

JOAN OLEZA

FROM ANCIENT CLASSICAL
TO MODERN CLASSICAL:
LOPE DE VEGA
AND THE NEW CHALLENGES
OF SPANISH THEATRE



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OF SPANISH THEATRE

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TC/12

PATRIMONIO TEATRAL
CLÁSICO ESPAÑOL
TEXTOS E INSTRUMENTOS
DE INVESTIGACIÓN

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Provenance of the chapters and translations:

The 'Arte Nuevo' from the Authority of Ancient Art: the Discussion of Dramatic Genres. Translated by Ruxandra Stoica, revised by Anthony Nuckols and Jesús Tronch, from the unpublished Spanish version: «La arquitectura de géneros en la Comedia Nueva: diversidad y transformaciones».

Historical Dramas of Private Events, by Lope de Vega: a Requirement of Subjects. Translated by Ruxandra Stoica, revised by Jesús Tronch, from the unpublished Spanish version: «Los dramas históricos de hechos particulares, de Lope de Vega: una exigencia de sujetos».

From Montaigne to Lope: Various Events from the Same Counsel. Translated by Anthony Nuckols, revised by Jesús Tronch, from «De Montaigne a Lope: distintos resultados de una misma decisión», *Revista de literatura*, Madrid, CSIC, LXXI, 141, 2009, pp. 39-56.

Schemes, Functions, Motifs, and Cases: Elements for the Analysis of Spanish baroque Theatre. Translated by Tito Vidotto and Amber Gamble, revised by Jesús Tronch and Nick Suárez, from «Trazas, funciones, motivos y casos. Elementos para el análisis del teatro barroco español», in A. Blecua, I. Arellano and G. Serés (eds.), *El teatro del Siglo de Oro. Edición e interpretación*, Madrid-Frankfurt, Iberoamericana/Vervuert, 2009, pp. 321-350.

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PROLOGUE

Anyone intending to walk through the paths of the Golden Age Spanish theatre will have to resort to the guide of Joan Oleza's studies, who has tackled some of the most crucial elements and aspects in the formation and development of the new comedy, including conventions, genres and sign systems (textual and staging), without forgetting the complex relations of society, ideology, cultural heritages and dramatic structures.

This is a broad field, of which the present volume offers a sampler that may represent some of Oleza's approaches to the phenomenon of that «arte nuevo» which is undoubtedly one of the most important cultural phenomena in universal history.

These pages do not include, of course, —that aim would require a complete collection of volumes— all the contributions of the scholar, who also leads other team projects, highflying and attentive to the most current requirements of the new applied technologies together with the solid erudition and the extensive knowledge of the texts and the conditions of the Golden Age spectacle. Suffice it to mention the monumental entitled «Artelope. Database and plots of Lope de Vega's theatre» (<http://artelope.uv.es>), which offers the research community an invaluable tool for the analysis and observation of Lope's immense work.

However, although there are not present here all of Oleza's works that could interest readers and researchers of Golden Age theatre, it can be said that this cast is fully significant of some basic preoccupations and of the ways of confronting them.

In my own perspective of the Spanish classical theatre I have repeatedly endeavoured to emphasize the role, in my view absolutely nuclear, of dramatic genres, which are linked to the conventions and to the horizon of expectations: it will not come as a surprise, thus, that one of Oleza's articles that most intensely captured my

attention, and whose reading I would insistently recommend to the discreet reader into whose hands this book may fall, is the one he dedicates precisely to the architecture of genres in the new comedy, where one can find meticulous and sharp judgments based on a knowledge that can be described as exhaustive of the preceptists, poetic and dramatic texts, and of the most current theoretical framework, always used with admirable intelligence.

The fact that my view on a detail —however fundamental— of the theory/practice of classical theatre regarding what Ricardo de Turia calls tragicomic «mixture», differs from the one proposed by Oleza has not made less productive the reading of his pages, populated by teachings on the role of creative genius, the limits and sources of mimesis, the quality of the arguments, the generic distinctions and elements on which this distinction is based, important evolutionary issues, terminological conflicts, etc. It is necessary to have the knowledge on classical theatre Oleza has in order to establish so authoritatively the deployment of the genre system, and the revision of the generic prototypes he analyzes by confronting ancient and modern concepts, by proposing useful guides for the comprehension of the studied theatrical corpus, which refers especially to Lope de Vega, but whose conclusions can be applied to other creators, with different adaptations, as Lope is a very particular case in which genre management, as shown by Oleza, is taking various forms and is deriving into a more and more complex production in its search of unexplored routes and of the multiple possibilities open to imagination and ingenuity.

Precisely when examining one of these varieties, the historical drama of private events, it is analyzed in detail in another article of this book that continues previous approaches in which Oleza already established some of his criteria. The amplitude of the scholar's readings stands out again, as it starts by placing Lope's work in the panorama of the plays of the genre already elaborated in the 16th century, and it delimitates the traits and the corpus that should be taken into consideration within Lope's sector, that reaches half a hundred plays, a very significant proportion, therefore, of his work, to which a major study, as noted by Oleza, had not been dedicated —until now—. I find especially important the discussion about the conditions required to qualify as historical drama a specific play:

once again theoretical precision nourishes on specific comments on specific plays, in an impeccable dialectical relationship.

The chapter dedicated to the comparison between Montaigne and Lope will strike, perhaps, the reader, but soon he will be able to understand the aim of this parallel, and in addition, a thorough reading will allow him to link this chapter to the next one: the guiding thread seems to be the conscience, both in Montaigne and Lope, of the complexity of the human behaviours, which ask for mobile, changing reflections, sieges from different perspectives, studies of the interminable casuistry, moral and artistic observations that take into account this come and go on forking paths. Variety and richness, the often problematic condition of human things are well reflected, Oleza states, both in Montaigne's essays and in Lope's innumerable comedies. Hence, in order to reflect this wide and varied world —impossible to synthesize in a few slogans or topics— it is necessary to display an equally varied theatrical world, whose abundant «schemes», «functions», «motifs» and «cases» are precisely the object of the last chapter, for which Oleza can make use of the alluded work of Artelope that allows him to access the details of half a thousand comedies in order to support their schemes and define their narrative functions that he always exemplifies with specific cases, very far from an invented theorization, distant from the realizations of the playwrights.

Theory and practice, attention to concepts and schemes, but always support in a exhaustive knowledge of the dramatic corpus — that of Lope, inventor of the new comedy, and of many other Golden Age creators— characterize, therefore, this set of studies that will be, I think, essential to all the people interested in Golden Age theatre.

And even if in the English version some of the style features of Oleza's critical language are lost —let us not either forget his condition as a writer, storyteller and most of all novelist, thorough not only with what he says but also with how he says it— the clarity of his argumentation and the effectiveness of his speech show through.

In short, this book is a significant example of the scientific production of one of the key names of the studies on Golden Age, on theatre and especially on Lope, and a milestone in the road of that recovery of the Spanish classical theatrical patrimony, a task to

which Oleza also dedicates himself as coordinator of the TC/12 Consolider Ingenio project.

A volume which, therefore, significantly enriches the young Batijoja collection, and for which I can only congratulate the editors.

Ignacio Arellano

THE *ARTE NUEVO* FROM THE AUTHORITY
OF ANCIENT ART: THE DISCUSSION
OF DRAMATIC GENRES

THE POETIC FOUNDATIONS OF THE «COMEDIA NUEVA»

In the early 17th century, after almost two decades of stage practice, the revolution of the *comedia nueva* is consolidated. Its supporters often have a euphoric attitude, that of living in a time of cultural splendor, of which theatre provides the best example. Years later, Tirso de Molina, by comparing modern and old comedies, has no qualms about asserting the superiority of the modern ones:

A mi parecer [...] el lugar que merecen las que ahora se representan en nuestra España, comparadas con las antiguas, les hace conocidas ventajas aunque vayan contra el instituto primero de sus inventores (*Cigarrales de Toledo*, 1621)¹.

The foundations of this consciousness of the splendor of the new theatre are not numerous, but they are extremely innovative, to such extent that they anticipate throughout nearly eighty years the arguments with which Charles Perrault will start the *dispute des anciens et des modernes* at the French Academy, and throughout two long centuries the proclamation of independence of the classical canons of romantic drama by Victor Hugo, in his famous *Préface* of *Cromwell* (1827). In the following lines, we will focus on the principles that affect the system of dramatic genres, ignoring others, such as freedom from the rules of unity of action, of time or of place, as they are not relevant here.

¹ «In my view [...] the place that the ones represented nowadays in our Spain deserve, compared with the old ones gives them clear advantages even though they go against the main objective of their inventors» (*Cigarrales de Toledo*, 1621).

1.- Times change and bring innovations, therefore new times provide new models and canons, and there is no reason why the old ones should prevail over the new ones. The highlight of this argumentation is the writing, by Lope de Vega, of a treaty for new times, declaring his intentions from the title itself: *Arte nuevo de hacer comedias en este tiempo* (1609). But no one went so far in developing this idea as Alfonso Sánchez, the author of the manifesto paradoxically written in Latin and in defense of Lope de Vega entitled *Expostulatio Spongiae* (1618), which proclaims a principle that will only fully settle in the 19th century, together with Romanticism, that declares «las obras de los poetas expresan la naturaleza, las costumbres y el ingenio del siglo en que se escribieron»². Not only do they respond to the passage of time, but they also express it. Sánchez supports this statement with another one, no less anticipatory of Modernity: the poet whom the people have given the sceptre and reigns in full right and sovereignty over the poets is above the law, and if kings adopt laws because they are the source of law, the king poet has also the privilege to dictate these laws to the other poets³.

2.- Consequent to the principle mentioned above is the attitude of emancipation from classical authority represented by the ancient preceptists, as well as by the modern neo-Aristotelian Italians and Spaniards. This attitude is known to be polemic in texts such as the *Apologético de las comedias españolas* (1616) by Ricardo del Turia or *Los cigarrales de Toledo* (1621) by Tirso. But often the polemical attitude becomes pure irreverence, contemptuous mockery. Lope himself participates in this derisive attitude by confessing that «ya le perdimos el respeto»⁴ for Aristotle, or by declaring that «cuando he de escribir una Comedia, / encierro los preceptos con seis llaves; / saco a Terencio y Plauto de mi estudio, / para que no me den vo-

² «The works of the poets express the nature, the customs and the ingenuity of the century they were written in». Sánchez Escribano and Porqueras Mayo, 1972, p. 206. Most of the preceptist fragments that we quote in these pages are taken, for convenience, from the useful anthology in Spanish by Sánchez Escribano and Porqueras Mayo, 1972. Here, p. 206.

³ Sánchez Escribano and Porqueras Mayo, 1972, p. 206. Vega, Lope de, *El Arte nuevo de hacer comedias en este tiempo*, 1993-1994, vol. II, pp. 353-393, vv. 40-43.

⁴ «We have already lost the respect».

ces»⁵. Again, in this respect, Alfonso Sánchez takes forward the idea, arguing that Lope, creator of the new art, «haya podido formular preceptos con la misma autoridad que Horacio»⁶ and that he can disregard classical comedies «puesto que tú solo has dado a nuestro siglo mejores comedias que todas las de Menandro y Aristófanes»⁷.

3.- The *comedia nueva* bases its legitimacy not on classical canons but on the primacy of public taste, and not on the most erudite and expert audience, but on the taste of the crowd that is able to sustain the success with its own money and support. Nobody dared to declare it openly until Lope did in *Arte Nuevo* (1609), which he defines as a treaty «al estilo del vulgo» («in the style of the masses»). Lope writes with mischievous irony:

Escribo por el arte que inventaron
los que el vulgar aplauso pretendieron,
porque, como las paga el vulgo, es justo
hablarle en necio para darle gusto (vv. 45-49)⁸.

Years later other voices would add up to explain this new form of aesthetic legitimacy, based on the aesthetic values of the market, that is, on the aesthetic sovereignty of mainstream audiences, such as the one of Ricardo del Turia in the *Apologético de las comedias españolas* (1616): «y es que los que escriben es a fin de satisfacer el gusto para quien escriben»⁹, and it would be absurd to stop looking for the applause of that public «por seguir las leyes de los pasados»¹⁰. It may be necessary, nowadays, to resort to the indignant reaction against this new form of artistic legitimacy of highly trained and

⁵ «When I have to write a comedy / I lock in the precepts with six keys, / I banish Terence and Plautus from my study / so that they may not cry out at me». Lope de Vega, *El Arte nuevo de hacer comedias en este tiempo*, vv. 40-43.

⁶ «Has been able to formulate precepts with the same authority as Horace».

⁷ «Since you have only given to our century better comedies than all those belonging to Menander and Aristophanes». Sánchez Escribano and Porqueras Mayo, 1972, p. 206.

⁸ «I write for the art that invented / the ones who sought the applause of the masses, / because, as the masses pay, it is only fair / to talk to them in foolish words in order to please them».

⁹ «And the ones who write do it in order to indulge those they write for».

¹⁰ «To follow the laws of the past ones». Sánchez Escribano and Porqueras Mayo, 1972, pp. 178-179.

prestigious writers in order to understand its revolutionary character. Cervantes, for instance, expressed through the words of the Canónigo, in chapter XLVIII of the first part of *Quijote* (1605), the most formidable and reasoned attack against the *comedia nueva*, and one of his strongest arguments is directed against «los autores que las componen y los actores que las representan»¹¹, who, knowing that the comedies «son conocidos disparates y cosas que no llevan ni pies ni cabeza [...] dicen que así han de ser, porque así las quiere el vulgo [...] y que a ellos les está mejor ganar de comer con los muchos, que no opinión con los pocos»¹². The Canónigo does not attack poets for their ignorance, he attacks the poetic principle of their market dependence:

Y no tienen la culpa desto los poetas que las componen, porque algunos hay dellos que conocen muy bien en lo que yerran, y saben extremadamente lo que deben hacer; pero como las comedias se han hecho mercadería vendible, dicen, y dicen verdad, que los representantes no se las comprarían si no fuesen de aquel jaez; y así el poeta procura acomodarse con lo que el representante que le ha de pagar su obra pide¹³.

4- The new legitimacy assigns a new dignity to the dramatic poet, not based on his study of the classics and their rules and texts, a new legitimacy that replies to the discredit that the classicists sought to extend to the new dramatic poets, relying on their alleged ignorance and lack of study. In his *Plaza universal de todas ciencias y artes* (1615), Suárez de Figueroa let the following statement drop: «Así se atreven a escribir farsas los que apenas saben leer»¹⁴. The first apology

¹¹ «The authors who compose them and the actors who represent them».

¹² «Are known nonsense and things that do not have a beginning, nor an end [...] say that this is the way they should be, because this is how the masses want them to be [...] and that it is better for them to make a living with the many, then the opinion of the few»

¹³ «And the poets who compose them are not to blame for this, because some of them know very well where they wander, and they know extremely well what they have to do; but as the comedies have become salable merchandise, they say, and say truly, that the agents would not buy the comedies from them if they were not of that ilk; and thus the poet tries to get used to what the agent who has to pay for his play asks». Sánchez Escribano and Porqueras Mayo, 1972, pp. 132-135.

¹⁴ «This is how the ones who can barely read dare to write farces». Sánchez Escribano and Porqueras Mayo, 1972, p. 175.

of the dignity of the playwright is not due to one of the new poets, but to one of his predecessors, the unknown author of *La comedia de Sepúlveda*, published in 1597 but written much earlier, in whose *Prólogo* Becerra argues that «es cosa de grande habilidad y calidad»¹⁵ to make comedies and that «se concede poderlas hacer a muy pocos entendimientos»¹⁶. But it will take waiting for Ricardo del Turia (1616), who calls Lope prince of the new poets, for Guillén de Castro (1618), who collects the nickname applied to Lope as «monstruo de la naturaleza», without a doubt a positive reply to the classicists who accused the *comedia nueva* of being «monstrous», for Tirso de Molina (1621) who raises him to the condition of founder of the new school and his teacher, for Alfonso Sánchez (1618), who assigns him the status of king of poets, with the same authority as Horace in dictating laws, and with better plays than those of the ancients. Lope himself never dared to so much. Among other things, because all his work is racked with a guilty conscience for being a poet paid by the crowd, known more as a playwright and less as an author of epic poems, he who would have wanted to be the great poet of the Spanish monarchy and its court¹⁷, and did not know or could not fully accept himself as the first modern poet consecrated by the market and emancipated professionally by his spectators. However, at the time of highest identification with his dramatic work, represented by the *Arte nuevo* (1609), Lope does not hesitate to proclaim his independence from the classical precepts and models, by declaring that he was writing for the multitude, seeking their applause and money. It is true that throughout the poem he plays with the ironic ambiguity of suggesting that he has done nothing but continue what was already happening in Spain, that his disloyalty to the classics makes him a barbarian, and that by adjusting to the tastes of his foolish public, he has no choice but to demean himself speaking to them in a foolish way, but the fact remains that, at the end of his poem, he gives up ambiguity and he defends himself defiantly, although he is called ignorant in France and Italy. Therefore, he concludes his manifesto with some splendid verses:

¹⁵ «It is a matter of great ability and quality»

¹⁶ «They can be created with little knowledge». Sánchez Escribano and Porqueras Mayo, 1972, p. 110.

¹⁷ See Ferrer, 2005; and García Reidy, 2009.

Sustento en fin lo que escribí, y conozco
 que, aunque fueran mejor de otra manera,
 no tuvieran el gusto que han tenido;
 porque a veces lo que es contra lo justo
 por la misma razón deleita el gusto (vv. 362-376)¹⁸.

5.- A comedy addressed to everyone. The audience of the open-air theatres in large cities was a diverse audience, both culturally and socially, where the most numerous sectors were formed by seated viewers, in *gradas* (tiers) and on *bancos* (benches), coming from the urban middle classes (knights, merchants, servants of the court or of the great noble houses, masters of the guilds, *hidalgos*...), by the *mosqueteros* or standing spectators, coming from the popular classes (officials and apprentices of the guilds, soldiers, servants of very different types, day labourers, floating population...), and by women, grouped in the *cazuela* (women's box), of indeterminate but in any case of non-aristocratic status; minority groups, but extremely influential, were the aristocrats, court officials and great nobles of the *apostentos* (boxes), or clerics and men of letters of the *desvanes* and upper galleries. It is therefore the first heterogeneous community of cultural consumers in the history of literature, and playwrights of the *comedia nueva* are aware that one of the most innovative aspects of the formula they work with is their ability to communicate with everybody, although distinct messages may be perceived, according to the capacity of reception of the various public sectors. Guillén de Castro expresses this synthetically in *El curioso impertinente* (1618) through the words of a Duke: the aim of comedies is to ensure «que las oiga un pueblo entero, / dando al sabio y al grosero / que reír y que gustar»¹⁹. Tirso will do it in a much more varied way in *El vergonzoso en palacio* (1621).

6.- A poetics based on the creative principle of nature. In the *Arte Nuevo* Lope justifies the mixture of comedy and tragedy that the *comedia nueva* practices, with the following argument: «Que aquesta

¹⁸ «I support in the end what I wrote, and I know / that, even though they would be better otherwise, / they would not have the taste that they have had; / because sometimes what is against what is right / for the same reason delights the taste».

¹⁹ «That an entire people hears them, / making the wise and the rude / laugh and enjoy them». Sánchez Escribano and Porqueras Mayo, 1972, p. 204.

variedad deleita mucho. / Buen ejemplo nos da naturaleza / que por tal variedad tiene belleza» (vv. 1178-1180)²⁰. Margaret Newels, in her review of the preceptives of the time, comments on these verses: «Here's an entirely new argument in defense of the theatre of the time»²¹. And this argument made a deep impression on the poetic opinion to the point that Lope was identified as the poet of nature, even as the «monstruo de la naturaleza». Nobody expanded this idea more forcefully than Alfonso Sánchez in the *Expostulatio Spongiae* (1618), where he lays the foundations of a thesis enunciated centuries later by Menéndez Pelayo (1883-1891), in which *comedia* did not break with the poetics of Aristotle, but made a different interpretation, a reading based not on the precepts of tragedy or of comedy, but on the principle of mimesis, the imitation of nature²². Alfonso Sánchez argues:

La naturaleza da leyes, no las recibe [...] Si es cierto, como dejó escrito Aristóteles, que el arte imita a la naturaleza, el mayor artífice será el que más se acerque a la naturaleza misma. [En la comedia] tenemos arte, tenemos preceptos que nos obligan, y el precepto principal es imitar a la naturaleza, porque las obras de los poetas expresan la naturaleza, las costumbres y el ingenio del siglo en que se escribieron [...] Ya que la naturaleza aborrece lo antiguo y se va detrás de lo nuevo, sigamos a la naturaleza para no quedarnos atrás [...] Lo que Lope ejecuta lo piden hoy la naturaleza, las costumbres, los ingenios; luego él escribe conforme al arte, porque sigue a la naturaleza [...] Parece que la naturaleza misma se expresa por la boca de nuestro poeta²³.

²⁰ «This variety causes much delight. Nature gives us a good example, for its beauty derives from its variety».

²¹ Newels, 1974, p. 143.

²² Menéndez Pelayo, *Historia de las ideas estéticas*, vol. III, chapter X.

²³ «Nature gives laws, it does not receive them [...] If what Aristotle once wrote, that art imitates nature is true, the greatest artisan will be the one that comes the closest to nature itself. [In comedy] we have arts, we have precepts that oblige us, and the main precept is imitating nature, because the works of the poets express the nature, the customs and the ingenuity of the century they were written in [...] Since nature loathes the old and pursues the new, let us follow nature to not be left behind [...] What Lope executes is required today by the nature, the customs, the ingenuity; then he writes according to art, because he follows nature [...] It seems that nature itself is expressed through our poet's words». Sánchez Escribano and Porqueras Mayo, 1972, pp. 205-207.

7.- A fundamental principle: the tragicomic. Undoubtedly the first term of the poetics of the *comedia nueva* is the one Lope orders in the *Arte nuevo*:

Lo trágico y lo cómico mezclado,
y Terencio con Séneca —aunque sea
como otro Minotauro de Pasife—
harán grave una parte, otra ridícula (vv. 174-177)²⁴.

But this precept was implemented by Lope from the very founding moments of the *comedia nueva*, and especially in the genre that helped him break with classicist proposals and those of the court theatre, the *palatine comedy*. And as early as 1581 Andrés Rey de Artieda boasted of having written a tragedy, entitled *Los amantes*, not on elevated subjects, but on a subject of love and with neither kings nor princes as protagonists but with a gentleman and a lady, and Juan de la Cueva, in 1588, in the *Coro febeo de romances historiales* observed: «el Trágico y el Cómico, / es uno ya, y una cuenta»²⁵. Newels provides a fragment of the poem entitled *A Thalia* in which the playwright of Seville claims the invention as his own:

Y de mí vio el mundo
en cómico estilo trágico
lo que no fue de ningún tiempo
visto ni de otro usado,
sino de mí y por mí
conocido, y de mí dado
por invención propia mía²⁶.

See now, for the edition and meaning of the Alfonso Sánchez's text, Tubau, 2009.

²⁴ «The tragic mixed with the comic, / and Terence with Seneca although it be / like another Minotaur of Pasiphae, will render one part serious, the other ridiculous».

²⁵ «The Tragic and the Comic are one now, and it narrates».

²⁶ «And I showed the world / in a comic tragic style / things that have never been seen or used before, / known only by me and because of me, and offered by me, through my own invention». Newels, 1974, p. 137.

The issue had reached so much resonance in Europe, especially on account of the controversy of Guarini and De Nores²⁷ on the concept of tragicomedy, defended by Guarini for his play *Il pastor Fido*, and attacked as being monstrous by De Nores, that the Spanish preceptists did not hesitate to echo, and the first one was Pinciano, in his *Philosophia antiqua poética*, of 1589, where he distinguishes a middle ground between tragedy and comedy that already has some classical precedents: the *Anfitrión*, by Plautus, called *tragicomedy* by his author, and the *togatas* and *trabeatas* comedies, «de gente patricia y grave», «que no son puras comedias y que tienen olor de lo trágico»²⁸. In general, Pinciano, very attentive to the practice of the comedia which flourished in Spain, is open to the concept, which he does not reject, but neither particularly recommends. But what mostly characterizes his attitude is a thorough reconsideration of the differences accumulated by the Medieval rhetoric and the Renaissance poetics that served to distinguish between tragedy and comedy, reviewing them one by one and contrasting difficulties and negative examples in order to discredit all of them except the one that transforms comedy in a vehicle for laughter and tragedy in a vehicle for pity and fear: «Veis todas estas diferencias y que todas son inciertas, sino son aquellas que tocan en ridículo y gustoso y donoso, por solo el cual se diferencia la comedia de la tragedia»²⁹. The firm boundary between the two classical genres became, therefore, very blurred, or replaced by a no man's land of mixed phenomena. After *Arte nuevo*, the defense of the tragicomic becomes a recurring motif of the playwrights of the *comedia nueva*. None of them perhaps as explicit as Ricardo del Turia in his *Apologético de las comedias españolas*:

Bien pudiera yo responder con algún fundamento [...] con decir que ninguna comedia de cuantas se representan en España lo es, sino tragicomedia, que es un mixto formado de lo cómico y lo trágico [...] en lo

²⁷ Newels, 1974, p. 140.

²⁸ «Of patrician and serious people», «that are not pure comedies and have a scent of the tragic».

²⁹ «You see all these differences and that they are all uncertain, but those that verge on the ridiculous, enjoyable and amusing are the only ones that allow the comedy to differentiate itself from the tragedy». Sánchez Escribano and Porqueras Mayo, 1972, pp. 101-102.

mixto las partes pierden su forma y hacen una tercer materia muy diferente³⁰.

And this was not invented by the Spanish, for this mixture is present in the ancient theatre, and then we have the more recent example of «la tragicomedia que el laureado poeta Guarino hizo del pastor Fido»³¹.

8.- The mixture as a value. The attitude of insubordination against the inherited categories, and the decision to combine and mix them extends to the entire poetics of the *comedia nueva*, to the point of becoming a value of the new dramatic system, not only a specific precept. The mixture of social and action ranks was the one that most supported this value, and consequently the most controversial, and not that of fatal or happy endings, as one might think. Especially that of serious characters, mainly kings and princes, considered to be characteristic of tragedy, in fables intended to provoke laughter, and in a smaller degree that of common, particular characters, especially citizen knights and honest farmers, in fables of serious development and denouement. In the *Ejemplar poético* (1606), Juan de la Cueva anticipated himself in attributing the innovation to himself:

A mí me culpan de que fui el primero
que reyes y deidades di al tablado
de las comedias traspasando el fuero³².

Lope transforms the subject-matter into the foundation of the mixture between the tragic and the comic and into the core element of his defiance against classical precepts: «Elíjase el sujeto [de la comedia] y no se mire / —perdonen los preceptos— si es de

³⁰ «If only I could respond with some fundament, by saying that none of the comedies represented in Spain is a comedy, but a tragicomedy, which is a mixture between the comic and the tragic [...] in the mixture the parts lose their shape and form a third very different matter».

³¹ «The tragicomedy that the poet laureate Guarino made out of the pastor Fido». Sánchez Escribano and Porqueras Mayo, 1972, pp. 176-180.

³² «They blame me that I was the first / who brought kings and deities to the stage / of the comedies breaking the rules». Sánchez Escribano and Porqueras Mayo, 1972, p. 143.

Reyes»³³, and he even allows himself to advise this mixture against the opinion of the «prudente / Filipo, Rey de España y señor nuestro»³⁴, who did not like at all seeing «la autoridad real [...] andar fingida entre la humilde plebe» (vv. 157-175)³⁵. Consequently, Lope entitles tragicomedies those plays which present war-heroic or political-diplomatic events from the time of the Spanish Habsburgs, which involve the kings and princes or their great nobles and captains, such as *Carlos Quinto en Francia*, *La Santa Liga*, *El asalto de Mastrique*, *El Arauco domado*, or *La nueva victoria del Marqués de Santa Cruz*.

Another mixture that the *comedia nueva* will gladly impose will be that of pretence and truth, as expressed in its title by the famous tragicomedy of *Lo fingido verdadero*, by Lope de Vega. The principle of differentiation of the plays according to their adherence to one of these categories had been established, in the origins of Renaissance theatre, by Torres Naharro's *Propalladia* (1517), to distinguish two major types of comedies, the *a noticia* comedies or of real subject-matter, and the *a fantasía* comedies, or of imaginary subject-matter. And it operated as something natural in the minds of many of the poets and scholars of the time, as seen in this fragment from *El cisne de Apolo* (1602), by L. A. de Carvallo: the comedies are performed «representando la historia o ficción» («representing history or fiction»), or in this other fragment from the *Quijote* of 1605, that speaks of the comedies «que ahora se usan, así las imaginadas como las de historia»³⁶. Cascales, in his *Tablas poéticas* (1617), raises it from a natural status to a preceptive status by theorizing it. However, the doctrine of Cascales would be wholly inadequate to the *comedia nueva*, which is suitable to the most daring mixtures of fiction and history in the same play: comedies such as *La niña de plata*, with an entirely fictional main action but developed by historical figures such as the prince *Enrique de Trastámara* (future king Henry II, and co-protagonist of the play) and the king Peter I of Castile, and dramas such as *Carlos V en Francia*, which portrays the Emperor in relation to historical events, and in whose action do not interfere mere

³³ «Choose the subject [of the comedy] and do not look / —pardon the precepts— if it is about Kings».

³⁴ «Prudent / Filipo, King of Spain and our lord».

³⁵ «The royal authority [...] blending in disguise with the humble masses».

³⁶ «That are now used, both the fictional and the historical ones». Sánchez Escribano and Porqueras Mayo, 1972, pp. 117 and 132.

episodes but a whole fable, amatory on one hand and military on the other, that disputes the axis of the plot, are but two examples of many that could be cited, and that would not fit under any circumstance in the neo-Aristotelian doctrine of Cascales. Tirso de Molina wrote it beautifully, in a famous passage of the *Cigarrales* that protests against this doctrine: «¡Como si la licencia de Apolo se estrechase a la recolección histórica y no pudiese fabricar, sobre cimientos de personas verdaderas, arquitecturas de ingenio fingidas!»³⁷.

The transgression of the strict separation of the fictional and the historical goes hand in hand with the questioning that history is the subject-matter characteristic of tragedy, while fiction is characteristic of comedy. Even Lope de Vega himself, when he tries in the *Arte nuevo* to show to the academicians that he is familiar with the classic precepts, he emphasizes the principle: «Por argumento la Tragedia tiene / la historia, y la Comedia el fingimiento» (vv. 111-112)³⁸. But this principle had gone through a crisis precisely in Renaissance Italy, especially in the work and in the doctrine of Giraldo Cinthio, as known from the time of Ganassa and the tournées of the Italian companies throughout Spain, performing among others his tragedy *Orbecche*³⁹. M. Newels summarizes the issue: «The Pinciano and [Jusepe González de] Salas, same as Giraldo Cinthio, ignore the rule, according to which the matter of tragedy has to be historical, and the comedy, fictional»⁴⁰. Lope, in *El castigo sin venganza*, entitled by him tragedy, gave a good example of this fictional use of tragedy, as he did in his palatine —imaginary— dramas, entitled many of them as tragicomedies.

Likewise the principle of correspondence between a love plot and comedy, as preceptists adopt, is infringed. According to Juan Pablo Mártir Rizo, in his *Poética de Aristóteles traducida de latín* (1623), «Debe ser la fábula cómica agradable y rediculosa y amorosa»⁴¹, and Bances Candamo, in the last preceptive of the 17th century, *Teatro de*

³⁷ «As if Apollo's license limited itself to the historical recollection and could not build, on a foundation of real people, fictional architectures of ingenuity». Sánchez Escribano and Porqueras Mayo, 1972, p. 208.

³⁸ «In its plot the Tragedy has history, and the Comedy figment».

³⁹ In this respect, the book of Ojeda Calvo, 2007.

⁴⁰ Newels, 1974, p. 79.

⁴¹ «The comic fable must be enjoyable and ridiculous and affectionate». Sánchez Escribano and Porqueras Mayo, 1972, p. 231.

los teatros de los pasados y presentes siglos (aprox. 1690) opposes frontally only two types of comedies, by their subject-matter: «Dividirémoslas sólo en dos clases: amatorias o historiales, porque las de santos son historiales también»⁴². Against the violation of this principle, precisely in the comedies of saints, Suárez de Figueroa protests in *El pasajero* (1617): «El uso, antes abuso, admite en las comedias de santidad algunos episodios de amores, menos honestos de lo que fuera razón»⁴³, and the reader, used to consult the texts related to the *Controversias sobre la licitud del teatro en España*⁴⁴ knows very well that this argument, the mixture of a love plot with the sacred character of the biblical comedies, of the New Testament comedies or of the hagiographical comedies was one of the key arguments used by moralists in their efforts to prohibit performances. And if the love plot is important in religious dramas, the profane dramas could not be explained without that subject-matter, associated or not with conflicts of honour. Love dramas are many of Lope's best tragedies and tragicomedies: *El caballero de Olmedo*, *Los Prados de León*, *El mayordomo de la duquesa de Amalfi*, *El castigo sin venganza*, *El remedio en la desdicha*, *Peribáñez y el comendador de Ocaña*, *El perseguido*, *La locura por la honra*, *La fuerza lastimosa...* and many others.

As recalled by M. Newels, no other difference between tragedy and comedy was so successful from late antiquity to the Renaissance as the unfortunate and calamitous ending of the tragedy, compared to the happy ending of the comedy: «This theory was based on the Book III by Diomedes, but was later made as absolute rule by authors such as Caelius Rodigino [...] and as Gregorio Giraldo, Francesco Nausea, Florido Labino, Alexander Carerio and even Julius Caesar Scaliger and, at certain times, even Jason Denores»⁴⁵. But once recovered Aristotle's *Poética* the new positions of the Renaissance preceptists will insist that the main difference between tragedy and comedy is not based on the endings but on what is essential to

⁴² «Let us divide them in only two categories: of love and historical, because those of saints are also historical». Sánchez Escribano and Porqueras Mayo, 1972, p. 347.

⁴³ «The use, previously abuse, admits in the comedies of saints some episodes of love affairs, less honest than it would be reasonable». Sánchez Escribano and Porqueras Mayo, 1972, p. 190.

⁴⁴ Cotarelo y Mori, 1904.

