Staging *La vida es sueño*: Its Première and Three Contemporary Productions



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Short abstract

Research on the *comedia* in performance has partially ignored the actor's role in establishing aesthetic and ideological meanings in early modern and (post)modern stagings. This study addresses this gap by employing four performances of *La vida es sueño* as case studies: the 1632-1636 première (Chapter I) and three CNTC productions from 1996 (Chapter II), 2000 (Chapter III), and 2012 (Chapter IV). Its objective is to answer the following questions: what is the players' role in conveying dramatic features (characterisation and conflict)? What resources –such as paralinguistic features, gestures, and use of space– do they employ to achieve this? How do they articulate aspects from their socio-political context onto the stage? As these issues are examined, this thesis discusses (a) the adaptations' level of (un)faithfulness to the play-text/première and (b) their (lack of) relevance vis-à-vis their aesthetic and ideological environment.

To do so, it introduces two dichotomies: the fundamentalist/reformist approach –which evaluates (a)– and the dry/wet perspective –which considers (b). Methodologically, the acting is analysed through "thick" description (specific scenes reveal generalities about the productions) and a particularised framework for each mise-en-scène. The comparison shows that there are two perspectives in the (post)modern staging of *La vida es sueño/*the

comedia: (1) The conservative one –catalogued as dry and fundamentalist– is illustrated by the 1996 and 2012 productions. This perspective fails to engage with the play's most contemporary themes (e.g., violence), while respecting the script/première (e.g., introducing few extra-textual scenes). (2) The radical one –catalogued as wet and reformist– is exemplified by the 2000 version. This approach engages with political criticism (e.g., the spectator's problematic attitudes towards cruelty/suffering) and transgresses Calderón's play-text (e.g., by introducing references to fascism). The main contribution of this study is that it questions and reinstates the relevance of the performance of Calderón's play and the *comedia* today.

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Long abstract

This study sets out to solve several problems in the study of *La vida es sueño*, all of them gravitating around one issue: the relevance of its performance today. Few *comedia* researchers have questioned why the productions they analyse are staged in the first place. What elements brought this or that version of Lope or Calderón to the *tablados* in a particular moment of history? Are these elements the kind that make the mise-en-scène of a 400-year-old play "modern"? Or does responsibility for its staging fall on those features that re-establish the dialogue between the 17th- and 21st-centuries and give the spectator the sense of being in Siglo de Oro Spain? Is the production one which brings about a compromise between both trends?

These questions are discussed here. The thesis is situated in the wider field of performance studies –an interdisciplinary field which engages with the relations between (theatrical) performances and the society/individual. More specifically, it is part of *comedia* in performance studies –an emerging discipline of Hispanic research, dealing with the stagings of Golden Age drama in contemporary theatres. The Introduction's contribution to the understanding of the "state of the question" of this area of knowledge is the recognition of three analytical trends: (1) one which centres on exploring the social/historical context of

the productions; (2) one which focuses on the semiotic/theoretical issues around them; (3) one which highlights the politics behind a given mise-en-scène. This thesis takes an original approach as it mediates between the three.

To narrow down the approach, these issues are contextualised in the Introduction within a specific period and geographical location: Spain between 1996 and 2012. Also, the scope is limited to three CNTC productions, case studies through which conclusions can be drawn about the features not only of *comedia* in performance but also of Western staging practices in general. These versions are compared to each other and, also, to a hypothetical première, to ascertain both their distinctiveness and their level of (un)faithfulness to the "original". Another delimitation is that this work centres on previously overlooked elements of this type of drama: the actor and their establishment of characterisation and dramatic conflict.

The Introduction also presents the methodological approach(es). Three frameworks are selected because: (a) they have never been employed to study the *comedia*, (b) they allow the establishment of interdisciplinary comparisons (the lack of them being a shortcoming in Golden Age research); and (c) they allow the object of study to "speak for itself", rather than imposing an arbitrary framework on it (as in past research). The first is "thick" description which selects meaningful textual/performative elements to present conclusions about the script/production. The second is an "immanent" method, which proposes the implementation of individualised frameworks for each production, based on their style and suggested by interviews, reviews, and criticism. This methodological process is a solution to unravel the complexity behind analysing four different performances, from four different timeframes, and which possess four different (extra-)dramatic objectives. The particular working schemes

are: the *corporal/motorio*, the *mixto*, and *espiritual/estatorio* styles (Chapter I); psychological realism (II); physical theatre (III); and emotional acting (IV).

Two unprecedented dichotomies guide my evaluation of the contemporary productions: (1) the fundamentalist/reformist approach, which measures the versions' (dis)attachment to the script/première and (2) the dry/wet polarity, which judges their aesthetic and political imprint. Both parameters' objective is to settle one of the most challenging dilemmas in the critical hermeneutics of theatre (and of literature): the articulation of the researcher's personal evaluation of the aesthetic phenomenon in a "scientific" fashion. Therefore, this approach (partially inspired by Shakespearean criticism) provides an objective base –categories sanctioned by their application in other theatrical traditions– for a purely subjective cognitive task –saying what one thinks about the productions. This is a first in a field such as *comedia* in performance studies, which has failed to include the individual valuation and "taste" of researchers who are, above all, spectators.

Although the study is chiefly concerned with the (post)modern adaptations' interactions with today's world, its starting point is Calderón's play's early modern première. This represents one of the few attempts to understand the most famous Golden Age play as a performance, rather than simply as a script. Furthermore, a comparison between analogous –performative– phenomena opens another layer of analysable data (beyond the text-based) to determine the contemporary productions' contributions to and/or misappropriations of the *comedia*. Hence, Chapter I offers a reconstruction of the acting of the *comediantes* playing Segismundo and Basilio –something only very partially done before. The focus on *both* characters/actors is also unique regarding *comedia* studies: former approaches have mainly analysed the Prince, overlooking the King.

A problem arises when trying to understand a live event four-hundred years later and which possesses no historical records evidencing its inception and reception. To solve this issue, the first chapter employs as its corpus the *suelta*, since it is the closest document to Calderón's (lost) manuscript, and it maintains more performance-oriented marks than the reading-oriented 1636 version. The bibliographic effort behind such a choice is worth making as only few inquiries have employed the *sueltas* as a primary source for any type of –textual and/or performative– exegesis.

The reconstruction of the play's acting is based on a thematic motif –the *cuerpo* and *alma* opposition–, which is contrasted with analogous elements from the theory of performance in early modern Spain: Pinciano's and Alcázar's *corporal/motorio* technique (emphasis on physicality), the *espiritual/estatorio* style (emphasis on declamation and statuesque bearing), the *mixto* pattern (a mixture of both). This systematisation using diverse pre-modern data is a novelty in *comedia* studies –more interested in analysing the plays from contemporary (and, hence, anachronistic) perspectives of acting rather than in engaging with terms proper to Calderón's cultural horizon.

The cutting-edge leap from the textual to the performative works as follows. If the protagonists' characterisation and conflict are guided by the body-soul *díada*, then the actors would have performed according to each of these two states. They would have followed the *corporal/motorio* style when their characters are controlled by corporal passion. Their style would have assumed an in-between *corporal-espiritual* technique for moments of dramatic –and, hence, performative– mutations. Finally, the features of the *espiritual/estatorio* method would have been employed during scenes of rationality and spirituality. This abstract understanding is complemented with specific descriptive models of painting from

Carducho's *Diálogos* –representing a holistic reconstruction (abstract plus specific) which contrasts to more generalising or superficial former interpretations.

Five conclusions are extracted from this experimental approach –that, beyond the objectives of this study, heighten our understanding of the *comedia*. First, variation in acting would have been highly valued at the *corrales*. Second, the performance would have been histrionic and affected (rather than naturalistic and spontaneous). Third, the *comediante*'s style would have been conventional and influenced by oratory/rhetoric. Fourth, there would have been a performative emphasis on hand movement. Fifth, there would have been an intrinsic relationship between textual elements and the acting. When previous studies have arrived at similar conclusions, they have done so without supporting their assertions with a profound textual analysis of a play (as in this study).

Chapter II analyses the 1996 production. To present a comparison in equal (i.e., performative) terms between the contemporary staging and the early modern one, the method to study García Valdés' version is established by articulating interviews, reviews, criticism, and my own interpretation. As there is a lack of valuable critical appraisal of the production, the chapter sets out to explore similar decisions to García Valdés' on the Shakespearean stage and, then, to adapt the vocabulary used to analyse them to examine the *comedia* –a theoretical pliancy unseen in previous, strictly mono-disciplinary investigations. This scheme permits the realisation that the director and actors worked to highlight the characters' inner impulses, following the style of psychological realism.

This theatrical language's tools and teachings are used to investigate the acting of this mise-en-scène –that is, elements from dramatic practice innovatively support the theoretical analysis. The implementation of such a method endorses the interpretation of Mari Sánchez's Prince as someone suffering from a deranged/immature psyche and his hamartia as connected

to psychopathologies. This represents a successful attempt to figure out one of the most obscure and less analysed Segismundos of the tradition. Contrary to less focalised and less practice-aligned interpretations, the Prince's dramatic arc is read for the first time as a therapy, the Palace scene as a clinical experiment, his anagnorisis as a behavioural remedy, and his dénouement as "open" (as in the première).

Likewise, the choice of a psychologically oriented framework enables us to interpret Colomé-Basilio's plot as negative, degrading from an initial hieratism and political security to uncontrolled kinesics and a-kingly madness. His acting displays how outer correlatives are inspired by an inner deterioration –mirroring, thus, the early modern King's spiritual downfall. The employment of concepts proper to psychology to analyse drama provides this study with one of the most valued qualities in contemporary research: interdisciplinarity.

Regarding the (un)faithfulness to the première, the 1996 production is fundamentalist since it draws teleological pathways for its protagonists like those of their "original" peers. Regarding aesthetic and political innovation, this version is dry, failing to engage with violence –the play's most contemporary topic– and preferring to assign blame to psychological derangements, rather than to the individual. No study of *La vida es sueño* previous to this one had emphasised the centrality of violence in establishing (extra)dramatic meanings and values.

A similar process is followed in Chapter III, which focuses on the 2000 mise-en-scène. That Bieito is very vocal about his directorial work in interviews facilitates the determination of this chapter's analytical approach, by matching his explicit reflections with the implicit stage decisions. An idea established at the start is that the 2000 production is conceived as a contrast to García Valdés' –indeed, one of this thesis's central argumentative lines is the exploration of the dialogue between the three CNTC performances (an innovation,

as a tendency of previous research had been to approach the productions as isolated from each other). Hence, to a psychological/internalised adaptation (1996) corresponds a physical/externalised version (2000), illustrating, for the first time in this type of investigation, the two main trends in the performance of Western theatre: a conception of acting as stemming either from within the actor or from without.

Two devices of physical theatre –physicality and complicité– are employed to explore how the actors conceive Calderón's roles. One of the main features of Bieito's project only becomes clear when compared with the performative aspects of the first staging (an attribute of this thesis): Notario-Segismundo stands out for re-establishing the première's instinctive and violent Prince and presenting an *energúmeno* (a fundamentalist decision). Likewise, owing to the formulation of a majestic "original" Basilio in the first chapter, the thesis is able to highlight the particularity of Álvarez's King: his show of decrepitude and vulnerability (a reformist interpretation). A paradoxical aspect that both protagonists share is interactivity with the audience (complicité): a feature that can be traced to the *corrales* (fundamentalist), but which Bieito decides to take to an uncomfortable level (reformist). Before this thesis, the audience's role had been mostly ignored by *comedia* researchers.

Another contribution to former research is this chapter's emphasis on Bieito's politics, which had only been superficially pointed out by critics. Its symbolisms are explored by analysing the production's thematisation of violence/victimhood and its ties with on-offstage interactivity and physicality. The logical path to follow is to question what Bieito is trying to tell *us* (those offstage) with such a proximal and explicit presentation of cruelty and suffering. One of the possible answers is that the director might be inviting the spectators to reflect on their own role as witnesses of social stigmas in the extra-dramatic world. These

ties between the "fictional" and the "real" worlds have rarely been treated with such an emphasis on the ideological factors in other *comedia* studies.

Bieito's production is depicted as the most politically motivated one of the three CNTC versions. It neatly embodies what is described as "wet" in the Introduction: an ideologically and aesthetically challenging anti-traditionalist interpretation of a classical drama. Although Bieito re-instates the most relevant motif of the play-text –violence–, he does so in such a hyperbolic fashion that it seems antithetical (reformist) to what a hypothetical première would have looked like: less intrusive regarding the offstage and more nuanced in its conception of nihilism. The establishment of this contrast is a result of this thesis's adoption of a (previously overlooked) comparative focus.

Considering the contrast established between productions, in Chapter IV, Pimenta's mise-en-scène is interpreted as a response to its predecessor's vanguardism. This argument is developed by showing the director's faithfulness to the text and her intention to restore the CNTC's "lost" conservative aesthetics and politics. To understand the implications of such a stylistic U-turn, the 2012 performance is analysed through the scope of the theory of emotions –another instance of this thesis's interdisciplinarity. This is because Pimenta explicitly recognises her intention to rebuild Calderón's masterpiece from the perspective of feelings, returning to an internalised (rather than externalised) way of acting. Hence, Pimenta's project –which has been positively valued by other surveys which lack a comparative approach– is described here as fundamentalist and dry.

The chapter throws light on this fundamentalism and dryness through a zoomed-in analysis of the actors' business. It focuses on Segismundo's paralinguistic features, posture, and use of space to conclude that his characterisation is that of a lion(ess) or a *llorica*,

conveying an emotionally oriented hamartia. His anagnorisis is conceived to present the idea of emotional repression and self-punishment.

Unlike his predecessors, Portillo-Segismundo's moral change is unproblematic: from the second imprisonment on, his rational change is uninterrupted and "clean", a reformist decision with dry motives behind it. In contrast, the former CNTC Princes show signs of their flaws until the very end, "opening up" the interpretation of their dénouement –another meaningful contrast extracted thanks to this study's comparative approach. On the other hand, Basilio is less influenced by Pimenta's conservativism. Notario's contribution to the role is the embodiment of unrepressed passion, a feature conventionally assigned to Segismundo. His hamartia consisted of being unable to restrain emotions.

The Conclusion summarises the work and reinstates the questions posed at the start. What is *La vida es sueño*'s relevance on today's stage? How can researchers and practitioners help to maintain its importance when it is constantly faced with pressure from more popular and innovative theatrical traditions? Although the answers to these questions are multiple –depending on each spectator/critic–, this final chapter centres on developing a personal response. If a benchmark should be established, I believe that future stagings of *La vida es sueño* (and the *comedia*) should resemble Bieito's –particularly in the way it challenges the artistic and social status quo. By assuming similar objectives, they can engage with a society such as the postmodern one, which is constantly questioning and adapting its aesthetic and ethical assumptions. Only by accepting the entrance of vanguardism into Golden Age theatre today can this tradition's survival be guaranteed.

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Introduction

Before the first series of lockdowns started to be imposed around the world during early 2020 due to Covid-19, one of the last plays to be performed in Mexico City was *La vida es sueño*. It was a live production by Mexico's Compañía Nacional de Teatro in the Sala Héctor Mendoza.[1] More than a year later, when social restrictions began to ease in Mexico City (for the second time), *La vida es sueño* was one of the first dramas to be staged. However, unlike the first one, this production by El Aedo Teatro for the Festival Internacional de Teatro Clásico MX was presented in a *hybrid* format: acted live (in the living room of the actor/director Jesús Torres) but only accessible via a virtual platform.[2]

Likewise, in Spain, during the autumn before the outbreak of the virus, Helena Pimenta (one of the directors featured in this study) staged the last production of her tenure with the (Joven) Compañía Nacional de Teatro Clásico (CNTC). From the entire repertoire of Golden Age plays, she chose to direct Calderón's masterpiece for a second time.[3] In late 2020, the company announced that they were working on a new adaptation of this play.[4] This

[1] *La vida es sueño*, Compañía Nacional de Teatro (México), dir. by Claudia Ríos, Sala Héctor Mendoza, Mexico City, January 2020 (Live performance): ≤https://inba.gob.mx/actividad/7884/la-vida-es-sueno> [Accessed 17/03/2021].

[2] *La vida es sueño, El Bululú*, El Aedo Teatro, dir. by Jesús Torres, 20 March 2021 (Live performance, via Zoom): <https://131e646e-7a25-a9b3-0400-919ba7269001.filesusr.com/ugd/257855_a207be990eaf46cca7e0b926dd59423d.pdf> [Accessed 25/03/2021]. There was another very free resignification of *La vida es sueño* for this same festival: *De los sueños de esta noche*, Teatro UNAM (México), dir. by Antonio Salinas, 27 March 2021 (Live performance, via Zoom): <http://www.teatrounam.com.mx/index.php/component/sppagebuilder/139-de-los-suenos-de-esta-noche> [Accessed 7/09/2021].

[3] *La vida es sueño*, Joven Compañía Nacional de Teatro Clásico, dir. by Helena Pimenta, Teatro de la Comedia, Madrid, September-October 2012 (Live performance): <http://teatroclasico.mcu.es/2019/06/17/la-vida-es-sueno-7/> [Accessed 17/03/2021].

[4] This was stated by Duncan Wheeler in: 'The Place of Golden Age in Twenty-First Century Spanish Theatre', paper presented in the conference: *Resituating the* Comedia, *Conference 1: Making Classics: Canonicity and Performance* (13 November 2020, UCLA, Online event via Zoom Webinar).

new mise-en-scène will be required to be planned, rehearsed, and executed complying with the rules and behavioural practices proper to "the new normality".

These cases are just the most recent examples of the importance that the *performance* of Calderón's masterpiece has in the cultural imaginary of the contemporary Hispanic world –on both sides of the Atlantic. Despite the crisis currently engulfing the dramatic arts due to this pandemic, the tradition of the staging of *La vida es sueño* has not succumbed to sanitary and economic pressures as other dramatic works have.[5] Instead, it has adapted to the times, acquiring virtual or socially-distanced formats to survive in these challenging times (and a further study could analyse these productions).

For that reason, from the academic world, there should be a constant effort to reassess, problematise, and question the relations between the different productions of Segismundo and Basilio's story and the contemporary theatrical and socio-political panorama (in the Spanish world and elsewhere). Such is the main goal of this study.[6] The importance of research with such aims is that it moves beyond investigations which, when examining Calderón's work, simplistically justify their choice because they see him 'como una de las cumbres de la dramaturgia universal'.[7]

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[5] The extent of such impact is evidenced by the fact that this topic has its own Wikipedia entrance: 'Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the performing arts', *Wikipedia*, 5 April 2021: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Impact_of_the_COVID-19_pandemic_on_the_performing_arts> [Accessed 25/03/2021].

[6] I acknowledge that: 'in order to adopt a genuinely theatrical mode of criticism, we must go a step further and recognize that performance holds the potential to generate meanings that without their aid, we would not have been able to "negotiate" through the play text': Duncan Wheeler, *Golden Age Drama in Contemporary Spain: The Comedia on Page, Stage and Screen* (Cardiff: University of Wales, 2012), p. 7. The reader only needs to glance at the 'Bibliografía calderoniana', a publication that every year gathers part of the bibliography relating to Calderón, to realise how this author is an inexhaustible source of material for the *textually oriented* literary criticism. See: Hernando Morata, 'Bibliografía calderoniana 2019', *Anuario Calderoniano,* 13 (2020), 431-451. In this study, I only refer to this philological side of criticism to support arguments related to the performance.

[7] Sergio Adillo Rufo, *La resignificación de Calderón en la escena española reciente (1981-2018)* (Madrid: Academia de las Artes Escénicas de España, 2019), p. 22.

This study thus reflects on the following two questions: (1) what is the connection between the aesthetic, performative, and ideological elements of the early modern *La vida es sueño* and its (post)modern productions? (2) What is the relevance of the play's main themes regarding our present-day context and how are they reinterpreted and brought into dialogue on the 20th- and 21st-centuries *tablados*? To respond to these issues, four performances of Calderón's play are analysed as case studies: (1) the early modern première (staged around 1629-1636) and three CNTC productions.[8] These were staged: (2) in 1996 (directed by Ariel García Valdés); (3) in 2000 (directed by Calixto Bieito); and (4) in 2012 (directed by Helena Pimenta).

The three trends

Before referring to the material analysed, it is necessary to explore the ways in which the critics of the *comedia* in the field of performance studies have dealt with questions and problems similar to the ones just presented (with regard to *La vida es sueño* and other plays). From this emerging area of Hispanic/Latin-American studies, I recognise three main critical trends, which are briefly discussed in this sub-section: (1) the historicist; (2) the theoretical; and (3) the political.[9]

(1) Duncan Wheeler's work is one of the clearest examples of the first trend. He has written extensively about 20th- and 21st-century adaptations of Golden Age drama 'on the page, stage and screen'. His work can be catalogued as historicist, as it is more focused on

[8] The early modern hypothetical première (as examined in Chapter I) is referred in this study simply as the première.
[9] There is a fourth one that concerns translated versions/adaptations of the *comedia* in performance. See: Susan Paun de García and Donald R. Larson (eds.), *The Comedia in English: Translation and Performance* (Woodbridge: Tamesis, 2008) and Kathleen Jeffs, *Staging the Spanish Golden Age: Translation and Performance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018).

exploring historical issues rather than on aesthetic ones. Indeed, Wheeler reveals such a tendency when he writes that his 'research is aimed not only at *comedia* specialists but also at those with an interest in the culture and politics of modern-day Spain'.[10] In relation to *La vida es sueño*, the author has dealt mainly with Pimenta's 2012 mise-en-scène –which he considers to be one of the most accomplished productions by the CNTC–, partially overlooking other adaptations of the play.[11]

Sergio Adillo Rufo's study of Calderón's performances in contemporary Spain also represents this trend (exemplifying the fact that there is a Hispanic branch of criticism alongside the Anglo-American one, though it is not well developed). As with Wheeler, his interests go 'más allá del análisis semiótico de determinados montajes'. Therefore, the textual and performative parameters normally set when studying the *comedia* are subservient to an analysis of the cultural politics of democratic Spain. His exegesis of Calderón (and *La vida es sueño*) stresses the 'factores (políticos, económicos, sociales, culturales, estéticos…) [que] han intervenido en la presencia y/o la ausencia de su teatro sobre las tablas'.[12]

(2) Due to such an extra-aesthetic standpoint, Adillo recognises that there is one study 'más próximo a la semiótica que al enfoque de esta tesis [: el de] Fischer'.[13] It is worth noticing that an author from the first trend acknowledges the methodological distance between his approach and a more semiotic –hence, theoretical– one. This is because Fischer's

[10] Wheeler, *Golden Age*…, pp. 1-2.
[11] This consideration was stated in: Wheeler, 'The Place…'. See also: Duncan Wheeler, 'Golden Age Transvestism on (Inter-) National Stages: *La vida es sueño/Life is a Dream* in Spain and *Don Gil of the Green Breeches* in Britain', *Shakespeare Bulletin*, 36 (2018), 271-298.
[12] Adillo, *La resignificación*…, pp. 20-22. See also: Purificació Mascarell, 'El Siglo de Oro español en la escena pública contemporánea. La Compañía Nacional de Teatro Clásico (1986-2011)' (unpublished doctoral thesis, Universitat de València, 2014) and Mar Zubieta, 'La dramaturgia de los clásicos del Siglo de Oro en el teatro contemporáneo español. Las diferentes propuestas escénicas de *La vida es sueño* de Calderón en la Compañía Nacional de Teatro Clásico' (unpublished doctoral thesis, Universidad de Valladolid, 2018).
[13] Adillo, *La resignificación…,* p. 20.

pioneering work tries to bridge the critical gap between the semiotically underdeveloped studies of the Golden Age drama and their avant-garde peers in Shakespearean criticism.[14]

Following Fischer, the studies that adhere to this trend –such as Mindy Badía's doctoral thesis– are distinguished for using theoretical concepts –such as metatheatre– to study more or less conventional contemporary productions –such as late 80's and early 90's stagings of Lope and Tirso by Mexico's UNAM.[15] Another more recent example of this tendency is Catherine Connor-Swietlicki's study of 'spectators' embodied cognitive responses' to analyse a Colombian staging of Calderón's *El astrólogo fingido* in the 2006 version of the Chamizal Festival.[16] Additionally, this school also draws significantly on adaptation and on questions of (un)faithfulness to the *textual* original (rather than to a performative one).[17] Of the three critical movements briefly outlined in this sub-section, this might be the one that has dealt with the difficulties proper to the performance of *La vida es sueño* in most detail.[18]

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[14] See: Susan Fischer, 'Lope's aspectuality and performativity: *El castigo sin venganza* (*Punishment without Revenge*), in *Reading Performance: Spanish Golden Age Theatre and Shakespeare on the Modern Stage* (Woodbridge: Tamesis, 2009), 134-162. 'Aspectuality' and 'performativity' are concepts developed by Jonathan Bate to explain Shakespeare's originality in *The Genius of Shakespeare* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998). A good compromise between the historicist and the theoretical trends is: María Bastianes, Esther Fernández, and Purificació Mascarell (eds.), *Diálogos en las tablas: últimas tendencias de la puesta en escena del teatro clásico español*, (Kassel: Edition Reichenberger, 2014). This compilation also includes interviews with directors, actors, and producers –illustrating an effort to bridge the gap between the practice and the theory of *comedia* in performance.

[15] See: Mindy Badía, 'Metatheatrical Staging Techniques in Contemporary Performances of Golden Age Drama' (unpublished doctoral thesis, Indiana University, 1996).

[16] Catherine Connor-Swietlicki, 'Creative Cognition for Staging *Comedia*', *Comedia Performance*, 4 (2007), 67-96 (p. 72). Connor-Swietlicki's study epitomizes a sub-section of the theoretical trend –one which concerns the role of the spectator and the reception of the *comedia*. Chapter III deals with similar issues, presenting a contribution to this emerging field.

[17] See: Catherine Larson, 'Terms and Concepts: The Adaptation of Classical Texts for the Stage', in *The Comedia…,* ed. by Paun, 3-12.

[18] See: Susan Fischer, 'Del texto "original" al espectáculo actual: la fuerza de la intertextualidad en *La vida es sueño', Hispanic Review*, 69 (2001), 209-237 and Susan Fischer, '*La vida es sueño* en las escenas posmodernas', *Calíope*, 6 (2000), 103-199.

(3) More recently, two critical clusters formed around the Association for Hispanic Classical Theatre (AHCT) (and its publication: *Comedia Performance*) and the UCLA's Diversifying the Classics project have introduced a third trend to the study of *comedia* in performance: a political one. Alongside more traditional criticism, these groups encourage state-of-the-art and socially-oriented works on, for example, a *Fuente Ovejuna* based on México's Muertas de Juárez, Latinx interpretations of *Don Quijote*, and feminist appropriations of Sor Juana.[19] Additionally, if the historicist and theoretical trends centre mostly on well-established performative traditions (e.g., the Marsillach era of the CNTC) and use sanctioned methodologies (e.g., semiotics), the political trend prefers to analyse productions staged by minorities (e.g., Hispanics in the US), through more experimental and recent areas of criticism (e.g., gender studies). Therefore, this non-conformist approach has pushed critics and translators to explore less performed texts and authors (e.g., Ana Caro's *Valor, agravio y mujer*) and to partially overlook more canonical ones such as *La vida es sueño*, and Calderón more generally.[20]

The early modern actor

Each of these trends has merits and limitations. This study intends to balance these perspectives when analysing the performances of *La vida es sueño* by giving them a historical, theoretical, and political context. However, it also seeks to address several gaps

[19] See: Sergio Adillo Rufo, 'De Fuente Ovejuna a Ciudad Juárez, o Lope según el teatro del oprimido', *Comedia Performance*, 9 (2012), 143-161; Carla Della Gatta, 'Material Bodies and Latinx Theatricality: Solis' *Don Quixote* and *Quixote Nuevo*' and Margaret E. Boyle, '"The worst" Women: Sor Juana and Early Modern Feminisms', papers presented in the conference: *Resituating*....

