

**Comedia Performance
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5. Avoid structures such as "This reviewer thinks..." Reviews are by definition subjective.
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Performance Studies

LOPE DE VEGA'S *LA MUERTE DEL REY DE SUECIA* ON THE MADRID STAGE AND AT EL PARDO: GLIMPSES FROM THE TUSCAN EMBASSY

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For specialists in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Spanish theater, *La muerte del rey de Suecia*, or simply *El rey de Suecia*, was until recently little more than a *comedia* title occasionally noted in passing. Though the text has been lost, a record of performance at the palace of El Pardo on February 1, 1633, by the company of Antonio de Prado, with payment on March 3, 1633 (Shergold and Varey, "Palace" 236), strongly suggested that its action centered on events at the Battle of Lützen, near Leipzig, where King Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden was killed on November 16, 1632. At this major engagement of the Thirty Years War, Gustavus Adolphus's Swedish army, which had been virtually unstoppable as it swept down into Central Europe, met a multinational Catholic force under the Imperial commander-in-chief Albrecht von Wallens-

tein, better known to his contemporaries by his title of duke of Friedland.¹

With the publication in 1980 of Brown and Elliott's *A Palace for a King: The Buen Retiro and the Court of Philip IV*, more details came to light, based primarily on Elliott's research in the Florentine archives, which centered on newsletters drawn up by Bernardo Monanni, secretary of the Tuscan Embassy in Madrid.² Synthesizing Monanni's report on the play, Brown and Elliott have this to say:

On January 26, 1633, the king and the count-duke went to the theater incognito to see a play on the defeat and death of the King of Sweden, especially written by Lope de Vega. The production had to be immediately withdrawn because it contained indecorous material, but the popular demand for it was so great that Antonio de Mendoza produced a hastily revised version which was performed before enthusiastic audiences. (Brown and Elliott, 63)

It can thus be inferred that the play has affinities with a large number of Spanish plays written in the 1620s and 1630s close upon Spanish or Imperial victories. While *relaciones* of these military successes might be purchased on the streets of Madrid, a *comedia*'s visual and verbal power could greatly amplify the impact of the prose accounts. A more permanent visual commemoration is the series

of twelve paintings in the Salón de Reinos of the palace of the Buen Retiro on victories (though Spanish only, not Imperial) won for Philip IV while the count-duke of Olivares was chief minister. A *comedia* on the Madrid stage celebrated nearly every one of these Spanish triumphs and also a number of the those designated as Imperial, in which Spanish funds, and sometimes Spanish troops, played significant parts.

At the Tuscan Embassy in Madrid, plays on the Madrid stage with overtly political subject matter were closely followed. Dispatches and newsletters sent to Florence often included reports on their reception along with analyses of their content. Indeed, a series of embassy dispatches and newsletters furnish a remarkable account of the early stage history of the play that Brown and Elliott identify as treating the death of King Gustavus Adolphus. It is, as will be shown below, indisputably the *comedia* bearing the title *La muerte del rey de Suecia*, in its shorter form *El rey de Suecia*. The principal writer here is Bernardo Monanni, who as embassy secretary was second in command from his arrival in the summer of 1626 until his return to Florence in 1642. An acute political analyst, Monanni drew regularly from an intricate network of sources he had developed from *bufones de corte* on up. In the period under discussion, he had already been in charge of the embassy more than once during intervals between ambassadors. He had thus been received in audience

by Philip IV and had conducted embassy business with Olivares.

Among the questions absorbing literary scholars who study plays on subjects from contemporary events is the length of the interval between receipt of the news and the appearance of a play on the stage. Brown and Elliott, drawing on a manuscript in Elliott's possession, state that the news reached Madrid on Christmas Day of 1632 (Brown and Elliott, 63). Monanni implies that the earliest reports did not allow the palace to declare a victory. It was only upon arrival of the duke of Feria's courier on December 27, with letters from the emperor confirming the Swedish king's defeat and death, that a decision was reached to treat Lützen as a victory, in Monanni's words in his newsletter of January 1 1633, "la maggiore che si ha conseguita da molti anni in qua contro gli Infideli" 'the greatest that has been achieved in many years against the Infidels'--i.e. Protestants. (Archivio di Stato di Firenze, Mediceo del Principato, *filza* 4959). The celebrations he goes on to describe, both within the palace and in public spaces, are a good example of ways in which a major military triumph was acknowledged at the court of the Spanish Habsburgs: a Te Deum in the chapel of the Alcázar; formal congratulations to the king by members of royal councils, ambassadors, grandees, and other gentlemen; lighted windows in every house in Madrid beginning at nightfall (with a penalty of four *escudos* for failure to comply), two evenings of illumina-

tions, including rockets and other fireworks, in the square in front of the palace, in the Plaza Mayor, in the Plaza de la Villa, and also in those facing the convents of the Descalzas Reales and the Encarnación. The two establishments of the great Fugger banking house are singled out for their costly illuminations, and on the following evening, for their sponsorship of an impressive service in the nearby Trinitarian church. Monanni adds that neither the French nor the English ambassadors ordered any display; on the contrary, they sought to diminish the Imperial achievement with the argument that the death of the cavalry general Pappenheim was a greater loss to the emperor than was the death of Gustavus Adolphus to the opposing force.³

A few days after the rejoicings within the palace and elsewhere in the capital, Philip IV and other members of his court prepared to set out for the palace of El Pardo, northwest of Madrid. Indeed, a stay of varying length between Epiphany and Carnival at this Sitio Real was a regular part of the court calendar. Monanni, in his newsletter of January 8, 1633, mentions the king's postponement of his departure until the following Monday, January 10, along with the expectation that the queen would join him there (ASF, Mediceo, *filza* 4959). The explanation for the delay emerges in the embassy newsletter of January 15, for on Sunday, January 9, the royal couple accepted Olivares's invitation to view the progress made in "il nuovo appartamento et giardino" 'the new apartment and gar-

den' underway at the Royal Convent of San Jerónimo, soon to be known as the Palace of the Buen Retiro (ASF, Mediceo, *filza* 4959).

If the Buen Retiro was to become the setting for countless plays and other entertainments offered to the royal family, some on a scale scarcely imagined earlier, El Pardo was already an established destination for theatrical companies when the king was in residence, with the difference that the plays performed there did not usually include productions designed to accommodate changeable Italianate scenery; rather, troupes were summoned to El Pardo almost exclusively to act *comedias* in their repertory written for the public stage.

Thanks to the dedicated efforts of Shergold and Varey in the Chamber accounts in the Palace Archives in Madrid, it is possible to show that other *comedias* were performed at El Pardo in late January and early February 1633, that is, both before and after *La muerte del rey de Suecia* was acted there. When Shergold and Varey published their findings in the *Bulletin of Hispanic Studies*, they catalogued performances by *comedia* rather than on a purely chronological basis. Where they found indications of place of performance other than Madrid (Alcázar), they included that information as well. In some instances, however, the Chamber accounts simply reveal that a certain company performed on a certain date, without reference to title. Elsewhere, a given company is credited with performances of plays during an unspecified period. In other words,

though Shergold and Varey correct and clarify compilations by Cruzada Villaamil (1871) and Renert (1907-1908) and publish for the first time performances previously overlooked, it should be kept in mind that not every entry in the Chamber documents they analyzed carried full details of performance.

To interject a personal comment: some time ago, after many sessions over a number of summer stays in Florence examining seventeenth-century correspondence preserved in the Archivio di Stato di Firenze between the Tuscan Embassy in Madrid and the grand duke's secretary of state in Florence, it occurred to me that much could be learned by preparing a chronological index of the palace performances Shergold and Varey had catalogued in their two articles, so rich for the 1630s up through 1637, and then setting the relevant portion against Monanni's newsletters, which give close attention to the court calendar.

The present essay is limited to a consideration of a very small part of the results, those which illuminate Philip IV's stay at El Pardo in early 1633, where a cluster of plays with precise dates and titles give specialists in Spanish theater a keen sense of the importance of theatrical performances when the king was in residence at one of the Sitios Reales. For the period under discussion, the earliest performance documented at El Pardo is *Sin peligro no hay fineza* (not in La Barrera) on [Sunday] January 23, 1633, by the company of Luis López, with

payment on February 25, 1633 (Shergold and Varey, "Palace" 236).⁴ On [Tuesday] January 25, 1633, the company of Manuel de Vallejo offered Lope de Vega's *La boba para los otros*, for which payment was made on March 1, 1633 (Shergold and Varey, "Palace" 218).

On Wednesday, January 26, 1633, as noted above, the king and Olivares attended a performance in a public theater of a play on the death of the king of Sweden. A closer look at correspondence from the Tuscan Embassy, which reveals that the king and Olivares interrupted their stay at El Pardo to return to Madrid for the performance, is pertinent here. First, Ambassador Francesco de' Medici, Commendatore di Sorano, following a well-established practice, directs the grand duke's secretary of state in Florence to a matter of particular interest that Monanni will enlarge upon in his newsletter. Writing on January 29, 1633 (ASF, Mediceo, *filza* 4959), Sorano reports that the king and queen are at El Pardo for the hunting there. Three days earlier, he continues, the king came [to Madrid] to see from a private box at a public theater a play on the defeat and death of the king of Sweden. This production, he states, is no longer being performed, "per le cause che Vostra Signoria Illustrissima sentirà dagli avvisi del Segretario Monanni, che vengono con questa" 'for the reasons that Your Most Illustrious Lordship will hear from Secretary Monanni's newsletter, which is included here.' The letter is addressed to Andrea Cioli, the grand duke's

secretary of state, a seasoned diplomat who had held his post for some years. Cioli was also the patron of Cosimo Lotti, the Florentine stage designer whose career at the Spanish court was closely monitored by embassy officials. Note that Sorano makes clear that Monanni is responsible for the newsletter (*avvisi*). Monanni's working relationship with Sorano, who took up his post in 1631, was closer than that maintained with previous ambassadors. Very early on, an agreement seems to have been reached whereby the secretary, whose sharp intelligence, fluent Spanish, and wide-ranging contacts made him an ideal choice, would gather material for a weekly newsletter. Though ambassadors might come and go, Monanni remained in charge of the *avvisi* until he left Madrid in 1642.

After Sorano's introduction of the topic to be developed, Monanni also takes up his pen on January 29, 1633 (ASF, Mediceo, *filza* 4959), enveloping the present-day reader almost at once in an *ambiente velazqueño* as he reports that on Wednesday, January 26, a female dwarf had been sent at full speed to El Pardo with an invitation from little Baltasar Carlos for the king to join him for dinner (a midday meal in the seventeenth century). The king would then attend a performance in a public theater "della battaglia et morte del Re di Suezia" 'on the battle and death of the king of Sweden.' The invitation probably originated with the Countess of Olivares, who as *aya* of Baltasar Carlos, was positioned to keep her husband informed about the heir.

Baltasar Carlos, born October 17, 1629, was three years, three months, and nine days of age on the date of the invitation.⁵

Upon detailing the circumstances of the invitation, Monanni reports that the king and Olivares came to Madrid, where the king spent time with the prince and then viewed the play “incognitamente, cioè in uno stanzino di dove vede tutto benissimo et non può esser vista” ‘incognito, that is, in a private box from which he can see everything extremely well and cannot be seen.’ At the conclusion of the performance, he returned to El Pardo the same evening. We can be sure that Olivares was present at the theater as well, as Brown and Elliott concluded. In any event, the Florentine letters on Philip IV’s visit to a public theater to see a *comedia* on the death of the king of Sweden constitute very early documentation of royal use of one of these *aposen-tos* to view a specific dramatic work.

It is not known whether the king and Olivares saw the play at the Corral de la Cruz or the Corral del Príncipe, though they could have been accommodated in a private box in either theater in early 1633. The Corral de la Cruz had a lateral box for the king as early as 1631, for on July 5 of that year Philip IV ordered 600 ducats to be paid “para la fábrica del aposento del Corral de la Cruz que he mandado hazer allí” (Davis, *Aposentos* 97-98). Davis describes two other boxes in the Cruz used by Philip IV, though both belonged to the duke of Medina de las Torres, the king’s “close friend and con-

fidant,” who was also Olivares’s son-in-law. These were the so-called *balcón de Astillanos*, used by the king between 1631 and 1650, and a lower box, the *reja de Astillanos*, documented from 1629, says Davis, but not before (“A Partial Sketch Plan” 117-18). For the Corral del Príncipe, Allen gives an account of several boxes, all of which were in place by 1642. Of these, he says, citing *Fuentes* V, 170, box H, to the south of the theater was once referred to as “a balcony they call the King’s” ‘un balcón que llaman del Rey’ (*Reconstruction* 83).

Should the king and Olivares have encountered any difficulty, which is highly unlikely, in early 1633 there could have been made discreetly available to them in either Corral a private box reserved for the *protector de los teatros*, José González, who since September 3, 1632, had shared administrative responsibilities for the theaters with the Villa de Madrid (Ruano de la Haza and Allen 163). Earlier he had received the king’s appointment to the Consejo de Castilla, a requirement for the *protector*. As Olivares’s personal lawyer, González was a member of the chief minister’s *camarilla*, termed the *sinagoga* in unsympathetic quarters.

Turning to the *comedia*, Monanni stresses that it had been known for “molti giorni” ‘many days’ that Lope de Vega was writing it. Lope, he implies, was an excellent choice because of his reputation as “il maggior poeta senza dubbio che sia oggi in tutta Spagna” ‘without a doubt the greatest

poet in all Spain at the present time.’ The secretary, an avid theatergoer himself, may have heard rumors that Lope was composing such a play. Moreover, the practice of advertising by playbills had become a requirement by 1608, when ordinances of the Consejo de Castilla further stipulated that when three acting companies in Madrid at the same time shared the two public theaters, “they were to perform turn and turn about, so that in twelve days, each would appear eight times” (Shergold 519), as would seem to have been the case in early 1633, when Antonio de Prado, Luis López, and Manuel Vallejo all had companies that performed at El Pardo within a two-week period. Clearly laid out in the 1608 ordinances was that playbills were to display the title of the play to be performed each day (519). Giving further weight to the secretary’s statement concerning Lope’s authorship is that the two were acquainted. In 1627 Monanni had written about half the music for Lope’s *La selva sin amor*, the first Spanish opera. The preparations and court performances, contrived to display the wizardry of the Florentine stage designer Cosimo Lotti and to introduce the *stile recitativo* (Monanni’s contribution), are discussed in Whitaker, “Florentine Opera.”

The secretary emphasizes that the subject matter of the play aroused so much interest that the first day of performance only those who went very early managed to get a place. “Piacque assai universalmente” ‘It was enthusiastically received by everyone.’ For that reason, expectation was high that it

would be repeated. That, however, was not to be; on the following day, as would-be theatergoers were waiting for the theater to open, an order came forth from the Consejo Real closing down the production. Though Monanni does not mention it, presumably because he knew his superiors in Florence were aware of the fact, the Consejo de Castilla would have already given its approval of the text before the acting company offered the *comedia* on stage. What the secretary does deplore, however, is the potential loss to the company, which we know was that of Antonio de Prado, of its portion of ticket receipts along with its investment in costumes and equipment.

The secretary then moves to an analysis of the reasons for the ban, which he says are clear to any intelligent person, whether he has seen the play or not. From this, a present-day reader can infer that much speculation had occurred. It is Monanni's view that even though in Spain poets are generally allowed broad latitude, "questo ne deve haver presa questa volta un poco troppa, essendo entrato con la sua composizione nelle cose di stato" 'this one has delved a little too far this time into affairs of state in what he has written.' ⁶ Monanni's catalogue of elements in *La muerte del rey de Suecia* that led to its prohibition is perhaps the fullest and most explicit that has come down to us from seventeenth-century Spanish theater. Heading the list, and probably the offense that was first in importance to Olivares and also to Philip IV, was that the play included scenes

in which advice on good government was recommended for the emperor and the king (Philip IV's uncle Emperor Ferdinand II and Philip IV himself). It may well be that neither of these two rulers were characters who appeared on stage. It is entirely possible that Lope assigned observations on the need for improvements in government to the King of Sweden.

However that may have been, by 1633 the Olivares regime was under heavy pressure from many directions, with a mounting quantity of political verse-satire circulating clandestinely in opposition to its policies. Many of these satires were in effect attempts to reach the ear of the king, urging him to bring about change. Monanni's newsletters contain a large quantity of such verse, together with descriptions of incidents on the streets of Madrid where persons sought to appeal directly to the king.⁷ In *La muerte del rey de Suecia*, the inclusion of passages on good government places it firmly in the anti-Olivares atmosphere that prevailed in Madrid in 1633. Since the king's passion for the theater was well known, the chances of reaching him through lines in a play were high, even if they carried a risk. With Olivares at Philip's elbow in the theater viewing a *comedia* that offended on other points as well, an order for its removal from the boards was almost inevitable.

The next point Monanni takes up he terms a breach of decorum in that a scene showed the Infanta of Flanders revealing secrets of state to a court

jester. The “Infanta di Fiandra,” as she is always called in the Florentine documents, is Isabel Clara Eugenia, Philip IV’s aunt and governor of the Spanish Netherlands. That she should be depicted on stage discussing weighty subjects with a *bufón de corte* constitutes yet another example of Lope’s testing the boundaries of what was acceptable, for he surely was aware that placing a living ruler in such a position risked being taken as the offense against decorum reported by Monanni.

Continuing with examples of dangers inherent in treating living rulers on stage, Monanni reports that in the play the king of Sweden spoke of the emperor and the king of Spain “*con troppa libertà et disprezzo*” ‘extremely freely and disdainfully.’ The king of Sweden was almost certainly played by the *autor de comedias* Antonio de Prado, who in 1623 had been acclaimed for his interpretation of Emperor Charles V. Prado’s proven ability to command the stage in a heroic role doubtless contributed to the public’s favorable response to the 1633 play.

Next, the secretary cites yet another element in the play, one that must have brought about some breath-catching moments, at the very least. This was a reference to the death in the Palatinate of the Grand Prior of Ivernia, who as a son of the marquis of Siete Iglesias, awakened “*queste memorie odiose*” ‘these odious memories.’ Treating the death of a son of Rodrigo Calderón, marquis of Siete Iglesias, would indeed have brought back memories

better left at rest, as far as a great many persons at Philip IV's court were concerned. Shortly after the king's accession, Rodrigo Calderón had been one of the first targets of the attack on corruption in the previous reign. He had been executed in the Plaza Mayor of Madrid, ostensibly for having ordered the murder of an underling. Although by the time *La muerte del rey de Suecia* was performed, one of Calderón's titles had been restored to his widow, thereby removing some of the opprobrium attached to the family, an unmistakable allusion in a praiseworthy context would not have been received favorably.

The final point that Monanni makes with respect to offending elements relates to praise accorded Don Gonzalo de Córdoba and the marquis of Santa Cruz, "come si havessero fatto nel caso grandissime prodizze non vi essendo trovati nè havendosi fatto nulla" 'as if they had performed great feats of valor on that occasion, when in fact they had not been present there nor had they done anything.' The reaction of common folk among the spectators, says the secretary, was laughter and hissing. By the time the play was performed, enough printed *relaciones* of the battle must have been in circulation for theatergoers to object vocally.

Monanni's comments about the prominence given to Don Gonzalo de Córdoba and the marquis of Santa Cruz are somewhat ambiguous, because at first reading it might seem that the two were characters in the *comedia*. What seems more likely, how-

ever, is that some of the rowdier—and more literal minded -- spectators wanted to show that they knew what was in the *relaciones* on the battle, which would not have contained a word on either Don Gonzalo or Santa Cruz. On the other hand, in Lope's defense, it does not seem unreasonable that he had mentioned them, since both had achieved important victories and both had campaigned in Central Europe. Indeed, as we will see in Monanni's account of the revised version, the passages on the two are not eliminated altogether.

Don Gonzalo de Córdoba, related to Lope's patron, the sixth Duke of Sessa, was long out of favor at court on account of his failure to take Casale, in the Monferrato in 1626. Earlier, however, in 1622, he had gained a major victory at Fleurus, near Brussels, which was shortly afterwards the subject of Lope's *comedia La nueva victoria de Don Gonzalo de Córdoba* and would be further commemorated in Carducho's painting, *La victoria de Fleurus*, on display in the Salón de Reinos of the Buen Retiro in the spring of 1635. Don Gonzalo, despite his loss of reputation in some court circles, figures prominently in Carducho's painting (Úbeda de los Cobos 128-29).

Don Alvaro de Bazán, second marquis of Santa Cruz, still held the trust of Philip IV and Olivares at the time *La muerte del rey de Suecia* opened in Madrid. A newsletter records his arrival in the Spanish capital on November 29, 1632, after

having been present at the fall of Maastricht. Almost immediately he was granted the position of *mayordomo mayor* to the queen (Gascón de Torquemada 346). As a member of her household, he might well have been present when the *comedia* was performed at El Pardo. Santa Cruz had achieved great success in 1625, when he headed a force that relieved Genoa when that city was under siege by French and Savoyard troops. Pereda's painting, *El socorro de Génova*, which depicts the marquis receiving thanks from the doge, was also painted for the Salón de Reinos (Ubeda de los Cobos 126-27).

Moving towards the close of his newsletter, Monanni advances the opinion that "può essere che il Re medesimo havendola vista come sopra, l'habbia fatta prohibire" 'it may be that the king himself having seen it [the *comedia*], as mentioned above, caused it to be banned.' The cautious tenor of the secretary's words is encountered frequently in letters that might carry a suggestion of responsibility on the part of the king or Olivares, for both Sorano and Monanni were aware that pouches moving overland by courier did not always reach their destination in Italy without being opened and examined along the way.

Monanni now acknowledges the dismaying prospect of a lackluster Carnival in Madrid, since none of the other "comédie ordinarie," that is, plays not using Italianate staging, equal the appeal of the banned play. Monanni knew, though he does not

mention it, that the death the previous summer of Philip IV's younger brother, the Infante Carlos, to whom the king was deeply devoted, had caused the cancellation of plans for lavish Carnival entertainments at court.

Upon the return of Philip IV and Olivares to El Pardo, *comedia* performances resumed. On [Thursday] January 27, 1633, Manuel de Vallejo's company stepped forward with Vélez de Guevara's *Correr por amor fortuna*, for which payment was made on March 1, 1633 (Shergold and Varey, "Palace" 222). Shergold and Varey recorded no indication in the Chamber accounts that the January 27, 1633, performance was at El Pardo, but since the king was in residence there, that is where it would have taken place. On [Sunday] January 30, 1633, Luis López's actors once again appeared at El Pardo, this time for Montalbán's *Más puede amor que la muerte*, with payment on February 25, 1633 (Shergold and Varey, "Palace" 230).

Before moving to any further records from the Chamber accounts, it would be well to look at Monanni's newsletter of February 5, 1633 (ASF, Mediceo, *filza* 4959), in which he brings his superiors up to date on the fortunes of *La muerte del rey de Suecia*. In this weekly packet of news he can report that the play has been restored to the public stage, now however having undergone changes. The great interest in the play has led the king to assign Don Antonio de Mendoza, here described as his *ayuda de cámara* and secretary (and was Olivares'

confidant as well), to correct its failings. Mendoza, as Monanni puts it, has dealt appropriately with certain liberties taken by the author. The praise accorded Don Gonzalo de Córdoba and the marquis of Santa Cruz has been attenuated, and the roles of the duke of Friedland, that is, Wallenstein, commander of the imperial forces, and Pappenheim, have been enhanced.

The king, reports Monanni, has had the *comedia* performed at El Pardo, especially for the queen and her ladies. It is perhaps well to review the full entry in the Chamber accounts as cited by Shergold and Varey: “*Rey de Suecia, El*. Performed Antonio de Prado, Pardo, [Tuesday] February 1, 1633; payment March 3, 1633” (“Palace” 236). These investigators add that neither Cruzada Villamil nor Rennert recorded this entry, which may mean that it comes from the *legajo* that neither of those scholars had seen (“Palace” 213). In any case, of the two titles that have come down to us in bibliographical entries, *La muerte del rey de Suecia* is, in my opinion, preferable in that it contains historically significant information about its subject matter. *El rey de Suecia* is probably an abbreviated title set down by an overworked palace clerk.

When Monanni elaborates on the *comedia*’s public reception, he reports that it has outstripped all others in a long time and that even after ten performances in the public theater, attendance has remained high. As we know, a run of ten performances was an impressive achievement in seven-

teenth-century Madrid. How did Prado's company manage to act the play ten times by Saturday, February 5, the date of Monanni's newsletter? Counting the Wednesday, January 26, 1633, occasion, when the king and Olivares were present at the first performance in one of the Madrid public theaters, and then moving to Wednesday, February 1, the day of the successful performance for the court at El Pardo, ten performances by Prado's company would have been impossible by Saturday, February 5, the date of Monanni's newsletter, without concessions from the other two *autores* in Madrid, Manuel de Vallejo and Luis López.

It is likely that Prado and the other two *autores* worked through José González, the *protector de los teatros*, and a representative of the Villa de Madrid to schedule performances. González, who had received his appointment in order to serve as Olivares's watchdog, and who was surely present in the theater on January 26, must have been appalled as he saw how the first performance was unfolding. Though he was not himself expected to carry out the task of examining the text before approval was granted for staging, he was responsible for seeing that it was assigned to someone who was alert to the political tensions evident in 1633 Madrid.

The three companies in Madrid were already faced with a one-third reduction in theater use for each in the busiest time in the Madrid theatrical year. How did the three companies finally solve the problem of giving Antonio de Prado the theater

space he needed to satisfy public demand for *La muerte del rey de Suecia* and also allow the other two companies to compete for theatergoers, when only two public theaters existed in Madrid? The solution, I am confident, lay in finding a third space that could serve as theater, with each company allowed two performances a day, morning and afternoon.

Corroboration is found in Monanni's newsletter of February 24, 1635 (ASF, Mediceo, *filza* 4960), when the three companies in the capital faced some of the same problems as in 1633. As the secretary writes, during the last two weeks before Lent three theaters were in operation, Cruz, Príncipe, and Villa [a hall in the Ayuntamiento in temporary use?] for the three theatrical companies in Madrid. With each giving two performances daily, observes the secretary, theatergoers had six performances each day, all of which he says were packed, from which to choose. That way, if a *comedia* proved extremely popular, the company performing it would have access to a theater the entire time. Indeed, in 1635 *El doctor Carlino* was a huge success, with an actor of "gran talento" in the title role as well as other good parts for both men and women. The ensuing scheduling adjustments Monanni describes are almost identical to those I believe *La muerte del rey de Suecia* had occasioned in 1633.

Aware that the theatrical season will soon conclude, Monanni reiterates his lament that Car-

nival is nearing its end. (He was writing on Saturday; the last day of Carnival would be the following Tuesday.) Almost as an afterthought, but with respect to a matter that he is obviously proud to relay to Florence, Monanni states that few persons of rank are mentioned in the play, but among these are “i Serenissimi Principi fratelli del Granduca di Toscana” ‘the Most Serene Princes, brothers of the grand duke of Tuscany.’ That they were singled out “con molta dignità” ‘with much dignity,’ he assures his superiors in Florence, is especially gratifying since the embassy had done nothing to bring it about. These two young Medici princes, Mattia and Francesco, first cousins of Philip IV (their mothers were sisters), served with Wallenstein’s army in the battle where Gustavus Adolphus lost his life.

Monanni concludes his report on *La muerte del rey de Suecia* by voicing his admiration for its deeply moving concepts and language. As he puts it, the play “si vede con profitto” ‘can be seen with profit.’ Elsewhere, giving his assessment of another play he had seen in Madrid, Monanni uses the same words. Here as well, he seems to imply that the profit is that of spiritual or moral uplift.

Performances of plays at El Pardo did not end with *La muerte del rey de Suecia*. On [Thursday] February 3, 1633, Manuel de Vallejo’s actors performed Lope’s *El castigo sin venganza*, for which payment was received on March 1, 1633 (Shergold and Varey, “Palace” 220). Shergold and Varey make no mention of El Pardo as the place of

performance, which very likely means that it was not recorded in the Chamber accounts. Since the king, queen, and Olivares were still there, as Monnani's reports make clear, there is no reason to think that the performance took place elsewhere.

For courtiers and members of the royal family, a stay one of the Sitios Reales must have given a feeling of being in a small enclosed world arranged almost exclusively for their delight. Velázquez's son-in-law, Juan Bautista Martínez del Mazo, seems to have caught something of this in his painting *La cacería del tabladillo en Aranjuez* (Museo Nacional del Prado, No. 2571), known in English as *The Deer Hunt*. High up on the *tabladillo* sit Queen Isabel and a cluster of her brightly attired ladies, along with three dueñas, all overlooking Philip IV, his brother Fernando, and several huntsmen who are engaged in dispatching two deer. Outside the enclosure are numerous male courtiers and other servitors. While El Pardo in late January or early February was not Aranjuez in the spring, both Sitios Reales provided a setting for high-born marriageable young women to put themselves on display as they admired the prowess of the king and other males of high rank. Although the *meninas* and *damas* in attendance on the queen were under the king's protection, it was an open secret at court that the young Philip IV, who would celebrate his twenty-eighth birthday on April 8, 1633, had not always observed those boundaries. Hence a supreme irony implicit in the condition of courtiers: the closer they

moved toward the king, the greater the prestige; at the same time the greater were the pitfalls.

It is tempting to try to visualize the hall In Pardo as the evening's performance of *El castigo sin venganza* opened. The king would have been seated in a chair; the queen on cushions beside him. Olivares would have been standing, though probably with his back against a wall for support. Other male courtiers would have been present as well as the queen's ladies. As the *comedia* opened with the Duke of Ferrara shown on the prowl in his capital in search of nocturnal sexual adventures, it would have been almost inevitable that everyone there would have linked the ruler depicted with the ruler seated a few meters away. The king would have been aware that others present would see some of his own traits in the Duke of Ferrara, played by the *autor* Manuel de Vallejo. The queen, not for the first time, would have remained expressionless as she witnessed a play containing elements that caused her pain.

That the first court performance was at El Pardo, not the Alcázar of Madrid, is the key that allows us to clarify Lope's words in the *Prólogo* to the *princeps* edition, a *suelta* printed in Barcelona in 1634: "Señor Lector, esta Tragedia se hizo en la Corte solo vn día por causas que a v. m. le importan poco. Dexó entonces tantos deseosos de verla, que los he querido satisfacer con imprimirla . . ." (Carreño 261). It will be recalled that in 1634 Aragon was juristically separate from Castile, thus the prohibition against the printing of *comedias* set up

by the Junta de Reformatión did not apply there. By 1635 *comedias* could be legally printed in Castile, hence *El castigo* was included in Lope's Parte XXI, which came out in Madrid.

Until now, some specialists have thought that the February 3, 1633, performance catalogued by Shergold and Varey and the single performance mentioned in Lope's Prólogo as having taken place "en la Corte" referred to the same performance. I would argue that "en la Corte" simply means Madrid, as in "Solo Madrid es Corte." To take another example, "A los 5 [de julio de 1624] , sucedió en la Yglesia de San Phelipe desta Corte un caso bien atroz" (Gascón de Torquemada 197). The sole Madrid performance, which Lope says was well received, would have taken place in a public theater on Feb 2 or conceivably at the morning performance on February 3. Vallejo subsequently took his company out to the palace of El Pardo and presented the play on Feb. 3, probably in the evening after the hunt. The actors would have returned to Madrid either that night or early the next morning, for they faced a grueling schedule of two performances a day, whatever the *comedia*, until the beginning of Lent. On February 4, when theatergoers would have been waiting to get in for a performance of *El castigo*, what would they have been told? Would they have been informed that the Consejo Real had suppressed the production? Or would Philip IV and Olivares have decided that it was politi-

cally unwise to formally close two plays by Lope de Vega within such a short interval?

Whatever may have been the explanation the public received concerning the withdrawal of *El castigo sin venganza* from the stage—if indeed any at all was given, Manuel de Vallejo's troupe was still in demand to perform for the king at El Pardo, where on [Sunday] February 6, 1633 the play selected was *El galán secreto*, by Mira de Amescua (?), with payment on March 1, 1633 (Shergold and Varey "Palace," 226). The following day Olivares left for Madrid. That same day, [Monday] February 7, 1633 --or probably that evening after a day the royal party spent hunting—Luis López's troupe acted the final play given at El Pardo before the king and queen's departure, Rojas Zorrilla's *Persiles y Sigismunda*, with payment on February 25, 1633 (Shergold and Varey, "Palace" 233). As Monanni puts it in his newsletter of February 12: "Lunedì passato a 7 tornò a Madrid il Conte di Olivares. Il martedì seguente ultimo giorno di Carnovale tornarono . . . Lor Maestà." 'Last Monday, on the seventh, the Count of Olivares returned to Madrid. The following Tuesday, the last day of Carnival, Their Majesties returned' (ASF, Mediceo, *filza* 4959). Since no important entertainments at court had been planned for Carnival, the king and queen apparently had no pressing reason to be in the capital at that time. Olivares, as was often his practice, hastened his return to affairs of state.

During Lent, the frankness with which needed improvements in government were stressed in *La muerte del rey de Suecia* without bringing about serious professional consequences for Prado's acting company seems to have emboldened Padre Lerma, a celebrated court preacher, to open his sermon by addressing the king, who was present in the church, concerning the ill effects of leaving the task of governing to favorites, "i quali solamente risplendono, et non i poveri suddeti" "who alone prospered, not his wretched subjects.' According to Monanni, in his newsletter of 12 March (ASF, Mediceo, *filza* 4959) Lerma went on to contrast the good times under earlier kings with what he termed "le miserie presenti" 'the present deplorable conditions.' The king, reports Monanni, was "alquanto malenconico" 'somewhat gloomy' as he left the church. Almost immediately, an order was issued that Padre Lerma should preach no more. Later, when commenting on the numerous sermons given by preachers during the previous week, Monanni observes: "ma non sono entrati più nelli materie di stato et del governo." 'but they have not again taken up matters of state and of government.'

The *autores* Antonio de Prado and Manuel Vallejo continued to flourish during Lent, for they were the actor-managers who won contracts then for their companies to perform the *autos sacramentales* for Corpus Christi in Madrid in 1633. As we know, companies awarded such contracts also received exclusive contracts to perform on the Madrid

stage from Easter until Corpus. Prado would have been in a position for his company to offer additional performances of *La muerte del rey de Suecia*, as Monanni had said were expected. After all, shorn of the elements that had brought about its temporary removal from the stage, the *comedia*, like others that celebrated military victories in which Spain had a part, could blend into the mythology of La Monarquía Hispanica.

With the opening of the new theatrical season at court after Easter, Prado led off with Calderón's *Mejor está que estaba*, on [Tuesday] March 29, 1633, with payment on August 8, 1633 (Shergold and Varey, "Calderón" 282). Vallejo's company ended the first week with Montalbán's *La más constante mujer* on [Sunday] April 3, 1633, for which payment was made on December 29, 1633 (Shergold and Varey, "Palace" 229).

As we have seen, Monanni called Lope de Vega "il maggior poeta senza dubbio che sia oggi in tutta Spagna" 'without a doubt the greatest poet in all Spain at the present time.' Both *La muerte del rey de Suecia* and *El castigo sin venganza* show him taking risks and in both cases he was caught out, so to speak. In the first instance he had to allow Antonio de Mendoza, the *valido del valido*, to make the necessary political adjustments; in the second some of the characterizations got too close to realities in the royal playpen that was El Pardo when the king was in residence. Granted, Lope's relations with the royal court were not easy, but his standing as a man

of letters was a powerful protection. Indeed, his prestige rendered him virtually untouchable. See McKendrick's superb, widely admired study.

As we know, Philip IV was a passionate theatergoer. At the same time, he was the institution's chief patron, for all the companies were licensed by the crown. The outcome of the events of early 1633 that have been the subject of this essay was that nothing untoward happened to the acting companies. The king needed—and wanted--them as much as they needed him.

Notes

¹ For two recent analyses of the battle, see Brzezinski, with the numerous graphics of the Osprey series; and Wilson 507-11, which contains a battle plan.

² Brown and Elliott, in their 2003 edition, omit the king's visit to the theater.

³ Historians do not generally consider that the Imperial forces achieved a victory. The battle was celebrated as such in Madrid, primarily because of the death of the greatest Protestant general of the age, Gustavus Adolphus. Nevertheless, even if not a total victory, the battle can be said to have represented a gain for the Imperialists—and thus for Spain. Elliott takes the position that for Olivares, at least briefly, the battle was perceived as a turning point that would open the way to accomplishment of his major foreign-policy goals, with the first of these being the restoration of peace to Germany (Elliott, *Count-Duke* 457-60).

⁴ Shergold and Varey do not indicate days of the week. I have supplied them, thanks to "Pillars of Time: A Perpetual Gregorian -Calendar, Spanning the Years 1600 to 2299," design

Bernard Vuarnesson, Paris: Sculptures-Jeux, 1991. It will be seen below that the calendar of performances followed the one observed at the Alcázar: Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays. The sole exception was Monday, February 7, 1633, a special occasion as the royal party's final evening at El Pardo.

⁵ Ruth Lee Kennedy's famous article on Tirso's *La prudencia en la mujer* showed that the play's date of composition was 1622, the year after Philip IV ascended the throne, and that the appeal for better government by the medieval regent Maria de Molina of the *comedia* was taken as an attack by those newly in power, who brought about Tirso's transfer to a remote monastery of his religious order, along with a command that he desist from writing *comedias*.

⁶ For a Velázquez portrait of the little prince and a dwarf, see the enchanting *Prince Baltasar Carlos with a Dwarf* (Museum of Fine Arts, Boston). A brief review of the question of the dwarf's gender is found in Domínguez Ortiz, Pérez Sánchez, and Gállegos 166.

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**INTERCULTURALISM AND THE *COMEDIA*:
K+S+E+C ACT'S ADAPTATION OF CER-
VANTES' *NUMANCIA***

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Current debate on theatrical cross-cultural experimentation cautions about the dangers of power inequality and indifference to distinction in the representation of cultures. Despite the initial optimism about the interculturalist trend and its potential to open the exploratory aspects of art it has been widely recognized that, when dealing with intercultural products, there is often a hidden agenda by virtue of which one of the cultures displayed often represents the “other.” Daryl Chin, for instance, warns that we must be wary of approaches that present interculturalism as “a simple way of joining disparate cultural artifacts together”(Chin,167) and Rustom Bharucha expresses his firm suspicion that “intercultural projects still have the whiff of colonialism about them, that they prevent the possibility of any reciprocity in intercultural exchange” (“Somebody's Other,” 212).

However, the debate is far from settled and the shifting perspectives, sometimes within the thinking of a single critic over time, only attest to the slippery ground on which interculturalism moves. Jacqueline Lo and Helen Gilbert pose a model of interculturalism that accounts for negotiation between the cultures in contact. In 1993, Bharucha himself showed some optimism about the potential of interculturalism when posing the pendulum model, which represents an oscillatory movement between cultures (*Theatre and the World*, 241), as an alternative to Patrice Pavis's hourglass model by which "the source culture is emptied while the 'target culture' is filled" (*Theatre at the Crossroads*, 5). Bharucha and Pavis represent two of the extreme reactions to interculturalism, from celebratory to skeptical. And, though it is not my intention to adjudicate between them, it is useful to position intercultural performances in terms of these premises so as to assess the reach of the above theoretical models. In this essay, I explore some ways in which interculturalism hinges on power issues in the Spanish Golden Age *comedia* by applying both the pendulum and hourglass models to my own viewing of *Numancia* as performed by the experimental Japanese company K+S+E+C Act. It is my intention to discern in general whether this type of intercultural production allows for an expansion of resources by integrating diverse cultural traditions or, on the contrary, "cuts off exploration in favor of imposing meaning, rather than allowing meaning to

arise from the material” (Chin, 175). The goal is to decide whether and how K+S+E+C Act's production of *Numancia* in the 2007 International Festival of Classical Theatre in Almagro shows ethnocentric indifference to distinction or, on the contrary, accounts for cultural equivalence while recognizing specificity. At the heart of this question stands a very contemporary debate: the encounter of global vs. local histories and the perceived danger of the gradual disappearance of the latter.

