imitates "him," thus an instance of meta-imitation. She pretends to be Don Gil de las Calzas Verdes so that other women are attracted to this version of "him," not to her Don Gil, the supposed real Don Gil de las Calzas Verdes. The irony of course is that Clara fell in

love with a cross-dressed character, but she does not know it. Now she is hoping to make other women fall in love with a cross-dressed character herself. The layers of imitation and dramatic irony will continue to accumulate, and only the spectators are privy to the truth, which draws them further into the play. The audience soon witnesses another case of meta-imitation. Don Juan is happily in love with doña Inés, but Don Gil de las Calzas Verdes appears and, like her cousin Clara, she falls in love with "him." Inés rejects Juan, and living up to his namesake, Don Juan is jealous and will stop at nothing to get his woman, so he dresses up as Don Gil de las Calzas Verdes in yet another circumstance of meta-imitation. The irony of course is that he is the only true male Don Gil de las Calzas Verdes, which the alert spectators will appreciate with a chuckle.

One of the final scenes of *Don Gil de las calzas verdes* is extremely complex. One by one, all four of the Don Giles appear on stage, including Don Martín's Don Gil de Albornoz. To confuse the matter even more, he is now wearing green breeches, so that by appearance, he seems to be Don Gil de las Calzas Verdes. Inés is completely befuddled because Juan (as Gil) had just appeared at her balcony, and here is another Don Gil de unas calzas verdes. Unless the spectators have been very astute and not become lost in the labyrinth of Giles, they may join Inés in questioning who is imitating whom. In his introduction to *Don Gil*, Zamora Vicente observes:

Nadie allí sabe quién es quién. Podríamos pensar que incluso los personajes disfrazados son almas divididas entre su propio yo y el ente de ficción que pretenden re-

presentar y que es aceptado como verdadero por los demás. Enloquecedor frenesí de movimiento y claroscuro espiritual, este aparecer y desaparecer, humanizado, corpóreo, de un espectro inexistente, inasible, don Gil de las calzas verdes, última derivación y motor de la universal broma. Todo comienza en mentira y el embuste acabará flotando por el escenario. (39)

In another layer of mistaken identities mixed with cross dressing, Martín-Gil assumes that Juan-Gil is actually Juana, for he believes that her soul has taken the form of a Don Gil (in this case, it is an assumed imitation, on Martín's part). During this verbal exchange, the audience is drawn further into the play, as Stanislavski explains: "When the spectator is present during such an emotional and intellectual change, he is like a witness to a conversation. He has a silent part in their exchange of feelings, and is excited by their experiences" (*An Actor Prepares*, 213-14). While the accusation is being hurled at Juan, Juana is playing her female alter-ego, Elivra, and she is with Inés on the balcony, spectating this meta-scene. Juana exits and shortly thereafter returns dressed up as her Don Gil de las Calzas Verdes identity. Before she arrives, Don Martín is momentarily alone on stage and delivers a tormented soliloquy:

¿Que delitos me imputan, que parece
que es mi contraria hasta mi misma sombra?

.....
Si a doña Inés pretendo, un Don Gil luego
pretende a doña Inés, y me la quita;
si me escriben, Don Gil me usurpa el pliego
y con él sus quimeras facilita;
si dineros me libran, cuando llego,
hallo que este don Gil cobró la dita.
Ya ni sé adónde vaya, ni a quién siga,

pues nunca falta un Gil que me persiga.
(3079-80; 3087-94)

The spectators can definitely relate to Martín's frustrated confusion. While Juana's masquerade certainly deludes her fellow players, even the audience can fall victim to this deception.

When doña Juana reenters the scene, her father mistakes her identity because she is dressed as Don Gil. As Arellano states, "Bien es verdad que nadie consigue controlar a este Don Gil: los codiciosos padres que han preparado bodas de interés, y sobre todo el romo y crédulo Don Martín se ven envueltos en la vorágine del enredo de doña Juana" (382). Juana explains that she is his daughter and she admits to her scheming: "Yo he sido el Don Gil fingido, / celebre ya por mis calzas, / temido por alma en pena" (3217-19). Juana informs Martín that *he* has actually been the tormentor of *her* soul, and he happily acknowledges her as his wife. Of course, that was Juana's objective all along and the motive for each of her actions, or as Stanislavski would explain: "In this innermost center, this core of the role, all the remaining objectives of the score converge, as it were, into one *superobjective*. That is the inner essence, the all-embracing goal, the objective of all objectives, the concentration of the entire score of the role, of all of its major and minor units. The superobjective contains the meaning, the inner sense, of all the subordinate objectives of the play" (*Creating a Role*, 86). As for the other characters, Inés and Clara agree to marry their former suitors, Juan and Antonio, but Carmanchel, the *gracioso*, remains baffled. He ad-

dresses Don Gil-Juana, who repeats to him that she is actually a woman, and Caramanchel replies: "Esto bastaba / para enredar treinta mundos" (3262-63). Of course, that is the understatement of the comedia, and his words reflect what the spectators are probably thinking.

To conclude, it is clear that without secret identities and various levels of imitation and meta-imitation, the dramatic action in *Don Gil de las calzas verdes* would not be able to unfold as it does; that is to say, without the intricate scheming inaugurated by Juana, there would be no play at all. Essentially, meta-imitation becomes the key metatheatrical situation employed in *Don Gil de las calzas verdes*, and it is the backbone of the entire structure of the play. As such, the remaining subplots and various scenes are built upon this metatheatrical foundation. Through the use of meta-imitation, the comedia deftly ropes the spectators into the play. The spectators cannot help but get involved. They are so taken in by Juana's predicament and her crafty maneuvering that they follow every line with bated breath, all the while trying to keep straight the multiple Don Giles and each one's ulterior motives. By the end of the play, the spectators are also relieved that a resolution has been reached: Juana has won back Martín, the confusion is cleared up, and the audience and characters share the same release. The glass wall between the actors and spectators has been effectively shattered to pieces. Orozco Díaz sums up the use of metatheater (and hence its variations, such as meta-imitation) as follows: "La introducción del teatro dentro del teatro se logra, pues, en el sentido más completo y profundo. Lo que contemplamos en

el tablado de la escena es la representación de una obra cuyo asunto es precisamente la representación de otra obra, pero esta obra que se representa es la visión síntesis y apresurada de nuestra propia vida" (163). And surely enough, just like these characters, whenever we mimic, mock, or imitate, there may be a secret reason behind why we do it.

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**“PUEDO YO CON SOLA LA VISTA OIR
LEYENDO”: READING, SEEING, AND HEAR-
ING THE *COMEDIA*¹**

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In an article written in 1999 with the aim of assessing modern approaches to the Golden-Age *comedia nueva*, I singled out the historical failure of scholars adequately to take into account the “performative contexts” of this drama.² Within the phrase “performative contexts” I meant to include all that had to do with the play as theatre performed on a stage, rather than as text read on a page. I would like now to build and reflect upon this observation by exploring in greater depth the importance of understanding the context of performance in the study of Golden-Age plays, and by assessing some recent developments on this front.

As so many theatre specialists remind us, a play should be understood primarily not as a written text; it comes to life in the theatre before an audience’s senses.³ Soon after Lope de Vega had begun to take a prominent role in the editing of his own plays, he

wrote, in the guise of “el teatro,” in a *prólogo* of 1619 (to his *Parte XII*): “Bien sé que leyéndolas te acordarás de las acciones de aquellos que a este cuerpo sirvieron de alma, para que te den más gusto las figuras que de sola tu gracia esperan movimiento” (xxii). Although the same prologue later reveals a clear understanding of the immortality granted to the *comedia* by its very preservation in print, Lope’s choice of metaphor here (text as body, *performance* as soul) betrays, paradoxically, the comparative importance to this playwright of the *mise-en-scène*, remembered, it would seem, from an actual performance.⁴ Lope cannot here envisage a private reading of a *comedia* without the concomitant imaginative recreation of its performance, especially the declaiming of its verse—indeed, the reader plays the god-like role of breathing life into the inert textual body.⁵ Taking a lead from Lope I think that use of the term “context” when referring to performance of the *comedia* should not, as it sometimes does, assume a relationship of inferiority or subordination to the tangible, enduring play-text. And yet, as we shall see in due course, the ghost of the past performance, the “alma en pena” perhaps, comes back to haunt this question.

The performance of Golden-Age drama is potentially a large area to explore and I shall not attempt to cover it all. Recent research—much of it published in the well-known Tamesis series *Fuentes para la historia del teatro en España*—gives us a much clearer idea of the material conditions in which Golden-Age plays were first performed. Documentary research has revealed information on

practical matters which range from the size of the audience to the height of the stage, from the differences between theatres in different cities to the details of actors who played particular roles. Valuable work has also been carried out on the acting style employed by Golden-Age *representantes*.⁶ The accumulation of such information has helped scholars to begin to speculate with some confidence on staging norms and the possible primitive staging of individual plays. This approach is starting to find its way—little by little—into some new editions of Golden-Age plays, and articles about and histories of Golden-Age theatre.⁷ (It is worth stressing that compared with English studies the progress made in this regard is slight.) The reconstruction of the Golden-Age playhouse at Almagro, together with the recent renovation of the early seventeenth-century *corral de comedias* at Alcalá de Henares, mean that, in theory, and as in the rebuilt Globe in London, scholars' ideas can be put to the test in actual productions. The conditions of at least a play's first performance should be closer than ever to the mind of the scholar.⁸

However, although it would seem that the time is ripe for the rehabilitation in the academy of the *comedia* as theatre, there remains a suspicion that *comedia* scholars' toes have been dipped into waters too uninviting to warrant a plunge. Most critics line up on the shore, curious and feeling slightly guilty, but unwilling to cast off the security-blanket of text-based study, traditional or modern. The echoes of James Parr's 1975 accusation, in his polemical exchange with E. M. Wilson, that "[a]lmost

never is the fact mentioned, in literary criticism, that they [*comedias*] were indeed written to be performed before an audience" (484) still reverberate. Performance is now at least regularly mentioned in literary criticism, and has found a central place in the work of a small minority of scholars. As teachers, aware of the perceived limitations of past approaches, we tend to remind students that when dealing with a play we must imagine a performance and envisage an audience, however notional, and not just a reader.⁹ We must read to see and hear. Another sign of this evolution in perceptions is Ignacio Arellano's long history of seventeenth-century Spanish drama, published in 1995. Of all the ways Arellano might have opted to open his study, he chooses to write that: "[l]as piezas dramáticas del Siglo de Oro se escribían, primordialmente, para ser representadas. Su consumo pertenece al territorio del espectáculo, y sólo secundariamente a la literatura" (61). The prioritizing of this theatrical side to the *comedia* marks a break with tradition. Scholars usually now at least pay lip-service to the new thinking. But are we yet capable of performance-based criticism of Golden-Age drama, perhaps even of downgrading the importance of the *comedia* as literature? Is there any evidence that we yet know, in *comedia* studies, what performance-based scholarship is? It seems to me that we are only just beginning to engage in the debate.¹⁰

This debate is most advanced in North America and continues to evolve annually in El Paso, Texas, at the AHCT's Golden Age Theater Festival where scholars and theatre people gather to watch Golden-

Age productions from many parts at the Chamizal National Memorial Theater, and to discuss these performances during *mesa redonda* sessions.¹¹ Recordings of these performances are made and stored in the AHCT's burgeoning video library as a resource to scholars and teachers alike.

Part of the reason for the continued predominance of text-based research, and in spite of the AHCT's efforts, is that Golden-Age drama specialists still cannot see productions of as many plays as they would wish. The lack of a performance tradition in Spain, gradually being remedied by the Compañía Nacional de Teatro Clásico, created in 1986, and various festivals including that at Almagro which has recently celebrated its 25th anniversary, is a serious impediment to a performance-based study of the *comedia*.¹² There is still comparatively little Golden-Age theatre performed within Spain and in other European countries, despite some signs of a renaissance.¹³ Some younger directors have understandably associated the classical theatre with the ideology of the Franco years,¹⁴ whilst others have come to "sospechar que los clásicos pertenecen a una admirable zona de la cultura más cercana al aburrimiento que a la amenidad" (Marsillach 1996, 11). However, the excuse of a lack of performance tradition, whatever its reasons, is not sufficient to explain the lack in *comedia* studies of the branch of performance-related criticism relating to the hypothetical staging of plays. Indeed the enormous richness of documents pertaining to the early-modern Spanish stage, alluded to enviously by Andrew Gurr in his studies of the English

stage (Ruano de la Haza 2000, 11), means that at least speculating about the way productions were realized should form a significant part of the critical material on, and any critical edition of a play.

The truth is, however, that few modern editions of Golden-Age plays deal in any great depth with staging and other issues of performance—whether assessments of actual productions or, more realistically, the potential staging of the play.¹⁵ Yet there has been a steady trickle of studies on *comedia* performance which merit our attention and this is undoubtedly a growing field with implications for the future direction of the study of Golden-Age drama. The research of British historians of the Spanish playhouse, inspired in part by English studies, has provided the bedrock for work as detailed as José María Ruano de la Haza's recent *La puesta en escena en los teatros comerciales del Siglo de Oro*, which draws on scores of plays to try to discover or confirm assumptions about some norms of *corral* performance in the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. It is now a little more common to find scholars writing articles on the actual or possible early staging of Golden-Age plays.¹⁶ We can learn a lot from these. A director wishing to stage Calderón's *La dama duende* will most likely initially envisage a set divided in two, or a turn-table which allows Manuel's room and Ángela's room, either side of the cupboard/passage-way, to be shown simultaneously or in quick succession. The theory persuasively argued by Ruano de la Haza (1987) that these two spaces in which the bulk of the action is played out, were differentiated on the primitive

corral stage, by the simple expedient of opening and shutting the curtain to the *vestuario*, which would contain some appropriate properties, should alert the director to the benefits of staging the play simply. The comedy loses pace and suspense and thus a good part of its comic vibrancy by being slowed down. This lesson would have benefited Teatro Corsario's production of Tirso's *Don Gil de la calzas verdes*, performed in Burgos (and elsewhere) in July 2002. The breathless momentum of the play which carries the action forward through a series of increasingly unlikely twists deliberately allows little time for any sort of reflection for characters or audience. This is in part Tirso's intention – his way of ensnaring us in his comic world. This pace was frequently slowed in Burgos by the stagehands' excessive intrusions to change or adjust sets and props.¹⁷

A welcome sign of the awakening interest in *comedia* performance is the recent publication of *El texto puesto en escena*, a collection of articles, edited by Bárbara Mujica and Anita Stoll, which are dedicated to performance. The essays have their origin in conferences held in Almagro and in El Paso in Texas during the Golden-Age theatre festivals. Charles Oriel, who has reviewed the collection, writes of it that 'many of the essays included here invoke notions of performance and "scene" as an opening gambit, only to utilize them as pretexts to generate readings that are, when all is said and done, rather similar (and in some cases, quite similar) to readings first gleaned under the auspices of new criticism and structuralism and, more recently,

under those of reader-response theory and deconstruction' (263). In this sense many of the contributors avoid confronting the implications of another important point outlined by Pavis: "[t]he principal difficulty of analyzing a text within a *mise-en-scène* is in not confusing the reading and the analysis we would make of it while reading, with reception and the impact it produces on the spectator" (222). Oriel's is a perceptive point – several of the studies do rely heavily on the authority of the written text – but where hesitancy exists in dealing with dramatic performance it is most likely a sign of a discipline in its infancy. The articles in this collection form a set of possibilities for future directions in performance-related research.

More practically fruitful perhaps are the handful of published studies which give accounts from within of actual performances of Golden-Age plays, or use the perspective of theatre people, steeped in the world of dramatic performance to shed light on the *comedia*. Charles Ganelin, in an article which applies some of the theatrical insights of Peter Brook to the *comedia*, sees the text as basic to performer and scholar alike, but argues for an approach from the scholar which bases analysis on a fusion of text and performance. He moves towards pinpointing a fundamental difference between the scholar and the director—whilst the former tends to want to impose an order on a finished text which will explain it intellectually (fashioning a well-wrought urn perhaps?), the latter uses the text only as a pretext to build a production made of myriad elements which will challenge an audience in part intellectually but

also through its visceral effect.¹⁸ There has been little evidence of the presence of the work of theatre people in *comedia* studies, however. The traditional barrier between the academy and the stage remains largely intact, as Adolfo Marsillach has noted (1989, 168). Accounts from people of the theatre involved in Golden-Age productions which have found their way into academic publications will do little to lift this barrier. In a recent special number of the *Bulletin of the Comediantes*, dedicated to Calderón, there is a behind-the-scenes account of Court Theatre's 1999 Chicago production of *Life is a Dream*. The article is written by the associate dramaturge, Kerry Wilks, and includes six photographs. This account tends to confirm the view from the academy that theatre people often have a limited (or less historically grounded) grasp of the material they are exploiting. Wilks reveals firstly that translators and directors tend to shy away from or change anything which they regard as too difficult for the modern audience (58).¹⁹ There is an ingrained suspicion of a cultural object made doubly foreign by its age and its provenance. Secondly, she inadvertently shows that a low level of research or a particular obsession by the director can have a negative effect on a production. In this case in directing Calderón's play, JoAnne Akalaitis, refused, as part of a feminist agenda, to allow Segismundo to resist his attraction for Rosaura even late in the play (72). This left the cast and presumably the audience scratching their heads.²⁰ Wilks also recalls the director's comments to the cast during their first rehearsal:

Not only did Akalaitis demonstrate a thorough understanding of the play, she also displayed a vast knowledge of all aspects of Spain's Golden Age. She claimed that Calderón first intrigued her after viewing Jerzy Grotowsky's rendition of *El príncipe constante*. When discussing *La vida es sueño*, Akalaitis tried to explain how she understood the play's 'Spanishness'. She threw out several terms, including verticality, spirituality, dignity, and solemnity. She ended, however, by saying that the work was 'paradoxical' and contained a 'screwed up quality that is essentially Spanish.' Regardless of these terms, it was clear that Akalaitis was quite fascinated with the world that Calderón created.

As a student of Golden-Age drama I am ready to celebrate performance and I attempt to attend productions with an open mind and a willingness to embrace a director's vision of a play. I hope I do not conform to Peter Brook's view of the scholar happy to sit comfortably in front of deadly theatre (12-13).²¹ In a 2003 London production of Lope's *Peribáñez y el comendador de Ocaña*, in translation, the director understandably felt uncomfortable with (and so omitted) Casilda's approval of her cousin's murder, and created a tension between husband and wife at the play's end which is not there in my reading of it. This seemed to me, however, to be a genuine attempt to adjust Lope's drama to modern sensibilities, and was consistent with the overall approach taken to the play. Less justifiable, however, is to allow the eponymous peasant to kill the *comendador* with a pitchfork, rather than a sword, as happened in a production in Cambridge in 1997. Several productions of Golden-Age plays that I have seen or read about, particularly those done in

translation, have been blighted by lack of vision and directorial confusion and have been instructive mainly in their weaknesses. This is perhaps bound to be the case in the absence of a performance tradition. Performances of English plays from the same period often reveal an awareness of past approaches through their rejection or echoing of other productions—even if a director is new to a play, critics are not.