[20] The UCLA's Diversifying the Classics, through the Working Group on the *Comedia* in Translation and Performance, translated Caro's work as *The Courage to Right a Woman's Wrongs*. This play was subsequently performed by the Red Bull Theatre Company (in November 2020) and discussed by scholars (as part of the conference: *Resituating the* Comedia, *Conference 1: Making Classics: Canonicity and Performance*). See: <https://www.redbulltheater.com/the-courage-to-right-a-womans-wrong> [Accessed 7/09/2021].

left by them. One of the most noticeable is that most studies commonly overlook the early modern performative context. Indeed, they omit the fact that the 17th-century dramatic text – on which the contemporary productions they analyse are based– was meant to be performed by *comediantes*.

Hence, a central conviction in this research is that the 'elemento esencial en el teatro del siglo XVII era el actor, quizá más que el decorado, adornos *e incluso texto*'.[21] *La vida es sueño* embodies the pre-eminence that the player and the performative possessed in this dramatic practice. Several aspects of the script reveal 'Calderón's willingness, if not the necessity, to let the circumstances of this play's performance modify its production'.[22] However, this is not a unique characteristic of this drama: in general, 'el mismo Calderón pudo introducir cambios textuales en sus obras para reflejar las diferentes condiciones escénicas'.[23] There is enough evidence to suggest that many of these textual changes were directly related to the actors, their styles, and their stage business.[24]

Due to *La vida es sueño*'s dependence on the context of the acting, a more objective approach than those previously taken would be: (1) to establish certain parameters about the *comediantes*' modus operandi in order to (2) contrast a(n early modern) performance with a (contemporary) performance. This like-for-like procedure is more logical than the unequal juxtaposition of (early modern) text and (contemporary) performance –the procedure of most critics. Thus, the first chapter intends to address this issue by presenting a hypothetical

[21] José María Díez Borque, *Los espectáculos del teatro y de la fiesta en el Siglo de Oro* (Madrid: Laberinto, 2002), p. 120. Emphasis added.
[22] Matthew Ancell, 'Painted Twilight: Anamorphic Monstrosity in Calderón's *La vida es sueño*', *Renaissance Drama*, 42 (2014), 57-90 (p. 64).
[23] Fischer, '*La vida…*', p. 105.
[24] To understand the role probably played by the *comediantes* in the (re)writing of a *comedia*, see: N. H**.** Shergold, '« La vida es sueño »: ses acteurs, son théâtre et son public', in *Dramaturgie et société. Rapports entre l'œuvre théâtrale, son interprétation et son publique aux XVIe et XVIIe siècles*, ed. by Jean Jaquot (Paris: Éditions du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1968), 93-109.

reconstruction of the acting technique of the *comediantes* playing Segismundo and Basilio – as suggested by the performance-conditioned play-text. It also deals with specific methodological issues such as: (1) the analytical adjustment from the textual to the textual/performative; (2) the primary and secondary sources used to support such adaptation; and (3) the current state of affairs in the re-establishment of Golden Age performance.

The contemporary actor

The lack of interest regarding the early modern acting/staging is a *common* feature of most studies in *comedia* in contemporary performance. Another gap in previous research involves the (post)modern actor. However, this issue concerns each of the three aforementioned trends *specifically*.

(1) This analytical lacuna is because the historicist approach considers extended temporal delimitations (e.g., 1939-2009 in Wheeler). Hence, this trend can be classified as company-oriented, since these cultural institutions are more long-lasting than the singular performance and/or performer. Its method usually consists on analysing 'detailed case studies' –the most recurrent one being the CNTC.[25] For instance, writing about the aftermath of the 2008 economic crisis, Adillo acknowledges that 'la CNTC con respecto a Calderón también *es una vez más el paradigma* del tratamiento que se le da en España a nuestro patrimonio dramático y a la cultura general'.[26] The consequence of this paradigmatical outlook is that it partially ignores the individuals that are paramount in the composition of such organizations: the players.

[25] Wheeler, *Golden Age*…p. 189.
[26] Adillo, *La resignificación…,* p. 149. Emphasis added.

(2) Olivia Nieto's and Vanesa Izquierdo's semiotic works are revealing with respect to the limited interest shown towards the modern-day actor by the theoretical approach. The first is an 'aproxima[ción] a tres escenografías totalmente diferentes de *La vida es sueño*' for the CNTC.[27] The second analyses 'la labor del diseñador de vestuario escénico' in the *Compañía*.[28] Studies such as these focus on aspects of the performance (the 'escenografí[a]' and the 'vestuario') that can be considered as subordinate to the dramatic action and plot – hence, they can be catalogued as setting-oriented. It is revealing that works concerning relatively dispensable elements of the theatrical practice have preceded any thorough attempt to analyse the only indispensable one: the actor.[29] While, in this study, ideas such as those presented by Nieto and Izquierdo are used, they function to establish the performative environment in which the acting takes place, not as the central subject of the interpretation.

(3) It can be argued that, precisely due to the politics involved in the last trend, these works can be qualified as director-centred, rather than actor-centred –directors tend to be responsible for bestowing ideological meaning upon a given production. To further develop this point, we should consider the speakers invited to the UCLA's conference *Resituating the* Comedia*, Making Classics: Canonicity and Performance*. Alongside authoritative figures in the field such as Susan Paun de García and Wheeler, the organisers also invited theatre directors such as Dave Dalton.

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[27] Olivia Nieto Yusta, 'Tres escenografías para *La vida es sueño* (1996, 2000, 2012) en la Compañía Nacional de Teatro Clásico', *Don Galán. Revista de Investigación Teatral*, 4 (2014): <https://www.teatro.es/contenidos/donGalan/donGalanNum4/pagina.php?vol=4&doc=1_5&pag=4> [Accessed 26/03/2021].

[28] Vanesa Izquierdo, 'Personajes del Siglo de Oro y su construcción plástica en el teatro actual', *Signa*, 27 (2018), 205-231 (p. 205).

[29] During his experiments with the Theatre Laboratory, Jerzy Grotowski concluded that: 'by gradually eliminating whatever proved superfluous, we found that theatre can exist without make-up, without autonomic costume and scenography, without a separate performance area (stage), without lighting and sound effects, etc. It cannot exist without the actor-spectator relationship of perceptual, direct, "live" communion': *Towards a Poor Theatre*, ed. by Eugenio Barba (New York: Routledge, 2002), p. 19.

Although the remarks made by Dalton were extremely thought-provoking, they also epitomise a clear tendency in this branch: to foreground the director and their political sub-text over the actor and their performative intention. Indeed, when referring to a possible staging of Guillén's *La fuerza de la costumbre*, his recommendations were addressed to the directors, rather than to the actors: a 'potential tool for directors is to allow the conventional ending to play with a tragic tone, rather than a happy ending'; this, in order to 'support an audience's potential condemnation of the play's violence'.[30] Such political decisions are also analysed here –however, the directorial choices are read hand-in-hand with the actors' performance, not as superordinate to them.

Consequently, one of the main contributions of this study is to reconsider the central function that the actor and their expression fulfil in the contemporary performance of the *comedia*. This interest led me to select the CNTC's 1996, 2000, and 2012 productions as primary research material. The fact that this *Compañía*'s performances have a well-documented database and that their video-recordings, reviews, and publications are easily available to the researcher –all of them archived, curated, and handled by the helpful staff of Madrid's Centro de Documentación Teatral– simplifies the task of tackling such an elusive topic as "the player" in modern-day performances of Calderón. The resources obtained from the CDT represent a fundamental part of the corpus of Chapters II, III, and IV. Furthermore, the accessibility of the CNTC's documents stands in stark contrast to the unavailability of data from other, smaller but maybe more aesthetically and politically daring companies and their productions (e.g., Teatro Inverso's *Rosaura*).[31]

[30] Dave Dalton, 'Respectful Irreverence: A Director's Toolbox for Engaging the Canon', paper presented in the conference: *Resituating*…, p. 8.
[31] *Rosaura*, Teatro Inverso, dir. by Paula Rodríguez and Sandra Arpa, Madrid, 2018 (Live performance): <https://teatroinverso.wixsite.com/teatroinverso/rosaura-1> [Accessed 19/03/2021].

However, there is also a qualitative reason to be added to the pragmatic choice of resources, for, like *Hamlet* for Shakespeare, 'esta obra de Calderón, cumbre de todo el repertorio clásico, es también prueba de fuego para intérpretes y directores'.[32] Beside *La vida es sueño*'s canonical status in text and *tablados*, the play's relevance resides in the fact that it represents a performative landmark for any theatrical team attempting to stage it. This implies that, in many cases, the audience buys a ticket for a performance of this drama with the intention to witness the highest technical standards from the actors portraying Segismundo's and Basilio's plots. Consequently, the players' job might be to fulfil these preconceived expectations. If this study's intention is to understand, revise, and appreciate the role of the actor and their savoir faire in contemporary adaptations of Golden Age drama, then, the most obvious subject of analysis seems to be the performative touchstone that is *La vida es sueño*.

Furthermore, concerning the relation between *La vida es sueño* and the CNTC, 'se trata […] de una pieza que ha abierto y cerrado puertas en esta institución, marcando alguno de los momentos más significativos de la historia de la compañía'.[33] Calderón's drama has acquired a particular meaningfulness inside this Spanish cultural institution. This makes it alluring for the researcher whose intention is to understand the performative and ideological dynamics within such an important feature in the life of Siglo de Oro theatre today: the company.

Therefore, a central part of this study is to appreciate the ways in which such interrelations have defined the acting in the three productions of the drama, through the three

[32] Javier Huerta Calvo, Emilio Peral Vega, and Héctor Urzáiz Tortajada, *Teatro Español [de la A a la Z]* (Madrid: Espasa Calpe, 2005), p. 743.
[33] Nieto.

Segismundos –Pedro Mari Sánchez (in 1996), Joaquín Notario (in 2000), and Blanca Portillo (in 2012)– and the three Basilios –Héctor Colomé (in 1996), Carlos Álvarez (in 2000), and Joaquín Notario (in 2012). It explores how the special aura around *La vida es sueño* in the CNTC has provoked a special kind of aesthetic and ideological communication between each staging. An example of this interrelationship is the case of Notario, a regular actor in the *Compañía*'s productions who played Segismundo in 2000 and Basilio in 2012. As will be shown, it is partly due to such inter-performative connections in casting that the player was able to imprint both protagonists with one of their most meaningful peculiarities: unrestrained violence.[34]

Characterisation and dramatic conflict

Now that the subject (the actor) and the material (the four performances of *La vida es sueño*) have been established, it is necessary to set out the parameters of this study. The research centres on Segismundo and Basilio for the simple reason that the action of Calderón's drama turns around them. This has two consequences regarding the performance of the play. First, along with Rosaura, the son and the father are allocated more stage time than the rest –thus facilitating an analysis of the actors' technique. Second, due to such performative centrality, directors tend to imprint their aesthetic and ideological idiosyncrasies on these two dramatic entities –rather than on, say, Clarín–, making them paradigms of the distinctiveness of each mise-en-scène.

[34] This interrelationship is a common phenomenon in theatre as 'not only does each new version of a work fail to erase totally the previous ones, but […] every interpretation thereafter forms part of it, and writes itself into the infinite series of successive versions': Patrice Pavis, *Contemporary Mise en Scène. Staging Theatre Today*, trans. by Joel Anderson (London: Routledge, 2007), p. 161.

Furthermore, the focus is on two elements of the plot that connect the textual to the performative: (a) characterisation and (b) dramatic conflict. These have been selected due to their intrinsic liaison to acting. Additionally, no matter how radical or conservative an adaptation of a play might be, these two aspects are always respected in all performances.

(a) 'Characterization' is understood as:

> the representation of persons in narrative and dramatic works. This may include direct methods like the attribution of qualities in descriptions or commentary, and indirect (or "dramatic") methods inviting readers [spectators] to infer qualities from the characters' actions, speech or appearance.[35]

As opposed to the direct/narrative method, the indirect/dramatic one implies that the audience's understanding of the personality of a character onstage happens through the actor's actions, their speech, and their physical demeanour –rather than by description. To introduce a more performance-centred definition, 'caracterización' is the 'acción y efecto de representar un actor a un personaje con toda propiedad'.[36] This assignation of attributes from 'actor' to 'personaje', through 'representa[ción]', is as true for the contemporary actor as it is for the early modern one: in Spanish Golden Age theatre, 'voz, signos faciales y signos expresivos del cuerpo formaban el triángulo de exigencias que el público tenía de sus actores'.[37] Taking these ideas into consideration, the study analyses how the players convey Segismundo's and Basilio's characterisation through: (1) their paralinguistic features;[38] (2)

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[35] Chris Baldick, *Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms* (Oxford: Oxford Univeristy Press, 2008), s.v. characterization, p. 52.
[36] Manuel Gómez García, *Diccionario Akal de teatro* (Madrid: Akal, 2007), s.v. caracterización, p. 147.
[37] César Oliva and Francisco Torres Monreal, *Historia básica del arte escénico* (Madrid: Cátedra, 1990), p. 196.
[38] I understand paralinguistic features thus: 'besides the denotative meaning of the words and the straightforward articulation and pronunciation of the dialogue of a playscript or performance piece, there is a wide range of tonal and rhythmic elements inherent in the speech-making process that gives color and context-specific overcoding to spoken words as signifiers. Elam and various other authors label these elements paralinguistic. […] The paralinguistic vocal elements that can be manipulated to encode spoken words are: loudness, pitch, inflection, resonance, articulation, tempo, rhythm': Jon Whitmore, *Directing Postmodern Theatre. Shaping Signification in Performance* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1994), p. 72.

'the kinesic components of performance –movement, gestures, facial expressions, postures, etc';[39] and (3) their interaction with the stage-space.[40] As will be shown, these elements are used differently by the actors of the four performances of *La vida es sueño* –thus conveying four very distinct Segismundos and Basilios.

(b) 'Conflicto [dramático]' is defined as:

> punto de tensión que se produce cuando un personaje, o dos o más personajes entre sí, han de superar una situación adoptando o manteniendo una línea de actuación definida entre posiciones, visiones de mundo, teorías o intereses contrapuestos.[41]

The conception of the dramatic entities in this study entails that they need to undergo positive or negative changes –to evolve or to degrade, to rise or to fall–, throughout the events of the play. This work also understands drama as an art-form which explores the contraposition(s) of interests or desires between two or more personalities –such as Segismundo and Basilio. (Neo-)Aristotelian criticism emphasises the centrality of dramatic shifts, of the (moral) transformation of the individuals, and of contradictions and tensions; hence, this school's terms –*hamartia, anagnorisis*, and *dénouement*– are followed to explain, compare, and

[39] Keir Elam, *The Semiotics of Theatre and Drama* (New York: Methuen, 2002), p. 62. I follow Whitmore's definition of gesture: 'gesture refers to the sign system that uses the performer's body as the signifier. […] Even in theatres that lack a specific, detailed codification system for gestures, a performer's body and his gestures can send more meaningful information to the audience than do his spoken words. In fact, gestures can provide insight into a scene's subtext that override the denotative meaning of the words being spoken': pp. 89-90. Regarding Golden Age theatre, 'en el Barroco […] el personaje que construye el actor se define en términos de lo que hace, gesticula': Evangelina Rodríguez Cuadros, *La técnica del actor en el Barroco. Hipótesis y documentos* (Madrid: Castalia, 1998), p. 339.

[40] The actor's interaction with space is fundamental to understand a determinate production as: 'movement within the presentational space is an important theatrical signifier […]. Movement may be meaningful in itself, or it may function rather or construct meaningful spatial groupings (either between performers, or between performer and object or element of the set), and these, in turn, may convey ideas about character and the fictional situation': Gay McAuley, *Space in Performance: Making Meaning in the Theatre* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2000), p. 105.

[41] Gómez García, s.v. conflicto, p. 209.

contrast the four different interpretations of the protagonists' dramatic conflict or tragic pathway.[42]

'Hamartia' is understood as:

> ignorancia que determina un error de juicio del héroe de la tragedia […], error que desencadena la catástrofe. También puede ser visto como enfermedad o delirio del espíritu […] consist[e] en que le héroe se dirige a su perdición al engañarse de su destino.[43]

In the four performances analysed here, Segismundo and Basilio commit errors that trigger the tragic episodes of *La vida es sueño*. However, as will be shown, the specific nature of such flaws is determined by the dramatic and ideological objectives of each staging and, in the contemporary versions, by the directors' distinctive readings of Calderón's play. One of the main findings of this study is the acknowledgment of the different interpretations of the protagonists' hamartia in each mise-en-scène.

'Anagnórisis' is defined as 'proceso retórico […] que conduce a un momento en que la repentina recepción de información origina el súbito reconocimiento de un personaje'. Furthermore, a character's hamartia is intrinsically connected to their awareness of such mistaken behaviour, since 'el reconocimiento presupone la existencia de un secreto, una ignorancia, un error, creadores de tensión y de suspenso'. [44] As in the case of their errors, both Calderonian (anti-)heroes undergo a process of recognition that is also decided by the four versions' interpretative uniqueness and by their more or less explicit ideological/ethical premises.

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[42] Although an argument can be made against the definition of *La vida es sueño* as tragedy, this study follows a less restrictive and more modern account of the fluidity of both this dramatic genre and the *comedia*. See: Frederick A. de Armas, Luciano García Lorenzo, and Enrique García Santo-Tomás (eds.), *Hacia la tragedia áurea: Lecturas para un nuevo milenio* (Frankfurt: Vervuert Verlagsgesellschaft, 2008), pp. 9-10.
[43] Helena Beristáin, *Diccionario de retórica y poética* (México: Porrúa, 2003), s.v. hamartia, p. 252.
[44] Beristáin, s.v. anagnórisis, pp. 41-42

A third and final stage of the tragic conflict is the 'dénouement': 'the clearing up or "untying" of the complications of the plot in a play or story; usually a final scene or chapter in which mysteries, confusions, and doubtful destinies are clarified'.[45] In the same way as the anagnorisis follows the hamartia, the dénouement normally is brought about by a process of moral or intellectual clarification. It is during this closure that the spectator is able to fully understand the artistic and critical intentions (the "message") of each staging.

In *La vida es sueño*, these three tragic processes acquire a moral signification, for 'Calderón conducirá la tragedia a los términos dilemáticos de los requerimientos morales en conflicto'.[46] This means that *textually* Segismundo's and Basilio's mistakes (hamartia) have ethical dimensions, their recognition (anagnorisis) has the shape of pious redemption or faithfulness, and the reshaping of their destinies (dénouement) is inspired by Christian dogma. Hence, part of the objective of this study is to show how these phases are interpreted –with more or less moral emphasis– through the acting of the two protagonists in the three CNTC productions. What are the implications of such morality or the lack of it regarding the artistic and socio-political message presented by each director? What is the relevance of maximising or minimising this (religious) aspect of Calderón's tragedy today?

Methodology: thick description and immanency

This study uses two complimentary methods to analyse *La vida es sueño*'s characterisation and dramatic conflict, as presented by the première *representantes* and the CNTC players:

[45] Baldick, s.v. dénouement, p. 84. The Aristotelian word for dénouement is 'catastrophe': 'the final resolution or dénouement of the plot in a tragedy': p. 49. However, due to the modern-day, non-literary meaning of catastrophe, the term dénouement is preferred.
[46] Evangelina Rodríguez Cuadros, 'La espantosa compostura: El canon de la tragedia del Siglo de Oro desde el actor', in *Hacia la tragedia…,* ed. by De Armas, 181-218 (p. 213).

one general and one specific. The first is 'thick description' –an approach adapted from ethnography and yet to be applied to *comedia* studies (hence the innovativeness of this scheme). Its primary advantage is that 'description is […] part of the analytical framework of the writing and is a tool through which the arguments and theoretical modelling can develop'. This interdisciplinary, original, and hybrid model has been chosen for this work because:

> the usefulness of thick description lies within the describer's ability both to present and interpret context towards opening the event to those who come to it later through the writing. In attempting this one must continually pick through "piled-up structures of inference and implication".[47]

First, the writing of this study is conceived as a complimentary process of presentation (of facts) and interpretation (of content). Second, it deals with *specific* and highly symbolic scenes from each performance in order to reflect on their *general* aspects, on their distinctiveness, and on their interrelations with other moments of other adaptations. This is because thick description's 'aim is to draw large conclusions from small, but very densely textured facts'. These latter are the verbal, gestural, and spatial components of acting which give meaning to the four versions.

Once these inferences about the performative aspects have been established, their cultural significance is discussed, since the intention of this methodology is 'to support broad assertions about the role of culture in the construction of collective life by engaging them exactly with complex specifics'.[48] In other words, the acting of the four performances of Calderón's play is interpreted as 'piled-up structures' or 'complex specifics' through which certain features of the 'collective life' of both the early modern and contemporary

[47] Patrick Duggan, *Trauma-Tragedy. Symptoms of Contemporary Performance* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2012), p. 6.
[48] Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), p. 28.

individual/society are explored.[49] Finally, the analysis centres on how these choices feed off each other.[50]

The second complimentary method is based on the idea that 'la méthode doit être immanente à l'étude', entailing that 'une méthode immanente ménage la possibilité de recevoir des suggestions des faits analysés'.[51] This approach intends to select –and, then, apply– a specific analytical framework for each of the surveyed phenomenon (i.e., each of the four performances of *La vida es sueño*). Rather than implementing a generalising scheme to underscore the commonalities between the different objects/subjects under investigation, these individual methods are suggested by the nature and main features of the 'faits analysés' and work to highlight their particularities. The reason for this is that it seems logical to think that, by choosing a theory that mirrors the phenomenon, research can acquire a certain sense of closeness and impartiality. In other words, the goal of this "immanence" is to reduce the presence of the scholar's idiosyncrasies in the different processes of investigation and to let the object/subject "speak for itself", as it were.

The consequence of its application is that each of the four chapters of this study has its own theoretical framework based on the productions' distinctive aesthetics and politics. To scrutinise these discursive practices differently 'is to misunderstand the nature of dramatic art and its tendency endlessly to reappear in different shapes and forms'.[52] Hence, in the

[49] Although thick description has been applied primarily to live performances, it can also be used to analyse the video-recordings of such performances. Indeed, the complex and densely textured structures (which represent the base of this methodology) are more easily accessible in recordings that can be paused and rewound to be "re-lived".

[50] Or, as Fischer mentions: 'Consideration, for example, of "what kind of dramaturgical choices have been made" may enable the performance critic to move from a fundamental recognition of how formal strategies work in a production to an analysis of objectives or ideological premises underlying dramaturgical choices': 'Calderón and Semiological self-exorcism: *El médico de su honra* (*The Physician of his Honor*)', in *Reading…*, 3-20, (p. 5).

[51] Tzvetan Todorov, 'Présentation', in *Théorie de la littérature: textes des formalistes russes*, ed. by Roman Jakobson (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1966), pp. 18-19.

[52] Charles Marowitz, *Recycling Shakespeare* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Education, 1991), p. 8.

second, third, and fourth chapters the nature of these analytical schemes is suggested (primarily) by the comments of directors, actors, crew members, reviewers, and critics of the productions, and (secondarily) by my own interpretation of the play or performance. In the first chapter, I adhere to performative cues or guidelines implied by the play-text, together with the early modern equivalents of theatre reviews or commentaries on the acting (e.g., Pinciano's work).

The objective of highlighting distinctiveness as the main feature to compare is also based on the fact that, as Wheeler concludes about the *comedia* at large, 'modern-day performances […] actively define themselves in contrast to their predecessors'.[53] To understand how this –implicit– contrast between productions is established it is necessary, first, to engage with their –explicit– self-definition. Only then can we delve into the particularity of a given mise-en-scène respecting not only Calderón's text and the other versions, but also the context in which it was conceived.

The immanent dramatic frameworks (which are explained in detail in each chapter) are: the *corporal/motorio, mixto,* and *espiritual/estatorio* techniques (Chapter I: the première); psychological realism (Chapter II: the 1996 adaptation); physical theatre (Chapter III: the 2000 production); and the acting of emotions (Chapter IV: the 2012 staging). To reinstate the questions previously presented: how are Segismundo's and Basilio's characterisation and dramatic conflict conveyed through the acting of each of these four dramatic styles? What does the choice of a specific theatrical language reveal about the production's aesthetic and social context and about its contemporary pertinence?

[53] Wheeler, *Golden Age*…, p. 218.

The fundamentalist/reformist and dry/wet dichotomies

Finally, two focalising parameters should be presented to study the relationships between the *La vida es sueño*'s première and the CNTC productions and, subsequently, between these three stagings. The first is the binary between a 'Fundamentalist View' of and a 'Reform[ist] Approach' to the contemporary adaptation of the classics (in English and Spanish). In her seminal study of Golden Age theatre in performance, Fischer borrows these terms from Shakespearean criticism (evidencing, again, her intention to connect the studies of the Spanish *comedia* with theories proper to the English stage).[54] Following her cue, this work adapts them specifically to analyse the adaptations of *La vida es sueño*.

Charles Marowitz –from a directorial perspective, rather than from an academical one– mentions that a fundamentalist view of the adaptation of Shakespeare (and, I would add, of Calderón) normally entails 'a director [that] cleaves to what the author has written, delves deeper into the complexities of the text and discovers more meaning nuance and more shades of meaning'. This attachment to the text necessarily 'render[s] a service to the author and re-establishe[s] the supremacy of the work'.[55] The director/critic also connects this obedient and script-oriented perspective to the productions of the Royal Shakespeare Company –a company that has been constantly related to the CNTC.[56]

In contrast, in a reformist approach an

> ingenious director, by interpolating ideas of his own, often far removed from the ideas traditionally associated with the play, can sometimes produce a frisson –or "alienating effect"– which is so enthralling in itself that people are prepared to forgive the liberties he has taken to achieve it.[57]

[54] See: Fischer, 'Calderón and "L'ilusion cinématographique" subverted: *Antes que todo es mi dama* (*Above All She's My Lady*)', in *Reading*…, 21-42 (pp. 21-22).
[55] Marowitz, p. 8.
[56] For a comparison between both companies' styles, see: Janine Ann Kehlenbach, 'Contemporary Productions of Spanish Golden Age Drama in Great Britain and Spain' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Colorado at Boulder, 2011).
[57] Marowitz, p. 8.

As opposed to the fundamentalist view, a reformist approach represents a creative addition to the play-text. It also produces an intellectual, rather than emotional, effect on the audience. While the first is subservient to a notion of faithfulness to the author (be it Shakespeare or Calderón), the second one breaks with the tradition and presents an iconoclastic interpretation of the drama or a specific moment of the production. Hence, I argue that these two poles of adaptation –the conservative and the avant-garde one– are present in the three productions under analysis here.[58]

Nonetheless, there are four shortcomings in Marowitz's interpretation. First, it is intimately related to the text. It understands the productions of classic plays as adaptations that respect or disrespect the written word, instead of establishing a dialogue with aspects more related to the performance. Therefore, due to the intricate relationship between script and staging in the *comedia*, this study examines the CNTC versions' level of fundamentalism and reformism with regard not only to the play-text but also to the early modern staging (as hypothetically reconstructed in the first chapter).