The first question to be sorted out in trying to determine intercultural power issues¹ is the awareness of power differentials among the cultures in contact. Relations between Spain and Japan, as may be deduced from the website of the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, have been defined of late by a bilateral “Treaty of Commerce, Friendship and Navigation” signed by the countries in 1868 (“Japan-Spain Relations”). This treaty, with only a brief interruption, has allowed both countries to enjoy what the site terms as “good relations.” Furthermore, several cultural encounters have taken place thanks to the regular intervention of the Japan-Spain “Commission for Cultural Exchange” established in 1982. This cordial diplomatic connection, apparently devoid of colonial ties despite both of the countries' imperialist pasts, hinders the possibility of a postcolonial approach, an important angle within interculturalist studies. Thus the cultural encounters offered by K+S+E+C Act's productions, which are often attended by Japanese diplomats,

produced as response to invitations from Spanish festival directors and performed in Japanese for Spanish and Japanese audiences alike, seem to circumvent a number of usual power issues. Yet, the absence of conflict or intense contact among cultures does not insure, per se, the two-way respectful treatment of cultural sources by theatre practitioners that is described by Bharucha's pendular movement. This is precisely what must be determined: whether K+S+E+C Act's cultural exchanges oscillate bidirectionally and allow for cultural negotiation between Spanish and Japanese cultures or, on the contrary, flow only one way. Admittedly, it will be difficult to determine the direction of the hourglass flow in this case, since the source and target cultures constantly merge: Japanese acting techniques (target culture) engage with a Spanish text (source) in a Japanese adaptation (target language) to be performed in front of both Japanese and Spanish audiences. The constant shift among target and source elements complicates Pavis's model, making its use problematic.

A number of circumstances make K+S+E+C Act a very interesting company by virtue of its unique blend of interculturalism: K+S+E+C Act is a Japanese group of experimental theatre which specializes in performing Spanish and Latin-American plays "Japanese style." In more than twenty five years of existence it has performed a myriad of Spanish canonical plays in several major Spanish festivals. Their success with Spanish audiences has

allowed them to revisit the prestigious International Festival of Classical Theatre in Almagro periodically since 2002, bringing to the public their particular vision of classics such as Calderón's *La vida es sueño* (2002), Cervantes's *Don Quijote de la Mancha* (2005), Cervantes's *Numancia* (2007), Fernando de Rojas's *La Celestina* (2008) and Lope de Vega's *Fuenteovejuna* (2009).

Part of this success as it applies to K+S+E+C Acct's production of *Numancia* may be due to a declared universalist and humanist intent on the part of the director that connects seamlessly with the history of stagings of *Numancia* in Spain. Both K+S+E+C Act's adapter and translator, Yoichi Tajiri, and the director, Kei Jinguji, have offered statements which clearly situate their reading of the play within this universalist trend thus negotiating a common place for the encounter between both cultural sensibilities. To begin with, Tajiri claims that: "...en cuanto autor de los guiones de la compañía K+S+E+C Act no tengo la menor intención de alentar ningún 'patriotismo simplista' del tipo '¿Eres capaz de morir por la persona que amas?'" (*Numancia*, 35). Instead he claims that his purpose in this production was to encourage thinking along more universal lines by setting the plot in quasi-apocalyptic terms that expose self-destructive tendencies within humanity:

Me gustaría hacer reflexionar sobre la siguiente pregunta: '¿Por qué la humanidad

todavía repite la tragedia de tener que morir con las personas amadas?' y que pensáramos que esta tragedia es la nuestra, la de nosotros que estamos al borde de una crisis a escala global. (Tajiri, "Numancia" 35).

Alongside traditional views that have insisted on exposing or even glorifying the mythical and nationalistic potential of *Numancia* in the peninsula, there have been a number of variant readings: the sympathetic representation of a heroic nation's self-immolation under the pressure of Roman imperial power has been occasionally perceived as self criticism of Spain's own expansionistic and imperialist policies during the 16th century.² This interpretation credits Cervantes with a subtlety of expression and a use of irony not at all surprising from the creator of *El Quijote*.³ However, more recent criticism coincides with the Japanese production in underscoring the human and universal aspects of the tragedy. The beginning of this trend is probably marked by the appearance of the popular *Historia del teatro español* published by Francisco Ruiz Ramón in 1967, in which he describes the play as satisfactory by virtue of the vitality generated by the intensity of human emotion (22). Leaving aside the celebratory rhetoric of prior decades, Ruiz Ramón finally strips the drama of the undercurrent of patriotic and nationalist readings that had accompanied it for centuries.

In this respect, we might situate the K+S+E+C Act's production within the category of transcultural theatre, which, as Pavis shows in his *Intercultural Performance Reader*, is primarily a Western-based tradition with a lineage in modernist experimentation:

Transcultural [theatre] transcends particular cultures on behalf of a universality of the human condition. Transcultural directors are concerned particularities and traditions only in order to grasp more effectively what they have in common and what is not reducible to a specific culture. (Pavis, 6).

In fact, the universalist, non-patriotic bent of the production is one of the points the Spanish local press praises: "la fuerza física actoral, una adaptación textual alejada de todo patriotismo y una escenografía planteada con acierto y poderío describen robustos mechones que, juntos, construyen una trenza casi perfecta" (Serrano). The textual adaptation is praised here in general terms for its universalist leaning, intent on showing "human dignity" in the play, a perspective shared both by the Japanese adaptors and Spanish critics and opposed to the versions that have underscored the "patriotic angle."

But, as may be apparent, an interesting reversal takes place here, for whereas theatre that transcends the East/West axis has traditionally been done from the West, including the work of

Mnouchkine and modernist pioneers such as Gro-towski or Artaud, this manifestation of intercultural performance is now articulated from the East. Though it must be acknowledged that this is not the first instance (Japanese adaptations of Shakespeare beginning in the 70's come readily to mind),⁴ K+S+E+C Act's work is among the first cases of Japanese adaptation of the Spanish *comedia*. K+S+E+C Act shifts the unidirectional trend by looking back to the West in a similarly experimental manner and with a parallel intent of identifying commonalities rather than differences among the traditions.

At first sight, it is a wonder that *Numancia* was the play selected by the Japanese company despite the problems they claim to have found in the text itself, which the adaptor describes as stiff, amateurish, excessively vehement, coarse in poetic form, and virtually untranslatable (Tajiri, 25). For this reason, K+S+E+C Act's treatment of the text becomes of particular importance here, since far from being a fetishization of the original text or a search for authority and narratives of origin, the adaptation constitutes a reappropriation for the purpose of cultural exploration whose terms are of utmost importance here.

The attraction to the Spanish classics seems to be justified by the Japanese director, Kei Jinguji, by a sort of telluric allure that would almost seem to provide grounds for organicist nationalism:

Sentía curiosidad por descubrir por qué ha habido siempre tantos grandes creadores, desde Cervantes a Calderón y Lope; Dalí y Picasso; Buñuel...todos son muy grandes. Pensé que debía de ser a causa de la tierra española.” (qtd. in Tovar)

Yet, in the case of their production of *Numancia*, the result lies far from patriotic sentimentalism or geographic specificity. In fact, I would argue that the Japanese production presents a unique form of interculturalism that circumvents many of its most problematic aspects and allows for new forms of cultural negotiation. The K+S+E+C Act adaptation may be described as a destabilized version of Cervantes’s text which acquires added polyphonic dimension; an intercultural product whose visual qualities de-center the text, both literally, through projected Spanish subtitles, and figuratively, through the spectacularity and physicality of its representation. The highly stylized performance, which combines Kabuki and experimental elements, surprises for its dissonance, its spasmodic rhythm, and the bareness of a stage that serves as a mere background to highlight the visual plasticity of actors trained in the gestural precision of Eastern physical theatres.⁵ The result may be described as a highly stylized product that allows for new explorations of the notions history, temporality and collectivity in the Cervantine text.

When the Spanish literary heritage is used as experimental ground for theatrical experience it is fair to question the connections that are established with the historical context. In other words, to what extent if at all is the 'source culture' emptied while the 'target culture' is filled? Theorists who caution against the dangerous potential of intercultural productions to oversimplify or devalue the original for the sake of universalist or aesthetic concerns (Chin, 167) may feel justified in light of the following comments by K+S+E+C Act's director, Jinguji, about his connection to the Spanish *Celestina*: "Hay lazos de unión, pese a las 'distancias'.... Hay muchas similitudes, también en Japón los autores hablan de cuestiones de honor o de amoríos" (Tovar). This description might seem more resolved to underline superficial similarity than to delve into exploratory aspects of interculturalism. And although the superficial link between cultures is meant to provide the grounds for cultural encounter here it may also, in effect, subject the Spanish text to a reductionist process that limits rather than multiplies its possible meanings. Admittedly, *La Celestina* encompasses much more than love and honor, a thematic description that would fit a large number of Baroque dramas including *La Numancia* but also, for instance, numerous Victorian texts. In such manner, the source culture might seem to be depleted, if not emptied, of meaning in this brand of intercultural encounter. I do not think this is really the case. In fact, it may be said that, far from being

an intercultural phenomenon, the underscoring of certain themes and materials, whether they be universal or not, is an inherent part of any directorial process and the basis of any theatrical adaptation.

In my view, the director's thematic simplification provides a necessary vehicle for a full visual exploration of the theme. Rather than oversimplifying the idea of honor or sacrifice, the Japanese production allows for the complexity of its expression which is, at once magnified and concentrated in isolated gestures, precise choreographies or specific theatrical properties. The first scene opens with a businessman casually coming upon the site of the Numantian ruins, a series of heaps of grey cloth distributed on stage which suddenly comes to life to reveal the heads of actors within. As their trunks slowly rise, while remaining in kneeling position and in white face, we hear their perfectly synchronized and high pitched speech, emitted with a rigid expression that resembles the rictus of death. This hunting image represents the chorus while simultaneously transmitting the notion of the human history within the ruins. But also, as the figures stand up and begin to act as the Numantians, still wrapped within their heavy ash-grey shrouds, they visually recreate a continuation among the annihilated victims, the place, and the collective wisdom of the chorus. As it may be expected from this *mise-en-scène*, the production did not fail to captivate Spanish audiences through the complexity of a visual

and auditory spectacle that in fact complicated rather than simplified the possibilities of the text.⁶

K+S+E+C Act's adaptation eliminates, not only "the long and stiff monologues" but also the allegorical figures Spain, Duero, Hunger, and Fame, that conferred to the original its "air of medieval religious drama" (Tajiri, 25) and, incidentally, part of its local specificity. But, despite the adaptor's flat rejection of this "medieval" air, I believe this production exploits the medieval allegorical mode precisely and originally, as a source of aesthetic richness that shifts the symbolism from the patriotic and the geographic (Fame/Duero/Spain) to the universal and temporal (War/Rocks/Ashes/Ruins). Thus, it may be said that a unique process of translation operates in the Japanese production that goes far beyond language. In Cervantes's text the river Duero, to take but one example, functions as image of physical continuity as it foretells Spain's future glories and celebrates the nation's historical endurance despite the impending destruction of the Numantians (Cervantes I 441-536). Notwithstanding the problematic nature of the speech, ambiguous enough to be construed by critics both as celebratory and condemnatory of imperialism, the interesting factor for our purposes is how it is meant for the audience alone, spatially excluding the Numantians from sharing the stage with history.⁷ In contrast to this, the Japanese production highlights the ubiquitous temporal presence of the Numantians by making the actors physically embody a number of key

elements: their sacrifice, re-enacted through the inclusion of the actors in a river of blood represented through three lines of stretched red cloth moved by the actors in a style reminiscent of Chinese dragons; the Numantian ashes in the past represented by lines of stretched grey cloth suspended from the ceiling and moved by concealed actors in a ghostly manner to signify the impending threat; the Numantian ruins in the present, represented statically in the manner described above and later transformed into a chorus that interacts directly with the contemporary spectator (the businessman). The changes in the Japanese script point out differences between Cervantes's version of history, which must be sung by rigid allegorical figures and committed to the spectators' memory but which confines the Numantians to a passive role, and K+S+E+C Act's version of history, which flows in front of our very eyes through precise choreographies and specific theatrical properties in which the Numantians represent organic, shifting agents. When taken even further, this contrast may be construed as the difference between a fixed logocentric official history, and a shifting, inclusive, experiential, popular history.

In effect, the production introduces an innovative temporality by inserting a narrative frame from the present through the figure of the "businessman," who first enters the stage casually speaking on a cell phone and is suddenly detained by the ghostly vision of the Numantian ruins. The use of this temporal device inserts the production specifi-

cally within the Japanese tradition, for Suzuki's *The Tale of Lear* in the 80's had similarly trimmed the Shakespearean text to about 100 minutes and had also intersecting modern temporal frames.⁸ Similarly, in the Japanese *Numancia* the twenty-first century employee, taken aback by the desolation and grief the chorus inspires, watches from the stage apron as the play unfolds in front of his very eyes. The frame visually engages past and present as the Numantian chorus dialogues with the present-day visitor to its ruins. This anachronistic visitor generates a metatheatrical effect that prevents the confusion of fiction and reality as it allows for the present to comment on the horror of the past in a humanized yet non culture-specific fashion. Symbolically, past and present are related through the striking image of the contrasting rivers described above: of ashes embodied in gray moving cloths (present ruins), and of blood materialized through red moving cloths (past sacrifice). As a result, this adaptation encourages a rational, creative and active reading on the part of the audience which generates a conscious and individualized experience that transcends the essentialized, fixed interpretations of some of the former performances of the play that were subservient to evoking patriotic sentiment in the audience.⁹

Without using individualized allegorical figures, the production's experimental aesthetics is strongly scripted through a mobile symbolic setting where set pieces, chorus and characters are one, and flow from one state to the other. The key element in

the costume/setting is the use of a heavy grey cloth that each of the actors wears and manipulates to different effects. This versatile cloth allows for fluidity within the system of symbols that confers particular significance to the setting as the element that playfully and anachronistically links the past to the future. Thus the river of ashes that ominously opens the play turns into a series of rocks that form part of the landscape of ruins, only to transform again and come alive as the ghosts of a chorus of Numantians who give testimony of the tragic past of Numancia. The music score aids in marking the semiotic transformation of bodies and stage properties: the river of ashes is accompanied by a throbbing and otherworldly piano score that, after a silence, gives way to a form of deafening techno-rock when the members of the chorus return to their rock form to become again the ruins. The absence of the heavy cloak when the actors eventually disrobe marks the presence of individualized Numantians and thus affects the temporal shift to the history within the story. Only in the moment of the tragic killings do the Numantians adopt the cloth as partial garb, still showing the upper body, later marked by red scarves of blood, but linking the lower body to the landscape and ruins with which they are about to merge.¹⁰

The innovative aesthetics of the performance go beyond props and set design to affect the bodies of the actors themselves. Besides endowing the set with a visually arresting semiotic mobility,

the heavy grey cloth produces a striking effect in the movement of the actors on stage. As Serrano admiringly notes: "[La] interpretación supone todo un reto físico-cada actor carga con un tejido de 12 kilos de peso-, y el resultado es de una fortaleza impactante, que impide apartar los ojos de cada uno de los intérpretes." The result is a performance technique that heavily scripts the rhythm and style of every motion by forcing the actors to lower their center of gravity and exaggerate their movements. The effect, far from detracting from the text, adds rhythm and grandiosity to its deliverance and establishes a dialectical process between word and movement highly sensitive to the lyrical and heroic aspects of the original.

Yet, suspicion towards intercultural adaptations of classical texts seems to be far from an exceptional reaction. In order to discern the dynamics of this type of intercultural encounter it is useful to compare this performance with the much celebrated and vilified adaptations of *Richard II* and *Twelfth Night* by Ariane Mnouchkine and *King Lear* by David McRuvie. Judith Miller reviews Mnouchkine's performances in the 80's, which as she observes "nightly captivated or maddened some 1000 spectators with her own verbal and visual translations of Shakespeare's *Richard II* and *Twelfth Night*" (114). The performances were respectively set in the Japan of the samurai and "illusory India." The first, to use an example, combined the silk kimonos, white masking and bright and gilded colors of medieval

Japan over Elizabethan ruffs. The combination caused stunned mixed reactions. Miller's comments may be representative of a sector of the audience's response:

Such a provocative mélange of Oriental and European iconography with an emphasis on Oriental acting techniques rocked the French audiences to their tasteful core. I, too, was stunned by the eight-hour splendor of Mnouchkine's Shakespeares; but I also came away neither weeping over Richard nor smiling fondly at the comic lovers: The eyes said yes; the heart said no. (115)

In the mind of this critic, the vibrancy and richness of visual detail seem to have caused confusion rather than a new openness to the text as the spectators concentrated on the “provocative [iconographic] mélange.” There is even a flat rejection of the extreme stylization of the actors' movements, which causes Miller to comment on the “tantrums” of the “infantilized lovers” who “never understood the sense of the music Orsino called forth nor even the sense of the calling. They did not communicate that Shakespearean pleasure of love which comes from the speaking of it” (116). There seems to be a sense in which the visual detail is considered also here as an “excess” that hinders clear transmission of the text. There may be even an allegation of lack of parity in the treatment of visual/textual elements that

indicates a privileging of the first and, hence, an imbalance of the target culture over the source culture.

Spanish reception does seem unanimous in describing the virtues of K+S+E+C Act's productions. What follows are but glimpses of the general acclaim of K+S+E+C Act's *Numancia* from sources that range from blogs, if they may be admitted as index of popular reception, to local newspapers and academic criticism. Ricardo Salvat, Catedrático de Artes escénicas de la Universidad de Barcelona and Premio Nacional de teatro, declares in *Artez*, a publication dedicated to the theatre arts:

La mejor *Numancia* que hemos visto. Es curioso. Mientras aquí aún se considera que Cervantes no es un verdadero autor teatral, algunas de las mejores compañías del extranjero lo valoran de manera justa y adecuada. En ninguna otra ocasión hemos visto que la grandeza del texto se viera correspondida en la grandeza de las imágenes y los visuales y auditivos que vimos en el bellísimo Teatro Cervantes. (Salvat)

Eiroa and Eiroa, from the Escuela Superior de Arte Dramático and Universidad de Murcia respectively, observe the following in a paper delivered at a Logroño congress about images of Antiquity in the visual arts:

A pesar de tratarse de una versión en japonés sobretitulado supieron ganarse al auditorio de nuestro festival más clásico. (Eiroa and Eiroa)

The misgivings of the academics, who comment on the achievement that it was for this production to win the audience over despite the Japanese over-titles, seem to match the general audience's reaction as disclosed by an anonymous blogger of *El Culturo*, who confesses his initial disorientation:

Superado el desconcierto inicial que supone la poda del texto de Cervantes en un 80%, reconocemos que la esencia del conflicto se mantiene y el dramatismo de las situaciones llega al espectador de forma intensificada por amor de la energía y el sincretismo de la expresión de los actores. ("XXV jornadas")

From these comments, scholarly and popular, a number of common points may be drawn: appreciation at the rescue of Cervantes, rarely seen on stage, as dramatist, and congratulatory remarks about the visual impact and ingenuity of the production. In general, few of the comments refer to the textual adaptation except to mention the initial bafflement at the language barrier and the looseness of the adaptation.

Similarly, a reporter from a newspaper in Ciudad Real announces the production in highly

laudatory terms: "Poderío nipón y terror oriental encumbran la *Numancia* de Ksec Act" (Serrano). But her reactions include detailed descriptions of visual splendor that emphasize the production's "otherness." The terms used to pass positive judgment on the piece are particularly interesting in that they allege trickery and underscore the power of the physical presence of the actors:

Los intérpretes japoneses embaucaron al público desde el primer minuto con un deslumbrante control y fortaleza física, reflejada en sus rostros y en cada uno de los movimientos de su cuerpo. Al contrario que sucede con los actores curtidos en el teatro inglés, los cuerpos de los nipones emanaban aparatosidad y vehemencia, fuerza muscular sobre todo lo demás, de un cálculo extremo que no deja duda alguna acerca del dominio del movimiento de los actores de Ksec Act. (Serrano)

The visual horror and beauty, "al más puro estilo japonés," is completed by "Luces, humos, colores y algunas sorpresas [que] ponen la guinda a un montaje que sería imperdonable perderse" (Serrano). In this review, the acting style is stressed and deliberately described in opposition to more restrained "English" styles with what could be described as a deliberate rhetoric of excess. It could be said that the undeniable fascination of the production is built

upon its distinction from the more familiar English, read “Western,” aesthetics of the stage.

The unquestionable emphasis on the visual aspects of the performance on the part of each of the reviewers, the comments on the looseness of the adaptation and the lack of literary protectionism give way to allegations of an interpretive freedom that some might find taints the flow of reciprocity in intercultural exchange. Chin, for instance, expresses his suspicions of intercultural adaptations and the imposition of the visual codes of the target culture as follows:

To deploy elements from the symbol system of another culture is a very delicate enterprise. In its crudest terms, the question is: when does that usage act as cultural imperialism? Forcing elements from disparate cultures together does not seem to be a solution that makes much sense, aesthetically, ethically, or philosophically. What does that prove: that the knowledge of their cultures exist? That information about other cultures now is readily available? (174)

The relevant issue here is: do the Spanish critics detect a similar unilateral process in K+S+E+C Act's adaptation? Do the constant comments on corporeal and visual details detract from the rendering of the text or do they betray a dialectical process between the cultures? Miller's perspec-

tive assumes, with Pavis's hourglass model, that the encounter is somewhat lacking in sensitivity and cultural equivalence, a fact that needs yet to be determined in the case of K+S+E+C Act's production. In order to test the issue of cultural equivalence, I will contextualize the performances by applying more appropriate models of interculturalism for this particular case: Bharucha's pendular model¹¹ as mentioned above, and Lo and Gilbert's, which describes intercultural encounters as a "two-way flow."

In our model ... both partners are considered cultural sources while the target culture is positioned along the continuum between them. The location of the target culture is not fixed: its position remains fluid and, depending on where and how the exchange takes place, shifts along the continuum. This fluidity not only foregrounds the dialogic nature of intercultural exchange but also takes into account the possibility of power disparity in the partnership. (Lo and Gilbert, 44)

The fact that K+S+E+C Act's productions are intended both for Spanish and Japanese audiences defines the nature of the target culture as permanently shifting and enables the "dialogic nature of intercultural exchange" proposed by Lo and Gilbert. Significantly, whereas Miller notes the di-

vided response to Mnouchkine's productions for Parisian audiences, who were either "captivated or maddened," Spanish critical reaction to K+S+E+C Act seems unanimously favorable.¹² In fact, the Japanese performance is often linked in theatre reviews to a need for a revival and renewal of the classics. The director of the "Jornadas de Teatro del Siglo de Oro en Almería," Antonio Serrano, aware of the challenge involved in presenting the classics alluringly after twenty five years of festivals, welcomes international "variants" such as the "exotic" version of *Numancia* by K+S+E+C Act (Relaño, 31).

And so, we catch a glimpse of a slightly disturbing aspect of K+S+E+C Act's popular success in Spain. Admittedly, some of the critical misgivings about intercultural adaptations seem to come true when the exploratory process becomes reduced to a mere glimpse of the cultural "other," thereby triggering the defamiliarization of one's own cultural heritage. On the other hand, the Spanish text travels well to Japan by virtue of its "universal appeal." Yet, when closely examined, both simple exoticism and comfortable universalism seem to be obvious, yet rather superficial responses to the performances at hand. Parting from the company's explicit notion of cross-cultural theatre I view K+S+E+C Act's productions as sites of intercultural exchange in which systems of symbols, aesthetics and performance techniques work together to produce a unique creation of a complexity far beyond

the merely “exotic.” K+S+E+C Act finds in Cervantes' *Numancia* a cultural resource at the level of narrative content that encompasses both the material and the symbolic. To this narrative inspiration they add striking visual and acting techniques whose plasticity and rhythm evoke those of kabuki theatre while inserting novel anachronistic and ludic elements that re-inscribe the mythical content of the play within experimentalist trends.

One of the most important aspects of a productive intercultural exchange in theatre is that the encounter between the traditions be produced in the spirit of creativity and experimentalism in a manner that avoids culture essentialism and considers the artistic product a separate creation, with no ties to the search for essential national identities. This is precisely the intent of K+S+E+C Act's theatre practice. The director expresses his impressions on the delicate balance established between the traditions involved and innovation. He argues that their performance of Spanish theatre is full of its own reality and fantasy but articulated through purely Japanese gestures. But, while acknowledging the importance of the Japanese tradition in their productions, Jinguji also confesses that, for K+S+E+C Act, creativity has always outweighed all other elements (Gabinete de Prensa).

Though I have so far concentrated on the innovative and experimental elements of the production I would like to comment further on the way it engages both the Spanish and Japanese classical

traditions. Let me focus first on the commonalities. The Spanish Early Modern tradition provides a series of parallelisms to kabuki theatre that may have similarly served as source of inspiration: a) both genres addressed popular audiences and were often used to comment on contemporary society; b) both were occasionally banned and eventually reestablished; c) both contained comic interludes among serious pieces, and, d) both lent themselves to the representation of actual historical events that often contained revenge plots driven by honor themes.

Upon close examination, a number of characteristics proper to the kabuki tradition may be perceived in K+S+E+C Act's production of *Numancia*. It may be said to display, to different degrees: a) a *kata*-like style of narration that uses the kabuki convention of separating action from reaction "into small fragments of time and space, letting the audience fully appreciate every instance and every nuance of the movement" (Weiler, 110); b) an acting style so stylized that it sometimes becomes virtually indistinguishable from dancing; c) a non-representational style that gives predominance to the virtuosity of the actor and that is sometimes centered around type characters such as the *aragoto* (reckless warrior) who portrays an image of strength and valor; and d) a particular sense of rhythm by which every move is important and is sometimes artificially prolonged, "which accounts for the apparently erratic and sometimes slow tempo of kabuki, and for the complaint heard often

from Western visitors that it is hard to tell where the climaxes are meant to be" (Weiler, 110). Some of these elements can be appreciated in K+S+E+C Act's production in the scene in which the Numantians first confront Cipión. The Roman general is represented here by a figure in golden garb, sporting a baton in lieu of a sword whose terrifying gestures *aragoto* style contribute to an elaborate, erratic choreography of war. The confrontation of the single character against the Numantians highlights the superior power of the single stretched menacing figure against the group of synchronized shifting grey shapes who barely escape his blows.

K+S+E+C Act's interaction with the cultural tradition of the West aims to, "relativize or transcend cultural differences" in a search of a Classical theme of universal resonance, which the translator phrases in quasi-Aristotelian terms. : "[Cervantes] sugiere que la obra se puede tomar como tragedia pura y no como un simple alegato del "patriotismo"...entonces, me puse a trabajar en la obra considerándola como la tragedia a la que se ven arrasados quienes no tienen otra opción que la muerte." (Tajiri, 25). Thus, the theme is bent to the kabuki tradition which is more geared to appeal to the senses than to reason. Yet, the minimalist plasticity of the setting, the stylized acting and the visual poetics of the most tragic moments (the death by starvation of a child, the compassionate murders, Baria-to's suicide, etc....) rather than engage us emotion-

ally, contribute to the distancing and defamiliarization of these scenes.

Still, the thematic core of the Spanish play evokes for K+S+E+C Act a shared tradition of strict honor codes, which the director, far from interrogating, naturalizes as follows:

En la época en que el honor era valorado y respetado más que la vida, su pérdida significaba como poco la muerte social. Por lo tanto, la norma social era la de quitarse la vida antes que recibir un dishonor. Esta escala de valores que pone el honor por encima de la vida también existió en Japón en la época de los samurais. Era una época en la que si se alcanzaba honor y fama, la vida y el cuerpo no se tenían en cuenta. Si a alguien se le mostraba el fundamento de que algo era más precioso que la vida, siempre se renunciaba calladamente a la vida allí mismo. El seppuku (harakiri) de los samuráis es un ejemplo típico. Era una época en que el honor era considerado como el bien (Jinguji, 22).

After making the cultural connection, the director makes an interesting observation when he sets honor in rather nostalgic terms, not as a literary convention or a dated practice that can be taken to barbaric ends, but rather as that which sets us apart from animals, as the virtue that defines “el orgullo de ser

[hombre]" (Jinguji, 23). Immediately, he proceeds to lament the present state of Japan, now distanced from this moral code and immersed in a wave of random and unnatural violence. To his mind, there is but one cause for this chaos: the loss of an education based on the honor code and on the pride, dignity and decorum that this practice confers to the human being (Jinguji, 23).¹³

There is no doubt that the Cervantine text provided the Japanese company with the set of symbols necessary to express their own experience. In their statements we are reminded of how intercultural theatre inevitably entails a process of encounter and negotiation between different cultural sensibilities the result of which varies depending on the degree of cultural reductionism or exploration at work. I would argue that K+S+E+C Act's productions lean towards the latter, that indeed their cultural exchanges allow for reciprocity in intercultural exchange by oscillating bi-directionally rather than flowing one way, and that their commercial and critical success in both countries speaks to this end. It is this kind of production, meant to be at the cross-roads between cultures and to move between boundaries, that best shows the shortcomings of unidirectional theories of interculturalism such as Pavis's.

I will conclude by citing Bharucha once again in a passage that, to my mind, attests to the potential of interculturalism as embodied by K+S+E+C Act:

...different languages, histories, and cultures can meet in and through theatre, and echo each other, and [...] the archetypes of a “foreign” text can actually accentuate the immediacies of the historical moment in another cultural context. In this sense, the [inter]cultural possibilities of theatrical intervention need not be regarded as necessarily exclusive or antagonistic activities so long as they find a common ground within the “political unconscious” of a particular group of actors in a specific context (“Somebody’s Other,” 202).

Indeed, I share his view that intercultural encounters need not imply colonialist agendas or prevent the possibility of reciprocity in intercultural exchange. Rather, in certain cases, it is possible to perceive in intercultural theatre the opportunity for encounter and exploration that Bharucha grants, in the citation above, to intraculturalism--cultural encounters “between and across specific communities and regions *within* the boundaries of the nation-state” (Bharucha, 6). Perhaps the challenge truly resides in allowing meaning to arise from the production’s plasticity and aesthetics at work, despite cultural differences, exoticizing misconceptions, and textual constraints.

NOTES

¹ A thorough exploration of the political reception of this adaptation of *Numancia* in relation to Spanish nationalism is beyond the scope of this paper.

² See Kahn, de Armas (86) and Bravo Elizondo (94) as somewhat exceptional examples of this position. Bravo Elizondo, in particular, adduces the Cervantine use of anachronism as an indication of his intention to criticize Spain's imperialist policies and offers an anachronistic reference to the ill reputed political advisors of Carlos V as illustration of his intent to unveil corruption in his government. Kahn's work contains a particularly lucid discussion of the question of imperialism in the play, reaching the conclusion that "By maintaining moral victory for the Celtiberians Cervantes glorifies resistance to unjust imperial expansion. This message is more resounding than the superficial praising of sixteenth-century Spain" (198).

³ Another exceptional instance of this criticism of resistance is the 1976 hypothesis of Hermenegildo that the play makes allusion to the brutal repression of the Arab revolt in 1570 by Juan de Austria. Cervantes, himself a marginal element as a new convert, is said to have sympathized with the cause of the persecuted Arabs and found inspiration for *La Destrucción de Numancia* in their resistance in the Alpujarras (Hermenegildo 51). Other recent critics, such as Simerka and Lupher have coincided in the possibility of resistant, counter-epic readings for the play.

⁴ Japan's long interest in Shakespeare seems to have arisen with the official policy of openness to Western traditions of the Meiji era. As it has been widely noted, the first shimpa adaptations were very much connected to the colonial enterprise. Versions of *Othello*, to name but one example, were adopted in this period to deal with the annexation of Taiwan (Williams, et al. 475). These were, however, very much text-oriented, and it would not be till the 1980s that a new era of

Japanese adaptations began which was more centered on the visual aspects of the performance. From these, worth noting are those by Ninagawa Yukio.

⁵ I would like to differentiate here between Western physical theatre, based on the “increasing withdrawal of the actor from the audience, both spatially and psychologically,” and the physical theatre, kabuki style, a nonrepresentational form of theatre based on its direct connection with the audience (Ernst, 209).

⁶ In fact, the director comments in an interview about the difficulties that the Spanish classics entail for contemporary Japanese audiences, indifferent to works in Spanish and foreign traditions, and responsive only to modern formulas and local traditional forms such as kabuki (Tovar).

⁷ See Kahn's illuminating review of the speech as example of its potential as a sign of Cervantes's dissent against Phillip II's imperialist policies (183-185).

⁸ Suzuki begins the play from the perspective of an old man in a nursing home who, having read *King Lear*, identifies with the protagonist and reenacts the text as a nurse reads it out loud (Williams et al. 476).

⁹ For a detailed analysis of the aesthetic differences among the stagings of Cervantes's *Numancia* by Rafael Alberti in 1937 and by Sánchez Castañer in 1956, see García-Martín (199-245).

¹⁰ Although the cloths are not the only examples of the transformability of the sign in this production they are undoubtedly the most significant and visually striking. The other stage property perhaps worth mentioning would be the paper balloons that were introduced at several moments in the play: red ones falling on Marquino and the Numantians in the scene of the omen, to signify their fate, bright colored ones falling on Cipión which he playfully pricks, pierces and tramples to represent the cruelty of the Roman towards the vulnerable Numantians.

¹¹ For an illuminating application of Bharucha's pendular model, see Daugherty.

¹² While perhaps it is true that the Spanish press seems to be favorable in general to most interest in Spanish classical drama, I have been a witness to signs of unrest among audiences who regarded certain adaptations of the classics excessively light or frivolous. In particular, I have observed audience's unease and enthusiasm to adaptations of Calderon's autos that included *commedia dell' arte* and flamenco elements respectively.

¹³ Jinguji's full statement is worth citing: "Si se piensa que existe algo específico que hace que el hombre sea hombre y fuera de lo cual no le queda a este sino la mera animalidad, entonces se puede admitir que el honor puede ser intercambiable por el orgullo de ser hombre. En Japón hace ya mucho que no se oye hablar de dicha mentalidad. La época actual nos ofrece parricidios, matricidios, fraticidios, infanticidios, asesinatos conyugales, malos tratos a niños, acoso y violencia escolar, y todo tipo de violaciones. Pero la raíz de todos estos males es en el fondo la misma; no se ve al ser humano como ser humano, en la sociedad actual campa rampante la moda de ignorar la dignidad humana. En el pasado se decía mucho 'Si haces esto se reirán de tí,' 'No abuses de los débiles,' '¿No te da vergüenza?'. En mi infancia nos educaron con máximas como esas. Los adultos de entonces nos enseñaron así que lo fundamental del hombre era el orgullo de serlo, el decoro, la dignidad."

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ALGUNOS ASPECTOS DE LA VIDA TEATRAL A TRAVÉS DE CUATRO ENTREMESSES DE AGUSTÍN MORETO

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La producción del teatro breve de Moreto es una de las más extensas dentro del siglo XVII con una treintena de obras atribuidas a su pluma. Entre estas obras hay un grupo dedicado a temas teatrales; dos loas: la *Loa del Pupilo* y la *Loa de Juan Rana*, y dos entremeses: *El poeta* y *El vestuario*. Además de estas cuatro obras, si leemos detenidamente el resto del corpus de Moreto veremos que era un autor que ponía bastante atención al detalle y en sus obras encontramos continua mención del *attrezzo* que debería tener cualquier compañía de teatro.

Hoy en día es parte del conocimiento general como se formaban las compañías de teatro, y se sabe que actuaban con mayor o menor éxito, dependiendo del día, de la obra, de quién era el galán o la primera dama, y de otra serie de detalles. Toda esta

información está recogida en una serie de textos críticos al alcance de nuestra mano, pero lo que este ensayo quiere presentar es como parte de esta información se obtiene directamente de los textos teatrales, y, en concreto, los cuatro textos anteriormente mencionados de Moreto.

Para contestar a la pregunta ¿cómo y quién formaba una compañía? podemos referirnos al origen de la compañía de Lope de Rueda que estaba formada por “un obrero manual que ha abandonado su primitivo oficio de batidor de laminas de oro y una bailarina de larga historia” (Arroniz 182). Al poco tiempo, a esta pareja formada por Lope y Mariana de Rueda, se les van uniendo, según las necesidades, otros actores y músicos. Así se puede ver que durante los orígenes de las compañías, y más tarde también, los actores provienen de otros campos y se puede decir, en líneas generales, que no son respetados, sino que más bien se les considera maleantes por su continuo deambular. Con el paso del tiempo y la influencia italiana, los actores españoles se van a organizar y van a formar compañías y alianzas primero con los hospitales y más tarde desarrollando los corrales. Para el siglo XVII, las compañías ya tienen un reglamento, una cofradía y un calendario de actuaciones. La propaganda que reciben es más bien de tipo oral, aunque también existen los carteles anunciadores. Sin embargo, sabemos perfectamente que las compañías tenían que deshacerse al final de la temporada para volverse a formar al principio de la siguiente. Según indica

Oehrlein la temporada se iniciaba generalmente en Pascua y solía terminar para Carnaval del año siguiente, aunque el año teatral se movía a través de diferentes fases que más o menos se relacionaban con las festividades religiosas o la estación del año (123-131). Los descansos entre temporadas servían para buscar material nuevo, revisar el que ya tenía y sobre todo para renovar contratos, lo cual traía como resultado el intercambio de actores de una compañía a otra, y una forma de anunciar estos cambios era a través de las loas. Agustín de Rojas fue el primero en usarlas como elemento de propaganda. Luego durante el siglo XVII fue Quiñones de Benavente quien compuso algunas de las mejores (Moreto 127), pero, por supuesto, hubo otros autores que siguieron esta moda que es muy específica y que termina a fines del siglo XVII.

De Moreto nos ha llegado la *Loa entremesada con la que empezó en Madrid la compañía del Pupilo*. “Pupilo” era el apodo de Francisco García que además de *autor* fue representante y cobrador. A lo largo de su carrera en el teatro pasó de ser galán en los años cincuenta a ser barba en los años setenta, principio de los ochenta, e incluso llegó a ser *sobresaliente* (extra) en 1679 (Sánchez 178). En la temporada de 1657-1658, el Pupilo es *autor* y Moreto le escribe una loa de presentación a su compañía para su aparición en Madrid. En este momento la compañía está formada por Francisca Verdugo, Jerónima de Olmedo, Isabel de Gálvez, Manuela de Escamilla, Pupilo, Juan González, Antonio de Es-

camilla, Antonio de Villalba y Juan de la Calle y, por supuesto, también hay músicos. Estos no solían faltar en ninguna compañía y algunos de ellos como veremos también fueron actores.

El tema de esta loa es el ataque de locura que les ha entrado a los cómicos y el problema que están causando al no reconocerse a sí mismos como actores. Por otro lado también, y apoyándose en esta locura, se va a presentar la rivalidad existente entre Francisca Verdugo e Isabel Gálvez por querer ser ambas la primera dama de la compañía. Pero justo a la mención de “Madrid”, que es la palabra mágica en esta obra, todos recobran la cordura y vuelven a sus puestos. Los únicos no afectados por la locura son Pupilo y Manuela de Escamilla, que van a ser los encargados de presentar al resto de los actores a través de esta trama de locura. Si Pupilo está contento de estar en la capital del reino, todo se tergiversa con la enfermedad de sus colegas. En el diálogo inaugural que tiene con Manuela hacen un juego de adivinanzas para que la actriz pueda empezar a dar información de los cambios que ha habido en la compañía desde la última vez que actuaron en Madrid. De forma resumida el intercambio entre Pupilo y Manuela es el siguiente¹:

P: Loco estoy, ciego estoy, estoy corrido.

... ..

M: ¿Es por qué le ha faltado Malaguilla,
que por estar el arpa algo achacosa
la primavera la purgó con Rosa?

P: Peor

M: Ya yo adivino su cuidado;
es porque el buen Gaspar nos ha faltado [...]

P: Mucho peor

M: ... ¿Es porque le hace falta Poca Ropa?

Que, aunque nos ha dejado,

ya la pena pagó su pecado.

Como es Melocotón, si bien lo advierte,

por poco no te manda.

... ..

P: Mayor es mi pena.

M: Si no me engaño,

de Francisca Verdugo el mal extraño,

le tendrá de esa suerte.

