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Baroque Remains

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Baroque Remains

James Rumsey-Merlan

A Dissertation
Presented to the Faculty
of Princeton University
in candidacy for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

Recommended for acceptance
by the department of
Comparative Literature

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November 2017

Contents

Acknowledgments.	**ii.**
Abstract.	**iii.**
An Anacrusis.	**1**
Chapter 1: Góngora in the Glass.	**41**
Chapter 2: What Became of Calderón.	**64**
Chapter 3: The Long Shadow of Baroque Humanism.	**110**
Conclusion.	**143**
Bibliography.	**144**

Acknowledgments.

I would like to thank my wife, my family and my professors. And the Holy Ghost.

Abstract.

In this thesis I attempt to show that "Baroque" does not only designate a mood in literature, or an epoch. It also designates a kind of analytical category that long outlived the seventeenth century. Unlike the Baroque itself, this thesis is doggedly empirical. I start with a methodical analysis of various tropes in *Hamlet, Richard Third* and *Life is a Dream.* By this analysis, I show that the distinction between symbol and allegory drawn by twentieth century Baroquologists from Walter Benjamin to Paul de Man is of those Baroquologists and not of the Baroque itself. The second chapter is an attempt to describe symbol and allegory collapsed into the linguistic figure of an ellipse in two sonnets, the first by Góngora and the second by Severo Sarduy. That chapter is intended as a formal, ahistorical description of the ellipse as one of the guiding shapes of Baroque poetics. The third chapter is also elliptical, but entirely historical. It sees Calderón's *Life is a Dream* lurching through the glass of Idealism into Grillparzer's *The Dream, A Life* and from there into a pure alembic of Baroque atavism, Hugo von Hofmannsthal's *The Tower.* The final chapter offers a view through the letter of the Baroque to its spirit, which is humanistic and off-kilter. I trace the trajectory of that spirit from the "Maese Pedro" section of *Don Quixote* to Hašek's *The Good Soldier Švejk.*

An Anacrusis.

> The symbol postulates the possibility of an identity.
>
> —Paul de Man, *The Rhetoric of Temporality*[1]
>
> Those who read the symbol do so at their peril.
>
> —Oscar Wilde, preface to *The Picture of Dorian Gray*[2]

Since the 1920s, criticism of the figural language of the European Baroque has been marked by a willingness to conceive of that language as one in which allegory was hallowed at the expense of symbol. Influential works in this vein were Walter Benjamin's *Origin of German Tragic Drama* (1923),[3] Eugeni d'Ors's *Of Baroque* (1943)[4] and Paul de Man's essay *The Rhetoric of Temporality* (1969),[5] which remains influential despite its author's subsequent recantation of much of its substance. What all of these works had in common was an assumption that one could draw a useful opposition between symbol and allegory. My first argument in this chapter will be that that opposition was a critical mystification, a propaedeutic lifeline wished into being by critics who found themselves in the shifting maw of the Baroque's artistic temperament, so many Ishmaels grasping for a coffin.

I will argue against the shearing off of symbol from allegory by adducing early modern

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[1] de Man, P. *Blindness and Insight*. University of Minnesota Press, MN. 1983
[2] Wilde, O. *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. Dover, NY. 1993. Pg. 4
[3] Benjamin, W. *Der Ursprung des deutschen Trauerspiels*. Suhrkamp, Frankfurt. 1992
[4] d'Ors, E. *Lo barroco*. Tecnos, Madrid. 2005
[5] de Man. Pg. 32

plays in which symbols are distended to the point that they become allegories. I will try to show that in Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, as well as in *Richard II, Richard III* and Calderón's *La vida es sueño*, symbols are allegorized to the point that differentiation of symbol and allegory is untenable. To advance my case, I will focus on a particular symbol, which occurs frequently in early modern plays and poems: the symbol of the Sun. Walter Benjamin claimed that the Sun existed as a remainderless analogy with the monarch in the symbolic imagination of the epoch. I will attempt to show that the symbol of the Sun was not remainderless in comparison with itself in the poetic imagination of Baroque early modernity, let alone remainderless in comparison with any monarch. Symbols such as the Sun existed in Baroque plays and poems with reference to different iterations of themselves in those same plays and poems. Baroque allegory was, by its very nature, local—and sometimes local to the point of implication by a single word. I will go on to argue that this localness oftentimes precludes our drawing meaningful analogy between apparently kindred theatrical works of the seventeenth-century Baroque. That argument will be the overture to an *a fortiori* claim that I will make in the next chapter. To wit: it is not possible to draw a critical analogy of any exactitude between the seventeenth-century Baroque and other artistic epochal styles which have been claimed as iterations of the "Baroque spirit," such as Hellenism or Postmodernism. If Baroque symbols "are not what they are," then the first term in any such epochal comparison is unstable. The Baroque is only unreliably itself. As such, it is not reliably analogous to other artistic epochs.

The great Cuban theorist of Baroque, Severo Sarduy, observed that the shift from

Copernican heliocentrism to the Keplerian variant typified a particular refinement of the Renaissance worldview by the Baroque. Kepler brilliantly observed that the movement of the planets around the Sun was not circular—a Ptolemaic perfection that Copernicus had wilfully retained—but elliptical.[6] An ellipse is similar to a circle, except that it describes a point travelling around two focal points, not one. This chapter will be grounded in a demonstration of the particular prominence of a double—or even multiple—Keplerian Sun in the symbolic language of the seventeenth-century European Baroque. I will build on this discussion of the Sun to move into a broader argument about why theorists of the Baroque (and also the Romantic) have devoted such energy to arguing for a more or less despotic reign of symbol (a primacy that peaked—as Paul de Man rightly argued—in the self-mystification of the German Romantic theorists) or of allegory (broadly speaking, those theorists of Baroque from the 1920s until now).

Walter Benjamin offers a defintive formulation of the view that the Baroque Sun was a symbol with a single meaning when he writes in *The Origin of German Tragic Drama* that

> The comparison of the prince with the Sun is repeated countless times in the literature of the epoch. The purpose of this is to stress the exclusiveness of his ultimate authority.[7]

---

[6] Sarduy's brilliantly lopsided eye saw ellipses everywhere. He concluded that "the form of Kepler's discovery of the elliptical orbit of planets is similar to that underlying the poetry of Góngora, Caravaggio's paintings, and the architecture of Borromini" (quoted in Calabrese, O. *Neo-Baroque: A Sign of the Times* (Lambert, trans.) Princeton, NJ. 1992. Pg.11). Unlike Lenin, for example, who viewed different expressions of a society at a given moment, such as its science and its art, as being of equal causal standing, Sarduy thought that the science of the Baroque inspired its art, not merely that they were coevals. Below I will treat the Baroque scientistic yearning, both on its own terms and as the fount of a sort of secondary ethnocentrism often evinced by those scholars who conceive of themselves as time-travelling ethongoraphers in the land of the Baroque.

[7] Benjamin, W. *The Origin of German Tragic Drama* (Osborne, trans.) Verso, London. 2009. Pg. 67

With the help of two examples, I would like to offer a preliminary speculation on what underlies this formulation of a remainderless symbolic equation of the prince with the Sun. One of the most memorable equations of the monarch and the Sun in "the literature of the epoch" comes in *Richard II*, when Richard prophesies failure for Bolingbroke's insurrection:

> So when this thief, this traitor, Bolingbroke,
> Who all this while hath revelled in the night,
> Whilst we were wand'ring with the antipodes,
> Shall see us rising in our throne the east,
> His treasons will sit blushing,
> Not able to endure the sight of day,
> But self-affrighted tremble at his sin
> (III. ii. 47–53)[8]

Disconsonant with this analogy's unambiguously drawn semantic content is its periphrastic rhetoric. Though his head be heavy with crown, Richard's tongue is light and full of delicate sibilance. He does not say the word "Sun"—although what Richard supposes Bolingbroke will be "self-affrighted" by is not only "his sin," but an implicit "my Sun." It is legitimate to hear that counternote in Richard's phrase, given that he has just laid out precisely the terms in which he is like the Sun, and given as well an insistent toying with words that are almost "Sun,"[9] in the Shakespeare canon. But what commentators on this passage have sometimes overlooked is the fact that Richard II does not here assume the naturalness of the equation of the Sun with the king. Still less does he assume that this equation meets with universal assent. Indeed, here he is explaining the

[8] Shakespeare. *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare* (Bevington, ed.) Pearson, New York. 2013. Pg. 779

[9] The more famous toying with the word is given not by this King Richard, but by the next one. "Sun of York" is an epithet that I will try to parse below.

conceit of the king as Sun to the incredulous Aumerle by citing the particular instance of his own kingship and the effect that he (vainly, as it turns out) hopes his majesty will have on Bolingbroke. We are put in mind of the opening lines of Segismundo's famous soliloquy at the end of act one of *La vida es sueño*: "The king dreams of being king and lives as if this deception ruled."[10] Here we might say, being precise, that Richard II is a theorist of metaphor dreaming of being a king.

Another slightly recondite analogy of the Sun and the king comes in Hamlet's first soliloquy: "so excellent a king that was to this / Hyperion to a Satyr."[11] As the etymology of "hyper-ion" suggests, that Titan was, at one point, taken to be the "uppermost one," *viz*. the Sun. However, already by the time of Hesiod's *Theogony*, Hyperion was the father of the Sun, Helios (or in the case of *Hamlet*, Old Hamlet). Whatever Hamlet intends with this analogy, it is not the "exclusiveness of the ultimate authority" of the monarch. Perhaps, with Keats, "Hyperion" puts us in mind first of falling, not shining. This is not, I think, far from how Hamlet intends us to hear the line. For in both the Sun analogy drawn by Richard II and in the Sun analogy spoken by Hamlet, there is a shadow that falls on the analogy "the king is like the Sun." In the case of Hamlet, the Sun king is both the Sun and something else, an exegete for the perplexed, us spectators. And we are in need of an exegete, because in this particularly involuted case, the dead king is both the Sun and the father of the Sun. This complicated series of near-identities is then made even more complicated by the negative analogy which comes later in the first soliloquy,

[10] "Sueña el rey que es rey, y vive / con este engaño mandando."
[11] Shakespeare, *Hamlet*. I. ii. 140. Pg. 334

in which Hamlet declares himself to be not much like Hercules, or—and the interpolation suggests itself readily—also not much like the other mythological H—s alluded to only a few lines before, Helios. What Hamlet says about Hyperion and Hercules (and, implicitly, Helios) —because it combines grandiloquence with ambiguous reference—is funny. Its ambiguity works as a subtle counterpart to Hamlet's declaration (which is more explict and more explicitly playable for laughs) about the impossiblity of analogy: "But no more like my father / than I to Hercules."[12] The humor that resides in a doubling such as this— I submit as a preliminary conclusion— is why critics have sometimes missed the doubling of the Baroque Sun. This doubling is the watermark of Baroque figures, perhaps only visible when held up to the light of criticism, though always present, always making the meaning of the symbol unstable, often making it funny.

Through this doubling there often percolates the profound humour that one of the great theorists and practioners of Baroque—Charles Baudelaire—argued comes from what he called "dédoublement." In *De l'essence du rire*,[13] Baudelaire argued that profound comedy comes not from the laugher laughing at an object that is intrinsically comical, but from the laugher laughing at himself, with the object of laughter serving, to some degree, as pretext. Both Richard II and Hamlet are themselves and they are their own exegetes and their own mockers. In Hamlet's case, the moment of dédoublement in his first soliloquy is particularly striking, because he is a Janus laughing at the other side of his own face, while the object which serves as a pretext for that laughter is also called

[12] *Loc. cit*
[13] Baudelaire. *De l'essence du rire*. Éditions Sillage, Paris. 2008. Pg. 3

Hamlet. When Hamlet says the word "Hyperion" in his first soliloquy, he comes as close as he ever does in the play to instantiating all of the avatars of an endlessly recursive, self-mocking and comical spirit, to being the jester of "infinite jest." With the exceptions of Erwin Panofsky[14] and Mikhail Bakhtin, no important critics of Baroque that I know of have placed much weight on the fact that it was the artistic epoch in which this division of self allowed the psychically divided "jest"—humor, as we moderns know it—to be born. The doubling of the Baroque Sun often comes at moments of high comedy, and this is one reason that more recent critics of the era, steeped in a seriousness which is not entirely of the Baroque—but is also of themselves—have tended to miss it.[15]

This predilection for the pessimistic, at the expense of the exultant and comic timbres of the Baroque, is not the preserve of critics alone. Baroque art was not devoid of pessimism. The Baroque second part of *Don Quixote* is an instance of this pessimism. It is Baroque because it posits its own self-reflexive content as a formal meditation on catachresis. The personification of this meditation is the Bachelor Sansón Carrasco. In the second chapter of the second part, Sancho Panza reports that

> Last night Bartolomé Carrasco's son, who's been studying at Salamanca, came home with his bachelor's degree, and I went to welcome him home and he told me that the

[14] Panofsky, E. *Three Essays on Style*. MIT, Cambridge. 1997

[15] Kierkegaard argued that the *Magic Flute* was the best of all operas, because it contained the perfect admixture of *serio* and *buffo*. The motley gravitas of the Magic Flute, as Alejo Carpentier argued, also makes it the most Baroque of operas. This thesis will take the *Magic Flute* as a lodestar in at least two senses: 1) opera is a historical aftergrowth of the Baroque mourning play, which became the Haupt-und-Staatsaktion in the north German lands and the opera in Austria. The Baroque is the perennial footnote to other eras; therefore, it is of particular interest to understand what footnotes it appended to itself. 2) the instinct that purged German and Austrian plays of the Hanswurst and Spanish plays of the gracioso is the death-mask of the Baroque spirit, and worth understanding because of that. Or to put it the other way, it will bear finding out where and why Papageno survived.

> history of your grace is already in books, and it's called *The Ingenious Gentleman Don Quixote of La Mancha:* and he says that in it they mention me . . . so that I crossed myself in fear at how the historian who wrote them could have known about them.[16]

Catachresis of the biographical kind—life spilling over into history—is as exhilarating as it is deadly. Sancho can't live with the fictionalised multiplication of his life. But Don Quixote can't live without it. And it is, of course, in a duel with the disguised Sansón Carrasco that Don Quixote eventually loses his right to fiction and, shortly thereafter, his life. The description of Don Quixote as the knight of the "sad figure" is introduced in a moment of playfulness, but ends up being an accurate epithet.

Schopenhauer, unlike other nineteenth-century Germans still half-swayed by Romanticism, never seems to have translated Cervantes. He did, however, translate one of Cervantes' spiritual and stylistic epigones with much care. According to Schopenhauer's tendentious translation of Baltasar Gracián's *Oráculo manual y arte de prudencia,* Calderón's oeuvre showed that life was hopeless, merely a piling up of epistemological confusions.[17] As any casual reader of Calderón knows, no broadbrush exegetical statement about his plays could be more wrong. The appearances of the terrestrial world are certainly deceptive in the plays of Calderón, but this deception is cause for humor as much as it is cause for despond, since human befuddlement, according to Calderón, has already been redeemed by divine omniscience and its correlate, divine mercy. Pessimism on the part of artists who saw themselves as inheritors

[16] Cervantes, M. *Don Quixote* (Grossman, trans.) Harper Collins, New York. 2005. Pg. 472
[17] Gracián, B. *Hand-Orakel und Kunst der Weltklugheit* (Schopenhauer, trans.) Diogenes, Zürich. 2002

of the Baroque will be, at least in an incidental sense, the subject of the next chapter of this thesis.[18] Here, I would like to submit as a preliminary conclusion that this critical and artistic pessimism has often been a nervous and bowdlerizing response to the overwhelming possibility of self-reflexive, recursive symbols. It has often revealed itself as the yearning for fixity that permeates analytical treatments of symbols prominent in the figural language of the Baroque, such as the Sun.

Apotheosis was not usually the fate of Baroque heroes, but neither was the definitive anti-apotheosis that Don Quixote experiences at the end of *Don Quixote*. Often as not, they succumbed to something in between, a burlesqued martyrdom. The proverbial burlesque martyr was Richard III. To understand the sense of his death, I want to treat the

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[18] Sancho's and Schopenhauer's despond at playing in a comedy that only a Divine reader could have read in its fullness has parallels in music-making and music-appreciation. We think of James Baldwin laying out the musical suspicions of the Black Baroque:

> In all jazz, and especially in the blues, there is something tart and ironic, authoritative and double-edged. White Americans seem to feel that happy songs are happy and sad songs are sad, and that, God help us, is exactly the way most white Americans sing them—sounding, in both cases, so helplessly, defenselessly fatuous that one dare not speculate on the temperature of the deep freeze from which issue their brave and sexless little voices. Baldwin, J. *Letter from a Region in my Mind*, New Yorker Magazine, October 23rd 1962.

We might here also adduce the despond of an instinctual composer of befuddlements of moods tart and ironic and— by extension— periodization, Brahms. Here we are particularly concerned with the symbolic unrequital that he took from the Baroque. A case in point: the fourth movement of Brahm's Fourth Symphony is shot through with allusions to Beethoven's orchestral works, incuding the Ninth Symphony. But Brahms' final symphony does not finish with anything like an Ode to Joy. It has the inevitable ostinato structure of a chaconne (or, more precisely, a "passacaglia," which is a close relative of the chaconne but more lugubrious, because not necessarily resolved in the major key and because lacking the effect of forward movement created by the chaconne's two compound triple beat groups per variation[18]). The theme in the fourth movement is cribbed from Bach's cantata "Nach dir, Herr, verlanget mich" (BWV 150). Bach used the ostinato of the chaconne form in E minor to subtly emphasize the apotheosis of the final chord, which seems to be the dominant of the relative major, G. Brahms' reimagining of this moment, the coda of his Fourth Symphony, remains in E minor, and the arresting, syncopated final bars serve to emphasize only that there has been no move away from the minor key, no apotheosis at all.

opening lines of his rhetorical life, "Now is the winter of our discontent / made glorious summer by this Sun of York." The deictic unsolvability of these lines seems to reside in the last four words: "this Sun of York." Are we listeners to hear "son" or "Sun?" And, if "son," which son of York? If the written word is the word of God, as the mystical, mythomaniacal Benjamin writes in *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*, and the spoken word that of God's fallible creatures, then this word "Sun," inscrutable because it is spoken, serves to announce that the spectators ensnared in this, "our" discontent, the contingency of "our" common life and therefore its metaphysical inscrutability, are creatures as Richard is, Richard who seems to call us pitliless onlookers by that very name in Act V: "There is no creature loves me / And if I die, no soul shall pity me."[19] In 1592, when *Richard III* was probably first performed, there was no historical "son of York." After the creation of the title "Duke of York" for the historical Edmund of Langley, the son of King Edward III (events recounted in *Richard II*), the title had been given to the second sons of English kings.

However, when Henry VIII's elder brother died, opening the way for his assumption of the throne in 1509, he merged all of his titles, effectively canceling the existence of the "Duke of York" until the title was restored and given to James Stuart's second son (subsequently Charles 1) in 1612, long after the first staging of *Richard Third*. In other words, Richard's invocation of "this son of York" is a speech act which must have been something of "a puzzle" to the Globe, much in the sense that Bertrand Russell would

[19]Shakespeare. *Richard Third*. V.ii. Pg. 392

assert that the statement "the present king of France is bald" was a puzzle, more than three centuries later.[20] This puzzle notwithstanding, a literalist might counter, *Richard III* was played as a history play, and the audience could be expected to have inferred instantaneously a temporal setting for the play in which there had still existed Dukes of York—a temporal setting such as the War of the Roses. But such a claim is disingenuous insofar as *Richard III* is, beginning with Richard's opening soliloquy, about the mechanics of royal succession. Laying open the mechanics of royal succession would have immediately announced it as being, in some sense, about the present, since succession was a general preoccupation in the last reigning decade of the childless Elizabeth I.

This dual temporality of the play is brought home in Richard's first word, "now," the first beat in an inverted foot whose semantic content is unsettled by the incipient rhythm of the line. Because the meter of the line is not settled until the second foot, "/the WIN-/," the fact that the stressed "Now" does not fall into the cadence of the meter does not become clear until it is already, so to speak, too late. As if to compound the temporal oddness of the first two lines of Richard's speech, the action of the first line is in the present, "/NOW is/," while the second line perhaps renders this "is" a verb auxiliary to action in the past, "is made," thus giving the lines a present perfective aspect: "has now been made." Either that, or the two lines function as independent clauses, with the second line serving as a postponed ablative absolute, such that the lines can be construed, "Made glorious by this Sun of York, now is the winter of our discontent," or to gloss such a

[20]Russell, Bertrand, "On Denoting," in *Mind* 14 (1905): 479–493

construal more idiomatically: “after having been made glorious by this Sun of York, now we find ourselves in a winter of discontent.”

The temporal and semantic confusions of these two lines are, in short, made complicated or even unresolvable by covert appeal to systems of rules that initially seem to undergird them almost by accident, namely history and grammar. But in themselves they constitute and seem to seduce their hearers into a sort of sonic “context of situation” (Malinowski),[21] which, when intuited, allows them to be decoded. The first line of Richard’s opening monologue is constructed as two concentric orbits. The first orbit is around the “n” in winter, where that “n” alliterates with the “ns” of “*n*ow” at the beginning of the line, and “-*n*tent” at its end. Inside that orbit is the concatenation of the two “s”s, in “is” and “dis-.” An orbital plot of the line looks like this:

~~Now is the winter of our discontent~~

The second line, when inspected in this way, looks like the “s”s of the first line broken free from their encasing “n”s, and now doubled at the ends of their orbit

made glorious ~~s summer by this Sun~~ of York

Maybe it is possible to hear them now, subtly bookended by a slightly lopsided, elliptical orbit of “r”s

made glorious ~~s summer by this Sun~~ of York

That asymmetrical orbit makes good sense as the line spills towards “York,” a supernumerary beat that, in enunciating the play’s first proper name, seems, at a minimum, to particularize some of the semantic confusion brought into existence by the

[21] cited in Wolf, G. *Language & Communication*. Vol. 9, No 4. Pp. 259-267. 1989

previous fourteen words.

In the sound of these two lines, then, all of the action of the play is given: kingship (or the rhetorical appurtenances of kingship, which will prove almost to be the same thing) springs merely from some other kingship which came before it and was articulated in language. This is all the legitimacy that the previous kingship can claim for itself. In other words, there is nothing outside the paranomastic games of the play that legitimates the rule of the "Sun of York," Edward V, except in contradistinction to the next "Sun" to take the throne, at one time called "Richard Plantagenet," and at another "Richard III." In turn, it will be the language of the play that will allow Richard III to rule, however briefly, by a right that might have been allowed to pass, falsely, as "divine," had not that same ironic language intervened. The image of the Sun, conceived of always as a negative and contingent term of comparison, carries with it nothing of "the exclusiveness of ultimate authority." The symbol of the Sun in *Richard III* is distended into unresolvability, into allegory, in the first two lines of the play.

A Midsummer Night's Dream does seem to enact the shoring-up of an exclusive and ultimate authority: the authority of Theseus, Duke of Athens. Not only does the play enact "the restoration of order in the state of anarchy,"[22] according to Barbara Freedman; it concurrently offers itself as an argument for the wisdom and necessity of this

[22] Benjamin, W. *Der Ursprung des deutschen Trauerspiels*. Suhrkamp, Frankfurt. 1992. Pg. 225

restoration. Freedman understands the play as a propagandistic apology for Absolute Monarchy.[23] Although Freedman does not dwell on the figural connection between the Absolute Monarch to be restored and the Sun, it is introduced in Theseus' first monologue:

> Now, fair Hippolyta, our nuptial hour
> Draws on apace; four happy days brings in
> Another moon: but, O, methinks, how slow
> This old moon wanes! She lingers my desires.[24]

Hippolyta and the moon conspire to deny Theseus (equated by opposition with the Sun) the immediate gratification of his desires. We are repeatedly invited to imagine the action of the play illuminated by moonlight and the word "moon" occurs every few lines. The play ends with the impending return of the Sun. Puck invokes the "Presence of the sun, following darkness like a dream."[25] Oberon's last spoken lines enjoin the fairies to go through the rooms of the Duke's palace and bless them:

> Every fairy take his gait;
> And each several chamber bless,
> Through this palace, with sweet peace;
> And the owner of it blest
> Ever shall in safety rest.
> Trip away; make no stay;
> Meet me all by break of day.[26]

The fairies are being asked to offer a valediction to the palace and the Duke, whose power will be restored with the Sun's rising, as the fairies "trip away." The end of the play sets the stage for the restoration of order, the return of the Sun-king Theseus. Such a

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[23] Freedman, B. *Staging the Gaze: Postmodernism, Psychoanalysis, and Shakespearean Comedy by Barbara Freedman*. Cornell University Press. 1991
[24] Shakespeare. *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. 1.1 1-4. Pg. 326
[25] Shakespeare. *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. V. ii. Pg. 348
[26] *Ibid*.

reading, while inviting, is oversimple. Puck does not say that the coming of the Sun follows after a dream. Rather, he says that the Sun is itself "like a dream." Coleridge and his critical successors have argued that the play is the staging of a dream. But Puck seems to think that it is what comes after the events of the play that will be a dream, and who are we to gainsay him? We might easily conclude from the play's final speeches that what will be restored is only a dream of Absolute authority.

There is an equivocalness in the supposed power of this Sun, Theseus, that puts him in the same line of dubiously sunny kings as Claudius, Edward V and Richard III. In Act II of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, we have already been prepared for the possibility that the Sun is no longer the Sun. Pursuing her suit with Demetrius, Helena says, "the story shall be changed: Apollo flies, and Daphne holds the chase."[27] For a moment at least, we are made to imagine what it would mean for Apollo to be chased and caught by Daphne. First, it would mean that the Sun was no "ultimate authority," that he could be forced into flight. And second—following the inversion of the the story of Daphne—if he were caught, his metamorphosis would be into stasis. His permanent state would be that of a paradoxically "frozen Sun." It might be arguable that these lines uttered by Helena in Act II are merely part of the inverted rhetoric of the dream. But this "might be true" is enough for us to begin to doubt. The audience can unhear these words neither in Act II nor in Act V, when the return of Theseus is at hand. When Theseus returns, it will be with his majesty ruffled, initially in the symbolic order and then in Athens.[28]

[27] Shakespeare. *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. II. i. Pg. 332

[28] It is interesting to think of the line that Shakespeare gives Helena about the story being changed, in light of his own cosmology. As scholars such as Weber have shown (Weber, A.

In Paris, "Le Roi Soleil" himself seems to have doubted his *a priori* Sun-ness. The most brilliant, most imitated monarch of Baroque Europe chose for himself the moniker "Roi Soleil" after appearing in a theatrical performance in 1653. Louis XIV appeared as the Sun in the *Ballet de la Nuit*, a ballet composed by Boësset, Cambefort, Lambert and, probably, Lully.[29] The ballet seemed to embrace the classical unity of time to a hyperbolic degree of verisimilitude, exceeding anything that even Boileau and the other "anciens" would go on to argue for in the "querelle" of the following decades. It ran for fully thirteen hours, constituted of four acts or "watches" ("en quatre Parties, ou quatre Veilles"). The first watch enacted the activities of sunset, the second enacted the "diversions of the evening," the third enacted the "freedoms and horrors of the night"[30] and the fourth, the activities of dawn. Louis appeared in the fourth act as "Apollon," sporting a bouffant costume embossed with much gold and topped with a headpiece of peacock feathers. The gesture of *theatrum mundi* is striking. The king is not the Sun. He is the actor who, in the Hôtel du Petit-Bourbon,[31] has at one time played the Sun. Also striking is that, though Louis might have let it be known that he was the Sun because he played the Sun, by the time of Charles Perrault's *Le Siècle de Louis le Grand* (1687), the

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Shakespeare's Cosmology. SUNY Press, Binghamton. 1996), Shakespeare was aware of Copernican thought and wrote into the era of Kepler, even if he stuck to a cosmology that was basically Ptolemaic. But despite his atavisitic Classicism in this regard, it is clear that he sensed that the Sun was unstable in the science of his age. Viewed in this light, it is perhaps no wonder that he took liberties with the Sun's correlate in the symbolic order, the Prince.