This comparison of the trajectory of studies of English classical drama with that of its Spanish counterpart is instructive. Students and directors of English theatre (and especially Shakespeare) can call on studies of the performance history of individual plays or certain eras. There are works—even book-length studies—on particular productions and their relationship to the performance tradition, on particular directors and actors who have influenced the reception of a play, on scenery, costume, acting styles in different works and periods.²² So large is the body of criticism on performance matters that one publisher, Cambridge University Press, in addition to its *Cambridge Companion to Shakespeare* has published, *inter alia*, the *Cambridge Companion to Shakespeare on Stage* and the *Cambridge Companion to Shakespeare on Film* in part as guides to the considerable literature on these matters. Manchester University Press meanwhile is publishing a *Shakespeare Performance Series*, dedicated to the performance histories of each of Shakespeare's plays. This consciousness of the play as part of a living tradition makes it unconscionable for an editor to omit some consideration of per-

formance (history) in a modern edition of an Elizabethan or Jacobean play.

If we take as an example the Arden edition of *Twelfth Night* (originally published in 1975), about a quarter of the introductory material is given over to a section entitled "In the theatre"—some 19 pages, or twice the length of the section on the play's critical history. The physical (and sometimes hypothetical) staging of a play is seen as important in a number of ways: in *Twelfth Night*, the editors, Lothian and Craik, use reviews, records, drawings and diaries to make a number of deductions about the play from past performances. It is considered important to know which actor played a certain part to try to shed light on its possible interpretation, for example in the 18th century the same actor, Charles Macklin, played both Malvolio in this play and Shylock in *The Merchant of Venice* (xc). Modern productions of the play witnessed by the editors are commented on and criticized, for example, the final scene of Olivier's interpretation of Malvolio (in Stratford, in 1955) is reckoned to run unjustifiably against the grain of the comic resolution to the play (xcviii). In short we learn a great deal about the play from the different ways it has been interpreted on the stage—the assessment of past performances (often with photographic evidence, integral to the introduction rather than as mere adornment) also facilitates hypotheses about staging. CD-ROM publishing of course increases the potential for performance-based criticism—a new Cambridge electronic edition of *King Lear* has not only half a

dozen versions of the text but images from over 120 productions (Carson and Bratton).

It is true that because Shakespeare's plays have been staged so regularly in his homeland there exists a strong performance tradition. Productions of Shakespeare, in Stratford and London especially, have a high cultural profile, attracting star performers, and are anticipated, reviewed across the media, and assessed against previous productions/versions. In English studies, however, it is not just the highest profile Shakespeare plays with a continuous performance tradition which warrant a consideration of staging in scholarly introductions. In Joost Daalder's edition of Middleton and Rowley's *The Changeling*, we see that considerable effort has gone into researching productions of the play despite there being none between 1668 and the 20th century (xl). In the fifth re-impression of his edition (1995) Daalder devotes a new section of the introduction to the Royal Shakespeare Company's 1992-93 production of the play and a BBC television version. The simplest details of a particular production can be of use to the scholar—here the fact that the mad inmates of the asylum in the play's sub-plot in the RSC production live under the stage entering and exiting via trapdoors reveals how the director symbolized the relationship between sane and mad society. It helps us to think about and interpret the play.

This sort of scholarship which uses performance to explore interpretations of the play is rare in editions of Golden-Age plays and still fairly uncommon in articles in journals, even in a journal de-

voted to theatre such as the *Bulletin of the Comediantes*. Where a play edition contains photographs of a past production, tantalizingly little information tends to be given about it. A handful of *comedia* scholars, however, some taking a lead from English theatre scholarship, have brought actual performance to the fore in their work and can serve as models for future studies.²³ Some of these scholars seem willing to accept that a theatre director is not a curator responsible for the preservation of a museum-piece in its original state. A play has been chosen to come alive in a modern context not to conform to some reconstructed template of what might have been. In a rather traditional field, it takes some courage to assess favorably (or even neutrally) the setting of a version of Lope's *El caballero del milagro* in 1950s Rome; or of Calderón's *No hay bur-las con el amor* in a circus; or the addition of expletives to a modern English translation of *El pintor de su deshonra*.²⁴ Yet a record of these and other elements of a particular production should be available to a play's readers and potential audience. The consequence is that the reaction of a certain director, or public, or country to a particular work can form a part of the history of its life on stage. In Bárbara Mujica's article on the 1996 production of Lope's *El caballero del milagro*, the author notes that the deliberate anachronisms in music and costume help to form a parallel between the play's original early sixteenth-century Roman setting and the Fellini-inspired world of 1950s Rome, and their respective relations to Madrid in its burgeoning early days as the Spanish capital and modern-day Washington

DC. The uncertain mixtures of these worlds make them the perfect habitat for an anti-hero such as Luzmán. The protagonist's socially threatening double-dealing and image-manipulation are concerns of Lope's day and of our times. This modern production might even have illuminated the possible interpretation of the play in its original social context.

My intention here is not to assess the justification for directors' readings of individual Golden-Age plays, often mediated again before they reach the scholar by reviewer or critic. What seems important to assert is that scholarly study of drama in performance has a purpose; it sheds light on the drama's possible interpretation—then and now. And yet a reservation remains. Drama in performance lacks the permanence and security, the relative solidity of the play-text (and indeed of cinema). Each production is different (Celis Sánchez 272-73), each production is live and unrepeatable, and each production is seen and heard and related imperfectly by its audience (Pavis 1-2). For those used to dealing with elements of a static whole, to be faced with the barrage of signs from the stage, what Larson has recently called, with Lope in mind, "*una gran variedad de sistemas semióticos*" (89), the multifaceted, elusive, allusive whirl of performance, can be paralyzing. It is easier to study a butterfly pinned lifeless to a board than when it is in the blur of flight—but which is more beautiful and more unpredictable? How can a scholar capture performance and analyze it?²⁵ If the written text is the play's body, as Lope would have it, we are anato-

mists who can describe most of its parts and try to analyze their relationships and functions, however complex; but performance gives a play-text a "soul," which is much more difficult to pin down. Like Juan Roca trying to capture on canvas the beauty of Serafina in all its complexity, are we doomed to throw down our brushes and concede defeat?²⁶

One exemplary approach to this problem is that of Susan Fischer in her article on Laurence Boswell's 1995 RSC production of *The Painter of Dishonour*. In her lengthy analysis of the play / production, with photographs, Fischer combines her own interpretation of the play as radical tragedy, with her reading of the English director's interpretation, with theoretical considerations on the modern performance of classical theatre, translation theory, past literary criticism of the play (E. M. Wilson), another scholar's reaction to the performance (Barry Ife's *Times Literary Supplement* review), more "innocent" reviews in newspapers, audience reaction (including "chatter" [194] overheard in the interval), interviews with the cast, the translator's notes, assessments of actors' styles and their development during the run, comparison with former performances of a wife-murder tragedy (Marsillach's *El médico de su honra* for the CNTC), and descriptions of the set and lighting, music, and dance. This is a full and critical look at a performance of a Golden-Age play translated for the British stage.

However impressive Fischer's work on *El pintor*, this scholar's remains simply one very well informed view of a production which is seen to con-

form to her interpretation of the play.²⁷ Her readers cannot always see the play as they can read the text, and so disagree or point out any possible errors. When I saw this same RSC production it had moved to London and lost Jennifer Ehle as Serafina amongst other changes. I remember my reaction as I saw, lurking in the shadows in act 1, the red-masked dance-leader, designated “death” in the program and absent from Calderón’s own cast-list. Fischer writes that the figure “can be rather effective in generating a sense of anxiety and outrage that extends beyond the footlights” (196). With hindsight I appreciate Fischer’s interpretation but I had been unable to weave a meaningful narrative around this figure and found ‘death’—like the drums in Calixto Bieito’s later *Life is a Dream*—simply distracting.²⁸ Metatheatrical comment is already built into the play by Calderón. Subsequently, when Susan Fischer talked in Cambridge about the production, in the paper that later became the article, she noted that the red figure’s presence had been an accidental development in a rehearsal and had not played a part in the director’s original plans for his production. This anecdote hardly undermines Fischer’s, or even Boswell’s, coherent response to the play, but it does perhaps underline the difference in the way similar material can be reconstructed and conveyed, the impossibility of painting the perfect portrait from life. If *El pintor de su deshonra* is in part an on-stage rumination on the failure of art to contain life, on life’s tendency to exceed attempts to frame it, then the play also provides a lesson to those who would try to frame the living drama. As an artist (or

an audience member or a scholar) one is a victim of one's own perspective, and must concede defeat in the face of the "might" of subjectivity. Of course something similar is true of the critic faced with a play-text, but here one can retreat to the relative safety of two-dimensional words on a page.

The difficulties presented by performance criticism which deals with actual *montajes*—the doomed attempt to pin down an elusive moment, the presence of an extra layer of mediation between text and scholar—do not, as I have already suggested, render it uninteresting or worthless (Pavis 10 and 52). However, one can detect a movement in English studies away from such approaches and back to the play-text. The introduction to R. A. Foakes's 1997 Arden edition of *King Lear* begins:

Plays have a double life, in the mind as read, and on the stage as acted; reading a play and seeing it acted are two different but equally valid and valuable experiences. Shakespeare's fellow-actors provided in the First Folio of his works a text for readers, and all later editors have also had readers in mind; even acting versions have first to be read. There has been a fashion in criticism for claiming that the 'real play is the performance, not the text', or that a play is a 'communal construct', and 'exists in relationship to scripts we will never have, to a series of revisions and collaborations that start as soon as there is a Shakespearean text'[Stephen Orgel]. It seems to me that the 'real play' is as much the text we read, and perhaps act out in the mind, as the performance we watch... (4).

If this is representative of a change in English studies – and judging by recent growth in performance studies in universities, and publishing ventures

including those involving CD-ROMs with text and video, I am not at all sure that it is -, then at least it constitutes reflections on lessons learned on a journey.²⁹ *Comedia* criticism has ventured only a short way along the path of performance studies and even if we were to meet English studies coming back the other way, we should not be tempted to abandon the route altogether.

I began by quoting Lope de Vega, disguised as *teatro* from the prologue to the twelfth *Parte* of his plays. Having supposed that the reader he addresses will have already seen and heard the play he is reading, Lope then concedes the advantages of private reading of drama, pointing to the existence of a dramatist's ideal imagined performance:

Quedo consolado, que no me pudrirá el vulgo como suele; pues en tu aposento, donde las has de leer, nadie consentirás que te haga ruido, ni que te diga mal de lo que tú sabrás conocer, libre de los accidentes del señor que viene tarde, del representante que se yerra, y de la mujer desagradable por fea y mal vestida, o por los años que ha frecuentado mis tablas; pues el poeta no la escribió con los que ella tiene, sino con los que tuvo en su imaginación, que fueron catorce o quince (xxii).

By the *Parte XVI* (1622), Lope, again as *teatro* discussing theatre with a *forastero*, makes the claim that forms the title of this article. Apparently appalled at the new dependence of *autores* on the visual in the theatre, rather than on the power of the verse to produce emotional responses, to create scenes and form ideas, he admits that the eye can "oír una comedia" (attend a play) too through its ability to read: "[p]uedo yo con sola la vista oír le-

leyendo, y saber sin los oídos cuanto ha pasado en el mundo" (xxv). Victor Dixon postulates a direct relationship between Lope's dismay at the antics of the actor-managers and his increased desire to publish his plays (58).

If we take from Lope's words permission to study his plays as we might a novel, however, we are not being faithful to the new frame of mind of Lope in his mid- to late-fifties. Lope's enthusiasm for having his plays read comes from a feeling of being misunderstood by ignorant *oyentes* and betrayed by poor actors and novelty-seeking *autores*—a similar disaffection (although with its origins in different causes) to that felt by Cervantes a few years earlier. Both men point to the advantages of the leisurely reading of play-texts, and this is not to be ignored. However clear it is that Lope always conceives of his drama as being spoken and performed, and that we should too when we study and teach it, he does clearly acknowledge the advantages of reading plays and concede that there are difficulties in live theatre. Text-based and performance-based critics can both find a defense of sorts in Lope de Vega.

It would seem, in conclusion, that there is more room in *comedia* studies for approaches related to performance, whether based on recreating original, hypothetical models, or exploring modern productions, be they textually faithful, *refundiciones*, or translations. Such studies can only help to increase awareness of the play as a thing that can return to life, take flight and surprise us, at any moment. Awareness of the context of performance and what

she calls "representational relevance" has, for example, helped Melveena McKendrick to build her argument that Lope's kingship plays are to be taken as deftly critical of the monarchs under which he lived (116). This is surely an approach which can help scholars recognize the potential energy, so to speak, of a play-text. There is more room especially, I think, for investigating the performance of verse spoken and rhetorical techniques of actors in a drama characterized, at least until late in Lope's career, by its verbal, not visual brilliance. And yet there are comforts and benefits to be had through reading plays. In 1902 James Fitzmaurice-Kelly concluded his lecture on the subject of *Lope de Vega and the Spanish Drama* by observing that anyone who '*reads* with care all Lope's surviving plays is inevitably condemned to *read* little else, on the other hand, such a *reader* has before him the certainty of being interested, moved, and delighted for no small part of a life-time. [...] He will *see* pass before him the entrancing pageant of a vanquished age...' (62-63, my italics). A century on we may be able to see more Golden-Age plays in performance than Fitzmaurice-Kelly was able to, and yet the truth is that students of this drama must still largely read in order to see and perhaps hear, with the few advantages and the many frustrations that that entails.

NOTES

¹ This article began life as a paper presented to the University of Cambridge Dept of Spanish and Portuguese Annual Day Symposium, "Current Perspectives in Golden-Age Studies: Text and Context," which took place on 29 November 2002 at Gonville and Caius College. I am grateful to Professor Melveena McKendrick and Dr Anthony Close for inviting me to speak on that occasion. I am also grateful to Professor Jack Sage for his comments on an earlier draft of that paper.

² See Thacker (esp. 24-27). The point is hardly a novel one, and has been underlined again recently by Charles Oriel in a book review in which he writes that performance continues to be "a relatively understudied aspect of the *comedia*" (264).

³ Ruano de la Haza, for one, writes that *comedias* "fueron compuestas para ser representadas y sólo muy secundariamente para ser leídas" (2000, 10), and Dixon stresses that Golden-Age plays were and still are published for readers who 'deben ser los directores, actores y público de su propio teatro mental' (59). See also on this matter the important contributions of the theorists, Patrice Pavis (198-223) and Manfred Pfister (13), and also the views of Stephen Orgel (qtd in Fischer 1993, 43-44).

⁴ Unlike for today's theatre audiences, for Lope remembrance of things heard is surely more important than remembrance of things seen—"acciones" as both Covarrubias ("significa, algunas vezes, la fuerça y energía con que alguno predica, lee o razona", 33b) and the *Diccionario de la Real Academia Española* (I, 41) confirm, can refer in this period to the rhetoric of the actor (i.e. his declaiming of the play's verse), rather than to physical movements.

⁵ See also Dixon (58).

⁶ On this last area see especially Rodríguez Cuadros. An excellent study of the practical matters is the first half of Ruano de la Haza and Allen.

⁷ Until fairly recently histories of and companions to Spanish literature paid little attention to dramatic performance. When scholars do investigate the stage-craft or performance of a particular play, as Ruano de la Haza (1987) and Vitse have

done in the case of Calderón's *La dama duende*, for example, their conclusions will find their way into good, new editions of play-texts. In this case Fausta Antonucci's 1999 edition of *La dama duende* benefits from these scholars' insights (e.g. at note to l. 780) and includes a brief record of performances of Calderón's comedy (lxvii). Ruano de la Haza makes an instructive comparison between the impressive progress made in English theatre studies with scant resources and the paucity of studies published on performance and staging of Spanish Golden-Age drama despite the rich seam of relevant documents that survive (2000, 11-13).

⁸ See, as an example of the potential usefulness of these reconstructions, Peter Thomson's reaction to the Globe's 2000 production of *The Tempest* which made him re-assess his understanding of comic acting in the time of Shakespeare, specifically because of the dynamics of the relationship of Caliban to the groundlings (138).

⁹ This is still well short of Pavis's ideal of 'a compromise between a text-centered and a stage-centered position' which is in part 'a question of separating one's thoughts on the study of written texts from that of stage practices involving texts' (206).

¹⁰ Catherine Connor welcomes Arellano's history of seventeenth-century Spanish theatre for its emphasis on performance, but is surely premature in writing of an "enorme cambio de enfoque" (3) in *comedia* studies. The vast majority of publications on the *comedia* are still text-based studies.

¹¹ In her brief history of approaches to the *comedia*, Bárbara Mujica sees the creation of the Association for Hispanic Classical Theater in 1976 as instrumental in ushering in an era of increased interest in performance (*Hispania* 1999, 402).

¹² See the comments of Adolfo Marsillach (1989, 167). See also Benabu (1991).

¹³ Antonio Serrano, in reviewing the period from 1985-1990, is sanguine about the position of Golden-Age theatre within modern Spanish society. He enumerates some twenty major Golden-Age productions in Spain for the year 1991 (184-85).

¹⁴ García Lorenzo and Muñoz Carabantes observe that 'los viejos clásicos sufrían además una identificación con las manifestaciones de la cultura oficial del régimen' (426).

¹⁵ Ruano de la Haza also highlights the lack of studies which have attempted to "analizar la escenificación" of particular plays (2000, 11), as does Jesús Rubio in his intervention in González Cañal (144). See also Oliva (427). Victor Dixon's bilingual edition of Lope's *Fuente Ovejuna* is a notable exception to the rule (Vega 1989, 25-34). Because of its prominence on the European stage, *Fuente Ovejuna* is one of the very few plays in modern Spanish editions to have received more than cursory attention insofar as at least its performance history is concerned. See also the edition by Francisco López Estrada (Vega 1996, 41-44). For an example of speculation about contemporary performance in England, see Gurr (156-94).

¹⁶ In addition to the work already mentioned on *La dama duende*, see for example the studies in the first section of Mujica and Stoll, part 2 of Ganelin and Mancing, Arellano (1999, esp. 195-311), and Kirschner. The content of these articles must eventually influence critical editions of plays with which they deal.

¹⁷ See Pellicena (173) for the account of a similar experience with Lope's *El despertar a quien duerme*. I am not here attempting to deny directors and writers the latitude they need to adapt or re-invent Golden-Age drama for their own times. See Fischer (esp. *Revista de Estudios Hispánicos* 1991 and 1993) for exemplary considerations of the adaptation of Golden-Age plays in Spain for performance in modern times.

¹⁸ From such concerns springs the debate about respect for the classics which has surfaced from time to time in Spain. For a summary of the question see Oliva (428-29).

¹⁹ See also Gómez Torres's review of a recent English version of Lope's *La dama boba* in which he admits that the translation is destined for a modern audience which may have trouble understanding the finer points of a Golden-Age play (226). William Oliver, the translator of the comedy, has elsewhere claimed that modern audiences "find it difficult to climb the stairs into the cultural attic of Spain's Golden Age" (154). The

question of cultural difference/difficulty tends not to be brought up by Spanish scholars—perhaps for obvious reasons.

²⁰ I have unfortunately not yet been able to consult Susan Fischer's recent article on this production of *Life is a Dream* (*Gestos* 2002).

²¹ For a frustrated director's view of academic audiences, see Oliver (164-65).

²² See, for example, Smallwood. In English drama studies there is now even a dictionary of stage directions. See Dessen and Thomson.