⁴⁵ Newels, 1974, pp. 78-79.

them, the object of imitation or mimesis: mimesis of «a noble and eminent action» in tragedy, mimesis of a laughable action in comedy⁴⁶. Within this framework Giraldo Cinthio proposed in Italy his happy ending tragedies, *de lieto fine*, and Pinciano, who knows the proposal of Giraldo, discredits the endings as fundamental distinctive difference. Pinciano asks: «¿De manera que el fin alegre o triste no diferencia y no distingue a la tragedia o comedia?»⁴⁷. Fadrique replies to this question, after considering several examples of Antiquity, which already presented *simple tragedies* with happy endings and *double tragedies* with happy ending for some protagonists and with unfortunate ending for others: «en el añudamiento y perturbación de la cual fábula está la diferencia esencial e importante, dicha tantas veces, de lo ridículo y espantoso y miserable [...] Esta sola es la diferencia esencial; que el fin ser alegre o triste, no lo es»⁴⁸. Even though Lope seems, with some exceptions, to reserve the title of tragedy for plays which have denouements that present unfortunate deaths (*La bella Aurora*, *El Duque de Viseo*, *El castigo sin venganza*...), there are many plays with a tragic or highly dramatic subject-matter that conclude with a happy ending (*El perseguido*, *Peribáñez*, *La fuerza lastimosa*...), with an unfortunate ending attenuated by some sort of compensation (*El marqués de Mantua*, *El casamiento en la muerte*, *Fuenteovejuna*, *El mejor alcalde, el rey*...), or contrasted by comic elements (*Adonis y Venus*, *Los comendadores de Córdoba*...).

No wonder, therefore, that *comedia* admits deaths and pitiful misfortunes in its fábula, as acknowledged by Pinciano: «Con todo cuanto me decís, dijo el Pinciano, veo yo que lloran los actores mismos en las comedias, y aun algunos oyentes, y veo también muertes en algunas dellas»⁴⁹. Fadrique, then, explains that there may be tragic elements in the *comedia* provided they are not destined to

⁴⁶ Aristóteles, *Poética*, fragments 1448 and 1449, in González, 1977.

⁴⁷ «So the happy or sad ending does not differentiate and it does not distinguish tragedy from comedy?».

⁴⁸ «In the entanglement and the disruption of the fable lies the essential and important difference, mentioned so many times, of the ridiculous and appalling and miserable [...] This is the only essential difference; whether the ending is happy or sad is not essential. Sánchez Escribano and Porqueras Mayo, 1972, pp. 100-101.

⁴⁹ «With everything that you tell me, Pinciano said, I see the actors themselves cry in comedies, and even some listeners, and I also see deaths in some of them».

provoke horror and sympathy but laughter: «y así las muertes trágicas son lastimosas, mas las de la comedia, si alguna hay, son de gusto y pasatiempo, porque en ellas mueren personas que sobran en el mundo, como es una vieja cizañadora, un viejo avaro, un rufián o una alcahueta»⁵⁰. Lope could have concluded these reflections with practical cases that sometimes go far beyond what the preceptists anticipate, in their audacity and shamelessness, as in the case of *Las ferias de Madrid*, where we will witness the comic assassination of a husband by his father-in-law, for the benefit of the adultery of his daughter, or of *El amor desatinado*, which will present the rape of a lady, mistress of the king, as a laughable matter.

2. GENRE SYSTEM IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE OF THE «COMEDIA NUEVA»: A DUAL SYSTEM

When Lope de Vega's theatrical proposal imposed itself in the battlefield for the control of the public spectacle between different aesthetic and, at the same time, scenic choices that characterizes the last two decades of the 16th century, a word also imposed itself, *comedia*, which served to designate all kinds of plays written according to the standards of the new school. This is the meaning of *comedia* that printers used with absolute majority in their printed volumes (*comedia famosa* is the most common subtitle that goes with the specific title of each play), irrespective of the tragic or comic character of the plays. And this is the meaning that it reaches in the most important treaty of the new school, the *Arte nuevo de hacer comedias en este tiempo* (1609), by Lope de Vega, the same that acknowledge both the apologists of the *comedia nueva* and the neo-Aristorelian theorists, often hostile and other times tolerant, although disdainful in relation to the new way of writing plays.

Nevertheless, at present, this denomination of *comedia* is particularly uncomfortable for critical language, because of its continuous overlap with the meaning of *comedy* as a genre opposed to *tragedy*. Also among the contemporaries the sliding from one meaning to

⁵⁰ «And so the tragic deaths are pitiful, but the ones in comedies, if any exist, are of delight and pastime, because there are too many persons in the world like the ones who die in comedies, such as an old meddling woman, an old miser, a pimp or a matchmaker». Sánchez Escribano and Porqueras Mayo, 1972, pp. 99-100.

another in the shade of the same word is as common as it is irremediable, as shown in *Arte nuevo* itself.

In order to disambiguate my own speech, requirement of all scientific language, I have used since 1981 the word *drama*, because, apart from being a known word at the time, as already defined by Covarrubias, though little used⁵¹, it can bring together the two predominantly «serious» or grave genres, *tragedy* and *tragicomedy*, so often distinguished from each other as confused or mixed by the very preceptists and contemporary playwrights, but constantly opposed to *comedy*⁵². *Drama* thus refers to the theatrical genre which regroups the more serious rather than laughable options of the *comedia nueva* system, the options that are not primarily comic, which to a greater extent, in short, merge the tragic and the comic.

We owe to E. Morby the most systematic modern effort of understanding the internal differences of genre in the Lope de Vega's work, who, in most cases considered *comedia* as a concept that included all kinds of plays of his time, subtitled a few plays with the label *tragedy* and others with the label *tragicomedy*, in at least 42 cases, which Morby estimated to be an eighth part of Lope's production. Obviously, by distinguishing this way between them he discredited his own conception, and made use again of classical concepts. Morby's essay⁵³, not always as coherent as systematic in his argumentation, reaches a series of conclusions which are of interest to me to emphasize here:

1. - There is a considerable amount of arbitrariness in the use of generic concepts in the work of Lope.
2. - Despite this dose of arbitrariness, one can observe an «imperfect order», or internal logic, in Lope's denominations: the term

⁵¹ Covarrubias, *Tesoro de la lengua castellana o española*. See, for the concept of «drama», in the context of the treatises on poetics of the time, the quoted essay of M. Newels, 1974, especially chapters III, V and VI.

⁵² This happens in *Tablas poéticas* (1617) by Cascales, in which the character Pierio is interested in *tragicomedies*, and Castalio, the author's spokesman, denies any possible connection with the *comedies*, not even with the *double comedies*. If they relate to something, he admits, it is with the *double tragedies*, even though they are, as *hemaphrodites*, bad *tragedias* and even though «tienen muy poco de sujeto trágico con que se ha de mover a misericordia y miedo» («they have very little tragic subject that has to induce mercy and fear»). Sánchez Escribano and Porqueras Mayo, 1972, p. 197.

⁵³ Morby, 1943.

comedia served to highlight the specificity of its formula as opposed to the classical and neoclassical tradition, but this *comedia* did not quite get to fully mask the orientation of each play to one of the two main categories, *tragedy* and *comedy*.

3. - Within the option for *tragedy*, there is a clear affinity between *tragedy-tragedy* (despite its deviation from the classical standards) and *tragicomedy*, as they share the same basis, which differentiates them from the *comedies* understood in their narrow concept. In order to explain this basis Morby refers to Spingarn's six major differential features between *tragedy* and *comedy* (1905)⁵⁴, out of which the most important in his view is the one that refers to the subject matter —historical in *tragedies* and *tragicomedies*, and fictional in *comedies*.

4. - Lope seems to distinguish between the *tragedies* and the *tragicomedies* with a certain regularity depending mostly on the denouement, unfortunate and full of deaths in the *tragedy*, happy in the *tragicomedies*.

At the end of his work, by somehow contradicting all his previous argumentation, Morby is inclined to admit that Lope's revolution led inevitably to the destruction of the chemically pure formula of *tragedy*, introducing in it many non-tragic elements to the point that the term *tragicomedy* would have been more suitable for his plays, but this word did not triumph⁵⁵. In fact, according to

⁵⁴ Spingarn, 1925. In fact, the differences that Spingarn points out had been inventoried by the medieval poetics and collected by Renaissance writers. Having few variants of presentation these are the ones that Alonso López Pinciano analyses, one by one, in his *Philosophia antigua poética* (1596).

⁵⁵ M. Newels explains that the term *tragicomedy* «was discredited [...] because of the discussions that it had raised in Italy and whose reflections had warned even in Spain. It had been tried to define the Spanish *comedia* as *tragicomedia*, but the Italian tragicomedy, for example, did not correspond to the Spanish nor the so-called French 'drame libre'. The antipathy of preceptists towards the term *tragicomedy*, even though Plautus had used it in his *Anfitrión*, is clearly visible in *Tablas poéticas* (1617) by Francisco Cascales, in which Castalio ends up threatening his interlocutor of getting seriously angry if he used the term *tragicomedy* again, instead of the *double tragedy*, which he suggests (Sánchez Escribano and Porqueras Mayo, 1972, p. 200). To reach agreement on the concept of tragicomedy between the various critical traditions is difficult even today. While in Spain, for instance, the term is linked to the deconstruction of the classical precepts on the modern *drama* (see Victor Hugo's *Préface to Cromwell*, in which he proclaims *drama* as the new genre of modernity, compared to the classical

Morby, Spanish playwrights lost interest of the aspiration to purity, and opposed the principle of «nature» with its mixtures and its freedom to that of «art» with its distinctions and its order, put forward by the Italian. While Italian and Spanish preceptists were struggling with the classification, delimitation and depuration of genres, Spanish playwrights opted for abandoning the categories.

From Morby's approach I assume, for my own conception, the highest affinity between *tragedies* and the ones that Lope called *tragicomedies*, whatever Lope's reasons to distinguish between them were, I consider them to be neither accurate nor systematically applied in his work as a whole. This proposal fits well with what the playwrights of the *comedia nueva* defend unanimously, as already explained: the mixture of «the tragic and the comic» as a structuring principle of the *comedia nueva*. A principle whose implementation violates all the differences between *comedy* and *tragedy* set again and again by preceptists, developing serious conflicts between low or common characters (*Fuenteovejuna*, *Peribáñez*), or involving elevated characters such as kings and princes in daily affairs (*El caballero de Illescas*), if not ridiculous (*El amor desatinado*); insofar as he raises tragic conflicts (power struggle, fall of royal or ministerial favour, defense of honour...) in a comical way (in the so-called *palatine comedies*, as in the case of *Los donaires de Matico*, which stages a popular revolt against the sovereign), or comical conflicts (love and other private conflicts) in a tragic way (as in *El caballero de Olmedo*); insofar as one may adorn plots of high dramatic tension with ridiculous episodes (the denouement of the *tragedy* of *Los comendadores de Córdoba*) or viceversa (in *El lacayo fingido*: the plot of the story of the invisible cloth, typical of a *comedy* in the most classical meaning, or of an *entremés* in Spanish style, is combined with the kidnapping of a lady of the palace by the king, who tries to take sexual advantage of her in a despotic and clandestine way); insofar as it freely oscillates between history and fiction, either in *tragedies* or *tragicomedies* (often

tragedy or *comedy*, and takes as fundament Lope's *Arte nuevo*), in Italy the term is linked to the proposal of G. B. Guarini and is opposed to Giraldi Cinthio's *tragedy de lieto fine*, and in England the concept carries an essentially neoclassical poetics, as M. T. Herrick, 1955 tells us. According to Newels, 1974, p. 125: «In Italy and in France simply showed another genre, which was added to the existing ones of tragedy and comedy, while in Spain it was necessary to define in general the new drama».

fictional, as in the case of *palatine dramas*, like *El perseguido* or *La fuerza lastimosa*, or in *comedies* (the historical ones are not missing, such as *La niña de plata*), or insofar as it feels entitled to solve indistinctly its endings, in a comic or tragic way, no matter how serious the plot is (the unequal love between a noble and a commoner ends in *tragedy* in *El mayordomo de la duquesa de Amalfi* and in *comedy* in *El perro del hortelano*).

But once admitted this hybridity of basis, this heterodoxy of principle, the *comedia nueva* diversifies its functions in alternative directions, it either explores the playing possibilities and the limits social life can be subjected to («es en vano / poner a los gustos leyes»⁵⁶), or it tries to awake the appropriate teachings to the good regiment of citizens («los tiempos no guardan ley, / la fortuna es desvarío»⁵⁷). The first direction opens a realm of imagination and intrigues, of unleashed desire, and it constitutes what we mean by *comedias* (tragicomic) of the *comedia nueva*. The second is the very territory of exemplarity, of controversy, of indoctrination, and also of the questioning of the human condition, and it corresponds to the *tragedies* (tragicomic) and the *tragicomedies* (tragicomic) of the *comedia nueva*. I will be referring to this second group as *drama*. If all of them are *tragicomedies*, some opt for the comic while some others do so for the dramatic⁵⁸.

In one of my articles in 1981 I expressed my belief that ultimately the plurality of options explored by the early Lope de Vega could be structured in a dual system, of only two macrogenres,

⁵⁶ «It is in vain / to impose laws on the tastes».

⁵⁷ «Times do not obey the law, / fortune is madness».

⁵⁸ D'Artois, 2009b, inquires into tragedies and tragicomedies, from a new point of view, that of the patterns of reading, especially in two of the *Partes de comedias* by Lope de Vega, XVI and XX. In line with her, both of these kinds of play share a unique editorial function. In concentrating tragedies and tragicomedies in those volumes, Lope should fashion an image of self-according to a courtly standard of poetry, that of the «tragic greatness», in a phase of his life in which he deals with a court self-promotion strategy.

from the functional point of view⁵⁹ but also from the point of view of the model of the spectacle⁶⁰, the comedies and the dramas:

Both genres are alternative not only with respect to the dramatic proposal they implement but also, and especially, in their attitude towards the public they invite. The drama revolves around a determined will of ideological impact, it is a spectacle of great pomp which creates exemplary conflicts and indoctrinating ways of solution. Drama is entrusted, in the division of labour imposed by the Baroque theatrical institution, with the transcendent mission, the proselytizing, the denunciation and the panegyric [...] Comedy, by contrast, is entrusted with a mainly ludic mission. *Comedy* is the land of the game, characterized by an often ingenious or amoral frivolity and even cynical, or at least unorthodox. *Comedy* is open to chance (which can lead to all the slips), to imagination, to the unsuspected potential of the intrigue. The comedy is also the realm of the mask, of hidden identities, of secret loves, of transvestisms, of face covers and of nocturnalities.

Both genres were configuring the dual, dialectic basis, on which the *comedia nueva* is founded. On one hand there are, as considered by Morby, the *tragedies* and the ones that Lope expressly called *tragicomedies*, although with an unequal weight, for the latter are considerably more frequent than the former. In Lope's theatrical production, even of the early Lope, the most avant-garde, there are still *tragedies*, and very relevant ones, such as *El casamiento en la muerte*, *El marqués de Mantua*, *La locura por la honra* (none of them called *tragedy* by Lope) or *El castigo sin venganza* (this one called *tragedy*), but most of the tragic contents in his work have a tragicomic formula. In principle the *tragicomedy*, if we take into consideration Lope's *Arte nuevo* or other contemporary testimonies, is a mixture of *comedy* and *tragedy*, potentially equal. However, from its very origins, established by Fernando de Rojas, the Spanish *tragicomedy* was *tragedy* with comedic episodes or characters. In the Renaissance, Torres Naharro developed a formula of *comedy*, which, by replying to that

⁵⁹ I mean by «functional» the modalization, or *mise-en-mode*, comical or serious, imposed by the author on the dramatic conflict and the effect he wants to provoke on the viewer with this modalization. The quoted article: Oleza, 1981, pp. 153-223.

⁶⁰ For the model of alternative spectacle that both genres convey, see the cited study: Oleza, 1981, pp. 154-157.

of Rojas, needed the tragic risk to cast a momentary shadow over an essentially comic world: in *Seraphina*, in *Ymeneá*, in *Calamita*, or in *Aquilana*, death ends up threatening the fate of the protagonists, but in all these plays the tragic risk is summoned in order to dissolve it and the triumphant gesture of the *comedy* is upheld precisely in the neutralization of the *tragedy*. The Spanish *comedy* was essentially *comedy* with shades of *tragedy* during the whole Renaissance period, to retake with Tárrega and Lope the gesture of Rojas, the *tragedy* with *comedy* laughs. Lope's *tragicomedy* is not an equipollent hybrid, it does not play at the same time and equally in the field of *comedy* and of *tragedy*. Pure *tragedy* was the antagonist of Renaissance *comedy*, especially at the end of the century. The Baroque *tragicomedy* finds its antagonist, however, in the pure *comedy*. Thus, the expectations of the audience are distributed unevenly in each century: between *tragedy* and *comedy* in the 16th century, between *tragicomedy* and *comedy* in the 17th century. This means that *tragicomedy* occupies much of the space and the functions that the precepts destined to *tragedy*, and only a fraction of those reserved to *comedy*. The *tragicomedy* displaced the need of *tragedy* due to assuming to a large extent its role concerning the public, due to its strong assimilation of a pompous morphology and an exemplary strategy, but for this very reason it did not displace the need for *comedy*. The *tragicomedy* constituted itself in the end as the modern form of *tragedy*. A form, it must be said, that allowed the existence of other forms, although it did so at the cost of reducing the demand of those other forms among the public in exceptionally adverse occasions and circumstances. *Tragedy* remains therefore in the dramatic system of the *comedia nueva* of the time of Lope de Vega, as the extreme possibility of seriousness, its purest and at the same time most minority expression, while *comedy* covers both the extreme possibility of the laughable, its purest and at the same time most minority expression (is the case of *comedias novelescas*: ordinary characters, fictional subjects, particular conflicts), and the most hybrid expressions: the *urban comedies*, with particular conflicts and middle-class characters, but with historical or contemporary spatial and temporal background, on the one hand; the *palatine comedies*, with laughable plots and imaginary stories, but among serious characters and with often dramatic conflicts, on the other⁶¹.

⁶¹ Arellano, 2011a, stresses also on the dual basis of the *comedia nueva*, joining

3. THE UNFOLDING OF THE GENRE SYSTEM: A BATTERY OF SPECTACLES AND GENERIC PROTOTYPES

Both drama and comedy, the two macrogenres of stage practice in the time of Lope, manifested themselves through a great variety of generic prototypes. It is not that dramatic poets and commentators were interested in explaining these different options, given the essentially pragmatic and anti-normative condition of their poetics. Few distinctions are made at the time, and they rarely go beyond the most basic distinctions: amatory or historical comedies, feigned or true comedies, comedies *de cuerpo* (of spectacular staging) or of wit, comedies of saints, of shepherds, cloak and sword comedies...⁶² Nevertheless the differences between the comedies give rise to a whole battery of different dramatic and spectacular options. These differences are in subject matter (e.g.: historical or amatory), in story (with its beginning, its *ñudo*, its *soltura* or denouement), in episodes (which unfold the *fabula*, and especially those linked to the secondary plot), in purpose (the intended effect on the spectator: laughter, moral lesson, tragic catharsis), in the rank of the characters (kings, nobles, knights, villeins...), in setting (near or remote, verisimilar or fantastic, stylized or realistic), in stagecraft (comedies of spectacular staging or comedies of wit, with domestic setting and poor staging), in costumes and *atrezzo* (Pinciano recalls that a dis-

up on the one hand tragedies and tragicomedies, without essential differences that could be observed between them, and comedies on the other hand. Nevertheless, I cannot agree neither with his devaluation of tragicomic *mixture* in the dramatic system of the *comedia*, nor his minimizing of dramatic elements into the comic plays and of comic elements into tragic or tragicomic ones. That approach takes away from the *comedia nueva* almost its entire potency of historical innovation, and makes incomprehensible, lack of understanding, the breaking of the *comedia nueva* with the classicist pattern, becoming assimilated to it. Anyhow, Calderón's times would better adapt than Lope's to an restorer point of view like that exposed by Arellano.

⁶² The most consistent attempts to shed light on the diverse set of genres of *comedy* are late. It is worth mentioning those of Pellicer de Tovar, *Idea de la comedia en Castilla. Preceptos del teatro de España y arte del estilo cómico*; Salas Barbadillo, *Coronas del Parnaso y platos de las Musas*; and especially at the end of the century, and undoubtedly the most complete systematization, although not the best informed historically, that of Bances Candamo, *Theatro de los teatros de los pasados y presentes siglos* (aprox. 1690), which fits much better Calderón's time than Lope's. See on the genres typology by Bances Candamo, Arellano, 2011b.

inction was made between comedies of «chapines» and comedies of «zuecos»⁶³ and should have been easily identifiable⁶⁴ —despite the constantly repeated subtitle *comedia famosa* that headed the posters of the performances— by the Baroque spectators, who like the modern spectators distinguished the type of spectacle they wanted to see and distinguished it with at least the same interest with which they distinguished between different companies or between various poets. Plays entitled *La dama boba* or *Los donaires de Matico* could not be mistaken beforehand for plays entitled *El casamiento en la muerte* or *El mejor alcalde el Rey*, or for others such as *Carlos Quinto en Francia* or *La historia de Tobías*, just as a spectator who was an expert in *romancero*, and up-to-date with the life and works of poets like Lope de Vega could not mistake his *Belardo furioso* for his *Adonis y Venus*, and even less the latter for *La campana de Aragón* or *El último godo*: the title itself often conveyed a declaration of intentions. But in many others, it was the very experience of the spectator, well nourished by the frequency of his visits to open-air theatres, which distinguished from the beginning the subject-matter (high or low, feigned or historical, pastoral or urban, *morisco* or of foreign history...), the quality of the characters, the setting of action, and the tone of the story (comic or dramatic). The first scenes, if not the first lines, situated the spectator in a horizon of generic expectations: he knew where things were going to⁶⁵.

⁶³ «Chapines» and «zuecos» are different kinds of shoes, something as slippers and clogs.

⁶⁴ Lope, in the *Arte Nuevo* recalls the different types of comedy in Ancient times and says that back then «también eran, como agora, varias» («there were also, just as nowadays, several»), vv. 116-118.

⁶⁵ This does not mean that the genres we establish from this moment on were characterized and assimilated genres at that time. Our proposal is hypothetical-deductive and it is based on a very sharp contrast with the texts (approximately 400, analysed in the Artelope Database, <http://artelope.uv.es>), and on a modern categorization. We do not try to describe things as they were (for there were no explicitly characterized genres, beyond those mentioned), but to develop a theoretical model capable of providing an explanation of how things happened, and especially explain the systematic differences between groups of plays, differences we can characterize rigorously and coherently. See footnote 57.

3.1. *Varieties of comedy*

In its fight against the classical theatrical proposal, where *tragedy* had primacy, *comedia nueva* held up *comedy* as an *avant-garde* flag, in its first stage, which was already a radical reply to the neo-Aristotelian standard that considered *tragedy* a superior genre to comedy, even superior to the epic. In the case of *comedies*, the more general principle of differentiation is the one that distinguishes the universe of unreality or of verisimilitude where the action is set, as already acknowledged by contemporaries.

The so-called *palatine* comedies are placed in a setting of unreality, whose space and time coordinates are treated as radically imaginary (whether they are or are not, as some are located in nearby European countries, like France or England, and in some exceptional cases even within some region of the kingdom itself), and whose action allows the audacity of the fantastic. These plays have the court as the dominant social universe, with its sovereigns, its nobles and their high offices, and as central core an episode of concealment of identity, either by not being aware of it, or by strategic decision. The hiding of identity comes from a destabilization of the right order (social and moral) and it will be revealed —only after the intricate sequence of adventures of the concealed identity— with the restoration of that order. These comedies therefore tackle with insolence, and sometimes with unusual doses of audacity, corruption and crimes of power, unlawful ambitions and desires of tyrants, adulterous passions of kings and nobles. The mask allows the protagonist, —voluntarily or involuntarily— to explore *another* identity, and with it, *another* reality, *another* social status (that of the «capigorrón» student, of the pilgrim, of the rustic shepherd, of the wild man, of the villein, of the lackey...). This kind of immersion in the dark side of social life facilitates for these comedies the exploration of social inequalities and their conflicts, the vision of the court as a place essentially corrupt and the monarch as an everyday character deprived of grandeur and many times of dignity.

The *palatine* comedies operate as the main shock force in breaking the *comedia nueva* with respect to both the scholarly and the courtly stage practice, whose theatrical conventions —in the case of the former— and whose rites of celebration —in the case of the latter— attacked frontally and with a considerable transgressive en-

ergy. It used characters of the highest rank, such as kings and princes, either for love and domestic affairs, often ridiculous, or for heroic and terrible affairs (wars, popular revolts, ruthless fights for the throne, risings and fallings of fortune), but also destined to provoke laughter in the audience, it ended in a joyful way, and it placed them in imaginary settings, against their natural habitat, according to the precepts, that was none other than history. That is, it practically violated all the instructions of classical precepts, the whole coherent argumentation destined to rigidly distinguish between *tragedy* and *comedy*, and this type of comedies gave rise to a more indignant response. Perhaps no other comedies received such an outrageous echo as *Los donaires de Matico*, which quite irritated Cervantes, but neither *Las burlas de amor*, *Ursón y Valentín*, *El príncipe inocente*, nor *El rey por semejanza* (if it is Lope's) have anything to envy in terms of boldness of imagination, moral audacity, and aesthetic or ideological irreverence.

In this genre, and putting an end to the first stage of his work, at the very frontier of 1599, Lope gives us a little masterpiece: *El lacayo fingido*. Throughout his career Lope wrote about ninety plays of this kind, but approximately twenty five had already been written during the first stage. Among his maturity plays the critics have emphasized the importance of *El perro del hortelano* and *El villano en su rincón*.

Compared to the palatine comedies, at the opposite pole, there are the urban comedies, the most representative of an everyday setting, partly learned from the Italian *comedy* and «novella» and partly from the Spanish tradition that started with *La Celestina* and Torres Naharro (especially with *Ymeneá*, being in its turn an adaptation of *La Celestina*), and whose formula the Valencian playwrights (Tárrega, Aguilar, Guillén de Castro) had started modeling in the 80s and the 90s. Lope's comedies place the audience in a recognizable urban geography, when not familiar (Madrid, Toledo, Valencia, Sevilla...), and between the manners of a gentleman urban middle class, whose adventures always revolve around conflicts, fantasies and misunderstandings of amorous seduction. It is the most classical genre that the *comedia nueva* brings into play, as it adapts well to the conditions established by the neoclassicist preceptists: the aim of provoking laughter in the audience, the medium rank of its characters, its love and domestic affairs, its beginning between anxieties

and setbacks in contrast to its happy ending, or its subject based most often on invented cases. This is also the most constant genre of Lope's production, as from the first to the last stage the comedies that represent it are always among the most numerous groups, although their conflicts and their most characteristic features change quite a lot from one stage to another⁶⁶. Lope wrote about a hundred such comedies, at least a quarter of his production. The early Lope wrote elaborated plays such as *Los locos de Valencia*, *El maestro de danzar*, *El mesón de la corte*, or *La francesilla* and, at the end of this period, a masterpiece: *La viuda valenciana*. Among the plays of the posterior Lope we should recall *El acero de Madrid*, *La dama boba*, *La discreta enamorada*, *El arenal de Sevilla*, *Los melindres de Belisa* or *La niña de plata*. The plays written during Lope's senectitude stage constitute the largest group, seven, many of them having a remarkable literary quality, such as *La moza del cántaro*; *Por la puente*, *Juana*; *La noche de San Juan* or *Las bizarrías de Belisa*.

But the early Lope set out his strategy of options with minority support in the flanks, much less practiced than the others, and in imaginary universes, typical of palatine comedies, he placed the literaturized and ingenious *pastorals*, so characteristic of the Renaissance palatine stage practice as now recycled to the format of the representation in an open-air theatre —and with considerable enthusiasm— for the early Lope, in harmony with his poetry of that time, expert in pastoral *romances*. Most of the pastoral comedies (a total of six) are from this period: *El verdadero amante*, *La pastoral de Jacinto*, *Belardo el furioso*, *Los amores de Albanio*... although the best play of this genre, *La Arcadia*, is posterior, and only much later he applied the genre, very mixed as it was, to the experimentation of a courtly spectacle of highly complex staging, *La selva sin amor*, the first Spanish opera sung entirely.

Furthermore in the field of imaginary fables, of literary descent, we should add to the battery of comic genres one that has been very wrongly defined so far by critics, the comedies *novelescas*. If we qualify these comedies as such, we do not do it, as in the case of Menéndez Pelayo, because the plot origins in a *novel*, as this origin may give

⁶⁶ Arellano, 1996 (collected in Arellano, 1999) studied the process of conformation of the urban comedy in the early Lope and its evolution towards what will constitute, once fully established, one of the major genres of Spanish classical theatre: the cloak and sword comedy, *la comedia de capa y espada*.

rise to plays belonging to very diverse genres, from *tragedies* with a historical background such as *El mayordomo de la duquesa de Amalfi* or with an imaginary background, such as *El perseguido* or *El castigo sin venganza*, to cloak and sword comedies such as *La ilustre fregona* or *El alcalde mayor*. We understand by a *novelesca* comedy a play that develops a story of adventures and «peripecias» in exotic environments or in environments that are hardly recognizable by the viewer's experience, which implies Lope's assimilation of plot schemes already used by the Spanish actors-authors (Lope de Rueda, Alonso de la Vega...) and the erudite *comedy* of Italian style. Due to their imaginative nature they relate to *palatine* comedies, but due to the status of their protagonists, gentlemen, merchants, teachers and middle-class citizens and due to the often urban environment, they border on urban comedies of contemporary manners. These comedies are rarely found in pure form, since the formula seems more inclined to bring its own elements (adventure, travel, sometimes the social status of the characters) to other kinds of plays. Among Lope's most characteristic plays are *Castelvines y Monteses*, *El halcón de Federico*, *El leal criado*, *Jorge Toledano* or *La doncella Teodor*.

On the opposite flank, that of the settings of verisimilitude, Lope takes his exploration of the contemporary manners further, through what I called elsewhere *picaresque*⁶⁷ comedies, few in number, to tell the truth, and almost all of them early, but very aggressive, very plot free, also very funny: *El caballero del milagro*, *El rufián Castrucho*, *El caballero de Illescas*, *La ingratitud vengada*, o *El anzuelo de Fenisa*, probably the most popular play of this genre, express well its characteristics. These comedies, with their exploration of the underworld (soldiers, pimps, matchmakers, courtesans...) are heterodox descendants of the inferior types of *comedy* distinguished by Donato and, after him, by the classical precepts, the *atellanas* and *tabernarias* comedies, that is, those whose characters had a lower rank (consequently opposed to the *togata*, with its patrician and urban characters), whose legacy will benefit, since the time of Lope de Rueda, more *pasos* and *entremeses* than comedies.

⁶⁷ Oleza, 1981, pp. 178-182

3.2. *Varieties of drama*

We will use again the category truth / pretence, as we did with comedy, to articulate the panorama of drama, because as we have already explained, it is the most rooted in the aesthetic consciousness of the time. Here, the representation of the truth belongs naturally to history. Therefore, on one hand there are imaginary, minority dramas, and on the other, historical dramas, clearly representing the majority.

3.2.1. *The imaginary dramas*

The imaginary dramas can be easily classified into two sectors, depending on whether the subject on which the fable works comes from a specific literary tradition, well codified, that the public would know to a greater or lesser degree. If not, we would have dramas of free invention and on the other hand, dramas of literaturized matter.

From this set of imaginary dramas the ones which weigh the most in the system are those of free invention, almost all of them being palatine dramas, defined by the symbiosis of a universe of free invention and courtly status (just like palatine comedies) and a highly dramatic conflict, of exemplary nature (*morata*), as opposed to the comedies of this type. In these dramas we may observe the legacy of one of the most characteristic subgenres of those which came from Italy, via Giraldi Cinthio, promoted by Valencian playwrights (starting with Virués and ending with the «Nocturnos», Tárrega, Aguilar, Beneyto and Guillén de Castro), and put into practice by the early Lope in plays such as *El perseguido*, *Laura perseguida*, *El favor agradecido* or *La fuerza lastimosa*. After 1600 the number of these dramas increased substantially, it seems as if Lope reactivated the dramatic formula he had learned in the Valencian playwrights, more interested now in pouring in a dramatic way what he previously poured mostly in a comic way: the conflicts of the struggle for royal favour, of the inequality of social condition and status, of the offenses to honour, of blood insults and revenges, of the moral disorders of power, typical of these works. Some of these plays are *El mayordomo de la duquesa de Amalfi*, *La locura por la honra*, *Los muertos vivos*, *El juez en su causa*, *La firmeza en la desdicha*, *La discordia en los casados* or *El animal de Hungría*. In the late Lope the theme of the

court is also very present, and now he seems to clearly opt for a more dramatic conflict, rather than for a comical one. As dramas are concerned, we are left with remarkable plays, such as *Porfiando vence amor*, *La boba para los otros y discreta para sí*, and the masterpiece of the genre, *El castigo sin venganza*.

There are few mythological dramas of Greco-Roman subjects (a total of ten) and they all belong to Lope's maturity stage. Sometimes they are related to commissions from the royal palace. Thus, during the first stage, *Adonis y Venus*, which is the only play of this kind, is a commission of the court. The mythological subject was clearly of courtly tradition, but Lope remodels it in this first play through a hybridizing, popularizing stage treatment, full of audacity and with complex pageant scenery. Lope will not return to this type of drama until the second decade of the 17th century when he writes *La fábula de Perseo* or *El premio de la hermosura*, both destined to courtly representation. He will later write *El laberinto de Creta*, *Las mujeres sin hombres*, *El marido más firme*, *Las justas de Tebas y reina de las amazonas* or *La bella aurora*. Two more commissions from the royal palace correspond to the full maturity stage: *El vellocino de oro* and *El amor enamorado*. From the beginning to the end this genre is at the very periphery of the stage practice of the *comedia nueva*, in a frontier territory with the stage practice of the court.

The subject of chivalry was also of great courtly tradition, but the *Romancero* and chivalry books had enabled its appropriation by the popular tastes, so its presence among the proposals of the *comedia nueva* in its first stage is not uncommon. The early Lope experiments with these chivalry dramas, marked by unreality and heroic excess, an epic fable, that launches a «modern mythology», a set of heroes which had popularized *Orlando furioso* and the *romances* of the Carolingian cycle, and a populist literary treatment, with its exciting action, its superlative settings and spectacular effects, in plays like *Los celos de Rodamonte* or *Los palacios de Galiana*. *El Marqués de Mantua*, perhaps the most sober and restrained play, also the most tragic, is undoubtedly the masterpiece of the genre. Its last samples are placed at the frontier of 1600: *Los palacios de Galiana*, *Las pobrezas de Reinaldos*, *Angélica en el Catay* or *La mocedad de Roldán*. After this frontier there is nothing left but the return on one occasion, to the courtly sources: *El premio de la hermosura* is a strong incursion of the mature

Lope in the court commissioned theatricality, and was brilliantly represented in Lerma in 1614 in front of the whole court.