[29]Burden, M. and Thorp, J. *Le Ballet de la Nuit*. Pendragon, New York. 2010
[30]*Ibid*.
[31] Located across from the Louvre, this is where theatrical entertainments were held before 1660.

definitive biography of Louis XIV published during his reign, Louis' helic attributes had been multiplied many times,[32] and in many directions. He was like Apollo because he had "brought peace, was a patron of the arts, regulated all the world."[33] In addition, the royal *levée* and *couchée* had, as noted in Perrault's biography, gained signal importance in the course of Louis XIV's reign, apparently offering further incontrovertible proof of his kinship with the Sun. In other words, the initial meaning of the Sun, introduced in a gesture of play, had come, by a process of contagion, to signify a constellation of attributes around the Sun, or around the Sun in the guise of Apollo.

The figuration of "constellation" around the Sun returns us to Spain and Calderón's *La Vida es Sueño*. In all three acts of that play there is an analogy drawn between the prince, Segismundo, and the Sun. Astolfo calls Segismundo the "Sun of Poland, whose glad light / Makes the whole horizon gay . . . the Sun issuing from the bosom of the mountains."[34] Later, in the third act, Rosaura speaks, in an extended metaphor, of how Segismundo,

[32] In the figural language of Baroque Europe, then, the Sun was not symbolic of Louis, but emblematic of Louis. This difference is of signal importance to anyone trying to understand Baroque poetics. The first "emblem book" was published in Augsburg in 1531, the *Emblemata* by the Milanese legal scholar Andrea Alciato. Emblem books contained a series of allegorical pictures, each accompanied by an ekphrastic blurb. The allegorical headings were most often laudable attributes (wisdom, fortitude) or didactic statements of a general form, such as "the big eat the small."

[34] Calderón de la Barca, P. *Life is a Dream* (Florence MacCarthy, trans.) Kessinger, London. 2009. II. iv. 26-29. Pg. 26. In some cases I have made use of Florence MacCarthy's translation, which sounds beautiful and slightly archaic, attributes that would have recommended it to Calderón. Some longer passages from the play I have translated myself, as indicated below, and in one case I have had recourse to Edward Fitzgerald's paraphrase translation, for reasons which I will give below.

now free from his wildness and beginning to show a propensity for just rule, is the Sun: "thus thou dawnest on the World / Bright auspicious Sun of Poland."[35] Such applications of the epithet "Sun" to Segismundo do seem to bespeak an evident figural association of the prince with the Sun in the play. However, the epithet is not applied exclusively in the play to the dreaming prince, Segismundo. Segismundo himself shows a predilection for comparing both Rosaura and Estrella to the Sun. To Rosaura, he says in II.vi., "thine own charms compose / something more bright than Sun, stone, star or rose."[36] Shortly thereafter, Astolfo calls Estrella "the Sun."[37] The putting in close proximity of stars and the Sun is repeated in III. vii., when Estrella says to Segismundo, "let me ride with you [as] a twinkling star beside that royal Sun."[38]

Thus there are two sorts of ambiguity that stalk the Sun in *La vida es sueño* that are closely related. The first is born from the putative Sun himself, Segismundo, referring to other characters as the Sun. The second is born from repeated association of the Sun with other stars, where these associations are not drawn by Segismundo. This commingling of the celestial bodies is echoed in a constellation of nominal games that all touch, "the impatient republic of the stars."[39] "Rosaura" is also "Astrea" and Segismundo suggests by invidious comparison that Estrella's proper name could be taken as a poetaster description of her, calling the attention of the play's spectators to the artificiality of an allegorical name such as "Estrella." But it is in inspecting the frequent association of the

[35] Calderón, III. ii. 78. Pg. 58
[36] *Ibid*. II. vi. Pg. 29
[37] *Ibid*. II. x. Pg. 34
[38] *Ibid*. III. vii. Pg. 67
[39] *Ibid*. III. vii. 62. Pg. 67

Sun with other stars that we will begin to advance towards an understanding of the symbolic valences of "Sun" in the play.[40]

"Sun" is an epithet applied, especially by Segismundo in his fury, to Estrella and then to her maid, Rosaura (Astrea). In the second act there is a telling exchange between Clarín and Segismundo. Segismundo asks for the name of the beautiful woman he sees before him, and Clarín says, "she is, my lord, your cousin, Star ('Estrella')."[41] To this, the mad Segismundo rejoins, "Better it were to call her the Sun ('Sol')."[42] Later in the act, Segismundo asks Rosaura, "Who are you, beautiful woman?"[43] Rosaura answers: "Of Estrella I am, an unhappy lady."[44] Segismundo rejects the suggestion of a star, in favor of the Sun:

> Do not speak thus: say the Sun, from whose flame
> that star (Estrella) lives,
> receiving radiance from your rays[45]

This is the most extreme moment of Segismundo's madness, when he is attempting to force himself upon Rosaura, the maid of Estrella, the princess he eventually marries. But, in his madness, Segismundo mistakes the relation between Rosaura and Estrella, telling Rosaura that she, being the Sun, illuminates her mistress, Estrella, the star, who merely receives "radiance from [Rosaura's] rays." In the end this will prove to have been a

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[40] It bears noting that it was only in the 1590s that Giordano Bruno had argued that the Sun was a star, and not a planet.
[41] Calderón de la Barca, P. *La vida es sueño*. Penguin, London. 2015. III. ii. 405. Pg. 326. This translation is mine, *et passim*.
[42] *Loc. cit.*
[43] Ibid. III. ix. 605. Pg. 390
[44] *Loc cit.*
[45] *Loc. cit.*

passing fancy; by the time the third act ends, Segismundo is no longer confused about whether it is his betrothed, Estrella, or her maidservant who burns like the Sun. Nonetheless, in the tumult of his mad feeling for Rosaura, Segismundo asks her

> So how, if amongst flowers, amongst stars
> rocks, signs, planets, as beautiful as you like, have you served
> the least beautiful one, having been,
> because more beautiful and comely
> Sun, morning-star, diamond, star and rose?[46]

The commingling of metaphorical language with the play's proper names is the enactment of Segismundo's madness. But there is, nonetheless, some destabilizing method in it. Segismundo supposes Rosaura to be "between" stars, a comical supposition because Rosaura does in fact work as the maidservant of "Estrella." Then, waxing lyrical, he claims that because Rosaura has seemed to him the most beautiful of the women he has seen since his release from the tower, she is "Sun, Venus, diamond, star and rose." This glistering heap of nouns casts the primacy of the noun "Sun" into disarray. In Segismundo's fanciful, Rabelaisian description of her, the relation between Sun and star—where before the former was the giver of light to the latter—is the relation of companion terms in an overwrought list.

The appearance of both "diamante" and "sol" in this list is typical of a species of comparison in *La vida es sueño* between the Sun, or other celestial bodies, and glassy things.[47] The most striking, denatured comparisons of this type come in the first act, in

[46] Ibid. III. ix. 607. Pg. 392
[47] This is a common trope in Baroque Spanish literature. In Spanish sonnets of the post-"italianizante" era there often occurs a comparison to crystal, almost Petrarchan, and always unsettling because of its slight denaturenedness. A good example is Góngora's sonnet "*Mientras por competir con tu cabello"*

which Basilio explains what ill portent of the heavens led him to have Segismundo banished.

> Those circles of snow,
> those canopies of glass,
> that the Sun illuminates with its rays,
> that the moon splits with its turns,
> those orbs of diamonds,
> those crystalline globes that the stars adorn
> and that make bright the signs,
> those are the great study
> of my years, they are the books,
> in which on diamond paper,
> in quarto-editions of sapphire,
> writes in golden hand,
> in distinct characters
> heaven, writes our happenings.[48]

We are initially struck by a slight impossibility in the imagery. Basilio describes the planets as "circles of snow." Venus appeared through Galileo's telescope, roughly twenty years before Calderón wrote *La vida es sueño,* as a circle of white. And Galileo was the first to observe that when viewed from the earth, Venus had two phases, which

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Esos círculos de nieve,
esos doseles de vidrio,
que el sol ilumina a rayos,
que parte la luna a giros,
esos orbes de diamantes,
esos globos cristalinos,
que las estrellas adornan
y que campean los signos,
son el estudio mayor
de mis años, son los libros
donde en papel de diamante,
en cuadernos de zafiros,
escribe con líneas de oro,
en caracteres distintos,
el cielo nuestros sucesos,
Ibid. 1. iii. Pg. 127

he deduced would only be possible if Venus orbited the Sun. This was one of the first steps in his proof that the Ptolemaic model was impossible. But whatever the refracted importance of Galileo's Venus to Calderón, "a circle of snow" is not a "circle of white." Snow does not customarily occur in the form of a circle, as canopies ("doseles") are not customarily made of glass. Paper is not made of diamond, quarto editions are not made of sapphire. Nor, in any of these metaphors, does there seem to be a *tertium comparationis* that could very convincingly be said to bridge them. Achilles does not have a mane, he is not yellow, but he is like a lion in valor (to name but one thing Achilles and the lion might share). A canopy (here "doseles" should, I think, also be taken to mean "the sky") has nothing in common with glass, except that they might both be see-through. But this is a tenuous third term indeed, given that the function of glass is to maximize see-throughness and the function of a canopy over a bed is to minimize it. Paper might be said to be like diamond only in the sense that both may be inscribed. But again, this third term is tenuous and attenuating: paper is valuable because it is easy to inscribe, while diamond is valuable because it is hard to inscribe. In the midst of these improbable comparisons is the Sun, which is ascribed a believable, prosaic function: it "illuminates with its rays." It is those things that are touched by these rays that are odd, discordant with themselves.

This internal discordance of materials coincides with a certain discordance of voicing, a discordance which clangs at different points in Basilio's long monologue. The king says that these denaturalized planets "are the great study of my years." The verb that follows, "escribe," both according to the syntax of the passage, and according to the declared

avocation of the king, seems to propose the king as its subject. However, the subject has been postponed to surprising effect. It is in fact "el cielo," which writes "our happenings" (where the possessive adjective "nuestros" might govern "all of us on stage," or the king alone). There is an explicit association in the passage of the Sun with the king. The Sun illuminates with its rays, and, until the twist of hyperbaton, it is the king who seems to write in lines of gold. And here there are multiple third terms of comparison. The Sun's rays are straight and yellow, the king's writing is in "lines" and it is yellow in color ("de oro"). And yet the figure of analogy is canceled when it is no longer the king writing. There are various inferential possibilities. Perhaps the Sun is the figure in a fate-determining "cielo" (heaven or sky), which is connected to the earth by rays. (Early-modern rays were, of course, not merely conveyors of light but quasi-physical connectors. Later in this monologue, the eclipse of the Sun and moon is described as an entanglement of their rays.) Thus, it is a conduit for heaven's intentions to be visited on the king, and the king is a conduit for heaven's intentions to be visited on us spectators: "nuestros." Or perhaps there is no great chain of "writers of the world's happenings" in operation, which is to say that we read the lines with the meaning that the king gives to them: "el cielo" ordains all of the "sucesos" of our lives, where "our" includes both the king and others on stage. The moment at which we are made to imagine that we on earth (be we kings or not) might determine the happenings of "our" lives is the moment at which we are drawn into vanity, a vanity which is undone in short order by the hyperbaton of the line.

This ambiguity is consonant with the general tenor of the king's monologue in the first

act, which in its content is about the possibilities of error, or ambiguity. This ambiguity is in Basilio's reading of the signs that accompanied the birth of Segismundo. In the first part of the monologue, the king describes in vivid terms the "signos" that accompanied Segismundo's birth:

> He was born when the horoscope was such
> that the Sun, tinted in its blood,
> was entering furiously
> into struggle with the moon.[49]

There was an eclipse, in which the Sun appeared red. At the time of Segismundo's birth, the rivers also "ran blood" ("corrieron sangre"), which echoes the haunting image of the Tiber foaming with blood in Book Six of the *Aeneid*.[50] The eclipse is described in lines that fall toward the beginning of Basilio's monologue.

> The greatest, the most horrendous
> eclipse that the Sun has suffered
> since it bewept with blood
> the death of Christ.[51]

This sounds like a horrifying portent indeed, and an ineluctable one. But again, there is a certain discordance in the imagery of the eclipse. The Sun was never before said to have turned red on the day of Christ's Crucifixion, although there was an occasionally-cited

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[49] *Ibid*. I. iii. Pg 102
nació en horóscopo tal,
que el sol, en su sangre tinto,
entraba sañudamente
con la luna en desafío

[50] Virgil. *Eclogues, Georgics*. *Aeneid Books 1-6*. Loeb, Cambridge. 1999. VI, 86-87. Pg. 488

[51] *Loc cit*. Calderón
El mayor, el más horrendo
eclipse que ha padecido
el sol, después que con sangre
lloró la muerte de Cristo

account that the moon did. Indeed, in the eschatology of both testaments of the Bible, there are predictions that the moon will turn red at the Last Judgment. In Acts it is written that, at the Last Judgment, "The Sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come."[52] The author of the book of Revelation writes that in his vision he "beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the Sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood."[53] If Basilio is here making an inverted allusion to such verses as these in the Bible, then we might take the whole play as being about eschatology—first mad Segismundo comes to the world as the Antichrist, and then he returns as Christ himself.[54] Basilio never himself makes explicit the figuration of his son with the Antichrist or the Christ (the Christ figuration is much more explicit in Hugo von Hofmannsthal's *Der Turm*, which I will consider in the next chapter). Nonetheless, he claims to know from his study of mathematics and the stars what the signs he observes mean. He proclaims himself a sage and pronounces himself burdened by knowledge (the lament of the archetypal Baroque man, Faust, although it is as old as

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[52] *King James Bible*. Acts 2:20

[53] *King James Bible*. Revelation. 6:12-14

[54] This seems to confound Benjamin's claim that "the Baroque has no eschatology" (cf. Benjamin 71). This claim of Benjamin's has been disputed by many scholars, most recently and effectively by Annika Thiem in her article "Theological-Political Ruins: Walter Benjamin, Sovereignty, and the Politics of Skeletal Eschatology." The era in which the play is set is also always ambiguous. This allusion perhaps suggests that it is in the eschatological time of the Bible. But there is also a sense in which the play has a Classical setting, which comes through in this same monologue.

Thus, against time and forgetting
the paintbrushes of Timanthes
the marbles of Lysippus
in all the ambit of this orb
proclaim me the great Basilio. Calderón. I. iii. 606–611. Pg. 104

Ecclesiastes). He says:

> that the man damaged by knowledge,
> is the homicide of himself
> I say this, although it will be better said
> by the events of my life.[55]

At this point, as at others in this monologue, Basilio bemoans the knowledge of the future that he has gained from his studies, which allows him to give definitive interpretations of signs. However, there are two obvious objections that we could make to Basilio's boasts about his own interpretive chops. First, we might suppose that any observer who saw the Sun turn red and the rivers flow with blood would take these things to be ominous portents, or at least signs of disruption of the natural order. If these portents had occurred shortly before a queen died in childbirth (as Basilio tells us his queen did), that same observer might well be inclined to conclude that these portents had some bearing upon the boy who had just been pulled from his dead mother's body. Viewed in this light, Basilio's feats of interpretation might not inspire such great adulation. Second, in the course of this monologue, Basilio comes to doubt his own skill as an augur. He says:

> For although his inclination
> might be dictated by his precipices,
> perhaps they will not defeat him,
> because the most disdainful fate,
> the most violent inclination,
> the most impious planet,
> only give inclinations to the will,
> they do not force the will.[56]

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[55] Calderón. I. iv. Pg. 128

[56]

pues aunque su inclinación
le dicte sus precipicios,
quizá no le vencerán,
porque el hado más esquivo,

Basilio's knowledge of signs, he suggests here, does not err. However, as Catholic theology had known since St. Augustine, errancy exists in the will. If Segismundo, by his own will, overcomes his stars, Basilio's incorrect predictions about his son's future are explained. Here we have arrived at a glib but entirely reasonable *précis* of the play: "Will Segismundo overcome the portentous signs that accompanied his birth?" But there is perhaps a more sophisticated gloss of what it means to "overcome a portentous sign," which is also given by Basilio in this monologue.

Basilio argues in this monologue that the meaning of signs depends on who is seeing them and from what vantage point. Early in his speech, he presents himself as the terrestrial observer of signs in the heavens: "those crystalline globes / that the stars adorn / where the signs are at pasture."[57] But later in the speech Basilio calls his own terrestrial vantage point "this / mortal planet or sign."[58] From what vantage point, then, can all signs be seen? To answer this question, it will first be useful to understand what "seeing a sign" would entail, in the light of Basilio's rhetoric. Basilio says:

> Would to heaven, first,
> that my wit had been

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la inclinación más violenta,
el planeta más impío,
sólo el albedrío inclinan,
no fuerzan el albedrío. Calderón III. i. Pg. 243

[57] "esos globos cristalinos / que las estrellas adornan / y que campean los signos". Calderón. III. iii. 187
[58] *Loc. cit.*

a comment on its margins
a register of its pages[59]

Basilio is here bemoaning the fact that he is not a mere scribbler of marginalia in the "notebooks of sapphire," in which fate is written. The margins are not for him—his unhappy knowledge is what he has read in the "body" of the text. This has a number of implications for we how understand Basilio's torment. First, we must conclude that "seeing signs" is akin to reading them. And he or she who finds them most legible suffers most. Second, there may exist good readings and bad readings. We might also suppose that the author might be writing "straight," or in rhetorical figures, or he might be lying. Indeed, Basilio himself admits that he has been the author of lies. He says that at the time of Segismundo's birth, "it was published that the Infante was born dead."[60] With this, Basilio could mean that "at the time of Segismundo's birth, it was published that he was born to die," which we could take as a true but trivial statement. Alternatively, he could mean that when Segismundo was born, Basilio wrote a lie to dissimulate the fact. This second reading seems to be what Basilio intends. He seems to admit that he has written untruths, and seems to admit that he might have read them too:

. . . that being
prudent, reasonable and good,
he [Segismundo] might give the lie completely to fate
which said so many things about him.[61]

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[59]
Pluguiera al cielo, primero
que mi ingenio hubiera sido
de sus márgenes comento
de sus ojos registro

[60] Publicóse que el Infante / nació muerto. Calderón. 1. iii. 738-739. Pg. 202

[61] … que siendo
prudente, cuerdo y benigno,
desmintiendo en todo al hado

Edward Fitzgerald, in an instance of the translation-as-gloss that he practiced well gives these lines as "Lest by some chance mis-reading of the stars."[62] Loose as his translation is, I think it gives the sense in which we should gloss these lines. Basilio's fear of Segismundo's actions might prove ill founded because Segismundo exercised his free will to defy the stars. Or it might prove ill founded because Basilio had read the signs badly. There is no height from which the signs in a semiotic system can be read unerringly, not even the exalted vantage point of the throne. Calderón's Basilio is himself struggling *avant la lettre* through a classical argument in semiotics: that it is only through signs that other signs can be interpreted.[63] In Benveniste's version of that argument, there is an important corollary that Basilio is also taught by Calderón in the play. Signs are not only the signs by which other signs become interpretable; systems of linguistic signs are the systems by which all other semiotic systems become interpretable. Basilio must experience the equivocations of language, both as a reader and a writer, before he can even begin to countenance the equivocations in the semiotic system of the stars.[64]

Many important qualities of Calderónian allegory shine forth from Basilio's excursus on signs in his first act monologue. Calderónian allegory enacts the interpretive perplexity of the spectators. It also provides limited guidance to the spectators about why they are

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que dél tantas cosas dijo . Calderón. III. vii. 808–811. Pg. 546

[62] Fitzgerald, E. *The mighty magician and 'such stuff as dreams are made of", a drama, taken from "Vida es sueño"*. Oxford University Press, Oxford. 1877. Pg. 85

[63] Benveniste, É.1969. Semiologie de la langue (1). *Semiotica* 1(1). pp. 1-12.

[64] Benveniste, *Loc. cit.* Pg. 11

perplexed—because symbols have been stretched and deformed into allegories and because the system of linguistic signs is not sufficient to the task of interpretation, even if it is the only tool available to interpret itself and other semiotic systems that lie beyond it. Another quality of Baroque allegory in evidence in Basilio's monologue is its didactic humility. An omniscient king does not sit on the throne. In this monologue, as is the case of Calderónian allegory generally, we are led to believe that there may be another vantage point, a divine one, from which allegory is interpreted in its fullness. Implying a God's-eye view was a possibility in seventeenth-century Madrid. However, it was no longer possible by the 1760s in Madrid, when performance of all of Calderón's plays was banned because of their "obscurity."[65] Of course, Calderón had intended the allegory of *La vida es sueño* to be obscure to Basilio and to us—but by the 1760s, the censors of Charles III could no longer imagine even a God capable of penetrating that obscurity. I will return to these complaints about Baroque allegorical style at greater length in the next chapter.

At this point, I would like to take a slight, analogical detour away from the borderland between Baroque symbol and allegory. The analogy is simple: what emblem books were to the Baroque, encyclopedias were to the Rococo. Our view of the Baroque is still formally distorted by the encyclopedia as a way of schematizing what we know, as well

[65] It is this quality that distinguishes Baroque allegory from more interpretively tractable forms of allegory, such as *The Pilgrim's Progress, Animal Farm* or whatever allegory was intended by Friedrich Schlegel's statement that "the allegorical is the beautiful," if such an allegory has ever existed.

as by what the *encyclopédistes* of the mid-eighteenth century wrote about the Baroque.[66] Here, I would like to treat some differences between the Baroque and the Rococo, in order to then surprise the Baroque sense of symbol and allegory, as it were, from the side.

The Rococo took from the Baroque the will to embellishment, while abandoning the Baroque's near certainty that the objects of the world were vain fripperies, mere thingified accretions of earthly vanity. It is no accident that those artifacts of Rococo that survive for us to touch are eminently solid: they are desks whose drawers and legs are worked in heavy gold or mirrors whose frames sag with thick arabesques of gold. The Rococo was a taming of Baroque ornament, an evacuation of the possibility of meaning from ornament and thereby an asseveration that the things of the world exist in a gilded halfway-house between meaning and nonsense. But by driving embellishment to such jejune lengths, the Rococo tacitly proposed that its objects were not mere embellishments. Perhaps the heavy, Rococo desk was built to bear three hundred years of august writing**,** while the golden mirror, its heaving weight not withstanding, showed things as they actually were. The things of the world had not been given by God without purpose. The Rococo in art was the era of Christian Wolff in philosophy. Wolff proposed in 1728 that Leibniz's principle of sufficient reason argued for a teleological meaning to all things ("Zweck"). The desk was given as it was to best facilitate its sitter's writing, as

[66] "Ce que j'entens par *génie,* n'est point ce goût bisarre & capricieux, qui seme par-tout le baroque & le difficile, & qui ne sait embellir ou varier l'harmonie qu'à force de bruit ou de dissonances." My translation: What I understand by genius is not that taste for the bizarre and the capricious which are brought to life here and there by why it is Baroque and difficult. It is not something which embellishes the harmony only by noise and dissonance. D'Alembert *et al*. 1751. *Encyclopédie, ou Dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers*. Paris

the moon was given by God to facilitate human seeing at night. In all things, the Rococo vision of the world proposed that its objects had sense, which could be perceived on the other side of an eminently penetrable film of nonsense.

The encyclopedia is handmaiden to Wolff's view of the *Zweckmässigkeit* of objects in philosophy and the incontrovertible golden solidity of the Rococo desk in art. The encyclopedia was heavy, and much of this weight was mere distraction, or frame. If one consulted the encyclopedia in search of a particular entry, one was, in an obvious sense, seeking a particular point of clarity framed by distractions, like the man who stared into his heavy golden mirror. The encyclopedia was also a programmatic response to the threat of knowledge out of sequence proposed by the Baroque. Chambers' 1728 *Cyclopaedia* seems to later readers as a half-caste, born between the unpredictable science and theater of the Restoration and the sobriety of English Enlightenment philosophy, theater and politics. The mode of the encyclopedia as antidote to the Baroque was perfected by the *encyclopédistes* in France:

> Baroque is all that does not follow the rules of proportion, and follows instead the caprice of the artist. In the paintings of Tintoretto there is always something strange and unusual, there is always something Baroque[67]

or

> Baroque music: music in which the harmony is confused, filled with modulations and dissonances.[68]

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[67] . . . baroque est tout ce qui suit non les normes des proportions, mais le caprice de l"artiste. Dans les peintures de Tintoret, il y a toujours quelque chose d"étrange et d"insolite, il s"y trouve toujours quelque chose de baroque. Pernety, *Dictionnaire portatif de peinture, sculpture et gravure*. Nabu, Paris. 1757. Pg. 56

[68] musique baroque : musique dont l"harmonie est confuse, chargée de modulations et de dissonances. Rousseau, J-J. *Suppléments à l"Encyclopédie*. Paris. 1776. Pg. 456

The Baroque was the natural enemy of the encyclopedia, insofar as it anathematized the very possibility of the exhaustive list, of a world, which was "finished," to use Bakhtin's word. One thinks of Polonius' pseudo-encyclopedic accounting of the Mousetrap players' range:

> The best actors in the world, either for tragedy, comedy, history, pastoral, pastorical-comical, historical-pastoral, tragical-historical, tragical-comical-historical-pastoral, scene individable or poem unlimited[69]

The Baroque had sensed long before Roland Barthes did that what is salient about the list is not its exhaustiveness, but its exhaustedness. In tandem with the exhaustedness that the Baroque exuded in lists of this kind, there was often evident a certain tongue-in-cheekness about the possibility of the headwords of the encyclopedia having been listed in any order that was metaphysically binding. It is telling that Calabrese, in his initial theoretical sketch of the Baroque temperament, has recourse to Umberto Eco's concept of the *enciclopedia*. Calabrese writes:

> In other words, culture can be seen as an organic totality, in which each element has a hierarchically ordered relationship with all the others. We can use Eco's term "Encyclopedia" to define this totality. The encyclopedia, however, with regard to each of these elements operates a general ordering principle, a kind of overall ideal of the organization of knowledge. When we are confronted with individual concrete elements, however, it is difficult to take the *entire* encyclopedia into consideration.[70]

But a distinguishing characteristic of Baroque art is that it defeats any critical vision of itself at the same time that it defeats any critique that would taxonomize it. To take this latter defeat of vision first: the massiveness of the Baroque church façade arrests the gaze (and the southern Italian scrolled church façade baldly implies the wrapping up or attenuation of this gaze). It is an impediment to the viewer, who would see the contours

[69] Shakespeare. *Hamlet*. II.ii. 379–382. Pg. 456
[70] Calabrese. Pg. 6

of the surrounding buildings (which in the Mediterranean especially were very often the seats of temporal power—the Duke's palace, for example.) Any comprehensive apperception of such façades themselves (even one which elides the urban surrounds) is impossible. This is an image of the Cathedral of Santa Croce in Lecce, Apulia:



71

[71] image from http://www.ilcortiledelleesperidi.it/lecce-citta-darte/

The massiveness of the façade, as well as the fine filigree of the stone work (a pastiche of Spanish plateresque masonry), defeats the eye's attempt to achieve a synthetic vision of the front of the church. The gargoyles ranged along the middle line of the façade are emblems of the Christian powers that took part in the Battle of Lepanto in 1571: a griffin represents the Genoese Republic, a figure of Hercules represents the Grand Duchy of Tuscany, and so forth. The façade is, in fact, a thoroughgoing illustration of the reasons that the Battle of Lepanto was was won by the Holy League. In its massiveness is represented the omniscience of the Holy Spirit. The emblems represent particular temporal powers, which claim themselves as victorious vectors of the Holy Spirit. It is, if you like, a total, encyclopedic account of a particular perspective on that battle. However, there is offered no key to deciphering this encyclopedia entry. One suspects that, even in the seventeenth century, those not versed in the heraldry of the age might have been inclined to take the thirteen gargoyle figures as an allegory for Jesus and the Apostles. Thus, the façade presents a particularly recondite vision of an encyclopedia entry, designed almost to frustrate its own decipherment. It is a sort of encyclopedia entry in spite of itself.

