

Comedia Performance



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Comedia Performance

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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.

Purchase Information

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Please contact Anita Stoll, Managing Editor, at a.stoll@csuohio.edu for additional information. Send other queries to Barbara Mujica at blm@comediapformance.com.

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All submissions must be original and unpublished. After publication, authors may solicit permission to reproduce their material in books or other journals. Articles may be in either English or Spanish and should be submitted electronically. No paper submissions will be accepted. Articles should use MLA style and not exceed 25 double-spaced, typed pages, including notes and bibliography.

Comedia Performance is a refereed journal. All submissions will be read by a committee of experts. Please submit articles to the appropriate editor. E-mails of editors are listed under Editorial Board.

Guidelines for theater reviews:

1. Reviews should be between 3 and five pages long, including pictures.
2. Reviews should not include endnotes and bibliography.
3. Reviews should not include a detailed description of plot. For canonical plays, no plot summary is necessary. For lesser known plays, a two- to three-line synopsis should suffice.
4. Avoid minute descriptions of action, costume, lighting or sets. Avoid constructions such as, "And then Don Lope comes out and says..." Instead, comment on the efficacy of the blocking of particular scenes or the effect caused by costume and decor. Do not describe details of the performance unless you are going to comment on them.
5. Avoid structures such as "This reviewer thinks..." Reviews are by definition subjective.
6. One reviewer may not publish more than two reviews in a single issue.

NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

It is with sadness, but also with a sense of accomplishment that I write this note. After three years as President of AHCT, I have decided to step down. On the one hand, my many publishing activities, including a new anthology of early modern theater and a new novel, make it impossible for me to continue with my administrative duties. On the other, I honestly think a frequent change in leadership is healthy for a professional organization. This year's conference will therefore be the last one at which I preside as President.

During my tenure as President I have realized certain goals that I have long cherished. First, I hosted a joint conference of the AHCT and the AEEA (Asociación de Escritoras de España y las Américas) at Georgetown University last October. In addition to 130 papers by an international assembly of scholars, the conference included premier professional performances of two plays by early modern women dramatists: *Valor, agravio y mujer*, by Ana Caro, directed by Hugo Medrano of GALA Hispanic Theater, and *Friendship Betrayed (La traición en la amistad)*, by María de Zayas, directed in English by Karen Berman of Washington Women in the Theater. Other highlights of the conference were an outstanding keynote address by art historian Christopher Wilson on Teresian iconography and a reception hosted by the Spanish Embassy.

Thanks to the outstanding efforts of Susan Fischer, Susan Paun de García, and Isaac Benabu, during my tenure AHCT also hosted another important symposium, held in summer, 2004 in Stratford-upon-Avon, in conjunction with the Royal Shakespeare Company's festival of Spanish plays. Although I cannot take credit for organizing this very successful event, I hope it will set a precedent for many other international AHCT symposia.

When we met in 2006, there was much talk of the possibility that the Golden Age Theater Festival at the Chamizal might not continue. I am happy to announce that not only will it continue, but it will expand until it returns to its original two-week format. Last summer I met in Washington, D.C. with Richard Harris, Superintendent of the National Park Service and with representatives of the El Paso Chamber of Commerce and of the El Camino Real Hotel. All of them assured me of their continued support for the theater festival. Richard Harris suggested that we have a representative of AHCT meet with his group on a regular basis in order to offer suggestions and guidance on issues involving the theater festival. With the support of the other officers, I named Robert Johnston to that position.

One issue that has concerned me over the years is the diminished participation in our annual conference of some of the profession's most highly respected members. To ameliorate this situation I initiated the Panel of Experts, a plenary session that features papers by senior scholars. Last year's panel

included stimulating presentations by James Parr and Catherine Connor-Swietlicki. This year we are able to count on three highly prestigious scholars for our panel: Frederick de Armas, Dawn Smith, and Teresa Soufas.

Another concern has been the lack of recognition of *comedia* studies outside of Hispanism. In August, 2006, I attended the annual conference of the Association for Theater in Higher Education (ATHE) in Chicago for the purpose of giving our group more exposure among academics in the field of theater studies. The conference was attended by over 1000 scholars and professional theater people. In addition to giving a paper on Calderón, I spoke at the plenary session and attended the Summit of theater organizations as President of AHCT. I am now taking steps toward obtaining affiliated status for AHCT in ATHE.

Finally, I am delighted to inform you of the extraordinary success of our journal, *Comedia Performance*, now in its fourth issue. There were so many excellent submissions this year that we were able to accept less than one third. Many first-rate research institutions, including the University of Pennsylvania, the University of California, and Ohio State University, are now subscribing. I am grateful to all of you for your support of *Comedia Performance*. I am particularly indebted to our Editorial Advisory Board, and I look forward to continuing to serve as Editor.

I would like to thank my fellow AHCT officers, the board, and the membership for an extremely gratifying three years. Donald Dietz, our President Emeritus, deserves special thanks for his continued support. I know the Association will grow and prosper under new leadership

Many thanks for giving me the opportunity to serve you.

Barbara Mujica
President, AHCT

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Performance Studies

THE WORLD OF THE *COMEDIA* ¹

JOHN JAY ALLEN

University of Kentucky, Emeritus

Thanks to Barbara Mujica and to the Association for this invitation and congratulations to them on the auspicious launching of the new AHCT journal, *Comedia Performance*. It is a special honor to deliver an address named for Don Dietz, knowing as I do Don's crucial role in the origination, maintenance, and occasional last-minute salvation of the Association. My original connection to El Paso is surely older than that of anyone else in this room, for I first came here over half a century ago as an army draftee, for basic training at Fort Bliss. I have not been to Chamizal for many years, but I have fond memories of this conference that go way back. I remember a particular visit exactly 20 years ago, when I came to moderate the post-performance discussions onstage, including one unenviable task of moderating between a few irate spectators and the company directed by Raúl Cermeño in a spicy production of

¹ Donald Dietz Keynote Address delivered at the 2006 annual meeting of ACHT, in El Paso, Texas.

Marta la piadosa. My recollection is that Cermeño won the prize for the best production and an invitation *not* to return the next year. Osvaldo Dragún was one of the judges that year, and I remember, too, his endorsement of minimalist staging: “Si hay un teléfono en el escenario, que suene,” he said, “y mejor que sea Dios.”

Not everyone may know that your keynote speakers from 2002, Juan Sanz and Miguel Angel Coso, won the Caudí prize awarded by the Spanish Directores de Escena in November, 2005, for the staging of Cervantes’s *Viaje del Parnaso*, produced by the Compañía Nacional de Teatro Clásico for the centenary, and were among three finalists for the Premio Max de escenografía for that work. On March 2, 2006, their staging of Lluïsa Cunillé’s “Barcelona, mapa de sombras,” opened for a run of a month in the new Valle Inclán Theater in Madrid. They continue doing great things.

The invitation to speak here this year is particularly valuable to me just now, since it has prompted a third installment of an ongoing retrospective look at 20 years of work with aspects of Golden Age theater that fascinate me still today, six years into retirement.

The first piece of this look back over my work as a piece in a very broad context was a survey I did of 17th-century *espacios teatrales* for Javier Huerta Calvo’s *Historia del teatro español*, published by Gredos in 2003, and the second was a history of one

specific crucial aspect, the peculiar disposition of spectator boxes in the Madrid *corrales*, in a review article that will appear later this year or early in 2007 in the *Bulletin of Spanish Studies*. Pieces of these two essays will come into the discussion today, which is a bit more personal than the other two.

You will notice that I am talking about everything *but* the text today, and a great deal of my work with theater has been outside the play texts, but everything I have done has been intended to get me to the text, because the *text*—the written text and the performed text—is always and absolutely primary for me.

(1) Today, then, I will review and comment upon aspects of the last half century of investigation in the areas of my interest. My coverage here is not comprehensive—I am actually out of touch, I'm sure, with a lot that has gone on recently. I will be talking mostly about work by British and European scholars and I will deal primarily with playhouses and staging possibilities—things I was involved in more directly, and less with the other aspects of the world of the *comedia*, things I was only involved with tangentially or briefly. In one sense it is kind of a personal history.

(2) Secondly, I will highlight what I think are the major advances and insights provided by all this activity.

(3) Finally, I will suggest what seem to me to be productive ways to build upon what we have done and learned in these particular areas.

I was taught each *comedia* as if it were a novel in verse dialogue; I did not teach theater at all, myself, for the first 20 years of my career. I began working on the theater in 1979, when Francis Hayes retired and I had to teach his courses in the picaresque and in theater. I began with the stage and, by extension, the playhouse itself. I spent a sabbatical semester in a cabin in the mountains of North Carolina that year trying to build a model of the Corral del Príncipe based upon Othón Arróniz's then recent idea of that playhouse in *Teatros y escenarios del Siglo de Oro* (Madrid: Gredos, 1976).

Using broomstraws and toothpicks and the backs of legal pads to construct a model, I soon realized that the elements that Arróniz described simply could not be made to come together in a coherent three-dimensional structure. All we had then for a *visual* idea of the corral was the ubiquitous illustration by Juan Comba, titled "El Corral del Príncipe, 1660," drawn for Ricardo Sepúlveda's book *El Corral de la Pacheca* (1888), an image which in time I realized was mistaken in almost every significant respect. Many of the problems in Comba's drawing had been pointed out years earlier by Norman Shergold, but the representation turned out upon close examination to

be even more seriously distorted than he had imagined. The Corral de Almagro was not taken seriously at that time by anyone, as far as I know, as a dependable model for the original *corrales*. At that point I was still controlled, as I believe all researchers were and had been for decades, by an unconscious model of a theatre containing boxes, an illusion fostered by the 1735 ground plans drawn up by Pedro de Ribera, which projected construction of a series of boxes inside the Corral de la Cruz, etched in our minds by Comba's drawing, and probably reinforced, especially in Shergold's case, as Charles Davis has suggested to me, by the universal knowledge of the London playhouses of Shakespeare and his contemporaries. It is a perfect, literal example of our inability to 'think outside the box,' because our source documents spoke again and again of boxes in the neighboring houses, comments which we repeated unthinkingly for decades without drawing the logical conclusions.

What made it possible to go forward was John Varey's perception that gaining ground in understanding the circumstances of the Golden-Age playhouse depended upon the publication of *all* of the documentary underpinnings of one's assumptions and hypotheses, a perception that was and is still today the hallmark of the marvelous series of *Fuentes para la historia del teatro en España*.

As I worked with the archival documents in those volumes and, later, in the archives themselves,

toward an understanding of the playhouses and of *corral* staging, I found myself forced to consider the economics and the actors and audience, and then the broader social implications, with the belated realization that the literature I had begun to study involved a *commercial enterprise*, a circumstance that had all kinds of unsuspected implications. I had been taught to look at any piece of literature as an *aesthetic* object, often involving *ethical* issues, and in teaching *Don Quijote* and Golden Age poetry I had never needed to think about buildings or financial transactions.

The people working on these materials at the time were mainly British, Spanish, and French, and the places where work was going on were London, Bordeaux, and, in Spain, Madrid, Valencia, and Seville, the three major centers of theatrical activity in the Golden Age. In Madrid, John Varey and his student Norman Shergold were working in the Municipal Archives and those at the royal palace. Some of those of us who followed them in Madrid worked also in the Archivo Histórico de Protocolos, which even today continues to add constantly to our store of information. Most of the people doing important work today are products of Varey and his methods, beginning with Shergold himself, whose *History of the Spanish Theatre*—never translated into Spanish—is still fundamental almost 40 years later, then José María Ruano de la Haza in Ottawa, and Charles Davis and the faculty group at the

University of Valencia who worked with John from the 80s until his death: Joan Oleza, Teresa Ferrer, and their colleagues. José María Díez Borque's publications on the sociology of the *comedia*—independent of John Varey's work, as far as I know—were also relevant and useful during those years, and more recently the work of José Alcalá-Zamora's students at the Complutense in the Archivo de Protocolos in Madrid—Bernardo García and Carmen Sanz Ayán—has brought more information to light. In Alcalá, of course, were Juan Sanz and Miguel Angel Coso, whose book on the Teatro Cervantes came out in the *Fuentes* series. Mercedes de los Ríos and Piedad Bolaños were working in the archives in Seville and also publishing on the Spanish Corral de los Arcos in Lisbon, and Jean Sentaurens's massive dissertation, based upon his archival work on theater in Seville, was produced for the University of Bordeaux. The second big contribution to my effort to gain some understanding of the world of the *comedia* outside the text was a growing interest in and collaboration with scholars of Elizabethan theater, something that has been extremely fruitful for my work on the playhouses. It began during a series of lectures I gave in Britain and Ireland in 1982, where I talked with some Globe researchers and first met John Varey at the University of London and put him in contact with Coso and Sanz in Alcalá, and in Dublin, where I met Victor Dixon.

A major extension of my interest in the Elizabethan connection came as a result of the Louise Fothergill-Payne's *Parallel Lives* conference in Calgary in 1987, which brought Elizabethan scholars and Hispanists together for what I believe was the first time. There I met John Orrell, whose reconstruction of Shakespeare's Globe was the latest advance in that area at the time. Later, when the international commission for the reconstruction of the Teatro Cervantes in Alcalá was formed, Andrew Gurr, the other major figure in the London reconstruction of the Globe, and Orrell were both named members of that body.

I also learned a great deal during 1989-90—especially on Elizabethan staging practices—while at the National Humanities Center, in consultation with nearby Elizabethan scholars George Williams at Duke and Alan Dessen at Chapel Hill. The reconstruction of the Globe on Bankside in London going on at that time prompted several conferences and brought out a great deal of research of interest to us, enriched particularly by the discovery in 1990 of the foundations of the Rose playhouse, the Globe's neighboring contemporary, which showed clear evidence of a shallow stage much more like the typical *corral* stage than it was like the replica of the Globe then under construction practically next door. At this time I also initiated my acquaintance and collaboration with Frank Hildy, a representative of the London Globe project then in

Drama at the University of Georgia, and now Chair of Theatre at the University of Maryland. His contribution to our ideas about the Almagro *corral* was truly revolutionary, and this brings us to the discoveries on the ground in Spain.

The Corral de Almagro, constructed in 1628-29, was not discovered until 1953, and not taken seriously by researchers until 30 years later. Although Hildy has shown that the playhouse stage and yard today is only something over half as large as it must have been originally, it is still remarkably well preserved and provides us with a snapshot of an early *corral de comedias*.¹

The Corral del Príncipe that I had tentatively reconstructed in the mountains prompted my first publication in the field, in 1980, and anticipated the complete reconstruction developed in my 1983 book.² The fact that the Príncipe occupied the site of the Teatro Español, across from the Plaza Santa Ana in Madrid, aroused interest there and contributed greatly to my book. My second model—the one in the illustrations in that book—was produced out of a lucky coincidence of interests with Jesús García de Dueñas of Radiotelevisión Española and Fernando Fernán Gómez, co-authors of a script for a TV miniseries that needed a Madrid *corral* as a major set.³ Jesús delegated Carlos Dorremocha to build the model based upon my design. Once I had come to understand that the lateral boxes of the Príncipe and the Cruz were

located outside the theater building itself, abutting or protruding through the party walls at each side of the original enclosed structure, the reconstruction had become much easier to accomplish.

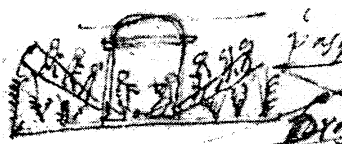
Only several years later did I begin to consider the possible relationship between the lateral platforms at each side of the stage and the three-cart structure of the standard *auto sacramental* arrangements, and came to hypothesize that this aspect of the *auto* tradition was simply incorporated into the Madrid *corrales*, making possible the flexibility of these versatile stages that permitted wide and elaborate single-perspective staging across the entire width of the playhouse yard and the contrasting simplicity that typifies the *capa y espada* stage, surrounded by spectators on three sides.⁴ This aspect of *corral* staging and the possible relationship with court staging is more fully discussed in my exposition of 17th-century “Espacios teatrales” in Huerta Calvo’s *Historia del teatro español*.

Ruano de la Haza’s pioneering layout of varieties of corral staging in our joint book is a fundamental starting point for the staging possibilities that are possible in the *corrales*, but I do not think he gives the lateral platforms anything like the wide range of effects that I believe they were used to achieve, especially for the scenes involving elevated structures so frequent in Golden Age plays.⁵ He and John Varey and I had all published

separate hypotheses of the *monte* set when Pat Kenworthy re-published Lope's hand-sketched two-mountain scene for *El cardenal de Belén*, first published by Earl Hamilton in 1948 and subsequently unknown to or forgotten by all three of us.⁶ The *acotación* just above the two-mountain staging that this remarkable sketch in Lope's own hand depicts reads as follows:

Descúbrase una cortina en que se vean María y Joseph y el niño y por un lado de monte bajen pastores, y por otro tres reyes.

Here is a close-up of this distinctive two-mountain set so common in the *corrales* and completely absent from the Elizabethan stage.



Kenworthy is very circumspect and even-handed in her discussion of our various hypotheses of the *monte* staging, but it seems clear to me that Lope has sketched exactly the staging of the two lateral elevations that I had envisioned in 1990, as depicted in my essay on staging in *The Prince in the Tower*, Fred de Armas's collection of studies from a Penn State conference on *La vida es sueño*.⁷

Let me suggest briefly some of the consequences of what I have described up to now, and also mention some of the ongoing archival research that continues to bring forth interesting information.

(1) The radical readjustment of our idea of the configuration of the Madrid playhouses changed our concept of the spectator space and disposition—the auditorium was about twice as wide as we had thought—and expanded and enriched the staging possibilities with the addition of the lateral platforms. The economic consequences of the lack of control of boxes opened up another area for exploration.

(2) The prominence of theater in 17th-century Spain has become clearer. It was obviously the dominant form of entertainment, and not just in Madrid, Seville, and Valencia. There were *corrales* in Zamora and Toro and Valladolid and Granada, and many other cities, and important theatrical activity was frequent even in small towns. Charles Davis's recent discovery of contracts establishing that actors from major companies hired out as individuals to work with local amateurs in their own hometown productions opens up fascinating possibilities. By 1615, Domingo Balbín, an actor who worked in Gaspar de Porres's troupe at the turn of the century, had his own licensed company, yet he and his wife contracted to help the town of Novés produce three *comedias*, among them *El villano en*

su rincón, providing costumes and playing whatever roles the towns needed. Charles has very generously shared with me the documentation on this contract, which he has yet to publish, so that I could comment on it here. The Archivos de Protocolos are still full of this kind of information that has not yet been brought to light.

(3) The Dictionary of Actors being built up in Valencia by a team headed by Teresa Ferrer is revealing more and more the extent of the relationships between families and generations of actors, and the archives are allowing researchers like Charles to trace the travels of the companies around the whole of Spain, and chart the concomitant spread of the craft of theater. The ‘world of the comedia’ is expanding prodigiously as you read this.

(4) Formation of the Compañía Nacional de Teatro Clásico has brought more experimentation, and publication of the *Cuadernos de teatro clásico* and of AHCT’s own *Comedia Performance*, together with performances in Chamizal, Almagro, and other places have shown how well the *comedias* still play today in the hands of talented actors and directors. Pepe Ruano’s work with actors and acting texts is an important instance of bridging the gap between academic research and performance.

(5) Spanish universities have shown increased interest in many aspects of the theatrical life of the period and in performance; here, for

example, is a course description from the University of La Coruña from 1995:

Este curso pretende paliar uno de los problemas que el currículum de las universidades españolas presenta: la falta de integración coordinada de los estudios teatrales en sus distintos aspectos, teórico, histórico y práctico. Se pretende articular un conjunto de saberes y experiencias de distintos ámbitos de investigación de forma que se pueda suplir, por vía de curso de postgrado, lo que en muchas universidades europeas y americanas está perfecta-mente integrado dentro del Departamento de Teoría del Drama o de Teatro.⁸

(6) The model that came out of my collaboration with Radiotelevisión Española provided the design for the model of the Corral del Príncipe that was exhibited in the Teatro Español in 1983 as part of the exposition mounted to mark its 400th anniversary, although the design for that museum-quality model was disastrously modified by Enrique Nuere, a distinguished architect and a member of the international commission on the reconstruction of the Teatro Cervantes in Alcalá. Nuere, finding the design architecturally improbable and pressed for time to meet the exposition deadline, simply moved the lateral walls some twenty feet in from each side (See Image 10), ignoring the specifications derived from the archival

documents on which it was based; he thus created something more like a three-dimensional version of the old Comba drawing than a representation of the Corral del Príncipe as it actually existed.

I find myself forced to deal with this misrepresentation again now, almost twenty-five years later, because the director of the Museo Nacional del Teatro has seen fit to feature it in the museum's recently inaugurated home in the Palacio de los Maestres in Almagro.⁹ As it is now displayed, the model disorients more than it informs museum-goers as to the nature of the Madrid corrales. To get a clear idea of the degree of distortion, see Images 11, 12, and 13 on the website. My own model was most recently exhibited in Warsaw in 2003, as part of José María Díez Borque's exposition entitled *Teatro y fiesta en tierras europeas de los Austrias*.

This unfortunate situation and the unpardonable treatment of Juan Sanz Ballesteros and Miguel Angel Coso Marín and of the Teatro Cervantes itself by many of the various elements who have controlled the playhouse in Alcalá since the reconstruction was initially finished, almost a decade ago, indicate that obstacles persist in the exploration of the world of the *comedia* and in our attempts to increase the awareness of these advances and their application in the theatrical world of Spain today, notwithstanding the many instances of fertile collaboration among Spanish and

foreign academics and between academics and Spanish governmental and educational institutions.

What have we achieved with all this activity? We have learned much of the extent and variety of playhouse construction and management throughout the peninsula in the Golden Age, much also about the economics of theater as a commercial enterprise—about who made money and how—, about relations with government and with elements of the nobility, about the physical implications for staging, about the potential esthetic consequences of the way the playhouses were funded on the types of texts that were commercially successful, and about the extent and variety of theatrical activity of the time.

What could be done to go forward in these areas of research and its application?

- (1) For twenty-five years I have argued that Madrid should build a replica of a *corral de comedias*. It could be built in the Retiro, and certainly there should at least be a respectable model of a *corral* somewhere in Spain, preferably in Madrid.
- (2) Efforts should be made to get José Luis Gómez, Director of the Teatro de la Abadía, who in that capacity now controls the Teatro Cervantes in Alcalá, and Joaquín Hinojosa, whom he has named artistic director of the playhouse, to develop it into what John Varey, Juan Sanz, and Miguel Coso

envisioned and delineated a decade ago: (1) a venue for live theater, staged alternatively, replicating 17th- and 18th-century conditions and 19th- and 20th- to 21st- century conditions, by varying as provided in the complex restoration the stage height, the stage design, and the lighting; (2) a center for scholarly research; and (3) a unique historic site for sophisticated tourism. Properly handled, the TC could be a major tourist attraction, coupled with the Casa de Cervantes, beautifully redone by Sanz and Coso a few years ago. The 20-minute video + tour of the Teatro Cervantes created by Sanz and Coso exists, ready to activate.

- (3) Archival work on many fronts is still necessary to fill in the gaps, using the data bases now available: chronologies of theatrical activity require merging data on performances, company formation, theater records, municipal records (especially of corpus autos and plays). Teresa Ferrer's Dictionary of Actors will be indispensable for this. Theatrical travel itineraries will emerge, and the recent discoveries by Charles Davis to which I have referred, of actors hiring out in small towns to produce theatrical productions in collaboration with local amateurs will help flesh out the picture

of the widening scope of early theatrical activity in Spain.

- (4) A staging bank should be created, to permit more sophisticated interpretation of how different scenes and circumstances were staged in the playwrights' time, and how staging developed and evolved through the period. This could be a joint effort over a decade or so, a sort of Wikipedia for staging, created by an individual or a team that would set up criteria and classifications, but open to contributions from everyone in AHCT. The Chadwyck-Healy TESO CD-Rom can be especially useful for searching stage directions in reliable early editions of the plays, and comparison and contrast can be made with similar elements in Dessen's and Thomson's Elizabethan staging bank.¹⁰
- (5) In this connection, stage directions must be read in the light of the lateral staging possibilities heretofore ignored, and staging using the lateral platforms needs to be encouraged among directors who are involved with productions of Golden Age texts if we are to successfully modernize works that were very likely staged with resources that modern productions would until now have considered too elaborate.

Finally, and as a kind of postscript to my remarks, I have posted thirteen images of the marvelous Teatro Cervantes in Alcalá about which I have spoken,¹¹ since very few of you have had a chance to see it. It is as unique in the Western world, I believe, as is Almagro, but in a different way; Almagro is a snapshot of a playhouse from the time of Lope de Vega, a Golden-Age *corral de comedias*. It has been modified, as we have seen, but it is still authentic, and uniquely representative. The Alcalá playhouse, on the other hand, is the incarnation of the entire history of modern theater, from *corral* to cinema, and I refer you to the AHCT website for a brief account of its origins and history.¹² It is of course very difficult to capture in a series of brief still shots, but I hope that the selection of photographs taken by Miguel Angel Coso that I have posted on the website will give you some idea of this unique and beautifully restored playhouse.

NOTES

¹ Numbers in parenthesis, here [Images 1, 2, 3, and 4] and henceforth in my text and notes, designate images posted on the AHCT website (<http://www.comedias.org/tools.html>). I made public Hildy's hypothesis of the original ground plan of the Almagro *corral* in "El corral de Almagro," *Cuadernos de teatro clásico* 6 (1991), pp. 197-211.

² *The Reconstruction of a Spanish Golden Age Playhouse El Corral del Príncipe (1583-1744)* (Gainesville: University Presses of Florida).

³ For a photo of my model, see Image 5. A promotional video for the miniseries, called *Fiesta de amor y celos*, which was never produced, is also available on the AHCT website. Image 6 shows theater as it is today. Image 7 comparing the ground plan of 173 with the plan of the Teatro Español as it is today shows quite clearly the correspondence between the two.

⁴ My conception of the three-cart staging of *El gran teatro del mundo* is illustrated in Image 8.

⁵ José María Ruano de la Haza and JJA, *Los teatros comerciales del siglo XVI y la escenificación de la comedia* (Madrid: Castalia, 1994).

⁶ Patricia Kenworthy, "Lope's Illustrated Stage Direction and the Staging of the *monte*," *BCom* 54 (2002), p. 285.

⁷ *The Prince in the Tower* (London & Toronto: Bucknell University Press), 1993, p. 36. Image 9 pairs the Lope sketch with my graph rendition of a similar three-part staging.

⁸ www.solocursos.net/postgrado_en_estudios_teatrales_y_audiovisuales-slccurso18841.htm.

⁹ The model is depicted, without attribution, on the museum's website: <http://museoteatro.mcu.es/esp/fondos/c06.html>.

¹⁰ Alan Dessen and Leslie Thomson, *A Dictionary of Stage Directions in English Drama, 1580-1642* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

¹¹ Images 14-26 on the website.

¹² The text is that of the press release that I wrote for the June 4, 2003 inauguration of the Teatro Cervantes, listed on the AHCT website as "El Teatro Cervantes de Alcalá de Henares: Historia y restauración."

**HIPOGRIFOS VIOLENTOS:
ADAPTACIONES Y PUESTAS EN ESCENA
DE *LA VIDA ES SUEÑO* (BOISROBERT,
FITZGERALD Y AKALAITIS)**

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El hipogrifo, según explica Jorge Luís Borges, nunca se menciona en las literaturas de la antigüedad clásica. Es un animal creado por Ludovico Ariosto en el Renacimiento, transformando lo clásico para crear algo de su propia época. El hipogrifo, entonces, puede servir de metáfora para la traducción, puesta en escena o nueva versión de un clásico. Ya que toda lectura es una nueva lectura, una nueva interpretación, críticos, traductores, escenógrafos, y directores están, de cierta manera, haciéndose las mismas preguntas: ¿cómo interpretar un clásico? ¿Deben dejarse llevar por las fuerzas centrípetas de la filología en busca de un original casi mítico, o deben ponderar como explican Luciano García Lorenzo y Manuel Muñoz Carabaotes que, “la significación de un drama dependía también de la circunstancia histórica y social en que era recibido, con la que había de mantener una relación crítica” (425)? Esta fuerza centrífuga, puede llegar a tal

ruptura con el texto de origen, a tal violencia interpretativa, a un hipogrifo tan violento que, nos llevaría a puestas en escena altamente controversiales o a obras que podrían representarse con nuevo título y nuevo autor (algo que ya tenemos en el Siglo de Oro con las refundiciones). También nos llevarían a acercamientos críticos que hacen tal violencia al texto que se convierten en ejercicios poético-literarios, teóricos o ideológicos.

O sea que cada respuesta al acercamiento es muy diferente. Por eso, la labor de Luciano García Lorenzo y de otros que tratan de establecer diálogos entre críticos y directores es tan importante. Es un diálogo en que comenzamos a comprender la similitud no sólo de los dos campos, sino también sus relaciones con la traducción. En este ensayo quisiera utilizar tres momentos en la difusión de *La vida es sueño* para mostrar cómo estudios críticos, traducciones, versiones, y puestas en escena no pueden separarse unas de las otras ya que se influyen mutuamente. A veces, para comprender la crítica de cierto momento histórico hay que entender las connotaciones de una traducción, y para estudiar certamente una puesta en escena hay que tener en cuenta teorías críticas de la época en que se representó. Analicemos, pues, tres visiones de *La vida es sueño*: (1) la primera traducción francesa hecha por el Abbé de Boisrobert en el siglo diecisiete – versión que no incluye el nombre de Calderón; (2) la más famosa de las traducciones inglesas, hecha por

el famoso orientalista de la época de la reina Victoria, Edward FitzGerald; y (3) una puesta en escena norteamericana de Joanne Akalaitis, que hace cambios a una traducción al inglés que ya incluía ciertas transformaciones del original. Akalaitis directora muy conocida por sus representaciones de tragedias clásicas inauguró su *Vida es sueño* en el Court Theater de la Universidad de Chicago hace unos pocos años.

Sería imposible en este breve estudio, mostrar todos los elementos que influyen, que crean nuevas lecturas y que dan a estos tres textos su propia identidad literaria. Lo que quisiera hacer entonces es centrarme en tres aspectos de estas versiones de *La vida es sueño*: (1) su relación con la crítica y con el momento histórico; (2) el uso de la mitología y en particular la evocación del hipogrifo y la aparición de Astrea; y (3) la presencia o ausencia de Rosaura y su rol en lo que se ha llamado “una intriga completamente pegadiza y exótica” que supuestamente no tiene nada que ver con la trama principal (Menéndez Pelayo 278). Pero, antes de pasar a estas obras quisiera volver a subrayar que es difícil compararlas con el texto original pues parece no haber tal texto, sino diferentes versiones de una obra. Francisco Ruano de la Haza hace hincapié en la importancia de estudiar las dos versiones de *La vida es sueño*. Y si no hay texto único, también es difícil convertirse en espectador de otra época y visualizar su primera representación—a pesar de que recons-

truimos una y otra vez teatros del Siglo de Oro. Lo que no quiere decir que no podamos acercarnos bastante al momento. Por ejemplo, el *coup de théâtre* con que comienza *La vida es sueño*, la caída del caballo por parte de Rosaura, y su precipitado descenso del monte hasta el reino de Polonia mientras que declama su queja contra el “hipogrifo violento,” ha suscitado numerosas interpretaciones de cómo fue esto representado. Las conjeturas de Jay Allen, John Varey y Ruano de la Haza nos dejan con dudas de cómo visualizar la escena.¹ Pero, todo esto ayuda en esa imposible búsqueda del momento original, que siempre se desdobra en algo nuevo y diferente.

El hipogrifo en sí representa tal imposibilidad. Es un monstruo que nunca ha existido. Conociendo la leyenda clásica que los caballos y los grifos se odiaban, y conociendo además que el grifo era monstruo parte águila y parte león, Ludovico Ariosto, como ya hemos dicho, visualiza la unión de lo imposible, la creación del hipogrifo como emblema de su poema épico. Calderón de la Barca, entonces, reconociendo la comedia nueva como monstruo dividido en tres actos, la relaciona con el imposible hipogrifo, animal que también rehuye las tres unidades clásicas ya descartadas por Lope de Vega en su *Arte nuevo de hacer comedias*. Pero Calderón desea separar su teatro de las creaciones lopescas. Escoge el hipogrifo para el primer verso de la primera comedia de la primera parte de sus obras teatrales como reto a Lope, pues éste, aunque había

llamado a su teatro “monstruo,” también había declarado repetidamente que rechazaba el término hipogrifo.² Calderón entonces crea un nuevo “arte monstruo” en el que según Roberto González Echevarría “los diferentes códigos teatrales con frecuencia están en desacuerdo” (52).³ Con este monstruo Calderón inscribe en su texto el propio desdoblamiento de la obra en el futuro.

Mientras que la comedia del Siglo de Oro apreciaba la monstruosidad hipogrífica en el estilo, el sentido y la técnica, dejando atrás el mundo clásico para crear algo nuevo, el teatro francés del siglo diecisiete se empeña en seguir las unidades clásicas y en imitar las autoridades del pasado, las tragedias de la antigüedad. Aún así, se observa un extraordinario fenómeno en las tablas francesas entre 1640 y 1660. Alrededor de 1637, regresa Antoine Le Metel Sieur d’Ouville a Francia, después de haber pasado muchos años en España e Italia. Trae consigo “sa valise pleine des pieces espagnoles et écoulait petit a petit le fruit de ses lectures” (Chardon 1.335). En 1639 alcanza gran éxito con su primera adaptación del teatro español, *L’Esprit follet*, derivada de *La dama duende* donde la nueva versión se rige por las tres unidades.⁴ Esta obra calderoniana (bajo la autoría de d’Ouville) da comienzo a un nuevo período en el teatro francés. La utilización de intrigas españolas, según Roger Guichemerre tiene un efecto positivo en el teatro, uno de renovación, que incluye cuatro elementos: “créer une comédie mieux intri-

guée, une action plus alerte, des personnages vivants, un dialogue plus comique” (26). El uso de obras españolas se reduce en la mayoría de los casos a comedias de capa y espada y comedias palatinas.⁵ Y estas versiones siguen estrictamente las unidades, mientras que los críticos franceses acusan a los escritores españoles de tener poco conocimiento de la literatura clásica y sus reglas.⁶ Así, las nuevas versiones adquieren nueva autoría y autoridad.

Junto a d’Ouville, tenemos también la popularidad de su hermano, el famoso Abbé de Boisrobert, quien utiliza, entre otros textos españoles,⁷ una novela de Castillo Solórzano de filiación indirecta con *La dama duende* para representar su comedia *La bella invisible* (1656).⁸ Ya que no parecen interesarles a éstos y otros franceses, con alguna excepción, dramas filosóficos, mitológicos, históricos o religiosos,⁹ es de sorprender que tengamos una versión de *La vida es sueño* durante este siglo—posiblemente la segunda traducción de la obra en el mundo—y se debe precisamente a Francois Le Metel Sieur de Boisrobert.¹⁰ Boisrobert, que ha tenido tanto éxito en el teatro utilizando comedias españolas, en este caso no escribe su versión de la obra de Calderón para el teatro. En vez, la incluye en una colección de novelas titulada *Nouvelles héroïques et amoureuses* (1657). Para Martin Franzbach: “Queda abierta la cuestión de por qué no dio al tema la forma de una tragicomedia, como había hecho en otras piezas” (29). Alejandro Cioranescu piensa que esta

extraña transformación tiene una causa bien obvia: ciertas comedias se transformaban en *nouvelles* pues así los autores podrían “se permettre des libertés que le théâtre avait perdues” (“La nouvelle française” 86).¹¹

El problema con esta teoría es que asume que la versión de Boisrobert debe ser novelesca y no seguir las unidades clásicas del teatro.¹² Pero, una lectura detenida del texto francés, muestra que es una adaptación que en cierto modo, y aunque falte la unidad de tiempo, trata de ajustarse a los conceptos clasicistas. Para Franzbach la obra de Boisrobert sirve para divertir y dar placer con su intriga romántica, eliminando al mismo tiempo toda intriga “monstruosa” (26). Sin entrar en detalles, debemos señalar que Boisrobert cumple ambos propósitos, uniendo los roles de Estrella y de Rosaura en uno.¹³ La única dama se llama ahora Sophonie y acude a la corte de Basile en Cracovia, para competir por el trono con su primo Frederick, duque de Moscú.¹⁴ O sea que Sophonie no había conocido a Sigismont en la torre/cárcel, como en el caso de Rosaura. El príncipe había vivido en unas habitaciones bajo el palacio, pero ha sido liberado por Basile para examinar su comportamiento, ya que el rey está preocupado por las rivalidades entre Sophonie y Frederick. Sophonie inmediatamente se enamora de Sigismont: “Leurs coeurs se rencontrèrent aussi bien que leurs yeux et leur émotion fut reciproque” (472). Ella le confiesa que Frederick es su enemigo, llevando a

Sigismont a la violencia. Cuando Basile lo vuelve a encarcelar, Sophonie lo inspira a rebelarse, ayudándole a ganar el trono y ganando también su corazón y su mano en matrimonio. Frederick ya no es rival pues muere en la batalla. Desaparece el barroco conflicto entre honor y amor por parte de Segismundo y Rosaura, y desaparece la deshonra de Rosaura. Sólo queda una intriga político-amorosa, con poco de filosofía. La obra, entonces, anticipa la futura crítica neoclásica francesa en la que Ernest Mérimée, por ejemplo, lamentaría que la intriga de *La vida es sueño* estaba “alurdie par l’inutile intrigue de Clotaldo et de Rosaura” (425).¹⁵

De la misma manera en que desaparece la filosofía y la intriga compleja, también parecen borrarse los ejes mitológicos que impulsan la acción (excepto la astrología). Ya que Sophonie conoce al príncipe en el palacio, se elimina la llegada de Rosaura a Polonia y su caída del caballo-hipogrifo. La ausencia del hipogrifo señala el rechazo de un arte monstruo, y la imposición de reglas y razón, que hasta alcanzan a la mentalidad de Segismundo quien estudia lógicamente sus errores en la corte. Este vacío mitológico se llena con elementos históricos sobre Polonia.¹⁶ Ya que Boisrobert se interesa por los elementos políticos de la intriga, podría haber preservado la presencia de Astrea en la figura de Rosaura – diosa que anuncia la llegada de una nueva edad de oro.¹⁷ Después de todo, los franceses al igual que los españoles, utilizaban alegorías polí-

ticas para alabar a sus monarcas, y era bien conocida la novela pastoril francesa, *L'Astrée*.