3.2.2. *The historical dramas*

Probably the most profound change experienced in the trajectory of the Fénix starting from 1600 is the transfer of the majority of his dramaturgy, with arms and luggage, to the field of history. The *historical comedies*, as they were denominated back then, constitute by far the largest group in the production of the years that follow. Lope did not discover then the historical drama, as his earliest works include plays such as *Los hechos de Garcilaso de la Vega y moro Tarfe*, and during the first stage there is a certain experimentation in different directions of the historical drama. However, starting from 1600, taking a real quantitative–qualitative leap, the occasional experimentation opens to a massive exploitation of the possibilities of the genre, and three main directions are imposed, those of the religious dramas, of the profane dramas of private events and of the dramas of famous events in the history of Spain.

Altogether these plays account for nearly half of Lope's dramatic production, estimated in broad terms at around 400 works. There are some forty religious dramas and approximately one hundred and thirty profane historical dramas, taking into account both the dramas of private events (73) and the dramas of public famous events (56).

3.2.2.1. *The religious dramas*

Although the genre was very popular in the founding years of the *comedia nueva*, as shown by the codices in the Gondomar collection⁶⁸, the early Lope rarely practised it: *San Segundo de Ávila* and *El alcaide de Madrid* are the only two essays of reliable authorship that we conserve dating for sure from that time. Starting from 1600, however, they come to constitute one of the most popular genres. The most numerous group of the whole genre is that of the dramas of the lives of saints and pious legends (some thirty plays), followed by plays based on stories from the Old Testament (between 4 and 9), and, with a testimonial character, those of the New Testament (1–4), and the few plays of contemporary religious subject matter (2).

⁶⁸ Badía Herrera, 2007.

Among the dramas of the lives of the saints there are numerous plays that are midway between the hagiography or the pious legend and of the historical drama itself, plays such as *La divina vencedora*, *El niño inocente de Laguardia*, *Los guanches de Tenerife*, *El caballero del Sacramento...* The dimension of the profane subject that incorporates itself into the plot of these plays is also very generous, to the extent that in many occasions its religious character takes second place. These may not be Lope's best plays, although one of them is highly relevant, *Lo fingido verdadero*, and others are of notable quality, such as *El capellán de la virgen*, *Barlán y Josafat*, *La gran columna fogosa*, *El divino africano*, *El niño inocente de Laguardia*, *San Isidro labrador* or *La buena guarda*.

The dramas that tackle subjects from the Old Testament are a small crop of between four certain plays and nine possible ones, all written during Lope's stage of maturity, except the early *La corona derribada y Vara de Moisés* and the late *La creación del mundo y primera culpa del hombre*, both of doubtful authorship. Consequently, the Old Testament could not easily reach open-air theatres: this is largely due to the fact that the *comedia nueva* is born when the studies, the translations and the editions of the Bible die, once the Council of Trento redirected all the freedom that humanists had deployed on the battlefield of the Holy Scriptures to a strict and repressive order. If we compare plays like *El robo de Dina*, *La hermosa Ester*, *La historia de Tobías*, or *Los trabajos de Jacob*, these being the most representative plays of the genre, with the historic ones, given the fact that they are all historical, we will be surprised to find out that the biblical dramas are much more accurate to their sources, this accuracy being comparable only to that of the historic dramas of contemporary and recent events. It would not be surprising that this accuracy had much or everything to do with the post-Tridentine environment regarding the Holy Scriptures, and this environment may also explain the significantly higher imaginative moderation of the first generation of playwrights with respect to the second. Lope, Tirso, Mira de Amescua or Felipe Godínez are much more respectful to the biblical text than Calderón, Rojas Zorrilla or Moreto, who often use it as a mere pretext. The rigor posterior to the Council of Trento faded with the passage of time, gradually subtracting from the repressive principle what it gave in a realistic policy to the doctrinaire and propagandistic principle.

3.2.2.2. *The profane historical dramas*

The Lope who launches to dramatize Spanish history has to be placed in the double context marked, on one hand, by the controversies over the legitimacy of the comedies, in which theatre supporters argue in its defense its usefulness in teaching history, and that of the emergence of a post-humanist, national, historical consciousness, spectacularly promoted by the historians of the time from Ocampo to Mariana. Nothing more significant, for these purposes, than the claims of Lope himself as royal chronicler, which appear alluded to very early in plays like *Ursón y Valentín* or *El rufián Castriacho*, belonging to the first stage, and that will accompany him to the end of his days, when he will still vindicate, already disillusioned, his merits for the commissioned work.

By contrast, as what used to be a spectacle is transformed into writings, and as the *Partes* of Lope's comedies are being printed, abound his meditations on theatre and history. In the dedication of *La campana de Aragón*⁶⁹ one may read a sort of first aphorism of this meditation:

La fuerza de la historia representada es tanto mayor que la leída, cuanta diferencia se advierte de la verdad a la pintura y del original al retrato; porque en un cuadro están las figuras mudas, y en una sola acción las personas, y en la *comedia* hablando y discurriendo y en diversos afectos por instantes cuales son los sucesos, guerras, paces, consejos, diferentes estados de la fortuna, mudanzas, prosperidades, declinaciones de reinos y períodos de imperios y monarquías grandes⁷⁰.

The second precept that emanates from Lope's meditation on the historical drama has to do with its ability to celebrate the fame of the events and the people who conquered it: «Nadie podrá negar que las famosas hazañas o sentencias, referidas al vivo con sus perso-

⁶⁹ In the *Decimaoctava parte de las comedias de Lope de Vega Carpio...* (Madrid, 1623).

⁷⁰ «The power of the represented story is much stronger than that of the read one, according to the difference between the truth and the painting and between the original and the portrait; because in a painting there are mute figures, and in one action the persons and in the *comedia* speaking and going through different emotions at times which are the events, wars, peaces, advice, different states of fortune, changes, prosperities, declines of kingdoms and eras of empires and monarchies».

nas, no sean de grande efecto para renovar la fama desde los teatros a la memoria de las gentes donde los libros lo hacen con menor fuerza y más dificultad y espacio»⁷¹.

The third precept defends the utility of history for the management of the present. In his response to Don Francisco de Aragón's commission of writing the *Historial alfonsina*, Lope suggests accompanying the second part of the *comedy* by praise that would concern «la utilidad de las comedias historiadas»⁷². It is the Ciceronian topic of history as «Magistra Vitae» that the humanists strongly emphasized. From Machiavelli or from Hernando del Pulgar to Luís Vives, Fox Morcillo, Fray Jerónimo de San José, el Padre Mariana, or Montaigne they all agree on this, but there is probably no other gloss as ingenious and beautiful as that of Saavedra Fajardo:

Gran maestro de príncipes es el tiempo. Hospitales son los siglos pasados, donde la política hace anatomía de los cadáveres de las repúblicas y monarquías que florecieron, para curar mejor las presentes. Cartas son de marear en que con ajenas borrascas o prósperas navegaciones están reconocidas las riberas, fondeados los golfos, descubiertas las secas, advertidos los escollos y señalados los rumbos de reinar...⁷³

3.2.2.3. *The dramas of public famous events*

The dramas of famous events, of public character, bring to Lope's work approximately 55–60 plays of certain, probable or even doubtful authorship. Among them, those relating to the history of the peninsular kingdoms and its imperial expansion represent the overwhelming majority. They reach their maximum potential in the system of Lope's maturity stage, starting from 1600. The first characterizing decision regarding the researcher is its differentiation

⁷¹ Same dedication, in the *Decimaoctava parte*... «No one can deny that the famous exploits or judgments, told out loud by the people who lived them, are not of great effect to renew the fame from the theatres to the memory of those people, where books do so with less force and more difficulty and space».

⁷² «The utility of the narrated comedies». The documentation of this nobiliary commission was collected and published by Teresa Ferrer, 1993.

⁷³ «Great master of princes is time. Hospitals are the past centuries, where politics makes anatomy of the bodies of the republics and monarchies that flourished, in order to better cure the present ones. In the cards with foreign squalls or prosperous navigations are recognized the banks, anchored the golfs, discovered the dry areas, noticed the reefs and outlined the course to follow...».

from the dramas of private events. The heroes of both types of dramas can be public or private, defined as those lacking a public life dimension, but whether public or private, their deeds, the ones represented in the drama, can have predominantly public or private origins, circumstances and effects. The researcher will have to make this decision, and it is not always as easy as in the case of *El postrer godo de España*, where it is obvious that a particular act, such as Cava's rape by Don Rodrigo has public consequences that transcend private interests, while in *Los comendadores de Córdoba* the assassination of his own wife by a public character, the *Veinticuatro de Córdoba*, is still the solution to a private conflict. In the case of a historical-legendary hero he will difficultly act on the basis of a purely private issue, but it may happen, as in the case of Bernardo del Carpio, in *El casamiento en la muerte*, to act in his public dimension of hero of Roncesvalles, and in his private dimension of illegitimate child, and then the researcher will have to weigh in as to whether the nature of the main events, in their origin, in their circumstances and in their consequences, is primarily public or private. The danger of not making the decision, and of not distinguishing between the two genres, is more grave than that of making a mistake, since it would impede capturing with all their peculiarity some of the most representative subgenres of Spanish historical drama, such as the private drama of honour and, even more original on the European stage, the drama of peasant honour, or it would impede understanding that many of the historical dramas are not born of a historical conflict but of the conflict of the individual and his rights in his society and his environment, with their laws and customs, with their terms and requirements, or it would make it difficult to apprehend that these dramas of private events are also historical, as much of the critical bibliography proves it by ignoring them.

Nevertheless, when the emphasis on the public occasionally combines with the emphasis on the historical-legendary, the great propagandistic and tendentious Baroque dramas are born, such as Guillén de Castro's *Las mocedades del Cid*, or Lope's *El casamiento en la muerte*.

The aim of a great part of the drama of famous public events is not so much to tell what «really» happened, but rather to celebrate it. The selected events can be as varied as the ages, the territories or the nature of the cases of interest, but they are dominated by the

character of a famous, remarkable, strange, worthy, miraculous, surprising, rare, never-before-seen event that demands to be celebrated, beyond any intention of limiting a reign, a war, a revolution, a segment of history as a whole, and of narrating it to all its extension. In the Middle Ages Lope celebrates the same heroes that the *canónigo* recommended Don Quijote to read in history books, distributing them by regions: Fernán González in Castile, el Cid in Valencia, el Gran Capitán in Andalusia, Diego García de Paredes in Extremadura, Garcilaso de la Vega in Toledo... they constitute the new national mythology. In modern times subjects, Lope prefers facts to lives, and specific events (*El Brasil restituido*) to the great conflicts that marked Spanish history (the Communities, the European religious wars, the conflicts with France or England...). Thus, the vast majority of Lope's historical dramas may be classified as dramas of famous events that transform dramatization not so much into a history lesson, but into a dramatic celebration of already known, famous events, where there is a merge between the culture and the sensibility of the playwright and his audience.

Lope usually distributes history and fable in separate doses:

Adviértase que en esta *comedia* los amores de Don Diego son fabulosos y sólo para adornarla, como se ve el ejemplo en tantos poetas de la antigüedad [...] Con este advertimiento se pueden leer sus amores como fábula, y las hazañas de Céspedes como verdadera historia de un caballero que honró tanto su nación, cuanto admiró las extrañas⁷⁴.

Diego Marín (1958) tried to demonstrate the connection that existed in Lope's theatre between the historical subject and the secondary plot. In his view, Lope used secondary plot only in certain historical-legendary comedies, whether their subject was human or divine, and whether they were called *tragedies* and *tragicomedies* or not. This made him establish two major categories in his production: the plays with a secondary plot, opposed or parallel to the

⁷⁴ «Note that in this *comedia* the loves of Don Diego are fabulous and just to decorate it, as seen in the example of so many poets of Antiquity [...] With this warning his loves can be read as a fable, and the deeds of Céspedes as the true story of a knight who honoured his nation just as much as he admired the foreign ones». «Al lector», dedication of *El valiente Céspedes*, in *Parte veinte de las comedias de Lope de Vega Carpio*... (Madrid, 1625).

main one, that are of historical nature; the plays of free invention, that integrate the subordinate actions into one complex plot.

Among the dramas of famous public events there are two minority groups, the first, that of the Dramas of Antiquity, includes only four plays of reliable authorship: *Roma abrasada*, *El honrado hermano*, *Las grandezas de Alejandro* and *El esclavo de Roma*; two other plays are of probable (*Contra valor no hay desdicha*) or of doubtful authorship (*La mayor hazaña de Alejandro Magno*). It is therefore a testimonial group, aspect which is very significant for Lope's emancipation from the classical poetics, that since the Italian Renaissance had made ancient history the privileged subject of *tragedy*.

The second group of dramas, that of European history, is also incorporated in Lope's production around 1600, and leads to a minority but significant group of 14 dramas, to which we should add, in order to value Lope's cosmopolitan interest, dramas and comedies belonging to other genres (palatine, historical of private events, hagiographical...), of European, African, or Asian settings. A single play of quite early certainty, *La imperial de Otón*, opens the way for two other dramas that stage intrigues of succession and of fight for the throne in the Medieval Germanic Empire (*El rey sin reino*) or in the back then remote, but contemporary Russia (*El Gran Duque de Moscovia*). The Germanic Empire is the most frequented focus (in addition to the above, see *El cerco de Viena* and *El valiente Céspedes*), together with the independent Portugal (*La lealtad en el agravio*, *La Fortuna adversa del infante don Fernando de Portugal* and the two parts of *El príncipe perfecto*). The interest extends to the Italy of the 15th century, with *El genovés liberal* and *La contienda de García de Paredes*, to the Flanders of *La nueva victoria de Don Gonzalo de Córdoba*, or to the Mediterranean as setting of the war against the Turks: *La pérdida honrosa* or *Los caballeros de San Juan*.

One peculiar play, which covers much of Europe, from Cuenca to Saint Quentin, is *Julián Romero*. Just like this one, a great part (6) of the plays mentioned above are linked to the European wars waged by the successive Spanish monarchies in the Germanic Empire, in Flanders, in Italy or the Mediterranean. The Europe of these dramas is less medieval (4 plays) than modern: four plays are set in the late 15th century, during the reign of the Catholic Monarchs, three during the reign of the Emperor, one during the reign of Philip II-Philip III (although nothing has to do with them: *El gran*

duque de Moscovia), and finally another during the reign of Philip IV (*La nueva victoria de Don Gonzalo de Córdoba*).

Among the largest group of the genre, the dramas of famous events in Spanish history, the extent of accuracy to the sources and the narrated events varies considerably with the temporal distance from the present. The more distant, the more legendary; the more contemporary, the more chronistic; thus is defined a whole range of positions between the voluntarily mythologizing endeavor and the tightly historicist treatment. Therefore, provisionally, as the research has yet to make many concrete steps to reach a sufficient characterization of the vision of Spanish history that Lope had, four ages could be mentioned —like the four ages of man, so often referred to by Lope— in our history, based however not so much on objective differences as on diversified historical treatments, which Lope shares with the critics and especially with Ocampo (with the Ocampo editor of *Crónica General*) and with Mariana. The first age is the one of the mythical origins of Spain and it extends to the penultimate Visigothic King, passing through Roman domination. There are few dramas of this type, *La amistad pagada*, *Bamba*, *El postrer godo de España*, although there are religious dramas that correspond to this *época*: *Lo fingido verdadero*, *El capellán de la virgen*... The second age ranges from the loss of Spain to the ancient kings of Asturias-Leon, the counts of Castile and Barcelona... to the end of the first millennium, in short. The predominant treatment is epic or legendary, depending on the case, and Lope extracts it from chronicles and the old *romancero*, where the breath of the ancient *gestas* survives. These are at least seven of his plays: *Las famosas asturianas*, set in Leon; *Las doncellas de Simancas*, located in King Mauregato's Asturias; the two dramas dedicated to Bernardo del Carpio, *El casamiento en la muerte* and *Las mocedades de Bernardo del Carpio*, these two works, as well as *El Conde Fernán González* and *El bastardo Mudarra* being milestones of the Castilian epic, and *El testimonio vengado*, set in the time of Sancho the Great of Navarre, also Count of Castile, the last Count. The third age is that of the peninsular medieval kingdoms, between the 11th century and the end of the 15th century, this being the age that Lope most frequented, at least in a dozen of plays. His vision here is that of the Chronicle. In Castile and Leon, Ferdinand I is *El primer Rey de Castilla*; the reign of Alfonso VI inspires *El hijo por engaño*, *La varona castellana*, and *Las hazañas del Cid*; that of Alfonso VIII, *Las*

paces de los reyes y judía de Toledo; that of Ferdinand III, *Dos bandoleras y fundación de la Santa hermandad*; that of Ferdinand IV, *La inocente sangre*; that of Peter I, *El infanzón de Illescas* and *Los Ramírez de Arellano*; that of Henry III, *Los novios de Hornachuelos*. In Navarre, *El príncipe despeñado* corresponds to the reign of Sancho II, in the first half of the 11th century and *La campana de Aragón* and *La reina Doña María* are located in the 11th and 13th centuries of the Crown of Aragon.

The fourth and last age is the present time, unified in the playwright's sensibility from the Catholic Monarchs to the contemporary Philips II, III and IV. Lope now becomes a historian of the immediate past. In his work of adaptation of the historical material that the Count of Ribagorza gives him for a commissioned play, provisionally entitled *La historial Alfonsina*, one may catch Lope in his workshop, and whom we see is a Lope who stays true to the basic historical events and who struggles to embellish them with «cosas de gusto». The era of the Catholic Monarchs fascinated Lope, who dedicated many dramas to them, some of these dramas being genealogical, such as *El blasón de los Chaves de Villalba*, others of colonization and conquest, such as *Los guanches de Tenerife* or *El nuevo mundo descubierto por Cristóbal Colón*, others are comedies of historical setting such as *El caballero de Illescas*, others are religious dramas, like *El niño inocente de Laguardia*, others are dramas of private events such as *Fuenteovejuna*, others have a European setting, as seen before, and many more are *moriscos* dramas, of the War of Granada, such as *Pedro Carbonero, el cordobés valeroso*. Among the strict dramas of public famous events of the history of Spain, *El mejor mozo de España* makes infante Fernando his protagonist, and during his reign plays such as *Las cuentas del Gran Capitán* or *El piadoso aragonés* are located; he dedicates *Carlos V en Francia* to the time of the Emperor, although this *époque* also has a European dimension. When Lope reaches the time he lives in, of which there is yet no consciousness of its historicity, his vision becomes more political, more connected to public events, more circumstantiated and attentive to the chain of causes and consequences⁷⁵. *Los españoles en Flandes*, *La Santa Liga*, *El bautismo del príncipe de Marruecos* and *El asalto de Maastrique* correspond to the reign of Philip II; *La nueva victoria del marqués de Santa Cruz* to

⁷⁵ Usandizaga, 2010.

the reign of Philip III; *La nueva victoria de Don Gonzalo de Córdoba*, whose setting is more European than Spanish, to the reign of Philip IV.

In any case, and in almost all circumstances, the dramas of public famous events transmit to their audience a feeling of historical self-satisfaction. The grandeur of the present is justified starting from the grandeur of the past: the mythical heroes, the epic heroes, the politicians or the soldiers identify themselves with the country and they exalt each other.

There are, apart from these groups characterized more by the chronology of their action, rather than by their status of strict genres, other singular thematic groups, neither genres nor subgenres, which should be kept delimited in order to be able to understand their specificity. The first such group is, by its numeric importance (at least 9 plays), that of the *moriscos* dramas, dramas of the frontier, in the War of Granada, that provides historical background to essentially private events. These dramas are characterized by a more novelistic than historical mode, which gives them a sophisticated and gallant look⁷⁶. These plays invade from the beginning Lope's early work, back then an accomplished poet of the *romancero morisco*, which inspires these dramas, as well as the *novela* or the *crónica moriscas*. In fact, Lope's first preserved play, and the only one in four acts, is one of these dramas: *Los hechos de Garcilaso de la Vega y moro Tarfe...* Other representative plays of the genre: *El cerco de Santa Fe*, *El hidalgo Bencerraje*, *Pedro Carbonero*, *El sol parado*, and, perhaps, the best play of the cycle, *El remedio en la desdicha*.

The second thematic group I want to point here focuses its representations on the colonization and conquest of the western empire. The occupation of the Canary Islands, in *Los guanches de Tenerife*, and *El descubrimiento del Nuevo Mundo por Cristóbal Colón*, during the reign of the Catholic Monarchs, the fight against the Araucanian Indians, in *El Arauco domado*, during the reign of Philip II, the reconquest of the city of Bahía, occupied by the Dutch, in *El Brasil restituído*, during the reign of Philip IV, are the conflicts this group focuses on. A very special case, which is also of conquest and occupation, but in a region of the peninsula that had been kept closed in

⁷⁶ Carrasco Urgoiti, 1956.

itself and in a state of nature, is *Las Batuecas del Duque de Alba*, whose action takes place during the time of the Catholic Monarchs.

The last of these very specific thematic groups is related to the racial conflicts in Christian lands, which presents in *El Hamete de Toledo* a shocking tragedy, that of the noble Muslim made into a slave and driven by the circumstances to kill, to be chased, to be horribly tortured and finally sent to death. In *El niño inocente de Laguardia*, there is a Christian-Jewish conflict which also reaches the dimensions of tragedy: the Jews of Laguardia are thirsty for revenge for all the humiliations and abuses they were subjected to by the Christians, so they decide to kidnap a Christian boy and make him embody the passion of Christ to its final consequences, with his crucifixion and death. If *El Hamete de Toledo* could be of doubtful historicity (although everything in it seems to refer to a true and contemporary event), *El niño inocente de Laguardia* concerns an event which took place in 1491 that had a lasting effect on public opinion, being collected and spread by different relations. In both cases Lope is able to see conflicts that his contemporaries ignored.

3.2.2.4. *The historical dramas of private events*

The most «modern» contribution of the *comedia nueva* is represented by the dramas of private events, which insert into history the private deeds of their protagonists, sometimes in such an inseparable way as in *Fuenteovejuna* or *Peribáñez*, other times in a more relaxed way, in which the historical element is reduced to background scenery, to the faded presence of a certain sovereign, event, situation, because Lope is interested more in the analysis of the conflict than in the recreation or the celebration of events and circumstances. Who remembers that the unfortunate death of *La desdichada Estefanía* and its relationship with the genealogy of the Castros takes place in the years of the Almohad invasion, which constitutes a second action? These dramas deal with conflicts which involve individual rights (personal honour, freedom of choice, the right to love), the recognition of civil or military merit, the impact of fortune on personal destinies, the always hazardous encounter between the individual and the power. There is still no awareness of the individual as emancipated from any determination of social status (of any determination of birth and blood), or religion, or country,

which takes shape starting from the liberal revolutions, and especially from the Declaration of the Rights of Man, of 1789, so the defense of individual values (honour, merit, the right to justice or to the exercise of power...) will always involve the environment of which the individual is an indissoluble part: lineage first, the social group, the social class, the nation or the place of origin, but the aura of individuality which begins to permeate the conflicts of this type of dramas is already perfectly detectable.

They are very numerous, approximately 70-75, appear in the *comedia nueva* from the first moment and do not extinguish until the end, when Lope began to focus on the dramas of public famous events. These include many of the plays that the critics consider to be Lope's best works: *El caballero de Olmedo*, *El duque de Visco*, *Los Prados de León*, and the dramas of peasant honour, *Fuenteovejuna*, *Peribáñez*, *El mejor alcalde, el rey*, *Los Tellos de Meneses*.

Depending on the type of conflicts they develop, one could describe them as dramas of royal favour and disfavour⁷⁷, of inconstancy of fortune or of deeds, that have a broader public field of action, involving the relationship between the individual and the power in the first two cases, and between the individual and the war in the third one. Another group of dramas have a more familiar and domestic environment, these are the dramas of honour. Among them it should be delimited an autonomous space for the dramas of peasant honour due to the highly innovative role they play in the mentality of the time and to their unusual status in the Renaissance and Baroque European classical theatre. These dramas are nothing celebrative, rather analytical, exploring in depth the conflicts exposed on the stage and searching throughout history more the teachings of past experience rather than the commemoration of its antiques or heroic deeds.

There are very few: about 4, in the most restrictive sense, and 8 or 9, in a looser sense. One drama, for instance, is not historical, *El cuerdo en su casa*, and another one is not a drama but rather a comedy, *El galán de la Membrilla*, while in two other cases the features of the drama of peasant honour are subordinated to others of palatine character, *La quinta de Florencia* or *El villano en su rincón*; finally, in the *Segunda parte* of *Los Tellos de Meneses* the conflict of peasant honour

⁷⁷ Ferrer, 2004, pp. 15-30.

dilutes for the benefit of others and *El alcalde de Zalamea* is more than doubtful that it belongs to Lope. The most characteristic plays of the genre are not released until well into the 17th century, and they appear in blocks, at intervals every few years: *Peribáñez* in 1605, *El cuerdo en su casa* between 1606 and 1608, *Fuenteovejuna* possibly between 1611 and 1613. We will then have to wait until the twenties for the next plays to be released: *El mejor alcalde, el rey* (1620-23), *Los Tellos de Meneses* (1620-28). But the list of these plays of peasant dignity does not finish by what we might call the core, but it has so much strength that it expands on a galaxy of diverse works in which the theme is prefigured or incorporated into an episode, this being the case of the early *Vida y muerte del Rey Bamba* that elaborates the myth of the king and the oxen, of the farmer king, which is later evoked in many other plays; *San Isidro labrador*, in turn elaborates the myth of the farmer saint, just like *San Diego de Alcalá*; and other plays such as *El galán de la Membrilla*, *El villano en su rincón*, *Los Prados de León*, *Los Guzmanes de Toral*, *La quinta de Florencia* and *El caballero de Illescas* develop veins and aspects of the vindication of peasant dignity. As a whole they constitute «an unusual species» in the European theatre of the time, «in them the farmer, the villein, against every precept and “decorum” bursts as the protagonist of the tragic action», escaping the «rincón cómico» to which classical poetics had reduced him⁷⁸. These dramas written by Lope leave behind a trail which will extend to some of the best plays written by Tirso de Molina, Calderón de la Barca or Rojas Zorrilla.

⁷⁸ Blecua, ed. 1981.

4. LOPE DE VEGA'S ARCHITECTURE OF GENRES⁷⁹

Lope's entire dramatic production lies on a balanced architecture of genres, that diversify and support it between symmetries and counterweights. There are two major structural axes: the dramas and the comedies, but each one is displayed in its turn in opposing collections: imaginary and historical dramas share drama, just as the comedies of imaginary universe and the comedies of verisimilar universe share comedy. Among these four groups there are many variants, but the genres that support the fundamental weigh of this architecture are four: the palatine and urban comedies, the dramas

⁷⁹ In our proposal of genres, we have taken into account the comments of contemporary playwrights and preceptists and also the most systematic elaborations of erudite critics (from Menéndez Pelayo to Marc Vitse), but this theorized and applied generic system starts from a deductive method, which creates its categories from pre-existing categories (tragedy, comedy, tragicomedy, fiction, truth, history...), but it systematizes them by abstract, hierarchical and non-contradictory relations: the first principle underpinning this categorization is the intended effect on the viewer through the kind of spectacle put into play, and distinguishes dramas from comedies. The second principle is the way of presenting the subject to the viewer, as a real (or historical) one or as imaginary one; if the subject is imaginary, it is worth taking into consideration the modality of imagination, its status of free invention or of previously literaturized subject; and if historical, the modality of the historical: the profane or religious subject; each of these options differently influences the viewer's receptive attitude. After the application of these two principles other additional criteria can be used that will distinguish groups within genre groups, such as the type of conflict and subconflict (private or public), the setting in which they take place (Europe, the Spanish empire, Arcadia, cities...), and the social rank of the characters that star in them (gods, chivalrous heroes, Arcadian shepherds, urban knights, feudal nobles, villeins, princes, kings, courtiers...). From this moment on, the groups are transformed into groupings of convenience, not strictly generic. If the reference is historical we can always emphasize the chronology of the conflict (Middle Ages, contemporary era...), but if it is religious, the literary source should be more appropriate than the chronology (the Old and New Testament, the hagiographic legends...). One can also choose some thematic groupings starting from a very specific feature: for example, we have distinguished among the dramas of private events, those of honour, of deeds, of inconstancy of fortune, and we have mentioned groups of *monsas* dramas, of colonization and conquest or of racial conflict. Others may choose, considering them to be clearly indicative of certain tendencies of the *comedia nueva*, the drama or the comedy of captives, or the comedies of secretary, to give two examples.

of public famous events of the history of Spain and the dramas of private events; a structural collection, but with a smaller role, is that of the palatine dramas, and a side collection, of great development, although not as determinant as the four groups mentioned before, is that of the hagiographic drama (the *comedies of saints*). On both sides of each of these genres, according to the stages of his writing, some minor but no less significant genres are displayed (pastoral comedies, mythological dramas, dramas of famous European events, etc.).

The system is not closed, because, as one goes deeper into the jungle of Lope's dramatic production, and moreover, into the Spanish Baroque theatre, with its thousands of plays, one will reach the conclusion that it is not possible to enclose all the complexity in a rigid system of choices and features, because although it is true that Lope's dramatic discourse, to stick to it, is displayed with aesthetic and ideological coherence and that it often closely follows previous composition patterns, it is not less certain that from time to time, here and there, in one play or another, the discourse tends to deconstruct itself, to explore unexplored routes, to delve into the possibilities of the heterogeneous, of the surprising mixtures, of the eccentric cases. There are dramas of free invention which nevertheless seek the pattern of the famous historical events, or of the private events of peasant honour, such as *El villano en su rincón*; the chronicle of famous events, the urban comedy and the drama of private events merge in *La octava maravilla*; there are mixed plays between the profane and the religious subject, like *El caballero del Sacramento* or *El niño inocente de La Guardia*; comedies that as Lope gets older gain seriousness and inner, sometimes moralizing meditation, that bring them close to dramas, this being the case of *Las flores de Don Juan*; there are others still that pursue a behavior guide based on individual experience and solutions—in the style of Montaigne or Machiavelli—, as it occurs in *La dama boba* or in *El perro del hortelano*. When the reader has got used to thinking of the dramas of peasant honour as historical dramas of serious subject, related to the dignity of the villein and the conflict between nobles and farmers, like *Peribáñez* or *Fuenteovejuna*, one comes across plays that follow the same pattern, but without any historical setting, and with the undramatized treatment of a comedy of contemporary manners, such as *El cuerdo en su casa*. *Los Ponces de Barcelona* is a genealogical play, therefore historical, and with a very dramatic first act, but it sud-

denly becomes an urban comedy, set in Barcelona, and then a *novelesca* comedy, whose action takes place in Moorish lands...

And it is not a static system, as it is not created at once, neither in practice nor in our theorization, which has advanced and modified since 1981. But if we stick to the movement of the stage practice of *comedia nueva*, its revolution starts more through comedy than drama, and certainly far more than through tragedy, which was the way the classicists proposed. And it starts with a very vast exploration of genres and subgenres, which will diminish over time, leaving aside a whole range of options that either will not be repeated or will repeat rarely (pastoral, *novelesca* and picaresque comedies, chivalry dramas).

Starting from 1600 it seems as if Lope's entire production obeyed the order of moving from the primacy of comedy to that of drama, and inside this, to the drama of public famous events, and, additionally, to the religious drama. Within the maturity period, dramas absorb some of the palatine subject, seizing it from comedies, which otherwise undergo a notable change of sophistication, and the dramas of peasant honour are incorporated. Little by little, as the influence of the court increases on the public theatrical system, mythological dramas appear gradually in Lope's work. After 1627, when entering the period characterized as *de senectute*, dramas and comedies tend to balance, and the variety of subgenres that Lope used to handle is reduced. The dramas of public famous events lose their weight decisively, this being the favourite genre of the era of *Arte Nuevo*, for the benefit of the dramas of private events, while comedies transfer their primacy in the use of the palatine subject to dramas. Lope focuses on few dramatic options. On the other hand, the transformation of the conditions of theatrical reception, both by the incidence of court stage practice and by a process of increasing theatrical literaturization, that if in Lope's case it comes from afar it also marks the time of Calderón, is inevitably reflected in their options. The late Lope appears to us being conditioned by his production for the palace: *La noche de San Juan*, represented on the night of the 24th of June of 1631 in the garden of the Count of Monterrey, at a party promoted by the Count Duke of Olivares, and attended by the royal family, still maintains its urban comedy formula for the public open-air theatres; two posterior commissioned plays correspond by their literary subject to the most deeply-routed court

tradition of pageantry, the mythological-pastoral, although they refer to different spectacle models. *El amor enamorado*, represented in the very gardens of the royal palace and in the presence of the kings, sometime after 1633, is a hybrid of court pageant and comedy of open-air theatre, staged, thus, with a great variety of scenic effects and a spectacular change of scenery at the end of third *Jornada*, and with an occasional participation of music. Finally, *La selva sin amor*, represented in the Alcázar in 1629, may be considered, according to Barbieri, as the first Spanish opera, meaning by it the text that was sung in its entirety. With *La selva sin amor* we are at a moment of crossroads of the modern theatrical spectacle. On one hand, it is a commissioned play for that renewed court stage practice which now begins to compete with the stage practice of open-air theatres and to regulate itself autonomously, during the reign of Philip IV. On the other hand, we are witnessing a moment in which music and singing no longer resigned to the subsidiary position of the pieces between two theatrical acts in the manner of the Florentine *intermedi* of the 16th century, strive to become an independent spectacle, the so-called *dramma per musica*, with a theatrical structure, a monodic singing technique (*el stile rappresentativo*), and a pompous stage technology, which originated in Florence in the last decades of the 16th century and which produced its first masterpiece, *Orfeo*, in 1607, and its first great musician-playwright, Monteverdi. Finally, the scenic engineering, in charge of specialists like Cosimo Lotti, responsible for an essentially spectacular staging, as that of *La selva sin amor*, is now beginning to question the model of stage practice in open-air theatres, a model of *poor theatre*, and to fully display the potential of the Baroque spectacularity. *La selva sin amor* shares these three key aspects of the crossroads, and it does it so radically that it will take considerable time to find continuities.