The "encyclopedia in spite of itself" is an almost hoary trope in Baroque epistemology. One version of such an obscurantist encyclopedia that was brought back to light in the last century was the seventeenth-century English bishop John Wilkins' *Philosophical Language*. In that ingenious work, Wilkins proposed a language that married philology and taxonomy. He proposed, for instance, that "Zi" might identify the genus of beasts, "Zit" might specify a further nuance, such as "rapacious beasts of the dog kin" and at the

end of the taxon "Zita" might name a dog.[72] Borges' 1942 essay "The Analytical Language of John Wilkins"[73] (*"El idioma analítico de John Wilkins"*) is formulated as a response to Wilkins. In that essay, Borges imagines another way of taxonomizing knowledge, which he claims to have cribbed from a translation of an ancient Chinese encyclopedia called the *Celestial Emporium of Benevolent knowledge*. In that Chinese encyclopedia it seems that all animals are assigned to one of fourteen different categories of which the first four are: "those that belong to the emperor," "embalmed ones," "those that are trained" and "suckling pigs." The taxonomy of knowledge proposed in the Chinese encyclopedia strikes us as risibly arbitrary. In the next instant we are made to think that Wilkins' pretensions to encyclopedism and our own—if we ever aspired to such—must also be risibly arbitrary, whimsical and incomplete. Michel Foucault's famous, and, to my mind, singularly wrongheaded reading of this essay by Borges, comes at the beginning of the *The Order of Things:*

> This book first arose out of a passage in Borges, out of the laughter that shattered, as I read the passage, all the familiar landmarks of thought—*our* thought, the thought that bears the stamp of our age and our geography—breaking up all the ordered surfaces and all the planes with which we are accustomed to tame the wild profusion of existing things and continuing long afterwards to disturb and threaten with collapse our age-old definitions between the Same and the Other.[74]

There are two points at which we might have recourse to a division between "same" and "other" in reading Borges' essay. What is the "same" is a pair of things that belongs at the same extremity of the taxonomical dendrite: *homo sapiens* and *homo habilis*, say. Secondly, and relatedly, we might suppose that there is a strain of sameness that springs up between us readers of European languages: Wilkins' English, Franz Kuhn's putative

[72] Wilkins, J. *An Essay Towards a Real Character and a Philosophical Language*. Royal Society, London. 1668
[73] Borges, J-L. *Otras inquisiciones*. Alianza, Madrid. 1976. Pp. 45-61
[74] Foucault, M. *The Order of Things* (Tavistock, trans.). Routledge, London. 2000 Pg. xvi

translation of the Chinese encyclopedia into German and Borges' Spanish. The other—with the other's attendant otherwise taxonomy of knowledge in the encyclopedia—is the Chinese encyclopedist. The problem with Foucault's instinctive division of the terms of the story into "same" and "other" is that all of the possible "sames" and "others" reside in the genius of one author, namely Borges. The Baroque conception of a wildly new ordering of the entries in the encyclopedia does not come from outside the semiotic glossary of the epoch. Indeed the Baroque knew no outsideness—Baroque historiography was able to presuppose the synchrony of many moments of history. Seventeenth-century philologists in Germany were as willing to argue that German was descended from Hebrew, as that Hebrew was descended from German. This example should also show that a divided conception of "Same" and "Other" did not come naturally to the Baroque spirit. The logical corollary of these breezy philological inversions was the never-endingly interesting suspicion, in the realm of politics, that Christians might have been Jews and Jews Christians, all at the same time. In seventeenth-century New Spain, Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora was convinced that Aztec glyphs were, in fact, also Egyptian hieroglyphs. That this would have theoretically made contemporary Aztecs and ancient Egyptians the very same people was no impediment to Sigüenza y Góngora's kindred postulation of the two writing systems.

To bring out the danger and the humor in Borges' essay, we might do well to direct ourselves to the Australian historian Keith Windschuttle's commentary on it. He has argued that the humanistic university in the twenty-first century is in decline. His evidence for this claim is his own assertion that many university teachers are convinced

that Borges' Chinese encyclopedia is real, or should be treated as if it might be real. Therefore, to Windschuttle, contemporary humanistic education in the English-speaking world is bunk. These culturally sensitive myrmidons of Borges believe that the improbable categories of the Chinese encyclopedia should not be called "improbable" but merely "other." Windschuttle assumes that the occasional observability of his claim demonstrates *ipso facto* that the humanities are in a parlous state, being taught badly by pretenders.[75] This is a silly supposition on Windschuttle's part. Nonetheless, it captures perfectly the anxiety that the *bien pensante,* Enlightened intelligentsia has always had when confronted with Baroque epistemology: the threat of reordering, of an obscurantist encyclopedia. The reason, indeed, why the French encyclopedias of the eighteenth century were so offended by the sensibility of the Baroque, the "strange," the "confused."

How, then, to begin to critique the Baroque, to characterize it as an epoch and place it in a sequence of artistic, political or scientific epochs? The Baroque wreaks havoc on all critique that is encyclopedic and not emblematic, which is to say that it wreaks havoc on all critique. Luciano Anceschi follows other scholars such as Francastel and Wellek when he suggests that "we consider the baroque as a cultural system represented by various formal components, but only in the sense of beginning with a *historically* determined description. Only after having constructed theoretically and, at the same time, historically, the borders and characteristics of the Baroque can one extend its heuristic

[75] Windschuttle, K. *The Killing of History: How Literary Critics and Social Theorists Are Murdering Our Past*. Encounter, NY. 2000

functions to other periods, movements, and cultural systems."[76] This is Omar Calabrese's cursory observation about Anceschi's attempt to schematize the Baroque: "A philosophy of history underlies all formalist theories."[77] This is true insofar as speculation on the forms of a particular style of art necessitates assumptions, tacit or not, about the historical moment that gave rise to them. However, if we begin with a description of the history of Baroque figural language that does justice to its idisosyncracies, to its formal affinity for the emblematic over the encyclopedic, I believe we can begin to imagine the Baroque as a particular constellation of rhetorical impulses.

In Walter Benjamin's account of Baroque allegory, it is beyond judgments of beauty, beyond even apprehension.

> Whereas in the symbol destruction is idealized and the transfigured face of nature is fleetingly revealed in the light of redemption, in allegory the observer is confronted with the facies hippocratica of history as a petrified, primordial landscape. Everything about history that, from the very beginning, has been untimely, sorrowful, unsuccessful, is expressed in a face- or rather in a death's head.[78]

It is as if Benjamin had hoped to find bedrock beneath the turbid, untimely streams of allegory and had called that bedrock "the symbol." But if the allegorical exists as a counterpoint to the symbolic, then the allegorical is not sorrowful or "unsuccessful." It is timely, not necessarily by its appeals to history, but by its counterposition with the

[76] Calabrese. Pg. 20
[77] Calabrese. Pg. 20
[78] Benjamin. Pg. 166

symbolic. Put another way, Monica Kaup might be right when she rehearses the idea that "Benjamin's neobaroque reconfiguration of allegory is a self-consciously artificial montage of fragments."[79] But that is something like a mere sign of Baroque, a convention, a quotation of other quotations of what Walter Benjamin opined about the Baroque. But as I hope I have shown up to this point, *pace* Benjamin, both the Baroque allegory *and* the Baroque symbol are artificial, fragementary, untimely, impossible allusions to history.

[79] Kaup, M. *Neobaroque in the Americas: Alternative Modernities in Literature, Visual Art, and Film*. University of Virginia Press, Charlottesville. Pg. 15

Chapter 1
Góngora in the Glass.

Al sol porque salió estando con una dama
y fue forzoso dejarla

Ya besando unas manos cristalinas
ya anudándome a un blanco y liso cuello,
ya esparciendo por él aquel cabello
que amor sacó entre el oro de sus minas,

ya quebrando en aquellas perlas finas
palabras dulces mil sin merecello,
ya cogiendo de cada labio bello
purpúreas rosas sin temor de espinas,

estaba, oh claro sol invidïoso,
cuando tu luz, hiriéndome los ojos,
mató mi gloria, y acabó mi suerte

Si el cielo ya no es menos poderoso
por que no den los tuyos más enojos,
rayos, como a tu hijo, te den muerte.

To the Sun because it rose
while he was with a lady
and he had to leave her

Already kissing crystalline hands
Already knotting myself to a neck, smooth and white
Already spreading around it that hair
That Cupid removed from amongst the gold of his mines

Already breaking on those fine pearls
Sweet words, many unmerited,
Already taking from each beautiful lip
Purple roses with no fear of thorns

I was, oh clear, envious Sun
When your light, wounding my eyes
Killed my glory and finished off my luck

If heaven is not now less powerful,
so that yours do not give any more annoyance
May light-beams, as they did to your son, give you death.

To build on the conclusions of the preceding chapter, I would like to give a close reading of an early sonnet by Góngora, which is a fourteen-line litany of moments out of time. The sonnet in question, *Ya besando unas manos cristalinas*, was written in 1582. I will attempt to elucidate the elements of this sonnet that make it ambiguous semantically and—to a lesser and more readily resolvable extent—syntactically. The two axes of ambiguity around which I will organize this exposition are "dreamed" versus "real" and "imitative Petrarchism" versus "innovative Petrarchism." (I have chosen these two axes because critical discussion of this sonnet has been almost exclusively organized around these two questions.)

Aspects of Góngora's early style, especially his use of hyperbaton and neologism, imply an extended sort of *captatio benevolentiae* spoken to the listener. The relentless obliquity and maddening reticulation of his early poems mean that they were available only to "personas capaces de entendelle,"[80] as he archly described his intended audience.[81] And merely by being among the happy few, these readers were ensnared in the poet's very deliberate attempt to extend and exalt the Castilian language.

Ya besando unas manos cristalinas[82] was written in 1582, when Góngora was twenty-one. It has some affinities with other early sonnets, especially *Mientras por competir con tu cabello,* which was also written in 1582. These sonnets are sometimes read by critics

[80] "People capable of understanding them."
[81] A clear allusion to Dante's intended audience in the *Vita Nuova*: "Donne, ch' avete intelletto d' amore."
[82] In the 1603 Hoces volume of Góngora´s poetry, 'et dans toutes les éditions qui en sont derivés, il est intitulé: *Al sol porque salió estando con una dama, y le fue forzoso dexarla*.' (Jammes. *Études sur l'óeuvre poétique de Don Luis de Góngora*. Bordeaux, 1967, Pg. 359).

as juvenilia, not worthy of comparison with the longer works, such as the *Soledades* and the later sonnets. Ciplijauskaité expresses a popular view when she writes, "His most impressive sonnets are those of the later years. In those he doesn't hide his feelings and the man himself is more clearly descried."[83] Suffice it to say that the biographical standard of taste has watermarked itself on Iberian poetic criticism indelibly enough that neither Barthes and Foucault nor Wimsatt and Beardsley have been able to produce a broadly acceptable counterfeit. Nonetheless, the distortions of people and scenes in these early sonnets by Góngora are such that even the most dogged biographers have found little to work with. Indeed, "*Al sol . . .*" has mostly been criticized for not having the right discernible content, biographically speaking—no critic, Spanish or otherwise, has attacked it on technical grounds.

As I will attempt to show in this chapter, however, even quite astute readers of the sonnet have often misapprehended its content, or the extent to which its content and form have been perfectly married. We should recall here Góngora's own dictum in the *Carta en respuesta* that "to delight the understanding is to give it arguments that sum it up and that are *commensurate* with it."[84] It makes sense to think of this sonnet as "measured reasons," which seek to delight the understanding, insofar as the sonnet presents itself as an argument in three parts. As in *Mientras por competir con tu cabello*, both quatrains begin with anaphoric elements that fix the sonnets as arguments in time: "mientras/mientras" and "ya/ya." But the break at the beginning of the tercets is even

[83] Ciplijauskaité, B. *Sonetos completos*, Madrid, 1992. Pg. 25 "Sus sonetos más impresionantes son los de los ultimos años; en ellos vela menos sus sentimientos y deja vislumbrar más claramente al hombre."
[84] Quoted in Beverley, J., *Aspects of Góngora's Soledades,* Purdue UP, 1980. Pg 16 "deleitar el entendimiento es darle razones que la concluyan y se *midan* con su contento" (my emphasis).

more extreme in *Ya besando unas manos cristalinas*, as it is only here that the first verb, "estaba" appears. Brockhaus, one of the definitive commentators on Góngora's sonnets, says of this irruption, "A clever *rejet* ['estaba' (was being), the first word of the ninth line] sums up the piling-up of the five gerundive forms, which are each accompanied by 'ya.'"[85] Calcraft claims that

> the shock of *estaba* at the opening of line 9 is almost theatrical. Its function is both to puncture the reader's increasing sense of positive expectation, and, by stilling the active verb sequence, to reduce an apparently dramatic present structure to a narrative past, with a consequent loss of immediacy. This point in the poem also opens into a new dimension, as the lover's attention shifts from intense concentration on his mistress to an exasperated awareness of an intruder upon their idyll.[86]

Both of these commentaries slightly overstate the anagnoristic potential of this "estaba," since "estaba" could be either the first- or the third-person imperfect of "estar." And though one of the five preceding participial forms is suffixed with a first-person singular object prounoun—"anudándome"—there is no indication that this "-me" is necessarily reflexive, i.e., someone else could have been "knotting me to a white and smooth neck."[87]

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[85] Brockhaus, *Góngora's Sonnetendichtung*, Bochum, 1935. Pg 34 "Ein kühnes 'rejet' (estaba—das 1. Wort in v. 9) fasst die Häufung der 5, jedesmal von 'ya' begleiteten Gerundialformen zusammen."

[86] Calcraft, *The Sonnets of Luis de Góngora*, Durham, 1980. Pg 33

[87] The "manos cristalinas" themselves could be the agents carrying out the knotting (indeed, knots are usually tied by hands), with no transgression of grammar in the first lines of the poem. This becomes clear if we disregard the comma between the first and second lines. "Ya besando unas manos cristalinas / ya anudándome a un blanco y liso cuello": already kissing some crystalline hands [which were/which had already been] tying me to a white and smooth neck. This may seem like a dilation of the sense of the lines which they will not bear, but we should recall Spitzer's brilliant line that, "El barroquismo de Góngora se complace en dorar con una belleza facticia un espectáculo que por si mismo desilusiona" (Spitzer, *Revista de Revistas* in *Revista Filología Hispanica*, 1940, pg. 19). This is true at the formal level as much as any other. Even when presented with such convoluted, disillusioning language (disillusioning or discombulating our sense of where and when we are vis-à-vis the speech act) as we are in this sonnet, we must remain alert to the possibility that there is still another layer (be it of belleza or of further disillusionment) to be fathomed. This is Empson's most sweeping claim in *Seven Types of Ambiguity*—that ambiguity is the sum of "alternative views that might be taken without sheer misreading." (Empson, *Seven Types of* Ambiguity, New Directions, New York, 1966. Pg. X). It is the duty of

The title of the poem, which is probably Góngora's, *Al sol porque salió estando con una dama, y le fue forzoso dexarla*, both does and does not clarify the extent to which the sonnet is an apostrophe by an "I" addressed to the Sun. It is "al sol," but the use of the participle "estando," avoids identifying the poem's speaker (in some of the subsequent editions the "le" in the title was removed, further muddying the waters), and presages the slipperiness in subject in the fourteen lines below. Indeed, the properly anagnoristic moment only comes after "estaba" with "o sol." Only then can the listener be confident that this is an apostrophe to the Sun by the lover.

The temporal ambiguity of the poem is never resolved. I have already posited two possibilities: 1) the voice in the poem is speaking of something which happened at one unspecified time in the past, the time of "ya," or 2) the speaker is remembering a small duration of past time. On this view each "ya" burrows further into the past, such that "Ya besando unas manos cristalinas / ya anudándome a un blanco y liso cuello" means "already kissing some crystalline hands [which were/which had already been] tying me to a white and smooth neck." These, I think, are the two possibilities for time in the octave. But the final tercet casts time into disarray: "If the heavens now / already are not less powerful."[88] Given that the word "ya" has already appeared five times in the poem, the reader is, I think, inclined to take this "ya" endophorically, to think of the hoped-for action of the final tercet as having taken place in the "ya"-time of the poem. We are at the

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the critic to be aware of all of these alternative views before providing any definitive reading of a poem.

[88] "Si el ciel ya no es menos poderoso."

same time totally unable to understand the final "ya" in this way, given that the final tercet expresses a wish in the subjunctive present.

> If the heavens now already are not less powerful
> because they will not give to you more pricks,
> thunderbolts, as to your son, may they give you death. [89]

There are two other meanings that the final "ya" might have, both exophoric. "Ya" might mean simply "now," the time at which the poem is written or being heard. It might also be understood in the context of the final classical allusion, in which the poem invokes Zeus' striking down of Helios' son Phaëton with a bolt of lightning. In this case "ya" would mean, in a loose sense, the postclassical age. The declining power of "el cielo" could also allude to the slow but palpable decline of Spain in the quarter-century since the death of Charles V, still "now," but in an extended, comparative historical sense. However, I think a historicist reading of the sonnet is not to be given much weight, given that there is no allusion of any kind to the "present" time, and the classical allusion comes without names. It is to be seen more as an architectonic piece in the structure of the sonnet, an attempt to enliven the understanding of the reader with the use of what William Empson would consider the basic type of ambiguity, which arises "when a detail is effective in several ways at once,"[90] where here that detail is the "ya."

With this knowledge of the poem's temporal ambiguity in hand, we are well on our way to understanding the sense in which it does or does not relate the happenings of a dream. And many critics have, on various grounds, considered the poem as a report on a dream.

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[89] "Si el cielo ya no es menos poderoso,
porque no den los tuyos más enojos,
rayos, como a tu hijo, te den muerte."

[90] Empson, v

Jammes writes, "Góngora simply wanted to say that the sun, as it struck his eyelids, woke him up at the sweetest moment of the dream."[91] His grounds for this claim, evidently, are simply that the verbs, when they do come, cause an interruption which is too sudden, "killed off my glory and finished off my luck.."[92] Calcraft, too, considers the sonnet to relate a dream and claims that the jarring verbs are understandable if the sonnet is understood "as a waking from sleep."[93] However, other critics, such as Brockhaus, suggest that the poem relates an event, which happened in the "real" world of the poet. His commentary on the sonnet is entitled "Sonnenaufgang als Störung des Liebesgenusses" ("Sunrise as disruption of the enjoyment of love"), and there is no hint that this "Genuss" has been disturbed in any realm other than the waking one. In the following section, I wish to discuss those aspects of the sonnet which might afford the reader more certainty as to whether it is a dream or not. I will also advance an argument about why this is important.

Part I: Perchance to dream

Phenomena in dreams are distinguished, among other things, by being more elidable with each other than phenomena in the waking world. They merge, or their noumenal content is revealed to be different from what we intuit it to be in the waking world. If we consider this sonnet as a drama, one avenue of investigation is to inspect its "characters," in order to see the extent to which they are discrete or elided with each other. I think we are here justified in speaking of a drama with characters, because of the multiple personfications

[91] Jammes, *Études sur l'óeuvre poétique de Don Luis de Góngora*, 359; "Góngora a voulu dire tout simplement que le soleil, venant frapper ses paupières, l'a reveillé au moment le plus doux de sa rêve."
[92] "mató mi gloria y acabó mi suerte."
[93] Calcraft, *The Sonnets of Luis de Góngora*, 34.

found in the poem. The characters that we can certainly identify are the Sun (called "invidïoso," surely a human trait), "el cielo" (implicitly personified, by being supposed "menos poderoso," a change in state attributable to Zeus or Jupiter only if he were suffering from acute anthropomorphism) and "Amor," oddly supposed to be a proprietor of mines— "que Amor sacó entre el oro de sus minas." The characters who exist in a less certain way are the poetic "I," whose ontic status is made murky by the second half of the poem's title "y *le* fue forzoso dexarla," but seems to exist at least more stably by the middle of the first line of the sestet, and the "dama" herself, whose existence the reader is adjured to take on trust. She is in the title and various parts of her do appear in the octave, although standard Renaissance and Baroque tropes such as "manos cristalinas" give the reader only a metonymic sense of her, or of her extremities. As feminist critics have pointed out, she does not move, unlike the Sun, or even Amor, who appears only in a one-line cameo. The instability of the poetic "I" and the fragmentary nature of the "dama" create characters—indeed, two of the three main characters in an aubade—with distinctly oneiric qualities.

Before coming to any definitive conclusion about the question of dreaming, I want to inspect another related problem, the resolution of which will help to clarify the status of the oneiric in the poem. There is a longstanding discussion of whether this poem even sets out to describe a "real" dama, and what the consequences of depicting a "dama" understood both by poet and reader to be false, or idealized, would be. This is, I think, the sense in which the poem shows itself to be most ambiguous—this is the question on which the greatest number of disparate views has been reached, "without sheer

misreading." Jammes begins his discussion of this question by averring that this and the other "amorous" sonnets revolve "around the woman, and the woman insofar as she is the object of love."[94] Unlike later critics, Jammes did not maintain that to be about "la femme en tant qu'objet d'amour," the sonnet would necessarily have to show the beloved as possessed of a real, terrestrial beauty "or still that she show herself in a dream, less stingy with her charms, the woman is always a goddess bestowed with a superhuman beauty."[95]

Jammes' formulation of the beauty described in *Ya besando unas manos cristalinos* is bipartite. It is "surhumaine" and "parfaite," yet at the same time "marmoréenne et insensible."[96] Where his account differs signally from later crtiticism is in supposing that this idealized beauty means that the poet/I is exercised by a feeling of frustration or incapacity, "la femme est belle et inaccessible comme une déesse."[97]

Later critics have seen this inorganicism in quite different terms. Stampino views the "white, polished neck and crystal-like hands" as illustrative of a style in which the poet/I consciously seeks to subject the beloved to his "coldness and cruelty."[98] She takes particular umbrage at finding this in an aubade, which she understands as necessarily a genre of amatory poetry. (One need only consider Donne's "The Sunne Rising" and Larkin's "Aubade" next to this sonnet to see the variations in mood and technique which are possible. I will consider the question of genre at greater length below.) Other critics

[94] Jammes, *Études sur l'óeuvre poétique de Don Luis de Góngora*, 357; "autour de la femme, et de la femme en tant qu'objet d'amour."
[95] *Ibid*.
[96] *Ibid*., 359.
[97] *Ibid*.
[98] M.G. Stampino, "Bodily Boundaries Represented: the Petrarchan, the Burlesque and Arcimboldo's Example," *Quaderni d'italianistica 16* (1995): 63.

have followed a similar line of argument to produce more interesting theoretical results. Wagschal has considered this inorganicism as an epiphenomenon of the poetic persona's jealousy of the sun. Adducing Kant's notion of the dynamic sublime, Wagschal writes, "The sublimity of jealousy destroys the beauty of love and poetry itself in this descriptive poetics, calling attention to a new focus on the sublime."[99] The problem in Wagschal's argument is that he is forced to contend that the sonnet both does and does not describe a beautiful, sensual love. Jealousy of the sun has compelled the poet to break the possibility of the beloved's having been beautiful by rendering this beauty inorganic. By this reading, the poem is an attempt by the jealous poet to take revenge on a Sun "of whose consciousness the reader never becomes aware."[100] But this part of Wagschal's analysis seems to me weak precisely insofar as the Sun is personified in the poem, and, as I have written above, is a more stably constructed personification than the poet/I himself—which would hardly be the case if the slighted poet were merely casting a pall of inorganicism over his subjects in order to "lay hold of the world."[101]

There are, in short, unresolvable ambiguities in the main "characters" of the poem, in the temporality of the poem and in the question of the reality (or unreality) of the "dama" and/or her beauty. I think it is worthwhile here to recall that Freud's discussion of the uncanny begins with a rejection of Jentsch's notion that the uncanny is really incertidude about whether a thing is alive or dead. Freud dismisses Jentsch's conception of the uncanny, even if it affords us another useful perspective on the sonnet. If we reread the

[99] Steven Wagschal, *The Literature of Jealousy in the Age of Cervantes* (Columbia, MO: Missouri UP, 2006), 186.
[100] *Ibid*.
[101] *Ibid*.

sonnet while constantly attempting to determine for ourselves whether the "dama" is alive or not, we are left with the sense not only that the answer is ambiguous, but that there is something uncanny—or just odd—about this ambiguity.[102] The longstanding attempt to ascertain conclusively whether this sonnet describes a dream or not needs to be reframed. What makes dreams unique in human experience is that we are very often unsure we are having them—whether we are in one or not in one, slipping into one or slipping out of one. We often do not know whether we are dreaming, and while it is stirring to contemplate the grand inversion of "The world becomes dream, the dream becomes world,"[103] the moments of transition in and out of dreams leave as deep an impact on our psyches as the dreams themselves. The sense of ambiguity in *Ya besando unas manos cristalinas* is an enactment of the incertitude of the waking sleeper about whether he is awake or asleep.

Part II: "El Despertar Frente a Una Realidad Oprimente"[104]

The drive of Góngora and a few of his poetic coevals to expand, invigorate and legitimize Castilian as a language of poetry and culture cannot be overstated. This era of militant vernacularization might be said to have begun in earnest on April 17, 1536, when Charles V, in an address to Pope Paul III and the ambassadors of France and Venice, "substituted Spanish for the customary Latin, feeling justified in so doing, because in his opinion the

[102] We are also struck by the uncanniness of the repetition of "ya," repetition of course being the wellspring of the uncanny, according to the Freudian conception.
[103] "Die Welt wird Traum, der Traum wird Welt."
[104] Trans.: Waking up to an oppressive reality.

dignity of the Castilian language made it deserving of being understood by all."[105] This aim occupied Góngora for the term of his life. He writes illuminatingly in the *'Carta en respuesta'*[106] that "our language, because of my work, has been allowed to reach the perfection and nobility of Latin. I have not done away with its articles, as it seems to your worthiness, but rather excused them where they were not necessary."[107]

I have cited this passage at some length to illustrate the bind in which Góngora found himself and the mode by which he imagines himself to have resolved it. Latin was the standard of perfection to which he sought to raise Castilian, but this was something like the task of the cartographer in Borges' short story, '*Del rigor en la ciencia*.' The only way by which Castilian could be said to have attained all of the perfection of Latin is if it were expanded to the extent that it was Latin.

Since the time of the poem's composition, commentators have been inclined to see it as derivative in both style and content. On the question of style, Ciplijauskaité groups it with the other early sonnets, which are "completely impersonal, cold, purely descriptive, inspired by Petrarchan models."[108] There is some justification for this: the idealized description of the beloved, the ABBAABBA octave and the hendecasyllabic lines. The subject matter and imagery are also recycled, according to Ciplijauskaité, who writes that

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[105] Eunice Gates, *The Metaphors of Luis de Góngora* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1933), 11

[106] Which is almost certainly not apocryphal. For more on this, see Beverley, *Aspects of Góngora's Soledades*, 15–25.

[107] "nuestra lengua a costa de mi trabajo haya llegado a la perfeccion y alteza de la latina, a quien no he quitado los articulos, como le parece a V.m., y esos señores, sino excusándolos donde no necesarios." Quoted in Beverley, *Aspects of Góngora's Soledades*, 22.

[108] Ciplijauskaité, *Sonetos completos*, 26; "completamente impersonales, fríos, puramente descriptivos, inspirados en modelos petrarquistas."

"the theme is also treated by Ovid, and Ariosto dedicates an entire chapter to it in *Orlando Furioso*."[109] Calcraft confidently claims that Góngora's particular source for the sonnet "is undoubtedly Ovid's *Amores*,"[110] while Brockhaus favours Ariosto: "Góngora coaxes a subject into fourteen lines, which Ariosto had dedicated all of Chapter Eight to. In that chapter the plaint against Aurora is offered at the end."[111] There is something in all of these commentaries which is reminiscent of the reaction to Góngora's first volume of poems from the critics who mattered most in Spain at the turn of the seventeenth century: the clerics. A Father Cascales wrote in 1617: "So what has our poet attempted to do? I will say it; he has attempted to destroy poetry . . . By what means? By turning things back to primal chaos; making it such that thoughts cannot be understood, nor words recognized at all amidst the confusion and disorder."[112] By the light of Father Cascales, Góngora is guilty of corrupting language insofar as he is turning it back. This is also the verdict of critics such as Ciplijauskaité, who contend that Góngora's style and content in the early sonnets are merely retrograde, and therefore not worthy of much further explanation. And claiming that "los pensamientos no se entiendan" is perhaps a more baldly philistine way of saying that the poet "vela sus sentimientos," Ciplijauskaité's claim about the sonnet. Góngora's classicism, in other words, has consistently been seen as backward-looking, as obscuring the present sentiments of the poet. This claim merits closer inspection. Brockhaus presents the allusion to *Orlando Furioso* this way:

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[109] *Ibid*., 462; "El tema es también tratado por Ovidio, y Ariosto le dedica casi un capítulo entero en *Orlando Furioso*."
[110] Calcraft, *The Sonnets of Luis de Góngora,* 32.
[111] Brockhaus, *Góngora's Sonnetendichtung*, 34; "In 14 Zeilen drängt G. ein Thema, dem Ariost das ganze Capitolo VIII widmet, wo am schluss Klage gegen Aurora erhoben wird."
[112] "Pues ¿qué ha pretendido nuestro poeta? Yo lo diré; destruir la poesía . . . ¿En qué manera? Volviendo a su primer caos las cosas; haciendo que no los pensamientos se entiendan, ni las palabras se conozcan con la confusión y desorden." Quoted in Beverley, *Aspects of Góngora's Soledades*, 11.