Ahora bien, no podemos dejar esta primera versión francesa dando la impresión que sólo tenemos una puesta en prosa-ficción donde predominan sólo los amoríos e intrigas palaciegas y donde la mitología es sustituida por la historia, y lo monstruoso por reglas de razón y unidad de intriga. Mientras que estos elementos reflejan la crítica neoclásica, Boisrobert esconde otros que hasta cierto punto rompen con todo lo dicho y nos dejan con un leve pero tenaz hilo de misterio. Estos misterios se basan en su mayor parte en la onomástica. En primer lugar, Boisrobert nombra a uno de los fundadores de las líneas dinásticas polacas Apollon, realzando que es pagano y tiene que convertirse al cristianismo.¹⁸ El dios Apolo/Sol era parte de la mitología de los monarcas españoles y franceses – recordemos a Felipe IV como rey planeta y a Luis XIV, el rey sol bajo cuyos rayos se publicaron estas novelas en Francia. Para mí, *La vida es sueño* tiene mucho que ver con el reinado de Felipe IV. Puede que Boisrobert haya comprendido esto y que otorgue el título de rey sol a los monarcas polaco-franceses, así subrayando el sentido político de la obra. ¿Quiere esto decir que la oposición padre-hijo puede verse como el conflicto entre el joven Luis XIV y el controlador ministro Mazarin? Recordemos que estos son los últimos momentos de la “Fronde” o batalla contra el poder de Mazarin.¹⁹

Boisrobert también sustituye los nombres de Rosaura y Estrella por uno que, hasta cierto punto, preserva el misterio y el mito.²⁰ Sophonie recuerda la palabra griega "sophron" que significa la moderación. Recordemos que sophrosune (sophrosyne) se tradujo al latín como *temperantia*, una de las cuatro virtudes cardenales. Sophonie, entonces, debería convertirse en la virtud que calma los espíritus belicosos y vengativos del texto. Lo que ocurre en el texto es lo contrario. Ella es parte de la "Fronde" de su época, instigando luchas contra el Mazarino de su tiempo. Recordemos que los salones presididos por mujeres fueron también muy importantes durante las luchas por el poder en Francia.

Vemos pues que *La vie n'est qu'un songe* de Boisrobert, se relaciona con la crítica francesa de su época, crítica que continuará hasta los albores del siglo veinte, pero constatamos también que todo texto está abierto a nuevas lecturas. Mientras que parece que el "plaisant abbé," como era llamado, ha encarcelado a Calderón con sus reglas clásicas y lo ha popularizado con una intriga romántica, ciertas brechas en el texto nos llevan a cuestionar el olvido de este llamado "écrivain de second ordre" (Mal-kiewicz 432), y re-pensar a través de esta versión francesa la importancia del mito y la política en *La vida es sueño*.

Al igual que en Francia, Calderón se conocía en Inglaterra por sus comedias de capa y espada. *La vida es sueño*, por ejemplo, sólo aparece como el

argumento secundario en una obra de Aphra Behn, representada en 1679.²¹ Con la revivificación y reivindicación romántica de Calderón en Alemania e Inglaterra, como dramaturgo a la par de Shakespeare,²² parece que el neoclasicismo va perdiendo vigencia. Pero, aunque este nuevo Calderón llega a su apogeo en Alemania con Augustus William Schlegel y en Inglaterra con el poeta Percy B. Shelley,²³ cuando pasamos a la época de la reina Victoria, las actitudes cambian radicalmente.²⁴ Un crítico inglés de esta época, Edward Byles Cowell, profesor de sánscrito en Cambridge, trata de salvar a Calderón.²⁵ Pero, utiliza una palabra clave que va a socavar sus elogios del dramaturgo español.²⁶ Primero dice que Calderón comete “wild mistakes” en la geografía y cronología de sus comedias, junto con un “wild profusion of imagery” (229). Aunque la palabra “wild” podría resultar algo positivo para los románticos, ya tiene una connotación negativa en la época de la reina Victoria. Ahora bien, esto nos lleva a Edward FitzGerald, pues él era estudiante y amigo de Cowell y éste lo guió hacia la literatura persa y la española. La adaptación magistral de FitzGerald de un poema persa, se ha convertido en un clásico de la literatura inglesa, *The Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám*. Y, como explica Margaret Greer: “Edward FitzGerald’s translations of Pedro Calderón de la Barca’s plays have won an enduring popularity with theater lovers, a popularity that shows no signs of diminishing” (1). Desde que se

publicaron en la segunda mitad del siglo diecinueve ha habido más de una docena de ediciones de las ocho comedias traducidas por FitzGerald, junto con ediciones individuales, en particular de *La vida es sueño*. Y ésta se ha representado una y otra vez.²⁷

Aunque FitzGerald primero tradujo seis obras de Calderón en 1853, nunca pensaba escribir una versión de *La vida es sueño*. Y esto no ocurrió hasta mucho después, y su traducción es casi tan original como su versión del poema persa. Al mismo tiempo, FitzGerald se deja influenciar por la crítica neoclasicista de su tiempo. Siguiendo el término utilizado por Cowell, se refiere a toda una serie de elementos “that defies sober sense in this wild drama” (376).²⁸ Dentro de estos elementos, tenemos naturalmente las acciones de Rosaura. Ya en una carta de 1858 explica que tiene que “subdue” (domar) la intriga de Rosaura “so as to assist and not compete with the Main interest” (Bentham 2.319). Así, elimina todo el enredo con el retrato de Rosaura en el segundo acto.²⁹ Pero esto no quiere decir que FitzGerald se deja encerrar en la cárcel crítica del neoclasicismo. Aunque rechaza ciertos elementos “wild,” incluye la palabra una y otra vez en el texto como para sorprender a su audiencia. Mientras Rosaura se lamenta de su “wild venture” (379), el gracioso inmediatamente indica que se han encontrado con “a wild man of the woods” (381). Y aunque Rosaura no usa el nombre de Astrea, su mito se forma de otra manera en esta versión, pues Segis-

mundo la considera un ángel que le dio una espada: “and Angel-like flung me a shining sword” (409). Como Astrea, puede llevar la espada de justicia.³⁰

Es cierto que el famoso hipogrifo, vocablo de rebelión al principio de la obra, también desaparece. Pero, lo que quisiera recalcar es la manera en que FitzGerald realza motivos calderonianos. Si ya el hipogrifo es algo barroco e imposible de domesticar para el público inglés, FitzGerald lo sustituye con un clasicismo convincente al llamar a su caballo “four footed Fury” (376). El caballo como alada furia que cae, recuerda el caos calderoniano. El claroscuro y la batalla de los elementos al principio del texto se convierten en una violenta tempestad que subraya el nuevo título de la obra. Pues, FitzGerald, para hacer más inglés a este drama lo titula “Such Stuff as Dreams are Made of,” cita de Shakespeare.³¹ Y así como *The Tempest* comienza con tormenta, esta nueva versión calderoniana explica cómo la tempestad causa la caída del caballo. Al igual que Shakespeare, la tormenta nos lleva a un nuevo mundo cundido de elementos maravillosos, donde pueden coexistir reglas neoclásicas con lo monstruoso y salvaje. La isla mágica de Próspero con el metadrama que produce a través de Ariel y Calibán, y que lleva a la meditación filosófica sobre la vida como sueño, recuerda la extraña corte de Polonia donde otra acción metadramática es implementada por Basilio quien se ha convertido en un “silver haired magician with a wand” (403). Aunque este

mago en una fuerza negativa que incita a Segismundo al furor y la venganza, al final, una vez que se calma la tempestad mental, Segismundo puede perdonar a su padre. Como explica Susan Fischer, Segismundo y no Basilio ofrece paralelos interesantes con Próspero. Ambos cambian hacia el final y no se aferran al poder: "Thus, Segismundo is able to give others the license to 'be themselves' . . . something that Prospero also achieves" (Fischer, "This Thing of Darkness" 161). FitzGerald utiliza las resonancias entre ambas obras para darles la oportunidad a lectores o auditorio a que se liberen de sus sospechas y prejuicios, y acepten la obra con todos sus excesos y todas sus paradojas. Y para atenuar el choque cultural, FitzGerald utiliza además numerosas referencias a *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, que sirven para asegurar a un público que ya todo esto es parte de la magia del teatro. Segismundo, por ejemplo, despierta en "Fairyland" (404); ya antes Rosaura y su gracioso se comparaban con los "fairy elves" de Shakespeare. Fife (Clarín) es otro Puck "following darkness like a dream" (379).

FitzGerald, entonces, sabe domar el texto con reglas neoclásicas, con textos ya bien conocidos por sus lectores, para así poder presentar a la Corte de la reina Victoria algo verdaderamente inusitado. Al domar el texto FitzGerald también refleja el deseo imperial de la época de domar tierras extranjeras. Claro que este intento de domar también señala el interés por lo diferente y lo "wild" que se reprime

en el momento de desearse. FitzGerald también utiliza numerosos elementos bíblicos para dar a su obra un ambiente apocalíptico, algo muy utilizado por escritores de su época y que también puede esconder ansiedades sobre el imperio.³² Y la Biblia parece coexistir con el mundo oriental. Exclama Rosaura: "And now the bearer of the lamp; indeed / As strange as any in Arabian tale" (381).

Mientras que a FitzGerald le interesa el oriente, lo arábigo y lo indio, a Joanne Akalaitis le fascina el teatro de Shakespeare junto con un teatro contemporáneo y experimental. El interés por lo clásico nos llevaría a pensar que Akalaitis busca un regreso al origen, que sus puestas en escena son centrípetas, que desea preservar y hasta adorar el texto primario. Pero, su interés por experimentos contemporáneos muestra las fuerzas centrífugas que llevan a transformar aún lo experimental. No va al teatro para adorar el pasado ni aún el presente artístico sino para cuestionarlo.³³ Sus puestas en escena, entonces representan un deseo de dialogar que a veces llega a deshacer violentamente aún cualquier llamada a la rebelión, cualquier "hipogrifo violento" experimental. No debe sorprendernos entonces, que repentinamente fue despedida de su cargo como directora del New York Shakespeare Festival.³⁴ Nacida en Chicago en 1937, y educada en la Universidad de Chicago (BA 1960), ha trabajado por todo el mundo, pero de vez en cuando regresa al Court Theater de su Universidad.³⁵ Su puesta en escena de *Quartet*

en 2005, por ejemplo, fue verdaderamente arriesgada y profundamente violenta. La obra de Heiner Muller, representada por primera vez en 1981, es una adaptación de *Les liasons dangereuses*. Akalaitis radicaliza aún más esta producción donde “Valmont and Merteuil have left 18th Century France and checked into what appears to be a Days Inn.”³⁶ Hasta hace una inversión de la cronología, pasando del presente al pasado, mientras que la obra de Muller comienza en el dieciocho y acaba durante la tercera guerra mundial. Si ésta es parte de la visión teatral de Akalaitis, podemos preguntarnos entonces, ¿Qué hace con *La vida es sueño*?

Para su representación de *La vida es sueño* en el teatro de la Universidad de Chicago en 1999, Akalaitis utiliza la traducción de John Barton y Adrian Mitchell, que el mismo Barton había utilizado para su puesta en escena por el Royal Shakespeare Company en Stratford-upon-Avon en 1983. Ya aquí Barton había ido más allá del texto para subrayar la violencia entre hombre y mujer. Como ya ha señalado Susan L. Fischer, Barton hace que Rosaura, frente a Clotaldo, muestre su furia contra el amante y el padre que la ha abandonado; también hace que se vista de mujer frente a todos, y cante una canción nada calderoniana, y más Brechtiana, donde se considera un payaso en un sueño (“The warrant of womanhood” 54-55). Hay muchos más elementos en Barton que resaltan el argumento y el rol de Rosaura, así negando toda actitud neoclásica

e incrementando lo monstruoso de la intriga secundaria que se hace casi más importante que la principal. De esta manera, la relación hombre-mujer se convierte en eje central.³⁷ Aún así, Akalaitis cree que los cambios de Barton no han sido suficientes. Como explica Kerry Wilks: "It was Akalaitis's interpretation of key concepts in the play that influenced the production in terms of staging, costume, set design, and musical underscoring" (57). Además, la directora corta muchísimos versos de la versión de Barton, que tienen que ver sobre todo con la acción principal. Así la rapidez de la trama es vertiginosa y subraya aún más la importancia de Rosaura.

Lo que no tiene nada de vertiginoso es la caída de Rosaura, montada en su caballo/hipogrifo. En vez de recalcar lo monstruoso con el lenguaje barroco y en vez de delinear la caída de la mujer, la referencia al hipogrifo se convierte en algo casi fuera de lugar, algo cómico, pues vemos a Rosaura cabalgando en un caballo de juguete. Para un crítico del *Herald Tribune*, la obra contiene "trademark Akalaitis witticisms as a wooden toy horse posing as a real one" (Wilks 75, n. 11). Pero este hipogrifo juguetón, no es de Akalaitis, estando ya en el texto de Barton.³⁸ No importa la proveniencia. Lo importante es que lo monstruoso en la obra tiene que ver con la intriga de Rosaura y con una confusión de tono que va más allá de lo típico en el teatro español. No es que Akalaitis no haya estudiado a fondo

las nociones y conceptos del Siglo de Oro español – Kerry Wilks, en sus notas durante los ensayos, muestra cuán interesada estaba la directora en investigar la cultura de la época. Lo que hace Akalaitis es llevar al extremo ciertos elementos barrocos como la fusión de lo trágico y lo cómico y la noción de la vida como sueño. La obra, entonces, es como un sueño lleno de disonancias. Segismundo tiene en sus manos un “picture book” (1.1.5); Rosaura canta payasadas; el caballo es un juguete casi fálico. A esto añadiríamos la música y los movimientos estilizados, casi balees, que ejemplifican la metáfora de la vida como sueño y que encontramos al principio y final de la obra (Wilks 63).

Akalaitis no sólo incrementa el sentido de la obra y la vida como sueño sino que también preserva el ambiente mitológico a pesar de las disonancias. La escena está cubierta de símbolos esotéricos tomados de Alexander Roob’s *The Hermetic Museum: Alchemy and Mysticism*. Uno de ellos recalca la presencia de los cuatro elementos en el texto calderoniano y parece mostrar símbolos de la alquimia. Y esto no está nada lejos de la ideología de Calderón (y aún de la de Shakespeare), dramaturgos que para algunos críticos introducen en sus textos el concepto de la obra de teatro como experimento alquímico.³⁹ Mientras que por un lado vemos la fuerza centrípeta que lleva a Akalaitis a conceptos del Siglo de Oro, por otra parte vemos la fuerza centrífuga que la lleva a rechazar el amor entre Rosaura y

Segismundo. Como directora feminista contemporánea, ella sólo puede ver las acciones de Segismundo como violencia hacia la mujer. Aún en la traducción de Barton, Segismundo le explica a Cotaldo algo que ocurrió en su “sueño” de palacio:

For I was all men's master
And wanted my revenge upon them all,
Except one woman whom I know I loved”
(2.2.99).

Como ha documentado Kerry Wilks, JoAnne Akalaitis interrumpe uno de los ensayos de la obra y exclama: “wanted, change it to wanted” (Wilks 72). Segismundo no pueda amar (“loved”), sólo desear (“wanted”). O sea que, para Akalaitis, la violencia masculina, en este caso la de Segismundo, se convierte en aspecto central de la obra, recalándolo con una tajante sentencia: “Rape is not love. Rape is never love” (72). Akalaitis demuestra esto en su puesta en escena cuando hace que Segismundo tire al suelo a Rosaura y trate de quitarle la ropa. La directora nunca comprendería a Rosaura como la mítica Astrea, a Rosaura como figura que transforma a Segismundo y al mundo.⁴⁰ Su versión enfatiza la violencia del patriarcado. La mitología de su puesta en escena se acercaría mucho más a las teorías de Ruth Anthony El Saffar: “Calderón has structured into his text a destabilizing element that renders uncertain everything else we say about it. Violante dwells in the vortex around which we turn, from

which we avert our eyes . . .” (166).⁴¹ Rosaura es hija de Violante, y ambas son ejemplos de la violencia masculina que yace escondida en el texto. *Life's a Dream* es una puesta en escena tan violenta, tan vertiginosa, como el hipogrifo. Por un lado, investiga nociones esotéricas y filosóficas de la época, pero por otra parte transforma la obra, llenando el vacío platónico-mitológico de la segunda intriga con un feminismo muy de nuestra época. La unión alquímica y la transformación de Segismundo de materia caótica en piedra filosofal, confrontan, en el texto de Alkalaitis la casi imposible función catalítica de Rosaura.

En conclusión, mientras que el texto de Boisrobert yace en el olvido al no poder escapar de la prisión del neoclasicismo, a pesar de su ingeniosa onomástica y sus misterios políticos, la puesta en escena de Joanne Akalaitis funde la investigación de nociones barrocas con el feminismo contemporáneo para crear una nueva alquimia. Es posible que su violencia ante la violencia nos lleve a recapacitar sobre la conducta humana. Entre las dos, encontramos la traducción o versión de FitzGerald, la cual ha sobrevivido hasta hoy día y continúa representándose en Inglaterra y Estados Unidos ya que sutil e ingeniosamente entrelaza el texto calderoniano con toda una serie de textos clásicos que mueven al mundo de habla inglesa, subrayando elementos “wild” que pueden tener como referentes a Shakespeare y a la Biblia, pero que también muestran la

creatividad del mundo hispánico y el mundo islámico, estableciendo así una extraña y deleitosa convivencia que nos convendría comprender mejor en estos nuestros días de conflictos tan apocalípticos como los representados en la obra de Calderón.

NOTAS

¹ Ruano habla de una “rampa escalonada” cuya relación a “un monte real es puramente convencional” (“Hacia una metodología” 91). Por su parte, Varey muestra que era muy caro crear tales rampas que tenían ramas y otros elementos que las trocaban en monte (169). Para estos dos críticos la rampa baja hacia los espacios laterales de la escena. Allen, por su parte, explica que la bajada de Rosaura debe de ser más dramática y que ella debe llegar al centro del escenario (30).

² En el *Arte nuevo* Lope lo incluye entre los “vocablos exquisitos” (Rozas 189-90) que no deben utilizarse y en una epístola a Gaspar de Barrionuevo, vuelve a criticar a este monstruo renacentista. Véase a De Armas “The Critical Tower” (4) y el estudio de Güntert.

³ González Echevarría explica: “Calderón fija su atención en los desaciertos, en los accidentes, en el proceso hacia una posible perfección, no en la perfección misma” (42). Añade que aunque parece que tenemos un restablecimiento del orden al fin de la obra, “el vestuario de los personajes lo contradice” (52). Tenemos, en vez, a un Segismundo coronado pero vestido de monstruo.

⁴ Para una descripción de los cambios hechos por d’Ouille véanse las diferentes interpretaciones de Cioranescu “Calderón y el teatro clásico francés” (1993) y De Armas “¿Es dama o es torbellino?”

⁵ Para una definición de esta última y su matización entre serias y de intriga cómica véase a Zugasti. Los franceses prefieren utilizar en general las palatinas no serias.

⁶ Véase el famoso discurso de Pierre Corneille sobre las tres unidades, y la actitud despectiva de Francois Bertaut al conocer a Calderón en España, pues éste no se enteraba de las reglas clásicas. Sobre este segundo tópico véase el artículo de L. P. Thomas.

⁷ Boisrobert utiliza también otras tres comedias de Calderón para su teatro: Casa con dos puertas, [Les fausses vérités 1643] Lances de amor y fortuna [Les coups de l'amour et de la fortune ou l'hereux infortuné 1656] y Peor está que estaba [Les apparences trompeuses 1656]. También utiliza El mayor imposible de Lope de Vega, La mentirosa verdad de Juan Bautista de Villegas y Obligados y ofendidos de Rojas Zorrilla. En esta última compete con Scarron – los dos representan versiones de la comedia en 1654. Para una lista de las obras españolas utilizadas en el teatro de Boisrobert véase a Franzbach 29-30.

⁸ Suzanne Guellouz compara la obra de Boisrobert con la comedia española. Pero Boisrobert no utilizó el modelo español sino la traducción de su hermano incluida en *Les nouvelles amoureuses et exemplaires* (1655-56). Véase a De Armas, “¿Es dama o es torbellino?” (95).

⁹ Explica Cioranescu: “La tragedia clásica había bebido demasiado cerca de la sombra protectora del teatro griego, para que le fuese posible admitir una interpretación de la tradición tan sorprendente y fantástica como la que ya vislumbraba Calderón” (“Calderón y el teatro clásico francés” 150-51). Claro que sí ha excepciones como *Le Cid* de Pierre Corneille basado en la comedia histórico-legendaria de Guillén de Castro y *Le véritable Saint Genest* de Rotrou basada en la comedia hagiográfica de Lope de Vega.

¹⁰ En el pasado se pensaba que la primera versión francesa de *La vida es sueño* era *Sigismund, duc de Varsau* (1646) de Gi-

llet de la Tessonerie, pero esta obra no tiene nada que ver con la obra calderoniana (Cioranescu, "Calderón y el teatro francés" 44).

¹¹ Si este es el caso, entonces, el texto calderoniano regresaría, en manos de Boisrobert, a la novela bizantina de donde provienen muchos de los elementos de la obra, tomados de *Eustorgio y Clorilene, historia moscóvica* (1629). Para Sloman la deuda calderoniana es indudable (22) Van Praag también concuerda con esto. Aquí, Eustorgio, después de muchos trabajos, emerge como un príncipe magnánimo que perdona a su tiránica tía Juana. Claro que hay muchos otros modelos para la obra de Calderón. Véase a De Armas, *The Return of Astraea* 88-98.

¹² Sería así parte de la popularidad de las colecciones de novelas a la española basadas en Cervantes, Castillo Solórzano y María de Zayas.

¹³ Franzbach lo ve de forma algo diferente: "Para mantener la unidad de acción, Boisrobert ha eliminado el papel de Rosaura... aquí [Segismundo] puede concentrar se todo su amor en Sophonie" (30).

¹⁴ "Mais comme la Princesse Sophonie fille de la sœur ainée du Roy croyoit devoir plus legitiment pretendre a sa succession, elle partit aussi fort accompagnée par l'ordre du grand Duc de Lithuanie son pere pour contester cet heritage" (453).

¹⁵ Sobre los elementos neoclásicos de la obra véase a Franzbach y a De Armas, "The Dragon's Gold."

¹⁶ Se discute en detalle la oposición entre monarquía electiva o hereditaria. Se incluye en lo histórico el breve reino de Henri de Valois a quien se le ofrece la corona electiva de Polonia en 1573, pero quien poco después huye de regreso a Francia para asumir la corona a la muerte de su hermano Charles IX. Según Franzbach: "[Boisrobert] conoce tanto las ideas paneslavistas (unidad del imperio de Moscú y de Lituania) como la sucesión dentro de la casa real polaca" donde Basilio casa con la hija del rey de Suecia, pues sólo ha tenido hijas y necesita un heredero masculino (31).

¹⁷ Calderón utiliza a Astrea por lo menos en trece de sus obras de teatro. Muchas de ellas tienen contexto político. Véase a De Armas, *The Return of Astraea*. Mucho se ha escrito sobre Astrea en Inglaterra, pero Francia también evoca a esta diosa, como en la novela pastoril de d'Urfé, *L'Astrée*.

¹⁸ "Primislas premier du nom Roy de Pologne, qui en mourant ne laissa qu'une fille à l'âge de trois ans nommée Eduige à qui les Estats conferuerent le Royaume, quand elle fut en âge on la maria au Grand Duc de Lithuanie nommé Apollon; mais comme il estoit Payen, ce mariage se fit à condition qu'il se feroit baptiser avec toute sa Cour & qu'il annexeroit pour jamais la Lithuanie avec la Pologne" (441-42).

¹⁹ La segunda Fronda o Fronda de Príncipes duró de 1650-53. Pero aún cuando Mazarin regresa a París después de su exilio al final de esta rebelión, el príncipe de Condé continúa batallando contra su poder como capitán ahora de ejércitos españoles. Todo termina con la paz de los Pirineos en 1659, dos años después de la publicación del texto de Boisrobert.

²⁰ Louis de Boissy, en su traducción/adaptación de *La vie est un songe* (1732), utiliza muchos de los nombres de Boisrobert, incluyendo a Federic. Lo importante es que transforma a Sophonie en Sophronie. Este nombre con sus connotaciones clásicas parece ser muy popular en el Renacimiento y barroco. En Italia, por ejemplo, Sofronia es personaje en *la Clizia* de Machiavelo, donde representa la buena esposa que usa la moderación y justicia.

²¹ *The Young King* se representó en 1679, pero parece haber sido escrito antes de 1670 (Loftis 136). Aunque se ha supuesto que pudo haber utilizado la novela de Boisrobert, esto no ocurrió ya que la novela francesa "omits the episode in which Rosaura accidentally encounters Segismundo in prison before he is first taken to court. In *The Young King* (act 2 scene 1), on the other hand, the episode is included" (Loftis 136). Aquí el príncipe se llama Orsames y la Rosaura que lo descubre encarcelado (en un remoto castillo) es Urania. No hay versiones

ni traducciones de *La vida es sueño* en Inglaterra en los siglos diecisiete y dieciocho.

²² Citando a Shelley, Walter Cohen concluye que: "All this is to say that Calderón's fortunes in England, and indeed in most countries, were inextricable from those of Shakespeare, because the two men were thought – accurately enough – to have written the same kinds of plays" (71).

²³ Sobre Alemania véase el libro de Henry W. Sullivan y sobre Inglaterra el estudio de Walter Cohen.

²⁴ Para un examen detallado de Calderón en la época de la reina Victoria, véase a De Armas, "Rosaura Subdued."

²⁵ George Henry Lewes, por ejemplo, en su libro de 1846, *The Spanish Drama. Lope de Vega and Calderón*, no ve ya ni lo sublime, ni lo místico, ni lo filosófico en Calderón, sino un apego fanático al catolicismo. Rechazando todo pensamiento original en el dramaturgo español, concluye que *La vida es sueño* es "a very interesting romantic caprice of an ingenious fancy" (221). Naturalmente, Rosaura y su hipogrifo vuelan en "the wings of romance" (202). Por lo cual hay que cortar esas alas y regresar a la realidad. Aunque Richard Chevenix Trench, arzobispo de Dublin piensa que lo religioso de Calderón va más allá de lo meramente católico, también rechaza el episodio de Rosaura.

²⁶ Cowell alaba los principios filosóficos de *La vida es sueño*, así rechazando las nociones de Lewes: "... and the deep feeling of the unreality of life hangin over it like a thundercloud . . ." (311).

²⁷ Greer nos da varios ejemplos: "William Poel's nineteenth-century promptbook . . . and the typewritten copy of the same play used by the National Broadcasting Company in New York in 1938. As recently as 1997, FitzGerald's version of the play was performed by the Logos Theatre Company at the Grace Theatre in London" (1).

²⁸ Al igual que Bosirobert trata de establecer criterios geográficos e históricos. La obra, por ejemplo, tiene lugar en Warsaw (Boisrobert la había localizado en Cracovia).

²⁹ Lo que sí preserva pero lo incluye brevemente en el tercer acto, es el secreto de Rosaura a quien Astolfo, en esta versión, le había dado la mano en matrimonio, pero la abandona cuando tiene la oportunidad de ir a Polonia y casarse con Estrella.

³⁰ En FitzGerald, la espada le fue dada al padre de Rosaura por Clotaldo, cuando aquel lo ayudó en Moscovia. Se elimina el hecho de que Clotaldo había deshonrado a Violante, madre de Rosaura. Clotaldo reconoce la espada (que Rosaura había dado a Segismundo para que se librara de su cárcel) y así la lleva a Varsovia. Allí Segismundo casi mata a Clotaldo con esta espada, pero es detenido por el ángel/Rosaura.

³¹ Prospero proclama: "And, like the baseless fabric of this vision... / We are such stuff / As dreams are made on, and our little life / Is rounded with a sleep" (I.151, 156-58).

³² Sobre los elementos apocalípticos véase a De Armas "The Apocalyptic Vision." Por ejemplo, Segismundo le dice a su padre: "The Last Day shall have little left to show / Of righted wrong and villainy requited! / Nay, judgment now begins upon the earth" (417)

³³ Esta oposición entre el estudio de los clásicos como algo sacramental o como diálogo proviene del análisis de la imitación de autores renacentistas que ha propuesto Thomas Greene.

³⁴ Dirigió el Shakespeare Festival entre 1991 y 1993, cuanto terminaron su contrato mientras preparaba una producción de Henry VIII. Entre las obras que representó en New York en estos años se encuentran: *The Comedy of Errors* (1992) *Pericles* (1991), *The Tempest* (1991), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1991), *Othello* (1991), *Henry IV* Parts I and II (1991).

³⁵ Akalaitis había representado la *Iphigenia* en el Court Theater, obra aclamada por la crítica. Su puesta en escena de *La*

vida es sueño es anterior a su más reciente adaptación, *Quartet*.

³⁶ He tomado esta cita de una reseña que encontré en el Internet y que no puedo ahora recobrar. Mis disculpas al escritor desconocido.

³⁷ Kerry Wilks explica: "The translators added two significant scenes: the first with Astolfo and Rosaura, and the second with Estrella and Rosaura. The adaptation retains the recognition episode with Rosaura's portrait but carries it much further by adding an additional scene after the confrontation. . . . In this scene, Astolfo explains to Rosaura why he cannot marry her in his quest for the Polish throne" (60). Véase también a Fischer ("The warrant of womanhood" 56-57).

³⁸ "She mounts a hobby horse and rides gently. Drums and trumpets sound suddenly and the horse neighs and goes wild" (1.1.1). Quisiera expresar mi gratitud a Kerry Wilks por la copia del "Production Script" de *Life's a Dream*.

³⁹ En *La vida es sueño* hay toda una serie de imágenes alquímicas. El nombre Basilio puede ser parte de esto, ya que en la alquimia el sol es el rey o Basilius. Por otra parte la materia prima se asociaba con Saturno, planeta importantísimo en el texto. Véanse a De Armas, "The King's Son" sobre la alquimia en *La vida es sueño*. Alan K. G. Paterson, en su estudio de la alquimia en *El médico de su honra* de Calderón, afirma: "Alchemy held a central position in seventeenth-century physics. It was theoretically consistent with basic theory on the nature of matter and met with the approval of most practical minds" (275). Véase también a Nicholl sobre la alquimia en Shakespeare.

⁴⁰ Wilks explica: "Her interpretation of this scene made it very difficult to believe that Rosaura may have influenced Segismundo's transformation" (70). Y añade: "She failed to prove an alternative motivation for Segismundo's transformation at the end of the play" (72).

⁴¹ Ruth Anthony El Saffar asocia a Violante con la mitología: "No shimmering Diana, she has instead a Gorgon quality that makes direct access to the text's totality impossible. Only by a trick of mirrors can we catch a glimpse of her, hidden away in the netherlands of consciousness" (166).

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CREATIVE COGNITION FOR STAGING *COMEDIA*

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A fortunate axiom of contemporary *comedia* criticism is that interest in staging of early modern plays has revitalized our study of *comedia* performances and the performative in the last two decades. Like many scholars, I recognize the great debt my research owes to the revolutionary turn taken by *comedia* research since the inception of the Chami-zal Siglo de Oro Theater Festival and the AHCT's Golden Age Drama Symposia. A closely related revolution has changed the focus of my work on *comedia* performance in the last six years. The "embodied cognitive revolution" in literary and cultural studies is impacting the way we participate in spectatorship or read with an eye to performance. As the term implies, this critical approach stems from recent neurological discoveries proving the absolute interdependence of the human mind and body. Far from abstruse, embodied cognitive studies have very pragmatic applications for staging and researching comedias. What could be more practical

and appropriate for understanding live performances than focusing on how our brains will participate in the embodied language of performers and spectators? In fact, human body/mind interdependence is the source of creation and reception of all aspects of dramatic arts. From the creative acts of dramatists to those of actors and producers and of course to the creative reception of spectators, theater cannot exist without human bodies and brains functioning together. In previously published studies and conference papers I have explained the scientific relevance of neurological, evolutionary, psychological and linguistic evidence for human cognition with relation to culture, literature and performance.¹ In the present essay, however, I focus on applying the findings of the cognitive revolution to our most practical concerns as teachers, scholars, directors and producers of or actors in *comedia* performances.²

I begin by describing how our normal body-brain functions are the same mental and emotional processes we use as theater spectators. I will mingle these neurological explanations with more concrete examples of how performances operate biologically and creatively in all of us. The chief theatrical components of these illustrations will be color, space and movement and their constituents such as costuming, music, dance and engendered gesture and voice. In effect, dramatists and their collaborators in production and acting must decide—subconsciously

or more straightforwardly—on how space, movement and color will participate in the expression of the planned performance and in its simultaneous cerebral recreation among some or all spectators. All concerned parties know both instinctively and from experience that a play's reception depends on how our individual sense organs help us conceptualize what we think we are perceiving and how our emotions participate in a performance. The playwright must assume that her audiences will initially categorize in certain standard and generally accepted ways all the perceptions seen, heard, smelled, tasted or otherwise felt in relation to the performance space.³ With his or her production team, the dramatist must decide how much of the sounds, color and movement in the space will be easy for a spectator to classify in terms of their potential meanings and how much the audience can process less easily contained feelings in more challenging situations.

In sum, dramatists as well as spectators rely on the same ordinary yet remarkable processes that we use every day. As humans we first perceive and conceptualize in a body-brain loop that has evolved to preserve the self without having to confront anything new and different and without stressing or devoting conscious thought to perceptions. This is the tendency toward basic body-mind stability we usually rely to tell us that the light or the figure or the smell or the color or the movements that we per-

ceive will not require us to exert any mental or physical energy. The entire human body-brain organism has evolved to act initially and rapidly with emotional response, to reason emotively—if you will—on the basis of preliminary feelings whether anything requires flight or fight or whether we can remain in subconscious reverie and avoid any destabilization of normal conditions.⁴ Our body-brain has evolved to function first in panic mode and second in automatic-pilot. This surrogate or automatic perception-conceptualization loop is what we see in the eyes of our students when they are daydreaming about something else. It is also what actors and directors want to avoid at all costs in theater. Our body-mind has to be cognitively and emotively engaged in a performance if we hope to maintain our suspended disbelief during a theatrical performance. In short, embodied cognitive studies bring scientific evidence to bear on what Lope intuited about keeping an audience quite literally entertained.⁵

A body-mind actively engaged in a theatrical or real-life situation is challenged by perceptions that are not categorized in the brain's automatic-pilot—its surrogate loop. More unique theatrical perceptions might not match our existing cellular memories of meanings and experiences without blending them. We must *bricollage* the best we can, patching or blending together elements from two or more cellular categories our minds have previously stored in order to conceptualize a new mental image resem-

bling what we just perceived. In effect, we perceive or enact reality by projecting our mental images onto the world or the performance. The newly blended concept is, in effect a cellular metaphor bridging concepts to make a new concept, a new sense of feeling and meaning. This embodied mental process of bridging or metaphorizing is how, on a daily and very mundane basis, we create change in ways big and small whether in the world of art and entertainment or in everyday conflicts of socio-cultural, economic and political spheres.⁶

Spectators, actors and dramatists alike are capable of creating new categories of meaning by mapping new neural links between previously classified experiences and/or current ones on stage and in life.⁷ The trick is to get the balance right for the intended range of audience members and the performance's content, form and context. What if the performance is so demanding in its "creativity" that only a few if any spectators, if any, are willing to accept the challenges from the stage in order to form the blended connections and the new categorizations necessary to find meanings and feelings in what they perceive? To what degrees might certain spectators engage their body-brain loops of perception and conceptualization in processing a director's tricky balancing act? The range of responses is as great as the range of personal life experiences of spectators.

An excellent example of wide diversity among spectators' embodied cognitive responses was recently witnessed at the Chamizal Festival of March, 2006. The Teatro del Valle from Colombia (Departamento de Artes Escénicas de la Universidad del Valle) staged a challenging performance of Calderón's *El astrólogo fingido* in which the group lived up to its proper name, Grupo de Creación e Investigación, and demonstrated the experimental training of co-directors Manuel González Puche and Ma Zheng Hong with the Russian Academy of Theater.⁸ González Puche is already known to challenge spectators to participate with an "óptica teatral" rather than a textually bound approach (Paun de García 166). This time the Chinese cultural roots of Zheng Hong provided the major creative changes made to Calderón's play and the greatest cognitive and emotive demands to spectators' neurons.⁹ Instead of asking us to connect with actors costumed in early modern dress or even in contemporary apparel, we were challenged to connect our established cerebral categories of Calderonian characterization with whatever brain cells might be storing our experiences with Chinese costuming, masks, painted faces, "strange" gestures, violent poses and loud percussion accompaniment in the style of Peking Opera. Each experimental components of this production pushed our most basic body-brain capacities and resulted in differing spectator reactions. The range of opinions, however, exemplifies the

strength of established cerebral categories of individuals and their diverse tendencies to metaphorize with regard to space, movement and color. A Calderonian expert, particularly one who had taught the text or published an essay on *El astrólogo fingido* might try to match categories of the Spanish text with whatever could be similarly processed regarding the Chinese-style performance. This difficulty in adjusting our perceptions and conceptualizations is a good example of experimental theater as extreme cellular creativity—not unlike any social or artistic change we find to be “outlandish” at first.¹⁰ Quite literally, there may be no proper cellular space—no cerebral terrain—in which experimental theater can dwell within some spectators. Thus, some Calderonistas among the spectators of Teatro del Valle’s *El astrólogo fingido* felt that the experience “was fascinating” or “lively and creative,” “but it wasn’t Calderón.” Like many non-traditional productions, this staging created new mental spaces with new meanings and feelings by challenging us to connect established brain categories with newly created memories of performance experience.

As I will indicate with references to the *El astrólogo fingido* and other performances—live or recorded and available to *comediantes*—our notions of space, movement and color are three major categories in which we discuss *comedia* productions. These three are also the most basic components of our embodied cognitive processes. The spaces in

which we store feelings and concepts are in constant movement as we readjust our memories in daily life and even in theater performances. We project our existing storage patterns back onto the world around us to make sense of the “reality” about which our senses have gathered information. Our embodied minds depend on space and movement in more ways than have been previously assumed. In fact, neurological studies reveal that Peter Brook’s title *The Empty Space* isn’t just clever phrasing and staging theory. Studies show that when we watch an actor move through the space of the stage, our brains activate the very same cerebral zones that we would use if we ourselves were moving on the stage. This common cognitive-emotive process relies on what has been called our “mirror neurons,” the very sort that we exercise in learning to move any part of our bodies or even to talk. The same is true for theater spectators: our brains’ perception-conceptualization loop follows categorization processes that quite literally parallel an actor’s actions as though they were our own.¹¹

And what if the actors’ embodied expressions in the empty space include dance and other musical movement? Neurologists studying dance audiences have discovered intense neural stimulation in the brains of spectators corresponding to identical areas in the brains of the dancers they are watching. Researcher Ivar Hagendoorn calls this phenomenon “the dancing brain” (2003). Of particular interest is

the revelation that brain activity registers very high among spectators of novel dance movements such as we might expect from experimental dancers such as Mark Morris or Pilobolus. In general then, brain activity is more intense among spectators of modern dance than of classical ballet if latter's the movements are familiar to audience members (2004). We are more cerebrally—and thus more cognitively, emotionally, and creatively—stimulated if we have to process and conceptualize movement along with sounds and sights on stage. Indeed, for some spectators the movement might be too intense while for others it is exciting and engaging. But these are questions any director must resolve in her particular situation for a particular performance and locale. For example, many of us remember or have seen the AHCT video archives of the very “creative” movements of the seductive and scandalous Marta in UNAM's 1986 production of *Marta la piadosa*. For some spectators, this staging could not be categorized as Tirso. For them, the cerebral blending required to appreciate the creative license in this *Marta* did not fit cognitive-emotively. The neural mirroring of the physical gestures of Marta might have been too outlandish to experience as meaning and feeling.