P: Nada de eso

M: ¡El demonio lo acierte! (8, 10-14, 19,
20-24, 25-27, 28)

Obviamente el público debía conocer los nombres aquí presentados de la temporada anterior: Malaguilla, Gaspar, Rosa, Melocotón, etc. En este intercambio Manuela informa al público que Malaguilla y Gaspar, ambos músicos y actores, no están con ellos, lo mismo pasa con otro actor Poca Ropa. Estos tres son lo que hoy en día llamaríamos actores de segunda línea, es decir que no solían actuar como protagonistas. Sin embargo, los tres son lo suficientemente conocidos por el público como para merecer una mención, por rápida que sea, en esta presentación. Del que menos sabemos es Poca Ropa, ya que era el apodo de un actor citado en varias obras e

incluso en la *Genealogía*, pero nunca por su propio nombre. Según indica Lobato “su figura en el entremés llegó a hacerlo proverbial” (*Pupilo* 502, nota) y continúa diciendo que Poca Ropa es probablemente otra máscara del teatro del Siglo de Oro (como lo es la máscara de Juan Rana, de la que se hablará más adelante) y que “su apariencia desaliñada debió darle el nombre” (*Pupilo* 502, nota). La loa también nos deja saber que Francisca Verdugo ha estado enferma, pero no nos dice si está o no con la compañía y éste es uno de los puntos de contención de la obra. Finalmente Pupilo confiesa que los cómicos que se han vuelto locos, pero no es una locura normal, ya que

Escamilla
ha dado en que es Maestro de Capilla,
Juan de la Calle, loco más profundo,
que es Felipe Segundo
y Juan González, que es en todo extraño,
en que ha de ser autor aqueste año [...]
(36-41)

Por su parte las actrices también tienen su forma de locura. Isabel Gálvez, ahora que está en Madrid se niega a que Francisca Verdugo sea la primera dama ya que lo quiere ser ella, y Jerónima de Olmedo la apoya en su petición ya que fuera de Madrid las dos han alternado los papeles a la hora de hacer de primeras damas. Este tipo de disputa debía de ser relativamente corriente entre las actri-

ces, ya que sus posiciones dentro de la compañía podían cambiar drásticamente de estar en provincias a estar en la corte. Ni su paga ni su lucimiento serían iguales. Pupilo acepta la petición que le presentan, porque sabe que Francisca está enferma y le hace falta una primera dama. Sin embargo, en el momento que todos aclaman a Isabel como primera dama, Francisca Verdugo hace una entrada triunfal a través del patio, y por el palenque, montada a caballo, comportándose como un caballero ofendido en su honor, dispuesta a luchar y a defender su buen nombre y posición, y para ello reta a Isabel a un duelo de espadas. La pelea empieza, Pupilo intenta pararlas y termina cobrando él, pero a su mención de que "Madrid" los está esperando, todo se arregla y los actores recuperan su cordura. "Madrid" es la palabra mágica que lo soluciona todo, ya que la mayoría de las compañías consideraban la capital del reino como centro neurálgico del teatro, y desde donde partían al resto de las ciudades y regiones; y era también en Madrid capital donde residían la mayoría de los actores fuera de temporada (Oehrlein 12).

Como siempre los versos finales de la loa son de alabanza a la villa de Madrid, de petición al público, especialmente a las mujeres de que no les piten ni les silben, de presentación del nuevo músico de la compañía, Gregorio de la Rosa, y los típicos versos finales pidiendo perdón por las faltas.

Hasta aquí vendría la representación que el público del XVII habría visto y oído, pero esa es

una ventaja que no tiene el lector del siglo XXI, a quien sólo le queda el texto para inferir como serían estos actores o como se moverían en escena, y ese es el trabajo de la loa. Con todo estas obras eran muy cortas, esta pieza en particular sólo constan de 366 versos, por lo cual no se detiene en detalle a hablar de todos y cada uno de los actores de la compañía. Ya se ha visto anteriormente que se pasa revista rápida dando los nombres de los que se han ido, y deteniéndose sólo en los más famosos. De ahí que en esta pieza se mencionen sólo con cierto detalle a seis de los actores, tres hombres y tres mujeres. De Juan González y Juan de la Calle sabemos que son los galanes de la compañía; de González el texto indica que “es en todo extraño” (40) y que hace reír (63). Su locura en la obra es querer se autor esa misma temporada y formar su propia compañía. Así pues sale a escena contando a sus actores con los dedos de la mano lo que da pie al comentario irónico de Manuela: “Hombre, éste es dedo y esa dama yema” (61). De de la Calle se menciona de su figura, que es extraña (86-87), su forma de andar: “qué paso, qué medida (86)” y lo que se podría entender como que es guapo: “verle es vicio (88)” ya que el comentario viene de Manuela. Aquí cabe indicar que tanto la figura como la forma de andar del actor podrían ser una parodia de como andaba un rey, en este caso Felipe II, ya que en su locura se cree que es este rey. Manuela remata su presencia cantando e indicando que siempre hace de galán segundo aunque en realidad lo que le gusta hacer es de tercero,

pero en el sentido celestinesco (96-99). De Escamilla no existe ningún tipo de descripción, sólo una acotación indicando como va vestido (de estudiante) y el texto que indica que enseña música. De él sabemos que solía ser el gracioso y, por lo tanto, su presencia en los entremeses era constante y conocida, pero como canta Manuela “ya no hará buen gracioso / si de esta libra, / porque tiene sus gracias en capilla.” (123-6), burlándose así de su locura de querer ser Maestro de Capilla.

Con las mujeres pasa algo parecido, de Jerónima de Olmedo no dicen casi nada, pero se sabe que era conocida y muy buena en papeles de segunda y tercera dama (Sánchez 181-20), aunque fuera de Madrid pudiera hacer papeles de primera dama como se menciona en esta pieza. Isabel Gálvez, por el contrario parece una mujer ambiciosa al querer seguir interpretando el papel de primera dama en Madrid. De sí misma menciona su ardimiento, vanidad y orgullo (142-143), a parte de sus gracias (157). Sin embargo, reconoce que Francisca Verdugo, que es la primera dama de la compañía, tiene brío, gala y despejo (151-152) con lo cual está indicando que Francisca es mejor que ella para ese trabajo, aunque está más que dispuesta a luchar por la posición que cree merecer. Como primera dama, Francisca hace una salida a escena dramática, ya que aparece por el patio de los mosqueteros montada a caballo con espada y sombrero de plumas, dispuesta a defender su puesto en la compañía, y literalmente habrá un duelo a espadas con Isabel

Gálvez por ver quién se queda de primera dama. Pero siendo esta pieza un entremés, se ha de buscar la broma y burla hasta en una lucha tan seria como podía ser la de la posición de primera dama, y cuando Pupilo interviene para separarlas, ambas mujeres arremeten contra él, recordándole al público como los entremeses solían terminar a palos, aunque este no lo hace pues no ha terminado todavía.

En líneas generales los entremeses son piezas teatrales que no necesitan una gran cantidad de *atrezzo*, como es el caso de esta pieza. Como parte del vestuario las únicas menciones que aparecen son las de Escamilla que según la acotación va “vestido de estudiantón sucio con bonete grande” (*Pupilo* 506) y la de Francisca Verdugo, igualmente en una acotación, que como ya se ha indicado va a caballo y con sombrero de plumas y espada (*Pupilo* 510). Sería posible asumir por esta descripción que pudiera ir vestida de hombre, ya que se va a comportar como tal en defensa de su posición en la compañía y buscando el duelo con Isabel Gálvez. Del resto de los actores no se dice nada, por lo que es de suponer que irían todos vestidos con ropa normal de calle.

Dentro del apartado de ruidos, utensilios en general y maquinaria que podría existir para una representación, la presencia de un caballo en un entremés es importante de señalar, ya que no es tan corriente como en una comedia, además esto trae consigo la presencia de un palenque, para que Francisca pueda subir al escenario desde el patio. Las

dos espadas que van a usar las mujeres son de señalar, así como el clarín que suena anunciando la llegada de Francisca. El uso de un clarín señalaría la entrada de alguien importante, porque como indica Henri Recoules: “El efecto sonoro subraya, pues, la importancia de la introducción de un nuevo personaje en la acción presente. El auditorio adivina entonces que algo esencial pasa o va a pasar, mira hacia el lugar de donde ha sonado el ruido, se prepara a presenciar un lance, imprevisto quizás, se muestra más atento ahora” (114). Y aunque esta técnica se usa más en la comedia, también tiene su efecto en los entremeses, puesto que el público ya estaba acostumbrado a estos ruidos y sabía con que asociarlos.

Un toque más personal tiene la voz de Manuela que suele rematar con una interpretación musical corta la situación de cada uno de los actores. Esta actriz era conocida principalmente por su voz, como veremos más adelante, y cuando actuaba lo hacía de terceras damas (Sánchez 176-7).

Dentro de esta línea de presentar actores también está el *Entremés de la loa de Juan Rana*. Este entremés no es una loa de presentación de compañía como la anterior sino un entremés que celebra las habilidades cómicas de Cosme Pérez conocido en las tablas como Juan Rana, y la imitación que éste hace de los que se consideraban en aquel momento las estrellas del teatro. El entremés se escribió para celebrar el santo de la reina Mariana, el 22 de julio de 1662. Sin embargo, esta obra

sirve también como loa de presentación, ya que a través de la misma se nos dan a conocer las calidades y cualidades artísticas de un pequeño grupo de actores. Hay que tener en cuenta que esta representación tuvo lugar en el palacio y probablemente trajeron a los actores favoritos de la reina, ya que era su santo. En este entremés aparecen: Juan Rana, Miguel de Orozco, María del Prado, Alonso de Olmedo, Mateo Godoy, Antonio de Escamilla, María de Quiñones, Manuela de Escamilla, y los músicos.

En este punto es necesario hacer un pequeño aparte y hablar de Cosme Pérez y su alter ego Juan Rana. Este último, como se ha mencionado anteriormente, es una de las máscaras principales del teatro español del Siglo de Oro, para la cual se escribieron alrededor de unas cincuenta piezas más o menos y es de pensar que muchas de estas obras se hicieran pensando principalmente en el actor Cosme Pérez como representante de Juan Rana (Serralta, "Juan Rana" 82). A este personaje se le reconoce por su "flema, su falta de memoria, su monumental credulidad, sus toscas "alcaldadas", sus constantes y chistosas prevaricaciones lingüísticas" (Serralta, "Juan Rana" 81), pero "el éxito cómico del gracioso también procedía, ..., de una mímica o de una serie de mímicas de tipo homosexual" (Serralta, Juan Rana" 82). Esta hipótesis que presenta Serralta tiene una base bien sentada en los entremeses que analiza que tienen como protagonista a Juan Rana; también es verdad que Cosme Pérez fue acusado de "pecado nefando," con lo cual el público termina asociando

ambas figuras la real (Cosme) con la ficticia (Juan Rana), con todo lo que ello implica, y ni el actor ni los poetas del momento se molestaron en desmentir o separar las dos figuras, más bien parece que se fomentó esa unión que dio grandes resultados en las tablas.

La trama de este entremés empieza presentando a un Juan Rana un poco deprimido y dudoso de su propia existencia porque parece creer que el mundo se ha olvidado de él y de sus chistes, en eso entra Orozco con el mensaje de que ha de ir a palacio para actuar en una fiesta. Este problema existencial de Juan Rana esta basado en la tendencia que tenía el actor Cosme Pérez de abandonar el teatro periódicamente, sin embargo le resultaba casi imposible desaparecer pues los reyes solían demandar su presencia (Serralta 164). Rana no le cree y le contesta a casi todas sus preguntas con “Pues ya está muy deferente.” Esta es una posible referencia a la edad del actor, pues para esta representación tenía ya 69 años. De todas formas, Orozco le dice que tiene que ir y representar él solo los seis personajes de la loa, que en realidad son todos parte del mismo Juan Rana y, ante la lógica incredulidad de Rana, promete enseñarle como esa curiosidad es posible. Se van a palacio donde Orozco tienen preparados dos espejos; en uno Juan Rana se va a ver tal y cual es, en el otro verá su otra personalidad. Este uso de dos espejos sirve para jugar con el tema de la homosexualidad del personaje, ya que no sólo verá reflejados a otros actores sino también a dos actrices.

Orozco cubre uno de los espejos con una cortina y le dice a Juan Rana que se mire en el primero, y se ve a sí mismo, se mira en el segundo y el reflejo que le devuelve es la figura de Escamilla, vuelve a mirar y es Olmedo, otra vez y es Godoy. Cada vez que se ve como reflejo de otro actor, Juan Rana hace algún comentario, ya sea de los atributos de la persona reflejada como actor o de su aspecto físico. De Escamilla que es el primero en aparecer en el espejo dice que se parece "un tantico" (155), pero no va a hacer más comentarios al respecto. Con Olmedo se expande más en la descripción:

“Mas, ¿cómo he de ser Olmedo
con la cara de un Macías,
bigotillo a la francesa,
planta de retrato, y vista
la capita a la jineta,
y con la habla de almíbar? (156-161)

Y según se ve en el espejo y se refleja Olmedo remarca en el hecho de que es galán (166) y que se parecen los dos "cortada la cara" (165). Sin embargo, aunque le parece posible ser como Olmedo en algunas cosillas (cosa prácticamente imposible al ser Cosme Pérez bajito, feo y jorobado, según su retrato), no cree que sea posible parecerse a Godoy, que sería exactamente lo opuesto a Olmedo:

Pero, ¿cómo podré ser
Godoy, la cara vestida

y la cabeza de una
calza de cerdas albillas,
con la muleta y la voz
como que tiembla o tiritita?
No es posible. (176-181)

Otra vez el espejo refleja la figura del otro actor en este caso alguien bien conocido y que debía de ser mayor que Rana, por la descripción del pelo blanco, el uso de la muleta y el problema con la voz. Hasta este momento son tres los actores reflejados en los espejos, de uno no hay comentario, pero los otros dos representan los extremos de la edad y dentro del teatro la evolución por la que normalmente pasaban los actores: de galán joven y guapo (Olmedo) a barba de la compañía viejo y con problemas de salud (Godoy), si seguían en el oficio, ya que no todos llegaban a viejo, ni todos se mantenían en las tablas.

Con todo lo pasado hasta el momento, el mismo Rana reconoce la imposibilidad de representar la loa sin mujeres, y la imposibilidad de que él pueda ser María de Quiñones de la que nos dice:

cuya cara es bien prendida,
cuyo talle es bien carado,
cuya habla es muy mellifla,
cuya representación
es de lo de a mil la libra. (201-5)

En efecto, por lo que se sabe María de Quiñones era una mujer guapa y muy respetada en los escenarios, nada parecida a Juan Rana. Sin embargo el espejo va obrar el milagro y al mirarse es en efecto María de Quiñones, y no puede evitar decir que no sabía que "era hermafrodita" (211), volviendo así a aludir a su homosexualidad, y sin dudarlo un minuto está dispuesto a llamarse "Juan Rana María" (213). Por supuesto con una dama no basta, hay que repetir el experimento, y otra vez no se lo cree:

... ... Pues ¿qué quería?
¿Qué fuese María de Prado,
Tan hermosa y tan pulida
como aceda y mal contenta
con todo y consigo misma? (221-25)

Y en efecto al mirarse es María del Prado, como siempre de mal genio y quejosa, de hecho es la única de los reflejados que habla y es para quejarse por tener que esperar, por lo que Rana ni se inmuta y dice que el mal genio le viene de antaño, que ya era así de pequeña. En este punto de la pieza, como indica Orozco, habría que pedirle silencio al público, a lo que Rana contesta:

“¿A quién? ¿A los reyes?
Es necesidad exquisita,
que callan como unos santos.
Así callaran arriba
en las trebunas. (238-242)

Y la loa termina con Juan Rana cantando con la voz de Manuela Escamilla, a la que no se va a ver en el espejo, pero el público sí va a oírla cantar. Este cambio de final se debe como indica Serralta al “carácter obsoleto de esta formalidad, [la de pedir silencio], tanto por tratarse de algo ya muy viejo como por ser totalmente inútil en palacio, donde los reyes, obligado modelo de todas las virtudes, no pueden menos que observar —e imponer por su presencia— el debido silencio” (Serralta 158). Otra cosa eran los corrales, “las trebunas” a las que se refiere Juan Rana, en donde era casi imposible conseguir que el público se callara durante las representaciones.

Este grupo de actores, que en realidad no habla, sólo sirve para el lucimiento de Cosme Pérez como actor, pero a la vez nos deja constancia de los nombres y de las características, ya sean tanto de personalidad como físicas, de los actores presentados. Curiosamente, de Escamilla, el otro gracioso presente es del que no se vuelve a decir nada que lo caracterice. De Olmedo, como galán recibimos más información como el uso del “bigote a la francesa”, posiblemente una moda de esos años, y su forma de hablar dulce, lo que podía ser atractivo para las mujeres que asistían al teatro. Y de galán joven, Rana pasa a ser barba viejo en la figura de Godoy, que como se ha mencionado anteriormente ya estaba canoso y achacoso, de hecho lo compara al “convidado de piedra” (186) haciendo referencia así a la obra de Tirso de Molina del mismo título.

Obviamente, las comparaciones con las mujeres son más divertidas, no sólo por el contraste varón-hembra, que de por sí puede hacer reír, sino porque la figura deforme de Cosme Pérez tenía poco que ver con la presencia física de estas dos actrices estrellas del momento. Y que, como en el caso de María del Prado, indica una relación de años ya que Rana la recuerda como niña. Es seguro que el público de palacio que vio la representación disfrutó con ella ya que Juan Rana tenía poco de galán y menos de mujer guapa. De su figura contrahecha se solía decir que causaba risa en los escenarios con sólo salir ante el público.

Para ser un entremés representado en la corte, es un entremés relativamente sencillo ya que sólo necesita dos espejos y una cortina. En cuestión de vestuario, no hay nada especial que resaltar, aunque habría de suponer que los actores llevaría sus mejores galas ya que estaban en presencia de los reyes. En cuanto a los ruidos, los únicos presentes son los relacionados con la música ya que al final de cada visión la música canta recalcando quien es el personaje que Juan Rana representa, y como hemos visto anteriormente la voz será la de Manuela Escamilla, que nunca aparecerá en escena y sin embargo estará siempre presente a través del sonido de su voz.

Obras como la *Loa del Pupilo* o la *Loa de Juan Rana* son una fuente de información sobre los actores que pululaban por los teatros, en este caso los de Madrid. No sólo nos ofrecen lo típico de las

loas, quien es nuevo y quien se mantiene de antes, sino que tenemos referencias a las relaciones entre los actores. En el caso de esta representación, como ya se ha dicho anteriormente, es un elogio de este actor-máscara que fue tan famoso en su tiempo. Con todo también la podemos considerar un elogio a los actores parodiados, pues son lo suficientemente buenos y famosos como para recibir este tipo de atención. La *Loa del Pupilo*, por su parte, informa sobre la formación de una compañía, presenta las relaciones entre las damas de la compañía y entre los galanes, pero sobre todo ambas obras nos ayudan con la datación de las obras y la formación de las compañías.

Con todo, el teatro es más que un corral y un grupo de actores, es la obra y todos los pequeños detalles que aparecen tanto en los entremeses como en las comedias, como las descripciones de decorados o el utillaje a tener en escena, que nos van a ayudar con la visualización de las obras, por ejemplo los espejos de Juan Rana en palacio o el caballo y la espada de Francisca Verdugo.

Para contestar la pregunta de cómo conseguían las obras, el *Entremés del Poeta* es una gran referencia. Las compañías ya establecidas normalmente podían comprar y encargar obras a los poetas ya establecidos. Esta es la relación que existió entre Moreto y autores como Antonio García de Prado, Gaspar Fernández de Valdés y Diego Osorio; los tres autores se beneficiaron de la producción moretiana y Moreto de sus representaciones (Lobato 17 y

ss). Era una forma de crear una simbiosis que ayudara a ambas partes del espectáculo teatral: poeta y compañía. El *Entremés del Poeta* de Moreto presenta una compañía ficticia aunque dice que es famosa y un poeta ficticio también. Esta es la primera obra de Moreto que conocemos y es aproximadamente de 1637. El protagonista, que se finge poeta, es el tipo locuaz tan típico de los entremeses, pero en este caso esa locuacidad le va a servir para desviar la atención de su público, la compañía a la que quiere engañar, y así poderles robar sin que se den cuenta. Este es un entremés en el que sólo tenemos conocimiento de los personajes que van a salir, pero no de la compañía que representó la obra. Para esta pieza hacen falta seis actores, todos ellos hombres, así dice el reparto: “cuatro hombres, Amigo, Poeta.” Aunque lo normal era que los entremeses estuvieran representados por hombres y mujeres, no era extraño que hubieran entremeses sólo para hombres o sólo para mujeres, pero no era la norma.

El entremés empieza con una acotación de dirección: “Sale el gracioso de estudiante y su amigo con él.” Los graciosos de las comedias (tanto ellos como ellas) solían ser los protagonistas de los entremeses. La acotación además indica cómo ha de ir vestido el gracioso, aunque el Amigo lo especifica más preguntándole: “¿Para qué te has vestido de esta suerte, / medio de estudiante y medio caminante?” (1-2). El estudiante es un personaje típico de la comedia del Siglo de Oro y por lo tanto tiene unas características determinadas que lo hacen reconoci-

ble en la tablas nada más aparecer. Lo principal es su traje; según indica Sarah Nemtzow el “traje tenía que ser modesto, ... [y] consistía, por lo general, de una sotana, un manteo (capa) y un sombrero. Los estudiantes pobres llevaban gorra en lugar del sombrero... (62-63).” Este habría sido el traje de Escamilla en la *Loa del Pupilo*, cuando representaba ser Maestro de Capilla (*Pupilo* 37) y lo más seguro que sería también el traje que llevaba en *El vestuario* cuando representaba el papel del poeta creador de la obra representar.

La trama de este entremés se basa en burlarse de quien constantemente se burla de todos, aunque sólo sea en el plano de la ficción y, de paso, robar a los actores. En ningún momento existe la duda sobre lo que quiere hacer el protagonista ya que lo establece nada más empezar la obra: “... hacer quiero / a toda esta famosa compañía / una burla que sea la más famosa” (5-7). Esta actitud del protagonista es un tanto curiosa, ya que el estudiante en general gozaba de bastante mala fama y de ser mentiroso, y al fin y al cabo esa era la misma fama que tenían los actores. De todas formas el amigo le contesta que tenga cuidado que los actores son gente “sutil y artificiosa” (9). La forma de engañar a los actores para poderles robar es haciéndose pasar por poeta dispuesto a vender su mercancía: obras y poemas. Y es bajo este disfraz de poeta que vemos la gran variedad de obras que se pedían y que se ofrecían.

Cuando encuentra a la compañía, el falso poeta ofrece:

comedias, entremeses, chazonetas,
bailes, loas de entrada, autos divinos,
palenques, tramoyones, desatinos,
bailes, transformaciones, turcos, moros [...] (35-38)

etc., y la lista continúa, por supuesto, con cosas casi imposibles de representar. En esta muestra de lo que el poeta lleva en su bolsa se puede observar que los dos primeros versos cubren algunos de los diferentes géneros teatrales del momento. Hay que recordar que las modas iban y venían en relación con algunos de los géneros menores y que a veces lo que cambiaba era sólo el nombre como lo que sucede con el entremés y el sainete. El tercer verso menciona dos de las máquinas más usadas en el teatro: el palenque (hemos visto como se usa en la *Loa del Pupilo*) y la tramoya, pero no son las únicas ya que más adelante mencionará las angarelas (o angarillas), el resto son trucos, personajes y demás elementos necesarios en las funciones teatrales de la época. El *autor* de la compañía quiere saber si sus obras son conocidas y como referencia el Poeta-protagonista da el nombre de un famoso comediante de fines del XVI, principios del XVII, Avendaño, y luego el de su mujer, Mari Candado, y aunque los actores existieron, las obras que nuestro protagonista dice haber escrito son tan de ficción como su mismo personaje. *La Zacateca*, en la que “entraban mil indios” (59), *Barahúnda*, sobre el arca de Noé y

sus animales “que formaban / un ruido notable” (63-64), *Guarda el coco* “de herreruelo y espada, no de capa” (67) y la última *Por aquí van a Málaga* con “palenque de Sevilla a Málaga” (78). Los títulos de las obras y la corta descripción que da de ellas resultarían divertidas para el público de la época, que estaría más al corriente no sólo con lo que pasaba en escena, sino con la actualidad del momento. Indios, religión, comedias de capa y espada, viajes por el mundo, etc. son temas de estas obras pero en todas se nota la exageración y el sarcasmo del poeta ficticio, sarcasmo estará presente durante toda su oferta de trabajos, ya que entre toda esta ficción también ha compuesto “un romancillo / que tardaba diez días en decillo / y era todo en esdrújulo ...” (87-89). Canta y recita, tiene obras de santos, comedias, y cuando le piden entremeses ofrece “uno extremado / de *Un hombre a quien la bolsa le han quitado*” (141-142). Y esa es la clave para que se den cuenta de que les está tomando el pelo. La obra termina con la devolución de lo robado y la celebración de la burla, pero a través de ella se ha visto la mención de la maquinaria necesaria para una compañía y los tipos de composiciones necesarios para sacar adelante el negocio. Al principio también hemos visto como lo que se pensaba de los actores “gente sutil y artificiosa” es sólo el principio de una larga lista de las cosas de las que se les acusaba con frecuencia, pero que en el fondo lo que dice es que son engañadores, porque lo que representan en el tablado no es la verdad. Ohrlein dice que todo esto es “una indica-

ción manifiesta de que los enemigos del teatro no parecían dispuestos a separar en absoluto la realidad cotidiana de la ficción sobre el escenario. A ciencia y conciencia mezclaban más bien ambas para dar una forma más sólida a sus argumentos” (209). Y hasta cierto punto Moreto juega con esta licitud del teatro para justificar la burla de su protagonista.

En el caso de *El poeta*, un entremés de burla sin duda alguna, vemos otro aspecto del teatro, las necesidades de las compañías ante la demanda de un público al que le gustaba un cambio constante de representación. El repertorio que mantenía un autor debía de ser relativamente extenso, en caso sobre todo de que la obra a representar no gustara o fuera mal recibida por el público.

Y con relación a este problema me voy a referir a un último entremés, *El vestuario*. Los críticos en general parecen estar de acuerdo en que este entremés es de lo mejor que Moreto ha escrito dentro del teatro breve. Es muy posible que lo escribiera a petición de la compañía, eso indicaría lo bien que la conocía para poder sacar el mayor jugo posible de los actores. Este entremés es de 1661 y presenta la tarde del estreno de una obra de teatro en un corral, desde el punto de vista de la compañía y con la intromisión de dos espectadores que han decidido ver la función desde el vestuario, detrás del telón de fondo [el paño] que separaba el tablado del vestuario de las actrices. Los primeros en salir a escena son los dos intrusos, uno de ellos, don Blas, parece estar muy familiarizado no sólo con el teatro en ge-

neral, sino con esta compañía en particular, con lo cual se cree con derecho a estar en el vestuario. El segundo intruso es don Gil, amigo del primero a quien ha venido a visitar a la corte para ponerse al día en las novedades que hay. Estos dos personajes, ajenos a la compañía son los que van a presentar el tema del entremés y los que van a indicarle al público donde empieza la representación. Lo interesante de su presencia es que, aunque no forman parte de la compañía, no rompen la dinámica entre los actores que se están preparando para salir al escenario, y a la vez funcionan como elemento de distensión para los nervios de las actrices, pues éstas tienen a quien dirigir su sarcasmo sin ofender a sus compañeros de reparto. Habla don Blas:

... .. Éste es el vestuario.
Lo que aquí pasa en semejante día
es cosa de gran risa y alegría,
porque andan damas y representantes
turbados y vistiendo y desnudando,
y entre ellos el poeta trasudando
y asomándose al paño; y aturdido
no sabe si es aplauso el silbo o ruido.
(7-15)

Con esta descripción se ve el caos que un día de estreno puede causar, divertido desde el punto de vista de éste observador, pero de confusión y desorden para la compañía y el poeta que dependen del buen resultado del primer día para sobrevivir.

Robert Carner dice de este entremés que para escribirlo Moreto tenía que haber tenido una muy buena relación con el mundillo del teatro por la forma tan vívida y humorística en la que describe las escenas entre bastidores de un día de estreno. Sigue diciendo que lo más posible es que viera muchas escenas de ese tipo, posiblemente en la compañía de Escamilla, y que a pesar de lo corto de esta pieza en particular (sólo 160 versos), cada uno de los personajes-actores sobresale por sí solo (Carner 188-189). Si nos detenemos en un momento en la lista de actores de esta compañía aparecen nombres que ya se han visto en los entremeses anteriormente tratados: Alonso Olmedo (galán), Antonio Escamilla (gracioso), Manuela de Escamilla (música-tercera), María de Quiñones (dama) y Malaguilla (músico). Hay que recalcar que la experiencia personal de Moreto en el mundillo del teatro ayuda de gran manera en la creación de esta pieza, que presenta muy claramente el estado nervioso y cansado de las actrices justo antes del estreno y después de haber estado ensayando por la mañana, tal y como lo expresa la Quiñones:

¡Que acaben de ensayar hoy a las doce
y sin mirar que tiene que tocarse una mujer,
vestirse y aliñarse,
a las dos me den prisa!
Ya esto lleva no comer día de comedia nueva. (49-53)

Moreto tampoco fue ajeno a las rivalidades entre estas mujeres y sus criados por coger el mejor sitio dentro del vestuario. El entremés presenta el orden de llegada de las actrices, no de los actores, ya que lo estamos viendo desde el punto de vista de los dos intrusos, que están más interesados en atraer la atención de las mujeres que en la obra en sí. La primera en llegar es María Escamilla, y para cuando ella llega “está el corral de bote en bote” (18), clara indicación del interés que producía el estreno de una nueva obra de teatro y la aparición de un nuevo poeta. La siguiente en llegar es Bernarda Ramírez, y don Blas se la presenta a don Gil como si la conociera de toda la vida: “Ésta es Bernarda, amigo” (32) Esta presentación es doble, ya que sirve también para presentarla al público, si éste no la había reconocido. La siguiente en entrar es Manuela de Escamilla. Va a haber una pequeña reyerta entre los mozos de las actrices en la que intervendrá don Blas. Para este momento, las tres actrices han demostrado que no saben quiénes son estos señores presentes en el vestuario, aunque don Blas sigue repitiendo como una coletilla: “Me hacen mucho favor” a lo que su amigo siempre responde “Ya se conoce”. Incluso para el lector del siglo XXI es fácil oír el retintín en la voz de don Gil, que puede ver claramente la falacia de su amigo. Queda harto establecido de esta manera que los dos personajes están fuera de su elemento totalmente, pero que la presencia de espectadores en el vestuario de las actrices era algo relativamente normal, ya que ninguna

de ella parece estar sorprendida o terriblemente molesta por su presencia. También, la presencia de los dos espectadores entre bastidores da una idea general del abuso que sufrían actores y actrices a manos de estos aficionados teatrales, que se metían por todas partes creyendo ser siempre bienvenidos; aunque hay que señalar que las actrices de este entremés no parecen tener pelos en la lengua a la hora de insultarlos, ni éstos parecen reaccionar a los insultos, que llegan a parecerles palabras de apreciación e incluso cuando intentan echarlos no se dan por enterados (105-6). Las dos últimas en llegar son María de Quiñones y María de Salinas con su hija pequeña Jerónima de Flores. La presencia de los niños era normal en las tablas, la misma Manuela Escamilla empezó su carrera artística a los siete años (Sánchez 176-7). A los nervios de los actores por ser tarde de estreno, se han de añadir los nervios del poeta, “¡Dense prisa, por Dios, señores míos! / No me echen a perder esta comedia, / que es un rayo de Dios cada jornada” (77-9). La poca fe en el éxito de la pieza que tienen los mismos actores y las creencias del apuntador con respecto a lo que se ha de decir en escena: “¡Ah, señor licenciado!, si le agrada / atajaré la copla de Granada, / porque es muy peligrosa” (117-9). Cada uno de ellos tiene algo que opinar al respecto del espectáculo, la obra y el público, y lo han de hacer desde sus diferentes puntos de vista. También se puede ver como las actrices reaccionan a los últimos detalles necesita-

dos en el vestuario, esta vez refiriéndose a sus vestidos.

No es difícil ver a través de estos versos los nervios de la compañía ante una obra de baja calidad y un público exigente, el cual estaba dispuesto a alborotar si no le gustaba lo que oía y veía, como pasa en esta representación. El propio poeta siente la presión: “Empiecen presto que el calor abrasa” (123); alusión clara no al tiempo, sino al ambiente caldeado del corral en el que los mosqueteros han empezado a armar jaleo porque la obra no empezaba.

La pieza comienza en el vestuario del corral, pero a partir del momento en que los actores salen a escena a presentar su nueva comedia, la representación, la acción del entremés se divide entre el escenario del patio del corral, que se supone está al otro lado del telón, donde acaba de empezar la sesión de la tarde, con las distintas piezas que acompañan a la comedia que esta compañía está estrenando, y lo que sigue sucediendo en el tablado, hecho "vestuario," con las reacciones de los actores y el poeta al fracaso de la representación.

La primera en actuar es Manuela Escamilla con una canción al paño, ella va a estar dentro terminando de arreglarse la falda, pero como comentan Escamilla y Gaspar: “¡Jesús, la gente viene mal sentada.” (132) “De todo el tono no han oído nada.” (133) Con este ambiente salen Olmedo y la Quiñones, y el público les grita: “¡Métanse, Métanse!” (144) Con lo que el desastre de la obra está asegu-

rado, y el nombre del poeta manchado para siempre, sobre todo porque el público les silba y empieza a pedir que salga Olmedo solo a bailar la pavana. Esta petición, que Olmedo no está dispuesto a conceder, no era nada extraño en los corrales, donde a veces el público demandaba lo que le apetecía ver y no necesariamente lo que había pagado por ver.

Esta es una visión única que da Moreto de la vida en el vestuario en día de estreno, pues por en varios momentos, como el anterior, tenemos la inclusión del público como participante del entremés desde dentro:

	<i>[En escena]</i>
Escamilla	Miren que desazonan a la plebe.
	<i>[Desde dentro]</i>
Hombre 1º	¡Échala fuera!
Hombre 2º	¡Toldo!
Hombre 3º	¡Hachas, que llueve!
Hombre 1º	¡Capón qui, quiri, qui!
	<i>[En escena]</i>
Olmedo	¡Tome ese lío!
Escamilla	¡Como viene la gente, Cristo mío! (82-85)

Estas intervenciones del público, al cual oímos pero no vemos, dan una visión diferente del espectáculo de la que normalmente proveen otras piezas. El público se queja y pide una mejor obra de teatro, a la vez que lanza a una serie de quejas e insultos, sin ton ni son, que sirven para asustar y poner más nerviosos todavía a los actores que han de salir a escena y enfrentarse con la gente alborotada.

Esta algarabía producida en el corral afecta también los nervios del poeta, ya que su futuro como tal depende del éxito o no de la tarde. En este caso la obra es un desastre, aunque tanto Manuela como Bernarda se lo toman con bastante filosofía y así se lo dicen al poeta al final del entremes:

Manuela: Tenga, señor poeta, nada repare
que estos silbos que oye son cosa de aire.

Bernarda: Muy bien sabe el poeta que esto que ha visto
son cuando pitos flautas y flautas pitos (157-160)

Este es un final típico de entremés en el cual no se soluciona nada, ya que esa no es la función de la obra. Lo suyo es hacer reír, burlarse de todo, y, sobre todo, intentar agradar al público, pero no dar soluciones.

Se ha visto ya como en la *Loa a la compañía del Pupilo* se trata la relación entre las damas y los galanes de la compañía, todos quieren ser más que todos, y todos quieren que se les respete por su importancia en la compañía; las rivalidades entre las primeras actrices y entre los primeros actores son cosas conocidas y que se mencionan con cierta regularidad en los entremeses, aunque al final todos se calman y aceptan sus correspondientes posiciones en la compañía a la que pertenecen por esa temporada. Esta era una forma de presentar los actores al público. Sin embargo, en *El vestuario* lo que se ofrece es la otra cara de la moneda, la lucha diaria de un grupo de personas, una compañía ya formada,

por salir adelante y los obstáculos que han de sobrepasar para conseguirlo, como son, en este caso, los admiradores demasiado fervientes, o el trabajo de poca calidad del poeta. La excelencia del entremés está en la agilidad con que presenta las diferentes situaciones, enlazándolas unas con otras sin crear un vacío entre ellas, y transmitiendo a través del diálogo esa sensación de nervios y ahogo que sufre la compañía. Debido a la forma en la que Moreto presenta este entremés, es fácil para el lector de nuestro tiempo identificarse con los actores y lo que les pasa, y a la vez sentirse irritado con la presencia en el vestuario de los dos espectadores que no hacen nada más que molestar, pero a los que hay que aguantar porque han pagado su entrada. También este entremés como indica María Luisa Lobato “aporta datos de interés acerca de las práctica de la representación, como la hora de comienzo: las dos [de la tarde], la duración: tres horas, la tarea del apuntador, la lentitud del público para sentarse y la costumbre de bailar en escena, en este caso la pavana” (Moreto 551). Lo interesante de esta pieza es esa participación del público, al que oímos pero no vemos, demandando cosas del corral y de los actores, y a la vez mostrando su disgusto con la pieza al silbar a los actores cuando salen y no les gusta lo que hacen.

El utillaje presentado para esta representación sería el necesario en la vida real para cada una de las artistas en el vestuario, la alfombra en la que van a poner sus cosas y se van a sentar, junto con el

vestuario que traen. En eso éste es uno de los entremeses que más elementos menciona de la ropa como mantos, vaqueros (que eran un tipo de falda), maquillaje, zapatos, que se van a ir viendo según la necesidad de las actrices para ponérselos.

El tema del teatro se ve desde el punto de vista interno, pero lleno de crítica e ironía. Nadie se salva de la burla, autor, actores y poeta, todos ven reflejados sus defectos y virtudes. Incluso el público participa en esta burla-elogio de las tablas: sufre la crítica por su abuso, y se ve elogiado por su discernimiento. Los entremeses que hablan del teatro presentan la necesidad que tenían los mismos escritores, como parte integrante del espectáculo, de mostrar la otra cara de la representación, no sólo el resultado final de un largo proceso de producción, que sería la representación del espectáculo que ve el público, sino también lo que ocurre entre bastidores durante un estreno o durante cualquier representación. Mostrar todo lo que es necesario para poder salir a escena, comparar el temperamento de los artistas, ver las demandas que las estrellas de la época hacían de sus autores, poetas y del resto de los miembros de las compañías, todo forma parte del resultado final: la puesta en escena de un espectáculo.

NOTES

¹ Para esta loa, la de *Juan Rana* y para el entremés del *Vestuario* uso las ediciones de María Luisa Lobato. Para el entremés de *El Poeta* uso mi edición.

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EL ARTE NUEVO DE TRADUCIR *LO FINGIDO VERDADERO*

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En su ensayo “El arte nuevo de hacer comedias en este tiempo, dirigido a la Academia de Madrid” el dramaturgo Félix Lope de Vega señala varios aspectos que contribuyen al éxito de una obra teatral teniendo como objetivo principal “darle gusto al vulgo” y planteando así la importancia de la recepción. De igual modo, para que sea eficaz la traducción de una obra dramática debiera tener “el mismo efecto” (Benjamin 77) que la obra original. Más aún, dado que se trata de una representación, una traducción exitosa de una obra dramática debiera lograr el mismo efecto en la audiencia que la obra original. Por ello, al comparar las siguientes tres traducciones de la obra *Lo fingido verdadero* de Lope de Vega y Carpio: *Acting Is Believing* (1986) por Michael D. McGaha; *The Great Pretenders* (1993) por Robert Johnston; y *Pretending Made True* (2008) por Antonia Petro intentaré

analizar las obras con el propósito de contestar a las siguientes preguntas: ¿Importa que el público entienda el mensaje político y sociológico del tiempo de Lope para disfrutar de la obra? ¿Qué traducción verdaderamente le habla al público? ¿Es importante que se traduzca según el público para que sea entretenida, como suplicó el dramaturgo Lope? ¿Hay una traducción verdadera? ¿Cuál de las tres será *lo fingido verdadero*? Será preciso observar para ello el uso de la preceptiva, la adaptación, el lenguaje, el efecto, y la pretendida audiencia de cada traducción, siempre teniendo presente a Lope.

Lo fingido verdadero, también conocida como *El mejor representante o Vida, muerte y martirio de San Ginés*, fue escrita alrededor de 1608 o 1609 y publicada en *Decimosexta parte de las comedias de Lope de Vega Carpio* en 1621. Según Michael D. McGaha, y otros varios expertos de las comedias de Lope, esta comedia parece tener algunos paralelos a *El arte nuevo de hacer comedias* (1609), pues explica su concepción de la comedia que rompe con los preceptos del teatro clasicista de Aristóteles. Por ejemplo, se ven versos semejantes entre los dos, lo que McGaha también nos muestra.¹ En *El arte nuevo*, Lope confiesa que ha seguido los preceptos griegos que él mismo crítica:

Verdad es que yo he escrito algunas veces
siguiendo el arte que conocen pocos,

mas luego que salir por otra parte
veo los monstruos de apariencias llenos
adonde acude el vulgo y las mujeres
que este triste ejercicio canonizan,
a aquel hábito bárbaro me vuelvo,
y cuando he de escribir una comedia,
encierro los preceptos con seis llaves (12).