²³ Four critics who stand out (and several of whose important studies are listed below amongst the works cited) are Susan Fischer, Bárbara Mujica, Isaac Benabu and Luciano García Lorenzo. Their approaches are by no means uniform. Although the focus of García Lorenzo tends to be more on the place of classical theatre in Spain than specifically on readings of particular performances/productions, his work has helped to reveal which Golden-Age plays have come to the fore and what their relationship to modern society is. For a list of relevant publications see García Lorenzo and Muñoz Carabantes (431, n. 10). Benabu (for example in his studies on Calderón and Tirso) tends to work from a text, but one whose primary function is to be performed, rather than from a particular performance or interpretation of a play. Fischer and Mujica are probably the two scholars who illuminate most regularly the lessons to be drawn from particular productions of Golden-Age plays that they have seen, in Fischer's case at least, in "multiple viewings" (1993, 43). In a series of important articles the latter has recorded and shed light on the offerings of the CNTC since its early years (see Fischer *Gestos* 1991, 1993, 1997, 1999, 2000, *Ayer y hoy* 2002). Mujica has worked on actual productions (e.g. 1995, 2000) but has also outlined, in a fascinating article, "an ideal, imaginary production" of a work by Ana Caro (*Engendering* 1999).

²⁴ See Mujica (2000), Cornejo and Déodat-Kessedjian, and Fischer (2000) respectively. For ruminations on a production of Calderón's *El mágico prodigioso* in France, see Préau.

²⁵ Some might even prefer the poetry of Lope on the page to any attempt to reconcile it with performance as Hazlitt did with Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* which "when acted, is converted from a delightful fiction into a dull pantomime. All that is finest in the play is lost in the representation. The spectacle was grand; but the spirit was evaporated, the genius was fled. Poetry and the stage do not agree well together" (102).

²⁶ Pavis would argue that we capture performance with 'a pluralism of methods and questionings' in order to avoid "the kind of critical impressionism of which theater people seem rather fond" (3), but he admits the huge difficulties involved in the process.

²⁷ To be fair to Fischer, her work on performance studies often lays bare and explores the very difficulties with which it is faced. See especially her article on Marsillach's CNTC version of *El médico de su honra* performed in 1986 (1993, 41-44).

²⁸ These two Calderón plays were performed on the London stage in 1996 (*The Painter*) and 1999 (*Life is a Dream*).

²⁹ Yet another book on Shakespeare, recently advertised by Cambridge University Press, promises to re-examine this question of text- or performance-based studies. See Erne.

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**FROM MANUSCRIPT TO 21ST CENTURY
PERFORMANCES: *LA TRAICIÓN EN LA
AMISTAD***

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A renewed interest in María de Zayas (1590-1669?) and the inclusion of her *novelas ejemplares* into the Spanish literary canon have placed her in the ranks of figures, such as Lope de Vega, Cervantes, and Ana Caro. The rediscovery of Zayas's autograph manuscript of the *comedia*, *La traición en la amistad*,¹ has also helped establish Zayas's reputation as playwright, and has brought her critical attention in numerous scholarly articles, a dissertation in Italian, an English translation and modern edition, a critical Spanish edition, inclusion in two anthologies, and recent performances at two major drama festivals, the Chamizal Golden Age Drama Festival in El Paso, and the Almagro International Classical Theater Festival in Spain.

According to Melveena McKendrick, the unaltered texts of autograph manuscripts best depict the playwright's creative art than those that have undergone major alterations and revisions (261).

Zayas's text of *La traición en la amistad* remains comparatively untainted, and has proven to be easily adaptable for contemporary theatrical productions. Perhaps the interest in having *La traición en la amistad* performed more than three hundred and seventy years after its creation is due to both its universal theme, the "betrayal of friendship" and to its similarity to our present-day sitcoms based on love triangles and relationships among young people. Or, perhaps the play's content and themes are as intriguing and seductive to readers, directors, and spectators as is Fenisa, one of the main female characters.

María de Zayas's *comedia*, *La traición en la amistad*, survived through several centuries of neglect, and was rediscovered, analyzed, translated, and edited. It has emerged as a *comedia* inviting potential in-depth analysis, various interpretations, and enhanced meaning. Text critics of 17th century plays that have been read, interpreted, meticulously dissected, and critiqued, are challenged to make the transition to the role of a spectator watching a 21st century performance. Biases and analyses aside, the performance of the play may be perceived as light entertainment, yet still contain several profound passages. One speculates whether the director has considered the following questions: "Should the period play be produced authentically? Should it be produced in a streamlined modern version? Should the message of the author be allowed to stand on its own merit? Should the play be interpreted to convey a particular modern message?" (Dietrich, 227, 228). The critic / spectator should comprehend that the

accuracy and the thought-provoking intention of the original text is necessarily compromised and altered at certain points by the director in order to accommodate personal interpretation as well as the interests of contemporary audiences. "The form of the production will be found when the director knows 'what' he wants to say and 'why' he wants to say it. When the director knows the answers, the form he finds will express the inner content of the play" (Moore, 91). Financial restraints are also at play in modern performance. In her presentation on "Teaching Drama: Text and Performance," Joanne Brown explained: "Unlike a poem or novel, whose meaning evolves from an interaction between the text and a solitary reader, the ultimate meaning of a drama lies in collaboration among a group of people: directors, actors, costumers, scene and lighting designers"(4). In any performance, then, there might be multiple interpretations and alterations of text, but other questions will arise. Are the play's themes and messages universal and insightful enough to endure the passing of centuries and the crossing of borders, and to be understood by a modern-day audience? Will Zayas's text sustain its integrity in subsequent theatrical performances in English and in Spanish? Will performances continue and, if so, will they be successful?

In Zayas's manuscript of *La traición en la amistad*, the three acts, or *jornadas*, are not divided into scenes, although breaks and changes in the series of events are obvious due to the entering and exiting of the characters, the conclusion of monologues or dialogues between them, or a change in subject. Asides

are given as well as stage directions. An initial reading of Zayas's play suggests it to be lacking in action, similar to other *comedias de enredos*, with a plot that is no more than intrigues and love triangles among young people of the court in Madrid: Marcia, Liseo, and Fenisa; Belisa, Don Juan, and Fenisa; Laura, Liseo, and Fenisa. Other characters of the play are the persistent and love-smitten Gerardo, who pursues and courts Marcia for seven years, the three servants León, Lucía, and Felix, Lauro, who also has a relationship with Fenisa, and two musicians, Antonio and Fabio. León, the *gracioso* of the *comedia*, provides comic relief to the sometimes overly-serious scenes.

But the plot is much more complicated than initially perceived. The characters' relationships intertwine and deceit is used to battle deceit. The women unite in a collective resolution of the conflicts and the betrayal among friends, and the cause of all problems, Fenisa, is finally ostracized. Zayas's text entices the reader, the director, and the spectator to dig deeper, to capture and interpret underlying messages. The director's task as intermediary is "to interpret the meaning and intent of the playwright for the audience...Does the playwright merely wish to evoke laughter or tears? Or is the intent more specific, such as the presentation of a social message or the evaluation of an important character?" (Dietrich, 200). Like the reader and the director, the spectator of the performances of *La traición en la amistad* is invited to surpass the situational comedy effect and to seek deeper meaning.

The performance of *La traición en la amistad* (*Friendship Betrayed*) on March 7th, 2003, was based on a translation into English by Catherine Larson.² It was a one-night event at the Chamizal Siglo de Oro Drama Festival in El Paso, performed by students of the Oklahoma City University Department of Speech and Theatre. Larson explained in her introduction to the 1999 edition, that she “attempted to remain as faithful to the original as possible without creating a translation that was stilted and overly artificial, and tried to remain cognizant of the ways that it could appear onstage” (28). As Larson’s translation made its way onto the stage under the direction of David Pasto, the attempt to maintain faithfulness to Zayas’s text was evident. His role as director would be to “see to it that all the elements—such as sets, music, lights, and costumes—contribute to the whole performance; every pose, every *mise-en-scène* must bring out the inner content of the given moment on the stage”(Moore, 90). Like a 17th century *impresario*, Pasto made alterations in order to bring the script to stage, but his approach maintained a close correspondence to the original text.

The El Paso performance was divided into acts and several scenes. Modern English pronunciation and prose were used with a brief interruption at the beginning of the Second Act, when Marcia entered on stage reciting verses from a book about love. Several passages of Zayas’s text were eliminated, perhaps in order to shorten performance time; Lauro was excluded as a character; and an intermission was added after the second act. Text changes would

have been noted only by those who have worked closely with Zayas's text. For example, Felix, Laura's servant, was portrayed as comical in the Chamizal performance, rather than interpreted as a confidant who seriously held his responsibility to care for Laura. As she fainted on stage, Felix tried to console Laura yet was afraid to touch her, and then humorously fell on top of her. Laura's entrance to speak with Marcia and Belisa regarding Liseo's infidelity was not as dramatic as implied in the original script. A cloaked and disguised Marcia faced and spoke with Liseo while on the center platform, rather than from a balcony. Finally, during the last scene, Fenisa and Belisa drew swords and began to awkwardly duel. The director justified the duel by literally interpreting Zayas's message to women "to take arms."

Key theatrical elements to consider in the El Paso Performance are those that Stroud listed from Konstantin Stanislavski's *Building a Character*: "diction, costuming, movement...the kind of stage, the ground plan, the scenery, the props and how they are handled, lighting, makeup, acting styles, tension between characters, acting areas, the positions of individual actors alone and in groups, the spoken words, their delivery, phrasing, dialects, and relationship to the subtext" (35, 36). Of these elements, the costumes were the only conspicuous anachronism that existed in this performance. They were contrary to Mowry Roberts' suggestion that setting and costume be "expressive of the mood and spirit of the play, of its historical and geographical locale, and of the particular segment of society

which it presents”(364). The 18th century French-style men’s costumes were notably out of place, particularly the lace and effeminate outfits and hair. The choice of costumes was indicative of the play’s characterization of the men as the weaker gender, notably apparent in one of the lead male roles, Gerardo. His virtuous love and rejection by Marcia were accentuated with feminine mannerisms and exaggerated by his fainting and woeful demeanor. Fenisa was seductively dressed with a low-cut, pants-like outfit, similar to Goya’s *La maja vestida*, unlike the dresses commonly worn during the 17th century. Fenisa’s seductive outfit emphasized and reinforced her significant and principal role in the performance as an alluring and beguiling siren. Although she was portrayed as an outcast at the end of the performance, the spectators were not disenchanted with her dominant, egotistical and indulgent personality. She represented a woman that everyone recognizes, as one who is not to be trusted, yet still captivates. Fenisa’s performance as well as her costume made it difficult to ignore and deny her. As a result, the other women’s roles in the performance were secondary and not as engrossing as the seductive Fenisa.

The Director’s use of space, props, and asides to the audience is also noteworthy in the El Paso performance. The stage setting was simple, yet functional. There were two benches, one at the right, upstage behind the platform, another downstage at the left forefront. A taller platform or landing with two sets of stairs at each side was at left upstage. While the original text indicated an interior

and exterior of a building, a balcony with a window, and a reference to a park in Madrid, the stage setting in the Chamizal Theater was unadorned and stationary. The stairs with a landing represented a balcony, and the center platform (a large octagon), an area where significant and captivating monologues or dialogues were recited. Although the size of the center platform was at times cumbersome and awkward, it served as a prominent focal point. It was evident that the center of stage was designated as a dominant space. Those main characters privileged to stand on the platform stood alone in the spotlight, or knelt, which exemplified the fact that "the varying strengths of the different areas were used to establish emphasis and subordination in composition because a character in a strong area tended to be more dominant than a character in a weak area"(Dietrich, 109). Like a traffic circle, the center platform also diverted the flow of the characters' movement on stage. As indicated by Staub: "often the most obvious route of movement is neither the smoothest nor the straightest. If the actor does not know how to move in the proper body position, or if he is clumsy moving up and down levels, the director should be prepared to coach him in horizontal and vertical movement patterns"(258). The benches were multi-functional. Primarily, they were seats for the actors and actresses (at one moment, Belisa embroidered while seated on the left bench). One bench was utilized as a shield by Gerardo to guard against Fenisa while she seductively approached him; another bench, a lounge while Laura reclined in lamentation. The setting provided

horizontal and vertical movement throughout the stage, although at times the milling around distracted from the delivery of the script. A break from onstage activity was the stopping of all action while the characters recited asides to the audience. The characters deliberately froze in their spot onstage, immediately after their lines or gestures. This technique gave a much-needed pause and rest from the play's quick tempo, as well as from the continuous movement throughout the stage. It provided a successful delivery of asides while other actors remained onstage, without causing yet another distraction by actors and actresses exiting and entering scenes.

Unlike the El Paso production, the 2003 Almagro premiere performance of *La traición en la amistad*, in the open-roofed patio with balconies of the Palace of the Fúcares, by Volarte Producciones represents "a 'director's theater' or 'concept' production, where the actual performance may depart from the text. Even in productions that try to remain true to the text, we can also see that there are some factors beyond the control of the text, such as the actors' physical characteristics" (Stroud, 37). Other significant performative dimensions to be considered are: "how actors create meaning in their respective roles, how a play text's meaning may vary from cast to cast, how the director's guidance affects interpretation, and how the technical effects (scenery, lighting, sound, makeup, costuming, camera angles, etc.) may shape the final performance" (Brown, 4). The director, Mariano Paco Serrano, clearly expressed his initial intrigue of *La traición*

en la amistad in the July 2003 Almagro XXVI International Festival of Classical Theater Program:

De ser una lectura más pasó a convertirse en una idea recurrente e ilusionada. La obra de María de Zayas me perseguía, ahora lo sé, de una manera sutil, nunca forzada, con el tesón de aquellas cosas se saben importantes pero se lo toman con paciencia, porque están seguras de que, más tarde o más temprano, van a salir. Así ha sido y aquí estamos, apostando por ella [n. pag.].

Although he retained the manuscript's Spanish verse, de Paco Serrano chose anachronistic technical elements in his production, such as modern props (a bicycle, acrylic containers and chairs, a plastic fuel container) and contemporary music. Aside from the utility of the props as part of the setting on an otherwise bare stage, the choice of the props presented to the spectator an opportunity to seek and interpret symbolic meaning. The bicycle that Don Juan rode on to the stage is not an early 17th century but a later invention; yet, it functioned as a mode of transportation that indicated a change of scene to an imaginary "exterior" of a building. The acrylic chairs provided seating for three actors or actresses, while the translucence of their material permitted the lighting to penetrate and not reflect or overpower other colors on stage. The three large acrylic planter-like bowls which contained a small portion of water, a single goldfish in each, and a ring placed in one by Lucía, provided a prop that could be easily moved back and forth from downstage to upstage without much effort. At times, the actresses spoke and stirred the water in the contain-

ners while the fish gracefully swam about, which suggested a close connection to the vigilance and restrictions of their own lives. The ring that had been placed in one container symbolized the commitment of marriage that was sought by the women from their *galanes*, particularly by Laura from Liseo. The many props that Gerardo used emphasized his desperation and forlorn character: a plastic fuel container and matches, a large noose around his neck, and a dagger pierced to his chest. Although we as spectators may consider these props as indications of Gerardo's suicidal tendencies, we also can interpret the props as symbolic of his deep love for Marcia: the ardent feelings which burn his heart and soul, the perpetual sensation of "hanging on" to a hope that Marcia will eventually reciprocate; the "heartfelt" pain of truly loving someone.

The Almagro performance, unlike the El Paso Performance and Zayas's manuscript, was a continuous flow of events, with minimal and short breaks between scenes. There was no intermission, nor was there a clear indication of when an act or *jornada* ended and another began. In Zayas's original text, there was very little music: the musicians, Antonio and Fabio, played as they sang an *endecha* for the melancholic Gerardo, Marcia's persistent suitor. Music became, however, a major element in de Paco Serrano's production. There were live songs sung from backstage by both men and women, recordings of "blues" played after major scenes, background music (at times played loudly) while soliloquies were recited, and songs sung or hummed onstage. The music's tempo accompanied

the actors' lines, actions, and movements onstage as well. Stanislavski emphasized that: "to bring music, singing, words, and action into unison is not an external, physical tempo that is required, but an internal, spiritual one. It must be felt in the sounds, in the words, in the action, in the gestures, in the moves, in the whole production" (Benedetti, 49). The Almagro spectators were not only audibly and visually captivated, but also were mesmerized and soothed by the various forms of sound and music. Additional sounds resonated throughout the small, intimate area of the patio: for example, drumming in the background while Gerardo lamented his love for Marcia; the deep and low wail of a saxophone played after Marcia, Belisa, and Laura revealed to the audience their plan to avenge Fenisa's betrayal and Liseo's deceit; the tolling of a bell; and a pestle stirred in an empty mortar created a ring and a hum during Liseo's aside to the audience.

Characters were eliminated from the Almagro Performance: the *gracioso* (León), Laura's *criado* (Felix), one of Fenisa's suitors (Lauro), and the musicians, Antonio and Fabio. The spectator unfamiliar with Zayas's text would not be aware of the director's alterations and his modernization of the original text, with the exception of those familiar with the *comedia*, and its indispensable character of the *gracioso*. The *galanes*, Liseo and Don Juan, partially assumed the comic role and delivered some of the *gracioso*'s humorous yet discerning lines while dancing jovially on to the stage, or riding a bicycle.

One of the most noteworthy actors of the performance played the role of Gerardo. In accordance

to Stanislavski: "The 'system' encourages the flourishing of the actor's individual traits. The laws for the behavior of all actors are the same, but each reincarnation will be different, and the personality of each actor will always stamp his stage creations with his own distinctive mark" (Moore, 10, 11). The actor Pepe Viyuela depicted Gerardo as masculine, but woefully and pitifully desperate for Marcia's attention. He greatly contrasted with the feminine and feeble role depicted in the El Paso Performance. The actor's gestures and facial expressions reinforced messages. His desperation was relayed to the spectators not only through his verses, but through body language and positions onstage, and through the use of props. There were several scenes where Gerardo's delivery of lines was exaggerated by slow-paced and coupled gestures. The actor's stage actions and lines were as rhythmic as the music that had accompanied several scenes. This reinforces Stanislavski's suggestion that "stage action, like speech, must be musical. Movement must follow a continuous line, like a role from a stringed instrument, or, when necessary, stop short like the staccato of a coloratura soprano... The tempo and the rhythm of the action must correspond to the music" (Benedetti, 48). A scene which drew the audience's applause was Fenisa's attempt to seduce Gerardo. As he slowly took off the noose around his neck, *ritardando*, he gradually melted before her and then very reluctantly departed offstage. Another notable scene was when he and the love of his life, Marcia, delivered their asides to the audience while both were present onstage. At the end of their solilo-

quies, the two joined together joyously and in tears, kissed passionately, only to be abruptly interrupted by Don Juan who had been listening while standing at the back of the stage. Gerardo once again left grudgingly and stupefied as if entranced.

The characterization of the women in the performance closely followed Zayas's text. Belisa, Marcia, and Laura were represented as principal and vital characters. Marcia presented herself as confident, majestic, and practical. Belisa acted headstrong and emotional, and Laura was beautiful, mystifying, yet naïve and distraught. Fenisa was alluring and sexy, particularly in the scene when she and Liseo stood close by and stared at each other while he read her letter relaying her desire to be with him. Fenisa's seductiveness was also displayed in a scene between her and Liseo, as she slowly picked up torn pieces of a letter directly in front of him. However, Fenisa did not upstage the other women in the Almagro production. Even Lucía, Fenisa's servant and confidant, was depicted as a principal character, although at times as a mysterious and silent presence. Her movements onstage were as deliberate and calculated as her verses. She entered scenes with a mystifying aura, did not participate in dialogue, and yet, became as symbolic and important as the props she moved or held. Not until after several scenes did the actress who portrayed Lucía speak and represent the conscience that Fenisa lacked. She reinforced what is considered essential to "good theater": "theater of profound thought and profound spiritual experience. In good theater an actor creates the inner experiences

of the character, incarnates them, and makes this creative process understandable to the audience” (Moore, 18).