Embodied cognitive research also sheds light on question of performance spaces and movements in historical contexts. We need to explore whether the body-brain capacities of early modern spectators

were different from our own. In evolutionary terms, their capacities to mirror and thus feel-think what was performed would have been biologically equal to ours. Researchers in the genetics of neurology, developmental psychology and all aspects relating to human biology demonstrate that even a small change in human genetic coding takes at least 50,000 years. This explains, for example, why our body-brains still operate initially in fight-or-flight mode, even if we live under totally safe conditions. Thus, in the short-run of a human lifetime any differences that an individual develops regarding space and movement are alterations pertinent only to that person's life experiences and biological memories of them. We cannot pass on genetically to our offspring any new socio-culturally developed categories of experiences and of cellular modification; only over many millennia can culture help us change brain capacity in ways that affect our descendants (Kandel). However, the cultural experiences and mental storage alterations of specific individuals in particular societies can similarly categorize their body-brain activity and thus develop experientially similar. This is the point at which evolution meets cultural construction in us. Only our societies preserve in the oral or written word their perceived conceptualizations can we become culturally aware of them, but not biologically through evolution.

For these reasons, all available documentation we can gather about actors, actresses, their movements and production spaces past or present becomes more important than ever to conceptualizing how spectators might have differed in their experiences of performances. Recent email traffic among the AHCT listserv recipients concerning acting style has piqued my curiosity about the relationship of early modern actors' movements to the intense performance conditions in the *corrales*, on the *prados de El Retiro* or in the palatial chambers converted into theaters.¹² Do the performance spaces and conditions of movement explain why the actions of early actors have frequently been termed "melodramatic" by modern standards? Does a high degree of gesture and movement in historic *comedia* performances indicate a higher level of spectator neuronal mirroring and thus of audience involvement than previously observed in *comedia* criticism? Given that many *comedia* theorists and traditionalists still presuppose somewhat propagandistic approaches to *corral* performance, the new cognitive observations about movement and audience reception open our horizons of scholarly expectations.¹³

A new cognitive-emotive approach to movement and audience participation points to implications for studying or staging *comedias* dealing with dance, such as Lope de Vega's *El maestro de danzar* and any number of operas and spectacular per-

formances pieces written by Calderón and others for the royal court. Even a performance of a work with “invisible dance movements,” like Cervantes’ *Retablo de las maravillas*, does in fact require the Sobrino of Benito Repollo to gyrate sensuously in an exotically lewd zarabanda with the imagined Herodías. Thus, even “ignorant” early modern spectators could physically and mentally mirror the kinds of dances they were familiar with—if they had some cellular memory of them. So too for spectators and *comediantes* today: if we can stretch our known cellular categories to include more creative blending of concepts, then directors and actors can exercise more creative license in staging spaces and movements that challenge how perceptive spectators co-process performances. A concrete example is the situation presented to us as professors of early Spanish theater: how can we communicate to students the stimulating impact of sensual dances used in early performance events, such as the *chacona* and *zarabanda*? Based on embodied cognitive research, I would say that if we can help students blend images of sensual dances they already know, then they have a better chance of approaching early modern sensuous dancing. A good point of departure for such blending in the early twenty-first century is the image many of my students have of the Colombian *cantautora* Shakira, already famous for blending her Latin American heritage with her Lebanese lineage and her substantial experience in

the dance traditions of both cultural categories. A recent music video of Shakira singing “Hips Don’t Lie” is an appropriate musical and visual metaphor for conceptual blending of body-brain concepts found in the roots of Middle Eastern and African Diasporic music—the very sort we might associate with sensual dances in early modern Spain. The rhythms and gyrations of meringue, reggaetón and belly dancing help us bridge our existing conceptualizations of percussive and sexy movements with those found in the *chacona* and *zarabanda*. In short, the impact of body-brain movements might be more effective for student spectators if the video performances or even classroom dramatizations they engage in are more creatively challenging. A little shock-value from contemporary popular culture could stimulate greater body-brain mirroring of early modern audience shock-values.¹⁴

Recent neurological discoveries on the power and durability of musical influences also suggest significant ramifications for our notions of early performances as well as contemporary ones. We now have greater evidence that the rhythms of *comedia* verses clearly served as memory devices for actors and cognitive-emotive stimulants for spectators. Nobel Prize winner Eric Kandel’s memory studies—along with work on music by neuroscientist and musician Daniel Levitin—reveal profound evidence that musical memories, particularly of melodies, may be the most durable of all.¹⁵ They

also underscore the interrelationship of the emotive and the cognitive in our bodies' cellular storage systems. From this evidence, logical conclusions for historians of performance could alter how much emphasis we place on *comedias* employing popular *romances* such as we find in Lope's *Caballero de Olmedo*, *Fuenteovejuna* and many others by him or other dramatists. If directors conclude that such melodies had significant political repercussions for previous audiences, how might they convey that impact when staging for contemporary audiences? Since the old songs would not have the same impact today, could the use of striking musical accompaniment, lighting or costuming call foreground music's role in the *comedia*'s meaning in the past if it is highlighted in contemporary melodies? Could such alterations help spectators create more meanings and deeper feelings about the entire performance? Why might some experimental performances of *comedia* find greater or less success, depending on how innovatively directors might alter verse rhythms and musical accompaniment for perception and conceptualization by a modern audience? Once again, challenging examples of creative conceptual blending for music are to be found in *El astrólogo fingido* staged by Alejandro González Puche and Ma Zheng Hong. Most strikingly, the clanging percussion of Chinese instrumentation kept audiences on edge of their seats, constantly calling attention to the entrances, other intense moments and the larger-

than-life traits of the characters. Was it effective? While I leave the details of that decision to individuals and reviewers of the performance, as a cognitive researcher I can at least state that it may have been impossible for any Western-trained spectators' minds to wander, given the stridency and attention-demanding "musical accompaniment." Where were Calderón's rhythmic verses, the ones today's more traditionally minded directors, *comediantes* and early modern audiences would have heard? The absence of verbal melodies altered conventional categorization the language we perceived. As a result, words had to be conceptually blended in extreme ways to make new senses and meanings for spectators.

By contrast, other directorial interpretations of a Calderonian text could grow out of close reading of textual implications as in Isaac Benabu's comments about his experience directing Calderón's *Médico de su honra*. In Benabu's case, the Golden Age dramatist made staging easy for a director willing to follow the flow of Calderón's coded indications from the dialogue and didascalia. Even so, how much innovation and how much of the known and accepted should Isaac include for certain audiences, depending on the time and location? Does he want to make sure, as his production of *Médico de su honra* suggested, that Gutierre's most intense soliloquies are performed in tenuous light where the protagonist's struggling voice and movements in

muted chiaroscuro reflect the gray area of his personal dilemma between conflicting codes of categorization? Could that diminished light and intense voice tone communicate Gutierre's cognitive-emotive struggle to blend his personal experiences within the categories of honor and love? In effect, directors, teachers and students who read with an eye to performance must exercise their own creative insight into the creative body-mind operations of early talented dramatists. Such are the reasons why we think of the most creative writers and directors as pushing spectators to engage in more personal and creative mental movement beyond status-quo perception-conceptualization. In providing a balance between stability and challenge for their viewing audiences, such writers are also great mental fitness trainers, coaching us to exercise our body-minds in more flexible and varied ways.

Gender performance is another major category for which neurological discoveries will make a difference in how *comedias* are staged, acted and mirrored by spectators. These findings directly relate to evolutionary, biological and developmental psychological factors influencing our notions of sex, sexuality and gender in everyday human life and artistic expression. While the repercussions of this research for *comedia* specialists and others are obviously enormous, I will limit my present discussion to a few aspects most clearly involved in perception and conceptualization of performances.¹⁶ Discoveries

about the roles of hormones, biological-psychological and social development underscore have direct bearing on spectator identification of or with characters. To what degree, for example, can and might a certain biologically and cultured engendered female identify with the male body and its movements? Does it feel differently and mean something different for a biological male who is genetically or culturally disposed toward other males? However, cognitive-emotive sciences demand that we include in the range of perceptions, not only the biologically and culturally rehearsed gender norms, but also a range of culturally repressed gender identifications found in genetic sex (chromosomes), gonadal sex (hormones produced by testes and ovaries), genital sex (presence of penis or vagina), sex typical behavior (for one's culture) and brain type (Baron-Cohen, 97-98). The latter refers to the relative strength of the "male" tendency toward systematic processing of perceived concepts and the "female" strength in empathizing. These notions of sexual difference point to a greater ability on the part of female spectators to perceive and conceptualize body movements and particularly facial expressions more accurately, in general, than do male spectators. Males, on the other hand, tend to have a better sense of space and precision of categorization but fewer inclinations toward emotive blending. If directors, actors and teachers take these tendencies into consideration, they can expand or

contract the artistic range of decisions producing performances. Certainly, knowing one's audience would be an asset to promoting audience participation in gender-associated meanings of a *comedia*. If a director wants his female character dressed in male garb truly to pass as male, then body movement, voice alteration and costuming can convince spectators—perhaps without detection—that the performer is truly masculine. All neurological evidence for how humans initially categorize what they perceive based on first-response judgments points to this conclusion. However, if directors might want to play more quickly with audience cognitive-emotive processes, they might make the costuming and acting sufficiently “fem” to cause only a brief double-take and playful confusion. Either way and even for early modern times, we should not underestimate the level of complex neurological activity necessary for spectators to blend all the concepts forming notions of a character in transvestite performance. Even if everything transpires very quickly and even when spectators have knowledge of the text, they must mentally and emotionally participate in the transformation. This body-mind connection is particularly useful in helping students understand the sensuous, satirical, and ideological impact of plays featuring cross-dressed characters flirting with other women or men. I believe that Sherry Velasco's contrastive analysis of two different film versions of *La monja alférez* demonstrates how viewers perceive a

performer to be either a man or a woman dressed as a man. María Félix in Gómez Muriels' 1944 Mexican production does little to convince us she is a man. But Javier Aguirre's 1986 Spanish adaptation relies on actress Esperanza Roy's more masculine costume, lack of make-up and manly demeanor to help us to understand how the original Catalina de Erauso really passed as a man for decades in early modern Spain and the Americas.

When encountering women dressed as men in *comedia* texts, the lively sexual references of dialogues are often lost on students if they cannot create lively visual images of the differently gendered figures. An in-class performance of costumed bodies in movement can be particularly effective in scenes from Ana Caro de Mallén's *Valor, agravio y mujer*, for example. The homoerotic dialogue of Leonor *vestida de hombre* comes alive for students when they quite literally get the picture and feel the intensity of Countess Estela's passion: her gestures and verses spewing forth, glorifying the image of the androgynous hero/heroine Leonardo/Leonor. The movements and flirtatious voices of the confused Countess and the playful transvestite can require students to re-sculpt how their brain cells process gender perceptions. Conceptualizing an otherly gendered character can re-map mind-body connections within the spectator—a re-creation paralleling the scene moving on stage. Admittedly, most performance decisions made by directors and

teachers to communicate dramatic conflict and characterizations are not as destabilizing and exciting as such gender-bending moments. However, as the neurological studies about cognition and emotion indicate, even supposedly slight changes of movement can make a significant difference in the meanings and feelings that spectators put into and get out of a theatrical production.

My final examples for *comedia* staging are drawn from embodied cognitive research demonstrating how our body-brains perceive and make meanings of colors employed for scenery decoration, costuming and lighting effects. Numerous neurological, psychological and linguistic studies have shown that human beings share a number of basic associations regarding the most common colors known to them in both biological and cultural contexts.¹⁷ A key illustration states that sighted human beings have genetically evolved to distinguish above all between dark and light shades, specifically between black and white. Hence, if a dramatist aims for the most culturally universal and intense reception of her play in performance, she might consider directing set and costume designers to employ exclusively shades of black and white. At the same time, the dramatist runs the risk of losing audience interest if the body-minds of the spectators if black-and-white classifications are not creatively applied. In other words, the two distinct shades could encourage less flexible thinking and even

mind-wandering among spectators in certain performance contexts. If, however, more gray is seen to dominate on stage, a less-stable and more creative process of perceiving and conceptualizing could be set in motion for the spectators. At the same, all the other conditions of performance could also simultaneously stimulate or curb the potential creative interpretations of the grays—depending on the complex interactions of sight, movement and actors' voices in expressing and communicating the script in performance. The scene mentioned above from *El médico de su honra* as directed by Isaac Benabu is a good example of a situation in which light and dark are flexibly integrated into Gutierre's sharply contrasting emotions and reasons for murdering his wife or loving her without harm. Spectators might identify with his confused state as depicted in movements and sounds in gray light, thus creating their own meanings and feelings associated with personal experience. In sum, the graying effects of light foster an ambiguity challenging spectators to participate in creatively.

On the other hand, a performance using another popular color offers a lively range of creative choices for performance teams and spectators alike. Red, red, red—red is the color most universally recognized by humans after black and white.¹⁸ It is the color researchers have found to have the longest list of shared cognitive and emotive associations with one color, but it also the longest list of disparate as-

sociations attached to one color. Quite simply, the human eye has evolved to perceive reds more frequently than any other real color, and thus to lend itself to both easy categorizations and more diversely significant ones. It is the color most likely for spectators to associate with a display of passion, be it anger and violence or the passions of erotic love. A prime example familiar to many *comediantes* in this regard was the Chamizal performance in 1986 of the *Burlador de Sevilla* by the Repertorio Español. I refer to the final scene of Act I and to the highly effective delivery of Tisbea's thrice repeated "¡Fuego, fuego, zagales! ¡Agua, agua,/ amor clemencia, que se abrasa el alma!" The scene's highly successful performance is paralleled in spectators' neurological processing of concepts and emotions in a literally moving and colorful context. Tisbea writhes in anguish, and our spectators' eyes and ears are moved to participate emotively and cognitively as the billowing red flames consume her cabaña, her heart, and our parallel sensations and thoughts. But the meanings that we each categorize will depend on the personal cultural histories each of us uses to re-create our own meanings and perceptions. An even more daring director and performer could experiment with more intense use of red in performance, but she might run the risk of alienating some spectators in order to communicate more creatively to receptive audience members. And returning to the example of *El astrólogo*

fingido, we could speculate that the Chinese version of Calderón was fascinating to even dubious spectators because of its vibrant, appealing and abundant use of Chinese red. Perhaps the colored motif helped the audience bridge *comedia* and Peking Opera, making it more meaningful in a blended notion of Calderón. Such are the decisions, intuitive or conscious ones, we must make for staging cognitively and emotively creative performances. These are but a few applications of the new body-brain sciences to art and to enrichment of *comedia* performance studies.

NOTES

¹ In "Bridging the Performance Gap: I introduced the embodied cognitive revolution to *comedia* studies. Relying on the revelations of neurological and other biological evidence on body-mind dependencies, I suggested ways that theater performances also bridge the body-mind gap in *comedia* scholarship. In effect, embodied cognitive research, focusing as it does on the mind in the body, bridges the gap between approaches to *comedia*—those oriented toward studying live performances and their phenomenology versus other approaches dependent on post-structuralist oriented theories with false assumptions about the body and outdated notions of human developmental psychology.

² Basic information on cognitive studies was drawn from studies by Antonio Damasio, Mark Turner, George Lakoff and Mark Johnson. More extensive references are to be found in the bibliographies of my published essays, particularly in "Bridging the Gap". Newer bibliographical references to ma-

terial on gender, music and color are cited in the present article.

³ Scent has been used in experimental performances to enhance audience experience. If we include the distribution of food as witnessed in new performances of medieval works, taste is certainly obvious component. However, biological studies of how we experience our surroundings demonstrate how frequently our perceptions and conceptualizations partake in cross-organ perception. Our taste-scent connections can be easily observed in our everyday experiences, but even our senses of sight and hearing are inseparable from our “seventh sense,” that of movement (Berthoz).

⁴ This aspect of basic human perception and conceptualization is particularly well explained in Damasio’s *Looking for Spinoza*. It is clear that the most “primitive” or limbic system of emotional-rational decision making is involved in all initial processing of our surrounding realities. Also very useful in understanding how we use our “surrogate” system for avoiding too much uncalled-for stress is Damasio’s *Descartes’ Error*.

⁵ Lope is well known for profoundly understanding of spectators’ needs and how to maintain their body-mind stimulation over the course of a performance without lapsing into a surrogate mental loop or letting their minds and bodies wander out of the *corral de comedias* too early. See verses 231-39, *Arte nuevo de hacer comedias*.

⁶ The processes of metaphorization and conceptual blending are used by scholars in applying neurological findings to their fields of study. See Lakoff and Johnson for linguistic and philosophical applications of metaphorical processing and Mark Turner and Giles Fauconnier for literary and other socio-cultural ramifications of blending.

⁷ Studies by Mark Turner, in particular, put our embodied cognitive processes in socio-cultural contexts, demonstrating how changes in how we live everyday life develop out of con-

cepts we creatively blend and then enact into our conceptualization of the world. See my "Seeing Like Sancho" and "Cervantes' Legacy of Creative Cognition."

⁸ Particularly informative in this regard is Susan Paun de García's recent interview with Alejandro González Puche. One can see parallels between embodied cognitive studies and the director's vocabulary of creativity regarding what his productions ask of spectators. In addition, see the Teatro del Valle's university and yahoo websites for information on the creatively experimental orientation of the directors, their training, performances directed and productions underway.

⁹ This neurological language is becoming a component of professional theater commentary if we judge by a recent review. "Actors on the London Stage: Listen Closely and You Can Hear the Neurons Firing" was critic Ben Brantley's leading caption for his recent evaluation of London productions. He commented on several performances, comparing actors whose gestures and expressions—even the most minimal—revealed what their characters are thinking and feeling.

¹⁰ Paun de García's use of the term *transgrede* to refer to artistic innovations in González Puche's production of *El gran teatro del mundo* suggests that she has observed the interrelated processes of theatrical creativity and social developments. In other words, there are potential social ramifications for blending new categories or concepts in society. This is how individuals and groups change our everyday world in real and historical time. See also my essays "Seeing Like Sancho" and "Cervantes' Legacy."

¹¹ Research on the brain's sense of movement reveals that all processes that we consider cognitive or emotive are intrinsically dependent on movements within and among our bodies' multiple systems of perception. Expert Alain Berthoz demonstrates that our perceptions are, in effect, simulated action and that our brain cells store experiences that we constantly recon-

struct as memory when we test new perceptions against them before blending and categorization.

¹² The emails brought to our attention material for future research on body-brain projections in early modern performances. See Evangelina Rodríguez Cuadros and David Castillejo.

¹³ Even among some new cultural-studies or Marxist oriented essays on *comedia* we find the persistence of Maravall's propagandistic designation of the *comedia de corrales*. Notions of the manipulated spectator still abound in contemporary *comedia* criticism and are in need of a more cognitive-emotive and phenomenological examination of the material they present.

¹⁴ Other new findings by researchers on music and its cognitive-emotive connections are being uncovered. These will have obvious benefit to theater performances, indicating that musical melodies are the most persistent in human memories (Levitin). This human propensity to maintain musical cellular storage suggests that we can create new mental and emotion bridges to music in performances. Thus, greater spectator participation should result from performances of *comedia* productions that emphasize the natural rhythms of verses and music inserted into performances.

¹⁵ Their research has helped me understand a personal question: why does music so often have a major role in films that I best remember in detail, such as "The Piano" and "Amadeus"? It appears that thematic blending of with emphasis placed on music has facilitated their enduring place in my memory. Similarly, an anecdote from Levitin explains that relative afflicted with memory-robbing Alzheimer's never failed to respond a familiar tune, even one from many decades before.

¹⁶ New sources on gender in my present essay will be further explored in a forthcoming publication. See Baron-Cohen, Brizendine and Miller, researchers whose primary focus is neurological distinctions in sex and gender.

¹⁷ See Zeki as well as Thompson et al. on black and white and colors in human perception and cognition.

¹⁸ Along with my paper "Seeing Red" on the NYU website for Hemispheric Performance, see Thompson et al. on colors, perception and cognition.

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**AT PLAY WITH CERVANTES:
REPERTORIO ESPAÑOL'S *EL QUIJOTE*
(2006)**

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DUKE. Why are you poets so fascinated with madmen?

CERVANTES. I suppose . . . We have much in common.

DUKE. You both turn your backs on life.

CERVANTES. We both select from life what pleases us.

— *Man of La Mancha* (Dale Wasserman, 1966)

To the viewer who is casually familiar with Cervantes' *Don Quijote*, Repertorio Español's current stage adaptation of the classic might play simply as entertaining theater, full of action, color, and strong performances.¹ This production, however, seems to aspire to more than do most theatrical adaptations of the work, which typically reproduce some memorable episodes and the book's general action in miniature. *Don Quijote* is, among other things, a narrative construct about theatricality. Repertorio Español's *El Quijote* is, in a sense, theatre about the structure of the *Quijote*. Like the

novel, this staging treats a number of issues related to the concept of play: reading, perception, imagination, reinvention, manipulation, and artifice. Unique in this adaptation, however, is the way it comments on these themes with respect not only to the characters but also relative to the creation and re-creation of *Don Quijote*. Director Jorge Alí Triana, one of Latin America's foremost film, television and stage directors, uses an adaptation of the classic written by another pioneer of Colombian theater, Santiago García, founder and director of Bogotá's Teatro La Candelaria. García and Alí Triana focus on Cervantes' presentation in the 1615 *Quijote* of the ways in which people deceive and manipulate others for power, personal gain, or entertainment. Like the madmen, poets, and Cervantes character mentioned in the above epigraph, however, they embrace what they like best from the text before them in presenting their vision of life. Though the material of the play is generally faithful to Cervantes, the dramatists engage in an interesting scene-by-scene process of selection, re-ordering, and re-contextualization in order to make the action play coherently and in a way that expresses their unique take on the novel and its hero. Just as its protagonist evades death, holds on to his fantasies, and promises his return, Repertorio Español's *El Quijote* encourages revisiting the text, upholds freedom of imagination and play in reinterpreting the classic, and insists on the remarkable independence and

transcendence of its central character. Accordingly, the production both transgresses and pays homage to Cervantes' masterpiece.

While García's playbook adheres more closely to Cervantes' language than most dramatic adaptations, he experiments with the chronology of the episodes, beginning with and drawing mainly from the second part of the *Quijote* before turning back to conclude the action at the end of the first part. The play, which continues from beginning to end with no intermission, blackouts, or abrupt divisions of scenes, follows this sequence:

- 1) *Barco encantado* (II, 29).
- 2) *Aventura de los leones* (II, 17).
- 3) Sancho introduces Don Quijote to "Dulcinea" and her "damas" (II, 10).
- 4) The protagonists meet the duke and duchess (II, 30).
- 5) Dinner at the ducal palace, interrupted by Merlín and Dulcinea *encantada* (II, 31-32, 35).
- 6) Don Quijote's advice to Sancho on good governance (II, 42-43).
- 7) Sancho as governor of Barataria. He judges the cases of the man who wishes to cross the bridge (II, 51), the two old men and the ten *escudos* (II, 45), and the young "*desgraciada*" (II, 45). Sancho is tempted with food in a burlesque dance,

which is interrupted by the attack of the enemies of Barataria. Sancho quits his post as governor (II, 53).

- 8) On the road again, Don Quijote and Sancho contemplate their adventures and come across the actors of *Las cortes de la muerte* (II, 11).
- 9) Sancho discusses his salary with Don Quijote (II, 28).
- 10) While Don Quijote meditates, Sancho pretends to whip himself (II, 51).
- 11) Princess Micomicona appears on roller skates and, aided by a *maese* Pedro-like character, uses a *retablo* to explain her kingdom's plight (I, 29). When Don Quijote destroys the *retablo* (II, 26), they give him a sedating drink.
- 12) Don Quijote is imprisoned in a cage. He is wounded in an encounter with some *disciplinantes* (I, 47, 52). From his cage he foretells of his glorious return.

Omitting Don Quijote's defeat, renunciation of the books of chivalry, and death to return instead to the middle of the story, García creates a circular plot: the action forgoes any closure and gives the impression that the protagonist's adventures could go on infinitely.

As the list above indicates, Alí Triana has decided to stage some of the most theatrical scenes of

the novel: much of the action involves characters performing or casting others in dramatic roles. Most of the episodes are from part two, in which Cervantes depicts the frivolous, self-serving, manipulative society of his time as constantly engaged in role-playing and staging in an effort to exploit and ridicule his two protagonists. Many might therefore consider this a “metatheatrical” production, if we take that somewhat shopworn term in its most general sense of theatre about theatricality.² For those who use the term more narrowly to describe only situations involving a character’s simultaneous occupation of “real” and theatricalized realms, only the final scene may qualify as “metatheatrical,” as the protagonist addresses the audience and hints at an awareness of himself as a character confined within a dramatic text.³

I find it more productive to consider this production within the context of play. Play has been analyzed and defined in many different ways by sociologists, anthropologists, philosophers, theologians, and literary scholars. Thus, it is difficult at best to venture a simple and universally-accepted definition of the concept. For the purposes of this analysis, then, I will adhere to a few notions of play that are of particular importance to the work in question. First, as Richard Schechner has written, “play is intrinsically part of performing because it creates the ‘as if,’ the risky activity of make believe” (81). Play is hypothesizing, recognizing how something *is*

while considering how it *could be*. Brian Sutton-Smith proposes that in the “antistructure” of play, we may discover “the latent system of potential alternatives” out of which “new culture” may emerge (qtd. in Carlson: 23).⁴ *El Quijote* re-enacts on stage what Cervantes wrote, but ultimately changes the story to inquire, “What if it were this way? What would it express?” Indeed, every generation seems to find some expression of its culture in Cervantes’ novel. Second, play involves mimesis, but also creativity in the imitation. Sociologist Roger Caillois includes “mimicry” as one of his four categories of games (19-23), and anthropologist Caroline Loizos observes that play involves a restructuring of previous behaviors that may include re-ordering them or breaking them off before completing them (228-29, 236). As mentioned, Alí Triana and García reconstruct Cervantes’ narrative, but play with the work’s chronology and reject its closure.

Of course, it remains evident that the director has chosen these scenes not only because they depict characters at play and are fertile ground for playful reconstruction, but also because they so vibrantly manifest a spirit of play through their visual spectacle, action, color, suspense, and variety. The second part of the *Quijote* makes for entertaining theater because of its wonderful potential for picturesque staging. Alí Triana and his choreographers, Silvia Sierra and Yanko Bakulic, demonstrate this throughout the production. In the opening *barco*

encantado scene, Sierra herself serves as the prow of the boat, and a long sheet wrapped around her torso forms the sides of the vessel, as dry ice billows up from the stage floor creating the illusion of a misty river. The climactic battle scene is also a visual feast as Sancho staggers comically through smoky fields, besieged at every turn by enemy warriors and deafened by explosions of gunfire all around him. Wasserman has said that “theatre is at the heart of every page of *Don Quixote*” (130). In these and many other scenes, Repertorio Español celebrates the wonderful instinct for theatricality that he and many others have observed in Cervantes.

As many critics have noted, the tone and thematic expression of part two of the *Quijote* differ from those of part one. Michael Bell, for example, interprets the 1605 *Quijote* as a fictional world wherein Don Quijote’s strength of character is center stage and his foolishness is often accepted “good-humouredly” by other characters (251). In contrast, the 1615 *Quijote* presents a more “real” world, inhabited by many who have, like the reader, read part one. Here the schemes or reactions of other characters to the protagonist take the primary focus, and their remarks often reflect “a weight of bitterly realistic social experience” as they regard Quijote not only as suffering from an antiquated idealism but also as lacking the proper respect for the social order (252). Joaquín Casaldueño notes

that in part one, deceit is a common theme, but does not direct the action as it does in part two (207). Quijote does not initiate his adventures as often in the second part as in the first; others construct conflicts for him, deceiving or humiliating him for their own entertainment. Alí Triana's production presents a cynical society like that observed in the 1615 *Quijote* by these and other critics. As we shall see, even the occasional scenes and elements integrated from part one either already exhibit the cynicism of part two or are manipulated to keep with the spirit of the latter part.

There are, however, some notable elements of the novel that García has chosen to leave out of his adaptation. Most scenes involving Don Quijote and Sancho's awareness of themselves as characters in *Don Quijote* part one are excluded. Absent from the play are Sansón Carrasco and other minor characters who have read about the two in the first part or in Avellaneda's apocryphal version. The duchess mentions off-handedly that she has read about the protagonists, but nothing more is made of it. The self-reflective "dialogue" between author and characters over the merits of their presentation in part one thus never materializes in this stage version. Indeed, it seems natural that an issue linked to narrative prose should be left aside in converting the work to the stage. Besides, the performance context itself already supplies a condition similar to that created by Cervantes in the second part of the

novel: most contemporary theatergoers, like many of the characters of part two, are familiar with one or two of Don Quijote's episodes and have at least some notion of the *ethos* of the character. The lack of any expository lines indicates that Repertorio Español assumes some familiarity with the story, and the characters from the encounter with the duke and duchess to the end of the action treat Don Quijote and Sancho as if they are conscious of the duo's desire to live the chivalrous life.

Another prose element left out in the transformation to theater is that of narrative layering: the play has no narrator and makes no allusion to Cide Hamete, an Arabic translator, a transcriber, or a manuscript. Although clearly the production is the result of collaboration between writer, director, actors, and crew, there is, nonetheless, no mediating voice, no divergence of authorial opinions, and no suggestion that the protagonists are historical figures. These are replaced by a typically theatrical sense of immediacy between viewers and characters, enhanced by the spectators' close proximity to the actors in the intimate space of the Gramercy Arts Theatre.

In addition to displacing the story from its narrative framework, García and Alí Triana also downplay the socio-religious context within which Cervantes labored. Although the church is represented in the play in the characters of the *cura* and the duke's priest, and the two briefly voice objec-

tions to Quijote's chivalrous antics, they do not explain or justify their protests on theological grounds. Lacking such discourse and Alonso Quijano's Christian repentance at the conclusion, the story does not easily lend itself to a religious reading. Leland Chambers' interpretation of the plot as a search for Christian truth and salvation, for example, could not be applied to this adaptation. In *El Quijote*, we detect no significant moral imperative that makes the protagonist's fantasizing theologically or ethically objectionable.

Repertorio Español instead seems primarily interested in focusing on characters engaged in "reading," interpretation, and reinvention. In the play, as in the novel, we see Don Quijote's signature transformation of the commonplace (a boat on the banks of a river) or the fictive (the *retablo*) into chivalric fantasy. In the encounter with the lion, the lion tamer avoids disaster by convincing Don Quijote that he has triumphed honorably over his foe and need not provoke the animal further. For the protagonist's benefit, he reinterprets the lion's bored reluctance to fight as a willful surrender to a superior adversary. When Sancho reinvents the *labradoras* as *damas*, Don Quijote interprets what he sees as a failure of vision afflicted upon him by the enchanters that relentlessly pursue him. As governor, Sancho "reads" each case set before him, at times having the actors (in the case involving the bridge) or the concerned parties (in the case of the

allegedly assaulted woman) reinvent the scene of the conflict. He then presents his interpretation of the problem and a solution. In a lucid moment late in the action, Don Quijote forgoes an opportunity to recast the actors of *Las cortes de la muerte* in some magical adventure, but they see him as a fool, and make him look like one by startling Rocinante. In his production, Alí Triana foregrounds Cervantes' sentiment that the way we interpret what is set before us determines our identity; our readings reinvent us and empower us to reinvent what we read. Particularly interesting in this work, however, is how the director, the author of the adaptation, and the company express this theme with respect not only to the characters but also to their own encounter with *Don Quijote* as they interpret and reinvent the work for the stage.

The title of Repertorio Español's production provides the first clue that the play treats not only the main character but also the narrative itself. Titles of other stage adaptations typically highlight the central duo or their misadventures: take, for example, *Don Quixote Rides Again* (Repertory Theatre, Birmingham, United Kingdom, 2005), *Don Quijote y Sancho Panza* (Teatro Gayumba, Dominican Republic, 2002), *El vuelo de don Quijote* (Teatro Avante, Miami, Florida, 2005), and *La ínsula de Sancho Panza* (Instituto Mexicano de Seguro Social, Chihuahua, Mexico, 1991). *El Quijote* is of course an abbreviated reference to Cervantes' novel

itself rather than to its protagonist. The title thus suggests that the play will engage the narrative medium through which *Don Quijote* is originally presented.

As the action unfolds, the viewer familiar with the structure of the *Quijote* witnesses Repertorio Español's approach toward reading, interpreting, and reinventing the action for the stage. The company's first step in this process, as we have just seen, is selecting scenes that express a unified vision and play well on stage. In the next step we see how the company arranges, shapes, and refines the material into a fluid and coherent expression. Their reinvention of the material consists of decontextualizing the scenes and recontextualizing them within what ultimately emerges as an original and alternative reading of the novel. The director plays with Cervantes' chronology of the scenes, thus removing some from their original part two circumstances and creating different dramatic milieus for them. The significance or effect of an adventure may further be altered in interesting ways through the omission of certain elements or the incorporation of ideas, images, or characters borrowed from Part I scenes.

As indicated, the play begins with the scene involving the *barco encantado*. This works well as an initial scene due to its rapid action and tense drama, and because it comes off as a prototypical Don Quijote adventure, much like the windmill adventure of part one, and thus sets up a familiar

“norm” for the audience. We recall, however, that in the novel, the scene is not quite typical, due mainly to the protagonist’s desperate reaction to his failure and to what comes before and after the scene. As Agustín Boyer points out, during the block of episodes from the *cueva de Montesinos* to the *barco encantado*, Don Quijote’s efforts to live like a knight fail. With Montesinos, he proposes a role for himself to play: that of disenchanter. He tries to become a part of the mythical knight’s world when he attacks the *retablo* of *maese* Pedro, but fails. Finally, the episode of the *barco encantado* affirms his inability to realize his fantasies: “Es una prueba contundente de que el mundo de don Quijote se desmorona definitivamente, y éste acabará reconociendo su derrota, su expulsión del mundo de la ilusión, con el conocido ‘Yo no puedo más’ (II, 265) que concluye la aventura del barco encantado” (Boyer 376). The scene can thus be considered a moment of crisis for the protagonist as he seems ready to quit his attempts to realize his chivalric fantasies. Hortensia Morell goes so far as to qualify the scene as a nostalgic farewell to “la auténtica vida o ficción caballeril” (92). Though the scene in the novel is too frantic, slapstick, and chaotic to qualify as nostalgic, it does constitute a kind of farewell to the protagonists’ freedom of imagination, as from this point on, most of the remaining adventures will be concocted by the duke, duchess,

and others, and are, as Morell points out, “concebidas en la burla y el escarnio” (91).

By placing this adventure first and following it not with the encounter with the duke and duchess but the confrontations with the lion, and later Dulcinea, García removes the scene from its original narrative context. He furthermore omits the “yo no puedo más” lines from the end of the episode. It thus functions not as a culminating moment of crisis, but as a signature Don Quijote adventure, parallel to the windmill scene of the first part. Like that famous episode, the *barco encantado* adventure is a fantasy prompted by ordinary objects or people featuring a violent encounter with a machine powered by the elements and ending with Don Quijote’s defeat, which he blames on the malice of the enchanters who pursue him. For Repertorio Español, the scene is not, as Boyer maintains, about an identity crisis; the company adjusts the scene so that, on the contrary, it establishes and affirms Quijote’s identity and typical *modus operandi*. Alí Triana takes full advantage of the chapter’s action and great potential for staging. As mentioned, he uses special effects to create the illusion of a boat floating through fog. He also utilizes the entire ensemble, some to create the mill using twirling parasols for the water wheels, others to wave a long sheet representing the water, and still more to storm in from the rear of the theater as the millers, urgently attempting to save Don Quijote, Sancho, and the boat.

He presents the scene with a wonderful sense of drama, mystery, and beauty that is not evident in the hectic, clownish incident of the novel.

Instead of the *barco encantado* scene, the director substitutes the encounter with “Dulcinea” as the final episode before the duke and duchess assume the role of fabricators of fantasies. The inclusion of the scene here makes sense for two reasons. First, key to the understanding of the rest of the play is Quijote’s belief that Dulcinea is enchanted. This notion motivates and explains many of the protagonists’ subsequent actions. Second, inserted here, the encounter provides a fitting bridge between scenes in which Quijote creates his own adventures and those in which the duke and duchess construct challenges for him. It can be seen here as a first instance of someone else (here, Sancho) imposing a fantastic vision on him. Later it will be humorous to contrast the duke and duchess’s refined and poetic illusion of Merlín and the enchanted Dulcinea with Sancho’s rustic, awkward attempt to dupe his master (although both are equally effective due to Don Quijote’s willingness to believe in the fantasies).

Alí Triana changes the character and behavior of the *aldeanas* of Part II, Chapter 10, mainly for practical reasons: to make the irony of the situation clear, and to simplify the staging of the scene. His adjustments are nonetheless provocative while maintaining the energy and humor of the episode from the novel. The irony of Cervantes’ scene

comes, of course, from the contrast between the chivalric ceremony and ornate language of the knight and squire and the impatience and rustic colloquialisms of the *aldeanas*. An audience unfamiliar with the appearance and language of sixteenth-century Spanish villagers might miss the irony, however. To solve the problem, Alí Triana borrows an idea from book one, chapter two of the *Quijote*, and makes the peasant women into prostitutes, with fishnet stockings, heavy makeup, and heels, so that contemporary viewers immediately recognize their nature. Bell has noted the contrasts between the protagonist's two encounters with working-class women; above all, that the part one prostitutes are compassionate toward Quijote while the part two peasant women are rude and hasty (250-52). Alí Triana combines the worst qualities of each: dressed as prostitutes, the actresses spice up their rustic language with non-verbal sexual innuendos. The audience easily understands the contrast between their vulgar manner and Quijote's chivalry. Also, since the director has the women walking instead of mounted on donkeys, the play does not include "Dulcinea's" humorous vault into the saddle at the end of the encounter. Instead, the prostitutes punctuate the scene by kicking Sancho around, leaving him sore and dejected. Overall, since the women in Repertorio Español's version of the episode are more vulgar and aggressive than in the original, the scene presents a meaner, more cynical view of soci-

ety. The added elements of sexuality and slapstick violence give the irony a bitter, darker edge.

The scene featuring Merlín and the enchanted Dulcinea is not at all burlesque, as in Cervantes. In the novel, Dulcinea is played by the duke's page, who chastises Sancho mercilessly ("con un desenfado varonil y una voz no muy adamada" [II, 35, 825]) when he refuses to whip himself.⁵ Here, Silvia Sierra plays Dulcinea, and does not attempt to appear as a man. As she dances poignantly under a flowing gossamer shroud, plaintive music underscores her moving appeal to Sancho. García's script leaves out most of the page's vituperative name-calling; Sierra's tone is, instead, haunting and sincere. While much of Cervantes' humor in this scene comes from his allowing the veil of artifice to slip to show the reader an amateur actor's strained efforts at theatricality, Repertorio Español revels in the hypnotic beauty of the illusion and weaves a spell over the audience, as in the *barco encantado* scene. The effect is not so much parodic as sensual, exotic and enchanting.