Las palabras de Ginés en el Acto II suenan a los versos de *El arte nuevo*:

Una comedia tengo
De un poeta griego, que las funda todas
En subir y bajar monstruos al cielo;
El teatro parece un escritorio
Con diversas navetas y cortinas.
No hay tabla de ajedrez como su lienzo;
Los versos, si los miras todos juntos,
Parecen piedras que por orden pone
Rústica mano en trillo de las eras;
Mas suelen espantar al vulgo rudo
Y darnos más dinero que las buenas,
Porque habla en necio, y aunque dos se ofendan,
Quedan más de quinientos que la atiendan. (*Lo fingido* 231)

La obra refleja la lengua contemporánea del público de Lope y una interpretación de la vida de San Ginés en la que el actor romano, Ginés, experimenta una conversión religiosa mientras representa a un cristiano para el emperador Diocleciano. Los actores representan varios roles que se llevan a cabo de-

ntro de la dramatización de la obra y se le hace difícil al espectador y al actor/espectador distinguir entre las escenas o entre los actores y los papeles que representan. Además de los símbolos, que en muchas ocasiones llevan doble sentido, esta compleja comedia es una metáfora teatral que emplea el metateatro el cual, según Jesús G. Maestro, muestra la reflexión del autor:

El uso del metateatro revela la intención del dramaturgo de hablar de teatro, de sus técnicas y funcionamiento, que se convierten momentáneamente en un tema dominante. Manifiesta también un interés por la recreación formal, la propia contemplación e incluso la justificación personal de determinados planteamientos dramáticos. (1)

Así, el traductor de una obra que emplea el metateatro se enfrenta no sólo con la dificultad de mantener la complejidad del diálogo sin la más mínima pérdida de los doble sentidos que Lope tanto utiliza, sino también con la de reproducir los procedimientos metateatrales de la obra sin perder la fluidez de ritmo en las escenas. Por ejemplo, en el Acto II de *Lo fingido verdadero* se complica la escena cuando Ginés, que está enamorado de Marcela, interpreta a Rufino; Marcela, la actriz, interpreta a Fabia que,

justamente, está enamorada del actor que interpreta a Octavio y que también se llama Octavio.

En el siguiente análisis, veremos cómo las tres traducciones son comparables tanto en el lenguaje como en el estilo al texto original y hasta qué punto siguen las pautas que Lope prescribe en *El arte nuevo*, utilizando un aspecto propuesto por Lope en referencia a cada acto. Sin embargo, cada traducción emplea sus propias estrategias a fin de ser relevante y entendida por un público moderno. *Acting Is Believing* y *The Great Pretenders* fueron traducidas para un público inglés. La primera es una traducción más literal que intenta reproducir la obra. La segunda intenta transformar la obra, utilizando el lenguaje coloquial moderno. *Pretending Made True* fue traducida con un público académico de California en mente e intenta transformar la obra para hacerla relevante para el público diverso del siglo XXI.

Las diferentes adaptaciones lingüísticas posibles de una traducción literaria se clasifican en un continuo que va de literal a libre, llamándose la literal a la que traduce palabra por palabra, respetuosa de la gramática de la lengua receptora; la comunicativa o equivalente que es la correspondencia en significado de una palabra o frase de la lengua original a la receptora; y la extrema, la libre, donde hay sólo una correspondencia global entre el texto original y el texto traducido (Hervey 12-13).

Además de la transferencia lingüística, también se tiene que tomar en cuenta la transferencia cultural. Ésta, según Sándor Hervey, et al, se llama la transposición cultural '*cultural transplantation*' que va de la inclusión de lo exótico al trasplante cultural '*cultural transplantation*,' una traducción más parecida a una adaptación (20-21).² Por ejemplo, la traducción de McGaha parece emplear todos los diferentes momentos de la traducción según sea necesario.

McGaha, siendo director además de traductor, traduce la comedia para ser representada. Mantiene el marco escénico a través de una prosa salpicada de palabras antiguas. Robert Johnston la traduce para poder dirigirla, utilizando un lenguaje moderno con un sabor del latín de antiguo romano. Por otra parte, Antonia Petro produce una traducción en colaboración con un director de teatro, específicamente para una audiencia bilingüe que desea oír rasgos del texto original. No hay muchas diferencias entre las traducciones de McGaha y Petro, como veremos. Por el contrario, Johnston se toma mucha más libertad, añadiendo, omitiendo y redistribuyendo los versos de los personajes. Los traductores emplean distintas estrategias en sus trabajos empezando con ser fiel a la letra, como el de Michael D. McGaha.

En *Acting Is Believing*, McGaha nos presenta una versión de la comedia lingüísticamente más

fiel al texto original que las otras dos traducciones. En su reseña de la obra, Alan S. Trueblood observa:

It is abundantly clear that the English text has, like the Spanish, been conceived as an acting version. Not that McGaha is not completely loyal to Lope: there is no revising and the only omission I have noted is one verse of "No ser Lucinda, tus bellas/niñas formalmente estrellas... (499)

McGaha no intenta imitar la sonoridad y el ritmo de los versos en el texto original ya que es casi imposible duplicarlo al inglés. En vez de eso convierte los versos en prosa y sólo retiene los versos en los sonetos y las canciones. Este método de traducción le resulta bien. Según Trueblood, McGaha encuentra un equilibrio entre la prosa y la forma métrica que imita los versos octosílabos de Lope, que está más en sintonía con el lenguaje de los españoles del siglo XVII (500). McGaha explica:

I initially experimented with translating the play into English blank verse, but I found that my translation soon began to take on a monotony which was in sharp contrast to the spontaneity and variety of the original. I therefore decided that the only way I could retain those important qualities was to trans-

late the play in prose. Where it seemed appropriate, I have tried to duplicate the rhythmic nature and sonorousness of the original. (35)

Un ejemplo de donde McGaha trata de duplicar el ritmo y la sonoridad se ve en los siguientes versos octosílabos del Acto III.5:

Cristo, que vivió en el mundo
después que del Padre eterno
bajó a tomar en María
Carne el Santísimo Verbo,
(*Lo fingido* 270)
Christ descended to this world
From the bosom of the Father,
And the Word took on man's flesh
In the holy Virgin Mother. (McGaha 50)

Los traductores, también, intentan mantener el registro social del texto original, como comenta McGaha,³ “without succumbing to the temptation of creating a belabored pastiche of Elizabethan English.” Aclara que según su propia traducción “Lope wrote in the language of his people, and I have tried to follow his example” (English, 35). En cambio, David Johnston, aunque hace una traducción más parecida al estilo original, manteniendo el verso, le da una ‘voz’ distinta de Lope.

Según Johnston, la traducción *The Great Pretenders* es una adaptación hecha primeramente con la audiencia en mente. Es verdad que la traducción de Johnston se acerca más hacia el trasplante cultural que la de McGaha, sin ser una adaptación completa. El estilo de Johnston no consiste en reproducir o copiar el texto original al inglés, sino en transformar el texto traducido para que tenga su propia vida, como señala la teoría de Walter Benjamin:

It is not the highest praise of a translation, particularly in the age of its origin, to say that it reads as if it had originally been written in that language. Rather, the significance of fidelity as ensured by literalness is that the work reflects the great longing for linguistic complementation. (79)

Para Benjamin la labor del traductor es liberar la obra de arte como una nueva forma de lenguaje para que sobreviva en 'la vida del más allá.' Y es por ello que Johnston elimina mucho del texto original de Lope para atraer el público de hoy en día. Al modernizar la comedia, vuelve al autor casi invisible y a la traducción transparente. Es decir, la nueva forma de la obra mantiene los dobles sentidos del diálogo y los procedimientos metateatrales de Lope

que atraían al público. De este modo hace visible el lenguaje original para un público moderno.

Johnston mantiene algunos rasgos en la forma semántica de Lope, especialmente con versos octosílabos que a veces produce rimas sutiles, como vemos en la siguiente escena del Acto I:

CAMILLA. White bread for sale, fresh baked, crusty.

MAXIMIAN. Perhaps we're not so badly off...

DIOCLETIAN. Good Caesar, we have done you wrong.

MARCUS. Done him wrong? We've got no money.

We've not been paid for months on end.

DIOCLETIAN. We have let our bellies rule our heads;

we owe Caesar our loyalty,

so let us give unto Caesar... (Johnston 21-22)

La traducción de Antonia Petro, *Pretending Made True*, combina los métodos que utilizan McGaha y Johnston para producir una interpretación bilingüe al mezclar el español de Lope con el inglés moderno. Según Kevin Wetmore, profesor y director de teatro en Loyola Marymount University, Petro tradujo *Lo fingido* teniendo en mente un público bilingüe y universitario católico en la ciudad de Los Ángeles. Wetmore afirma en su presentación, "Genesis in the City of Angels,"⁴ que una de las estrategias que Petro utiliza es crear un registro lingüístico que demuestra los varios niveles de la jerarquía social, como señala *El arte nuevo* "comience, pues, y con lenguaje casto/no gaste pensa-

miento ni conceptos en las cosas domésticas, que sólo/ha de imitar de dos o tres la plática” (16). Para lograrlo, Wetmore dice “aristocratic and upper class characters spoke only English. Lower class characters spoke Spanish. Characters in between would codeswitch, just as bilingual individuals do when speaking with different individuals” (Wetmore).⁵ Vemos la aplicación del ‘code-switching’ ‘alternancia de código,’ desde el primer Acto con Camila y el soldado Maximiano:

CAMILA. ¿Quién compra el buen pan, soldados?
Blanco y bien cocido está.

MAXIMIANO. Victuallers already?
We are well accommodated.

DIOCLECIANO. We talk against Caesar with no
cause.

MARCELO. Yes, we need more money to buy
bread (Petro 4).

La manera en que Petro aplica la alternancia de código “del uso de la gente,” su audiencia bilingüe, fluye bien sin confundir al lector (*El arte nuevo* 16).

Acto I

El cómico lenguaje
sea puro, claro, fácil, y aún añade
que se tome del uso de la gente,

haciendo diferencia al que es político;
porque serán entonces las dicciones
espléndidas, sonoras y adornadas.

El arte nuevo

El siguiente aspecto a notar es cómo los diferentes textos manejan elementos especialmente difíciles de traducir: el escenario clásico, la paronomasia, la metáfora, el coloquialismo, y las diferencias específicas de género particulares al lenguaje español. Puesto que, como observa Roman Jakobson “poetry by definition is untranslatable” (151), la veracidad en la traducción no significa tanto concordancia con el texto sino la comprensión y comunicación del mismo. Benjamin prescribe: “The task of the translator consists in finding that intended effect upon the language into which he is translating which produces in it the echo of the original” (77). Es decir, no se trata de reproducir sino de producir una ‘intención de efecto’ en eco. A continuación, vemos cómo se encuentra la ‘intención de efecto’ en los siguientes ejemplos, empezando con las acotaciones: “Sale Carino, en Roma, en hábito de noche, con dos músicos, y Celio, criado, y Rosarda, en hábito de hombre” (*Lo fingido* 205).

En las traducciones de McGaha y Johnston no hay ninguna mención del vestuario de Carino, ni la ciudad de Roma. Petro, en cambio, traduce la acotación casi literalmente con la excepción del

vestuario, donde sólo dice que Carino está “*in disguise*.” Las traducciones no mencionan el vestuario porque no tiene sentido hoy en día dado que los teatros están equipados con luces que indican una escena nocturna.

Para Lope,

las figuras retóricas importan/como repetición o anadiplosis; y en el principio de los mismos versos/aquellas relaciones de la anáfora/las ironías y adubitaciones/ apóstrofes también y exclamaciones ... Siempre el hablar equívoco ha tenido/y aquella incertidumbre anfibológica/gran lugar en el vulgo, porque piensa/que él sólo entiende lo que el otro dice (*El arte* 17).

Así que los personajes salen, conversando emocionadamente, según el modelo de lo que el autor prescribe:

CARINO. ¡Brava burla le hemos hecho!

ROSARDA. ¡Por Dios, que el emperador
se acuchilló con valor!

CARINO. Es que te llevo en el pecho.

ROSARDA. ¿Hay arma que tenga nombre
de mujer?

CARINO. ¿No puede ser
rodela?

ROSARDA. Sí, que es mujer;
que escudo, en efecto, es hombre.

CELIO. Por lo que son más amigas
de escudos, fuera mejor
llamarla escudo, señor.

CARINO. Bravamente nos fatigas
con hablar a la española.

CELIO. ¡Qué quieres! Vengo de allá.

CARINO. ¿Adónde ahora se irá
que haya alguna dama sola?

MÚSICO 1º. Cerca vive falsirena,
bizarra napolitana;
pero...

CARINO. Es muy agrio.

MÚSICO 1º. Es anciana.

CARINO. Anciana, falsa y sirena.
¡Qué lindas tres calidades!
No la nombres.

MÚSICO 2º. Ahora un mes
que aquí se pasaron tres,
como instrumento, en edades:
prima, segunda y tercera.

CARINO. La prima.

MÚSICO 2º. Quince.

CARINO. Extremada
la segunda.

MÚSICO 2º. Requintada.

Quince más que la primera.

CARINO. Treinta razonable,

y luego...

MÚSICO 2°. Dos treinta.

CARINO. Malo; sesenta.

MÚSICO 2°. Es tercera de los treinta.

ROSARDA. ¡Oh! ¡Que la abrase mal fuego!

No vamos donde haya vieja.

CARINO. ¿Por qué?

ROSARDA. Son grullas que velan
la gente moza.

CARINO. Y que pelan
desde la barba a la ceja.

(*Lo fingido* 205-06)

McGaha y Petro son fieles a la letra en sus interpretaciones, tanto en la estructura gramatical como en las metáforas, pero con algunas diferencias, ya que, como aconseja Phyllis Zatlin:

To translate comedy—or occasional word-play within a serious text—the translator needs a sense of humour. The goal should be a pun for a pun and a joke for a joke, although it is not always possible to handle double meanings and laugh lines on a one-for-one basis. The translator thus resorts to a strategy of compensation: inventing a new pun somewhere close by to make up for one that was lost (92).

Primero, McGaha traduce los nombres al latín, Carino a ‘*Carinus*’ y Celio a ‘*Celius*,’ mientras que Petro los mantiene casi todos en español. Pero por alguna razón, Petro traduce el nombre de Ginés a ‘*Genesisius*’, lo que veremos más adelante. Otra diferencia se ve en el diálogo. Petro mezcla los dos idiomas, algunas veces dándonos la traducción:

ROSARDA. Is there a weapon with a female name?

CARINO. Rodela?

ROSARDA. Breastplate? Yes, it’s feminine,

Since escudo is, in fact, masculine. (She points at his shield)

CELIO. Since women really like other escudos (makes money sign with his fingers)

that’s how you should call her, my lord.

CARINUS. You bore us speaking like a Spaniard.

CELIO. Well, that’s where I come from.
(10)

El traductor se enfrenta con la dificultad de la paronomasia, o sea juego de palabras, al traducir obras de teatro, como observa Zatlin: "Puns and other word play pose an enormous challenge in all literary translation, but are especially difficult in theatre: the

spectator has to catch the double meaning on the fly" (92). En su versión, Petro usa las acotaciones para ayudar al espectador con la paronomasia. En la de McGaha, se usa un concepto equivalente para la audiencia de habla inglesa:

CARINUS. How about "breastplate"?

ROSARDA. Yes, that's right, but "buckler" sounds masculine.

CELIUS. Since women are the buck's best friends, you ought to have called her your buckler, sir.

CARINUS. Your Spanish-style puns are a pain in the ass.

CELIUS. I can't help it; that's where I'm from. (51)

En la siguiente parte, Petro decide quedarse con la metáfora del instrumento en la escena, minimizando las palabras en español:

CARINO. Where will we go now
so we can find a lonely woman?

[Petro interpreta "mujer sola"
como 'a lonely woman' que sugiere una mujer que se siente sola en vez de una a solas.]

MÚSICO 2º. A month ago, three
women arrived,
their ages like instrument cords:
first, second and third.

CARINO. La prima. (signals “one” with his finger)

MÚSICO 2º. Fifteen.

CARINO. Extremada (he nods approvingly) la segunda (signals “two” with his fingers)

MÚSICO 2º. Tightened

Fifteen more

CARINO. Thirty is a fair age, and then...

MÚSICO 2º. Two thirties.

CARINO. Malo; sixty.

MÚSICO 2º. Three more decades.

ROSARDA. ¡Oh! Damn her to hell!

Let’s not go where old women live.

CARINO. ¿Por qué?

ROSARDA. They are cranes who keep watch over young people.

CARINO. And they pluck themselves from beard to eyebrow. (10-11)

McGaha engloba el estilo literario propio del barroco español al tratar los períodos de madurez de la mujer como los de la fruta:

CARINUS. Where shall we go now
to find a woman alone?

[McGaha y Johnston interpretan la palabra “sola” como ‘alone.’]

MUSICIAN 2. A month ago, three
women came by here, separated like
fruit, into three ages: green, ripe, and

rotten.

CARINUS. The green one?

MUSICIAN 2. Fifteen.

CARINUS. A nice, juicy age; and the second?

MUSICIAN 2. Fifteen doubled; fifteen more than the first.

CARINUS. Thirty's a fair age; and the next one?

[Aquí McGaha cambia la oración que termina con puntos suspensivos a una de interrogación.]

MUSICIAN 2. Twice thirties.

CARINUS. That's bad; sixty.

MUSICIAN 2. She's the thirty-year old's *middleman*.

[McGaha añade 'middleman'. El énfasis es de McGaha.]

ROSARDA. Damn her to hell! Let's stay away from old women.

[McGaha omite la '¡Oh!' en la primera oración. Al igual que Lo fingido, su interpretación dice que eviten a las viejas, en vez de evitar ir a donde hay viejas, como sugiere la de Petro.]

CARINUS. Why?

ROSARDA. They're cranes who spy on the young.

CARINUS. And they pluck themselves
from the chin to the eyebrows. (51-52)

Johnston escoge una dirección completamente diferente a la de McGaha y Petro. Él cambia las estructuras de las oraciones, la puntuación, hasta le quita versos a un personaje para dárselos a otro, eso si es que decide quedarse con ellos, y elimina a los músicos por completo. Al principio de la obra choca al espectador con “The Emperor’s a fucking joke! Fuck him and his fucking empire” y hace lo mismo en la entrada de la siguiente escena (19). Veamos:

CARINUS. The stupid whore, she fell for it!

I nearly fell off for laughing.

ROSARDA. And what about her husband’s face,

The way his mouth just fell open?

You stared him out, straight in the eye

And when you said: “Sir, it’s the law,

The ancient right of legover”

I thought that he would have a fit.

But he’d have been no match for you. (270)

Johnston parte de la estructura del texto original y elimina el parlamento de los personajes sobre el escudo y la rodela para expandir los acontecimientos que pasaron antes de salir al escenario. En el siguiente diálogo, Johnston crea un juego de palabras:

CELIUS. Rosarda, a muse to amuse.

CARINUS. That's exactly the type of pun
That gives Spanish *plays* a bad name.

[Este es otro método para recordarle al
público que están observando una co-
media. El énfasis es mío.]

CELIUS. It's not my fault that I'm from
Spain.

CARINUS. No, but you don't have to flaunt it.
[Esta oración fue agregada.] (270)

De aquí, Johnston excluye la charla entre los músicos y los otros, eliminando la metáfora del instrumento por completo. Así, Johnston logra eliminar secciones, como fue mencionado anteriormente, sin perjudicar la fluidez ni el argumento de la historia.

Acto II

Describe los amantes con afectos
Que muevan con extremo a quien escucha
El arte nuevo

En el segundo acto de *Lo fingido*, se observa el metateatro en acción con los personajes de Rufino y Fabia. Como ha notado Barbara Simerka, "Genesius conflates two different meanings of the word 'act,' eliminating the distinction between the theatrical and the everyday uses of the word" (61). La repetición de "representante" no solamente sirve

como doble sentido a lo largo de la obra, sino también como un leitmotivo para enfatizar el metateatro. Por mucho tiempo, este método de repetir ha funcionado como “a stock comic device” en el teatro (Zatlin 94). En este intercambio entre Rufino (Ginés) y Fabia (Marcela), el personaje/actriz duda si Ginés está representando a Rufino o si le habla de veras.

(Salen Ginés de galán, Marcela
de dama, a empezar la comedia)

MARCELA. Déjame, y no me atormentes.

GINÉS. ¿Tanto tormento te doy?

MARCELA. Tanto, Rufino, que estoy
con mortales accidentes,
Porque más que tú en quererme,
En aborrecerte siento.

GINÉS. Si sientes, Fabia, tormento,
Tan grande en aborrecerme,
Imagina cuál será
El que tengo aborrecido,
Pues del amor al olvido
Tanta diferencia va.

MARCELA. Mi pena es mucho mayor.

GINÉS. No lo creas, que en tu vida
fuiste, Fabia, aborrecida;
todos te tienen amor,
y lo que va de matar
a morir, has de entender

que hay de amada a aborrecer,
y de aborrecida a amar;
mas pongamos en razón
la causa por que me dejas.

MARCELA. Si me importaran tus quejas,
te diera satisfacción.

GINÉS. ¿Tan resuelta vives, Fabia,
de tratarme con rigor,
y no agradecer mi amor?

MARCELA. Quien desengaña, no agravia.

GINÉS. Bien sé, Marcela, que nace
el hacerme aqueste agravio
de que quieres bien a Octavio;
Octavio te satisface,
Octavio te agrada, ingrata;
por él me dejas a mí

MARCELA. Ginés, ¿representas?

GINÉS. Sí,
mi pena a quien mal me trata.

MARCELA. ¿Cómo me llamas Marcela,
si soy Fabia?

GINÉS: Por hablarte
de veras, por obligarte
a que tu desdén se duela
de aqueste mi loco amor.

MARCELA: ¿Qué tengo que responder?

GINÉS: Con saberlo agradecer
me responderás mejor.

MARCELA: Esto no está en la comedia,

mira que el César nos mira.
(*Lo fingido* 242-43)

Para esta escena, McGaha y Petro no se desvían mucho del texto original. Petro decide usar la palabra [reenacting] para revelar el doble sentido de “representante” a la audiencia, en vez de repetir [acting], como veremos con McGaha. Empezaremos con la traducción de Petro:

MARCELA. Leave me, and don't torment me
anymore.

GENESIUS. Do I torment you so?

MARCELA. So much, Rufino, that I may
lose my life, because my loathing
is bigger than your love.

GENESIUS. If you feel, Fabia, such torment
loathing me, imagine my torment being
loathed, for there is little difference between
love and forgetting.

MARCELA. My pain is stronger.

GENESIUS. Don't say that; you, Fabia,
have never been hated,
every man loves you,
think of the difference
between killing and dying,
you must understand it's the same
between loving and hating,
and between hated and loved;

but let's hear the reason
why you are leaving me.

MARCELA. If I cared about your complaints, I
would answer you.

GENESIUS. Are you so determined, Fabia,
to treat me with such rigor
and be ungrateful to my love?

MARCELA. She who disillusion is not de-
ceiving.

GENESIUS. I do know, Marcela, that you re-
ject me
because you love Octavio,
Octavio pleases you,
you, ingrate, love Octavio;
that's the reason why you are leaving me.

GENESIUS. Sí, I'm *reenacting* my pain
to the one who mistreats me.

MARCELA. Why do you call me Marcela
if I am Fabia?

GENESIUS. To tell you the truth,
to force your scorn
to have pity on my mad love.

MARCELA. What do you want me to answer?

GENESIUS. Returning my love
will be your best answer.

MARCELA. This is not in your play.
Careful, the Caesar is watching. (47-48
énfasis mía)

Comparémosla a la de McGaha:

MARCELLA. Begone, torment me no more.

GENESIUS. Do I cause you so much pain?

MARCELLA. So much, Rufinus, that I may be fatal, for my hatred of you is greater than your love for me.

GENESIUS. Fabia, if hating me torments you so, imagine how I must suffer from your hate. There is as great a difference between my suffering and yours as there is between loving and forgetting.

MARCELLA. My pain is much greater.

GENESIUS. Don't believe it, for you've never been hated in your life. Everyone loves you, Fabia, and there's just as much difference between being loved and hating as there is between killing and dying. But let's talk about the reason why you're leaving me.

MARCELLA. If I were to listen to your complaints, I'd be giving you satisfaction.

GENESIUS. Fabia, why are you so determined to treat me harshly and reject my love?

MARCELLA. It's better that you should face the truth.

GENESIUS. I know very well, Marcella, that the reason why you treat me so unjustly is that you love Octavius. Octavius satisfies you, Octavius

pleases you, you ingrate. It is because of him that you're leaving me.

MARCELLA. Genesius, are you *acting*?

GENESIUS. Yes, I'm *acting* out the pain I suffer from your ill treatment.

MARCELLA. Why do you call me Marcella, when my name is Fabia?

GENESIUS. Because I'm really talking to you, because I want your scorn to take pity on my mad love.

MARCELLA. What should I answer?

GENESIUS. If you knew how to appreciate my love, you'd answer me better.

MARCELLA. This is not in the play. Don't you know Caesar is watching us? (75-76 énfasis mío)

La traducción de Petro y la de McGaha se apartan poco del texto original. Sin embargo, la de Johnston, aunque relata el mismo mensaje suena muy diferente:

Genesius re-appears, dressed as a handsome youth, accompanied by Marcella, in the costume of a beautiful young lady.

MARCELLA. Leave me alone once and for all!

GENESIUS. I seek only your happiness.

I love...

MARCELLA. You torment me with your love.

I feel it everywhere I go.

And you fill me up with hatred,
a hatred greater than your love.

GENESIUS. If your hatred torments you so,
Sweet Iulieta, it kills me.

My pain and yours are worlds apart,
as different as day and night,
like being loved and being forgotten.

MARCELLA. My hatred for you, Romeus,
Corrodes my soul and blights my life.

GENESIUS. But you have never been hated;
You do not know what it is to die,
only to kill.

MARCELLA. I'll not listen.

I'll not encourage your madness.

GENESIUS. Iulieta, won't you even...

[La emoción cambia de interrogación a ruego.]

MARCELLA. I'll not be held responsible.

It's better that you face the truth.

GENESIUS. You think I don't know, Marcella?

The truth? That you love Octavius,
That you're leaving me for him?

MARCELLA. You're meant to be *acting*, remember?

GENESIUS. I'm *acting* out the pain I feel
when you say that you don't love me.

MARCELLA. Romeus, I'm Iulieta.

Why do you call me Marcella?

GENESIUS. I'm talking to you, Marcella, in the
only way that I can.

MARCELLA. I don't know the words.

GENESIUS. You'd know them,
if your heart just had ears to hear.

MARCELLA. Follow the script. Caesar is watching. (56-57)

Como hemos visto, las tres traducciones captan el doble sentido de la palabra 'representar' aunque Johnston se toma ciertas libertades para enriquecer la traducción; sustituye los nombres de los dos amantes, Rufino y Fabia, personajes de la obra dentro de la obra del texto original, por un equivalente mejor conocido hoy en día, Romeo y Julieta, transportándolos al marco escénico de los romanos con la pronunciación latina.⁶ Este cambio de los nombres permite el humor que viene con la asociación de los nombres de Romeo y Julieta para entender la 'supuesta' pasión de los amantes, algo que la audiencia de Lope había captado, a la misma vez que enfatiza el metateatro.

ACTO III

Sustento, en fin, lo que escribí, y conozco
que aunque fueran mejor, de otra manera
no tuvieron el gusto que han tenido,
porque a veces lo que es contra lo justo
por la misma razón deleita el gusto.

El arte nuevo

En el último Acto, Ginés se convierte al cristianismo y por ello recibe la sentencia de muerte por orden del emperador pagano. Por lo tanto, a cada traductor, al final, se le presenta el dilema de acabar con el ‘representante’ o con la ‘comedia.’ En los últimos versos, Lope “deleita el gusto” del público con la promesa de otra comedia (*El arte* 19). Lope termina la comedia en consonancia con la costumbre del anuncio del final, sin embargo, acorde con el tono de la obra, deja la puerta abierta a la interpretación. Con qué ‘representante’ acaba: ¿con el actor? ¿el personaje? ¿o con la comedia titulada “El mejor representante?”

La comedia termina con el monólogo de Ginés, que se descubre empalado. Él declama su dedicación a Dios y termina:

GINÉS. Mañana temprano espero
para la segunda parte.

OCTAVIO. Aquí acaba la comedia
del mejor representante.

McGaha traduce esos versos:

GENESIUS. ...Tomorrow I'll see the sequel to
this play.

OCTAVIUS. Here ends the play of the supreme
actor. (103)

La traducción de Petro es casi igual:

GENESIUS. ...Tomorrow morning I expect
to see the second part of my play.

OCTAVIUS. Here ends the play of the best of
ators. (91)

En la de Johnston, no hay referencia al actor
como espectador:

GENESIUS. ...In my God's heaven
the play will resume.

OCTAVIUS. And so dies the supreme actor,
the patron saint of all actors. (86)

Irónicamente, Johnston le da una interpretación más ambigua al verso de Genesius con la traducción *literal* del artículo 'la' a [the play], en vez de [this play] como hizo McGaha o [my play] como la de Petro. Esta estrategia lingüística mantiene al actor dentro de la comedia en vez de fuera como espectador. En los últimos versos de Octavio, ambos traductores, McGaha y Petro, los traducen como fin de la comedia "aquí" en la tierra: "here ends the play." En cambio, en la interpretación de Johnston, se muere el actor sin ninguna mención del fin de la comedia de modo semejante a una película donde al final, aunque los actores mueran, se sabe que habrá una

continuación, sea con el mismo actor o con otro.⁷ La comedia sobrevivirá el ‘*afterlife*.’

En conclusión, los traductores se presentan con la imposibilidad de traducir a Lope de Vega. Sin embargo, aunque no se puede decir que haya una traducción verdadera, ni se puede saber qué traducción verdaderamente le habla al público, estas traducciones suelen seguir los consejos de Lope en *El arte nuevo*. El mismo dramaturgo reconoce “que aunque fueran mejor, de otra manera no tuvieran el gusto que han tenido” ya que al final es el público que decide el éxito de la obra (19). Así que, cada traductor traduce con su público en mente para que su obra sea entretenida, como suplicó Lope. En su “Translator’s Note,” Johnston lo resume de forma adecuada cuando dice “What we are talking about is not the translation of a play but the recasting of the experience of theatre in one culture and language into an equally valid and vivid experience in another” (13). Por tal razón, se puede concluir que no importa el mensaje político y sociológico del tiempo de Lope para que el público disfrute de la obra, ya que el público lo interpretará de acuerdo con su propia experiencia y en este sentido concuerdo con Mona Baker que dice “as both storytellers and audience, we make decisions on the basis of good reason, but what we consider good reasons is determined by our history, culture, experience of the world in which we live” (468). Por tanto, es fundamental

que el/la traductor/a tenga su público en mente, empleando diferentes métodos de traducción, para que la obra traducida no sólo sea entendida sino también entretenga.

Así, cada una de las tres traducciones de *Lo fingido verdadero*—*Acting Is Believing*, *The Great Pretenders*, y *Pretending Made True*—logra a cierto nivel producir una traducción que, a la vez de entretenernos, es fiel al autor. Éstas, al pretender borrar o iluminar la matriz cultural, cruzan una frontera lingüística en donde se nos hace difícil colocarlas definitivamente dentro de un género o categoría. La interpretación de Petro requiere trabajar al borde de dos idiomas, es decir, para el oído bilingüe, al contrario que las de Johnston y McGaha. Sin embargo, cada traducción posee el “elemento emocional, humano” que implora Hans Erich Nossack para conservar la belleza del texto original (238). Según Zatlin, “an effective play translation must sound like an original text,” (Zatlin 75) y por lo tanto, “aquí [no se] acaba la comedia del mejor representante” que, afortunadamente, sigue siendo *Lo fingido verdadero* en forma nueva que “deleita el gusto.”

NOTES

¹ Véase las páginas 25-28 de *Acting is Believing*.

² Según la explicación de Herve, et al, en *Thinking Spanish Translation*, transposición cultural es la sustitución de rasgos específicos de la lengua original en el texto traducido con rasgos específicos de la lengua receptora (221)

³ En *Thinking Spanish Translation*, registro social (social register) se define: “a style of speaking/writing that gives grounds for inferring relatively detailed stereotypical information about the social identity of the speaker/writer” (224).

⁴ Wetmore lo presentó en el congreso AATE/ATHE “Risking Innovation” en New York, agosto 2009.

⁵ Según *Thinking Spanish Translation*, “code-switching” [alternancia de código] es “the alternating use of two or more recognizably different language variants (varieties of the same language, or different languages) within the same text” (220).

⁶ La ortografía de los nombres, Romeus e Iulietta reflejan los de la obra de Matteo Bandello (1490-1560), la que inspiró a Lope escribir *Castelvines y Monteses*. Según el crítico de teatro, Javier Vallejo, “la historia de los dos amantes fue novelada por Masuccio Salernitano en el siglo XV y reescrita libremente por Luigi Da Porto, que trasladó la acción a Verona. Matteo Bandello, obispo de Agen y amigo de juventud de Da Porto, se apropió de su obra, le dio otro tempo y carácter, y la tituló: *Las fortunata morte di due infelicissime amanti che l'uno di veleno e l'altro de dolore morirono, con vari accidenti*. La traducción inglesa cayó en manos de Shakespeare, con el resultado que todo el mundo conoce, y la castellana en las de Lope, que escribió *Castelvines y Monteses*” (59-60).

⁷ Por ejemplo, en las películas de Harry Potter, el primer actor que hace el papel de Dumbledore, el director del colegio Hogwarts, muere en vida después de la segunda película. La película continúa con otro actor que se parece al primero.

Después en la quinta película, el personaje sí muere pero el actor no. Sin embargo, él regresa a la continuación como un fantasma.

⁸ Por ejemplo, en las películas de Harry Potter, el primer actor que hace el papel de Dumbledore, el director del colegio Hogwarts, muere en vida después de la segunda película. La película continúa con otro actor que se parece al primero. Después en la quinta película, el personaje sí muere pero el actor no. Sin embargo, él regresa a la continuación como un fantasma.

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**FROM THE TOWN WITH MORE
THEATE THAN TAXIS: CALDERÓN,
LOPE AND TIRSO AT THE 2008 ALMAGRO
FESTIVAL**

(First of two parts)

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The absence of a continuous performance tradition of the national classics in Spain is frequently lamented.¹ Nevertheless, the Almagro Festival and the Compañía Nacional de Teatro Clásico (CNTC) are often credited with having, at least in part, remedied this cultural and historical deficit. In his capacity as Director-General of Theater, Rafael Pérez Sierra established three major initiatives in 1978 that would help shape the landscape of Spain's democratic culture: the creation of the Centro Dramático Nacional; a theater for children and adolescents; and the establishment of the first Jornadas in Almagro. When I interviewed him recently, he claimed that it is this last of which he is most proud for, in his view, it has proved to be the most important and

influential.² It is the aim of this article to analyze this legacy by examining the thirty-first edition of an event that began as a modest forum through which theorists and practitioners could meet to discuss actual and hypothetical productions of Golden Age drama, and is now categorized as an International Festival of Classical Theater.

The victory of the centre-left Partido Socialista y Obrero Español (PSOE) in the 2004 general elections generally brought optimism amongst practitioners in Spain, and José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero became the first leader in the democracy to specifically discuss culture in his inaugural address: “El destino de un pueblo depende del valor que sus gobiernos dan a la cultura. Por ello me propongo que la cultura se sitúe en las cuestiones de Estado” (Zapatero, 7). In purely financial terms, there can be no doubt that this promise has been fulfilled, and with reference to *comedia* performance this has been manifest in a proliferation of festivals (e.g. Alcalá, Alcántara, Cáceres, Chinchilla, El Escorial, Getafe, Olite, Olmedo, Peñíscola). This network allows productions of Golden Age drama to tour in a manner akin to the way in which pop and rock groups cross Europe to perform at different music festivals.

In terms, of size, budget and prestige, Almagro nevertheless remains in a different league.³ Because of the political nature of cultural appointments in Spain, the change in government

meant that both the CNTC and Almagro had new directors in the aftermath of the election: Eduardo Vasco and Emilio Hernández. They were charged with raising the profile of their respective institutions, with the latter ambitiously voicing his desire for Almagro to become “la capital europea del teatro clásico” (López Antuñano, 101). This increased productivity has been a mixed blessing for *comedia* performance as, perhaps due to the widespread misconception that the national classics now play a more active role in Spain’s theatrical landscape than they did twenty years ago, there has been a broadening of horizons beyond Golden Age drama.

This trend was, however, firmly bucked in 2008 when the theme of the Festival was “Yo soy clásica”. It is perhaps a testament to the *comedia*’s strong female characters that, in addition to productions of dramatic works by Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz and Feliciano Enríquez de Guzmán, there was such an unusually high number of works by Calderón de la Barca, Lope de Vega and Tirso de Molina. Over the course of the Festival, the following productions based on and around plays by the three major Golden Age playwrights were staged: *Basta que me escuchen las estrellas*; *El burlador de Sevilla o el convidado de piedra*; *Casa con dos puertas mala es de guardar*; *Los comendadores de Córdoba*; *El cuerdo loco*; *La devoción de la cruz*; *La gatomaquia*; *Fuente Ovejuna*; *Las manos blancas no ofenden*; *La mujer por fuerza*; *El perro del*

hortelano; *La prudencia en la mujer*; and *La vida es sueño*.⁴

In the context of post-civil war Spain, this constitutes an unprecedented intensity of *comedia* performance. With the exception of *La devoción* that circumstances beyond my control prevented me from attending, I was able to see all of the productions multiple times in Almagro and/or elsewhere. This hotbed of theatrical activity thereby provides a unique opportunity for the detailed analysis and comparison of a broad range of productions that, in turn, allows for some general conclusions to be drawn on the current health of the Festival and, more generally, of Golden Age drama on the contemporary Spanish stage.

Lope and Tirso, Our Contemporaries?

One of the first subjects to be raised at Almagro in the 1970s was to what extent modern-day productions are faithful to texts written in the Early Modern period, and according to which criteria they ought to be judged. Hernández has stated that the hallmark of a classic is its amenability to twenty-first century makeovers and that “el Festival de Almagro aspira a convertirse en el festival contemporáneo de teatro clásico” (López Antuñano, 98). In this section, I will analyze three productions of non-canonical plays by Lope and Tirso whose presence on the twenty-first century

Almagro stage was self-consciously justified in reference to their ostensible modern day relevance.

The director, Alberto González Vergel, has been one of the major players in Spanish *comedia* performance over the last forty years. In his capacity as director of the Teatro Español at the end of the dictatorship period, he championed Golden Age drama at a time when it was unfashionable to do so. His 1974-75 production of *Marta la piadosa* as a rock musical was a critical and commercial triumph that marked a paradigm shift in breaking with the tradition of staging the classics in an archaeological fashion. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, his Company Teatro de Hoy then sought to resuscitate lesser known Golden Age plays. As he enters his eightieth year, González Vergel has lost neither his predilection for idiosyncratic and controversial choices nor his desire to uproot the past into the present. This was clearly manifest in his production of Tirso's *La prudencia en la mujer* staged at the Teatro Municipal in Almagro.

The play, set in the mediaeval period, has an episodic structure rather than the kind of linear narrative more typical of the *comedia*. The chief protagonist, Queen María de Molina, has recently been widowed and is a martyr both to the nation state and her son and infant King, Fernando. In the First Act, she is temporarily dethroned from her regency when Don Juan and Don Alonso are angered by her refusal to re-marry and thereby allow them the possibility of ascending to the throne

that they proceed to usurp through violent rebellion. María, with the support of loyal vassals, is able to reclaim the throne; she pardons the insurrectionists. This favor is repaid with treachery as Juan persuades a Jewish doctor, Ismael, to poison the infant King Fernando. His mother discovers the plan and she forces the hired assassin to drink his own lethal potion. She dramatically reveals to Juan that she knows of his treachery by displaying the Jew's corpse. The realm is, however, experiencing economic hardships and some of the nobles begin to conspire against her. Yet again, she emerges victorious and is merciful to her enemies.

Then, with complete disregard for the unities of time, the Third Act shows a sixteen-year old Fernando about to take on his official role. In a long speech, his mother advises him on how to be a prudent and wise monarch; the King almost completely ignores this advice and pays hedence to flatterers. These sycophants conspire to turn him against his mother with false claims that she intends to re-marry and that she wanted to have him killed as a child so that she could usurp his crown. Fernando believes them at first, but through a gradual process of intellectual and emotional maturity, he is guided closer to the truth and María is able to provide evidence of her enemies' treachery, thereby facilitating a happy ending.