HISTORICAL DRAMAS OF PRIVATE EVENTS, BY LOPE DE VEGA: A REQUIREMENT OF SUBJECTS

Early Renaissance playwrights flirted with recent events of political, courtly or military nature in short plays of political circumstances. It is worth mentioning *La exhortação da guerra*, by Gil Vicente, *La Trophæa* by Torres Naharro, *Coplas por la prisión del Rey de Francia*, by Andrés Ortiz, *Égloga* by Francisco de Madrid, or *Farsa para celebrar la paz de Cambray*, by Hernán López de Yanguas, to name only a few. They were not historical dramas, because by then the present was not part of history, although it could be subject of a chronicle, but they did bring to theatre the commemoration of a certain type of present, of pomp and of public nature, with aspirations to strike in history, and they turn into the immediate predecessor of Baroque dramas of contemporary famous events (Ferrer, 1995). At the end of the 16th century a series of playwrights rushed to experiment with replacing ancient history (with its humanist prestige) by Spanish historical legends, boosted by chronicles and romancero: sometimes legends are so ancient that they almost belong more to the ancient world than to the modern one, as in the case of *Tragedia de San Hermenegildo*, or *Numancia* by Cervantes, but others bring the sixteenth-century spectator closer to a recognizable medieval past, as in Fray Gerónimo Bermúdez's *Nises* or in Juan de la Cueva's *Tragedia de los siete infantes de Lara*. Sometimes, even the represented events occurred in the same century in which they were performed, such as *El cerco de Pavía* by Canónigo Tárrega, or *Comedia del Saco de Roma*, by Juan de la Cueva. The early Lope absorbs these stimuli, and in his early production he explores the following directions: fabulous origins in *La amistad pagada*, medieval history in *El casamiento en la muerte*, and recent events, no more than thirty years before they were written, in *La Santa Liga*.

The kind of drama that was rarely or not at all experimented with, both in early Renaissance theatre and during the time of transition in the last quarter of the 16th century, is the «Drama of Private Events», as I qualified it on another occasion (1997), a drama that brings together history and events of private nature. A thorough investigation would probably find a precedent, both rare and blurred, among the classicist playwrights, possibly in *Isabela* by Lupericio Leonardo de Argensola, in *El trato de Argel* or in *La gran sultana*, by Cervantes, but especially in the Valencian playwrights, for whom it does not represent a trend but an experiment. As examples of the latter we could cite plays such as *Los amantes de Teruel*, by Rey de Artieda, probably the most obvious precedent of all, or later plays (contemporary with Lope's early production) such as *La sangre leal de los montañeses de Navarra*, by Canónigo Tárrega or *La humildad soberbia*, by Guillén de Castro. And together with them, and among the codices of the Gondomar Collection, cataloged by S. Arata (1989) and studied by Josefa Badía (2007), those very early genealogical dramas, *La descendencia de los Marqueses de Mariñán*, of Italian setting, or *La descendencia de los Vélez de Medrano*, a play which is almost closer to hagiographic legends than to profane dramas. The existence of two such early plays invites us to think about the path that dramas of genealogical intention helped open up for the genre of Dramas of Private Events, as they were intended to praise the historical merits of a lineage on account of those of its founder or of one of its most prominent individuals.

But these precedents are not able (not even adding them all) to explain the appearance on the horizon of our theatre of such a new, powerful and popular genre. ARTELOPE recorded at the beginning of our research eighty-eight plays of such features, out of which seven were inauthentic, fourteen of doubtful authorship, four of probable authorship, and sixty-three of certain authorship. After a thorough revision of all these plays, we can establish that there are forty-eight plays that definitely belong to Lope and to the genre at a primary level. We have ruled out other plays from other genres that only belong to it at a secondary level. Forty-eight is close to the forty-one dramas of public famous events at a primary level and of reliable authorship and to the fifty-two palatine comedies, at a primary level, of reliable authorship, and well below the seventy-five urban comedies, at a primary level, of reliable authorship.

These four genres, as I mentioned in other occasions, form the backbone of the *New Comedy* in Lope de Vega's time.

While the quantity offers these results, the quality is even more relevant. Among the dramas of private events we can find many of the ones considered canonical by the critics: *El casamiento en la muerte*, *El caballero de Olmedo*, *Los comendadores de Córdoba*, *Fuenteovejuna*, *Peribáñez*, *El mejor alcalde, el rey*, and others that are not considered so canonical but which, in my view, are of great quality, such as *Los Tellos de Meneses*, *El Duque de Viseo*, *Los Prados de León*, *Querer la propia desdicha* or *Don Lope de Cardona*, in addition to some dramas initially attributed to Lope and now discarded, like *La Estrella de Sevilla* or *El infanzón de Illescas*.

If this is true, then how is it possible that they have not been worthy so far of an overall study, not even of the acknowledgement of their existence as a genre? The bibliography on Lope's historical dramas is quite substantial, given the aesthetic importance of many of them, but the bibliography that only serves to provide overview is limited, and even more limited is the corpus of plays they handle, as shown by the two latest monographs on the issue that I have been able to consult, apart from my 1997 article mentioned above: one by Florence Calvo (2007) and another one by Guillem Usandizaga (2010). None of the aforementioned studies expressly tackles the possibility of the existence of a branch of historical dramas defined by the private nature of their conflicts. Only the now distant «Essay on the poetic imitation of history» by Edmund de Chasca that prologued, in 1958, Robert B. Brown's *Bibliografía de las comedias históricas, tradicionales y legendarias de Lope de Vega*, when dealing with «The problem of the classification of Lope's historical theatre», advocates the convenience to take into account, for this classification, not only the degree of historical authenticity of the events described, but also the nature of these events, depending on whether they belong more to the personal life or to the public life. If the events «belong to the sphere of personal life», then Chasca is in favour of excluding them from the genre, and he cites as an example the case of *La niña de plata*, a comedy starring historical figures such as King Peter I of Castile, and his brother Henry of Trastámara, future Henry II, but whose action is of intimate, private, or romantic nature, as he describes it in a very Anglo-Saxon manner.

In my view there are two main reasons that have prevented so far the acknowledgement of the genre whose existence and full importance I claim. The first reason is that as the Aristotelian opposition between the historical and the poetic takes precedence over any other classifying criterion, these dramas were subsumed within the historical dramas, without other distinctions, and the requirement that the critics have imposed in relation to them until recently has been mainly to measure the degree of historicity and fidelity to sources¹. If, in addition, we take into account the fact that Marcelino Menéndez y Pelayo's almost never questioned authority declared these dramas historical, it will be easier to understand why their condition had not been put to the test. Out of the forty-eight plays of reliable authorship, which are of private events at a primary level, according to ARTELOPE, Menéndez Pelayo integrated

¹ Closely related to this issue, critics have also been concerned about another one, the lack or the superficiality of Lope's historical perception, and of classical theatre in general, as the same accusation has been brought, for example, to Shakespeare's *history plays*. This criticism, as stated in a book by Karl Vossler or, later, in Lope's biography by Lázaro Carreter (1996), stems from the idea that Lope does not know how to perceive the difference between past époques and the present one, and that he conceives characters, situations, spaces, customs of the past as if they were contemporary. The discussion on this matter would require a separate article, which I consider necessary. Suffice it for now to say that it is a lack of historical perspective asking the 17th century theatre to operate as the 18th century novel: the capturing of the historical setting, of its scenery and of its customs, its «local colour» and its «picturesqueness» (for the Romantics) or «representativeness» (for Realism) will not strike until the late 18th or early 19th century. The idea that the character is the result of the determinations of an époque requires a very different historical conception than the one of the 16th and 17th century, in which the character is outlined not on a specific chronotope but among the great archetypes of morality and religion. The historical conception of Baroque theatre has other sources: the discovery that the present is the way it is due to the chain of past events, already highlighted by Rosaldo in an important study (1958), the providential belief that each nation has its own destiny, distinct from that of other nations, the concern to establish genealogies (real alternative to the modern chronotope), capturing the conflicts of every age (the defense of Christianity against paganism in the age of Romanization, the fight for the reconquest after losing Spain, the monarchical-aristocratic confrontations of the 14th-15th centuries...), the belief that history is the master of our lives and that the past finds its full meaning in the guide and prevention of the dangers of the present. But we will speak about all this on another occasion.

thirty-seven of them, that is 77%, into his «Comedies and issues of national history» and he only considered as *novelescas*, and therefore as non-historical, five of our dramas, that is 10.4%. He did not state an opinion regarding the remaining six². We will leave aside the plays he does not comment on and that simply refer to different information between Don Marcelino's list and the one I suggest, as some of these plays would most probably fall within the criteria of historical drama that he considered, such as *Don Lope de Cardona*, *La mayor virtud de un rey* or *Las mudanzas de fortuna y los sucesos de Don Beltrán de Aragón*, very similar to others that he did include in his studies.

I will take a closer look for a moment at the plays that he considered as non historical, because maybe by inferring his criteria of exclusion —as he did not dedicate any study to any of them— we will be able to better define our criteria of inclusion. As I have already mentioned, there are five plays that mark the dissidence between ARTELOPE and Don Marcelino: the two parts of *Don Juan de Castro*, *El ejemplo de casadas*, *El piadoso veneciano* and *Servir con mala estrella*. In *El ejemplo de casadas* we read in ARTELOPE:

The historical background is very simple, it limits to the participation of the protagonist, an imaginary count of Barcelona, in the Third Crusade, promoted by Richard the Lionheart of England and other kings, and in which Lope thought that Alfonso VIII of Castile had participated.

Consequently, the play is about a 12th century in which a county of Barcelona that had not been yet incorporated to the Crown of Aragon (the dynastic union took place in 1162) and the Third Crusade (1189-1192) coexist. This conflict of data, although at a short distance in time, is not infrequent in many undisputed historical dramas that glide events from one date to another, including moving from one reign to another. We can perceive, therefore, that the poet intends to frame the action historically. However, Enrico, the protagonist, who holds a historical and peninsular sovereignty (that of the counts of Barcelona) is totally imaginary, this being quite

² Although Robert B. Brown (1958), by including in the historical dramas plays that Menéndez Pelayo did not edit, but which at some point he considered as such, added one more, of reliable authorship and of private events at a primary level, *Los Guzmanes del Toral*.

unusual: imaginary sovereigns are, in their vast majority, foreigners in Lope's plays. On the other hand, the historical circumstance does not determine at all the action of the comedy: it simply is, in the third act, the excuse for the absence of the protagonist from his kingdom, who could well have gone to Jerusalem or to the Norwegian fjords, with the same result. The characters have pompous literary names such as Elarino, Roselio, Rosardo, Floriano, Tibaldo, or they represent nonexistent kingdoms, like the Prince of Bearne. In addition, the main action is entirely *novelesca*, even typical of fantastic folk tales, as it deals with the infinite and the sinister tests the Count subjects his docile and humble wife to. Among other situations, she gives away her little children to be killed by order of the Count, or takes part in the preparations of the supposedly new wedding of the Count and a French princess, after her repudiation: the obedient Laurencia agrees to everything without a question until the Count, finally satisfied with her docility, rewards her by reuniting her with her children, who are now teenagers and whom he had not killed, and by allowing her to return to the Court and to her marital bed. A similar case is that of *El piadoso veneciano*, although I will not enlarge on the subject. I will only point out that the main action takes place in Venice and that for Don Marcelino it could not be part of the national legends. In both plays the historical circumstance, little accurate in its data and not at all decisive in the action, does not suffice to offer historical meaning to the conflict, and we will have to agree with Menéndez Pelayo and withdraw the condition of historical dramas from these two plays in ARTELOPE.

This does not happen in the case of *Servir con mala estrella*, for here the historical circumstance is well elaborated: it is made up of historical events such as the love between King Alfonso VII and Doña Urraca Fernández de Castro (Doña Sancha in the fictional story), and it announces the conquest of Jaén. The action is marked by the figure of the Cid (the good vassal of a bad king whose ingratitude is heard in folk songs), which serves as a backdrop to the ingratitude of King Alfonso VII for his vassal Rugero de Valois, the protagonist of the play. The historical sites are precisely located: much of the action takes place in the fortress of Toledo, and a remarkable episode occurs in the castle of San Cervantes. The purely historical actions have a direct impact on the fictional action and so,

Don Nuño Alonso's death in the battle against the Moors in Peña Negra, the dismemberment of his body and the sending of the pieces to different cities, in Act II, can be found with full precision in Ambrosio de Morales's *Crónica general*. The Chronicle says:

The Moorish crossbowmen were pressing them, shooting with haste without stopping, it seemed that the sky rained arrows: they were shooting arrows at Nuno Alonso, because they saw that the power of the Christians lied with him, and so they wounded him fatally with many of them. Fighting like a lion, that no one dared to come close to, the brave warden of Toledo fell dead into the ground [...] Warden Farax of Calatrava ordered that Alonso's head, right arm, hand and foot be cut and his body be wrapped in gold and silk cloths³.

Farax ordered that many more Christian heads be cut and together with that of Nuno Alonso he sent them to Cordoba, to Seville, and even to Africa, to King Texufino. The protagonist of the action, Rugero of Valois, is fictional, but the co-protagonist, who plays a decisive role in the play, is King Alfonso VII of Leon and Castile, and apart from other historical characters involved in the action, such as the aforementioned Nuño Alonso, the most important parallel action of the play, that of the King's concubinage with Doña Sancha, reproduces King Alfonso's extramarital love affair with Doña Urraca Fernández de Castro, who is the mother of Stephanie the Unfortunate in the historical chronicle and in Lope's homonymous play. By the way, Menéndez Pelayo did not hesitate to include *La desdichada Estefanía* in his catalogue of historical dramas, and documented its legend in the *Crónica del Emperador don Alonso VII*, by Fray Prudencio de Sandoval (1600). The historical factors are therefore crucial, and the play should be classified, in spite of Menéndez Pelayo, as historical drama.

³ «Íbanlos apretando los moros ballesteros, tirando apriesa sin cesar, que parecía que llovían saetas del cielo: señaladamente las tiraban a Nuño Alonso, porque veían que en él estaban las fuerzas de los cristianos; y así le hirieron mortalmente con muchas dellas. Peleando como un león, que nadie se le osaba acercar, cayó el valiente Alcayde de Toledo muerto en tierra [...] Mandó el Alcaide Farax de Calatrava cortar la cabeza de Nuño Alonso con el brazo derecho, mano y pie y que el cuerpo se envolvese en paños de oro y seda», in *Crónica General de España*, vol. I, part II.

Halfway between the two plays that we have decided to dismiss as historical dramas and the one we have reaffirmed as such, there are the two parts of *Don Juan de Castro*. ARTELOPE attributes to the first one very mixed generic features of historical drama of private events, of *novelista* comedy and of palatine drama, and the following can be read about it:

This is an unusual drama [...] The historical or, better yet legendary, background is minimal, and is limited to the descendents of the lineage of the Castros of King García of Galicia, ruler of a homonymous kingdom at the beginning of the 10th century. At that stage the Kingdom of Galicia coincided in time with the county of Barcelona [which is also present in the play]. All the other data is inaccurate: there was not a prince of Galicia of the lineage of the Alarcos, there was not a king of England called Eduardo until the 13th century, there was neither Norman nor English intervention in Ireland until the 12th century... The jousts called by the King of England in order to give his daughter's hand to the winner, the appearance of the 'black squadron' and the triumph of the [anonymous] black knight in the jousts, refer us to the chivalric universe, and they inevitably recall the chapter of the English festivities in *Tirant lo Blanch*, although it is not a drama of chivalry [matter]. The shipwreck off the coasts of England, the supernatural interventions of the deceased Tibaldo, the protagonist's kidnapping [and his transfer to a prison in Ireland], the protagonism of two half brothers of different fathers and yet similar as two drops of water are all features of *comedia novelista*. But it is not a comedy (the play almost completely lacks a comic strategy), nor the two plays as a whole will be predominantly comical. Finally, the court setting and the intrigues revolving around power and desire both in Galicia and England, evoke the palatine dramas. The plot starts in a serious tone, with accents of tragedy, initiated by the overwhelming desire the princess feels for her stepson, it turns towards the *novelista* due to the shipwreck [off the bay of Plémua, Plymouth], then towards the chivalric due to the English festivities, and it ends in a highly dramatic tone.

Meditating on Rugero's doubts in view of the requirement to consummate the marriage he had entered into on behalf of his brother from the part of the father and the loyalty to him, imprisoned in a distant place.

This dramatic character increases a lot in *Segunda parte*, where in Acts I and II the military adventure predominates, with the war

between Ireland and England and the venture of release of Don Juan de Castro by his brother Rugero de Moncada. But in the third act, after the episode in which, as the new Abraham, Don Juan supposedly sacrifices his children in order to cure his brother Rugero, a highly dramatic tone prevails, the tone of the pact that lives beyond death, of the commitment to the dead, a tone that, from the denouement, gives meaning to this entire second part and, by projecting itself back on the first part, to the two dramas as a whole.

It is, therefore, on the whole, a drama, but the historical circumstances in which it is formed are both vague and contradictory; all the characters involved in the action, except for the protagonist's possible genealogical background, are fictional. Moreover the action is entirely fictional, and no historical event affects it. All this would lead to dismissing the two parts as historical dramas, had it not been for the undeniable genealogical meaning of the play, as it brings to stage through the protagonist, Don Juan, son of the Prince of Galicia, the royal descendents of the lineage of the Castros in Galicia, direct descendents, according to the genealogy, of the first king of Galicia, Don García, who died in prison in 1090. It is obvious that this genealogical intention of the poet is related to the Count of Lemos, previously Marquis of Sarria, a descendant of the main branch of the Castros, whom Lope de Vega served, whom he always treated with great deference, boasting about his loyalty, and whose high position at court, refined culture, and love of letters made him the most demanded literary patron of his time. And if Cervantes was able to bear witness to it firsthand, Lope wrote in tribute to his genealogy not only the first and the second part of *Don Juan de Castro*, but also *La desdichada Estefanía*, a play in which expressions such as the following can be read: «The Castros, blood of the Cid», «You, the Castros, are descendants of the Kings», and which ends by evoking the weeping of «Castros and Andradas» for the innocent Estefanía and promising, through Belardo's words, a «second comedy» with «what the history is missing»⁴. This second part might be *El pleito por la honra o el valor de Fernandico*, a play in which Fernán Ruiz de Castro reappears, the nobleman who murdered his wife Estefanía on a false assumption. But it is not certain that this play belongs to Lope, and, furthermore, Vélez de Guevara also

⁴ *Estefanía, la desdichada*, p. 983.

wrote about the legend of Estefanía in *Los celos hasta los cielos*. The tributes to the illustrious family do not end here: the same legendary Fernán Ruiz de Castro reappears, this time elderly, in *Las paces de los Reyes y judía de Toledo*, and another Ruiz de Castro, now in the 15th century, is present in *La piedad ejecutada*, while a Don Juan de Castro, in King Manuel's Portugal, is the protagonist of the drama *La mayor virtud de un rey*, and another one with the same name is the protagonist of the urban comedy *El premio del bien hablar*, in contemporary Seville.

The genealogical dramas nourished themselves on the extremely abundant harvest of noble genealogies of the 16th and 17th centuries, which were accepted as historical genre no matter how many fables and legends they included in their lines, so we have to admit that these dramas flaunt the same strategy as others of the same type, such as *Los Porceles de Murcia*, *Los Ramírez de Arellano*, *Los Tellos de Meneses*, or *Los Prados de León*, although served in *Don Juan de Castro* with freer fantasy. On the other hand, abounding in this strategy, we have Lope's words in the Dedicatory of the *Primera parte* to the Count of Cantillana: the Muses «shared out between themselves the liberal arts, and the most famous ones got history and poetry, *that all may be one*, even if there are contrary views on *truth and license*». Lope then states that there is «history in verse and poetry in prose», so, consequently, his *Don Juan de Castro* is «true history with a different name, and due to the aforementioned license, poetic fable»⁵.

The previous analysis allows me to point out the minimum conditions that a drama must meet in order to be considered historical. The circumstances of space and time of the action have to provide a certain historical context, however vague or even inaccurate it may result with respect to the historical event we know today, but these circumstances are not enough to support the historical character of the drama. This requires that they affect in some way the action of the text, when the action or a part of it is fictional and not historical. A historical drama could neither be conceived without a character that may be considered historical, either in the role of protagonist, co-protagonist, antagonist, witness of the events or a secondary character who is involved in the action, sometimes in order to sanction it could not be conceived. The pragmatic aspects of production and

⁵ *Obras completas de Lope de Vega. Comedias, XIV*, p. 585.

reception are particularly crucial: when relevant data is available about the poet's intention to situate the events historically, its *historial* character cannot be doubted; in the same way, when suspecting that the audience's reception was not in terms of history, because the precedents were unknown, its *historial* character must be put into parentheses, or in a secondary position. Both *El castigo sin venganza* and *El mayordomo de la duquesa de Amalfi* were inspired by two of Bandello's novels, and in both cases Bandello admits that he based his stories on events that actually occurred in the past, however, as they do not come from Spanish legends, well known to the public, it is more than likely that they were considered of free invention. The historical genre, in literary texts, seems to demand an aural (or readerly) pact by which the author and the spectators assume that what is said or shown, or part of what is said or shown, happened in the past, no matter how many licences were authorized for its adornment. Taking into account this pressure on the classification of the drama both from the poet's intention and from the audience's reception, which imply the intervention of subjective factors, and which we may not know, we prefer the Spanish adjective *historial*, typical of the era, rather than the adjective historical, which imposes a greater level of objectivity.

The other main reason why the genre of drama of private events has not been acknowledged as such is that a genre whose necessity was neither explained nor justified, and whose conceptualization has not been established cannot be properly acknowledged. And there cannot be any necessity if we think of history as the knowledge of public events that affect an entire community and that are worthy of collective memory.

This is what we could consider as the classical historical perspective. It can be seen in a manual—very useful, by the way—like *Historia de la historiografía española* by Benito Sánchez Alonso (1944). In his second volume, which covers the period between 1543–1684, each of its three chapters repeats the same structure. First of all and by way of introduction, given the limited visibility they have during this époque, the theorists of history are examined. The core of each chapter is represented by *Crónicas Generales*, which in time will be succeeded by *Historias Generales*; by *Historia de los antiguos reinos*; and by the contemporary reign or reigns, such as the ones of Charles V and Philip II, in the first period. A second core is constituted of the

Historias de sucesos particulares, understood à la Cayetano Rosell (1946), who based his collection on a label used by Nicolás Antonio, that is, as histories of events of limited duration in time, without a general length. And in their vast majority, they are public events such as wars or annexations of titles and territories to the crown. In order not to extend myself too much, I will summarize the events of the first period (1543–1592): the fights against the Turks and the Berbers, and in particular the Battle of Lepanto; the war against the Moriscos of Granada; the wars in Flanders, France and Germany; and finally the incorporation of Portugal to the crown of Spain. In the third core, that of *Biografías y Autobiografías*, finally appear some narratives of a private nature, in the sense we use here. These are, for instance, *Memorias* by Francisco de Encinas or Esteban de Garibay, or *Vidas* by the bishop Diego de Simancas and Teresa de Jesús. However, also important in this core are the biographies and autobiographies of great public figures, such as Cardinal Cisneros, the Turk Barbarossa, the Marquis of Pescara; and partial biographies reduced to relevant moments, like the death of Prince Charles or of Queen Isabel de Valois, or to journeys, such as Prince Philip's journey to England. Then there is a fourth core, a true hotchpotch, which investigates *universal histories* (a peculiar relegation), *histories of cities*, *ecclesiastic history* and of *religious orders*, *hagiographies*, histories of institutions: A brief section is devoted to *genealogies*, but Sánchez Alonso does not investigate their content. Finally, there is an extensive subchapter dedicated to the *historians of the Indies*, with the same hierarchical structure, but then a special chapter opens, that of the «histories in which predominate the news about the indigenous people», ripe for exploitation for a more updated historiography.

All in all, in this profuse succession of histories and more histories, events that are predominantly private, or more private than public, barely appear in other places apart from a few biographies and autobiographies, a couple of genealogies that are not mentioned and in those news about the indigenous people of the New World. The axis of the history is made up of *general histories*, *medieval* ones and those of *contemporary reigns*, all based on the great figures and public events.

Sánchez Alonso's book was published in 1944. In the late 20th century, however, things seemed to have changed radically. Critics began to speak of *the new history*, and in a collective book edited by

Peter Burke in 1991, that aimed to cover and explain the different forms to make this new history, the editor was trying to summarize in seven points «the contrast between old and new history». We would like to emphasize here four of these seven points.

Here is the first:

According to the traditional paradigm, history is essentially concerned with politics [...] it did include the history of the Church as an institution [and] «the continuation of policies by other means», that is, war. Although other kinds of history —the history of art, for example, or the history of science— were not altogether excluded by the traditional paradigm, they were marginalized in the sense of being considered peripheral» (1991, p. 3).

Here is the third:

traditional history offers a view from above, in the sense that it has always concentrated on the great deeds of great men, statesmen, generals, or occasionally churchmen. The rest of humanity was allocated a minor role in the drama of history. (1991, p. 4)

Burke's assertion could be reinforced by the ascertainment that, for most of the history textbooks, kings are the people with the most history, at least until the 19th century, while there are many people who, by principle, have no place in history.

Here is the fourth: «according to the traditional paradigm history should be based on the documents» especially on official documents released by the government and kept in archives (1991, p. 4).

Here is the sixth:

According to the traditional paradigm, History is objective. The historian's task is to give readers the facts, or as Ranke put it in much-quoted phrase, to tell «how it actually happened». (1991, p. 5)

Against each and every one of these seven aspects Burke set the contrary as typical of the new history, whose origins date back, according to a quite broad consensus, to the founding in 1929 of the *Annales* journal, in Paris, associated with the names of Marc Bloch and Lucien Febvre. The dominance of political history has given way to the belief that «everything has a history», that is, everything

has a past that, in principle, can be reconstructed and related to the rest of the past. «In the last thirty years we have seen a number of remarkable histories of issues which had not previously been thought to possess a history, for example, childhood, death, madness, the climate, tastes, dirt and cleanliness, gestures, the body [...] femininity [...] reading, speaking, and even silence» (Burke, 1991, p. 3). We could add to the list everyday life, mentalities, family, or forms of punishment. The history from above has been countered with the notion of by the history from below. The history of popular culture has received considerable attention, the study of mentalities and collective representations has consolidated, and the so-called Microhistory, on the other hand, with its narration of the everyday lives of ordinary people, not particularly historic, in a local setting, has reinforced among the historians in the few last years⁶.

Let us recall that such an acclaimed book as Carlo Ginzburg's *Il Formaggio ei vermi* (1976) emphasized that the life of a humble rural miller born in 1532, who lived in Friuli and who was never involved in any major public event, could be as full of history as the life of the Pope under whose authority he was persecuted by the Inquisition, condemned and executed. In the fundamental prologue that prefaces Ginzburg's story, we can see him reasoning like this:

if the sources offer us the possibility of reconstructing not only indistinct masses but also individual personalities, it would be absurd to ignore it [...] A number of biographical studies have shown that in a movers individual who is himself lacking in significance and for this very reason representative, it is still possible to trace, as in a microcosm, the characteristics of an entire social stratum in a specific historical period, whether it be the Austrian nobility or the lower clergy in seventeenth-century England. (1980, p. xx)

In many of the forms of the new history the primacy of the document and of the supposedly positive event established by the document has been subjected to criticism. If historians are currently

⁶ Some typical examples would be *Cristofano and the Plague* by Carlo Cipolla; *The Return of Martin Guerre* by Natalie Davis; *The Gate of Heavenly Peace* by Jonathan Spence... See as introduction G. Levi's, 1991.

interested in all kinds of human activities, and not only in the political, ecclesiastical and military ones —argues Burke—, they will have to resort to different types of evidence: oral, written, statistical evidence... living testimonies, letters, photographs, or literary texts, now rediscovered by historians, are used as assets of the new history.

As for the claim that history should pursue the objective knowledge of the past, of how things really happened, it has been rejected as chimerical by the new history. Burke expresses it with the courtesy that is so typical of him, but it would be enough to inquire into the approaches of some of the theorists of history, such as US-born Hayden White (1992), who have been very influential among historians and literary theorists, in order to find much more radical proposals. For White the ability that history has to explain the past comes from its ability to select and sort the events from a particular point of view, linked inevitably to the historian's —socialized— present, and from its ability to put an end to them, in short, its ability to create a plot and a denouement, and this double capacity is essentially narrative. By imposing a plot to the sequence of real events the author does not reflect life the way it is, but an image of life that is and can only be imaginary, and by imposing an end to it, the sequence is endowed with a moral significance because the events are not events without a plot that selects, highlights and orders them, nor do they ever have an ending that gives them meaning. For H. White History and Fiction basically operate in a similar way when faced with the real, because they both use the narrative as a way of knowing the real, they both constitute a symbolic discourse whose greatest power is not the informative one, but that of generating images of the real. The plot of a historical narrative does not reproduce the past, it does not imitate it, nor does it explain it, it understands it and it symbolizes it, it becomes its allegorical correlate.

R. Chartier (1992), from a theoretical tradition —that of the *Annales* school— very different from White's school, also states that the acknowledgement of the structural identity between the fictional narrative and historical narrative is inevitable. After all, the intrigue operates in all narratives as a vehicle of comprehension: to explain some events historically is nothing other than revealing their intrigue, he writes. One knows by telling. This does not lead him, however, to accept White's thesis, «el relativismo absoluto de una

historia identificada con la ficción», nor does he accept the opposite, «las certidumbres ilusorias de una historia definida como ciencia positiva» (p. 78)⁷. For Chartier, the classic explanation of history through the duality historical matter, of objective and real nature, and historical knowledge, of subjective, yet scientific nature, forced to reveal the former, is the one that seems less certain today (76).

White and Chartier have formed their positions in parallel with and at the same time in debt to Paul Ricoeur's philosophical work, who in turn echoes White's proposals. For Ricoeur the ascertainment of a certain difference, albeit limited and relative, between fictional and historical narrative, based on «the pretence of truth» of the latter, does not preclude the establishment of their structural identity, its narrative condition. There are practically two different forms of the same requirement of truth, and they both bring into play the temporary nature of human experience. Ultimately, the difference between historical narrative and fictional narrative belongs to the final phase of the narrative mimesis, that Ricoeur calls *mimesis 3*, and it stems from the reading process. The reader is its key.

In a later book, Peter Burke goes back to the subject in order to explain the changes that take place in the history, and especially in the cultural history, which could be summarized in terms of a displacement of a history that seeks the representation of the past to another one that strives to build it. The ultimate belief that underlies many historical essays of the past fifty years is that our knowledge of the real is not a representation of the real, but a cultural construction. We build history as we know, and similarly we build the idea of genre, or the idea of nation, or the image of an entire civilization, or everyday life, or the classics of a literature, or personal identity, or the speech of institutions such as the clinic, the psychiatric hospital or the prison.

It is no coincidence that in this theoretical environment, the end of the 20th century staged a new alliance between History as a discipline and Fiction (Oleza, 1996), based on this acknowledgment of the work of the historian as narrative construction, and the attraction of historians, novelists and readers to the hybrid forms of

⁷ «the absolute relativism of a history identified with fiction», «illusory certainties of a history defined as positive science».

novel and historical reality, as embodied in the successful rise of mixed genres such as fictionalized historical biographies (*El general en su laberinto*, by García Márquez, *El último emperador*, by Bertolucci, *F*, by Justo Navarro, about the fictionalized life of the poet Gabriel Ferrater...), the fictionalized historical autobiographies (*Años de penitencia*, by Carlos Barral, *La autobiografía de Federico Sánchez*, by Jorge Semprún, *Ardor guerrero*, by Antonio Muñoz Molina...), fictional autobiographies (*Yo Claudio*, by Robert Graves; *Memorias de Adriano*, by Marguerite Yourcenar), the fictionalized reports of real events (*El relato de un naufrago* or *Noticia de un secuestro*, by García Márquez; *Enterrar a los muertos*, by Martínez de Pisón...), fictionalized historical reconstructions (*El queso y los gusanos*, by Carlo Guinzburg; *El Sacco de Roma*, by André Chastel; *The Gate of Heavenly Peace*, by Jonathan Spence...). All these genres, among which some of the best contemporary narratives have been created, are mutants of history and fiction.

And in this new alliance one cannot conceive the historical without its private dimension, because, as I wrote elsewhere, «la privacidad es un modo de vivir —tal vez tan intenso como la militancia— esa experiencia colectiva e inevitable que es el acontecimiento histórico» (1997b)⁸. The characters of many of these contemporary novels

viven inmersos en la historia [...] pero viven la historia no en el espacio de lo público sino en el de lo privado, y buscan no la crónica de los acontecimientos públicos sino la verdad privada, la memoria del corazón, este lado de acá de la experiencia personal. Transitan por la historia llenos de privacidad (1997b)⁹.

Our conception of history claims, therefore, the full acknowledgement of the role that personal experiences of both private and public subjects play in it. It is, as the title of this paper says, a ques-

⁸ «privacy is a way of living, —perhaps as intense as the militancy— that collective and inevitable experience which is the historical event».

⁹ «live immersed in the history [...] but they live the history not in the space of the public, but of the private, and they seek not the chronicle of public events but private truth, the memory of the heart, this side of personal experience. They walk through history full of privacy».

tion, or better yet, a requirement of subjects. And I think that I am now in the position to characterize the genre.

They are *historial* dramas, that stage events whose causes and circumstances are personal, whose very nature is personal or private, although its effects and consequences may become public, events that trigger conflicts of private nature, experienced by either imaginary characters or historical ones (sovereigns, legendary heroes, testifiable private characters), that act under public, historically determined circumstances.

There are more dramas than comedies, because they often pursue the reflection of, or the moral effect on, spectators or readers more than their laughter, sometimes giving rise to questions about the human condition and destiny (*El caballero de Olmedo*, *La desdichada Estefanía*, *El infanzón de illescas*, *La adversa fortuna de Don Bernardo de Cabrera*), often adopting an emphatic exemplary character (*El amigo hasta la muerte*, *Lo que hay que fiar del mundo*, *La mayor virtud de un rey*), which may become indoctrinating (with respect to, for instance, the behaviour of the married woman, as in the insufferably patriarchal *El ejemplo de casadas* or *La hermosura aborrecida*, or with respect to the popular credulity in superstitions as in *Los Porceles de Murcia* or *El servir con mala estrella*), often stage subjects and conflicts of tragic tradition (the struggle for power and favours, kings' justices or injustices, the changes of fortune, the offences to the family clans and blood vengeance), or recently discovered conflicts for new tragedies (such as the dramas of conjugal honour, or of peasant honour, or of jealousy). Many of them are situated on the orbit of tragedies in the style of *Arte Nuevo* (*El casamiento en la muerte*, *La corona merecida*, *La desdichada Estefanía*, *El mayordomo de la duquesa de Amalfi*, *El caballero de Olmedo*, *Audiencias del rey Don Pedro*, *Porfiar hasta morir*, *El bastardo Mudarra*, *El Duque de Viseo*, *La Estrella de Sevilla...*) while others come very close to the commemorative or celebratory nature of the dramas of famous events, by representing the deeds of the new heroes (*Los hechos de Garcilaso*, *La contienda de García de Paredes*, *Julián Romero*, *El valiente Céspedes...*).