García also places the *Cortes de la muerte* episode after the protagonists' stay with the duke and duchess instead of before, as Cervantes does. The sense of the scene is that Don Quijote chooses not to see a fantastic adventure here perhaps not so much because of any new lucidity or maturity on his part, but because he and Sancho have had enough of actors and fantasies at the ducal palace.

Indeed, just before the appearance of the acting troop, our hero complains about the “escarnio, bur-las y ultrajes” he has suffered, “aun en casa del Du-que” (García 100). The scene also ends differently from the episode in the novel, wherein Sancho speaks movingly on behalf of Christian non-violence when he rejects his master’s suggestion that he pursue the actors and avenge their treatment of his *jumento*: “No hay para qué [. . .] tomar ven-ganza de nadie, pues no es de buenos cristianos tomarla de los agravios” (II, 6, 630). In the novel, the chapter ends at this point with Don Quijote praising Sancho’s Christian discretion while the two move on. Alí Triana instead has the company sur-round Sancho and beat him soundly after he has ut-tered these lines, thus casting a sense of irony and cynicism on the non-violent sentiments. This sets up perfectly the squire’s disillusionment and complain-ing about salary in the next scene. Thus, with re-spect to both protagonists’ psychological and emo-tional peaks and valleys, Alí Triana and García cre-ate a logical cause-effect relationship between the *Cortes de la muerte* encounter and the scenes im-mediately before and after.

The greatest liberty is taken in the final scenes, wherein the action appears to morph gradually from part two back to the end of part one. After Sancho deceives Don Quijote into believing that he has ful-filled his promise to Merlín to give himself 3300 lashes in order to free Dulcinea from her enchant-

ment, the two naively await her appearance, expecting her to materialize at any moment. Instead of Dulcinea, however, it is the princess Micomicona (I, 29) who glides onto the stage on roller skates. Two assistants set up a *retablo* to help her explain her kingdom's plight to Don Quijote. As in the part two episode involving the *retablo* of *maese* Pedro (II, 26), the knight listens intently, becomes absorbed in the conflict, then rises, incensed, draws his sword and destroys the *retablo*. He agrees, however, to fight the giant Pandolfilando for the princess, and yields to her request that he drink a magic potion to facilitate his travel to Micomición. When he falls asleep, the *cura* and the *barbero* enter with a large cage on wheels and pay Micomicona, whom we now recognize as one of the prostitutes from the earlier "Dulcinea" scene, and her assistants, the other prostitute and a male character much like Ginés de Pasamonte.

In Cervantes' Micomicona episode, Dorotea, Cardenio, Fernando, and Luscinda—characters to whom we have become endeared—charitably offer to help the *cura* and the *barbero* save the mad *hidalgo* for the sake of his own health and welfare. By making Micomicona a rude prostitute from an earlier scene rather than Dorotea, and integrating the wily Ginés de Pasamonte and his *retablo* into her presentation, Alí Triana and García recast the part one scene, transforming it from an intervention in which some admirable characters help the hero, to a

manipulative trap, executed by mocking and callous mercenaries hired as bounty hunters for reasons only vaguely and cursorily referred to after the fact by the *cura* and *barbero*, who do not strike us so much as Don Quijote's benefactors as his jailers. Alí Triana's vision here, as in the "Dulcinea" scene and the encounter with the actors, is darker and more cynical than that of Cervantes. The hero's impetuous attack upon the *retablo* in this penultimate scene parallels his misinterpretation and destruction of the boat in the first scene. Don Quijote, in other words, appears not to have developed or learned from his misadventures; he remains largely unchanged. "Truth" continues to be as he wishes to perceive it.

In the last scene, the hero is surrounded by *disciplinantes*, wounded, and locked in the cage. His final lines are taken from part one, chapter 47 of the novel, wherein Don Quijote bids farewell to the innkeeper's wife, daughter, and servant, Maritornes, who pretend to weep at his downfall. In his script, García replaces these figures with some women in mourning following the *procesión*; however, no such women appear in Alí Triana's production. When Ricardo Barber, as Quijote, utters the lines, "No lloréis, mis buenas señoras, que todas estas desdichas son propias de los que profesamos esta noble tarea de la caballería andante" (García 136), he addresses the audience directly, for there are no *señoras* on stage. As the lights dim except for a lone

spot trained on him, the theatrical space becomes intimate, and Barber makes eye contact with the audience. His tone is fearful and desperate, yet hopeful as he implores us not to lament his misfortune, but to celebrate his virtue. García's lines here depart slightly from the original: while Cervantes has Don Quijote ask the women to pray that God free him from his incarceration, in *El Quijote*, the hero does not mention God and boldly promises his return to knight errantry: "Tened por seguro que esta prisión que aquí véis es tan solo un descanso que dará más fuerza y vigor a mi brazo para derrotar el mal en las más inauditas hazañas. . . os prometo regresar con más entereza y ánimos que nunca" (García 136). It is as if he confides in the audience awareness that he is a character trapped within a text—whether dramatic or narrative—but that he looks ahead confidently to his return. Don Quijote's defeat, renunciation of books of chivalry, and death are all omitted. Here then, we have a different story: there is no *anagnorisis*, no Christian repentance, no significant change in the protagonist. As Salvador Fajardo points out, "there is no closure in the novel's first part. It leaves us in suspense, with the promise of future adventures" (41). Quijote lives on, captive but defiant, a character who has become bigger than the structures that attempt to contain him and his fantastic imagination.

In all of this restructuring, two closely related ideas are suggested. First, this production rejects the

notion, implied by much commentary on the work, that the protagonists continually progress toward a more enlightened state. Repertorio Español does not read the *Quijote* as a pilgrimage, a search for truth, a taming of the protagonist's hubris, or a passage through purgatory toward salvation.⁶ Rather, the drama features a circular structure that encloses the protagonists in a perpetual cat-and-mouse game between fantasy and reality. The adaptation suggests that actions from the novel may be interchanged or superimposed without destroying the story's coherence or altering the core ideas that the protagonists embody. Second, the idea that Alí Triana and García take from the *Quijote* and foreground as paramount is that creative, disruptive play with prepared texts is the essence of art and life. Both writer and director disassemble and reconstitute the *Quijote* with the same hypothetical, experimental approach that Don Quijote takes toward the windmills and boats of "reality," the same playful attitude the duke, duchess, and other characters display in manipulating the knight and his squire.

Sealtiel Alatríste notes, in addition to many thematic similarities between Julio Cortázar's *Rayuela* and the *Quijote*, that the two works "son dos grandes novelas fundadoras de un estilo de escribir, que coinciden en una narrativa fragmentaria" (143). After chapter 56 of the former work, Cortázar instructs the reader to begin at chapter 73 and, effectively, skip back and forth among the 155 chapters

of the novel. Just as the reader of *Rayuela* pieces together familiar events integrated with new material to gain a new perspective on the plot, Alí Triana and García suggest a different chronology and conception of events that yield a circular, open-ended story faithful to the rebellious, imaginative spirit its protagonist maintains throughout most of the novel's action. Peter Brooks asserts that "it is the role of fictional plots to impose an end which yet suggests a return, a new beginning: a re-reading. Any narrative, that is, wants at its end to refer us back to its middle, to the web of the text, to recapture us in its doomed energies"(109-110). Rather than concluding, Repertorio Español's production plunges us right back into the middle of the story, challenging us to revisit Don Quijote through a re-reading, or to seek him wherever he may be found – in literature, on the stage, in art, in life.

While Cervantes may have wanted to put Don Quijote to rest once and for all to discourage any more "Avellanedas," Repertorio Español apparently invites those who would resurrect the character and his fondness of illusion to do so, by all means, with creative license, as they have done. How can such a transgression, an inversion of the author's intent, contribute to the ongoing greatness of the work? The director, cast, and crew demonstrate a notion articulated by José Ortega y Gasset: "El simbolismo del *Quijote* no está en su interior, sino que es construido por nosotros desde fuera, reflexionando sobre

nuestra lectura del libro” (412-13). If Wasserman is correct in attributing the “enduring success of the novel” to a similar notion, the fact that “each may take from it the meaning that he personally chooses” (126), then Repertorio Español’s effort is further testament to the timeless appeal of the classic. Though their staging of the *Quijote* takes significant liberties with the structure of the masterpiece, they remain true to the spirit of author and protagonist alike by mimicking their indulgence in the playful and creative reconstruction of the texts before them.

NOTES

¹ *El Quijote* was first presented by Teatro La Candelaria in Colombia in August, 2000. Repertorio Español debuted the work February 2, 2006. At the time of this writing, the show continues to play regularly at the Gramercy Arts Theater, New York. Performances are currently scheduled at least through March of 2007.

² Since Lionel Abel’s introduction of the term as designating “theatre pieces about life seen as already theatricalized” the concept has been used broadly and frequently to describe a range of dramatic situations depicted on stage. For general and inclusive definitions of the idea, see Abel 60 and Hornby 31-32. For an overview of problems with the term and its liberal application, see Rosenmeyer.

³ For a discussion of “incommensurate ontological worlds” on stage, see Fuchs 338. She rejects the term “metatheatre,” preferring to call plays involving such situations “structurally theatricalist” (337-38, 351-52).

⁴ The original source, a conference paper, was not available. Carlson provides the following bibliographical information (note 34, p. 202): Brian Sutton-Smith, "Games of Order and Disorder," paper presented to the Symposium "Forms of Symbolic Inversion" at the American Anthropological Association, Toronto, 1 December 1972, 17-19.

⁵ I cite page numbers of the 2004 edition of the Real Academia Española.

⁶ See, respectively, Fajardo-Acosta, Chambers, Allen, and Sullivan.

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TALKING TO HIMSELF: A TAXONOMICAL ANALYSIS OF SEGISMUNDO'S SOLILOQUIES BY PERFORMANCE CIRCUMSTANCE

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In their totality, the dramatic devices employed by characters frequently form the backbone of the communicative structure of a play. Included among these dramatic devices are the aside, soliloquy, monologue, prologue, epilogue, and any type of metatheatrical situation.¹ In addition to a thorough examination of the communicative functions of the dramatic devices themselves, the performance circumstance in which each particular device is employed also should be analyzed, often adding to the complexity of its use. Upon examining the compendium of dramatic devices used in a play, occasionally the use of one type of device stands out, merely because of the numerous examples found, or based upon their obvious importance to the structure of the play. Such is the case with *La vida es sueño* and the soliloquy, in terms of both frequency of use over other dramatic devices as well as their importance to the play's foundation, as discovered through a

detailed analysis of the performance circumstances and communicative capabilities of each example of this device. Over the years, many critics have focused on the importance of the soliloquies and monologues in this comedia, and some scholars have specifically analyzed several of Segismundo's soliloquies. However, no scholar has concretely identified all of Segismundo's speeches by the various subcategories of the soliloquy; the communicative functions of the soliloquies have not been fully considered, particularly in regard to the spectator; and the soliloquies have not been categorically organized by performance circumstance. Here, not only will the soliloquy be clearly delineated as a dramatic device itself, but all of the subcategories will be explained, in addition to the multiple accompanying communicative functions of soliloquial discourse. After grouping them into the four performance circumstances (which will be explained as well), each soliloquy delivered by Segismundo will be analyzed according to the taxonomy of soliloquial discourse and how it potentially affects the spectator, thus offering a new approach to these singularly important soliloquies in *La vida es sueño*.

In its basic definition, a soliloquy is an extended discourse delivered by a character who is alone on stage, merely believes him or herself to be alone, or pretends to be alone. (These are the commonly accepted performance circumstances of the soliloquy, with "alone on stage" being the most

regularly employed circumstance. Shortly, I will divide the "pretends to be alone" circumstance into two separate categories, for a total of four performance situations or circumstances.²) A soliloquy often reveals a series of "unspoken" thoughts; it can also be considered a form of talking to oneself. It is in these regards that the soliloquy differentiates itself from the monologue, which is merely extended discourse delivered by a character who knows that he is in the presence of other characters. Both the monologue and soliloquy are classified as a speech that monopolizes the dramatic dialogue. In theoretical terms Manfred Pfister states: "The soliloquy is based primarily on a convention, an unspoken agreement between author and receiver, which – unlike conditions prevailing in the real world – allows a dramatic figure to think aloud and talk to itself" (131).³ Taxonomically, this dramatic device consists of ten subcategories: the revelatory soliloquy, dialogical soliloquy, soliloquy of direct address, descriptive soliloquy, actional soliloquy, informative soliloquy, commentative soliloquy, monological soliloquy, double soliloquy, and most rare of all, the triple soliloquy. As a dramatic device, the soliloquy has multiple communicative functions, all of which are directly linked to the spectators. Through the soliloquies, the spectators hear a character's secrets; learn of the character's private, hidden emotions; discover the interior motivations of that character; hear the character's fan-

tasies and dreams; etc. Other pieces of information can sometimes be acquired by the spectators through soliloquial discourses, such as information about other characters or about the dramatic past, present, or future; also, the dramatic action is often advanced through a soliloquy. The soliloquies help to shatter the glass (or fourth) wall that allegedly separates the actors on stage from the spectators in the audience, thereby allowing the actors to communicate directly with the spectators.

In Calderón's *La vida es sueño* (1635), several characters deliver soliloquies, but Segismundo's are the most significant to the structure of the play. His solitary discourses represent nearly every variation of the soliloquy mentioned above, and in some of the soliloquies, the category changes partway through the speech. That is to say, within one soliloquy, Segismundo's purpose in speaking can alter, his thought process can vary its course, or the speech's direct function within the play can change, thereby forcing the shift in subcategory and reclassification of the soliloquy. The multiple variations and categorical shifting within one speech demonstrate in part the complexity of the use of the soliloquy as understood by Calderón and other baroque playwrights. Another aspect of Segismundo's soliloquies to be considered is the performance circumstance under which each discourse is delivered. It is through the use of soliloquies that Segismundo communicates with the spectators, thereby allowing

them to feel as if they are active participants in the dramatic production. In sum, Segismundo's soliloquial discourses, in addition to the soliloquies delivered by the other characters as well, form the communicative backbone, indeed the very structure, of the play.

In *La vida es sueño*, there are 14 soliloquies: seven are delivered by Segismundo; two each by Rosaura, Clotaldo, and Clarín; and one by Basilio. In the introduction to his edition, Ciriaco Morón explains: "Los monólogos de Segismundo son como las columnas que sustentan la comedia" (42). Segismundo's soliloquies⁴ do indeed form the foundation of the play, as he is the character with the most soliloquies in *La vida es sueño*. Many critics have analyzed some of these soliloquies, in particular Segismundo's first speech; for example, Arturo Farinelli and Milton Buchanan both examined the sources of this soliloquy. Their investigations were followed by Ricardo Monner Sans, Harold G. Jones, and Alfonso Reyes, who also examined the themes in Segismundo's first soliloquy. More contemporary critical approaches to Segismundo's soliloquies will be referred to throughout this essay, including those by Emilio Orozco Díaz, E. Michael Gerli, and A. Robert Lauer⁵, among others. Segismundo's seven soliloquies present examples of eight of the ten subcategories: monological, informative, commentative, dialogical, descriptive, revelatory, direct address, and actional.⁶ All of Segismundo's solilo-

quies are comprised of at least two subcategories, which highlights Calderón's rather complex employment of the dramatic device. Furthermore, Segismundo's soliloquies are delivered under the four types of performance circumstances. First, he delivers two soliloquies while he is entirely alone on stage. Second, there is one soliloquy during the delivery of which he **believes** himself to be alone, but other characters are present and listening. Third, three of his soliloquies are delivered fully aware of the presence of other characters, but Segismundo seems to ignore them and directly addresses only himself (and the spectators).⁷ In the fourth performance circumstance, one of his soliloquies is delivered in the presence of other characters, but apparently none of them are able to hear Segismundo, for several possible reasons which will be discussed. Segismundo's seven soliloquies will be analyzed by the four groups of performance circumstances.

First, the two soliloquies that Segismundo delivers while he is alone on stage represent four different categories, dialogical, commentative, descriptive, and revelatory. In Act 2, after Segismundo throws the servant off the balcony, Basilio enters and converses with Segismundo. The dialogical soliloquy is subsequently delivered when Basilio exits. In this discourse, Segismundo declares that he is not dreaming, as Basilio suggested, and he continues:

Y aunque agora te arrepientas,
poco remedio tendrás:
sé quién soy, y no podrás,
aunque suspires y sientas,
quitarme el haber nacido
desta corona heredero;
y si me viste primero
a las prisiones rendido,
fue porque ignoré quién era. (1536-44)⁸

In a dialogical soliloquy, the character literally converses with him or herself during the speech, or with another character, but fully aware that the other is not present. Pfister explains: "the speaker of a soliloquy may address himself as 'you', which can then produce a conflict between several viewpoints ('contextures') in one and the same soliloquy – such as the contrasts between body and soul, heart and mind, duty and desire, past and present..." (128). (In other soliloquies, the conflict for Segismundo will be between liberty and freewill, as well as dreams and reality.) Here, the second person singular address leads the spectators to believe that Segismundo is yelling at his father, even though he knows Basilio is no longer listening. Perhaps he hopes Basilio can hear him while exiting, but it can also be read as the typical move of a child who yells at a parent behind the parent's back, so as not to be punished for what is said.⁹ The dialogical soliloquy is a more highly-developed form of the soliloquy than some of the other categories. The use of lan-

guage tends to be more complex; it is usually a lengthy discourse; and in some cases, it literally almost becomes a one-sided dialogue with the spectators. We do not see it regularly employed in medieval or renaissance dramatic pieces. This particular discourse is also classified as a commentative soliloquy, as Segismundo is literally commenting on the dramatic situation itself, as well as on his father's lecture to him.¹⁰

The discourse that closes Act 2 is another soliloquy that Segismundo delivers while completely alone on stage. He does not address anyone but himself in this discourse, as he catalogues several types of men, from rich to poor, from successful to spiteful, and he speculates about their dreams; therefore, it is classified as a descriptive soliloquy. In his analysis of this soliloquy, Morón explains: "El final del acto segundo es en resumen una danza de la muerte o un norte de los estados. Del rey abajo, todos son representantes de la pobre comedia de la vida. Después de recorrer la gama de menesteres humanos, se pronuncia la moraleja" (42-43). At the end of this descriptive soliloquy, he finally offers himself, and the spectators, possible answers to the questions plaguing him throughout Act 2, in the famous verses:

¿Qué es la vida? Un frenesí.
¿Qué es la vida? Una ilusión,
una sombra, una ficción,
y el mayor bien es pequeño;

que toda la vida es sueño,
y los sueños, sueños son. (2182-87)

Effectively, Segismundo has placed himself between the stage and the audience, with one foot in the dramatic world and one foot in the "real" world. In "La función mediadora del aparte, el monólogo y la apelación al público en el discurso teatral," Cueto Pérez explains that these dramatic devices "son también semejantes en el sentido de que se sitúan, dentro de la actividad teatral y por procedimientos difer[e]ntes, *entre* la representación dialogada y los espectadores, buscando, proponiendo e instaurando un ámbito intermedio, una mediación momentánea y excepcional" (246).¹¹ Orozco Díaz refers to this "intermediary" state as "una situación crítica marginal" (158).

In his analysis of the aforementioned soliloquy, Orozco Díaz concludes that this speech represents Segismundo's inner thoughts: "Segismundo se nos descubre en el proceso de su más íntimo razonar y sentir en diálogo consigo mismo hasta llegar a esa conclusión. Es, pues, el soliloquio un convencional pero eficaz desbordamiento expresivo, ya que intenta conmover al auditorio manifestando lo que ocurre en el interior del personaje" (150).¹² Based on Orozco Díaz's accurate analysis of this speech, taxonomically it should also be classified as a revelatory soliloquy, in that the spectators learn more about Segismundo's psyche and thought processes

through this speech. The spectators may believe that Segismundo is merely pronouncing these intimate thoughts subconsciously. The rhetorical questions he poses also lead this speech to be classified as a dialogical soliloquy: Segismundo asks the questions, and he truly seeks the answers, if not from someone else, then eventually from himself. The active spectator may go so far as to verbalize mentally a response to these questions, if not immediately, certainly later. At the very least, all the spectators are silently witnessing Segismundo's growing dilemma. Orozco Díaz states in more depth: "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).

Segismundo's first soliloquy in *La vida es sueño* occurs early in Act 1, under the second performance circumstance. He assumes that he is alone and thus proceeds to vocalize his private thoughts, whereas in fact Clarín and Rosaura are listening. Frederick de Armas notes: "When Segismundo realizes that he has been overheard, his wrath descends upon Rosaura. His pride and vanity are countered by her humility and compassion" (101). It is at this moment that this monological soliloquy becomes a

pure monologue, in that now Segismundo knows that someone is listening. In addition to being a monological soliloquy, it is also both revelatory and descriptive. Segismundo continues the motif of nature commenced by Rosaura in her opening soliloquy: he, too, describes many objects found in nature, from birds and fish to a stream, but in his speech, they all retain realistic characteristics, unlike in Rosaura's. After each description, Segismundo comments upon the freedom that each item possesses and he queries about why he, who is also alive, has no freedom. It is also a revelatory soliloquy: García Martín states that the soliloquy "puede servirnos para penetrar en su personalidad. Nos da ciertas pistas para comprender su psicología, especialmente en cuanto a sus criterios morales. Tómense en consideración... la antítesis entre su ambición y sus frustraciones... su actitud ante la vida y el uso de la facultad del juicio que se crea percibir en él" (70-71). An additional communicative function of this soliloquy is that the spectators learn about one of the central themes of the play, liberty and free-will:

¿y teniendo yo más vida,
tengo menos libertad?

.....
¿Qué ley, justicia o razón
negar a los hombres sabe
privilegio tan süave,
excepción tan principal,

que Dios le ha dado a un cristal
a un pez, a un bruto y a un ave? (161-72)

Lauer states: "El final del monólogo es magistral con la recopilación final de los cuatro elementos de la naturaleza diseminados anteriormente y que ahora sirven para reiterar el reproche de Segismundo contra un cielo injusto" ("Monólogos de Segismundo," 543). The repetition reminds the audience of the importance of his argument, and the angst apparent in Segismundo's words prepares them in advance for his future actions, as well as for his subsequent speeches in which he continues his discourse about freedom, when he will add to it the conflict between dreams versus reality, for the spectator to contemplate as well. As Ricardo Sáez asserts: "Sea cual fuere el embrujo a nadie se le escapa el efectismo teatral que cumple no sólo, en el encadenamiento de la intriga sino también en la captación del público, el conflicto que desarrolla el monólogo" (271). Thus, this particular soliloquy is fundamental both to the structure of the play and an enhanced actor-spectator communication: the audience has a better understanding of Segismundo now because he has revealed himself intimately through the soliloquy. They see all aspects of his personality, some of which remain hidden from other characters throughout the play, with the obvious exception of Rosaura and Clarín, who have listened to this speech. In "Forma interior y forma exterior del

primer monólogo de Segismundo: La sistematización de la pasión," Gerli observes: "Sentimos la inmovilidad del alma del protagonista, la angustia y melancolía que lo abruman al enfrentarse con la realización de su estado en la vida" (1105). The active spectators will be able to identify with Segismundo's feelings and later believe themselves to be an accomplice to his actions. The most imaginative of these active spectators may even go so far as to believe him or herself to be Segismundo, through a complete suspension of disbelief and a total identification with his anxieties and frustrations.

The third performance circumstance is that in which Segismundo is aware of other characters' presence, but he ignores them and apparently addresses only himself. These three soliloquies are automatically classified as monological, since the other characters can hear his speech, although it is not intended for them. Segismundo's second soliloquy in the play is delivered in Act 2, while he is being dressed by the servants. Because they are by his side, there is no doubt that they can hear him speak. However, upon careful examination of the content of Segismundo's discourse, it is apparent that he is talking only to himself, and thus the speech is soliloquial, in fact, a soliloquy of direct address – to himself. Segismundo questions himself on several items, such as why he is being waited on (1234-35), so the soliloquy is also classified as dialogical: he is conversing with himself, as well as answering his

own questions, because the servants do not reply, which forces the soliloquy into this performance circumstance. The spectators learn of his new speculations about dreams and reality for the first time in this speech: "Decir que sueño es engaño; / bien sé que despierto estoy. / ¿Yo Segismundo no soy?" (1236-38). Segismundo is contemplating and remarking upon his new circumstances, thereby rendering this a commentative soliloquy as well; thus, not only must the spectators be aware of the spoken words in the speech, but of the dramatic situation itself as well. In *Lire le théâtre*, Anne Ubersfeld discusses the relationship between the dramatic written text, its performance, and the audience. She explains that the text contains gaps which must be filled in by the performance but then interpreted by the spectators (24). In terms of spectator reception, Ubersfeld states: "Le spectateur est obligé, non seulement de suivre une histoire, une fable (axe horizontal), mais de recomposer à chaque instant la figure totale de tous les signes concourant à la représentation" (45). The spectators must follow not only the plot, but they should also be aware of the icons, indexical signs, and symbols which appear continually throughout the performance. Here, the audience is offered assistance by Segismundo's soliloquy for interpreting these signs and symbols on their own, by employing their imagination: the more engaged spectators will identify with the inner conflicts that Segismundo feels when he finds him-

self somewhere completely new, confusing, and unknown.

In Act 3, Segismundo delivers two more soliloquies under similar circumstances: he is surrounded by soldiers, but he talks aloud to himself. In the first soliloquy, Segismundo debates with himself, and he states: "Para mí no hay fingimientos; / que, desengañado ya, / sé bien que la vida es sueño" (2341-43). This discourse reveals even more of Segismundo's psychological structure to the spectators. When first encountered by them, Segismundo was a snivelling philosopher, but when he experienced life in the palace, he became proud and egotistical, only to be thrown back into prison. He has learned his lesson and will not be deceived again, neither by dreams nor reality. This soliloquy is both revelatory, as the spectators see a newly evolved Segismundo, as well as dialogical, as he again asks rhetorical questions to himself in the second person. An active spectator can identify with Segismundo and be drawn into the play even more through this soliloquy, particularly if the actor playing Segismundo faces the audience directly as he asks these questions, which include for example:

¿Otra vez queréis que toque
el desengaño, o el riesgo
a que el humano poder
nace humilde y vive atento? (2314-17)

The active spectator may feel that he is being directly addressed, and therefore he may feel com-

pelled to answer, if only quietly in his mind. The level of response by a spectator is explained in *The Semiotics of Performance*, where Marco De Marinis suggests that there are three scenarios of communication. First, the spectator, or receiver, must know the code of the sender in order to have complete communication. The sender is the actor, who sends the code to the spectator (receiver), with the hope of eliciting a particular response. If there is little or no response at all from the spectator, then there was a possible break down of communication between the stage and audience (141), or under another interpretation, perhaps the spectator simply is passive. If the response is not precisely what the dramatist, director, or actor intended, then there was at least partial communication. If the spectator responds exactly in the way that was predetermined by the dramatist, director, or actor, then there was complete communication. De Marinis notes that the most common of these three scenarios is partial communication (142). The issue of partial communication versus complete or zero communication is of significant importance because Segismundo's soliloquies are directly linked to the communicative process between the actor and the spectator. If the actor playing Segismundo turns directly to the audience to deliver the soliloquy, the spectators should be fully aware that he is directly addressing them. However, sometimes soliloquies function in a more subtle manner and the actor seems to be talking only to

himself, so the spectators may not realize that the speech is intended specifically for them. The success of communication is often directly related to how attentive, active, and imaginative the spectator is because if the spectator does not give complete attention and a certain degree of belief, he may miss the nuances inherent in various uses of the soliloquy. Regarding semiotics and Segismundo's soliloquies, Lauer explains that "al nivel exclusivo del significante, cualquier miembro de cualquier público captaría los cambios de tono en el desarrollo del habla del protagonista antes de acudir al nivel del significado" ("Monólogos de Segismundo," 540).

A mere 300 verses later, Segismundo begins another soliloquy, and now the spectators listen to him confidently boast of his strength and glory as leader of his army. Again, it is possible that the other characters are listening, but upon analysis of his words, he appears to be addressing only himself; therefore, it is a monological soliloquy, just like the others analyzed under this performance circumstance. Suddenly, his descriptive discourse morphs into a commentative soliloquy, as he reminds himself (and the spectators):

No así desvanecemos
aqueste aplauso incierto,
si ha de pesarme, cuando esté despierto,
de haberlo conseguido
para haberlo perdido;
pues mientras menos fuere,

menos se sentirá si se perdiere. (2665-71)

In effect, this has also become an actional soliloquy: in this subcategory of soliloquy, the character debates and then chooses an action that will affect the outcome of a situation, and thus the soliloquy itself is an act that transforms the direction of the dramatic action (Pfister 136). Segismundo is encouraging himself to remember that he may be dreaming and it could all vanish, so he should behave accordingly and concentrate on the matter at hand, the battle. An additional communicative function of this soliloquy is casuistic in nature: it reminds the spectators of the brevity of life and to act now while it is possible.

Finally, Segismundo's last soliloquy is delivered in direct response to Rosaura's extended monologue regarding her dishonoring by Astolfo. Although there are other characters on the stage with him, the speech is a soliloquy because it does not appear to be intended to be heard by anyone except the spectators, and the other characters simply cannot even hear it. This is the fourth performance circumstance, and there are several ways to explain how it is rendered possible. The actor playing Segismundo either whispers the speech or he steps away from the other characters, towards the spectators. Or, the other characters simply ignore Segismundo or they wander away and engage in their own quiet (pretend) conversations. It is through this commentative and informative¹³ soliloquy that the

spectators can observe Segismundo's logic in motion. First, he ponders again the possibility of the similar nature of dreams and reality (2934-42). Then he realizes that perhaps it is best to seize every pleasure when it presents itself (such as the lovely Rosaura), before it vanishes like a dream (2958-66). Finally, he arrives at the conclusion: "¿quién por vanagloria humana / pierde una divina gloria?" (2970-71). The soliloquy becomes informative as Segismundo tells the spectators what he has decided to do:

Rosaura está sin honor;
más a un príncipe le toca
el dar honor que quitarle.
¡Vive Dios!, que de su honra
he de ser conquistador
antes que de mi corona.
(2986-91)

Orozco Díaz explains: "Segismundo se abstrae y se sume en la más profunda y angustiosa reflexión, en la que pasión y razón luchan ante la definitiva actitud, antes de lanzarse a la batalla a la cabeza de las tropas y gentes que le vitorean como futuro rey" (152).¹⁴ Here, the spectators learn the importance of thinking before rushing into action, in order to act in the best possible fashion. The example: Segismundo has carefully weighed his options, he informs himself (and the spectators) of his decision, and now he asserts himself and rushes off to restore Rosaura's honor, which leads directly to the

conclusion of the play. In his analysis of this soliloquy, Morón explains: "Entre gozar a Rosaura o salvar su honor, el príncipe dramatiza una lucha interior, pero no muestra sufrimiento ni auténtico titubeo. Fórmulas morales y lógicas deciden para él desde fuera. El único titubeo se da en el recuerdo y contraste de los dos extremos --pasión y ley-- entre los cuales se encuentra" (43). The battle on stage parallels Segismundo's interior battle, which the spectators have been privileged to witness through this final soliloquy. They have listened to every word, and even if they disagree with something he has said, they are basically forced into affirmation by their attendance, with some spectators even considering themselves Segismundo's accomplices, or at the very least, his confidants. It is hoped that they have learned alongside with Segismundo, who has developed the ability to reason with "verdadera libertad," as Lauer suggests: "O sea, todo es ahora cuestión de lógica. Si la libertad absoluta que tanto añoraba le causó volver a la prisión de su vida inicial, la represión de las pasiones le permitirá volver a nacer, ahora triunfante, en palacio" ("Monólogos de Segismundo," 544).

In *La vida es sueño*, the vast majority of soliloquies are at least partly commentative, and hence this is an important function of the soliloquy in this comedia. These soliloquial discourses offer a running commentary on the dramatic action to the spectators throughout the unfolding drama, from

which the audience can gain advice on how to behave in their own lives, which points to Calderón's casuistic intention. As in earlier plays, the soliloquies fulfill other functions as well, offering privileged information to the spectators and advancing the action of the play, but here the soliloquies themselves are more complex: they represent nearly every category of soliloquial discourse, often combining several variations within one speech. It is in this regard that one should note the greatest development of the use of the soliloquy in baroque drama. Segismundo delivers half of the soliloquies himself, and this is appropriate since he is the male protagonist and is grappling with philosophical problems (dreams vs. reality and free will vs. destiny, etc.). Through Segismundo's soliloquies one notes another new development of the soliloquy. He delivers the discourses under four different types of performance situations: completely alone; believing he is alone; surrounded by others who might be listening, but addressing himself only; and surrounded by other characters who simply cannot hear him. With dramatists such as Calderón, the soliloquy reached its pinnacle by serving the widest variety of communicative and dramatic functions, and it had become an increasingly complex device in and of itself. It is through the use of soliloquies that Segismundo communicates with the spectators, thereby allowing them to feel like active participants in the dramatic production should they so de-

sire, having served as a collective sounding board, then offering a silent affirmation by their mere presence. The taxonomical analysis of Segismundo's soliloquies clearly demonstrates that without the use of soliloquial discourse as dramatic device, the play would not be able to function so brilliantly on both the philosophical and communicative levels for the spectators. In their totality, the compendium of soliloquies in *La vida es sueño*, encompassing Segismundo's and all the characters' soliloquies together, form the veritable foundation of this comedia.

NOTES

¹ In *The Semiotics of Theatre and Drama*, Keir Elam refers to the dramatic devices as "conventionalized presentational devices" (90). These devices establish the actor-spectator alliance, which allows for greater communication between the two; they are delivered to an ideal or implied spectator. Elam suggests that they "appear to be cases of 'breaking frame', since the actor is required to step out of his role and acknowledge the presence of the public, but in practice they are licensed means of *confirming* the frame by pointing out the pure facticity of the representation" (90).

² Critics of the comedia specifically and world drama in general often discuss soliloquies under only two performance situations, either the character completely alone on stage while delivering a soliloquy (situation number one), or with the presence of other characters on stage during the speech (situations two, three, and four). It was through my analysis of Segismundo's soliloquies that I devised this system of four performance circumstances because simply stating that other characters are present during the speech does not fully identify

what is taking place while it is being delivered. Taxonomically separating the performance situations aids the critic in the classification and understanding of the soliloquies.

³ In the dramatic world, thinking aloud and speaking to oneself on the part of a character are two actions that are particularly appreciated by the spectators. Technically, they are the only people who are supposed to be able to hear the speaker of a soliloquy, and the information compiled from it may be crucial for the spectators' enhanced understanding and/or enjoyment of the performance.

⁴ As in Shakespearean theater, indeed all world theater, some drama scholars interchange the terms monologue and soliloquy fairly loosely. To complicate matters further in the baroque comedia, here in *La vida es sueño*, for example, Segismundo does have some monological soliloquies, which can technically be classified either way. I select "monological soliloquy" rather than "soliloquial monologue" if the discourse was clearly intended to be a soliloquy.

⁵ Regarding Basilio's soliloquies and monologues, see the articles by A. Robert Lauer.

⁶ The only categories not represented here are the double and triple soliloquies, which are the most complex variations. The double soliloquy begins as one character's private discourse, and then another character enters and delivers a soliloquy as well, which eventually produces an intertwined discourse that is a "pseudo-dialogue" unto itself, a secondary dialogue superimposed onto the primary dramatic dialogue. In a double (or triple) soliloquy, if the content of the two (or three) speeches actually matches up communicatively, then the two (or three) soliloquies are also classified as dialogical. Below, an example of a single dialogical soliloquy will be analyzed, according to dramatic theory proposed by Manfred Pfister. Double and triple soliloquies are categories that I have identified, and more detailed information is currently available in manuscript format.

⁷ The soliloquies of the second and third circumstances are automatically categorized as monological soliloquies because the other characters can definitely hear what Segismundo is saying, although his discourse is not necessarily intended for them.

⁸ Quotes are taken from José María García Martín's edition of *La vida es sueño*, Castalia, 1984.

⁹ Of course, the use of the second person can also be interpreted as Segismundo addressing himself. Here enters a gray area of semantic interpretation of Calderón's use of the second person. Expanding upon his own initial theory of extensional and intensional worlds (1977), John Lyons explains that interpretations of reference can be "either a straightforward **extensional** interpretation, in which it serves to identify a particular person... or an **intensional** interpretation, in which – to make the point rather crudely and perhaps tendentiously for the moment – what counts is not the actual person that the locutionary agent has in mind, but some concept that fits the descriptive content of the expression" (*Linguistic Semantics*, 301). Clearly, the interpretation is open, therefore intensional. Furthermore, when analyzing the deictic context of this portion of the soliloquy, Lyons's theory of pure and impure deixis serves well: it is clear that when Segismundo speaks in the first person that he is referring to himself (pure deixis). However, while Lyons asserts that the second person is always pure, in this instance, the question of who the "second person" actually is renders it an impure deixis. Additionally, in support of this question as to whom this "second person" is, Emile Benveniste explains that "'I' and 'you' are reversible: the one whom 'I' defines by 'you' thinks of himself as 'I' and can be inverted into 'I,' and 'I' becomes a 'you.'" (199). As convoluted as this argument can become, clearly this demonstrates the baroque nature of such a passage: what exactly did Calderón intend here? There are at least two viable answers: the "you" refers to either Segismundo himself or his father

Basilio, or possibly even the spectator. Under this third possibility, an active spectator would feel more like an accomplice to Basilio rather than to Segismundo, momentarily.

¹⁰ A commentative soliloquy is when a character delivers his or her own opinion regarding the action which just occurred, anything regarding the present circumstances, or something from the dramatic past. The character's perspective is usually biased, particularly if he or she is the father, mother, brother, sister, wife, husband or friend to another character. See Pfister, page 136, for more information about the commentative soliloquy.

¹¹ In comparing Segismundo's first soliloquy in the play with this one, Cueto Pérez suggests that this soliloquy "forma parte de la acción y del tiempo dramático y modifica las relaciones actanciales, mientras el primero (¡«Ay mísero de mí, ay infelicé!», Jornada I) funciona como suspensión o paréntesis argumental" (251).

¹² Regarding Lope's use of soliloquies as compared to Calderón's, Orozco Díaz asserts: "Aunque Lope gustara de ellos y fuese plenamente consciente en su experiencia teatral de la eficacia expresiva del recurso, sin embargo no los prodiga tanto ni hace del soliloquio pieza tan fundamental en la expresión y comunicación del conflicto íntimo dramático" (147).

¹³ Informative soliloquies simply give the spectators information regarding individual situations and occurrences in the play, or those that had developed "before" the dramatic action began. For additional details, see Pfister, pages 136-37.

¹⁴ Regarding both asides and soliloquies in many of Calderón's comedias, Orozco Díaz states: "En general todas sus obras maestras dentro de su más personal sentido de lo dramático y de lo teatral conceden una especial importancia a estos recursos expresivos de desbordamiento de la escena, sobre los espectadores. La razón está en que en general esas obras suponen una acción dramática que esencialmente reside en el conflicto íntimo del personaje consigo mismo, la lucha interior

que le plantea el angustioso razonar y dudar, en que el pensamiento y el sentimiento se agitan" (154).