Each Act almost functions as an individual entity as the heroine battles against both personal and political attacks. In the process, she

demonstrates “her triple majesty: as a heroic Queen, magnanimous toward her enemies; a loyal wife, faithful to her husband’s memory; a loving mother, sublime in her self-abnegation” (Kennedy, 1133). The director claims that *La prudencia de la mujer* had to be updated to have resonance in the modern age and “que no se representa desde hace muchos años y se ha hecho mal. Lo digo con conocimiento de causa. Yo vi la última representación de Cayetano Luca de Tena en el Español, con un criterio casi arqueológico y fracasó” (cited in Alvarado).⁵

As Ruth L. Kennedy notes, Tirso “has not merely portrayed María de Molina and her unworthy son in their milieu of medieval anarchism; he has, *at the same time*, consciously reflected both characters and conditions of those early years of Philip IV’s reign” (Kennedy, 1134). The director appropriates this technique whilst noting that he and Tirso both relate the narrative to issues of Catalan separatism: “Tirso se encuentra en el XVII con esta cuestión y acude a María de Molina, presentándola como parábola, como yo la presento ahora” (Amestoy). The question of whether the Spanish nation-state is effectively under threat as a result of the PSOE’s policy of devolving power to the regional autonomies has been a hotbed of debate in recent years. In this context, the staging of a play that can clearly be interpreted as a paean to the unity of Spain is clearly not politically neutral.

González Vergel had previously suggested the project to the current director of the Español,

Mario Gas, who proposed that he stage *The Crucible* instead (Facio, 29). He accepted this offer but still intended to retire from stage activity with a production of Tirso's play. This was, however, complicated because, he claims, "muchos ayuntamientos han rechazado programar la función por considerarla, cuanto menos, peligrosa" (cited in Alvarado). It has, nevertheless, been staged around the Peninsula. A two day slot at the Teatro Municipal in Almagro was presumably facilitated by the director's reputation alongside the presence of a strong female protagonist who also belies the widespread belief that the maternal figures are conspicuously absent from the *comedia* as a whole.

Given its political and aesthetic *raison-d'être*, it is hardly surprising that the production did not adopt an Early Modern or medieval setting. The stage walls were decorated with press articles containing headlines such as "majestad" and "España". There was lack of historical precision in relation to the wardrobe; whilst the nobles were in period dress, the other characters wore clothes that appeared to come from the 1930s. This deliberate temporal anachronism was further highlighted by characters brandishing guns from the early twentieth century, whilst reading copies of *El País* and *El Mundo* whose typeset clearly belonged to the twenty-first century. Furthermore, there were brief interludes in which Japanese ninja figures danced on stage that, to my mind and eye at least, bore no relation to the principal action. Music has often

played a central and successful role in González Vergel's theatrical aesthetic with the aforementioned *Marta la piadosa* and a more recent jazz version of *La malcasada*. In this case, however, its presence was underwhelming; it was limited to rather amateur sound effects and pre-recorded contemporary and baroque music.

From a theatrical perspective, the more traditional elements were the most successful. Effective use was made of this fairly standard medium-sized Italianate theater with three doors at the rear of the stage. In the first half, these were draped with the royal insignia and the middle door opened to allow characters to enter and exit the stage whilst also providing a concealed discovery space most spectacularly employed when Maria reveals Israel's corpse. After the interval, the doors were then reversed to showcase reflective surfaces that subtly communicated the vanity of the court once the Queen and the unity she supplied have been removed.

It was a brave move to stage a play requiring the presence of a young actor to recite verse; Antonio Palomo made a valiant effort as the King in his youngest incarnation, yet he struggled with multiple long speeches that were generally not edited for performance. Unfortunately, the adult members of the cast were no more accomplished in dealing with the challenges raised by the play-text. There was a complete lack of subtlety in the depiction of actions and emotions. Hence, for

example, malevolent characters often chuckled out loud as they hatched their villainous plans. In a similar vein, Mauricio Villa, who played the adolescent Fernando, resorted to yawning repeatedly as his mother gave him advice in order to communicate his disinterest to the audience. In general, the cast gave little evidence of having internalized their roles, and appeared to be badly under rehearsed. On the night I attended, this was made visibly manifest in the curtain call when the actors came forward in pairs but the uneven numbers meant that poor Elías Arriero (Don Juan Alonso Caravajal) was left out and never had the opportunity to receive the audience's admittedly tepid applause.

González Vergel's version of the play-text incorporated few changes, although he made the ideological subtext more salient by interpolating some verses of his own at the end of the play that constituted an impassioned plea for the unity of Spain. No allowance was made for the potentially disquieting effect of Tirso's unusual triptych structure that was understandably perplexing to spectators, many of whom voiced doubts when the curtain came down at the end of Act 2 as to whether this was an interval or the end of play!

The emphasis on political aspects effectively bypassed the interrogation of femininity enacted by Tirso's play-text. It would, for example, have been an interesting theatrical experiment to pick up on the stage directions at the beginning of Act Three:

“Sale el Rey Fernando, mozo sin barbas – puede hacerle una mujer”. More substantially, the play-text is fascinating in the way that it constantly interrogates essentialist gender roles. The actions of the Queen belie her frequent references to female frailty and Don Juan’s comparison of her with Jezebel when trying to convince her son that she wanted him dead is symptomatic of the way in which her enemies’ attempts to discredit her are frequently framed in gendered terms (e.g. Álvaro: “¿Qué no hará, si arrogante/y ambiciosa, una mujer?” [Act 2, p. 77]). These aspects of the play were never explored or developed on the stage, and the rather one-dimensional emphasis on a contemporary political issue that was only communicated in unsubtle general strokes resulted in a production that suffered from what Jonathan Miller terms “historical provincialism” (Miller, 119). This is particularly regrettable in that it fails to do justice to either Tirso’s relatively unknown play or to González Vergel’s substantial theatrical legacy.

Productions of Lope’s *Los comendadores de Córdoba* and *El cuerdo loco* staged at the intimate Iglesias de las Bernardas by Teatro en Tránsito and AlmaViva Teatro respectively were also self-consciously modern. In virtually every other respect, however, they were radically different to *La prudencia*. Firstly, the practitioners involved were young and these projects constituted their first professional encounter with the classics.⁶ Secondly, these plays are not the most obvious choices for a

Festival ostensibly designed to celebrate women; both contain female characters that embody the negative characteristics attributed to the female sex in the misogynist slander vocalized by the villains of Tirso's play. Although *La prudencia* is hardly a canonical play, it has been performed intermittently in recent years. The most recent Spanish production of *Los comendadores* was a small-scale production by the Grupo Escénico de Arte Dramático de Córdoba in 1970; I have been unable to uncover any record of *El cuerdo loco* being performed in modern times.

The desire to resurrect *Los comendadores* in 2008 is not unrelated to the recent visibility of domestic violence in Spain, a trend that culminated in the passing of the controversial *ley integral contra la violencia de género* in 2005.⁷ On a small scale, this has been reflected in a recent upsurge in productions of wife-murder plays with, for example, the CNTC staging Calderón's *El pintor de su deshonra* in 2008. In the Festival program, César Barló, the director of *Los comendadores*, makes the link between past and present explicit:

La sociedad aún no condena y no se mueve ni se conmueve tras los asesinatos diarios de mujeres. Encontramos demasiados asesinatos y demasiadas absoluciones [...] Seguimos comiendo delante del telediario como si fuera normal. Y no. NO es normal aceptar que cada día muera una persona a causa de

un sentimiento irracional como los celos, como la posesión de otro ser humano, como la reclusión, la opresión de esos a quienes “se quiere”. No es normal. AlmaViva teatro pretende criticar esa apatía que nos embarga y nos paraliza. (60)

This historical connection was communicated on stage from the outset as the performance begun with the entire cast walking down the aisle from the rear of the church to the stage; individual actors read aloud news stories about “violencia de género”. They then shouted out “Córdoba” in unison before the audience was immersed into the world of Lope’s play. The production’s principal weakness was its inability to establish the flagged connection between past and present in dramatic terms. This was both the cause and consequence of its failure to engage with a perplexing and problematic seventeenth-century text.

As Frederick A. de Armas notes of this play, “es posiblemente el más violento y cruel de los dramas de honor de Lope de Vega y uno de los ejemplos más llamativos de la brutalidad masculina en el teatro de Siglo de Oro” (Armas, 763). This ostensible indictment of male violence was presumably what attracted the Company to the play. The production stumbled, however, due to their inability to distinguish between poetic and historical realities. There was no acknowledgement that, although Lope may have based the play on a real-

life incident, his was a heavily stylized re-interpretation of an occurrence of which he had no direct experience and of which his knowledge had largely been mediated through a ballad.

Los comendadores has subsequently troubled critics not only from an ethical perspective but also in terms of how exactly it would have worked on stage in a seventeenth-century corral, a question that needs to be taken into account at least by anybody seeking to resurrect it in the twenty-first century.⁸ Hence, for example, the play is problematic from a dramatic perspective in that none of the characters is sympathetic, and it difficult to see how or why an audience is made to identify with them. The Venticuatro is a self-satisfied and pompous knight who is proud of his wife, Doña Beatriz, because she helps him maintain a fragile sense of pious masculinity. He, nevertheless, spends insufficient time or effort tending his household as his prime concern is gaining favor and seeking approval from a series of male authority figures.

Unlike in Calderón's wife-murder plays, his partner does not see his absence and other male attention as a threat but as an invitation; she and the Venticuatro's niece, Doña Ana, actively court the attention of the eponymous noble suitors, Don Jorge and Don Fernando. These men are noble in title only; they are cowardly opportunists in search of sexual relations predicated on lust. The cuckold is alerted to the situation indirectly by the King and

directly by his loyal slave, Rodrigo, who is scandalized by what is taking place in his master's household. This prompts a vengeance of biblical proportions as the Venticuatro slays his wife and her accomplice alongside their lovers, servants and pets before returning to boast of his resolution to the King.

It has often been assumed that the play is a particular macabre celebration of traditional Spanish patriarchal values, and was therefore designed as a form of moral exemplum likely to be anathema to the modern-day spectator. The problem with this interpretation, as Melveena McKendrick notes, is that:

If cowardly nobles, randy noblewomen and an unstable, insecure Veinticuatro represent the traditional values of Spain, then this play is indeed a celebration of them. This is unquestionably a sordid play, its air heavy with sex and the threat of violence, its action strewn with suggestions of ridicule and burlesque which finally explode into the sensational mayhem of its ending. ("Celebration" 358)

In 1979, Alix Zuckerman-Ingber detected comic elements in the play, and McKendrick develops this to argue that the "entire play could without strain be played for laughs as a black farce" (McKendrick , 359). She argues that it can be

construed as a kind of *reductio ad absurdum* of the wife-murder genre designed to amuse the audience whilst simultaneously ridiculing codes of honor that, it is often assumed, were axiomatic to the life and drama of the Golden Age: "Rather than a confident celebration of traditional values, *Los comendadores* is an uneasy play which teeters on the edge of the ridiculous" (McKendrick, 354). If nothing else, McKendrick's argument is compelling in that it provides an intelligent and coherent interpretation of the play that helps us to understand its appeal in the seventeenth-century whilst also perhaps giving a clue to how *Los comendadores* could be staged in the twenty-first century.

These considerations were bypassed in a production that was unwilling to take the potentially comic dimension of the play seriously. Sadly, this often meant that it was often the performance rather than the incident it was meant to enact *which teetered on the edge of the ridiculous*. The play-text was performed virtually in its entirety; this was symptomatic of a remarkably non-committal approach that depicted this contentious classic as neither a comedy nor a tragedy. This resulted in a production lacking a coherent aesthetic that was both confused and confusing. Hence, for example, there was no on stage indication that there is a time-lapse between the massacre and the Venticuatro's exchange with the King. In this conversation he refers to his slaughter of rather incongruous victims of domestic violence, his monkey and parrot, yet

they never appeared on stage. These references would presumably, therefore, occasion bewilderment amongst those spectators not already familiar with the play.

The production did admittedly remain loyal to its avowed purpose by highlighting some of the attitudes that underline violence against women. Hence, for example, in a scene that closely resembled the way in which the CNTC staged Juan Roca's fear of losing his honor in *El pintor de su deshonra*, the Venticuatro heard voices and was encircled by other characters who gesticulated in his direction as he began to question his wife's fidelity. Rodrigo, the black slave (played here by a white actor) was elsewhere seen molesting a female servant whilst lecturing her on the need for moral rectitude thereby highlighting the frequent double standard applied to male and female chastity. Nevertheless, these individual scenes were never developed and the latter was both illogical and incongruous. It is not clear how a black slave would have had the power to sexually pursue a female Spanish servant woman, whilst his actions also undermine his function as an intransigent moral compass.

The acting was, in general, rather melodramatic; Alberto Gómez and Sergio Leal, the Venticuatro and King respectively, were particularly guilty of over-acting. The presence of ladders as a means of entering and exiting the stage created dynamism, but the production too often

includes disparate elements that fail to coalesce into a satisfying whole. Why, for example, in a production that is set in the fifteenth-century, was there a pianist on stage and why were loudspeakers employed whenever a character was summoned by an authority figure? The overall impression was of an unfortunate collision between historical moments that did justice to neither the seventeenth- nor the twenty-first centuries.

Carlos Aladro's production of *El cuerdo loco* undoubtedly distinguished itself as the most straightforwardly entertaining to be staged at the 2008 Festival. Once again, however, its engagement with the play-text on which it was ostensibly based was tenuous. A complimentary program given out to every member of the audience was designed to contextualize this obscure drama through an excerpt from *Hamlet* and a brief explanation of the similarities between the plays (Teatro en Tránsito).

Prince Antonio's father has died and a fictional court from Albania has gone to ruin under the rule of his stepmother, Rosania. She is romantically linked to Dinardo, a Duke in charge of the army; the couple is united by their lust for power. Antonio is an obstacle to their ambition for he is a popular prince and legitimate heir to the throne. They therefore resolve to poison him with a potion that will turn him mad and thereby provide the justification for them usurping his power. The plan backfires, however, because Roberto, charged with the task of intoxicating Antonio, is loyal and

reveals all to the Prince, who subsequently feigns madness as a means of regaining control.

The version prepared by Aladro and Azucena López Cobo was heavily edited and a number of changes were introduced to make the action of the play more intelligible. Hence, for example, the production opened with what we presumed to be a funeral as all the characters were dressed in black. This mournful atmosphere was violently interrupted by the sound of a Spanish pop song, “Por la boca muere el pez” by Fito y los Fitipaldi, which erupted through the speakers as the characters began to dance as if they were in a discotheque. The Duke wore red shoes and brandished a pair of sunglasses whilst virtually all of the characters appeared to be drunk as they consumed from water bottles that, we were led to assume, contained liquor of a more intoxicating variety.

In the same way that Calixto Bieito set his 2003 English-language version of *Hamlet* in a nightclub, the idea seemed to be to use a seedy environment to communicate the decadence of a corrupt court. This dynamic albeit asphyxiating environment was actually more appropriate in this case as the nervous and kinetic energy it evoked are tailor made for Lope’s narrative and chief protagonist that, in direct contrast to Shakespeare’s, are characterized by an excess rather than a deficit of action and resolve. In addition, the conceit of intoxicated aristocrats was well suited to at least

some of the exchanges for the mental processes of a drunk and a man obsessed with his honor share some fundamental qualities.

Aladro claims in the program that Lope employs this corrupt demimonde as a metaphor for the morally and spiritually bankrupt Spanish monarchy and that:

[...] es una prueba más de que nuestros clásicos no eran sólo autores al servicio del poder, sino verdaderos humanistas inmersos en una compleja realidad que se servían de las máscaras del teatro para cuestionar el *status quo* sociopolítico, supuestamente inamovible. (cited in Teatro en tránsito)

Jonathan Thacker has arrived at a similar conclusion through detailed textual exegesis:

Lope himself was a fellow wise enough to play the fool, that is, to see the possibilities within pretend madness to undermine and criticize the apparently sane world in which he lived, but also to be clever enough (sufficiently *discreto*) to camouflage his astuteness with a mask of *simpleza*. (476)

Unfortunately, however, neither the relationships between the past and present nor sanity and madness were fully developed on stage where there

was a rather one-dimensional emphasis on the more superficial aspects of comedy that often appealed to the lowest common denominator. Israel Elejalde hammed up both his insanity and a potential sexual subtext with his stepmother in his “mad” scenes as Antonio; hence, for example, at one point he pulled his trousers down on stage. The comic elements did, at least on the night I attended, prove very popular with the audience. They delighted in exchanges such as the one between Antonio and Rodrigo that takes place after the latter has revealed the nefarious plan to intoxicate the former:

ANTONIO: ¿De dónde eres?

RODRIGO: Español

ANTONIO: Español habías de ser (vv. 854-856)

Comedy, by its very nature, is often infectious and, by the second half of the performance, I was engrossed and thoroughly entertained by the on-stage action despite or perhaps because of the fact that it did little to elucidate Lope’s play-text. I do, however, wonder whether the production might actually have been better if they had undertaken a more radical overhaul of the play and rendered it in prose. The actors struggled with metrics, and their stilted delivery of seventeenth-century verse clashed with interpolated modernisms such as the airing of songs by Prince and Celine Dion through the loudspeakers.

Antonio's love-interest in the play, Lucinda, is headstrong and is closer in psychology and action to Juliet than the ostensibly more passive Ophelia. In fact, the Third Act of the play reveals marked similarities with Shakespeare's great romantic tragedy; nevertheless, as in Lope's *Castelvines y Monteses* – based on similar source material to *Romeo and Juliet* –, *El cuerdo loco* delivers a happy ending befitting comedy. Lucinda attempts suicide when she incorrectly believes that her lover has died. Her brother nevertheless reveals that the potion she has ingested is not lethal, as it is merely a soporific he prepared to drug the husband of a woman he has been pursuing!

Prior to this uplifting conclusion, Lope nevertheless introduces a series of potentially sinister complications. Most serious amongst these is a Sultan laying siege to the city; his terms for surrender include the sacrificial offer of the bodies and souls of their young males. Even this scenario was played for laughs on stage. As with the recourse to stereotypically negative physical and character traits in the depiction of Ismael in Gonzalez Vergel's *La prudencia en la mujer*, this depiction proved shocking to the Anglo-American sensibility not accustomed to the level of political incorrectness considered permissible on the Spanish stage. Alex García did not embody the role of a proud Turkish warrior seeking a symbolic victory and the emasculation of a defeated force, but rather

that of a camp Arab playboy in a white suit and an affected accent.

His illicit trade never takes place for Antonio raises an army that defeats the occupying enemy; this counter-attack was, in this production, staged in a unique manner. The stage lights were dimmed as the theme tune to *Star Wars* accompanied the armed forces that entered from the rear of the church; these warriors were decked in Darth Vader outfits made visible solely by the fluorescent light sabers that overcame the enemy with little resistance! This victory paved the way for a comic resolution in which the audience was held rapt as the light sabers proved their versatility; they were used both to bless the union of Antonio and Lucinda, and to issue merciful judgments against the vanquished forces.

It was clear by this point that the production had little or no relation with either Lope or the socio-political realities of seventeenth-century Spain evoked by the creative team in the program. I am loath to be dismissive of any performance that supplies a fun and entertaining evening of theater. However, in my role as an academic with a vested interest in *comedia* performance, it does raise some unsettling questions. Why, irrespective of its not inconsiderable merits, was it felt necessary to simplify the play-text to the extent that it had little relation to either Lope or the socio-historical context in which he wrote in order to appeal to and engage an early twenty-first century audience? Is it

that the Horatian adage of *deleitar enseñanado* is now construed to be an oxymoron?

In my view, one of the defining hallmarks of a faithful and successful dramatic representation of a *comedia* is if, after seeing a performance, we are unable to read the play-text in the same way that we had previously. To borrow a phrase from Charles Ganelin, this occurs when, “upon receiving a work anew, we draw it back into the present to fuse horizons” (Ganelin, 10). According to this criterion, none of the three productions cut the mustard. A lack of directorial vision and the inability of the actors to inhabit their roles or master Castilian metrics meant that the productions occupied a confused liminal zone that was not anchored in any concrete socio-cultural reality and failed to do justice to either the past or present. Ironically, in all three cases, the attempts to “modernize” the *comedia* only served to make it appear more anachronistic and the verse overly stylized. Consequently, the productions were hardly good advocates for Lope or Tirso being our contemporaries.

The Many Faces of Don Juan

As James A. Parr notes, “[a]lthough it is safe to say that Don Juan left no physical offspring, it is undeniable that his progeny in Western literature number in the hundreds” (Parr, 98). In terms of international stature, only Don Quixote, a native of La

Mancha, rivals Don Juan. In broad terms, to borrow a phrase from Hernández, “[e]l primero expone el lado más idealista, mientras que Don Juan representa el lado más canalla del español” (cited in González Barbasevilla). Traditionally, however, Zorilla’s version of the Tenorio myth has been more frequently staged than the play attributed to Tirso de Molina. Nevertheless, in the 1970s and 1980s, there was a rapid decline in the number of productions – largely as a result of the narrative being indelibly linked with Francoism – but there were signs of a resurrection by the turn of the century.⁹

This renewed prominence came to the fore in 2008 with, for example, the Festival de Olite including a cycle titled “Las edades del burlador”.¹⁰ At Almagro, the opening ceremony consisted of an outdoor musical spectacle based on the myth, titled *Don Juan en los ruedos (opera popular de caballos, bailes y cantes)* directed by Salvador Távora with his own Company in collaboration with La Cuadra de Sevilla. An adaptation of *El burlador* was performed for children alongside *El perro del hortelano* and *La vida es sueño* (to be discussed in the next section); and a puppet version was also staged by the Portuguese Teatro de Formas. In addition, there were two major productions of the work attributed to Tirso.

The more high-profile production of *El burlador* was directed and adapted by Hernández himself and was the subject of controversy as a result of the Festival’s director effectively contracting him-

self whilst also employing his wife, Magüi Mira, as directorial assistant. Criticism was exacerbated by the fact that it was staged at the most prestigious venue, the stunning partially open-air Antigua Universidad Renacentista, at the height of the Festival between 28 June and 6 July.¹¹ In all fairness, it is clear that the production was tailor-made for a large theatrical space of this kind and was designed, for better or worse, to appeal to large audiences in a way that most other *comedia* adaptations struggle to do so.¹² The impressive lighting and large screens at the rear of the stage were of the kind more habitually on display at stadium rock concerts than in the theater. A grandiose pre-recorded score based on Mozart was augmented by live on-stage voices, and Fran Perea was cast in the lead role as a result of his vocal as well as his acting abilities.

There does appear to be an increasing commercialization of Almagro that is perhaps indicative of broader changes in theatrical production. Spanish theater has, for example, not traditionally had such a strong “star system” as the UK or US; a symptom and cause of this is that lavish programs detailing actors’ previous roles is not the norm. However, changes do appear to be afoot in this regard.¹³ For example, most of the press surrounding the Hernández production focused on the presence of Perea (a popular musician, actor and sex symbol) alongside Marina San José, the daughter of Ana Belén and Victor Manuel.¹⁴

Considering the ostensibly gynocentric nature of the 2008 Festival and Tirso's reputation as the Golden Age playwright with the strongest female roles (e.g. Galoppe; McKendrick, *Women* 330-31), the decision to focus heavily on *El burlador* is initially perplexing. In fact, the play's emphasis on the male seducer and a certain one-dimensionality in the depiction of female characters was evoked by Alfredo Rodríguez López-Vázquez to suggest that the play has been incorrectly attributed to Tirso (López-Vázquez, 115). It is, however, possible to argue that this may, at least in part, be the consequence of hermeneutical practices rather than the text itself. Susana Pendzik noted, for example, in 2004 that most critics focused too insistently on the masculine anti-hero: "In other words, the picture is incomplete: the female presence in *El burlador* remains to be addressed" (Pendzik, 165). According to this reading, the play's women need to be fleshed out; this is, very literally, what Hernández set out to achieve.

In the festival program, he speaks of "La mujer víctima de la impunidad de un mundo de hombres donde el poder es masculino, y la ley, la norma y la fuerza lo protegen para no perder ese privilegio" (52). In line with this appraisal, the production envisaged the relationship between Don Juan and women to be a metaphoric indictment of wider social practices. Hence, in his direction notes, Hernández refers to:

Una apasionante creación del fraile mercedario, que buen conocedor de la sangre azul – no en vano era confesor real – retrata con toda crudeza, tal vez sin ser del todo consciente de cómo lo íbamos a interpretar, todo el tinglado de una institución machista, prepotente, caprichosa y corrupta por naturaleza como es la Monarquía. (126)

This iconoclastic claim has dramatic potential that was not, however, realized in a performance that was unimaginative, repetitive and exploitative. On a visual level, the production focused on the female characters from the outset. The opening scene consisted of the four women who will later be tricked by Don Juan emerging on stage. Nevertheless, as this initial *mise-en-scène* intimated, they had a collective identity but they were not individualized at the levels of action or psychology. Tisbea's lengthy tirade about the inequalities of gender roles was, for example, heavily edited. There was also no attempt to distinguish between those women seduced by the promise of marriage, and those who may or may not believe Don Juan is their official suitor rather than "un hombre sin nombre."

The publicity surrounding the production may indicate that Don Juan is both the agent and product of a perverse social structure but this was undermined by Perea's presence. This thirty year old physically resembled the archetypal image of the mythical figure more than the character in Tir-

so's play who, as multiple commentators have noted (e.g. Gala, Mandrell), relies on verbal more than physical seduction,. Furthermore, his star presence and performance style self-consciously created the image of a romantic rebel as is reflected in the actors' comments to the press:

Don Juan se drogaba, seguro. Se tiraba en para-pente, hacía puenting, era un kamikaze. En una sociedad en la que su único trabajo era el ocio podía elegir el riesgo como forma de vida. Por eso seducía a las mujeres, no era sólo por sexo ni por burlarlas, ¡sino por luchar contra lo establecido como un revolucionario! (cited in Portinari)

As a consequence, the audience was encouraged to delight in the explicit sex scenes in which both Don Juan and his "victims" were often completely naked. There was no attempt to replicate the play's interrogation of vicarious and voyeuristic scopophilic pleasures that Peter W. Evans has identified through the figure of the *gracioso* in Tirso's play:

If Catalinon [sic.] is a *mirón* at don Juan's *burlas* against women, to what extent are we, whom he represents, not also in some ways *mirones*, in the pejorative sense, as well? Are we perhaps *mirones* taking pleasure from looking at the spectacle of the *castigo* of women who have dared exercise their sexuality and eroticism?

The brilliance of the play is not that Tirso is crudely joining in the misogynist outcry against women, seeking to make them pay for man's expulsion from paradise, but that through this highly self-conscious method of Catalinón's *mise-en-abyme* we are made to reflect even more deeply on the play's issues, and to catch ourselves applauding perhaps with unconscious and unrecognised sado-masochistic tendencies those who punish our own repressed, formerly unconscious but now recognised desires. (Evans, 245)

This self-conscious reflexivity was conspicuously absent on stage where the sole meaning Hernández attributed to women and sexual relations was as symbols of a corrupt and malevolent society. From an ethical perspective, what was more concerning was the form in which this symbolic worth was embodied through the frequent display of female flesh that is characteristic of the director's work.¹⁵ In this case, a series of young nubile bodies paraded for the audience's delectation verged on the pornographic. The explicit *mise-en-scène* and performance often served to humiliate and vilify not only the female characters but also the actresses who embodied them on stage.

To cite just one example, there was a completely gratuitous scene where Pedro Tenorio whipped off Isabela's top leaving her breasts exposed when he talked in disgust of how she has re-

linquished her virginity. Such scenes often encouraged the spectator to take a vicarious and voyeuristic pleasure in the on-stage action exacerbated by the arrangement of this large theatrical space. The raised seating meant that no member of the audience was physically that close to the on-stage action, and yet we were all afforded an unobstructed aerial view.

These ethical qualms would not necessarily hold such sway if it were not for the fact that there was an aesthetic correlative that helps explain the reaction of my fellow spectators on the play's opening night in Almagro. They struggled to concentrate, and were visibly bored for much of a performance that lasted two hours and contained no interval. One problem with striptease and sexual titillation is that, like *Don Juan*, it often promises more than it delivers; relentless activity can easily lapse into tedious repetition. That this trait will be reproduced in the dramatic action looms over any production of a play that ostensibly lacks the structural unity and cohesion of many *comedias*. It was partly in order to avoid this pitfall that the respected Spanish novelist, Carmen Martín Gaité, expanded the female roles in the version that she prepared for a co-production between the CNTC and the Argentine Teatro San Martín directed by Adolfo Marsillach in 1988.¹⁶ Her adaptation creatively developed the proto-feminist sentiments present in Tisbea's lament as a springboard to further develop the female

roles in the play whilst also imbuing the play with a more conventional dramatic arc.

This experiment worked well in many respects but this is not to say that such extensive cosmetic surgery is a necessary prerequisite for *El burador* being staged successfully. As Joan Ramón Resina notes, “[i]t is remarkable that the literary slackness of the play does not detract from its dramatic force, which arises largely from the tension between discursive orders that is built into the dramatic structure in the form of competing plays” (Resina, 577). In this case, however, Hernández’s privileging of the sexual dimension effectively bypassed these “competing plays” and posited the lead character in a linear dramatic trajectory that, according to the director, finds its closest modern-day equivalent in a “road movie” (Hernández, 123). However, even on its own terms, this journey was not staged at all imaginatively.

Considering that the vast screens presumably absorbed a substantial portion of the production’s 360,000 Euro budget, it is perplexing that they were not put to greater or more creative use; they merely contextualized the action displaying, for example, the scene number and location. More substantially, the best road movies involve emotional engagement as well as physical displacement. This was conspicuously absent on stage thereby robbing the play of any dramatic tension whilst Perea’s romantic and romanticized performance made

Don Juan's damnation and the absence of redemption or salvation completely incongruous.

One of Almagro's chief attractions for the *comedia* aficionado is clearly the rare opportunity to compare and contrast productions and performance styles. Hence, for example, I was also able to see a radically different image of Tirso's most famous creation in a production directed by Dan Jemmett, the first British practitioner to direct a Moliere play for the Comédie Française. In this case, he collaborated with the Teatro de la Abadía, one of Spain's most reputable and consistent companies, where the production was initially staged before undertaking an extensive tour that included a residency at the Teatro Municipal in Almagro.

Although there are certain parallels to which I will later return, this production was ostensibly the antithesis of Hernández's vision. A reduced cast of six resulted in many actors playing multiple roles, whilst the bald Antonio Gil, who played a physically decrepit Don Juan in need of walking stick, appeared to be older than the actor playing his on-stage uncle.¹⁷ As Edward H. Friedman notes, "[t]o construct a play around a consistently malevolent protagonist is a challenge, for the dramatist must sustain a plot while eliminating the possibility of intellectual or ethical growth" (Friedman, 64). Modern-day practitioners also need to be ingenious in their depiction of the character, especially if they choose not to invest the seducer with the arms of physical attractiveness.

Jemmett's solution was to locate the action in a 1920s cabaret bar; Don Juan was presented as a cynical and jaded but not altogether unsympathetic drinker. This basic conceit allowed the director to make the *burlador* and his fellow barflies' arrested development a source of dramatic tension and psychological interrogation. As the narrative progressed, it becomes increasingly clear that what initially appeared to be a seductive and lively nocturnal demimonde was in fact sordid and desperate. The various seductions were therefore framed as being degrading for all concerned. Hence, for example, there was a tragic and desperate bathos to the way in which the women who have been tricked appeared to be increasingly under the influence of drink as the narrative unfolded, as did Don Juan when he contemplated his imminent death.

The actors delivered their lines in an accomplished manner that was sensitive to the specific exigencies of individual scenes and characters. Hence, for example, Marta Poveda commanded attention and sympathy as she delivered Tisbea's extended lament. This technical prowess allowed Jemmett to emotionally modulate the production in a precise manner; less successful, to my eye and ear however, was his decision to introduce popular music to punctuate the action. We heard pre-recorded versions of "Rivers of Babylon" as Tisbea washed her clothes; "A message to you, Rudy" when the Marquis and Don Juan were on stage; and "Su-

sanne, beware of the devil” when the seducer was relaying his charms on Arminta. The narratives of these lyrically sophisticated songs did, as their titles suggest, have relevance to the play, and I enjoyed hearing them. Nevertheless, their inclusion was anachronistic in the context of a non-English speaking country where reggae and ska have never had mass appeal.

This soundtrack was representative of an accomplished production sabotaged by a desire to be irreverent. This was evident, for example, when Ana and Don Juan rehearsed a number of sexual positions for the amusement of the audience before he disappears up the folds of her skirt. Elsewhere, Gonzalo suddenly broke into the “Moonwalk” dance made famous by Michael Jackson, whilst Don Juan appeared at the end in a ridiculous and garish red costume.

In spite of their manifest differences, both productions implicitly shared the belief that audiences need to be seduced and/or tricked into watching a seventeenth-century play. This, in turn, provides one explanation as to why Hernández and Jemmett both focused so heavily on the ostensibly transgressive but largely superficial elements of *El burlador de Sevilla*, albeit with radically results.

Consolidating the Cannon? Performing *Fuente Ovejuna*, *El perro del hortelano* and *La vida es sueño*

It is indicative of the contemporary Golden Age canon that a production aimed at children prepared by Ruth Prieto for the Compañía Perkustra contained three segments based around *El burlador*, *El perro del hortelano* and *La vida es sueño*. This was a relatively rare attempt to familiarize children and adolescents with Golden Age drama. A running length of an hour allowed for approximately twenty minutes to be dedicated to each play, with emphasis placed on the rudiments of their respective narratives. These were interspersed with a series of lively activities (a young man doing back-flips; an acrobat juggling balls; a rather unexpected conga etc.), which functioned as modern-day equivalents to the *entremés*. It was an amusing and lively production well suited to its predominantly youthful demographic; although I hardly constitute its target audience, I do nevertheless sense that it would have benefited from being less repetitive and more tightly structured.

In the first segment, a young actor in period dress recounted Don Juan's story employing seventeenth century verse forms; he subsequently removed his hat to replace it with a baseball cap and replayed the narrative through rap using modern-day diction. This helped make the play accessible whilst implicitly advancing the plausible theory that rap is the closest modern-day equivalent to verse.¹⁸

A difference in national sensibilities was manifest in what, to my English ear, appeared to be remarkably frank language (e.g. *tirar/pilba*), whose literal translations would, I suspect, occasion controversy if performed in the UK or the US.

In all three plays, the narratives were described rather than performed, and the actor proceeded to recount the story of the Countess of Belfor and her ambitious secretary. Segments of the plot were interspersed with the musical refrain “Te has captado el interés” used to make the audience clap along; judging by their reaction, the answer was a resounding “sí”. *La vida es sueño*’s philosophical depth was affectionately lampooned in the third segment where the young actor had the play explained to him in the simplest of terms. A rather tedious play on words in which they confused Calderón de la Barca with Barça Football Club ensued; following a description of Segismundo’s key soliloquy on the ontology of dreams, the child noted how he also has “sueño” when his mother makes him go to school. A more “adult” comparison was also introduced as Segismundo being locked in the tower was compared to Josef Fritzl’s daughter who was imprisoned in their Austrian home by her father and subject to extreme physical and sexual abuse.

In the previous section, I discussed productions of *El burlador* but all three of the *comedias* referenced were performed during the course of the Festival. Laurence Boswell, who had

earlier received rapturous reviews for his 2004 production of *El perro* in English with the Royal Shakespeare Company, staged a version in Spanish with Spanish actors.¹⁹ One of the RSC's major achievements had been to perform a moving and genuinely funny version of the text that did not, however, deviate tremendously from Lope's play-text. In performance, its success was largely grounded in the intensity and precision of the psychological charge that circulated between the characters, actors and spectators. This was facilitated by the use of ensemble actors and the apron stage in use at the Swan theater in Stratford. As a result, the RSC was able to avoid the trap into which many, although by no means all, Spanish productions fall: either playing excessively for laughs or encasing the seventeenth-century within a corset of solemnity.

Unfortunately, Boswell proved unable to replicate this success with the Spanish production, which seemed a pale imitation of his earlier production. The *mise-en-scènes* were remarkably similar, whilst Óscar Zafra's performance as Tristán unsuccessfully tries to ape his predecessor's energy and charm. Even the actor who played Teodoro seemingly had his hair styled so that it bore a striking resemblance to Joseph Millson who had played the lead role in the British staging. The gag whereby Ricardo had a servant produce flowers whenever he saw Diana that had worked so effectively now felt tired and labored. Furthermore, Blanca Oteyza was

clearly miscast as Diana.²⁰ She struggled with verse and conveyed any feeling of displeasure with the same expression: a tightening of the facial muscles. Whether it was as a result of the skills of the actors or possible difficulties in communicating with Boswell, the acting was generally far inferior to that of the RSC production and there was a virtual absence of either dark sexual passion or the pace of comedy.

Another transnational interpretation of the classics was provided by an English-language version of *La vida es sueño*, Calderón's best known and most regularly staged play both at home and abroad. The mere existence of this Spanish-American production previously staged in New York, and whose sponsors included Amnesty International, bears testament to its international standing as do the plans to develop this production into a film.²¹

The producer, Puy Navarro, claims she was inspired by a series of lectures delivered on human rights, and the re-worked narrative performed in contemporary dress refashioned this seventeenth-century drama as a modern-day political intrigue. The program made manifest the desire to use Calderón's play as a pretext to discuss contemporary political concerns; "El texto ha sido editado para agilizarlo y adaptarlo al público de hoy día, y la localización de los hechos se ha modernizado para poder encuadrarla dentro de los conflictos y violaciones de Derechos Humanos actuales" (Festival 66). The pre-emptive imprisonment of Segismundo

and the exploration of what it means to be free and fully human clearly lend themselves to interpretations of this kind. Gabriel Garbisu, for example, directed a version at the 2006 Festival that rather clumsily sought to make analogies with military intervention in the Middle East.

This production was more accomplished and constituted a brave attempt to bring a very challenging play alive in a modern-day setting. Nevertheless, in its desire to reiterate its contemporary relevance, it tried to include too much and lacked cohesion. Effective use was, for example, made of modern technology and much of the music and visual images was moving, yet their effect was often blighted by a lack of directorial vision. Near the beginning of the performance, Astolfo wrote Estrella an e-mail in real time; its contents were projected on a large screen at the rear of the auditorium. In this message, he stated their respective claims to the throne and suggested that they join forces in order to gain power. Whilst this was an imaginative way of incorporating a classical narrative into the context of a modern-day political intrigue, it did not withstand close scrutiny. Firstly, Astolfo may be a Machiavellian operator but he would never be so unsubtle as to frame his claim and designs in such explicit terms. Secondly, even if he were to do so, it would be foolish to use electronic form as his words could so easily return to haunt him. This is a distinct possibility as it is his first overture to Estrella, and he therefore has little idea of how she will respond.

A tendency to be over-explicit and facile was present elsewhere. Take, for example, a scene where Basilio was depicted as a twenty-first century American President. He issued a televised political broadcast in which he justified his son's imprisonment on the grounds that it would protect the public from some unknown and un-verifiable danger to which they may be subject in the future. The political connotation would be clear enough without footage of prisoners in boiler suits from Guantanamo being shown on the large screen.

The acting was, in general, rather overwrought. In the role of Segismundo, Vayu O'Donnell reverted to histrionics and physical gesticulations in an embodiment almost completely lacking in nuance. This performance style was not necessarily the actor's fault as it was invited by the adaptation/translation that was neither faithful to the seventeenth-century play nor genuinely updated. As a result, the beauty and poise of Calderón's verse was lost yet a residual antiquity prevented the lines from being delivered in a naturalistic manner. This was particular problematic in the case of Basilio where Gerry Bamman was portentous and unintentionally comic in his style of delivery.