There is a close affinity between the seventh verse:
"Already taking from each beautiful lip
Purple roses with no fear of thorns"
And the forty-seventh verse of the Italian poem:
"Seeing the roses in the open lips
Of her mouth and never fearing thorns"[113]

The allusion is certainly plain enough to merit being described as an "enge Berührung," though calling it an "analogía"[114] is misleading. The lines are very similar, but different sorts of lips are being described. The lips that Góngora describes are purple. This has the effect of transforming the image, which is already uneasy, into one which is profoundly macabre. The ambiguity which makes this image as macabre as it is depends on the placement of "purpúreas" between "labio bello" and "rosas." It is, therefore, a more jarring form of ambiguity than the later double use of "rayos" to mean both "ray" and "bolt," for in the case of "purpúrea," only one of the things described can be purple in the living world, namely roses—lips that are purple are dead.

The sonnet's allusion to Ovid's *Amores,* which most commentators on *Ya besando unas manos* have been happy to blithely re-announce, also merits closer inspection. Calcraft supposes that

it is likely that the irony of the final lines in Ovid's poem:

iurgia finieram, scires audisse: rubebat,
nec tamen adsueto tardius orta dies.

[113] "Enge Berührung besteht zwischen v. 7f.:
ya cogiendo de cada labio bello
purpúreas rosas sin temor de espinas
und v. 47f. des italienischen Gedichtes:
mirar le rose in su le labra sparse
porvi la bocca e non temer de'spini
Ernst Brockhaus, *Góngora's Sonnetendichtung*, 34.
[114] Ciplijauskaité, *Sonetos completos*, 462.

commended itself particularly to the young poet.[115]

There is certainly an allusion being made by Góngora, but is it merely a matter of some ironic final lines which appealed to Góngora, or is there a more important reason to allude to Ovid? The tone of these lines in the *Amores* is entirely different from that of *Ya besando unas manos* in that it brings out the subtle irony which very obviously underlies every aubade. An aubade is a fit of pique spoken against the Sun or, in the Occitan, "alba," which is the progenitor of the modern form, against the guardsman who alerts the lovers to the coming of the day. It is certainly ironic (or ironically pathetic) to protest against something which is totally ineluctable—indeed, totally ineluctable every day. One of the key metrics of tone in any aubade, then, is the vehemence with which the poem objects to the coming of the light, and the degree to which this is done with an awareness of the universality of the situation. And here, *Ya besando unas manos cristalinas* and the lines of the *Amores* to which they allude are very far apart. Ovid gently acknowledges the irony of the scene he has set: "the day rose as usual"—there is no such gentleness in Góngora's sonnet. A keen reader of the sonnet, Calcraft acknowledges that "In contrast to Ovid's comparatively lengthy poem, however, Góngora's choice of the concise sonnet form gives a particularly cutting edge to the lover's emotions."[116] He fails, however, to take stock of the significance of Góngora's "particularly cutting edge." The two classical references that most clearly undergird the sonnet are both much gentler in the original than they are in Góngora's appropriation of them. They are "palabras dulces," stock quotations which a

[115] Calcraft, *The Sonnets of Luis de Góngora*, 32. Translation: "I'd ended the brawl. You'll know I'd dared: she blushed / but still the day rose as usual, no more slowly!" Ovid, *The Amores*, trans. A. S. Kline, accessed April 27, 2017, http://www.poetryintranslation.com/PITBR/Latin/AmoresBkI.htm.
[116] Calcraft, *The Sonnets of Luis de Góngora*, 32.

would-be lover might try on a would-be paramour, but "sin merecello." Góngora is, I think, very consciously building on his allusions, none too subtly implying that Castilian poetry can sharpen the Latin and Italian poetic tropes to which it is beholden.[117]

Ya besando unas manos cristalinas accomplishes a great deal. It manages to enact the uncertainty between dreaming and waking, which is one thing an aubade should, by rights, always have done. Simultaneously, it manages to present a version of poetry in Castilian Spanish that unambiguously acknowledges—and unambiguously improves upon—its Latin and Italian forebears.

* * *

Que se quede el infinito sin estrellas,
Que la curva del tiempo se enderece.
Y pierda su fulgor, cuando se mece
Un planeta en su abismo y en las huellas

Del estallido primordial. Aquellas
noticias recibidas del comienzo
de las galaxias, del vacío inmenso,
hoy son luz fósil. Paradojas bellas

que anuncian por venir lo transcurrido
y postulan pasado lo futuro.
Universo del pensamiento puro:

un espacio que fluye como un río
y un tiempo sin presente, opaco y frío.
El tiempo de la espera y del olvido.

Let infinite space be without stars
Let the curve of time straighten
And lose its brightness, when a planet
Rocks in its abyss and in the footprints

Of the first explosion. That
news received from the beginning
of galaxies, from the immense void

[117] The most famous treatise on rhetoric in Golden Age Spain was Gracián's *Agudeza y arte de ingenio*. By "agudeza" Gracián means sharpening in this sense of honing or improving.

today is fossil light. Beautiful paradoxes

that announce the coming of[118] the past
and postulate as past the future.
Universe of pure thought:

A space that flows like a river
And a time without present, opaque and cold
The time of waiting and forgetting.

This sonnet by Severo Sarduy is connected to Góngora's "*Al sol . . .*" by an ellipsis that lasted almost four centuries. The seventeenth-century European Baroque, according to the twentieth-century Cuban Sarduy, was a copy of "something that must be read in filigree." This definition is almost as enigmatic as it is grandiose. Here I will argue that one simple thing that Sarduy means by this grand statement is that a later work can help us read an earlier work. In this section I will first attempt to explicate Sarduy's sonnet and then venture an opinion as to how it might help us to read Góngora's.

The first two feet of Sarduy's sonnet are very close to rhyming with each other perfectly. "QUE-se" in many dialects of Spanish that have lenition of the s-phoneme, including that spoken around Camagüey in Cuba, where Sarduy was from, is pronounced as "QUE-he" or "QUE-'e". "QUE-de" in Camagüey is pronounced with a weakening of the "d" as "QUE-'e." Thus, the initial ontic exhortation of the poem seems to be lost in the distance between the idea of language and its dialectal image, even if what emanates from the "first explosion" of the poem, and ends up being one half of the anaphoric axis around which it turns, is the syllable "que," which appears twice in the first line, once in the second and once at the beginning of the first tercet. Its final appearance is different, not

[118] The phrase "por venir" is a clever fragmenation of "porvenir," the future.

the hortatory conjunction of the first two lines, but something much less grand: a relative pronoun. We are reminded of the final "ya" of Góngora's sonnet, which undoes the anaphoric continuity that the word has given to the sonnet up until that point.

Sarduy's sonnet is wound on a double distaff of troubled anaphora. "Que" is the repetition that holds the poem together, up until the first lines of the tercets. The plosive "p" enters in the last line of the octaves, crescendos in the first tercet and sees the poem off in the second—"Paradojas . . . postulan pasado . . . pensamiento puro . . . tiempo sin presente . . . tiempo de la espera . . ." In Sarduy's own glossary, the sonnet orbits two poles. It is an ellipse rather than a circle. The poem itself asks for the "curve of time" to straighten itself, which we might read as an entreaty to the ellipse to become perfect, to become a circle. By demanding an impossible perfection, Sarduy was carefully casting into sharp relief the existence of something he called "el Neobarocco," the Neo-Baroque.

The figural language both of the Baroque and Neo-Baroque, Sarduy argued, were marked by their epoch's conception of "el infinito," a catch-all word of his that I have translated here as "infinite space." As discussed in my Introduction, Sarduy was convinced that Baroque figural language was given by contemporary developments in astronomy: the shift from a model of the solar system that postulated planets moving in circular orbits around the Sun (retaining the perfection of Ptolemy's formal conception, while denying its content) to the Keplerian model of elliptical orbits. Kepler's model, in its lopsided precision, was more radical than anything Galileo or Copernicus had ventured. But it was afraid of itself, and Kepler solved the theological problem thrown up by his lopsided

view of the universe by taking as read that the Sun was where God resided. It was this will to anachronism that suggested Kepler to Sarduy as the tutelary spirit of the Baroque. And it was because of this move in Kepler's astronomy, Sarduy grandly argues, that the dominant rhetorical trope of the Baroque should necessarily have become the ellipsis.

Neo-Baroque poetry was precipitated not by developments in astronomy, argues Sarduy, but by developments in cosmology. Isaac Newton brought the Baroque to a close, Sarduy has it, by giving the law of universal gravitation. Even if the planets' elliptical orbits were evidence of a universe visibly imperfect to all but Kepler himself, the law of universal gravitation, which proposed that an apple and a planet were moved by the same force, offered a solution that was general enough to imply some thoroughgoing perfection. All major European poets after Newton, in Sarduy's view,[119] had been happy enough to reflect this perfection, until Einstein posited the theory of special relativity. That theory assumed the localness of time; spaces that varied according to an individual frame of reference; private vistas on the universe. Special relativity in cosmology was the obvious correlate of Impressionism in painting, according to Sarduy. What Sarduy was particularly attracted to about special relativity was the way in which it seemed to have a great caveat at its center (as Kepler's heliocentrism had done, so Sarduy, by positing the Sun as God.) Reference frames might in themselves be private, but all were subject to the unchanging speed of light in a vacuum. The constant speed of light in a vacuum gave

[119] Sarduy did not change his explanation of the Baroque much from the beginning of his career as a critic until its premature end. For the fullest Sarduvian etiology of the Baroque see Severo Sarduy, *Ensayos generales sobre el barroco* (Madrid: *Fondo de cultúra económica*, 1987)

solace to Sarduy. In the sonnet I have cited above, he speaks of "luz fósil," a fossil remnant of light that survives from the distant past into the present.

Sarduy's conception of post-Einsteinian cosmology is willfully—artfully—simplistic. In his theoretical writings, as in this sonnet, he seems to cling to a conception of constant light as a necessary element of the "Steady State" theory of the universe, which competed with the Big Bang theory into the 1970s. He seems to take up the Big Bang playfully in the sonnet—"del primer estallido." But Sarduy's understanding of the Steady State theory, which Einstein himself rejected in the 1960s, held that the constancy of the speed of light showed that the universe itself had always expanded at a constant rate. *Pace* the period of inflation which the Big Bang Theory postulates, the universe had never expanded more quickly at one time than at any other. It had never been created and would never end.

Sarduy's embrace of Steady State in the 1960s[120] allowed him to do two things in his poetry. First, it allowed him to find himself in a history of poetry that was always growing, but had never made itself radically new. It allowed him to co-opt retrograde forms in Spanish poetry, such as the sonnet, fully-Castilianized, as he understood it, for the first time by Góngora. Second, it afforded him a place in the sequence of those who dictated the terms of poetry to their epoch on the basis of an important theoretical postulate with a grand caveat that seemed to contradict it, or at least to offer the promise

[120] Severo Sarduy, *Ensayos generales sobre el barroco* (Madrid: *Fondo de cultúra económica*, 1987)

of continuity with the past. Kepler had retained the immutability of God, Einstein the immutability of light. Sarduy retained religiously what was paradoxical in them both and in Góngora, and called his motley philosophy "la religion del vacío," the religion of the void, even though it was a "religion" that brimmed to plenitude with all of the most heterodox truths of his ancestors, scientific and poetic.

Or: Sarduy's putative religion is a parody of the ancestor religions. In his essay, "Barroco," Sarduy defines the relation of Baroque "copies" to their originals. A Baroque copy, he writes, is a "substitution, proliferation, condensation . . . and parody."[121] Sarduy's sonnet substitutes the anaphoric "ya"s of Góngora's sonnet for "que"s and plosive p-sounds, substituting weariness for anaphoric exhortation. It is a proliferation as it is a condensation—a carrying forth of the condensed sonnet well into the era of free verse. Is it also a parody of Góngora's sonnet? What is a parody of an earlier work? It is both a grotesque of a work, Sarduy seems to say, and a simple guarantee that it will continue to exist, as Bakhtin had argued.[122] Most interestingly, for Sarduy, parody exists in tandem with what he calls "reading what came before in filigree."[123] Sarduy's sonnet is not only a series of allusions to Góngora's—it is as an enjoinment to read Góngora's sonnet in light of its ancestors, Ariosto, Petrarch and Ovid, which is what I have attempted to do above.

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[121] Severo Sarduy, *Barroco* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Sudamericana Sociedad Anónima, 1974), 73
[122] Lars Kleberg, *Parody and Double-voiced Discourse*: *On the Language Philosophy of Mikhail Bakhtin* in *Dialogue and Technology: Art and Knowledge* (London: Springer Press, 1971), 11
[123] Severo Sarduy, *Barroco*, 75.

"Ya" is the word that seems both most tired and most urgent when we read Góngora's sonnet in filigree, carefully, backwards through Ovid and Petrarch and forwards through Sarduy, who turns the "ya" into "que." "Ya" makes Góngora's sonnet a parody of the timeless "tamen" of Ovid and the timeless lips and hair that Petrarch posits in his poem. It is a parody of them that seeks to make them new, in a new language. In its pomposity, it imagines that it is about the present (also conveyed by the "ya"). But it is about the present as much as Sarduy's sonnet is about a plausible, contemporary theory of cosmology—that is, not at all. The Baroque is always already late, even if it is cut off from the knowledge of this lateness by an enduring, pompous faith in its own discernment. In that sense, the Baroque artwork is frequently both parody and threnody—a killing off of something that it only meant to be a smirking footnote.

Chapter 2

What Became of Calderón.

This chapter will be built around three plays: Calderón's *La vida es sueño,* Franz Grillparzer's *Der Traum ein Leben* and Hugo von Hofmannsthal's *Der Turm*. *La vida es sueño,* as translated by A.W. Schlegel in 1803, was a runaway hit on the North-German stage. By then, the German theatrical tradition had visited upon the story of Segismundo the "principle of sufficient reason," first articulated by Leibniz and Wolff and then transposed to the theater by Lessing's teacher, Gottsched. Thumbing its nose at both tragedy and tautology, this principle held that the world was no more or less complicated than it needed to be, in order to be the best version of itself.[124] Gottsched's notion was that plays needed to be precisely as long and precisely as thin as necessary, to impart precisely the moral precept that the most upstanding possible playwright could have wished to convey.

And by the time that Franz Grillparzer wrote his inverted take on Calderón's play (*Der Traum ein Leben*, 1834), the ennobled Kantian subject, whom Grillparzer knew by report through Schelling and Fichte, had made possible a play that was no longer about theology, but epistemology. Rustan, the Segismundo of Grillparzer's play, has to judge on the basis of a bad dream, and act accordingly. In the plays of Calderón, there had been

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[124] In German, this is the "Satz vom zureichenden Grund," called by Leibniz the principle of "raison suffisante" in the *Monadologie* and "raison determinante" in the *Theodizee*. The principle was first formulated for the theater by Gottsched in his *Ausführliche Redekunst*, Leipzig, 1736.

no characters endowed with a private and efficacious faculty of judgment—there had been only avatars of the divine that caromed around against a background of godly omniscience.

Hofmannsthal's *Der Turm* was a brutal and beautiful return to the Calderónian model of subjects whose will was incidental to the tendency of the plot. Hofmannsthal sought to transcend the idealism of Grillparzer and thereby to achieve an atavistic return to Calderónian necessity. His play is also an only slightly refracted eulogy for the Habsburg Empire. But by necessity, it never bridges the distance between empirical history and the anonymizing, anachronistic impulse of Baroque art.

This chapter will also necessitate tracing the fate of the allegorical style in three countries. *La vida es sueño*, unmoored from its Spanish origins, became a pilgrim in Germany during the epoch of Romanticism (although it was, properly speaking, the plaything of Romanticism's forebears), where it was subjected to the deformations of Leibniz, Wolff, Gottsched and Lessing, as well as Kant, Fichte, Schelling and Voltaire. This multifarious deformation had, as its result**,** Grillparzer's *Der Traum ein Leben*. Segismundo had come to live and die in Austria, where he was to be revivified in the next century by Hofmannsthal in *Der Turm*. This pilgrimage was also the working-through of a set of questions that hovered above European drama before, during and after the Enlightenment. What is the relation of drama to metaphysics? What is the relation of drama to ethics? Or more precisely: can allegory provide consequent solutions to ethical problems? Showing how these questions were asked, reframed and answered will be the

task of this chapter.

To understand the senses in which the *Life is a Dream* allegory was distorted in subsequent epochs, it will be useful at this point to establish a few basic points about Calderónian allegory. Essential to Calderón's allegory is a treatment of time that, in its idiosyncratic emptiness, remains peerless in the history of European drama. Critics of Calderón have often been inclined to describe his theater as an attempt to show what is eternal, achieved by sloughing off what is human and contingent in time. So, for example, Friedrich Schlegel in his Vienna Lectures of 1812 imagined a ladder of dramatic art, on which Lope de Vega held the bottom rung, "because he only shows the shiny surface of life."[125] On this ladder, the rungs above Lope are held in ascending order by Shakespeare, then Calderón, then "the eternal" (das Ewige).[126] Schlegel's spectrum ranged from "superficial" to "eternal," where Calderón's drama fell near the latter end of the spectrum. Not twenty years later, another Viennese critic, Solger, came to dismiss Calderón's allegory as itself "superficial," calling it "formulaic" and marked by "a certain emptiness."[127] Solger was militating for a return to Lope as a dramatic model, and his consternation with Calderón coincided with a general turn away from him that started in the 1820s and became more determined in the leaden, Metternich-suffused 1830s. To make sense of this turn away from Calderón in the history of European drama, it is worthwhile to note that Schlegel's spectrum from "superficial" to "eternal" was initially

[125] ". . . nur die glänzende Oberfläche des Lebens zeigt." Quoted in Henry W. Sullivan, *Calderón in the German Lands and the Low Countries: His reception and Influence, 1654–1980* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 97.
[126] Quoted in Walter Naumann, "Grillparzer und das Spanische Drama," *Deutsche Vierteljahrsschrift für Literaturwissenschaft Und Geistesgeschichte 28* (1954): 345–372.
[127] Swana L. Hardy, "Goethe, Calderon und die romantische Theorie des Dramas," *Heidelberger Forschungen, 10* (Winter, 1965): 203.

accepted, and then repudiated. But putting Calderón on this spectrum at all strikes us as an interesting sort of misunderstanding because, for Calderón, the eternal was precisely that which was "superficial." The face of eternity is superficial. All moments in time are background, of equal standing with each other. Ernst Curtius captures this flatness of Calderónian time when he writes, "In Calderón's world Rome and Greece are never models for ethical or human attitudes: they are always a mere decorative background . . . to the Spaniard's eye, world history is a single vast picture-book in which all the pages are equally important . . . history is a great procession of marvelous figures."[128] If we accept Curtius' view of Calderónian time, then I think we must accept an obvious corollary of the view: dramatic tension in Calderónian allegory does not emerge from the temporal setting, which is merely that, a setting. To set a play in seventeenth-century Spain was to show the obscurity, the contingent *engaño* of a particular epoch, the way in which that epoch placed itself like a dark glass in front of its spectators, obscuring the eternal. To set a play in Rome, Greece or Peru was to show how this dark glass interposed itself between the spectators of those ages and the truth in other times and places. By calling attention to the darkness of this glass in all times and places, the dark glass was allowed to become a "decorative background." Nowhere near the edifice of Calderónian allegory is Benjamin's Angel of History in flight. That angel overflies another house, ruined and strewn with shards, gamely wishing them into wholeness. For even if Calderónian history could be put back together by Benjamin's angel, that history would still be the history of human apperceptions of history, a mere summation of *engaño*s. What is eternally true in the allegorical sensibility of Calderón is only visible to

[128] Ernst Robert Curtius, *Essays on European Literature* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2016), 156.

God and that obscured truth is a source of solace, not anxiety. Benjamin came closer to the truth of Calderónian allegory when he called it "the expression of convention."[129] "Rome" and "Greece" are conventions, impervious to any tension that might result from their reordering, their reworking in montage. Naumann put this simply and correctly when he wrote that, "Calderón takes the happenings of the world for granted."[130]

The Baroque plays that Benjamin took as examples in the *Ursprung des deutschen Trauerspiels* were generally set in epochs that fell long before the European Baroque proper, such as ninth-century Byzantium in the case of *Leo Armenius*, Gryphius' most performed play. Time is also not what it is in Calderón's oeuvre. Time is never the font of dramatic tension in Calderónian allegory. At this point, I would like to recapitulate two artful, dialectical conceptions of what the source of that tension actually is, before making a proposal of my own. The first dialectical account of the origins of dramatic tension in Calderón is by Hegel, who argued that the plays of Calderón stage a conflict "between love and honor."[131] The second dialectical account of the origins of dramatic tension in Calderón is by Schelling, who argued that Calderón's plays staged a conflict "between inherited sin and divine grace." On the example of one of Calderón's *comedias*, I would like to proceed by showing the strengths and weaknesses of these two modes of approaching Calderón's allegory.

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[129] "Allegory is both: convention and expression; and both are inherently contradictory . . . baroque allegory is regarded as created . . . it is not convention of expression, but expression of convention." Walter Benjamin, "Origins of German Tragic Drama," quoted here in *Baroque New Worlds: Representation, Transculturation, Counterconquest*, ed. Monika Kaup and Lois Parkinson Zamora (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010), 61.
[130] Naumann, "Grillparzer und das spanische Drama," 350.
[131] Quoted in Henry W. Sullivan, *Calderón in the German Lands and the Low Countries: His reception and Influence, 1654–1980* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 192.

El alcalde de Zalamea—one of Calderon's plays, which was both popular in his lifetime and of great importance for subsequent playwrights in the European and Latin American theatrical tradition—is evidently about love and honor in conflict. There are three moments in the conflict of love and honor in the play. One moment comes at the beginning of the first act, when the wealthy commoner Pedro Crespo hides his beautiful daughter Isabel in his attic. A batallion of soldiers is to be billeted on the town, and Pedro knows of the soldiers' reputation for sowing *deshonra*, which he understands to mean sex out of wedlock with his daughter. At the first moment in the dialectic of love and honor, then, the two terms are synonymous. They are the cause of the same action. Because Pedro Crespo loves his daughter, he wishes her not to be dishonored, and thus he hides her away. The second moment in the dialectic of love and honor comes after the soldier Don Álvaro has "dishonored" (i.e. raped) Isabel Crespo. Pedro Crespo seeks to have Don Álvaro marry his daughter. At this moment, love and honor are in conflict. Pedro Crespo seeks the marriage to maintain the public form of honor, although he feels himself to be besmirching his own private love for his daughter. The third moment comes after Pedro Crespo has failed in his attempt to make the marriage, but succeeded in becoming mayor of the town *pro tempore*. He has Don Álvaro hanged, even though as a civilian and a commoner he seems to be overstepping the bounds of what honor condones. The dialectical moment comes when Phillip II appears on stage to condone what Pedro Crespo has done, and makes him mayor for good. In this act, a new conception of honor is forged, which is profoundly heterodox. In this new conception, a slight to a man's love (for his daughter) belatedly makes it honorable in the temporal world for a man who is a civilian and a commoner to revenge himself on a noble soldier.

While the temporal unfolding of these events does not seem to be dialectical or even fraught, the development of the concept of honor is. In the opposition of love with honor, a new conception of honor is produced. The king, as the instantiation of temporal power, is out of step with the unfolding of the events of the play—he does not determine the order of events in the play. By the time he authorizes the death of Don Álvaro, Pedro Crespo has already killed him. The authorization that he gives for the execution of Don Álvaro is *ex post facto*. This lateness, this disordering of the play's *syuzhet* and *fabula* by the intervention of Phillip II—emerging as it does as the possibility of royal fallibility in time—implies the possibility of imperfect, royal judgment. In this sense, the play is perfectly in step with its time, written for a nation in thrall to Juan de Mariana's *De rege et regis institutione* (*Of the King and the King's Education*).[132] Published in 1598, it argued not only that kings were fallible, temporal avatars of divine power, but also that unjust kings might justly be overthrown. This rebeliousness, which I have also described above as the forging of a new concept of honor by the staged contention of love and honor, endeared this play in particular to proto-Romantic playwrights in Germany, such as Lessing. But there is an important difference between *El alcalde de Zalamea* and *Emilia Galotti,* clearly a blood relation of Calderón's play. While Pedro Crespo ends up as the mayor of Zalamea and his daughter ends up in a nunnery, apparently awaiting divine redemption for a crime she did not commit, Emilia Galotti ends up dead at her own father's hand. Lessing's *bürgerliches Trauerspiel* ("bourgeois mourning play") was intended to be angrily didactic, to spur its bourgeois audience to indignation at the

[132] Juan de Mariana, *De rege et regis institutione*, 1599.

excesses of the nobility. Calderón's original, on the other hand, is contained, autonomous. It stages an injustice and produces a new conception of honor capable of remedying the injustice. It has a more or less happy ending. It is a *comedia,* not a *Trauerspiel*. I will return to this autonomy or self-sufficiency of Calderónian allegory below. Before I do that, though, I would like to inspect what exactly the terms of the rectification of *Zalamea's* injustice are, in a theological sense.

A second reading of *Zalamea* is possible, along the lines that Schelling put forward. The play evidently rehearses the tension between inherited sin and divine grace. The interestingness that Calderón brings to this tension putatively springs from the fact that sin has been inherited by a nobleman and that grace seems to shimmer forth from a commoner. The ascendancy of Pedro Crespo would seem to equate Calderónian favor with divine grace itself, a force capable of soaring above merely temporal injustices. This reading is theologically coherent but logically dull. As orthodox as Calderón's theological positions might have been, his dramatic debt was to Lope de Vega, who counseled against predictability, counsel which Calderón tended to equal or exceed.

Calderón was too wedded to unpredictability for either of these dialectics to exhaust the play. If the play does invite parsing both in secular terms (as love versus honor) and in theological terms (as inherited sin versus divine grace), it also invites a reading which plays these readings against each other. How to read a play which is self-evidently about merely human affections confronted with divine law? The comedies of Shakespeare are centaurs—half secular, half otherwordly and all vassals, linguistically, of the divine. This

is not Calderón's hedge. For Calderón, the confrontation of sacred and profane was always resolved on the side of the sacred. What was the practical import of Pedro Crespo's victory, when played in the *corral* of Madrid, where the poor men and poor women were in different sections and only the box-holders (the aristocrats) could sit men and women together far above the commoners and the censors in the gods? The practical import of Pedro Crespo's victory, we might be tempted to say, was nothing. Unlike Shakespeare's England, Calderón's Spain was untroubled by schisms within Christianity, and it was more or less untroubled by schisms between the social classes. What might have become the bourgeoisie was decamping as rapidly as boats could sail to the New World.

What *El alcalde de Zalamea* asks is this: can a play matter? If God's law is eternal, what is the meaning of a play that plays off love and honor, inherited sin and divine grace, as if seeking a victor in these confrontations, or at least the emergence of a third and contingent term? Bringing these dialectics into play can be of no import if the world will stay as it always was, as a place in which these dialectics have never been called into being. Here we have arrived at what I think is the real dialectical tension of Calderón's *comedias,* as well as the *autos* and many of the *entremeses*. Do Calderón's plays have any bearing on the lives of their viewers, on their ability to understand the mystery of, say, the Eucharist—or do they not? Are they pearls or are they swine? Are they neither? There is a lever between Aristotle and Walter Benjamin beneath which Calderón is a fulcrum. Aristotle never confused tragic drama with life. Benjamin could only imagine

life as tragic drama. As I will try to show in what follows, Calderón had a foot in both camps.