Second, Marowitz's account centres on the director, rather than on the actor. Third, its focus is mainly on aesthetic, rather than on ideological or political elements. Fourth, the categorisation of the CNTC productions is not always as straightforward and as unequivocal as the author suggests. As will be shown, most of the times, these versions possess both fundamentalist and reformist characteristics, making them challenging to classify and, hence, interesting to study.

[58] There is a third pathway –'the Quantum Leap Approach'–, a radical interpretation of the Shakespearean text which 'bears only the faintest resemblance to its progenitor': Marowitz, p. 10. This category is not followed as it is not related to any of the productions studied here. Teatro Inverso's *Rosaura* fits this category.

For these reasons, it is necessary to complement this dichotomy with another, more nuanced, and performative- and ideologically-oriented appreciation of classic theatre in contemporary interpretation. Patrice Pavis –from the perspective of academia, rather than from theatrical practice– uses the metaphor of wet and dry to arrive at similar conclusions:

> there might be two traditions and two types of performances, wet and dry. In the wet theatre, the actor gets wet feet, literally and figuratively, taking risks, breaking a sweat, externally and internally, producing an excess of energy that leads to an overflow of bodily fluid, of residue, of detritus and of filth produced onstage. […] On the other hand, dry theatre (for example classical French tragedy which is "represented" and not "performed" or "acted out" on most French stages) stays dry, linked to the word alone, to pure language: the symbolic replaces the literal, the cerebral neutralises the visceral, dry convention takes the place of realities. […] By getting dry, a performance loses its radical nature, but it gains clarity and rationality: it becomes more readable.[59]

This extended quotation's usefulness to the present study is that, unlike Marowitz's conception, Pavis' definitions centre on the actor (rather than on the director) and on their stage business (rather than on the text). It also implies a distinction between an ideologically 'radical' and 'risk[y]' –wet– production and a more 'convention[al]' and 'neutra[l]' –dry– one. In order to explore the applicability of this reading with regard to the *comedia* in performance, I wish to emphasise and complement certain aspects from each type of staging.

From the wet approach, I want to underscore that its main instrument for dramatic meaning-making is the actor's body and movement; it can be described as visceral, literal, and provocative. It should be added that it is normally politically oriented or socially engaged. As far as the dry style is concerned, it uses the mental, emotional, and verbal as resources to convey its dramatic objectives; it can be characterised as cerebral, rational, traditional, and realistic. It should be added that the dry style tends to be politically uncommitted or conservative. Therefore, by joining both dichotomies together, the following

[59] Pavis, *Contemporary…,* p. 234.

scheme of work appears: (1) the fundamentalist/reformist binary measures the productions' level of (un)faithfulness to both the text and the première and (2) the dry/wet opposition evaluates their (lack of) radicalism relating to their respective aesthetic and socio-political context.

Having these ideas in mind, the main questions presented at the start of this Introduction can be reformulated in the following way. How does each theatrical language or style followed by the three CNTC productions relate to these dichotomies? What are the specific elements of the different interpretations of Segismundo's and Basilio's characterisation and dramatic conflict that link them to a conservative or a progressive approach? How do the paralinguistic features, gestures, and use of space contribute to such categorisation? What is the relation between the première and both the fundamentalist/reformist and the dry/wet views as embodied by the three CNTC productions? Which tradition or approach is more relevant –aesthetically and politically– to the present context?

Structure of the study

The first chapter deals with the première of *La vida es sueño* (1629-1635) and studies the play-text's implication of an acting dichotomy: the *cuerpo* and *alma*. The second chapter analyses the fundamentalist/dry 1996 production through the lens of psychological realism – a theatrical language that emphasises the characters' interiority, understands their dramatic conflicts in terms of their psychopathologies, and conceives the actors' stage business as psychologically motivated. The third chapter focuses on the "wettest" productions of the three, the 2000 performance, through the lens of physical theatre –a dramatic framework that stresses the player's body, its movement, and the actor-audience interactions as the centre of

dramatic meaning-making, and that was chosen by the director in order to question the spectators' (voyeuristic) relationship with violence/victimisation. The fourth chapter analyses the politically and aesthetically conservative 2012 mise-en-scène through the functional theory of emotions due to the fact that the production conveys Segismundo's drama as a journey of emotional self-control and Basilio's story as one of emotional degradation. The conclusion further discusses the elements that still make Calderón's masterpiece aesthetically, performatively, and politically relevant to the context of the late 20th- and early 21st-centuries, as presented by the actors of the three CNTC productions.

Chapter I: *La vida es sueño*'s Première: A Hypothetical Reconstruction of Early Modern Spanish Acting

Introduction: the body-soul dichotomy and its performance

La vida es sueño was written and first staged between 1629 and 1635.[60] Although critics have debated the date of the earliest version and its première, the performance *per se* has been partially ignored.[61] The objective of this chapter is to fill this gap by answering the following questions: (1) how were Segismundo and Basilio interpreted on the early modern stage? (2) How did the *comediantes* employ their paralinguistic features, gestures, and use of space to convey their characterisation and dramatic conflict?

To address these issues, a comprehensive reading of the play-text is needed, as 'la lectura atenta de las obras […] nos permite adentrarnos en los límites de las indicaciones a los cómicos'.[62] This reading is based on the 1632-1634 *suelta.*[63] This is because: (a) it is the closest document known to a first (lost) script by Calderón's hand and (b) it 'parece […] más preocupada por los gestos de los actores […] lo cual confirma […] que se trata de una versión adaptada para una representación determinada'.[64] The interpretation of this performance-oriented text is complemented with the 1636 one.[65] Previous approaches ignore not only the *suelta* but the reciprocal relationship between different variants.

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[60] See: Don W. Cruickshank, *Don Pedro Calderón* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 114-115.
[61] See: Ancell, p. 63.
[62] César Oliva, 'Calderón, director de escena', in *Estado actual de los estudios calderonianos*, ed. by Luciano García Lorenzo (Kassel: Reichenberger, 2000), 203-237 (p. 205).
[63] Pedro Calderón de la Barca, *La vida es sueño*. *Comedia famosa de Lope de Vega*. Without printing date and place. Retrieved from Sydney Jones Library, University of Liverpool: SPEC L57.13 (13).
[64] José María Ruano de la Haza, 'Introducción', in Pedro Calderón de la Barca, *La vida es sueño*, ed. by José María Ruano de la Haza (Madrid: Castalia, 2016), p. 12. See: José María Ruano de la Haza, 'Introducción', in *La primera versión de* La vida es sueño, *de Calderón* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press,1992).
[65] Printed in Pedro Calderón de la Barca, *Primera Parte de Comedias de Don Pedro Calderón*, ed. by José Calderón (Madrid: Imprenta de María de Quiñones, 1636). The edition used in this and the following chapters is: Pedro Calderón de la Barca, *La vida es sueño*, ed. by José María Ruano de la Haza (Madrid: Castalia, 2016).

On a thematic level, this interpretation is based on the connection between the play's dramatic elements and the 'disonancia' of 'la relación del cuerpo y del alma'.[66] Indeed:

> los 3319 versos de *La vida es sueño* […] reiteran el eje temático de la obra, neoplatónica, de la díada razón *versus* pasión. […] Estos polos antitéticos maniqueos se resolverán, al final, merced al libre albedrío, en el sometimiento de los instintos por la razón, en victoria del espíritu sobre el cuerpo, exaltando lo espiritual como real y eterno y lo material, contrariamente, como no real y perecedero. [67]

The conception of the individual as a composite of soul and body is one of the main topics of this drama. It influences the foundation of the roles and their hamartia, anagnorisis, and dénouement. On a performative level, it also would have modelled how the *comediantes* portrayed the protagonists onstage –a relationship explored here.

The *representante* playing Segismundo would have portrayed a Prince initially controlled by his body, his passion, and materiality. During the first two *jornadas*, the son represents 'a man in whom the animal, rather than human, nature is dominant'.[68] Instincts and violence characterise this 'hombre de las fieras | […] fiera de los hombres' [fol.3^{r}]. However, he gradually evolves, learning how to behave driven less by the body and more by the soul. A spiritual and reasonable Christian Prince eventually supplants the corporeal *bruto* in his exemplary dénouement, as 'his experience is a representation of man's awakening from the life of the senses to that of the spirit'.[69]

In contrast, the *comediante*-Basilio would have conveyed a King initially defined by the spiritual and reason. At the beginning, 'Basilio se mueve entre la fe […], la ciencia –[…]

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[66] Domingo Ynduráin, 'Introducción', in Pedro Calderón de la Barca, *La vida es sueño* ed. by Domingo Ynduráin (Madrid: Biblioteca Nueva, 2004), pp. 21-22.
[67] Aída Nadi Gambetta Chuk, '*La vida es sueño*: Abducciones en torno a lo maravilloso miliunanochesco', in *Calderón 2000. Homenaje a Kurt Reichenberger en su 80 cumpleaños*, vol. II, ed. by Ignacio Arellano (Kassel: Reichenberger, 2002), 475-481 (p. 476).
[68] E. M. Wilson, 'On *La vida es sueño*', in *Critical Essays on the Theatre of Calderón*, ed. by Bruce W. Wardropper (New York: New York University Press, 1965), 63-89 (pp. 69-70).
[69] Wilson, p. 78.

de la astrología–, el pragmatismo político y la lógica y la retórica clásicas'.[70] Faith, majesty, and wisdom define him, who receives the 'sobrenombre de Sabio' [fol.6^{v}]. However, after the first *jornada*, his dramatic degradation is typified by his progressive abandoning of a behaviour guided less by the soul and more by the body. A frightened, maddened, self-reprehensible father replaces the prudent and spiritual one in his counter-exemplary abasement.

These two divergent paths would have been performed pursuing 'el ideal de perfección del actor [que] consistía en conciliar naturaleza y arte en el gesto, en la palabra y en el movimiento'. The successful portrayal of Segismundo and Basilio depended on the *comediantes*' mixture of verism and conventionality in their stage business. From these resources or 'arte', the focus of this analysis is on body language, since 'en el Siglo de Oro se produce una sobrevaloración del gesto'.[71] Unlike most of contemporary "naturalistic" stage practices, the early modern players' overvaluation of kinetics lead to their typification:

> cada papel o al menos algunos de ellos, marcados por la tradición, supondrían en realidad un encadenamiento o repertorio de gestos codificados. Gesto que abarcaría toda una serie de elementos, desde las composiciones de tipos fijos al mero e ingenuo disfraz o las situaciones tópicas […]. Gesto que cabe recuperar y deducir –pues no tenemos territorio documental que nos afirme en la total certidumbre–.[72]

This study intends to 'recuperar y deducir' the repertoire of codified gestures likely followed in *La vida es sueño*'s première. In other words, from the players' 'instrumental "artesano" (dicción, gestos, mímica, dotes de bailarín, cualidades musicales)', the objective is to recreate the second feature and, tangentially, the first and third –corporeality representing the core of

[70] Eduardo Pérez-Rasilla, 'Identidad y teatro en *La vida es sueño*, de Calderón de la Barca', in: <https://portal.uc3m.es/portal/page/portal/departamento_humanidades_fltlecem/literatura/miembros/eduardo_perez_rasilla/LA%20VIDA%20ES%20SUE%D0O.pdf> [Accessed 11/05/2020].
[71] Díez, p. 120 and 123.
[72] Rodríguez, *La técnica…,* p. 381.

early modern Spanish acting.[73] The functions of these three resources are evaluated in the portrayal of the play-text's main 'situaciones tópicas': Segismundo's evolution from body to soul and Basilio's degradation from soul to body.

Methodologically, two sets of documents belonging to Calderón's cultural horizon are employed, alongside contemporary criticism of Golden Age performance, to present a robust remodeling of the stage action.[74] The first set comprises: (1) Alonso López Pinciano's 'Epístola trece y última. De los actores y representantes', from *Philosophía Antigua Poética* (1596) and (2) Vicente Carducho's *Diálogos de la Pintura* (1633). These documents bestow on the hypothesis a *visual*, *descriptive*, and *specific* foundation.

The choice of the 'Epístola' is justified as 'el texto del Pinciano es […] el primer depósito de gestos codificados' in Spanish theatre.[75] It also represents 'un complejo entramado de significados y significantes tipificados en escena que tiene como finalidad la comuniciación teatral'.[76] Due to its detailed and systematic approach, Pinciano's typified account of the actors' kinesics to outline dramatic states can be transposed to any *comedia* – such as *La vida es sueño*. Likewise, Carducho's description of the 'modelos/personajes' for painting functions as an instrument to recreate Golden Age acting, as the *Diálogos* possesses a 'posible influencia en la caracterización exterior de los personajes ideados para el teatro'.[77]

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[73] Josef Oehrlein*, El actor en el teatro español del siglo de Oro*, trans. by Miguel Ángel Vega (Madrid : Castalia, 1993), p. 63.
[74] For a literary review, see: Laura Vidler, 'Introduction: Critical Theory and the Reconstruction of Early Modern Performance', in *Performance Reconstruction and Spanish Golden Age Drama: Reviving and Revising the* Comedia (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).
[75] Rodríguez, *La técnica*…, p. 358.
[76] Antonia Martín Marcos, 'El actor en la representación barroca. Verosimilitud, gesto y ademán', *Diálogos hispánicos de Amsterdam (El teatro español a fines del siglo XVII: Historia, cultura y teatro en la España de Carlos II. Representaciones y fiestas)*, 9 (1989), 763-777 (p. 769).
[77] Rodríguez, *La técnica…,* pp. 224-225.

The second set of primary sources provides the reconstruction of the staging with an *abstract*, *theoretical*, and *general* viewpoint. The works used are: (1) Pinciano's aforementioned 'Epístola' and (2) José Alcázar's 'Ortografía castellana' (ca. 1690). The reason for such a decision is that the ideas from both treaties present an implicit relation with *La vida es sueño*'s body-soul distinction –pairing the methodology (the treaties) with its object of analysis (the text).

Pinciano establishes a difference between a spiritual and a corporeal style of acting: 'porque unas destas acciones tienen mucho de lo *espiritual*, y otras de lo *corporal*, dezimos a unas obras de facultad espiritual, y a otras, de corporal'. The *espiritual* technique is distinguished 'porque [las acciones] tienen más de lo intellectual'. The *corporal* faculty is characterised by 'lo que con el cuerpo hacen' or 'obra[n] con el cuerpo' 'los farsantes'.[78] While the *espiritual* technique can be related to the soul side of *La vida es sueño*'s binary, the *corporal* is connected to the body pole.

Alcázar recognises a similar dichotomy in early modern performance:

> los decidentes de la representación son *motorio*, *estatorio* o *mixto*. *Motorio* es la representación turbulenta que consiste más en hacer que en hablar. El *estatorio*, la representación quieta, que se emplea más en hablar que en hacer. *Mixto*, el que tiene de uno y de otro. [79]

The distinction between a spiritual, static, verbal, and intellectual technique and a more physical, movement-oriented, non-verbal, and passionate/emotional one is shared by both the 'Ortografía' and the 'Epístola'.[80] However, Alcázar adds a third faculty that lies in-

[78] Alonso López Pinciano, 'Philosophia antigua poética', in *Obras Completas I*, ed. by José Rico Verdú (Madrid: Biblioteca Castro, 1998), pp. 519. Pinciano in the footnotes.
[79] José Alcázar, 'Ortografía castellana', in *Preceptiva dramática española del Renacimiento y el barroco,* ed. by Federico Sánchez Escribano and Alberto Porqueras Mayo, (Madrid: Gredos, 1972), p. 336.
[80] The origins of this dichotomy can be traced to Cicero's distinction between oratory's ethical (*espiritual*) and pathetical (*corporal*) styles/topics. See: *Brutus. Orator*, trans. by G. L. Hendrickson and H. M. Hubbell (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014), 128, pp. 401-403.

between the first and the second –implying a continuum in the performative practices that matches the gradual nature of the characters' dramatic change. This chapter shows how the *comediantes* probably adopted these three acting techniques –along with specific models similar to Pinciano's and Carducho's– to portray the characterisation of Segismundo and Basilio and the different phases of their conflict.

By joining Pinciano's description with Alcázar's ideas, the following scheme of work appears: (1) The *corporal*/*motorio* technique: this centres on the *representante*'s action, body language, and movement, underscoring the kinetic component of the performance, rather than the declamatory one. (2) The *espiritual*/*estatorio* technique: the soft and calmed gesturing works as a complement or rhetorical aid to the actor's words and the message presented, focusing on the declamation, rather than on the kinesics. (3) The *espiritual-corporal*/*mixto* technique: this possesses features from both (1) and (2), conveying an equilibrium between declamation and gesturing. As will be shown in the following chapters, the contemporary productions' level of faithfulness or unfaithfulness with these styles and the play's thematic binary will determine their fundamentalist or reformist character. Likewise, their "dryness" or "wetness" is ruled by how the directors and actors adapt these performative and textual features to transmit conservative or progressive artistic and ideological objectives.

The structure of this chapter is as follows. Part I deals with the acting of Segismundo and is divided into three sections that represent the three main stages of the Prince's exemplary evolution –the performance changing from the physical (*corporal*) to the declamatory (*espiritual*). Part II focuses on Basilio's counter-exemplary degradation in three instances –the acting shifting from the declamatory (*espiritual*) to the physical (*corporal*). In both sections, the specific features of the staging (the models) aid to illustrate the abstract

ones (the techniques). The conclusion explores the link between these techniques and the way they can be readjusted on the 20th- and 21st-century stages.

Part I: Segismundo

I.1. Hamartia: an *indignado* and *apassionado* Segismundo

From the beginning of the first *jornada* to the end of the third, the main *comediante*'s performance would have mirrored Segismundo's 'proceso de aprendizaje [que] consistiría en […] remontar desde lo material hasta lo espiritual y eterno'.[81] In order to convey such moral 'remonta[da]', his style would have varied as the events progressed:

> the part of Segismundo must have been an exacting, if rewarding, one for its actor; he had to master swift transitions from deliberated pain to snarling fury, from love to petulant rage; if he made good the acting variety called for by the part in its opening stages, then he had established the twisting profile of the character which could later undergo yet stranger mutations.[82]

How were the Prince's swift transitions conceived by the player during the opening stages? How did he turn pain into fury? Three moments from the first scene exemplify the acting range implied in Segismundo's first –physical– phase of his spiritual mutation.

Pain would have been suggested by the actor's paralinguistic features when he recited from backstage ('Dentro'): '¡Ay, mísero de mí! ¡Ay, desdichado!' [fol.2v]. His voice would have conveyed Segismundo's 'm[iseria]' and 'desdich[a]', through low intonation and a slurred enunciation.[83] The Prince's first stage direction reads: 'Descúbrase Segismundo

[81] Ynduráin, p. 43.
[82] Alan K. G. Paterson, 'The Traffic of the Stage in Calderón's *La vida es sueño*', *Renaissance Drama*, 4 (1971), 155-182 (p. 166).
[83] The description of paralinguistic features is suggested by: Griselda Bombelli, 'The language of Evaluation: paralinguistic features as a phonological domain for appraisal', *DELTA Documentação de Estudos em Lingüística Teórica e Aplicada*, 29 (2012), 267-280. This choice might seem anachronistic, but it is justified as this is one of the first approaches 'sobre la recitación –de la que tan poco sabemos en realidad': Díez, 126.

vestido de pieles, con una cadena' [fol.2^{v}]. After his offstage words, his stage position ('Descúbrase'), his costume ('vestido de pieles'), and the use of a prop ('cadena') are the first elements available to the actor to introduce his role.

'Descúbrase' means that the *comediante* would have appeared inside the *vestuario* ('tiring room' or 'discovery space') by the drawing of its curtains.[84] The 'cadena' establishes that the Prince's bodily impulses are responsible for his being restrained. Only an animalised individual should be tied down in such a manner to restrict his restlessness. This prop entails that the *comediante*'s physicality would have been employed to convey the son's instinctive flaw. As he appeared, he could have struggled to free himself from it –showcasing his chaotic movements and the tension of his muscles (specially from the shackled arms and/or legs).

The 'pieles' would have provided an intertextual link between Segismundo and the notion of corporeality, as this costume was commonly employed by Calderón to suggest somatic passion. For example, in his *auto El pleito matrimonial del cuerpo y el alma* (1655), the role Cuerpo/Hombre –whose actions are instinctively-driven– is also 'vestido de pieles'.[85] Furthermore, the change of disguise would have been fundamental to present the Prince's behavioural improvement, as 'las dos [indumentarias] del propio Segismundo (pieles-traje cortesano)' 'contienen la clave de la experiencia de Segismundo'.[86] As the first part of such experience is controlled by passions and instincts, the wearing of the skins would have been the most suitable apparel to reveal the protagonist's animalized hamartia. In contrast, the

[84] José María Ruano de la Haza, 'The Staging of Calderón's "La vida es sueño" and "La dama duende"', *Bulletin of Hispanic Studies*, 64 (1987), 51-63 (p. 53).
[85] Pedro Calderón de la Barca, *El pleito matrimonial*, ed. by Mònica Roig (Pamplona: Universidad de Navarra, 2011), p. 152.
[86] José María Ruano de la Haza, *La puesta en escena en los teatros comerciales del Siglo de Oro* (Madrid: Castalia, 2000), p. 73.

civilized 'traje cortesano' worn later, would have implied a positive step towards his moral awakening or anagnorisis.

In this respect, Pinciano comments that 'en lo que es el ornato tocante a la acción se debe considerar la persona, el tiempo y el lugar': 'el estado'.[87] The 'ornato' (i.e., attire) (a) must have been related both to aspects of characterisation (b) and spatiotemporal features (c). Hence, to determine Segismundo's 'persona' (b), it is necessary to consider the conjunction of (a) the animalised costume and (c) the 'aspereza enmarañada' of the 'monte eminente' where he inhabits [fol.1$^{v\text{-}r}$] (as described by Rosaura). At the start of the play, both features imply that Segismundo is 'un salvaje que vive preso en un oscura prisión'.[88]

Habitat and disguise suggest that the Prince resembles a 'salvaje' (b): 'el hombre que vive o se ha criado en los bosques o selvas entre las fieras y brutos [(c)], o enteramente desnudo o vestido de algunas pieles [(a)]'. Therefore, the actor would have displayed the *fiera*'s 'horroroso semblante, con barbas y cabellos largos e hirsutos'.[89] The beard and long hair would have been signs of an initial emphasis on purely physical features. Gesturally, the actor's face would have acquired the fearsome countenance of the brute or the 'rostro diforme' of 'los de costumbres pésimas' (as described by Carducho). As primitive behaviour is proper to a savage, the *comediante* would have portrayed something analogous to this model's 'ojos […] que miran airados, […] el aspecto atroz, los cabellos rígidos, la cabeza dura, angosta, y aguda'.[90]

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[87] Pinciano, p. 523.
[88] Enrica Cancelliere, 'Dos tipos de locura: la rebelión de Segismundo y la obediencia de don Fernando', *Criticón*, 87-88-89 (2003), 129-141 (p. 130).
[89] Real Academia Española, *Diccionario de Autoridades*, Tomo VI, s.v. salvage: <http://web.frl.es/DA.html> [Accessed 12/05/2020].
[90] Vicente Carducho, *Diálogos de la pintura: su defensa, origen, esencia, definición, modos y diferencias,* ed. by Francisco Calvo Serraller (Madrid: Turner, 1979), p. 402.

These enraged eyes are documented also by Pinciano: the 'párpado abierto inmovible' depicts the man that suffers 'la saña'.[91] *Saña* is a passion that can be ascribed to an unfairly imprisoned Prince. Thus, as he was revealed to the audiene, the *comediante* would have stared at them very fixedly ('inmovible[mente]') and in an irate fashion ('airad[amente]') – emulating an animal in captivity. That the actor would have made use of one of the most minute parts of his body –the eyes– as a tool of characterisation, proves that the technique followed by him would have been corporeal in its orientation.

The passion/reason opposition is presented in the lines concerning 'el ave', 'el bruto', 'el pez', and 'el arrollo'/'culebra' [fols.2^{v}-3^{r}]. Their staging also would have manifested the variation from deliberate pain (of his 'm[iseria]') to snarling fury (of the beasts):

> there is a terrible pathos in his first soliloquy, for his envy of the animal or of the animate almost expresses itself as a wish that he might lose his humanity. […] He is an animal, uncontrolled. Calderón has not drawn him as a "character", a being with a private individuality, but a man in whom the animal, rather than human, nature is dominant.[92]

In this soliloquy, Segismundo's hamartia is revealed as an envious passion that alienates him from his humanity. The resulting animalisation of the role is based on the thematic contrast between the instinctive/corporeal and the rational/spiritual. An example of this binary is that the physical elements –bird, brute, fish, and river/snake– contrast with the metaphysical ones –heaven and God. To emphasise the distinction, the character-actor's recriminations against the (spiritual) skies would have been uttered from the depths of a (terrestrial) cave/*vestuario*.

How would Segismundo's 'terrible pathos' been expressed by the *comediante*, considering that 'la técnica era hartamente convencional y fijada de antemano…'?[93]

[91] Pinciano, p. 529.
[92] Wilson, pp. 69-70.
[93] Ruano*, La puesta*…, p. 518.

Carducho's model of 'ira y furia' fulfills both parameters –it is semantically related to the Prince's passion and it is an artistic conventionality:

> los movimientos de la ira y furia intrepidos, sin orden, y fuera de si, la boca abierta y torcida, que rasga miembros, ó aprieta los dientes, mira fixo, y mui abiertos los ojos, y la boca cerrada, sacando la quijada de abaxo mas afuera que la alta; y tal vez echado en el suelo dando puñadas en la tierra con grandes vozes, tiembla, echa espuma por la boca, y fuego por los ojos.[94]

The 'intrepid[ez]' of this model's 'movimientos' entails that, by following it, the *comediante* would have used every part of the body (even the jaws) to portray Segismundo's anger. This uncontrollable feature relates to the turbulent kinesics of the *motorio* technique. Hence, by acquiring such style, the actor would have corporeally translated the textual guidelines for fury entailed by: (1) 'el ave' that flies 'negándose a la piedad | del nido'; (2) 'el bruto', described as 'atrevido y cruel'; (3) 'el pez' that 'a todas partes gira'; or (4) 'el arroyo', a poisonous 'culebra' and 'sierpe' [fols.2^{v}-3^{r}]. More specifically, the player 'fuera de si' could have imitated: (1) the 'alas' of the *ave* –by extending both his arms horizontally as wings–; (2) the 'crueldad' of the *bruto* –by slamming his fist on the floor–; (3) the 'gira[r]' of the *pez* –by spinning his torso as he 'tiembla'–; and (4) the 'huida' of the *arrollo/culebra* –by running around the stage– [fols.2^{v}-3^{r}]. At the same time, his twisted and open mouth would have foamed while reciting his lines with 'grandes vozes' and "fire" would have been seen emerging from his eyes.