In modern times, *Fuente Ovejuna* has been Lope's best known and most loved play largely as a result of heavily politicized versions from both ends of the political spectrum. It is a self-conscious engagement with earlier performances that, alongside Lope's play-text, forms the basis of *Crónica de*

Fuente Ovejuna, a relatively modest production directed by a well-respected veteran: José Carlos Plaza.²² Its title may suggest a lack of fidelity to the play-text yet the production contained the vast majority of Lope's scenes albeit with occasional cuts. The Maestre, for example, did not appear. The major narrative and thematic innovation is that *Fuente Ovejuna* was theatrically unstitched and the audience's knowledge (or lack thereof) of the play-text and its stage history was woven into the very fabric of the theatrical action. According to the theatrical program, Samarkanda Teatro opposes what they consider to be Lope's central thesis: the coincidence of the interests of the people and the monarchy. As a result:

Nuestra propuesta surge a partir de esta conclusión del autor: ¿Es éste el mensaje que queremos transmitir hoy? Y si no es así, ¿por qué hacer *Fuente Ovejuna*? Y desde estas preguntas hemos desarrollado una dramaturgia respetuosa con el texto de Lope en aquellas escenas que desarrollan la acción de la "línea principal", y que trata de desenmascarar y acercar al presente la "línea histórica". De esta forma, no estamos poniendo en escena *Fuente Ovejuna* sino a una compañía de teatro que indaga, discute, rebate, defiende, ensaya...partiendo del desacuerdo con la tesis política del autor. (Samarkanda Teatro)

The first scene had a distancing effect as we saw a number of actors struggle to perform the scene where the Catholic Monarchs ostensibly restore order. The apparent lack of professionalism on display did not bode well but, fortunately, it soon became evident that this was a staged rehearsal. Following this, the actors debated the inclusion of the scene and the merit of even performing the classics at all.

A similar exchange took place just prior to Laurencia and Frondoso's wedding as the actors deliberated over whether their respective characters ought to celebrate considering that Jacinta and Mengo had recently been subjected to extreme sexual and physical violence. One technique particularly well utilized was having the actors often voice sentiments derived from their character's perspective thereby offering a more global and plural vision than a linear performance (or reading) would normally supply. The scenario was compared by one of the male characters to the contemporary dilemma faced by a local mayor when a man kills his wife or girlfriend on the day of the town fiestas. Against the claim that they are allowing the murderer to perpetrate two crimes (the first against the victim and the second against the town) if they cancel the festivities, one of the actresses protested that they would not peddle this argument if they were the victim.

The debate is not settled but the wedding does go ahead. Crucial to the production's success was the relationship between narrative strands that were clearly demarcated and yet had a cumulative effect. In general, the meta-theatrical elements of the play were performed in more naturalistic and luminous lighting while the scenes from Lope were characterized by darkness and strong red and blue lighting. Costume wise, the actors frequently donned specific garments for set scenes and removed them for rehearsal sequences but no strict demarcation was established. Esteban, for example, wore a leather jacket throughout the wedding scenes. This may have been a deliberate attempt to subvert any folkloric subtext that is often associated with productions from the dictatorship period; the songs were nevertheless delivered with a verve and bonhomie that could rival any production.

It initially appeared as if the play would end without the inclusion of the Catholic Monarchs. The house lights were raised after the torture scenes, which were shown on- rather than off-stage in contrast to the directions indicated in Lope's play-text. In an explicit example of a performance history playing a constitutive role, the on-stage director said that this was how Lorca's adaptation ended, and they discussed whether their version should follow this example or remain faithful to Lope's play-text. A debate ensued and a number of arguments were brandished: how faithful was Lope to the historical record? Could Ferdinand and Isabella have had cyn-

ical motivations? These more subversive interpretations appealed to the fictional actors whose real-life counterparts then completed a circular structure by performing the scene with which the production had begun but in a more professional manner.

As Darci Strother notes, the absence of prior knowledge that is assumed by the production could jeopardize a production of this kind in performance. She nevertheless concludes that, in the context of Almagro:

It is a play that richly rewards the well-prepared audience member with the chance to be challenged as a creative partner, to re-evaluate the play and the historical events it is loosely based on, to consider what lessons classical theater can still teach us, and to marvel at the sight of a group of performers so adept at transporting us back and forth between Lope's world and ours. (Strother, 208)

I echo this sentiment and applaud what I consider to be undoubtedly the best production at the 2008 Almagro Festival as a result of its ability to facilitate communication between both the stage and auditorium, and the seventeenth- and twenty-first centuries. These qualities are largely attributable to the specific practitioners involved, but their efforts and achievements were enabled, at least in part, by the fact that *Fuente Ovejuna* is arguably the

only *comedia* in which past and present productions enter into continual dialogue with each other.

NOTES

¹ This article is ideally designed to be read in conjunction with my article, "The performance," and/or my forthcoming book: *Golden Age*.

² Interview conducted with the author in Madrid on 14 April 2008.

³ The Almagro Festival had a budget of 2.2 million Euros in 2008 ("Arranca hoy"). To put this context, the neighboring Olmedo Festival had a modest 260,000 (Viloria).

⁴ In addition, the Compañía Antigua Escena staged a version of Calderón's auto sacramental, *La paz universal o el lirio de la azucena*. It is unfortunately beyond the remit of this article to discuss this ambitious production. For a detailed review of this production, see Martin (154-56).

⁵ This does appear to have been a sentiment shared by others. As Ricardo Doménech noted in his review: "¡Que sensación de tristeza! El teatro estaba prácticamente vacío. Apenas cuatro o cinco filas de espectadores aburridos, que habían ido allí sin duda para matar el tiempo y como podrían haber ido a cualquier otra parte" (54). González Vergel fails to mention the most recent professional staging of the play from 1982, directed by Modesto Higuera and starring Ana Mariscal in the lead role.

⁶ According to the Festival Program, the director of *Los comendadores de Córdoba*, Cesar Barló, encountered the play from Fernando Doménech's classes from his time at RESAD. This then inspired him to work on a modern-day version of the play that he staged with a cast made up of both fellow students, and actors cast from elsewhere (60).

⁷ For more details of the law and changing attitudes to domestic violence in Spain, see Wheeler, "Intimate."

⁸For a discussion of the play's critical reception and its relation to gender, see Evans, "Masculinities."

⁹ The CNTC organized a season based around variations on the myth. In 2004, Mario Gas organized a three-day jam at the Español that included a session titled "Cincuenta voces para Don Juan" featuring stars of the Spanish stage and screen including such high-profile names as Núria Espert, Imanol Arias and Leonor Watling.

¹⁰ For more details, see Ruiz Pastor.

¹¹ For a detailed personal and professional attack on Hernández, see Adrián Daumas's blog: <http://teatroculturaopniondaumas.blogspot.com>). Consulted on 31 July 2009.

¹² Indicative of this fact is that it was premiered at a Festival in Naples prior to Almagro whilst it later toured extensively and had, for example, an extended residency at the Teatro de las Bellas Artes in Madrid.

¹³ It is no coincidence that the next production to be staged in this grand auditorium was *Hamlet* directed by the film star Juan Diego Botto who shared the stage with fellow Spanish screen idol, José Coronado.

¹⁴ This married couple is both famous singer-songwriters renowned for their left-wing tendencies. Belén made her name as child star in the 1960s and is famed for her erotic appeal forged largely through a series of sexually explicit screen roles.

¹⁵ Women's breasts are, for example, frequently and gratuitously on display in his productions of *Fuente Ovejuna* (1999) and *Romeo X Juliet* (2003).

¹⁶ For more details about this adaptation and production that was staged at Almagro in 1988, see Martínez Ferrol; and Monleón "Las razones."

¹⁷ This is not the first time that a director has deliberately sought to make Don Juan physically unattractive. In Miguel Narros' production with the CNTC in 2003, the role was taken

by Carlos Hipólito who had previously played Don Gutierre in *El médico de su honra*, and whose cinematic screen persona has been forged through appearances that consciously subvert the role of the traditional matinee idol.

¹⁸ This comparison would be further developed at the 2009 Festival when the group, Rapsodas en el Barrio, performed fragments of various plays including *Fuente Ovejuna* and *El caballero de Olmedo* in rap and hip-hop styles.

¹⁹ For a detailed of this production and the RSC season, see Fischer.

²⁰ In my personal opinion, Boswell made the wrong decision in casting Oteyza. Silvia Abascal, who was excellent in the role of Finea in the recent film version of *La dama boba*, – for which she won the best actress award at the Malaga Film Festival – also auditioned for the role.

²¹ As the PDF file featured on the web-page for the film that refers to the play as the “Hamlet español”:

Dada la naturaleza clásica y el enfoque moderno del proyecto, la explotación de esta obra cinematográfica abarcará los sectores comerciales, educativos y culturales, tanto en España como en el extranjero, pudiendo convertirse en una obra de referencia y, con ello, alargar su explotación en el tiempo. (2)

Downloaded from <http://www.lavidaessueno.com> on September 26, 2008.

²² For a detailed analysis and review, see Monleón “*Fuenteovejuna*,” and Strother.

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Interview

CALDERÓN'S *DREAM* ON THE LONDON STAGE: A CONVERSATION WITH JONATHAN MUNBY

MARYRICA ORTIZ LOTTMAN
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Jonathan Munby has directed operas, contemporary dramas, and classic plays for such theaters as the Royal Shakespeare Company, the Guthrie, the Old Vic, the Globe, and the Shakespeare Theatre Company. So far, he has directed five *comedias*, including four by Lope de Vega. In the winter of 2009 he opened Calderón's *Life Is a Dream* (*La vida es sueño*) at the Donmar Warehouse, a 250-seat Covent Garden theater that is one of the most prestigious and innovative playhouses in London. The production received rave reviews, as did its lead actor, Dominic West, star of HBO's widely respected TV series *The Wire*.

MOL: The Donmar Warehouse is one of the top theaters in London. Could you talk about the process of getting *Life Is a Dream* produced there?

JM: Well, Michael Grandage, the artistic director of the Donmar, had started opening the doors to the European repertoire in a way other theaters in London hadn't. Of course, *Life Is a Dream* sits there as one of the great European classics, like *Hamlet*. It had been a play he had been interested in doing, so when I mentioned *that* play, alarm bells rang for him. It felt like absolutely the right work to do, given my history with the Spanish Golden Age. We were both interested in producing inside a small space a play of epic proportions, certainly in terms of ideas. You can create a really wonderful theatrical experience and get the audience inside a kind of crucible.

MOL: The Donmar is so small and so quick to sell out, that you feel privileged just to sit there.

JM: (*Laughs.*) It took nearly two years to get from the initial conversations to production. Translating from Spanish to English, from one period to the present, from one culture to another is a negotiation. *Life Is a Dream* is a particular kind of play that taps into traditions of tragedy, yes, but also taps into fairy tales. I've not read a translation that does it justice. I have no Spanish, but my instinct was that there was a play there that I hadn't quite read yet in English. I was adamant that the play should be in verse because of the heightened nature of the writing. The play itself is a poem. The language wraps itself around an audience and consciously so;

it's rather like Shakespeare, where the audience is aware of the actor speaking a heightened language.

MOL: And Segismundo is a prince.

JM: And he is a prince. But the characters are all in the same register. I don't know the Spanish well enough to differentiate on the page between Clarion's text, for example, and Segismundo's. But I got a feeling they're all in the same mode. This is really important to the heightened nature of the play, to its discourse, to the atmosphere that is created through the language. So it was about finding a translator who would be comfortable writing a contemporary English verse version. For me, always, it is only about the mode of communication between actor and audience and the drama of that moment. The Donmar has a tradition now of commissioning new versions of these plays from contemporary writers. And we absolutely wanted to put this play into the hands of a proven dramatist like Helen Edmundson.¹

MOL: And she had already done adaptations of other plays. You said you commissioned a literal translation from the Spanish. At that point, did Helen turn the prose translation into verse?

JM: Exactly. Because she has no Spanish either.

MOL: Maybe that arrangement's an advantage because you think of it as something fresh.

JM: You're free. You're free! We allowed her to

spend some time and respond in her own way to the literal issue she was reading. She had written some song lyrics before and some of her writing has a heightened quality to it, but she had never written in verse before. She was teaching herself to write verse as she was writing this play!

MOL: She did a wonderful job.

JM: It was a great debut as a verse writer.

MOL: When I was listening to it, at times I was thinking: So this is poetry. No, it's not, it's prose. And I couldn't decide, because it worked both ways. Not until one looks at it on the page does one realize that definitely, the whole thing is verse.

JM: I always urge my actors to make verse sound like prose. You have to somehow be so fluent with the language that it sounds free and can sound like prose—as a way of trying to make it live. Helen and I both instinctively knew that the verse form shouldn't be iambic pentameter.

MOL: Because of the identification with Shakespeare's language?

JM: Exactly that. We had to create a form unique to itself, so that the English ear was hearing something that had an otherness to it. We used an octosyllabic line.

MOL: Oh, that's the Spanish *romance* line.

JM: Yes, it's the form that David Johnston prefers

in the English versions of his plays. Those two beats that are lost on the verse line do an interesting thing to an English ear that is so used to the iambic pentameter. That shortness actually draws the English ear towards the action. It's faster. It has a kind of rhythm and a kind of passion to it, I'd say—a heat to it.

MOL: You never come to the end of the line, you keep on going.

JM: Absolutely that! The thought travels through the verse. We played around in the scene where Basilio the king is being persuaded to go into battle. Some academics had told us that Calderón was changing his verse form there rather dramatically. Suddenly the play—it expands. What had been a domestic situation becomes a global conflict, and the world goes to war. Helen's language expands to those dimensions, so it becomes wider, larger. It affects more people.

MOL: Speaking of universality, you made the Donmar stage seem just huge. Later, when I saw another play there, I couldn't believe I was in the same space because it felt so tiny.

JM: The designer Angela Davies and I knew instinctively that we wanted to hold onto certain principles of the *corral*. So, bare stage, very few props, almost no furniture. Really just a floor and a wall. And so the evening would be about the actor and the word. If you strip everything away in the

Donmar, what you are left with is actually quite a wide space, relative to the depth, certainly. And a lot of—I call it “middle air” rising towards the ceiling. I knew we wanted to play something within the center of the space that had resonance to it. That’s where the astrolabe idea came from.

MOL: The astrolabe is the mysterious golden chandelier that hangs high over the audience and contains a sort of perforated lamp, and golden rings eventually release themselves around the lamp.

JM: The astrolabe reminds the audience of the science that was the catalyst for the story, Basilio’s astrology. And then I wanted to use the back wall of the Donmar, a very famous wall that kind of pushes the action towards the audience. If you dare to strip away and don’t put any scenery in that space, you get a wonderfully resonant wall that pushes the language and the ideas of the play forward. The bricks in that wall are soaked with years of these plays, but also with the history of that Victorian building, which was a warehouse before it was a theater. The bricks themselves have a great kind of resonance.

MOL: Because they are all handmade.

JM: They are very human and the scale of them is very human, so we wanted to hang onto that detail. Angela Davies had this wonderful idea—to gold leaf the back wall. Real gold leaf in this case, and that’s where the money went. We created a playing space

that provided us with all the different locations of the play. We could move from one scene to the next with great elegance and fluidity and speed. Because of a couple of really carefully chosen elements—the gold, the astrolabe, a chair for the throne, and a chain—, we were able to tell the story of each scene. Going back to what I said earlier about an epic play in a small space, we didn't want to make the play seem too domestic or to diminish the scale of its ideas.

MOL: The space got bigger as the play went along. It wasn't until late in the action that I realized the gold leaf on the back wall was representing a map of the world. Also, you realize then that the chandelier overhead has released its rings, so that it does closely resemble an astrolabe, or maybe the circulation of the planets.

JM: Good, I'm glad you had that experience. It's very easy to be too literal in theater. I'm always much more interested in metaphor, obviously, and to suggest something that can take on a different resonance, within a different context. So, that back wall was the wall of the palace, it was the wall of the prison, then suddenly it was a gigantic map—a strange, surreal map of the world—across which we were going to wage war. You noticed it late in the play because we started to light it differently. And when the play went to war, suddenly that gold was drenched with a blood red. Lighting played a huge

part in how we treated the space. Neil Austin and I have collaborated a lot, and he's able to sculpt the space with light and close it down to a single figure when we need to, but then open out and create—through shafts of light, through quite a striking kind of dramatic gesture—an epic picture. When we're talking about an open space, the lighting designer becomes even more important than usual. Because, with the same set for each scene, it's really up to him to change the atmosphere, the mood, and sculpt it in a different way.

MOL: You also used the spaces off stage in really interesting ways. Stage right, at the extreme edge, there was a space covered over with bars that represented the prison cell at times. It functioned like a *reja* in the *corral de comedias*. Stage left, again at the extreme edge, there was another two-story set of bars, with the musician hidden behind them in darkness on the upper story. He makes this unearthly cry, and we feel like there's a lot of space back there that's going to open up at some point. It never did, but it gave us that sense that there's more beyond.

JM: That's great. But in the Donmar there's no room back there to move at all! (*Laughs*). So now I've spoiled the magic for you. The idea of a caged figure stayed with Angela Davies and me right from the genesis of the project. At the end of the play Segismundo imprisons a rebel soldier, and a man

who has dedicated his life to a cause is now punished for it. That decision is a necessary part of Segismundo's metamorphosis into a prince. I wanted to deliver a bit of a blow to the audience and say, "Yes, let's celebrate the fact that this prince has managed to see the error of his ways and become a benign being, but there are people suffering as a result of it." To suggest that history is cyclical, that we don't learn from our mistakes necessarily, that someone's gain is someone else's loss. So, the play ends with another jailed figure in the tower. And by having our musician Ansulman Biswas also in prison, behind the bars at the side of the stage, I wanted to underline that fact.

MOL: The sight of him, and his voice, work subconsciously on the audience.

JM: Yes. His cry is Segismundo's cry, the cry of an innocent soul in prison.



Dominic West as Segismundo

MOL: At one point we see Ansulman's naked chest. He's so athletic and such a big guy, like Dominic West, that we know he has to be really miserable caged.

JM: That was a conscious choice, actually, in casting Dominic as Segismundo. Because we could have gone with a very different physicality, but that character needed to have quite a dominating, dangerous physical presence, so that we genuinely fear for the safety of those people in the palace when the beast is released.

MOL: At times, your Segismundo seems aware of his strength, and sometimes not at all. He takes the servant and throws him over the balcony. But when he's with Clotaldo, his jailer, he doesn't seem to know that he could take that guy out. You had that dish of water on the floor—one of the very few props in the production—, and at one point Clotaldo snaps his fingers and demands that dish, and Segismundo is immediately submissive. It was like Stockholm syndrome.

JM: Exactly that.

MOL: You developed a Segismundo that had tremendous variety in his personality and all of these contradictions. Definitely, he's a character undergoing transformation.

JM: Ah ha, good. I'm glad you saw that. He's a brilliantly complex individual. From the beginning

of rehearsal we made sure to take his situation seriously, and we dared to investigate the reality of what his life had been. So, for example, this jailer who becomes the father in his life has a very potent relationship with him. And because of the sense of betrayal that Segismundo feels towards Clotaldo and the rest, we wanted to see something that was instinctually submissive. That jailer was a man he would subjugate himself to and a man he was frightened of. When Dominic and I were rehearsing, we read about the recent, extraordinary cases of children who had been imprisoned by a father, most notably the two cases in Austria. Both those women had been imprisoned, in one case the whole of her life in a dungeon. And the behavioral patterns certainly fed into the kind of work we were doing rehearsing.

MOL: Dominic West gives a marvelous performance.

JM: Dominic West as a human being is very different from the star persona. There is a great innocence and vulnerability to him. You put that man in a room, and what you have to do is go on a journey to create the ego of the prince. In rehearsals, all our actors have the same status, including the two guys that played the jailer's soldiers. We all investigate the play together, and that takes the onus off the leading actor, because he knows we're all in it together.

MOL: There are so many wonderful people here. Let's talk about Rosaura—and her part in your marvelous opening of the play with its bits of *palmeo* and flamenco stomping. That opening, when Rosaura gets up on her hippogryph, was so sexy and so full of meaning. But first I want you to talk about your use of flamenco, which some *comedia* scholars have criticized.

JM: We shouldn't call it "flamenco" because it gets some people's backs up. I use the word because I know exactly what I mean. I did a workshop once with a Spanish choreographer-dancer, an Indian dancer-choreographer and a Middle Eastern belly dancer and choreographer, and an academic as well. There are extraordinary links in the rhythms and certainly in the footwork among all three of those disciplines, like a physical form traveling through the world. I imagine the journeys of indigenous people from India through the Middle East and to Europe. You can trace the origins of flamenco right through, a physicality that goes beyond Spain. (*Laughs.*) In *Life Is a Dream*, that opening choreography was created by Mike Ashcroft, with whom I've worked many times. We wanted to create a physical journey into the play. To arrest the audience and give them—I think it was a minute and a half, possibly less than that—an event that took them into the heart of the story we were going to tell and into the language of the telling. We created an event that helped give the story of a young

woman disguising herself, getting onto a horse and riding to a far-off country. So it was about telling that story physically.

MOL: The two or three male flamenco dancers suddenly come together to form the horse, and instantly she's on the shoulder of one, falls off the back of another man, and tumbles. Making two men into a horse made us see that all humans are animals. You have Kate Fleetwood, with her strong chin, as the beautiful Rosaura, who was vulnerable and very strong because she is on top of a horse, and then she's overthrown.

JM: Good. You know, hybrids, the idea of hybridization.

MOL: And monstrosity.

JM: And monstrosity. That was something I kept coming back to. The piece itself—Helen's adaptation—is a hybridized form: it's English and Spanish, it's classical and contemporary, it's both worlds colliding. Segismundo is man and beast. Rosaura is man and woman. She's the hunter and she's the hunted. This idea of the hybrid played out through the production. So, to come back to that opening and the physicality and the kind of Spanishness of it. There is no reference to Spain in the play whatsoever. A contemporary English audience may have heard of the Spanish Golden Age, but really has a very limited knowledge. That opening was a way of giving the audience a sense of

where the play has come from. So give it some footwork and some clapped rhythms (*Laughs*) to take us to that place. We are going to take you on a journey from the Spain of the seventeenth century to the Poland of this production.

MOL: Speaking of hybrids, I wonder if you would talk about the beastliness of your man. In the battle scenes, Segismundo was wearing a very tailored, elaborate uniform from the Napoleonic era, and he also wears a wolf pelt across his chest and smears its blood across his face. Making him appear so beastly was really effective because his full transformation into a man of moderation was so much more startling. We know that transformation doesn't take place altogether steadily, but in dramatic leaps that sometimes tilt backwards.

JM: Great. It was really important to us to take the journey of the play right to those final choices that the man makes, so that he didn't leap from beast to prince in a very unreal way, but with a progression to it. He enters the battlefield, and it's described in the play as half-man half-beast, in the same way that Rosaura enters the battlefield, and she says something like, "As a woman I come to you with this plea, but also as a man wearing this armor plating and with this sword."

MOL: She has her gown tucked up under the armor.

JM: She's one hybrid meets another. (*Laughs*).

This young man has been brought up in this environment—here we have the nature-nurture debate, which I seem to come back to again and again in my work. This man has been brought up in these circumstances. How is *he* going to fight on the battlefield? How much military training has he had? None. We can fantasize in a real way about how he is going to fight. And you're absolutely right: the blood became a kind of symbolic gesture.

MOL: It also seemed like his moment for self-expression, like painting "This is who I am!" on his face. He's declaring, "This is the beast part of me that you made by caging me!"

JM: Absolutely. Because it becomes a kind of revenge plot.

MOL: How did you work with the costume designer? There was a transition between mostly dark colors in the clothes at the beginning to mostly lighter colors in the second half. It also seemed like the costumes were dominated by just a few colors, black and white and red and blue, as I pointed out in my very enthusiastic review of this production.²

JM: Creating the world for the context of the play and releasing it for a contemporary audience really informed all our choices. I say this when we are speaking to designers: We must never think of these as costumes, these are clothes. What are the clothes these people in this world would wear? Even if it's an invented world, a hybrid in every sense, what are

these clothes? We knew instinctively we didn't want to go to the period the play was written in, we knew we didn't want to go to the 1630s.

MOL: Because it would be too close to Shakespeare?

JM: Yes. And the play somehow wouldn't resonate enough beyond that period. We felt it might be trapped in a specific place. Helen's adaptation felt very immediate and very contemporary, so we wanted to travel closer to us in time and still allow the play to work. The play has warfare with swords, and its people still travel on horseback. Where could we go in time that brought it close enough to us but still allowed a classical sense that didn't diminish the epic quality of the play? When I looked at some etchings by Goya, lots of things fell into place. I'm talking specifically about *The Disasters of War* series, his reaction to the Napoleonic Wars and the invasion of northern Spain.

MOL: This is fascinating stuff. Some scholars are looking into the correspondences between early modern iconography and the ways in which certain *comedia* scenes might have originally been staged.

JM: For me, those Goya etchings really go to the heart of what Calderón was writing, about man as war machine, but also about the victims of war being lumps of meat, lumps of flesh. There's a horrible kind of meatiness to the way Goya depicts

dead bodies. But there is one etching in particular, called “Sad Forebodings of What Is to Come.” It’s a single figure on its knees, in rags, facing up into the light.



Goya, “Sad Forebodings of What is to Come”

MOL: You had Dominic West in that position. I remember that. It’s a very affecting image.

JM: I’m really asking the question of “Why?” It’s that single figure, in those circumstances, ravaged by experiences—whether it’s war or imprisonment—, asking that question, “Why me?” “Why this?” I knew that what Goya was fascinated by in the savagery of those particular wars could help us to release this play. There was also a famous Spanish woman, Agustina de Aragón, who defied her position, her place, and fought against the French. Goya depicts her in a dress surrounded by weapons of war, cannons and guns, with bodies surrounding her. She strode into battle with firing cannons when

there was no one else around.³ She was a great kind of model for Rosaura.

MOL: How about Estrella? In the play there is no indication she is ever dressed as a male, but you had her also wearing a breastplate toward the end of the play. I wondered if you had done that for a contemporary audience by dressing her that way, and maybe through your direction as well, that you were making her into a more assertive woman so that at the end of the play the audience is more comfortable with her being married to Segismundo.

JM: Actually, we're talking about a woman who went into battle herself. So the question is, how did Estrella fight on the battlefield? What did she wear? As a model for her, we took Marie de Guise, Mother to Mary Queen of Scots. There is a very famous portrait of this woman riding into battle in a breastplate, with her skirt hooked up. When all those characters come together in the final scene of the play, they can't feel like figureheads, like a storybook where these people are untouched by the war that they've created. They need to have blood on their faces.

MOL: How about Clarion? I found that he was not as uproarious as clowns usually are portrayed in the *comedia*. Both Rosaura and Segismundo were deliberately comic at times. For people who know the play, that was very unsettling—in a good way, because it enlarged both characters for people who

only know Calderón's text. For example, when you did *The Dog in the Manger*, the clown in that production was just so hilarious. I still remember him with some trousers twisted into a turban on his head when he's pretending to be a Greek merchant.

JM: (*Laughs.*) For me, the humor in these plays is always very, very important, as important, obviously, as the tragedy. Calderón and Lope de Vega are writing comic tragedies, using comedy as a kind of release valve. If you get it right, it's a way of releasing tension before you pile the tension back on—as well as investigating the reality of the situation and allowing the absurdity of humanity to shine. There is nothing more delightful than human beings trying to wend their way through the maze, the labyrinth of life. I was determined for Clarion to not descend into a comic form that was too slapstick or too obvious, because internally those two plays are very different. *Life Is a Dream* has a debate at the heart of it that is far more serious, far more epic than the kind of domestic shenanigans in *Dog in the Manger*. Calderón's play contains a philosophical debate that allowed a kind of freedom in a different way. So the actor Lloyd Hutchinson and I were determined to make Clarion a very real person in a very real situation, and identifiable too, because the death of that character has a particular kind of resonance for the audience, and pathos too. Unless he was a real person that wouldn't have had any purchase or real impact. The *gracianos* in these

plays are counterpoints. So it really is about balance: they hold a mirror up to the very serious characters, whether it's Segismundo or Rosaura, or the characters in *Dog in the Manger*, to reflect them, to dismantle them, to challenge them. Whereas in *Dog in the Manger* the *gracioso* has moments of what amounts to pure unadulterated stand-up or pure situation comedy, *Life Is a Dream* had to be of a piece tonally, coherent, and all of the characters needed to exist in the same plane. Some of the translations of this play allow the two plots to feel like very different plays, but these characters need to be in the same world. There are very real reasons why Calderón writes these two plots to run beside each other, feeding each other, exploring honor in quite different ways. So that's why Clarion wasn't as knockabout funny as I know he's been in other productions.

MOL: And Segismundo was funny at times. I really appreciated the joke that Helen Edmundson invented. When he hurls the servant to his death, he congratulates himself and says he threw him off the balcony because "he wouldn't fit through the window." Hilarious!

JM: And also very human.

MOL: Having a Segismundo with a sense of humor did not at all overwhelm his serious side. When he gets liberated, his sense of humor gets liberated, too. Thank God he's out of his cage for awhile!

JM: Absolutely. And that has as much to do with casting Dominic as with what is on the page in Helen's adaptation. There are moments that are potentially very funny that would not have been funny in another actor's hands. I'm always allowing these characters to come from the heart of the person who's playing them. Segismundo is a huge part of who Dominic is as an individual. Dominic has this other side to him—he's comfortable being witty. I'm always allowing these characters to come from the heart of the person who's playing them. It seemed right to me that if you put Segismundo in that situation, you put Dominic West in that situation, and he reacts in that way. It's about allowing the humanity absolutely, as much as it's about the instinct of the individual, to come through. You're absolutely right, you can allow the humor without diminishing the darker, more intellectual debate that's going on.

MOL: Dominic in his labyrinth.

JM: And Calderón, through Rosaura, talks about the labyrinth. That idea stayed with us, the idea of the journey through the labyrinth to enlightenment. But also for the half-beast, half-man trapped inside a man-made kind of prison construction.

MOL: Could you talk about staging some of the speeches, especially Basilio's long speech? Other directors have characters move in and out of the spotlight just for variety, but you didn't do that at

all. Basilio really is center stage, holding the stage and speaking to the populace because he's king, by darn, and he can hold 'em. And then at a certain point it seems like he's moving in diagonals, and then he comes back to the center, in my recollection, when he announces he has freed his son.

JM: The first thing to say about that speech is that one has to trust the form we are working in here. What Calderon is writing are these great arias. As an opera singer might come and stand down, stage center, and sing an aria, and trust that the music and the form that they are working within does the work, we need to trust the language in the same way. The movement is actually in the language. We trust the movement of the thoughts as opposed to trying to find too much movement in terms of the stage action. Trust the audience will go with us. Not just acknowledging the movement of the thoughts but also storytelling as an idea. The character effectively says, "Sit down, I'm going to tell you a story." So we enter into that. But you're right: because he's the king we all sit and listen because we don't have a choice. There was one move I know came instinctually out of the psychological journey of that character. Again, it's about investigating reality. Always. What is it for that man to have lived for thirty odd years of, not guilt necessarily, but doubt. Was what he did right or wrong? There is a very profound moment where the

king *needed* to sit down. He had brought the court up to date in terms of the story, and then he had to acknowledge the fact that what he did may have been wrong. Do you know what the actor did instinctively in rehearsal? Malcolm Storry, who played Basilio, he sat for a moment and paused longer than is normally allowed in a performance, and he just thought for a moment about what it has been like to live in flux for thirty odd years, to doubt the choice he has made, and fear for the future as a result of that.

MOL: With good reason, as it turns out.

JM: Absolutely. So we were able to kind of underline that with a very simple gesture. The great figurehead, the monarch of this world, from standing proud, strong, defiant, *sat*. And Malcolm rather brilliantly becomes not king but—father. Vulnerable father.

MOL: What made you personally choose to do *Life Is a Dream*?

JM: One chooses a play for a number of reasons. One of those is purely an instinctual thing. You'll read a dramatic moment in a piece, or an idea, that resonates so deeply with you that you know you have to stage it, to produce it. The confrontation between father and son, I knew, instinctively, would be thrilling theatrically. And I knew if we could get the rest of their world right, and feed that moment, and make sure the audience was absolutely invested

in these people, as real people in a real situation, the moment that father met that son for the first time, it could be explosive and thrilling. It's for those moments that you choose a play like that. So, therefore, you have to make sure the rest of the evening feeds that moment. A play like *Life Is a Dream* really responds to who you are in a particular time in your life. All our work, to a certain extent, we can only work creatively and respond to the play in terms of who we are at that point. But, because of the questions that *Life Is a Dream* asks, the philosophical debate, the existential questions, I think it could be a very interesting play to return to at some point in maybe twenty years' time. It might be a very different kind of production I would do.

MOL: Can you talk a little bit about attracting audiences to the Spanish *comedia*?

JM: It's difficult to do and it's why we don't see these plays often. They need the support of the subsidized theater to get produced, because they need translating, because they need very careful marketing, because they need to be performed in theaters where there is already a core audience. One of the thrilling things about *Life Is a Dream*, and this only occurred because of the cast we had and the reviews that we got, we got an offer to take it into the West End. And it couldn't happen because of the non-availability of the actors. But how

thrilling that a Calderón drama could play in a commercial context! Extraordinary. I so wish that could have happened. So, we're limited in producing these plays. We're limited by the writers and translators who really understand and "get" these plays and are able to release them for a contemporary audience. And, also, they are not known. They are unknown.

MOL: If this play were written by Cervantes, somehow you'd be more likely to get it produced, but Calderón is less known. Lope is less known.

JM: Absolutely. And in the current economic climate, we are less and less likely as theater makers to take these risks. It's certainly the responsibility of the National Theatre and the Royal Shakespeare Company, and houses like the Donmar and the Almeida, to keep these plays in the repertoire.

MOL: Thank you so much.

JM: A pleasure.

Notes

¹ Edmundson has published her verse adaptation of Calderón's masterpiece (*Life Is a Dream*, Nick Hern Books, 2009).

² Lottman, Maryrica Ortiz. "*Life Is a Dream*. By Calderón de la Barca. Dir. Jonathan Munby. Donmar Warehouse, London." *Comedia Performance* 7.1 (2010): 301-306.

³ *Desastres de la guerra* 7 "¡Qué coraje!"

Theater Reviews

THE SINS OF SOR JUANA. BY KAREN ZACARÍAS. DIR. HENRY GODINEZ. THE GOODMAN THEATER, CHICAGO. JUNE 19-JULY 25 2010.

KRISTIN CONNOR

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For several decades the figure of Sor Juana has enjoyed a resurgence in the academic world and in popular culture through the film *Yo, la peor de todas*. The play *The Sins of Sor Juana*, by Karen Zacarías, seeks to join both scholarly and popular interests in this enigmatic writer of the seventeenth century. The play dramatizes the life of Sor Juana, from her early life in the court to the controversy surrounding the publication of *La respuesta*. A fictitious love affair is introduced during her time at court, and the play suggests that the tragic death of her lover ultimately led her to join the convent. Through this love affair, and later, her attempts to defend her learning and writing at the convent, we see a young woman struggling to maintain her identity and beliefs in the face of adversity. The play has many merits, including an eye for historical detail,

an excellent cast, and an appreciation for audience expectations. However, certain elements fall flat and detract from the otherwise fine production.

The play is staged on a set that is used to depict both the convent and the court. High arches frame the sides of the stage and a tiled roof reminds the audience of the Spanish cultural setting. In the background, the bell tower of a church can be seen. While props such as a bed, a throne and other furniture are used to depict a location change, one important symbol, Sor Juana's desk, never leaves the stage. It is arranged to resemble the one depicted in her famous portrait, with stacks of books, a quill pen and blank writing paper. A somber tone is set by the dimly lit stage painted in gloomy colors. But throughout the play, dramatic tension is punctuated by bursts of comedy.

The staging and production of the play at the Goodman Theater reflected many conventions of the *comedia*. In the early modern era, the waiting audience was entertained with music and/or dancing, and a *loa* often preceded the main attraction. We see both of these traditional elements in the staging of *The Sins of Sor Juana*. The audience enters the theater to the sounds of a baroque-inspired song. After a humorous request from the "Inquisition" for the audience to refrain from using photography, the stage is darkened and the maid Xochtil performs a kind of *loa* that includes some biographical information about Sor Juana. The modern interpretations of

these traditional staging techniques reflect both a commitment to historical detail as well as recognition of the audience's need for background information.

The characters themselves, especially the squire Pedro and the maid Xochtil, also reveal seventeenth-century tradition. These two characters take on the role of the *gracioso* and his comic love interest. Xochtil is at once an advisor, a friend, a confidant to Sor Juana, but most importantly, she plays a vital role in the young Juana's love life. She exemplifies the typical *comedia* maid who spurs on or inhibits relationships between protagonists.

Other Golden Age conventions employed by the playwright include cross-dressing and the appearance of the *mujer varonil*. At one point in the play, Juana and her love interest, Silvio, find themselves alone in Juana's bedroom. During a comic verbal exchange, they switch costumes with each other. Wearing Juana's red dress, Silvio mocks stereotypical feminine behavior, implicitly referencing the cross-dressing of the *gracioso* Castaño in Sor Juana's *Los empeños de una casa*. In the relevant scene of *Los empeños*, Castaño has donned the heroine's clothes in an attempt to escape the house where he and his master are trapped. He proceeds to mimic stereotypically feminine behavior, coquettishly speaking of his beauty. In the parallel scene in *The Sins of Sor Juana*, and elsewhere in the same

play, Silvio takes on the role of the *gracioso*, but ultimately he is the *galán*.

Meanwhile, the young Juana wears Silvio's leather jacket, and her undergarments resemble a man's pantaloons. Silvio and the young Juana play at their crossed gender roles; he curtsies to her while she bows to him. What is interesting about this particular Golden Age convention is that the effects are just as titillating to a contemporary audience. The possible homoeroticism of the cross-dressing underscores a sexual tension prevalent during the entire play. Indeed, although well covered by a very old-fashioned nightdress, the young Juana is in night dress nonetheless and standing before her bed, sexualizing even further an erotic scene.

But more than dressing like a man, the young Juana manifests characteristics of the *mujer varonil*. She most resembles the *mujer varonil* type of the scholar or career woman. However, in her dialogue with other characters and especially in her assertiveness, perhaps even aggressiveness, with her love interest, Silvio, the young Juana steps outside this realm of the *mujer varonil*. Her characterization at this point becomes too contemporary to remain historically accurate with representation of women on the stage of the seventeenth century. For example, her relationship with the vicereine has both implicit and explicit lesbian references. Whereas in the seventeenth century women on stage sometimes did fall in love with one another, it was often the case of

mistaken identity because one of the two women was disguised in male clothing, and the lesbian relationship was not taken as seriously as we see it presented in *The Sins of Sor Juana*.

Indeed, there are several elements that play to the contemporary audience. As mentioned above, the first and foremost of these elements is the very overt sexualization of Juana. While quoting love poems, the character speaks of kisses, breasts, lips, etc. The implied lesbianism of Juana in her relationship with the vicereine, represented by two different kisses on the lips between the two women electrifies the sexual undercurrent of her character. The reaction of the vicereine to these kisses ranges from shock to pleasure. We also see the treatment of such a relationship between the two women in the film *Yo, la peor de todas*, which implies a possible lesbian relationship, most notably in the scene when the vicereine takes off Sor Juana's habit to let down her hair. It is interesting to note that the play also incorporates a similar scene, sexualizing Juana and implying an erotic relationship between the two women.

Silvio's character expresses a common early modern theme, the question of whether virtue is granted by birth or by action. Silvio declares that men should be judged by the "nobility of our actions not our ancestry." However, this is perhaps the only Golden Age convention that Silvio brings to the stage. His characterization relies on a modern

day cowboy-inspired swagger. His clothes are a mix of different time periods. His name is a pastoral one, not that of a cowboy or *pícaro*, and for scholars of the Golden Age, the contrast between his name and his behavior is very comic. The actor's gestures also seem very contemporary; the over exaggerated swaying of the arms, the cowboy swagger, the wide shuffling step he uses portray the character like a Dirty Harry rather than a noble from the seventeenth century. However, Silvio's representation is the only overtly modern interpretation of the characters in this way.

The representation of Sor Juana in this play is more than sympathetic, it is idealistic; modern day feminist overtones of the play place Sor Juana in a pantheon of other female role models. Such a figure should be recognized as a positive role model, with her inclination for learning and her desire to stay true to herself despite pressure to betray her beliefs. The Sor Juana of this play is a strong woman. However, the idea that such a determined individual would find their demise in an obsessive love slightly discredits such an interpretation. Not to mention, the over sexualization of the character further takes away from her status as a feminist role model. However, refusing to reduce Sor Juana to a caricature of herself and instead portraying her as an individual is perhaps the most feminist and inspiring aspect of her character.