Something of the relation that Calderón perceived between "life" and the "drama" is clear from a cursory look at his own career as a dramatist. He wrote plays for the *corrales* (public theaters) and the court in early life. During this period (1623–1651) he produced *comedias* such as *El alcalde de Zalamea, La vida es sueño* and *El mágico prodigioso* at a prodigious rate. In 1646, Phillip IV closed the theaters, apparently aggrieved at the deaths of both his son and queen. Calderón in turn took holy orders in 1651 and thereafter wrote only *autos sacramentales*, at the rate of two per year, until the end of his life thirty years later.[133] Comedies might be written by a layman, but a holy man might write only celebrations of the mystery of the Eucharist—in this respect Calderón took it to be true that a playwright could only write plays befitting his condition of life. And in this respect he was unlike many other Golden Age poets and playwrights, who saw no necessary connection between the taking of holy orders and the writing of doctrinally pure plays and poems. We think of Góngora, who also took holy orders in the middle of his career (1605), and thereafter became a less orthodox Catholic than he had been before, alluding complicatedly to his pagan poetic forebears with alacrity in the *Fábula de Polifemo y Galatea* of 1612 and in subsequent works. Dámaso Alonso has argued persuasively that the second phase of Góngora's poetic career was not a sea change, but merely an intensification of his more parochial early output.[134] Whether we accept Alonso's claim

[133] Pedro Calderón de la Barca and Gwynne Edwards. *Plays, one: the surgeon of honour ; Life is a dream ; Three judgements in one,* 13
[134] Dámaso Alonso, *Estudios y ensayos gongorinos* (Madrid: Gredos, 1982).

or not, it is evident that Góngora's taking of holy orders did not compel him to take up religious dogmatism. An artist might produce difficult, heterodox work, whether ordained or not, so Góngora. But Calderón was not of this view. The change in his output after taking holy orders in 1651 shows that he did not think it condign with the life of an ordained playwright to produce comedies (this might have been mere expedience, although there is no evidence that the ordained Calderón wrote *comedias* under a pseudonym, which he might easily have done). All of which is to say that Calderón did perceive a connection between "life" and the "drama." A man living a holy life could write only holy drama. But what we are principally concerned with here is the question of who could *read* holy drama, whether Calderón assumed the necessity or possibility of resonance between the spectator's life and the spectated play. Could plays "matter" in the lives of those spectators and, if so, on what terms?

What "mattered" to the lives of Calderón's spectators had been changed, even if only by report, by the Reformation. The Protestant conception of the Eucharist was important to Calderón not insofar as it challenged settled doctrine, but insofar as it affected the immediacy of representation. If the doctrine of consubstantiation proved to its adepts the uncorrupted transparency of their faith, the Calderónian faith in allegory was of a piece with his conviction that the image of transparency itself was a temptation of the world, an *engaño*. This deep ambivalence about transparency shows itself in *El mágico prodigioso* when Justina—whom Goethe instinctively understood as an analogue to Helen in his

Faust[135]—emerges from a rock (an entrance made possible by the brilliant stage design of Cosme Lotti[136]). No rock is just a rock, if it might be moved aside to release Helen from within it (the allusion to Jesus rolling aside his rock is so breezy that it avoids shading into the blasphemous). This, in micro, typifies Calderón's will to *theatrum mundi*—all that happens on the stage is a diffracted version of what might, with divine or Calderónian know-how, happen in the world and *vice versa*, unlikely as either transformation might seem. On his stage appears a wildly, derangedly and ingenuously transubstianted world, not a merely consubstantiated one. We anglophones cannot think of the trope of *theatrum mundi* but in the terms of *As You Like It,* "All the world's a stage, and all the men and women, merely players."[137] But Jaques' line in that comedy presupposes a distance between stage and world, which is marvelously bridged by rhetoric. In the case of Calderón, however, such bridging was unnecessary. Ernst Curtius, speaking with equal correctness of Hofmannsthal's *Der Turm* and Calderón's plays of the 1630s and 1640s describes:

> a universal allegorical and symbolic poem which should raise all the perplexities of existence to the order of the great fundamental laws so that the eternal may shine through temporality. Here allegory is not an attenuation of vitality nor the mask mere appearance. The reverse is the case: only when we have perceived the deceptive character of our existence do we gain insight into its deeper truth and meaning.[138]

Curtius is entirely correct, although we would add that that what Curtius senses as the "non-attenuation" of vitality in the allegories of Calderón emerges as a victory of the quotidian vitality of a play over its allegorical vitality. To put it another way: after the

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[135] Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Faust: eine Tragödie: Erster und zweiter Teil* (Munich: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1997).
[136]Pedro Calderón de la Barca and Gwynne Edwards. *Plays, one: the surgeon of honour ; Life is a dream ; Three judgements in one,* 13
[137] Curtius, *Essays on European Literature*, 136.

allegorical wisdom of what might be a brutal dream has accrued to him, Segismundo returns to the world and its hierarchies, even refusing to kill his father when he has the chance to do so. The allegorical insights of Segismundo's madness are, in Act III of *Life is a Dream*, tested against the exigencies of ruling. Benjamin puts this flight from allegory to pragmatism thus, when he observes that in the plays of Calderón "the conflicts of a state of creation without grace are resolved, by a kind of playful reduction, within the sphere of the court, whose king proves to be a secularized redemptive power."[139] "Morality," Benjamin concludes in this passage, "is valid within a play such as *La vida es sueño*."[140] And ingenious, impossible stage design, we are inclined to say, is valid within a play such as *El mágico prodigioso*. To postulate a thesis about the "meaning" of Calderón's plays for their audience, we must remind ourselves that, in essence, he had two audiences: the theater-going public of the *corrales* and the court of Philip IV. That king's affection for Calderón's plays is proverbial, although Aercke has recently argued convincingly that the extent of Philip's patronage of Lope and Calderón was probably not as great as once thought.[141] Nonetheless, it is indisputable that Philip saw himself as the good king in Calderon's *comedias* and reveled in Calderón's use of perspective scenery (especially in throne room scenes), a stage trick imported from Italy by the ingenious Lotti.[142] The king saw his own power reflected and increased by Calderón's stage productions, which mattered deeply to him and to his courtiers, since they were to learn from Calderón's plays deference to a glorious imagination of a king,

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[139] Benjamin, *Ursprung des deutschen Trauerspiels*, 81.
[140] *Ibid*.
[141] Kristiaan P. Aercke, *The Gods of Play: Baroque Festival Performances as Rhetorical Discourse* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994).
[142] Jeremy Robbins, *The Challenges of Uncertainty: An Introduction to Seventeenth Century Spanish Literature* (Lanham, MD: Rowan and Littlefield, 1998).

who was, in extra-theatrical life, a mediocrity at best. Philip, like Louis XIV in France and Elizabeth in England, was very much in love with literature and the stage. Unlike Louis, he does not seem to have condescended to act on the stage himself, although it seems quite possible that he was a ghostwriter or a ghost co-writer of some of Lope's late *comedias*.[143]

A century later and beyond, Charles III proscribed the plays of Calderón, up to and including the *autos sacramentales*. He reasoned that the dead ends and reversals of Calderón's plots amounted to an obfuscation of the dignity of the Eucharist. Sullivan captures the tenor of broader objections to the *autos* during Charles III's reign when he writes: "Madrid press of the era makes for tedious reading. [The *autos*] were condemned with a predictable chorus of complaints about infringements of the Unities of Time and Place, errors of geography, history and decorum, the lack of verisimilitude, the mixture of comic and tragic elements, and so on."[144]

Madrid playbills from that star-crossed, philistine decade, the 1760s, in which the banning of Calderón proved to be merely the overture to the proscription of the Jesuits and their expulsion from the New World, show that Calderón was the most performed playwright by far in the *corrales* of the city. The ban on Calderón was not merely academic—it deprived theatergoers in the capital and other parts of the Spanish Empire of seeing their favorite plays performed.

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[143] *Ibid*.
[144] Sullivan, *Calderón in the German Lands and the Low Countries*, 114.

To draw what might be an over-simple arc from Philip IV to Charles III, then, one could say that while Calderón's plays mattered to the first king, they mattered much more to the second king's subjects—in that king's paranoid conception of them, at least. Charles imagined that Calderónian allegory, even if in it "the king proves to be a secularized redemptive power," could impart a subtlety of thought that might make a King's job more difficult. If one were inclined towards functionalist explanations of the allegorical style, such as that of Maravall, one might argue that the Spanish king had grown less sure of himself in the one hundred and thirty years between Philip and Charles, and less willing to brook forms of artistic expression that might secretly imply anti-Catholic or anti-monarchic messages. But such an explanation flies in the face of facts. Charles III considered himself an enlightened absolutist, in the model of Maria Theresa of Austria and Catherine the Great of Russia, one who was more willing to tolerate uncensored forms of expression than his predecessors had been. Moreover, the Spanish Empire reached its greatest extent during his reign. On his watch, the revolt of Túpac Amaru II was put down, as were such smaller rebellions as the Revolt of the *Comuneros*, one vice-royalty to the north, in 1780. To see a Spanish king fearing for his kingdom and cracking down on those he feared seems like reading with the benefit of hindsight, where in fact the king's distaste for Calderónian style is to be ascribed to something else. Another point that would seem to bear this out is the fact that the Madrid press, which was in fact given new leeway under Charles III and was in some instances more critical than it had been before of the monarchy, was also critical of Calderón, as Sullivan notes.[145]

[145] Sullivan, *Calderón in the German Lands and the Low Countries*, 74

The question then, does not seem to be about authority. It is about taste, the machinations of which are, perhaps, even harder to pin down. What had changed in the formation of literary taste between the mid-seventeenth century and the latter part of the eighteenth century, and why did it affect the taste for Calderónian plays in his homeland so particularly? I think that Paul De Man is approaching this same question from a different side when he speaks of "the change that takes place in the latter half of the eighteenth century, when the word 'symbol' tends to supplant other denominations for figural language, including that of 'allegory.'"[146]

The simplest explanation for this change (though de Man does not countenance such simplicity) is the criticism of Voltaire. His effect on Prussian theater criticism was as profound as his effect on Spanish theater criticism. To put it simply, Voltaire imagined that he was against allegory. Nonetheless, he pronounced himself in favour of Corneille (though in ambiguous terms that I will inspect below), who was a conduit to France of Spanish Baroque theater. Corneille pastiched Juan Ruiz de Alarcón's *La verdad sospechosa* with abandon, turning it into his own *Le menteur*, which was a great success with the Parisian public, as well as with Voltaire. That notwisthstanding, the late Voltaire was a militant despiser of Calderón, whom he considered a plenipotentiary representative of the Spanish theater. It will be instructive here to plot this turn in Voltaire's affections, because it provided the model for the critical *volte-face* that Calderón later suffered, not only in Germany, but also in Spain.

[146] de Man, *Blindness and Insight*, 188.

In 1727, the youngish Voltaire had still been willing to grant that every playwright was playing to two countries, the playwright's own and France. In his "Essai sur la poésie épique" he seemed to grant that the beauty of a play was relative, in some measure, to the acclaim that it received in his own country. Williams writes of this early period:

> Voltaire had always staunchly defended the merits of relativistic perspectives and cosmopolitan tolerance. Following the 'local beauty' argument, the consensus of opinion within a single nation, on Shakespeare for example, or Camöens, or Milton or Calderón, had been accepted in earlier phases of Voltaire's literary criticism as a vindication of the artist's claim to greatness.[147]

But by 1758, great playwrights had only one homeland—France. And they were subject to only one standard of taste—France's. This standard was, in fact, Voltaire's, although he always considered himself the mouthpiece of an ideal, reasoned theatergoer, "le peuple français." Voltaire's turn in the first instance, was against Shakespeare (as would Tieck's be, to take but the German whose turn against Shakespeare and Calderón imitated Voltaire's most exactly, more than fifty years later). The monstrosity that he found in Calderón Voltaire was, at least, charitable enough to put down to the Spaniard's century and not to anything in his own genius:

> I had said that [Shakespeare's] genius belonged to him and his faults belonged to his century. In my opinion he is exactly like Lope de Vega of the Spaniards, and like Calderón. A beautiful nature, but savage, without regularity . . . no art, baseness with grandeur, buffoonery with the terrible. It is the chaos of a tragedy in which there are a hundred traces of light.[148]

What did Voltaire mean when he applied the epithet "savage" to Calderón and his ilk? (And it is notable that general ignorance of the Spanish theater in mid-eighteenth-century France was such

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[147] David Williams, "The Role of the Foreign Theatre in Voltaire's 'Corneille,'" *Modern Language Review Vol. 71 Issue 2* (April 1976): 283.

[148] Quoted in Williams, "The Role of the Foreign Theatre in Voltaire's 'Corneille,'" 287; "J'avais dit, que son genie était à lui, et que ses fautes étaient à son siècle. Il est précisément à mon avis comme le Lopez de Vega des Espagnols, et comme le Calderon. C'est une belle nature, mais sauvage; nulle regularité . . . nul art; de la bassesse avec de la grandeur; de la bouffonnerie avec du terrible, c'est le chaos de la Tragédie dans lequel il y a cent traits de lumière."

that Calderón could be accused of having the same shortcomings as Lope de Vega. As noted at the beginning of this chapter, by the time of Schlegel's lectures, Lope and Calderón were already at opposite ends of a spectrum of superficiality concocted in Vienna.) Writes Voltaire of his own loose translation of Calderón's *En esta vida todo es verdad y todo es mentira*:[149] "I wanted to offer a translation of the *Héraclius* of Calderón because it is so bizarre, savage, comic and at certain points, sublime, that it deserves to be known. It is pure nature, nothing resembles Shakespeare more closely."[150]

This "savage" seems to be an apposition for "pure nature." But in the same breath, Calderón's play is accused of being unnatural and bizarre (the first synonym, incidentally, that appears for the word "Baroque" in the 1750 *Encyclopédie*). I will treat the paradoxical accusation of excessive naturalness and excessive unnaturalness present in the same work below.

The flippancy of Voltaire's transposition can be judged from his rendering of the opening of *Héraclius*: Calderón's magician Lisipo had conjured up an enchanted castle in the middle of a forest, a scene which Voltaire ignores out of fidelity to the unity of place. Federico's providential arrival with an army (III, xiv), which constitutes the plays dénouement, Voltaire considered admirable, although he wished it had more

[149] Which Voltaire asserted without evidence must be a bowdlerization of a Spanish translation of Corneille's *Héraclius*. Cf. Sullivan, *Calderón in the German Lands and the Low Countries*, 105.
[150] Quoted in Williams, "The Role of the Foreign Theatre in Voltaire's 'Corneille,'" 288; "J'ai voulu donner une traduction de *L'Héraclius* de Calderón; elle est d'un bizarre, d'un sauvage, d'un comique, et en certains endroits d'un sublime qui méritent d'être connu. C'est la nature pure, rien ne ressemble plus à Shakespeare."

vraisemblance and *convenance*. Donald Schier has observed of Voltaire's rendering of the latter sections of the play:

> In the second and third *jornadas* the abridgement becomes drastic. Thus Voltaire summarises at one point with the words, "Phocas dit enfin au bonhomme Astolphe…" and the *enfin* refers to about two hundred lines which he does not even summarise. Similarly twelve lines in Voltaire's version do duty for eleven scenes and some four hundred lines in the Spanish text. There are multiple errors of translation as well, and Voltaire actually attenuated the expressions that shocked his neo-Classical sensibility; he commented on attitudes offensive to him in the text, and railed against an author who had "surrendered to his savage genius."[151]

Because so much of the antipathy that the late Voltaire felt for the "savage genius" of allegorists such as Calderón was really nothing more than thinly disguised Gallic chauvinism, it can seem a fool's errand to tease out the reasons for Voltaire's disdain for allegory. As noted above, the *mago* Lisipo's sudden conjuring-up of the enchanted forest is simply omitted, on grounds of *vraisemblance* (which is to say simultaneously that Voltaire is quite willing to dispense with the principle of verisimilitude entirely, when there arose a question of verisimilitude in translation). We might ask ourselves, then: is there any allegory, which attains the late-Voltairean standard of *vraisemblance*? *Candide*, perhaps. *Candide* satisfies doubly the Voltairean test for good allegory. Published in 1759, it achieves in spades the chauvinism that was to mark all of Voltaire's works after the definitive turn against foreign art.[152] It also achieves the second criterion for good allegory, according to Voltaire. It is stridently and univalently didactic. Earlier allegories by Voltaire, such as *Micromégas* (1752), were also didactic but, to adapt the language of Benjamin, the distance between their "artistic intention" and their "theological

[151] *Ibid*., 106.
[152] It was in 1758 in a letter to Besterman that Voltaire first wrote of Shakespeare's plays as a hodgepodge of 'scènes bouffonnes.' Voltaire, *Correspondence*, ed. Theodore Besterman, 107 vols. (Geneva: Institut et museé Voltaire, 1953–1965), D7741.

intention"[153] was much greater. To render that "distance" in simpler terms, we could say that *Micromégas* needs a reader to decipher its lesson, while *Candide* repeatedly deciphers itself, its allegory flattened into a thoroughly dependable irony.

Sullivan writes that "allegory, for Voltaire, was a lapse into the Gothic barbarism of the Middle Ages."[154] This statement seems broadly true, except for the fact that by the time Voltaire savaged Calderón, the transfigured face of allegory had already been revealed in the light of redemption, to misquote Benjamin only slightly.[155] In spite of himself, Voltaire did not wish to repudiate the allegorical style—he simply wished to redeem it. Allegory mattered very much to Voltaire, but only insofar as it could be deployed didactically.

In 1764, Voltaire wrote a short, allegorical story that would have a great effect on the European theater for the next century and beyond. *Le blanc et le noir* is the story of a certain Rustan, a nobleman of Kandahar who has been promised to a girl of his own rank. However, at a fair in Kabul, he falls in love with a princess. She is from Kashmir, and spurred on by his black valet, Ébène, Rustan goes in search of her. Some of the linear progression of *Micromégas* is recalled here. Rustan begins in one place that starts with Ka-, travels east to another Ka-, and ends up at yet another Ka-. He has been cautioned, though, by an oracle that, "If you go to the East, you'll end up in the West,"[156] and indeed he is finally dispatched back to the Ka- of origin, Kandahar. His other valet, Topaz, who

[153] Benjamin, *Ursprung des deutschen Trauerspiels*, 84.
[154] Sullivan, *Calderón in the German Lands and the Low Countries*, 107.
[155] Benjamin, *Ursprung des deutschen Trauerspiels*, 166.
[156] "Si tu vas à l'orient, tu seras à l'occident."

is white, has initially cautioned him against the whole trip, and cautions him against each separate move that gets him closer to Kashmir. When he finally reaches Kashmir, the princess mistakes him for another man whom she despises, throws an enchanted spear at him and kills him. The *dénouement* sees Rustan wake up, back in Kandahar, safe and sound. It has all been a dream.

There are a few preliminary observations that one could make about this story. At the outset of the story, we are told that Rustan's bad *daimon* is black and his judicious *daimon* white. However, it is made fairly clear at the end of the tale that this color-scheme is an invention of Rustan's fevered mind. When Rustan wakes in his bed in Kandahar he exclaims to Topaz

> —So what has become of that barbarian Ébène with his four black wings? It was he who caused me to die such a cruel death.
> —Sir, I left him upstairs as he was snoring. Would you like me to have him come down?[157]

Which is to say that this may in fact be a cautionary tale against racial generalizations. The giver of bad counsel may never have been black at all, except in Rustan's dreamworld. "His four black wings" sound very much like the inventions of an uneasy dreamer, or a throwaway allusion to the black horse of the soul in the *Phaedrus*, or both. This didacticism also seems to be directed against generalizations about the "Orient." At the very least, many of the "Oriental" details of the story are meticulously observed: the series of Ka- places, as well as Rustans's rank of *mirza*, a Persian title, which corresponds more or less to "Marquis" in the European schema. Kandahar is east of Kabul, which is

[157] "qu'est donc devenu ce barbare Ébène avec ses quatre ailes noires ? c'est lui qui me fait mourir d'une mort si cruelle. – Monseigneur, je l'ai laissé là-haut qui ronfle; voulez-vous qu'on le fasse descendre?" Voltaire, *Oeuvres de Voltaire, Tome XXIII* (Paris, Lefèvre, 1829), 34.

east of Kashmir. More salient yet, the story explicitly warns against finding easy wisdom in the "Orient." As the oracle tells him, "If you go to the East, you'll end up in the West,"[158] and indeed the story ends up being about the inescapability of the Occidental point of departure.

Voltaire's story does not seem to essentialize the "Orient" at all, except, perhaps, in one important respect. He has named his hero "Rustan," who was established as the archetype of the hero in the *Shahnameh*, the Persian epic that Voltaire seems to have known largely by report (the figure of Rostam was also a source of fixation for Goethe, half a century later). In the *Shahnameh,* Rostam is a mighty knight of the faith who is overtaken by tragedy when he discovers that he has killed his own son, Sohrab, in battle. Voltaire plays magically with this strange, anti-Oedipal story in the reorganization he visits upon it in *Le blanc et le noir*. In the *Shahnameh*, Rostam's mother is Rudaba, the princess of Kabul. In Voltaire's rendering, Rustan is noble but not royal, and he seeks to marry a princess whom he meets in Kabul, who turns out to have been a phantasm. The epic Rostam of the *Shahnameh* is humbled, reframed, ironized—in a word, novelized. He goes from being a repository of his nation's glories to being merely a repository of his own psychic foibles and doubts.

Is this, then, what Voltaire meant with the word *vraisemblable*, something like "epic characters endowed with psychological quirks"? In some measure, yes. But while he looks forward to the ascendancy of the novel, Voltaire simultaneously looks back with

[158] "Si tu vas à l'orient, tu seras à l'occident." Voltaire, *Oeuvres de Voltaire, Tome XXIII*, 9.

nostalgia on the classical unities. Unity of place, which Voltaire found so lacking in Calderón, he achieved in this story by choosing various Oriental settings, which changed, but seemed not to, as Ka-ndahar became Ka-bul, which became Ka-shmir. The unities of time and action are less obviously in evidence but, with a final flourish, Voltaire ensures that they are not gainsaid. When Rustan awakes, he is sure that much time has passed, but Topaze corrects him: "Sir, you only slept for one hour." Time seems to have been fractured, but in fact it was not, as we learn in a kind of *deus ex machina* of the unities.

Le blanc et le noir is also a critical commentary on *La vida es sueño*. Rustan is a slightly bourgeoisified Segismundo, who seems to be made to suffer in part because he has attempted to "marry up." Segismundo's realizations, Voltaire also seems to say, are impracticable and not worth teaching. Most spectators of Calderón's play cannot simply check their passions, and by that small act of restraint hope to earn themselves a kingdom. Dreams are useful only insofar as they throw up wisdom that can be put into practice. Like allegories, dreams are only didactic when they are readily decoded.

Franz Grillparzer's *Der Traum ein Leben* (1834) is, as its title indicates, a kind of inverted take on Calderón's *La vida es sueño*. Its primary source material, however, is Voltaire's *Le blanc et le noir*. It is an allegory which takes for granted the premise that the only allegory worthy of imitation is Voltaire's Enlightened allegory. But it is, in some sense, an even more verisimilar copy of the political conditions of real life than Voltaire's short story. Rustan is recast by Grillparzer as a hard-up hunter whose transgression is to dream himself into love with a woman occupying a much higher social station than his

own. It was immediately obvious to an audience seated in the reactionary *Burgtheater* of the 1830s that such a dream could only end in failure. And indeed, Grillparzer's Rustan wakes just as he is to be killed for his class-defying antics. Unlike his namesake in Voltaire's story, he announces the moral of the story—and it is a pragmatically moral story—explicitly: "Use your dreams to teach you to navigate reality."

Schreyvogel has claimed that, although *Le blanc et le noir* and *Der Traum ein Leben* are similar in content, they are written in different modes. He speaks of a shift in emphasis "from Theology to Morality."[159] This is an elevated way of saying that by the time the *Life is a Dream* story was subjected to Grillparzer's reworking, it no longer presupposed the certainty of divine mercy. It was not concerned with the divine at all, but rather with what Schreyvogel aptly calls the "inner happiness that lies in Selbstbegrenzung und Seelenfrieden."[160] To clarify how Selbstbegrenzung became the handmaiden of Seelenfrieden in *Der Traum ein Leben*, it will be necessary to turn away from Voltaire and towards the German philosophers who impressed themselves on Grillparzer at different stages of his career.

By 1834, when *Der Traum ein Leben* was written, Grillparzer was in thrall to two kindred philosophical traditions, the Kant-Fichte-Schelling-Schlegel school of Transcendental Idealism and the Leibniz-Wolff-Gottsched-Lessing school of Pluralistic Idealism. This division of Idealists into two distinct camps is persnickety, although it is

[159] Quoted in Sullivan, *Calderón in the German Lands and the Low Countries: His reception and Influence, 1654–1980,* 169
[160] Sullivan, *Calderón in the German Lands and the Low Countries: His reception and Influence, 1654–1980,* 170

not wrong. Transcendental Idealism was concerned with the epistemological limits of subjects, whereas Pluralistic Idealism was in search of the epistemological possibilities endowed to many subjects observing or experiencing the same phenomenon. From epistemology as a collective exercise, there was a short road to morality as a collective exercise. Pluralistic Idealism in its high period, from the late seventeenth century to the late eighteenth century, became increasingly interested in the theater, insofar as it could be used as a vector for moral injunctions.

In what follows, I would first like to examine the effect of Transcendental Idealism on the Grillparzer of *Der Traum ein Leben*. I will then go on to treat the Pluralistic Idealist refashioning of theatrical imperatives that exerted itself on *Der Traum ein Leben*.

It will be useful first to articulate the debt that the school of Transcendental Idealism itself owed to Calderón. Hardy comes to the explanation succinctly when he writes that "Idealist followers of Kant felt that his system lacked a first principle."[161] Whether this is true or not (do the three Critiques taken together not constitute a sort of triune first principle?), it is certainly what many of the philosophers, poets and playwrights of the generation after Kant felt about Kant's work.[162] Calderón's plays reposed on a first principle that was only too evident: the principle of divine grace.

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[161] Hardy, "Goethe Calderon und die Romantische Theorie des Dramas," 216.
[162] When Fichte found Kant's first principle missing, he invented his own, which he called the "Absolute Ich," an Ich that became "absolute," fundamental both as a principle of cognition and action as it became conscious of itself.[162] Fichte transmitted his version of Kant's philosophy to Friedrich Schlegel at Jena.[162] He and the other Romantic philosophers imagined that the first principle resided elsewhere, namely in Art itself.

It was Friedrich Schelling who, of the Idealists in the generation after Kant, felt the lack of a first principle most keenly. Schelling invented his own first principle, which he called "Nature." This put him at odds with Kant, who viewed nature as a sort of final principle that might have some noumenal quality far beyond the cognition of the subject. It also caused a rift between Schelling and his erstwhile collaborator Hegel, for whom Nature was inert and excluded from the realm of Spirit ("Geist"). The Sun, as he argues in the opening lines of the *Lectures on Aesthetics,* was not an object for aesthetic consideration at all, because it was not a human artifact. Even if Schelling found this first principle of metaphysics in Nature,[163] he understood the foundational principle of drama to be the struggle between freedom and necessity, a principle that he develops in his *Abhandlung ueber die Tragödie*. Schelling argues that freedom and necessity cannot cancel each other out. Oedipus is punished for a crime forced on him by fate, yet he freely assumes the consequences—that the "innocent" guilty party voluntarily assumes his fate is tragedy's sublimity.[164] Schelling argued that Eusebio in Calderón's *La devoción de la cruz*, caught between inherited sin and divine grace, was the "the new Oedipus of the differentiated world . . . Classical and Romantic [*i.e. Catholic*] art in a new synthesis."[165] And of the Idealists in Kant's wake, it was Schelling who would exercise the greatest influence on Grillparzer. The struggle of freedom and necessity became the "first principle" of plays such as *Der Traum ein Leben*.

