Emilio Carballido's [Re]Writing of Pedro Calderón de la Barca's *entremeses*

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In a brief essay, entitled "Un preámbulo a Calderón," Emilio Carballido expresses dismay at our stultifying reverence of the classics. The twentieth-century Mexican playwright encourages readers and directors to see their Golden Age predecessors as contemporaries. For example, he invites the reader of *El alcalde de Zalamea to* add some modern touches: "A los lectores aconsejo que visualicen la obra con las ropas campesinas de cualquier región nuestra; que imaginen al ejército vestido de verde oliva y al desconcertado rey con una banda tricolor al pecho y sin corona: la obra les resultará inmensamente más comprensible" (*Tramoya* 191). Carballido clearly had this practice in mind when he published *Teatro para adolescentes*, a collection of one-act plays, which included *La tía*, *El desafío de Juan Rana*, *La rabia*, and *La muerte*, adaptations of four of Calderón de la Barca's *entremeses*.[1] These renditions remain surprisingly faithful to the originals. For the most part, the plot, characterization, and even some aspects of the language—replete with Baroque contrasts and image patterns—remain unchanged. Nevertheless, Carballido modernized numerous elements, including the setting, the dramatic function, idiomatic expressions, and the historical context. An added or deleted line here and a changed stage direction there reveal the contemporary nature of the *entremés*.

Carballido's revisions yield a curious blend of adherence to and departure from Golden Age dramatic practices, thereby exemplifying Harold Bloom's definition of intertextuality. Bloom posits an oedipal relationship between different generations of writers. When the ephebes, or younger writers, impart divine qualities to a predecessor, they begin to establish the need to free themselves from the dominating force: "In making the precursor a god, the ephebe already has begun a movement away from him, a primary revision

that imputes error to the father, a sudden inclination or swerve away from obligation" (13). In turn, the ephebe develops fully into a revisionist who "strives to *see* again, so as to *esteem* and *estimate differently*, so as then to aim 'correctly'" (4). In the role of revisionist, Carballido subverts some of the thematic and stylistic cornerstones of mainstream Golden Age drama. *La tía* updates and parodies *comedia* conventions surrounding courtship and marriage. *El desafío de Juan Rana* makes light of the machista extremes entailed in the honor code. *La rabia* maximizes Baroque linguistic ambiguity and peppers it with Mexican expressions. *La muerte* inverts religious hegemony by substituting Old World symbols with their New World counterparts. In [re]writing Calderón, Carballido simultaneously asserts his independence from and his dependence on the Golden Age dramatist and his work. Carballido revises the acknowledged canon in order to suit contemporary needs and/or offer alternative explorations of facets of the human condition, including, problematic language, gendered identities, the conflict between personal desires and collective mandates, and religious orthodoxy. By adding Mexican nuances to these Spanish productions, Carballido reaffirms the longevity of the canon even while he alters it.

Before analyzing the textual particulars of Carballido's modern day *entremeses*, it is helpful to recall the marginalized position occupied by the *entremés vis a vis* mainstream Golden Age theater. Hannah Bergman succinctly situates the *entremés* in its traditional dramatic context:

El público que fluía sin cesar a los teatros de Madrid en el Siglo de Oro no se contentaba con sólo aplaudir (o silbar) la comedia nueva, fuese obra de un dramaturgo novato o del gran Lope mismo. Insistía en un entretenimiento variado y continuo, que incluía además de los tres actos del drama un juguete cómico en cada descanso más la loa inicial y el "fin de fiesta." De estas piezas intermedias, comparables a los cortos metrajes de nuestros programas de cines, se han conservado centenares en colecciones antiguas, ediciones, sueltas y manuscritos. Igual que los noticiarios, dibujos animados, etc., de hoy, que nada tienen que ver con la película principal, las piezas cortas no solían tener la menor relación temática con la comedia a la cual acompañaban, ni tampoco se debían a la pluma del mismo poeta. Los escogía arbitrariamente el jefe de la compañía dramática de entre su repertorio de tales piezas compradas a los

más famosos comediógrafos del día, o a otros poetas que se especializaban en el género chico sin intentar jamás obra de largo aliento. Aunque el entremés formaba una parte esencial de la función dramática, una añadidura imprescindible a la comedia representada, tenía así vida independiente. Constituía un género de por sí, fuera de la principal corriente de la literatura dramática, pero, sin embargo, íntimamente ligado a ella, de la cual se sustentaba y a la cual enriquecía. (16)