That being said, Sor Juana's feminism exceeds that of the seventeenth century. Indeed, other than the historical Sor Juana's defense of women's right to education, there is little to no evidence to support the idea that Sor Juana was a feminist in the modern sense of the term. One of the most controversial interpretations of Sor Juana's lines on stage is her declaration of her faith in God. Her declaration to Padre Nuñez during one of the opening scenes, "I love the Lord," comes out hollow and empty sounding. The audience is left to question whether Juana does believe in God and why she has become a nun. Her blasphemies throughout the play seem to discredit her commitment to religion. In the seventeenth century, such thoughts, if thought at all, were not expressed. Furthermore, there is absolutely no evidence that suggests that Sor Juana was not a devoted Christian. Her declarations of women's right to education was not unique and did not necessarily go against accepted Church doctrine, as can be seen in such a pious example as Saint Theresa. If anything, the evidence supports Sor Juana's devotion, when she gave up her writing, for whatever reason, and dedicated her remaining years to the convent. And Octavio Paz asserts that her knowledge was more theological than philosophical.

However, such attempts to keep traditional themes and staging interesting and engaging to a contemporary audience are what made the performance possible at the Goodman Theater as opposed

to remaining at highly specialized academic theaters. The popularization of Sor Juana poses many problems dealing with historical accuracy, modern day interpretation as well as the ever evolving theater. But the play *The Sins of Sor Juana* sought to unite scholarly historical consciousness of the seventeenth century stage alongside contemporary audience expectation, and in many ways succeeded. The merits of this play far outweigh the oversights in over-contemporizing of certain elements, such as Silvio's characterization. However, the play is equally entertaining and enjoyable for an audience unfamiliar with such historical omnipresence. Overall, it is a valid attempt to recreate the flavor of a seventeenth century *comedia* from the point of view and consumption of a contemporary audience.

***THE SINS OF SOR JUANA.* BY KAREN ZACARÍAS. DIRECTED BY HENRY GODINEZ. LOOSELY INSPIRED BY THE LIFE AND WORKS OF THE MEXICAN NUN. ARGENTINEAN COMPOSER GUSTAVO LEONE'S BACKGROUND MUSIC INFLUENCED BY THE BAROQUE MASS AND GREGORIAN CHANTS. PRODUCED BY THE THEATRE AND INTERPRETATION CENTER (TIC) AT NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY. JANUARY 30, 2009 – FEBRUARY 8, 2009. JOSEPHINE LOUIS THEATER. EVANSTON, ILLINOIS. FEBRUARY 8, 2009**

JORGE ABRIL SÁNCHEZ
Wake Forest University

The Theatre and Interpretation Center at Northwestern University exists as an operational component of the School of Communication with the specific charge of producing, managing, funding and administering the artistic creations of the Department of Theater and the Department of Performance Studies. Each year, the TIC opens its doors to offer a new series of forty spectacles—including both classic and contemporary plays—which reflects the academic mission and the curricular needs

of the College. Most of these productions are mounted and directed by faculty, third-year MFA (Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing) directing students, and also guest artists. After winning the National Latino Playwrights' Competition, the TCG/AT&T First Stages Award and the Francesca Primus Award in 2004, 2005 and 2006 respectively, Karen Zacarías made her debut as playwright at the TIC in January/February of 2009.

Premiered at Washington, D.C.'s Theater of the First Amendment in 1999, *The Sins of Sor Juana* might be easily considered a speculative pseudo-biography of Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz (1648/51-1695): a self-taught scholar who chose to enter a convent to pursue intellectual freedom and social equality as a writer, rather than locking herself up as a wife behind the doors of marriage in a traditional household. Prized with the Outstanding New Play at the 2000 Helen Hayes Awards, the action is set in seventeenth-century New Spain, where the Baroque poet lived and composed some of the most beautiful poetry and dramas in the Spanish language. However, the plot and the stories included in the script are far from being completely accurate. Indeed, the author allows herself to be driven by her imagination. Thus, she often blends the known facts of Sor Juana's life with carefully researched moments of fiction. Historical figures share the stage with imagined characters, whose names are often drawn from those used in Sor Juana's poems. Consequently, *The Sins of Sor Juana* gives voice to numerous

silences in the life of a woman trapped by the profession and gender boundaries of her time, and proposes possible solutions to vague passages of her biographical account, such as her much-disputed surrender to the Inquisition and religious authorities at the end of her days. All in all, *The Sins of Sor Juana* is stirring proof that the New Spanish nun did not live in vain.

The play begins with the moment in 1690 when Sor Juana clashed severely with the Church and the bishop of Puebla—Manuel Fernández de Santa Cruz—over the limits of scholarly pursuit and publications by a woman. On stage Sor Juana appears sitting at a table writing the famous *Carta Atenagórica*, in which she analyzes and criticizes a 40-year-old sermon delivered by António Vieira, a prominent Portuguese Jesuit theologian. The play then flashes back to 1665—the time when 17-year-old Juana Inés de Asbaje y Ramírez de Santillana takes holy orders—to show us the forces at work in shaping Juana's decision and fate during her time at the court of Viceroy Antonio Sebastián de Toledo, the Marquis of Mancera. As imagined by Zacarías, the young writer falls in love with a courtesan, a fictional character called Silvio, who is the fortune-seeking bastard son of a noble father, the Marquis of Gorgona. Silvio comes to love her sincerely, but he is embroiled in a plot and counterplot between the viceroy and his wife, both of whom seek to control Juana's destiny for their own personal reasons. While the viceroy roundly opposes the marital un-

ion of Sor Juana with any of her wooers, his spouse seeks to arrange a marriage between the nun and her own uncle, another fabricated figure named don Fabio. The vicereine knows that the novice will not be allowed to spend much time with her at court as a single woman. Karen Zacarías, thus, outlines Sor Juana's relationship with the aristocrat in correlation with the unfounded hypothesis of a lesbian sexual affair between the consort and the poet, once portrayed in María Luisa Bemberg's 1990 movie, *Yo, la peor de todas*. After this episode, the action goes back to the future when Sor Juana discovers in despair that she has been deprived of her private library. This incident is a turning point in the development of the events. Sor Juana decides to run away with Silvio. Unfortunately, Pedro, an invented cousin of the viceroy, finds out their plans and, following the orders of the vicereine, kills Sor Juana's lover. In open revolt, the nun renounces the vicereine's protection and returns to the convent to assume her religious responsibilities. Nevertheless, her final surrender turns out to be problematic. Once left alone in her room, Sor Juana takes a knife and cuts her hand before fainting away exhausted at the end of the performance. This dénouement might be interpreted in two different ways. On the one hand, it could refer to the nun's alleged repentance, in which she renews her vows and signs her confession with her own blood. On the other hand, it could represent an act of rebellion and nonconformism because she would prefer to take control over her

body and commit suicide rather than yielding to what her confessor Antonio Núñez de Miranda and the religious authorities had in mind for her.

In any case, what is beyond all doubt is the scriptwriter's originality and ability to mount a beautiful spectacle with a few noteworthy striking scenes originated in the author's imagination, which remind the audience of the kind of oppression suffered by women in Early Modern Spain. For example, on one occasion, after playing with Sor Juana's clothes, Silvio decides to don the nun's tight corset and dress. In doing so, he experiences the religious woman's painful constriction of her body based on the criteria of physical beauty of the period. Another time, the flamboyant character of Pedro is introduced. He enters the stage *coming out* of a chest located in Sor Juana's room. As a clown, his function is to offer comic relief to the dramatic and traumatic situation experienced by the novice. Thus, despite being effeminate, he assumes a feigned masculinity that would turn him into a prospective match to any lady-in-waiting at court. With this intention in mind, Pedro proposes that Sor Juana lose her virginity by sleeping with him. Sexual intercourse with the courtesan would not only hide Pedro's assumed, unorthodox nature in a heteronormative New Spanish society, but it would also free the nun from any possible marital union, as she would not be eligible to marry honorably once she does not come to matrimony as a virgin. After being rejected, Pedro delights us with one of the funniest

sketches of the play. Left alone in the chamber, the clown begins to rub his testicles with some pillows and to make jerky movements with his hips in bed as if he were sexually penetrating a lover. Juana's authoritarian mentor, Sor Sara, who has come to see if the novice has followed her orders to accept her submissive role and to take respectful chores, interrupts this act of nonsensical self-affirmation.

Pedro's entrance through a chest also speaks volumes to the construction of the stage under the direction of Henry Godinez, Marija Plavsic and Karin Magary. Given the limited size of the building, every square meter was utilized. Pieces of furniture, such as closets, worked as doors. Walls did not separate rooms. Sometimes thin panels or screens bordered areas where the action took place. On another occasion, three rows of columns created the sense and perspective of a church. Even lighting, designed by Samantha Szigeti, was subordinated to this purpose and, when it was necessary, it focused on specific parts of the stage, thus creating mood and atmosphere.

It is fair to say that not every director's decision was successful. In an apparent attempt to make this story more relatable to a modern audience, he gave the entire story a contemporary flair. Thus, Godinez combined bits of slapstick comedy and/or melodrama (when the nun sighed and often cried out loud: "¡Oh, Dios Mío!") with moments in which Sor Juana quoted her own literary works in conversation. In spite of them, these minor flaws did not

prevent the director from achieving his goals. Indeed, this was a passionate and inspirational theatrical interpretation of the life and works of a celebrated female Mexican author, whose literary and social impact unquestionably set the stage for the great feminist movements of the 19th and 20th centuries. Sor Juana went down in history as an irrepressible spirit who fought for justice in a time when freedom of religion and thought was not guaranteed. Thanks to Godinez's mastery and technical decisions, in the afternoon of February 8, 2009, the campus community at Northwestern University and the greater Metropolitan Chicago area enjoyed Karen Zacarías's new account of the life and courageous words of a visionary woman who still continues speaking to us centuries after oppressive powers tried to silence her. Bravo!

LA VIUDA VALENCIANA DE LOPE DE VEGA. DIR. VICENTE GENOVÉS, ADAP. ANTONI TORDERA. COMPAÑÍA DE TEATRES DE LA GENERALITAT VALENCIANA, TEATRO PAVÓN, MADRID. DEL 12 AL 27 DE DICIEMBRE DEL 2009.

ESTHER FERNÁNDEZ
Sarah Lawrence College

La viuda valenciana, escrita alrededor de 1600 y publicada en la XIV parte de sus comedias (1620), pertenece al periodo iniciático del Fénix, caracterizado por un conjunto de obras todas ellas con elementos irreverentes y atrevidos. En la comedia que aquí nos ocupa, su protagonista, Leonarda, una joven viuda adinerada emprende una enrevesada aventura erótica con el objetivo de gozar a un galán, Camilo, de quien se ha encaprichado, sin que ello la comprometa social o personalmente. No es difícil de suponer que las apariencias pasen a ocupar un papel crucial en esta lúdica iniciativa de seducción, como su sobre título deja más que implícito, *La viuda valenciana o el arte de nadar y guardar la ropa*.

Vicente Genovés, director de esta versión, aunque apuesta por una estética de corte clásico con respecto al decorado y al vestuario, no obstante se atreve con la innovación en su propuesta de crear un espectáculo que rompe con la cuarta pared caracterizado por tres iniciativas escénicas que dan un giro original a la comedia. La primera de estas decisiones artísticas es la recreación a modo de “efecto de inmersión” y desde la entrada al patio de butacas de un ambiente típico de los corrales. La segunda es la acentuada ambientación metateatral carnalesca. Y la tercera es la recalcada comicidad que envuelve la obra en un tono de farsa erótica más próximo del entremés que de la comedia.

Pero antes de pasar al análisis y evaluación de estas tres apuestas dramáticas, cabe mencionar una acertada aportación artística que enriquece el conjunto de la versión. Se trata de la inclusión de la Suite para orquesta *La viuda valenciana* (1940) que el compositor soviético Aram Kachaturian escribió basada en la comedia homónima de Lope. A pesar de no pertenecer a un estilo barroco, la recurrente y alegre melodía impregna la obra de una anacrónica elegancia musical que unifica el conjunto de una representación que se extiende más allá de los límites del escenario.

En efecto, nada más entrar al patio de butacas, lo primero que llama la atención al espectador es la presencia de un actor —vestido de negro con un sombrero de ala ancha, un antifaz y una vara— que da la bienvenida a los asistentes e inspira una

sensación de desconcierto entre el público. Antes de que se levante el telón, este “maestro de ceremonias” sube al escenario y da comienzo oficial al carnaval: “¡Que empiece el gran carnaval!”. Una vez comenzada la comedia y más concretamente después del intermedio entre el segundo y el tercer acto, el teatro vuelve a convertirse en un corral de comedias con la representación de una jácara al pie del escenario en la que el público se funde con el espectáculo dando palmas al son de la música.

Aparte de esta transformación del teatro en un patio de comedias, la escena se convierte, justo antes de que dé comienzo la comedia, en una fiesta carnalesca, según nos adelantaba la presencia del “maestro de ceremonias” con su oficial bienvenida a esta festividad. En efecto, una apócrifa coreografía de doce figuras con máscaras representa el ambiente callejero y de desenfreno al ritmo de la suite de *La viuda valenciana*. Aunque la comedia está ambientada originalmente durante los Carnavales de Valencia y por lo tanto las referencias literales y metafóricas a tales fiestas no faltan, esta apertura anticipa la escena quinta del acto primero en la que los tres ridículos pretendientes—Valerio, Otón y Lisandro—llegan con máscaras a la casa de Leonarda con deseos rivales de cortejarla.

Además de recalcar estas dos ambientaciones sociales y festivas—el ambiente de los corrales y el Carnaval—Genovés saca el máximo partido de la comicidad de cada personaje—a través de una caracterización caricaturesca—y de cada escena

hasta el punto de convertir la comedia en una farsa jocosa. El erotismo, por naturaleza sutil, se convierte en esta adaptación en una bufa representación del deseo que provoca una carcajada fácil pero que borra uno de los matices más ricos y sutiles del erotismo presente en el texto original, impidiéndonos una reflexión crítica más profunda.

Después de hacer un balance del conjunto de las aportaciones escénicas del director, cabe concluir que se trata de un intento demasiado forzado y ambicioso el de recrear dos ambientes tan complejos como son el de los patios de comedias y el del Carnaval. La ambientación de los corrales resulta pobre y desconcertante en una sala tan aséptica como es la del madrileño teatro Pavón. Quizás, en otro emplazamiento más íntimo o histórico el efecto podría resultar más natural. Igualmente, es delicado trasladar a la escena un ambiente tan cargado de significado, de riqueza estética y de fiesta dionisiaca como el del Carnaval. A no ser que se opte por un calculado y elegante minimalismo simbólico o un rico despliegue de medios escénicos, un punto medio como por el que opta Genovés resulta en un insípido “quiero y no puedo”. A lo dicho hasta el momento, cabe añadir la exagerada comicidad que, aunque ameniza la trama, la desnuda a su vez de sus matices más complejos, especialmente tratándose de una obra tan única por su arriesgado erotismo.

En definitiva, Genovés con *La viuda valenciana* se ha embarcado en un proyecto que le supera, llevado por el entusiasmo de recrear de modo re-

alista complejas ambientaciones que resultan un tanto pobres en la escena. Más que complementar la comedia, la ficticia recreación metateatral del ambiente de los corrales y del Carnaval y el abuso del humor diluyen la esencia de una trama lo suficientemente única y original que brillaría por sí sola en las tablas sin ningún tipo de parafernalia espectacular añadida.

**LA MOZA DE CÁNTARO DE LOPE DE VEGA.
DIR. EDUARDO VASCO, ADAP. RAFAEL
PÉREZ SIERRA. COMPAÑÍA NACIONAL
DE TEATRO CLÁSICO, TEATRO PAVÓN,
MADRID. DEL 9 DE ABRIL AL 13 DE JUNIO
DEL 2010.**

ESTHER FERNÁNDEZ
Sarah Lawrence College

Después del éxito de *Las bizzarrias de Belisa* (1634) y de *La noche de San Juan* (1631), estrenadas respectivamente en Diciembre del 2008 y Enero del 2009 por la “Joven” Compañía Nacional de Teatro Clásico en Madrid, su actual director, Eduardo Vasco, pone a prueba, una vez más, a un nuevo grupo de jóvenes actores con otra de las comedias más tardías de Lope, *La moza de cántaro* (1632). La trama de la obra aborda las valientes y varoniles peripecias de una dama noble, Doña María, que no duda en matar a uno de sus pretendientes por vengar el honor de su anciano padre. Una vez en la corte, ésta cambia su identidad haciéndose pasar por una moza de cántaro llamada Isabel de quien Don Juan se prende perdidamente y cuyo amor acabará ven-

ciendo los obstáculos de clase gracias a la anagnórisis final.

La acertada puesta en escena que nos ofrece Vasco podría calificarse, a grandes rasgos, de innovadora y original gracias a un minimalismo escénico—un panel de madera vertical, un piano de pared, una tarima con escalera hacia al patio de butacas componen el decorado de este montaje—que el director manipula con fineza y maestría con el propósito de resaltar la palabra a través de toda una serie de recursos escénicos metafóricos muy sugerentes.

El vestuario, creado por Lorenzo Caprile, sigue esta misión artística por su sencillez y codificación de colores básicos con respecto a los trajes de las dos damas rivales, Doña Ana y Doña María. Cada una luce una serie de tres vestidos en rojo y azul respectivamente, indicando la dualidad entre ambas y simbolizando la naturaleza de cada personaje. Mientras que Doña Ana es un personaje esquizoide que no deja de expresar su insatisfacción y sus incontrolables deseos por Don Juan; Doña María, por el contrario, acepta su fortuna y en todo momento se muestra en armonía con su entorno y su desplazado estado de moza de cántaro.

Otra de las decisiones escénicas que merece analizarse es el simbolismo recurrente de la venda en los ojos que llevan los actores y que aparece en cuatro ocasiones distintas a lo largo de la representación. Se trata, por supuesto, de un aporte apócrifo del director con el que enmarca la función de principio a fin. Antes de que se declamen los primeros

versos de la comedia, la totalidad del elenco, con los ojos vendados y en silencio, se presenta ante el público en una fila horizontal que cubre la totalidad del escenario de derecha a izquierda. Uno a uno se va quitando la venda y eligiendo a una pareja de la fila, colocándose, acto seguido, alrededor del piano. Esta misma fila de todos los intérpretes con los ojos vendados se repite al concluirse la comedia, justo antes de los aplausos. Además, en otras dos ocasiones, tanto las criadas como Doña María/Isabel salen con una venda en los ojos. Este recurrente recurso metafórico enfatiza, de manera visual el mensaje latente de la obra; la naturaleza ciega del amor verdadero, ajeno a normas e imposiciones sociales.

La tercera apuesta escénica con la que nos sorprende Vasco es el uso del coro y de la constante coreografía de grupo para subrayar aquellos parlamentos claves o más llamativos de la obra. En este sentido, una de las escenas que más se destaca es la narración del padre de Doña María, Don Bernardo, sobre su pérdida del honor. Vasco opta por sustituir al personaje paterno por el conjunto de actores masculinos que forman el reparto, quiénes, formando un semicírculo, declaman a diferentes voces la historia de la infamia, cercando progresivamente a la protagonista, la cual yace en el suelo desesperada mientras escucha el recuento de los desafortunados sucesos. Esta polifonía de voces y la presencia de una multitud de cuerpos en un escenario iluminado por una luz tenue elevan el dramatismo del parlamento

a su punto culminante. Paralelamente, Vasco utiliza la coreografía de grupo y el recurso del coro en dos parlamentos más, humanizando, así, las largas tiradas de versos y enfatizando su mensaje principal.

El acompañamiento musical del piano juega también un papel esencial a lo largo de la representación, marcando el tono de gran parte de las intervenciones de los personajes y de sus gestos, especialmente, en aquellas escenas cómicas, donde la gestualidad exagerada de sus intérpretes nos puede llegar a recordar a una película muda.

La comicidad que paulatinamente va tejendo Vasco en su puesta en escena es otro de los mecanismos que aportan originalidad e innovación interpretativa al conjunto de la representación. Aunque el director no pierde de vista las humorísticas intervenciones de los graciosos, convierte en irrisorios seres caricaturescos a Doña Ana, el Conde y el indiano. Esta red cómica que se extiende desde los criados a los personajes de más alcurnia sirve para destacar la nobleza de la pareja central de protagonistas, Doña María y Don Juan y su insigne causa: la victoria del amor verdadero frente a las leyes sociales.

Cabe concluir la presente reseña apuntando cómo cada uno de los recursos previamente analizados se funden entre sí formando una puesta en escena rica en significado y sólidamente unificada, donde cada una de las decisiones artísticas y escénicas tiene una poderosa razón de ser. En definitiva, la versión que propone Vasco de *La moza* es una

crítica reflexiva del texto de Lope que obliga al espectador a cuestionar e interpretar lo que ve en el escenario. El elemento implícito y sugestivo con que el director recubre el texto original de Lope en la escena problematiza y enriquece esta maravillosa obra de principio a fin.

**EL ALCALDE DE ZALAMEA, DE PEDRO
CALDERÓN DE LA BARCA. VERSIÓN Y
DIRECCIÓN, DE EDUARDO VASCO. COM-
PAÑÍA NACIONAL DE TEATRO CLÁSICO.
TEATRO PAVÓN DE MADRID, ESPAÑA.
(SEPTIEMBRE 30, 2010)**

FRANCISCO J. MARTIN
California State University San Marcos

Arranca la temporada de teatro este otoño en el legendario Teatro Pavón de Madrid, sede temporal de la Compañía Nacional de Teatro Clásico (CNTC) mientras se efectúan reformas en el edificio que tradicionalmente alberga su Teatro de la Comedia, con el estreno de *El alcalde de Zalamea*, el clásico drama de honor de Calderón, cuya realización corre a cargo de Eduardo Vasco. Ésta es la tercera ocasión en que la CNTC lleva a escena — antes lo había hecho en 1988, bajo la dirección de José Luis Alonso Mañes, y en el año 2000, en coproducción con el Teatre Nacional de Catalunya, dirigida por Sergi Belbel— la obra maestra del gran dramaturgo del Siglo de Oro español.

Esta puesta en escena de Vasco, de escenografía parca y austera, pero en la que se ostenta un

vestuario de época rico y vistoso, si contenida y medida en los calculadamente ponderados efectos de iluminación, es a la vez clásica y moderna. Éste es el patrón que se sigue en toda la producción. En este sentido, se nos presenta el drama entero en una serie de cuadros escénicos que se suceden sin interrupción, informados siempre por un juego de contrastes y dualidades, de luces y sombras, del claroscuro que nos hace recordar en todo momento las corrientes artísticas en boga en tiempos del dramaturgo. Así, mientras el majestuoso escenario aparece revestido, en toda su amplitud, en sobrio cortinaje oscuro, si profuso en tupidos pliegues y volantes superiores; el llamativo vestuario, tan fiel al reflejo de la moda y costumbres de la época —de ahí el triunfo que alcanzara la comedia entre sus contemporáneos— que los personajes parecen haber saltado al escenario de alguno de los cuadros de un Velázquez o un Murillo, se exhibe en marcado contraste con aquél. El efecto que se consigue viene a ser distintivamente vigoroso y singularmente fascinante a la hora de crear una fidedigna atmósfera del tiempo en que se ubica la obra. Como consecuencia, la naturaleza multidimensional del carácter de personajes centrales como Pedro Crespo, don Lope de Figueroa, Isabel, o el capitán don Álvaro de Ataide, puede desplegarse mejor a su aire y desarrollarse con la fluidez y naturalidad que el genio dramático de Calderón originalmente las infundiera. Es ésta una de las razones más poderosas por las que hoy nos identificamos más y mejor con *El al-*

calde de Zalamea en esta versión en la que Vasco propone ofrecernos un Calderón que, en sus propias palabras, “es un hombre de su tiempo, pero escribe para el nuestro.”

El escenario, auténtica ‘caja negra’ en una línea que nos recordaría la configuración de un “Black Box Theater,” se nos presenta impresionante en la ascética integridad de su espacio, si bien forrado en oscuras cortinas, cuya riqueza de pliegues y discreción de tonos recuerdan tanto el estilo recargado de la época del autor, como la atmósfera y color preferidos de un Felipe II que habrá de presidir la conclusión de la obra, y significativamente avalar la determinación y proceder de Pedro Crespo. En conjunción con esta presentación de un set escénico contenido y minimalista, no hay plataformas, ni decorados de ningún tipo, en consonancia con la austeridad del ambiente en que se desarrolla el drama, como tampoco se presentan, en la misma línea, interludios de ninguna clase. Únicamente, en contados pasajes específicos de la obra, aparecerán en el fondo del escenario una mampara cuadrada de color oscuro indefinido y de la altura limitada de un interior habitado o del muro de una calle, para las escenas que suceden cerca de, o en la casa y desván de Pedro Crespo; y unas franjas rectilíneas verticales de escaso grosor, de la portentosa altura desnuda del escenario, hábil y elegantemente montadas en los pliegues del cortinaje de fondo a través de efectos luminosos, que sugerirían estilizados troncos de árboles, para las escenas de monte y bosque. Al pie

del cortinaje, y a cada uno de los lados del escenario, se extiende una hilera de sillas sencillas, que también podrían ser de época. Al comenzar la representación, y coincidiendo con la primera escena, en la que en marcha militar magníficamente coreografiada y acompañada al canto por todos los representantes avanzan hacia el frente dos columnas de soldados, toman asiento en ellas —metapúblico espectador a su vez— los actores que habrán de actuar llegado su turno, como en la vida misma —“Life’s but... a poor player / that struts and frets his hour upon the stage,” que definía Macbeth—, también en congruencia con el carácter simbólico y filosófico que informa aquel tiempo, y lo que tradicionalmente se ha dado en llamar el ‘segundo estilo’ dramático de Calderón. La última silla, hacia el fondo, de cada una de las dos filas está ocupada por los intérpretes de una caja de percusión y de una viola de Gamba respectivamente, únicos instrumentos, aparte de las voces de los actores —que a coro salen entonando la alegre y jubilosa jácara que da comienzo y pie a la obra—, que proveen el acompañamiento musical a lo largo de la representación, muy al gusto de la época y de los espectáculos palaciegos de Calderón en particular.

Los personajes, enmarcados en “una perfecta estructura,” como afirma Vasco, “fruto del talento del gran arquitecto dramático de nuestro Siglo de Oro,” en, posiblemente, la obra cumbre del teatro clásico español, despliegan la rica complejidad de sus respectivas personalidades en eficientes duali-

dades que a la vez se contrastan entre sí, crecen, se desarrollan, se funden en casos, y se complementan. Tenemos así las parejas que conforman Rebolledo y La Chispa, Don Mendo y Nuño, Isabel e Inés, Don Álvaro de Ataide y su sargento, y sobre todo la magistralmente lograda de Pedro Crespo y Don Lope de Figueroa. A este efecto, Vasco hace alarde de sus excelentes dotes como director cuando demuestra que sabe explotar al máximo las cualidades histriónicas de un elenco de primer orden.

A la cabeza, Joaquín Notario es Pedro Crespo, y a la vez que hace gala de la más extensa gama de emociones que la compleja figura del alcalde requiere, sabe, con excepcional maestría, meterse de lleno en el personaje. Particularmente eficaz es el uso que hace lo mismo de su imponente y perfectamente caracterizada presencia física, que de los variados registros de voz y ritmo en la dicción que confiere al Pedro Crespo que encarna. El despliegue de sus excelentes cualidades de interpretación se hace especialmente evidente tanto en los incomparables enfrentamientos y discusiones que sostiene con su antagonista por excelencia, el insigne general don Lope de Figueroa, en cuyos mejores momentos aflora el grandioso y emblemático forcejeo de la arrogancia y el desabrimiento; como en los episodios sublimes de ternura paternal y dimensión humana, cuando desgarrado ante las condiciones críticas de su hija Isabel en los instantes más trágicos de su existencia, despidiéndose de su hijo Juan que abandona la casa para alistarse en el ejército, o

simplemente tomando el fresco apaciblemente en la calle.



José Luis Santos es sensacional en el papel del egregio Don Lope de Figueroa como contrapartida calculadamente balanceada de la figura grandiosa del porfiado alcalde. La química existente entre ambos intérpretes es incuestionable, y denota un acoplamiento excepcional entre los dos actores. Lleg a su máximo esplendor en momentos cumbres de la representación, y son particularmente magistrales el sincronismo y ritmo con que entablan sus debates y altercados. El porte físico de Santos, admirablemente complementado por el vestuario de que hace gala, está igualmente adaptado a la perfección para ofrecernos la clásica figura del digno oponente de Pedro Crespo. Queda decidida y eminente-

temente destacado este tándem de lujo, que se constituye con excelencia en uno de los obligados ejes fundamentales de la obra, sobre el que ha de descansar el monumento prominente de la personalidad del alcalde de Zalamea.

Este acoplamiento es también evidente en los casos de las otras parejas en las que se conforma la estructura maestra de este drama clásico. Es de destacar, en este sentido, el otro tándem constituido por Rebolledo y La Chispa, que por momentos parece que pueden robarse el espectáculo. David Lorrente y Pepa Pedroche saben conferir al drama esa atmósfera festiva, ese trazo cómico y apicarado indispensable que dan pie y alivio a la gravedad del asunto que se desarrolla en la obra. Pepa Pedroche es magistral en la vivacidad y ritmo que confiere a la escena, incluidos sus impuestos apartes.

Éste es el caso, así mismo, de la pareja formada por Miguel Cubero como Don Mendo, y Alejandro Saá como Nuño, su criado, que proveen el respiro humorístico, si partiendo de otras premisas sociales, tan diestramente interpretado en la figura trasnochada del ridículo Don Mendo, y la agudeza de la figura apicarada de Nuño. Tan conseguidos están los trazos de sus retratos que genuinamente arrancan la risa del espectador en el caso del pomposo y ridículo hidalgo, y hasta la compasión, en medio de la carcajada, en el caso del pobre criado. La atención al detalle es extremada. Está particularmente logrado, en este sentido, el cuadro que presenta a amo y criado dialogando, al tiempo que éste,

muerto de hambre como es de esperar estando al servicio del típico hidalgo empobrecido, ávidamente recoge del suelo y se lleva a la boca unas migajas de pan que han caído de la pechera del jubón de su amo que poco antes había rociado para aparentar que había comido.



Las actuaciones de Eva Rufo en el papel de Isabel, y de Ernesto Arias en el del capitán Don Álvaro de Ataide son de igual forma dignas de subrayar, si bien hemos de irnos hasta los momentos cumbres del lamento y soliloquio de aquella tras haber sido ultrajada por el capitán, y el enfrentamiento de éste con su superior en el que su vida está en juego, para encontrar interpretaciones de la altura emotiva que el conmovedor y desgarrado dramatismo de las respectivas escenas solicita.

Pedro Almagro es sensacional en el papel del sargento compañero de fatigas, amigo y confidente del capitán, listo en todo momento para celebrar las bravuconadas de su superior. Especial mención así mismo se ha de hacer de David Boceta que con destreza y energía encarna a Juan, el apasionado e impulsivo hijo del alcalde, en momentos fundamentales para la delineación del carácter de Pedro Crespo como padre y como patriota. Isabel Santos, en paralelo con lo que es el sargento al capitán, es Inés, prima, amiga y confidente de Isabel. El papel, si definitivamente secundario, lo hace interesante y sugestivo.

La interpretación impecable de la música, que en una obra de Calderón —autor del libreto de la más antigua ópera española conocida, y de dos piezas musicales— no podía faltar, corre a cargo de Eduardo Aguirre de Cárcer, para la percusión, y de Alba Fresno, para la viola de Gamba y los acertados arreglos, junto con Eduardo Aguirre y el propio Vasco, de las canciones que se interpretan a lo largo de la representación, y de la Tombeau y Sarabanda de Mr. De Sainte Colombe le fils.

No puede faltar aquí la mención igualmente destacada tanto de Carolina González, por su aportación indispensable de una escenografía perfectamente adaptada a un drama en el que siendo barroco se consiguen a la vez los efectos de una puesta en escena para el siglo presente; como de Miguel Ángel Camacho, por unos efectos de iluminación

intachablemente calibrados con las exigencias de la clásica/moderna escenografía mencionada.

En la presente versión de *El alcalde de Zalamea*, Eduardo Vasco y la CNTC nos ofrecen un clásico perfectamente adaptado a un marco moderno, sin perder el virtuosismo y la maestría de la dramaturgia y el verso característicos de un Calderón que, de la mano de un magnífico reparto y unas interpretaciones espectaculares, encuentra cabida en el ámbito emocional del espectador del siglo XXI.

***EL ESCLAVO DEL DEMONIO* BY MIRA DE
AMESCUA. DIR. ÁNGEL OJEA. LA MÁQUI-
NA REAL. CORRAL DE COMEDIAS, AL-
MAGRO. JULY 18, 2010 (RUN 17-18 JULY
2010)**

ELIZABETH M. PETERSEN
Florida Atlantic University

In the dead heat of summer the sun beat down on La Mancha, threatening to melt the brain of anyone who dared to venture into the streets. During the sultry hours of the midday heat, Almagro seemed like a ghost town. However once the sun set, Plaza Mayor came to life with theater lovers, young and old, who came to partake in the *Festival de Teatro Clásico de Almagro* 2010. One of the most popular *comedias* of seventeenth century Spain and one that consistently filled the seats in Madrid's *corrales* demonstrated its appeal to today's audience in Julián G. León's adaptation of Mira de Amescua's *El esclavo del Demonio*. Under the coolness of the moonlit skies, spectators lined up outside of the *Corral de Comedias* to attend the puppet production by theater company *La Máquina Real*.



Silvia Rodríguez, music director, left, and Beatriz de la Banda, far left, in *El esclavo del Demonio*.

Under the direction of Ángel Ojea, the cast of *El esclavo del Demonio*, Maribel Bayona, Raúl Esquinas, Sergio Martínez, Raquel Racionero, and Adrián Torreo, transported us to the *corrales* of Spain where marionettes played an important role in the entertainment arena. Audience members, both children and adults alike, smiled and laughed with delight when the puppets performed acrobatic movements of dance and fights, and expressed surprise when firecrackers popped and flames suddenly sprang onto the stage. The music, under the direction of Silvia Rodríguez, played an intrinsic role in enhancing the *comedia*'s festive and dramatic moments, adding an empirical element from the period to today's theater experience. From the second level

balcony the two musicians, Rodríguez and Beatriz de la Banda, guided the emotional tone of the play with music and sounds from their instruments, Renaissance flutes and a Baroque guitar.

The stage, beautifully designed by Jesús Caballero, displayed a multi-leveled portrait of a seventeenth century Spanish veranda. With a switch of lights, the shapes and colors of the stage seamlessly changed moods from vibrant to eerie to portray daytime and nighttime scenes. However, the stage was partially obstructed by the dark wooden frame that bordered it, and unfortunately for those of us sitting in the *aposentos* (balconies on the second and third floors located on each side of the stage), some of the critical moments of the play, such as the balcony scene in Act I with Don Diego and Lisarda and again with Don Gil and Lisarda, were visually lost. Yet, even though the façade obstructed our view of one side of the stage, those of us sitting in the *aposentos* were given a unique glimpse of events happening behind the scenes.

The performance behind the performance was just as fascinating as the puppet show itself. Actors moved with agility and fluidity through, around, under and above the set pieces, often times crossing arms and legs as they brought the show to life. From our seats above, we witnessed the acrobatic movements required from the actors as they manipulated the puppets from underneath one of the platforms. In Act I Scene 2, for example, Domingo, Diego's lackey, entered from stage left to hand Di-

ego a note. However, what most audience members who sat in the *patio de los mosqueteros* (the main floor) and in the *cazuelas* (balconies facing the stage) could not see were the movements required by the actors in order to position themselves for the next scene. The space in which the marionettes moved was too narrow for the actors to cross each other, therefore, they had to take turns holding and moving each puppet as they carefully maneuvered their own bodies under the platforms and around the posts that held the platforms. They accomplished these actions while staying in character; an incredible feat by any standards.

Actors also dealt with typical backstage mishaps with uncanny calmness yet highly animated expressions. For example, Scene 2 of Act III called for the entrance of two slaves. Instead, only one marionette appeared, reciting the lines for both roles. Apparently, though not so apparent to most of the audience, the wooden pole that held one of the puppets broke, leaving the actor with only one marionette for the role of the two slaves. Those of us in the side balconies had a birds' eye view of the incident occurring behind the scenes. It was amazing as well as entertaining to witness the actor move the puppet through the scene as she, with a look of surprise, displayed the broken stick to another actor across the stage. Like a ventriloquist, she managed to inform her fellow actor about the damaged puppet while never missing a beat in her character's

performance as she engaged in dialogue with the character Don Gil.

These and other off-stage ‘happenings’ enhanced the theater experience for those of us in the *aposenos*. It was interesting and educational, to say the least, to watch the actors’ movements on and off stage. Their command of the puppets and their performances were extraordinary. The audience responded with pleasure at the ease with which the well-crafted puppets interacted, giving the actors and musicians a well-deserved standing ovation.

***EL CABALLERO DE OLMEDO* [THE KNIGHT FROM OLMEDO] BY LOPE DE VEGA. DIR. JOSÉ LUIS ARELLANO GARCÍA. GALA HISPANIC THEATRE, WASHINGTON, D.C. AND ACCIÓN SUR FROM SPAIN. OCTOBER 2, 2010 (RUN SEPTEMBER 16, 2010 - OCTOBER 17, 2010)**

ELIZABETH M. PETERSEN
Florida Atlantic University

In celebration of their 35th season and in recognition of Hispanic Heritage Month, GALA Hispanic Theatre, in co-production with the Spanish company Acción Sur, presented *El caballero de Olmedo* by Lope de Vega in Washington, D.C. and plan to present it in Spain in 2011. Director José Luis Arellano García, a native of Spain, took advantage of the collaboration by pulling together a team of actors, designers, and production personnel from Madrid, the Americas, and GALA's company to develop a modern, transatlantic version of the *comedia*.

During the development process, GALA company members traveled to Madrid to train and rehearse with members of Acción Sur. The director and cast members worked closely with writers and

designers to develop a rich and modern work of Golden Age Spanish Theater. Arellano García chose to focus on the physicality of the play as a vehicle for highlighting the action imbedded on a linguistic level by Lope. In the playbill, the director comments that his goal is to “find the beast in each character: [...] to convert this animal instinct into the theatrical, and to communicate through the cast the action that runs through Lope’s text, highlighting its lyricism.” Through physical action, the actors convey the struggle and resistance, the logical and illogical, and the reality and illusion often found in Lope’s plays. Juan Caballero, who wonderfully plays the young man Alonso in love with Inés (Emme Bonilla), moves about the stage gracefully, with natural ease and fluidity. In his opening soliloquy in which he declares his love for Inés, Caballero tears off his shirt and hurls himself on the ground, reminiscent of a *torero* in a bull ring. His interaction with his sidekick Tello (Pedro Martín) and the *alcahueta* Fabia (nicely portrayed by Monalisa Arias) is playful and entertaining.



Pedro Martín and Monalisa Arias perform in *El caballero de Olmedo* by Lope de Vega at GALA Hispanic Theatre

In the seduction scenes between Fabia and Tello, Martín's forced and contrived movements are far from convincing, losing its comedic effect. However, he is comical as Inés's Latin tutor and his performance is chilling as the anguished servant in the final scene of the play. Unfortunately, Bonilla's (Inés) motionless reaction to the announcement of her character's lover's death robs the audience of its cathartic moment. Rodrigo, on the other hand, an angry young man and the mastermind behind Alonso's death, is marvelously played by Jerry Nelson Soto. He maintains great balance on the delicate tight wire of jealousy and anger as his character's rage against his rival Alonso increases, slowing down only when his character reaches his breaking point.



From left to right: Pedro Martín and Jerry Nelson Soto perform in *El caballero de Olmedo* by Lope de Vega at GALA Hispanic Theatre

There are times in which the delivery of the lines between characters seems forced and choppy. In a scene from Act III where Alonso and Inés move up and down a steel frame that represents the iron-railed window to Inés's bedroom, the actors' movements are too choreographed, too rigid. As still-pictures, each frame is a work of art; however, the abrupt movements from one frame to the next brake the natural flow of the dialogue. Even so, Arellano García's strength as a choreographer compliments the poetic rhythm of the play, outshining those awkward moments.