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**COMEDIA SCHOLARSHIP AND
PERFORMANCE: *EL MUERTO DISIMULADO*
FROM THE ARCHIVE TO THE STAGE**

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I first read Angela de Azevedo's three *comedias* (*El muerto disimulado*, *La Margarita del Tajo que dió nombre á Santarem*, and *Dicha y desdicha del juego y devoción a la Virgen*) in 1993 at the Biblioteca Nacional in Madrid while comparing my transcription of María de Zayas's *comedia* with the original manuscript. I had become aware of Azevedo by searching through Cayetano de la Barrera's catalog of authors of "teatro antiguo español," so I had read that, a native of Lisbon, Azevedo "[m]ereció . . . , por su natural discreción y rara hermosura, especial aprecio de nuestra reina doña Isabel de Borbon" (4). Azevedo served the queen (the first wife of Philip IV) as a lady-in-waiting. I guessed that this patronage made possible Azevedo's publication success (all three plays survive as printed *sueltas*), while fine *comedias* by Ana Caro, Leonor de la Cueva y Silva, and María de Zayas remained in manuscript until the early twen-

tieth century. When I learned that Isabel de Borbón loved the theater as much as her husband did and organized performances at court, in which her ladies-in-waiting played all the roles, both female and male, I conjectured that perhaps the queen commissioned the writing and performance of Azevedo's three plays and perhaps Azevedo herself acted in some of these presentations (see Aubrun 45, 59-60). Despite her success at court, after the seventeenth century Azevedo's plays disappeared from *comedia* histories and were never again edited nor reprinted until 1997 when Teresa Soufas performed her labor of love in the publication of her anthology *Women's Acts: Plays by Women Dramatists*. Azevedo eventually married a nobleman in Madrid and they had a daughter. When the husband died, the widow took her daughter to live in a Benedictine convent. Azevedo became a nun and died in the convent. I learned these details about Azevedo and made my conjectures about her life in the way all scholars do—by searching and studying in libraries and other archives.

As soon as the librarian at the Biblioteca Nacional brought *El muerto disimulado* to my desk, I fell in love with the theatricality of a script that begins with a father, dagger in hand, chasing his daughter around the stage because she refuses to marry and I began to imagine what the play would look like in performance. I taught the written text *El muerto* with great enthusiasm in a Golden Age

women writers seminar at the University of New Mexico in Fall 1993, and in February 1994 I presented a paper on the limits of *comedia* convention and *El muerto* at the Louisiana Conference on Hispanic Languages and Literatures. My scholarship (and that of all other critics that followed Soufas's publication of the play) was at best informed by our imagined stagings of *El muerto*.¹ Then ten years after my conference presentation, our students at Brigham Young University decided to bring *El muerto* back to life February 25-March 20, 2004—from the archive to the stage.² Student director Jason Yancey conceived the production in the style of *commedia dell'arte* and using techniques suggested by Dario Fo in rehearsals, he taught the actors to act and project their characterization effectively while wearing masks.³ They presented the play for audiences in Utah, Idaho, Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas at public and private schools, colleges and universities.⁴ Their performance text grew up outside the boundaries of the library (and the classroom and conference rooms) and questioned the limits of my—and all other—scholarly interpretations by offering a radically different textual space. Because most playwrights create their dramatic texts for the stage rather than the individual reader, performance texts enhance the critical enterprise. My literary criticism has benefited from my students' staged readings of *El muerto*.⁵

El muerto deals in many of the standard conventions associated with *comedias de capa y espada*, including overbearing fathers and brothers, cross-dressing, sword-fights, and women jilted by their lovers. Azevedo pushes these conventions to their limits, foregrounding passive female roles in unusual ways and taking the roles of the *mujeres varoniles* to unusual extremes. In the written text, two male characters, don Rodrigo de Aguilar and don Alvaro de Gamboa, try to control the social and sexual relationships of their female family members. Fathers and brothers in the *comedia* almost always assume this role, because maintaining their family honor always has more to do with maintaining a daughter's or a sister's virginity, than with one's own noble or dishonorable actions. But in *El muerto*, Rodrigo and Alvaro go to excessive lengths to control the women in their families.

Don Rodrigo is the father who pursues Jacinta with a threatening dagger as the play opens. Other female characters in the *comedia* have suffered much worse persecution, especially when their husbands suspect them of adultery, but that persecution usually comes at the end of the play rather than at the beginning. Wanting to appear reasonable, Rodrigo allows Jacinta to choose a husband:

Yo esposo no quiero darte
de mi mano, que en la tuya
dejo en causa tanto suya
la elección para casarte. (105-08)

He does not care whom she marries, but insists Jacinta must marry or die: "o Jacinta ha de casar / o Jacinta ha de morir" (143-44). Soufas views Rodrigo's "largesse" as "a sort of bribe" that he offers Jacinta followed by his "ultimatum" (126), while Stoll claims that Rodrigo represents "[s]ocietal injustices toward women" (160). Múzquiz-Guerreiro's reading of Rodrigo casts him in a somewhat weaker light. He is "struggling to maintain his authority" and he is forced to "negotiate his position" (148-49).

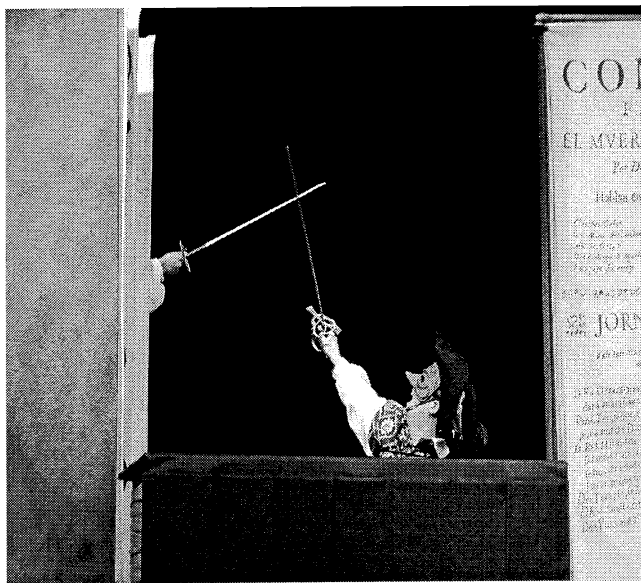
Our students' performance text recognized the exaggerated nature of Rodrigo's complaints and behavior, and it also recognized the potential humor that I had missed in that exaggerated violence. The students created over-sized props as just one of their means of signaling Azevedo's larger-than-life representation of *comedia* conventions. With his giant dagger, Rodrigo (played by David Lindes) became ridiculous (and thereby less threatening) in his interactions with Jacinta (Jennifer Ramírez).⁶



Anna-Lisa Halling's deadpan portrayal of Dorotea, Jacinta's maid, further underscored Rodrigo's silliness. Azevedo's initial stage direction instructs, "*(Sale Jacinta, como huyendo de don Rodrigo, que viene con una daga en la mano, y Dorotea, teniéndole)*" (91). Halling entered the scene clutching the back of Rodrigo's jacket with two or three fingers, and in an almost bored tone of voice recommended, "Ten, señor, el brazo fuerte / por amor de Dios" (3-4). Her lack of physical and verbal enthusiasm suggested that perhaps Rodrigo had thrown similar temper tantrums in the past, but whatever the case,

his current behavior required very little serious response.

In the printed play, Don Alvaro seems equally overzealous in his desire to control the actions of his sister, doña Beatriz.⁷ We first see don Alvaro dueling with his cousin Alberto. The performance text reduced the duel, Alberto and Beatriz to a short scene, in which Alvaro swordfights with an arm from off stage.



My 1994 critical reading had focused on the effects of Alvaro's behavior on his sister's identity:

Azevedo's exaggeration of the conventional relationships between fathers and daughters, brothers and sisters makes it clear that these female characters . . . must exist in the frustrating circumstance of having little control over the whims of the fathers and brothers that directly affect their lives (5).

Student actor Matt Steen's performance suggested consistent motivations for all of Alvaro's unreasonable actions. Even in the scene in which Alvaro describes his murder of Clarindo, Steen portrayed a personality that I did not imagine as I read the play. Steen's Alvaro lisped, stammered, and gestured in an exaggerated way, sometimes repeating a movement—like the flick of a sword—several times in rapid succession. Because of Steen's wild gesturing, Alvaro's admission that he killed Clarindo with "dos fuertes puñaladas" became humorous, rather than threatening. Controlling and domineering, Alvaro also suffers because of his insecurities over his comic inability to control and dominate. Once again, the performance text underscored the comic possibilities inherent in a character's very threatening and violent behavior.

In response to male overbearing behavior, some women in the *comedia* cross-dress. Melveena McKendrick asserts that the "commonest and most straightforward situation" of the female characters she calls "avengers" is that of a woman who "vows vengeance on the man who has abandoned her"

(262). In *El muerto*, however, Azevedo turns the convention around on itself. Lisarda dresses as Lisardo, not to go after a lover, but to take on the "traditionally masculine responsibility" of avenging her brother Clarindo's murder (Múzquiz-Guerreiro 154). The complete reversal comes when the "avenger" falls in love with the "murderer" Alvaro. My reading of the written text imagined a strong *mujer varonil*: "Not the victim of male indiscretion, this *mujer vestida de hombre* wears male clothing in order to act in a male world and to make the assassin . . . her victim" (6). Following *comedia* convention, Lisarda first appears on stage in male clothing and accompanied by her *gracioso*, Papagayo. She explains to Papagayo (and through him the audience) why she must dress as a man to avenge her family's honor. Laura Pratt, who played Lisarda, began her portrayal with a great deal of masculine bravado. Using the large books that formed the set of the play, Lisarda insisted that she has transformed into Lisardo. Lisarda noticed the book opened to the title page of *El muerto disimulado*. She found her name on the list of characters, pulled out a strip of fabric with the name Lisardo painted on it, and using it like a refrigerator magnet, covered her own name with it. She then strutted slowly across the stage, imitating a masculine swagger, and made an effort to spit like a man when she reached stage right.



Papagayo (Emiliano Ferreira) mocked her strut, imitating her swaggering steps and reciting his hilarious lines that question the limits of gender:

pues entre los papagayos
hay papagayas también,
y en las golondrinas damos
con golondrinos . . .
lo mismo en ti estoy pensando
que aunque mi voz te apellide
Lisarda, ¿quién te ha quitado
el ser Lisardo . . . ? (723-37)⁸

Despite Papagayo's mocking, Lisarda, determined to be Lisardo, continued to play the role with masculine strength.

Azevedo's Lisarda not only dons new clothes in the playscript, she also takes up a sword and knows

how to use it. Soufas states that Lisarda is "depicted as just as capable of undertaking [her] quest as her brother" (125) and Gascón says she "proves herself as skilled with a sword as any of the male characters" (130). In fact, Lisarda's skills with the sword are actually superior to those of the male characters in the play. She interrupts a duel, causing Alvaro to turn on her: "Pues que me habéis estorbado / mi venganza, contra vos / se han de volver mis enfados" (802-04). Lisarda responds to his challenge: "Sinrazón es, que mi acero / sabrá rebatir" (805-06). They fight and Lisarda knocks the sword from don Alvaro's hand. Lisarda can wear a man's clothes and deprive her enemy of the symbol of his manhood or "power" (Músquiz-Guerreiro 155). Alvaro admits his opponent has "Raro / valor!" (814-15). In regard to this scene, Soufas observes that Lisarda "enacts a reversal of gender roles by interrupting the fight, and upon Alberto's escape, defeating Alvaro. . . . what men usually do in *capa y espada* altercations, her female character also accomplishes" (128). Once again, Azevedo pushes the boundaries of *comedia* conventions.

The performance text shifted the emphasis from Lisarda's talents to Alvaro's lack of ability. Lisarda had but to draw her sword and hold it up, when Alvaro became frightened by it, began waving his sword wildly about in the air, and almost defeated himself. When he dropped his sword, he ran across stage and hid behind a prop. From that posi-

tion his compliment to Lisarda, “Raro valor,” again registered as comic. Lisarda offers to continue the duel, but in a moment that Músquiz-Guerreiro recognizes in the written text as “cowardice,” Alvaro decides he admires Lisarda/o and wants to become friends (155). Alvaro’s cowardice connects with his desire to control, and Steen’s performance of that tension rendered the possibilities and implications of the written text in a natural, organic way.

Our students’ interpretation diverged most sharply from my reading when their Lisarda tires of playing Lisardo. Azevedo’s Lisarda/o states:

Accidentes tan notables,
sucesos tan peregrinos
como los que me suceden
¿a quién habrán sucedido?
¡Que venga yo tras mi agravio,
y topando a mi enemigo,
me embargue el amor que tome
satisfacción del delito! . . .
¿Viéronse lances más raros?
¿En qué comedia se han visto
más extrañas novedades
ni enredos más excesivos? (2842-65)

Pratt used these self-conscious lines to allow Lisarda to complain about the complications of cross-dressing. Her Lisarda grew tired of pretending to be a man.



Throughout the performance, the cast creatively used asides in English to draw the non-Spanish speaking members of their audience into the play. In this scene, Pratt sometimes whimpered, “I have to wear a sword!” In my readings of the written text, the development in the plot of *El muerto* that has always bothered me the most occurs when strong and capable Lisarda falls in love with manipulative, murderous Alvaro.⁹ The performance text resolved this discomfort by reading both Lisarda and Alvaro as flawed, but not entirely unattractive in their weakness. This performance created consistent characterizations for Lisarda and Alvaro. They are not the characterizations that I want to find in the play as a feminist literary critic, but they make more sense than my reading and they worked well on stage.

Lisarda is not the only cross-dresser in the play; her brother Clarindo also cross-dresses, and through him, Azevedo stretches the convention even further beyond its usual limits. Men who dress as women do not appear nearly as frequently as women who dress as men in the *comedia*. And cross-dressing men are commoners, usually *graciosos*: Sor Juana's Castaño, for example, from *Los empeños de una casa*.¹⁰ Azevedo's Clarindo, on the other hand, belongs to the nobility. As Soufas observes, "Clarindo's disguise is a particularly subversive component, since Spanish dramaturgy was generally opposed to cross-dressed males. Azevedo challenges this caveat by presenting a nobleman dressed as a woman" (132). Músquiz-Guerreiro sees cross-dressed Clarindo as "an aberration of the conventional *mujer varonil* in Spanish dramaturgy" (159).¹¹ Clarindo becomes Clara (rather than Clarinda) and thus linguistically marks through the truncation of his name his own castration. Just as many female cross-dressers suggest that they have actually become men when they don their male clothing, Clarindo begins to work as a woman—at least as male-rendered version of woman—in women's spaces when he pulls on his skirts. This nobleman-cum-woman goes on to play with his identity and stretch *comedia* conventions even further.

In a remarkable inversion, Azevedo uses Clarindo dressed as Clara to play with the woman

jilted by her lover convention.¹² While “Clara” sells gloves, stockings, fans, ribbons, and other small items in Jacinta’s house, “she” reveals her sad tale:

Cierto galán de esta corte,
por amistad que tenía
con mi padre, tuvo entrada
(confianza mal permitida)
en su casa, y tantas veces
me habló que la cortesía
se hizo amor, que estas dos cosas
siempre fueron muy vecinas.
Con promesa al fin de esposo
(¡o promesa fementida!)
me robó amante la joya
que en el mundo más se estima. (1775-87)

Female characters tell this same story many times in the *comedia*, but male playwrights place the story in the mouth of the cross-dressed woman—Lisarda, not in that of her brother. In the jilted woman’s tale, a lover always woos a woman with promises of marriage, and, seduced by the promise, the woman always relinquishes her most precious jewel, her chastity. Afterwards, the lover, no longer impressed by what he already possesses, disappears. When the woman realizes her lover will not return, she must go in search of him because “[i]n the seventeenth century the jilted woman was an unmarketable commodity” (McKendrick 263). Clarindo and all

the other “female” characters in both the written and the performance texts recognize this harsh reality.

Aaron de Jesús who played Clarindo developed the comic possibilities of a jilted woman portrayed by a man to their fullest.¹³



Outfitted by student costume designer Melissa Mills in an outrageous flamenco dress, de Jesús pulled his wares out of his hat, from his basket, out from under the ruffles on his skirt, and at one point even off his

leg. He played out on stage the spectacle of a male-rendered version of "woman," a version not explicitly available to readers of Azevedo's written text. In performance, Clarindo often got carried away in his own storytelling, sometimes having to think fast to fill in gaps between self-propagating fictions and reality. De Jesús created a Clarindo-dressed-as-Clara who inspired sympathy in Jacinta and her servant. The women accepted him into their confidence and included him in their girl-talk. This conversation among female characters suggests the possibility of the women working together—collaboration—in support of Clara's needs. The other women listen carefully, respond with suggestions, and in a later conversation Jacinta and Clara discuss ways to resolve their problems at the same time.

Clarindo's cross-dressing makes possible their conversations and the woman-centered resolution of the play. Soufas sees "Clarindo's disguise . . . [as] merely a convenience that affords him both the opportunity to observe and ensnare his attacker Alvaro and to spy on his beloved Jacinta in order to test her promise to love only him, be he dead or alive" (126). Múzquiz-Guerreiro suggests that Clarindo "unwittingly participates in the ruse for Don Alvaro's downfall" and that his "jealousy and insecurities . . . drive him to ridiculous extremes" (160). If these "extremes" are his cross-dressing and playing of various female roles, then they may appear

“ridiculous” because good comic theater is often ridiculous. However, the cross-dressing does not make Clarindo the object of ridicule; rather, it empowers him to carry out his plans. In both the written and the performance text, Clarindo invents Clara and the story of Clara’s unfaithful lover with a definite purpose, to get into Jacinta’s house and to name don Alvaro as the guilty lover who jilted him in order to impede any progress Alvaro might have made in his efforts to woo Jacinta. Dressed as Clara, Clarindo gives the name “Urbano de Lago Amado,” an anagram, which Jacinta correctly deciphers as Don Alvaro de Gamboa (3556-564). His plan works and in a soliloquy he describes his success:

Ya la celosa invención
e industriosa estratagema
que hallé para de Jacinta
entrar en la casa mesma
he visto también lograda,
que a mí Jacinta me ruega
a que me quede en su casa, . . .
que como ha considerado
por las inculcas y señas
que le di de aquel galan
que he dicho me supusiera
el nombre para engañarme, . . .
que es don Alvaro . . . (2075-94)

Clarindo realizes that if Clara knows Alvaro’s correct name, she should have had an easier time finding him, so he describes Alvaro, giving Jacinta the

necessary "inculcas y señas" so that she can guess that she and Clara share the same enemy.

Because the story and its circumstances are fictional and the audience knows this (de Jesús recited Clara's story as if invented in the moment to cover up for some part of his already complicated account), Clarindo's use of the jilted woman convention to further his own ends foregrounds its very conventionality. Critics have recognized that Clarindo's cross-dressing and storytelling allow him access to women's space, but they have various interpretations of what that access means. Soufas sees it as "a violation of sorts" (133). Maroto Camino contrasts Lisarda's movement toward "public spaces," "adventure," and "the maculine" with Clarindo's movement toward "the domain of the feminine and of the domestic," suggesting that women's clothing weakens his position by moving away from the center of power and toward the marginalized women's space (317). Músquiz-Guerreiro sees Clarindo/Clara as "[j]ealous and desperate" and a nobleman reduced to "'deviant' standing" (157, 59). She argues that Azevedo has Clarindo/Clara cross a multiplicity of "gender, economic, and ethnic lines in order to demonstrate how these 'social spaces' serve as enclosures which limit the role of women in society" (159). My critical reading and the performance text shift the emphasis of these interpretations to recognize the ways in which Clarindo/Clara's entrance into women's space em-

powers, rather than limits, him.¹⁴ By telling the other women characters the story of Alvaro's supposed insinuation into Clara's life, Clarindo does not so much violate women's space as penetrate masculine space, that is, Alvaro's world.¹⁵

In the *comedia*, masculine responses to conflicts frequently involve deception, social and economic competition, and dueling. However, dressed as a woman and speaking from an enclosed women's space, Clarindo can use feminine strategies—conversation, collaboration, and forgiveness—to resolve conflicts and bring the play to its happy ending. Indeed, the moment in which Clarindo, having returned to his masculine dress and behavior, draws his sword is the only moment in the final scene in which the play's happy outcome comes under threat. Lisarda steps in to defend Alvaro and after Clarindo listens to his sister's story of her love for his enemy, Clarindo chooses to forgive and tells Alvaro:

si amor así lo quiere,
quiero constante mostraros
que soy para vos amigo
y vos para mí cuñado. (3750-753)

The stories about love for Alvaro by both women (Clara's false testimony and Lisarda's true change of heart) affect the course of the play's story and help in the resolution of the play's *enredos*. Thus, rather than having created a female character (Clara

or *Lisarda*) as object, Azevedo has created a male character (Clarindo) who impersonates a female character in order to act as subject. The *mujer vestida de hombre* convention admits again and again in *comedia* after *comedia* that in a skirt, women are denied access to power that they handle very well while wearing pants.¹⁶ Azevedo's Clarindo-as-Clara reveals something else—the power available in the women's marginal enclosed world from which men in pants are excluded. Azevedo included this meaning in her written text and audiences could read it in the performance texts. On stage Clarindo in Clara's clothes became the central focus and most powerful force in every scene in which he/she appeared. Rodrigo and Alvaro muddled through their attempts to control throughout the play, Jacinta had to work from within her confined space to try to resolve her problems, Lisarda's strength became thwarted by her own conflicting desires, and Papagayo (who in the production carried a rubber chicken) allowed his fears and superstitions to guide his reactions. Clarindo-as-Clara became the only sign on stage that could move through, affect, and work with power in all the gendered spaces.

The Brigham Young University 2004 staging of *El muerto disimulado* was both a reading of the written text and a text to be read. When I opened the original printed version of *El muerto* in the Biblioteca Nacional in 1993, I held a treasure in my hands. The written text signifies through its lan-

guage and its unconventional use of conventions. Each time our students from Brigham Young University created a performance text of *El muerto*, they endowed it with new rich meanings. My critical reading of the text opened it to and interpreted it for my listeners and students who had not previously heard of Azevedo or her plays. Our students' readings in the performance text opened and interpreted the play for our audiences in Utah, Idaho, Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas, and revealed new possibilities for interpretation to me as literary critic. Angela de Azevedo, like other *comedia* authors, wrote *El muerto disimulado* for audiences in performance spaces, not for literary critics alone in their archives. If any of my conjectures from the archives have validity, then perhaps Azevedo's intended performance space—in the palace before the queen with all the roles played by *damas*—looked something like the women's space in which Clarindo-as-Clara tells his/her stories to other women during the play. Then, in one more meaningful crossing of gender lines, Azevedo herself or one of the other ladies-in-waiting would have played Clarindo playing Clara for the queen and other women, with the women in the palace all collaborating in the creation of a women's theatrical space.

NOTES

¹ After Soufas published *Women's Acts*, wonderful critical articles began to appear on Azevedo's plays, including Teresa Soufas's chapters in her *Dramas of Distinction*, Anita Stoll's "‘Tierra en medio’: Liminalities in Angela de Azevedo's *El muerto disimulado*," Mercedes Maroto Camino's "Transvestism, Translation and Transgression," Christopher Gascón's "Female and Male Mediation in the Plays of Angela de Azevedo," and Darlene Múzquiz-Guerreiro's "Symbolic Inversions in Angela de Azevedo's *El muerto disimulado*."

² The BYU Spanish Golden Age Theater Production of *El muerto disimulado* formed part of a mentoring project supported by BYU's Office of Research and Creative Activities and Spain's Ministry of Culture. *El muerto* was the third full-length *comedia* that Dale J. Pratt and I mentored.

³ See especially Fo's "Second Day" (56-88). When I asked him about his use of Dario Fo's work, Yancey explained, "I like to think of classical theater as a game with specific and sometimes new rules to be followed. Fo's book outlined what those rules were for us in a clear, alive and very applicable way that other books, which treated *commedia dell'arte* as a dead performance style from ages gone by, treated as an historical artifact."

⁴ The BYU Spanish Golden Age Theater mentoring project endeavors to make Golden Age Theater accessible to as wide an audience as possible through performances and school outreach programs (service learning). The intended audience of the productions very seldom includes professors of the *comedia*. Even though they do extensive research and write about various aspects of their performances, the student actors unabashedly care more about appealing to their audience members than about justifying any particular scholarly reading of the play.

⁵ Most Golden Age theater specialists were trained as literary critics, rather than performance critics. *Comedia* perform-

ances—even student productions—can help us get beyond the written text to a physical theatrical space where a performance text can exist.

⁶ Some *comedia* specialists read even comic *comedias* as highly serious. Spanish Golden Age theater is, rather, highly conventional. Created before the fourth walls and method acting existed in the theater, *comedia* performances formed part of Golden Age popular culture and appealed through the tragic, the spectacular, and the comic to all levels of Spanish society, particularly Lope's *vulgo*.

⁷ Múzquiz-Guerreiro points out that Jacinta's description of Alvaro predisposes the spectator to dislike him: "warning the audience and reader that the antagonist is arrogant, jealous, vindictive, and capable of physical violence" (151). She goes on to describe him in very threatening terms, claiming that throughout the play, Alvaro "demonstrates his potential for violence and manipulation in order to fulfill his self-centered agenda to obtain the object of his desire" and all his "actions are motivated by his lust for Jacinta and prove that he is capable of murder" (160).

⁸ Soufas calls this questioning in Papagayo's speech an "insistence upon the unstable discursive formation of men and women" (132).

⁹ Stoll refers to Lisarda as a "divided self" (160), but Múzquiz-Guerreiro resolves the conflict by suggesting that Lisarda chooses her own happiness over family interests: "When having to choose between a revenge that does not correspond to her directly and her personal happiness, Lisarda chooses the latter. This character then continues her ruse, but does so now to obtain the object of her desire" (156).

¹⁰ See Canavaggio.

¹¹ Maroto Camino asserts that "hierarchies are . . . undermined by the adoption of female clothing by an upper-class male in a serious context" (321). While I agree that hierarchies are un-

dermined, I believe the context in the play is comic rather than serious.

¹² Soufas believes that “Azevedo complicates the blurring of genders even further by assigning to one of her male protagonists the abandoned woman’s speech of complaint” (134), and goes on to assert that “[t]hrough Clarindo, the playwright scrutinizes in a new way the woman’s plight, assigning to a male figure the abandoned woman’s complaints against an irresponsible male lover” (138).

¹³ The student actors came from many different ethnic, linguistic, and theatrical backgrounds. De Jesús, a Puerto-Rican theater major (now an Equity actor), delivered the strongest performance. Laura Pratt, who grew up in Chile, Mexico and Spain, and who majored in theater education, also stood out. Other actors were from Argentina, Colombia, Guatemala, and the United States; some majored in Spanish, Pre-Law, and Community Health. All were fluent Spanish speakers and worked hard, learned their lines, and developed their characterizations. Dale Pratt and I mentored the production with critical eyes, making positive and tactful comments, and suggestions about students’ performances.

¹⁴ Whereas some feminisms call for the erasure of sexual differences; in my reading, *El muerto disimulado* celebrates those differences.

¹⁵ I am grateful to Dale Pratt for sharing this and many other insights.

¹⁶ This holds true in male-authored *comedias*, as well as in plays penned by women. However, female cross-dressers created by women (Ana Caro’s Leonor/Leonardo, for example) tend to outperform both male characters and male-authored female cross-dressers. Soufas concludes her discussion of *El muerto disimulado* by focusing on the “strategy of the cross-dressed woman,” stating that “masculine political identity carries privileges which feminine identity does not” (140). Maroto Camino affirms, Lisarda’s “transvestism” helps her “to

gain access to a geographical location to which, as a woman, she would not be admitted [and] allows her to control her movements" (317). According to Múzquiz-Guerreiro, Lisarda's masculine dress "empowers her to negotiate at the highest levels of the social hierarchy" (154). Additionally, Azevedo's play shows the power inherent in male cross-dressing; feminine "identity carries privileges" that masculine identity does not and Clarindo gains "access to geographical" locations from which, as a man, he would be excluded.

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**EN BUSCA DE UN TEATRO
COMPROMETIDO: LA *ENTRETENIDA*
DE MIGUEL DE CERVANTES BAJO EL
NUEVO PRISMA DE LA CNTC**

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Según Paolo Grassi, uno de los codirectores del Piccolo Teatro de Milano, “una compañía tiene que definir un repertorio, y un repertorio se define por las obras que monta y/o por las que, pudiendo montar no monta”.¹ Tomando como punto de partida este proceso de calculada filtración dramática y escénica, Eduardo Vasco, actual director de la Compañía nacional de teatro clásico (CNTC), propone una revalorización de los clásicos españoles a través de selecciones y adaptaciones arriesgadas respecto a su puesta en escena y a sus reminiscencias ideológicas. Ejemplo de ello fue el estreno de *La entretenida* de Miguel de Cervantes el pasado 2 de febrero del 2005 por la CNTC, representada como primicia profesional con motivo de la conmemoración del cuarto centenario de la edición de la primera parte del *Quijote*. Una apuesta dramática y cultural que, en un año saturado de montajes del *Quijote*,² contri-

buye a matizar el repertorio del teatro nacional español como atrevido e innovador, capaz de re-visitar y proyectar vitalmente una de las comedias cervantinas *nunca representadas* alejándola de una contemplación museística conmemorativa.

Fecha entre 1613-1614, *La entretenida*, una obra atípica dentro del panorama dramático del Siglo de Oro, y del propio repertorio cervantino, fue una de las últimas comedias surgida de la pluma de Cervantes con intención de parodiar el género de capa y espada y, a su vez, dotar a los criados de una independencia y libertad inconcebible en la Comedia nueva.³ La trama la constituyen tres intrigas: dos de ellas paralelas, unidas por el denominador común de los personajes acomodados, y una tercera independiente y eje fundamental de la obra protagonizada por los más humildes. Las dos primeras líneas argumentales narran el enredo protagonizado por don Antonio y don Ambrosio, rivales por el amor de Marcela Osorio. Esta última, personaje sin presencia física en la obra, pero responsable de crear una confusión con su nombre al dar lugar a sospechas de un amor incestuoso entre hermanos. La trama paralela se construye en torno a otros dos galanes, Cardenio y Silvestre, los cuales se disputan a Marcela de Almendárez, hermana de don Antonio y prima de Silvestre. Finalmente, el tercer argumento gira en torno a las trazas de los lacayos, llamados Ocaña y Torrente, y del paje Quiñones; todos ellos

sufridos competidores por el amor de la fregona Cristina.

A primera vista, no cabe duda que el asunto de *La entretenida* tiene ecos patentes de las comedias urbanas y de enredo del Siglo de Oro. Sin embargo, un análisis más detenido pone en evidencia que se trata de “un ejercicio de estilo de fina inteligencia transgresora entre la norma vigente en los escenarios y la propia poética del autor”.⁴ Esa disidencia innata le permite a la comedia asimilar una refundición anacrónica capaz de establecer un diálogo con un público coetáneo a través de tres ejes que moldean de manera radical la adaptación que aquí nos ocupa: Un reajuste lingüístico en base a una modernización textual, una refundición del contexto histórico en los años sesenta, y una estética Pop que funciona como ambientación cultural a modo de referente iconográfico y de llamativo telón de fondo.

La versión textual de la CNTC corre a cargo de Yolanda Pallín, quien partiendo de la premisa de que toda acción en esta comedia no está limitada al diálogo, opta por la eliminación de algunos versos y estrofas en base a unos juicios de reiteración y ritmo.⁵ En consecuencia de esto, el texto original de cinco jornadas queda reducido a tres, con una duración de una hora cuarenta y cinco minutos sin interrupción. A esto contribuyen las supresiones de los sonetos de don Antonio, personaje acomodado, a favor de otros de mayor interés retórico y formal,

expresados por personajes humildes, verdaderos protagonistas de esta comedia. Uno de los sonetos, conscientemente conservados, es el de Torrente, truncado al final de cada una de sus estrofas e infiltrado de manera original por las ranuras de las distintas conversaciones banales mantenidas simultáneamente por otros personajes:

TORRENTE Pluguiera a Dios que nunca aquí viniera;
o, ya que vine aquí, que nunca amara;
o, ya que amé, que amor se me mostrara,
de acero no, sino de blanda cera...
(1033-1036)

[CARDENIO] [redondilla]

[OCAÑA] [aparte]
...O que de aquesta fregonil guerrera,
de los dos soles de su hermosa cara,
no tan agudas flechas me arrojara,
o menos linda y más humana fuera
[1041-1044).

[MARCELA] [redondilla]

[CARDENIO] [redondilla]
Estas sí son borrascas no fingidas,
de quien no espero verdadera calma,
sino naufragios de más duro aprieto
(1049-1051).

[CARDENIO] [redondilla]

¡Oh tú, reparador de nuestras vidas!
Amor, cura las ansias de mi alma,
que no pueden caber en un soneto!
(1056-1058)

Además de lo insólito de su emisión, el contenido de dicha estrofa poética resulta ser un sutil ataque,

por partida doble, de la preceptiva del *Arte nuevo* de Lope de Vega. Por un lado, critica la rigidez de la polimetría, la cual resulta insuficiente para expresar la pasión de un amor recién descubierto: “Amor, cura las ansias de mi alma, / que *no pueden caber en un soneto!*” (1057-1058, énfasis mío). Por otro, parodia implícitamente la inverosimilitud de una pasión nacida súbitamente del flechazo amoroso, este último, ingrediente indispensable y aclamado en las comedias de enredo de la época.

El segundo soneto cuidadosamente mantenido es el de Ocaña, también pretendiente de Cristina y rival de Torrente. La originalidad de dicha estrofa se debe, esta vez, al hecho de recrear “un remedo de jerga apocopada, rítmica y llena de vitalidad”⁶ debido a la métrica de pie quebrado que el actor Joaquín Notario supo expresar con maestría, utilizando estos cortes en provecho de un acento castizo, propio del típico chulo madrileño de verbena:

OCAÑA Que de un *mecá*- la fuerza poderó-,
 hecha a machamartí- con el trabá-,
 de una fregó- le rinda el estropá-,
 es de los cie- no vista maldició-.
 Amor el ar- en sus pulgares to-,
 sacó una fle- de su pulí- carcá-,
 encaró al co-, y diome una flechá,
 Que el alma to- y el corazón me do-.
 Así rendí-, forzado estoy a cre-
 Cualquier mentí- de aquesta helada pu-
 Que blandamen- me satisface y hie-.

¡Oh de Cupí- la antigua fuerza y du-,
cuánto en el ros- de una fregona pue-,
y más si la *gachí* de muestra cru-¡
(1641-1654, énfasis mío)

Además de la forma inusual de dicho soneto es obvia la modernización del léxico empleado, lo que asegura una mejor comprensión del texto por el espectador coetáneo. Estrechamente ligado a esta voluntad de actualización del mensaje, cabe destacar el desplazamiento semántico de una palabra desaparecida en el lenguaje coloquial actual. Los ejemplos de este tipo son múltiples a lo largo de la adaptación, desde el soneto de Ocaña mencionado anteriormente, hasta los oficios de los personajes humildes cuyo significado, literal y figurado, es crucial mantener fiel para preservar el mensaje original de la obra, como reiteró Helena Pimienta en su momento:⁷

Cuando nos preguntamos Yolanda [Pallín] y yo cómo hacer llegar al público de hoy este mensaje que entendimos que Cervantes tenía, nos planteamos elegir una analogía, porque si no, el tratamiento de los criados, de los humildes [...] iba a ser muy lejano, como lejanos se ven los oficios de lacayo o caballerizo...todo eso es literatura. Y pensamos que era vital elegir oficios que el público reconozca como del siglo XX [...].⁸

Irónicamente, alterar el texto original cervantino resulta en estas circunstancias un acto de mayor lealtad dramática que mantenerlo intacto, ya que el espectador contemporáneo, aunque tiene la capacidad de reconocer una palabra como “lacayo”, la pérdida de significado de dicho vocablo resulta inevitable; y por lo tanto, su funcionamiento teatral será menos efectiva hoy en día que la palabra “mecánico”.⁹ No obstante, uno de los requisitos que implica el desplazamiento semántico es la tramitación de un seguimiento textual y escénico durante el resto de la obra, capaz de justificar contextualmente cada una de las transmutaciones con respecto a las profesiones. La caracterización física de Ocaña como mecánico ayuda a profundizar en este anacronismo profesional, como también contribuye uno de los parlamentos que considero más logrados de la versión textual propuesta por la CNTC:¹⁰

OCAÑA

Quiero

poner aceite, señor,
pero *el suministrador*
no lo da, si no hay dinero.
Débense cuatro bujías
y *el radiador*; mira, pues,
si andarán aquellos pies,
siendo tus manos tan frías
(507-513, énfasis mío).

El campo semántico del automóvil, concretamente del Seiscientos en esta producción, substituye la

jerga del oficio original del herrador en el texto cervantino:

OCAÑA

Quiero

*herrar el bayo, señor,
y no acierta el herrador
a herrarle si no hay dinero.
Débense cuatro herraduras
y un brebajo; mira, pues,
si andarán aquellos pies,
siendo tus manos tan duras
(585-592, énfasis mío).*

Esta asimilación entre ambos oficios sigue reproduciéndose a lo largo de toda la obra, como lo demuestran palabras como “garaje”, “jardín”, “llanta” y “tuberías” que equivalen en la versión original a “caballeriza”, “harnero”, “pesebre”, “paja” y “cebada”.¹¹ Pero, además del oficio de “mecánico”, el resto de las ocupaciones que desempeñan los personajes humildes de la versión original han sido asimiladas por otros más sugerentes para el espectador actual. Quiñones, por ejemplo, pasa de ser paje de los Almendárez en el texto de Cervantes, a mayordomo en la versión que aquí nos ocupa. Muñoz, escudero de Marcela en el texto original, ejerce de chófer de la familia Almendárez. Cardenio y Torrente, presentados como estudiante y criado capigorrón por su autor, pasan a encarnar a un aprendiz de torero y a su mejor amigo y hombre de negocios, respectivamente.

Contrariamente, los oficios de las dos criadas, Cristina y Dorotea se muestran fieles a la versión original, aunque en el caso de la primera, su caracterización resulta ser la pieza angular de la estética del conjunto de la adaptación. En efecto, el protagonismo de Cristina es uno de los elementos que mejor consolida la versión de la CNTC desde el comienzo de la obra. Nada más subirse el telón, ante un trasfondo púrpura en el que se aperciben las siluetas de los edificios más emblemáticos de Madrid, vemos a una atractiva Cristina, de cabello rubio platino y seductor uniforme de sirvienta, pasar una aspiradora eléctrica naranja chillón. Una vez concluido su trabajo de limpieza doméstica, y en la más cadenciosa mímica, enciende un cigarrillo y fuma unas caladas cruzada de piernas en un sillón colocado en medio del escenario; todo ello, en un ambiente de soporífera ensoñación. Este insinuante ‘solo dramático’ funciona a modo de sugerente preludio de la comedia, y anticipa el protagonismo sensual de Cristina a lo largo del montaje. Cristina no es una criada más, como Dorotea, sino una sobreviviente encarnada en la típica chica yéyé de los sesenta con un objetivo firme: encontrar a un amante que la saque de su situación. Su estética se superpone a la del resto de los demás personajes a través de modelos atrevidos, colores chillones y materiales textiles muy de moda en la época, como el nylon, el poliéster y el vinilo. Este estilo, que podríamos calificar de *kirsh*, contrasta con el del resto de los em-

pleados domésticos, cuyos figurines se diseñaron conscientemente en un algodón de tonalidades sobrias para dar un aspecto deslavazado a unas indumentarias que pretenden pasar desapercibidas.