Their most permeable borders are kept with the dramas of public famous events and with the urban comedies. With the former because it is not at all surprising that the main subject of these dramas is involved in public events, apart from the private events which determine the action: in *El casamiento en la muerte*, for exam-

ple, the fundamental action is the recovery of the family honour by the bastard Bernardo del Carpio but it includes a historical-legendary event as relevant as the battle of Roncesvalles; *Los hechos de Garcilaso de la Vega*, which shows the personal triumph of the knight in replying to the challenge of the moorish knight, is included in the events of the final phase of the War of Granada; García de Paredes and Juan de Urbina intersperse their deeds, including the assassination of his own wife by the latter, with the entrance of the Great Captain in Naples, with the battle of Pavia or the sacking of Rome. Sometimes, the protagonist has an unequivocally public identity, as in the case of kings, and it is impossible to objectively demarcate the private affairs from the public ones from a contemporary perspective, as the kings of the absolute monarchy only inhabit the public area and even their most intimate actions are of public nature. However, the playwright may accentuate the passionate character, sometimes secret, in his actions, in conjunction with our own sense of privacy, and then we make the decision to define them primarily as private events of public protagonists, in full awareness that we do so from our own perspective. Such are the feelings of mistrust, invincible antipathy, jealousy, envy, hatred that John II of Portugal harbours for the Duke of Viseo and that would not calm down inside of him until ordering and executing his assassination, and such is the lustful desire of Sancho el Bravo for Estrella Tavera, who will drive him to order the murder of his innocent brother.

With the urban comedies they maintain the sinuous complicity of all tragicomedies, in which even though they have more things in common with the tragedy, they still verge on comedies. This applies to *Los enemigos en casa*, where the irreparable discord between the family clans of the Atienzas and the Ovandos results in that, while the adults persist in their hostilities, the two lovers celebrate the fact that he was arrested and imprisoned by her parents because it allows them to enjoy their love for three years, leaving each year on the parents' doorstep the corresponding newborn tucked in a basket: the title of the play, the enemies at home, could not be more malicious and amusing. Dramas of private events with many features of urban comedy are also *La piedad ejecutada*, *El amigo hasta la muerte*, and *La Paloma de Toledo*, which replies to *La Estrella de Sevilla* with a comedic approach, due to the services of a skilled father in his mediations and to the lady's capacity of persuasion. And the

opposite also occurs, mainly urban comedies such as *La boda entre dos maridos* or *La niña de plata* that have numerous features of historical drama of private events.

The genre system that we have been designing strives to establish clearly the categories that separate genres as reference systems, but our analysis of the texts make us see how in many cases the texts frolic with those categories, they experiment with the limits of the established, they flirt with the mixtures. While theory requires the rigour of the categories, criticism assumes the liberty of the texts. However, I must say, the dramas of pure private events, unmixed with other genre, constitute a clear majority.

The dramas of private events are historical, as shown when pointing out the necessary conditions for their acknowledgement. However, the degrees of historical intensity can be quite different. In a now distant essay, of 1981, I distinguished between three degrees of interference of private facts in a historical or legendary plot. The weakest is one in which the historical circumstance is a concise environmental framework, generally provided by names of places, allusions to historical situations (captivity in Algeria, for instance), names and titles of kings, and deprived of specific events that characterize it as a concrete historical moment, so that the only events of the plot are the private ones, which are inserted into this framework. In fact, there are not many such dramas and they usually contain features of other genres, which is why they are situated at the border of our genre, and their condition can be up for debate. I have already commented upon the cases of *El ejemplo de casadas*, *El piadoso veneciano* and the First and Second Part of *Don Juan de Castro*, and I will take a closer look only at another drama with these features, *Querer la propia desdicha*. The action takes place in the court of Toledo during the reign of an unspecified King Alfonso, who conducts negotiations with the court of Aragon in order to marry the Aragonese princess, just as Alfonso X, who married Violante, daughter of Jaume I, but who is in open hostility to the kingdom of Granada, like Alfonso XI, among whose commanders Reduán is mentioned, a Nazari general who lived in Alfonso XI's time, in the first half of the 14th century. The only historical event that is mentioned in the action is the announcement of the wedding of the king of Castile with the princess of Aragon, that would be held in Medinaceli (and which was actually held in Valladolid, in 1246).

Apart from this, the state of discord with Granada allows the protagonist, Don Juan de Cardona, to convince King Alfonso that he was preparing a conspiracy against him with the help of the Moorish king of Granada, in order to force him to withdraw all the grants and titles that he had granted to him till that moment and to make him fall into disgrace. The plot unfolds between changes of fortune and requited loves that manage to overcome the disturbances that very fortune causes with its changes.

The second degree is represented by the dramas in which the historical context, with specific circumstances that characterize it, does have a significant impact on the private events, even though they do not produce major effects on the historical circumstance. It may be then that the protagonist is not a historical character, but a fictional one, but the opposite can also happen, he may be a historical character of purely private action. Whatever the protagonist, other secondary historical characters may appear in the action, marking it with their intervention. It is the very common case of kings, who, at the end of the action, come into stage to sanction the denouement, without having interfered previously in the events. *La mayor virtud de un rey* would be a good example of this type of plays. Others: *Los Ponces de Barcelona*, *El caballero de Olmedo*, *El amigo hasta la muerte*, *Donde no está su dueño está su duelo*, *Porfiar hasta morir...*

The third degree is the most intense: the intersection between public and private events, which occurs mainly when the protagonist is a historical character, of known events, whose action unfolds in both public and the private spheres. This applies to:

1— heroes of epic tradition such as Bernardo del Carpio in *El casamiento en la muerte*, or the seven infants of Lara and their illegitimate brother in *El bastardo Mudarra*;

2— historical kings, protagonists and co-protagonists of the action, such as King Peter the Cruel in *Audiencias del rey Don Pedro*, King Sancho the Brave in *La Estrella de Sevilla*, King John II of Portugal in *El Duque de Viseo*;

3— characters mentioned in chronicals, genealogies and legends, of known events, although of a more private nature, like Garcilaso de la Vega from *Los hechos de Garcilaso*, Veinticuatro from *Los comendadores de Córdoba*, the soldier of fortune García de Paredes from *La contienda de García de Paredes*, Fernando Ruíz de Castro from *La desdichada Estefanía*;

4— imaginary protagonists that move within the maze of required historical circumstances and in contact with first-hand historical characters, such as Don Juan de Meneses from *La discreta venganza*, Don Álvaro Núñez from *La fortuna merecida*, Laurencia from *Fuenteovejuna* or Casilda and Peribáñez from the homonymous drama.

I would dare say that this high degree of intersection between the private and the public, in these four variants of protagonist, is by far the most common within the dramas of private historical events. This reaffirms the *historial* dimension of many of Lope's plays, and his ability to historically frame his characters' private experience, contrary to views arguing his alleged inability or insensitivity to history.

A few years ago, in 2001, in relation to *La Estrella de Sevilla*, I elaborated by way of hypothesis the concept of *traza* (scheme) in order to characterize a plot of events that repeats in a variety of plays. In a later work, published in 2009, and by consulting a large number of plays in ARTELOPE, I could cement this concept of *scheme* as a precise combination of narrative functions, many of them made specific by motifs, which manifested themselves in a series of plays of different genres that, however, shared the same basic conflict. I then studied the conflict of *the lust of the despot* starting from *La Estrella de Sevilla* and I could show that the same conflict could cross the boundaries of genres and manifest itself in many different forms of the *comedia nueva*, which is unsurprising given the fact that one thing is the structure of the scheme and a completely different thing is its elaboration process, which can be comical or dramatic, historical or of free invention. In fact, the conflict of the lust of the despot was present in five different genres: palatine comedies and dramas, urban comedies, chivalry dramas and historial dramas of private events. By preparing this study, and by looking up in ARTELOPE at least ninety plays related to the historical dramas of private events, I can affirm the belief that the texts of the *comedia nueva* respond to a triple connection. On one hand, they are very singular cases of a poetic imagination that delights in the casuistic, which almost always present one or more unusual events or aspects, or as they liked to say at the time, «nunca vistos» (literally, «never seen»), thus highlighting that newness that was so pleasant for the Baroque sensibility; but on the other hand they offer a double de-

pendence, a dependence on the genre they belong to, which governs to a large extent the expectations of audience and readers, and which is already preannounced in the title of the play¹⁰, and the dependence on the scheme that they share with other plays of different genres but identical conflicts.

In the production of the *new comedy* of Lope's time, no conflict, however serious, seems exempt from comic treatment. I invite you to take a look at the famous conflict of the offended peasant honour, resulting in such intense and beautiful tragicomedies as *Peribáñez*, *Fuenteovejuna*, *El mejor alcalde, el rey* or *El infanzón de Illescas*, and then read *El cuerdo en su casa* to see how peasant honour defends itself in a comedic manner against the siege of the capricious offsprings of the nobility, or *El galán de la Membrilla* or *La quinta de Florencia*, if you want to corroborate the experience with other cases. If this is so, and if we can prove that a conflict of conjugal dishonour occurs in urban comedies (*Las ferias de Madrid*), in palatine dramas of free invention (*El castigo sin venganza*), and in historical dramas of private events (*Los comendadores de Córdoba*), then the conflict of honour, whether conjugal or peasant, cannot be included into the characterization of a single genre, as it is present in various.

Therefore, if we have been referring, since 1981, first to the genre of the dramas of honour, and since 1997 (1997a), to the historical dramas of private events of honour, we now propose to withdraw the type of conflict from the characterization of the genre, as it leads us to an insurmountable contradiction: if the conflict is part of the definition of the genre of the drama of private historical events, then how do we explain the fact that it appears in a palatine drama? If it is historical it cannot be palatine, that is, of free invention, and if it is part of the definition of the historical drama, then our definition is incompatible with the existence of this conflict in a palatine drama. Our current proposal, which we have applied in ARTELOPE, correcting the previous characterization, is distinguishing between genre and scheme. The genre is that of the

¹⁰ Thus, judging by the titles alone, *La nueva victoria de Don Gonzalo de Córdoba* cannot be perceived as a palatine drama, *El marqués de Mantua* could not be a historical drama, and *El casamiento de la muete* could hardly be perceived as a comedy. The audience's competence played a significant role in distinguishing genres, and play-wrights relied on that competence.

historical private events, the scheme is the plot of events that triggers a particular conflict. The genre is determined, first of all, by the disjunction between comedy and drama; then by specific features of the type of mimesis: verisimilar, whether it is about the present or the historical past, or imaginary; and by a series of specifications that refer to the type of literary matter (of literary tradition or of free invention, profane or religious, biblical or hagiographic, of the history of Spain, of ancient history, of foreign history), to the characterization of the persons of the play (courtiers, citizens, peasants, mythical figures, saints) and the environments of their acting (palatine, pastoral, urban, peasant, mythological...), and finally to the very nature of the action (private events, public events).

The scheme is determined by the conflict and its development, which is transverse to the genres. This way we can talk about the conflicts of the lust of the despot, of peasant honour, of conjugal honour or dishonour, of royal favours, of changes of fortune, of requited love and its hazards, etc.

This proposal seems more operational than that of maximizing the subtypologization of the genres and it allows us to attend with much more explanatory capacity the movement of display of cases, of exploration of possibilities, of combinatorial game that exists in the *new comedy*. But above all it allows us to gauge what kind of conflicts the playwright subjects this recently discovered private topic to. The map of his private conflicts is the map of his privacy, where the sources of the pre-modern subject are found, a subject that begins to take the shape of a private subject, that is, individual, confronting the panorama of history that legitimizes him and provides him with a play ground, a stage, endowed with the solemnity and the gravity that pertain to history.

The following lines should not be viewed as a final proposal, as it is a recently opened research, but as a proposal supported by a number of more than enough researches and proven cases, eighty-nine plays, among those of reliable authorship, and the probable, doubtful or even inauthentic ones (a rare case), and among the ones that were ratified as dramas of private events and the ones that were discarded. On the other hand, without having developed a detailed analysis of the outline of the different schemes we distinguish here—as we did in the case of «the lust of the despot» scheme (2009)—, and that will without a doubt require or modify some of the aspects

raised here, I will rely on the conceptualization of the conflicts that are capable of generating an scheme in this and other genres.

What is likely to become a conflict, in the private sphere, for the characters that are the protagonists of an individual encounter with history? What beliefs, what feelings, what adventures and, most of all, what fears are capable of triggering that plotted chain of events, that is, the scheme? Among what kind of alternatives does the condition of the private subject, that is, the subjectivity of the Baroque hero, take shape? The answer to these questions, that can be read in the historical dramas of private events, is particularly substantial. We believe we can isolate up to eighteen basic conflicts that are related to individuals and their feelings, to the struggle of these same individuals for the control of their destiny and for their social integration, to the defence of social dignity and the sense of belonging to the family or the lineage, to the relationships with power and especially with the royalty, which represents the divine power in the constituted society.

Among the dramas of individual feelings comes first the conflict that includes the hazards, the obstacles and the disturbances of requited love, caused by parents who are against that love, that can act with the brutal intolerance of *Los Ponces de Barcelona*, or by that other symbolic type of father, the kings, often with different plans to the love for their vassals, such as the reason of state in *El vaquero de Moraña*, or in *La ventura en la desgracia*, or the rivalry with the lover, as in *El duque de Viseo* or *La Paloma de Toledo*. But the obstacles may come from other love rivals, as in *Los Porceles de Murcia* or in *La mayor virtud de un rey*, and trigger such terrible jealousy as in *El caballero de Olmedo*. Sometimes the same vicissitudes of fortune may cause the conflict, as in *Querer la propia desdicha*. In all these dramas of love the starting point is varied: we witness the rituals of seduction between lovers, as in *El caballero de Olmedo*, or they have shared many years of requited love that may have resulted in pregnancy, as in *Los Ponces de Barcelona* or *Los Porceles de Murcia*. The challenges the lovers must pass through may include the death of a third character and the flight of one of the lovers, as in *La ventura en la desgracia*, or a separation that can be as short as in *Los Porceles de Murcia*, of only nine months, or going through an exile, as in *El duque de Viseo*, or causing the lengthy and distant separation of the lovers, as in *El vaquero de Moraña*, or the belief that the break-up is final, and because

of living so many years and adventures apart, they are not able to recognize each other when they reunite, as in *Los Ponces de Barcelona*. The jealousy between the lovers themselves can become a very threatening challenge as in the case of *El más galán portugués*. The denouement may lead to the couple's fortunate reintegration, as in *Los Ponces de Barcelona*, *El vaquero de Moraña*, *La mayor virtud de un rey* or *La Paloma de Toledo*, but the difficulties suffered can also cause the ultimate frustration of love, its impossibility, as in *La Estrella de Sevilla*, or even the death of one of the lovers, as in *El caballero de Olmedo*. Through all these cases a conflict takes shape, a conflict we could define as «hazards and challenges of requited love», ranging from cases that are very close to comedy, such as *Querer la propia desdicha* or *Los Ponces de Barcelona*, to the most intense tragedy, like *El caballero de Olmedo*, *El duque de Viseo* or *La Estrella de Sevilla*.

There is another conflict of love, *the impossible love*, which is qualitatively different, but we have only detected a sample among the historical dramas of private events, *Porfiar hasta morir*, which stages the love obfuscation, as intense as foolish, of Macías, the troubadour lover.

There is another individual feeling that comedy likes to challenge: friendship. At least six of our dramas display it as conflict, two primarily, *El amigo hasta la muerte* and *Mudanzas de fortuna y los sucesos de Don Beltrán de Aragón*, and four secondarily, the two comedies of *Don Bernardo de Cabrera* and the two comedies of *Don Juan de Castro*. In all of these, friendship, always between men (whether knights, as the protagonists of *El amigo hasta la muerte*, noblemen as in *Don Bernardo de Cabrera* and *Don Beltrán de Aragón* and his co-protagonists, or princes, as in the comedies of *Don Juan de Castro*), is presented as a supreme value, to which all the other feelings must be sacrificed. In *El amigo hasta la muerte*, Don Bernardo is able to travel to Tetuán, where Don Sancho is held captive, and he offers himself as a slave in exchange for the freedom of his friend, and later they both confess that they are the authors of a murder in order to be sentenced to death and thus save the other from punishment. These comedies organize their intrigue as a series of *challenges for friendship* that are overcome due to the display of the friends' abnegation and loyalty.

And a very peculiar feeling, hardly considered by critics as the central conflict of a scheme, is the one in *Los pactos más allá de la muerte*, the commitment to comply with the dead. There are three

dramas that are articulated mainly on this conflict. One is that of *El marqués de las Navas*, almost a chronicle of events, the other one, written in a much more heroic and sinister tone, is that of the two comedies of *Don Juan de Castro*. In *El marqués de las Navas*, Don Pedro de Ávila, mortally wounds Leonardo on a nightwatch. Later, the ghost of the deceased shows up to the Marquis when the latter is in the chapel of San Martín palace in Madrid, to entrust him, as his executor, with clearing his debts and remedying the situation with his wife, whom he married when he was desperate not to leave her in dishonour, and with their daughter. The Marquis wakes up stabbing the shadows. Days later, as the Marquis does not fulfill the things that the deceased had entrusted him with, the latter shows up again to demand them, because they keep him prisoner in this world and he cannot rest in peace forever in «the desired land». This time the Marquis obeys and complies with his commitment to the man he killed.

In the first act of the first part of *Don Juan de Castro*, the protagonist, in order to escape from Galicia and from his stepmother's loving persecution, sails to England with the help of an English gentleman, Tibaldo. The ship sinks off the coast of Plymouth and Tibaldo, dying in the arms of Don Juan, on the beach, asks him to pay off an unpaid debt. Don Juan promises he will do so and, picking up his body, looks for a decent place to bury him. From this moment on, an intense and repeated connection appears between the live knight and the dead knight. Don Juan will pay off Tibaldo's debt and will give his last resources to the widow, at the expense of being left without any resource he needs to survive. Tibaldo will show off at night to offer him the necessary resources like for example vassals, horses, guns and clothes to participate in the jousts that the King of England has called with the promise of marrying his daughter to whoever wins them. In return, Don Juan will give Tibaldo half of whatever he wins. Don Juan accepts the pact and the morning after he sees a squadron of black knights arriving whom he joins and they go altogether to London, where he wins the jousts and gets the hand of the princess of England. In the third act, Don Juan is kidnapped in a treacherous ambush by the King of Ireland and taken to a prison in his kingdom. Tibaldo appears again to warn Rugero de Moncada, Don Juan's brother, about what happened. Rugero replaces his brother, following the instructions of the de-

ceased, to make sure that no one will notice his brother's absence and also to release him as soon as possible. This happens in the second part, where the English army, led by Rugero, enters Ireland and releases Don Juan. In the third act of this second comedy, Rugero becomes the victim of a type of leprosy and lies locked in a room that only Don Juan dares to visit. For three consecutive nights, between dreams, Don Juan hears a voice that tells him that if he wants to save his brother, he will have to make him drink the blood of the two children that, meanwhile, he had had with the princess. And Don Juan does so, he slaughters his children and makes his stepbrother drink their blood, who then begins to heal. Or at least he thinks so, but the King and the court watch the children play and, meanwhile, they see how Rugero is getting better. At the end of the act, during a restless night, while trying to sleep, Don Juan hears the voice and the knocking of Tibaldo, who is shouting for him to open the door, and after doing it, Tibaldo reminds him about the promise he made that night in the chapel when they agreed that he would give him half of whatever he won, and that also included half of his wife. Don Juan wakes Clarinda and tells her about the agreement he has with Tibaldo, to whom he must give half of her body. Don Juan raises his knife and Tibaldo, like a new angel that at the last moment stops Abraham's sacrifice of his son Isaac, restrains Don Juan's hand and is satisfied.

The commitment to the dead is of paramount importance in two other plays, *El infanzón de Illescas* and *Dineros son calidad*, although in both cases Lope's authorship has been questioned. The four aforementioned plays are among the plays within which Menéndez Pelayo searched for the motif of the apparition of the ghost in his prologue to *El infanzón de Illescas*, but the distinction between the appearance of the motif in plays like *El Duque de Viseo* or *La imperial de Otón* must be borne in mind, and the constitution of a scheme of commitment to, or debt to, or pact with, the ghost, particularly when the latter is the spirit of a man killed by the protagonist.

All other types of conflicts have more to do with the socialized identity than with personal feelings. They are the conflicts caused by the opinion and the valuation given socially, but also by the ostentation of one's own dignity and sense of honour to others, or for the indisputable right of the male, whether father, brother or husband,

to the power, property and custody of women. Against abusive simplifications of what is traditionally described as «drama of honour», here I will just show, without going deeply into the matter, that the feeling of honour represented in our theatre is much more varied and complex than what a specialist such as Donald B. Larson (1977) understood, stating that the drama of honour has nothing to do with «what we in English call ‘sense of honor’» nor with the «reputation» of a social character (4), but with the triangle made by a protagonist, an antagonist and a woman linked to the former and desired by the latter, which triggers the feeling of shame and the need to fix it. If a description like this can be applied to some of the dramas of conjugal honour, not even to all of them¹¹, it cannot explain, instead, all the other cases that are related with self-esteem or with the love for one own’s lineage, or with the dishonour of the maiden to whom the contracted marriage vow has not been fulfilled, or with the challenges that the married woman has to face in order to prove that she deserves the honour she is entrusted with. In my view, the obsession with defining the concept or with trying to limit its application to a group of plays coherent with it, has led to a substantial depletion of the field of the conflicts of honour. Américo Castro’s interpretation was also very important, as he unilaterally interpreted the feeling of honour as a symbolic expression of the blood purity and the desire to show off socially the fact that one belongs to the dominant caste, in a doubtful application of the Freudian concept of *transfer* to an entire social community. One cannot simply criticize Don Américo’s sharp and brilliant argument, although his interpretation can be considered less relevant when explaining various manifestations of honour, especially those that refer very directly, without the need of psychoanalytic mediations, to the relationships between men and women in a patriarchal society. Or to the role one’s social image plays in a society where the autonomous sphere of the private life within the family which is typical of bourgeois societies has not yet been created, where the rights that any human being has simply for being an individual, regardless of their blood and their status, have not yet been defined,

¹¹ Larson also excludes the dramas in which «a man wrongly suspects his wife of being unfaithful or of plotting infidelity», as the action in this type of dramas has as an object «not the regaining of lost male honour but the disclosure of female constancy» (p. 2).

and where the lineage plays the role of first mediator between the individual and the community. Sovereignty lies with the monarch, not with the nation, and even less with the people, and the fundamental links between people are religion, the prince, the territory, and the lineage.

So, in the field of honour, it is not the same to talk about the family bonds, as critics usually do, as about lineage bonds, which are typical of this feudal society. Lineage entails a chain of ascendants and descendants that are linked by ties of blood and are socially acknowledged by a name, a place of origin and, if noble, a genealogy, a coat of arms or a shield. Through lineage, social rank, reputation, honour and dishonour are perpetuated. Lineage is transmitted through the male line but it is the female that guarantees the authenticity of that transmission. That is why crises of lineage express the fears of the whole society, the anxiety caused by the possible loss of legitimacy of one's social status.

The field that covers the concept of honour is therefore complex and it has very diverse manifestations, and it should be seen in the picture of the social relations of a courtly and feudal society. That being said, I will stop only to distinguish different types of conflicts that have to do with the field of honour.

Those that have to do with conjugal honour are very well known, and, in my opinion, they can be better explained if they are related to the fears of a social community rather than to their needs of affirmation. The fear of the lineage crisis is dramatically expressed by the great variety of situations that can lead to this crisis. In many of these situations, the lady is innocent but becomes suspected because of the conspiracies of others, unjustified suspicions or the libertine's deception. In *Donde no está su dueño está su duelo*, the conjugal honour is threatened in the absence of the husband because of a domestic conspiracy, and it is about to be repeatedly offended. In *La desdichada Estefanía*, again a domestic conspiracy, hatched by a housemaid, creates such a conjunction of appearances that causes the husband to blindly believe in his wife's infidelity, in a tragedy that, unlike the previous one, conveys a terrific fear of being dishonoured even when one is not aware of it, when there has been no cause, when one is completely innocent. However, in *El más galán portugués*, the husband's ill-founded jealousy causes him to falsely accuse his wife of dishonouring him. In *Audiencias del rey*

don Pedro, the lady is mocked by the gallant rake, a precedent of Tenorio, who uses the night to his advantage by pretending to be the lady's lover. Another series of cases refer to an infidelity the respective ladies agree to, it is the case of *Los comendadores de Córdoba*, *La victoria de la honra* whose denouement is very similar to the one of the previous play, *El sufrimiento de honor*, or the secondary plot in *La contienda de García de Paredes y el capitán Urbina*. *Los embustes de Fabia* stages, with shameless celebration, the repeated and enjoyed betrayals of this lascivious Roman matron, who delights herself in mocking and cheating on her husband, Senator Catullus. Other situations of conjugal dishonour are those presented in the form of the false accusation against the lady, especially when that lady is the queen, a situation that does not occur in dramas of private events, but among the dramas of public events (*El testimonio vengado*). A similarly specific character is also seen in the conflicts of peasant honour and of the lust of the despot.

In all this variety of conflicts, always pre-conjugal or conjugal, there is also a remarkable variety of answers. Against the husband's canonical blood vengeance, we find different solutions, such as that of Laurecia from *Audiencias del rey don Pedro*, who, just like the biblical Judith, cuts the throat of her wrongdoer; or that of the prevention of the husband's revenge, with the collaboration of all the characters in the play, as in *El más galán portugués*; or as in the most prudent and calculated tactic followed by the husband, Captain Valdivia, in *La victoria de la honra*. Valdivia first informs the father through a letter about his son's illegitimate intentions, a libertine young knight from Seville, warning that if he does not stop his attempts, he will resort to other means. A few days later, after finding out that the child has not respected the counterclaims of the father nor of the letter, he visits the father at home and makes the complaint orally, while he warns: «I do not have to endure, sir / mockeries about my own honour». As the son persists and tries to trick his father, he secretly meets with his unfaithful wife. Valdivia, who has been watching them all the time, takes them by surprise and kills them, then he sends the key for the place where he locked the bodies to the father. In the final scene, the father gives up all revenge and takes the side of Valdivia, giving him the hand of his daughter and a generous dowry. The only instance when revenge is not socially justified is in the case of *El piadoso veneciano*, where the

husband kills the man who was trying to get to his wife by means of intimidation, and must flee Venice, abandoning his home, his wife and his daughter, who are imprisoned while the Senate of the republic puts a price on Sidonio's head and expropriates the house from the women. After only a six-year exile, Sidonio returns to Venice to give himself up to the Senate, in return for the allocation of the reward for doing so to his wife and daughter. The final scene with the public hearing Sidonio will eventually be forgiven for his crime when the son of the deceased also forgives him.

But undoubtedly the most original and brazen denouement is the one in *Los embustes de Fabia*, where after a hilarious sequence of the wife's attempts to assassinate her husband, and of the husband to assassinate his wife, the man commits suicide when forced to witness Nero's attempt of taking advantage of his wife, and the wife also pretends to commit suicide, but she remains «dead» only until Nero forgets about everything and leaves the room, or until she needs to get up and into the arms of a flighty former lover.

I will not dwell on the conflict of peasant honour, on which I gave my opinion on another occasion (1997a), nor on the lust of the despot, which I analysed in detail in other studies (2001 and 2009). I will only recall that their presence is qualitatively very important among the dramas of private historical events. Peasant honour is the main conflict in six cases (*Fuenteovejuna*, *Peribáñez*, *La quinta de Florencia*, *El mejor alcalde, el rey...*), two of which do not belong to Lope (*El infanzón de Illescas* and *El alcalde de Zalamea*), and the lust of the despot is the main conflict in three cases (*La corona merecida*, *La Estrella de Sevilla*, and *El príncipe despeñado*) and the secondary one in another three (*Los embustes de Fabia*, *La hermosura aborrecida*, and *La ventura en la desgracia*). Less important here is a very frequent conflict in urban and palatine comedies, that of the unfulfilled conjugal promise to the lady, seduced and then abandoned, which is present in only one play, and concerns two ladies in *Las dos bandoleras*.

Conjugal honour is related to a different kind of conflict, which develops a scheme in which the honest wife is subjected to the most ruthless challenges in order to show loyalty, docility and devotion that rise to the husband's expectations, who exercises a domination of ownership over her and demands the obedience of a slave. Two plays represent this exemplary indoctrination of married women, which comes into deep contrast with the freedom single ladies en-

joy in the comedies *El ejemplo de casadas* and *La hermosura aborrecida*. I have already referred to the former here and I will not dwell on the latter. The contemporary reader is taken aback by such an excess of shameful patriarchalism, but the plays require an analysis in light of the treatises on women of the time.

However, there are other conflicts that have nothing to do with conjugal honour, but with the sense of honour and of dignity of one's own lineage. One of them is that of *threats, offences and vengeance of lineage*, that can be seen in plays such as *Los enemigos en casa*, *El bastardo Mudarra* and *El pleito por la honra o el valor de Fernandico*. Another conflict is the affirmation of the peasant's honour, closely related to the conflict of peasant honour, because it is about the claim of the right to honour of the same social class, but it does not concern sexual offenses, rather the positive affirmation of this right. The best-known example is the palatine drama *El villano en su rincón*, but in two of the dramas of private events this conflict is depicted as secondary, but very explicit: the first part of *Los Tellos de Meneses* and the second one, *Valor, fortuna y lealtad de los Tellos de Meneses*. In the first of these comedies Tello de Meneses, the old, is another Juan Labrador, and his behaviour and ideas are almost identical to those that belong to the protagonist of *El villano en su rincón*. There is one difference between them, and this is Tello de Meneses's Gothic descent, despite his peasant condition. King Ordoño also behaves similarly to the King of France in *El villano en su rincón*, and both kings end up rewarding and ennobling their respective peasants. The conflict mainly stems from an intersection of discourses, those of the king and the peasant. Within this, the dignity of the peasant emerges. In the second part, however, the conflict becomes more dramatic, because that dignity is questioned by the new king, Alfonso III. The monarch does not approve of the Tellos' rise to nobility and of their having contaminated royal lineage with peasant blood, and insists on canceling the favours awarded by King Ordoño. It is then when the value, the fortune and the loyalty of a peasant lineage, of farmers, imposes on the challenges he is subjected to, and ratifies his right to social ascent and nobility.

Other types of conflict found in dramas of private events are the following (here I will simply report their presence): the numerous exploits of the protagonist, whether a soldier, a military, a highwayman or a noble (*El blasón de los Chaves de Villalba*, *La contienda de*

García de Paredes, La divina vencedora y famosos hechos de Meledín Gallinato, Guerras de amor y honor, Los hechos de Garcilaso y moro Tarfe, Julián Romero, Lanza por lanza, de Luis de Almanza, Nardo Antonio, bandolero, Pedro Carbonero, El primer Fajardo, Los Ramírez de Arellano, El valiente Céspedes, La varona castellana). Another well-represented conflict involves changes of fortune, whether these changes affect a lineage (*Los Prados de León, Los Tellos de Meneses, Valor, fortuna y lealtad*) or an individual (*La adversa fortuna de Don Bernardo de Cabrera*, the two parts of *Don Juan de Castro, Lo que hay que fiar del mundo, La próspera fortuna de Don Bernardo de Cabrera, Querer la propia desdicha, Servir con mala estrella, La hermosura aborrecida, La mudanzas de fortuna y los sucesos de Don Beltrán de Aragón, La primera información, El vaquero de Moraña*). The conflict of royal favours and court intrigues appears in five plays at a primary or secondary level (*La discreta venganza, El Duque de Viseo, La fortuna merecida, Valor, fortuna y lealtad, Los Guzmanes de Teruel*). Two conflicts particularly affect the king as holder of absolute power. On the one hand, there are dramas that stage the king's justice and his challenges (*Audiencias del Rey Don Pedro, La mayor virtud de un rey, La primera información, El mejor alcarde, el rey*). On the other hand, other plays contrarily show the king's ingratitude, offences and injustice (*Don Lope de Cardona, El Duque de Viseo, La porfía hasta el temor* at a primary level, *Servir con mala estrella, La próspera fortuna de Don Bernardo de Cabrera, El vaquero de Moraña, and La ventura en la desgracia* at a secondary level).

I would like to conclude by pointing out a particularly intriguing type of conflict: that of bastardy, more linked to the need to belong to the lineage than to conjugal honour. I would not be as bold, at this moment, to establish a closed census of the dramas that form it, especially in other genres, so I will just stick to the six that I have encountered so far. These six are dramas of private events, and they form a group, however small, of a very powerful dramatic identity, such as the dramas of peasant honour. In addition, it is striking that four of them (the vast majority) appear in a group in the last years of the 16th century, from 1595 to 1600: *El casamiento en la muerte, Las mocedades de Bernardo del Carpio, Los Benavides* and *El pleito por la honra*. After these dates, Lope writes two more plays around 1612-14, *El bastardo Mudarra* and *El aldehuela*. It should be noted, as a precaution, that two of these plays are of doubtful authorship: *El pleito por la honra* and *Las mocedades de Bernardo del Carpio*.

Perhaps in order to understand why the condition of the bastard can result in a dramatic conflict of this type, it is worth stepping back in time and listening to the social and legal consideration of the bastard at that time. The *Diccionario de Autoridades* collects and systematizes the definitions in Covarrubias's *Tesoro* and adds the following meaning of «bastardy»: «Metaphorically is called what mixes with something, and it deviates it from the straight way, confusing it and staining it in a certain way so that it does not have the condition it should» and also this definition of «bastard»: «A rude thing, impure and illegitimate, and that diverts and degenerates from its first quality, status and purity». The *Diccionario* also adds its characteristic quotes. Here is one of Father Mariana's *Historia de España*: «It was a proven thing that the King don Fadrique because of his father's bastardy did not have any right to the Kingdom of Naples». This quote tells us that bastardy perpetuates in the lineage through generations, and that it supposedly deprived of the right to succeed to the throne. Another definition from a legal recompilation states: «Bastard or illegitimate children of any nature, cannot inherit from their mothers, neither *ex testamento* nor *abintestato*». These two quotes place us in front of a legal problem. The source of legal authority continued to be, in Lope's time, the *Siete Partidas* by Alfonso X el Sabio, who in *Partida Cuarta* dedicated a series of laws to his natural and illegitimate children. In Title XIV of *Partida IV* he makes the distinction, which Covarrubias includes, between two kinds of illegitimate children, the natural and the *fornecidos* («conceived against the law or natural reason»), and he dedicates a peculiar display to the varieties of the latter (incestuous, adulterous, sacrilegious, *mánceres*, spurious, *notos*...), and this distinction prevailed until the 19th century. Natural children could be legitimized either by Royal Favour, public writing or by will. Children could also be legitimized if they were given to the court of the king or the lord, but in this case the father had to do a solemn and public recognition of the child. This is the procedure used by the Duke of Alba to recognize his natural son Fernando in *El aldehuela y el Gran Prior*. The legitimacy, or establishment of the legitimate affiliation, gave the right to use the name, to receive food, and to inherit. The other, the bastards, could not be legitimized, and they were considered inferior to the natural ones. The bastards could receive neither honours nor titles, and if they were to achieve them, they

could be deprived of them if discovered their origin. Neither did they have the right to inherit from their parents or relatives.