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[163] I will have more to say about Schelling and his principle of "Nature" in Chapter 4, in relation to Lezama Lima and Sarduy's reappropriation of him in their bid to "creolise" Hegel's "Geist" for Latin America.
[164] Hardy, "Goethe Calderon und die Romantische Theorie des Dramas," 217.
[165] *Ibid*., 219. Schelling, "Eusebio" in *La Devoción* is the new Oedipus of the "differentiated world." He is caught between inherited sin and divine grace. Schelling found it the combination of classical and romantic art in a new synthesis.

In *La devoción de la cruz*, Eusebio, his sister Julia and their father Curcio freely took upon themselves what had been meted out to them as *destino*, which in philosophical terms is called *necessity*. And, in that sense, they were successors to Oedipus. But the Rustan of *Der Traum ein Leben* is unlike those characters. He freely chooses *not* to take upon himself what we spectators of the play assume to be the necessity of his doomed, dreamt-up life. Naumann writes: "For Calderón, life's happenings have the religious character of something final, something that must be shouldered, carried and overcome. By contrast, Grillparzer's hero acts, he brings about the causes of his life and its happenings by wishing, overstepping himself and fibbing."[166]

Naumann's differentiation of freedom in Calderón (and in this passage he is referring primarily to Segismundo in *La vida es sueño*) and in *Der Traum ein Leben* is well observed, even if it overtstates a difference in the letter between Calderón and Grillparzer more than it captures the great difference in spirit. For characters in Calderón's *autos* and *comedias* also wish, overstep themselves and fib, but these actions only seem to "bring about the causes of their lives" until the beginning of the third act. In the dénouement of his plays, Calderón's characters are subject to a form of *anagnorisis*. They are not given a shocking insight that relates them in a new way to others. They are rather given a progressive insight that relates them in a new way to themselves. And that insight is that they had never had a self, if a self was ever anything other than a sliver of God's capacious knowledge.

[166] Naumann, "Grillparzer und das spanische Drama," 355; "Fuer Calderon hat das Geschehen des Lebens den religioesen Charakter von etwas Endgueltigem, das angenommen, ertragen und bestanden werden muss. Grillparzers Held dagegen handelt, er fuehrt das Leben, das Geschehen erst herbei, indem er selbst wuenscht, uebertreibt und schwindelt."

Another way of expressing this differentiation of Calderón and Grillparzer's characters is in terms of what Naumann brilliantly calls "Einmaligkeit," or uniqueness. In a passage that comes shortly after the one I have cited above, he argues that Grillparzer has, in effect, undone the binding uniqueness of Calderón's world. He writes: "Grillparzer wants to have lived, harvested the insight that comes from having lived . . . since it was a dream, the uniqueness of what has happened is rescinded ('aufgehoben'). Time . . . is effaced. This is an inversion of Calderón's play, which emerged from the unity ('Eintracht') of the cosmic order."[167]

Rustan's freedom is great indeed. He can choose to free himself from the world he encounters, even though that world has presented itself as unique and uniquely inescapable. By an act of will, he can cognize the world as a merely deceptive contingency, as an *engaño*. Thus he arrives at Calderón's point of departure, but by other means. Naumann is right to use the Hegelian verb, "aufgehoben," to describe what Rustan has done with the knowledge of Segismundo (the knowledge that all the world's an *engaño*). Grillparzer has not "rescinded" it, as I loosely translated Naumann's use of the word. He has "stored it away" or "lifted it up" for rediscovery by an autonomous subject, his Rustan.

[167] Naumann, "Grillparzer und das spanische Drama," 356; "Er will gelebt haben, die Einsicht gewinnen, die das Gelebte bringt . . . dadurch, dass es ein Traum war, ist die Einmaligkeit des geschenen aufgehoben. Die Zeit . . . ist ausgeloescht . . . es ist die Umkehrung des Stueckes von Calderon, das aus der Eintracht der Weltordnung enstanden ist."

Works by Grillparzer such as *Die Ahnfrau* and *Der Traum ein Leben* were works of critique, much in the sense that Kant used that word. They were intended to establish the limits of the subject's autonomy and the limits of what the subject could know of himself. Grillparzer said of *Der Traum ein Leben,* "that it was based on a dream that is made into an object for the spectators and leads to a change of mind in the protagonist."[168] The dream of the play becomes an object to two subjects, Rustan himself and the spectator. The play is intended to enact a process—the process of making a dream an object of those subjects' cognizance. Insofar as the dream can be objectified in an exemplary way by Rustan, it can become instrumentalized by the audience. This is a precondition of the "Besserungsstueck," which Grillparzer's friend and frequent correspondent Josef Schreyvogel militates for in a rhetorical question that stabs at the heart of Calderón's view of the world: "So do you see how foolish the people are who content themselves with what they were given by the hand of fate?"[169]

In *Der Traum ein Leben*, "uniqueness" emerges as the quality of a subject acting in a singular way, rather than as the single, immutable world that Calderón's God had given to benighted humanity. In consequence of his idiosyncratic understanding of Schelling's masterful parsing of Calderón's plays as struggles between freedom and necessity, Grillparzer endows Rustan with a freedom that would have been alien to Calderón. But as he elevates the autonomous subject, he simultaneously makes that autonomous subject

[168] Quoted by William Edgar Yates, introduction to *Der Traum ein Leben*, in *Grillparzer: A Critical Introduction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972), 4; "Dass es auf einen Traum basiert war, der vor dem Zuseher sich objektiviert und die Sinnesaenderung des Helden bewirkt."
[169] Quoted in Sullivan, *Calderón in the German Lands and the Low Countries: His reception and Influence, 1654–1980,* 169

into a type, into an avatar, though not a Calderónian one. Grillparzer's autonomous subject becomes an exemplar of how any subject, endowed with freedom, should act.

The "Besserungsstück" seeks the betterment of its spectators in general. It assumes the multiplicity of worlds, not of spectators. And the world that it hopes to call into being is the "best possible world." Leibniz had not been concerned with whether the characters that inhabited the world were endowed with the wherewithal to make it better or worse. He was concerned with demonstrating that the world that these characters encountered was the best that they could have encountered. That a uniquely "best possible world" could be brought into being by the moral conditioning of spectators in general was a thought delivered to Grillparzer by a certain line of Leibniz's successors, namely Christian Wolff, Johann Christoph Gottsched and Gotthold Lessing.

The Classical *principium rationis sufficientis* was disinterred for Modern philosophy by Leibniz (and Spinoza, although the Leibnizian version quickly became dominant). In the *Monadologie*, Leibniz argues that human judgments ("raisonnements") are based on two principles: the principle of contradiction and the principle of sufficient reason ("raison suffisante"). It was the second of these two principles that came to exert itself on Grillparzer. The relevant section of the thirty-second paragraph of the *Monadologie* postulates that "sufficient reason, by virtue of which we find that no fact can be

considered true or existent and no enunciation (*énonciation*) truthful unless there is a sufficient reason why it should be thus and not otherwise."[170]

This seems to be a verbose restatement of the Classical *principium rationis sufficientis,* which Cicero succinctly expressed as "nothing happens without a cause."[171] However, the paragraph goes on to qualify itself: "these [sufficient reasons] most often cannot be known to us."[172] The principle of sufficient reason, then, only reveals itself in its sufficiency to the eyes of God. Leibniz's argument for sufficient reason was not passed on in its qualified form by Leibniz's student and explicator Christian Wolff. According to Wolff, a thing that exists draws its essence from the existence of its constituent parts and from the way in which they are put together. The sufficient reason for the existence of a being, then, is that way of putting its constituent parts together which is coextensive with its essence. Ways of putting constituent parts together are governed by rules, which can be observed by human observation as they are followed or broken. If the rules are not followed, the essense of the existing being is vitiated as it is rendered less perfect ("vollkommen"). Crucially, this lessened perfection may be observed by human observers. The reasons sufficient to make things what they are can also be observed,

[170] "la raison suffisante, en vertu duquel nous considérons qu'aucun fait ne saurait se trouver vrai, ou existant, aucune énonciation véritable, sans qu'il y ait une raison suffisante pourquoi il en soit ainsi et non pas autrement." Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, *La Monadologie*, accessed April 27, 2017, http://classiques.uqac.ca/classiques/Leibniz/La_Monadologie/leibniz_monadologie.pdf, page 16.
[171] "nihil fit sine causa"
[172] *Loc cit*. "Quoique ces raisons le plus souvent ne puissent point nous être connues."

since things are simply what they seem to be. Whereas for Leibniz philosophy was the postulation of perfection, for Wolff philosophy was the perception of that perfection.[173]

If perfections can be perceived, it follows that they can also be imparted. They were imparted to the theater by Johann Christoph Gottsched. Gottsched started his life as a disciple of Wolff, lived his middle age as a stentorian critic of Baroque "mannerisms" in rhetoric and died an unheeded pedant. His advice to would-be playwrights begins thus: "The poet chooses a moral thesis, which he wishes to impress on the spectators in a concrete manner."[174] This, we are tempted to say, is precisely what Grillparzer does at the beginning of *Der Traum ein Leben*. In the opening speech Mirza says:

> Yes, forgiving! That is precisely it,
> Therein lies the weight of the disaster
> Oh, one should be allowed to grumble
> To grumble as others stay away
> Long and insistent,
> So that forgiveness would seem to be the cost of mending things
> And not the reward for errancy[175]

Mirza is bemoaning her beloved Rustan's long absence. But the passage is about forgiveness and the conditions under which it may be granted. It will be granted by Grillparzer to Rustan, in that Rustan will be allowed to save himself by, as it were,

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[173] In this paragraph I am following Sullivan, *Calderón in the German Lands and the Low Countries: His reception and Influence, 1654–1980*, 116.
[174] Quoted in Sullivan, *Calderón in the German Lands and the Low Countries: His reception and Influence, 1654–1980*, 118.
[175] Ja, verzeihn! Das ist es eben,
Darin liegt das Maß des Unglücks.
Oh, man sollte grollen können,
Grollen, so wie andre fehlen,
Lang und unabänderlich,
Daß Verzeihung Preis der Beßrung
Und nicht Lohn des Fehlers schiene.

drawing on the dream knowledge that Grillparzer has given him. An important, multivalent word in this passage is "Besserung," which I have translated as "mending things," with an eye towards the mending of the sentimental distress that Rustan's long absence has caused. But "Besserung" in its basic meaning is the cognate of the English "betterment." Thus, Mirza's line could also be construed as "the cost of trying to better oneself socially should be the semblance of forgiveness." And that is a *précis* of the "moral" message of the play to come. Clearly, by casting the attempt to better oneself socially (even if only in a dream) as something that needs forgiving, social climbing is simulatenously cast as a shortcoming or error ("Fehler," as Mirza calls it in the following line).

Gottsched's first serious opposition presented itself in 1744. Johann Elias Schlegel (the uncle of the brothers Schlegel) wrote a treatise entitled "Abhandlung, dass die Nachahmung der Sach, der man nachahmet, zuweilen unähnlich werden müsse,"[176] or "Treatise arguing that the imitation of the thing that one is imitating might sometimes need to be unlike the thing." The treatise is essentially an apology for Shakespeare. Schlegel argues that Shakespeare is superior to all other playwrights, even though he imitates people and settings that were clearly not factual. As an adjunct to this argument, he contends that Shakespeare's characters are almost never facsimiles of morally upstanding people.[177] Although these arguments might not seem particularly original in

[176] Johann Elias Schlegel, *Abhandlung, dass die Nachahmung der Sach, der man nachahmet, zuweilen unähnlich werden müsse* (Meißen, 1744). 2.
[177] *Ibid*.

themselves, the treatise opened the floodgates for attacks on Gottsched, who himself never wavered on the question of Shakespeare's immorality.

Almost simultaneously in Switzerland, Johann Jakob Bodmer and Johann Jakob Breitinger launched their own attack on Gottsched, which was even more pointed than Schlegel's. In 1740, Bodmer published his *Critische Abhandlung von dem Wunderbaren in der Poesie* ("Critical Treatise on the Marvellous in Poetry"). In that work he makes the case for the unlikely and the miraculous and opposes those virtues to the humdrum and the verisimilar and, by extension, the practical and the edifying.[178]

The question of practical edification was never far from the mind of another of Gottsched's students: Gotthold Ephraim Lessing. After studying with Gottsched as a young man, Lessing turned decisively against him. In his *Briefe, die neuste Literatur betreffend (Letters touching on contemporary literature)*, published between 1759 and 1765, Lessing expressed the opinion that his dying former teacher was a "big idiot." Like Johann Elias Schlegel, he deeply resented Gottsched's attempt to cast Shakespeare as a stranger to the German temperament. Lessing was convinced that both Shakespeare and Calderón could be (and in fact had been) models for the German theater.[179]

Lessing himself was simultaneously repulsed by and attracted to Calderón. He took Calderón to be a sort of stand-in for Catholicism in general, in all of what he perceived to

[178] Sullivan, *Calderón in the German Lands and the Low Countries: His reception and Influence, 1654–1980*, 128.
[179] *Ibid*., 135.

be its "Oriental" majesty. On first reading Calderón, the dumbfounded Lessing wrote in a letter to a friend of his conviction that Catholics "Did not speak to each other's words, but rather to each other's souls."[180] This, I contend, is what endeared Calderón to Lessing. Lessing saw in him a purveyor of lessons that were conveyed in between and beyond the lines that he had his characters say. For Lessing never really diverged from Gottsched's position that the theater was a forum for pouring ethical precepts into the souls of spectators. What he found objectionable in Gottsched was the obviousness with which he would have these precepts conveyed, the ploddingness of the ethical schema he would have laid out on the stage and the damage that such ham-fisted didacticism inflicted on the aesthetic interest of a play. In Calderón he found what he took to be a model for conveying ethical truths in aesthetically engaging ways.

Lessing sought to prick the ethical sympathies of the bourgeoisie, but his plays were difficult, and the intended bourgeois viewers often found themselves confused by his plays. Eckermann, in one of his conversations with Goethe, observed that Lessing's divagations could be hard to follow. To this, Goethe is supposed to have responded: "You are quite right . . . Lessing supposedly said once that, should God offer him the Truth, he would refuse the gift, since he would prefer to go to the effort of finding it for himself."[181]

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[180] *Ibid*., 133.

[181] "Sie haben wohl recht . . .Lessing soll selbst einmal geäußert haben, daß, wenn Gott ihm die Wahrheit geben wolle, er sich dieses Geschenk verbitten, vielmehr die Mühe vorziehen würde, sie selber zu suchen." Johann Peter Eckermann, *Gespräche mit Goethe in den letzten Jahren Seines Lebens* (Frankfurt: Reclam, 2002), 139.

A good exemplum of the difficult didacticism that Lessing aspired to is *Emilia Galotti*. That play remains of particular interest to us because it is partly an adaptation of a *comedia* by Calderón that has been discussed above, *El alcalde de Zalamea*. At the end of Calderón's play, the commoner Pedro Crespo has a sort of triumph. He is made mayor of the town of Zalamea, and his execution of the nobleman who raped his daughter has been deemed honorable and legal by the King. His daughter has gone to a convent, which seventeenth-century Spanish spectators would have taken as the prelude to her being forgiven by God, tantamount in the terrestrial realm to the restoration of her honor. But in Lessing's rendition of the tale, Emilia asks her father Odoardo to kill her in the fifth act, and he obliges by stabbing her to death. Eckermann is thus both right and wrong about a play such as *Emilia Galotti*. The play has various abrupt reversals of fortune, but Lessing's careful, formal clarity is such that these reversals are easy for the spectators to follow. What is difficult is the kind of "Mitleid" produced by the bloody conclusion of the play. It is a "Mitleid" designed to outlast the staging of the play, to impel the spectators towards a salutary ethic of resentment against the normative schema of the play, which made the killing of Emilia possible and, according to her and her father, necessary.

Keeping in mind the possibility that in the "bourgeois mourning plays" Lessing was deliberately trying to impart a salutary resentment, I would like to turn to what was probably his most important contribution to theatrical criticism. In the *Hamburg Dramaturgy*, which is partly a program for the course that a national German theater should take, Lessing comes to the question of *katharsis* directly. In the *Poetics*, Aristotle

had defined tragedy as, in part, that which achieves *katharsis* by means of "eleos" and "phobos."[182] Before Lessing, this pair had appeared in translated form in the German critical lexicon as "Jammer" and "Schrecken" or "Jammer" and "Schaudern." "Jammer" had a very particular history in German translations of the Bible. In Luther's rendering of the Greek Bible, "dürre Tal" or "Jammertal" is what was called in the English Bishop's Bible translation of the Vulgate the "vale of teares" (Psalm 84:6), which in the Christian reading of the psalter is the human world. "Schrecken" meant, simply, an access of fear. Lessing willfully retranslated Aristotle's couplet as "Mitleid" and "Furcht." "Mitleid" is a Middle High German calque from the late Latin "compassio," which is itself a calque of the Greek "sym-pátheia." "Furcht" meant fright, and also appeared as half of a calque in the Lutheran Bible. The Greek "eusebie" was calqued into the Lutheran bible as "Gottesfurcht," "the fear of God." The coinage appears in the Book of Proverbs: "Gottesfurcht ist Anfang der Erkenntnis, nur Toren verachten Weisheit und Zucht."[183] (Proverbs 1:7; "Fear of God is the beginning of knowledge, only fools heed wisdom and culture.") Contemporary philologists such as Manfred Fuhrmann have pointed out that Lessing's reworkings of Aristotle's Greek were at the far end of tendentious, if not simply wrong. In his translator's note to the 1996 edition of Aristotle's *Poetics*, he has argued that Aristotle's couplet should, in fact, be renderered in German as "Jammer" and "Schaudern."[184] We should be grateful for the exacting atavism of philologists such as

[182] Aristotle, *Poetik*, ed. Manfred Fuhrmann (Stuttgart: Reclam, 2014).

[184] Aristotle, *Poetik*, Chapter 6, 1449b24ff. Hochspringen↑ Vgl. Fuhrmann: Nachwort. S. 161–163.

Fuhrmann. But it is worth noting that Lessing himself was quite explicit about the willfulness of his translation.[185]

Lessing imagined that the theater might succeed as a teacher if its spectators could be banded together by mutual sympathy. What is salient about this sympathy, as I have intimated in the discussion of *Emilia Galotti* above, is not necessarily that it is coeval with the narrative time of the play. It is, rather, abstracted beyond the time of the play to become an enduring resentment, putatively carried forward by all who were present at the time of its formation.

Grillparzer's *Der Traum ein Leben* owes a debt to Lessing insofar as it seeks to be didactic, even if that play seeks to realize Lessing's ends by other means. Grillparzer was bequeathed the already partly-repudiated didacticism of Gottsched by Lessing. This didactic content was refracted through the prescriptions for aesthetic containment set down by Schiller. The influence of Schiller's foreword to his late play *Die Braut von Messina* shows itself clearly in the form of *Der Traum ein Leben*. In that foreword, Schiller had argued for the inclusion of an ancient holdover, the chorus, in a contemporary play. He argued that the chorus served to emphasize the artificiality of the play, such that the play would not be mistaken for "nature": "Thus should the chorus be a

[185] Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, *Hamburgische Dramaturgie* (Cramer, Hamburg and Bremen, 1767). 23.

living wall, which pullst the tragedy in around it, in order to be completely closed off from the real world, in order to preserve an ideal groundwork and its poetic freedom. "[186]

Der Traum ein Leben has no chorus. Its formal containment is achieved by the use of a novelistic trope akin to the *Herausgeberfiktion*, the editor's fiction. Rustan's dream narrative is bookended by moments of waking life that quarantine the morally suspect character of the main narrative.

Grillparzer fell on the side of containment—Rustan's misfortune was produced in the first monologue of the play and resolved in its final scene. His misfortune was to hope for social "betterment," which his betrothed understands to be a mistake. The misfortune is resolved by being teased out in a dream in which he is warned against aspiring to "betterment." *Der Traum ein Leben* creates a communion between the stage and the audience that threatens to become Schrecken, "terror," at what is, in the play's own terms, a misdeed. A preliminary conclusion that we might reach for, following Auerbach, is that *Der Traum ein Leben* makes history of the nineteenth century present. The play is a history of the present's conservative political bent, told under the guise of an old allegory.

This was not Hugo von Hofmannsthal's view of the play, however. In the second of the two pieces that Hofmannsthal devotes to Grillparzer, he writes that *Der Traum ein Leben,* "is the magic piece of Viennese popular theater, magnificently ennobled and

[186] So sollte er [the chorus] uns eine lebendige Mauer sein, die die Tragödie um sich herumzieht, um sich von der wirklichen Welt rein abzuschließen, und sich ihren idealen Boden, ihre poetische Freiheit zu bewahren. Friedrich Schiller, *Schillers Werke* (Weimar: Band, 1980), 724.

spiritualized."[187] In Hofmannsthal's view of Grillparzer, he is always moving away from his audience and its time, moving from the "popular" to the "vergeistigt." Writes Hofmannsthal: "Grillparzer always resisted [the times], along with their restless, superficial character."[188] "Oberflächlich," the term of opprobrium that Solger applied to Calderón, which Curtius understood as the key to his genius, re-emerges. In his way, Hofmannsthal casts Grillparzer as a partisan of both Solger and Curtius. On the one hand, he imagines Grillparzer as a ceaseless "Vergeistiger" of the jejune and the ephemeral: "His critics, like Goethe's critics, wanted him to be more in step with the times, but he was interested in the real. The present always summons up a flood of pseudo-ideas, but few of them are worth thinking about; he thought about what was important."[189]

What is "real" and "important" is contrasted invidiously with "the present." In his disdain for the present, Hofmannsthal compares Grillparzer to the "great Spaniards," who were "the study of [Grillparzer's] mature manhood."[190] In the same breath, Hofmannsthal describes Grillparzer as a "Realpolitiker."[191] He writes that Grillparzer was "no politician," "but next to Goethe and Kleist he was the most political mind among modern German poets."[192] And if politics means "Realpolitik" here, Hofmannsthal is conferred a great advantage over Goethe and Kleist. In Hofmannsthal's mind, Grillparzer had unique capacities as an Austrian that set him off from "Franks" such as Goethe and Kleist. "The German," he writes, "has a difficult, inhibited feeling toward the present. Whether it is an

[187] David S. Luft, *Hugo Von Hofmannsthal and the Austrian Idea: Selected Essays and Addresses, 1906–1927* (West Lafayette, IN: Purdue University Press, 2011), 147.
[188] *Ibid*., 140.
[189] *Ibid*., 74
[190] *Ibid*., 142.
[191] "He was an Austrian and, to a certain extent, a *Realpolitiker*." *Ibid*., 74.
[192] *Ibid*., 73.

epoch or a moment, it is not easy for him to live in time. He is here and yet not here; he is above the age and not in it. This is the reason why no people has so much to say about time as the Germans; they wrestle with the meaning of the present, while to us it is given."[193]

Hofmannsthal goes on to solve almost inadvertently the problem he has set for himself: the problem of the Austrian Realpolitiker who is far above the present. And his solution makes an implicit appeal to *Der Traum ein Leben*. "He was in his very being the people and in his dreams the ruler."[194] This judgment, although not on *Der Traum ein Leben,* sums up the play perfectly. In his dream, Rustan is the ruler (of himself and very nearly of the kingdom), but in his being—in his waking being—he is a commoner deprived of any semblance of autonomy.

Hofmannsthal thought he had found in *Der Traum ein Leben* what he did, in fact, go on to create in his late play, *Der Turm*. *The Tower* is something like *Der Traum ein Leben* sublimed of its *Realpolitik*, its "Absolute I" or, indeed, any autonomous subjects at all. Even the mechanical characters of *La vida es sueño* seem free in comparison with Hofmannsthal's Sigismund. In Calderón's rendering, Segismundo is discovered by Rosaura and Clarín in the first act chained and imprisoned in the tower. His first words in Calderón's play, "Ah! woe is me!"[195] cast him as having the capacity for reflection on his fallen place in the world. Hofmannsthal's Sigismund is discovered in his dungeon endowed with no such capacity for reflection. He begins his life in *Der Turm* as a caged

[193] *Ibid*., 75.
[194] *Ibid*., 74.
[195] "¡Ay mísero de mí!" Pedro Calderón de la Barca, *La vida es sueño*, 1.1.102.

animal. His initial scattered fragments of speech are all verbatim repetition of instructions that are given to him. Anton, one of his jailers, says to him, "Go on, sit down next to me. Sigismund *imitates:* Sit down next to me."[196] He has no more freedom than a reflection or a shadow.

Hofmannsthal experimented with various Sigismunds, until he had come upon the least free version of the character that he could imagine. He finished an initial version of the play in 1923, shortly after publishing the "Rede auf Grillparzer" (he did not attend the conference in Hanover where he was to have spoken it). In that version of the play, the dying Sigismund is given the chance, like Hamlet, to speak his last will and testament. In that first draft of the play, he gives his kingdom to the king of a neighboring kingdom, in order that he might rule it justly, free from the meddling of its current intriguers. Hofmannsthal's correspondents, Walter Benjamin and Karl Reinhardt, pushed him to end the play in a different way. In the second version of the play, which was performed in 1928, Sigismund insists on walking out of his room in the palace and onto the balcony, even though he knows that a sniper is waiting for him. He cannot choose other than to sacrifice himself for his kingdom. Written between the two versions of *Der Turm* was Benjamin's *Ursprung des deutschen Trauerspiels*, in which he writes that the "rejection of the martyr drama for a century and a half resides in authority of Lessing."[197] *Der Turm* is, evidently, the repudiation of this enjoinment of Lessing's. It is a martyr drama for the last Habsburg, formally kin to the (mostly North) German martyr dramas of the seventeenth century. In 1922 Hofmannsthal wrote of Grillparzer's connection to

[196] "Geh, da setz dich zu mir. Sigismund *imitating*: Setz dich zu mir." Loc cit.
[197] Benjamin, *Der Ursprung des deutschen Trauerspiels*, 74.

Habsburg history, through settings such as the Hradschin castle in Prague, and characters such as the Emperor Rudolph. This connection to what might be called a general mythical history of Austria-Hungary is moored, according to him, to "the seventeenth century, between which and us a secret thread runs all the way up to yesterday."[198] That "yesterday," the end of the Habsburg Empire, was precipitated by the martyrdom of the archduke, Franz Ferdinand.

"Everything higher requires synthesis," writes Hofmannsthal. *Der Turm* is the synthesis of a particular seventeenth-century Spanish play, *La vida es sueño*, with a particular school of seventeenth-century North German play, the martyr drama. It is also a synthesis of the Trauerspiel (which were, in fact, mostly martyr dramas) with the Bourgeois Trauerspiel inaugurated by Lessing. In his second essay on Grillparzer, Hofmannsthal praises him as a student of Lessing's "construction of the dramatic situation." "Lessing," he writes, "was a great giver of form, as much in individual speeches as in the construction of the whole. Great power always dwelled in Grillparzer himself and in everything he left behind, a power of a strict, self-enclosed kind."[199] *Der Turm* betrays Hofmannsthal's own debt to Lessing's formal "power," which shows itself in clearly marked points of inflection in the plot, short speeches and sharply-drawn conclusions, either negative (*Emilia Galotti*) or positive (*Nathan the Wise,* which ends with the stage direction: "(There is mute, collective hugging, which continues as the curtain falls").[200]

[198] Luft, *Hugo Von Hofmannsthal and the Austrian Idea: Selected Essays and Addresses, 1906–1927*, 173.
[199] *Ibid*., 148.
[200] "Unter stummer Wiederholung allseitiger Umarmungen fällt der Vorhang."

However, *Der Turm*'s conclusion marks the play as a late martyr drama, a hearkening-back to a style still uninflected by Lessing. The seventeenth-century North German martyr drama resolved itself in a farrago of ambiguities. Is the man being martyred on stage a worldly king or Christ? If Charles Stuart or Leo Armenius is figured as Christ, then has the play been a Passion Play all along? And, if so, then when was the play set—the seventeenth century or sixteen hundred years before? Curtius claims that *Der Turm* is a seventeenth-century-type martyr drama distended into what is unambiguously a Passion Play. He writes, "In the making of Segismund into a divine, nature man . . . *Der Turm* becomes a passion play, in which suffering is revealed as a divine principle."[201] This is an elegant formulation indeed, but it is strange if we consider that in the medieval Passion Play, Christ was a divine man, not a "Naturmensch." Nonetheless, Curtius' formulation is true of *Der Turm*, which begins with Sigismund as an aphasic savage and ends with him as an eloquent gentleman, divinely aloof from the squabbles and remonstrations of his courtiers.