Similar to the cartoon or newsreel, which was not related to the feature presentation, the *entremés* stood apart from the *comedia*. Unlike a Bugs Bunny cartoon or Movietone reel about WWII, however, the *entremés* was, as its name implies, in the middle of the performance. Cotarelo y Mori outlines a typical sequence of events that lasted for about 2 or 2 1/2 hours: an introductory musical piece with instrumental accompaniment of the guitar, harp, and vihuela; the introductory loa, if appropriate; first act; *entremés*; second act; *baile*; third act; and, finally the *fin de fiesta* or a *mojiganga* (Cotarelo y Mori II-III).[2] Although not part of the main attraction, the *entremés* was integral to the theatrical experience of the Golden Age spectator. Bergman points out another aspect in which the three-act *comedia* and the short *entremés* were intertwined: "El papel principal del entremés siempre tocaba al gracioso de la compañía. El segundo papel cómico correspondía, por lo común, al que hacía *segundos barbas* en la comedia" (137). The *entremés*, then, provided the frame in which some actors moved from supporting to leading roles.

A similar shift occurs in the themes presented in the *entremés*. Secondary themes or motifs of the *comedia* become central to the *entremés*. To a certain extent, exclusion from the stock repertoire gave these comic short pieces a subversive edge. Given that the primary objective of the one-act was to provoke laughter in an often uneducated spectator, unorthodox concepts not usually permitted in the standard *comedia* became the norm. Asensio suggests that the Carnivalesque origins of the *entremés* engendered this social and religious irreverence: "En la atmósfera del Carnaval tiene su hogar el alma del entremés originario: el desfogue exaltado de los instintos, la glorificación del comer y beber . . . , la jocosa licencia que se regodea con los engaños conyugales, con el escarnio del prójimo, y la befa tanto más reída cuanto más pesada" (20).[3] These introductory comments concerning the function and context of the entremés

provide ample evidence that a day at the *corral* was a complex and multi-layered experience. The very themes that were sympathetically presented in act I of the *comedia* could become fodder for laughter minutes later in the *entremés*. While a spectator could condemn an unfaithful spouse or heretical priest in the *comedia*, she might be sympathizing and laughing with the fickle husband or infidel in the *entremés*.

When Carballido sets out to adapt some of Calderón's work, he taps the marginalized status and subversive potential of the *entremés*. Carballido's first alteration is to reposition the pieces in order to capitalize on the idea that they have a vitality independent from the three-act *comedia*. The dedication simultaneously pays homage to and emends the work of his Golden Age predecessor: "De Pedro Calderón de la Barca. Libremente retocados y trasplantados por Emilio Carballido, para ponerse todos juntos o emparejados o de uno en uno" (235).[4] Each one-act is a discrete unit in and of itself, not squeezed in between the first and second acts of the main attraction. One can also read the four one-acts as four acts of one play loosely connected by a presentation of different aspects of the *comedia*, ranging from courtship strategies and the conflict between love and honor in *La tía* and *El desafío de Juan Rana*, to linguistic obfuscation and religious hegemony in *La rabia* and *La muerte*. Furthermore, Carballido takes great pains to encourage the reader to relate the Golden Age to contemporary society. For example, in *La tía* the stage directions indicate: "El ambiente y las modas serán en México posibles los siglos XVII a XIX y hasta principios del XX" (237). In this nexus between twentieth- and twenty-first-century Mexico and sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Spain, Carballido nurtures the subversive tradition of the *entremés* in two distinct but interrelated ways. In the first instances, Carballido merely reaps the parodic seeds sown by Calderón. Such is the case with *La tía*, in which Calderón lampoons the cult to virtuous women, and *La rabia*, which exaggerates the Baroque penchant for linguistic obfuscation. Carballido updates and expands on the ridicule but does not drastically alter the original. In the second kind of subversion, Carballido significantly revises Calderón's works. For example, Calderón's *La muerte* adds humor to religious allegory and *El desafío de Juan Rana* mocks the macho husband of the honor play. Carballido, however, takes these stances a considerable step further. In *La muerte* he supplants New World cosmology for European hegemony. In *El*

desafío de Juan Rana he adopts a playful attitude toward monolithic sexual identities. By doing so, Carballido assures the spectator that his modern *entremeses*, be they critical or accepting of Spain, the Golden Age or the fictional *comedia*, spill over into Mexico and twenty-first century life.