This 21st century production did not lose sight of the underlying message of the importance of women’s solidarity against friendship’s betrayal and infidelity. The spectator was not mesmerized by Fenisa’s seduction alone, but by each actress who represented vital characteristics of a woman’s entire composite. De Paco Serrano’s resolution of Fenisa’s betrayal of her friendship was not to place her in the forefront, but rather to treat her with a certain amount of contempt, intolerance, and ostracism from the circle of friends at the end of the performance. A final kiss by Marcia left Fenisa shunned onstage without friend or suitor. As Brown explained: “Because playwrights are limited to those elements that an audience can hear and see—dialogue and movement—much of a drama’s tension and interest lie in what is known as the subtext, the characters’ emotions and motives implied but not directly expressed by the text itself” (3). In this performance, messages were relayed while song, dance, gestures, and verses entertained. The performance brought Zayas’s text to life without sacrificing meaning nor compromising the integrity of the original. The spectator was entertained, but at the same time relieved that Fenisa received her just punishment for betraying her friends.

NOTES

¹ Manuel Serrano y Sanz included María de Zayas's biography and *comedia* in his *Apuntes para una biblioteca de escritoras españolas desde el año 1401 al 1833*.

²In Valerie Hegstrom's edition of *La traición en la amistad*, Catherine Larson provided the prose translation of Zayas's text into English.

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PERFORMING MALE PREGNANCY IN LANINI Y SAGREDO'S *EL PARTO DE JUAN RANA*

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Who can deny that the ultimate case of “el mundo al revés” characteristic of the *entremés* genre might include a pregnant man who suddenly goes into labor and gives birth on stage just in time to end the farce by dancing and singing with his new born son? While Lanini y Sagredo's *El parto de Juan Rana* (c. 1638-40) seems to take gender and sexual transgression to a hilarious extreme, this *entremés* actually enacts many of the anxieties related to women's reproductive health (including conception, pregnancy, and childbirth) as well as issues of paternity, abnormal births, and other “monstrosities” such as intersexed bodies and homosexuality.¹

While the idea of male pregnancy may seem over-the-top to some, the concept is not new. According to the Greeks “the male alone was the true parent, the true *genere*, since only the male was capable of the act of generation” (Zoja 115). In ancient mythology Zeus delivered Athena from his

forehead and Dionysus from his thigh, while some Chinese Buddhas open their stomachs to reveal cuddling babies (Perreault 305). Along similar lines, like the images of the birth of Eve from the side of Adam and the "birth" of Ecclesia from the pierced side of Christ, maternal imagery was frequently included in medieval religious works when discussing God or male authority figures (Bynum 147, Zapperi 3-32). In European folklore, legends of pregnant men have persisted in numerous versions and adaptations for centuries. Frequently based on the confusion of a blood or urine sample from a pregnant woman but attributed to a man, these tales often reveal fantasies of male omnipotence (Zapperi 71). Likewise present among the cultural traditions of early modern Europe was the symbolic ritual of the *couvade*, in which the husband of an expectant wife engaged in mimetic childbirth, "pretending to have borne the baby himself. The man goes to bed and lives through the birth: he writhes and moans, his face is distorted with pain; when the labour is over, the baby is given to him to cuddle and soothe" (Gélis 37).

When discussing the recurring fantasy of a child born from man alone, Rosi Braidotti looks to alchemy as the *reductio ad absurdum* of the male desire for self-reproduction, as a tiny man-made male pops out of the alchemist's laboratory, fully formed and endowed with language (87). Accordingly, Paracelsus, the master theoretician of alchemy, is certain that a man should and could be born outside a woman's body: "The assumption is that the alchemist can not only imitate the work of woman but

they can do it better because the artificial process of science and technique perfect the imperfection of the natural course of events and thus avoids mistakes. Once reproduction becomes the pure result of mental efforts, the appropriation of the feminine is complete" (Braidotti 87-88).

As Thomas Laquer notes, biological and intellectual conception are closely related in Aristotle. Therefore, "normal" conception is for the male to have an idea in the uterus of the woman while "abnormal" conception (or *mola*, which is a monstrous product of the womb attributed to self-insemination) is "a conceit for her having an ill-gotten and inadequate idea of her own" (Laquer 59). Of course, examples of childbirth as metaphor for creative literary production abound. Perhaps one of the more famous early modern cases is found in the beginning of Cervantes' prologue to *Don Quixote*: "Y así ¿qué podrá engendrar el estéril y mal cultivado ingenio mío sino la historia de un hijo seco..." (50).

Like Cervantes, Lanini y Sagredo begins *El parto de Juan Rana* by establishing the relationship between procreation and patriarchal intellectual fecundity. When the local officials discuss Juan Rana's crime of having transgressed gender, anatomical, and sexuality proscriptions by becoming pregnant, they echo the scientific theories of "ingenios" detailed by the sixteenth-century medical authority Juan Huarte de San Juan in his *Examen de ingenios para las ciencias*. That is, man's ability to conceive new ideas and give birth to them is the result of the body's humoral makeup, which determines the individual's intellectual and creative apti-

tudes. Like the mayor Berrueco in *El parto*, Huarte uses the language of procreation to explain what makes men *ingeniosos*: "Se empeña y pare y tiene hijos y nietos... se llaman genios por ser fecundos en producir y engendrar conceptos tocantes a ciencia y sabiduría" (188-89). The bottom line, then, is the connection between the body, knowledge, and power, which in *El parto* is played out in the dilemma created by a man who should not have the capacity to bear children but as an *alcalde* Juan Rana should possess the intellectual power to give birth to new concepts and solutions generally expected of a political figure:

- Berrueco: Alcalde siendo, aun más delito era
siendo fecundo, que hay estéril fuera?
Escribano: ¿Necedad es bien rara
fecundo queréis sea?
Berrueco: Pues la vara a un Alcalde absoluto
¿de que provecho le es, si no da fruto?
Escribano: ¿La vara comparáis agora al sexo?
Berrueco: Vos, escribano, no entendéis bien de
eso;
una vara concibe dos mil cosas
luego puede parirlas prodigiosas. (1)

Of course in the interlude the *vara* of patriarchal power and authority also serves as a phallic symbol of Juan Rana's sexual behavior that led to the present scandal. Peter Thompson notes, however, that the pregnant man must combine both phallo- and gynocentric images: "Juan Rana's *vara* symbolizes phallocentric powers, but the fact remains that Juan Rana's pregnancy is proof of his female fertility. What is implied here is that Juan Rana's character in *El parto* is a fruitful example of

both genders in one, namely, that his double-sexed condition makes him a hermaphrodite" (324). Given the sexual indeterminacy of the hermaphrodite, it may not be surprising that the seventeenth-century doctor Paolo Zacchia wrote of a hermaphrodite soldier named Daniel, who became pregnant. Despite the fact that Daniel also had a penis, Zacchia refers to him/her as a woman since s/he "could have had a prolapsed uterus" (Finucci *Manly*, 55).

How, then, do the other characters in *El parto* explain this "más liviana fea culpa"? One attempt to justify the inexplicable condition incriminates Juan Rana's nontraditional marriage to his *marimacho* wife Aldonza:²

- Escribano: Primeramente,
el que siendo casado
Juan Rana con Aldonza nunca ha dado
indicios de ser hombre, pues Aldonza
(al susodicho) siendo una persona
era quien le mandaba,
le reñía y a veces le pegaba,
logrando en sus contiendas
que él hiciera de casa las haciendas,
que barriese, fregase y que pusiese
la olla, y aun a sus mandados fuese.
- Berrueco: La probanza esta llana
del delito que importa a Juan Rana
del preñado supuesto
que si el permitió que los cabrones
su mujer se pusiese en oraciones,
ser el preñado él no es demásí,
pues hizo lo que ella hacer debía. (5-6)

So the logical conclusion, taken to the extreme, reasons that if he was doing all other womanly duties then why wouldn't *he* be the one to get pregnant

and give birth? We might also conclude, then, that this case serves as a warning to others who transgress traditional gender roles: gender nonconformity can result in an anatomical sex transmutation. Not surprisingly, *El parto* reveals numerous references to and jokes about same-sex desire. At the beginning of the *entremés* Berrueco announces that Juan Rana “para hembra es mejor que para hombre” (1) while also confirming that in no way is he a real man (“nunca ha dado indicios de ser hombre” (5), “por no ser Juan Rana hombre en nada”) (8), and later when Juan Rana speaks in his own defense, he refers to himself in the feminine: “Valga también confesaros/ que no soy culpada en nada” (8). While the audience waits during much of the interlude for the climactic entrance of the pregnant Juan Rana or as Thompson describes him “an over-the-top, pregnant drag queen” (326), even the other visiting mayors participate in burlesque homoerotic gags. At least one mayor, for example, sits on the lap of another, which inspires jokes about him being a pack-saddle on a donkey, as another makes suggestive comments distinguishing which *alcalde* is the top and which is the bottom, etc. (“¿El alcalde de abajo y el de arriba?”) (4).³

While the audience of *El parto* may or may not have been aware, like the actor/protagonist’s name, frogs were not only linked to the term “buffoon” (“de la palabra Latina *bufo*, *nis*, por el sapo... por estar echando de su boca veneno de malicias y desvergüenças, con que entretienen a los necios e indiscretos”) (Covarrubias 243) and the related *buffo* (male singer of comic roles in opera) but they like-

wise have been used to represent the uterus and female sexuality for centuries.⁴ The Church, in particular, has manipulated the image of frogs and toads as symbols of fornication and immorality, frequently associating them with female sex organs and demonic involvement (Lovkrona 117).

Interestingly, ancient and medieval versions of the legend of Nero's pregnancy reveal many issues that would reappear later in Lanini y Sagredo's *entremés*. Among other crimes and vices, Nero was known for being the bride in at least two homosexual marriages. It was also believed that his transgressive sexual behavior caused his stomach to swell so much, creating such pain that his doctors believed him to be pregnant. However, he reportedly died when they opened his belly in the vain attempt to remove a fetus (cited in Zapperi 112-113). Other medieval German and Latin versions of Nero's life recount how his intense wish to give birth to a child convinced his doctors to prescribe him a magic potion which would cause him to become pregnant. The medical treatment proved effective but when it came time to give birth he only succeeded in delivering a frog from his mouth (Frazer 215). Undoubtedly an interesting precedent for Juan Rana's performance in *El parto*, the story of Nero's desire to become pregnant most likely was inspired by the role that he played on stage in *Cannace In Childbirth* (told in Euripides' lost tragedy *Aiolos* and in Ovid's *Heroides*). As R.M. Frazer notes, "Imagine the ruler of the Roman Empire playing on the public stage a woman in childbirth!" (215). Referring to the significance of the frog in

Nero's pregnancy tale, Frazer argues that it can be interpreted in terms of an ill-willed critique of his "rather froggy-sounding" singing voice (217). Moreover, it seems that the two actors also shared certain physical features that could be compared to a frog-like physique. Suetonius, for example, describes Nero as "regular rather than attractive, his eyes blue and somewhat weak, his neck overthick, his belly prominent, and his legs very slender" (cited in Frazer 217). Similarly, Hannah Bergman suggests that the stage name "Juan Rana" was inspired by the physical attributes featured in his portrait "con su cuerpo tan redondo e hinchado, la cabezota grande, hasta una vaga sugestión de joroba, realmente tiene figura de rana" (67).

Like the readers and spectators of the pregnant Nero legend, the seventeenth-century audience was well aware of the suspicions of homosexuality associated with Cosme Pérez, the actor behind the stage name Juan Rana. Scholars such as Peter Thompson, José Cartagena-Calderón, and Frederic Serralta argue that the 1636 sodomy charges against the actor as well as his frequent gender-bending roles on stage prove that the public undoubtedly must have assigned a gay subtext to Juan Rana's performances. Cartagena-Calderón, for example, cites a line from Agustín Moreto's 1662 play, *El lindo don Diego* to show how Juan Rana's celebrity icon had become a symbol for homosexuality: "La sexualidad 'nefanda' de don Diego queda todavía más patente cuando en medio de una discusión éste le reprocha a su rival, don Juan: '[u]sted me tiene por rana' ..., alusión que en el contexto de esta pieza el

público de entonces no hubiera tenido la menor dificultad de asociarla con la figura teatral de Juan Rana" (Cartagena-Calderón 166).

Cosme Pérez's overwhelming popularity with the royal family as well as with the general public undoubtedly influenced the decision to release the actor from jail instead of enforcing the death penalty normally expected for the crime of sodomy.⁵ In fact, despite the potential scandal, Pérez was later granted a pension for life from the Queen "en consideración de lo que la hace reír" (Duque de Nájera, cited in Bergman 68). This royal favor is likewise believed responsible, in part, for an existing portrait of the actor, given that portraiture of thespians in early modern Spain was extremely rare. (Bergman 70). Rather than assume that the portrait reveals a faithful resemblance to Cosme Pérez, Evangelina Rodríguez Cuadros links the artistic proscription for painting the figure of the "bobo, necio o simple" described by Vicente Carducho in his *Diálogos de la pintura* (1633) with the "almost caricaturesque" nature of the anonymous artist's portrait of the famous actor: "el hundimiento del cuello, los perfiles gruesos de toda la fisonomía que se acentúa en la curvatura del vientre, la cortedad de miembros, la mirada caída, los bellos insinuados" (Rodríguez Cuadros 273).

Not surprisingly, the representation of gays in film often utilized character actors who, like Cosme Pérez, look funny "in that they look comic and in that they look in a real sense deformed" (Saunders 8). This "comic ugliness of the sissy" described by Michael William Saunders in his study on gay mon-

sters in film is also referenced by Ernest Larsen in his analysis of the casting of Danny DeVito opposite Arnold Schwarzenegger as a pregnant scientist in the 1994 Hollywood comedy *Junior*. Saunders argues that DeVito's homeliness defuses the transgressive potential of the implied homoerotic undercurrent in the plot: "An actor in the role who was in the least conventionally attractive would have propelled the film into dangerous territory" (243). We might wonder, then, if the "comic ugliness of the sissy" associated with the early modern actor Cosme Pérez helped to avoid similarly dangerous territory. In fact, the mere physical appearance of Juan Rana evoked laughter: "Sólo con salir a las tablas, y sin hablar, provocaba a risa y al aplauso" (cited in Cotarelo y Mori clxi).

Needless to say, the "beer belly" visible in the portrait of Juan Rana and referred to in the play was not a far cry from his role as pregnant man. Therefore, we might assume that the actor did not need to pad his stomach for his pre-delivery appearance. While his affection for food and liquor in the past was the reason for his extended abdomen, his new aversion to eating cannot stop his growing stomach from announcing the imminent delivery:

Escribano: Juan Rana le ha crecido
el vientre de manera
que una cuba parece.

Alcalde Tercero: Antes lo era
de vino.

Escribano: Y le han faltado
las ganas de comer, que en un preñado
son las señas fatales.

Alcalde Cuarto: Y en él, que es un glotón, son más señales. (6)

Just as Huarte described the effeminate male as being flabby and having a soft-spoken voice (622), Rodríguez Cuadros notes that references to the actor's high-pitched voice ("voz atiplada") have been used to speculate on his possible homosexuality but also point to his ability to comically "ajustar determinadas desventajas físicas para una habilísima construcción de una máscara" (273). In fact, his effeminate voice and gender-bending on stage are mentioned in Agustín Moreto's *Loa de Juan Rana*:

A la Escamilla imita
Rana en los tonos,
pues haga él las terceras,
y ella gracioso. (cited in Rodríguez-Cuadros 468)

Interesting for the study of *El parto* is the fact that when Juan Rana finally gives birth, it is the actress Manuela de Escamilla, as a young girl, who plays the part of his newborn son Juan Ranilla (Cotarelo y Mori, cclxxii). Therefore, following Moreto's verses quoted above, in *El parto* Juan Rana appears on stage dressed in women's clothing and nine months pregnant while the young female actress is cast and dressed as a boy. According to the early modern theater documents compiled in the *Genealogía*, Manuela de Escamilla began acting on stage in 1636 at the age of seven, playing *terceras damas* in *sainetes* and later returned to Madrid to play the recurring role of Juan Ranilla (Shergold and Varey 421). We might assume, then, since Manuela de Escamilla was still a child when acting in *El parto*, that the interlude was performed not

long after news of the actor's sodomy charges were common knowledge for theater-goers.

As a result, the male pregnancy plot surely must have resonated with audience members in terms of the consequences of Cosme Pérez's sexual behavior more with other men than with Juan Rana's domineering wife Aldonza and their gender role reversal. In fact, his own humorous pleadings while in labor play on references to same-sex partners in the past. As Juan Rana screams with pain and begs for relief, his water breaks and he bemoans the absence of a midwife to assist with the birth: "Señores, piedad, que rota/ ¡Tengo ya la fuente! ¡Qué haya/ de parir yo sin comadre/ habiendo tenido tantas!" (9). Besides the common usage of *comadre* as midwife, the term was also used to describe the blunt and perhaps difficult woman who is also prone to gossip: "la mujer enojada, y aun sin enojarse, no sabe guardar secreto" (Covarrubias 340). Therefore the joke might refer to his experience with women like his bossy and controlling wife Aldonza. The big laugh here, however, most likely comes from the implied play on words between *comadre* and *comadrero*, which according to Covarrubias is "el hombre que anda metido con mujeres y gusta sólo de la conversación de unas y de otras, por entretenerse, es mucho de viejos o de hombres fríos y maricones" (340).⁶ This clear reference to the description of the effeminate male is frequently associated with "el pecado nefando" or sodomy. Huarte, in his essentialist argument, constructs an explanation for the existence of feminine men by linking pregnancy, gender transgression, and homosexuality:

Muchas veces ha hecho Naturaleza una hembra y lo ha sido uno y dos meses en el vientre de su madre, y sobreviniéndoles a los miembros genitales copia de calor por alguna ocasión, salir afuera y quedar hecho varón. A quien esta transmutación le aconteciere en el vientre de su madre, se conoce después claramente en ciertos movimientos que tiene, indecentes al sexo viril: mujeriles, mariosos, la voz blanda y melosa; son los tales inclinados a hacer obras de mujeres, y caen ordinariamente en el pecado nefando. (608-9)

While this transmutation may occur before birth, it was generally believed that postnatal spontaneous sex changes could only happen to women who transform into men, because: "we... never find... that any man ever became a woman, because Nature tends always toward what is most perfect and not, on the contrary, to perform in such a way that what is perfect should become imperfect" (Paré 33). Paolo Zacchia's early modern medical jurisprudential text *Questionum medico-legalium* explains this in terms of thermodynamics, arguing that men cannot transform into women because the heat characteristic of men drives forward, it does not contract and therefore the penis cannot retreat inward; whereas with an onset of heat in women, the sexual member may propel itself outward (Laquer 140-42).

Certainly early modern medical wisdom would argue against the possibility that a man could acquire the female reproductive organs necessary to conceive and give birth, despite the belief that some individuals (such as eunuchs) can degenerate into a "womanish nature, by deficiency of heat" (Jones and Stallybrass 86). Surprisingly though, for suc-

cessful fertility results for masculine women, Huarte suggests a coupling that greatly resembles the Juan Rana-Aldonza marriage. In the chapter "Qué mujer con qué hombre se ha de casar para que pueda concebir" Huarte recommends: "La mujer fría y húmeda en el primer grado, cuyas señales dijimos que eran ser avisada, de mala condición, con voz abultada, de pocas carnes, verdinegra, vellosa y fea. Esta se empreñará fácilmente de un hombre nescio, bien acondicionado, que tuviere la voz blanda y melosa, muchas carnes, blancas y blandas, con poco vello" (624), despite the fact that the author also claims that such men are "inhábil para engendrar. Estos no son muy amigos de las mujeres ni las mujeres de ellos" (622).