Posterior to the *Partidas*, the laws of Toro, which include the Catholic Monarchs' legislative activity established by the Courts of Toro in 1505, went back on the issue. These laws of Toro were compiled and updated by Philip II in 1567. Law IX persists on the distinction between natural and illegitimate children, and establishes that illegitimate children cannot inherit neither by will nor without will in case parents have legitimate children, «however we allow parents to leave to their children in life or in death up to the fifth part of their belongings». If the mother had no legitimate children, then the natural and the illegitimate ones could inherit «by order and rank [...] *ex testamento* and *abintestato*», with the exception of some cases that do not concern us here.

The dramas of private events we have referred to do not make a distinction between natural children and illegitimate children, they are all bastards. However, as we begin to distinguish, Bernardo del Carpio from *El casamiento en la muerte* and *Las mocedades de Bernardo del Carpio*, Sancho from *Los Benavides* are natural children of single parents, who could have married and legitimated the child. More complex is the case of *El aldehuela*, as Fernando's mother, who conceived him with the Duke of Alba, was single at the time of conceiving the child but not when giving birth to him, as the Duke kept secret his relationship with the beautiful miller and he married her to his vassal Anton, precisely to avoid her and her son's dishonour, so the child was born of a marriage that was not of his parents'. Mudarra, on the other hand, is a true bastard, born from an adulterous union. As for *El pleito por la honra*, the case is somewhat different: Fernandico is not really a bastard, he is the son of Stephanie the Unfortunate and of Fernán Ruiz de Castro, and conceived in marriage, but he suffers the dishonour of a bastard because of his mother's assassination by his father, who suspected her of adultery. If, from a legal point of view, there could be up to four different cases, from the dramatic point of view the five plays represent the same conflict, the one that the entry from the *Diccionario de Autoridades* anticipated by describing bastardy as «what mixes with something, and it deviates it from the straight way, confusing it and staining it in a certain way so that it does not have the condition it

should». The bastard does not have the proper status, he is excluded from the lineage because of a dishonour of origin.

In five of the cases the child grows up and is educated in a different environment than that of his origin, ignoring the existence of the latter. Only in *El casamiento en la muerte*, Bernardo del Carpio knows, right from the outset, who his parents were and the cause of his bastardy. In the cases where the bastard has grown up ignoring his origin, in a foreign environment, although showing clear signs of a status that does not correspond to the circumstances in which he grows up, the moment that triggers the conflict is when his origin is revealed. From that moment, the bastard will face a series of challenges that will ask of him, in order to overcome them, a singular deed: in the case of Sancho Benavides, he saves the boy King from the Moors; in the case of Fernando de Alba, he fights heroically in the assault on the city of Mons; the bastard Mudarra will have to carry out his revenge; or the many deeds, with the conquest of nineteen castles, in the case of Bernardo del Carpio, both in *El casamiento* and in *Las mocedades*. Only one play chooses another option than that of the deeds, a legal option, that of suing the father and asking for his death sentence for having deprived him of honour. The father's deeds will lead, to a great extent, to the reconciliation between father and son. In all these cases the denouement involves legitimizing the bastard, but the ways in which this legitimization is put into effect are varied.

The difference between the scheme in *El casamiento en la muerte* and that in other plays is the lack of revelation of the truth, because the hero has always been aware of it. For twenty years Bernardo's father has been imprisoned in the Golden Castle and his mother locked in a monastery. And yet none of the other protagonists live like Bernardo with the awareness of their illegitimacy. The King's nephew, accepted and respected in his court, blessed for the military success in many battles, carries the insufferable burden of dishonour. Bernardo expresses it in his complaints to the King, repeating them over and over again:

¿Quién, señor, ha de creer,
que aun decillo me acobardo,

dar a un bastardo mujer
ni tener yerno bastardo?¹²

After all, however numerous and great his triumphs are, «no cabe alabanza / en un hombre mal nacido» («there is no praise in a misbegotten man», vv. 2286-2287)¹³. It is true that his parents felt guilt, and Bernardo speaks of «la mella» («the mark») that «tuvo mi madre» («my mother had») and that he does not have a sword, and that «mi padre no guardó / el casto amor prometido» («my father did not keep / the chaste love he promised»), but he is not to blame. Advancing an argument that only centuries later would be reflected in the legislation, he declares himself innocent:

¿qué culpa le tuve yo?
Pues antes de ser nacido
no pude estorbarlo yo.
Que si hubiera podido
se lo estorbara de forma
que sin casar no lo hiciera.
Mas antes de ser formado
¿qué culpa, Rey, he tenido?¹⁴

The King has Bernard's legitimacy in his hands. Simply authorizing his parents' wedding would be enough. And Bernardo tells him this angrily at the beginning of the action:

Si yo soy bastardo, Rey,
que tú quieres que lo sea (vv. 117-118)¹⁵

But faced with the King's repeated failures to comply, Bernardo reminds him over and over again of the merits he had obliged him to, and over and over again he reminds him of his parents' wed-

¹² 'Who, sir, can believe, I even fear saying it, that someone could let a bastard marry a woman or that a bastard could be accepted as a son-in-law?'

¹³ I quote from the Prolope edition of *Lope de Vega: Comedias*, I, 2. Lleida, Milenio, 1997. Ed. Luigi Giuliani, pp. 1151-1276.

¹⁴ 'What was my fault to you? Because before I was born I could not disturb you. If I could have disturbed you, I would have done it in order to get married. But what was my fault before being formed?'

¹⁵ 'If I am a bastard, King, is because you want it this way'.

ding. After the epic triumph in Roncesvalles, Bernardo addresses a vehement speech to him in which he recalls one by one all the conquests he made on behalf of the King and all the times he helped him, and how every time he did so the King promised to release his father, and that every time the King broke his promise.

The letter he receives from his father takes Bernardo to that point of moral catastrophe where anything would have been possible, even the rebellion against the king, which his cousin Rodrigo de Rasura urges him to carry out:

Hijo, si buen hijo fueras,
 que te engendré te acordaras,
 sangre que te di me dieras,
 vida que te di pagaras
 con vida que me ofrecieras
 ...
 Aquí me cuentan de ti
 una hazaña y otra hazaña,
 pero ninguna creí,
 pues das libertad a España,
 y me la quitas a mí.
 Yo no sé por qué la gente
 te da nombre de valiente,
 teniendo en prisión a un padre,
 y sin casar a tu madre,
 para que el mundo te afrente. (vv. 2403-2432)¹⁶

It is true that during the performance the spectator will hear Bernardo saying to himself three times at points of special intensity: «I am Bernardo del Carpio!», he exclaims when waking up from the dream about the prophecies of Castile and Leon. He tells it to Roldán, in Roncesvalles, when preparing to fight one on one. He says it again, addressing to all his family, after killing the French hero. Bernardo declares his faith in himself, in his immune identity,

¹⁶ 'Son, if you are a good son, remember I gave you life. You will return to me the blood I gave you, you will pay the life I gave you with the life you will offer me. They tell me about your deeds, but I do not believe any of them, as you give freedom to Spain, while taking mine. I do not understand why people call you brave, when you have an imprisoned father and an unmarried mother, so the world confronts you'.

detached from any other value and circumstance apart from that of his own worth. It is the cry «I am who I am», so much acclaimed by Américo Castro, a cry of exaltation that his manhood requires no more proof than himself. He states it too, and with the pride of an epic hero, at court in Paris, in front of Charlemagne and the twelve Peers, when Roldan asks him: «Say, who you are?», and he answers: «Baste que yo mismo soy»¹⁷.

And he insists in an even more enlightening way:

Yo, que yo mismo estoy
por mí mismo, ¿qué me quieres?¹⁸

One would be tempted to hear in these words the proclamation of an emancipated subject, aware of his individuality, of the value that is achieved by one's own merits, and neither by the inherited blood nor by the favours and privileges awarded. But Bernardo depends much more on his need of lineage than on his faith in himself. Or better said, faith in himself is useless if it cannot be linked to the faith in his lineage.

That is why his goal is to set his father free in order to get his legitimacy, rather than showing who he is to everyone else. In the dream related with Castile and Leon, this is what he is being predicted: the long descent from his lineage that leads to the Dukes of Alba, «valerosos caballeros/ y capitanes cristianos, / emperadores nacidos/ y deudos tuyos cercanos»¹⁹, a triumphant descent that will run parallel to the Hispanic kings, that Leon enumerates one by one, from the Gothic kings to «Filipe heroico, / rey de España soberano / y otro Filipo, su hijo / que ha de ser del mundo espanto» (vv. 1455-1536)²⁰.

When finally, and after saving his life by killing the bear that trapped him, the King granted the freedom of his father, he runs to the Golden Castle. He finds him sitting in a chair and, falling at his feet, he takes his hand and he stammers as he speaks to him, until he

¹⁷ 'Suffice it to be myself.'

¹⁸ 'I, who I myself am here for myself, what do you want me for?'

¹⁹ 'brave knights, and Christian captains, born emperors and close relatives of yours'.

²⁰ 'heroic Philip, sovereign, king of Spain and another Philip, his son who must be a terror to the world'.

perceives the coldness of his father's hand, and then the warden confirms his fears: that he had died three days before. For a moment the prevailing lament is that he is to be condemned to eternal bastardy:

¡Oh, pobre de ti, Bernardo!
 ¡que me he de quedar bastardo!
 ¡que bastardo me quedé!
 ¿Ah, padre, así me dejáis?²¹

But Bernardo recovers between tears the man of action, he hurries to get his mother out of the monastery where she is locked, threatening the nuns, he makes sure he has not professed, which would make his plan impossible, he takes her running to the castle, he reunites her with his father, he joins their hands, asks her to declare that she agrees to marry the corpse, and then he asks the same thing to the corpse. There are few scenes as moving as this one in all Spanish classical theatre:

Padre, apretad bien la mano
 ...
 Decid sí, que bien podéis.
 Sí, dijo, no ha sido en vano.
 Y si no lo pronunciáis
 con la boca bien el sí,
 bajad la cabeza así,
 como que este sí otorgáis.

Toma la cabeza con la mano y hácela bajar.

Sí dice, sí claramente,
 y el que no dijere aquí,
 que soy legítimo así,
 mil veces digo que miente.

Estánse los dos asidas las manos, y doña Jimena muy llorosa.

No hay más ley, si yo me fundo
 con que los dos se han casado

²¹ 'Oh, poor, Bernardo, I will always be a bastard, I am a bastard. Oh father, how can you leave me like this?'

y que me han legitimado
cuanto al cielo y cuanto al mundo²².

The bastard, the symbolic figure —if there is one— of Baroque man's insecurity, cannot emancipate by himself as the modern man or woman. They need the mediation of the lineage. This is one of the most efficient causes of his internal conflict, his fears, his way of aspiring to social legitimacy. The question of why Lope, and especially Lope in the final years of the 16th century, was caught in the web of this conflict and could not help but bring it to stage remains open.

²² 'Father, squeeze well the hand... Say yes, if you please. He said «yes», this was not in vane. And if you cannot pronounce well the «yes» with your mouth, then lower your head in sign of approval. He puts his hand on the head and he lowers it. «Yes», he said, it is a clear «yes». And if someone says I have not been legitimized, I will say a thousand times that person is lying. They both hold hands and doña Jimena is crying. There is no other law, if I fade, than the one by which they got married and they legitimized me, before Heaven and the world'.

FROM MONTAIGNE TO LOPE:
VARIOUS EVENTS FROM THE SAME COUNSEL

I. SCHEMES AND CASES

Over the last few years I have been elaborating¹ a conception of Lope de Vega's theatre which stemmed from the dissatisfaction with the totalitarian, univocal, ideologicalized interpretation of a popular and ultra-Spanish Lope, brilliant creator of a theatrical system upheld over an uncritical propaganda of the absolute monarchy, the primogeniture of the grand nobility, the empire of Catholic orthodoxy, and dedicated with militant ardour to the indoctrination of a supposedly homogenous and interclassist Spanish people of the *corrales* with exemplary cases of honour and mythical legends inherited from the epic and *romancero*. It seemed to me, and continues to do so, that «this Lope, hammer of infidels, rebels and heterodoxies, would have little to communicate to us, we spectators on the edge of the second millennium. For the learned audience at the end of the 20th century, Lope had other things to say, and he truly did say them»².

¹ This essay is the latest episode (until now) of a long series in which I have been articulating the same discourse since, at least, 1994. As such, it would prove to be contrived of me to present it isolatedly, for it has its premises and its fundamentals in other parts, and not always within the immediate reach of the reader. I ask for forgiveness a thousand times over, consequently, for having felt obliged to synthesize the stages and to cite those works which have led me to this point. Whoever may know them already, or whoever may not desire to know them, can proceed on the fast route and forgo the first chapter «Schemes and Cases» in order to continue directly to its last three paragraphs and, immediately following, to the chapter «A casuistic discourse in black (Pascal) and white (Montaigne)» which is the new phase of expansion of my work that I propose here.

² Oleza, 1994, p. 237.

As one permits his readings to spread out the length and width of the dramatic production of the Phoenix, as one opens the fan — as well as the cage— of the most cited plays by historians and critics, as one penetrates the non-canonical genres, the impression of polyphony —as Bakhtin would say— undermines that traditionally Castilian-popularist-nationalist interpretation, transmitted by Menéndez Pelayo, fostered in the *Centro de Estudios Históricos* (Américo Castro), and ratified by the progressive-sociologicistic interpretation of the 60s (Maravall). In order to listen to those other things which Lope's theatre, and 17th century Spanish theatre in general, has to say to us, it is enough to let the ideological and artistic plurality emerge from this vast dramatic continent and to verify then that each of the theses of that canonical interpretation can be replicated from the very inside of the dramatic production of Lope and some of his contemporaries. It is enough to be willing to listen to what at one time I called «the rumour of differences» which arrived to us from that theatre.

From my point of view, there are three spaces of privilege from which this rumour may be grasped. In the first, the moral biography of Lope himself has the first say: the early Lope is not the same as the late Lope, and between them both there lies a sufficient number of years to place any uniformity under suspicion. I have dedicated some work to these sometimes unperceivable and other times striking turns of Lope's moral biography³.

The dramatic genres constitute the second of these spaces of privilege. What the historical dramas affirm can be answered from those dramas that are more legendary than historical or of ancient history or foreign history; the palatine comedy has an imaginative freedom capable of all surprises; there is a pure comedy, of urban character, in which many of the moral principles of the tragicomedies of honour, etc., remain suspended. I have also dedicated a continued attention to this plurality of perspectives that open different dramatic genres⁴.

The third space of privilege is given by the multiple crossroads of a production which is oriented philosophically by a casuistic argumentation, an orientation that provokes some plays to act as a

³ Oleza, 1980, 1997, 2001, 2004, 2004b.

⁴ Oleza, 1986, 1990, 1991, 1994, 1994b, 1997, 1997b.

counterweight to others, in such a way that that which is affirmed in many of what are considered canonical cases is placed into question, argued, answered or denied in other cases, canonical or not. Getting inside of the labyrinth that the different cases draw obliges us to explore the connection of this dramatic casuistry with the keys of Baroque philosophical thought that underlies it.

It is in this third space, this third research front, that I wish to insist now. If the diversity in approaches of a given conflict (the illegitimate desire of a monarch, for example) does not come about by way of the difference in generic perspectives and, therefore, in the audience's expectations (as, for example, in the case of the difference that exists between the perspective to which that illegitimate desire is subjected in a comedy such as *El lacayo fingido* or in a tragedy such as *El marqués de Mantua*⁵), then where does it originate? In order to answer this question I feel it essential to state that, under the genres in which the system of the *comedia nueva* was articulated, certain groups of plays can be isolated, networks of plays that explore a determined conflict and the possible—and varied—answers to said conflict, transversally to the genres, for they cross its boundaries. In the beginning, I opted to designate them as micro-genres⁶ and to recognize that, while it was still not possible to draw out a complete catalogue of the same ones nor establish the conditions and restrictions of their constitution, some of them were well known in the critical bibliography: such as that of the well-known dramas of honour with a dignified villein or honourable labourer. Later on, while working on *La Estrella de Sevilla* and focusing the research on one of these networks of conflicts, the one I named «the lust of the despot», I analyzed a series of plays that shared this conflict as a base plot conflict and that did so from five distinct genres (urban comedies: *La niña de plata*; palatine comedies: *El lacayo fingido*; palatine dramas: *La locura por la honra*, *La batalla del honor*, *El perseguido*, *La fuerza lastimosa*; chivalry dramas: *El marqués de Mantua*; historical dramas of famous private events: *La condesa Matilde*, *La Estrella de Sevilla*, *La ventura en la desgracia*, *Servir con mala estrella*): I proposed to designate this unitary scheme with a concept that is

⁵ I have dealt with the mutations that genre introduces in the treatment of monarchical power in Oleza, 1995, 2005.

⁶ Oleza, 1994.

found in dramas and in the metadramatic reflections of the time, all of which appeared more adequate to me than that of the micro-genre, which is the concept of *traza* (scheme). Plays which had very distinct text and a very distinct denouement could respond to the same scheme, which allowed me to arrive at a conclusion on *La Estrella de Sevilla*, that if the text which had been preserved was not Lope's, it was indeed of his same scheme⁷.

In a recent article, as I write these lines⁸, I returned to the concept of *traza* (scheme) applied to the same conflict, this time in order to define it as a collection of abstract narrative functions (in the line of: *The despot tries to satisfy his lust; The offended parties react to their dishonour*, etc.) which are met by the different dramas that share a common scheme (although with a sequential order, a display, and repetitions of the same function which are typical of each play). Those narrative functions manifest themselves often as very concrete and characteristic motifs that are repeated throughout many plays, such as the despot's infatuation with the lady during his triumphal entry into a city (which corresponds to the function: *The despot desires a lady (or a man) in a dishonourable manner*), the bribing of a slave or maid (which corresponds to the function: *The despot requests collaboration to satisfy his or her desire*), the using of the lady's lover as an aide to achieving the despot's desire (which corresponds to the same aforementioned function), the raid on the desired lady's room (*The despot tries to give satisfaction to his lust*), the offended husband or lover who recognizes the despot and is then obliged to hide it (*The offended parties react to their dishonour*), etc. But the variation in story-lines of a same scheme does not depend solely on the different motifs that are used and the way in which they are used, which I have examined from the motif of the *dissimulated recognition*, but rather on the very diverse points of departure, characters involved, circumstances of action. I have analyzed a wider corpus of plays in the previously cited work, which comprises more genres.

In order to give just one example, let us take the first of the narrative functions, the one of the conception of the despot's illegitimate desire. Once this abstract or prototypical function is settled in a particular action, the Despot can be the King (*El lacayo fingido*, *La*

⁷ Oleza, 2001b.

⁸ Oleza, 2009.

ventura en la desgracia, *La Estrella de Sevilla*, *La batalla del honor*, *El perseguido*, *Servir con mala estrella*, *El amor desatinado*, *La condesa Matilde*, *El postrer godo de España*), the crown Prince (*El marqués de Mantua*, *La locura por la honra*), the future King (*La niña de plata*) or, in the most singular case, the daughter of the King (*La fuerza lastimosa*, *La locura por la honra*), or even the wife of the sovereign, as is the case of the Duchess of Burgundy in *El perseguido*.

This dishonourable desire englobes up to three different situations: in the most habitual way, the so desired lady or gentleman is already married or about to be so (*El lacayo fingido*, *El marqués de Mantua*, *La locura por la honra*, *La fuerza lastimosa*, *El perseguido*, *La batalla del honor*, *La condesa Matilde*); they may also be in love with a gallant or a lady with whom they desire to be married (*La niña de plata*, *La Estrella de Sevilla*); in *El lacayo fingido* and in *La ventura en la desgracia*, both of the previous situations take place: on one hand, the desired ladies are about to be married to men out of convenience, on the other they are both in love with a third man; and finally: the despot aspires to achieve his objective by offering in exchange the condition that lady be his concubine, an offer which the lady's family would like to be able to reject (*Servir con mala estrella*, *La ventura de la desgracia*, *La Estrella de Sevilla*, *El amor desatinado*).

The circumstances in which this desire shows itself are repeated with a significant frequency, giving way to characteristic motifs: either the despot knows the lady or man, object of his/her desire, thanks to the closeness shared in the court (*El lacayo fingido*, *La locura por la honra*, *La fuerza lastimosa*, *El perseguido*, *La batalla del honor*, *La ventura en la desgracia*, *Servir con mala estrella*, *El amor desatinado*), or because the despot discovers her or him in a festive circumstance, whether it be upon visiting a city and receiving welcoming honours (*La Estrella de Sevilla*, *La niña de plata*), or during a celebration, which can be the wedding of the desired lady (*El marqués de Mantua*, *La condesa Matilde*), or even the wedding of the despot himself (*El postrer godo de España*).

This is how the set of plot variations of this abstract function unfolds according to the subject who has a certain desire, according to the dishonourable way in which he or she desires, according to the circumstance in which the desire is manifest, and according to the object which is desired, which can be a woman (the most general case) or a man (*El perseguido*, *La fuerza lastimosa*), a maiden (the most

general case), a woman engaged to be married (also the most general case) or a married woman (*La condesa Matilde*, *La batalla del honor*, *La locura por la honra*). Everything functions as if the variants, which we have proposed to call according to the dramatic terminology of the time, *the cases*⁹, while still using very fixed base outlines (the schemes), reinvented the possibilities of the *comedia nueva* as a system in each play, by way of an almost infinite combining of the functions and actions that make them up. In fact, it is perfectly possible that, given the scheme, we may create the plot of a never-written comedy, but for which only actions present in different plays of Lope are used, and this is how we tried it out in the cited work.

The schemes are underlying structures that refer to the mindset of a certain time period, to the base discourses that express the scheme, and have much to do with the most general ideological keys of that time. The cases, on the other hand, do not manifest so many determined ideological keys as the very way to operate a certain political discourse, or especially a moral one of the times, which is a discourse that had begun to spread at the dawn of the Renaissance and gradually displaced the primacy of the universal principals (the neo-Platonist, or neo-Aristotelian and scholastic) for an invitation to the casuistic analysis, for a weak thinking, as Gianni Vattimo¹⁰ would say in our time, for a mode of applied ethics that chose the concrete analysis of a concrete situation over the necessary doctrinaire principals. A type of discourse we could qualify as casuistic, since it proceeded case by case, and which could be detected and analyzed in the doctrinaire texts of the time, especially among the Jesuit treatises or, with a great literary quality, the work of Montaigne, in which the bases of an understanding completely removed from the sacred and relativized from life as well as history were set.

⁹ The original Spanish as written by Lope reads as follows: «*Los casos de la honra son mejores / porque mueven con fuerza a toda gente*» (*Arte nuevo*, vv. 327-328). Often times, the Spanish term *casos* is translated as «subjects» into English: «Better still are the subjects in which honour has a part». However, in the English translation of this article, we have opted for the term *cases*, as it preserves the connection between the different cases present in Lope's work and the casuistic thought present in Montaigne's writings.

¹⁰ Vattimo y Rovatti, 1990. The original edition, in Italian, with the title *Il pensiero debole*, from 1983.

It is with the background of this discourse that the casuistic mode of conduct of Lope's theatre, that dramatic strategy interested in exploring, above all else, the diversity of the cases, takes on a dimension of time, unexplored until now.

II. A CASUISTIC DISCOURSE IN BLACK (PASCAL) AND IN WHITE (MONTAIGNE)

Two French writers, each very distinct from one another, represent in a very illustrative way the opposition to this type of discourse¹¹ (Pascal) and its creative assimilation (Montaigne), as if one and the other were to put it to test either in negative or in positive, white on black or black on white.

In this way, against the casuistic discourse as exemplified in the Jesuits' moral treatises, Blaise Pascal's fierce criticism appeared in his

¹¹ We use here the concept of *discourse* that M. Foucault tried to categorize and delimit in *L'archéologie du savoir* (1969), whose repressive order (or of exclusions and negations) he dealt with in *L'ordre du discours* (Conference in the Collège de France, 1970), but of which he showed all its possibilities in relation to the epistemes of different time periods while putting it into praxis in books like *Surveiller et punir* (1975). The epistemological turn that Foucault proposes removes the discourse from the subject that emits it (the author), from the objects (the reference) that it deals with, and from the individualized text (the work itself) that manifests it, in order to conceive it as a discursive praxis (a series of discursive events) or as a discursive formation that is historically produced and that shapes the objects it talks about, for which it is controlled by a series of rules that are immanent to a praxis and which defines it in its specificity (opposite others, in the way the discursive formation of Natural History, opposite that of Political Economy or that of Clinical Medicine). Conceived in this way, the discourse is characterized by an anonymous dispersion through texts, books and works, in which, nevertheless, and in spite of the multiple discontinuities and variations produced at its height, it is possible to determine that those texts and works speak of the same thing, are placed at the same level, use the same conceptual field, oppose themselves on the same battlefield, and exclude the same statements, the same things that this discursive praxis prohibits or represses to say. Ultimately, the discursive formations, at their most general level, shape the episteme of a time period (*Les mots et les choses*, 1966). With Foucault's proposal, we go from a history of ideas founded in authors and works to an archaeology of knowledge, understood as a study of the conditions of possibility of a multiple, diversified, discontinuous (and in relation to the conception of the world or episteme of a time period) discursive praxis. It is from this point of view that the moral treatises of the Jesuits, the theatre of Lope de Vega or the essays of Montaigne can integrate themselves into one and the same praxis.

Provinciales letters (1656-57)¹², which took the side of the Jansenist Antoine Arnauld opposite the harsh attacks from the Sorbonne, which was dominated by the Jesuits. Through Pascal's splendid satire, the procedure and authorities of the casuistry appeared, in negative light, and that satire illustrates perfectly to what extent that new moral discourse, of an eminently realist, relativist, and pragmatic character, which came about at the heart of post-Tridentine Catholicism, could seem transgressive to Jansenist rigorism.

In Letter V, for example, Pascal tells of his visit to an old friend, one of the masters of the Society, to whom, in order to work up his appetite and put him to test, he proposes the question of fasting. The Jesuit father looks to his authorities for support, always fellow Jesuits and in the majority of occasions Spanish ones, in each question that he is presented with, quoting titles, chapters, passages, pages, and explaining the anticipated answer to the proposed problem. The dialogue, which is most entertaining, goes through a process of questions and answers very similar to the way in which the first act of Lope's *El amor desatinado* begins, so as to thoroughly analyze the question to the utmost detail. Pascal asks, for example, if a man who has doubts as to whether or not he has reached the age of twenty-one is obliged to fast. In light of the Jesuit's response, Pascal insists with more detail: And if I turn twenty-one tonight, one hour after midnight, and tomorrow is a fasting day, would I be obliged to fast tomorrow? And the Jesuit responds: No, you could eat however much you desired from midnight until one, since you would not be twenty-one yet, and enjoying the right to break the fast, that right would not oblige you to abstain from food the next day. The consultation is extended to an even more curious case, also anticipated by the treatises the Jesuit is familiar with: Whoever is tired for

¹² The 18 letters were edited separately and addressed to Louis de Montalte and were dated between January 23rd, 1656 and March 4th, 1657. In this last year, they were gathered and published under one title: *Les Provinciales ou les lettres écrites par Louis de Montalte à un Provincial de ses amis...* (1657). Here we cite the English translation by Thomas M'Crie, available through the University of Adelaide's online library, accessible at (<http://ebooks.adelaide.edu.au/p/pascal/blaise/p27pr/>). In the original article, and for the quotes left in the original French, we cite the edition prepared by Louis Cognet and Gérard Ferreyrolles which reproduces this first edition of the entire collection. The text can be consulted online at the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, in Gallica Classique (<http://gallica.bnf.fr>).

whatever reason, for example, the case of someone tired from pursuing a young woman¹³, is he obliged to fast? Not at all, replies the Jesuit. Even in the case of one that had tired himself on purpose so as not to have to fast, he would not be obliged to do so. The erudite father, triumphant, looks at his astonished friend, Pascal: So, what do you think? Could you have imagined? Pascal, shocked, answers:

The truth is, my father, even now I cannot believe it. So it is not a sin to not fast when one is obliged to? Is it that we are permitted to search for chances to sin? Are we not obligated to run from them? It would be very comfortable, if it were so.

But the Jesuit answers with his habitual relativism: Not always, everything is according to what and how so.

The dispute continues on and comes to a stop on the doctrine of *l'opinion probable*, masterpiece of casuistry: «*C'est le fondement et l'ABC de toute notre morale*»¹⁴. According to this doctrine, the way in which Pascal interprets it, it is enough that one opinion of recognized authority is given to be able to act in consequence of it, even if there are other different opinions on the considered case, and even if these other different opinions could be more certain and more founded, even when the one who gives the opinion does not fully believe it but judges it as convenient for both the person and situation in question. In view of the scandal of Pascal the Jansenist, who from the beginning states to him: «Je ne me contente pas du probable [lui dis-je], je cherche le sûr»¹⁵, and now he asks him how it is possible then to distinguish the true opinion amongst different probable opinions, the good Jesuit does not become intimidated, but rather quite the contrary and with firm conviction he explains to him:

¹³ The text says *poursuivre une fille*, an ambiguous expression (without taking the risk of exploring different contexts) could be translated as «persuing or hounding a young woman».

¹⁴ «It is the Foundation and the abc's of all our moral».

¹⁵ «I am not just satisfied with the probable (said I), I'm looking for the secure».

There are very few questions, indeed, in which you do not find the one saying yes and the other saying no. Still, in all these cases, each of the contrary opinions is probable. And hence Diana says on a certain subject: «Ponce and Sanchez hold opposite views of it; but, as they are both learned men, each renders his own opinion probable» (Letter V).

Sarcasm overflows Pascal: «Reverend father, thanks to your probable opinions, we have got liberty of conscience».

For Pascal it is evident that the Jesuits are provoking a perverse moral revolution, in which, in order to accommodate oneself to the demands of very different populations, cultures, and nations (their catechism has led them to the most disparate and remote places), they have generated an entire horde of «casuistes assortis à toute cette diversité»¹⁶. And this is how they answer him: «pour toutes sortes de personnes et répondent si bien selon ce qu'on leur demande»¹⁷. Indignant, Pascal comments: «as if the faith, and tradition, its ally, were not always one and the same at all times and in all places». The disparity of positions arrives at its limit when Pascal believes to have found an irrefutable argument and he asks the Jesuit what happens when the casuists' probable opinions are contrary to those of the Fathers of the Church. But the argument does not impress the Jesuit father much, and he answers as Lope de Vega would have answered:

The Fathers were good enough for the morality of their own times; but they lived too far back for that of the present age, which is no longer regulated by them, but by the modern casuists [...] In questions of morals, the modern casuists are to be preferred to the ancient fathers, though those lived nearer to the times of the apostles.

But Pascal's disapproval is not only directed at the Jesuits' minimalist morality, the moral rigorism of his *Pensées* (1670) also included Descartes and Montaigne, in whose *Essais* Pascal perceived a profound mundanity, an interest that, having nothing to do with God, concentrated on the human subject and his experience. It is in this way as an innovative scientific thinker, a creator along with

¹⁶ «Casuists concerned with all this diversity».

¹⁷ «For all kinds of people and respond so well according to what they are asked».

Fermat of the mathematical probability theory, that he vehemently opposed the moral theory of probable opinions and, in general, the discourse of self-understanding of the human condition that Modernity was beginning to elaborate in Descartes and Montaigne.

And speaking of probable opinions, the most probable is that Lope did not ever read Montaigne, for he never quotes him nor was he translated into Spanish¹⁸. And on the other hand, the social condition, personality, and attitude towards one and the other's religion were so different that any idea of direct intellectual coincidence should be rejected. With this said, the contemporary reader can perceive in Montaigne's thought some of the foundations of Lope's conception of the world. Or if one prefers to say it in a different way: Lope and Montaigne are associated, each one from his own circumstances and his own position, with the discourse that marks a wide zone of the human experience as a dominion of a desacralized thought, not protected by revelation or by faith, and much less by dogma, a discourse which initiates the secularizing process, of disenchantment of the world, as Max Weber would say¹⁹, of empowerment of the human sphere over the dominion of the sacred, which will be a major axis of evolution towards Modernity. As Hardt and Negri write, the primary event of Modernity is «the affirmation of the powers of *this* world, the discovery of the plane of immanence»²⁰ which begins to mature in the territory of science and of philosophy with Nicholas of Cusa or Pico della Mirandola, which achieves decisive milestones with Galileo or with Spinoza, and which Montaigne's *Essais* have a fundamental link.

A Montaigne who, sheltered in the *château* of his property, near Bordeaux, leaves his spirit in «full leisure», free «to entertain and divert itself» (I-VIII)²¹. At that time he is thirty-nine years old, ac-

¹⁸ The first known Spanish translation is from the First Book of the *Ensayos*, carried out between 1634 and 1636 by Diego Cisneros, whose manuscript *Experiencias y varios discursos de Miguel de Montaña* is conserved in the BNE, 5635.

¹⁹ Weber, 1979. The original edition, in German, of this classic book of modern sociology is from 1901.

²⁰ Hardt and Negri, 2005, p. 91. The original edition, in English, is from 2000, published by Harvard University Press.

²¹ *Los Essais de Messire Michel seigneur de Montaigne, chevalier de l'ordre du Roy, & Gentil-homme ordinaire de sa Chambre. Livre premier & second*, were published in Bordeaux, by S. Millanges, 1580. In this translated article, we cite the online collection from the University of Adelaide, translated by Charles Cotton and

according to his own declaration (I-XX), and we find ourselves in the year 1572. Montaigne feels like a villein in his corner, but in a noble manner, proud of his independence: «a gentleman of France scarce feels the weight of sovereignty pinch his shoulders above twice in his life» (I-XLII). He has no reason to envy the princes, for he has withdrawn «this corner from the public tempest, as I also do another corner in my soul» (II-XV).