Para marcar un contraste estético e ideológico, las clases acomodadas, por su parte, al ser profesionalmente improductivas, se mantienen fieles a la versión original. El caso más llamativo es el de los hermanos Almendárez, ambos caracterizados por una vestimenta oscura y típica del Siglo de Oro; si bien, en algunas escenas no pueden evitar impregnarse de la contemporaneidad del conjunto de la adaptación. En el caso de Marcela, una de las escenas que mejor marca el contraste entre mundos anacrónicos es la del desayuno. La protagonista (en bigudís) toma un chocolate con churros en una taza de una sola asa de loza pintada, mientras que su criada Dorotea le hace la pedicura ayudada de un barreño de plástico rosa. Por otra parte, Don Antonio aparece en otro momento en camisa y calzones negros de época leyendo un vistoso libro rojo con grandes letras negras de imprenta que dicen "TEATRO" y bebiendo una copa de Brandy. Estos objetos como la taza de loza, los bigudís, el barreño, la letra de imprenta del libro y la copa de brandy contagian inevitablemente de una nota de contemporaneidad a estos protagonistas siglodeorinos.

Don Silvestre de Almendárez, el primo indiano que viene a casarse con Marcela y don Ambrosio, galán al que Marcela Osorio le da la palabra de ma-

rimonio, también se mantienen fieles a la obra cervantina en cuanto a su falta de identidad profesional. Aunque la caracterización de éstos sigue la estética de los sesenta, a diferencia de los hermanos Almendárez caracterizados, según acabamos de apuntar, como dos seres salidos de una máquina del tiempo, símbolos de la "otredad" en esta adaptación. Esta discrepancia temporal en el vestuario refuerza, a nivel visual, el mensaje original de la obra, facilitando la comprensión espectral, según afirma Patrice Pavis: "Spectators try to orient themselves in terms of the most marked oppositions, to read a costume in relation to others, and to understand the system of regularities that effect connections or disjunctions" (179). Por lo tanto, este marcado contraste visual entre los personajes secunda las expectativas de Roland Barthes, para quien el 'buen disfraz' (*the good costume*) "must be material enough to signify and transparent enough not to turn its signs into parasites" (Citado en Pavis 174).

Paralelamente a los mencionados contrastes en la caracterización de los personajes, se superpone una contextualización histórica que recrea la España de los años sesenta. Una estrategia escenográfica muy arraigada con la recepción actual, y central en la nueva visión que tiene Vasco para la CNTC; como él mismo ha declarado en diversas ocasiones:

Hay que hacer una reflexión sobre el tipo de espectador que acude a ver teatro clásico, pero que a la

vez asiste a otro tipo de espectáculos, ve la televisión, el cine, etc. La percepción del espectador ha cambiado sustancialmente desde que se escribieron estos textos, destinados a unos usos escénicos muy concretos. No podemos ofrecer una actividad museística ni excesivamente rígida, que aleje al espectador de la historia que se le está contando. Elegimos este tipo de teatro por su forma y por su contenido, y ambos deben tener algo que ver con nosotros.¹²

La elección de esta década comprometida como periodo histórico privilegiado de esta adaptación, funciona como una ‘historización’ (*historization*) del texto original: “With little concern for the historical exactitude of performance conditions at the original creation of a work, it endeavors to relativize this perspective, and to rediscover in the narrative a (hi)story that concerns us directly, adapting situations, characters, and conflicts as required”.¹³ La década de los sesenta se erige como un referente histórico más próximo para el espectador actual que el Siglo XVII. Asimismo, según asegura Pimienta, las reminiscencias sociales y políticas de los años sesenta funcionan como metáfora política y social del mensaje original de la obra cervantina; esto es, otorgar una voz a los subalternos: “[...] creímos que los años 60 eran un momento clave en España, porque ya había pasado la convulsión de la guerra civil, pero aún estaba ahí junto con una cierta apertura que venía del resto del mundo, que era ese querer darle la voz y la palabra al pueblo”.¹⁴ Si bien, selec-

cionar este periodo histórico no fue fácil para la directora, más complejo aún, resultó su seguimiento cabal a lo largo de la adaptación, con el objetivo de profundizar en su significado, y evitar limitarlo a un nivel puramente estético y superficial.¹⁵ Este propósito contribuye a la presencia continua del arte Pop como referencia visual regularizada durante toda la obra. El término *Pop-Art*, utilizado por primera vez en 1962 por el crítico británico Lewis Gennig, define un arte que recurre al empleo de imágenes populares de la comunicación de masas con el objetivo de subrayar el valor iconográfico de la sociedad de consumo. Ideológicamente, este movimiento artístico iniciado a finales de los cincuenta fue el resultado de un estilo de vida influido por la tecnología, el capitalismo, la moda y el consumismo, donde los objetos dejaron de ser únicos para ser pensados como productos en serie. Ideología que coincide con el objetivo original por el que Lope concibió sus comedias; una visión puramente comercial. Resulta simbólico que Richard Hamilton, pionero del arte Pop británico, definiera este arte como efímero, popular, barato, producido en serie, joven, e ingenioso. Toda una serie de cualidades que duplican, salvaguardando las distancias, la función comercial de la Comedia nueva lopesca.

Si recordamos el propósito de Cervantes al escribir *La entretenida*—parodiar el género de capa y espada escribiendo una comedia, en la cual acata combativamente la preceptiva del *Arte nuevo*--; ca-

be afirmar que la elección de la cultura pop, como ambientación escénica anacrónica para esta adaptación, conserva ideológicamente el propósito disidente cervantino original.

A nivel estético, el arte Pop, además de reciclar imágenes cotidianas y permutar colores, toma del dadaísmo el uso del *collage*, y del fotomontaje la metáfora visual de los ideales del momento. Es decir, la superposición de lo nuevo sobre lo más tradicional que, inevitablemente, sigue perdurando en la sociedad. La producción de la CNTC se sirve tanto del diseño del vestuario como de la escenografía para recrear las técnicas de superposición en cada una de las escenas, transformando el escenario en una gigantesca, flotante y versátil instalación Pop.¹⁶ Ejemplo de ello son las secuencias dramáticas en las que Cervantes va sumando paulatinamente a los distintos estamentos en el escenario de manera artificial y sin entrelazar sus discursos, emulando las técnicas de superposición a modo de incongruente *collage* humano. Esto implica que aunque las distintas clases vivan bajo un mismo techo, las barreras sociales, culturales y económicas prevalecen en ambos mundos, el de los amos y el de los criados, inevitablemente separados e incomunicados en su esencia.¹⁷ A nivel visual, esta tendencia se traduce en una sobria caracterización de Marcela y de su hermano, ambos depositados en pleno corazón urbano de los sesenta y rodeados de aspiradoras eléctricas, carteleras de cine y de la indispensable pre-

sencia del sufrido Seiscientos, un coche utilitario pensado para las necesidades de la clase media trabajadora.

A la propuesta caleidoscópica plástica e ideológica que propone la CNTC cabe añadir un elemento más que amplía su perspectiva artística, el trasfondo madrileño como presencia constante dentro de la escenografía de la adaptación. En el texto cervantino, la ciudad de Madrid ocupa un protagonismo indisociable con el resto de la trama, dotando a la comedia de un realismo histórico y costumbrista por las continuas alusiones a los lugares más transitados en la época. De esta manera, el diseño escenográfico de José Tomé ha querido preservar este verismo urbano proponiendo un montaje que pone de relieve las siluetas de los edificios más emblemáticos de la capital, tales como la Plaza de España, la Gran vía, el Ministerio del Aire, los Nuevos Ministerios, la Telefónica, la Torre de Madrid¹⁸ y el Arco de la Victoria,¹⁹ muchos de los cuales fueron, además, emblemas políticos y arquitectónicos de los sesenta.

Parece que la CNTC en su nueva misión de revalorizar a los clásicos, aprovecha cada uno de los *tour de force* cervantinos, adaptándolos anacrónicamente y de manera experimental. Así, las distintas artes y texturas entran en contacto para revitalizar una dramaturgia cuya mayor parte sigue aún entre bastidores. Cervantes ha sido uno de los autores, por no decir, el autor, del que más se ha llevado su

prosa a las tablas, pero cuyo teatro, a parte de los entremeses, ha quedado relegado a un segundo plano por una cierta desconfianza o incomodidad a la hora de escenificarlo.

En la actualidad, una puesta en escena implica más que transponer un texto a las tablas, como en el caso que nos ocupa: [...] sometimes it is an installation, in others words a bringing together of diverse stage practices (lighting, plastic arts, improvisation), without the possibility of establishing a hierarchy between them, and without the text assuming the role of magnetic pole for the rest of the performance”.²⁰ Siguiendo estas pautas mencionadas por Pavis, la adaptación que propone la directora Helena Pimienta implica una arriesgada revisión atípica en la que la sociedad aurisecular se intercambia de modo metafórico por la de los años sesenta, un periodo histórico más cercano al espectador actual con el objetivo de provocar una re-evaluación social por parte de éste. En ese sentido, la versión de la CNTC destaca con maestría y originalidad la función del teatro como un arte orgánico y un espacio escénico-textual que invita las sociedades a la reflexión y al cuestionamiento retrospectivo de sí mismas a través de los tiempos.

NOTES

¹ Citado en Salvat 106.

² *La entretenida*, según Helena Pimienta no cuenta con ningún referente escénico que se haya podido utilizar como material de reciclaje para la adaptación que aquí nos ocupa: “Sabemos que no es suficiente haber leído los textos teatrales; hay que haberlos revisitado en distintas épocas para poder tener referencias sobre ellos. Como en el caso de Cervantes no era así, estábamos prácticamente ante la primera puesta en escena, hemos tenido a veces una sensación de vértigo” (Citado en Zubieta 32).

³ La crítica ha venido trazando un paralelismo entre la función paródica de *Don Quijote de la Mancha* frente a los libros de caballerías, y de *La entretenida* en relación con la comedia de capa y espada (Rey Hazas 28).

⁴ Vasco 17.

⁵ Pallín 13.

⁶ Pallín 13.

⁷ Helena Pimienta, directora escénica de la versión que aquí nos ocupa ya había dirigido en el 2002 *La dama boba*, refundiéndola en la España de los años treinta con el objetivo de reivindicar, como en el caso de *La entretenida*, la contemporaneidad de la obra y de su autor.

⁸ Citado en Zubieta 30.

⁹ Pallín 13.

¹⁰ Otros ejemplos en esta misma línea serían los siguientes:

OCAÑA Pues vuélvome a mi *garaje*
 por no ver este retablo
 destas dos figuras juntas
 que no se apartan jamás
 (106-110).

OCAÑA Por dios, bajad el embozo,
 soberbio, que, en mi conciencia,
 hay muy poca diferencia

entre *un chapuzas* y un mozo
(Pallín, 121-124, énfasis mío).

OCAÑA [...]
Pero yo nací, sin duda,
para entender *un motor*.
Y así no alcanza favor
mi suerte, que no se muda.
Currito soy, Dios mediante;
pero *currito* discreto,
y, a pocos lances prometo
ser para marqués bastante
(Pallín, 550-557).

¹¹ Paso a reproducir otros pasajes de la versión de la CNTC en contraste con su original cervantino en los que aparecen estas transmutaciones semánticas a las que me acabo de referir:

OCAÑA Soy desta casa *mecánico*;
y, aunque siempre en *garaje*
me arrincono, el amor ciego,
con su yelo y con su fuego,
me aturde y quita coraje.
Entre *el jardín*, y *una llanta*,
o *arreglar las tuberías*,
todas las noches y días
de amor la fiebre me espanta
(Pallín, 1077-1085, énfasis mío).

OCAÑA Soy desta casa *lacayo*
y aunque en la *caballeriza*
me arrincono, el amor ciego,
con su yelo y con su fuego,
me consume y martiriza.
Entre *el harnero* y *pesebre*,
entre *la paja* y *cebada*,
de noche y de madrugada,

me embiste de amor la fiebre
(Cervantes, 1214-1220, énfasis mío).

¹² Citado en Perales.

¹³ Pavis 212.

¹⁴ Pimienta 31.

¹⁵ Pimienta 32.

¹⁶ Dentro de la estética del arte-Pop, uno de los detalles más significativos de la adaptación de la CNTC es la gasa que aparece en algunas escenas a modo de cortina de humo de un primer plano de Clark Gable y Vivien Leigh a punto de besarse, la cartelera original de *Lo que el viento se llevó* (1939), una de las películas más taquilleras de la España de los sesenta.

¹⁷ Sevilla Arroyo y Rey Hazas XXVIII.

¹⁸ La Torre de Madrid, cuya construcción se inició en 1954 y concluyó en 1957 fue por muchos años el rascacielos más alto de la ciudad hasta la construcción de la Torre Picasso en 1989.

¹⁹ Fue mandado construir por Franco en 1956 como un tributo a la armada nacionalista. Cabe añadir que Franco pasaba a menudo por la zona cuando viajaba desde la capital a su residencia en El Pardo.

²⁰ Pavis 207.

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Interviews



Doña María (Margarita Arboleda) y Beatriz (Elizabeth Parra)
(Foto: Carlos Mario Lema).

CALDERÓN Y LA ÓPERA PEKINESA: *EL ASTRÓLOGO FINGIDO*, DEL TEATRO DEL VALLE. ENTREVISTA CON MA ZHENGHONG Y ALEJANDRO GONZÁLEZ PUCHE

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El maquillaje de los personajes, dominado por el blanco y el rojo, acentúa los ojos y enfatiza las formas geométricas de las caras. Un vestuario colorido

do y elegante combina elementos de la ópera pekinés con siluetas del barroco español. El verso rítmico de Calderón va puntuado por toques percusivos que describen la psicología del protagonista de la escena. Y los movimientos de las manos de los actores, ahora delicados, ahora tensos, bien podrían contarnos toda la historia por sí solas.

Es, según ha dicho un crítico de la obra, el “matrimonio feliz, multiétnico, de sana y afortunada hibridación” de la ópera china y el teatro áureo español.¹ *El astrólogo fingido*, por Pedro Calderón de la Barca, capta vida nueva en este montaje del Grupo de Creación e Investigación Teatro del Valle, de Calí, Colombia. Bajo la dirección de Ma Zhenghong y Alejandro González Puche, el grupo otra vez llevó en marzo de 2006 a El Paso una producción vistosa, espectacular e innovadora, calidad que, después de las novedades de *El condenado por desconfiado* (2003) y *El gran teatro del mundo* (2004), ya hemos llegado a esperar en el trabajo de esta ilustre compañía.

Después de estrenar esta comedia de enredos en Cali en 2002, Teatro del Valle llevó su versión de *El astrólogo fingido* al XXXI Festival del Drama del Siglo de Oro en el Chamizal National Memorial Theater el 2 de marzo de 2006, en El Paso, Texas, donde fue recibido con gran entusiasmo.² Siguieron los éxitos de la producción en el verano de 2006 al ser invitado por el Ministerio de Cultura de Colombia a participar en las “Itinerancias de Colombia”,

una gira artística-cultural por varias ciudades colombinas.

En la obra, don Juan de Medrano visita secretamente a doña María de Ayala. Otro pretendiente de María, don Diego, se entera de sus relaciones por su criado Morón, y las condena públicamente. Para encubrir la divulgación, Morón interviene, explicando que don Diego lo adivinó todo por la astrología. Esta invención conduce a toda una serie de complicaciones y conflictos entre los personajes.

A continuación, Ma Zhenghong y Alejandro González Puche comentan la conceptualización, el vestuario, el estilo de la actuación y la música que acompaña la acción de la obra.

CDG: ¿Por qué decidieron hacer *El astrólogo fingido*? ¿Qué resonancia tiene su temática con un público actual?

MZ y AGP: La idea de montar *El astrólogo fingido* surge de un proceso académico dentro de un taller de montaje para actores en formación en la Universidad del Valle. Estudiamos varias comedias de Calderón, como *La dama duende*, *Hombre pobre todo es trazas*, *Casa de dos puertas mala es de guardar*, atraídos por la limpieza de su estructura y de alguna manera por un carácter matemático. A nuestro gusto son obras más abstractas que las comedias de Lope, por ejemplo. *El astrólogo* se escogió finalmente porque tiene el tema de la superstición que finalmente es el tema del saber y la igno-

rancia. Ahora bien, en la escogencia de la obra no predominó este tema, es decir el deseo de comunicar tal o cual mensaje. Tenemos que aclarar que en la Colombia teatral, hay una escasísima presencia del repertorio áureo dentro de la cartelera. Estábamos iniciando un proceso de montaje sin tener los más mínimos referentes sobre cómo hacerlo. Había como una rebeldía por montar una obra de un repertorio que nuestros grupos y directores no asumen por falta de conocimiento al afrontar el verso y por un rechazo específico a la tradición teatral española.

CDG: ¿Podrían explicar el “carácter matemático” de *El astrólogo*?

MZ y AGP: Después de planteada la peripecia principal, es decir aquella por la cual don Diego se convierte en un eminente astrólogo, las escenas subsiguientes están construidas a manera de *triller*, es decir ocurren todos los encuentros posibles entre los personajes por una planificación matemática del dramaturgo más que por un desarrollo de la situación. Por eso algunas escenas están justificadas de una manera coherente, otras no. En esta disposición de las escenas un poco formal, ocurre el disparate, por ejemplo Violante se encuentra con don Carlos en su desamor, va donde el astrólogo en busca de ayuda, se encuentra con don Juan como un fantasma, nuevamente se vuelven a encontrar Carlos y Violante, Carlos va donde el astrólogo, vuelve a encontrarse con Violante.

CDG: El tema del saber y la ignorancia es, como saben, muy frecuente actualmente en Estados Unidos. La transmisión de la información – la circulación de rumores, la revelación de secretos, quién sabía, quién ignoraba, quién dilató – parece ser una preocupación constante. ¿Tiene tanta importancia este tema en Colombia?

MZ y AGP: Claro, somos una sociedad que no sabe escoger sus ídolos. ¿Cómo puede ser posible que por el disparate de un criado, don Diego se convierta en un célebre astrólogo, al que consulten las muchachas enamoradas, después los criados y terminen los señores más respetados recurriendo a su saber? Mientras más importante sea el personaje, ponderará más vehementemente su ciencia, lo cual es una exaltación a la ignorancia generalizada.

CDG: Desde la perspectiva de director o actor, ¿cómo caracterizan el verso de Calderón en esta obra? ¿Cómo se distingue, por ejemplo, del verso de Tirso en *El condenado por desconfiado*, o del verso de *El gran teatro del mundo* (otras obras del repertorio de la Corporación Teatro del Valle)?

MZ y AGP: Ésta es una pregunta imposible de responder en brevedad. Cuando iniciamos con *El astrólogo*, nosotros como directores no sabíamos absolutamente nada sobre como era el trabajo con el verso en español. Habíamos tenido alguna experiencia sobre el verso en Ruso, trabajando obras de Pushkin, o en Chino, pero en español nada. Por eso empezamos a investigar ciñéndonos al libro de ver-

sificación española de Tomás Navarro Tomás y tratando de poner en práctica sus innumerables reglas.³ Más allá del conteo de sílabas, nos interesaron los aspectos relacionados con el período rítmico, es decir, la acentuación de dos sílabas, una inicial y otra final, identificadas según el caso para cada verso. Esa obsesión por el período dio rápidamente frutos, ya que colocó a los actores en una tradición interpretativa correcta, es decir, donde la atención se ponía sobre el período (a veces de una manera mecánica y abstracta), pero por lo menos no atiborraba el verso de innumerables acentos lógicos o situacionales, es decir, la tradición psicologista, que no es apropiada para el verso. Ese período rítmico limpiaba el verso, colocaba ritmo y tensión. Ésta fue la primera instancia del aprendizaje.

Después de ser rigurosos con esta experiencia, iniciamos *El condenado por desconfiado*, donde el propósito era encontrar a Tirso dentro de la tradición oral del Pacífico colombiano, cuya población afro-descendiente maneja una oralidad ligada a la décima, la rima y el refrán. Tratamos de dar un sentido de verdad a partir de esta rica tradición que tiene formas melódicas y estructuras de síntesis muy similares a las que debieron ser usadas en el Siglo de Oro. En *El gran teatro del mundo* fue el examen más difícil porque maneja una variedad enorme de versos donde cada personaje se expresa de una manera diferente. Aquí la preocupación fue por abrir el carácter filosófico del texto con todas sus

contradicciones, y nos preocupamos por montar una partitura externa totalmente ajena al sentido del texto, lo que obligaba al espectador a depender de la palabra. Después de estas tres experiencias, retomamos a *El astrólogo* en una segunda versión con menos actores, pero que sin lugar a dudas, lleva implícita las experiencias en la interpretación de *El condenado* y *El gran teatro del mundo*. Esta versión fue la que ustedes vieron en El Paso y que cierra un círculo de experiencias de cinco años sobre las posibilidades interpretativas del verso. Ya no está todo el tiempo la marcación casi escolástica de la primera versión; los actores se apoyan también en el sentido del verso y en el tema de la ignorancia.

CDG: Sabemos de unas entrevistas anteriores que sus montajes de *El gran teatro* y *El condenado* hacen referencia a unas realidades contemporáneas colombianas. ¿Es distinto el caso de *El astrólogo*?

MZ y AGP: Siempre los artistas hablamos de nuestro entorno, unas veces de una manera más directa y obvia, otras no. Aquí tratamos el tema del fetichismo y la ignorancia, pero desarrollamos la obra de una manera abstracta en su forma, tanto así que tiene la forma de la ópera de Pekín. Pero el hallazgo más grande con este montaje fue precisamente que nos dimos cuenta que la dramaturgia del Siglo de Oro español puede ser tan moderna como se quiera, y que es una tarea de los directores sacarla del ámbito del teatro de museo.

CDG: ¿Cómo se les ocurrió la idea de montar la obra en el estilo de la ópera de Pekín?

MZ y AGP: Al principio la idea fue elaborar personajes muy barrocos, es decir, con una obsesión particular (casi neurótica) y una imagen del mundo que inclusive excluyera a otros personajes, alejándonos de la uniformidad de estilo. Estos personajes contarían con elementos simbólicos y de exageración, y así nos mantendríamos en una teatralidad necesaria en el género. Pensamos muchas cosas locas, como elaborar personajes a partir de las figuras de los naipes españoles, e incluso a partir de los travestis o *drag queens*, y así, a partir de muchas propuestas de los actores y con la presencia de una directora China, descubrimos que lo que más se acercaba a lo que queríamos era la ópera de Pekín, aunque tenemos que reconocer que muchos personajes como don Diego portan aún la primera idea de las barajas. La ópera es un sistema conocido de teatralidad colorida y de plasticidad rítmica, simultáneamente superficial y profunda, que involucra poesía, gesto y acrobacia. Estos elementos, generalmente abstractos, ayudaban al verso español que comúnmente elabora los personajes y toda su expresión solo a partir de la palabra.



Don Carlos (Diego Robledo) y doña Inés (Adriana Bermúdez)
(Foto: Carlos Mario Lema)

CDG: ¿Tiene alguna función en la producción el exotismo?

MZ y AGP: El propósito principal era rescatar el espíritu del teatro del Siglo de Oro como un teatro popular, alejándonos de un teatro de costumbres. En el plano actoral, esto significaba encontrar una imagen y energía extra-cotidianas que ayudase a interpretar estos extensos versos y monólogos. Cada personaje tenía que identificar una imagen, vestuario y resonador específico para que todos los elementos fueran coherentes entre sí, y claro, termina siendo muy popular y exótica la convención. Se retomó la idea que los espectadores asistían a los corrales a ver bellos atuendos conjuntamente con la acrobacia y poesía.

CDG: El programa indica que cada actor se encargó de su propio vestuario. ¿Pueden explicar esto?

MZ y AGP: Como hemos comentado, la manera de producir esta obra fue a partir de un taller académico, donde no es el productor conjuntamente con el escenógrafo los que deciden todos los aspectos, sino los docentes se plantean los objetivos de las escenas y encargan a los estudiantes todos los detalles de los personajes, incluyendo el carácter, la voz y el movimiento, y así ellos empiezan a traer cosas. Es una metodología de prueba y error. En lo relacionado con el vestuario y el maquillaje, la propuesta era hacer una fusión, tomando como base ideas de la pintura barroca y de la ópera de Pekín. Este grupo era especialmente talentoso en el trabajo manual y en detalles de maquillaje. Pero como el arte depende mucho de las casualidades, felizmente muchas madres eran modistas y sastres, y construyeron para sus hijas bellos vestidos dentro de las ideas propuestas. Confeccionar estos vestuarios era relativamente económico ya que se usan todas las telas más baratas del mercado, como sedas sintéticas que por sus colores llamativos se emplean solo para forros y partes internas de los trajes. Al traer las primeras actrices sus vestuarios, surgió una sana competencia, y a cada ensayo traían cosas cada vez más espectaculares. Así se fue conformando la obra en un estilo donde casi todo tiene cabida.



Don Carlos (Diego Robledo) y don Juan (Felipe Pérez) (Foto: Carlos Mario Lema)

CDG: ¿Qué ideas de la pintura barroca se integran en el vestuario?

MZ y AGP: La idea principal es la desproporción; es decir, el cuerpo del personaje no expresa su forma real sino su forma ideal. Don Juan, el amante, tiene plumas y va vestido de verde, conceptos expresados por el mismo Calderón; don Diego tiene el pecho de gran volumen en contraste con sus piernas; Violante tiene un gran miriñaque que abulta sus caderas. Esta exuberancia ayuda mucho a los espectadores a entender la condición y punto de vista de los personajes en una dramaturgia que no precisa de escenografía.

CDG: ¿El maquillaje también es creación de cada actor o prestado de la ópera pekinesa? El maquillaje de don Diego es particularmente impresionante; le da un aspecto feroz. ¿En qué se inspira?



Don Diego (Jaime Castaño) y Morón (Manuel Viveros) (Foto: Carlos Mario Lema)

MZ y AGP: Los maquillajes son copiados al principio de los libros de ópera de Pekín que trajo la directora Ma Zhenghong y poco a poco adaptados a la expresión de cada actor. Muchos tonos de maquillaje originales se adaptaban a la expresión de los actores, bien sea por lo alargado de su rostro o por el color de sus ojos. En doña María de Ayala y don Juan, se copiaron del maquillaje tradicional para la dama joven y el galán típicos de la ópera. En don

Diego, es un maquillaje de guerrero que tiene un carácter brusco e inquieto. Morón es un gracioso de la ópera, pero también hay creaciones totalmente originales como la de Violante.

CDG: Cada personaje en la obra parece tener su particular manera de moverse o gesticular: don Juan sacuda la mano mientras va contemplando lo que va a decir; don Diego anda sacando los pies por adelante y haciendo círculos con las manos; las damas escuchan siempre con la boca abierta; los viejos acarician las barbas mientras escuchan. ¿Cuáles de los gestos empleados por los actores son convenciones de la ópera china y cuáles son invenciones particulares a esta producción?

MZ y AGP: El presupuesto original era producir un montaje basado en recursos corporales para cada actor sin mayor uso de la escenografía o la ambientación. El principio de creación era buscar recursos físicos y gestos independientes del sentido del texto, privilegiando de alguna manera las *poses* frontales con el fin de distraer lo menos posible al espectador del sentido del texto. Muchos personajes como doña María, Beatriz y Morón son fuertemente inspirados en los movimientos de las damas y los cómicos de la ópera de Pekín, igualmente don Leonardo y don Diego son inspirados en los personajes de los funcionarios públicos. Otañez está inspirado en Sancho Panza, don Juan está influenciado en el galán de la ópera y en el conocimiento de las técnicas de mimo que sabe el actor. Don Diego fue cons-

truido a partir de la brusquedad del personaje, aprovechando su cabello largo y su gran constitución. También él amplía su cuerpo con una estructura interna similar a la de un futbolista americano. Su forma de andar es extraída de los guerreros de la ópera y los brazos con movimientos circulares del Tai-Chi. Una de las grandes experiencias fue la de trabajar con la mirada; los actores son conscientes que la postura corporal, la línea del movimiento y el gusto pantomímico son elementos que se trabajan conjuntamente bajo el concepto de la técnica actoral de la ópera de Pekín. Cuando ya se decidió en el estilo oriental, se realizaron agotadoras sesiones de calentamiento propias de la ópera de Pekín con especial atención en los desplazamientos, bajando el centro, articulando las manos, y manteniendo una mirada abierta mientras se hacen rotaciones.

CDG: En su reseña, Robert Lauer ha notado unos toques brechtianos en esta producción, por ejemplo, en unos de los apartes al público y en el uso del biombo plegable. ¿Pueden comentar?

MZ y AGP: Conscientemente Brecht no está presente; si hay alguna semejanza que ahora aceptamos, estos momentos brechtianos están implícitos en el mismo Calderón, quien a veces detiene la acción dramática para establecer un careo o una aclaración a los espectadores sobre las reglas del arte que está observando, incluso burlándose de la comedia. Por ejemplo, Beatriz le dice a doña María en la primera jornada, “Dama / de comedia me pareces” (115-16);

y Morón en el segundo acto dice, “¿Piensas que comedia es, / Que en ella de cualquier modo / Que se piense sale todo?” (2042-44).⁴ Estos apartes los decíamos abriendo una especie de cortina imaginaria, que con ayuda sonora de la marimba o xilófono, corríamos para establecer un contacto directo con el espectador.

Aparte de estos momentos, por análisis textual comprendimos que los refranes tampoco son parte directa del engranaje teatral, sino que son aclaraciones a la trama y dispuestos para una fácil recordación por parte del público. Morón dice in la primera jornada, por ejemplo, “Yo sé que una criada puede a veces más que una tía” (564-65). Otra forma similar son toda la serie de piropos o galanterías con las que Don Juan aborda a las espectadoras de una supuesta Cazuela en la primera jornada. También, las odas son permanentemente mencionadas por los especialistas en teatro español, pero casi nunca vemos en los espectáculos una solución clara de estos grandes textos, como cuando Don Diego dice, “En la corte de Filipo, / Villa insigne de Madrid, / gran metrópoli de España, /de nobles padres nací” (1197-1200). En estos momentos cambiamos la luz, encendemos la sala y saludamos a un rey imaginario.

CDG: ¿Comunica algún tipo de parodia o sátira esta producción?

MZ y AGP: Para nosotros es una comedia en el sentido estricto del término, puesto que si tomamos a don Diego como modelo de héroe principal que

pretende engañar al mundo, finalmente es descubierto y castigado como en el esquema clásico de este género. La ignorancia y la superstición quedan en entre dicho, pero el resto de los protagonistas son premiados y contraen nupcias. El propósito de la puesta no es tampoco parodiar ni satirizar sobre el arte oriental o los españoles.

CDG: Los movimientos y reacciones de los personajes van subrayados por toda una variedad de toques percusivos. ¿Pueden detallar el proceso de integrar y sincronizar los sonidos con los movimientos? Es decir, ¿dieron rienda suelta al músico Mauricio Nieto para crear y añadir elementos musicales en momentos apropiados, o fue todo el resultado de una colaboración entre actores, directores y el músico?

MZ y AGP: Inicialmente eran tres músicos bajo la conducción de Mauricio Nieto quienes hacían toda la parte incidental. El conjunto original incluía violín y flautas que ayudaban melódicamente a la percusión que puede resultar hostigante para el espectador occidental. La música es una variación del conjunto musical de la ópera china. La complementación que la música hace del verso es la parte importante, como en el arte oriental brinda un piso melódico y rítmico a los cantantes, la acrobacia y la entonación del verso. En *El astrólogo* no se canta pero se usa para acompañar el período rítmico y obtener una progresión dramática. La música sirve para resaltar algunas cesuras; al principio, exagerá-

bamos y eran todas, y los sucesos importantes de la obra. Los acentos son de varios tipos: Sorpresa. Suceso. Suspenso. Estoy pensando. Estoy en aprietos. Disparate. Después, Mauricio también se hizo cargo de la melodía, y entonces se hizo mas fácil desplazar la obra.

CDG: En mayo de 2006, por invitación y apoyo del Ministerio de Cultura de Colombia, llevaron *El astrólogo* a unos públicos en Cúcuta, Pamplona y Ocaña como parte del proyecto artístico-cultural “Itinerancias por Colombia”. ¿Cómo respondieron a la obra los espectadores de esas ciudades, y qué aprendió de la experiencia el Grupo de Creación e Investigación?

MZ y AGP: Ésta fue una experiencia única. La itinerancia recorrió ciudades casi abandonadas por los circuitos culturales y que gracias a la iniciativa del Ministerio de Cultura pudimos visitar. Actuamos en edificaciones de principios del siglo XX, como el teatro Jáuregui de Pamplona, cuyos camerinos, por circunstancias de abandono, fueron ocupados por familias enteras que realizan su vida cotidiana mientras la función transcurre. Es decir, a manera de los incipientes corrales de comedias, la trasescena estaba tan abarrotada como la sala y el arte, fluida como un accidente más de la vida. Ésta es una zona de Colombia que habla uno de los españoles más enfáticos y claros. Las funciones trascurrieron con unos espectadores participativos que añoraban un tipo de teatro que durante muchos años no

visitaba estas importantísimas ciudades durante la colonia y la independencia. Corroboramos que el teatro del Siglo de Oro, su oralidad y forma están presentes en el subconsciente colectivo de los espectadores populares en Colombia.

NOTES

¹ Miguel González, "Calderón de la Barca restituido" (rev. of El astrólogo fingido, del Teatro del Valle), *Memorias: III Festival de Teatro de Cali, Salas en Concierto* (2002), 20 marzo 2006

<<http://escenicas.univalle.edu.co/alejandro/gonzastro.htm>>.

² A. Robert Lauer, "Astrólogo fingido Simply Stellar," *ElPasotimes.com* 10 marzo 2006, 7 abril 2006

<<http://www.elpasotimes.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=2006603100327>>.

³ Se refiere a Tomás Navarro Tomás, *Métrica española: Reseña histórica y descriptiva* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1956). Véase también, del mismo autor, *Arte del verso* (México D.F.: Compañía General de Ediciones, 1959).

⁴ Los números de los versos corresponden a la edición de Max Oppenheimer, *Pedro Calderón de la Barca's The Fake Astrologer: A Critical Spanish Text and English Translation* (New York: Peter Lang, 1994).

MARÍA DE ZAYAS ON THE WASHINGTON STAGE: INTERVIEW WITH KAREN BERMAN

BARBARA MUJICA
Georgetown University

Until summer 2006, Washington, D.C. had never heard of María de Zayas. The WWIT production of Zayas' *Friendship Betrayed*, directed by Karen Berman, changed all that. For the first time ever, Washingtonians had the chance to see a full-length play by an early modern Spanish women playwright, and they loved it. Zayas' work played night after night to a packed house at the Warehouse Theater during most of July.

Karen Berman is co-founder, with Sidra Rausch, of Washington Women in Theater (WWIT). The group's first performance was on August 11, 2003, at the National Museum of Women in the Arts. A not-for-profit theater company, WWIT has been hosting a festival of new plays every summer since its inception. The objective of WWIT is to provide women writers, composers, and directors in the Washington, D.C. area and beyond the opportunity to showcase their work. Most of their material deals with contemporary social issues. Among the plays

they have premiered are four works by Caleen Sinnette Jennings, including *Day Come*, about a freed slave. Others are *Frida Vice Versa*, by Marian Licha and R. Dennis Green, on the life of Mexican artist Frida Kahlo, and four plays by Rausch that explore her Jewish heritage. The production of *Friendship Betrayed* was a Washington, D.C. premier and one of the first productions, in either English or Spanish, in any country. The production was reprised in October 2006, for the conference of the AEEA and the AHCT¹ on early modern women writers and theater at Georgetown University.

I asked Berman was attracted her to *Friendship Betrayed*.

KB: I have always been attracted to the poetry and power of Spanish Golden Age plays. When I



Karen Berman

was a graduate student in Directing at Catholic University many years ago, Calderón's *Life is a Dream* was one of my top three choices for my Directing Thesis production. I have not directed it yet, but I intend to soon! On my first reading, I thought that *Friendship Betrayed* was a delightful play with excellent characters and a feminist viewpoint that appealed to me. It is a play ahead of its time in terms of the strong female characterizations. Fenisa, the female Don Juan, outdoes even Don Juan himself. Many of today's female icons from pop culture behave in a way similar to Fenisa. We read in the tabloids about a constant stream of men flowing through the lives of women such as Britney Spears and Paris Hilton. Characters in the television show *Sex in the City* and *Desperate Housewives* are not unlike those in *Friendship Betrayed*. We love watching the ins and outs of celebrity lives, just as Golden Age society enjoyed watching the goings-on at court, and the servants León and Lucía in the play love observing their master and mistress.²

BM: What did you think of Catherine Larson's translation? How and why did you alter it?

KB: I thought Catherine Larson's translation was excellent, very contemporary, very readable, and very playable. In exchange for Zayas' original Spanish verse, Larson's English prose heightened the contemporary flavor, making it audience-friendly and understandable. The actors were very



Marcia, Fenisa and Belisa

comfortable with the language and it was easy for the cast to memorize because the flow and logic was so beautifully and carefully fulfilled by Larson. The only significant alterations that I made to the translation were a few cuts to tighten certain sections. For example, I shortened some of León's

lines, synthesizing his very funny stories to get to the punch line more quickly—only because one rule of comedy is that the joke set-up must be close to the tag line to punch the humor. I eliminated the character of one of the musicians, Fabio, as we needed only one musician for the show, but gave his lines to the other musician. While we performed the piece in English, we interspersed some of the original Spanish throughout the script.

BM: How did you hit upon the idea of making the play into a kind of spoof on Paris Hilton and her ditsy friends? Tall, slim, blond Mundy Spears, who played Fenisa, really reminded me of Paris. What parallels do you see between Zayas' society and our own? What elements of the play made interpreting it for a modern American audience difficult? Is it possible to "translate" a work from one culture to another?

KB: I think the sexuality of today's youth is similar to that which Zayas portrays in her society. I've always thought that it was important to make a play relevant for its current audience. A play only exists in the moment of its playing and for the audience attending. There is no way to recreate the dynamics of Golden Age society and ensure the same reception. Instead, every play must be interpreted for its time, and within the context of the society receiving it—certainly a postmodern sensibility. The coy Paris Hilton who is caught on sex tapes and making the nightclub scene with different men each

night is an icon of today's culture of voyeurism. Paris is also considered royalty because of her money and social class, and it is important not to forget the class distinctions between servants and masters we see in Zayas' play. It is certainly an exciting part of a director's task to conceptualize any play. Translating a play from one culture to another, and one era to another, creates additional joys and challenges. Cultural translation is always difficult and not always successful. The play, of course, was already mediated by Larson's translation and choice of language. Next, it was mediated by the director and actors, and finally, by the audience. In this complex layering of translation, one must consider the original authorship, purpose for writing, and audience reception. Once that dramaturgical research is done, the challenge is to find a way to translate the production for the ephemeral here and now.