Of course, in *El parto* it is not just the gender role confusion in marriage that leads to Juan Rana's pregnancy. The female announcer suggests that a biological failure in the mail (male) delivery is the root of his "faults":

La naturaleza humana
escribió a Juan Rana antes
ya le faltaron las cartas.
Sus faltas ha descubierto
y en nueve faltas,
cuantas palabras pronuncia
son ya palabras preñadas. (8)

The suggestive use of "pregnant words" is described by Covarrubias as words that literally communicate much more than they mean ("las que contienen virtualmente mucho más de lo que espresan") (880). Therefore, the audience is invited to read between the lines and discover what is "miss-

ing.” Likewise, the author humorously plays with variations of “faltar”: missing letters, mistakes, and nine missed periods. While the idea of a “menstruating man” may seem like an oxymoron, some early modern Iberian physicians (such as Andrés de Laguna, Juan de Quiñones, and Isaac Cardoso) wrote about the affliction as a sign of the consequences of being idle, effeminate, and/or a judaizer (Pomata 113, 120-21).

I would argue that *El parto de Juan Rana* plays with both the gender and sexuality transgression that led to the protagonist’s condition of being “with child” as well as the cultural preoccupation with patriarchal control over reproductive practices. Once Juan Rana gives birth (“Sale por debajo de las faldas Juan Ranilla con sayo”) (9), the new debate centers on issues of paternity, or whether he is really the child’s father, despite the fact that the birth was witnessed by six mayors, a court clerk, and the female announcer. Like the well-known saying “*Pater semper incertus est, mater est certissima*,” fathers could only hope they engendered the fetuses their partners carried and delivered (Finucci “Maternal,” 41). This fear led many early modern writers to express similar sentiments. Castiglione’s *El libro del cortesano* for example, explains that since the female sex is imperfect and not trustworthy, men must control women’s chastity “porque no estemos en duda de nuestros mismos hijos, si son nuestros o ajenos” (330). Juan Rana, following suit, tried to exculpate himself by implying that his child was not conceived by any external participant or any impropriety on his part. Like the Virgin Mary’s

Immaculate Conception, Juan Rana was not impregnated by man: "Valga también confesaros/ que no soy culpada en nada/ pues este chichón viviente/ ningún tropezón le causa./ Y por fin, valga advertiros/ que si en las yeguas se halla/ concebir del viento, pueden/ lo mismo hacer los Juan Ranas" (8-9). Like Juan Rana's reference to "wind eggs" (*hupenemia*) that are produced without male involvement, both Aristotle and Virgil wrote of mares who were impregnated by the wind.⁷ In this way, Juan Rana becomes the "monstrous mother" described by Marie Hélène Huet: "a blasphemous parody of the cult of the Virgin Mary. In erasing all traces of the progeny's legitimate father, the monstrous mother replicated, and derides, the Immaculate Conception" (30).⁸

In a pre-DNA paternity testing era, resemblance played a key role in linking fathers to their babies. Accordingly, one of the witnesses quickly confirms the physical resemblance after Juan Ranilla pops out from under his father/mother's skirt: "Su retrato es el muchacho/ en talla y en rostro" (10). While the child recognizes Juan Rana as his "mamá" one witness notes the hybridity of his new role: "No niega/ en madre a su padre" (10). Although the proud child-bearing father greets his offspring with joy, he soon begins to look for proof that this boy is truly his: "Aun falta/el saber si es mi hijo, pues/ puede ser que otro lo haya/ hecho en mi ausencia" (10). When asked how he can prove his paternity, he responds that the test will be a father-son comparison while dancing the *zarambeque* (a lively and joyful African dance commonly performed in the inter-

ludes) (Cotarelo y Mori cclxxi-iii). As they dance together and are soon joined and imitated by the other mayors, Juan Rana celebrates the similarity: "Que se me parece,/ ay, mi Juan Ranilla,/ ¡en el zarambeque!" (10).

Based on Aristotle's definition of a monster as that which does not resemble its progenitors ("they generate offspring which, owing to its imperfect state, is unlike its parents: —for monstrosities come under the class of offspring which is unlike its parents") (425), theories of false resemblance were frequently attributed to the relationship between procreation, art, and the mother's imagination. Referring to illustrations such as Paré's drawing of a frog-faced boy (born to a mother who had been holding a frog in her hand during conception), Marie Hélène Huet discusses the role of visual images during both conception and again after birth through the artistic rendition of the monstrous newborn: "These drawings had a twofold importance: they provide concrete evidence for tales of extraordinary births, and they possessed a tangibility that was more striking than words. Most of all, they duplicated in frightening detail the workings of the maternal imagination" (16). Huarte de San Juan, on the other hand, rejects the Aristotelian belief that a visual image could impact the mother's imagination, which would thereby control the physical appearance of her offspring: "También se cuenta por ahí que una señora parió un hijo más moreno de lo que convenía por estar imaginando en un rostro negro que estaba en un guadamecil, lo cual tengo por gran burla; y si por ventura fue verdad que lo parió,

yo digo que el padre que lo engendró tenía el mismo color que la figura del guadamecil” (653). Nonetheless, like his contemporaries, Huarte was also preoccupied with issues of resemblance and anxieties about infidelity and paternity, even offering suggestions to fathers who want their children to take after them and not the mother:

Si la simiente del padre vence del todo, saca el hijo su figura y costumbres; y cuando la simiente de la madre es más poderosa, corre la misma razón. Por donde el padre que quisiere que su hijo se haga de su propia simiente, se ha de ausentar algunos días de su mujer y aguardar que se cueza y madure, y entonces es cierto que él hará la generación y la simiente de su mujer servirá de alimento. (669)

As the early modern medical community began to invade the exclusively female domain of giving birth by questioning the competency and integrity of midwives, the emergence of male-authored texts on the subject during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries is not unusual. As Julie Sanders points out, it was “the male anxiety surrounding childbirth that led to the eventual penetration of this space by male doctors and more generally by the discourse of the New Science” (77). One way this fear is manifested is through the tendency in early modern manuals on pregnancy and childbirth to emphasize the sensational stories of problematic or monstrous births. The first obstetrical text written in Castilian, Damián Carbón’s 1541 *Libro del arte de las comadres o madrinas* focuses more on problems during pregnancy and childbirth than on normal deliveries.⁹ Likewise, the second treatise on childbirth in

Spain (written by Francisco Núñez and published in 1580) specified its alarmist theme in the title: *Libro del parto humano en el cual se contienen remedios muy útiles y usuales para el parto dificultoso de las mujeres*. Even Juan Alonso's 1606 treatise on pregnancy *Diez privilegios de preñadas* begins with a discussion of monsters and why women should not be considered monstrous merely because they are dissimilar from the perfection of being male (9-10v).

If we compare the pregnancy and birthing scene in *El parto* with other early modern representations of childbirth we discover certain common features that are not as hyperbolic as one might expect from such a fantastical *entremés*. Surely the audience was accustomed to the narrative and visual strategies employed in the sensationalist illustrated *relaciones* or news pamphlets recounting the births of abnormal and hybrid "monsters." In a 1688 *relación*, for example, the description of the recent birth of a child with both primary sex characteristics also manipulates the reaction of disbelief of those present at the birth in order to shock and entice the reader, who is also witness to the prodigious event. The first page provides an initial physical description and illustration of the child—who is born with normal female genitalia but also possesses a male penis in the middle of his/her face. Likewise, the baby has no eyes or nose but has three big teeth in his/her mouth, six fingers on each hand, and two holes in one ear, through which the child wheezed. Then, after discussing the shocking nature of monsters in general, the text relates certain details of the par-

ticular delivery featured in the news pamphlet. Like Juan Rana's experience in labor, the mother endures difficult pain but unlike the comical male mother, she is assisted by an experienced midwife. As soon as the midwife declares "Ea hija, mira que no has parido" the baby suddenly appears between the sheets and the midwife discards the afterbirth saying "Gracias a Dios, que salimos con vitoria, que lo nacido ya está seguro."¹⁰ Then the real dramatic spectacle begins: "Descubrieron la criatura, que viéndola los que se hallaron presentes, por mucho rato quedaron en un profundo silencio atónitos, y pasmados, mirándose los unos a los otros, por ver tal monstruosidad." Like watching a horror film, the reader waits with anticipation, enjoying the focus on the witness' speechless reaction before the presentation of the creature's deformities.¹¹

Juan Rana's pregnancy, while freakish in nature, includes many common issues that normalize his predicament, such as food aversion, nine missed menstrual periods (*nueve faltas*), extreme pain, and promises of never getting pregnant again. While these experiences are likewise highlighted in early modern medical publications dealing with pregnancy and childbirth, the narrative strategy that most aligns *El parto de Juan Rana* with other monstrous births is found in the emphasis on witness and spectator shock when the newborn child emerges. Although the audience watches as the actor gives birth, the father (whose arms are supported by two of the mayors) must narrate his own painful delivery: "Tengan, que del parto está/ la cabeza coronada,/ mas ya parir con mil diablos/ no me haré

otra vez preñada,/ no mas en mi vida" (9). Once little Juan Ranilla comes out from under his father's skirt, all those present shout "¡Cielos! ¿Qué ha parido?" Juan the father naturally responds to their shock by asking "¿Qué se pasan?" (9). This initial fear of what kind of creature might have emerged from his womb is alleviated by the reassurances of the non-monstrous resemblance between father and son ("Su retrato es el muchacho/ en talle y en rostro") (10).

The end of this incredible reproductive fantasy answers the hypothetical question "What if men could give birth?" as a singing woman announces that only by giving birth themselves can men be sure of their offspring:

Cantando mujer: Si los hombres parieran
fuera gran cosa
pues tuvieran por ciertas
todas sus obras. (11)

Of course, Juan Rana ends the *entremés* by blaming women for manipulating men and being deceptive about the identity of their children's father:

Juan Rana: No hay duda pues que muchas
mujeres vimos,
que a mamar a otros padres
los dan los hijos. (11)

Ultimately *El parto de Juan Rana* methodically reveals a complex and interconnected list of cultural anxieties related to the control of procreation, gender transgression, homosexuality, monsters and ab-

normal births, and perhaps (given the unstable and fluid nature of early modern gender and sex assignment) the not so inverisimilar fear that an anatomical transmutation can occur in the reverse, unnaturally from male to female. In this way, perhaps Lanini y Sagredo's interlude is not just a carnivalesque representation of man's desire to appropriate reproduction by eliminating the woman but rather an insightful precursor to Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* and other new reproductive technologies such as our recently departed cloned friend Dolly the sheep.

NOTES

¹ All references to *El parto de Juan Rana* will be cited from Peter Thompson's transcription of the manuscript copy of the interlude (Ms. 14.089-43. Biblioteca Nacional, Madrid).

² For the *marimacho* or masculine woman association with the name Aldonza, see Gossy and Redondo.

³ An interesting twist on the top/bottom dilemma contributing to male pregnancy is found in the third story of the ninth day in Boccaccio's *Decameron*. In this story a gullible husband is convinced by a couple of tricksters (looking to make some fast and easy cash) that he is pregnant. The panic-stricken husband immediately blames his pregnancy on his wife for assuming the dominant role during sex: "'Ah, Tessa, this is your doing! You always insist on lying on top. I told you all along what would happen'" (694). He implies, then, that his phallic pregnancy is really not so phallic after all since his usual sexual position on the bottom is frequently associated with a passive female role during sex. Moreover, the husband not only condemns this transgression of gender roles in bed but also he blames his wife's rampant female sexuality. In the end, the "pregnant" husband pays for a remedy that will induce what

he believes is a "painless miscarriage," since his biggest fear is related to the pain in childbirth (Boccaccio 694-695).

⁴ See also Rodríguez-Cuadros 273 and Frazer 217.

⁵ See Lobato 187-88. Interestingly, Lobato excludes any mention of Pérez's arrest for sodomy from her otherwise inclusive description of the actor's life. For sodomy in early modern Spain see Carrasco.

⁶ Covarrubias defines *maricón* as: "El hombre afeminado que se inclina a hazer cosas de muger, que llaman por otro nombre marimaricas" (790).

⁷ Finucci *Manly*, 51-52 and Laquer 58.

⁸ When discussing the political-sexual caricatures explicit in prints during the French Revolution, Vivian Cameron shows how "when reproduction is depicted, the imagery is that of the immaculate conception" (98). In a political image curiously similar to Juan Rana's birthing scene, a very masculine woman (perhaps a man in women's clothing) "standing up and effortlessly giving birth to an immediately ambulant child" (98), who emerges from his mother's skirt. Cameron also analyzes other imagery of the Revolution, in which the reproductive capabilities of women are appropriated by men as a way of emasculating the constitution and its founders (96-100).

⁹ For midwives in early modern Spain see Ortiz.

¹⁰ All references to this news pamphlet are from Ettinghausen (facsimile pages not numbered).

¹¹ Even the apocryphal version of the second part of *Don Quijote* written by Alonso Fernández de Avellaneda (1614) concludes with a curious scene in which Don Quijote hires a young squire who suddenly gives birth in the middle of the street while the famous knight looks on with amazement at what he must initially assume to be a miraculous male delivery. Of course the reader knows that the squire is actually a pregnant woman disguised in men's clothing:

Llevando por escudero a una moza de soldada ... vestida de hombre, las cual iba huyendo de su amo porque en su casa se hizo o la hicieron preñada, sin pensarlo ella, si bien no sin dar cumplida causa para ello;

y con el temor se iba por el mundo. Llevóla el buen caballero sin saber que fuese mujer, hasta que vino a parir en medio de un camino, en presencia suya, dejándole sumamente maravillado el parto; y haciendo grandísimas quieras sobre él (462).

While there is no doubt about the female identity of the child-bearing squire, the visual impact (on the unsuspecting observer) of a male-attired individual suddenly giving birth may be even more shocking than the initial appearance of a man dressed as a woman in labor.

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On a research trip to the *Biblioteca Nacional de España* I located the handwritten manuscript of Lanini y Sagredo's *El parto de Juan Rana* (Ms. 14.089-43) mentioned by Frédéric Serralta in his article "Juan Rana Homosexual" (*Criticón* 50 1900, 81-92). On transcribing *El parto* it became clear that the *entremés* was extraordinarily contemporary in its thematics. Marital, sexual, biological and gender difference and patriarchy were all histrionically challenged. I have shared the play with Sherry Velasco and am pleased that she has written about it. I hope many others will enjoy *El parto* and be inspired to do further research on this extraordinary theatrical gem.

—Peter Thompson

Jesús, María, José
ENTREMÉS DE *EL PARTO DE JUAN RANA*
De Lanini y Sagredo

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Salen, un escribano y Cosme Berrueco con sayo y vara de Alcalde

Escribano—A vos, Cosme Berrueco
(insigne Alcalde del lugar de Meso)
A vos os han nombrado
Los concejos, por juez tan afamado
Para que presidáis en esta Audiencia
En que a tomar se viene residencia
Al Alcalde Juan Rana
Que preso tienen por la más liviana
Fea culpa que Alcalde ha cometido
Después que Alcaldes en consejo ha habido:

Su cargo es enormísimo

Berruco—

Escribano

No seáis vos inormísimo: a la mano
Os id; ¿es mas la culpa encreminada
enormísima, fea y ponderada
el que Juan Rana (porque a nadie asombre)
para hembra es mejor que para hombre?

Escribano—

¿Luego no es feo delito y mal notado
que un alcalde en persona esté preñado?

Berrueco—

Alcalde siendo, aun más delito era
Siendo fecundo, que hoy estéril fuera?

Escribano—

¿Necedad es bien rara
Fecundo queréis sea?

Berrueco—

Pues la vara
A un Alcalde absoluto
¿de que provecho le es, si no da fruto?

Escribano

¿La vara comparáis agora al sexo?

Berrueco

Vos, escribano, no entendéis bien de eso;
Una vara concibe dos mil cosas
Luego puede parirlas prodigiosas.

Más haced relación.

Escribano

La haré en llegando
a la junta otros jueces.

Berrueco

Pues sentando
Entre tanto me voy; pero al portero
Me llamad al instante.

Escribano

¡Ah!
Que os llama el seor alcalde

(Sale el portero)

Portero

¿Qué me mandáis?

Berrueco

Que nadie entrar en balde
Dejéis, sin que primero
Digáis quien es.

Portero

Lo haré. *(Vase)*

Berrueco

¡Gentil portero!

Escribano

El tal alcalde es gran simplón

(Aparte)

Berrueco

Pregunto

¿Escribano en la causa habéis visto?

Escribano

Nunca yo me torcí; ni lo imagino.

Berrueco

Hacéis bien, pues el hombre que es buen vino

Por mas que se le fuerce

Se volverá vinagre si se tuerce.

(Sale el portero con el primer alcalde y luego se va)

Portero

A la junta el alcalde de Pozuelo

Es el que llega

Berrueco

¡Qué famoso anzuelo

De pescar! ¿Pues tan tarde?

Alcalde Primero

Por la posta,

En mi burro he venido a toda costa

Berrueco

A correrla en vos mismo yo discurro,

Que era lo propio que correrla en burro.

Pero tomad asiento.

Alcalde Primero

Junto a vos por estar con mi jumento

(Sale el portero con el segundo alcalde)

Portero

El alcalde de Parla

Berrueco

Saldrá de sus lagunas

Alcalde Segundo

¿Qué se guarda?

Berrueco

Si allá sois renacuajo

O ¿alcalde en las lagunas?

Alcalde Segundo

A destajo

Allá soy mi poquito

Más vos en sólo sois mosquito

Berrueco

Vuestro asiento ocupad

Alcalde Segundo

De los primeros

(Sale el portero con el tercer alcalde)

Portero

El alcalde ha llegado de los Güesos

Berrueco

Decid de los capones

Que esos los güesos son.

Alcalde Tercero

¡Oh!

¿Eruditos?

Berrueco

Sentando

Os id, que vendréis güero

Y será en blando.

(Sientan sobre el primer alcalde)

Alcalde Primero

Alcalde sois albarda

Alcalde Tercero

No imagino,

Mas pues vos la sentís, seréis pollino.

Alcalde Primero

Pero vos sois en todo albarda viva.

(Sale el portero y el cuarto alcalde)

Portero

¿El alcalde de abajo y el de arriba?

Berrueco

Decid Caraimancheles

Alcalde Cuarto

Brava turba ¿hay de alcaldes moscateles?

Alcalde Segundo

¿Falta en la junta aun más?

Escribano

Solo uno falta.

(Sale el portero con el quinto alcalde)

Portero

¡El alcalde de Ambroz!

Alcalde Primero

Miren si salta

Berrueco

¿Cómo? ¿A esta junta vos venís postrero?

Alcalde Quinto

Ambroz en cortes, siempre fue primero

Los cinco

¿Qué es primero?

Berrueco

Dejad los alborotos

Y pues estamos ya bastante votos

La Audiencia se prosiga.

*(Empiezan a hablar los alcaldes unos con otros y
Berrueco toca la campanilla)*

Portero

¿Qué mandáis?

Berrueco

Despejad

Portero

Aquí una hormiga

No hay siquiera.

Berrueco

Que sean respondones

¡Siempre aquestos porteros! Los moscones

Despejad.

Portero

No discurráis,

Que aquí los hay.

Berrueco

¿No oís este susurro?

Portero

Ya los aviento.

(Con el sombrero avienta a los alcaldes)

Berrueco

Empieza, escribano

A hacernos relación en canto llano
Del cargo de Juan Rana.