As mentioned above, in *La tía* Calderón parodies the impractical marriage practices often found in the *comedia*.[5] A resourceful aunt tries to prevent three persistent *galanes* from courting her three virtuous nieces. It becomes apparent, however, that the aunt has ulterior motives for forestalling the courtships. In each case, when the desperate suitor asks how to compensate for his lost love, the aunt responds, "Quererme a mí, que soy mujer más hecha" (Calderón 369; Carballido 245). The young people soon discover that the quickest route to their own marriage is to first marry off their aunt. In typical *comedia* fashion, by the end of the play, four marriages are announced. Each niece is paired with a noble and the aunt marries the *lacayo* Laínez. One of the nieces, Cenobia, even suggests a lesson to be learned by the piece:

> Y acabando el sainete,
> sirva de ejemplo
> de que todas las tías
> paran en esto. (248)

Of the four pieces analyzed in this study, Carballido's version of *La tía* is the most derivative. For example, he even includes stichomythia for a rapid intensification of the emotional pace, resulting in the loss of individuality of the three male protagonists:

> Toribio: De la tía desespero.
> Nuño: Porque es una fiera.
> Toribio: Un áspid.
> Nuño: Un basilisco . . .
> Toribio: Un infierno
> Los tres: Una tía, que es lo más
> que hay que ser en lo perverso. (Calderón 368; Carballido 241)

Nevertheless, Carballido does make some changes that exploit the potential for physical humor in the piece. Calderón's heroes merely allude to the aunt's strictness while they make half-hearted plans to hang themselves out of desperation. Carballido, however, stages the trials faced by the suitors. We begin with the all-important balcony, the locus of numerous *comedia* mating rituals. As indicated by the stage directions, the balcony will fulfill its predictable role: "luz a los balcones, y se abren poco a poco; rendija, mano, pañuelo y al fin rostro en el primero. Lo mismo en los otros dos, uno por uno" (237). With this slow motion preparation, Carballido calls attention to place. This is not just any balcony; this is *the* balcony where numerous suitors throughout the ages, perhaps the most noted being Romeo, have gone courting. Indeed, each gallant of *La tía* addresses his sweetheart in her lofty position. Carballido also concentrates on the aunt's exaggerated efforts to keep the suitors off the elevated platform. Buckets of water douse Estebán while he tries to reach Estefanía. Nuño climbs a ladder at gun point while searching for Bonifacia. Toribio braves a growling dog as he tries to reach his beloved Cenobia. In keeping with the importance of concretizing the physical space of the piece, Carballido also updates the reference to a very Golden Age motif. Calderón's nieces ask their aunt for permission to peek through the jalousie [la celosía]; Carballido's characters merely want to look out the window. Carballido has emphasized one of the central symbols of *comedia* courtships in order to highlight the trials and tribulations of the suitors and their beloveds. While the balcony is a quick and easy source for slap-stick comedy, it also provides the modern viewer with a refresher course in the spatial semantics of a Golden Age courtship.

El desafío de Juan Rana criticizes the honor code and its attendant obsession with a woman's virtue. Juan Rana returns home late one evening after having been roughed up by one Gil Parrado, who has insulted his honor. Juan would just as soon forget the whole event but his new wife, Gila, reminds him that his only recourse is to fight a duel. The challenge is written and delivered and the two meet in the street. In keeping with his cowardly nature, Juan stalls for time by asking for a snack before the duel and practicing the various thrusts and feints that his wife taught him. The bailiff interrupts the brief scuffle and wants to take Juan Rana to jail. Gila arrives and begs for mercy on her husband's behalf. The bailiff acquiesces and the piece ends with everyone singing a ditty about Juan's dubious valor:

Ya es valiente Juan Rana,
ténganle miedo
para cuando las ranas
tuvieren pelo. (Calderón 631; Carballido 258)

Thus, Juan Rana's courage is about as believable as the proverbial snowball in hell.

Juan Rana's character is a prime example of the comic objectives of the *entremés* as outlined by Rodríguez and Tordera: "el sentido de la farsa, carnavalización y permisividad moral que solidifica el entramado del género hasta su cristalización en la forma evolucionada que reconocemos en el seiscientos (15). Later, the same critics elaborate: "El entremés realiza una propuesta dramática de transgresión de la proporción, armonía y decoro, de lo que resulta que su esfera de acción es lo *ridículo*" (21).[6] In numerous other plays, this warped morality initiates a tragic sequence of events. In the *entremés*, however, the quaking Juan Rana plays comic foil to the grisly Gutiérrez of *El médico de su honor* and the deranged Juan Roca of *El pintor de su deshonra*.