Hofmannsthal claimed of Grillparzer that he had always "resisted [the times], along with their restless, superficial character."[202] However, as I note above, he also praised him as a *Realpolitiker*. One manifestation of that, which I have described above, was his refashioning of Voltaire's *Le blanc et le noir* into a parable intended explicitly to teach that, in the era of Metternich, social climbing was not to be countenanced. *Der Turm* is not outside of time, even if Hofmannsthal could write of its composition: "more and more

[201] Curtius, *Essays on European Literature*, 161.
[202] Luft, *Hugo Von Hofmannsthal and the Austrian Idea: Selected Essays and Addresses, 1906–1927*, 143.

the present becomes a veil to us . . . the infinity of life is not to be exhausted in enjoyment, as actuality, but only symbolically and through suffering."[203] The time of the play is not the present, but a past whose end was abruptly precipitated by the assassination of Franz Ferdinand. Hofmannsthal wrote that "everything after 1917 was inflected with divine suffering."[204] *Der Turm* is a mourning play in a particular sense—by enacting an allegorized version of the death of the archduke, it seeks to casts the mourners' minds back to a time before the death. "Death," as Curtius brilliantly observed of Hofmannsthal's ethic, "is the interpreter of life."[205] This is made explicit at the end of the fifth act of *Der Turm* by the physician who is pleading with one of the conspirators, Olivier, for the life of the king: "Look over the whole world: it has nothing nobler than what confronts us in this human being."[206] Wherein does this nobility consist? we ask. In a kind of power of enchantment, a power to rule by magic. The physician says, "The people feel it! Far and wide it makes them go down on their knees."[207] And what will replace enchantment? The physician knows that too: "The world is not ruled by iron clubs, but by the spirit that is in him [Sigismund]. He is a powerful man. Take care!"[208] The meaning of the Habsburg Empire is only revealed in its death. It meant (according to the mythical, archconservative Hofmannsthal) governance by magic, and it has been replaced by a form of social solidarity that is violent, heavy and mechanical ("iron").

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[203] Curtius, *Essays on European Literature*, 157.
[204] *Ibid*., 155.
[205] *Ibid*., 164.
[206] J. D. McClatchy (ed.), *The Whole Difference: Selected Writings of Hugo Von Hofmannsthal* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), 487. Reprinted from Hugo Von Hoffmannsthal, *Three Plays: Death and the Fool, Electra, The Tower*, trans. Alfred Schwartz (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1966).
[207] *Ibid*., 488.
[208] *Loc cit*.

Lessing gave us *Mitleid* and Grillparzer took *Mitleid* to ends more didactic than even Lessing could imagine. If you don't share in the Mitleid of Rustan, he seemed to say, you will suffer. Rustan himself did not suffer, not even a little bit, because he heeded his didactic dream. Sigismund reunited pre-Lessingian Leiden with Mitleiden. The audience shares (Mitleiden) in the suffering (Leiden) of Sigismund and, in so doing, is transported out of the present back into the enchanted past and forward, beyond the play, into a future that will always be tarnished by the grand *lèse-majesté* that is the past.

Chapter 3
The Long Shadow of Baroque Humanism.

In the undulating typological classifications that claim to have ensared the Baroque, which started with Wölfflin and Nietzsche and continued through Spengler and d'Ors to Calabrese and Eco, there was a juxtaposition of the Classical with the Baroque. Wölfflin is willing to countenance the move from "Classical" Roman culture to Hellenism as an instance of this wave, breaking. Calabrese and Eco take the move in art from Modernism to Postmodernism as an instance of the same thing. In this chapter I will follow the afterlife of the picaresque novel, which was a Baroque invention. I will pay particular attention to the way in which the Picaresque as a genre has functioned since its inception as a repository for a particular kind of Baroque Humanism. The novels I will take as exempla are Cervantes' *Don Quixote* and Jaroslav Hašek's *Good Soldier Švejk*.

This chapter will, in essence, concern itself with two indices of Baroque Humanism, one negative and one positive. The first is private language: my argument will be that the tales of Švejk and Maese Pedro, the fortune teller who appears together with his monkey in the second part of *Don Quixote,* are both rejections of private language. The second is historical irony: both Švejk and Maese Pedro depend on an overt historical lateness that makes them reliably funny. Simultaneously, they both rest on an implicit historical lateness that makes them reliably ethical. In the case of the Maese Pedro story, this is achieved by its being a co-option of an Arab story from the eighth century that presents

itself as explicitly anti-Moor (and is immediately followed by the story of Melisendra, Charlemagne's daughter imprisoned by the Moors). In the case of Švejk, this is achieved by its being a co-option of Picaresque, a genre imported from Spain, cousin to Habsburg Austria, putatively Hašek's enemy, if not Švejk's.

The concept of "private language" is a sort of parameter by which Classical and Baroque artworks can usefully be compared. In the first section of this chapter I would like to juxtapose Wittgenstein's conception of private language with a particular conception of private language that emerges in the second part of *Don Quixote*. Wittgenstein, as a High Modernist, I take as an avatar of the "Classical" conception of private language, while I cast Cervantes' Maese Pedro as his Baroque foil (before coming to Hašek, who was happy to be the foil to any and all Austrians).

In the philosophy of language, the concept of "Private Language" had a lifespan of approximately five pages.[209] I am referring to Wittgenstein's "private language," which he gives birth to and kills off in paragraphs 243–276 of the *Philosophical Investigations*. In the next section I will turn to chapter 25 of the second part of *Don Quixote*, in which the possibility of a private language is also proposed, and chapter 27, where it is dismissed—in the person of Maese Pedro, who seems to be a puppeteer whose warm-up

[209] I am glossing over Locke and Frege. Frege's intimation of the possibility of a private language is especially interesting, but treating his idea would introduce "transversales" that would confuse the elemental distinction between Cervantes and Wittgenstein that I wish to draw.

act consists of taking questions from the crowd, listening to the monkey on his shoulder make an answer, and then conveying this chattered answer to an amazed crowd. Maese Pedro's monkey would seem to be speaking what Wittgenstein would have called a private language—"sounds which no one else understands but which I appear to understand might be called a 'private language.'"[210] The act is, of course, a trick. Maese Pedro's ruse is to camp out near a town before he enters it, find out about the people in it, and then announce that his monkey can only divine things about the past and present. But the tenor in which private language is dismissed is very different in the *Philosophical Investigations* and in *Don Quixote*.

One of the oldest accustations leveled against the Baroque is that it is hermetic—that, to paraphrase T. S. Eliot's willfuly obtuse reflections on *Hamlet* (which Benjamin, writing at about the same time as Eliot, saw as the highest moment of the "mourning play"), the title character is too wrapped up in himself, that he does not give the audience "objective correlatives" for his mental states. He hides behind throwaway adages-to-be—"words words words"—while communing with himself in some private glossary of his own feelings. But if we think of the seven soliloquies as the seven seals that afford us access to Hamlet's inner life in a way that is uniquely lucid in the history of drama, then Hamlet himself never spoke in clichés—rather, he succeeded in making public his inmost sensations in a language that succeeded in being both new and readily understood.

[210] Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations* (London: Pearson, 1973), ¶ 269.

Eliot's view would seem to correspond with the exact same possibility suggested by another great High Modernist, Wittgenstein. In paragraph 243 of the *Philosophical Investigations*, in which private language is introduced as a problem, he writes

> 1. A person can give herself succor, order herself, obey, scold, punish, pose a question to herself and answer it. One could therefore think of people, who only spoke monologically . . .
>
> 2. But would a language be thinkable, in which one could prounounce or write down for one's own use . . . feelings and moods, etc. . . .?[211]

The second of these two possibilities, the Hamlet possibility (the Hamlet reality, according to Eliot), is the possibility with which Wittgenstein is primarily concerned, because it presents itself as a kind of limit case for private language. One could feel pain on touching an electric stove, and this would certainly be not "private linguistic", but "pre-linguistic". But—and I am following Wittgenstein—pre-lingustic means precisely that. The mere sensation of pain involves no words. What Wittgenstein comes to argue is that between "the sensation of pain" and my public declaration "I feel pain," there is no possibility of an expression in an intermediate language that "only I understand"—this possibility, which he describes in the most effective metaphor for "me communicating with myself" as the passing of an object from my left to my right hand. Something might have changed hands, but it has not been "communicated in language."

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[211] Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophische Untersuchungen* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 2003), ¶ 243.

> 1. Ein Mensch kann sich selbst ermutigen, sich selbst befehlen, gehorchen, tadeln, bestrafen, eine Frage vorlegen und auf sie antworten. Man könnte sich also auch Menschen denken, die nur monologisch sprächen . . .
>
> 2. Wäre aber auch eine Sprache denkbar, in der Einer seine inneren Erlebnisse - seine Gefühle, Stimmungen, etc. - für den eigenen Gebrauch aufschreiben, oder aussprechen könnte?

So much for Wittgenstein, let me turn now to Maese Pedro. Who is Maese Pedro? In the twenty-fifth chapter he is announced by the keeper of the inn where Don Quixote and Sancho Panza are staying. In the Grossman translation the announcement is thus:

> He's a famous puppet master who's been traveling the Aragonese side of La Mancha for some time, showing a puppet play about Melisendra being freed by the famous Don Gaiferos, which is one of the best and best-acted histories seen in this part of the kingdom for many years. He also has with him a monkey with the rarest talent ever seen among monkeys or imagined among men, because if he's asked something, he pays attention to what he's asked, then jumps onto his master's shoulders and goes up to his ear and tells him the answer to the question, and then Maese Pedro says what it is . . .[212]

Even though the innkeeper says "la mas rara habilidad," the monkey seems to display two talents to the public. He can make divinations about the past and the present, and he can communicate them in a language that only Maese Pedro can understand. If the monkey spoke a language intelligble to the public, presumably Maese Pedro would not need to interpret it. But in the passages that follow, the reader's attention is directed towards the first of these two talents in the discussion that Don Quixote and Sancho Panza have about divination of the past and present. The possibility of a language spoken only by man and monkey is not cast into question. But the innkeeper is aware that the private language is where the money is, concluding his introduction of Maese Pedro with these words: "He drinks more than six men and drinks more than twelve, everything paid for by his tongue, his monkey and his puppet-theater."[213] But of course the joke—that of the two talents "predicting a publicly known past and present in the spoken language of those present"—is surely much less impressive than putatively "inventing a private language in which one can quickly communicate these banal, public facts."

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[212] Cervantes, *Don Quixote*, 624.
[213] "Habla mas que seis y bebe mas que doce, todo a costa de su lengua y de su mono y de su retablo." Miguel Cervantes, *Don Quijtote de la Mancha* (Madrid: Punto de Lectura, 2008), 745.

This scene of what we might call "the public performance of a private language" continues as the monkey jumps on to Maese Pedro's shoulders and appears to say something. Maese Pedro then throws himself at Don Quixote's feet to make it appear that the monkey has just divined that man and monkey are in the presence of that "never-sufficiently praised knight," Don Quixote. The somewhat paradoxical idea that, for a private language to exist, it must be publicly performed, or publicly entertained, underpins the passages of the *Philosophical Investigations* about private language, and has been important in subsequent debates about the *Philosophical Investigation*. The dismissal of private language in the *Philosophical Investigations* can be understood as an attempt by Wittgenstein to say either that a private language is false, that it is nonsense, or that is both. Let me try and explain what the difference between false and nonsense would be, and why this is not just a analytical quibble. Let us first assume that a private language is possible. We can then go through and make assumptions about it, and show them to be contradictory. This kind of *reductio ad absurdum* would, I think, involve something like showing that signs can only emerge dialogically, and that a private language would somehow assume signs that either inhere in their signifieds or in the inventor of the language. But as Gordon Baker, one of the great readers of Wittgenstein in the latter half of the twentieth century, has argued, what might be salient about the private language argument is not that it is false, but "that the argument is nonsense masquerading as an important possibility." But—and this is important—*even if* Wittgenstein is making the claim that private language is nonsensical, this claim is still not a moral judgment about private language—private language for Wittgenstein is, at worst, a waste of time.

But this is not the case for private language in *Don Quixote*. And this returns us neatly to *Don Quixote* and Maese Pedro's audience. Because, as I argued above, what is notable about the introduction of the possibility of private language is that it is slipped in under the guise of the monkey's main non-talent, divination of things past and present. Chapters 25–27 are not concerned with as dry and boring an analytic question as "Is private language false or nonsense?" The question that is posed is, rather, "Is private language nonsense, or is it diabolical nonsense?"

The possibility that there is something diabolical about Maese Pedro is first suggested by the innkeeper in his lengthy introduction of Maese Pedro, in which he says, "even though he isn't right all the time, he's not wrong most of the time, so he makes us think he has the devil in his body."[214] This possibility is then taken up by Don Quixote after he has been praised by the prostrate Maese Pedro. Quixote argues that Maese Pedro is, essentially, Faust:

> I mean only that he must have made some agreement (*concierto*) with the devil to grant this talent to the monkey so that Master Pedro could earn his living, and when he is rich the devil will take his soul, which is precisely what the universal enemy wishes. And what makes me believe this is seeing that the monkey replies only to past or present things, which is as far as the devil's knowledge can go: future things cannot be known except through conjecture (*conjeturas*), and only occasionally, for knowing all times and moments is reserved to God alone, and for him there is no past or future: everything is present.[215]

Let us consider what is diabolical about the monkey's twin talents: divining the past and present and chattering in Maese Pedro's language. Either talent by itself would not be a

[214] Cervantes, *Don Quijtote de la Mancha*, 624.
[215] Cervantes, *Don Quixote*, 627.

thing that turned a profit (and this chapter is replete with suggestions that Maese Pedro has made himself a rich man by his activities). There is nothing particularly remarkable about describing events of the past and present. And, as noted by the innkeeper, Maese Pedro is not even particularly accurate in his divinations. Merely presenting spectators with accounts of their own lives that they know to be faulty would more likely get a travelling charlatan run out of town than anything else. What is special about Maese Pedro's faulty accounts is that they have been refracted through a private language. Thus, there appears to be something occult or hermetic about them—and this is, as the economists say, where the value has been added. Private language thus emerges as a way of enclosing the common of a publicly held good, and then selling it back to the public. And that is why a private language might be nonsense that is, in fact, diabolical nonsense (or, as Disraeli might have put it in a different context, a "damned lie" as opposed to a "lie").

Why am I inclining towards the spatial metaphor, towards the metaphor of enclosure, which is of land? For two reasons: first, because the idea suggested itself to me in a moment of strange translation of paragraph 243 of the *Philosophical Investigations*, in which Wittgenstein imagines a "Forscher" of private language positing it as a true possibility. "Forscher" here clearly means a researcher; an academic is a *Forscher*. But Elizabeth Anscombe, who was the first translator of the *Philosophical Investigations*, and whose translation is still widely used, renders it as "explorer," as if private language were some sort of undiscovered country, as opposed to a thought experiment. The other reason

I am inclined towards the spatial metaphor of enclosure as a way of explaining the none too implicit devilry of private language is that it sends us to the famous line in Rousseau's *Discourse on Inequality* about "the first man who, having enclosed off a piece of land, got the idea of saying '*This is mine*,' who was the 'true founder of civil society.'"[216] For the first man's act of enclosure to gain purchase, for it to mean anything, that man had to find people, after he had announced that the land was enclosed, "who were simple enough to believe him." Maese Pedro has done this—he has, as Cide Hamete tells us in Chapter 27, "gained remarkable credibility." Indeed, all of the characters in Chapter 25 are more than simple enough to be duped by Maese Pedro's apparent act of lingusitic enclosure, which has allowed him to enlist private language in the service of profit. There are those, such as Don Quixote, who are so simple that they are inclined to reach for a complex explanation—that the devil allows Maese Pedro to do what he does—while the answer is much simpler, and more mundanely nefarious.

Of course it is one of the most foolish moves in *Don Quixote* criticism to impute any view to Cervantes, or the implied author Cervantes—and that is precisely what I want to do now. Although we readers, like the dupes of Maese Pedro in the novel, might have been simple enough to be fooled into subscribing to the possibility of private language, in part because of the sleight of hand of the private language being used for a particularly unlikely end, namely divination of the public past and present, we are completely disabused of the possibility of private language in Chapter 27, in which Cide Hamete

[216] Jean-Jacques Rousseau, "Discourse on the Origin and Basis of Inequality Among Men," *The Social Contract and the Discourses*, trans. G. D. H. Cole (New York: A.A. Knopf, 1993).

explains the trick. The necessity of making the magician reveal his trick comes, I think, from the conviction of Cervantes (and, I should say, the matured Don Quixote, who has softened his linguistic prescriptivism to the point that he is willing to come up with portmanteaux with Sancho Panza, instead of merely correcting him) that what we might call "publicness of language" is a moral imperative. This idea is present implicitly in Don Quixote's speech indicting Maese Pedro as an agent of the devil when he talks of past or present things, "which is as far as the devil's knowledge can go." Future things cannot be known except through conjecture—*conjeturas*—assemblies of logical propositions but also literally *con-jacere*, "throwing *together*," collaborating, which necesitates a language that is the opposite of private.

The distinction that the philosophy of language draws between private language and natural language, which is any language that has been produced organically by being spoken by people (such as English, Spanish or Latin), is not the distinction that is important to the implied author of *Don Quixote*. The question for the master of what Leo Spitzer called "lingustic perspectivism" is not "Is a language natural?" just as the question about private language is not "Is it true or false?"—it is, "For whom is a natural language natural?" There are three of what philosophers of language would call "natural languages" in chapter 25 of Part Two: Spanish, Italian and Latin. The Italian is sprinkled in most "naturally," which is to say "seamlessly," when the innkeeper says that Maese Pedro is an "uomo galante" and a "bon compagno." Don Quixote, perhaps pricked into using Italian by the innkeeper's own use of the language, then asks Maese Pedro, "che

pesce pigliamo?" These phrases, and others like them, had been injected into Spanish by soldiers returning from Italy, and none of the characters present seems to have any trouble understanding the Italian that the others use. Latin appears twice in the chapter, and the implied author Cervantes seems much more circumspect regarding its usage. Maese Pedro introduces his puppet show (which will be broken up by Don Quixote in Chapter 26) by saying "operibus credite, non verbis" (actions speak louder than words), which is a sort of macabre instance of itself, given that of the present company, only Don Quixote might be able to believe these words in Latin, as he is probably the only one who can understand them. On an even more sacrilegious note, we learn earlier in the chapter that, when giving his answers, the monkey chatters in Maese Pedro's ear for the time it takes to say a "credo," very nearly equating Latin with the implied private language of Monkey and Maese Pedro—the implication of course being that a language such as Latin ceases to be natural as it loses its meaning-bearing function and comes to fulfill a function which is closer to being merely phatic (the linguistic function that bears least meaning, according to Jakobson) for many of its users.

The implied author of *Don Quixote*'s dismissal of the possibility of private language differs from Wittgenstein's insofar as he is not concerned with whether private language might be true or false, false or nonsense. Private language is clearly nonsense; the point is to attach a moral valence to the nonsense—it is diabolical nonsense. And what is diabolical about it is that presupposes an act of enclosure, and enclosure means profiteering. What is perhaps most interesting for us is that the implied author of *Don Quixote*—certainly the most elusive character in the novel—becomes perhaps most

public at the moment that he succumbs to what seems to be a moral imperative to very publicly dismiss private language.

* * *

> I can highly recommend the Gestapo to everyone.[217]
>
> —Sigmund Freud, 1938

A critique of irony is always a fraught thing. Irony itself is often so fraught a thing as to scare theory off: to elicit a heuristic that is "merely affective," mystical or of Schlegelian universality. Even Quintilian's seemingly unimpeachable assertion—"irony is made evident to the understanding either by the delivery, the character of the speaker or the nature of the subject"[218]—must seem like a mystical pronouncement in our epoch, in which we do not set much store by autonomous deliveries, speakers or subjects. In the second part of this chapter, I wish to resist mysticism—so far as I can—in trying to fathom the extent to which ironic speech acts in a given novel can be understood theoretically. I will begin by scrutinizing Wayne Booth's notion of unstable irony, as propounded in his *A Rhetoric of Irony*,[219] in tandem with Paul de Man's ironic "Kantification"[220] of Kierkegaard's *Concept of Irony*,[221] which leads him to conclude that irony is a sort of "conceptless concept." The rest of the essay will be an attempt to adumbrate my own critique of irony, which, while acknowledging irony's inherent

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[217] "Ich kann die Gestapo jedermann auf das beste empfehlen," was the line that Freud innocently asked if he he could append to the release form that the Gestapo prepared for him in 1938. He was signing off on the Gestapo's claim that he had not been mistreated, etc, while under arrest. Ernest Jones, *The Life and Work of Sigmund Freud, Volume Three* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 1957), 234

[218] Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1980), 8.6.54.

[219] Wayne Booth, *A Rhetoric of Irony* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974).

[220] Paul de Man, *The Concept of Irony in Aesthetic Ideology*, ed. Andrzej Warminski, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 163–185.

[221] Søren Kierkegaard, *The Concept of Irony With Continual Reference to Socrates* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989).

instability, situates it with some definiteness within the tropic bounds of metaphor and metonymy. This will obviously require adducing Jakobson's majestic essay on those two "poles." It will also necessitate a close reading of the first few chapters of Jaroslav Hašek's *The Good Soldier Švejk*,[222] which was the great literary instantiation of a particularly Czech (though we might as well say "universally minor") irony forged from within the maw of higher powers—the Austrians, the Germans, the Russians—and, not coincidentally, one of Roman Jakobson's favorite novels.

In *What Are the Signs of What?* Kenneth Burke supposes that there are four "terministic pyramids" in which a word might, by turns, reside. He terms these the "natural order," the "verbal order," the "sociopolitical order" and the "supernatural order."[223] He explains the sense in which a word might make an appearance in the different pyramids:

> a word such as 'person' belongs to the sheerly *natural* insofar as a person must have a living body subject to the laws of motion; it is in the *verbal* order inasmuch as the rationality of a person is involved in kinds of mental maturity that require a high degree of aptitude at symbol-using; it is in the *sociopolitical* order because of the sociopolitical relationships and roles involved in personality; and it is in the *supernatural* order at the very least to the extent that it involves attitudes towards words for this order and towards the institutions representing this order.[224]

In any given context, a word may hide itself behind intimations of meanings that it might have had in another context. Thus we might be inclined to think of the possibility of irony as we think of the possibility of Kabbalah. Any word might secretly mean its opposite; any word might be ironic. Of such a possibility Wayne Booth writes, in the even-handed terms in which he is wont to condemn things:

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[222] Jaroslav Hašek, *The Good Soldier Švejk*, trans. Cecil Parrott (London: Penguin, 1973).
[223] Kenneth Burke, *Language as Symbolic Action*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966), 374.
[224] *Loc cit*.

> What is more troublesome, some modern critics—for example, I.A. Richards, Cleanth Brooks, and Kenneth Burke—have suggested that every literary context is ironic because it provides a weighting or qualification on every word in it, thus requiring the reader to infer meanings which are in a sense not in the words themselves: all literary meanings in this view become a form of covert irony, whether intended or not.[225]

Booth's problem with characters such as Burke is, I think, twofold. A critique of irony (as of anything) is an attempt to clearly delimit what is under discussion. If irony is accorded enough slipperiness to outmaneuver any attempt to capture its essence, then a critique of irony is too obviously just an attempt to corral the wind. And, more importantly, irony must be as systemizable as the other rhetorical tropes to which it was so long a poor relative (until Schlegel, F., if we follow the account of Kierkegaard and de Man, if not Booth) if it is, in fact, to mean anything.

Like most critics of irony, Paul de Man proceeds in a way that is "seriously" ironic.[226] Why? As he says, at the beginning of the *Concept of Irony*, quoting Schlegel on irony: "Wer sie nicht hat, dem bleibt sie auch nach dem offensten Geständnis ein Rätsel."[227] Irony is to him what election is to Calvinists—you can't attain it under your own steam; you can merely work hard to make it look like you have always "had" it. Thus does de Man interpolate himself between Schlegel and Wayne Booth by means of one of the most reputable and stable ancient ironic figures—dialectical irony:

> You must then keep in mind that the smart guy [*eiron*], who is by necessity the speaker, always turns out to be the dumb guy, and that he's always being set up by the person he thinks of as being the dumb guy, the *alazon*. In this case the *alazon* (and I recognize that this makes me the real *alazon* of this discourse) is American criticism of irony, and the smart guy is going to be the German criticism of irony, which of course I understand. I

[225] Booth, *A Rhetoric of Irony*, 7.
[226] In *The Concept of Irony*, at least.
[227] Friedrich Schlegel, quoted in Eichner, H, *Kritische Friedrich Schlegel Ausgabe* (Paderborn-Vienna-Munich: Verlag Ferdinand Schoeningh, 1967), 101.

> have in mind, on the American side, an authoritative and excellent book on the problem of irony, Wayne Booth's *A Rhetoric of Irony . . .*[228]

De Man proceeds to offer three criticisms of Booth's account of irony. First, he notes that Booth largely restricts his analysis to eighteenth-century English prose, without taking stock of the German Romantic tradition. Second, he notes that Booth devotes much more space to what he terms "stable irony" (in cases of which, something like Quintilian's dictum that irony can be known 'by the delivery, the character of the speaker or the nature of the subject' holds wordy) than to what he terms unstable irony (other cases). Third, de Man shrewdly notes that (as I intimated above) Booth's project is based on the premise that irony can be contained within a critique, that it can be understood, that one can know when a text is ironic or not.

In *The Concept of Irony*, de Man makes the case that Booth's critique of irony is ultimately not categorical in the Idealist sense. It is rather, he claims, hypothetical insofar as it brings content to a critique of irony, and that content is precisely the critic's desire for irony to be delineable. Here, we might rejoin that this is simply another way of saying that a critique of irony is not possible from a "position of silence"—that irony implies hermeneutics. However, such a peremptory rejoinder does not do justice to the nuanced conclusion that de Man reaches. To wit: towards the end of his essay, de Man invokes Benjamin's *Der Begriff der Kunstkritk in der deutschen Romantik*[229] *(The Concept of Art-Criticism in German Romanticism)*—which owes much to Lukács' *Theory of the Novel*, as de Man says—in which Benjamin argues that irony is never a "subjective whim of the

[228] de Man, *The Concept of Irony in Aesthetic Ideology,* 165.
[229] Walter Benjamin, *Der Begriff der Kunstkritik in der deutschen Romantik,* Werkausgabe vol. 1, *Gesammelte Schriften* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1980).

author,"[230] but always a destruction of the form of the particular work, in service of, as de Man puts it, "the radical negation, which, however, reveals as such, by the undoing of the work, the absolute toward which the work is under way."[231]

Of course, such a launching of the work (or we might say "through the work" here, thinking of Blake's "seeing through the eye") towards the absolute presupposes that the act of irony is in dialectical relation with history. It is in this sense that de Man finishes the antepenultimate paragraph of the essay with the gnomic line: "So irony is secondary to a historical system."[232] But because the effort to understand irony in a work is an attempt to understand the moment at which destruction of form becomes creation (creation of movement towards history, towards the absolute). Since for de Man, it is negation, not creation that is the motive energy of dialectic, a critique of irony is only able to go so far. It may be able to ascertain the concomitant necessity of history and irony, but it cannot grasp the moment of irony itself. If I have read de Man correctly, his is another way, more sophisticated and more radical than Booth's, of saying that irony is necessarily a slippery fish for the understanding to grasp, that it is inherently unstable.

I think that de Man's analysis seems to do away with the possibility of exhaustively theorizing those forms of irony that might be thought of as being particularly impersonal, such as *l'ironie du sort* or what rhetoricians since antiquity have called "historical

[230] Quoted in de Man, *The Concept of Irony in Aesthetic Ideology*, 182.
[231] *Ibid*., 183.
[232] *Loc cit*.

irony."[233] However, I contend that there are other forms of irony that exist strictly within the confines of the work (and are also not merely "subjective whims" of the author), that can be fairly well accounted for theoretically. Before expanding on this claim, I wish to offer the briefest possible sketch of *The Good Soldier Švejk*, in order to situate the argument to follow.