(Están los alcaldes volviendo a hablar)

Portero

¿Oíos?, pues hay.

(Tomando el escribano unos papeles como que por ellos hace relación)

Escribano

Primeramente,
El que siendo casado
Juan Rana con Aldonza nunca ha dado
Indicios de ser hombre, pues Aldonza
(al susodicho) siendo una persona
era quien le mandaba,
le reñía y a veces le pegaba,
logrando en sus contiendas
que él hiciera de casa las haciendas,
que barriese, fregase y que pusiese
la olla, y aun a sus mandados fuese.

Berrueco

La probanza esta llana
Del delito que importa a Juan Rana
Del preñado supuesto
Que si el permitió que los cabrones
su mujer se pusiese en oraciones,
ser el preñado él no es demasía,
pues hizo lo que ella hacer debía.

Alcalde Primero

La consecuencia es clara,
Mas pues él se lo quiso, que lo para.

Alcalde Segundo

Pasad más adelante.

Escribano

Es público, es notorio y muy constante
Que de tiempo a esta parte, al contraído
Juan Rana le ha crecido
El vientre de manera
Que una cuba parece.

Alcalde Tercero

Antes lo era
De vino.

Escribano

Y le han faltado
Las ganas de comer, que en un preñado
Son las señas fatales.

Alcalde Cuarto

Y en él, que es un glotón, son más señales

Alcalde Quinto

Clara probanza del delito es esa.

Berrueco

Y veo del preñado, ¿él se confiesa?

Escribano

Está en un juramento

Negativo.

Berrueco

Pues désele tormento.

Escribano

¿Cómo, estando preñado?

Que la ley de tormento le ha excusado.

Berrueco

Para todo hay remedio,

Dese tormento a su mujer.

Alcalde Primero

¿Qué medio

Es ese, ¿qué un juicio le condena?

Berrueco

Tormento es darle en cabeza ajena

Pues su parte contraria es advertida,

Es cualquier mujer propia del marido

Escribano

El tormento excusado

Es, cuando el delito está probado,

Y consta por lo escrito

En sumaria y plenaria.

Alcalde Segundo

Sí el delito

Se comprueba en plenaria
Votémosle nosotros en sumaria.

(Hablan unos con otros como en secreto)

Berrueco

Eso apruebo

Alcalde Tercero

Mi parecer es este.

Alcalde Cuarto

Y este el mío.

Alcalde Quinto

Y el mío.

Berrueco

Muy conteste???????

El juicio se ve en todos elegante.

Alcalde Primero

¿Ningún discrepante?,

Se mira la sentencia.

Escribano

¿Habéis ya sentenciado?

Alcalde Segundo

Y en conciencia.

Berrueco

Decid pues que fallamos.

Debemos condenar y condenamos,
Que a voz de pregonero
Que cantado lo exprés al mundo entero,
Que a la vergüenza saquen a Juan Rana
Vestido de mujer (y muy profana)
Donde todos le vean
y públicos testigos fieles sean
de que es su culpa clara
y si la da allí el parto, que allí para,
y que aquesto mandamos
que se ejecute luego y no firmamos
por no saberlo hacer.

Escribano

Del mismo modo
Al punto a ejecutarlo parto todo. (*Vase*)

Alcalde Tercero

La ley se le echó a cuestras.

Alcalde Cuarto

En razón se ha votado.

Alcalde Quinto

Siempre en estas
Sentencias fue muy dicho.

Berrueco

En mi vida jamás las erré mucho,
Mas según el bullicio
A Juan Rana le sacan al suplicio.

Alcalde Primero

Pues desde aquí veamos
Si se ejecuta bien lo que mandamos.

(Sacan a Juan Rana vestido de mujer y con una barriga muy grande y a Juan Ranilla debajo de las faldas y delante salen el escribano y una mujer que viene cantando en todo de pregón)

Cantando mujer

Venga a noticia de todos
Como por no ser Juan Rana
Hombre en nada, de mujer
A la vergüenza le sacan
Pues sí por el ordinario
La naturaleza humana
Escribió a Juan Rana antes
Ya le faltaron las cartas.
Sus faltas ha descubierto
Y en nueve faltas,
Cuantas palabras pronuncia
Son ya palabras preñadas.

Canta Juan Rana
¡Ay! Desdichada
De quien es su embarazo
Su desgracia
Y pues no vale, oh, jueces,
Razón a la fuerza valga,
Razón para que a la fuerza,
Lo que he concebido, para.
Valga decir que no sé
Si dormida ni descuidada

Sonando en mí halle en mi propio
vientre con mi semejanza
Valga también confesaros
Que no soy culpada en nada
Pues este chichón viviente
Ningún tropezón le causa
Y por fin, valga advertiros
Que si en las yeguas se halla
Concebir del viento, pueden
Lo mismo hacer los Juan Ranas.
Ay desdichada ella????

Alcalde Segundo

Su lamento a dolor mueve.

Alcalde Tercero

Y a risa mueve su cara.

Juan Rana

Mas aquí ha llegado el parto
¡Ay! Que se me desencajan
Las caderas/ Qué dolores
Qué penas, cielos, qué ansias!
¿No hay quien me ayude siquiera
A parir, que muero en tanta
Fatiga? Más un temblor
Me hiela toda, y me pasma.
Señores, piedad, que rota
¡Tengo ya la fuente! ¡Qué haya
De parir yo sin comadre
Habiendo tenido tantas!

(Tienen de los brazos dos de ellos)

Escribano

Ayudémosle a parir.

Juan Rana

Ténganme bien.

Los dos

¡Qué nos mata!

Juan Rana

Tengan, que del parto está
La cabeza coronada,
Mas ya parir con mil diablos
No me haré otra vez preñada,
No más en mi vida.

(Sale por debajo de las faldas Juan Ranilla con sayo)

Todos

¡Cielos!

¿Qué ha parido?

Juan Rana

¿Qué se pasan?

Berrueco

Su retrato s el muchacho
En talle y en rostro.

Juan Ranilla

Mamá,
¿No abraza a su Juan Ranilla?

Juan Rana

¡Ay! ¡Parto de mis entrañas!
¡Ay, prenda mía!

Alcalde Primero

No niega
En madre a su padre

Juan Rana

Aún falta
El saber si es mi hijo, pues
Puede ser que otro lo haya
Hecho en mi ausencia.

Alcalde Segundo

Pues como,
Hacer la experiencia tratas?

Juan Rana

Viendo si es que un zarambeque
También como yo le baila.

Juan Ranilla

Pues la música le anime,
Y tóquele la guitarra.

(Canta la música y los dos bailan el zarambeque)

Música

Los hijos al padre
En las semejanzas
Como en las mudanzas
Se retratan siempre
Teque, teque, teque.

Cantando Juan Rana
Que se me parece,
Ay, mi Juan Ranilla,
¡En el zarambeque!

Escribano

Qué hacéis, alcaldes?

*(Vuelven a hacer otra mudanza, y los seis alcaldes
dejan las varas y bailan también)*

Alcalde Primero

¡Querer
Parecer hoy de Juan Rana
También retratos al vivo!

Juan Rana

Vayan unas muecas

Juan Ranillas
Vayan

(Hacen los dos las muecas y el escribano los imita)

Alcalde Segundo

Qué hacéis, escribano?

Escribano

Ser

de Juan Rana semejanza.

Juan Rana

Digo que en todo es mi hijo,

Sin faltarle una migaja.

Todos

Pues el natal se celebre

De Juan Ranilla en Juan Rana

Escribano

¿Con qué?

Juan Rana

Con la conterilla

Conque un entremés se acaba

Cantando mujer

Si los hombres parieron

Fuera gran cosa

Pues tuvieran por ciertas

Todas sus obras.

Juan Rana

No hay duda pues que muchas

Mujeres vimos,

Que a mamar a otros padres

Los dan los hijos.

Laus Deo.

Interview

RESCATAR A *EL CONDENADO POR DESCONFADO* DEL TEATRO DE MUSEO: UNA ENTREVISTA CON ALEJANDRO GONZÁLEZ PUCHE, DIRECTOR DEL TEATRO DEL VALLE (CALI, COLOMBIA)

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Figura 1: Paulo ermitaño. Cortesía de la Corporación Teatro del Valle.

El director Alejandro González Puche se propone encontrar el verdadero sentido de *El condenado por desconfiado* en la cultura popular negra del pacífico colombiano.¹ Sitúa la acción de este drama de Tirso de Molina (1571?-1648) en el Valle del Cauca (Colombia), donde aproximadamente treinta y nueve por ciento de la población se considera afro-colombiana.² Así como lo reitera en esta entrevista, su objetivo primordial es el de servir a su audiencia con una obra de naturaleza espiritual tan vigente hoy día para las comunidades afro-colombianas así como lo hubiera sido para el vulgo del siglo XVII.

La obra comienza con un ambiente festivo de mojiganga, al ritmo popular afro-colombiano de tambor, cucunes, clarinete y flauta que tocan los mismos cinco actores que desempeñarán todos los personajes de la obra.³ A continuación los actores recitan décimas, versos populares propios del litoral pacífico con fin de que los espectadores sientan más fluidamente la transición al espacio de la poesía española áurea.⁴ El festivo ritmo musical se contrasta con una lánguida tela plateada que está situada al fondo. Por momentos, el brillo de la tela nos hacía pensar que detrás de las siluetas de palmeras grises que se dibujan en ella, se encontrara el Océano Pacífico que yace en el litoral colombiano.

Una de las primeras funciones se presentó en marzo de 2003 en el XXVIII Festival de Drama del Siglo de Oro (El Paso, Tejas).⁵ Desde entonces, se ha representado la obra más de sesenta veces en teatros en México, Chile y Colombia.⁶ Puede ser que el tono carnavalesco de la interpretación de González

lleve a algunos críticos a percatarse del montaje por falta de fidelidad al espíritu trágico de la obra textual. En la siguiente entrevista—en la Universidad del Valle (Cali, Colombia, 27 y 28 de noviembre de 2003)— el director Alejandro González Puche explica por qué eligió representar *El condenado por desconfiado* dentro del contexto afro-colombiano, cómo interpreta dramáticamente a los personajes principales, y en qué formas los elementos festivos del montaje contribuyen al ambiente trágico de la obra.

González es director principal de la Corporación del Teatro del Valle y profesor de drama en el departamento de Arte Dramático de la Universidad del Valle (Cali). Estudió artes dramáticas en Rusia, donde egresó de la Academia Teatral rusa (GITIS) y fue estudiante de Anatoli Vasiliev.⁷

CL: ¿Qué lo llevó a querer montar *El condenado por desconfiado*?

AGP: Hace dos años empezamos a montar teatro áureo con *El astrólogo fingido* (Calderón de la Barca) y *El burlador de Sevilla* (Tirso). Una de las cosas que nos llamó a todos la atención fue que los actores negros que estaban muy ligados a la cultura popular afro-colombiana de aquí tenían una gran facilidad para aprenderse el verso. Ellos manejaban la cesura, la cadencia y los acentos de una manera más exacta. Ellos manejaban con más facilidad y de forma más orgánica lenguaje alegórico de los versos, cosa que nosotros hemos perdido. Se reían de ciertas partes de las obras que no causaban risa al resto

de nosotros, porque tenían un entendimiento más profundo de los versos. Fue entonces que nos dimos cuenta que para ellos el verso no se les sentía ajeno. Empezamos a interesarnos más en el tema y descubrimos la fuerza de la oralidad que todavía rige en estas comunidades. Fuimos a algunos de los foros de negritud y allí encontramos que todavía las décimas, los refranes, y las canciones alegóricas son parte de su realidad lingüística. En algunos lugares, como en Tumaco, todavía se escuchan algunos noticieros en décimas.

Quise encontrar una obra que pudiera entonces ambientar en el contexto del litoral pacífico colombiano, pero me demoré mucho porque quería encontrar una obra con una dramaturgia que pudiera justificar estéticamente, de temas y personajes que no provocaran extrañamiento. O sea que no queríamos personajes ajenos al espectador nuestro, como caballeros, comendadores o reyes que hablaran de patria o lealtad, temas poco orgánicos para nosotros. Eso es teatro de museo y no queríamos hacer teatro de museo. Después de buscar y buscar llegué a *El condenado* que la audiencia entiende bien porque trata de un tema religioso, y aquí somos profundamente religiosos. Y también porque tiene personajes que uno encuentra en cualquiera de nuestras comunidades. Mire, aquí casi no se monta teatro español áureo porque siempre queda sin contestar la pregunta: ¿dónde está el experto? Lo lindo es que entendimos que el maestro, el experto de la obra, estaba aquí en la región.

CL: Los actores recitan unas décimas propias de la cultura popular afro-colombiana como un tipo de prólogo a la obra.⁸ ¿Cuál fue el propósito de empezar la obra de esta forma y cómo se relaciona a *El condenado*?

AGP: Lo que entendimos cuando montamos *El astrólogo fingido* fue que la gente empezaba a entender la obra como a la mitad, porque acostumbrarse al verso siempre es muy difícil. Y como sabemos, la exposición del argumento en el teatro del Siglo de Oro español siempre ocurre al principio. Yo estaba buscando una forma de que el público se sintiera familiarizado con el verso a la entrada de la obra. El truco era que el público no sintiera a manera forzada el verso del teatro español y que entendiera que ese verso no se aleja de los versos de nuestro folclor. El problema del verso es que es el límite perfecto entre forma y contenido. Uno debe mantener la forma del verso pero se debe hacer con sentido, si alguno de estos ingredientes se desplaza se pierde la unidad del verso.

CL: ¿Cuál fue el objetivo principal de usar actores negros para representar a Paulo y Enrico?

AGP: El concepto original de trabajo fue que la obra tratara de dos destinos de hombres negros. El negro es precisamente el que maneja la oralidad y la espiritualidad que no maneja el blanco. Entonces, el protagonista más idóneo es él. Otro no puede ser. Genera verdad en el espectador.

Por otro lado, la historia trata de personajes marginales, y aquí las personas marginales son los negros. Pues, uno dice, “¿por qué personajes negros?” Da más sentido de verdad, da mucho más sentido de verdad, tanto para el maleante como para el espiritual. Si cualquiera de los dos hubiera sido blanco, hubiera habido muchas contradicciones y muchas lecturas diferentes, como que el santo fuera blanco o al revés.

Por otro lado, en el sentido estético, yo creo éticamente que si un director teatral no va a reivindicar algún elemento de una obra, no tiene para qué traerlo a escena. Mire, nosotros leímos un estudio muy interesante sobre el personaje negro en el teatro Siglo de Oro español de Fra Molinero, y uno siente es una historia desafortunada. Nuestro *condenado* fue la primera obra dramática reconocida que en Colombia que tiene dos actores negros como protagonistas. El milagro que nos ha ocurrido a nosotros es que llegamos a demostrar que un negro puede presentarse como ser orgánico y serio en una obra de teatro.

CL: ¿Tenía algún temor con respecto a la posible recepción tanto del público general colombiano como de los espectadores de las comunidades afrocolombianas?

AGP: Mire, que el miedo era el no querer hacer una reivindicación del negro mecánica. Hay muchos estereotipos también en la recepción del teatro cuando uno pone actores negros. Por eso, ante todo, quería que fueran actores que actuaran bien. Yo

como director me he encargado de no hacer folclor. Cuando se puede bailar más, ahí dejamos de bailar, siempre abandonamos el camino del folclor. En la forma de hablar, tratamos de que los actores no hablaran como el estereotipo del negro. En los ensayos, tuve que luchar a veces con los actores para que los actores no hicieran eso. No queríamos poner al negro en el lugar donde siempre lo han puesto, en el lugar de lo exótico por lo exótico. Aún así, cuando presentamos la obra en el Teatro Nacional de Bogotá, alguien me preguntó si los actores negros estaban actuando o si “eran así.” Por otro lado, cuando presentamos la obra en Buenaventura, el epicentro de la cultura negra de Colombia, le preguntamos a la gente si la obra era buena o era mala, y lo que decía era que habíamos hecho “una inclusión.” Nos explicaron que era “una inclusión,” porque “pusieron al negro donde nunca había estado, lo pusieron a actuar.”

CL: Se ha descrito a Paulo como un personaje muy introspectivo, de gran inteligencia lógica y muy calculador.⁹ Sin embargo, en su interpretación de Paulo se lo muestra como ermita poco cerebral, más bien paródico del Paulo del texto.

AGP: La verdad que no sé dónde lo verán tan racional, porque él no toma ninguna decisión inteligente. Por ejemplo, Paulo no sabe adaptar el pensamiento a la situación, cosa que Enrico sí sabe hacer. Lo peor es que cuando tiene un encuentro teológico, Enrico maneja mucho mejor los argu-

mentos teológicos que Paulo. En el segundo acto dice Enrico:

Desesperación ha sido
lo que has hecho, y aun venganza
de la palabra de Dios,
y una oposición tirana
a su inefable poder (1971-1975)¹⁰

O sea que Enrique sí es inteligente y sabe adaptar un pensamiento a la situación. Aparte, vea usted que toma más inteligencia ser bandido que ser ermita.

Pero la pregunta que nosotros nos hicimos al principio del proyecto para conducir al actor que hacía de Paulo, no era si era inteligente o no, porque finalmente en teatro eso es muy abstracto, eso no se lee. Lo que se mide en acción dramática es el propósito del personaje. El propósito de Paulo es ser bueno y encontrar su salvación, pero no llega ni a ser bueno, ni a encontrar su salvación. Es un personaje muy confundido y poco consistente. En teatro hay una forma de interpretar a los personajes que es el siguiente: a ellos no se los juzga por lo que piensan o por su auto-imagen sino por lo que hacen, que es en última instancia la manera más correcta de analizar un texto. ¿Qué cosas buenas hace Paulo? Paulo mantiene a una persona en contra de su deseo (Pedrisco) matándola de hambre por diez años, no solamente conspira contra su destino, sino que ha hecho que conspire otra persona. Le piden limosna y no da limosna. Después de hacerse bandolero, Paulo empieza a asesinar pasajeros y a colgar cabezas de árboles. Enrico es todo lo contrario. Su proyecto de vida es el de vivir el momento y el de

hacerse la imagen del más malo que dio natura, pero en realidad, fuera de la biografía que relata, él es esencialmente una persona buena.

CL: Uno de los detalles interpretativos que me llama la atención de su montaje es la escena en la que Enrico cuenta los terribles crímenes y fechorías que hizo en su vida, y Celia y Galván no dejan de reírse. Esa risa medio macabra crea un gran contraste con el monólogo de Enrico. ¿Cómo explica la relación entre lo grave y lo festivo en el relato de la vida de Enrico?

AGP: Mire, esa parte trata de una competencia, una especie festival de rufianes en el cual se va a ver quién es el peor de todos. En nuestra representación de la escena, los bandidos (Celia y Galván) se ríen de todo, pero cuando Enrico dice: “No respeto a religioso” (856), ellos inmediatamente dejan de reírse porque ellos soportan todo, las violaciones, los asesinatos, etc., menos eso. Ellos no soportan que Enrico haya robado seis cálices de las iglesias y se quedan muy serios. Ahora, cuando Enrico habla muy seriamente de su padre tullido, todos los otros bandidos se vuelven a reír, pero a él no le causa risa. Se ve un contrapunto de qué le causa risa a la banda y qué le causa risa a Enrico.

CL: ¿Podría explicar por qué esta escena se cierra con el siguiente canto que ustedes añaden: “que me lleve el diablo (Enrico) / a mí también (la banda) / que me lleve el diablo (Enrico) / a mí también (la banda)?”