Through some minor but strategically placed textual revisions, Carballido ups the ante on the irreverent attitude toward *comedia* practice. The most notable change relates to Gila, Juan Rana's wife. In Carballido's version, when Gila begs the bailiff to save her husband's life, she reveals some surprising details concerning the father of her child:

¡Por vida del hijo tuyo,
que, ya ves, es hijo nuestro,
te pido que no le prendas!
Es muy pequeño el entuerto,
y él es padre de tu hijo . . . . (258)

Even the original *entremés*, which allowed for some moral wiggle room against *comedia* practice, did not go this far. Calderón's protagonist pleads: "Señores, si vale el ruego, / Dejadle, que es mi marido" (631). To which the bailiff responds: "Ahora bien, por vos le dejo" (631). No one insinuates that the bailiff may be the father of Gila's child. For reasons unknown, he grants Gila's wish, thereby supplying ample motivation for the prerequisite happy ending of

song and dance.

Allusions to premarital relations in the modern version alter the standard characterization of the chaste wife and provide credible motivation for the bailiff's actions. If Calderón's Juan Roca serves as comic foil for the male leads of the wife-murder plays, Carballido's Gila carries the parody to the female victims. Unlike the pure doña Mencía and doña Serafina of *El médico* and *El pintor*, Gila's virtue is dubious. It would seem, then, that Gil Parrado's insults to Juan Rana's honor are justified. These accusations are all the more ironic since Gila was the one who urged Juan Rana to defend his honor. As long as she guards her presumed virtue, Gila earns the dubious blessing of living happily ever after with the inane Juan Rana. This unsatisfactory ending is in true keeping with *comedia* practice where hasty pairings in the final act often leave the spectator wondering just how blissful the proposed marriages will be. In the meantime, however, Gila has perfected the Golden Age motif of hiding reality for appearance's sake. The bailiff in Carballido's version also faces a similar dilemma. If Juan Rana goes to jail, the bailiff will have to accept his paternal obligations. With Juan Rana acting as surrogate father to his son, the official can continue to ignore his responsibilities. The practical lawman chooses the latter course of action. Therefore, in addition to rewriting a stock figure of the chaste wife, the innuendo about who fathered Gila's baby provides the bailiff with a logical reason for freeing Juan Rana, thereby making for a tighter structure and more humorous characterization.

Juan Rana also turns standard portrayals of the *galán* topsy turvy. In both Calderón's and Carballido's versions, this silly scaredy-cat is the antithesis of the noble as portrayed on the Golden Age mainstage. Carballido, then, emphasizes two factors that were merely hinted at in Calderón's version. First of all, Carballido stresses the fact that Rana is illiterate. In both versions of the entremés, Gila writes the note inviting Gil to a duel. Nevertheless, in Calderón's version, no one mentions that Juan Rana cannot write while Carballido's protagonist openly admits, "No sé escribir" (252). This minor revision adds to the portrayal of Juan Rana as a bumpkin. So many of his Golden Age predecessors read between the lines, albeit incorrectly, on missives that supposedly provided evidence of their wife's infidelity. They composed poetic declarations of love or courageous challenges to rival suitors. This modern Juan Rana relies on his wife to pen his thoughts. For contemporary audiences, Juan's

ignorance makes him an even stronger target for ridicule.