BM: Although your set was simple, it was provocative. The sparse decoration evoked animals. The chairs were covered with animal skins, and the characters frequently donned animal masks. The actors' movements reinforced the animal motif. Often they crouched, prowled, or made clawing movements. Sometimes they snarled or hissed. Could you comment on the "basic instinct" aspect of the production, as represented by the skins, masks, and animal-like movements?

KB: Ah, there is indeed a "basic instinct" aspect of the production. I believe there is a hunter and

hunted aspect to the relationships of the play and the animal skins reflected that aspect of the concept. Everyone in the play is pursuing the opposite sex. Props such as bow and arrow and darts were deliberately chosen to convey this theme, as were the animal prints in the set and masks. The ideas came directly from the animal references in the text: León refers to a “clawing cat,” Belisa speaks of “wild beasts,” “lion’s cruelty,” “proud and arrogant wolf,” and the “fox.” Lucía, near the end, states, “I have a recipe for domesticating wild animals.” Liseo refers to Laura as a “wild beast” and Fenisa speaks of herself as a “lion.”

BM: Please comment on the costuming—the combination of very contemporary bustiers and the nineteenth-century skirts with bustles. Fenisa, the most voracious of the women, is wearing what looks like underdrawers, visually akin to today’s cropped pants. The men, in contrast, are fully clothed in what looks like nineteenth-century suits.

KB: My costume designer and I looked at the art Goya’s paintings in preparing for the show. We were looking for a combination of two eras, contemporary and Golden Age. The bustiers were a modern Paris Hilton and Christina Aguilera sexy style which we combined with the panniers of the long skirts of the Golden age. The women were



somewhat underdressed, in pieces of underwear, to represent what they were in the home—the domain of woman—and sexually available. The men were more fully dressed, as we presume that they had to navigate the exterior landscape to appear in the rooms of the women. The corseting of the women was particularly important to me, as the undergarments of women express society's expectations of the physical shape and freedom, or lack therefore, for the women in that culture. Both now and in the Golden Age, women who are molded and cinched at the waist—either by corsets, diet, or liposuction—are considered sexually appealing. Therefore, this freedom of sexuality exhibited in the play comes at the price of a kind of bondage imposed by societal expectations of beauty.

BM: In your production, León is constantly jumping on Liseo, his master. Why did you introduce an element of male homosexuality into the play? Some critics have seen female homosexuality in the play, but you didn't highlight this. Why not?



KB: León's earthy humor in his scenes with Liseo reflected both the affection of a servant-master relationship and a male bonding that hinted at homosexuality. I imagined bisexuality for the character of Fenisa, someone with a sexual appetite for "all men," as she states, but for all women, too. The way that Belisa ogles Laura when she tells her, "There is nothing better than the sense of sight, since it allows us to witness such beauty," followed by, "If I were a man, I would put my faith in your

love,” are outward displays of female homosexuality. In fact, Belisa touches Marcia at that moment, opens up her cape, and eyes her up and down. Laura, Belisa, and Marcia all overly admire the beauty of the other, which is more than a suggestion of sexual attraction, and I did want this to be clear in the play. Perhaps in the next iteration, I will push this further.

BM: How is directing a play like *Friendship Betrayed* different from directing a play by Shakespeare? What particular challenges does this play present?

KB: As in the case of Shakespeare, the language of this play can be difficult for some actors due to antiquated references and metaphors. The metaphorical language of the Spanish Golden Age, which parallels that of Shakespeare, was preserved by Larson and honored in this production. I was fortunate that I had a cast that handled the language very well. There are certainly similarities to Shakespeare. For example, León, the comic fool. Like Shakespeare’s plays, *Friendship Betrayed* takes place in multiple settings. I addressed that by having the action take place in one bedroom setting. The decision helped the pace of the show. Since Larson used prose for her translation, I only used verse in a few instances. I chose to highlight the verse passages by turning them into song.

BM: “Race-blind casting” is common in Washington, but usually, directors avoid calling attention to the race of the actor. That is, a black actor might

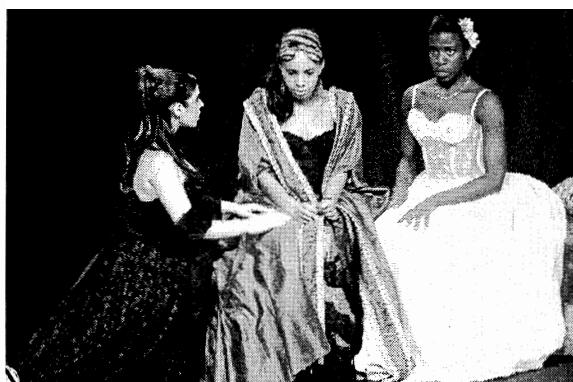
play the role of Fray Lawrence in *Romeo and Juliet*, but he plays it as though he were a white actor. You chose to exploit the race and ethnicity of your actors. For example, Belisa, as played by Valeka Nichols, is a sassy black sister, and Lucía, as played by Tai-sha Camerón, is a street-smart Puerto Rican maid. What motivated you to do this?

KB: I did want a modern urban feel to the play, and I think the multicultural cast achieved that. The Belisa lines seemed to match well with a confident black woman, and the actress in the role of Lucía, via her portrayal of a Puerto Rican maid, did a beautiful job of bringing out the humor in her relationship with Fenisa. I encouraged my cast to bring their own personalities to the forefront in these roles. Primarily, I was interested in the multicultural sisterhood that brought women of all races and ethnicities together because of gender.



BM: Did you deliberately choose actors of different races and ethnicities, or did it just happen?

KB: I did make deliberate choices to find a multicultural cast that reflected today's society in order to make a commentary about gender that celebrates a sisterhood among all races and ethnicities. The message I wanted to send was that the battle of the sexes was found in all cultures. The semiotic binaries (as espoused by semiotician Jacques Derrida) of men and women are apparent here. During the audition process I did not have specific roles necessarily planned for a specific ethnicity. The actors and actresses of color that auditioned simply fit beautifully into certain roles in the world I was creating and were encouraged to flaunt their ethnicity. It was also important to me to honor the Spanish source, the heritage of the piece, while making it relevant for a contemporary, multicultural American audience.



BM: Your actors really seemed to connect with Washington audiences. The theater has been filled with people of every race and ethnicity, and their enthusiasm is palpable.

KM: Yes, the audiences all seemed delighted with the play, and we were very pleased with the reactions. We had standing ovations and enthusiastic e-mails from our patrons. The adaptation worked very well for the audiences. I was especially delighted to have received a phone call the day following one performance from the Cultural Attaché of the Spanish Embassy thanking me for a wonderful show and offering to support it in any way possible. The Spanish Ministry of Culture had funded Larson's translation, and they were excited about the production.

BM: The play ends with an erotic Spanish dance, a musical chairs in which Fenisa is left alone, without a partner. Could you please comment on this?

KB: The Spanish dance mixed with contemporary American guitar was a celebratory wedding dance of sexually charged energy, in which the final moment finds Fenisa without a partner. In this musical chairs dance, we find union between male and female characters, reconciliation after the gender battle. It was a partner dance in which each person settled in with the lover, only to change partners, which mirrored the action of the show. Just as each pairing got comfortable, the woman literally kicked the partner she had away in order to find another

man. I imagine that if the play were to go on, that even after the happily made matches at the end were consummated, there would be additional swapping of partners.



BM: You mentioned that the Spanish government funded the translation. What kind of funding did you get for the production?

KB: The funding for this production came from Washington Women in Theater. From our donors, that is. We had strong attendance during our run at the Warehouse Theater, and the box office receipts covered some of our costs. For the Georgetown production, we also received funding from the Program for Cultural Cooperation between the Spanish Ministry of Culture and United States Universities, thanks to a proposal written by Susan Paun de García of AHCT, as well as from the AEEA and from

several Georgetown departments, in particular, the Department of Spanish and Portuguese. As the largest cast production in our short history, our costume budget and actor fees were much larger than for previous productions.

BM: Do you plan to direct more early modern Spanish plays in the future? Why?

KM: I would certainly love to direct more Spanish Golden Age plays. I have always wanted to direct Calderón's *Life is a Dream*. I believe these plays have great artistic merit and should be offered more frequently to American audiences.

In addition to running Washington Women in the Theater, Karen Berman is a professor of theater at Georgetown University and outgoing president of the Association for Theater in Higher Education. She will deliver the Donald Dietz Keynote Address this year at the annual AHCT conference in El Paso, Texas.

NOTES

¹ The AEEA (Asociación de Escritoras de España y las Américas) is an international organization devoted to the writing of early modern Spanish and Spanish American women. The group recently changed its name to GEMELA. The AHCT is the Association for Hispanic Classical Theater.

² For an in-depth description and analysis of this production, see Mujica, Barbara. "María de Zayas's *Friendship Betrayed* à

la Hollywood: Translation, Transculturaltion, and Production." *The Spanish Comedia in English: Translation and Performance*, Ed. Donald Larson and Susan Paun de García. London: Tamesis, 2007.

Theater Reviews

Don Quijote: La última aventura. By Miguel de Cervantes. Adap. by Margarita Galbán and Lina Montalvo. Directed by Margarita Galbán, Bilingual Foundation of the Arts. Los Angeles. October 30, 2005. (Play's run: September 30 - November 20, 2005).

BONNIE L. GASIOR
California State University, Long Beach

Repertorio Español's *El Quijote* dazzles viewers with colorful costumes, an energetic pace, and fine acting. Santiago Garcia's adaptation of Cervantes' classic distinguishes itself from others by forgoing the well-known windmill episode and other misadventures from the first part of the *Quijote* to focus almost exclusively on the second part of the novel. This makes perfect sense: the 1615 *Quijote* is easily adapted to the stage as it is the more theatrical and cohesive of the two parts of the masterpiece. Jorge Alí Triana takes full advantage of the theatrics of part two to make performance itself a theme of his production. We witness here, as in the novel, a variety of characters engaged in staging an alternate reality.

It is fitting that the play should begin with the episode of the *barco encantado*, the very chapter in

which Don Quijote proclaims what is to become a unifying theme of the second part of the book: "to-do este mundo es máquinas y trazas, contrarias unas de otras" (II, 29). While Garcia's adaptation does not include these words, Alí Triana makes wonderful use of stage machinations to bring the scene to life. Dry ice and a long sheet wrapped tightly around an actress create the illusion of a boat, complete with mermaid prow ornament, gliding across a misty river.

Though not always following Cervantes' chronology, the action moves rapidly through some of the most dramatic episodes of book two: the lion adventure, the Duke and Duchess's staging of Merlin's appearance, Sancho's brief term as governor, and the encounter with the actors of *Las cortes de la muerte*. Emyliano Santa Cruz plays the bumbling, refrán-spewing Sancho expertly and with great stamina, as he never leaves the stage. Francisco Reyes portrays the Duke with refreshingly understated affectation and haughtiness. One of today's finest mature Hispanic stage actors, Ricardo Barber is captivating in the title role. Whether the scene calls for raving lunacy or thoughtful contemplation, Barber's gravelly baritone weaves a spell over the audience and commands the entire space.

To make Cervantes accessible to an audience perhaps unfamiliar with the episodes presented, Alí Triana emphasizes action and movement. Aided by Sylvia Sierra and Yanko Bakulic's choreography,

he creates vibrant stage pictures and raucous fight scenes. The ensemble seems to use every inch of the rather cramped performance space of the Gramercy Arts Theatre, from the extreme backstage to the aisles. The chaotic scene depicting the battle for Sancho's insula is spectacular: the smoke-filled, body-strewn stage recalls *Les Misérables*, but is filled with slapstick humor as well. The choreography also shines in the spellbinding scene in which Merlin shows Don Quijote the enchanted Dulcinea dancing poignantly beneath a shroud, and in the comic transition in which the Duke's servants dance jovially to Renaissance music around the starving Sancho, tempting him with platters of food.

Alí Triana further reaches out to the audience by making the abstract visual. The Princess Micomicona, for example, explains the plight of her kingdom to Don Quijote and Sancho by referring to a moving scroll painted with figures depicting the giant Pandofilando terrorizing her people. Actors pose as living puppets to dramatize the puzzling case presented to Sancho in which he must decide if a man should be hanged or acquitted for his prognostication. The director also adds modern touches to guide the audience's interpretation of certain characters. The arrogant Duke, sporting shades and a maroon-purple jacket over a white shirt with ruffles at the chest and cuffs, looks more like something out of an *Austin Powers* movie or the lead singer of a retro rock band than a noble of seventeenth-century

Spain. The labradoras that Sancho presents to Don Quijote as Dulcinea and her damas are portrayed as prostitutes in heavy makeup, fishnet stockings, and corsets. This enables an audience unfamiliar with the stereotype of the seventeenth-century villana to recognize immediately the linguistic and social distance that separates Don Quijote from the three ladies, without which the irony of the scene would be lost.

The play does not end with Alonso Quijano's recovery of his sanity, condemnation of the books of chivalry, and tranquil death. Rather, the action returns to the end of the first book, where we see a wildly defiant Quijote, ranting through the bars of his cage as he is carted home through the trickery of his village priest and barber. Are we to take this Quijote as hero or madman? The protagonist's words reflect a stoic heroism as he tells the audience not to cry for him and promises to return stronger than ever. Yet Barber's desperate, hysterical tone and wild eyes suggest the madness of a caged animal. Some viewers may leave the theater dissatisfied or confused by the darkness and apparent ambivalence of the ending. Yet, perhaps there is purpose in this inconclusiveness: Quijote, like the imagination, is capable of both triumphant inspiration and destructive delusion, neither of which is quite capable of overcoming the other.

“The UnPOSSESSED,” based on Miguel de Cervantes’ *Don Quixote*, performed by Double Edge Theatre (Massachusetts); conception, direction and scenario by Stacy Klein and created with Carlos Uriona and Matthew Glassman; original music by Justin Handley; the Flynn Space, Burlington, VT, January 13, 2006.

CATHERINE CONNOR-SWIETLICKI
University of Vermont

Can a staged version of Cervantes’s masterpiece communicate a full spectrum of responses to a one-hour performance in English with occasional Spanish and Spanglish mixed in? A performance of “The UnPOSSESSED” featuring Argentine-born Carlos Uriona as Don Quixote and Matthew Glassman as Sancho left me the impression of having done just that. Under director-writer Stacy Klein’s experimental methodology of conceptualization and production, each spectator is stimulated to recall or develop about any sense of the *Quixote* that he or she can imagine. We perceive everything from burlesque notions of Cervantes’ text as a funny book to more nuanced cultural satire, to hints at Romantic interpretations but communicating at the level of a “Man of La Mancha.” Indeed, we seem to find in

theatrical form every sense of Quixote known, from those expressed in the first novel to the first post-modern one.

I think that three interrelated factors help Double Edge's production communicate this range of experiences to us as spectators. The first is training in experimental theater, closely related to a second factor, the imaginative usage of bodies, objects and lighting in a flexible exploration of space and movement. Finally, the troupe's sense of contextualized history is a major factor in all aspects of the production. Although the interdependence of content and form make it difficult to appreciate any performance experience by analyzing its contributory factors, discussing these three developmental aspects of "The UnPOSSESSED" may promote more viewing opportunities for potential audiences and more widespread critical exposure. I will first discuss the final or third factor since, ironically, it is the combination of contextual components that makes Double Edge Theatre's production of the Quixote by so timely regardless of the historical moment when it is performed. Director Klein's notions of what life and art mean after September 11, 2001, are informed by a wide range of meanings one can interpret from four hundred years of Cervantes' masterpiece, by an admiration for Spain's tri-cultural *convivencia* and by belief in the indefatigable human spirit despite wars local or worldwide and even despite the specters of Inquisi-

tion and Holocaust. Mingled together are cruelty, minds and bodies in pain along with quasi-mystical notions of the self and community—perhaps reminiscent of cultural confluences of spirituality, including Klein's own interest in Kabbalah.

Neither entirely starry-eyed nor overwhelmingly negative in its message regarding life after 9/11, *Double Edge* gives us a Quixote for our times. Everything in the text seems somehow to be in the performance, even though it might not be obviously represented as are the episodes of windmills, sheep, the inspection and burning of books, the attempt to save poetry, the "creation" of Rocinante, the *galleotes*, Marcela's speech, the Duchess and Duke, the Panza family, Trifaldi and friends, Maese Pedro and puppets and Sancho's wages. Simultaneously Baroque and neo-Baroque mingle together, demonstrating that the former is not of necessity infused with Counter Reformation despair and that the historical Baroque clearly informs all post-modern notions of neo-Baroque socio-cultural conditions. In "The UnPOSSESSED" we continually inquire how we might determine where creative possession ends and madness begins. When are we Quixote and when Cardenio? The old questions are forever with us and their images in the *Double Edge Theatre* production transform themselves as easily as the actors' bodies and voices melt into the spaces, forms, sounds and light or darkness around them.

How can a one-hour performance possibly bring us so many sensations and thoughts about the Quixote in relationship to human life and art? I think the most obvious factors influencing the conception and staging of "The UnPOSSESSED" are Klein's training in experimental theater and the influence her strong leadership and creativity have exercised since its founding of Double Edge Theatre in 1982. Schooled in Europe with Rena Mirecka and then Jerzy Grotowski's "poor theatre," she is also thoroughly conversant in the methods of Eugenio Barba and Latin American Street Theater—this latter influence achieved in collaboration with her partner Uriona. Since Double Edge first opened its own performance spaces (1985-1997), the company's experienced actors and those in training have partnered to develop works and performances around the core notion of actor as artist. Diverse international currents have always informed their experimentation but have particularly enriched their experience since establishing in 1995 "The Farm," Double Edge Theatre's International Center for Performance, Collaboration and Training in Ashfield, MA. It is there that the creativity of artist/actors encountered Cervantes' creativity to transform spaces, light, objects and sounds/music—taking on new/old meanings and shapes even as they reincarnated the old knight, his squire and countless human characterizations and problems. Seemingly working with nothing or with found ob-

jects as in contemporary art, the artist/actors transform the material world and the textual material, taking on nuanced and new contexts. We too need to join them in such transformations in order to appreciate the performance. And, as we hear the actors doing in the conclusion, we need to adapt the knight's message about the "glory of Spain" into its post-structural contexts—ironic ones as well more practical considerations.

Having seen the play with a group of non-experts unfamiliar with the Quixote or only vaguely remembering their reading of the text in college great works classes, I believe that two general sorts of spectators will get the most from seeing this production. First are the *cervantistas* or even non-experts who truly know the text or perhaps have some notions of how *Don Quixote* has been received over the centuries. They will be delighted by the performance puzzles that this theater company challenges them to recognize and appreciate as they co-participate in creating meanings of the event. Finally, any audience members with a liking for vanguard performances by experimental theater groups should relish an opportunity to enjoy the diverse artistic explorations offered by "The UnPOSSESSED." Vaguely informed yet open-minded spectators, particularly students, can get something out of the performance if helped along by a pre-performance talk, such as the one I witnessed Klein deliver. Double Edge Theatre's production has been

staged in Spain and in many U.S. locations, although most are in the East. It has also been much reviewed with high praise, it appears. Indeed, several reviews are accessible in their entirety or in excerpts on the troupe's website where video clips and a good deal of additional information about training classes and performance schedules is also available (www.doubleedgetheatre.org). As described by spectators from academia and mainly by numerous theater journalists, the professionals seem quite thrilled with "The UnPOSSESSED." For these and so many similar reasons, this would make a wonderful addition to the Chamizal Golden Age Drama Festival.

Sueño. By José Rivera. From *La vida es sueño*. By Pedro Calderón de la Barca. Dir. Joseph Hanreddy, Milwaukee Repertory Theater. Quadracci Powerhouse Theater, Milwaukee, Wisconsin. 11 February 2006. (Play's run: 18 January – 18 February 2006)

CHRISTOPHER WEIMER
Oklahoma State University

José Rivera's *Sueño* can prove an exasperating experience in the theater for those familiar with its source, *La vida es sueño*. There are moments in which this English-language adaptation, commissioned and first produced by Hartford Stage Company in 1998, provides audiences with a relatively faithful rendering of Calderón's *comedia*, but more often it can strike knowledgeable spectators as a distorted fun-house mirror image of the original. Rivera, the Obie Award-winning playwright whose screenplay for the film *The Motorcycle Diaries* earned him an Oscar nomination, begins the play with a prologue set on the night of Segismundo's birth, re-sets the main action in a semi-fictionalized 1635 Spain, incorporates modern slang and profanity, reworks Calderón's eponymous central metaphor into one of existential skepticism, and perhaps

most startling of all, ends the play with Estrella's betrothal to Astolfo and Rosaura's to Segismundo, along with Segismundo's decree that the tower be razed to the ground rather than have it serve anew as a prison. *Sueño* is most definitely *not*, in other words, our parents' or our professors' *La vida es sueño*; it is a revisioning of Calderón's *comedia* which simultaneously pays homage to and challenges its source.

Problematic though Rivera's play might be for some *comediantes*, it is nevertheless undeniably effective theater on its own terms, as spectators discovered at Milwaukee Repertory Theater's production of *Sueño* during the winter of 2006. Fluidly staged by Milwaukee Rep artistic director Joseph Hanreddy, this *Sueño* offered strong performances from several of the company's actors. The clear audience favorite was Torrey Hanson's wry and ultimately moving Clarín, who expertly combined a contemporary clown's props and shtick with a traditional *gracioso*'s knack for laying bare the truth of situations; his final scene was especially effective, as he found the irony in his fatal encounter with the violent demise he had hoped to avoid and then quite literally kicked a handy nearby bucket in his death throes, recalling the sight gag immortalized by Jimmy Durante in Stanley Kramer's *It's a Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad World*. Also outstanding was Tim McCuen Piggee as Clotaldo. Rivera's text gives even greater weight to Clotaldo than the latter pos-

sesses in Calderón's original text; here he serves as the negligent Basilio's privado, ruling in his stead, and has even acted in the past as the king's personal assassin. Piggee brought an appropriately Shakespearean gravitas to this Clotaldo's efforts to resolve his seemingly irreconcilable conflicting obligations.

Calderón's Segismundo and Rosaura are of course notoriously demanding roles, and it must be admitted that neither part is made any easier in *Sueño* by Rivera's decision to mix poetic rhetoric with modern vocabulary and imagery. Reese Madigan offered a strikingly intelligent Segismundo who was nevertheless quite believable when his passions triumphed during Rivera's version of the palace trial, in which Segismundo – to harrowing effect – uses his bare hands to put out the protesting servant's eyes onstage rather than hurling him to his death from Calderón's offstage balcony. Madigan's talents and best efforts, however, were nevertheless occasionally thwarted by the monologues in which, for example, Segismundo had to describe himself as "a secret medical experiment, God's wild new virus kept under strict control" and as "a bag of guts, a storm of chemical responses pretending to have a soul, eating and shitting and waiting to die." Lanise Antoine Shelley's Rosaura seemed even more verbally at sea, unable to reconcile her poetic dialogue, which she tended to deliver in uncomfortably stilted cadences, with the more contemporary passages in

which she revealed her true gender to Clotaldo by confiding that "Though I possess the swords and daggers of a man, I lack his 'ultimate weapon'" and cursed Astolfo with the cry, "I spit in your father's sperm!" Despite this problem, due at least in part to Rivera's text, Shelley did offer audiences the full measure of Rosaura's *varonilidad*, while her wordless cry of grief at discovering Clarín's corpse in the final scene and her closing speech of love to Segismundo were both genuinely affecting.

Among the other performers, Lee E. Ernst seized the opportunities provided by Rivera's Basilio to portray an all-too-human king, one whose noble intentions co-existed with his vanity, his malicious pleasure in disappointing Astolfo and Estrella with the news of their cousin's existence, and even a fleeting moment of lechery ("Come, niece, nephew, embrace the old body. Estrella, a little closer please. A little tighter. Just a bit more."). Rivera's addition of a prologue between Basilio and Clotaldo on the night of the queen's death in childbirth also gave Ernst the chance to show audiences a younger, less vague Basilio before tragedy and age transformed him into the king of the play's main action. Ted Deasy's Astolfo revelled in language as extravagant as his foppish garb; his comic physical cowardice never made him seem so foolish that he ceased to be a legitimate contender for the throne and for Estrella's hand.

Heather Prete likewise made the most of Estrella's mixture of shrewdness and petty vanity.

The evocative sets, including Segismundo's book-filled cell and Basilio's luxuriously-appointed palace, were designed by Michael Frenkel, with lighting by Thomas C. Hase and costumes by Martha Halley. The production used Rivera's 1999 text for the first production rather than the revised version published in 2003; the only serious departure from the original script was the decision to divide the play into two acts rather than Rivera's (and Calderón's) three, splitting Rivera's second act into two parts and taking just one intermission.

. In summary, this production of José Rivera's *Sueño* had many pleasures to offer. Milwaukee Repertory Theater and Joseph Hanreddy deserve applause for bringing Rivera's challenging text, a work by a major contemporary playwright which engages and enters into fierce dialogue with Calderón's canonical text, to the stage.

El rufián Castrucho. By Lope de Vega. Dir. Hugo Medrano. Gala Theatre, Washington, D.C. 19 March 2006. (Play's run: Feb. 23 to March 19, 2006).

MARYRICA ORTIZ LOTTMAN
University of North Carolina, Charlotte

“¡Va agua!” A splash of water thrown from a balcony highlighted one of the many comic moments that delighted audiences of this masterful production of *El rufián Castrucho*. Director Hugo Medrano had prepared the modern audience for this Golden Age prank by showing a character urinating at the end of the previous scene. In this uproarious comedy by Lope de Vega a regiment of Spanish soldiers falls victim to the *rufián* Castrucho. On Medrano's stage a series of tall lances dominated the scene, and from them were hung banners representing military tents. At stage right a tower offered three playing levels: a balcony, a portico, and a staircase. Lanterns hung from the military lances during the night scene set in a garden, but the inclusion a few hanging plants or branches of ivy would have underscored the strong contrast between a garden and a military camp.

The production inventively executed Lope's comic fights and swordplay, of which one particularly hilarious example will be noted: Three rivals drew swords on each other at the same moment so that no matter where each man turned, he faced two lethal enemies and as a consequence, all three were stymied. Soon the chief instigator, Castrucho, was forced to defend himself with a dagger – a much shorter instrument than his opponent's sword and one very appropriate to Castrucho, since a dagger is associated with treachery. Moreover, Castrucho's dagger functioned phallically to suggest that despite his strutting and his violent domination of women, this hustler was not as virile as the soldiers he routinely fleeced.

Among a talented cast, Monalisa Arias stood out as Castrucho's servant Escobarillo, who (we later learn) is actually the spurned damsel Brisena. Boyishly, "Escobarillo" held a straw in her mouth à la the American *pícaro* Huck Finn, and her shambling walk conveyed the self-serving attitude of a *criado* who serves his master to a minimal degree – saving energy while employed by the likes of Castrucho, a capricious and unjust master. Certainly Ernesto J. Concepción as Castrucho was the heart and soul of the production. His performance epitomized the heights a gifted actor can scale when paired with great material and a highly inventive director. Mr. Concepción's animated gestures, facial expressions, and comic body language hypnotized the viewer,

and his quick, rapid-fire voice changes veered from braggart to coward in a comic instant. Castrucho's outlandish gestures were linked one to the other quite naturally. The actor was not performing a series of "bits," but rather he inhabited the character and made this Golden Age stereotype truly come alive. The fluidity of his movements harmonized with the overall conception of Castrucho as devilish and serpentine. Each eyebrow rose to a hornlike peak, as did the center points of his mustache. With sinuous grace, he slunk around the stage and slyly tried to escape a sword's sharp edge by sliding his feet across the floor and his neck along the length of the blade. At the close of the final act, Castrucho's gestures artfully commented on the less-than-blissful ending of this comedy. Castrucho marries the lovely Fortuna, but he has beaten her in the past. Among the newly wedded pairs, the lieutenant seems happy to honor the woman he once jilted, but the sergeant gives his hand to his bride only under military orders. Moreover, while Castrucho's appointment as an officer means he will no longer need to live off the income earned through Fortuna's beauty, one can only imagine what chaos and corruption will further plague an army where Castrucho gives orders.

While Castrucho proved a fully developed character on stage, his female counterpart, the elderly bawd Teodora, was conceived too broadly. The production focused on the light, comic elements of

this character, but Lope's Teodora – like any Celestinesque character – contains more than a few base notes of greed, lust, and corrosive evil. In the text Castrucho and Teodora act as protagonist and antagonist and pattern themselves after Celestina and Sempronio. The portrayal of Teodora should be based on some physical strength and a great deal of *astucia*. Since Alicia Kaplan, the actress playing this crone, was very slender, she would have done well to stand taller, taking full advantage of her height, rather than walk with a pronounced stoop. Often she was too jittery for the sake of impersonating old age. Simply standing still would have conveyed more strength and confidence. Lope's Teodora manipulates Fortuna and battles with Castrucho for the profits that this young woman can generate. The real Teodora would have tried to project confidence and strength despite her small stature.

The Gala Theatre has gone to great lengths to make Baroque theater more accessible to both modern Spanish-speakers and to those who must rely on the English-language supertitles projected above the stage. While the lengthy, scene-by-scene summary provided in the program is to be appreciated by students and scholars, both Spanish- and English-speaking theatergoers would be better served by the inclusion of a general summary for each act. These could be supplemented by photographs of the principal actors in costume and identified with the char-

acters they portray. A brief explanation of comic character types, such as the celestinesque Teodora, might also be helpful. Spectators who must rely on supertitles would be well advised to sit in the top rows of the theater from where their field of vision can encompass both the English translation above the stage and the action transpiring below.

The soldiers' ranks were confusing during the first half of the play. No doubt these distinctions would have been evident in the *Siglo de Oro* and they can help modern audiences more easily identify and individualize these characters. While even today not all of us can differentiate military officers at a glance, the theatrical costumes of past centuries let us mark the ranks with visual cues that a modern audience can digest in an instant. In costuming a large number of soldiers it is best to follow the general rule that the higher the rank, the gaudier the costume and the greater the number of accessories (hats, feathers, sashes, gloves).

Despite these minor faults, this production must rank among the play's most graceful and professional, for it fills its audience with hilarity.

El rufián Castrucho, by Lope de Vega. Dir. Hugo Medrano. English translation Heather McKay. GALA Teatro Hispano, Washington, DC. March 12, 2006 (run February 23 – March 19, 2006).

ROBERT S. STONE
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“Written in the last years of the sixteenth century, in Lope’s youth, and influenced by... Italian renaissance comedy, this work submerges us in a world of eroticism, sensuality and carnality, very different from Lope’s later plays.” So writes director Hugo Medrano in the program notes to his latest Spanish-language production. *El rufián Castrucho* is in effect a sex farce, a sort of inverse *Othello* in which a slattern (Fortuna, passively yet effectively portrayed by Emilia Sims) is made to seem virginal in order to pique male passions. Castrucho, played energetically by the well-known Puerto Rican actor Ernesto Concepción, is a sort of cowardly vaudevilian Iago, and Spanish officers awaiting their orders in Italy are his dupes. The topsy-turvy nature of the play is encoded in the name Castrucho, which at once implies emasculation and refers to the *castrum*, Latin for an army field camp.

The GALA Theatre's staging of the play conjures this camp with a minimalist set, a good counterpoint to the plot's complexity and the protagonist's verbosity. A few well-placed poles and triangular cloths become tents, lances or pennants, as the action requires. (To the present-day viewer they also add to the carnivalesque atmosphere of the drama.) This is not a play about the measured wielding of power, but of male desire run amok. While this is a leitmotif in Lope, the weddings that ultimately re-establish order feel more highly artificial than normal and serve mainly to underscore the weak character of the officers involved. It is possible to see this play as a broad critique of Spain's imperial ambitions, but that does not always come through in this production, which is primarily (and for the most part, successfully) an entertainment.

When men are fickle and women instigators, Lope suggests, the empire is on shaky ground. The only fortunes that appear to be on the rise, ironically, are those of Castrucho and Fortuna. She is passed up the ranks from foppish sergeant to slovenly lieutenant to dandy captain to self-important colonel, and finally to a feckless general. None of these in fact conquers her, although three are led to believe so through Castrucho's sleight of hand. In general, the colorfulness of the period costuming helps to distinguish secondary characters such as the officers, who might otherwise become lost in the *enredo*. As for the prime movers of the action,

Castrucho consistently wears red beneath the cape behind which he often cowers. Teodora is always in black, looking like an avenging Catholic schoolmarm, and Fortuna wears wedding-day white. The final tragedy beneath the requisite comic ending is that Fortuna, having found out that her true love is a woman in disguise, is married to Castrucho, the man who spends much of the play abusing her and stealing everything she has.

For a play set in the midst of war, it is remarkable that there are no pitched battles in *El rufián Castrucho*, on or offstage. All conflicts are petty rivalries over wine, women and gambling, and all anger is fueled by rage as opposed to principle of any kind. In fact the longest (and funniest) speeches of the play are those in which insults – “*todo palabras y viento*” - are traded. In pursuing their personal desires, embodied by Fortuna, the officers in this play have forgotten obligations to lovers they think they have left behind. In order to ply a well-worn trade, Fortuna is made to follow these men into the field by her “mother” Teodora and her “chulo” Castrucho, i.e., her Celestina and her *alcahuete*. But we see two abandoned women take matters into their own hands and pose as male servants in order to win back the noblemen who have dishonored them. It is a pyrrhic victory pulled off with the unwitting assistance of Castrucho, who for once is nonplussed when he thinks that the offi-

cers don Héctor and don Álvaro have spent the night happily in the arms of servant boys.

If Lope wants to douse too-fervent patriotic and priapic passions, there can be no mistaking the symbolism of the scene in which the crone Teodora, played with delightful disgust by Alicia Kaplan, empties her chamber pot out of the window and onto the head of one of Fortuna's many suitors. In no uncertain terms the play comments on misspent Spanish energies in which the hot pursuit of a fallen woman takes the place of any honorable cause. The ensemble plays out this drama with verve, subterfuge and good humor befitting the picaresque nature of the title character.

Staged in the recently and lovingly restored Tivoli Theater in the heart of Hispanic Washington, DC, the production features a simultaneous superscript translation that is helpful to audience members whose Spanish is less than perfect. The translator, however, misses a couple of comic opportunities, for example when "*multiplicar*" is rendered as "to do sums" instead of "to multiply." The more obvious choice has the advantage of preserving a sexual double meaning that Lope probably intended. Quibbling aside, however, the original score by Turkish composer Fahir Atakoglu is uniformly excellent, creating a tragicomic ambience that would suit most any *comedia* of the age.

El Quijote. By Miguel de Cervantes. Dir. by Jorge Alí Triana, Adap. by Santiago García. Repertorio Español, Gramercy Arts Theatre, New York. May 12, 2006. (Play's New York debut: February 2, 2006.)

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Repertorio Español's *El Quijote* dazzles viewers with colorful costumes, an energetic pace, and fine acting. Santiago Garcia's adaptation of Cervantes' classic distinguishes itself from others by forgoing the well-known windmill episode and other misadventures from the first part of the *Quijote* to focus almost exclusively on the second part of the novel. This makes perfect sense: the 1615 *Quijote* is easily adapted to the stage as it is the more theatrical and cohesive of the two parts of the masterpiece. Jorge Alí Triana takes full advantage of the theatrics of part two to make performance itself a theme of his production. We witness here, as in the novel, a variety of characters engaged in staging an alternate reality.

It is fitting that the play should begin with the episode of the *barco encantado*, the very chapter in which Don Quijote proclaims what is to become a

unifying theme of the second part of the book: "todo este mundo es máquinas y trazas, contrarias unas de otras" (II, 29). While Garcia's adaptation does not include these words, Alí Triana makes wonderful use of stage machinations to bring the scene to life. Dry ice and a long sheet wrapped tightly around an actress create the illusion of a boat, complete with mermaid prow ornament, gliding across a misty river.

Though not always following Cervantes' chronology, the action moves rapidly through some of the most dramatic episodes of book two: the lion adventure, the Duke and Duchess's staging of Merlin's appearance, Sancho's brief term as governor, and the encounter with the actors of *Las cortes de la muerte*. Emyliano Santa Cruz plays the bumbling, refrán-spewing Sancho expertly and with great stamina, as he never leaves the stage. Francisco Reyes portrays the Duke with refreshingly understated affectation and haughtiness. One of today's finest mature Hispanic stage actors, Ricardo Barber is captivating in the title role. Whether the scene calls for raving lunacy or thoughtful contemplation, Barber's gravelly baritone weaves a spell over the audience and commands the entire space.

To make Cervantes accessible to an audience perhaps unfamiliar with the episodes presented, Alí Triana emphasizes action and movement. Aided by Sylvia Sierra and Yanko Bakulic's choreography, he creates vibrant stage pictures and raucous fight

scenes. The ensemble seems to use every inch of the rather cramped performance space of the Gramercy Arts Theatre, from the extreme backstage to the aisles. The chaotic scene depicting the battle for Sancho's *ínsula* is spectacular: the smoke-filled, body-strewn stage recalls *Les Misérables*, but is filled with slapstick humor as well. The choreography also shines in the spellbinding scene in which Merlín shows Don Quijote the enchanted Dulcinea dancing poignantly beneath a shroud, and in the comic transition in which the Duke's servants dance jovially to Renaissance music around the starving Sancho, tempting him with platters of food.

Alí Triana further reaches out to the audience by making the abstract visual. The Princess Micomicona, for example, explains the plight of her kingdom to Don Quijote and Sancho by referring to a moving scroll painted with figures depicting the giant Pandofilando terrorizing her people. Actors pose as living puppets to dramatize the puzzling case presented to Sancho in which he must decide if a man should be hanged or acquitted for his prognostication. The director also adds modern touches to guide the audience's interpretation of certain characters. The arrogant Duke, sporting shades and a maroon-purple jacket over a white shirt with ruffles at the chest and cuffs, looks more like something out of an Austin Powers movie or the lead singer of a retro rock band than a noble of seventeenth-century Spain. The *labradoras* that Sancho presents

to Don Quijote as Dulcinea and her damas are portrayed as prostitutes in heavy makeup, fishnet stockings, and corsets. This enables an audience unfamiliar with the stereotype of the seventeenth-century villana to recognize immediately the linguistic and social distance that separates Don Quijote from the three ladies, without which the irony of the scene would be lost.

The play does not end with Alonso Quijano's recovery of his sanity, condemnation of the books of chivalry, and tranquil death. Rather, the action returns to the end of the first book, where we see a wildly defiant Quijote, ranting through the bars of his cage as he is carted home through the trickery of his village priest and barber. Are we to take this Quijote as hero or madman? The protagonist's words reflect a stoic heroism as he tells the audience not to cry for him and promises to return stronger than ever. Yet Barber's desperate, hysterical tone and wild eyes suggest the madness of a caged animal. Some viewers may leave the theater dissatisfied or confused by the darkness and apparent ambivalence of the ending. Yet, perhaps there is purpose in this inconclusiveness: Quijote, like the imagination, is capable of both triumphant inspiration and destructive delusion, neither of which is quite capable of overcoming the other.