AGP: Como dije, Enrico ofrece una competencia diciendo que el que haya cometido el mayor número de crímenes “hazañas [...] latrocinios” (691), “una corona de laurel le pongan/ cantándole alabanzas y motetes” (696-697). Entonces, él se lleva la alabanza más grande (“¡que me lleve el diablo!”) porque él ganó.

CL: Una escena imprescindible y que nos prepara para la salvación de Enrico es su encuentro con su padre Anareto. Aquí es donde se ve en el texto que por medio del amor que le tiene al padre, también es capaz de amar a Dios (Rogers 31). A nosotros, los espectadores que vimos la obra en El Paso (2003), nos gustó mucho esta escena por la ingeniosa manera inesperada con la que usted presentó al padre enfrente de un altar iluminado por luces (Figura 2). Por otro lado, se podría observar que la forma festiva se desencaja de la seriedad que se espera de la escena.

AGP: Lo festivo no tiene porque restarle a lo serio. No le pida a un católico de aquí espiritualidad interna. Aquí uno tiene que salir a expresar su espiritualidad por medio de fiestas y celebraciones. Y en el pacífico el dolor se expresa festivamente. Un aspecto trágico-cómico de nuestro montaje es que la comida que le trae Enrico a Anareto es un plátano, que es algo torpe porque es duro de morder y una persona mayor no puede comer eso. Pero Enrico lo quiere tanto al padre que es capaz de hacer lo imposible. Y es por eso que al ver que no puede comerse un plátano, le trae un patacón—una tortilla frita de pláta-

no—que al fin y al cabo tampoco puede comer. Sí, hay humor, pero no es para hacer chiste, sino para señalar, por medio de la risa, la desesperación que tiene Enrico de querer hacer lo que sea por el padre.



Figura 2: Anareto tullido. Cortesía de Corporación Teatro del Valle.

¿Por qué un altar? Porque si uno quiere mucho al padre, la manera más hermosa de verlo es como un altar. También Enrico roba de altares: “seis cálices he robado/ y diversos ornamentos/ que sus altares adornan” (858-860). La interpretación nuestra fue que Enrico se guardaba las cosas de oro y que lo demás se lo traía a Anareto, porque aunque él no creía en Dios, el padre sí creía. En el tercer acto, nosotros interpretamos la aparición del padre en la cárcel como un milagro, porque el papá, que estaba tullido, llegó a levantarse de la cama para salvar a su hijo:

La cama, Enrico, dejé

y arrimado a este bordón
por quien me sustento en pie,
vengo en aquesta ocasión (2448-2451)

CL: Entonces, ¿cómo define usted el rol de la risa en *El condenado*?

AGP: Estoy de acuerdo con la crítica de que la obra es trágica, pero algo que nosotros empezamos a descubrir durante el montaje es que en el fondo el que guía el argumento es el demonio. Por eso, hicimos que el mismo actor que hace del demonio se encargue de narrar las acotaciones importantes de escenas. Él introduce las escenas importantes, dice “Jornada I: Selva, bosque, desierto, pajaritos, Paulo ermitaño,” etc. Mire, el demonio en Colombia es una figura popular y carnavalesca, no teológica.

CL: Los actores me comentaron que el representar la obra en su contexto más directo—o sea en las comunidades negras del valle caucano—les ayudó a comprender a los personajes de una forma más real y humana. ¿Qué influencias tuvieron estas comunidades en la dramatización de los personajes?

AGP: Yo le voy a explicar un milagro que surgió con *El condenado*. Nosotros subvencionamos ir a presentar la obra a Buenaventura, que es una ciudad de unas trescientas mil personas afro-colombianas, el epicentro de la cultura negra en Colombia. Esa función partió la historia del montaje en dos, porque antes de eso los actores no habían recibido el bautismo, por decirlo así, de hacer esos personajes. De

pronto, los actores vieron que la gente allí miraba la obra muy concentradamente, y que para ellos, que el monólogo espiritual de Paulo era serio. En particular, el actor que hacía de Paulo entendió que actuar serio era posible y que no ironizar la espiritualidad era posible. Además, al conocer la selva y la espiritualidad de la gente de ahí empezó a sentir la verdad de las palabras. “Paulo” empezó a sintetizar su realidad en verso, que es lo más difícil para un actor. “Paulo” había empezado como “desconfiado,” pero la audiencia de Buenaventura le enseñó a matar esa desconfianza.

NOTES

¹ *Los actores del Teatro Corporación del Valle*: Néstor Durán (Paulo, Lisandro, Albano, un carcelero), Manuel Viveros (Enrico), Marleida Soto (Celia, el gobernador, demonio vestido de ángel), Johnny Muñoz (Pedrisco, Octavio, Anareto), Felipe Pérez (demonio, Galván, socio de Enrico, el alcalde). *Duración*: 1 hora 30 minutos. *Producción*: Margarita Arboleda. *Preparador corporal*: Armando Collazos. *Preparador musical*: José Antonio Torres, 'Gualajo.' *Preparador de esgrima (pelea de machetes)*: Ananías Caniquí. *Vestuario*: Magola Hernández.

² Porcentaje aproximado ofrecido por el Departamento Nacional de Planeación de la República de Colombia (12 de septiembre de 2003).

³ Estos instrumentos, guiados por la marimba (xilófono) también proveen toda la música y los efectos de sonido durante el desarrollo del drama.

⁴ La “décima” del pacífico litoral colombiano adquiere otra estructura de la clásica española. Se compone de cuarenta y cuatro versos, de los cuales los primeros cuatro son la llamada Glosa Primera. Después de la Glosa Primera, hay cuatro estrofas de diez versos. El último verso de cada una de las cuatro

estrofas coincide con los versos de la Glosa Primera (Ver Motta González, 72-81)

⁵ Una grabación de VHS forma parte de la colección de vídeos de la A.H.C.T. (Association of Hispanic Classical Theater)

⁶ *Lugares de representación*: Teatro Tolima de Ibagué (Colombia, febrero 2003), *XXVIII Festival de Drama del Siglo de Oro* (Estados Unidos, marzo 2003), *Festival de Teatro del Siglo de Oro en Ciudad Juárez* (México, marzo 2003), Ciudad de México Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes (México, marzo 2003), Teatro Colón de Bogotá (Colombia, abril 2003), Teatro de Puerto Montt (Chile, julio 2003), Teatro Imagen Santiago de Chile (Chile, julio 2003), Teatro Municipal de Cali (junio-noviembre 2003), Casa del Teatro Nacional (noviembre 2003).

⁷ Vasiliev ha escenificado una gran variedad de obras, incluyen entre otras: *El astrólogo fingido* de Calderón de la Barca (2001), *El burlador de Sevilla* de Tirso de Molina (2001), *El malentendido* de Albert Camus (2001), *Fausto* de Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (2000), *Días impares* de Carlos Enrique Lozano (1999), *La Gaviota* de Anton Chekhov (1998), *El ángel de la culpa* de Marco Antonio de la Parra (1997) y *La ilusión cómica* de Pierre Corneille (1995).

⁸ Los versos que sirven de prólogo varían de función en función. Los siguientes son ejemplos que se recitaron en la función de El Paso y en la función de Bogotá (Teatro Nacional):

Cuarenta y cuatro palabras
tiene una décima entera
diez palabras cada estrofa
cuatro la glosa primera

El cielo aquel infierno
por un tizón de candela
se lo robé a Satanás
y le deje una canela
l'diablo miró en su cuaderno
y yo no estaba en su lista
m'dijo: para usted no hay cupo
así que m'hijo no insista

le dije pidiendo pista
yo vengo con un recado
que el cielo me ha encomendado
y si en algo le consuela
yo llegue hasta su casa
por un tizón de candela

⁹ R. J. Oakley lo describe como "intelligent and, at times, extremely lucid, he is also a selfish calculator" (34).

¹⁰ Los versos citados son de la edición de Morón y Adorno (1974).

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Theater Reviews

Los Clásicos . . . Enredos. By Margarita Galban and Lina Montalvo. Based on Calderón de la Barca's *La dama duende*, Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz's *Los empeños de una casa*, Lope de Vega's *El anzuelo de Fenisa*, and Ruiz de Alarcón's *La verdad sospechosa*. Dir. Margarita Galban. Translated by Margarita Lamas. Bilingual Foundation of the Arts, Los Angeles. 19 April 2003. (Play's run: 4 April-18 May 2003.)

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The Bilingual Foundation of the Arts (BFA) has a 30-year tradition of providing Southern California audiences with the opportunity to view some of the best of Hispanic theatre, both old and new. Aficionados of Spain's Golden Age *comedia* typically have the chance to attend the performance of a *comedia* at the BFA once every few seasons. This year, however, '*comediófilos*' got four for the price of one with *Los Clásicos . . . Enredos*. Conceived by the BFA's Artistic Director Margarita Galban, *Los Clásicos . . . Enredos* is a compilation of four 17th-century plays: *La dama duende* (Calderón de la

Barca), *Los empeños de una casa* (Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz), *El anzueto de Fenisa* (Lope de Vega), and *La verdad sospechosa* (Ruiz de Alarcón).

According to the play's program, the production sought to introduce audiences to "the best of each play," so the four plays were abbreviated to accommodate the format of the production. In doing this, it was clearly necessary to make use of artistic license, which resulted in the elimination of certain characters, and plot and dialogue modifications. A brief intermission followed the performance of the first two acts, which corresponded to the first two plays. A narrator figure was introduced, and before each act provided the audience with important background information about the plays' respective plots and playwrights. Far from being merely a functionary role, however, the narrator, played with abundant enthusiasm by the talented Alejandra Flores, became a full-fledged character in her own right, and set the tone for the hilarity that was to follow.

True to the nature of the *comedia de enredos*, this performance highlighted the confusion, dissimulation, mistaken identities, and unexpected outcomes that are central to the four works in question. Sumptuous costumes helped transport the audience back to the 17th-century, as did the judicious use of effective stage props. While a center-stage portal was used for many of the entrances and exits, the director took full advantage of the intimate nature of the theatre (which seats 99), and had a number of actors enter from the rear of the house, and deliver lines while walking up and down the aisles. Audi-

ence members became so enveloped in the action that in particular those in the front row seemed as if they might become casualties in some of the well-choreographed but very up-close fight scenes.

Several music and dance numbers livened up the performance, and were generally effective in contributing to the desired ambience. However, the piped-in sounds of waves, used to evoke a seascape in *El anzuelo de Fenisa*, were too loud and proved distracting.

The cast of eight principal actors deserves accolades for the very successful execution of what must have been an extremely challenging piece to perform. Not only does each actor play at least four distinct roles (corresponding to the four plays represented), but also must learn the lines for each of these roles in both Spanish and English. This is due to the fact that part of the mission of the Bilingual Foundation of the Arts is "presenting Hispanic world drama to an audience of English- and Spanish-speaking people,"¹ and therefore it offers performances in English and in Spanish, alternating the language from week to week. Those who stood out among this talented international cast included: Glenda Torres (understudy who performed in lieu of the well-known Venezuelan actress Sonya Smith the night this critic attended), particularly in her role as Doña Angela in *La dama duende*; and Jaime Arze as the consummate *gracioso* in several character roles.

While scholars of the *comedia* may find the abbreviated versions of these four plays somewhat unsatisfying, the audience's enthusiastic applause throughout the play and in particular at its conclusion, suggests that for most of the public the adaptations were certainly acceptable. Indeed, for the group of university students who accompanied this critic to the performance, *Los Clásicos . . . Enredos* sparked their interest in learning more about the *comedia* in general, and in reading the full text of these particular plays. This is consistent with another of the programs of the Bilingual Foundation of the Arts, its "Theatre-In-Education" program. In addition to the version of *Los Clásicos . . . Enredos* staged for the general public, the BFA simultaneously offered an educational program called "The Golden Age of Spain; Introduction to the Classics – Comedy of Intrigue." This program "is a field trip program designed for children in grades 3rd to 8th. This interactive program uses a compilation of four plays from the Spain [sic] Golden Age . . . it will capture your students' attention, inspiring them to embrace learning about theatre. Our Golden Age Narrator will be on-hand to answer their questions and really engage them in the true joy of live theatre."

(http://www.bfatheatre.org/pages/2003_productions/classics.html). Not only, then, did this adaptation by Ms. Galban and Ms. Montalvo make for an entertaining performance, but it also served to educate and inspire future theatergoers, and possibly future *comediantes*. All in all, *Dulce et Utile*.

Don Gil de las calzas verdes. By Tirso de Molina.
Dir. Fernando Urdiales, Teatro Corsario. Teatro
Galileo, Madrid. 1 June 2003. (Play's run: 28 May –
8 June 2003.)

ELLEN FRYE
Monmouth University

Always a humorous – but highly complex – text to read, *Don Gil de las calzas verdes* is a treat to see in performance. Under the clever direction of Fernando Urdiales, this *comedia* reaches its hilarious heights. Overall, the staging was expert: holding to the 17th century rubric, the scenery was quite simple and the props were minimal. He remained faithful to the written text for the most part, in terms of dialogue and the characters' entrances and exits. The costumes were extremely effective, if a bit exaggerated, which of course simply added to the humor. It was the casting and acting, perhaps, that made his production of *Don Gil* so outstanding.

The actress portraying Doña Juana (Rosa Manzano) displayed the prowess with which the character is endowed. While playing the role of don Gil, Manzano exuded masculinity, from gestures to

hardened facial expressions, tempered with a small note of hesitancy, just enough to remind us of the true—female—character. Her costume as the first don Gil was important to the play, and it did not disappoint. Everything was green, from the tall boots to the top hat, and even the codpiece. The gracioso Caramanchel (Luis Miguel García) was played to the hilt, and the quickly collapsing house-of-cards conclusion was highlighted by his confusion: he brought the audience into the play by frequently addressing them directly in his brief monologues, and he made great use of his props, especially the umbrella, behind which he occasionally hid. In tandem, doña Juana and Caramanchel made quite a show, and clearly that was Tirso's intention. The actor who portrayed don Martín (Pedro Vergara), the male protagonist who jilted doña Juana, was respectable. His role is not inherently as humorous and complex as the other characters, but the actor could have exaggerated more, particularly with certain verbal expressions and gestures.

As happens occasionally in any play, it was a secondary protagonist who literally took down the house: Doña Inés was played superbly by Beatriz Alcalde. This character is significant to the play because she inadvertently starts to thwart doña Juana's plans to get back her man, don Martín. Alcalde clearly knew the text thoroughly, and she pushed her lines past the limit, with her emphatic speech and her accompanying facial expressions. It was her eyes, however, that won the performance. Throughout the play, Alcalde used them brilliantly: several times they were wider than saucers, in bewilder-

ment, and at other times they were narrower than a needle's eye, in anger. Furthermore, a number of times she crossed her eyes in defiance or to mock the idiocy of another character, which made the audience roar. To add to the humor, her red silk dress was more than a meter wide at the hips, and her big blond curls (with a red rose behind the ear) bounced in time with the dress's bodice!

As the director states in the program, "el rompecabezas de la trama transita por situaciones límite plenas de comicidad que hacen que sea una de las comedias más graciosas del repertorio clásico español." His production of *Don Gil* was perhaps the most comical *comedia* performance this critic has seen, and if given the opportunity, she would definitely see another production by this theater company from Valladolid.

Peribáñez. By Lope de Vega. Dir. Rufus Norris. English version Tanya Ronder. Young Vic Theatre, London UK. 7 May 2003. (Play's run: 7 May – 14 June 2003).

JONATHAN THACKER
Merton College, Oxford

Lope de Vega's *Peribáñez y el comendador de Ocaña*, is not as well known to English-speaking audiences as his *Fuente Ovejuna*, perhaps because of the latter's eye-catching mass rebellion. The story of the village's brutal uprising against its *comendador* has enjoyed considerable success on the European stage over the years and is one of the few plays from the Golden Age to have definitively entered the European canon. Its attractions to a theatre director are obvious: resistance to tyranny, rousing rhetoric and crowd scenes, a strong female character, a grounding in history, a love story with a resolution. And yet, as Rufus Norris's production of *Peribáñez* at the Young Vic has proven, the lesser-known play is just as gripping on the stage and yet a subtler, more thought-provoking work in which the figure of the disruptive *comendador*, Don Fadrique, is a much more sympathetic one, a misguided

young man rather than an arrogant and wicked tyrant.

The Young Vic's *Peribáñez* was successful in almost every respect. The intimate space of the theatre – without a Proscenium arch – was well exploited by a talented ensemble. Understandably no effort was made to create a *corral*-type stage, but at the same time the spirit of the *corral* staging was observed. Changes of location were not indicated by wholesale changes of scenery or the excessive introduction of props. As in Lope's day the audience was expected to keep up with such movements by listening to the dialogue and by noticing differences in the way the actors treated the set around them. Thus an 'upstairs', or upper level of the set, could flexibly represent the domain of the noble classes (starkly emphasising their social elevation, and constantly reminding the audience of the gulf in class which dominates the play), and also Casilda's bedroom, a balcony, Antón's house, or the royal residence in Toledo. The most obvious innovation in terms of staging was the draping of large sheets of paper over the lower level of the set, so that the marriage scene before the play opens became a shadow-play, in which the young couple are united to the accompaniment of rustic music and dance, only to have their shadow heads threatened by the shapes of two sickles which hover above them ominously. The haunting moment comes to an end as the heads of Casilda and Peribáñez break through the paper and the light-hearted dialogue begins.

The director's intelligence in allowing the play to breathe for itself was instructive. The point has

been repeatedly made by Golden-Age drama scholars that we have few opportunities – or at least fewer than our counterparts in English or French studies for example - to see performances of the plays that we study and write about. It was not just Lope's supreme ability to structure a play that emerged with clarity from Norris's production, but also his attention to detail in his characterization. The main figures are able to develop convincingly. Thus the *comendador* (played by David Harewood) gave an assured performance as he descended from a man incapable of believing that a peasant girl can resist him, to a desperate sexual predator. Lope's language gives the actor all the clues he needs to build a convincing persona. Peribáñez himself was almost as convincing as a wide-eyed innocent, now shocked that his lord would betray his feudal responsibilities, now doubting his decision to marry Casilda. What was arguably missing from Peribáñez's character, however, was his more calculating side, and this occasional over-simplification of Lope's creation reduced the potential force of some scenes – notably at the painter's studio in Toledo and again at the start of act 3 when he forces Don Fadrique to gird on his sword. The three peasant girls, Casilda (Jackie Morrison) and her two cousins were at once a teenage gaggle, and yet three quite distinguishable types, who reacted to crisis in different ways. Most striking of all, however, was the fact that even the minor characters took wing. The painter and the priest, both played for laughs by Michael O'Connor, were good examples. The former had a hint of the moody *artiste* about him but

was ready to abandon his principles when reward was offered by either the noble or the peasant characters. The latter, given an Irish accent, was a comic mixture of predictably holy advice and excessive fear of the rampaging bull. He was treated with a knowing affection by his flock. Fadrique's sidekick, Leonardo, was interpreted with a wonderfully laconic superiority by Mark Lockyer making his discovery of the moribund *comendador* towards the end of act 3 all the more poignant. The peasant characters, present at the wedding, in the confraternity's meeting in act 2 and in the reapers' scenes were also carefully drawn and differentiated by their musical talents, sense of humour or a defining characteristic.