The second revision made by Carballido brings out Juan Rana's feminine side, a trait usually buried in the machista *comedia*. In both versions, Gil asks Juan Rana why he wants to duel. Calderón's character responds: "Cierta opilación que tengo / Fue la causa" (631). In the standard honor play, an offended husband would eloquently lament having to shed blood in order to recover his tarnished reputation. Juan Rana, however, humorously chalks it up to dropsy. Calderón clearly pokes fun at *comedia* expectations of manly behavior. Carballido unmans Juan Rana even more. When asked by Gil to explain the reason for the duel, Juan responds: "La menstruación que padezco fue la causa" (256). *Comedia* husbands traditionally justify their actions with an exaggerated sense of protecting their social standing; Juan Rana blames his acts on the mood swings associated with monthly cycles. Even though Carballido may be mirroring the banter inside closed male circles, both hetero- and homosexual, he is also playing with historical fact. Cotarelo y Mori was one of the first critics to delve into the biography of Cosme Pérez, the Golden Age actor for whom more than 40 Juan Rana pieces were written (CLVII-CLXIII). Pérez played a whole array of different characters as evidenced by the sampling of titles of *entremeses* in which Juan Rana is the principal character: *El doctor Juan Rana; El hidalgo Juan Rana enamorado; Juan Rana viudo; El alcalde de Alcorcón; Juan Rana poeta; Juan Rana comilón; El soldado*; and finally, *Juan Rana mujer*. Hannah Bergman elaborates: "Su gran triunfo fue la creación de una nueva máscara cómica, comparable a las de la *commedia dell'arte* italiana, *Juan Rana*. Creador y creación llegaron a confundirse tan íntimamente que el público, y hasta algunas escrituras legales, llamaban al actor por el nombre del personaje que desempeñaba por excelencia" (520). Furthermore, as suggested by Peter Thompson, part of this fusion of actor and character no doubt has to do with the fact that both were accused of and incarcerated for committing "el pecado nefando," a Golden Age euphemism for sexual acts, such as sodomy, that were considered outside the realm of normal behavior and violations to natural order (240).[7] The historical Juan Rana/Cosme Pérez expressed his sexual ambiguity through homosexuality; the contemporary Juan Rana departs even further from socially sanctioned manly behavior by declaring that he experiences female physiological functions. Given the farcical nature of the

entremés, Juan Rana's deviance does not threaten traditional social and sexual roles, even in a predominantly *machista* society, such as modern day Mexico.

The plot of the third piece, *La rabia*, seems simple enough. On her way to visit a friend, Doña Bárbula is bitten by a dog. Afraid that she has contracted rabies, Bárbula asks her servant, Casilda, to fetch a doctor. Bárbula assumes that she will get faster treatment if she tells the doctor to go to the house of the wealthy neighbor across the street, doña Aldonza Equivalente. Meanwhile, doña Aldonza has just received a visit from the impoverished doña Hermenegilda, a complainer who has stopped by for a free meal. Soon all the characters, including the doctor, various creditors, Bárbula, and Casilda converge on doña Aldonza's house and the piece ends with dancing and singing all around. In this seemingly straightforward plot, however, Calderón has packed in a lot of prototypically Baroque ambiguities. Nothing is what it seems. Mistaken identities, deceiving appearances, and clever puns carry the same comic punch associated with the longer three-act *comedia de enredo*. For example, Aldonza has two servants called María and Beltrán.[8] Hermenegilda, and probably the spectator, have trouble figuring out why a man enters when Aldonza summons María and why a woman comes on stage when she calls for Beltrán. Nevertheless, as Aldonza explains:

> Los sobrenombres les bastan,
> Llámase Doña Teresa
> Beltrán aquesa criada,
> Y ese escudero Don Lucas
> María . . . . (Calderón 721)[9]

Appearances are equally misleading. For the creditors who appear at the end of the play come not for Hermenegilda but Aldonza. It would seem that the supposedly rich Aldonza has not paid the landlord, the shopkeeper, the tailor, and various merchants for nearly two years.

The richest ambiguity in this play, however, resides in the language, principally in the pun surrounding the word "rabia." Throughout the play, several characters have trouble deciding whether "rabia" means rage or rabies. When the doctor arrives, Aldonza assumes that he is another creditor and vents her anger. Therefore, the doctor diagnoses Aldonza as having "la rabia."

Several other characters also takes a turn at explaining why they are so upset. Bárbula's hydrophobia gets lost in the contest of one-upmanship about who is the angriest.

The Baroque ambiguities outlined above are in both Calderón's and Carballido's versions of *La rabia.* Carballido, however, adds another pun which strengthens and updates the humor of the play. When Bárbula tells Casilda to go for a "saludador," the servant asks: "¿Qué te diga 'buen día' y 'buenas noches'?" Later, the following exchange takes place between Casilda and the barmaid:

Casilda: Vengo buscando
porque a curarla [Bárbula] acuda . . .
Luisa: ¿A quién?
Casilda: A maese Andrés, el que saluda.
Luisa: ¿Porque diga "qué tal" con cortesia?
Casilda: Ya hice ese mismo chiste en este día.
Digo yo de salud, al que te cura
cuando de fiebre ardes.
Luisa: Al curandero, pues. . . . (Carballido 263)