From this situation, and isolated from family life in the medieval tower that dominates the access to the grounds of his mansion in the Mountain, he provides us with a close-up of himself in his *Essais*, always interrogating himself, examining himself, discovering himself, denoting himself as proud compared to the prince or the dominion of the ordinary masses («let us take a way quite contrary to the common course», I-XIX²²), wielding the first person singular or plural that expresses itself through verbs of thought («we have the idea that», «we think that», «it seems to me that», «I will be careful not to...»), of expression («we say»), or of experience («I have seen several in my time»), and which he constitutes his discourse on three fundamental bases. The first base is comprised of reasoning, a precise instrument to speak the truth, but which depends on a limited human reason, which we do not dominate, inconstant and contradictory, and that can turn against us («this advantage of reason, of which we so much boast, and upon the account of which we think ourselves masters and emperors over the rest of all creation, was given us for a torment?», I-XL). The second is that of the classic authorities and their texts «I easily submit my belief to the authority of ancient opinions», II-II), which surround him in the circular library of the highest floor of the tower, and whose sentences decorate the beams that support the roof. But above these two is the third, that of experience: «I find by experience» (I-XL), «I do not know that this is true; but I experimentally know» (II-XIV), over

edited by William Carew Hazlitt, available at the following address: (<http://ebooks.adelaide.edu.au/m/montaigne/michel/m76e/>). All quoted passages are subsequently cited with two numbers: first the book, then the chapter. In the original article, we used the edition from Cátedra, translated and edited by María Dolores Picazo and Almudena Montojo.

²² Or also: «We are to discharge ourselves from these vulgar and hurtful humours» (I-XIX), or also: «I am ready to conceive an implacable hatred against all popular domination» (I-III).

and over again Montaigne repeats «I want to tell my own experience»²³, nevertheless he is perfectly conscious of the fact that experience provides a relative knowledge, and one in the same event can give way to very diverse experiences, as he states for us in that formidable satire against physicians and medicine that closes his Book the Second with.

On this triple base, Montaigne elaborates an image of man as a «marvellous vain, fickle, and unstable» being, to such a point that man is one «on whom it is very hard to form any certain and uniform judgment» (I-I), for «such as make it their business to oversee human actions, do not find themselves in anything so much perplexed as to reconcile them and bring them into the world's eye with the same lustre and reputation; for they commonly so strangely contradict one another that it seems impossible they should proceed from one and the same person [...] irresolution appears to me to be the most common and manifest vice of our nature». Everything in «our manners and opinions» is instability, and it is for this reason that «I have often thought even the best authors a little out in so obstinately endeavouring to make of us any constant and solid texture». Such authors «choose a general air of a man, and according to that interpret all his actions», a way of behavior that Descartes could sign but completely contrary to Montaigne's, who says he «can more hardly believe a man's constancy than any other virtue». In fact,

our ordinary practice is to follow the inclinations of our appetite, be it to the left or right, upwards or downwards, according as we are wafted by the breath of occasion [...] [we] change like that little creature which receives its colour from what it is laid upon [...] we do not go, we are driven; like things that float, now leisurely, then with violence.

In the essay we are commenting, which opens the Second Book with the title of «Of the inconstancy of our actions» the writer glides from the general inconstancy to his own:

²³ Montaigne gives himself advice: «rather consult effects and experience» (I-XIX), or when travelling, he encourages himself to learn: «observe in my travels this custom, ever to learn something from the information of those with whom I confer (which is the best school of all others)» (I-XVI).

For my part, the puff of every accident not only carries me along with it according to its own proclivity, but moreover I discompose and trouble myself by the instability of my own posture [...] I give to my soul sometimes one face and sometimes another, according to the side I turn her to. If I speak variously of myself, it is because I consider myself variously; all the contrarities are there to be found in one corner or another; after one fashion or another.

In the sentence in which all the difference that separates Descartes from Montaigne is explained, Montaigne writes: «I have nothing to say of myself entirely, simply, and solidly without mixture and confusion». And from there he deduces: «And, therefore, to make a right judgment of a man, we are long and very observingly to follow his trace». Upon arriving at this point, Montaigne once again raises his discourse to a general ascertainment:

No one lays down a certain design for his life, and we only deliberate thereof by pieces [...] We are all lumps, and of so various and inform a contexture, that every piece plays, every moment, its own game, and there is as much difference betwixt us and ourselves as betwixt us and others (II-I)²⁴.

This inconstant, contradictory man, differentiated from all others and in his own interior, is obliged to more than following universal rules of conduct but to also trace himself and adapt himself to his own destiny: «each one's fortune is shaped by him by his own mores», he writes, quoting Cornelius Nepos (*Life of Atticus*, I-XX), and if Montaigne had legislated on human conduct, «I should be of opinion that in this, as in all other actions of life, each person should regulate the matter according to his fortune» (I-III).

Together with immanence, relativity, contradictoriness, we must situate human subjectivism: «Men (says an ancient Greek sentence) are tormented with the opinions they have of things and not by the things themselves». But this is not only torment, but a privilege as well, for it allows us to modify things by way of our judgment. «If things surrender themselves to our mercy, why do we not convert and accommodate them to our advantage?». On this path, Mon-

²⁴ On this last difference, between one and others, see Montaigne's essay «Of the inequality among us» (I-XLII).

taigne arrives at pre-Kantian formulations: «if, fortune simply provid[es] the matter, 'tis for us to give it the form». He then cites this sentence from Cicero: «By which one may understand that grief is not in nature, but in opinion» (Cicero, *Tusculanas*, Quaes., III. 28), and he continues:

Plenty, then, and indigence depend upon the opinion every one has of them; and riches no more than glory or health have other beauty or pleasure than he lends them by whom they are possessed [...] Every one is well or ill at ease, according as he so finds himself; not he whom the world believes, but he who believes himself to be so [...] Fortune does us neither good nor hurt; she only presents us the matter and the seed, which our soul, more powerful than she, turns and applies as she best pleases [...] A straight oar seems crooked in the water it does not only import that we see the thing, but how and after what manner we see it (I-XL).

But this power that our mind has over things also has a negative aspect: «we can never enough decry the disorderly sallies of our minds» (I-IV). Minds

which if not applied to some certain study that may fix and restrain them, run into a thousand extravagances, eternally roving here and there in the vague expanse of the imagination [...] The soul that has no established aim loses itself (I-VIII).

Our spirit

like a horse that has broke from his rider [...] creates me so many chimaeras and fantastic monsters, one upon another, without order or design, that, the better at leisure to contemplate their strangeness and absurdity, I have begun to commit them to writing (I-VIII).

This task of ordering them, of committing them to writing, is, nevertheless, affected by dependence and one's own disorder:

occasion, company, and even the very rising and falling of my own voice, extract more from my fancy than I can find, when I sound and employ it by myself [...] This, also, befalls me, that I do not find myself where I seek myself, and I light upon things more by chance than by any inquisition of my own judgment (I-X).

A consequence of this disorder is that «our mind hinders itself» and it sometimes appears «exactly balanced betwixt two equal parts» (II-XIII).

Montaigne achieves the perhaps noblest tone of his discourse in his meditation on death, but also on those things most immanent and tied to life: «The premeditation of death is the premeditation of liberty», he writes, «he who has learned to die has unlearned to serve. There is nothing evil in life for him who rightly comprehends that the privation of life is no evil: to know, how to die delivers us from all subjection and constraint» (I-XIX). We hear, almost three hundred years later, Schopenhauer proclaim that there is nothing bad in death. In this essay, significantly titled «That to Study Philosophy is to Learn to Die» (I-XIX), Montaigne insists on the demand of considering directly our own death in order to conquer our life:

Neither is there anything of which I am so inquisitive, and delight to inform myself, as the manner of men's deaths [...] he who should teach men to die would at the same time teach them to live (I-XIX).

And so, the day of our death is «the master-day, tis the day that is judge of all the rest, tis the day, says one of the ancients, that must be judge of all my foregoing years» (I-XVIII). Montaigne's discourse goes quite far along this existential path, from the affirmation of life on the border of death, to the point of situating himself on a radically immanent plane, in which neither God nor religion has a role to play:

As our birth brought us the birth of all things, so in our death is the death of all things included [...] Nothing can be a grievance that is but once [...] Your death is a part of the order of the universe, 'tis a part of the life of the world [...] This very being of yours that you now enjoy is equally divided betwixt life and death (I-XIX).

The fullest life is that which accepts death as a travel companion and is prepared at any moment: «The perpetual work of your life is but to lay the foundation of death», for that reasons, «If you have made your profit of life, you have had enough of it; go your way

satisfied», and Montaigne, once more in this same essay, quotes Lucretius: «Why not depart from life as a sated guest from a feast?». And Montaigne insists: «The utility of living consists not in the length of days, but in the use of time; a man may have lived long, and yet lived but a little» (I-XIX).

Few times would it be possible for the reader to find, in this time period, a discourse so linked to the *kingdom of this world*, so little soaked with religious sentiment, so free from the ideas of guilt, sin, redemption, or supernatural punishment. Even suicide enters in the order of what Montaigne accepts (II-III, *A Custom of the Isle of Cea*). So it is not strange that, at the end of his Second Book (Chapter XXXV: «Of the Most Excellent Men»), when he makes the declaration of his ideal human and identifies him with what are for Montaigne the three supreme figures of history: Homer, Alexander the Great, and above all, Epaminondas, none of whose lives was that of a saint, or even that of a Christian.

This desacralization of death and, through it, life as well, finds a support post in the power granted to accident, which displaces providence entirely from the field of vision: «accident has more title to anything that comes from me than I», writes Montaigne (I-X), and it has «a very great part» in sciences such as Medicine and others, or in military enterprises. «'Tis no wonder, says one of the ancients, that chance has so great a dominion over us, since it is by chance we live» (II-I).

In Montaigne's thought there is a very developed consciousness of the relativity of truth that we may achieve in our reasoning and in our experience, even if they are informed by classic knowledge. The first essay of his first book bears a title that is a complete relativist manifesto: «That Men by Various Ways Arrive at the Same End» and he displays a series of cases that show how different attitudes in one who has been defeated, whether in submission or by result of defiance, can give either a good or bad result, indistinctly, without being able to deduce a general rule of conduct to follow. After all, «there is no reason that has not its contrary» (II-XIV), as he writes in one occasion, and in another he adds: «But with us 'tis quite contrary; every particular action requires a particular judgment» (II-I).

In turn, in Chapter XXIII of his first book, is titled «Various Events from the Same Counsel», and after examining different examples from experience, Montaigne arrives at the following conclu-

sion: «so vain and futile a thing is human prudence; throughout all our projects, counsels and precautions, Fortune will still be mistress of events» (I-XXIII). What characterizes us is

this doubt and uncertainty, that the shortsightedness of human wisdom to see and choose the best (by reason of the difficulties that the various accidents and circumstances of things bring along with them).

And so, once examined the different cases and different results, Montaigne proposes that

seeing all the remedies a man can apply to such a disease, are full of unquietness and uncertainty, 'tis better with a manly courage to prepare one's self for the worst that can happen, and to extract some consolation from this, that we are not certain the thing we fear will ever come to pass (I-XXIII).

It would be impossible to find a more radically relativist affirmation.

Within this relativizing discourse and fed by sentiments of immanence, it is not discarded that it may be precise to use contemptible means to a good end, in a similar pragmatic line as that of the Jesuits: «And yet the weakness of our condition often pushes us upon the necessity of making use of ill means to a good end» (II-XXII), and it incites us to not condemn the great figures of history, like Alexander the Great, for some reprehensible, particular acts (the ruin of Thebes, the deaths of Menander and Hephaestion, and the mass execution of Persian prisoners...), for «such as he are to be judged in gross by the main end of their actions» (II-XXXV).

The moral voluntarism is another feature that characterizes his thought: «We cannot be bound beyond what we are able to perform,» he writes, «by reason that effect and performance are not at all in our power, and that, indeed, we are masters of nothing but the will, in which, by necessity, all the rules and whole duty of mankind are founded and established» (I-VII). The entirety of his philosophy is oriented towards an ethical model of conduct, even while recognizing the limits in which will, and therefore morality, move: «No one lays down a certain design for his life, and we only deliberate thereof by pieces» (II-I).

Montaigne's philosophy is an essentially pragmatic one. It does not, as Descartes does, search for a metaphysical certainty, to found human knowledge in a universal and absolute theoretical truth, and upon it the existence and dominion of nature. Montaigne's philosophy searches for an applied knowledge that may be able to teach one to live better, to orient oneself in a world where all is «variety and dissemblance» (II-II). Descartes aspires to apprehend the universal, Montaigne to explore the particular. Upon finishing the Second Book of his *Essays*, he makes balance of all of them and writes:

my art and industry have been ever directed to render myself good for something; my studies, to teach me to do, and not to write. I have made it my whole business to frame my life: this has been my trade and my work; I am less a writer of books than anything else [...] He who has anything of value in him, let him make it appear in his conduct, in his ordinary discourses, in his courtships, and his quarrels: in play, in bed, at table, in the management of his affairs, in his economics (II-XXXVI).

This sentence could illustrate to perfection Charles Taylor's thesis according to which modern identity does not achieve its true fullness until it can affirm itself on an ethics of common life, which situates itself in contrast with the aristocratic ethics of honour and glory²⁵. In Chapter 5 of the First Book, Montaigne comments satirically on blind heroism, fair game at all costs, defence of abstract principals over concrete situations, and even more so when it comes to war: «We are not so scrupulous in this affair, and who attribute the honour of the war to him who has the profit of it» (I-V). Several pages before, he evokes a sentence from *Heauton Timorumenos* that sums up in good part the pragmatic orientation of his discourse: «Things are, as is the mind of their possessor; who knows how to use them, to him they are good» (I-XLII).

But if his conception of the individual, the desacralization of very wide fields of reality and of writing, the relativity of judgment,

²⁵ Taylor, 2006, especially in his Third Part, chapters 13 to 17. The original edition, in English (*Sources of the Self*), in Harvard University Press, was published in 1989. Taylor studies, on the other hand, and from the point of view of the conformation of modern individual identity, Montaigne's thinking, which he considers as a decisive figure in the process of this conformation.

or pragmatism bring Montaigne's and Lope's conception of the world closer, the casuistry that the Spanish poet's comedies stage corresponds to that which is useful to him to argue with the French prosaist, for both proceed by way of examination of cases. The argumentative technique of the essayist from the Mountain begins often by exhibiting the problem in a more or less developed way (at times, in a very brief way). For example, when someone has defeated us and has us at his mercy, what is better? Trying to move him to compassion with our submission and docility, or awakening his admiration with our bravery and moral fortitude? Once the dilemma is explained, Montaigne begins to provide us with cases, diverse cases with different results. In the example that concerns us, he evokes a case that happened to Edward, Prince of Wales; another to Scanderbeg, prince of Epirotas; another to the Emperor of Germany Conrad III. Upon arriving at this point, he asks himself what would his reaction be as victor, and he comments «I have a marvellous propensity to mercy and mildness, and to such a degree that I fancy of the two I should sooner surrender my anger to compassion than to esteem», (I-I) but immediately he counters himself with a new observation, from the classic texts: «nevertheless», he writes, «and yet pity is reputed a vice amongst the Stoics», (I-I) and after explaining this new position on the topic in question, he again provides a series of cases, like that of the Theban people, Dionysius the Elder, Pompey, Sulla, and Alexander the Great. The essay ends without conclusion, open, on the cruelty of Alexander with a prisoner in Gaza or with the massacre of six thousand citizens of Thebes. In other occasions, he extracts a small conclusion, of practical order: This is the case of the problem put forth in Chapter V: «Whether the Governor of a Place Besieged Out Himself to Go Out to Parley». After presenting the case of what Lucio Marcio did, Roman legate in the war against Perseus, King of Macedonia, he goes on to analyze the answers they gave, in different cases of siege: the Roman senators, the Achaeans, the barbarians of the kingdom of Tarentum, the ancient Florentines. Once again he takes a pause to reflect on his own position and to which solutions would he feel more inclined, but now he infers a rule of conduct: «a general rule amongst the martial men of these latter times, that a governor of a place never ought, in a time of siege, to go out to parley» (I-V). And he gives various examples of it, but he immediately finds a

nuance that would justify the contrary decision: «But yet, as to this, it would be excusable in that governor who, going out, should, notwithstanding, do it in such manner that the safety and advantage should be on his side» (I-V) and he provides two successful cases to apply to the decision and one of failure, after which he feels himself capable to enunciate a brief practical lesson:

I could, and do, with great facility, rely upon the faith of another; but I should very unwillingly do it in such a case, as it should thereby be judged that it was rather an effect of my despair and want of courage than voluntarily and out of confidence and security in the faith of him with whom I had to do (I-V).

Montaigne advances in his thought stating dilemmas, disjunctive situations, putting forth cases that appear to lead to a conclusion, posing difficulties to that conclusion, contributing new cases and counter-cases, in an indefatigable effort to shed some light on the precarious human condition, on life in the kingdom of this world. Not very distinct is the behavior, as a whole, of the dramatic writings of Lope, which sets out from problems situated at the heart of his time period and of his country, which are expressed in fixed outlines of narrative functions, in dramatic traces, and he unfolds his argumentation in cases and counter cases and in more cases, as many cases as comedies that develop a given trace, not searching for a universal conclusion, a norm which would govern all cases and reduce reality to a dominion of slogans, but rather exploring hungrily the variations of circumstances and characters, the combination of actions and possible reactions, in a world in which the immanent, human dimension of life is entirely variation and different, and in which only the examination of different cases can provide us with the measurement of their diversity and open our mind and our conduct to a new species of availability before the facts, an open availability, more founded in observation and in experience than in the obligatory observance of inherited universal principles.

SCHEMES, FUNCTIONS, MOTIFS AND CASES: ELEMENTS FOR THE ANALYSIS OF SPANISH BAROQUE THEATRE

The French Admiral cannot sleep. The King's harassment of his wife has left him restless. Wandering around the house, he enters the bedchamber where Blanca sleeps: «¡Ay, cielos, ¿cómo es de día / si está durmiendo el Aurora?»¹. He decides against waking her so as not to further disturb her. Pulling up a chair, which is slightly hidden between some plants, he sits down: «Sueño, licencia te pido / para poder descansar»². Moments later, the King steps unseen into the bedchamber —this thanks to Count Arnaldo, neighbour of the Admiral, who agreed to make a hole in the dividing wall for the King to enter by. The King stares at the lady in amazement and, unable to restrain himself, goes to hug her. Then a voice startles him:

ALMIRANTE	¡No hagas tal!
REY	¡Estraña voz! Mas mi mal es sordo.
ALMIRANTE	¡Míralo bien!
REY	¿Que lo mire bien? ¿Pues quién hay agora en el jardín que estorbe mi bien? En fin, la abrazo.
ALMIRANTE	¡Míralo bien!
REY	Que lo mire bien o mal, ¿qué importa a quien quiere bien? Durmiendo está mi desdén: hoy la abrazo.
ALMIRANTE	¡No hagas tal!
REY	¿No hagas tal? ¿Míralo bien? ¿No es eco de mi razón?

¹ «Oh, heavens, how can there be daylight / if Aurora is sleeping?».

² «Dream, permission I ask of you / In order to be able to rest».

Causado me ha confusión
y helado el alma también³. (vv. 2295-2308)

Yet the King is determined to do as he pleases, and no one would defy him. But the voice again thunders in the bedchamber, «¡Es mi mujer!»⁴. Thus the King discovers the husband behind some plants, who appears to be sleeping. Yet is he sleep-talking, or pretending to sleep-talk in order to put a stop to his unfaithful ways? The King ponders:

Irme y perder me conviene
la ocasión que amor me ha dado.
No quiero andar descubierto
con hombre tan bien nacido,
que quien me avisa dormido,
me sabrá matar despierto⁵. (vv. 2327-2332)

This scene, filled with dramatic fluidity, comes from the play *La batalla del honor*⁶. The reason I bring this up here is because underneath all of this rich dramatic substance lies a perfectly isolable motif in the historian's laboratory, a motif that can be formulated like this:

The husband surprises the despot in his attempt to dishonour him, and warns him that he has acknowledged him, but he does so discretely

The motifs condense prototypical events in a brief yet complete unit of the intrigue. And we know, as experts of the *comedia nueva*, that these plays are sustained on configurations of motifs. A limited

³ «ADMIRAL: Don't do that! KING: Strange voice! But my pain is deaf ADMIRAL: Look at it carefully! KING: Look it carefully, you say? Well who / is now in the garden / to disturb my well-being? Anyway, / I hug her. ADMIRAL: Look it carefully! KING: Look it carefully, you say, / whether I look it carefully or not, / what does it matter for the one who wants well? / Sleeping is my disdain: / today I hug her. ADMIRAL: Don't do that! KING: Don't do that? Look it carefully? / Isn't this the echo of my reason? / It caused me confusion / and it also freezed my soul».

⁴ «This is my wife!».

⁵ «I should leave and lose / the opportunity that love gave me. / I do not want to be exposed with such a well-born man, as who warns me asleep, / will know how to kill me awake».

⁶ Cited from the edition of Ramon Valdés in *Comedias de Lope de Vega*, part VI-1.

amount of these motifs, not yet fully covered in our studies, constitutes the basic combination of these dramatic pieces, since they are repeated from play to play. Some are exclusive to particular genres, and others can appear in all types of plays, irrelevant of their genre.

In fact, this same motif is dramatized another three times in the same play: twice in Act I and once in Act II. In the first, during the night, the Admiral and his servants surprise the King, his court favourite and two musicians by the gates of his house. The Admiral immediately recognises the King, despite his disguise, and knows that he is there to dishonour him. Then he asks himself:

¿Cómo le echaré de aquí
con el debido decoro
y dando a entender que ignoro
que no me le guarda a mí?
Ahora bien, industria sea,
pues fuerza no ha de valer⁷. (vv. 113-119)

Neither of the two can reveal their own identity: the King does not wish to be seen committing infamy, and the husband cannot discover this infamy because it would push him to take revenge for the offence on none other than the King himself. Then the Admiral pretends to be the constable on patrol. The King immediately notices and whispers to his favourite:

Que para echar a los dos
de su puerta, se ha fingido
Justicia
[...]
Invención
de celoso cuerdo ha sido⁸. (vv. 145 y ss).

The two antagonists play a subtle game whereby they know that they recognise each other without wanting to admit it, and whereby

⁷ «How will I ban him from here / with the proper decorum, / implying that I ignore / the fact that he does not maintain it for me? / However it should be done with ingenuity / because force is not the answer».

⁸ «That in order to ban the two / from his door, Justice / was simulated [...] It was / invention of jealous reason».

they insinuate it without explicitly accepting it. They use this technique to their advantage in order to be threatening.

In the event that takes place at the end of Act II, the King goes into the garden where Lady Blanca is and besieges her, begs her and oppresses her... Again the Admiral arrives to everyone's surprise, but only after eavesdropping, he shouts to warn the King of his presence. The King is the hidden one now, and the Admiral, pretending that he has not seen him, says to his wife:

Vive Dios, que de manera
te adoro [...]
[...] que creo
que cuando fuese posible
que el mismo rey te sirviese,
[...] que creo que le matase,
que la honra, Blanca, es tigre
que por sus hijos no teme
puntas de lanzas terribles,
cuanto más las de coronas,
que al fin son flores de lises⁹. (vv. 2048 y ss.)

The indirect threat here incorporates a nuance: the pretence not only serves to warn or threaten, but also to reproach the lecherous King for his infamous behaviour, although also in an indirect manner i.e. denying that such behaviour has been or can be committed:

Que nunca los reyes sirven
las mujeres de sus deudos,
mayormente los que siguen
los pasos de sus mayores¹⁰. (vv. 2053-2056).

The motif of the 'Dissimulated Recognition', if I may refer to it as such, is repeated with variations in four occasions in this play. We

⁹ «I swear to God, that I / adore you so [...] / [...] that I think / that in the eventuality / that the king himself courted you / I think I would kill him, that honour, Blanca, is a tiger / that for its children it does not fear / terrible spear heads / and less those of the crowns, / that in the end are lilies».

¹⁰ «That never kings court / the women of their relatives, / mostly the ones who follow / the steps of their elders».

find it in many others, particularly when there is a lecherous sovereign that tries to dishonour a vassal.

The motifs, if repeated in a systematic way and in a significant number of plays, can lead to the characterization of a genre as a whole¹¹. But what is interesting to point out here is that these motifs fulfil some functions in the plot (narrative functions) within a given plot prototype that are characterized by some of the conflicts at the basis of the *comedia nueva*.

Let me return, for a moment, to the concept of *traza* (scheme) that I explained some years ago¹² with reference to *La Estrella de Sevilla*; a play whose material text, as it has come down to us, I judged did not belong to Lope, but whose 'scheme' was undoubtedly his. I based this concept on the definition in the *Diccionario de Autoridades* of the word *traza*: «La primera planta, o diseño, que propone, e idea el artificio para la fábrica de algún edificio, u otra obra»¹³.

Some years later, after my experience with the approximately 500 plots that we have dissected in our database *Artelope* (today almost in finalisation stage), I believe that I can fundamentally define the concept of *traza* as a precise combination of narrative functions, many of them materialized by motifs; and that I can characterize a microgenre as a group of plays with the same base conflict, such as the unfolding of the same scheme in various plays. Then I studied the conflict of *the lust of the despot* from *La Estrella de Sevilla* and from the ten plays that could be associated with it. Today the outlook is greater and so are the precisions that can be incorporated.

In that article I could establish that this same conflict could break through genre barriers and manifest itself in very different categories of the *comedia nueva*. This was unsurprising since we need to distinguish between the structure of the scheme and the way of

¹¹ For example, the motif of the affray between gentlemen, some wrapped in their cloaks, who unsheathe their swords at the window or the balcony of the lady they are competing for, has characterized the urban comedy of contemporary manners in such a way that it provided the genre with its term: «comedia de capa y espada».

¹² Oleza, 2001, pp. 42-68.

¹³ The first plan, or design, that proposes, and creates the artifice for the construction of a building, or another work.

elaborating it, which can be comical or dramatic, urban or rural, historical or of free invention, etc.

From that article on the *conflict of the lust of the despot*, its presence could be deduced in the following genres:

COMEDIES				DRAMAS				
universe of unreality		universe of verisimilitude		imaginary		historical		
literary tradition	free invention	Picaresque	urban	literaturized matter	free invention	profane		religious
∅	palatine	∅	<i>La niña de plata</i>	chivalry	palatine	private events	public events	∅
	<i>El lacayo fingido</i>			<i>El marqués de Mantua</i>	<i>La locura por la honra, El perseguido ...</i>	<i>La Estrella de Sevilla, La condesa Matilda</i>		

Without any claim to exhaustivity, neither then nor now, such conflict appeared in up to five genres: palatine comedies and dramas, urban comedies, chivalry dramas and historical dramas of private events (located either in Europe, like *La condesa Matilde*, or in Spain, like *La Estrella de Sevilla*, *La ventura en la desgracia*, or *Servir con mala estrella*). Today I continue to maintain this cross-cutting capability of schemes, although I would point out that it is a limited capability, since the schemes seem to avoid specific genres and manifest themselves with preference in others. This is the case in *the lust of the despot*, which would be difficult to find in pastoral, picaresque, or *comedias novelescas*, for the simple reason that these plays do not usually feature the role of the despotic sovereign. Only in some rare urban comedies, cloak and sword comedies, but with historical characters and background, such as *La niña de plata*, the presence of this scheme is favoured.

Similarly, the scheme of *the lust of the despot* lends itself to a more dramatic treatment. Within this treatment, although more frequently found in historical dramas of private events than in those of public events (as in *El postrer godo de España*¹⁴), it could find itself

¹⁴ Occasionally, schemes appear to be secondary within the main conflict as a result of the discomfort with which they adapt themselves to certain genres. This is evident in historical plays such as *El postrer Godo en España*, where the scheme of *the lust of the despot* remains subordinate to the public events of Rodrigo's loss of Spain and Pelayo's initiation of the *Reconquista*. Also the historical

most at ease in imaginary dramas, and within them in those of free invention, in palatine plays, which seem to constitute its favourite scenario. This is perhaps not without reason given the fact that this scheme is impregnated by a discourse critical of power, and given the danger that the political treatises at that time, from Bodin to Suárez, acknowledged in absolute monarchy: the danger derived from the requirement of the identification of the king with the positive law (not with the natural law, and less clearly with the divine law).

Our *traza* (scheme), as we have conceived it today, is a ‘warp’ of motifs; but above all it is a series of narrative functions, of abstract character, that we will examine. The first of these functions is, necessarily, the sovereign’s conception of an illegitimate and despotic desire that is dishonourable for the object of that desire:

A male or female despot conceives an illegitimate desire for a Lady (or a Gallant)

In this function the despot can be the king (*El lacayo fingido*, *La ventura en la desgracia*, *La Estrella de Sevilla*, *La batalla del honor*, *La condesa Matilde*, *Servir con mala estrella*, *El amor desatinado*), the crown prince (*El marqués de Mantua*, *La locura por la honra*), the future king (*La niña de plata*), or, in the more unusual case, a daughter of the king (*La fuerza lastimosa*, *La locura por la honra*), including the wife of the sovereign, as in the case of the Duchess of Burgundy in *El perseguido*.

The dishonourable manner encompasses three different situations. In the most common, the desired lady or gentleman is already married or about to get married (*El lacayo fingido*, *El marqués de Mantua*, *La locura por la honra*, *La fuerza lastimosa*, *El perseguido*, *La batalla del honor*, *La condesa Matilde*); also they could be in love with the gallant or lady they wish to marry (*La niña de plata*, *La Estrella de Sevilla*). In *El lacayo fingido* y *La ventura en la desgracia*, the two former examples are evident: on one hand, the desired ladies are about to get married with their chosen husbands, on the other, they are in love with a third party. Finally, the despot aims to achieve his goal by propos-

drama *Servir con mala estrella*, although of private events, subordinates the scheme of the lust of the despot to that of *dramas de privanza y fortuna*, with its main conflict between the evil sovereign and the good vassal.

ing the condition that the lady should be his concubine, a condition that the lady's family would like to be able to reject (*Servir con mala estrella*, *La ventura en la desgracia*, *La Estrella de Sevilla*, *El amor desatinado*).

The circumstances in which this desire is manifested do not affect the main part of the function, but are repeated with a significant frequency, giving way to well characterized motifs: either the despot knows the lady or gentleman because they see each other at court (*El lacayo fingido*, *La locura por la honra*, *La fuerza lastimosa*, *El perseguido*, *La batalla del honor*, *La fventura en la desgracia*, *Servir con mala estrella*, *El amor desatinado*) or because they meet by chance in a social situation, either on visiting a city to receive honours (for instance *La niña de plata*, *La Estrella de Sevilla*) or because of the celebration of a party, which could be the wedding of the desired lady (*El marqués de Mantua*, *La condesa Matilde*), or even the despot's own wedding (*El postrer godo de España*).

I have just introduced the primary function of the scheme and sketched an outline of how this function can be differently materialized in the subject that desires, in the dishonourable way in which the subject desires, in the circumstances in which the desire is manifested, and in the object that is desired, which could be either the lady or the gallant.

The second function of the scheme (although not necessarily in the order of their appearance, given that each play imposes its structural order in structuring the functions) is:

The despot requests collaborations in order to satisfy his desire

This function is certainly complex since it is carried out through a wide variety of situations. Within them, the following motif stands out: a bribe to the slave or servant (*La Estrella de Sevilla*, *La batalla del honor*) or to a relative (*La niña de plata*), or the coercion on a courtier (*La batalla del honor*), in order for access to the house and the bedchamber of the lady to be granted. In some case the bribe is not necessary, since the maidservant collaborates spontaneously given the fact that she is in love with a servant of the tyrant (*La locura por la honra*).

A second possibility is the request of help to a gentleman, not knowing that this gentleman is the gallant of the desired lady. This

gives the gentleman the decision to either obey his lord or be loyal to his love. In all cases, and in a more or less dignified way, the gentleman obeys the king (*El lacayo fingido*, *La Estrella de Sevilla*).

It is also common to count on the help of an honourable lady who is willing to lend assistance to the occasion of a dishonourable encounter, either with some conditions (*EL marqués de Mantua*) or by their own initiative and with full involvement (*La locura por la honra*).

A strategic resource that appears in some plays is forcing the wedding of the desired lady with a courtier, who gains the protection of the king even though he may become a pampered husband. This situation is very relevant in *La ventura en la desgracia*, in which the King forces the lady to get married twice, or in *El postrer godo de España* and *Servir con mala estrella* in which the final intention is not fulfilled.

In almost all of the cases the tyrant counts on the collaboration of an adviser, usually with little or no moral diligence, whose main concern is to efficiently satisfy the requirements of his lord, no matter the legal situation. This is the case of the pragmatic and prudent don Arias in *La Estrella de Sevilla*, or of the arrogant and imprudent Galalón in *El marqués de Mantua*. In some plays the advisor is in turn a gallant with his own interests at heart, which are not always those of the tyrant, at least in the field of love: this is the case in *El lacayo fingido*, in *La batalla del honor*, and above all, in the exemplary Rugero of *Servir con mala estrella*. It is interesting to observe that when the lady is the subject of the dishonourable desire, there is no need for advisors, as in *La fuerza lastimosa* or in *El perseguido*.

Finally, in some cases the tyrant tries to win the co-operation of his antagonist by means of gifts and honours: be it either the husband or the gallant of his lady (*La batalla del honor*), or the relative responsible for her honour (*La Estrella de Sevilla* and *La niña de plata*).

The third function refers to the strategy of aggression to remove obstacles and get rid of opponents to the satisfaction of illegitimate desire.

The despot resorts to aggression against his opponents

These opponents respond mainly to two roles: the gallant (requited) of the lady, and the relative (brother, father, uncle) who is the trustee of her honour.

The exile of the gallant is archetypal (*La ventura en la desgracia*), as are his capture and confinement (*La ventura en la desgracia*) and his separation, by means of a mission that he has to carry out (*La Estrella de Sevilla*, *El marqués de Mantua*, *Servir con mala estrella*). The separation is circumstantial and disordered in *La locura por la honra* and in *La condesa Matilde*, and very unusual and unique in *El postrer godo de España*, a play in which Count Don Julián trusts Rodrigo, the lecherous despot, with the custody and honour of his daughter, la Cava, when he bids farewell to the court in order to attend his obligatory position on the front line.

Another exceptional device is the threat of forcing a divorce that the King of France makes to the Admiral in *La batalla del honor*, which leads to the honest husband's madness.

In some very significant cases, the despot makes his opponent fall into a trap in order to subdue or remove him. This is seen in *La fuerza lastimosa*, in which the King asks Count Enrique to judge his own case as if it were the case of someone else, and then the Count sentences that, given the fact that the princess has lost her honour, the first thing is to restore it, obliging the seducer to marry her, and, if already married, to kill his wife with his own hands. The King then reveals to him that he has sentenced his case, and that he should kill his wife in order to be able to marry the princess. Another trap is the hunting party that Carloto urges Valdovinos to follow in *El marqués de Mantua*, and similar traps can be found in *El perseguido*, *La Estrella de Sevilla* or in *La ventura en la desgracia*.