The basic data of *The Good Soldier Švejk* are as follows: on the day that Franz Ferdinand is assassinated in Sarajevo, Josef Švejk of Prague is so uncommonly vociferous in his support for the Emperor Franz Joseph that he is taken in by a member of the Habsburg secret police on suspicion of harboring treasonous sentiments. On account of his answers to various commissions, he is found to be insane and sent to a lunatic asylum, whence a particularly inquisitorial commission of doctors shunts him back to the police station. On the way to the police station, the policeman escorting him points out the Emperor's proclamation declaring war. I will quote what ensues in its entirety, because it is the passage with which I will be mostly concerned:

> 'I prophesied it,' said Švejk, 'but in the lunatic asylum they still don't know about it, although they should have got it from the horse's mouth.'
>
> 'What do you mean?' the police officer asked Švejk.
>
> 'Because they've got a lot of officer gentlemen locked up in there,' Švejk explained, and when they reached another crowd of people surging in front of the proclamation, Švejk shouted out:
>
> 'God save our emperor Franz Joseph! We shall win this war!'

[233] Which can of course occur in history or in art. The O. Henry story "The Gift of the Magi," which fascinated the Russian Formalists is a good example of the latter. At Christmas the poor wife cuts off her beautiful hair and sells it, in order to buy a chain for the fob watch of her poor husband. Meanwhile, he has sold the watch to buy her an elegant set of combs.

> Someone in the enthusiastic crowd banged his hat over his ears, and so the good soldier Švejk, surrounded by a crowd of people, stepped once more through the gates of police headquarters.
>
> 'Quite definitely we'll win this war. I repeat it once more, gentlemen!'
>
> And with these words Švejk took leave of the crowd which accompanied him.
>
> And somewhere from the dim ages of history the truth dawned upon Europe that the morrow would obliterate the plans of today.[234]

After he is taken to the police station, the police commissioner attempts to play the critic of situational irony:

> 'I give you full marks for your enthusiasm, but if only it had been displayed in different circumstances! After all you know very well that you were under police escort and that a patriotic pronouncement like that could and must have been regarded by the public as ironic rather than serious.'

But Švejk counters all such attempts to get past him with answers such as

> 'If there's a war it must be won and people must call out "God save our emperor." No one will talk me out of that!'[235]

Once the police commissioner has become exasperated, Švejk is released, enlists in the army and becomes batman to a chaplain, who promptly uses him as a stake in a card-game and loses him to a Lieutenant Lukaš. After missing his train, Švejk spends much of the novel walking around southern Bohemia (grandly called his "anabasis") in search of Lukaš and the front. He is finally arrested and escorted back to his regiment. The last episode of the novel sees Švejk's regiment sent to the Galician front, where he narrowly avoids execution for donning the uniform of a Russian officer he comes across. The novel breaks off before Švejk has a chance to fight—Hašek did not complete it before he died.

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[234] Hašek, *The Good Soldier Švejk*, 43.
[235] *Ibid*., 45.

Let us agree with both de Man and Booth in supposing that the motive force of irony is instability or equivocation. This instability can, I think, be a mystification of any, all, or some subset of the six terms in the Jakobsonian communication model. And in a novel such as *Švejk*, there is an intentional invitation, as it were, to commit the intentional fallacy—on account, perhaps, of its excesses of style, to assume that Joseph Švejk is the noted drunk and anarchist Jaroslav Hašek. But Švejk is manifestly a simpleton, while Hašek is famous for the sophistication of his anti-Monarchic and anti-Catholic thought. Thus the "sender" is ironized. And if irony is simply to "say what you don't mean," the "message"—a story about the pro-imperial ministrations of a simple Czech *qua* devoted Habsburg hoplite—is manifestly ironic in what Booth would call a "stable" way. We readers can intuit an author by the sheer force of what he is trying to (not) convey to us. And, finally, we wise reading selves are ourselves ironized, or at least deprecated, by the simpleton Švejk's non-discrimination of register—he visits on us the same stupid historical inaccuracies that he tells his troglodytic cellmates when he is first imprisoned.[236]

But to begin to postulate a theoretical model for "stabilizing" irony, I would like to make appeal to another essay of Jakobson's, namely "The Metaphoric and Metonymic Poles."[237] Jakobson's essay is organized around the "varieties of aphasia,"[238] where aphasia is "some impairment . . . either of the faculty for selection and substitution or for

[236] To take only the three most important terms terms in Jakobson's sexpartite model.
[237] Roman Jakobson, "The Metaphoric and Metonymic Poles," *Fundamentals of Language* (The Hague: De Gruyter Mouton, 1981).
[238] *Ibid*., 76.

combination and contexture."[239] Švejk, despite his extreme loquacity, is considered by almost all of his interlocutors (especially those who would extract from him confessions of his misdeeds) to suffer from some "impairment" of normal speech. Once they begin to speak with him, almost all of those who talk to him consider him to be an "idiot," a "dunderhead," or a "blockhead." With some frequency, too, his interlocutors wonder whether he is just pretending to be impaired. For instance, Švejk's statement to the crowd, which I have quoted above: "God save our emperor Franz Joseph! We shall win this war!"[240] is taken by the police commissioner as duplicitous.

At the simplest explanatory level we can say that the police commissioner is imputing to Švejk a desire to express the opposite of what he is saying, namely "that Austria-Hungary shall not win this war." His claim for this is circumstantial. He tells Švejk that expressing the sentiment he has expressed may be laudable, but not when he is under police escort. For one moment, let us suspend the "absolute infinite negativity" (Kierkegaard) that we suspect inhabits this statement of Švejk's, both as it exists within the novel and as it continues "out of the novel" to the idea that the author Hašek is really trying to get at. Let us assume that the character Švejk has genuinely expressed something he feels, and that the police commissioner has merely explained to him why he was wrong to express himself in the terms that he did in the situation in which he found himself. Let us try and state clearly the sense in which the police commissioner takes Švejk's speech to be impaired or deficient.

[239] *Loc cit*.
[240] Hašek, *The Good Soldier Švejk*, 43.

One way in is to take the police commisioner to be saying that Švejk is committing an error of "substitution." He is unable to substitute the stuff of what he wants to say (as a "proud ex-soldier") for a statement that would allow him ingenuously to convey what he wishes to convey. He thus commits a tautology of the sort described by Jakobson in the case of the subject who is presented with the word "hut" and responds by saying "hut."[241] Švejk's response is doubly tautological because he is 1) articulating without substitution his feeling (perhaps "feeling" is too loose a word—we can say "mental state" in case there are any analytical philosophers still reading along) that "If there's a war it must be won and people must call out, 'God save our emperor'"[242] and 2) restating the stimulus (here a proclamation of war that he has seen) by saying, "We shall win this war!" In this sense, I think, we can say that one of the first stable moments of this ironic speech act is a moment of non-substitution, a non-substitution which then has attention brought to it by its "receiver." Evidently the sense in which this moment is ironic, and not merely aphasic, is given by the overlaying of various levels of context, which I will return to below.

If Švejk's outburst is characterized by an impairment in the faculty for substitution, it also demonstrates an excess of "contiguity." Švejk in fact makes two declarations to the crowd, the first that finishes "we shall win this war" and the second, which is "Quite definitely we'll win this war. I repeat it once more, gentlemen!"[243] These two statements bear an obvious relation to each other, and it is a relation of contiguity. The second

[241] *Ibid*., 77.
[242] *Ibid*., 45.
[243] *Ibid*., 45.

statement is slightly different from the first; it is an asseveration of the first. And as in the case of the metaphoric pole, I think there are two kinds of contiguity that can be isolated. The first is simply the kind of rhetorical trope in which the speaker gets carried away, or appears to get carried away. This (as opposed to tautology, which is repetition of the same) is what classical rhetoric called "pleonasm," an accretion of excess around the rhetor's exposition of one idea. The second is a sort of contiguity of longer duration, an invitation for the receiver of the message (which could here be the crowd, the police commissioner or the reader), to imagine versions of this asseveration being implied forward into a context in which they might be unambiguously unironic, for example if at some later stage in the book an officer addressing his troops said, 'Indeed boys! We are going to win this war!— the kind of statement that officers who know they are fighting a losing war have always made.

Thus far I have made two related claims about the germs of irony at the base of a particular speech act in *Švejk*. First, I claimed that Švejk's address can be thought of as a form of aphasia at the pole of metaphor—either that he is unable to make a requisite substitution or, put another way, that he substitutes a phrase with itself, committing a tautology. Second, I claimed that his address to the crowd implies a sort of excess of contiguity, and thereby becomes a sort of pleonasm. This second claim, however, would not constitute evidence of a form of aphasia for Jakobson, who contends that only the lack of an ability to generate contiguous statements is evidence of a disorder. A surfeit of

contiguity is the hallmark not of a lingusitic disorder, according to Jakobson, but of a realist fiction. He claims:

> it is still insufficiently realized that it is the predominance of metonymy which underlies and actually predetermines the so-called "realistic" trend, which belongs to an intermediary stage between the decline of romanticism and the rise of symbolism and is opposed to both. Following the path of contiguous relationships, the realistic author metonymically digresses from the plot to the atmosphere and from the characters to the setting in space and time[244]

A question then, that needs to be answered at this point, is what Hašek's relation to "realism" is. There is a clear sense in which Hašek's *Good Soldier Švejk* is permeated by realist tropes. And it is here where we can see the sense in which realism might begin to be thought of as a kind of linguistic disorder. Recall that Jakobson claims that the metaphoric-aphasic pole is characterized by a "deterioration of metalinguistic operations." But surely such a "deterioration" might obtain in any context in which there emerged an instability in the relation between selection and contiguity. And in the run of a novel, would not a deterioration of metalinguistic function mean something like the deterioration of the narrator at the expense of events or anecdotes, an inability to connect the episodes of the novel?

This is precisely what critics of *Švejk* have always said about the novel. Cecil Parrott, whose 1973 translation into English remains the definitive one despite its occasional twee flourishes, writes: "[Hašek] displays considerable ingenuity, inventiveness and imagination . . . in devising the innumerable stories which Švejk and the characters tell in

[244] Jakobson, "The Metaphoric and Metonymic Poles," 78.

the book. But his own comments and descriptions are less successful . . . he can be surprisingly lame in his descriptions and unconvincing in his narrative style."[245]

There is something undeniably true about this statement. The novel often reads like a series of sketches loosely tied together. Hašek himself seems to make the serious claim that he is a realist. Part 1 of the novel has an epilogue, in which Hašek describes his plan to write two more sections of the novel, and writes of what has become of those people who inspired the characters of the novel. He writes the following: "Life is no finishing school for young ladies. Everyone speaks the way he is made. The protocol chief, Dr Guth, speaks differently from Palivec, the landlord of The Chalice, and this novel is neither a hand-book of drawing-room refinement nor a teaching manual of expressions to be used in polite society. It is a historical picture of a certain time."[246]

But this is, of course, just another version of the *Herausgeberfiktion*, here inserted as an epilogue instead of a prologue. For *Švejk* is only "realistic" enough to establish a "realistic form" that is to be transcended by means of irony. If the realist tendency of the novel is given as a series of anecdotes, sloppily tied together, the ironic tendency of the novel exists as counterpoint, which is given by situation and sequencing—by implicit relations between anecdotes and by the implicit relation of these scenes to history (the necessary hypostasis for irony, as Kierkegaard says).

[245] Hašek, *The Good Soldier Švejk*, xvii. We might think here of Benjamin's successive efforts to liberate the *Passagenwerk* of a narrator, to bring it ever closer to Goethe's idea of "letting the facts speak for themselves."
[246] *Ibid*., 214.

In the previous section, I argued for the possibility of using traces of aphasia at the metaphoric and metonymic poles as a way of stabilizing irony in the situation given by a particular speech act. But such an analytic is incomplete insofar as it implies particulars of the situation of the speech act and implies other situations and speech acts. This does not, I think, prove the "absolute infinite instability" of any one ironic speech act. After all, any speech act, ironic or not, necessitates many things outside itself—a system of signs, a framework by which those signs may be transmitted between two parties, a semantic world that presupposes past speech acts and speech acts to come.

As Kenneth Burke cleverly claims in *What are the Signs of What?*, every speech act can be conceived of as the center-point of semantic circles with different circumferences. Every word or speech act inhabits diverse "contexts of situation."[247] What, then, are the "contexts of situation" of Švejk's warlike words above? Both his declarations of war can be understood in terms that Burke would call the "first degree of indexicality"[248] within the text, which is to say words "as co-extensive with themselves." This degree of indexicality could, I think, be equated with what I have identified above (following Jakobson) as the tautology of the metaphoric pole. "God save the emperor!" is potentially a tautology with itself (in the sense that I argued above), as well as a tautology with its appearance at other points in the text, when uttered by other characters. It can also be

[247] Burke, *Language as Symbolic Action*, 359.
[248] *Ibid*., 369.

parsed at what Burke would call the second degree of indexicality, namely radiations of itself in the text,[249] which sounds like a restatement of Goethe's narratological gem about "repeated reflections."[250] This degree of indexicality is at the level of near-tautology or apposition, an example of which is "the emperor Franz Joseph."

I have thus far resisted extra-textual data as potential sources of "context of situation" in order to countermand the immediacy of the dialectic between irony and history. In so doing , I have only concerned myself with the indexical planes on which words or phrases exist in the novel. I think there is another plane though, which exists purely within the text, and is also a wellspring of irony. This is the plane of character. For Švejk is constructed as an "ironic" character in contradistinction to a host of other "straight" characters who appear in *Švejk*. Švejk's principal foil is Palivec, who keeps the tavern at which Švejk drinks. In the opening pages of the novel, both Palivec and Švejk are arrested by a secret-policeman for harboring treasonous sentiments. Švejk blithely says what he wants to say. Palivec is always careful to frame his comments, to indicate how he wishes the "situational context" to be construed. He is arrested for saying the following to the secret-policeman: "Yes, you're right . . . [a picture of His Imperial Majesty] did hang there, but the flies used to shit on it, so I put it away in the attic. You know, somebody

[249] *Loc. cit.*
[250] "Wiederholte Spiegelungen."

might be so free as to pass a remark about it and then there could be unpleasantness. I don't want that, do I?"[251]

When he is arrested, Palivec asks the secret-policeman why. The secret-policeman answers thus: "Because you said the flies shitted on His Imperial Majesty."[252] The point is clear—the unthinking representative of authority does not pay heed to narrative framing, to "situational context," authority being the unironic thing *par excellence*. Palivec says that he has been "careful," a word his wife repeats when she is bewailing the fact that her husband has just been imprisoned for ten years. On this occasion, she also reports that, as her husband was taken away, he yelled "as though he'd gone off his head: 'Long live free thinking!'"[253] The ever "frank" Švejk, meanwhile, is never even imprisoned long enough for his first prison meal to be digested. In the juxtaposition of Švejk and Palivec, the ironic character emerges as the one who is never guarded in his speech, pays no attention to context, is at one point even called the "*non plus ultra*," and is not subject to history as it is unfolds in the story. He is never impelled by his misfortunes to say "Long live free thinking!" The ironic character is thus exempted from "situational context" and is also, simultaneously, the prime mover who determines the temperament of the situation.

[251] Hašek, *The Good Soldier Švejk*, 8.
[252] *Ibid*., 14.
[253] *Ibid*., 46.

There is, of course, another kind of irony which emerges in the chiastic moment when real exhortations of the story are crossed with "real history." It is ironic that Švejk exclaims, "We shall win this war!" because the novel was published in 1923, long after the Habsburgs had not only lost the war, but also lost their empire. But, as I hope I have shown in the passages above, this form of extra-textual irony might be only the complement to forms of irony, which stabilize themselves within the text, and do not necessitate any appeal to history. Indeed, I hope I have shown a few things in this essay. First, that Schlegel is not always right that those *Dichtungen* (poetic acts) that are thoroughly ironic are ironic "at every point." Irony is invariably constructed within the text with reference to other points in the text that are not ironic. Second (and I am not sure that I showed this with any great convincingeness), Kierkegaard is not necessarily correct to suppose that irony is "absolute infinte negativity." It can be positively formulated both as forms of aphasia at the metaphoric and metonymic poles and as a disequilbrium between these two poles. Third, that the similar claims by Booth and de Man that irony is ungraspable as it moves towards instability, or moves toward transcending the form of the text, are not always borne out, if one is serious enough about the ironic *Textstelle* (point in the text).

I hope, too, that in the course of this section, I have given the lie to Hašek's claim that he belongs to any school of "realist" authors. Indeed, the sophistication of his irony and the facility with which he is able to divert the reader's attention from this irony, or even to make the reader assume that this irony emerges only in dialectical relation with history, is

such that we must agree that *Švejk* should be called "baroque." On that note, Měštan writes:

> In his afterword to Milada Součková's book *Baroque in Bohemia* (1980), Roman Jakobson affirms—and certainly he is right in so doing—that the Baroque tradition in Czech culture is still very much alive today. He rightly gives as an example the novel of Hašek. Jakobson recognized that different elements of the Czech literary Baroque survive in the novel of Švejk, in spite of the fact that Hašek has borrowed a great many motifs from the stories told in Prague brasseries, a relatively new genre.[254]

Historical irony after all?

In what I have written above, I have described certain ironies that emerge within *Don Quixote* and *The Good Soldier Švejk*. There are other intratextual ironies that I could have drawn out, especially in the case of the Maese Pedro section of *Don Quixote*. Quixote calls himself a defender of Christendom and curses Maese Pedro as the Devil, on the grounds that the Devil can only see the past and present, whereas God can see the future. Don Quixote, then, has released the Devil into the world, since Maese Pedro is Ginés de Pasamonte, whom Don Quixote had freed from prison in part one of the novel.

There are in both novels, however, certain ironies that could rightly be called "historic." The *Good Soldier Švejk* was published in 1923, long after Švejk's entreaties for the Habsburg emperor to be saved could be read as anything other than gallows humor (more properly: "beyond the gallows" humor). They were an all-too-late enjoinment to

[254] Antonín Měšťan, "Jaroslav Hašek, Josef Lada et Švejk," *Institut d'études slaves* vol. 74, n°1 (2002): 94; "Dans sa postface au livre de Milada Součková *Baroque in Bohemia* (1980), Roman Jakobson affirme — et certes à juste titre — que la tradition baroque dans la culture tchèque est encore très vivante aujourd'hui. Il donne justement pour exemple le roman de Hašek. Jakobson a reconnu que différents éléments du baroque littéraire tchèque survivent dans le roman de Švejk, en dépit du fait que Hašek a emprunté beaucoup de motifs aux récits de brasserie praguois, genre relativement jeune."

"patriotism." By the same token, Maese Pedro's auguries are "late," already undone by the innkeeper who introduces Maese Pedro to Don Quixote thus (and I think the magnanimity of the introduction makes it worthy of repeition):

> He's a famous puppeteer who's been wandering around this Aragon and of La Mancha for some time now with a show about Melisendra being set free by the famous Don Gaiferos, one of the finest and best performed stories seen in these parts for many a long year. He's also got an ape with the most unusual skill ever seen among apes or conceived by men, because if it's asked a question it listens attentively and then jumps up on its master's shoulders and whispers the answer into his ear, and then Maese Pedro announces it; and it says much more about events in the past than what lies in the future, and although it doesn't always get everything right, it's more often right than wrong . . .[255]

In other words, Maese Pedro's past, known to the innkeeper and the reader, renders his monkey's divinations about Don Quixote's present dead letters. And they are, on their face, devoid of information about the future.

The incident of Maese Pedro is, however, more freighted with the past than is obvious. Maese Pedro is, as we learn, the same rogue, Ginés de Pasamonte, that Don Quixote has released from prison in the first part of the novel. Indeed, he is one of the few characters to appear in both parts of the novel. As Don Quixote frees Ginés de Pasamonte, Ginés tells him that he is writing his autobiography, and that it is very good:

> "Is it so good?" said Don Quixote.
>
> "So good is it," replied Ginés, "that a fig for 'Lazarillo de Tormes,' and all of that kind that have been written, or shall be written compared with it: all I will say about it is that it deals with facts, and facts so neat and diverting that no lies could match them."[256]

This is the only explicit reference to *Lazarillo de Tormes* in *Don Quixote*. We know *Lazarillo de Tormes* as the first picaresque novel. However, it is also, arguably, the last of the Maqāmāt. The Maqāmāt formed a literary genre that blosommed in the tenth century

[255] Cervantes, Miguel, *Don Quixote*, trans. John Rutherford (New York: Penguin Books, 2003) 658.
[256] Cervantes, *Don Quixote*, trans. John Rutherford, 624.

A.D. (third and fourth century A.H.), whose creation is attributed to a Persian wanderer through Baghdad and its environs, Badīʾ al-Zaman al-Hamadhāni. He created a scholarly alter ego called 'Isa ibn-hisham, who wandered through the world and often found himself observing the charlatan abu-l-FatH al iskanderi. This observation by proxy allowed ibn-hisham to make light of social mores. By himself and by proxy, he was particularly attentive to the foibles of those of a higher social class than himself.[257] The Maqāmāt of Badi are, evidently, an important antecedent for *Lazarillo de Tormes*. One of them, in particular, is an important antecedent to the Maese Pedro story in *Don Quixote*, and its importance is signaled by the story's oblique reference to *Lazarillo de Tormes*, through Maese Pedro/Ginés de Pasamonte. I will quote the Maqāmā in its entirety (since, as far as I know, the connection with *Don Quixote* has never been pointed out before), as it appears in the 1915 translation by William Prendergast, which remains the best translation in English:

> 'Isa ibn-hisham related to us and said: While I was in the city of Peace [Baghdad], returning from the Sacred Territory [Mecca], I was swaggering along, with the swaggering of pedestrians, on the banks of the Tigris, observing those rare sights and closely exaiming those embellishments until, suddenly, I reached a ring of men crowding together, excitement agitating their heads and laughter exploding their cheeks. Curiosity impelled me to do what it had driven them to do, till I stood within earshot of the voice of a man without being able to see his face, because of the intensity of the thronging and the excessiveness of the crowding, and behold! It was a monkey-trainer causing his monkey to dance and making those near him laugh. So I bounded as bounds the well-trained hound, and went forward, after the manner of one lame, over the necks of the other people. This one's shoulders throwing me in that one's stomach, until I made the beards of two men my carpet and sat down after much fatigue. And verily shame choked me with its spittle and the straitness of the place distressed me. When the monkey-trainer had finished his performance and the place of assembly divested itself of its people, I arose, and verily terror had clothed me in its garb, and I stood up that I might see his face, and lo! By heavens! It was Abú'l-Fath, al-Iskanderí. So I said: 'Sirrah, what meaneth this baseness?' Then he indited saying:—

[257] Harim, Sonia. "The relation between the Maqámát and the *Lazarillo de Tormes*," Academia.edu. Accessed April 28, 2017. http://www.academia.edu/15257975/The_relation_between_the_Maqamat_and_the_Lazarillo_de_Tormes.

> ‘The sin is the days’ not mine,
> So censure the vicissitudes of the nights.
> By means of folly I obtained my desire
> And proudly trailed my embellished skirts.[258]

The parallel to the Maese Pedro story is twofold. There is the obvious kinship of content: a charlatan who travels with a monkey to entertain passing crowds. There is also a kinship of form: the charlatan performs his routine with the monkey and then shows his hand, laying bare the ease with which a crowd can be duped. In Badi’s version, the reveal is made by the charlatan to the scholar, ‘Isa ibn-hisham. In Cervantes’ version, the reveal is made (after being initially suspected by the innkeeper) by the Arab historian Cide Hamete.

Between Chapter 25 and Chapter 27 comes Chapter 26. In this chapter, Maese Pedro performs a puppet-play of Charlemagne’s daughter Melisendra and her husband, Don Gaiferos. The play is from the saga of Roland. Melisendra has been taken captive by the Moorish king Marsilio. Don Gaiferos succeeds in rescuing her from captivity. They flee, pursued by Moors. At this point in the story, Don Quixote, as a Christian knight, feels compelled to intervene. He cuts off the flight of the Chrsitian lovers as he cuts up the puppet Moors with his sword.

Don Quixote emerges in Chapter 26 as a knight of the faith. This follows immediately after his being praised by the charlatan Maese Pedro, who grabs his legs during the

[258] W.J. Prendergast, *The Maqámát of Badí' Al-Zamán Al-Hamadhání: Translated From The Arabic With An Introduction and Notes Historical and Grammatical*, vol. 4 (New York: Routledge Library Editions: Islamic Thought in the Middle Ages, 2015).

monkey show and says: "These legs I embrace as if I were embracing the twin pillars of Hercules, O illustrious reviver of the forgotten order of knight-errantry! O never sufficiently praised Don Quixote de la Mancha, encourager of the faint-hearted, support of those about to fall, helping hand to the fallen, staff and comfort of all of the unfortunate."[259]

To this paean Don Quixote replies, ". . . who could have persuaded me that there are apes that practice divination, as I have seen here with my own two eyes? For I am indeed the very same Don Quixote de la Mancha that this worthy animal has named . . ."[260]

Our hero, in other words, on the cusp of an act in defense of Christendom, accepts a particular encomium that is offered in the terms of an old story told in the domain of the enemies of Christendom. If this irony is too obscure—written in a language that is not in the least private, but is unknown to Don Quixote—the joke is made known to all when it is explained by the Arab chronicler Side Hamete just as soon as Don Quixote has had time to slash at the Moors with his sword. The Maese Pedro section is a repository of secret humanism, told in the idiom of the enemy—and the degree of this inversion, of this strange prosopopoeia, is only hinted at by one of their number, Cide Hamete, never fleshed out.

[259] Cervantes, *Don Quixote*, trans. John Rutherford, 659.
[260] *Ibid*.

Max Brod was the first of many critics to recognize the kinship between the *Good Soldier Švejk*, which he translated into German, and *Don Quixote*.[261] The parallels in structure and voicing between the two novels are hard to miss. Unlike the story of the Maese Pedro, which has Cide Hamete as an exegete, the story of Švejk makes no reference to *Don Quixote* or to Spain, the place from which it was "translated." Švejk says, "Long live the Emperor!" which I have glossed above in the ironic terms of the novel as "May the Austrian Emperor die soon!" The conditions of possibility for the emergence in central Europe of this genre of long-form ironic exposition, the picaresque novel, are given by its earlier emergence in Habsburg Spain, which was, as Hugo von Hofmannsthal called it, the "cousin" to Habsburg Austria and its hated emperors. Herein lies the recondite tempering of hatred that I call Baroque Humanism. Mockery is its watchword, but mockery quietly stolen from the mouths of the mocked.

[261] Max Brod, *Zwei Prager Volkstypen*, (Prague, *Prager Abendblatt,* 7.11.1921), 6.

Conclusion.

> *Circumlocution (periphrasis)* has been a current figure since Antiquity. Goethe has a periphrase for Venice in the words:
>
> *Jene neptunische Stadt, allwo man geflügelte Löwen Göttlich verehrt…*
> (That city of Neptune where to winged lions Honors divine are paid…)
>
> The earliest examples are in Hesiod, in the language of oracles, and later in Pindar. The latter says "the bored work of bees" for "honey."[262]

Ernst Curtius, one of the genial figures of 20th century literary criticism, holds that these lines of Goethe's and Pindar's are both "Mannerist." I disagree. Goethe's lines are a mannered play at Baroque manners, an overwrought reimagining of a certain Tintoretto in words. Pindar's line is Baroque. Curtius is barred from making this distinction, since he has disqualified Baroque as an analytic category. He writes that

> Much of what we shall call mannerism is today set down as "Baroque." But this word has caused such confusion that it is better to eliminate it. The word "Mannerism" further deserves the preference because, compared with "Baroque," it has a minimum of historical associations. The concepts of intellectual history should be so constructed that they offer the least possible opportunity for misuse.[263]

To be sure, Baroque art is not without its "historical associations." I hope that in this thesis I have shown what some of them are. Moreover, I hope that I have shown that in the history of literature and in the history of fretting about literature, *Baroque* has often been a useful analytic category— sometimes the only one.

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[262] Ernst Curtius. *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages*. Translated by Willard Trask. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973, 273.
[263] *Ibid*.

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