While these cornball puns are likely to elicit groans from the audience, they effectively underscore the fact that language is in a constant state of flux. Carballido further calls attention to this linguistic evolution when Luisa decides that what Bárbula really needs is a "curandero." Sure enough, the stage directions in a later scene cast the doctor as a stereotypical healer: "Empieza el saludador una limpia con yerbas y rociando con turbios líquidos a Aldonza. Cascabeles y campana . . ." (269). This light humor points to different audiences with different sets of expectations and understandings. With all the puns about salutations and medicine, Carballido highlights the potential confusion experienced by a contemporary spectator who cannot decide if everyone is looking for a greeter or a folk healer. Next, Carballido turns the tables of misunderstanding by adding a word whose connotations are familiar to the New World spectator but in all likelihood unknown in Golden Age Spain. None of the characters has trouble recognizing "curandero." With a few slight textual revisions Carballido simultaneously emphasizes the linguistic obsolescence *and* vitality of the Calderón's *entremeses*. Future revisions of Calderón's work will probably yield a new set of linguistic confusions which, ironically enough, will continue to bring us full circle to a Baroque aesthetic.

Of the four pieces analyzed here, the last, *La muerte,* develops the most complicated relationship between original and emended texts. In both versions, an itinerant group of actors who have just performed an *auto sacramental* set off for their next gig. Fact and fiction easily blend as the actors, still dressed in their costumes and referred to by their allegorical names, begin to board the wagon and insinuate some of the petty jealousies and marital infidelities of their off-stage lives. For example, the Autor arranges the seating so that the actors playing Cuerpo y Alma, husband and wife in real life, are separated by Muerte during the trip. The Autor's own wife, Angel, gets assigned a seat next to Demonio. These metatheatrical elements deftly prepare the spectator for the following scenes in which a drunken hobo meets up with the actors after they have had an accident. Much comedy ensues as the confused and bleary-eyed traveler, trying to distinguish reality from fiction, finds himself seated between Angel and Demonio while being asked by Cuerpo to watch over the unconscious Alma. The vagabond ultimately declares the most intertextual line of the piece: " pues estoy / Viendo que la vida es sueño" (Calderón 647; Carballido 281). Rodríguez and Tordera make a convincing argument that *La muerte* was written in 1673, the same year that Calderón wrote his *auto sacramental, La vida es sueño* (168). Calderón, then, playfully juxtaposes the more serious *auto* with the comic *mojiganga.* Furthermore, it would be difficult to ignore Calderón's intertextual reference to the title of his most famous *comedia*, written nearly forty years earlier in 1635. In Carballido's version, the drunken hobo refers to life as a dream two times, thereby blatantly calling attention to the line's origins. Several layers of intertextuality emerge here. First, Calderón refers to three of his own works. His *mojiganga* points back to his *auto,* which points back to his *comedia*. Next, Carballido pays double homage to Calderón by referring to *La vida es sueño*, the *auto* and/or the *comedia,* not once but twice. The intertextual web is as dizzying as the vagabond's drunken stupor.

To this point, Calderón's and Carballido's plays are similar. Toward the end, however, the two playwrights diverge. In Calderón's version, rival gangs of gypsies and Galicians, poised for a brawl, run into the acting troupe and, like the inebriated nomad, believe that they have met their maker. Once they separate fantasy from reality, everyone decides to let bygones be bygones. In keeping with the tra-

ditional tone of most *mojigangas,* the piece ends with a light-hearted and conciliatory celebration of music and dance.[10] Carballido captures the same festive tone but with an indelibly Mexican twist. A group of pilgrims, en route to the shrine of "el santo señor de Chalma," also meet up with the actors and, like their Golden Age predecessors, take the fiction for reality. Once the pilgrims realize that they have encountered actors, not spirits, they too decide to celebrate with song and dance.

In these last few passages, Carballido blends profane and sacred elements of Mexican culture. For example, as soon as they appear on stage, the pilgrims declaim a litany of their New World origins:

> —Adelante, peregrinos,
> que el santuario está muy cerca,
> —Y el Santo Señor de Chalma
> ya nuestras danzas espera.
> —Yo vengo desde Sonora
> —yo mis cascabeles traigo
> para bailar un pascola (282)

Once the actors and the pilgrims call a truce, they decide to celebrate with a "tocotín a lo indígena" (284). This ancient dance and song breaks into two parts: an invocation to the god, Pilzintli, and a recitation of the first two quartets of a sonnet by Sor Juana.