The *iracundo*'s rapid hand motion is related to Pinciano's description of the 'jugar de mano' of the 'indignado': 'si está indignado, la moverá más desordenadamente, apartando el dedo vecino al pulgar, llamado índiz, de los demás, como quien amenaza'.[95] This speech defines Segismundo as indignant against heaven's 'venganza y rigor' [fol.2^{v}] –materialised

[94] Carducho, p. 406.
[95] Pinciano, p. 528.

in his imprisonment. Hence, from his very earthly antre, the actor might have agitated a menacing index finger to the sky as he mentioned 'cielos' and 'Dios' and questioned them thus: '¿tengo menos libertad?' [fols.2^{v}-3^{r}].

These examples of hand employment would have portrayed how Segismundo 'titánicamente arremete contra cielo y tierra, contrastando su condición de segregación forzada con la libre existencia de las criaturas símbolo de los cuatro elementos cosmogónicos'.[96] Along with their role in the Prince's general depiction as a titan, these resources' usefulness relies on the fact that they would have been fundamental to illustrate the creatures' wings, paws, swimming, and slithering. Due to their centrality in establishing both general/abstract and particular/iconic aspects of the protagonist's early characterisation, it might be that gesturing partially assumed a higher importance than Calderón's words. This semiotic priority confirms that 'cabe hablar de una cultura gestual con un código preciso y riguroso'.[97]

After his initial display of rage, Segismundo says:

> En llegando a esta pasión,
> un Volcán, un Etna hecho,
> quisiera sacar del pecho
> pedazos del corazón. [fol.3^{r}]

Along with the imagery of the animals, that of the volcano –and the consequent acting– 'situate the action in a demonic realm'.[98] Segismundo's comparison with a passionate Etna also prefigures the violence committed in the following scenes:

[96] Cancelliere, p. 130.
[97] Díez, p. 123.
[98] Frederick A. De Armas, *El retorno de Astrea: astrología, mito e imperio en Calderón* (Frankfurt am Main: Vervuert Verlagsgesellschaft, 2016), pp. 116-117.

> Segismundo's lust and rage at the court are thus foreshadowed by his description of his inner self as Mt. Aetna. […] [T]he monstrous, savage and proud nature of Segismundo is described with reference to the Sicilian mountain.[99]

The volcano mirrors Segismundo's suppressed, and then explosive and unpredictable, aggressivity, materialised later by Criado 2's defenestration, the insults to the members of court, the attempted rape of Rosaura, the war waged against his father, and Soldado 1's punishment. Consequently, this reference is, first, a symbol of the passion side of the *díada*. Second, it is an anticipation of Segismundo's hamartia: volcanic lust, rage, and pride lead him to his second imprisonment and tragic fall. Third, it is a gestural cue for the player to interpret this and the following scenes viscerally, as 'el actor deberá somatizar y verbalizar esta devastadora deliberación'.[100]

The acting of these lines would have exemplified that, in the *comedia*, 'la ostentación de las pasiones' was conceived 'de forma un tanto monstruosa': 'los sentimientos se desborda[ban]'.[101] With this kinetic "monstrosity" in mind, the *comediante*'s interpretation would have been blaring –vocally– and tumultuous –gesturally– to display an overflowing of feelings. The first guideline for such somatisation is the stage direction that precedes the line 'En llegando…' in the *suelta* (absent in 1636): 'Levántase' [fol.3^{r}]. By suddenly standing in the middle of the soliloquy, the actor would have emulated both the volcano's unexpected eruption and the push of monstrous emotions.

Additionally, Segismundo's words convey that 'en su apogeo, la injuria alcanza los tonos de la pasión más violenta hasta manifestarse como autolesión'.[102] Thus, the player's

[99] De Armas, *El retorno*…, p. 130
[100] Rodríguez, 'La espantosa…', p. 213.
[101] Juan Manuel Rozas, 'Sobre la técnica del actor barroco', *Anuario de Estudios Filológicos*, 3 (1980), 191-202: <http://www.cervantesvirtual.com/obra-visor/sobre-la-tcnica-del-actor-barroco-0/html/ff8dd514-82b1-11df-acc7-002185ce6064_6.html>[Accessed 7/9/2020].
[102] Cancelliere, p. 133.

hands would have undertaken this manifestation of self-harm. The 'injuria[do]' Prince would have hit his own chest with his fist as he proclaimed his wish to tear out pieces of his burning heart.

This frantic upper limb movement is opposed to Pinciano's warning: 'al actor […] no le está bien jugar de mano razonando'. However, it is until the third *jornada* –after Segismundo's anagnorisis– that he begins to use his reason. Accordingly, for moments of irrationality such as this, the *Philosophía* introduces an exception: the character 'estando apassionado, puede [jugar de mano el actor], porque la passion ciega razón'.[103] Exaggerated hand movement connoted someone driven by volcanic emotions. Hence, by pounding his own fist against his thorax, the actor would have portrayed an appropriately 'apassionado' Prince.

Pinciano mentions that passion blinds reason. Here, Segismundo's reason is *blinded* by his instincts. However, his dramatic evolution will eventually bring him to the *sightedness* of reason. As the Prince advances towards moral exemplarity, the player would have displayed a different employment of the hands, acquiring a more calmed and stable movement (inspired by the *espiritual/estatorio* technique).

There is a final gesture that could have been deployed to portray Segismundo's 'apassiona[miento]'. Pinciano's description of the actor's stage business is so meticulous that it even includes the lips: 'el labio muerde el que está muy apasionado de cólera'.[104] Along with the sudden standing, the screaming, and the self-harming hand, the *comediante*-Prince could have also bitten his lip to reveal the character's choleric passion. This second display of self-harm might have happened while he recited, for example, 'En llegando a esta *pasión'*

[103] Pinciano, p. 528.
[104] Pinciano, p. 528.

–proving that 'el héroe calderoniano puede [*literalmente*] desgarrarse energuménicamente en la acción'.[105]

The histrionic performance of Segismundo's first speech shows that, in Siglo de Oro theatre, 'la expresión de emociones fuertes era uno de los ingredientes escenciales para alcanzar el éxito en las tablas'.[106] To achieve the enormity of feeling implied in the Prince's recriminations against the heavens, in his animalisation, and in his volcano-like behaviour, the actor probably used a body- and movement-focused performative technique: the *corporal*/*motorio*. This style would have also guaranteed success in the face of those who saw him passionately playing onstage. The following chapters explore how and why the emphatic gestures implied in the protagonist's presentation are mitigated or highlighted in the three CNTC productions.

I.2. Anagnorisis: a *desapassionado* and *melancólico* Segismundo

While in the 1636 version, Calderón's most famous speech contains 39 lines, in the *suelta*, it has only 12 –showing the contrast between the earlier variant's action orientation and the later rework's conceptual interests:

> Segismundo, que aún en sueños
> no se pierde el obrar bien;
> es verdad, pues reprimamos
> esta fiera condición,
> esta furia, esta pasión,
> por si ya otra vez soñamos,
> y sí haremos, pues tocamos;
> ¿qué es la vida?: una ilusión,
> una sombra, una ficción,
> y el mayor bien es pequeño,
> que toda la vida es sueño,
> y los sueños, sueños son. [fol.15^{v}]

[105] Rodríguez, 'La espantosa…', p. 213.
[106] Martín, p. 776.

These words contain Segismundo's anagnorisis –hence, they entail a variation in the stage business. Imprisoned, again, in his cave, the Prince reflects on the sinfulness of his previous conduct, hinting at a change in his future behaviour. The objective of this section is to show how the *comediante* might have conveyed such moral adaptation.

The adjustment during and after the anagnorisis is more noticeable if the scene that anticipates Segismundo's recognition is compared with the one that follows it. During the first, 'rather than being concerned with the kingdom, the prince is preoccupied with the fulfilment of his passions –violence, revenge, and desire'. His hamartia is guided by instincts, rather than by reason: 'Segismundo's downfall is […] due to excess.'[107]

In contrast, from Segismundo's understanding that 'no se pierde el obrar bien', his vocabulary changes, acquiring a moralistic lexicon, instead of denoting volcanic emotions. When the Prince is liberated, he uses a word that reveals a newly-acquired tendency to do good: 'alma'. He commands his actions –previously motivated by passions– thus: 'soñemos, *alma*, soñemos' [fol.16^{v}]. Then, as he escapes his cave, he verbalises his new inclination to act correctly: 'obrar bien es lo que importa' [fol.17^{r}]. Later, when Rosaura asks Segismundo to be the champion of her honour, he responds with another exemplary formula: 'acudamos a lo eterno' [fol.20^{v}].

The moment which marks the change between the first and the second Segismundo is the '¿qué es la vida?' speech. The intemperance characteristic of the pre-anagnorisis Prince can be recognised from the first lines: '…es verdad, pues reprimamos | esta fiera condición | esta furia, esta pasión'. Segismundo understands both the circumstances that brought him again to the cave ('esta fiera condición…') and the steps required to change such status

[107] De Armas, *El retorno*…, p. 130-131.

(‘reprimamos’). This recognition entails a latent stage direction: from now on, the actor needs to interpret his character with a more “repressed” body language than the one he used to portray fearsomeness, as ‘the “desire to experience the body” through the senses and the passions is now restrained: “pues reprimamos esta fiera condición”’.[108]

The player probably portrayed such stylistic reorientation through a change of the *apassionado* to the *desapassionado.* Following Pinciano’s aforementioned ‘jugar de mano’, ‘si [el personaje] está desapassionado, puede mover la mano con blandura, agora alzándola, agora declinándola, agora moviéndola al uno y al otro lado’.[109] As opposed to the self-harming fist, the *comediante*’s hands probably moved softly and rhythmically to present the first stage of Segismundo’s behavioural control. This is because (1) Pinciano’s use of the word ‘blandura’ implies a gentle action (generated by a gentle soul); and (2) the repetition of ‘agora’-‘agora’-‘agora’ is an indication of the imprint of tempo in the gesticulation (brought about by a temperate anima). These kinetic features would have been introduced to accompany, as rhetorical tools, the verbal content of the speech, rather than portraying demonic vigour.

The syllogistic component of this soliloquy asks for such a rhetorical-orientated bodily expression –‘denotando un claro subrayado del actor próximo a la retórica oratoria’.[110] Therefore, a gestural way to interpret the monologue would have been for the actor to rhythmically ‘alz[ar]’ the hand when he presents the proposition through which his argumentation develops: ‘no se pierde el obrar bien’. Then, the *comediante* would have been seen ‘declinándola’, as he mentions the logical concatenation of the first premise: ‘es verdad,

[108] De Armas, *El retorno*…, p. 135.
[109] Pinciano, p. 528.
[110] Rodríguez, *La técnica*…, p. 144.

pues reprimamos | esta fiera condición…'. Afterwards, he could have been 'moviéndola al uno [lado]', as he recites a justification for or elucidation of the previous assertion: 'por si otra vez soñamos'. Finally, he would have transfered it 'al otro lado', when he arrives to the conclusion of the thesis: 'y si haremos, pues tocamos; | ¿qué es la vida?: una ilusión | una sombra, una ficción'.

The *comediante* would have also used slow-paced and organisation-oriented gestures to help the audience follow the logical steps of this conceptually-challenging speech. The hands of the *desapassionado* would have been a didactic tool to expose the Christian message that everyone dreams –not really lives (as the only life is the afterlife)– what they are. Although there would have still been a degree of physical emphasis in such stage behaviour, it would have been considerably toned down in comparison to that observed at the beginning. The blend of pedagogy, declamation, and physicality entails that the acting style followed in this scene would have been *mixto* or *corporal-espiritual*.

A consequence of this moral 'repr[esión]' is humbleness, a state contrary to the one shown in the Palace, where Segismundo:

> trusted in his senses and in his newly found powers when he was allowed to be a prince for a few hours; he woke up, disillusioned, in the tower. Pride comes before a fall, and from the fall the proud man may become humble and prudent.[111]

The Prince's pride would have been interpreted through a 'sens[e]'-oriented method. In contrast, his humbling and prudence during and after the anagnorisis demand a less

[111] Wilson, p. 78.

'power[ful]' staging. An example of this mutation is Pinciano's recommendation: 'con los brazos cruzados se significará humildad'.[112]

There is also a sense of self-blame when Segismundo accepts that his 'furia' and 'pasión' are contrary to the 'obrar bien' expected of him by his father. The consequent embarrassment could have been translated by the *representante* into a specific head movement as, 'en la cabeza toda junta hay también movimientos' and 'la perseverancia en estar declinada [sirve] para significación de verguenza'.[113] Crossed arms and bowed head would have connoted the humility and shame brought about by the disillusionment that succeeds a downfall.

Additionally, the soliloquy's tone and the context of its utterance –Segismundo's imprisonment– can be described as depressing. Hence, while he recited Calderón's most famous words, a frown might have appeared on the *comediante*'s face, as 'sirve el sobrecejo caído al ojo triste'.[114] A contrast would have been established between the fixed glare of the savage and the anguished eyes of the 'triste'.

Regarding paralinguistic features, an example of how sadness could have been verbally expressed on a Golden Age *tablado* is Isabel's post-rape speech in Calderón's *El alcalde de Zalamea* (1636). This (self-)refection of the vocal (and gestural) aspects of the behaviour/performance of hopelessness can be used as a tool to explain the possible oral exposition of Segismundo's fall. This is because the lady reveals an intention to her father that is analogous to the communicative aims of the Prince's monologue: 'contarte mis desdichas | […] referirte mis penas' [96-97]. Segismundo's despair of being imprisoned for

[112] Pinciano, p. 528.
[113] Pinciano, p. 529.
[114] Pinciano, pp. 528-529.

a second time would have inspired a broken and tearful intonation from the *comediante* similar to the one Isabel makes explicit thus:

> pues (calle aquí la voz mía)
> soberbio (enmudezca el llanto),
> atrevido (el pecho gima),
> descortés (lloren los ojos),
> fiero (ensordezca la envidia),
> tirano (falte el aliento),
> osado (luto me vista),
> y si lo que la voz yerra,
> tal vez el acción explica,
> de vergüenza cubro el rostro,
> de empacho lloro ofendida... [184-194][115]

The words describing Isabel's rapist (Don Álvaro) –'sobervio', 'atrevido', 'fiero', 'tirano', etc.– are the same which characterise Segismundo's former self. The memory of his previous 'descortes[ía]' provokes 'g[emidos]' and 'll[antos]' in the redeemed Prince, who now disowns such 'osad[ía]'. As the emotions of both Calderonian characters coincide ('vergüenza', 'luto', and 'empacho'), the *representanta*-Isabel and *representante*-Segismundo would have 'call[ado]' intermittently, 'enmude[ecido]', and their breath would have 'falt[ado]' to show how their 'voz yerra' as they grimly confess their respective tragedies. Along with the voice, a gesture can be added to the aforementioned depiction of shame: the actor would have covered his face, embarrassed by his previous sinful behaviour.

The mixture of pensiveness and sadness in Segismundo's speech is suggestive of melancholia, a pathology related to his dramatic arc:

> el itinerario de Segismundo, a pesar de que se suceden en él estados melancólicos y frenéticos, va hacia la progresiva desaparición del inicial

[115] Pedro Calderón de la Barca, *El alcalde de Zalamea*, ed. by José María Díez Borque (Madrid: Castalia, 2017), pp. 262-266.

> delirio, hacia aquella postura melancólica que marca su conquista de la sabiduría…[116]

Although the connection between Segismundo and melancholy appears throughout his 'itinerario', nowhere is it more evident than here. Melancholy's 'estados' imply sadness, while its 'postura' entails reflectivity: both present in the '¿qué es la vida?' soliloquy. Regarding this speech's pensive tone, its last five lines exemplify a 'discurso melancólico acerca del "sentido" con mayúscula'.[117] This is because their intention is ontological: Segismundo's objective is presenting a definition of the (Christian) *S*ense of the concept of '*V*ida', through the metaphor of the vigil (the afterlife) and the dream (this life).

Another aspect that reinforces this monologue's philosophic –hence, melancholic– inflection is that its central postulate is a rhetorical question ('¿qué es…?'), a linguistic aspect that asks for commentary and exposition. The conclusion of this instigation of reflection is equally melancholic: the nihilistic and depressing *desengaño* that (mortal) life is intrinsically fallacious. The aftermath of this process of recognition is that Segismundo undergoes a melancholic's 'higher spiritual exaltation' –or anagnorisis, in dramatic terms.[118] He is pushed

> hasta encontrarse obligado a deducir que el sueño es la condición en que se encuentran todos los que viven. La aceptación de esta soledad, reconocida como condición universal, lleva de nuevo a Segismundo a una condición de melancolía.[119]

The dispiriting acceptance of humankind's universal solitude –our existence is only a dream– triggers the second aspect of melancholy: sadness. In early modern Spain, 'dec[ían] estar uno melancólico cuando está triste y pensativo de alguna cosa que le da pesadumbre'.[120] The fact

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[116] Cancelliere, p. 133.
[117] Fernando R. de la Flor, *Barroco. Representación e ideología en el mundo hispánico (1580-1680)* (Madrid: Cátedra, 2002), p. 97.
[118] Raymond Klibansky, Erwin Panofsky, and Fritz Saxl, *Saturn and Melancholy: Studies in the History of Natural Philosophy, Religion, and Art* (London: Nelson, 1964), p. 16.
[119] Cancelliere, p. 136.
[120] Sebastián de Covarrubias, *Tesoro de la lengua castellana o española*, (Madrid: Melchor Sánchez, 1674), s.v. melancolía, fol.108^{v}.

that Segismundo is both 'triste y pensativo' in this monologue calls for a performance of a prototype similar to Carducho's *melancólico*:

> la melancolía, pensativos, y llenos de tristeza, los ojos hundidos, fixos en la tierra, la cabeza baxa, el codo sobre la rodilla, la mano debaxo de la quixaja, echado debajo de qualque arbol, ó entre piedras, ó caverna, el color palido y amarillo.[121]

Regarding the actor's use of space, there is a connection between how and where the *Diálogos* place the *melancólico* –stoically lying beneath a tree, surrounded by rocks or inside a cave– and the location of Segismundo's speech. As Carducho, Rosaura describes the Prince's 'edificio' as a 'peñasco' that yace 'entre desnudas peñas' with a cavern-like 'funesta boca' where 'la noche' 'se engendra dentro' [fol.2r] –i.e., the *vestuario*. Concerning the posture, the author mentions one of the most conventional visual aspects of the representation of this model: the lowered head, the elbow leaning on a knee or other surface, and the hand under the jaw. I present three examples of melancholics from early modern painting to illustrate how these codified gestures might have inspired the actor's staging of this monologue:

[121] Carducho, pp. 403-404.



Fig. 1. El Bosco, *San Juan Bautista en meditación*, c.1489, oil on canvas, 48,5 × 40 cm, Museo Lázaro Galdiano, Madrid –chosen for the cover of Roger Bartra's book *Cultura y melancolía. Las enfermedades del alma en la España del Siglo de Oro*.



Fig. 2. José de Ribera, *Media figura de mujer* (*El triunfo de Baco*), 1636, oil on canvas, 67 x 59 cm, Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid –chosen for the front image of the 2015 exhibition 'Tiempos de melancolía: creación y desengaño en la España del Siglo de Oro' at the Museo Nacional de Escultura, Valladolid.

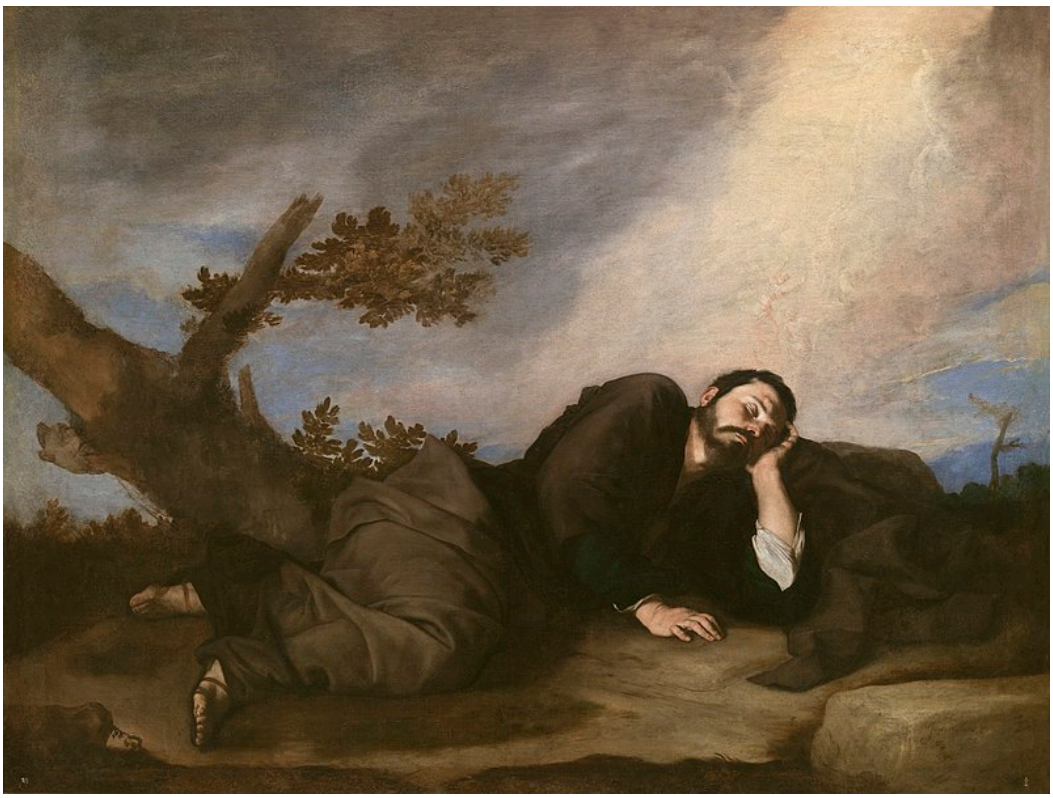


Fig. 3. José de Ribera, *El sueño de Jacob*, 1639, oil on canvas, 179 x 233 cm, Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid –chosen for the cover of Ruano' edition of *La vida es sueño*.

These representations of melancholia portray *salvaje*-like hermits reclined beneath a tree, over rocks or inside a cavern (as Carducho recommends). Accordingly, Segismundo, dressed as an anchorite, recites his soliloquy from a site similar to San Juan's and Jacob's. Additionally, the characters depicted as melancholics in Golden Age painting often represent saints undergoing a spiritual transition. The Prince's state also coincides with this process of enlightenment thanks to his anagnorisis: 'la predisposición melancólica acompaña […] la salida de Segismundo de la condición de frenesí delirante hacia la toma de conciencia'.[122]

If the *comediante* had placed his hand to support his head –emulating the behaviour of San Juan, Ribera's woman, or Jacob– he would have conveyed, through kinetic means, the idea of depression and pensiveness (as advanced by the text). Another non-verbal aspect that would have denoted melancholia is the eyes fixed on the earth of, for example, the protagonist of Bosco's painting. A contemplative and sorrowful gaze, like that of Ribera's *mujer*, would have been a fitting facial expression for an individual who concludes that terrestrial existence is a fiction. These eyes might have looked down gloomily to the chains that shackle the *comediante*-Prince's limbs once again –denoting his repentance for his previous behaviour.[123]

Overall, in this melancholic portrayal of Segismundo, the *comediante* would have probably performed using a style in-between the *corporal* and the *spiritual* or *mixto* technique. This means that, by the end of the second *jornada*, the actor would still have employed his body

[122] Cancelliere, p. 136
[123] See: Eduardo Paredes Ocampo, 'A Bicephalic Melancholiac: Acting a Royal Pathology in Spanish Golden Age Drama', in *Early Modern Spanish Theater: Staging and Stage Décor*, ed. by Bárbara Mujica (Delaware: Vernon Press, forthcoming).

and its movement as tools for meaning-making (e.g., the hand supporting the chin). However, he would have shown less physical energy in this scene than in previous, pre-anagnorisis ones (he would have been sitting or lying down).

The player's stage behaviour probably worked to emphasise the ponderous and morally-charged words of Segismundo's soliloquy –as rhetorical or didactic resources. This change of style would have been particularly noticeable in his hands and arms. If the *apassionado* and *colérico* Segismundo hits his chest with his fists, the *disapassionado* and *melancólico* Prince swings his hands, softly and rhythmically, or calmly deposits his meditative head on them. A faithful adaptation of this scene's ethical implications is studied in Chapter IV, which deals with Pimenta's 2012 version.

I.3. Dénouement: a *prudente* Segismundo?

The 'Campo ilustre de Polonia' scene [fol.21^{v}-22^{v}] represents the conclusion of Segismundo's dramatic evolution. Throughout the third *jornada* leading to it, 'the renewal takes place within Segismundo himself, in an act of spiritual regeneration that liberates him from the irrational'.[124] This means that, at the end of the performance, the *comediante* needed to present this awakening through an e*spiritual*/*estatorio* technique. A liberating change *within* (the character) calls for a composed gesturing *without* (the actor).

The first signs of such enlightenment are intermittently depicted before the dénouement. If the Prince's anagnorisis –that is, 'the realisation of the dream of life[–] implies the awakening of the soul or inner self [, then,] Act three will portray a second ascent'. 'Ascent' presupposes that it takes certain intermediary steps to arrive at the summit. Hence,

[124] Paterson, p. 181.

in this post-anagnorisis third act, 'the will to *obrar bien* is not enough. Segismundo's transformation is gradual'.[125]

This graduality appears after Segismundo's liberation. Once he is named captain, Clotaldo enters and surrenders before him. Then, he denies helping the Prince's war against Basilio. There is a contradiction in Segismundo's answer, marked by the change from direct discourse to an aside:

> ¡Villano, ingrato, inhumano!
> (suframos el sentimiento, [*aparte*]
> que aunque la muerte le diera
> mi cólera, considero
> que es leal, y no merece
> morir un hombre, por serlo). [fol.16^{v}]

In the first line, the character behaves like the old 'c[olérico]'. To achieve this, the actor might have assumed the *corporal*/*motorio* technique and the *apassionado* model. His paralinguistic features would have been loud, and his gestures focused on displaying aggressivity through, for example, muscular tension. He may also have used his hands and pushed Clotaldo to the floor.

However, in the following soul-searching *aparte*, the character swiftly transitions to the rationality proper to his humbled self, behaving like a Christian Prince towards his former captor. Accordingly, the *comediante* might have converted to the *espiritual*/*estatorio* style and the *dispassionado* figure. The function would have been to present the sense of stoic self-reprehension ('suframos el sentimiento') and to emphasise the rational message of the words ('considero…'). The kinesics must have been more calmed and prudent: helping Clotaldo to stand up from the floor with a cordial hand, for instance. This acting variation between the

[125] De Armas, *El retorno*…, pp. 134-135.

corporal and *espiritual* binary would have been a performative equivalent to the fact that 'in the third act Segismundo is a man alternatively swayed by passion and his newly acquired prudence'.[126]

Segismundo's behavioural sway is further evidenced later on, when Rosaura asks him for reparation. At first, having the desired lady surrender to him, Segismundo hesitates: 'Astrea está en mi poder | su hermosura el alma adora, | gocemos, pues, la ocasión' [fol.20^{v}]. For a moment, carnal passions return to him even after undergoing anagnorisis: he wants to 'go[zar]' Rosaura/Astrea. Therefore, a *corporal*/*motorio* style would have been expected from the *comediante*. His gestures would have been used to establish an expectation of sexual violence: in particular, his hands might have denoted his intention to grab the lady's body.