One wonders whether the reputation that Spanish Golden-Age dramatists have had for being rather unconcerned about the importance of characterization has originated from too text-based a study of their plays. The success of the Young Vic's *Peribáñez* cannot be put down solely to the strength of the actors' interpretations of their characters however. The production was true to the tragicomic spirit of Spanish Golden-Age theatre. Norris had clearly encouraged his ensemble to permit the frequent comic moments to cut across and rub shoulders with the tragic events, a merging which was epitomised by the figure of Peribáñez (Michael Nardone) covered in the decisive scene in a mixture of flour and blood. The frequent laughter at the antics of the men and women of Ocaña, and the good will felt towards the loving central couple as they explored domestic and marital bliss, if anything

added poignancy to the final scenes where harmony turns irrevocably into horror. The combination, anathema to some theorists maybe, was seen to have the power to move an audience to a stunned silence.

Perhaps the greatest impediment to the appreciation of Spanish Golden-Age drama on the foreign stage today is not so much the strangeness of the honour theme to a modern audience, as the difficulty for the translator of rendering the mixture of Italianate and traditional Spanish verse-forms. In *Peribáñez* this is a particular problem given that the two classes are often differentiated by the type of verse they speak. The play's translator, like many before her, balked at a verse translation, but allowed her lively English registers to do the work done in part in the Spanish by polymetry. This strategy has its risks on the page but was made to work by Norris's decision to have the peasants speak in a variety of regional accents while the nobles spoke in clipped officer-class tones. The colonial loftiness ('What do they like, these peasants?') played very well to an English-speaking audience and the contrast became a high point of the production.

A debate which has occasionally surfaced particularly in Spain about its classical drama is the extent to which a director is at liberty to adapt the original play for modern times, or to give it a new slant. Clearly the translator and/or director in the case of *Peribáñez* felt that a modern British audience might struggle with the harshness of Casilda's approval of her cousin's murder by Pedro, and her explicit endorsement was thus omitted in this pro-

duction. This led to an ending which might seem out of key to the specialist. Casilda and Peribáñez became figures apart whose lives had been changed for ever and for the worse by the *comendador*'s obsession, and their isolation is emphasized by the physical distance between them on stage, their eyes never meeting. Although the voice of Casilda is not heard at the end of Lope's play, there is probably a stronger sense that a difficulty has been successfully overcome by female virtue and male prudence, than this production allowed. In today's society such momentous events would perhaps be more likely to drive a wedge between a couple than to unite them. This change in emphasis was consistent with the director's vision for the play, and thus justifiable.

Peribáñez tested the physical and mental resources of its cast to the full but clearly gripped the audience from beginning to end. It did this by remaining faithful to the technical simplicity and the spirit of the original, while not being too concerned about adapting for a new audience.

Friendship Betrayed. By María de Zayas y Sotomayor. Dir. David Pasto. Based on Catherine Larson's translation of *La traición en la amistad*. Chamizal National Memorial Theatre, El Paso. 7 March 2003.

La traición en la amistad. By María de Zayas y Sotomayor. Dir. Mariano de Paco Serrano, Volarte Producciones. Palacio de Fúcares, Almagro, Spain. 18 July 2003.

(Play's run: 18 July- 20 July, 2003.)

BÁRBARA LÓPEZ-MAYHEW
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Believed to have been written in the early 1600's, the long awaited performance of María de Zayas's *comedia de enredos*, "La traición en la amistad," has not only occurred once but several times in 2003. Heterogeneous audiences on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean have had the opportunity to see Zayas's play performed in English and Spanish at two renowned drama festivals: the XXVIII Siglo de Oro Drama Festival at El Paso's Chamizal National Memorial Theatre and the XXVI International Festival of Classical Theatre in Alma-

gro, Spain. The performances followed the plot of Zayas's *comedia* which involved various liaisons between young ladies of the 17th century Spanish court and gallant and persistent gentlemen, and the incorrigible actions and deceit of an insidious and egotistical friend, Fenisa. As the play progressed, a series of love triangles were resolved between the main characters Marcia, Gerardo, Belisa, don Juan, Laura, and Liseo, with the end result of ostracizing the seductive and traitorous third party, Fenisa. Yet, each play director chose to follow his own artistic interpretation of the text, which was evident in two very distinct types of performance.

The first American performance in El Paso, Texas, was based on Catherine Larson's prose translation into English, *Friendship Betrayed*. It came to fruition on March 7th, 2003, by students of the Oklahoma City University Department of Speech and Theatre and director David Pasto. The play was divided into three acts, four scenes, three scenes, and four scenes respectively, with an intermission after the second act. Despite the anachronistic choice of costumes of an 18th century *maja* style (particularly Fenisa's outfit) and effeminate male vesture with wigs and lace, the two hour performance followed the text of the 17th century play with minor alterations.

The simple yet dimensional stage setting was illuminated as the curtain rose: a large octagonal platform center stage, two benches at the right front and back of the platform, one bench at the left forefront, and a taller platform at the back left with two sets of stairs on each side (which would later represent a

balcony in several scenes). Other than the deliberate and effective freezing of actors and actresses in place while asides were recited to the audience, the continuous movement of the actors and actresses on, behind, around, and in front of the oversized center platform was distracting. However, it eventually became clear that the octagonal platform served as a focal point for the importance and relevance of the main characters' roles and their recited lines. When the actor or actress stepped on the center platform, his or her lines tended to be more inspirational and intense. At one moment, a distraught Laura in the spotlight emotionally revealed the infidelity of her disdainful lover, Liseo, with the sexually indulgent Fenisa; at another moment, Marcia conveyed her plan to avenge Fenisa's betrayal of friendship, and to trick Liseo into marrying Laura. On a rare occasion, the *gracioso*, Liseo, stood on the center platform as an opportunity to vent or even to allegorize: for example, when he spoke about his uncle, a priest, and his numerous illegitimate children, and about the lost glorious times that had passed. Although as cumbersome and disproportionate as the center platform appeared, the rest of the stage area was resourcefully used throughout the performance, having the benches and the stairs provide additional vertical and horizontal dimensions.

The acting was impressive and convincing, and without a doubt, the student troupe should be commended, particularly the young men who effectively played the humorous roles of León and Felix. One character, Lauro, was eliminated entirely from the

script, and the remaining male roles were characterized as weaker than their female counterparts. The most developed and memorable character of the performance was the seductive and impetuous Fenisa. At the end of the play, the actress emotionally drew a sword and began to duel with Belisa and Marcia, also equipped with swords. Although this scene was applauded by many in the audience for the fact that the women literally “took arms” in their battle against betrayal and infidelity, and that the swords symbolized the necessary “male” strength to combat the enemy, the scene was shocking for others who believed that the women did not need to resort to swords to show their strength of character and intelligence. The actresses’ lack of skill in wielding the swords at the climax weakened the *comedia*’s collaborative and well-orchestrated plan by the young ladies to gain back the lovers’ attention and hands in marriage and to shun Fenisa. Perhaps, the women of this performance should have resorted to a cat fight, which was in the original last scene described in Zayas’s text.

The Spanish performance of *La traición en la amistad* in verse was professionally presented July 18th, 19th, and 20th at the Palacio de Fúcares, Almagro, by Volarte Producciones, and directed by Mariano de Paco Serrano. Undoubtedly, the setting could not have been more appropriate and intimate: an interior open-roofed patio with balconies along the perimeter, and two sets of bleacher-style seats facing the stage, which accommodated approximately 120 spectators. The performance began at 10:45 p.m., lighting was minimal, and only a star-

filled sky could be seen in the darkness of the patio. As dim lights shone on stage, simple, "modern" props could be viewed: three clear plastic chairs placed in a horizontal row at the back of the stage, a bicycle parked at the back right stage (used by don Juan in one scene) and three large clear plastic planter-like containers that served as fishbowls, that were slightly filled with water, some stones, and a large goldfish in each, positioned in the forefront. While Fenisa spoke to the audience in the first scene, a young actress with an aura of peacefulness and spirituality silently placed a ring in one of the fishbowls as she sat cross-legged behind it. Her enigmatic presence was clarified much later as Fenisa's servant, Lucía, although she was mysteriously ever-present onstage, at one moment seated in front with her back turned to the audience, at another, seated on the floor left stage stirring a pestle in a mortar, making it sound and ring as Liseo spoke to the audience. As the play progressed, the fishbowls were either slowly dragged back and forth by Lucía or don Juan from front stage to under or in-between the chairs at the back of the stage, or they were played with by the actresses or actors while revealing their thoughts and feelings. We can only guess that the bowls and the fish were symbolic of the three young women and their lives and dilemmas within the small world of the court.

Costumes were historically correct: cloaks, collarless shirts, vests, pants, and low-cut long dresses, with the exception of don Juan's blue denim jeans tucked into his knee-high black leather boots. The acts and scenes blended into one continuous flow of

events that lasted approximately two hours, with background or contemporary music played while making the transition from one scene to another. Surprisingly, the songs were primarily in English and were selections of rhythm and blues; at times the verses were accompanied by the saxophone or a violin, or a selection from the Pop Charts, such as Elton John's "All By Myself." One of Gerardo's soliloquies about his love for Marcia and the anguish he felt because of her lack of attention and compassion for him was particularly effective because of the melancholic song that played as he spoke.

Besides the modern day choice of music and props, the Director opted to eliminate several characters from Zayas's text: Lauro (one of Fenisa's suitors), Felix (Laura's confidant and servant), Antonio and Fabio (musicians), and León (the *gracioso*). Don Juan served as Laura's confidant in lieu of Felix, or at other times Laura emotionally recited her verses as asides. León's absence was noticeable to those who are familiar with Zayas's *comedia*, and his verses were either entirely eliminated (for example, when he spoke about Galician women, his uncle (the priest), the loss of glorious days past) or given to another character, primarily to Liseo. Liseo assumed the dual role of gallant and comic. As the performance progressed, Liseo became more emotional, intoxicated, and jovial as he danced onto the stage; evidence was an empty wine bottle in his hand. The remaining actors and actresses were impressive, passionate, and captivating, all playing equally important roles. Their incredible facial ex-

pressions and gestures augmented their emotions, as they recited or listened to the others on stage, or as they hugged and kissed.

The most striking character in this performance was Gerardo, who had been portrayed as weak and effeminate in the El Paso performance. In the Almagro performance, his desperation and anguish to gain Marcia's love was evident in three of his soliloquies. His instability and suicidal tendencies were exaggerated and indicated by the props he brought on stage while he spoke: the first time, matches and a plastic fuel container of flammable liquid with which he doused himself and threatened to ignite; the second time, a thick rope and noose around his neck; the third time, a sharp dagger he held towards his heart while he cried and lamented. In a scene where Gerardo requested help from Fenisa in his relationship with Marcia, the actor was enthusiastically applauded because of his extraordinary facial expressions, and his sensitive and almost comic reaction to Fenisa's seduction.

The actresses who played Marcia, Belisa, and Laura were as vibrant and beautiful as Fenisa. The auburn-haired Belisa, who was portrayed as the most headstrong, was seen in some scenes practicing fencing skills using an épée. In the last scene, when all gathered on stage, with the exception of Laura up in the balcony, Belisa and Fenisa challenged each other with foils they had drawn from the men's sheaths standing nearby. They did not enter into a duel because they were intercepted by Marcia. The final scene emotionally and passionately culminated and followed Zayas's text: the

young women paired up with their loved ones, Belisa and don Juan, Marcia and Gerardo, Liseo and Laura, with the exception of Lucía walking offstage alone. After explaining to Fenisa about love and the results of her betrayal of her friends, Marcia kissed Fenisa as she too left the stage. Laura and Liseo remained on stage as they began to sing a sonnet put to music about *los ojos*, and were soon accompanied by the rest of the cast for the finale.

The director's description of his version of "La traición en la amistad" in the Almagro Festival's program best explains his play: "un espectáculo cuya principal pretensión es la de hacer pasar un buen rato al público, ofreciéndole otra perspectiva de una época, quizá no tan lejana. Otros usos y maneras. Así de sencillo." Perhaps, the gentleman who stood up at the end and shouted "Bravo!" said it all.

Book Reviews

Teatro y Fiesta del Siglo de Oro en tierras europeas de los Austrias. Madrid: Sociedad Estatal para la Acción Cultural Exterior de España, 2003. 319 pp. ISBN: 84-96008-26-6.

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Among the many opportunities involving Golden Age theatre in Spain in the summer of 2003, was the exposition on *Teatro y Fiesta* in the Real Alcázar de Sevilla. Organized by the Sociedad Estatal para la Acción Cultural Exterior de España, this exposition, which moved to Warsaw in July, brought together an impressive array of documents on stage space, paintings, engravings, and books from the era of Hapsburg reign, not only in Spain but Italy, Portugal, Holland, and Austria. This catalogue is of interest not only to the general public, but also the scholar, for it includes clear color reproductions of original items displayed in the exposition, two hundred forty in all, accompanied by a series of scholarly articles on the Hapsburg monarchy, Baroque public spectacles, processions, fiestas, staging, performance, stage space, theater architec-

ture, dance, and puppets, all which contribute to the notion of *espectacularidad* of the period (Ferrer Valls 27). José María Díez Borque, the *comisario* for this exposition and author of the introduction, undoubtedly had a hand in collecting the twenty-four scholarly contributions in this volume. Intended for the general reader, these articles focus on Golden Age stage practice. A general bibliography concludes the volume although significant studies are scattered throughout the notes, such as Evangelina Rodríguez Cuadro's *La técnica del actor español en el Barroco* (Castalia, 1998), found embedded in Bernardo García's article on actors.

Articles are divided into two groups. The first group of eight begins with a study of the Hapsburg monarchy by Karl Freidrich Rudolf, then moves on to three discussions on "Fiesta" by Teresa Ferrer Valls, Isabel Enciso Alonso-Muñumer, and Andrea Sommer-Mathis, and ends with four more articles on "Teatro" by Mercedes de los Reyes Peña, María Grazia Profeti, Carmen Sanz Ayán, and María José Ruiz Mayordomo. Under the rubric "Catálogo," also divided into the same two groups, "Fiesta" and "Teatro," are shorter explanations of items presented at the exposition. Contributors here are Bernardo J. García (10 articles, 1 in collaboration with Ruiz Mayordomo), Díez Borque himself (2 articles), Ignacio Arellano, and José María Ruano de la Haza (2 articles). Thus this volume brings together some of the most distinguished scholars in Golden Age dramaturgy. A few examples of the scholarly articles will suffice in the space here. In her "El teatro barroco en España y Portugal," Mer-

cedes de los Reyes Peña presents a thorough review of “lugares de representación,” complete with engravings, a photo of the Corral de Almagro, and a *cartel de teatro* from 1619. She comments that staging for the commercial theater could either be “pobre” or “espectacular” and includes a study of the *teatro cortesano* and the Coliseo del Buen Retiro, closed barely one hundred years after its construction, and the *carros* for the autos sacramentales. While most of this information is well known to scholars, this volume has the advantage of offering a wide range of studies on stage history and performance all in one place, including visual materials of high quality.

Public festivities and spectacles or “extramuro” festivities are not always included in studies on “lugares de representación intramuros” (de los Reyes 81), perhaps because of their ephemeral nature. In her “La fiesta en el Siglo de Oro: en los márgenes de la ilusión teatral,” Teresa Ferrer Valls examines temporary structures for these outdoor events, such as triumphal arches, altars, and carts, and the *relaciones de fiestas*, accounts of public festivals often written in verse, that proliferated during the Baroque era. This balance of studies on the stage and the public festival brings an interesting dimension to questions of the relationship between staged events and political power. For commentaries on the exposition items, Ignacio Arellano’s “Dramaturgos y otras teatrales” is accompanied by portraits of dramatists themselves, manuscripts, and printed texts. Arellano injects a polemical note on

genre theory in which he deplores reductionist notions of Spanish drama (215).

In sum, this beautifully-presented volume contains valuable information and a detailed, up-to-date bibliography that should interest scholars of Golden Age stage practice. Such color reproductions of Juan Rana and *La Calderona* make this catalogue and collection of essays a valuable item for any library, especially for the study of stage production and stage space.

Suárez García, José Luis. *Teatro y toros en el Siglo de Oro español, Estudios sobre la licitud de la fiesta*. Granada: Editorial Universidad de Granada, 2003, 326 pp.

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It is perhaps one of the ironies of comedia history that its detractors have left extensive commentaries on their objections to stage practice. While it is not at all clear to what extent the moralists actually saw the plays they critique, in *Teatro y toros*, José Luis Suárez García presents an analysis of both enemies and defenders of the stage, along with original texts, and points out that the number of treatises on *licitud* increases as the *comedia nueva* reaches its highpoint in the seventeenth century. He makes a convincing argument for the consideration of the moralists, since they discuss valuable information on ways in which the comedia was staged and performed, including music, costuming, and most of all the presence of women on the stage. In a thoroughly-researched volume, Suárez scrutinizes a wide range of documents, many of which appear in Emilio Cotarelo's *Bibliografía de las controversias*,

an edition of which he edited in 1994 (University of Granada). He takes US scholars to task for not including the issues on the moral legitimacy of theater into account, especially as concerns performance and women. His argument is well taken. With interest in the *comedia* today, spurred on by theater festivals, the many competing theories on dramatic production, gender, reader response, and, for what concerns us here, performance often ignore a discussion of debates from the Golden Age. Suárez presents not only a fine analysis of the issues brought forward by the moralists but the texts themselves together with a detailed documentation of source materials that includes classical authors, Saint Thomas Aquinas, and theater critics today. In his plea for attention to these treatises, he shows that they provide an historical underpinning for current theories on staging and performance. He dedicates an entire chapter to the consideration of women on the stage, the origin of the moralists' complaint about the *comedia nueva* according to Suárez, particularly the *mujer vestida de hombre*. Although the moralists did not view *comedia* performance as inherently sinful, nor was attendance of such performances a sinful act, even playwrights such as Lupericio Leonardo de Argensola condemned the practice of cross-dressed women on the stage. The moralists generally viewed theater production along with other public spectacles such as bullfights, an issue Duncan Moir also approaches in his edition of Francisco Bances Candamo's *Teatro de los theatros* (London: Támesis, 1970). As entertainment, bullfights may incite passions, but were

not inherently evil. While Saint Thomas states that entertainment is healthy for the soul, the moralists turned this argument against the *comedia nueva* by stating that such productions amounted to an excessive display of lascivious gestures, ostentatious attire, and cross-dressed women that went beyond anything previously seen. Actresses and their deceptive ways were viewed as a source of imitation for weak-minded women theatergoers, more easily inclined to sin than men. While issues of what constitutes sinful behavior might not be in the forefront today among post-modern discussions of the stage, Suárez's discussion focuses on the importance of women as an integral part of the stage experience and as object of moralizing diatribe. He also presents portions of original texts by Fray Manuel Rodríguez Lusitano, Juan de Mariana (on bull-fights), Juan de Herreros de Almanasa (whose work is not available in modern editions), and an anonymous "Censura en América Latina: dos testamentos." Herreros, one of the defenders of the *comedia*, gives testimony of actually attending performances, "Y confieso que ante todas las cosas que soy tan aficionado a ver una buena comedia como cuantos hay nacidos" (172).

Given the voluminous amount of source material here, an index would have been helpful. Also, full bibliographical entries often appear in notes and not in the general section at the end. Aside from these redundancies, Suárez displays an impressive knowledge of sixteen- and seventeenth-century treatises on theater that give evidence of actual stage practice. Along with Suárez's edition of Cotarelo's

Bibliografía, Teatros y toros is a welcome addition to the corpus of scholarship on the controversy concerning the Early Modern Spanish stage.

Cover photo

Left to right: José Luis Ferrer, Ricardo Barber, and René Sánchez in the Repertorio Español production of Calderón's *La vida es sueño* (New York, 1997). Our thanks to Repertorio Español for furnishing this photograph.