With the religious overtones of this last scene, Carballido reaffirms the origins of theater. The indigenous dances, the *pascola* and the *baile de concheros,* combined with the chants to gods named Chalma and Pilzintli, create a spectacle that resonates with pre-Colombian festival and pageants. The Old World complement to these pieces is the Christian *auto*, originally used to explain the meaning of the Eucharist. These religious parallels take on ideological implications in light of the Conquest. Several textual clues lay the groundwork for a potentially subversive juxtaposition of Calderón's and Carballido's plays. From several comments made during the both plays, it is obvious that the actors have just finished performing an *auto.* In fact, given the names of the characters and their costumes, Valbuena Prat, in his 1927 edition of the piece, ascertains that they have just performed *El pleito matrimonial del Cuerpo y el Alma*, one of Calderón's earlier philosophical-theological allegories (Cited in Rodríguez & Tordera 167). Furthermore,

toward the beginning of the play, when the actors beg the coachman to wait for them while they change costumes, they reveal the nature of the piece they just performed: "Dénos lugar á que nos desnudemos / Los trajes con que el auto se recita" (Calderón 645; Carballido 276). Although the characters refer to the piece they have just performed as a *mojiganga*, it is clear that it was religious in nature. Rodríguez and Tordera call it a *mojiganga* for "la fiesta del Corpus" and conclude: ". . . el propio texto nos da indicios más que suficientes de esta circunstancia: las prisas de la compañía de cómicos, su atuendo, las alusiones 'al más festivo día,' etc., sin contar con el extraordinario espejamiento de la visión calderoniana de la vida y el teatro a través de un caminante cuya borrachera impide (o impone) el dilucidar sobre los límites del sueño y la realidad" (167). In that sense, the actors have completed the didactic and aesthetic ends of religious theater.

These religious overtones take on political dimension when Carballido transports the setting of the play to twentieth-century Mexico. As readily acknowledged by theater historians, drama was a most effective means of indoctrination used to convert the pagan Indians (Arrom 26-31). Like their sixteenth and seventeenth-century counterparts, the actors of Carballido's play travel from town to town performing Christian allegories. The stage directions at the beginning of Carballido's piece reaffirm the contemporary force of the play: "Ambiente rural y fantástico, cualquier siglo, del XVII hasta hoy" (273). Nevertheless, Carballido cleverly turns the didactic tables. Unlike their predecessors, these modern thespians leave the theater in order to confront pre-Colombian religious realities. For all intents and purposes, the evangelical mission fails and the play ends, musically and thematically, on a decidedly pre-Christian note.

This religious reversal is accompanied by an aesthetic one. Following the invocation to indigenous gods, the characters recite the first eight verses of a well-known sonnet by Sor Juana. Celia urges a rose in full bloom to enjoy life, for not even future and permanent death can rob the rose of its present and ephemeral glory. Aside from capturing the *carpe diem* tone of the celebration, this sonnet juxtaposes two Baroque poets; one Mexican, the other Spanish. The tone of this scene is joyful and generous:

> Una monja mexicana
> da el tocotín de su ingenio;

A Calderón, de Sor Juana
el fin de fiesta le demos. (284)

Sor Juana, the Mexican nun, has given her poetry to Pedro Calderón de la Barca, the Spanish priest. Students of the *comedia* know what happens when a gift is given and received on the Golden Age stage. We can await endless rounds of expressions of obligation and gratitude between the *dama* and the *galán*, to the point where the roles of giver and receiver become confused and interchangeable. Carballido has initiated a similar kind of dialog in which several sets of donors and recipients, including Mexican/Spanish, male/female, Christian/indigenous, meet on equal footing, momentarily blend, and separate once again. Unlike many debates in which competing world visions vie for supremacy and exclusion, this exchange promotes conciliation and inclusion. Whether the discussion concerns something as insignificant as gift obligations or as critical as national identity, religion, or gender, the participants emerge from this exchange with a glimpse of the Other. Finally, one who insists on having a winner may note that, in the end, Sor Juana has the last word.

Unfortunately, the *entremés* has suffered from a kind of critical marginalization in academic circles. Rodríguez and Tordera summarize this condescension: "Las obras dramáticas breves del siglo XVII, denominadas en algún momento, y con evidente inconsciencia crítica, *teatro menor* o incluso *género ínfimo*, no han gozado de la misma atención bibliográfica que otros aspectos del arte escénico barroco" (15). Eugenio Asensio offers a more poetic description of the uneven relationship between the *comedia* and the *entremés*: "ha medrado como planta parásita enroscada en hostil intimidad al tronco del que brotó" (15). Quoting Cayetano Rosell's introduction to the edition of Luis Quiñones de Benavente's *Jocoseria*, Asensio further suggests that an especially well written *entremés* could prevent a box office flop: ". . . el autor que tenía una mala comedia, con ponerle dos entremeses de este ingenio le daba muletas para que no cayese, y el que tenía una buena, le ponía alas para que se remontase" (15). Although these comments were written in 1983 and 1971, respectively, not a lot has changed in subsequent decades. Even today, conference sessions with titles such as *teatro breve* or *teatro menor*, continue to marginalize these pieces from the mainstream *comedia*. Carballido, however, has recognized the dramatic vigor and relevance of these small treasures. In many ways, the