However, the redeemed Prince reappears after a moment of moral contemplation: 'Rosaura está sin honor: | pues más a un Príncipe toca | dar el honor, que no quitarle' [fol.20^{v}]. The advance from 'gocemos' to 'dar' is a guideline for the adjustment to a more *espiritual*/*estatorio* staging. The actor would have controlled the excessive gesturing previously shown, to stress the ethical content of words such as 'honor'. Furthermore, this now rational and humanised Segismundo calls himself 'Príncipe' instead of 'fiera'. Hence, his previously grasping palms would have been kept to himself, near his own body, exemplifying repressed and princely gestures.

These two scenes illustrate how the *comediantes* were expected to

> alternar cuerdo el modo, ya tierno, ya hinchado, ya humilde, ya soberbio, ya con mesura, ya con despejo, ya severo, ya apacible, camaleón de afectos contrarios para tener en éxtasis dulce, suspensos y arrebatados los ánimos de los oyentes.[127]

[126] Wilson, p. 76.
[127] Joseph Pellicer de Tovar, 'Idea de la comedia de Castilla', in *Preceptiva…,* ed. by Sánchez, p. 267.

At the beginning of the third *jornada*, the actor-Segismundo would have undergone a constant performative alternation of his 'modo' to portray both the newly humble, measured, and peaceful Prince and the old arrogant, severe, and vain brute. Consequently, the variation would have made the Prince an interesting and rounded character with believable human affects and contradictions. This chameleonic style might have partially been the reason for *La vida es sueño*'s success regarding spectators that were kept in suspense and extatically 'arrebatados'. It might also be the cause behind the diversity of contemporary approaches to the protagonist –something discussed in the following chapters.

However, the show of positive 'afectos' would have eventually dominated the *representante*'s acting, as, at the end, 'Calderón conceives the ideal Christian prince as one who is guided by reason and not by passion'.[128] How did the actor interpret the transformation to a pious and judicious heir to the throne? This mutation is materialised in Segismundo's victorious entrance to the Palace and in his discredit of Basilio's astrological methods, by presenting a balanced understanding of the individual's actions. With this, 'se inicia con esto lo que hemos llamado el tema pedagógico'.[129]

Hence, the *comediante* would have inteneded to establish a rhetorical/expository relation between Segismundo's pedagogic topic and his performance, as 'lo más probable es que la técnica actoral del siglo XVII fuese muy formal y artificial y que estuviera influenciada por las artes retóricas y por los predicatores'.[130] In this admonitory speech, the Prince assumes the role of a 'predicado[r]', by introducing a moral dictum through his verbal

[128] Everett W. Hesse, 'Calderón's Concept of the Perfect Prince in *La vida es sueño*', in *Critical…,* ed. by Wardropper, 114-133 (pp. 131-132).
[129] Enrique Moreno Castillo, *Sobre el sentido de* La vida es sueño (Madrid: Biblioteca Nueva, 2004), p. 88.
[130] Ruano, *La puesta…,* p. 518.

eloquence. This suggests that the acting would been very formal and that its physical side would have been subservient to the declamation –to expose the content as didactically and clearly as possible. The choice of the word 'habla' in 'atended | que vuestro príncipe os habla' [fol.22^{r}], rather than the verb 'obrar' (as before) reveals a switch of focus from action to speech.

Segismundo's objective to lead by example is explicitly stated from the start: 'Sirva de *ejemplo* esta extraña | admiración…'. The Prince presents his own experience to illustrate his proverbial critique ('*Mi* padre […] | *me* hizo | un bruto…' [fol.22^{r}]). Therefore, the actor's stage business would have worked not only as a rhetorical support for the aphorisms, but also as an embodiment of the behavioural ideal being exposed. That is, his vocal expression, kinesics, and blocking would have tangentially shown Segismundo's 'constancia | [que] ha de poder' 'escusa[r]' '[la] sentencia del cielo' and become honourable by forgiving his father [fol.22$^{r\text{-}v}$].

Segismundo's final verbal 'escarmiento' [fol.22^{r}] would have been enunciated with serene paralinguistic features. As is stated in Miguel de Cervantes' *Pedro de Urdemalas* (1615), in speeches like this, the player

> …ha de recitar de modo
> con tanta industria y cordura
> que se vuelva en la figura
> que hace de todo en todo. [2912-2915][131]

The required 'industria' and 'cordura' of 'recitar' can be translated into modern terms as a restricted vocal range and slow tempo. The intention would have been for the *comediante* 'que se vuelva' into the ideal moral 'figura' presented by Segismundo in his exposition –

[131] Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra, *Comedia famosa de Pedro de Urdemalas*, ed. by Edward Nagy (New York: Las Américas, 1965), p. 146.

through his oratorical equanimity and its implication of internal lucidity. The actor's reproduction 'de todo en todo' of his role's state is rhetorical in its orientation as, following Cicero, 'es casi imposible que un orador sucite una pasión en sus oyentes si no es afectado primero por la pasión'.[132]

Regarding gesturing, Pinciano presents a conventional hand movement to accompany speeches with pedagogic and narrative tones: 'si [el personaje] enseña o narra, podrá adjuntar, al dedo dicho [índice], el medio y pulgar, los cuales a tiempo los apartará y ajuntará'.[133] The main function of Segismundo's final discourse is precisely to 'enseña[r]' –the (im)morality of certain decisions– and 'narra[r]' –his own exemplary story– to the on/offstage audience. Thus, the 'aparta[r]' and 'adjunta[r]' of the middle and thumb fingers would have helped to present this dialogue's righteousness through expository-oriented kinetics.

An example of the possible application of such gestures can be found in each of the four premises presented by Segismundo here. The first one reads:

> *Si a algún hombre le dijeran,*
> *la fiera más inhumana*
> *te ha de dar muerte*, **¿escogiera**
> **buen remedio en despertarla**
> **cuando estuviese durmiendo?** [fol.22^{r}]

The central part of the Prince's final speech is constructed by four prepositions introduced by 'Si…' –that present four concrete images (the 'fiera, espada, mar y fuego' [fol.22^{r}])– in order to metaphorically and didactically illustrate Segismundo's abstract moral conclusion (quoted in the following paragraph). Each of these four premises is divided into two parts: (1) the conditional sentence (italics above) and (2) the particular conclusion/question (bold).

[132] Cicero quoted by Victor Dixon, 'Manuel Vallejo. Un actor se prepara: un comediante del Siglo de oro ante un texto (*El Castigo sin Venganza*), in *Actor y técnica de representación del teatro clásico expañol* ed. by José María Díez Borque (London: Tamesis, 1989), 55-74 (pp. 66).
[133] Pinciano, p. 528.

A formal and pedagogic way for the *comediante* to convey the structural and semantic difference between (1) and (2) –between preposition and resolution– would have been with a different hand movement. Following Pinciano, in each of the four posits, (1) would be presented 'adjunta[ndo]' the index, middle, and thumb fingers; then, (2) would be performed 'apart[ándolos]'.

Regarding the body, Rodríguez's description of a player who 'parece prepararse para un solemne recitado' represents another tool to visualise the performance of Segismundo's dénouement. As he recited such an eloquent and dignified intervention, we can picture a Prince whose 'piernas se abren al compás, adelantándose la izquierda, pero manteniendo el equilibrio que prescribirán todas las preceptivas del gesto del actor', portraying 'un ancho gesto que parece requerir la más alta y trascendental elocusión poética'.[134] A textual guideline for this posture can be interpreted in the conclusion of Segismundo's judicious advice:

> la fortuna no te venza
> con injusticia y venganza;
> con prudencias y valor,
> y así quien vencer aguarda
> ha de esperarla constante
> cuerpo a cuerpo y cara a cara. [fol.22^{r}]

A balanced body language similar to the one described above would have been a fitting counterpart for the *comediante*-Segismundo's presentation of three positive values: prudence, courage, and constancy. The character promotes the embodiment of these qualities –semantically related to physical endurance and equilibrium– precisely through a corporeal metaphor: the individual must show steadfastness with both body and face to defeat fortune. To illustrate the Prince's incorporation of these principles, the actor might have 'adelanta[do]' the left leg as he mentioned 'cuerpo a cuerpo'; then, his face would have

[134] Rodríguez, *La técnica*…, pp. 281-282.

shown the emotional sobriety of perseverance while he recited 'cara a cara'. This link between textual meaning and the formality of the performance proves that, in Golden Age acting, 'se trata de actitud y gestos que obedecen a un sentido de representación, no a la espontaneidad'.[135]

The 'prudenci[a]' alluded to by Segismundo is described by the *Díalogos*:

> la prudencia tiene las acciones graves, recogidas, sin torcimientos del cuerpo, ni arrojamiento de brazos, ni de piernas, esforzándose penoso, templada severidad de frente, ojos y boca, la mano en la barba bien puesta, y no afectada.[136]

As opposed to the unrestrained kinesics of the *corporal* Segismundo, this post-anagnorisis Prince had no 'torcimientos del cuerpo'. Instead of presenting the 'arroja[das]' actions of the *motorio* style, the *prudente* Segismundo would have employed a more 'templada' performance with 'no afectad[os]' movements. For instance, the motion of arms and legs would have been 'graves' and 'recogid[os]' –as they were meant to rhetorically complement the declamation and illustrate the internalisation of the called-for virtuosity. The way in which Carducho writes about this equilibrated type –through negative words such as 'sin', 'ni', and 'no'– suggests the absence of emphatic body language.

Furthermore, the words stemming out of the foaming mouth of a choleric (e.g., the first Segismundo) are recited passionately, abruptly, and without reflecting. In contrast, a message delivered by a serene 'boca' conveys prudence and pensiveness. The content emitted by the second mouth is worthier to be listened to by the audience than that of the first one. If the actor's intention was for the public to fully assimilate the speech's ethics, his mouth

[135] Díez, p. 123.
[136] Carducho, p. 407.

would have looked more like the second, rather than the first. A lack of affectedness in the *comediante*'s face would have helped the spectators follow the logical concatenations and virtuous postulates of this intervention.

Carducho also highlights that the *prudente* ought to be depicted gesturally 'esforzándose penoso' –that is, without histrionic display. Its "lazy effort" relates to the *estatorio* technique, in which physicality is not as fundamental in meaning-making as its linguistic counterpart. Hence, in this moment, the player-Segismundo's actions would have been less 'arroja[das]' and more 'bien puesta[s]', inspired by this newly-acquired predicator-like role.

A self-reflection of this unaffected way of acting can be interpreted in the third of the four premises presented by Segismundo:

> Si dijesen golfos de agua
> ha de ser tu sepultura,
> […]
> mal hiciera en darse al mar
> cuando sañudo levanta
> montes de cristal y nieve. [fol.22^{r}]

These lines imply that the (social) actor should perform without an emotional excessiveness –metaphorically related to the sea. The individual should not 'darse' to those fervent 'montes' and behave following instincts and passions. Instead, they must act with *prudencia*, a behaviour that would have been literally exemplified by the actor's restrained gestures.

Concerning the dramatic conflict, prudence and equilibrium are spiritual values that both Segismundo and Basilio have lacked at different points on their paths, surrendering to the sea of feelings. Hence, retrospectively, both the main actors would have performed 'sañud[a]' and 'levanta[damente]' to convey their affective hamartias *before*. To contrast such corporeality, *now* the player-Prince would have assumed one of most identifiable

performative styles in the *comedia*: the 'representación estatuesca'. This is the approach 'en la que la acción se congela en un cuadro inmóvil con el objeto de reforzar el básico significado de la escena'.[137] As the onstage action momentarily "freezes", the audience's attention would have focused on what the actor said, rather than on what he did (following the *estatorio* style).

After presenting the four premises and their conclusion, Segismundo says:

> Del suelo, padre, levanta,
> dame tu mano, que ya
> que el cielo te desengaña
> de que has caído, en el modo
> de obligarle, humilde aguarda
> mi vida a que tú te vengues,
> rendido estoy a tus plantas. [fol.22^{v}]

This is an answer to Basilio's previous lines:

> Segismundo, si tu padre
> y a tu Rey busca tu saña
> humilde yace a tus pies,
> *De rodillas,*
> pon en mi cerviz la planta… [fol.22^{r}]

While he spoke, the player-Basilio would have knelt in front of the statuesque Segimundo. The stage direction '*De rodillas*' is not present in the 1636 version (evidencing the *suelta*'s more stage-oriented condition). With this gesture, the *comediante* would have literally embodied the bad omens the King read in the stars: that Segismundo '…pondría sobre mis hombros | las plantas, y yo [estaría] rendido… [fol.6^{v}]. This action confirms the connection between the play-text's themes and its tacit stage directions –evidencing the importance of studying *La vida es sueño* as a performance, not only as a text.

[137] Martín, p. 767.

Kneeling is also the obvious gesture for Segismundo's response: 'rendido estoy a tus plantas'. When the spectators saw this movement, they would have inferred that the character justly demands punishment ('te vengues') for his previous delirium. Alongside kneeling, the word 'humilde' would have forced the actor to lower his head with repentance. This gesture is further underscored in 1636, as Calderón changes 'vida' for 'cuello' [3246] to reinstate the physical signs of the protagonist's enlightenment.

The proffered hand is a third gesture that would have conveyed the protagonist's righteousness: 'la oferta de la mano quita definitivamente la connotación de violencia de los brazos de Segismundo'.[138] This expression would have accompanied the line 'dame tu mano' and would have been presented to the father (kneeling in front). The staging of this redemptive moment further supports the conjecture that hands were a highly symbolic element of the *comediante*'s body –helping, as no other performative resource, to present the negative and positive stages of Segismundo's dramatic evolution.

Indeed, during the first scenes, the Prince's hands and arms exude violence, functioning as devices to characterise the *hombre-fiera*. Initially, Segismundo's brutality would have been conceived through their turbulent movements. An example happens when Segismundo agressively tells Rosaura: 'Sólo porque me has oído, | entre mis membrudos brazos | te tengo de hacer pedazos' [fol.3^{r}]. While he recited these lines, the gesture of *asir* Rosaura (as textually added in 1636: 'ásela') would have been staged by the *comediante*. In contrast, during the dénouement, Segismundo offers a forgiving palm –rather than a violent clutch– to his defeated father, improving his characterisation by means of cordial gesturing.

[138] Norbert von Prellwitz, '"De tus brazos me retiro": gestos del conflicto padre-hijo en *La vida es sueño*', in *Giornate Calderoniane. Calderón 2000. Atti del Convegno Internazionale Palermo 14-17 Dicembre 2000*, ed. by Enrica Cancelliere (Palermo: Flaccovio, 2003), 127-140 (p. 133).

Therefore, the first stage behaviour can be catalogued as *corporal*/*motorio*, as the 'membrud*os* braz*os*' entail a movement-oriented performance. The *comediante* would have used *both arms* (plural, in the text) for the enactment of monstrosity. In contrast, the upper-limb gestures of the post-anagnorisis player-Prince can be described as *espiritual*/*estatorio*. The line 'dame tu mano' would have probably been acted with *a single hand* (singular, in the text), through moderate and statuesque kinesics. This opposition illustrates Pinciano's testimony about the portrayal of emotional change through one or both hands: 'y en el [movimiento] de las manos es de advertir […] la variedad de los affectos, acerca de lo cual se considera que, o se mueve una mano sola o ambas'.[139]

Finally, the Soldado 1 punishment scene should be considered, since, as will be shown, the three CNTC productions interpret it differently. The contrast between each of the performances' staging of this scene helps us classify them either as conservative or experimental. After Segismundo decides each character's destiny, Soldado 1 says:

> Si así a quien te ha ofendido
> honras, a mí que fui causa
> del alboroto del Reino
> y de la torre en que estabas
> te saqué a mandar…

Segismundo interrupts Soldado's question (explicitly stated in 1636 thus: '¿qué me darás?' [3296]):

> …Te doy
> la torre, con que no salgas
> della sólo a morir.

Soldado:

[139] Pinciano, p. 527.

¿Por qué?

Segismundo:

…Porque ya acabada
la victoria, el que es prudente
del que fue traidor se guarda. [fol.22^{v}]

The critical attention given to these lines can be summarised thus:

> while some have seen the final Segismundo as a type of Stoic-Christian hero, who maintains order and banishes the dark world of unreason, others have recognized him as a tyrant who renews the cycle of injustice in the name of political expediency.[140]

Following the second (more complex) interpretation, in this final moment, the *comediante* would have been forced to bring back the unreasonable *hombre-fiera.* The performance had to be re-modelled by this instance of a renewed tyranny (even when Segismundo paradoxically calls himself 'prudente'). Using the energetic hand gesture of the *apassionado* as an example, the actor might have aggressively pointed to the soldier in the direction of the cave/prison-*vestuario*, contrasting with the moderate kinesics just used. Additionally, the actor's mouth might have foamed with rage as an *indignado*, his vocal articulation would have become tense, and his eyes would have shot daggers at the sight of the political opportunist. If the Soldado 1's punishment scene represents a contradiction to Segismundo's moral evolution –a return of his hamartia–, these final lines would have been performed with the *corporal*/*motorio* technique.

This example of chameleonic characterisation demonstrates that the Golden Age audience appreciated it when the *comediante* underwent 'altos metamorfoseos de su rostro | color, ojos,

[140] Paterson, p. 180. See: Daniel L. Heiple, 'The tradition behind the punishment of the rebel soldier in *La vida es sueño*', *Bulletin of Hispanic Studies*, 50 (1973), 1-17.

sentido, voz, y afectos | transformando la gente'.[141] Or, in words of a contemporary critic, the swift passage from the *corporal* to the *espritual* style –and the many instances in-between– show that 'el actor t[enía] que lograr gran virtuosismo en el cambio de afectos y en la capacidad de producirlos inesperadamente en el público'.[142] The change of passions would have been a virtue expected from the performance of such a protean and emotionally-fervent character as the Prince. It may be thanks to such virtuosity that *La vida es sueño* became one of the most successful dramas in Spain. The following chapters show how Segismundo's mutability is translated into three different theatrical languages by the CNTC productions, depending on their aesthetics and politics.

Part II: Basilio

II.1. The presentation of a *magestuoso* and *prudente* Basilio

The direction of the father's dramatic conflict –and its performance– is the opposite of the son's. This contrast responds to the play's inversion of roles:

> al eje semántico Razón/Sinrazón corresponde el de Observador/Observado, ocupando nuestro héroe [Segismundo] los polos de la negación. Sin embargo, a través de las bisectrices la situación se puede invertir, según un juego de conmutaciones que realiza quien es mirado, el sujeto de la sinrazón, de modo que el que mira, vigila, custodia [Basilio], acaba siendo loco y el rebelde sabio...[143]

How was this reversal of attributes conveyed by the *comediante*-Basilio? How did his paralinguistic features, gestures and use of space present the change from reason to unreason?

[141] Felix Lope de Vega, *El peregrino de su patria,* ed. by J. B. Avalle Arce (Madrid: Castalia, 1973), p. 383.
[142] Oehrlein, p. 176.
[143] Cancelliere, p. 130

What are the techniques followed to stage his degradation from the positive pole of behaviour towards its negation?

Basilio's reasonable phase is displayed in his first intervention. The stage direction marking his entrance is: 'Sale el Rey y acompañamiento'. The 1636 version adds 'viejo', to stress the need for an old actor or an old-man's characterisation. This, as with Segismundo's skin costume, is an acting guideline. Other cues are Basilio's self-definitions in this speech: 'rey', 'padre', 'sabio', and 'anciano' [fol.5^{v}-7^{r}].

These labels are connected in Golden Age drama. Lope's *Arte nuevo* recommends the *comediantes* in similar situations as him who plays Basilio: 'si hablare el rey, imite cuanto pueda | la gravedad real; si el viejo hablare | procure una modestia sentenciosa' [269-271].[144] Thus, the player had to make use of his declamatory and intellectual skills –rather than his corporeality– to connote the sententiousness, gravity, and modesty of an old King. Evidence for this are the epithets that Astolfo and Estrella dedicate to Basilio upon his entrance in 1636: '*Sabio* Tales, | *docto* Euclides' [579-580]. His characterisation as wise is confirmed by Basilio when, later, he self-assigns the 'sobrenombre de Sabio' and affirms: 'me llaman el *gran* Basilio' [fol.6^{r}].

The word 'grave' (introduced by Lope) is repeated four times by Carducho when he describes 'magestad' –an epithet applicable to this astrologer-King:

> las acciones de la magestad, graves, autorizadas, decentes: dignos, severos, afables, osados, fuertes, prontos, el rostro áspero, el semblante magnífico, las manos siempre ocupadas en cosas graves, altas, y generosas: la planta firme y grave, y todo el cuerpo algo derecho, y no descompuesto, los ojos tardos, graves, y despiertos.[145]

[144] Felix Lope de Vega, *Arte nuevo de hacer comedias*, ed. by Enrique García Santo-Tomás (Madrid: Cátedra, 2006), p. 146.
[145] Carducho, p. 405.

To portray Basilio's royal gravity, the actor probably entered the stage with an authoritative pace. As he stopped to recite his first lines, he might have adopted a hieratic posture, connoting the security of a capable political leader. A 'rostro áspero' –that is, showing no sign of passions– would have further contributed to portray dignity. A visual example of this hypothetical reconstruction is (fig. 4):



Fig. 4. A grave King acquires a hieratic, equilibrated, and statuesque posture as he talks to his (on- and offstage) subjects. Image from: Juan de Solórzano Pereira, 'Emblema XVIII', in *Emblemata regio politica*.[146]

[146] See: Shergold, p. 108.

Basilio's statuesque bearing would have emphasised the pedagogic content of the speech (without distracting the public with movement). Along with the inviting body expression, verbal signals such as 'Escuchad, pues' [fol.5^{v}] work as rhetorical tools to focus the audience's attention on the message (rather than on the visual features of acting). The *comediante*'s paralinguistic features would have also assumed this focalising intention by respecting the verse structure and being precise in articulation and slow in tempo –for those offstage to follow word by word. The formality of these aspects would have exemplified the fact that 'en el Barroco se fragua el sentido de declamación como la forma enfática y ampulosa de la expresión del texto […] incluye[ndo], pues, el efecto de artificialidad, cimentado en el uso del verso'.[147]

Gestural and verbal 'ampulos[idad]' is proper to someone acclaimed by 'los matices de Timantes, | los mármoles de Lisipo' [fol.6^{r}]. As these comparisons are taken from the high arts of painting and sculpture and are used by Basilio to depict his own magnificence, they belong to the spiritual side of the *díada*. Hence, they are opposed to the material and irrational paradigms chosen for Segismundo's initial self-definition (the animals present him as instinctive). The refinement behind the father's analogy with the arts suggests a sophisticated and humanised staging –which would have contrasted to his son's brutishness. Therefore, the *comediante*-Basilio's posture would have been elegant as the painting's 'matices' (without kinetic excesses) and statuesque as a 'marmo[l]'.

Furthermore, Carducho mentions that the majestic individual should have his hands occupied with grave and higher things. These dignified matters have a textual correspondence in the positive illustration of Basilio's sciences: the 'matemáticas *sutiles'* that portray

[147] Rodríguez, *La técnica*…, p. 507.

'*sagrado*[s] designio[s]'. One of the positive aspects of the King's personality is his intellectual engagement with the conceptual and spiritual subtleties of the stars. To present such nobility, as Basilio mentions the 'círculos de nieve', the 'doseles de vidrio', the 'orbes de diamante', and the 'globos cristalinos' [fol.6^{r}], the actor could have pointed his hands towards the 'cosas graves' and 'altas' of the skies –that is, towards the *corral*'s ceiling or opening (a place opposed to Segismundo's cave/*vestuatio*).

Likewise, Pinciano mentions that the actor representing solemnity must have a 'ju[ego] de mano' that accompanies or complements the speech's content: 'mire el actor la persona que va a imitar; si es grave, puede jugar de mano, según y cómo es lo que trata'.[148] The hands pointing to the skies –that which is being 'trata[do]' in Basilio's discourse– would have denoted the King's devotion and moral gravity (the 'orbes' being the site of Christian spirituality).

There is another relationship between the text, the *comediante*'s arms, and Carducho's model. After the epithets from Astolfo and Estrella, as the King says 'Sobrinos, dadme los brazos' [fol.5^{v}], the actor would have 'generosa[mente]' opened his arms to receive the embrace from the 'sobrinos'. He would have calmly extended his palm and maintained that posture until Astolfo and Estrella answered back. This expression would have been docile and intended to produce a sense of familiar love and high ethical standards – suggesting that the technique followed would have been *espiritual/estatorio*.

Afterwards, Basilio presents his plan of placing Segismundo on the throne to ascertain whether the stars were right or wrong. This scheme can be interpreted thus:

[148] Pinciano, p. 528.

> también se puede pensar si el experimento del Palacio no es una argucia de Basilio, una manera de demostrarse a sí mismo y de demostrar a los demás lo acertado de sus vaticinios y lo prudente de las medidas adoptadas para evitar su cumplimiento.[149]

Basilio searches to inspire a sense of credibility and righteousness because of the problematic nature of his project: drugging Segismundo and bringing him by force to the Palace. This 'argucia' can only *look* 'acertad[a]' if the King *looks* judicious while presenting it. To achieve this, the actor would have probably assumed gestures similar to Carducho's aforementioned model of *prudencia*. Prudence is also connected to the characterisation of the King as old, since, in Golden Age theatre:

> el Rey tiene dos aspectos: cuando es joven, de verdadero galán, normalmente injusto por soberbio [Segismundo]; si es viejo, prudente y necesario para la solución del conflicto [Basilio].[150]

When confronting any old King, the spectators would have expected him to perform with the prudence necessary to solve the *comedia*'s discord. Basilio's first speech is the verbalisation of an attempt to present a solution to Poland's political dilemma: he proposes placing the exiled Segismundo as "King" to solve its lack of succession. However, this expectation will be shattered as Basilio gradually assumes the features of unreason and loses this prudence.

Prudence is conceived through a calmed and measured stage business. Hence, its un-affectedness would have been assumed by the *representante* to portray the confidence of a conflict-solver and to reinforce the idea of a rational and politically-able sovereign. In other words, the reassuring intention of the speech –meant to comfort the *corte* for Poland's heirless condition– had to be accompanied by equally reassuring gestures. An example of this is:

> Aquí hay tres cosas: la una,
> que yo, patria mía, os estimo

[149] Ynduráin, p. 17.
[150] Oliva, 'Calderón…', p. 205.

tanto que os quiero librar
de la prisión y servicio
de un Rey tirano, porque
no fuera señor benigno
el que a su patria y su Reino
pusiera en tanto peligro… [fol.6^{v}]

'Señor benigno' –semantically connected to prudence– is a guideline for personification. This means that the King's enumeration of the reasons behind his scheme would have been conveyed through stage business that suggested that he is 'piadoso, amoroso, compasible' (as 'benigno' is defined).[151] The speed of his elocution would have been steady, and his hands would have been set in a prayer-like expression of piety. Additionally, this gesture would have had an extra function as: 'suplicamos y adoramos con las manos juntas y alzadas'.[152] This dually-symbolic gesture would have been a rhetorical device both to imply Basilio's devotion and to supplicate the Kingdom to believe that his "cruelty" against their future King is actually an act of 'estim[a]' (this necessary evil done to protect Poland from the danger of the tyrant).