The Constant Prince. By Calderón de la Barca. Directed by Alexander Zeldin. Adapted by the Etha Theatre Company with Michael Lasslie. Performed by the Etha Theatre Company. Oxford Playhouse, Oxford, UK. July 14, 2006 (Play's run July 13-15, 2006).

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The Etha Theatre Company went to Egypt to rehearse their English-language production of Calderón's *The Constant Prince*. They worked with local performers, artists, and musicians, then premiered the play at El-Sawy Culture Wheel in Cairo on September 10, 2005. The play was performed in various venues in Cairo and Alexandria before opening in London at the Arcola Theatre on November 21, 2005. The Etha Theatre Company revived the production (with some cast changes) at the Oxford Playhouse in Oxford with a combination of British actors and Egyptian musicians.

The Constant Prince is an interesting choice for a joint English and Egyptian production, since the play depicts a war between the Portuguese and the Moors for the city of Ceuta. Prince Enrique is taken prisoner by the Moors, who offer to exchange his freedom for the Christian-held city of Ceuta. He

refuses to be ransomed, if the price of his freedom means that Ceuta's churches will be converted into mosques. His suffering and martyrdom for Catholicism grant him the title of "the constant prince."

In the Etha Theatre production, the Arabs were as honest, as devoted to their faith, and as passionate in their suffering as the Europeans. This interpretation makes the audience question Enrique's sacrifice to save Ceuta from falling out Christian hands and into Muslim hands. If the Muslims are morally equal to the Christians, then his suffering and death are unnecessary and meaningless. Both the Moors and the Christians seem to be misguided in their hatred for each others' religion in this production of *The Constant Prince*.

The production gave the audience a clue that this would not be a traditional interpretation of the script as soon as they entered the theatre. Instead of a front curtain, they could see the safety curtain (clearly labeled in capital letters: SAFETY CURTAIN). This safety curtain was also lowered between the acts and at the end of the performance. Presumably, this was a Brechtian devise to remind us that we were in a theatre and to distance the audience from the action of the play, so we would think about, rather than empathize with, the characters' emotional and physical suffering.

As the house lights were lowered, faint Arabic music could be heard. As the safety curtain rose, the music became louder, and we could see two musi-

cians in traditional Arab dress. One played two traditional drums (a tabla and a douf) and the other played four different traditional wooden wind instruments (an arghoul, a kawala, a mizmar, and a ney) at various times during the show. At the start of the performance, they played while the cast of six actors danced in isolation. Each of their dances seemed to be a combination of traditional Arab gestures and Martha Graham style contractions and expansions.

The dancing ended and the dialogue began, but the music did not stop. Music continued to be played underneath most of the dialogue—sometimes just the beating of a drum, sometimes a melody from the wind player. These Egyptian musicians contributed greatly to the effectiveness of the scenes, adding rhythm and emotional variety to the dialogue. They also served to remind the audience that Muslims were present, watching, and judging the action as well as Christians.

The costumes for the Moors had an Arabic flavor as the costumes for the Portuguese suggested Renaissance Europe, but there was little attempt at historical accuracy. For example, Don Enrique, the constant prince of the title, wore a loose white shirt and vest with modern shorts with pockets like contemporary cargo pants sold at Old Navy. The combination of period silhouettes and modern articles of clothing suggested that the action of the play should

be re-interpreted from a modern, multicultural point of view.

At the front of the stage, visible even when the safety curtain was lowered, was a raked platform. This black platform was covered with a thin uniform layer of white sand. Many of the scenes were played on this platform so that the actors' bare feet messed up the formerly pristine sand. Perhaps this was a metaphor for their messed up lives, or for how religious prejudice disrupts the world.

The six actors each portrayed a major character and most of them doubled as minor characters (the women sometimes doubling as male characters). The acting style was very intense and presentational. Most of the speeches were delivered directly towards the audience, even if the character was supposed to be talking to someone else on stage. The actors tended to start their scenes and speeches at a very high emotional level and then maintain that intensity throughout the entire scene or speech. Although this style was very emotionally engaging at first, the lack of variety became monotonous. Scenes and speeches did not build to climaxes, so the performance lacked any sense of a forward progression.

Although I admired the actors' abilities to reach such heights of emotion and intensity, every scene and speech seemed to end exactly as it began, as if nothing had happened, as if they suffered in vain. In fact, the characters all seemed to feel so sorry for

themselves that I found I had little sympathy for their self-pity. Perhaps the point of this production was that their suffering, caused by enmity between Christians and Muslims, was due to religious and racial prejudice, and therefore was meaningless and unnecessary.

El Burlador de Sevilla. By Tirso de Molina. Dir. Pep Sanchís Ventos, Aula de Teatro de la Universidad de Valencia. VII Xornaes de teatru na cai [Seventh Festival of Street Theater] July 12 – July 16 2006. Plaza de España, Avilés (Asturias), Spain. July 16, 2006 (Play's run: July 5 – July 24, 2006; on tour, one-day performance in Avilés at 8:00 pm).

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As July's Celtic music festival in Avilés, a small industrial and fishing town in the North of Spain, already enjoys international prestige, the local government has planned to extend its summer offering of cultural festivals. This series of events, which begins in mid-July and ends on the eve of the patron's festivities (Saint Augustine, on 28th August), includes the International Chess Open (second week of August), the gastronomic Festival of Beer (third week of August) and the popular Festival of Street Theater, which celebrated its seventh anniversary this July in the town's main plaza as usual. The purposes of this free Street Theater festival are, on the one hand, to present the *avilesinos* and *avilesinas*, citizens of Avilés, with a number of new shows that are seldom performed for mainstream audi-

ences, and, on the other hand, to support independent theatrical productions. This year the program was formed by five small companies, coming from inside and outside Asturias, which entertained children and adults with the following spectacles: "Hortzmuga Teatro" (from the Basque Country) on 12th July with a performance, entitled *Zirco Iluna*, about the retiring members of a circus company who remember their last days of glory; "Nun Tris" (from Asturias) on 13th July with a spectacular performance (with fireworks), entitled *Brenga*, about several elements of Asturian mythology; "Factoría Mascaró" (from Catalonia) on 14th July with a fresh and dynamic dancing performance entitled *¡Ay, que me mojo!*; "Markeliñe" (also from the Basque Country) on 15th July with a comic night show (with fireworks) about the hard life of miners; and the "Aula de Teatro de la Universidad de Valencia" on 16th July with a new version of Tirso de Molina's *El Burlador de Sevilla* as part of their tour entitled "Las rutas de la Barraca 2006."

With "Las rutas de la Barraca 2006" the students of the University of Valencia seek to follow the steps of the university theatrical company that the Spanish poet and playwright Federico García Lorca founded seventy-five years ago to tour small and isolated towns around the Iberian peninsula during the summer season with the greatest plays of the Golden Age. Lorca believed that the Spanish theater needed a renewal of actors (not necessarily profes-

sional) and another system of production (different from the one used in the traditional *corrales de comedia*). Under Lorca's direction, from July 1932 to April 1936 "La Barraca" traveled the breadth of Spain on a truck and a bus carrying with them every piece of their stage, illumination system and wardrobe. "La Barraca" amazed so many Spaniards that Lorca's company gained legendary status and is still today considered one of the most outstanding projects ever produced in Spain. "La Barraca" had a total of eight programs, including Calderón's *La vida es sueño*, Lope's *Fuenteovejuna* and *El caballero de Olmedo*, Juan de Encina's *Égloga de Plácida y Victoriano*, Tirso's *El Burlador de Sevilla* and Cervantes's *Entremeses*, which was brought to Avilés in August 1932 as part of their tour around the provinces of Galicia and Asturias. In July 2006, a rejuvenated "La Barraca" has come back to the town of Avilés with the same adventurous and unselfish spirit of the 1930s. The group is now formed by the students of the "Aula de Teatro de la Universidad de Valencia," including Anna Mari, Dani Tormo, Laura Lara, José Vila Belda, Josep L. Peris, Lorena Jiménez, Isaac Albarracín, Sergio Moreno, Severino Montero and Miguel Vinyoles. This time, however, they brought their adaptation of Tirso's *El Burlador de Sevilla* (approximately 80 minutes long), which they have been performing around the provinces of Galicia, Asturias, Cantabria and Aragón thanks to the support of the Sociedad Esta-

tal de Conmemoraciones Culturales (SECC), the University of Carlos III, the University of Murcia, the University of Santiago de Compostela, the University of Valencia and the Festival de Teatro Clásico of Almagro.

Unlike many other cultural projects with important institutional support, which normally drives theatrical companies into extravagance, the “Aula de Teatro de la Universidad de Valencia” has wisely decided to honor Lorca’s austerity. For example, swords were made of wood, costumes (designed by Antonio Moreno) were simple and without any kind of adornment (only the kings of Castile and Naples wore a crown made of thin cardboard), and, most importantly, the furniture on stage was kept to a minimum. In this sense, only in the scene of the wedding between Batricio and Aminta a few chairs and a small table were used in order to create the illusion of the ceremony reception. These pieces of furniture were brought back to stage on Act Three for the scene where Don Juan has dinner with the ghost of the Commander of Calatrava, Don Gonzalo de Ulloa. The only other scene with furniture belongs to Act One, in which a ladder (covered with a piece of red cloth) imitated the shape of the King of Naples’s royal throne. This austerity also affected the scenery, for which a total of four curtains with drawings were used to recreate the location of the scene. Each curtain had the name of the town where the action takes place: namely, Naples, Tarragona,

Seville and Dos Hermanas. In relation to this, the company, or Mercedes López as designer of the sets, made two mistakes. On the one hand, they substituted Dos Hermanas with Lebrija in the fourth curtain as the place where the wedding between Batricio and Aminta is celebrated. In the text, Lebrija is, however, the name of the town where Don Juan is exiled. On the other hand, the running curtains were not very practical and they would get tangled in the middle of the performance not covering the next scenery:



Fig 1. Act One: Don Juan, Catalinón and Tisbea in Tarragona (from left to right). Photography by Jorge Abril Sánchez.

As for the piece of stage machinery that should take Don Juan into the Underworld in Act Three,

the company successfully decided to substitute it by using a visual image instead. When Don Juan shook the commander's ghost's hand, the trickster of Seville was pulled and hidden behind the long gown the ghost (standing on the table formerly used in the wedding celebration) was wearing. This piece of cloth covered the table and made the audience believe that the ghost was levitating in the air. Kept behind the gown, Don Juan was invisible and thought to have been sent to Hell. The commander's ghost, for his part, stayed on stage, thus avoiding condemnation, which has caused great discussion among literary critics.



Fig 2. Act Three: Servants, Don Juan, the commander's ghost and Catalinón in Seville (from left to right). Photography by Jorge Abril Sánchez.

Finally, the company's innovations did not affect the musical content of the play. In relation to this, a group of talented musicians and singers did a good job in making the scenes pleasant with flutes, kettledrums and oboes. The only problem was due to the poor acoustic conditions of a noisy open-air plaza at 8 pm. Because of this, the actors put too much emphasis on being heard by the audience, thus giving priority to speaking aloud, rather than to keeping the rhyme. From the seating area, there were a few times it was hard to understand the lyrics or the recitation of the verse. When sudden movements or races took place on stage, the noise was even worse. Given that microphones were not carried by actors, but placed in front of the stage, the actors' steps distorted their speech.

In spite of all these defects, typical of street theater, the performance was still entertaining. The actors (all amateur) were enthusiastic and disciplined to play tribute to Tirso de Molina's *El Burlador de Sevilla*. The main plaza of Avilés was crowded during the hour and twenty minutes of the show. "Las rutas de la Barraca 2006" is an example of how a theatrical production does not need a big budget to successfully communicate with an audience, who unanimously awarded them with a final ovation. "Las rutas de la Barraca 2006" has recovered Lorca's spirit to tour again the lands of Spain showing that our Golden Age theater belongs to all of us.

Book Reviews

Vélez de Guevara, Luís. *La mayor desgracia de Carlos Quinto*. Ed. William R. Manson y C. George Peale. Hispanic Monographs. Newark, Delaware: Juan de la Cuesta, 2002. Paper. 458 pp.

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Los avatares por los que ha pasado a lo largo de la historia *La mayor desgracia de Carlos Quinto* de Luís Vélez de Guevara, justificaban hace tiempo un estudio documentado y extenso de la obra. Esto es precisamente lo que William Manson y George Peale nos ofrecen en esta edición crítica publicada por Juan de la Cuesta.

La obra de Vélez fue representada el 28 de Mayo de 1623, por la compañía de Antonio de Prado, en el Palacio Real. Hubo otras representaciones en los años 1626, 1627 y 1634. Es a partir de estas fechas cuando comienza la confusión entre la obra de Vélez y otra de título muy parecido: *La mayor hazaña de Carlos Quinto* de Diego Jiménez y Enciso, que apareció en el año 1625. La similitud de los títulos y las fechas de creación de ambas obras han creado bastante confusión en los catálogos de obras teatrales publicados; ya que las noticias documentales de

la comedia para aquellos años presentan títulos como: *La primera parte de Carlos V* (Madrid, 28 y 30 –V-1623), *La primera y segunda parte del Emperador* (Madrid, 19 y 22 –VII- 1626), *La primera parte del Emperador* (Valencia, 13 –III- 1627; Madrid, 22 –XI- 1634), *La segunda parte de Carlos V* (Madrid, 5 –XII- 1634). Para complicar un poco más la cosa el texto de Vélez apareció en la *Parte 24*, extravagante, de las *Comedias de Lope de Vega* que se publicó en Zaragoza en el año 1633. La edición que Marcelino Menéndez Pelayo hizo de las obras de Lope de Vega para la Real Academia Española, incluye el texto de Vélez como si fuera de Lope, aumentando así la confusión.

La mayor desgracia de Carlos Quinto recoge dos hechos diferentes del Emperador: el fallido intento de capturar Argel en el año 1541, y la campaña de Túnez llevada a cabo en 1535. Los dos primeros actos están centrados en la expedición a Argel, que históricamente acaba en fracaso, debido en parte a las inclemencias del tiempo. El tercer acto lo dedica Vélez a la campaña de Túnez, desviando las tropas del Emperador hacia este lugar, cuya conquista logran. De esta manera transforma una derrota en una conquista inesperada.

En el estudio introductorio de Harry Sieber se expone el contexto histórico en que tanto la obra de Vélez (1623) como la de Enciso (1625) fueron escritas, así como las fuentes de inspiración: *La Historia de la vida y hechos del emperador Carlos V* de

fray Prudencio de Sandoval, de la que Vélez incluyó pasajes enteros; y la *Topografía o descripción de Argel y sus habitantes y costumbres* escrita en 1612 por el doctor Antonio Sosa. Sieber apunta también cómo algunos detalles que aparecen en la obra de Vélez, tales como la campana de Velilla, la mención a la amenaza de Francia, la discusión entre el Duque de Alba y Cortés, pueden ser indicios de que Vélez pretendía apoyar, con esta obra, la política del Conde-Duque de Olivares.

Manson y Peale han trazado los orígenes, vericuetos y autoría de *La mayor desgracia de Carlos Quinto* basándose en los manuscritos existentes y en los estudios de Morley y Bruerton. El principal manuscrito es el llamado *MSI*, que se encuentra en la Biblioteca Apostólica Vaticana y fue el utilizado por la compañía de Antonio de Prado para su estreno, por lo que conserva las anotaciones para su puesta en escena. Así mismo los editores cotejan el manuscrito *S*, que es una suelta publicada sin fecha o lugar, del cual existen dos ejemplares: uno en la Biblioteca Nacional en Madrid y otro en la Biblioteca Británica. Estos dos manuscritos mencionados son bastante similares y los editores los usan, conjuntamente, para contrastarlos con el texto publicado en la *Parte 24* de las *Comedias de Lope de Vega*, el cual aparece con la sigla *P*.

Los editores analizan los méritos de cada uno de los manuscritos y documentos utilizados en la edición, así como el parentesco entre la comedia de

Vélez y la de Enciso, comparando los temas tratados por ambos. Esta parte puede crear algo de confusión en el lector, pues *La mayor hazaña de Carlos Quinto* de Enciso, trata principalmente de la abdicación del Emperador y su retiro en Yuste; mientras que *La mayor desgracia de Carlos Quinto* de Vélez, se refiere a las expediciones de Argel y Túnez.

Tal vez el mayor logro del estudio de Peale y Manson sea editar los manuscritos *MSI* y *S* paralelamente al documento *P*. De esta manera, quien esté interesado en conocer en profundidad y detalle la obra, puede ir comparando las variaciones existentes en las versiones. Las notas a pie de página son abundantes y detalladas, constituyendo una excelente fuente de información para estudios más detallados sobre *La mayor desgracia de Carlos Quinto*. Así mismo, la bibliografía que acompaña, es de gran ayuda, tanto por su extensión como por su calidad. En las últimas páginas del libro aparece un *Índice de voces comentadas* de utilidad a la hora de localizar rápidamente nombres, lugares y personajes, dentro de la obra.

William Manson y George Peale han realizado un gran trabajo presentando con minuciosidad y rigor una comedia áurea sobre la que existía bastante confusión y desconocimiento.

Voros, Sharon and Ricardo Sáez, eds. *'Aquel Breve Sueño.'* *Dreams on the Early Modern Stage*. New Orleans: University Press of the South, 2004. Paper. VIII + 395 pp.

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The ten essays in this compilation, gathered and arranged by Sharon Voros and Ricardo Sáez, offer different approaches to the topos of dreams in the Spanish *comedia*. The editors seek, according to Voros, to “open a critical dialog across borders” and inspire new studies on the role of dreams and “dream discourse” on the seventeenth-century Spanish stage. The essays selected treat an array of plays by both major and minor playwrights and employ approaches varying in focus from textual analysis to speculative recommendations for performance. Context for these studies ranges from treatises and depictions of dreams in Classical, medieval and Renaissance sources to contemporary psychoanalysis and dream theory from Freud to Lacan. The first six essays, placed under the heading, “Oneric Discourse on the Early Modern Spanish Stage,” explore dreams as prophesy, dramatic motif, character, and as a vehicle for moral discourse. The

second grouping, "Approaches to *La vida es sueño*," includes four essays devoted to different aspects of Calderón's famous play. The division of the book into these two sections, and the arrangement of the essays in several additional subsections ("The Prophetic Dream," "The Performance Dream") represent the editors' attempt to provide coherence to the variety of topics and approaches in these essays. With this scaffolding as a guide, the book as a whole offers an introduction to the many-faceted role of dreams in the Spanish *comedia*. Considered singly, the individual essays offer useful insights to specific plays and playwrights.

In "El sueño profético de Lope de Vega: De Felipe II, Felipe III, Rodrigo y el perro alano," Belén Atienza approaches Lope's *El último godo* (also titled, *El postrer godo de España*) in terms of the dream of *el perro alano*, which in the first act of the play appears to the Gothic King Rodrigo as a warning of the Moorish invasion of Spain. As context Atienza sketches the historical and ideological background for the interpretation of dreams in the seventeenth-century as well as the traditional account of Rodrigo in the *romancero*. She extends her analysis of the play to its contemporary political context and speculates as to Lope's opinion of Philip II, Philip III and the future of Spain. The prophetic dream in this play thus assumes a dual function, first as a dramatic device and second as a

means of expressing the playwright's political views.

"El sueño présago en *El nacimiento de Montesiños* de Guillén de Castro y su fuente romancística," by Charo Moreno, also focuses on the *romancero* as a source for dreams in *comedias*. Moreno explains how Guillén de Castro's play incorporates the dream episode from the *romance*, "Muchas veces oi decir..." and joins it with an interpretation of the dream derived from established tradition and reflected in another *romance*, "Doña Alda." The analysis demonstrates how poetic formulas within the *romancero* flowed one into another, and it contributes additional evidence of the ways in which Guillén de Castro transformed material from this tradition into dramas.

The third essay, *¿Sueño o vivo?: The Dream as Motif and Dramatic Device in Calderón*," by Ezra Engling, considers the role of dreams in the plot structure of several of Calderón's plays, including *El médico de su honra*, *El pintor de su deshonra*, and *La vida es sueño*, and reaffirms the playwright's keen interest in the workings of the human psyche.

In one of the more intriguing and original essays of the collection, "The Metatheatrical Function of Dream Sequences in the *Comedia*," Ellen Frye argues that dreams in plays such as Calderón's *El médico de su honra*, *El pintor de su deshonra*, and *La vida es sueño*, in which characters experience

different forms of dream, sleep, or trance, serve a metatheatrical function, since they "enlarge the dramatic space" and create "an intermediary level of illusion and reality" (137). Such "dream sequences" also help establish and maintain the relationship between spectators and actors, since they give spectators privileged access to the minds of characters on stage, and they often serve a primary role in determining the course of the dramatic action.

Rogelio Miñana's essay, "El sueño como héroe: *Sueños hay que verdad son* (1670) de Calderón," also offers insights useful for understanding the aesthetics of seventeenth-century theater. Miñana describes the use of dreams in this *auto* as a dramatic motif that permits the playwright to explore simultaneously the true nature of life as well as the difficulty of distinguishing reality from illusion. Linking dreams with imagination, a faculty of the soul, Miñana sketches an aesthetic dynamic that ultimately associates dreams with poetry's potential for expressing truth. He affirms that in *Sueños hay*, Calderón "está presentando ante los ojos de teólogos, moralistas, gobernantes, y público en general, un poderoso mensaje subliminal en defensa del teatro y de la ficción, y ... lo está haciendo fundamentalmente a través de la figura del Sueño" (155-56). Miñana closes his article with some speculative, yet intriguing, suggestions for staging this *auto* for modern audiences.

In "Leonor de Cueva y Silva (1611-1705) y el discurso onírico en *La firmeza en la ausencia*," Sharon Voros considers moral, prophetic, and feminist elements in the "dream discourse" of the only woman playwright considered in this collection. Voros situates Cueva y Silva's play within the context of Classical and Renaissance treatments of dreams, and she finds particular similarities to both Lope de Vega and Quevedo in the use of dreams as a vehicle for social and political satire. Notable in this playwright, however, is the particular application of these conventions to question the canonical assumptions about the authority of patriarchy and the inferiority of women compared with men. In *La firmeza en la ausencia*, Voros finds that "El sueño como discurso político aparece como una retórica de resistencia en contra del abuso del poder" (182).

In the second section of the collection, Nelson López's "El gesto y el movimiento en *La vida es sueño*: metodología, praxis, y relectura," offers practical suggestions for the study of Calderón's play in the university classroom. He steers his discussion away from literary analysis and toward techniques of staging that might help bring the play to life for students. Creative and sensitive to detail, Nelson's vision of the play also tends toward the speculative and the prescriptive, drawing as much on his experience as actor and director as on staging suggested in the text itself. Nonetheless, his suggestions offer interesting and potentially useful

teaching techniques to make the play accessible to US university students.

Cristian Andrès's "La metáfora del *Theatrum Mundi* en Pierre Boaistuau y Calderón en *La vida es sueño* y *El gran teatro del mundo*" compares Boais-tuau's use of the topos "the world as stage" in his treatise *Le Theatre du monde* (1558, translated to Castilian in 1569), with Calderón's *La vida es sueño* and *El gran teatro del mundo*. A Calvinist Huguenot, Boaistuau depicts human experience in terms of the miseries one suffers, a theme which resonates with Segismundo's monolog in the first act of *La vida es sueño*, where he laments "el delito mayor del hombre es haber nacido." The combination of the topos *Theatrum Mundi* with that of *sueño* and the catholic perspective on the role of good works and free will are unique to Calderón, yet Andrès finds enough similarities with Boaistuau to suggest his work as the point of departure for Calderón's play.

Ricardo Sáez's, "Estudio del primer monólogo de Segismundo de *La vida es sueño*: Jornada I, Escena II," is the most compelling article of the collection. Comprehensive in breadth and exhaustive in detail, it provides a definitive explication of the six *décimas* that comprise what is perhaps the most famous passage of Calderón's play. With a preliminary glance at previous commentary, including the anti-Calderonian tradition fomented by Menéndez y Pelayo, Sáez situates the passage in relation

to its poetic, rhetorical, and ideological antecedents: Aristotle, Aquinas, Petrarch, Garcilaso, Lope, Scalliger. He then explores the poetic text in minute detail, showing the integration of meter, rhyme, rhetorical structure, logic, theology, and theatricality. The complex harmony of parallels, contrasts, sonorities, and asymmetrical tensions emerges as Sáez opens the passage stanza by stanza to find "una escritura cuyos recursos y resortes culteranos no logran ahogar el lirismo patético ni la densidad dramática del monólogo que tematiza en puros términos dramáticos la noción del libre albedrío (307). Segismundo's monologue, giving voice to the struggle of passion against reason, "la intensidad de los sentimientos frente a la densidad del concepto," seeks to *move* the spectator with a dramatic version of the baroque *concordia discors*.

In another intriguing and well-documented essay, "Représenter l'institution du prince: Dramatisation d'un *topos* dans *La vida es sueño* de Pedro Calderón de la Barca," Christine Aguilar-Adan addresses theatrical writing and the representation of politics, literature and power. Questioning the view that Calderón's plays represent a positive image of absolute royal power, she examines *La vida es sueño* against the background of political treatises on monarchy and the divine right of kings in sixteenth and seventeenth-century Spain. For her approach to Calderón, she also outlines notions about the didactic function of dramatic poetry

drawn from debates about the political tragedies of Corneille. *La vida es sueño*, she suggests, rather than presenting a definitive position, offers a sort of "political meditation," a hypothetical case that reveals the problems and contradictions inherent in the institution of monarchy, the aporia, in other words, that the treatises and manuals for princes do not solve. The play problematizes the concepts of royal succession by inheritance, the king's responsibility for the public good, the basis of royal power, and natural law, and it dares to open such unspeakable themes as regicide, parricide, sedition, tyrannicide, rebellion, and civil war. *La vida es sueño* deals less with monarchy itself, Aguilar-Adan argues, than with the "art of kingship," and whatever solutions the play may offer to the problems it raises lie not in the political institution of monarchy but in the acquisition of virtue by the prince.

The quality as well as the focus and approach of articles in this collection vary. Some irregularities in formatting appear as well as some blemishes overlooked in proofreading. Most of the articles are well crafted, however, and several stand out for exceptional scholarship (Voros, Andrès, Sáez, Aguilar-Adan) and for original and provocative ideas that should prove useful to other researchers (Frye, Miñana, López). Taken together, the studies in this collection provide new ideas, promising points of departure, and indispensable bibliography for future

studies on dreams and dream discourses in the *comedia*.

Zayas y Sotomayor, María. *La traición en la amistad*. Ed. Michael J. McGrath. Newark, DE: Cervantes & Co., 2006. 139 pp.

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The continued interest in female-authored texts of early modern Spain and Colonial America by such writers as María de Zayas y Sotomayor, Ana Caro, and Sor Juana de la Cruz, to name a few, reminds us of these women's remarkable ability to produce works that rivaled—and arguably surpassed—the quality of those written by many of their male counterparts. In the past, their writing was often challenged or overlooked by a male-dominated society but, more recently, their position as esteemed literary figures has been galvanized by numerous studies, critical editions, and performances of their works. María de Zayas stands out as a prominent figure in the Spanish literary circles of the seventeenth century as the best-selling author of *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares* (1637) and *Desengaños amorosos* (1647), but her talents were not limited to the *novella* as she also wrote at least one *comedia*, *La traición en la amistad* (c. 1618-20).

In *La traición en la amistad*, Zayas interrogates the traditional themes of love and honor, but by placing the female characters at the center of the work, she also introduces aspects of female friendship rarely seen on stage at the time. The two female leads, Fenisa and Marcia, are opposites. The former, a distorted Don Juan figure, tries to seduce as many men as possible by any means, which include the betrayal of her friends; the latter, an exemplary woman, remains constant to her values and friendships. Although innovative with regard to subject matter, the play ends according to convention, which, according to Constance Wilkins in "Subversion through Comedy?: Two Plays by Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz and María de Zayas," makes the play more palatable to the traditional taste of the theater-going public.

In the preface to his edition of *La traición en la amistad*, Michael J. McGrath states his intention to make the play accessible to the non-native speakers of Spanish, a goal he achieves. His introduction is clear, concise, and informative. McGrath begins the section with a description of the socio-historical situation in Spain during the seventeenth century, pointing to numerous political, religious, and economic factors that precipitated the decline of the Spanish Empire. Though a good introduction to several problems afflicting seventeenth-century Spain, a brief explanation of such cultural conventions as gender roles and the honor code would be a

welcome addition, facilitating the examination and further understanding of the play.

McGrath continues with an explanation of the professional theater in Golden Age Spain, dividing his discussion into three parts. The first talks about the female playwrights of the time. He suggests that “[p]erhaps the most significant literary contribution of female playwrights was the gendered perspective of their dramas” (13), a notion he expands upon by underlining their innovative contributions to the stage. He gives an excellent description of the early modern Spanish playhouse, which is complemented by a photo of John Jay Allen’s model of the *Corral del Príncipe*. McGrath concludes with a short explanation of the two categories of acting companies that performed plays. This section provides an excellent overview of aspects of the entire dramatic process and highlights their importance to the production and performance of the work.

Biographical information about Zayas is then followed by McGrath’s unique approach to the discussion of the play, which is complete and insightful. His descriptions of the characters prove extremely useful as he combines specific information about characterization and plot with more general details about conventions typical to the *comedia*. He explains versification in a succinct manner and includes a synopsis of the various verse forms found in each act. McGrath also dedicates a section that points out grammatical and orthographical phenom-

ena common to the Golden Age but possibly unfamiliar to the modern-day reader.

McGrath does a fine job editing the play text. He not only includes many explanations of difficult aspects of the play mentioned in previous critical editions but also manages to anticipate even more sticking points and to point out further examples of useful rhetorical devices in the text. He does, however, omit some of stage directions found in previous editions whose inclusion could prove useful in visualizing the performance and staging of the work. The glossary at the end enhances the vocabulary translated in the margins.

McGrath has achieved his self-stated goal to make Zayas's play accessible to the non-native student. While some minor omissions to the introduction and stage directions may call for additional explanation, the edition is nonetheless well-executed and useful in the classroom. Indeed, by supplying pertinent details about the conventions and history of the *comedia*, McGrath offers the tools necessary for a better understanding of early modern Spanish theater and this particular play text, making for another outstanding addition to early modern Spanish theater scholarship and teaching.

Bass, Laura R. and Margaret R. Greer. *Approaches to Teaching Early Modern Drama*. New York: The Modern Language Association: 2006. 294 pp.

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This new collection of articles on teaching early modern theater is part of the prestigious MLA *Approaches to Teaching* series. The book is divided into two parts, one on materials and the other on approaches to teaching early modern theater. It concludes with a useful Glossary of Key Terms, as well as a list of Works Cited that constitutes a fundamental bibliography on early modern theater.

The first part, Materials, consists mostly of lists of editions, background studies, films and internet resources. This section demonstrates the editors' familiarity with the vast corpus of teaching materials related to the *comedia* and to the larger field of theater studies.

The introduction to the second section, Approaches, provides the beginning instructor with basic information that should be included in any course on early modern Spanish theater. The articles included in the collection cover a wide range of top-

ics, such as historical context, non-*comedia* theater forms, early modern women dramatists, moral issues in the *comedia*, obstacles created by linguistic peculiarities, performance theory, cross-cultural issues such as the *comedia* in comparison with other theater traditions, and technology as a teaching aid. Most of the contributors are established scholars with extensive classroom experience.

Among the outstanding articles is Laura Bass's "Costume and the *Comedia*," which explains how instructors can bring a consciousness of costume into the classroom. Bass notes correctly that students, who often read theater solely for plot, tend to overlook the importance of the visual signs transmitted through costume. Using Tirso's *El vergonzoso en palacio* as an example, she shows how costume can serve as a catalyst for discussion of the countless ambiguities and contradictions inherent in the *comedia*. Rather than dictate one particular reading of the play, Bass recognizes the elusiveness of theatrical signs and demonstrates how, by embracing this vagueness, instructors can stimulate dialogue.

This book contains a wealth of resource information as well as many provocative, well researched articles. It will be a useful tool for teachers and scholars.

Thompson, Peter E. *The Triumphant Juan Rana: A Gay Actor of the Spanish Golden Age*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006. Paper. 183 pp.

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Los cinco capítulos que componen este nuevo libro de Peter Thompson trazan genialmente la polémica vida y representaciones de Juan Rana, famosísimo entremista del Siglo de Oro Español.

El texto inicia una amplia investigación sobre Cosme Pérez y la significación del alias Juan Rana que como se verá a través del libro señalan su homosexualidad. El apodo simbólicamente le sirvió para poder transmutarse y poder modificar su sexualidad en el medioambiente homófobo en el que se tuvo que mover. Aunque pocos estudiosos lo han identificado como homosexual, en su época se escribieron entremeses específicamente para él, con insinuaciones y temáticas homosexuales. Thompson analiza brillantemente la función dramática del entremés que servía como válvula de escape para aliviar la seriedad o rigurosidad de una comedia puesto que conlleva la significación jocosa de un carnaval donde la sexualidad y la inversión de género eran su principal característica. Tras esta inicial in-

troducción, en los tres capítulos siguientes se estudia la persona/ personaje de Juan Rana haciendo hincapié en la ambigüedad del actor dentro y fuera del tablado.

Además de Calderón de la Barca, Luis de Belmonte Bermúdez, Francisco Bernardo de Quirós, Jerónimo de Cáncer y Velasco, Agustín Moreto y Cavana, Luis Quiñones de Benavente, y Sebastián de Villaviciosa, compusieron entremeses para la representación específica de Juan Rana. En su época fue muy querido ya que más de cincuenta entremeses fueron escritos para él. Gozaba de mucha fama y como Thompson demuestra no es sorprendente que tuviera dobles. Esto último es el énfasis del segundo capítulo que analiza la representación del doble/ *Dopplegänger* en ciertos entremeses representados por Juan Rana. El doble es una antigua figura retórica que en este capítulo representa la subversión de la moralidad, lo político, lo sexual y otras formas sociales que no se podían mostrar o expresar abiertamente por razones de buen gusto a miedo al castigo.

En *El triunfo de Juan Rana* incluido en la obra de Calderón *Fieras afemina amor* se estudia el contraste entre el papel de Juan Rana y el de Hércules, llegando éste primero a ser el alter-ego del último. *Los dos Juan Rana* y *La loa de Juan Rana* de Agustín Moreto y Cavana se manifiesta las distintas maneras de la doble representación de Juan Rana. En *La Loa* se hace alusión directa al arresto de Juan

Rana en 1636 diciendo éste que ya a nadie ni a él le importa mucho reflexionando interiormente y pasando al reflejo del espejo donde se transforma en múltiples imágenes dejándonos saber a todos que al igual que Juan Rana, nos vemos en una fase de reflejo. Juan Rana fue tan famoso que incluso después de muerto se trató de imitarlo con poco éxito. En el entremés de Jerónimo de Cáncer y Velasco, *Juan Ranilla* se analiza el doble a través de la parodia sobre la marca distintiva de Juan Rana. Juan Ranilla (la reproducción del protagonista) se siente abochornado por tener que depender de la figura de Juan Rana.

El capítulo tres considera el cambio de ropa y lo que esto representa al adentrarnos en un territorio que entrecruza las barreras impuestas en el género. Este cambio de ropas crea cierta crisis en una época con clara marcación de cómo debían actuar hombre y mujer desafiando de esta manera la dicha construcción. La vestimenta sirvió no sólo para distinguir las clases sociales, sino también el género. Los moralistas de la época repetidas veces hacían referencias a la falta de verdaderos hombres y la amenaza que esto representaba para el Imperio. No es de extrañar que existiera un verdadero empeño por controlar el código de vestimenta. Los entremeses escritos para Juan Rana donde el cambio de ropa era parte de la temática fueron usados para parodiar la vida social, política, sexual, matrimonial y biología de una época en crisis y no con el propósito de

ejemplificar que a Juan Rana le gustase o no vestirse con ropas de mujer. Thompson propone que Juan Rana actuaba en ropas femeninas no sólo como medio económico sustentáculo, pero igualmente para exponer la injusticia contra los papeles de género. Los entremeses donde específicamente aparece Juan Rana vestido de mujer -*La boda de Juan Rana*, *Juan Rana muger y el Parto de Juan Rana*- muestran claramente que el sexo y la identidad de género al igual que la ropa son posturas, algo que podemos quitarnos y ponernos de acuerdo con nuestro deseo o circunstancias, haciendo constancia en que la ropa limita y controla, en especial la ropa mujeril.

Antes de resumir la vida artística de Juan Rana, se investiga un último capítulo crítico sobre las insinuaciones y confesiones fálicas en varios entremeses. Tomando en cuenta ciertas sugerencias sobre la importancia de incorporar en el teatro la incertidumbre e insinuaciones “anfíbológica” en *El arte nuevo de hacer comedias* de Lope de Vega, se analiza el entremés de Calderón de la Barca, *El desafío de Juan Rana* donde, de nuevo, se satiriza la masculinidad y se manifiesta la preponderada existencia de la débil y afeminada clase noble. Thompson contrapuntea la infinidad de insinuaciones fálicas textuales en el manejo y amenazas que se hace con armas blancas. En *Los muertos vivos* de Quiñones de Benavente el diálogo ambiguo junto con las insinuaciones homosexuales combinadas con el conocimiento de los espectadores sobre la vida real de

Juan Rana hace posible la explosión risible en el público. En *El mundo al revés* las insinuaciones no son tan directas como en los otros entremeses donde claramente se usaron espadas y garrotes, aquí se usa la metáfora del soldado y las conexiones bélicas de éste. En el entremés, Quiñones de Benavente se ríe de la hipocresía social, preocupada enteramente por “el qué dirán” y donde decir la verdad era considerado pecaminoso. El siguiente entremés de Francisco de Quirós, *Las fiestas del aldea* usa símbolos bélicos y alusiones directas al pecado nefando de Juan Rana. El diálogo y las interpretaciones de “bota”, “vaina”, “espada” y “camarada” se usan como referencias al acto sexual entre homosexuales. Tal vez el entremés más incriminado es el de Quiñones, *El pipote en nombre de Juan Rana* donde directamente, Juan Rana se ríe y desafía las creencias sexuales y llanamente sale del “ropero.” A todo esto, el autor afirma que aunque sea arriesgado asignar simbolismo homosexual al teatro del siglo XVII, el resultado es un análisis de la vida y producción de Juan Rana que en total sale fructífero. Es importante y significativo comprender los códigos homosexuales a fin de entender los dichos y juegos de palabras en estos entremeses. En la conclusión Thompson afirma que el homosexual ha sido un campo risible en toda época.

El triunfo de Juan Rana correspondió a la ambigüedad representativa de la homosexualidad. De muchas maneras, Juan Rana al igual que los entre-

meses, representan emblemáticamente al Imperio, una sociedad en un fluir ambiguo. El trabajo colectivo de Peter Thompson muestra representaciones de la realidad y la ficción homosexual en la España barroca.



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Cover Photo:

The GALA Hispanic Theater production of *Valor, agravio y mujer*, by Ana Caro, October 2006. Directed by Hugo Medrano. Photo by Daniel Cima. Pictured here from left to right: Tim Pabon, Mel Rocher and Gabriela Fernandez-Coffey. Our thanks to GALA Hispanic Theater for supplying this photo.