earthy humor, the realistic characterization, and the mundane plots make these pieces even more accessible than the stylized stage society portrayed in the classics. Furthermore, Carballido's efforts to update these *entremeses* with modern colloquial expressions and New World elements further ensures the longevity of Golden Age drama. A cultural exchange has taken place and each world is the richer for it.

•NOTES

[1] There is some discrepancy here regarding what to call these one-act pieces. Most criticism and collections of Calderón's work call these four pieces *entremeses* (Hartzenbusch and Cotarelo y Mori). Carballido, on the *other hand, calls La tía and El desafío sainetes and La rabia and La muerte mojigangas.* The following summary shows that the distinctions between the three terms *entremés, sainete,* and *mojiganga,* are subtle and for the purposes of this paper, interchangeable. Bergman defines *entremés* in the following way: "El entremés propiamente dicho consta de unos 200 a 250 versos en dos o tres metros diferentes y desarrolla un pequeño enredo o una burla complicada entre 4 o 6 interlocutores. Es una pintura graciosa de costumbres contemporáneas, entreverada de sátira social; las figuras típicas continúan pero a menudo individualizadas hasta cierto punto; al final casi siempre hay música y baile" (28). Ziomek calls *sainetes* "one-act farces" (188) and Rennert elaborates: "*Sainete*, a word meaning a delicacy or relish, came into vogue as the appellation of a one-act farce toward the middle of the seventeenth century. . . . The *sainete* did not differ in any essential particular from the *entremés*. It was slightly longer and commonly contained more characters than the majority of the *entremeses*, but it was of the same general type." (294). Rennert defines *mojiganga* as "masquerade, mummery" (295) and quotes Rouanet in that the *mojiganga* "contains a greater number of episodic personages than the *entremés*" (295). Ziomek defines the *mojiganga* as "a short burlesque piece presented with caricatures and masks" (125). These comments are evidence of the fact that there is a certain amount of fluidity among the generic distinctions of these pieces.

[2] Theatrical practices of the time allowed for a lot of variation from day to day and play to play. For example, the dance between the second and third acts was often substituted for a second *entremés*. The *fin de fiesta* and *mojiganga*, common to the Corpus Christi *autos* and palace extravaganzas, were often eliminated from the *corral* productions.

[3] Bergman notes that Luis Quiñones de Benavente consciously took risks with

this subgenre and openly admitted that he tried to find "chanza que no hubiera / servido en otro festín" (92).

4 All four of Calderón's *entremeses* are included in the fourth volume of Harztenbusch's collection of the complete works. All subsequent references to Calderón's text come from this edition.

5 In the introduction to his study, Cotarelo states that *La tía* was included between the first and second acts of *Hado y divisa de Leonido y Marfisa* (IV). The authorship of this piece, however, has caused some debate. Rodríguez and Tordera question Hartzenbusch's inclusion of *La tía* in his collection. They doubt that Calderón wrote it: "Nuestras dudas al respecto, sobre todo por la factura estilística, son muy serias" (50).

6 Bergman, citing examples of humor in the language, characterization and gestures, also defines the main purpose of the *entremés* as: "provocar la risa del espectador" (91).

7 Thompson fully discusses Peréz's arrest and its subsequent transformation to the stage in a Juan Rana *entremés*. Thompson also outlines previous critics' reluctance to deal openly with Peréz's and Rana's homosexuality. According to Thompson, even in the provocatively entitled "Juan Rana: Homosexual," Serralta "shies away from a detailed analysis of gay content" (242).

8 This character is called Germán in Carballido's version.

9 The female servant in Carballido is called "doña Teresa Germán" (265).

10 It should be remembered that Carballido calls *La muerte* a *mojiganga* even though Calderón's piece is usually called an *entremés*. See note #1 for an overview of the some of the proposed distinctions contained within this dramatic subgenre of the Golden Age one-act..

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