The self-legitimation of Basilio's (unjustifiable) resolutions entails also the performance of 'el justo': 'los pies medianos, y bien articulados, los movimientos varoniles y magnanimosos, expertos y moderados, con severidad, apacibles y suaves, como recogido, y atento en si, a la consideracion del intento de la cosa'.[153] The King's posture and kinesics would have been manly and severe –the back straight, one leg in front of the other in perfect equilibrium– thus displaying his political attentiveness. As the King also needs to portray benevolence and patriotic love, the actor's kinesics would have implied peacefulness and restraint. For example, his facial gestures would have been serene –not tense and erratic like

[151] Covarrubias, s.v. benigno, fols.90^{v}-91^{r}.
[152] Pinciano, p. 528.
[153] Carducho, p. 398.

Segismundo's. Consequently, the moderated and declamatory-oriented gesturing entails that the player probably followed the *espiritual*/*estatorio* technique during Basilio's presentation –a style that the 2000 and 2012 CNTC productions will modify by adding stage action to the King's dialogue (as is studied in Chapters III and IV).

II.2. Father and son's encounter: Basilio's *desdén*

The value of hand gesturing in Golden Age acting is also exemplified during Basilio and Segismundo's first encounter. After the son confesses to Criado's defenestration, the father questions him:

> ¿Con qué amor llegar podré
> a darte agora mis *brazos*,
> si de tus sangrientos *lazos*,
> que están enseñados sé
> a dar muerte?
> […]
> Yo así, que en tus *brazos* miro
> desta muerte el instrumento
> y miro el lugar sangriento,
> de tus *brazos* me retiro.
> Y aunque en amorosos *lazos*
> ceñir tu cuello pensé,
> sin ellos me volveré,
> que tengo miedo a tus *brazos*. [fols.11^{r-v}]

The reiteration of 'brazos' (and its rhyming with 'lazos') is a textual cue for the player to employ the arms to convey this scene's meaning, as 'la representación [estaba en] estrecha armonía con el contenido y el tono' of the dramas.[154] The tone of this dialogue is based on one of the play's main thematic oppositions, established by Basilio during his presentation. There, the King sympathetically opened his arms to Astolfo and Estrella. Here, in contrast,

[154] Díez, p. 121.

his arms cease to imply such benevolence and, instead, are used to show its antipode: disdain towards Segismundo.

Disdain is verbally introduced when Basilio questions his intention to embrace Segismundo, as he hoped when meeting his son. The father refrains from this deed of love because his son's arms have turned into 'sobervios lazos' by killing Criado. Although a murder took place, Basilio's words and behaviour are unfair as it is precisely the Prince to whom the King most owes the sympathetic and forgiving embrace of his 'brazos' –the defenestration being another consequence of the deprivation of fatherly love.

Behind the contrast between the sympathetic and antipathetic use of Basilio's arms is his hamartia. His flaw is related to his unequal treatment of the two political leaders of the play. The King's fall is intrinsically connected to the injustice committed by him against Segismundo and his favouring of Astolfo. Consequently, the actor would have gesturally illustrated this favouritism –a basic element of the plot structure –by embracing Basilio's nephew (then) and refraining from doing so with his son (now).

As a kinetic complement of disdain, at the beginning of the King's question, the player's paralinguistic features would have been soft and slow. He could have opened the arms in the same 'amor[osa]' way as he previously did with Astolfo and Estrella and presented them to Segismundo. With this, he would have built –vocally and gesturally– a performative "premise" for a contrast to come. He would also have portrayed this movement when, lines later, he describes his own arms as 'amorosos lazos'. However, to underscore his contempt towards Segismundo, Basilio-*comediante* would have dramatically pulled his loving arms away from his son, while disdainfully pronouncing: 'de tus brazos me retiro' and 'sin ellos me volveré'.

The father also establishes an ontological opposition between the nature of his 'brazos' and that of his son's: Basilio's arms are oriented towards love –they are 'amorosos lazos'– and Segismundo's are prone to induce death –they are 'el instrumento' 'desta muerte'. The actor might have illustrated the negativity of Segismundo's 'sangriento[s]' limbs by parodically imitating their frenzy: moving them up and down, for example. However, in a second moment, he would have contrasted this mimicry by rapidly transitioning to the amorousness of his own arms –'retira[ndo]' the first parodic action of his son and supplanting it with the decorous kinesics appropriate to his character. This expression would have been one of 'ceñir' (opening both offering arms), identical to that shown towards the 'sobrinos' before. As in Segismundo's case, Basilio's performance of contrasting feelings and the variation of arm movement in a few lines would have been valued by the audience as 'cuanto más variados eran los sentimientos expresados y más rápido el cambio de uno a otro, más aclamado era el representante'.[155]

Although these swift changes would have been conceived through physicality, there is a moral intention behind them –hence, an implied subservience to the performance's linguistic aspect. The parody of Segismundo's brutal *brazos* by the father is a way to warn his son against his chaotic behaviour; the contrasting show of his own loving gestures (as he presents his verbal admonishment) represents the ethical way to act. Due to this mixture of corporeality, pedagogy, and declamation, the acting here can be catalogued as a combination of *corporal* and *espiritual*, or *mixto*, techniques.

[155] Martín, p. 766.

The scene develops as a heated discussion between both protagonists. At the end, the father erupts indignantly against his son:

> **Bárbaro** eres y **atrevido**.
> Cumplió su palabra el cielo;
> y así, para él mismo apelo.
> ¡**Soberbio**, **desvanecido**!
> *Y mira lo que te advierto:*
> *que seas humilde y blando,*
> *porque quizá estás soñando,*
> *aunque ves que estás despierto*. [fol.11ᵛ]

Basilio's aggressive interjections demonstrate that he has come closer to unreasonableness in his dramatic degradation (while Segismundo evolves towards his courteous education). A particular performance can be inferred from such decadent outbursts –which are opposed to the prudence previously displayed. In terms of paralinguistic features, the speech can be divided between: (1) the use of a blaring tone and raised vocal range to mark the King's emotional paroxysms (in bold) and (2) the employment of a more restricted voice to convey his pedagogic dictum (in italics).

Basilio's initial frenzy would have also been established through the actor's use of space:

> it was also Antonio de Prado the *autor*, the director of the troupe, who played the King who hovers in the wings like a solicitous director, instructing Clotaldo and the court as to their next move, erupting indignantly from time to time to remonstrate with the principal player [Segismundo] when he gets out of hand. As he played the King, Prado was recreating in similar terms the relationship he bore to the individuals who were on stage acting in Calderón's play, that of the director to his cast.[156]

La vida es sueño can be summarized as a struggle between two temperamental beings (and *comediantes*), who behave and evolve in opposite directions (and perform using different styles). During the Palace scene, the higher ranked individual (King/*autor*) shows his

[156] Paterson, p. 169.

indignation against his subordinate (Prince/principal player) because he ignores his (acting) rules. The tone of this speech exemplifies such antagonism: it is not a polite dialogue, but a passionate clash between both rivals on their contrasting dramatic (and performative) paths. Hence, it possesses a considerable degree of emotional (and histrionic) power.

An (acting) instruction from the director/father to the protagonist/son is embodied in his warning to be 'humilde y blando'. Basilio directs Segismundo to behave wisely –or to change his acting technique to a more spiritually-oriented one–, for him to become a worthy player for another role: heir to the throne. These performative/behavioural solicitations would have eventually been followed by the *comediante* when the post-anagnorisis Segismundo decides that he is morally fit to stage the part of the Christian Prince. As has been shown, Basilio's called-for 'humil[dad]' would have been portrayed by the player-Segismundo during his exemplary dénouement –through prudent kinesics (e.g., the lowering of the head) and calmed vebal tempo. Likewise, the demanded 'bland[ura]' is related to the docile and measured stage business of the enlightened Prince at the end.

Paradoxically, the other *representante* would have gradually stopped performing these virtues as Basilio degrades spiritually. The statuesque posture previously shown would have degenerated into a less affable bearing: for example, pacing up and down the stage (as a strict and unsatisfied *autor*), while scolding Segismundo. Due to such mixture of physicality (drifting around the *tablado*) and pedagogy (trying to educate his son), his acting can be catalogued as *espiritual/corporal* or *mixto*.

Basilio's indignation would have acquired an onstage presentation similar to Pinciano's description of 'cuando abominamos de algo' or 'desdén':

> las manos se ayuntan algunas veces para ciertos affectos, porque, cuando abominamos de alguna cosa, ponemos en la palma de la mano siniestra la

> parte contraria (que dicen empeine) de la diestra y las apartamos con desdén.[157]

Again, Pinciano stresses the fundamental role played by the hands in the characterisation of dramatic roles. As the 'affet[o]' experienced by Basilio here is one of abomination towards Segismundo, the sudden outburst of the disdainful adjectives 'bárbaro' and 'atrevido' could have been accompanied by the placing of the outside of the *comediante*'s right hand on the palm of the left hand and, then, swiftly removing it. Compared to the judicious arm movement of the benevolent King, this expression would have connoted that the character's passions –rather than his intellect– direct his actions now. The acting transformation implied in the assumption of a new passionate phase of Basilio's personification exemplifies that 'el modo característico de representar era efectivamente en extremo dramático: los comediantes solicitaban la "admiración afectiva más que cerebral"'.[158]

However, along with the words in italics, a moment in this dialogue re-establishes Basilio's moral and 'cerebral' behaviour –forcing the staging to assume a *mixto* or *corporal/espiritual* appearance. As he bursts against the Prince, the King invokes the sky: 'al cielo, ingrato, plugiera…' [fol.11^{v}]. The gestures entailed by such appeal would have probably been a pointing finger or folded hands and a pious glance at the heavens; the range of his voice being more restricted than before. These expressions would have reinstated a sense of spirituality, pedagogical intentions, and moral restraint from a character that exhibits intermittent displays of anger and mixed declamation. The following chapters study how Basilio's liminal state is toned-down (in the 1996 production) or acquires violent emphsasis (in the 2000 and 2012 versions).

[157] Pinciano, p. 528.
[158] Ruano, *La puesta…*, p. 515.

II.3. The 'teatro funesto' speech: Basilio's *temor* and *reprehensión*

Basilio's disdain for Segismundo prefigures the last stage of his downfall: the realisation that his son leads the *vulgo* against him. The King –now the subject of unreasonableness– recites:

> ¿Quién, Astolfo, podrá parar prudente,
> la furia de un caballo desbocado?
> ¿Quién detener de un río la corriente
> que al mar desciende cristal helado?
> ¿Quién un peñasco suspender, valiente,
> de la cima de un monte, desatado?
> Pues todo al arte o al valor se debe,
> un vulgo no, que a su señor se atreve.
> Dígalo en bandos el rumor partido,
> cuando se oye sonando en el profundo
> de los montes el eco repetido,
> unos "¡Astolfo!" y otros "¡Segismundo!"
> El dosel de la jura reducido
> a segunda intención, a honor segundo,
> teatro funesto es, donde importuna,
> tragedias representa la fortuna. [fol.17^{r}]

The first question includes the word 'prudente', entailing that neither Basilio nor Astolfo possess this merit to stop Segismundo's rebels. If prudence was a virtue enjoyed by Basilio initially, in this direst moment of the play (when he faces a force superior to wild horses), it is lost. Likewise, the second question suggests that the enemy possesses the bellicose determination that those in the Palace lack: it is as unstoppable as a river running towards the sea. The third reinforces the loss of another kingly quality: Basilio and Astolfo want the 'val[entía]' to control the landslide-like powers of the mob. Paradoxically, in war, prudence, determinacy, and bravery are the most appreciated political values expected from a King and his captain –a fact that determines their hamartia.

How did the *comediante*-Basilio perform the absence of these virtues? The mention of *prudencia* and *valentía* represent a counterintuitive gestural cue: the actor would have tried

to imprint their opposite with his stage action. The antonym of these nouns is 'temor' –a model in Carducho's *Diálogos*:

> las acciones del temor, trepidas, sin defensa, pronta, descolorido, que buelve las espaldas, debiles posturas de piernas, brazos, y cabeza, bolviendola a una parte, y los ojos (abiertos) a otra, con los hombros algo encogidos.[159]

As he recited this speech, the *comediante* needed to depict Basilio's anguish towards 'el vulgo, despeñado y ciego' [fol.17^{r}]. Thus, his linguistic expression would have followed the vocalization of 'ciertos comediantes [que] al representar [lo hacen] a grito pelado y entre aspavientos y *aydemíes* aquellos horrores catastróficos'.[160] 'Grito[s] pelado[s]' would have conveyed Basilio's emotional reaction to the imminent catastrophe of being defeated. Also, the three questions would have been uttered with 'aspavientos': the *representante* nervously asking a new '¿Quien…?' and instantly cutting off any potential response from the previous one.

Carducho's depiction of the actions of *temor* as 'trepidas' and 'pronta[s]' implies a quick, trembling movement. This kinetic acceleration would have been expressed by the *comediante* by running around the stage –as if trying to escape the adverse circumstances. This jitteriness suggests that the technique would have been *corporal* /*motorio* –the physicality ceasing to be subservient to the declamation and, instead, portraying the speech's sub-text: fear (cf., fig. 4).

During the first question, the actor probably faced Astolfo initially. However, during the second and third, he would have 'buel[to] las espaldas' to him and his audience, drawing an increasingly startled individual. As his whole world crumbles before his eyes, he would

[159] Carducho, p. 407.
[160] Enrique Funes, *La declamación sevillana* (Sevilla: Tipografía de Díaz y Carballo, 1894), p. 295.

have turned away from every reminder of his adverse circumstances or shielded himself against the cataclysm. Consequently, the *farsante* would have assumed the 'encogid[o]' posture of someone wanting to hide away in fear.

The horror besetting Poland makes the King so impatient that he answers his own questions: 'Pues…' This line is an acceptance that there is no 'valor' nor 'arte' in the whole Kingdom to stop the *vulgo*. Therefore, along with fear and impatience, a feeling expressed by the *comediante* would have been embarrassment –of not being able to fulfil his duty as King and protect his Kingdom. He would have conveyed such emotion with the constancy of a bowed head (as mentioned earlier), contributing to the general shrunken bearing of his body.

Next, Basilio alludes to the 'atrev[imineto]' of the 'vulgo' against 'su señor'. The surrealness of such bravado (stemming from inferior vassals towards a divinely-sanctioned Monarch) increases his fear. The *comediante* could have portrayed this with, for example, a posture 'con los hombros algo encogidos' –as if withdrawing from the rebellion and showing his very human frailty.

Basilio's description of the ghastly sounds made by both armies could have been interpreted by the player 'bolviendola [la cabeza] a una parte, y los ojos (abiertos) a otra'. The head and eye movement would have complemented the King's allusion to the sound of the echo vibrating in one part of the stage and then repeating itself in another. This gesturally-drawn opposition in the stage-space would have also traced the hypothetical location of the two opposing armies in the "battlefield" for the audience: from one side, Basilio's soldiers march; from the other, Segismundo's men approach.

He might have nervously faced 'a una parte' when he recited: 'unos "¡Astolfo!"'. Then, he could have glanced 'a otra' while pronouncing: 'y otros "¡Segismundo!"'. The

speed of the movement (and of his recitation) would have denoted the anxiety of someone both unnerved by every new and mysterious 'rumor' and surrounded by all sides. Actions such as this –tracing the position of imaginary elements on the stage-space– 'parece[n] apoyar una suerte de hiperactuación en voz y gestos, por las condiciones materiales en que debía desenvolverse la representación'.[161] Acting affectedness was linked to Golden Age theatre's physical reality: it represented the main resource to "fill-out" the empty *corral* and supply it with spatio-temporal coordinates.

Additionally, the actor would have transmitted Basilio's *temor* through the weakness of his limbs –materialised in, for example, an inability to stand up or walk straight. Such feebleness would have been more ostensibly portrayed in the last four lines, as they epitomise one of the most vertiginous and apocalyptic scenarios of the play. They mark the character's realisation that he is but an actor trapped inside a baleful stage, condemned to a destiny of performing only tragedies. As he recited this metatheatrical abomination, the actor's legs and arms would have shown the dismay of someone seized by the greatest horror of all: discovering that he is a fictional character and a puppet of fortune. He might have pretended to faint, for instance.

Carducho also alludes to the paleness of the *temeroso*. The change in skin colour was a convention greatly appreciated in Golden Age theatre. A classic example is the actress María Riquelme who 'si algún caso infausto o desdichado, luego se ponía pálida'.[162] As La Riquelme, in this scene, the player would have become pale to portray misfortune and a hapless state. Another specific aspect of the acting is that 'el miedo y la desesperación

[161] Díez, p. 121.
[162] Joseph Pellicer quoted by Oehrlein, p. 176.

también se mostraban soltándose los cabellos en los corrales españoles'.[163] If the *comediante* had appeared with loose and disarrayed hair, the audience would have understood that the King was in a condition of extreme desperation.

Shaking, a shrunken and withdrawn posture, jitteriness, weakened limbs, pale face, and *even* loose and disarrayed hair were all physical resources available to the *comediante* to denote Basilio's fear. Due to such emphaisis on corporeality, he would have illustrated a piece of advice similar to Juan de Zavaleta's: 'repare si las acciones son las que piden las palabras, y le servirán de más palabras las acciones. Mire si los que representan ayudan con los ojos lo que dicen, que si lo hacen le llevarán los ojos'.[164] The few words of this scene (as opposed to Basilio's presentation) and their powerful imagery call for the histrionic actions of the *temeroso*. This, in order to 'lleva[r] [a] los ojos' of the spectators (rather than to their ears, as before) the extreme despair felt during Basilio's defeat. Hence, the visually-vigorous kinesics of this moment can be catalogued as *corporal*/*motorio* –as 'las acciones' 'servir[ían] más [que las] palabras'.

Another example of this physicalised interpretation comes after Basilio hears Estrella's and Rosaura's account of the bloodshed being shed over the fields of Poland. The King answers:

> ¡Que poco medio tiene lo infalible,
> o cuánto riesgo lo esperado tiene!
> Si ha de ser, la defensa es imposible,
> que quien la escusa más, más la previene.
> ¡Dura ley! ¡Fuerte caso! ¡Horror terrible!
> Quien huye el daño, al daño viene.
> Yo mismo, yo, mi muerte he prevenido;
> mi mortaja tejí, gusano he sido. [fol.17^{r}]

[163] Ruano, *La puesta*…, p. 528.
[164] Juan de Zabaleta, *El día de fiesta en Madrid y sucesos que en él pasan* (1659), ed. by Enrique Suárez Figaredo, *Lemir*, 20 (2016), 145-344 (p. 269).

This moment corresponds to Basilio's anagnorisis. The King realises that it was his 'hu[ída]' of 'el daño' that, paradoxically, brought him his 'daño'. The consequence of the imprisonment of his infant son (first 'daño') is the revenge of his adult persona (second 'daño'), making his downfall 'infalible'. At the same time, he acknowledges that the defense of his Kingdom is impossible –a fact that would have inspired the *comediante* to portray anguish with, for example, a weakened posture of his lower limbs. On a thematic level, the reference to the 'gusano' reveals that Basilio's lexicon is now related to the *cuerpo* side of the *díada*.

A model fitted for such acknowledgement is: 'cuando reprehendemos a nostros mismos de alguna cosa que habemos hecho, la mano hueca aplicamos al pecho'.[165] As in Segismundo's case, Basilio's recognition implies an instance of self-blame. Hence, every time that the King repeated the personal pronouns of this speech –a sign of the censure against his own actions–, the actor would have performed the codified kinesics denoting reprehension: 'yo', 'yo mismo', and 'mi' would have been accompanied by the *comediante*'s '[a]hueca[da]' hand, slamming against his chest. The same gesture, conveying a self-directed condemnation, would have accompanied the King's persuasion that the whole conflict was caused by '*nuestro* error, *nuestra* ignorancia…' [fol.21v].

Overall, thanks to the histrionic performance of Basilio's last scenes, the *comediante* would have probably 'cons[e]gui[do] más admiración […] haciendo que hablando'.[166] This is because, in early modern theatre, 'un actor e[ra] capaz de captar la atención del auditorio con

[165] Pinciano, p. 528.
[166] Alcázar, p. 336.

sólo hacer uso de la expresión corporal'.[167] The *corporal*/*motorio* technique performed at the end of the King's dramatic degradation would have required great physical dexterity from a player who would have been old. The captivated audience would have applauded his capacity to gradually transform himself –despite the physical limitations of his age– into an affected figure as his character's unreasonableness gradually conquers his behaviour. The following chapters deal with the ways in which Basilio's actions and dramatic pathway are presented more or less corporeally by the three CNTC performances.

Conclusion: from early modern to contemporary acting

Segismundo's and Basilio's characterisation and conflicts depend on their relation to *La vida es sueño*'s thematic axis of passion-reason or *cuerpo-espíritu*, an aspect which would have been presented through the acting. Consequently, there are two opposite dramatic and performative pathways: one followed by the Prince and the other by the King. The son starts behaving like an instinctive animal and eventually becomes a Christian heir (evolving from body to soul). The father is a prudent and wise King who ends up defeated and as a frightened and self-reprehensible individual (degrading from soul to body).

Regarding the staging, for the first part of the play, the *comediante*-Segismundo would have performed with gestures which underscored physicality and movement rather than declamation. After the Prince's anagnorisis, his acting resources would have acquired more statism –highlighting the moral of the message. In contrast, the *representante*-Basilio would have started his interpretation with a grave and statuesque posture –underscoring the linguistic content. However, during the last *jornada*, he would have assumed a more

[167] Martín, p. 772.

corporeal expression –the body assuming higher or equal importance in the meaning-making than the words.

Due to the Prince's evolution from instincts to morality, there would have been three general acting techniques followed in three different stages of his conflict: (1) the *corporal*/*motorio* (hamartia); (2) the *corporal/espiritual* or *mixto* (anagnorisis); and (3) the *espiritual* /*estatorio* (dénouement). As the King degrades from reason to unreason, three performative styles would have been portrayed by the *representante*: (1) the *espiritual* /*estatorio* (presentation); (2) the *corporal/espiritual* or *mixto* (hamartia); and (3) the *corporal* /*motorio* (anagnorisis/dénouement). Along with these general techniques, there would have been more specific (and conventional) ways to personify the actors' roles. The combination of Carducho's pictorial models, Pinciano's descriptions of gesturing, and contemporary criticism of Golden Age theatre represents a holistic and detailed approach to hypothesise on the première of *La vida es sueño* –and could be used to analyse other *comedias*.

If both the general and the particular procedures are combined, the following scheme appears. For the *corporal*/*motorio* technique, models similar to the following would have been portrayed: the *salvaje*, the individual with *costumbres pésimas*, the *colérico*, the *indignado* with *ira* and *furia*, the *apassionado*, somone possessed with *temor*, and the one that uses *reprehensión* against himself. Regarding the in-between of the *corporal* and *espiritual* or *mixto* style, the protagonists' characterisation would have entailed: the *desapassionado*, the *melancólico*, and the individual possessed with *desdén*. Finally, for the *espiritual*/*estatorio*, the figures presented would have been: the *prudencia*, the *humildad*, the *vergüenza*, the *gravedad*, and the *magestad.*

From the ideas discussed in this chapter, I wish to highlight five findings which contribute both to our understanding of *La vida es sueño* and to the theory of early modern

acting. (1) The different stages of the play's conflict are intrinsically related to the gestures interpreted by the *comediantes*. In particular, the hand and arm gestures and the kneeling posture are fundamental to recognise the characters' evolution or degradation. (2) As a consequence of this, one of the most recurrent tools to convey dramatic meaning by early modern actors is most likely to have been hand and arm movement. (3) Variation in acting was highly appreciated during Calderón's time –Segismundo's success on the *tablados* may be due to the fact that his characterisation entails such protean performance. (4) It seems that conventionality –rather than naturalism or verism– would have been the criterion followed when representing dramatic roles. (5) Due to such fixed nature, the dogmatic arts of rhetoric and oratory would have been fundamental to develop the different stage behaviour of the *comediantes*.

Calderón's play and its performance seem to be distinguished by an equilibrium between two drives: a physical and action-oriented one and a cerebral and declamation-centred one. The following chapters show how these two poles of characterisation are implicitly overemphasised or minimised, depending on their adaptation into the theatrical language and the ideological objectives of each CNTC production. This link between two cultural horizons is based on the fact that the distinction between a physical and a declamatory style is also present in the 20th and 21st-century stage. Therefore, two hypothetical types of performances can be suggested depending on the intention to highlight one of the two sides of *La vida es sueño* thematic *díada*: (a) the passion/body one or (b) the reason/spirit one.

A production that explores (a) is more likely to centre on the character of Segismundo, underscoring his animalised and instinctive hamartia, and toning down or discarding his moral and rational anagnorisis. Consequently, three scenes acquire particular relevance:

Criado 2's defenestration, Rosaura's attempted rape, and Soldado 1's punishment. On the other hand, the figure of Basilio tends to be overshadowed by that of his son or at least to be interpreted in a similar way to him: that is, in a more corporeal fashion than that entailed in the play-text (especially at the beginning).

In this kind of stagings, the textual implications of a *corporal*/*motorio* technique are performed faithfully –or, sometimes, hyperbolically– to the way in which they would have been portrayed in the première (e.g., Segismundo's animal and volcano lines or the 'teatro funesto' scene). At the same time, the parts concerning the *espiritual*/*estatorio* style are overlooked or modified –through unscripted, extra-textual, gestural, or blocking additions–, to present a less stable, statuesque, and/or declamatory stage business (e.g., Basilio's first intervention –which seems boring to the contemporary audiences). One of the key consequences of these adaptations is that they underscore the most problematic aspect of *La vida es sueño*: violence. Cruelty is the paradigmatic theme questioned in physical –and wet– productions. The third chapter deals with a version that includes such features: Bieito's performance in 2000.

In contrast, the textual aspects implying an *espiritual*/*estatorio* performance are likely to be respected in (b): more aesthetically and politically conservative adaptations. The central motif of such works is Segismundo's moral change and Basilio's final redemption. Hence, the characters' "monstrous" emotions –as conveyed by the *comediantes*' physically emphatic gesturing, stage movement, and/or piercing vocal tone– are downgraded to portray cerebral, rational, or psychologically-oriented individuals. Scenes such as Segismundo's anagnorisis acquire a dramatic and canonic relevance not entirely justified by the text (specially in the *suelta*) –which favours an ambiguous reading of the Prince's moral awakening, for example.

In these rather dry productions, the declamatory aspects and the "correct" reciting of the verse have the artistic weight that more avant-garde adaptations place on modernising both the words of the text and the paralinguistic features accompanying them. Other issues of the staging –such as the décor, the music, and the costumes– take over semiotic functions that were "originally" fulfilled by the early modern actor: the establishment of spatial, temporal, or psychological differences through gesturing on the bare *corral*, for instance. Chapter IV deals with Pimenta's 2012 production –a version that epitomises this kind of performance.

In the following chapter, I centre on a staging that initially can be catalogued as fundamentalist or dry: García Valdés' 1996 adaptation. This is because it downgrades Segismundo's physical violence by interpreting his conflict as psychologically driven. However, its open, non-conformist interpretation of the Prince's dénouement –by showing the corporeal signs of his derangement at the very end– places this production somewhere in-between conservativism and experimentalism. Thus, it revitalises *La vida es sueño*'s *cuerpo-alma* dichotomy in the most important contemporary company of Spanish classical theatre, almost four hundred years after the play's première.