This aggression reaches its culmination when the despot conceives of the desire to kill his or her opponent, and above all when the despot orders to carry this out. This is seen in *La estrella de Sevilla*, where King Don Sancho the Brave orders Sancho Ortiz to kill Busto Tavera; or in *La ventura en la desgracia*, where the same King repeatedly proposes to have Don García killed; or in *El marqués de Mantua*, where the Dauphin of France orders to have Valdovinos killed by Galadón and his hired assassins; or in *La condesa Matilde*, where the King of France decides to kill Count Gesualdo. Some of

these murderous attempts achieve their purpose (*La Estrella de Sevilla*, *El marqués de Mantua*). Other attempts result in failure (*La ventura de la desgracia*) and others succeed in an indirect way, in the battlefield, where the injured husband that has been sent to war heroically dies defending the tyrant king —an elaboration of the biblical story of David and Uriah (*La condesa Matilde*). When the desire to kill is by a woman, the murderous intention diverts towards other objectives and uses other very strange means (which can be rarely characterized as motifs): if in *La fuerza lastimosa* the Princess wants to force her lover Count Enrique to kill his wife and her opponent, Countess Isabel, in *El perseguido*, the Duchess of Burgundy clearly deviates from the male norm: rejected by her illegitimate love Carlos, she decides to kill his son, who is just a child, and then by mistake attempts to take the life of her own husband, the Duke. In *Servir con mala estrella* it is the desired lady, converted into the royal concubine, who decides to act dishonourably and have her own brother killed, don Tello, who was against her. This action saves the King from carrying out this mission. Something similar happens in *La locura por la honra*, in which Flordelís, the lady that is going to be dishonoured by the Dauphin of France, wishes the death of her husband, an obstacle for that dishonour, even when the killing is not carried out.

The despot's opponent, warned of the danger lying ahead, is put on guard

When the opponent is a gallant, his reaction remains conditioned by jealousy and by the confused situation this jealousy causes, as in *La niña de plata* or in *La ventura en la desgracia*. When the opponent is a husband, the motif is imbued with special dramatic intensity: in *El marqués de Mantua* this motif gives rise to an emotional farewell scene for the married couple in which the omens and fears of the wife alert her beloved to the danger (this is indeed a motif), and culminates in another very intense moment where the Dauphin tells Valdovinos a story involving another man which in fact alludes to himself (another motif), a story that makes Valdovinos understand that he has been sentenced to death. Other relevant cases appear in *La condesa Matilde* where the hidden husband observes the king's harassment of his wife, fluctuates between the trust in her, fear and doubt, and finally risks his own life in the battlefield in order to

save his lecherous king. Also notable is the reaction of the Admiral of France in *La batalla de honor*, but most extraordinary that of Count Floraberto in *La locura por la honra*, which reminds us of other husbands in other schemes, like the husband in *Peribáñez* or in *Los comendadores de Córdoba*, when the absent husband, after disturbing signs have made him suspicious of what could occur in his house, returns in secret and unexpectedly (another motif), and there surprises the adulterers, has her servant killed, and kills the accomplice and his wife with his own hands, but lets the Dauphin escape.

Just as dramatic is the case of the despot's opponent being the brother, as in *Servir con mala estrella*, but above all in *La estrella de Sevilla*, where, after receiving unjustified honours from the King, Busto Tavera becomes suspicious and adopts a vigilant attitude, and therefore manages to avoid the rape of his sister and makes the King run away from his house. Later, upon suspecting that the slave Matilde facilitated the King's entrance, he interrogates her and, considering she is to blame, hangs her in the battlements of the fortress, leaving in her hands the paper in which the King granted her freedom in return for her service. It is then that the King, mad with anger by an *hidalgo's* challenge to his power, orders to kill him. Busto, who foresees this, puts out a message to Estrella, tries to speed up her wedding with Sancho Ortiz, and gets ready to leave for exile. He did not expect, however, that Sancho Ortiz was the executioner that the King had prepared for him.

The despot tries to satisfy his lust

In a good number of these plays the despot directly approaches the lady, woos her, pursues her, and tries to rape her: this is the case in *El marques de Mantua* and in the first (unsuccessful) attempts in *La locura por la honra*, and in *El postrer godo de España*, where Rodrigo violates la Cava.

In an important group of plays, it is necessary for the despot to raid the house in which the lady lives in, alone (again a motif), or at least he assumes she will be alone. This happens in *La estrella de Sevilla*, in *La niña de plata*, or in *La batalla de honor* (in this play the raid is repeated various times and is quite original, since it involves making a hole in the dividing wall of the neighbour's house through which the King can sneak in). In some cases this entrance into the

house is not by force but by means of a visit imposed on the lady, as in *La condesa Matilde* or even more in *Servir con mala estrella*, where repeated visits by the King are disguised as visits to organise the wedding of the lady to his favourite Rugero. This provokes the dismay of her brother who cannot avoid these visits, and which result in the pregnancy of the Lady.

Sometimes the King attempts to kidnap the lady, as in *La batalla de honor* or in *La ventura de la desgracia*, or in *El lacayo fingido*, where his attempt is successful and is carried out by none other than the lady's gallant. The King hopes that, once she is locked in a tower, she will concede to his wishes, but they will not be granted, not even when she is left to die from hunger and thirst, as in *La ventura en la desgracia*.

A special way of doing it is to entice the lady into a trap. This also happens in *La ventura en la desgracia*, in which the King and his advisor write a letter to Doña Sancha making her believe that the letter is from her lover Don García. She reads that a meeting will take place at night in her lover's house, which the King has taken into ownership in Don García's absence. There the Lady would come, but also many other people, which causes much confusion and many misunderstandings, and consequently the King fails to seduce the Lady.

The desired Lady or gentleman reacts to the despot's desire

In most plays the lady resists all harassment she is subjected to for the sake of the love she bears for her gallant or husband and in defence of her honour. This occurs in a comical way in *El lacayo fingido* and in an especially heroic way in *La ventura de la desgracia* (after her wedding, the lady refuses to yield to the husband that the king has chosen for her, even though it put her life in danger), but also in *La condesa Matilde*, or *La batalla de honor*, where the way in which she resists is very original (the lady rids herself of all her beautiful clothes and simply puts on a plain petticoat in order to diminish the King's desire). In some of these cases the lady verbally confronts the despot and succeeds in dissuading him. This is what occurs in the first attempts of *La locura por la honra*, but especially in *La niña de plata*: in a magnificent scene, she is intimidated by Prince Don Enrique in her bedroom and, without any possibility of escaping,

resorts to the power of speech, which she uses so skilfully that the Prince decides against satisfying his desire and changes his role from violator to protector and godfather of the wedding.

There are few plays in which the lady concedes to the despot's desire: in *La locura por la honra* this acceptance appears to be justified because the lady, before marrying Count Floraberto by order of the King, loved the Dauphin, and this love was corresponded. Only Reason of State could separate them. And now, even though she resisted at first and eventually came round to proclaim her love for her husband, it did not take long before she hated him and wished the worst for him. Yet it took less time to bring the Dauphin to her bed, 'una y tres noches más', after letting him know of the absence of her husband. Another case is *Servir con mala estrella*, where Doña Sancha, locked up by her suspicious brother in the tower, managed to receive regular visits from the King and become pregnant. Later she will come to accept a life as a concubine in the palace, together with her daughter, the future 'desdichada Estefanía', and the King's attempts to have her marry a suitable gentleman will not worry her. But when she suspects that the King is negotiating to marry a princess, she becomes deranged and denounces his dishonour, accuses herself for the death of her brother and claims vengeance. The desperate jealousy against the King will cause her to lose her mind and all five senses¹⁵. A similar 'concubine' situation is that of *la Cava*, but she is a forced mistress and runs away as quickly as possible to take refuge in the castle of Malaga. However, one day she throws herself off one of the towers because she is unable to bear her disgrace and the evil that she has caused to hang over Spain. Lope, converted into a stage manager, notes: «Échase allá detrás del teatro porque aquí sería lástima, que se haría mucho mal»¹⁶.

When the object of the illegitimate desire is a gentleman, he does not accept the dishonourable marriage either, as in *El perseguido* or in *La fuerza lastimosa*. But then, the perverse lady subjects the gentleman to an implacable persecution —a persecution that is

¹⁵ «Sean luego castigados / todos mis cinco sentidos: / los primeros, los oídos, / que creyeron lo que oyeron [...] Todos los demás sentidos / entren en esta querrela, / y el alma misma sin ella» (vv. 2526-2536). Cited from the edition by Laura Calvo Valdiviello, *Comedias de Lope de Vega*, Part VI-1.

¹⁶ She should throw herself behind the theatre because here it would be a pity, because she would hurt herself a lot.

overcome by Carlos, but not by Count Enrique: while Carlos eventually denounces her before her husband and sovereign, the Duke of Borgona¹⁷, Count Enrique is forced to kill his wife and marry the princess, and this causes him to lose his mind.

Both the coveted lady and gentleman get help from other characters

This help can come from their gallant or husband, as in *La ventura en la desgracia*, and above all in *La fuerza lastimosa*, where Count Enrique refuses to kill his wife and prefers to abandon her at sea¹⁸.

It can also come from another lady, especially if she is a graceful lady with an ability to complicate the intrigue, as in the case of *El lacayo fingido*. Or of another gentleman, as in the case of Duke Octavio, in *La fuerza lastimosa*, who was at first the opponent of Count Enrique and betrayed him by usurping his place in the princess' bed, and now rescues the abandoned Isabel from the sea and welcomes her to his land and finally helps her and her husband rekindle their love.

Sometimes, the help can even come from a non-tyrannical sovereign, like the Duke of Burgundy in *El perseguido*, who always sides with the persecuted Carlos rather than with his wife, the intriguing Duchess. The help can also come from the brother and rigorous defender of her honour, as in *La Estrella de Sevilla*.

However, the most effective assistant is undoubtedly the lady's father, who is usually a nobleman greatly respected at court because of either his value or merits—a nobleman the tyrant is obliged to respect—or can be a foreign sovereign, who can at any time get his troops together and invade the despot's kingdom. In the first of these examples we find Duke Balduino in *La locura por la honra*, a victorious war fighter with a 'Roman' sense of honour, who with

¹⁷ «Jamás te hablé, señor, de aquesta suerte, / porque jamás pensé ver lo que veo. / Casandra, tu mujer, desea mi muerte / porque no le cumplí su mal deseo» (vv. 3270-3274). Cited from the edition of Silvia Iriso and María Morrás, *Comedias de Lope de Vega*, Part I-1 («Never told you about, sir, in that way/ because I never thought I'd see what I see. / Cassandra, your wife, wishes my death / because I refused his evil desire»).

¹⁸ Again a well characterized motif (one of biblical origin and that was disseminated through folklore): the abandonment of a woman (in the water or in the forest) or of a creature condemned to be executed, thanks to the mercy of the executioner.

no hesitation sides with his son-in-law when he discovers the he has killed his daughter for being dishonourable. A very special case is that of the Marquis of Mantua, the uncle and not the father of Valdovinos, who will take revenge himself and claim compensation from the Emperor. Equally as special is the example of Count Don Julián, who will come and save his daughter from the hands of the lecherous Rodrigo thus causing the Arabic invasion of Spain in retaliation. Don Tello of *La ventura en la desgracia* is a good example of an astute father, who knows about the King's perverse intentions towards his daughter and knows to anticipate them, disarming them and protecting his own. As well as deceiving the King, he knows how to get him out of prison on two occasions, thus obliging him to be at his service. In the second situation we find the Count of Barcelona in *La fuerza lastimosa* or the King of Aragon in *La ventura en la desgracia*, who sends his army to support the princess and to order King Sancho VI to stick to his word and marry her.

However, some of these ladies do not have the fatherly or brotherly protection, as in *La niña de plata*, *La condesa Matilde* and Lady Blanca in *La batalla del honor*; in these they resemble persecuted and coveted gentlemen, like Carlos in *El perseguido* or Count Enrique in *La fuerza lastimosa*.

The despot's harassment provokes mistrust and jealousy amongst the lovers

In these cases the play, when it is a 'drama', acquires aspects of comedy (*La ventura en la desgracia*, *El perseguido*, *La condesa Matilde*, *El marqués de Mantua*, *La locura por la honra*, *Servir con mala estrella*, *La batalla del honor*), and when it is a comedy, it really is a comedy (*La niña de plata*, *El lacayo fingido*). In some cases, a third party comes into play, which complicates the plot (*El perseguido*, *La fuerza lastimosa*, *El lacayo fingido*, *La niña de plata*). The temporary break-up of two lovers caused by jealousy reaches to a point of tragedy in only one case: in *La fuerza lastimosa*, when Count Enrique not only has to tell his wife Isabela about her death sentence, but also has to kill her. The poignancy of the scene between the couple is intensified even more when the mother bids farewell to her children.

While in motifs three and four we examined the despot's aggression against his opponents and how, in the latter motif, they are on their guard, and in motif 6 the reaction of the character that is the

object of illegitimate desire, we will now discuss the function behind the reactions of the opponents who have been dishonoured (the gallant, the husband and the relatives). This function is one of the richest in terms of plot variants.

The offended opponents react to their dishonour

The reaction that shows the most resignation is found in plays such as *La ventura en la desgracia* or *La condesa Matilde*, where the gallant and the father in the former and the husband in the latter try to overcome a not fully accomplished grievance through the reaffirmation of their loyalty to the despot, whom they come to help with their weapons, and therefore oblige him for their services. In the case of *La condesa Matilde* this self-denial heightens when the husband loses his life in battle after having saved the King. The dying Count Gesualdo, after contemplating a portrait of his wife that he always carries in his pocket, nominates the King his executor, and entrusts his wife to him:

Como a deudo, solamente,
os encargo a mi mujer:
si se quiere recoger,
ayudadla honestamente;
si se quisiere casar,
sin vuestro gusto no sea,
que yo os hago albacea
y a vos la quiero fiar (vv. 2792-2799)¹⁹.

In *La ventura en la desgracia* the more the King's manifestations of arbitrary and animosity multiply, the more the opponents respond with their self-denial: the gallant, Don García, and the father of the lady, Don Tello de Meneses, who on two occasions will get the Aragonese troops to free the sovereign from prison. The lady and the gallant, in common agreement, prefer to hand over a pitcher of water to the thirsty king, even though the king condemned the lady

¹⁹ As a relative, only, / I entrust you my wife: if she wants to become a nun, / help her honestly; / if she wants to get married, / she must not do it if you don't agree, / as I name you executor / and I want to entrust her to you. Cited from the edition by M. Marón García Bermejo, *Comedias de Lope de Vega*, Part II-2.

to death by starving her, and locked her in a tower in a desert before quenching her desperate thirst. The King drinks the water and then afterwards his servants pour it on the sand.

In a significant number of plays, once the offence has been accomplished, the impossibility of taking out revenge against the despot causes the madness of the opponent, in a switch from the blame of the King to himself and therefore to his punishment. Given its repetition, the madness of the victim of an unbearable offence constitutes a true motif, different to that of the (Ariosto-like) madness of the disappointed lover: this is the case of Count Floraberto in *La locura por la honra*, and of Count Enrique in *La fuerza lastimosa*, and also of Sancho Ortiz in *La estrella de Sevilla*, or of the Admiral of France in *La batalla de honor*²⁰.

Some plays set out the husband's bloody revenge against the adulteress wife, as in *La locura por la honra* (here we have a new motif, more typical of other conflicts), and against the accomplices of the offense (as in *La locura por la honra* or in *La estrella de Sevilla*), but not against the aggressive sovereign. On the other hand, in plays like *La fuerza lastimosa*, the father of the offended lady, the Count of Barcelona, who is another sovereign, sees taking revenge as an obligation and mobilises his troops against the King of Ireland. Something similar occurs in *El postrer godo de España* although with consequences that are a lot more sombre. In this play the father of la Cava, Count Don Julián, takes revenge on King Rodrigo for raping his daughter by gathering Muslim troops for the invasion of Spain.

This function is most typically put into play by means of the 'dis-simulated recognition' motif. We discussed this motif with respect to *La batalla del honor* at the beginning of our study, but it presents notable variants in other plays. There are times when, for example, the despot (a king or any other type of sovereign) declares his identity as a sovereign, but the dishonoured brother or husband pretends that he does not believe it since a loyal sovereign will never dishonour a loyal subject in this way. This is the case in the splendid scene of *La Estrella de Sevilla* where Busto Tavera reproaches the King about his behaviour in an indirect but forceful way.

²⁰ This is the only example of these cases whereby the grievance has not been consummated, but instead the abuse exercised by the sovereign to an inferior subject is consummated, and for the latter, impossible to bear.

It can also occur that the dishonoured opponent effectively checks (despite not wanting to) that his attacker is the sovereign, and then surrenders his weapons. Even after his friends arrive to help him he dismisses their help in order to protect the sovereign. The sovereign returns this loyalty with haughtiness and orders the noble master to be captured: this is the case of *La ventura en la desgracia*.

In *Servir con mala estrella* the King is surprised by don Tello, the brother of the lady, in his house. In order not to be forced to hide his identity («Nunca los reyes se esconden»²¹) he opts instead to remain still and to make don Tello believe that he is a portrait. However, don Tello recognises him but decides to play along. After he leaves, the King discretely retires.

There are also other variants that are more imaginative. For example, in *La batalla del honor*, the husband pretends to be asleep so as to warn the King. Without doubt one of the most humorous variants appears in *El lacayo fingido*. The King enters the tower where he has locked up the lady, ready to take his pleasure in her, but the witty lady has summoned an assembly and the first person to enter is the raging Queen, followed by the whole court. The King has been caught red handed, so he is forced to think of an alibi that the rest of the people choose to believe. It all ends well, except for the crestfallen and disappointed King. If the previous example is the most comical, this next example is the most dramatic. Evident in *La locura por la honra*, the deceived husband unexpectedly bursts into his house, has the maid killed, murders the accomplice servant, and before his wife can start uttering excuses and lies about her lover, he asks whose things are scattered on the floor, whose weapons are these, whose cape is that and most importantly whose feet are those poking out from underneath the tapestry. The husband kills his wife and lets the hidden Dauphin escape. Even though he knows who he is, he immediately asks for his name. The Dauphin answers «Your lord», but the count denies it: his lord would not dishonour him like this. The Prince insists that he should let things be forgotten, but when Duke Balduino, the honest father of the adulteress wife, enters, the situation changes.

In all of these cases, the motif of the 'dissimulated recognition' of the despot ends up allowing him to live his life, perhaps because

²¹ «Kings never hide».

as Floraberto argues: «Más vale, aunque caballero / soy de tan alto valor / que viva yo sin honor / que Francia sin heredero». Also, in all of the cases, the scene gives place to a moral recrimination for the despot. A very direct and rational example can be seen in *La locura por la honra*, and a very indirect example with subtle hints in *La estrella de Sevilla*. Occasionally, the recrimination gushes from the lips of the offended lady, as in *La niña de plata*, *La condesa Matilde*, *El marqués de Mantua*, or *La batalla del honor*.

The highest level of protest, but also the most legitimate, is expressed within the motif 'the claim for justice' addressed to the sovereign against a despot that is under his jurisdiction, who is either his own son, as in *El marqués de Mantua*, or his own wife, as in *El perseguido*, or against the same sovereign due to his despotic behaviour as in *La Estrella de Sevilla*. This play presents a more elaborate denouement among these cases, and adds an institutional component in order to make sure that the lawsuit is not just presented by the offender (Estrella) but also by the city of Seville, represented by the chief justices. Estrella's moral requirement of justice against her beloved (who killed her brother by order of the King) shall be subject to a statutory requirement from the justices. These, however, do not accept the King's sentence, and counter it with their own, which finally forces the King to acknowledge that Sancho Ortiz murdered Busto Tavera following his orders and to publicly admit that he is to blame for this death:

Sevilla,
matadme a mí, que fui la causa
de esta muerte. Yo mandé
matarle y aquesto basta
para mi descargo²².

Only in two of the studied cases, the reaction of the opponents does not take place, and instead the complaint is resolved by a special implicit pact. In both *El lacayo fingido* and *La niña de plata* the reactions are treated as comedy. Thus it is the genre itself that leads to solving the conflict by means of an agreement.

²² «Seville, / kill me, as I was the cause / of this death. I ordered his death and this is enough / for my discharge». Cited from *La Estrella de Sevilla*, édition critique publiée par A. Foulché-Delbosc...

The sovereign solves the conflict provoked by the lust of the despot

Basically two situations can be distinguished: either the sovereign is the culprit, or the culprit is a prince, a princess or the female sovereign, someone below the innocent sovereign that will solve the conflict. In the first case, the most frequent solution involves the sovereign's repentance, compliance, and compensation of the insulted parties through favours, privileges or honorary weddings. This is what occurs in *El lacayo fingido*, in *La batalla del honor*, or in *La ventura en la desgracia*. It is clear that in none of these plays the King had consummated his crime. A special case is that of *Servir con mala estrella*, where the outcome of the play has little to do with the scheme, which has faded into the background: this happens when Doña Sancha, dishonoured by the King, converted into his mistress and mother of a bastard girl, asks and obtains from the King her admission into the monastery of Las Huelgas.

A different solution is that of *La condesa Matilde*, a play where the King was not able to dishonour the married lady, despite his attempts, but becomes aware of the loyalty towards him and the self-denial of the offended husband that has given his life in the battlefield and, before dying, entrusted his wife to him. The King, instead of providing an honourable wedding as requested by the husband, claims the wife for himself; but Countess Matilde only accepts under certain conditions, one being to delay the wedding for a year in mourning for her dead husband.

The most serious case is that in which, once the aggression is entirely consummated either through the killing of the opponent, as in *La Estrella de Sevilla*, or through the rape of the lady, as in *El postrer godo de España*, the pain or harm is irreparable. In the first play, neither Sancho Ortiz nor Estrella Tavera can accept the wedding that the King proposes to them as an act of compensation, despite their mutual love. The innocent blood of the murdered brother prevents it. In the second play, the violation of la Cava brings about three events: her suicide, the death of her father, Count Don Julián, who exercised his rights to take revenge in terms of treason to the homeland, and the death of King don Rodrigo in the battlefield. In both plays the King's guilt is convincingly reasoned on the stage.

If, on the contrary, the one who solves the conflict of some close relative of his (even the heir) is an innocent sovereign, then the solution of repentance is not so frequent. This is found in *La niña de plata*, where Prince Enrique gives up his dishonourable purpose and acts as a godfather to the lady in her wedding. This repentance will be endorsed by the sovereign, King Don Pedro. More common is the case of the guilty person that, having acknowledged his guilt, is morally condemned but legally pardoned, while at the same time the victims are compensated. *La locura por la honra* and *La fuerza lastimosa* elaborate this solution.

The most severe form of denouement is the punishment of the guilty person. This is the case with the Duke of Burgundy, who condemns, disowns («Ya ni soy, ni quiero ser marido») and banishes his wife, Duchess Casandra, in *El perseguido*, despite his repentance and the victim's interception in his favour. In *El marqués de Mantua*, Emperor Charlemagne has his heir (the Dauphin of France) executed and orders his corpse to be exhibited as a lesson for the court.

The whole of the *traza* (scheme) of *the lust of the despot* is therefore composed of ten motifs:

A male or female despot conceives an illegitimate desire for a lady (or a gallant).

The despot requests collaborations in order to satisfy his desire.

The despot resorts to aggression against his opponents.

The despot's opponent, warned of the danger lying ahead, is put on guard.

The despot tries to satisfy his lust.

The desired lady or gentleman reacts to the despot's desire.

Both the coveted lady and gentleman get help from other characters.

The despot's harassment provokes mistrust and jealousy amongst the lovers.

The offended opponents react to their dishonour.

The sovereign solves the conflict provoked by the lust of the despot.

The model of *traza* that I propose is very methodologically different to the one V. Propp proposed in his morphology of the

Russian story in his day²³. I am interested in distinguishing some of the essential differences.

The ten narrative functions do not happen in a fixed way, but easily alter their order of appearance, and adopt the figure of a network more than that of a sequence. Often, the same function presents itself at various times in the same play, as we saw with the 'Dis-simulated Recognition' motif in *La batalla del honor*. This motif brings into play function 9 (the offended opponents react to his dishonour) in up to three occasions, apart from the fact that it also operates by means of other motifs (for example, the mad husband). All these functions do not necessarily have to be present in all the plays that contain this scheme, as in the case of function 8, which seems to be more appropriate for comedies than the 'dramas'. Finally, each function presents a basic outline that can be displayed in a number of cases and situations, some of them likely to be characterized as motifs, as we have just seen, while others are singular situations and are not repeated by the system.

Just for the sake of entertainment, one could establish a new scheme (which would not correspond to any existing play) by combining different materializations of functions as they are put into practice in the plays. Here follows a possible example.

The King of Hungary is captivated by the princess of Croatia, who is promised to his son, the Prince, during the welcome festivities that are celebrated at court, and conceives a wild passion for her (1). Unable to control himself, he requests Duke Octavio, the ambassador who went in search of the princess and accompanied her to the court and who is showered in an excessive amount of honours, to keep her in the garden that evening in order to meet her. Duke Octavio, who during his ambassadorship has developed a

²³ *Morfología del cuento* (First edition [1928] and second edition [1968] in Russian, (1970) first edition in French, (1971) first edition in Spanish: Madrid, Fundamentos) revolutionised in the 60s and 70s the classical studies on folklore and the new ideas of the era of structuralism on narrative structure. If in the popular story folk tale already resulted in impoverishing the events into a single scheme, always the same, as C. Bremond showed («Le message narratif» and «La logique des possibles narratifs», both articles published in the magazine *Communications*, in 1964 and 1966 respectively, and later re-written in «Le message narratif», 1973, pp. 11-47), in *comedia nueva* the order is so imaginative and creative, just like the presence, absence, contents and repetition are very open.

secret love for her, feels that he cannot refuse the request, much to his regret (2). The King, who intends to stop the fulfilment of marriage at all costs, orders his son the Prince to lead the troops that very afternoon in order to push back the Turkish expedition that threatens their borders (3). The Prince's loyal servant warns him of the danger his absence will cause, as well as of Duke Octavio's secret feelings. The Prince says goodbye to the Princess in a scene in which disastrous omens are perceived (4). In the evening, Duke Octavio takes the Princess to the garden with the excuse that a secret messenger from the Prince wishes to see her. However she is met by the King, who comes out from behind a statue. He declares his passion for her, demanding that his love should be returned (5). She tries to dissuade him, reminds him of his fatherly love to the Prince and his obligations as King, of the terrible confrontation that would arise between the father and the son... (6) Meanwhile Duke Octavio, fearing the consequences of the meeting in the garden, and ashamed of the role that he had to play in leading the princess to the trap, complains to his servant, the clown Fabio. The latter wittily makes the courtiers attending the festivities, and especially the Queen, believe that there is a fire in the garden (the fire of the King's passion, alluded to through wordplay). The King, hearing the noise and warned by Fabio, is obliged to confess to the Queen and the people of the court that he put out the fire with the help of the Princess (7). Far from the court, on his way to the border, the Prince is upset by bad omens and the jealousy that makes him mistrust the Princess. He is convinced that he has noticed Duke Octavio flirting with her (8). After confiding his fears to his servant Lope, he decides to go back to the palace that night without telling anyone and leaving his army with neither orders to follow nor leader (4). Meanwhile, the King is not willing to stop his determination and bribes the Princess's slave with the promise of freedom, so he can gain access to her rooms (2). The King is led by the slave into the bedroom and finds the Princess in distress (5); but then they hear agitated noises that are nearing: it is the Prince who bursts into the room with a sword in his hand. The slave flees, followed by the servant Lope who catches up with her, snatches the paper signed by the King and stabs her to death. The King just about had time to hide behind the tapestry. The Prince accuses the Princess of treason, despite her protests, Fabio enters and shows him the paper that he

snatched from the slave. Then the Prince sees a man's feet poke out under the tapestry. He goes towards it and lifts it up. The King, unable to escape or pretend that he's not the King, shows his face and declares his identity, but the Prince denies it, because a father would never dishonour his son, and a king would never dishonour his heir, and because the King, his father, is a fair king. The Prince pretends to believe that the body of his father is just a ghost and orders him to disappear. The King, understanding that this is his only chance to leave, plays the game and, turned into a ghost, withdraws himself from the bedroom (9). The Princess, now alone with the Prince, confesses the whole truth to him, dissuading him from taking revenge on her just because he believes that she is to blame. The Prince gauges the seriousness of the situation and the inability to face his father, and deteriorates into a state of delirium. He then starts arguing with the ghost of his father, to the point where he believes he can see the ghost in every corner of the room, a state which continues to aggravate him for the following days; this despite the efforts of his faithful servant, Lope, who tries to restore the Prince back to full sanity by turning his mad thoughts into comical ones (9). The Hungarian troops, without the Prince's command are defeated by the Turks, who invade the Kingdom. The King requests Duke Octavio, famous for his military triumphs, to lead the troops and fight the battle. Meanwhile, the Princess, dressed for mourning before the court, announces the death of the Prince, who in his mad pursuit of a ghost fell off a cliff, and demands justice from the King. The King bitterly laments the death of his heir and takes the blame before the generals and before the court. A page boy interrupts the scene and announces the victory of Duke Octavio against the Turks. When Duke Octavio arrives triumphantly, the King, in order to compensate for offences inflicted on the Princess and in order to recognise the merits of the Duke, proposes that they marry each other. Both accept the proposal, since they felt they were in love with each other from their very first meeting. Fabio is named captain of the army and, with no maid left to be assigned to him, proposes to marry Lope (10).

This plot does not correspond to any specific play written by Lope, but all of its actions are characteristic of the plays that we have seen until now, and all of its situations and cases are present in Lope's theatre. What is clearly shown is the capacity of a scheme to

generate a multitude of different plays. To summarise, the *traza* is the outline, the nucleus, and its multiple materializations and variants are *the cases*.

*Los casos de la honra son mejores
porque mueven con fuerza a toda gente*²⁴
(*Arte nuevo*, vv. 327-328).

In the words of Lope, it does not really interest me to establish the popularity of the theme of honour so much as to point out that this topic is materialized in cases: different cases according to different circumstances, different precedents, different characters, different fates, different plots, different truths and deceptions... There is all of this in *comedia nueva*, but especially in that of Lope's work there is an almost Dionysiac celebration of the diversity of life, the diversity of schemes and the diversity of the cases²⁵ which turns out to be revealing in order to understand their positions in contemporary discourse.

The plot is an underlying structure that has much to do with the ideological keys of a certain time period. To me it seems obvious that a scheme like *the lust of the despot* refers to the relationship between the King and his vassals in the political theory of the absolute

²⁴ «*The cases of honour are better / because they move everybody with force*».

²⁵ It is possible to slip out of one scheme and into another similar one at any point, even if they deal with a different but related conflict. Let us imagine that whoever conceives the dishonourable desire is not a sovereign but a nobleman, no matter how high his position is, and let us imagine that the object of his desire is not a lady but a woman of the non-gentry class. These two factors would be enough to define another scheme, that of the conflicts involving the honour of the non-gentry, with very different assumptions and conditions. In regard to the range of cases, the combinations of variants that functions can adopt is so extraordinary that, sometimes, we may verge on the restrictions permitted by the scheme. Lack of space does not allow me to discuss any of these fascinating plays further, famous for their dramatic quality, like *El castigo sin venganza*, or famous for their imaginative audacity, like *El amor desatinado*. Inasmuch as they respond to the scheme of the illegitimate desire (in the case of *El castigo* the illegitimate desire is that of the sovereign's son for his stepmother, Count Federico, an unusual situation that turns the sovereign into a judge (motif 10) and into an opponent (motif 9)), they deserve to be discussed for their peculiarity in a specific study.

monarchy. It is there in the treatises of the Dominican Francisco de Vitoria, of Hugo Grocio, of Jean Bodin, of Jesuits Mariana and Suárez, of Diego of Saavedra Fajardo. They debate the subtle network of dependencies between the Natural or eternal law, and the Human or positive law. They laboriously and strenuously search for the possibility of an agreement between the power of the absolute monarchy and the requirements of human rights. They raise the issue of the right of resistance against the tyrant, or investigate the responsibility of the King before a law that he himself embodies. Or they begin to formulate a political theory based on the idea that the state holds the contract between the power of the monarchy and the rest of society, an idea that will be formulated with full force in Thomas Hobbes's *Leviathan* (1651). It is there, in those treaties, where I think we should look for the key purpose of this scheme, and perhaps of another; at least that is where I am looking for it. Only from the perspective of the legal and political discourse of that time, formulated by Suárez in his monumental *De legibus ac Deo legislatore* (1612), one can understand why, if the King is the subject of a harmful and dishonourable desire, he can or cannot be put in prison, depending on the cases; and in what cases he is responsible for his crime when he infringes a natural law and not only human, for example; and what the position of Lope is with relation to that of a Guillén of Castro, a Cervantes, a Virués or a Calderón. Also one can understand that if the subject of this desire, and the violator of the positive law, is a nobleman, he has to be immediately condemned and the revolt should be justified, from Peribáñez until Pedro Crespo, since no one apart from the King, who embodies this law, can be above the law.

The cases, on the other hand, do not refer as much to fixed ideological keys as to the very way a certain political discourse—but above all a moral discourse—of the times operates. This is a discourse that had begun to spread at the dawn of the Renaissance and that was gradually displacing the supremacy of the universal principles (neo-Platonic, or neo-Aristotelian and scholastic) for an invitation to casuistic analysis, for a weak thinking, as Gianni Vattimo would call it in our time, and for a mode of applied ethics that preferred con-

crete analysis to the doctrinal principles universally required²⁶. A type of discourse that we can classify as casuistic, since it proceeded case by case, and which could be detected and analysed in the doctrinaire texts of the time, especially among the Jesuit treatises or, with a great literary quality, the work of Montaigne, in which the bases of an understanding completely removed from the sacred and relativized from both life and history were set. But this must be, by necessity, the subject of another essay.

Until then, farewell.

²⁶ Vattimo, G. and Rovatti, P. A., (eds): *El pensamiento débil*, 1990. The original edition, in Italian, titled *Il pensiero debole*, from 1983.

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C o l e c c i ó n B a t i h o j a



This book offers the reader for the first time in English some of Joan Oleza's most representative essays on early modern Spanish theatre. Its pages go through the genre system that Lope de Vega puts into play and its evolution over time. They stop especially on one of the most innovative genres, the historical drama of private events. Or they go into the relativistic discourse that supports Lope de Vega's theatre, such as Montaigne's essays, as opposed to the theocentric and substantial thought of the time. Finally, it analyzes Lope de Vega's entire theatre as a system in which three different factors interact: genres, schemes and cases. All these essays highlight the new challenges faced by the New Comedy.

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