Emme Bonilla and Juan Caballero perform in *El caballero de Olmedo* by Lope de Vega at GALA Hispanic Theatre

Set designer José Luis Raymond creates a metaphorical bull ring; an open space framed with horizontal metal beams that accommodate Arellano García's choreography. The gymnasium bars serve as a backdrop where scenes behind the scenes occur. Unlike the painted backdrops of the *corrales* where the actors were normally heard and not 'seen,' these ladders—adorned with actors who deliver their lines behind, beneath, and in-between the horizontal posts, like acrobats at a medieval fair—allow the audience to 'peek' behind the scenes. Sand, covering the stage floor, however, adds to the actors' risk of slipping and falling: a choice that at times lessens the impact of the contrasting spiritual and physical elements that unite the play. The pace in the sword fight between Alonso and Rodrigo, for example, is slow and mechanical in contrast to the kinetic energy of the show. Notwithstanding, the isolated feel of the sand and the warmth from the wooden floor planks contrast well with the coldness of the metal beams, adding to the eeriness of the *comedia's* tragic story.

Mar Zubieta and Francisco Rojas render a beautiful adaptation of Lope's *El caballero de Olmedo*, and Dawn Smith's English translation, shown by way of surtitles on ceiling-suspended monitors, captures Lope's lyrical language and energy. Music composed and selected by David Rodríguez Peralto is pertinent to the rising action of the play. Especially memorable is the scene in which the peasant (Sebastian R. Delta) sings a *seguidilla*, forewarning

Alonso of his death; turning the mood dark and solemn. In the following scenes, the baroque *vihuela* accompanied by percussion enhance the dramatic climax, accelerating the action like that of bulls. By creating a night of power and passion in this modern production of *El caballero de Olmedo*, Arellano García and his cast of actors and musicians succeed in their wish to take their audience on a journey from Media to Olmedo, “melding the world of illusion with reality, fantasy and lyricism, history and drama.”

Book Reviews

Braga Riera, Jorge. *Classical Spanish Drama in Restoration English (1660-1700)*. Benjamins Translation Library. Volume 85. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Co., 2009. Hardcover. 330pp. \$149

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Jorge Braga Riera's study undertakes a highly contextualized and descriptive analysis of the translations of the five Spanish *comedias* (with surviving English adaptations) that were translated from the original text and performed on the stage in London during the four decades post-Cromwell. This closed group are: Samuel Tuke's *The Adventures of Five Hours* (first published and first performed in 1663), an adaptation of Antonio Coello's *Los empeños de seis horas*; George Digby's *Elvira, or The Worst Not Always True* (1667, 1664), based on Calderón's *No siempre lo peor es cierto*; Sir Thomas Sydserf's *Tarugo's Wiles, or The Coffee-House* (1668, 1667) from Agustín Moreto's *No puede ser guardar una mujer*; John Dryden's *An Evening's Love, or The Mock Astrologer* (1671, 1668), based on Calderón's *El astrólogo fingido*;

and John Crowne's translation of the Moreto play, *Sir Courtly Nice, or It Cannot Be* (1685, 1685).

Braga Riera divides this book into two necessary parts. Part I establishes the background for the ensuing critical analysis. In Chapter One he treats theatre translation as a genre, providing a succinct overview of the translation of dramatic works from the strictly linguistic theories of the 1960s and 1970s, the culturally-oriented theory of the eighties, through the current ones that address the necessary concepts of bilingualism and biculturalism, the visibility of the translator in the decisions made to adapt the original to the specific target audience, and whether the translation was intended for subsequent performance. Acutely aware that the *theatre translation* (i.e., for performance), on which his study is based, can never duplicate the text as performed, Braga Riera continues his detailed review of translation theory scholars and the key areas of linguistic and extralinguistic factors and phenomena relevant to the singularities of theatre translation. He concludes with a careful examination of the bicultural terminology in both languages—"recreación," "refundición," "transliteración," "refraction," "manipulation," and "plagiarism," etc.—to define his own use of "translation," "adaptation," and "version."

Chapter Two centers on the historical and cultural concepts of 17th-century English drama translation theory, its practitioners, and the London

theatres from their Jacobean heritage and the Elizabethan era through 1700. Referencing earlier historians and literary scholars (Hume, Schevil, Pane, Loftis, et. al.), he documents the early English comedies with Spanish dramatic sources and the significant influence of Spanish theatre in Germany, France, and the Low Countries. The author quickly establishes the social, religious and political factors surrounding the lack of influence of the Spanish *comedia* until the Restoration period of the return from exile of Charles II and his promotion of the Spanish comedy in England. While quantitatively small, Braga Riera underscores the qualitative importance of the Spanish theatrical works on the English stage: the largest *corpus* of translations to English to date.

Part Two of his book begins by noting the relative trouble in identifying the Spanish *Siglo de Oro* dramatic sources, as he summarizes in detail the conclusions of numerous modern literary scholars. He identifies the courtier dramatists who turned to the *comedia*, 17th-century English poets and scholars with large holdings of Spanish works, and the five English translators in question, three of whom accompanied Charles II into exile. Using numerous examples throughout, he continues with his analysis of the transfer through a comprehensive comparative study of the titles, plots and characters of the five works, and the external structure of the original and target five-act texts. Braga Riera also

amply documents the treatment of the three unities, how the translators dealt with Spanish metric forms, and the far greater attention given by the English translators *cum* “directors” to a rich variety of *acotaciones*, thus fewer *didascalias*. Too, he finds that the requisite prologues, epilogues, letters and songs of the target text contribute to an understanding of the English translators’ strategies.

In Chapter Four, the author effectively tackles the difficult challenge of a descriptive analysis of the transfer of extralinguistic factors that underpin theatre translation when the third process in Pavis’s series of “concretizations”—the performance(s) proper—is inaccessible, leaving the written translation (process one), an analysis of the viabilities and difficulties of the performance (two), and the reception of the theatrical product by the target culture (four). Nonetheless, Braga Riera offers many examples of such factors as the translators’ use of rhythm and other phonic creations in the three-hour English performance, their incorporation of additional gestures beyond those that are faithful to the Spanish sources, the varying profiles of the five translators—each desirous to be known as his comedy’s creator—and, again, the omnipresent cultural influence on the translators of socio-literary circumstances, still including Elizabethan conventions of performance. He does not fail to pinpoint a host of peripheral factors important to the transfer: the theatre-going public, criticism, patronage, thea-

tre economics, and censorship, be it self-censorship or the office of the Master of the Revels.

The destination culture is the central focus of Chapter Five, which begins with a reminder of the strategies available to the translator along an axis from complete conservation of the original on the one end, to “absolute naturalisation” (177) at the other. Key here is Braga Riera’s very well-documented analysis of the transfer by the five English translators of proper nouns, toponyms and anthroponyms alike. He incorporates the theoretical mechanisms proposed by both Aixelá and Carlson, as he clearly details. This is rounded out by an in-depth contrastive study of the translation of far broader cultural references, broken down into two groups: culture-specific or lexical items (clothing, dwellings, accessories, even the inclusion of Spanish words and what would be linguistic terms—invectives, insults, etc.—inappropriate to the source *comedias*); and source expressions such as forms of address, verbal decorum, religious references, and the *exemplum* used by the *gracioso*, or droll. Braga Riera concludes that with both groups, naturalisations, neologisms and deletions are the translators’ primary devices, although he acknowledges that any synopsis of their strategies remains elusive.

In his final chapter, the author centers on how the translators dealt with the *comedia* themes of love and honour. He also considers in detail the motif of humour and the flavour of the translations,

concentrating on one of Olson's areas of comic devices: situational humour, for the most part respected. In his analysis of stage comicity, he methodically follows Arellano's eleven subdivisions of the signaling systems of staging, again with many specific examples. As far as the theme of love, the author notes that the straying from the original texts reflects the more freedom afforded women in Restoration drama, most evidenced in Crowne's chronologically latest translation. As for "honour," Braga Riera notes the more varied sense of this term—*honra*, *honor*, plus additional meanings—in the English translations. His brief analysis of three kinds of honour—synonymous with reputation, social rank, and chastity—nonetheless leads to his conclusion that in both the original and target texts, honour is more important to plot development than love.

Braga Riera's study is methodical, meticulous, and articulate. As he happily notes in his Afterword, theatre translations for performance are now taking primacy over academic translations. His book is a gold mine of information not only for translation studies scholars, but also for (aspiring) translators, directors, and scholars and aficionados of English Restoration drama and the *Siglo de Oro comedia*.

Manson, William R., and C. George Peale, eds. *Los celos hasta los cielos y desdichada Estefanía*. By Luis Vélez de Guevara. Newark and Delaware: Juan de la Cuesta, 2007. Paper. 172 pp.

CHRISTOPHER D. GASCON
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Luis Vélez de Guevara's *Los celos hasta los cielos y desdichada Estefanía* is an intriguing tragicomedy that contrasts authentic love and transgressive desire, loyal innocence and treacherous deceit, lawful circumspection and vengeful wrath. Intense passion and suspense drive the action from beginning to end as we watch the protagonist Fernán Ruiz de Castro fall, Othello-like, deceived by his wife's servant and blinded by honor, into a murderous rage that will be his undoing.

The edition has been carried out with meticulous attention to detail. The explanatory notes are quite helpful in clarifying lexical challenges, idiomatic expressions, common sayings, historical and mythological allusions, grammar, metrical peculiarities, and cultural notions. As Peale explains, the notes include explanations of items ranging from the elemental to the obscure, in an attempt to make the work accessible to the broadest possible reader-

ship. Students of Golden Age literature will certainly benefit from the editors' efforts here, as will directors and actors considering the challenges of staging. Scholars will appreciate some of the longer notes that compare the use of words, ideas, and images in the play to their usage in other works by Vélez and his contemporaries. A minor inconvenience for readers wishing to consult all of the notes is that they appear as end notes after the text of the play, on pages 145-67, while manuscript discrepancies appear as footnotes. Peale includes Hugh Kennedy's breakdown of the versification and Menéndez Pelayo's observations on Vélez's modifications of Lope's original, *La desdichada Estefanía*: Vélez shows the subtle gradations of the hero's increasing jealousy, creates a moment of hesitation before he commits the final murder, and prolongs Estefanía's final breaths so that she may witness Fortuna's confession and hear her husband lament his folly and recognize her innocence.

Matthew Stroud is clear, perceptive, and cogent as always in his Lacanian analysis of the play. The essay nonetheless seems rather misplaced as an introduction to the edition, as it only succeeds in showing how the work is similar to so many other *comedias*, rather than pointing to any unique qualities particular to this play or specific to Vélez's art. The study offers little of what one might expect in an introduction, such as biographical information, a description of the dramatist's corpus or aesthetics,

an attempt to date the writing of the play, or records of any stagings. In fairness, it should be noted that this book is just one in a series of editions of Vélez's works to be carried out by the editors, and that some general information on the dramatist may be presented in the introductions to other works in the series. Still, those wishing for more information on the author and play here may be disappointed. Stroud's comparison of Velez's imitation to Lope's original is helpful, however, in pointing out Vélez's streamlining of the action, intensification of the dramatic impact, and portrayal of the central figures as initially impeccable in character and motive.

Manson and Peale should be commended for their work here and in the series, as it may well lead to a wider readership for Vélez de Guevara, and, one might hope, more frequent productions of his well-crafted, stage-worthy plays.

Arellano, Ignacio, and José Antonio Rodríguez Garrido, eds. *El teatro en la Hispanoamérica colonial*. Madrid: Iberoamericana, 2008. Paper. 474 pp.

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In 2006, Mindy Badía and Bonnie Gasior published *Crosscurrents: Transatlantic Perspectives on Early Modern Hispanic Drama*, a collection of essays exploring processes of cultural exchange as evidenced in Hispanic drama written in Spain and the Americas in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In the same year, Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú and Grupo de Investigación Siglo de Oro de la Universidad de Navarra hosted a conference on Hispanic American colonial theater in Lima. The current volume results from work shared at that conference. Like *Crosscurrents*, Arellano and Rodríguez Garrido's edition focuses on theatrical forms developed in Spain and transformed through contact with the Americas. Both volumes comment on the work of dramatists such as Sor Juana, Alarcón, Lope, Calderón, Tirso, and Cervantes. The two works are, however, essentially different. While *Crosscurrents* features a variety of theoretical approaches (post-colonial, Bakhtinian,

performance studies, anthropological) and tends to emphasize the reception of the works in the metropolis or from a modern perspective, Arellano and Rodríguez Garrido's edition is primarily historical in nature, focusing on the writing and production of theater in the Americas during the Early Modern period. Much of the work in this extensive volume is archival, uncovering a fascinating degree of theatrical activity, great familiarity with peninsular forms and works, and impressive industry, imagination, and alacrity in producing, adapting, and translating works for diverse colonial Hispanic American audiences.

The themes explored in the 23 essays of this work are numerous and varied, and no attempt is made to group or order them according to chronology, place, theme, dramatist, or genre. Subjects explored include Jesuit scholastic theater, the theme of the hunt, plays in Náhuatl and Quechua, actors in colonial society, theatrical space in colonial drama, American culture in Sor Juana, genres transformed in Hispanic America, convent theater, manuscripts of minor theater in Charcas, the Inca in Peruvian theater, the transition from baroque to neoclassicism in Hispanic American theater, the influence of baroque theater today, the Indies in Tirso, and the Cave of Salamanca in Hispanic American folklore.

All of the essays are well-researched and clearly argued. Of course time and space do not permit commentary on all of the pieces, but a few of

the most notable deserve mention for the way they show how certain themes common to Golden Age theater were transformed in order to resonate more effectively with colonial audiences. In an essay on Fernán González de Eslava's use of the theme of the hunt in his coloquio *El bosque divino*, Margaret Greer details how the dramatist sets the struggle over human souls between the divine hunter God and the evil hunter Lucifer in the context of the war between the "Chichimecas" of northern Mexico against both Spanish miners attempting to exploit the riches of the mountains of Zacatecas and the nomadic tribes of Nueva Galicia. The allegory equates the seven forts on the way to the mines with the seven sacraments, and ends by pointing the way toward reconciliation and a negotiated end to the violence.

Claudia Parodi analyzes Bartolomé de Alva Ixtlixóchitl's translations of works of Lope, Calderón, and Mira de Amescua into Náhuatl, with a view toward the cultural perspectives underlying certain alterations the translator makes to the originals. Most interesting is her suggestion that in his adaptation of Calderón's *El gran teatro del mundo*, Ixtlixóchitl does not translate the conceit of life as theater and people as actors because the dramatic manifestations with which his indigenous audience was familiar contained few fictive elements, thus the concept of "theater within a theater" may have proven difficult for him to express. God's creatures

are therefore not portrayed as acting the role assigned to them, but as carrying out the creator's desires. The fact that Calderón's *auto* was translated to Náhuatl in the same year that it debuted in Spain speaks to the popularity of peninsular drama in Latin America, and the skill and ingenuity of colonial writers in adapting the works to their purposes.

Celsa Carmen García Valdés traces the myth of the cave of Salamanca through Calderón's *El mágico prodigioso*, Cervantes' famous *entremés*, Ruiz de Alarcón's play of the same name, and the folklore of Latin America, particularly of Argentina and Chile. She discusses how the myth took on a life of its own, incorporating autoctonous elements, local superstitions, and indigenous beliefs, and taking on meanings as general as "any dark and sinister place" to the name of the realm of Zupay, the indigenous god of evil.

These are just a few examples of the wonderful discoveries this volume unearths. The issues and dramatists treated range from the marginal to the essential, from little-known amateurs to canonical, commissioned playwrights. This rich collection offers something for everyone, and above all, contributes significantly to our understanding of dramatic writing and theatrical production in colonial Latin America.

Fischer, Susan L. *Reading Performance: Spanish Golden Age Theatre and Shakespeare on the Modern Stage*. Woodbridge, UK: Tamesis, 2009. xxiv + 368 pp.

DONALD R. LARSON
The Ohio State University

As readers of this journal are well aware, interest in the study of Spanish Golden Age theatre as performance has increased significantly in the last few years. Although most published critical commentary still tends to approach early modern plays primarily, if not exclusively, as literary texts, there is a growing body of studies that focus on how works were, or might have been, staged at the time of their first performances centuries ago, or on how they have been presented on specific occasions in recent times. In the vanguard of those scholars who write about the *Comedia* as performance art is Susan L. Fischer who, over the last couple of decades, has published an impressive number of highly illuminating studies dealing with particular productions of seventeenth-century Spanish plays. In her new book, *Reading Performance: Spanish Golden Age Theatre and Shakespeare on the Modern Stage*, she has brought together in revised and expanded form

thirteen of those studies, along with two complementary essays focusing on *The Merchant of Venice*, and the result is a challenging and engrossing volume that will surely be welcomed by all *comediantes*.

Fischer's book is divided into three sections of unequal length. The first, and longest, is comprised of commentaries on productions of Spanish dramatic, or semi-dramatic texts, put on in the original language. The well-known works whose particular stagings are examined here include *El médico de su honra*, *Antes que todo es mi dama*, *La Celestina*, *El alcalde de Zalamea*, *El vergonzoso en palacio*, *Fuenteovejuna*, *El burlador de Sevilla y convidado de piedra*, and *El castigo sin venganza*. Each of the productions enumerated was mounted by the Compañía Nacional de Teatro Clásico in Madrid, and many were directed by that theater's former artistic director, Adolfo Marsillach. The second section of Fischer's book is devoted to analyses of several English-language productions of *comedias*, including three different versions of *Life Is a Dream*, as well as mountings of *The Painter of Dishonour* by the Royal Shakespeare Company, *The Dog in the Manger*, also by the Royal Shakespeare Company, and *Peribanez* [sic] by the Young Vic. The final section of the book is made up of discussions of three different stagings in Spanish of *The Merchant of Venice*, another staging of Shakespeare's play in French, and still another staging of *Peribáñez*, also

in French. The last two productions are particularly noteworthy in having been put on by the world-famous Comédie Française.

To her discussions, or as she calls them “re-viewings,” of the productions that she appraises in her book Fischer brings a formidable set of qualifications. First of all, she genuinely loves theatre, and she is able to communicate that love in everything that she writes. Secondly, she has had a world of experience in spectatorship, which includes multiple viewings of each of the stagings about which she writes. Thirdly, she has a profound knowledge of the dramatic texts upon which those performances are based, as well as of their social, political, and historical contexts. Fourthly, she has a particularly acute sensibility to what happens on stage during a production, giving the impression that she notices everything: details of costuming, props, and sets; facial expressions and bodily movements, inflections of dialogue and so on. Finally, she has read widely in contemporary theatre and cultural theory, and in the chapters of her book she utilizes that reading in a particularly interesting and effective way to frame the discussions of the performances she discusses. Her studies are thus not merely descriptions of the performances that she has seen, but highly sophisticated examinations of the many diverse issues of staging, interpretation, and reception that those performances suggest.

Given the impossibility of considering here all of those issues, I should like only to mention briefly three of them. The first has to do with textual “authenticity,” a matter which arises in connection with Fischer’s assessment of the CNCT’s production of *La Celestina*. The text of *La Celestina* is, of course, particularly problematic, but drawing on contemporary theoreticians such as W. B. Worthen, Peter L. Shillingsburg, and Jerome J. McGann, Fischer argues convincingly that Renaissance texts are inherently “unstable,” given the collaborative efforts that produced them and multiplicity of versions in which they typically exist. No one version, then, can be said to be authoritative but is merely, in the words of Shillingsburg, “one specific form of the work [...], the ideal form [...] as it was intended at a single moment or period for the author.” Clearly, the point has important implications for all those involved in the study of Spanish *comedias*.

A second issue, raised particularly in Fischer’s piece on *El castigo sin venganza* and somewhat related to the preceding, has to do with the notion of “aspectuality,” a concept that in the context of drama and theater is associated principally with the Shakespearean scholar Jonathan Bate. In *The Genius of Shakespeare*, Bate advances the idea that in great art, as in much of life, truth is not singular but multiple and contradictory, not something that can be looked at as either/or—*either* this *or* that—but rather both/and, that is to say, *both* this *and* that.

When applied to enduring works of theater, the notion posits that no one character can be said to embody wholly and exclusively the “truth” of the text but only certain aspects of that “truth.” Allied to this notion of aspectuality, both in Bate and in Fischer’s essay is the concept of “performativity,” the idea that in the works of truly great dramatists—and Bate specifically includes Lope in that category—identity is not something that is predetermined but rather “is performed through action.” The obvious corollary here is that the richest characters can be realized on stage in a multitude of perfectly valid, if totally differing, ways.

A third issue, discussed throughout the final chapters of the book, centers on the questions prompted by the act of translating a theatrical text from one language to another. Some of those questions are raised by Jean-Michel Déprats, one of the theorists, along with Susan Bassnett, Jacques Derrida, and Harold Bloom, upon whom Fischer relies to ground this particular discussion. Quoting Déprats, Fischer asks:

Is literalness the opposite of accuracy? How can one pay tribute to the specific genius of the target language? Can the context of dramatic poetry be separated from its form? How much importance should be granted to the historical dimension of the language? Should accuracy and metaphoric richness be

sacrificed in favour of an oral style, a spoken language?

Some tentative, and highly stimulating, answers to these and other questions are advanced in Fischer's analyses of the various translated playtexts upon which the productions discussed in the second half of her collection were based.

Throughout her volume Fischer's discussions of productions, texts, and contexts is balanced, lucid, and exceedingly well-informed. She proffers her own thoughts and observations, but on page after page incorporates the ideas of others as well: theorists, critics, scholars, reviewers, directors, designers, actors, and, on occasion, even random members of the audience. Her book breaks exciting new ground in the study of the *Comedia* and is highly recommended to the attention of all those interested in early modern European theater.

One final, parenthetical thought. In reading to the end of Fischer's book I could not help being struck by how unrelievedly grim many of the productions that she analyzes seem to have been. In staging after staging the costumes are said to have been black, the sets forbidding, the lighting dark and tenebrous, the music harsh and off-putting, the humor forced and distinctly unfunny. One might well expect an atmosphere of total bleakness in performances of *El médico de su honra*, of course, or *El pintor de su deshonra*, but not necessarily in

productions of such works as *La vida es sueño*, or *Fuenteovejuna*, or *Peribáñez*. Over and over early modern Spain—or the location that stands as an analogue to it—is seemingly depicted as unremittingly obsessed, suppressed, repressed, superstitious, narrow-minded, and hypocritical. There is no denying that such qualities were a significant part of the social and political life of the time, but that was clearly not the whole picture. It is perhaps not surprising that such an image of Spain should dominate foreign productions of *comedias*, for it reflects widely spread stereotypical views of that land in the period under discussion, but it is curious that it would be so tightly embraced in domestic productions as well, even given the fact that many of those productions were the product of the early post-Franco period when the country was bent on exorcising the demons of both the near and distant past. Since, as Fischer's book so convincingly shows, great works of theatre can be approached in a virtually infinite variety of legitimate ways, one looks forward down the road to seeing or hearing about other productions that offer a less monochromatic and more nuanced view, one that allows for the fact that even in times of great difficulty, privation, and, yes, repression, people still manage to find moments of satisfaction and ways of connecting sincerely and meaningfully with one another.

Carreño-Rodríguez, Antonio. *Alegorías del poder: crisis imperial y comedia nueva (1598-1659)*. Woodbridge, GB: Tamesis, 2009. 271 pp.

CHARLES PATTERSON
Stephen F. Austin State University

This work joins those of Melveena McKendrick and others in reexamining the 1970s consensus, exemplified in the seminal writings of José María Díez Borque, José Antonio Maravall and others, that the *comedia* is a form of hegemonic propaganda. Instead, Antonio Carreño-Rodríguez sets out to demonstrate that *comedias* were often critical of power structures. His evidence is a phenomenon that he labels “alegorías de una crisis del poder,” which are plays that manipulate historical, mythological, or biblical sources in such a way as to allegorize a criticism of contemporary political situations.

The first chapter, entitled “Alegorías del poder: textos y contextos,” is by far the strongest and most useful to *comedia* scholars. In it, Carreño-Rodríguez briefly reviews the political climate in Spain during the first half of the seventeenth century, emphasizing the sense of decadence that came as result of the two Felipes’ reliance on *validos* and

the general economic malaise of the times. Since censorship was prevalent, Carreño-Rodríguez sees the use of allegory as a natural form of criticism: "como lenguaje críptico, velado, tiende a florecer en épocas de crisis, de censura; cuando no se puede expresarse con libertad" (10). He goes on to establish that dramatic theorists during the seventeenth century, drawing on classical sources, also saw the *comedia* as an ideal vehicle for political allegory. His methodology for approaching the works discussed in future chapters, then, is to read the *comedia* asking the question "¿cómo se elabora en la comedia nueva un espacio crítico sobre el poder político que se expresa mediante ese tropo [la alegoría]?" (30).

He applies this methodology to the works of Lope de Vega in the second chapter, "Lope de Vega o los inicios de la crisis del poder." This chapter is more tightly organized than the ones that follow it. He bases his analysis around five "modalidades retóricas que caracterizan . . . el corpus dramático de Lope," including "(a) los *specula principis* . . . (b) los dramas que representan el castigo del tirano . . . (c) los que desarrollan la relación inestable . . . entre el poderoso y su privado; (d) los que enfrentan al poderoso ejemplar con la figura antagónica del tirano . . . y, finalmente (e) los dramas que representan el desgobierno del poderoso" (34). He analyzes the plays *El príncipe perfecto*, *El príncipe despeñado*, *El duque de Viseo*, *Fuenteovejuna*, and *El rey*

don Pedro en Madrid y el Infanzón de Illescas as respective examples of each of these “modalidades.”

The third chapter is entitled “Tirso de Molina o la carnavalización del poder.” Carreño-Rodríguez begins the chapter with what seems to be a continuation of his analysis from the previous chapter extended to include three of Tirso’s works, *La prudencia en la mujer*, *La ventura con el nombre*, and *Privar contra su gusto*. The chapter becomes more interesting when he turns his attention to Tirso’s biblical plays. He begins this section with *La mujer que manda en casa*, in which he sees in the portrayal of Ahab and Jezabel an allegory of “una grave crisis del poder, aplicable a todo el período que abarca las tres primeras décadas del siglo XVII” (133). He also examines *Tanto es lo de más como lo de menos*, which he reads as a warning to Felipe IV “sobre los peligros que acarrea el sistema de la privanza” (130). The political message that he sees Tirso expressing in both plays is that “Dios sólo funda y conserva los estados de aquellos príncipes que guardan su santa ley” (141). To finish the chapter, Carreño-Rodríguez examines the carnivalesque elements in *La república al revés* and *El burlador de Sevilla*, concluding that these works reveal a world in crisis to which order can only be restored through more responsible government.

Carreño-Rodríguez turns his attention to the works of Pedro Calderón de Barca in his fourth

chapter, "Calderón: templanza, prudencia y poder." He begins by recognizing that "La relación de Calderón con el Poder es compleja; establece y desarrolla una hábil dialéctica de atracción y de repulsión proporcional" (158). He then applies his methodology of interpreting political allegory to the biblical drama *Los cabellos de Absalón*, the historical play *La cisma de Inglaterra*, the deeply philosophical *La vida es sueño*, and the two parts of the mythological court drama *La hija del aire*.

The strength of this study as a whole is its consistent methodology throughout. The sheer accumulation of evidence makes a cogent case for understanding the *comedia* as more of a tool for political critique than propaganda. Although such a consistent application of the same methodology to such a large number of plays makes the study somewhat monotonous and predictable at times, Carreño-Rodríguez's work is a valuable contribution to our understanding of the uneasy relationship between art and power in seventeenth-century Spain.

Calderón de la Barca, Pedro. *La vida es sueño*. Ed. Vincent Martin. 2nd ed. Cervantes & Co. 10. Newark, DE: European Masterpieces, 2006. 184 pp.

CHARLES PATTERSON
Stephen F. Austin State University

Beginning with Tom Lathrop's monumental student edition of *Don Quixote* in 1997, the Cervantes & Co. series has published numerous editions of Peninsular literary works designed to make these works accessible to North American students. Although the volumes in this series cannot be considered critical editions, they are useful tools in undergraduate courses. The tenth volume in the series, Calderón's *La vida es sueño*, was edited by Vincent Martin and published in 2003. Martin included in this edition an Introduction to Students which gives a brief overview of Calderón's life and work, as well as a guide to Golden Age language and prosody. The textual notes, like those of all Cervantes & Co editions, are extensive and geared primarily for non-native speakers of Spanish. Martin subsequently revised his work, and the second edition was published three years later. Since there are almost no changes in the textual notes between the two editions, I will focus my review on the introduction to

students that precedes the play itself. Although in the first edition Martin successfully managed to make his introduction both scholarly and accessible, the changes made in the second edition serve to enhance these aspects of it.

Many of the alterations made in the second edition tend to make the introduction more academically rigorous. Martin adjusts some of his information in the interest of greater historical accuracy and precision. For example, he adds the variant name "Cosimo" when referring to Cosme Lotti, as he is called in the first edition (11). He also expands the name of the Jesuit "Colegio Imperial" to the more precise "Colegio Imperial de la Compañía" (11). In some instances he gives less precise information where there may be some dispute or uncertainty about the facts given in the first edition. For example, where in the first edition he refers to the debut of *El príncipe constante* as occurring "the following month" after Calderón's run-in with Fray Hortensio Paravicino, in the second edition he gives the more ambiguous "that same year" (14). Although less precise, this modification is likely more accurate given the difficulty in dating *comedia* performances. Martin's discussion of Spanish prosody in the first edition is particularly comprehensive and useful; his few alterations to it make it more erudite. For example, he adds linguistics jargon by offering the English translations to the terms *agudo*, *llano*, and *esdrújulo* as "oxytone," "paroxytone," and

“proparoxytone,” respectively (21-22). Finally, Martin makes the introduction far more useful as a starting point for serious research by increasing the number of secondary sources in his bibliography from nineteen to thirty-three.

Even while tightening the scholarly rigor of his introduction, Martin makes other modifications to increase the accessibility and utility of the edition for a general readership. In most cases this involves simply moving sentences around or adding explanatory clauses in the interest of increased clarity. In other instances, he eliminates information that would be unnecessary for students. For example, while in the first edition he uses the terms “vowel rhyme” and “full or perfect rhyme,” he replaces these with the Spanish equivalents *rima asonante* and *rima consonante* throughout. Since Spanish courses are typically taught entirely in Spanish, this change will prevent confusion for the students when they hear the Spanish terms used in class discussion.

The only defects in the second edition are a few minor typographical errors in sections that were modified. As mentioned above, this and other editions from its series are intended more for classroom use than research purposes. Instructors can be confident, however, that they are not assigning their students something “dumbed down” in any way. The scholarly rigor is sufficient to challenge advanced undergraduate students, but the writing style

and crisp organization make the basics of Calderón's biography and Spanish prosody accessible to North American students, freeing the instructor to dedicate class time to discussion and interpretation.

Sánchez Martínez, Rafael. *El teatro en Murcia en el siglo XVII (1593-1695). Estudio y Documentos*. Fuentes para la historia del teatro en España XXIV. Woodbridge: Tamesis Books, 2009. pp. 214. \$105.00

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Como su título indica el libro está dividido en dos partes claramente definidas, por un lado el estudio que el profesor Sánchez hace del teatro en la ciudad de Murcia y por otro lado la transcripción de los documentos usados en el texto.

La primera parte del libro es un estudio sobre los teatros comerciales que existieron en Murcia capital, como se crean, se mantienen, los arreglos que se hacen y por qué aparecen, desaparecen o dejan de funcionar. Son cuatro los teatros estudiados: el Teatro del Hospital (1593-1609), el Teatro del Toro (1609-1633 y 1638-1700), el Teatro del Buen Suceso (1633-1638) y el llamado “Teatro del Trinquete”. El primer teatro a estudiar es el del Hospital de Nuestra Señora de Gracia y Buen Suceso. Es el más antiguo del que se tienen noticias y documentos. Este teatro nace dentro del Hospital con el apoyo del Cabildo catedralicio y del Concejo de la ciudad. Surge como la mayoría de los corrales de la época

para subvencionar a los hospitales donde se representaba. Está claro, a través de los documentos que maneja el Profesor Sánchez, que el espacio dedicado a la representación teatral sufre continuamente de lo que se consideran mejoras tanto para los actores como para el público. Se mejora desde el suelo del patio de comedias al cercamiento del aposento de las mujeres (p. 6). Con el tiempo, el teatro constó también de un escenario, de bancos para el público, de balcones, y de una entrada aparte, para no tener que cruzar todo el hospital para llegar al teatro. Sin embargo para 1608, el Ayuntamiento reconoce la necesidad de construir un teatro más grande para servir a la ciudad de Murcia. Y aunque en un principio se pensó que se construiría en terrenos del hospital, esto nunca llegó a pasar y tanto el hospital como el cabildo eclesiástico perdieron todo protagonismo en relación al teatro (p. 12).

El segundo teatro es el teatro del Toro, que es un teatro municipal “por lo que todos los procesos burocráticos (...), al igual que las obras, fueron llevados a cabo por el Ayuntamiento de Murcia” (11). Esto quiere decir que tanto las ganancias como los costos de mantenimiento corrían a cargo del Ayuntamiento. Hubo algún debate para la construcción de este teatro pero al final se situó junto a la muralla y la puerta del Toro (de ahí su nombre), en la zona del antiguo Alcázar Nassir. Este teatro sigue en planta al de Córdoba de 1602, es un edificio construido exclusivamente para la representación.

Gracias a los documentos examinados, se da una detallada explicación de las obras, materiales empleados, costo de los mismos y de la mano de obra, contratos de alquiler, pagos del mismo, construcción de ventanas, escaleras, puertas, etc. Estos documentos presentan la vida de este teatro y como estaba en evolución constante, para admitir la mayor cantidad posible de público en cada representación. El teatro del Toro se hundió el 14 de Noviembre de 1613 durante una representación, lo que causó heridos y un total de 26 muertos (p. 25). Cinco días después se decidía reconstruir el teatro, aunque no había unanimidad en el Cabildo. El hundimiento había tenido lugar porque la construcción era defectuosa. La investigación sobre los hechos acaecidos duró varios años. El teatro se reconstruyó y duró otros 20 años más o menos, hasta los años 30 en que empezaron los problemas otra vez. En 1633 el teatro se desplomó otra vez “por un exceso de espectadores en una zona ya debilitada” (29). Se llegó a la conclusión de que toda la obra era “falsa y defectuosa” y mejor que reconstruir, sería abandonar este teatro y construir uno totalmente nuevo. Es interesante el comentario que hace el profesor Sánchez sobre los teatros, como las construcciones interiores que se hacían, el estado del edificio en general y su seguridad no fueron nunca la prioridad de los que regentaban el negocio. Y es algo que se deduce claramente al leer los documentos de las construcciones, en los que se mueven columnas y

paredes, según las necesidades del momento, sin prestar a tención a posibles problemas estructurales.

Al teatro del Toro siguió el teatro del Buen Suceso. Este era un edificio que pertenecía al Hospital, que estaba en el centro de la ciudad y que estaba regentado por la Orden de San Juan de Dios. Así pues hubo que contactar a todos los superiores religiosos para poder alquilar el caserón y hubo que hacerlo rápidamente ya que al Ayuntamiento le urgía tener el espacio pues tenía un contrato con Francisco López, autor de comedias, y no tenían un sitio listo para la compañía. En este nuevo teatro subió el precio de las entradas en dos maravedíes, ya que el Hospital se quedaba con dos maravedíes del precio de la entrada y había un representante del Hospital antes de cada actuación recogiendo el dinero de las mismas.

Si el teatro del Toro se basó en el de Córdoba, el del Buen Suceso lo hizo a grosso modo en el de Valladolid. La construcción llevó su tiempo en parte por cuestiones económicas y en parte por la misma construcción. Una de las ideas que se propone, pero que no hay documentación indicando si se llevó a cabo o no, es la construcción de un parasol de madera encima del patio, en lugar de usar la vela, con lo cual hubiera techado el patio del corral (43). A los dos años de haber abierto, el estado del teatro es tan preocupante que el Ayuntamiento empieza a plantearse dos posibilidades: arreglar el Buen Suceso o rehabilitar el del Toro. Este va a ser un punto

de contención dentro del cabildo y ambas propuestas van a tener un grupo de seguidores. El regidor Juan Zaballos va a defender el Teatro del Buen Suceso y Diego Fuster la rehabilitación del Teatro del Toro. La posición de Zaballos prevaleció y se empezaron las obras de mejora del Buen Suceso, que funcionaría por otros años, hasta que empezaron las obras del Teatro del Toro en 1638. Y así fue como este teatro se convirtió en el definitivo para la ciudad de Murcia.

El cuarto teatro del que habla el profesor Sánchez, el “Teatro del Trinquete,” nunca fue un teatro sino un centro para el juego del trinquete de pelota. Cuando el teatro del Buen Suceso quedó vacío, el Hospital perdió sus ingresos, así pues pidieron permiso para abrir un local donde se pudiera jugar pelota y seguir recaudando dinero para el Hospital. La segunda parte del libro presenta la colección de documentos procedentes del Archivo Municipal de Murcia y del Archivo General de la Región de Murcia los cuales proveen gran información sobre la evolución los teatros (corrales) de la ciudad de Murcia durante el periodo a estudiar. Estos documentos, que cubren toda una gama de temas, van desde la persona que alquilaba el edificio y por cuánto, a la compañía que iba a actuar, las elecciones de alguacil de comedias y cómo y para qué comedias. De hecho el profesor Sánchez aporta una lista de las compañías que representaron o estu-

vieron en Murcia entre 1593 y 1692, que es necesaria para el estudio los actores españoles.

No hay duda de que este libro aporta una serie de datos importantes sobre el teatro de en la ciudad de Murcia, en un periodo crítico de la evolución del mismo.



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Aquel Breve Sueño: Dreams on the Early Modern Spanish Stage.

Aquel Breve Sueño. ' *Dreams on the Early Modern Spanish Stage* is a collection of ten essays by distinguished scholars from Spain, France, and the United States. Originally an idea by Ricardo Sáez of the Université de Rennes, France, this volume includes a variety of approaches on the significance of dreams as dramatic discourse. In Part I, "Oneiric Discourse on the Early Modern Spanish Stage," contributors are Belén Atienza, Ezra Engling, Ellen Frye, Rogelio Miñana, Charo Moreno, and Sharon Voros. Topics included are the prophetic dream in Lope de Vega and Guillén de Castro, dreams as motif and dramatic device in Pedro Calderón de la Barca, the metatheatrical function of dream sequences, the dream as dramatic character in Calderón's *auto*, *Sueños hay que verdad son*, and the performance dream in Leonor de la Cueva y Silva's *La firmeza en la ausencia*. "Aquel breve sueño" is a line from Garcilaso's second Elegy.

Contributing to Part II, dedicated exclusively to Calderón's *La vida es sueño*, are Nelson López, Christian Andrès, Ricardo Sáez, and Christine Aguilar-Adan. Topics include staging and directing *La vida es sueño*, a comparative study on Pierre Boasitau's *Theatrum Mundi* and Calderón's *La vida es sueño* and *El gran teatro del mundo*, poetic structure and style in the *redondillas* of *La vida es sueño*, and *La vida es sueño* and the political institution of the prince.



Before she was a saint,
she was a woman....

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Beautiful, wealthy, and flirtatious, she was known as the “belle of Avila.” The woman who would become one of the world’s most beloved saints entered a convent to avoid a dangerous scandal and discovered an unparalleled spiritual fervor—one so powerful it was condemned as sinful by some. The daughter of a rich Jewish merchant who converted to Catholicism during the religious persecutions of the late 15th century, Teresa became a reformer, visionary, and founder of convents whose revolutionary ideas both provoked the Inquisition and inspired millions. Masterfully blending fact with fiction, Bárbara Mujica narrates Teresa’s story in vivid detail. Painstakingly researched and beautifully rendered, Mujica’s tale conjures a brilliant picture of sisterhood, faith, terror, and the miracle of salvation.

Teresa de Ávila

LETTERED WOMAN



BÁRBARA MUJICA

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The 2011 Siglo de Oro Spanish Drama Festival

Wednesday March 2, 2011

La vida es sueño (Spanish) by Pedro Calderón de la
Barca

Acting Group: EdeStreno (Trujillanos, Spain)

Director: Jesús Manchón

Thursday March 3, 2011

Peribanez (Spanish) by Felix Lope de Vega

Acting Group: Los Barracos (Madrid, Spain)

Director: Amaya Curieses

Friday March 4, 2011

Senor Quijote Mio (Spanish) by Miguel de Cervantes
Saavedra

Acting Group: Perro Teatro (Mexico City, MX)

Director: Gilberto Guerrero

Saturday March 5, 2011

The Capulets and the Montagues (English) by Felix Lope
de Vega

Group: ANDAK Stage Company (Hollywood, USA)

Director: Anne McNaughton

Sunday March 6, 2011

El Burlador De Sevilla (Spanish) by Tirso de Molina

Acting Group: Escuela Nacional de Arte Teatral (Mexico
City, MX)

Director: Carlos Corona