Chapter II: Psychological Realism in *La vida es sueño*:
García Valdés' CNTC 1996 Production

Introduction: Psychological realism

Ariel García Valdés' *La vida es sueño* premièred at the Hospital de San Juan, Almagro on 18 July 1996.[168] It was the first time that Calderón's masterpiece had been staged by the CNTC since its creation in 1986. However, there already existed a performative tradition which set a stylistic pattern for interpretations of this play –and García Valdés' piece would be greatly influenced by it.

The sanctioned method was 'el lento ensimismamiento practicado en los últimos tiempos, […] la pretensión de interiorizar la acción, de hacer de *La vida es sueño* un pretexto para el realismo psicologista'.[169] The 'ensimismamiento' and 'interioriza[ción]' –two of the main features of this production– are conveyed through the actions of Pedro Mari Sánchez's Segismundo and Hector Colomé's Basilio. In the crafting of characterisation and conflict, the actors, 'el director y adaptador actuales parecen haber cedido cierta tensión dramática por una mayor profundización psicológica'.[170]

García Valdés' concentration on characters' psychology represents a reworking of the theatrical language of the early modern première. The tension of the "original" –linked to acting variation– is supplanted by 'psychology' which 'aims to discover universal laws of human thinking, feeling, and behaviour […]. [P]sychology's ultimate goal is to come to an

[168] *La vida es sueño*, Compañía Nacional de Teatro Clásico, dir. by Ariel García Valdés, Hospital de San Juan, 1996 (Archive video, Centro de Documentación Teatral): <http://teatroclasico.mcu.es/2010/08/27/la-vida-es-sueno-1996/> [Accessed 8/06/2019].
[169] Felipe B. Pedraza Jiménez, 'Tres espectáculos calderonianos en la CNTC', *Cuadernos de Teatro Clásico*, 15 (2000), 27-52 (p. 32).
[170] Fischer, 'Del texto…', pp. 219-220.

adequate understanding of how human psyche works in general'.[171] The objective of this chapter is to describe and analyse Segismundo's and Basilio's characterisation and dramatic conflict in terms of their thoughts, feelings, and behaviour. How do Mari Sánchez and Colomé employ their paralinguistic features, gestures, and use of space to convey the protagonists' psyches?[172]

This approach can be narrowed down by considering that the director noted that, with his *La vida es sueño*, 'estamos ante una obra de sangre, de sexo, de equivocaciones, de poder, de locura, de obstinación… De concreción y no de abstracción'.[173] Going hand-in-hand with the *ensimismamiento* and internalisation, 'equivocaciones', 'locura', and 'obstinación' illustrate the type of psychological symptoms presented by the actors to determine the different stages of the protagonists' plot-arc –a role fulfilled by corporeality and spirituality in the première. The negativity entailed in these traits exemplify how 'the tendency to psychologize early modern heroines [and heroes] often leads, in contemporary emotional-realist stagings, to psychopathologizing'.[174] In this emotional-realist staging of Calderón, psychopathology is the main trait that distinguishes these (anti)heroes from the other Segismundos and Basilios examined throughout this study. While the son's journey is

[171] Jeroen Lauwers, Hedwig Schwall, and Jan Opsomer, 'Introduction: Psychology and the Classics', in *Psychology and the Classics: A Dialogue of Disciplines*, ed. by Jeroen Lauwers, Hedwig Schwall, and Jan Opsomer (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2018), 1-10 (p. 4).

[172] The use of psychological realism –pioneered by Konstantin Stanislavsky– as methodological tool is justified due to this version's 'énfasis en la dramatización de la extraordinaria experiencia de Segismundo [y Basilio] […] [que] podía expresarse recurriendo al proceso del actor capacitado y sumergido en el método de Stanislavsky': Fischer, 'Del texto…', p. 228.

[173] Rosana Torres, 'Ariel García Valdés dirige en Almagro "La vida es sueño"', *El País*, 16 July 1996: <https://elpais.com/diario/1996/07/17/cultura/837554409_850215.html > [Accessed 10/11/2020].

[174] Roberta Barker, Kim Solga, and Cary Mazer, ''Tis Pity She's a Realist: A Conversational Case Study in Realism and Early Modern Theater Today', *Shakespeare Bulletin*, 31 (2013), 571-597 (p. 589). In this chapter, the study of Shakespeare is adapted to analyse Calderón, in response to the limitations of the critical vocabulary of the *comedia* in performance, as opposed to the richness of its Elizabethan analogue.

interpreted as a therapeutic process to cure psychic disarray, the father's degradation is understood as a (tragic) fall into madness.

The internal disturbances suffered by the Prince and the King have evident external correlatives in the performance, as this theatrical language's 'approach to character and physical actions look[s] less at movement per se but rather for the psychological motivation for movement'.[175] Therefore, the actors' stage business can be read as triggered by the characters' interiority.[176] Segismundo's and Basilio's psychopathologies justify Mari Sánchez's and Colomé's actions onstage. If this style centres on the 'étude psychologique et physiologique des personnages', my intention is to show how the 'physiologique' works in the service of the 'psychologique'.[177] An analysis of the actors' performance of their roles' psyche is a first in *comedia* in studies.[178]

Furthermore, the director's allusion to his production's 'concreción', rather than 'abstracción', is connected to the attributes of naturalism/realism. His mise-en-scène illustrates that 'the term naturalistic in drama usually has a broader application, denoting a very detailed illusion of real life on the stage'.[179] García Valdés imprints Calderón's

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[175] Paul Allain and Jen Harvie, *The Routledge Companion to Theatre and Performance* (London: Routledge, 2014), p. 209.

[176] I agree that 'the term "interiority" is ambiguous. Here it refers to inner psychological phenomena and the processes of thought which they bring about in a character': Douglas M. Carey, 'Asides and Interiority in "Lazarillo de Tormes". A Study in Psychological Realism', *Studies in Philology*, 66 (1969) 119-134 (p. 119).

[177] Émile Zola, *Le naturalisme au théâtre: les théories et les exemples* (Project Gutenberg: EBook #13866): <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/13866/13866-h/13866-h.htm> [Accessed 27/12/2020]. In other words, I look at the 'character's "psychological gesture." Such a body movement asks an actor to make kinaesthetically manifest a character's psychological state, although the gesture itself may not mean anything in particular': Vidler, p. 57.

[178] *Comedia* researchers have mostly disregarded psychological realism as a method to analyse performances with realistic and naturalistic styles. To ascertain how this theory/technique has been fruitfully applied by previous scholars and/or practitioners, one needs to refer to studies in Shakespearean criticism or in less conservative and more innovative areas of knowledge such as film studies. See, for example: Julia A. Walker, 'The birth of the "cool": Marlon Brando and the afro-aesthetics of psychological-realist acting', *Studies In Theatre And Performance,* 41 (2021), 111-131.

[179] Baldick, s.v. naturalism, p. 221.

philosophical postulates (such as the *cuerpo*/*alma* binary) with life-like touches precisely through his minute focus on psychological features. Consequently, Mari Sánchez's and Colomé's acting 'emphasizes psychological analysis of the character's thoughts, feelings and intentions to evoke naturalistic performance'.[180] A contrast is established between this method –which aims for spontaneity and naturalness– and the première's dependency on conventionality and rhetoric.

Following the method of thick description, I have selected the three scenes most representative of each actors' presentation of psychological motivation, highlighting their relevance with respect to their characters' dramatic pathway, and their relation to the text and the early modern and contemporary performances. The chapter is structured thus: Part One concerns Mari Sánchez-Segismundo's display of psychopathology and of his eventual (though ambiguous) therapeutic healing. Part Two centres on Colomé's interpretation of Basilio's psychological strength and subsequent mental degradation. The conclusion discusses this production's relation to the fundamentalist/reformist and dry/wet approaches to contemporary performance.

Before beginning the analysis, the formal aspects of this production need to be introduced. The first element with which the audience is confronted is the 'sobria e imponente escenografía de Jean Pierre Vergier'.[181] The stage is a long, empty plateau that invites the actors to "fill it out" with their movement –as in the *corral*. It represents 'para el actor un

[180] Richard Walsh-Bowers, 'A Theatre Acting Perspective on the Dramaturgical Metaphor and the Postmodern Self', *Theory and Psychology*, 16 (2006), 661-690 (p. 667).
[181] Nieto.

ambiente escénico que en vez de estorbar, ayud[a] su complejo trabajo artístico'.[182] The minimalistic décor consists of a throne, a cauldron, and two background walls, which assist the players in conveying the conflict.

These resources also 'se complementan para recrear […] una óptica onírica'.[183] This atmosphere and the constant allusions to *el sueño* contribute to the pre-eminence of psychology as the thematic and tonal sub-text. This is facilitated because, in contemporary culture, ideas about dreams (and their meaning) are associated with the theories of Sigmund Freud, modern psychology, and therapeutic psychoanalysis.[184]

Juan Gómez-Cornejo's lighting design also serves the oneiric motif. The stage's chiaroscuro creates the mysterious ambience of a dream. It also symbolises the obscurity stemming from within the characters, fulfilling a postulate of psychological realism's scenography: that 'la luz activa y dramática [y] el objeto material son los "instrumentos" para que la escena sirva a la acción dramática del actor'.[185]

However, the Palace scene contrasts with this atmospheric sobriety, as the stage is blindingly well-lit. This moment can be summarised as an experiment to almost scientifically observe Segismundo's behaviour by Basilio (who confesses: 'Quiero *examinar*…' [1102]). Hence, the penetrating white lights recall those of the clinical laboratories dedicated to the study of mental patients. The bright bleached robes (by Vergier) worn by the Palace's Criados

[182] Stanislavsky quoted by: Fabrizio Cruciani, *Arquitectura teatral*, trans. by Margherita Pavia (México: Gaceta, 2005), p. 175.
[183] Nieto.
[184] This was one of the points made –when referring to the modern reception of Segismundo's tragedy– by the director of the Festival de Teatro Clásico de Almagro, Ignacio García, in his masterclass for the 2020 *Dramafest/Dramazoom* festival: 'El teatro del Siglo de Oro en la escena contemporánea': See: <http://dramafestmx.com/master-classes/> [Accessed 14/12/2020].
[185] Cruciani, p. 174.

further support this reading: they evoke lab coats or nurse's gowns, contrasting with the grey clothing featured during the rest of the production.

Finally, Juan Carlos de Mulder and Daniel Carranza's music arrangement is also inspired by a nightmarish sombreness. A solitary minor chord sounds intermittently, projecting the idea of ominousness and, more functionally, to transition from one scene to another. With this brief contextualisation in mind, I focus now on the performances of Mari Sanchez and Colomé.

Part I: Mari Sánchez-Segismundo

I.1. The '¡Ay, mísero de mí!' speech: a *loco* Segismundo

The first line is recited from offstage by Segismundo: '¡Ay, mísero de mí! ¡Y ay, infelice!' [78]. His absence connotes that he is talking to himself, as if engaged in some internal conflict. Mari Sánchez's Prince is undergoing psychological realism's 'inner monologue', identified as 'streams of character consciousness, known in detail exclusively to the actor, [which] r[un] beneath the play's spoken language and c[an] be implied onstage only through gestures, tones, and glances'.[186]

With this lack of interlocutor, Mari Sánchez exhibits that his character's 'miser[able]' and infeli[z]' condition has no connection to the external environment (represented by what lies beyond the stage). Rather, it stems from his consciousness and is evident only to him –

[186] Roberta Barker, '"Deared by Being Lacked": The Realist Legacy and the Art of Failure in Shakespearean Performance', in *The Oxford Handbook of Shakespeare and Performance*, ed. by James C. Bulman (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 47-63, (p. 50).

portraying his characteristic *ensimismamiento*. Even before stepping onto the stage, the actor establishes the Prince's dramatic conflict as psychologically driven.

A fundamental feature to introduce such inwardness is the actor's 'ton[e]'. His *ayes* are recited quietly, with a high pitch, and a feminine timbre. These paralinguistic aspects contrast with those of Arestegui-Rosaura, who, in the previous lines, displayed 'la virilidad que rezuma la mujer'.[187] The opposition characterises Segismundo as 'un loco de voz aflautada' –rather than as a *salvaje*.[188] This voice is the first sign of the turmoil of Segismundo's psyche, as 'qualifiers like pitch height and intensity […] are taken to be indices of the speaker's emotional or psychological state'.[189] A high and intense pitch is generally a mark of someone whose mental condition is altered or deranged –i.e., a *loco*. This *locura* constitutes the Prince's hamartia, as it will lead him to his fall.

Segismundo walks onstage 'tras haber dicho en voz baja entre bastidores su famoso verso inaugural'.[190] As he slowly emerges from the darkness, he stares intensely into the feeble flame of a candlestick. This makes Segismundo further resemble an individual lost in the stream of his (sickened) consciousness, mesmerised by the light, and oblivious of the world beyond (a full theatre and/or Rosaura). The words and actions that follow can be interpreted as an externalisation of such isolationist reverie. Colomé-Basilio will also display his self-absorbed anima by interacting with the flame of a similar prop: the cauldron.

The starkness of the candlestick contrasts with the heavy chains used to convey brutality in the première. It also differs from those that Notario-Segismundo aggressively slams down in front of the first row in Bieito's mise-en-scène. The employment of the two

[187] Fischer, 'Del texto…', p. 214.
[188] Fischer, '*La vida…',* p. 110.
[189] Elam, p. 72.
[190] Fischer, 'Del texto…', p. 217.

different props establishes an opposition between the –psychological– fragility of Mari Sánchez's character and the –physical– strength of the Princes in both the "original" and 2000 adaptation.

The light from the candlestick helps delineate Rosaura's and Segismundo's shadows and projects them into a gloomy atmosphere. This feature possesses a symbolic function, as 'el proyectar así las imágenes hace que se intensifique visual y visceralmente *el conflicto dramático interior* de dos seres desamparados y solitarios que se encuentran a oscuras en una tenebrosa torre'.[191] The figurative treatment of shadows is ingrained in modern psychology:

> Jungian analysis […] classes as "shadows" all that which the subject refuses to recognize or admit and which dominates him or her […] in impulses. […] The shadow is also displayed in impulsive and unpremeditated words or actions which suddenly reveal an aspect of the psyche.[192]

Segismundo's shadow is a metaphoric correlative of the negative impulses that shape his subjectivity. He will only be able to recognise that a deranged psyche –a "shadowy" inner world– dominates his behaviour during his anagnorisis. Until then, he will act unpremeditatedly, displaying such intemperance through his verbal and gestural expression, and refusing to acknowledge it throughout the Palace scene. Hence, as with the candlestick, the shadow is a visual prologue for the speech that, in a few moments, will make such implicit strife verbally explicit (the full effect of these elements' symbolism comes retrospectively, after Segismundo's words). Additionally, this allegorical use of a shadow is similar to that presented in 2012 during Portillo's entrance, as both represent externalisations: the first of the Prince's (deranged) psyche; the second, of his (uncontrolled) emotion.

[191] Fischer, 'Del texto…', p. 217. Empahsis added.
[192] Jean Chevalier and Alain Gheerbrant, *A Dictionary of Symbols* (London: Penguin, 1996), s.v. shadow, p. 869.

The projected shadow also reveals that the Prince's hamartia is a manifestation from within, rather than from without (as in the première). His altered psychology –not his instinctive carnality– sets the conflict in motion. The disastrous consequence of the 'desampar[o]' and 'sol[edad]' of his psyche will be the Prince's second imprisonment and tragic fall. Psychopathology stands for what violent physicality and uncontrolled emotion will represent in the 2000 and 2012 versions respectively: Segismundo's fatal flaw.

Segismundo sits on the centre-front, puts the candlestick on the floor and, looking at the ceiling, softly and *aflautadamente* recites:

> *Apurar, cielos, pretendo,*
> *ya que me tratáis así,*
> que delito cometí
> contra vosotros * naciendo [102-106].

The actor focuses his gaze on the 'cielos' and only indirectly glances at the audience, following 'Stanislavskian notions of the fourth wall and the actor's "circle of attention", which are intended to create the sense of a closed "real" world onstage'.[193] Unlike the première's Segismundo –who would have fiercely fixed his stare on the spectators– and the 2000 interactive one, the 1996 Prince creates an imaginary barrier between on- and offstage. This delimitation reinforces the idea of a Segismundo who is lost in his inwardness and oblivious to external factors.

This solipsism illustrates one of the main traits of the 'adaptación de García Valdés con la CNTC, [en la cual] se partió de la idea de que Segismundo "está acostumbrado a hablar solo, así que lo hace de una manera distinta de los demás"'.[194] A typical way to represent a

[193] Barker, '"Deared…."', p. 56.
[194] Fischer, '*La vida*…', p. 110.

loco –someone without contact with the "real" world– is to portray him 'habla[ndo] solo', avoiding eye contact, and ostracised from his social milieu. These pathological features are conceived through the establishment of the fourth wall.

Furthermore, Mari Sánchez accompanies these words (and the rest of this speech) by uncontrollably moving his head from right to left and from up to down. Due to such agitation, these four lines can be divided into two kinetic segments. For the first two, the actor faces the right side of the ceiling (in italics above; fig. 5); then, he glances at the upper left, with the second two (underlined; fig. 6). At the same time, his arms and hands remain motionless, highlighting the fidgeting head (where neurosis is based). Mari Sánchez also unorthodoxly cuts the last line with a pause (asterisk above).

As with the high-pitched voice, Segismundo's corporal convulsions reveal his psychological strain, because, in psychological realism:

> unwanted background distortion, such as fidgeting […] are usually minimized or eliminated. So if such things are introduced into the performance, we take it that the actor is sending a purposeful message about (say) the anxiety levels of the character.[195]

There is a deliberate message behind the player's fidgeting body. Through it, he connotes that the Prince's anxiety levels are elevated and pathological. Mari Sánchez does not tone down these externalised distortions –even when the jitteriness entails, for example, the constant cutting of the conventional way in which the "sacred" Calderonian verse is recited (his agitation impeding verbal fluency).[196] Rather, they are stressed to convey Segismundo's

[195] Daren Tunstall, *Shakespeare and Gesture in Practice* (London: Palgrave, 2016), p. 124-125.
[196] This unconventional interpretation of the *octosílabos* was one of the main critiques of the production: the actors were 'gritando de prisa los hermosos versos de Calderón y rengloneando a placer con lo que la rima se impone al pensamiento, se oyen de cuando en cuando esos versos admirables que nuestros abuelos aficionados al teatro sabían de memoria': Lorenzo López Sancho, '"La vida es sueño": descafeinado Calderón en el Teatro de la Comedia', *ABC*, 10 December 1996, p. 88: <http://hemeroteca.abc.es/nav/Navigate.exe/hemeroteca/madrid/abc/1996/12/10/088.html> [Accessed 18/08/2019]. The relationship between acting and the canonic reciting of the verse is an important issue in the performance of the *comedia* (an issue that, due to the constraints of this work, will not be analysed). During

psychotic hamartia. The causes of such derangement can be traced in the text: the recognition of an unfair 'trat[o]' (by Clotaldo), first; and the acknowledgement of the 'delito' of being born (as a sentient being, not an animal), second. These negative circumstances produce an unease (within) that is manifested by shivering and stammering (without).

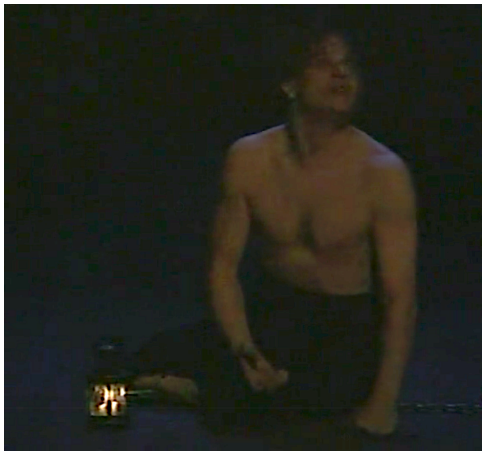



Fig. 5 and **fig. 6**. Segismundo's fidgeting head and stuttering are motivated by his psychological derangement.[197]

The same nervous spasms illustrate Mari Sánchez's performance of the 'ave', the 'bruto', the 'pez', and the 'arrollo/culebra' [123-153]. The particularity of this interpretation can be understood if it is compared with the première and the 2000 production: in both, Segismundo imitates the movement and violence of each animal with his body. As opposed to these representations based on mimicry, the 1996 actor goes through the verses concerning each *bruto* without displaying any specific physical reference to them –or their cruelty.

The acting features which stand out the most from this speech are those that *follow* the description of each animal. Mari Sánchez screams the repeated question '¿tengo menos

Ignacio García's aforementioned masterclass, two questions posed to him by acting students concerned the verse and its (lack of) importance in today's stages. García answered with a thought-provoking adaptation of Emiliano Zapata's famous revolutionary dictum ('la tierra para quien la trabaja'): 'el verso para quien lo trabaja'. In this sense, Mari Sánchez re-appropriates Calderón's 'verso' by 'trabaj[ándolo]' through psychological realism to show Segismundo's anxiety.

[197] The images of the three CNTC productions are screenshots of the video-recordings reproduced with the permission of the Centro de Documentación Teatral, Madrid, Spain.

libertad?' [132, 142, 152, and 162] with his *aflautada* voice, accompanying it with a sudden jolt of the arms. In contrast, the other lines – those concerning the *brutos*– are barely audible from the videorecording, the actor remaining almost static as he recites them. This lack of performative potency suggests that he is trying to minimise the animal (and corporeal) component from the presentation of Segismundo's conflict, censuring 'todo ángulo primitivo de su personalidad'.[198] Instead, his stage language emphasises the purely human facets of the speech: his desire for the very cultural concept of 'libertad'.

This reinterpretation reveals that 'el Segismundo que sale no es tanto un símbolo de la trágica condición existencial del ser humano, como un ser sumamente humano víctima de malos tratos'.[199] His conflict is not an ontological fight against the animal, primitive or corporeal side of the body-soul composite that is the individual (as conceived by early modern thought and Calderón). Rather, this Segismundo confronts an aspect 'sumamente humano' and contemporary: a traumatised psychology.

Segismundo's trauma –materialised in the piercing voice of a *loco,* his fidgeting head, and flailing arms– is the sequel to his lack of 'libertad' and Clotaldo's 'malos tratos'. As this Prince comes to symbolise victims of abuse, Mari Sánchez's motivation for his acting is the protagonist's violated psyche. Therefore, from now on, the Prince's evolution will take the shape of a therapeutic process to cure his very human and modern *locura* –mirroring the change from passion to reason in the première. By choosing such route for Segismundo's conflict, García Valdés underscores a notion already prompted by the play-text: that 'todo el

[198] Paciencia Ontañón, 'El sueño de Segismundo', in *400 años de Calderón*, coord. by Aurelio González (México: UNAM, 2001), 131-137 (p. 137).
[199] Fischer, 'Del texto…', p. 215.

proceso ha actuado en él como sesión terapéutica: ha podido hacer consciente su inconsciente'.[200]

These trauma-inducing 'malos tratos' are presented moments later. After Segismundo's first speech, Rosaura interacts with him. As she speaks, Mari Sánchez unconventionally lies on the floor –externalising once again the incongruity of the Prince's psyche and his unsociability, instead of displaying the aggressive corporeality of his 'membrudos brazos' [184]. Then, Clotaldo and the guardians appear. In contrast to the previously half-muted speech, Mari Sánchez is careful to make each syllable of his interjection audible in order to expose the provenance of his suffering: 'Este es Clotaldo, mi alcaide. | ¡Aún no acaban mis desdichas!' [282-283]. Segismundo's 'desdichas' are exhibited in the way these newly-arrived characters-actors treat him: 'resalt[a] así el violento trato que el prisionero y los intrusos reciben al salir Clotaldo (Juan Jose Otegui) apuntando una pistola y los soldados con las espadas desnudas'.[201]

As a response, Mari Sánchez presents a frightened madman by running around the stage. His character's internalised burden –implied by such uncontrolled movement– is further externalised through paralinguistic features. Attempting to spare Rosaura and Clarín from Clotaldo's abuse, Segismundo says:

> Primero, <u>tirano dueño</u>,
> que los ofendas y agravies,
> será mi vida despojo
> destos lazos miserables… [309-312]

[200] Ontañón, p. 135.
[201] Fischer, 'Del texto…', p. 218.

The verbal strength is gone, and the Prince's intonation grows lower and hesitant with 'tirano dueño'. This modification in his voice's inflection is a sign of his anguish when faced with those responsible for this tyrannical violence. Then, a confused Segismundo runs towards Clotaldo but is stopped by the soldiers, becoming the victim of their 'ofensas y agravi[os]'. Mari Sánchez lies on the floor and is forcibly dragged away from the stage by their 'lazos miserables'. With this abuse, he has been 'despoj[ado]' of his dignity –one of the most dehumanising and psychologically-harmful experiences that can be faced.

Overall, the consequence of a psychological treatment of Calderón's drama is an actualisation of the première's rigid and conventional conception of the Prince as, by means of psychological realism, 'el personaje adquiere […] rasgos físicos y psicológicos precisos, emanados del texto dramático, suplantando al sistema de roles o papeles fijos'.[202] Segismundo's initially fixed role as the *salvaje* or *iracundo* and his typified show of primitivism is supplanted by a more realistic and accessible interpretation, as contemporary culture conceives an individual as possessing precise psychological features. Therefore, this approach can be catalogued as reformist –as it differs from the "original". However, its tendency to overlook the protagonist's intrinsic violence favouring a cerebral conception of him represents a conservative or dry procedure.

Although, as the tragedy advances, García Valdés' teleologic intentions become clear regarding the protagonist's positive mutation, this pathway is less evident and accomplished than in 2012. As opposed to Portillo-Prince and the absolute regulation of his uncontrolled

[202] Karina Mauro, 'La metodología de actuación realista como dispositivo de atenuación de la presencia del actor en teatro y cine', *Revisita Brasileira de Estudos da Presença*, 7 (2017), ISSN 2237-2660: <http://www.scielo.br/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S2237-26602017000300523&lng=es&tlng=es> [Accessed 24/09/2019].

emotions, Mari Sánchez will continue to exhibit symptoms of madness until the end, thereby presenting a slightly more enigmatic Segismundo than the one conveyed sixteen years later (although never as innovative as Bieito's). The scene which best embodies these intricacies and makes García Valdés psychologised directorial intentions evident is the Palace scene.

I.2. Segismundo's autism: Pantomime and antisocial fixation

Mari Sánchez conceives the Palace scene through a technique related to that of 'introyección', in which 'todo signo exterior producido por el actor en escena será el correlato de una vivencia interna'.[203] Segismundo's 'vivencia interna' assumes the form of a deranged and traumatised psyche and is expressed by the actor through various 'signo[s] exterior[es]'. The three most noticeable examples of the staging of this method are: the licking of Estrella's hand, the defenestration of Criado, and the attempted rape of Rosaura.

The Prince enters the stage, running away from three Criados, and wearing 'un traje-pijama blanco de manicomio'.[204] Along with this straightjacket lookalike, his body movement also recalls a patient from the 'manicomio'. His kinetic chaos can be explained as the aftereffect of the sedative or tranquilizer ('la apacible bebida' [990] forcibly administered by Clotaldo). When he finds himself hospitalised in this mental-health ward/Palace, he tries to escape: 'un Segismundo frenético aparece en palacio, corriendo con los revoltosos movimientos de una fiera por primera vez sin trabas'.[205] The Prince's frenzy and the madhouse atmosphere make García Valdés' 1996 Palace scene appear as though lifted from

[203] Mauro.
[204] Fischer, '*La vida*…', p. 110.
[205] Fischer, 'Del texto…', p. 224.

Miloš Forman's 1975 *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, rather than one from Calderón's 1632-1636 *La vida es sueño*.

The nurses/Criados manage to manhandle the unruly madman as he recites: '¿Yo en palacios suntuosos? | […] ¿Yo cercado de criados | tan lucidos y briosos?' [1228-1231]. With this last line, Segismundo looks at Criado on his left with pleading eyes, begging for his liberation from a new form of abuse (now in an institutionalised aspect). Finally, the wardens force the patient onto the throne –as onto a restraining hospital bed. From there, Mari Sánchez talks with visible signs of bewilderment.[206]

Clotaldo enters and requests: 'Vuestra Alteza, gran señor | me de su mano a besar' [1260-1261]. Confused by seeing he who inflicted his past *desdicha* asking for such courtesy, Segismundo runs to the centre-front and lies on the floor, assuming a foetal position. Then, 'de nuevo se oye esa "voz aflautada de un loco" […] al interrogarse, como pez fuera del agua, "¿Que es lo que pasa por mi?"'.[207] Clotaldo answers: 'Una gran confusión'.[208] At the same time, Mari Sánchez puts his hands on the back of his head to signal the place where Segismundo's internalised 'confusión' comes from: his brain (fig. 7). Outside the fish-tank of his cave, he seems to be drowning in perplexity.

[206] The characterisation of Segismundo as a patient of a hospital/mental-health institution is also established in Mexico's Compañía Nacional de Teatro's 2020 production. For example, Fernando Huerta Zamacona-Segismundo is brought into the Palace unconscious and lying down over a stretcher carried by two wardens/Criados.
[207] Fischer, 'Del texto…', p. 224.
[208] From now on, the productions' adaptations to the text will be indicated by mentioning the line(s) number(s) from Ruano's edition in the footnote: [1268].



Fig. 7. In the foetal position, Segismundo covers his head: the locus of *locura*.

Realising that he is now free from Clotaldo's violent treatment, Segimsundo stands up and recites:

> y así el Rey, la ley y yo
> ~~entre desdichas tan fieras~~
> te condenan a que mueras
> a mis manos… [1308-1311]

As opposed to the physical interpretations of this scene in 2000 and 2012, Mari Sánchez is two meters away from Otegui –supposedly the recipient of Segismundo's 'conden[a] a' 'muer[te]'. The lengthy distance in both actors' proxemics frustrates any interpretation of palpable violence from the "soft" protagonist towards his previous captor. Mari Sánchez's paralinguistic features mirror this lack of danger. The line where Segismundo condemns Clotaldo to suffer similar 'desdichas' to those endured by himself is barely audible (crossed out above).

With this, Mari Sánchez seems to downplay all references to Segismundo's 'fier[eza]', reinstating Segismundo's psychologised –rather than instinctive– hamartia. A

heavily sedated patient cannot be moved by aggression. His harmless frenzy is only an expression of confusion and/or drugs –a factor that takes away the Prince's voluntariness in his own actions.

This is a consequence of García Valdés' intention to transform a 17th-century conflict into an approachable and modern plot –psychology being a more contemporary and personal subject than the ontological struggle between *cuerpo* and *alma*. In an interview, he recognised that: 'he tratado de aproximar esta joya del teatro barroco español a la sensibilidad, a la técnica y a la energía de los actores y actrices de nuestro tiempo'.[209] As a result of this attempt to bring this drama closer to the 20th-century, this tamed and unenergetic Segismundo shyly walks away from the confrontation, following a technique of our time: psychological realism.

Next, Estrella enters the stage. Segismundo asks Clarín about her. He answers that her name is Estrella and Mari Sánchez screams 'Mejor dijeras el sol' [1391] directly into the *gracioso*'s ear. This display of mental imbalance is followed by the actor's drawing a crazed smirk on his face and showing it to his cousin. Reintroducing the comparison with *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, Mari Sánchez's demented grin recalls Jack Nicolson in his role as Randle McMurphy.

Then, Segismundo recites: 'Dadme a besar vuestra mano, | en cuya copa de nieve | el aura candores bebe' [1404-1406]. Estrella extends her hand to receive the kiss. Segismundo once again displays his mania 'no besándole la mano a su prima sino lamiéndosela' (fig. 8).[210] The lady answers: 'Sed más galán cortesano' [1407]. To further emphasise the absence

[209] Torres, 'Ariel…'.
[210] Fischer, 'Del texto…', p. 225.

of ‘galan[ura]’, the Prince bites her fingers, as Criado warns him: ‘Advierte, señor, que no | es justo atreverte así, | con una dama’.[211]

Instead of exhibiting the appropriately decorous gesture in this interaction –kissing the hand– Segismundo’s actions are driven by his psychopathology: he bites it. This ‘atrev[imiento]’ is an expression of his disconnection with the social environment and the rules it dictates (the ‘cortesan[ía]’ expected of an heir to the throne). It also portrays an anomalous fixation (with the hand of a stranger) that can only be explained as an externalisation of the protagonist’s introspective madness.



Fig. 8. Segismundo licks, then, bites, Estrella’s hand, showing his internalised derangement.

[211] [1411-1413].

A Criado walks to where Segismundo is clutching Estrella's hand to stop him. Segismundo tells him '¿No digo | que vos no os metáis conmigo?' [1413-1413] and grabs him by the neck while keeping hold of the lady. The two restrained characters start moving in different directions and, as they fight for their freedom, another Criado seizes the first Criado's coattail. A third Criado repeats the same caricatural movement, clutching onto the second's coat (fig. 9). At the end, the actors become disentangled and Segismundo guides the first Criado towards the window and –almost gently– pushes him out.



Fig. 9. A parodic pantomime develops onstage, minimising the calamitous consequences of Criado's defenestration.

The comic interpretation of this scene trivialises the unjustified assassination of Criado –the action that concludes such gestural travesty. The aspect of the Criados also contributes to diminish its tragic imprint, as they are characterised as 'unos pomposos pajes

que pudieran haber procedido de la Austria de Mozart, con lo cual se insinua la idea de una experiencia artificial o forzada'.[212] The farcical costume and body language of those involved in the death produces laughter –rather than concern– from the spectators. Thus, they can only connect comically –not tragically– with this incident. This hinders the feeling of compassion for Criado, the questioning of Segismundo's actions, and the reflection of the politics behind an execution of a servant by his master (as was probably Calderón's intention).

The cartoonish interpretation of the defenestration is another stage device through which the instinctive violence of a Calderonian Segismundo is toned down. This is because these operatic pastiches and their 'forzad[o]' movement do not represent relatable human victims and the Prince's actions lack brutishness. Instead, Estrella and the Criados resemble ludicrous and anachronistic puppets handled by a crazed puppeteer. Like a socially unskilled child, Mari Sánchez-Segismundo seems to be whimsically playing with his (flesh-and-blood) toys, before becoming bored of them and carelessly tossing one out of the window –an assassination that functions as a conclusion to the joke, rather than as an expression of nihilism.

The purposely searched-for lack of verisimilitude in the characterisation, proxemics, and kinetics degrades the human condition of those onstage. The result is the minimisation of the critical and alienating effects of violence. In terms of the production's aesthetic value, this objectification makes the scene's artificiality stand out from this production's realism and, hence, disturbs its stylistic homogeneity.

Segismundo's mental imbalance is further conveyed by the jocular way in which Mari Sánchez delivers the rhyming *octosílabos*, as the charade develops. He sings the last word of

[212] Fischer, 'Del texto…', p. 224.

the following lines as if they belonged to a lullaby: 'Nada me parece *justo* | en siendo contra mi *gusto*' [1417-1418]. With this, the actor shows how the Prince's puerile 'gusto' –rather than his chaotic passion– is the drive that pushes him to objectify others and become a murderer (although a shoddy one). Here, inspired by *other* moments of the play-text, 'su comportamiento es como el de un niño, atento únicamente a lo que concierne a su persona'.[213]

Infantilisation is intrinsic to the personification of the protagonist, as Mari Sánchez affirmed in an interview: 'he querido partir de nada, como mi personaje, que es un inmaduro sin experiencia emocional'.[214] One of the clearest examples of this interpretation is the frivolous treatment of the defenestration. Only a psychologically deranged and childish individual would perform a pantomime and sing before killing in such an inconsequential way. Although the pantomime entails a degree of physicality, its disengagement with violence –the theme of the play that lends itself the most to be interpreted with critical or political aims– links this production to the dry category of *comedia* in performance, rather than to the wet one.

The immaturity of Segismundo's psyche is also manifested in the attempted rape of Rosaura. The second time the Prince and the lady meet they get into an argument due to her 'resistencia | [que] es veneno crüel' to his 'paciencia' [1632-1633]. Tired of her reticence, Segismundo forcibly takes her by the hand, turns her around, carries her, and says: 'por ver si puedo, cosa es llana | que arrojaré tu honor por la ventana' [1644-1645]. These lines reinforce

[213] Ontañón, p. 132.
[214] Rosana Torres, 'García Valdés se enfrenta "con la mayor sencillez" a "La vida es sueño"', *El País,* 6 December 1996: <https://elpais.com/diario/1996/12/07/cultura/849913204_850215.html> [Accessed 16/08/2019].

Segismundo's frivolous treatment of an action that would otherwise have dreadful undertones: throwing people out of the window. As before, Mari Sánchez's tone is parodic, almost singing the words.

Segismundo puts Rosaura on the throne, lies on top of her, and starts frenetically kissing her neck (fig. 10). Desperately, Rosaura pronounces: 'No en vano prevenía | a este reino infeliz tu tiranía' [1650-1651]. These lines entail that the Prince's 'tiranía' should turn more sexualised and violent, displaying a carnal Segismundo who sullies the 'honor' of a victimised Rosaura. An example of an increased brutish sensuousness in someone actually 'nacido entre fieras' is Notario's staging of this scene in 2000: the 'cruel, soberbio, bárbaro y tirano' [1657-1658] even rams his pelvis against Rosaura's body from behind, partially giving the idea of the consummation of the rape.

Paradoxically, in 1996, the mitigated Segismundo interprets this moment of aggression (as suggested by the script) with anomalous behaviour: he centres his apparently "sexualised" attention on Rosaura's hand (not on her whole body). As with Estrella, the madman takes it and starts kissing, licking, and biting it (fig. 11). Finally, Clotaldo enters and interrupts Segismundo's freakish mania.




Fig. 10 and **fig. 11**. Segismundo lies on top of Rosaura and kisses, licks, and bites her hand, in another display of *locura*.

The Prince's toxic infatuation with hands (first Estrella's, now, Rosaura's) represents an expression of his psychopathology. In this moment, Segismundo 'revela una cándida inocencia e inmadurez emocional que irrumpirá en puro autismo al hallarse ante una hembra por segunda vez'.[215] Autism is a suitable word to describe the characterisation of the protagonist as an (unhealthily) introspective being –staged by Mari Sánchez through external signs such as the kissing of hands.

This is because autism has 'three core diagnostic features: (1) difficulties in social development and (2) in the development of communication, alongside (3) unusually strong, narrow interests and repetitive behavior'.[216] In this scene, Mari Sánchez-Segismundo displays the first two symptoms in his lack of social restraint and anomalous (verbal and

[215] Fischer, 'Del texto…', p.225.
[216] Simon Baron-Cohen, 'Autism: The Empathizing–Systemizing (E-S) Theory', *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, 1158 (2009), 68-80 (p. 68).

proxemic) interaction with Rosaura. The third diagnosis is exemplified by his fixation with hands –a narrow conduct that is repeated several times in this mise-en-scène.

Therefore, the Calderonian Prince's guilty tyranny is substituted by the guiltless 'cándida inocencia' of an autistic individual. Underdeveloped emotional and social skills –not untamed brutishness– are to be blamed for his erratic actions: they are fundamental to Segismundo's hamartia. Making a pathology accountable for the errors committed removes the sense of culpability from the individual. It is not his will that commands his deeds, but an unwanted and unconscious "disorder". The objective is to endow the character with a feature more akin to the 20th-century persona –autism–, rather than preserving conventionalities and anachronisms similar to those of the première's *salvaje* or *apassionado*.

Overall, the Palace scene shows how 'Pedro Mari Sánchez [hizo a] un Segismundo, cuyas perplejidades y violencias no alcanzan la deseable trascendencia'.[217] The play-text's implied aggressivity is not explored to its full –critical– potential by an actor playing a psychiatric (and innocent) patient. Actions that could have evidenced man's barbarity towards *others* (such as murder or rape) are reduced to pantomimes and autism –cerebral issues prevailing over physical ones, introspection over viscerality. Therefore, the Prince's characterisation of *locura* and emotional immaturity is largely to be blamed for this production's loss of a 'deseable' critical edge and for its immanent "dryness" (vs. "wetness"). Four years later, Bieito's forward-looking production will contradict such psychic passivity when dealing with Segismundo's cruelty in these same moments of the play-text, manifesting 'a presentation of

[217] López.

the character [that] resembles the way postmodern theatre exposes its characters, that is, as a *nonpsychological* blend of words, actions, and identities'.[218]

I.3. Liberation and dénouement: Segismundo's therapy

The liberation scene further illustrates that 'bajo la dirección de García Valdés, el protagonista se ofrecía como un ser blando, débil, con desagradables estridencias en la voz'.[219] The 'bland[ura]' and 'd[ebilidad]' shown then are anticipated by the muted way in which Mari Sánchez performs the '¿Qué es la vida?' speech [2148-2187]. He sits down, with his habitual fidgeting head movement, and looks at the ceiling (rather than standing and engagingly gazing at the public as in other versions).

This stage behaviour will also be followed in 2000 and 2012. However, contrary to the facial seriousness assumed by Notario and Portillo, Mari Sánchez-Segismundo delivers these solemn lines with the incongruous smirk of a *loco* (again, looking more like a 20th-century Jack Nicolson, than a 17th-century *melancólico*). That the actor continues to display the external symptoms of his psychologised hamartia (the grin and strident voice) problematises the anagnorisis denoted by the text and exemplifies one of the clearest reformist aspects of this adaptation. Mari Sánchez's Prince has not entirely learnt to 'reprim[ir]' his 'condición' of internalised 'fier[eza]' [2148-2149]. This change has not taken place, not even after the lesson entailed by his second imprisonment, this self-reflexive monologue, and Clotaldo's dictum: 'Segismundo, que aun en sueños | no se pierde *el hacer bien*' [2146-2147].

[218] Kasia Lech, 'Metatheatre and the Importance of Estrella in Calderon's *La vida es sueño* and Its Contemporary Productions', *Bulletin of the Comediantes*, 66 (2014), 175-193 (p. 179). Emphasis added.
[219] Mascarell, 'El Siglo…', , p. 308.

After this soliloquy, the rebels locate the imprisoned protagonist and acclaim him: 'Gran Príncipe Segismundo' [2276]. However, Mari Sánchez's gestures do not reflect such princely 'gran[deza]': he lies on the floor, afraid of the four intruders. In that fragile position, Segismundo crawls away from them, evidencing 'un sentimiento de apatía y desapego'.[220] As one of the soldiers tells him 'la libertad | te espera. Oye sus acentos' [2304-2305], the immature Price assumes a withdrawn position –as if wanting to shut out the external world's 'acentos' and isolate inside his narrow introspection.

Next, Mari Sánchez gets up and 'corre freneticamente de un lado para otro del escenario y los soldados le contienen con fuerza'.[221] The movement that accompanies this speech contradicts its content of rational scepticism: he incongruously runs around the stage to reinstate the incongruity of his mind. His frenzy is only stopped when a soldier grabs his arms from behind (a restraining action staged by the Criados/wardens before). The sound of an electrifying note boosts the mercenaries' duress, as Segismundo recites: 'Para mí no hay fingimientos, | que, desengañado ya, | sé bien que la vida es sueño' [2341-2343]. Finally, the other soldiers surround him and coercively put a military vest or piece of armour on the subjugated Prince's chest (fig. 12).

[220] Ruano, 'Introducción…', in Pedro…, p. 23.
[221] Fischer, 'Del texto…', p. 229.



Fig. 12. The soldiers force a military vest on the passive Segismundo.

Compared to other versions, this is an unconventional way to interpret Segismundo's liberation (and the start of a civil war). Although abuse against him is present in the CNTC productions (as implied in the play-text), it is normally perpetrated during other scenes and by Clotaldo, Basilio, and his lackeys, rather than by the *vulgo*, which remains loyal to him until the end. This reformist decision answers to Segismundo's depiction as a harmless *autista*. It seems as though the rebels must exert pressure to awaken him from his introspective apathy –embodied by Mari Sánchez's depressed posture and running. Violence is so uncharacteristic of this innocuous Prince that the role that guarantees his freedom (that of leader of the rebellion) needs to be forced onto him through bullying, rather than being a personal initiative.

Additionally, this interpretation obscures the protagonist's supposed anagnorisis. Is it Segismundo's *own* decision to 'obrar bien' [2424] or is it, rather, an imposition from outside? After witnessing the soldiers' intimidating behaviour, can the audience believe the conviction behind the Prince's call for action at the end of this scene and the personal change it entails: 'a reinar, fortuna, vamos' [2420]? What kind of 'amigos' is he going to 'ganar' [2426] in the ensuing wars?

A toned-down version of Segismundo is further reinforced through a textual adaptation in the ensuing scene. After the soldiers, Clotaldo appears and kneels before him. Compassionately, the Prince asks him to stand and seemingly pardons him for the trauma inflicted. Then, Clotaldo says: 'Si a tu padre has de hacer guerra, | yo aconsejarte no puedo | contra mi rey, ni valerte'.[222] In both the *suelta* and the 1636 script, Segismundo's retort is a visceral one: '¡Villano, | traidor, ingrato!' [2410-2411].

As a point of comparison, in the 2000 production, these lines are faithfully performed by Notario with an emphasis on physical violence: Segismundo tries to gauge Clotaldo's eyes out, then allows Clarín and the soldier to torture him. In contrast, in the 1996 version –where a directorial tendency limits most expressions of the play-text's cruelty, in favour of the Prince's psychologised plot–, these lines are omitted. In the scene that substitutes them, Segismundo forgives Clotaldo and, without any sign of aggression, innocently tells him: 'en el campo nos veremos'. This adaptation can be read thus:

> el hecho de que en escena se haya eliminado el ataque de rabia de Segismundo contra Clotaldo pone de relieve la intencionalidad del proceso del autodominio, basada en la singular experiencia de ser sancionado o devuelto a la torre cada vez que pierde los estribos, lo que manifiesta no tanto una epifanía –de "desengaño", se decía en el Barroco– como una

[222] [2406-2408].

> transformación behaviorista, *un historial clínico de psicología* por antonomasia.[223]

The Prince's dramatic arc mirrors the stages of psychological therapy: from his initial "diagnosis" as an *autista* (who talks to himself) to his 'transformación' (after the cave). The central facet of this clinical trial entails a 'sanci[ón]' of the patient with his 'dev[olución] a la torre' –after the examination of his conduct in the Palace/laboratory. Hence, the elimination of the scene of Segismundo's assault against Clotaldo evidences the intention not to deviate too much from conveying the partial success of such treatment. An 'ataque de rabia' from the Prince would only contradict his psychic improvement and the teleology drawn by García Valdés.

However, this interpretation is not categorical. Part of the behavioural remedy implies that it can be hypothetically repeated as many times as necessary ('cada vez que pierde los estribos'). This iteration could take place until the *loco* learns how to act with social and psychological 'autodominio'. The ambiguity intrinsic to this remodelling of Segismundo's dramatic conflict and evolution makes him a rounded and realistic character –although the politics conveyed through him are negligible.

Another consequence of the fact that Segismundo is 'sometido […] a algo así como a un tratamiento de parapsicología' is that 'por ese camino, la comedia calderoniana entr[a] en la actualidad'.[224] The epiphanic nature of the Baroque Prince's anagnorisis (probably conceived in the manner of a melancholic saint) is adapted in 1996 to favour a more accessible (contemporary) notion of an individual's change: that of his ongoing and constantly assisted psychological improvement. This update contrasts with the première's

[223] Fischer, 'Del texto…', p. 230. Emphasis added.
[224] López.

arrival at a *self*-discovered and somehow solitary 'desengaño', after the protagonist's fall. Indeed, in the *suelta*, the private nature of Segismundo's moral recognition is illustrated by the mention of his own name before the '¿qué es la vida?' speech: '*Segismundo*, que aún en sueños | no se pierde hacer bien' [fol.15^{v}].

The reworking of the Prince's growth as not absolutely autonomous relies on drawing the plot as 'una transformación behaviorista'. Modern behaviourist theory postulates that 'all behaviors are learned through interaction with the environment through a process called conditioning'.[225] Segismundo's constructive transformation assumes a very present-day form: not exclusively as *self*-accomplished, but also as conditioned by his interaction with others and the surroundings. The liberation scene shows how the Prince's behavioural evolution requires an external 'intencionalidad' (even in its coercive shape) from both the soldiers and the impending war. The almost suffocating care displayed towards the patient/Segismundo by the nurses/Criados inside the Palace/sanatorium is also an example of this psychological renovation, in which great part of the individual's cure comes from without.

The final stage of this (partially) successful 'historial clínico' is presented in *La vida es sueño*'s last speech –which begins with a fundamentalist tone. The protagonist is dressed in a black outfit, implying the sobering-up of his former intemperance. He no longer wears the straitjacket or the imposed armour. As he recites this rationalised monologue, Mari Sánchez walks with a hieratic posture and at a composed pace, reminiscent of the première's *prudente*. He has ceased to run frenetically around as a *loco* or to lie on the floor as a depressed, isolated

[225] Saul McLeod, 'Behaviorist Approach', *Simply Psychology*, 5 February 2017: <https://www.simplypsychology.org/behaviorism.html> [Accessed 11/05/2021].

autista. Further, Calderón's words are expressed without the tonal stridency of the scenes anticipating his therapeutic confinement at the cave/tower; instead, Mari Sánchez's voice is sober, his pitch low, as the *comediante*'s.

However, apart from these signs of healing, two brief moments hint at Segimsundo's psychopathological former self, and suggest that his therapy might need to be repeated. First, after Segismundo gives Rosaura to Astolfo, the Prince asks Estrella: 'Dame tu mano' [3286]. Mari Sánchez extends his left hand towards her, who hesitates, visibly afraid at the prospect of another externalisation of fetishism of her hand (fig. 13).

At last, Estrella allows Segismundo to take her palm, and walks towards the other side of the stage. As this happens, the Prince firmly grips the lady's hand without letting it go, lasting for a few uncomfortable seconds. It looks as if he is maintaining the grasp of her hand against her will –as if wanting to lick and bite it again (fig. 14). The audience notices the repetition of the antisocial behaviour or narrowed interest already witnessed when Segismundo encountered Estrella and Rosaura. Hence, one might question if Segismundo's therapy of self-dominion and sociability was totally successful. Are there still small traces of the autistic nature during the dénouement, and possibly beyond the action of this story?

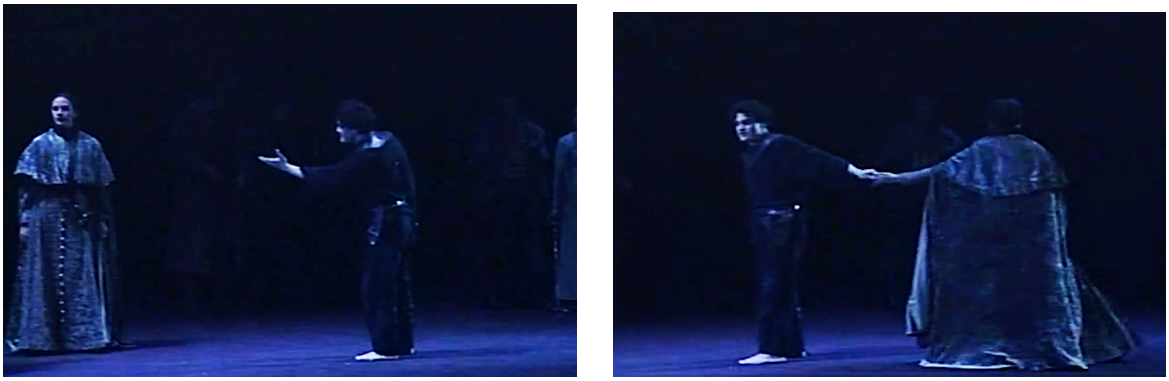


Fig. 13 and **fig. 14**. Segismundo offers to take Estrella's hand in marriage. As she accepts, he forcibly grips her hand for a few seconds –externalising his autistic interest in this part of her body.

The performance of the production's final words also imprints nuance and vagueness to Mari Sánchez-Segismundo's behavioural transformation. As peace is established, the Prince recites:

> [Haré] tal como el representante,
> **que, habiendo sido un monarca,**
> **vuelve a ser esclavo vuestro**
> **cuando la comedia acaba**
> *y humildemente os suplica*
> *que le perdonáis sus faltas*.[226]

Mari Sánchez has lost his fidgeting head movement, once a symptom of anxiety and trauma. His posture is vertical and commanding, as opposed to 'la hiperatividad y la exitación que rezuma[ba] Segismundo' during the beginning.[227] With the line underlined above, the actor takes a step forward and momentarily glances at the stalls, projecting the idea of a cured and rational individual: the *autista* who struggled with social interaction is now confident enough to communicate with the external world (the public).

However, this self-assured bearing ends as the lines in bold are delivered, again, with an uncanny smirk on the actor's face –as if Segismundo, suddenly remembering the behavioural 'faltas' triggered by his madness, desires to relive them. As he recites the line in italics, he unexpectedly turns his back to the audience. Paradoxically, the Prince looks at the floor when the text suggests a direct address to the spectators (who are grammatically included in 'os' and 'perdon*áis*').

This action is analogous to the self-absorbed, autistic manner in which he performed the first speech –establishing, again, an impenetrable fourth wall that isolates him from the remedial environment. The pathological relapse implied by the brief reappearance of this

[226] [3315-3319].
[227] Fischer, 'Del texto…', p. 229.

imaginary barrier suggests that Segismundo's *ensimismamiento* and antisocial behaviour have not entirely disappeared from the supposedly "cured" patient. To add to such open ending, the single chord sounds for a final time –manifesting its implied portentousness–, as the lights are suddenly shut, and the clapping starts.

In conclusion, these three scenes contain both reformist and fundamentalist interpretations of Segismundo's fable. Reformism is manifested in the fact that the Prince's hamartia is connected to his *locura* and *autismo*. These are (very modern) internalised pathologies – externalised mainly through obsessive conducts, frenetic body movements, a fidgeting head, irrational smirk, and talking to himself– that must be treated. This amelioration requires sanctions such as the second (and the implied subsequent) imprisonment(s) and other clinical experiments such as the Palace scene –a procedural repetitiveness absent from the première. The "original" implied the failure of his moral awakening at the end (e.g., the Soldado 1 punishment scene) and hinted at the perpetuation of the Prince's reign of terror, rather than at the re-admission of the patient to the Palace/clinic.

Another reformist feature is that this behavioural remedy is regulated by forces of the surroundings (the Criados, Clotaldo, and, even, the rebels). The participation of *others* in Segismundo's inner healing consequently reduces his impact on his *own* change (as in the première), adding realistic roundness to the character and his anagnorisis –in the 20th-century, a more believable conception of psychological/moral growth includes the influence of the environment. It may be due to this lack of control over his *own* evolution that, at the end of this production, Mari Sánchez's actions might make some spectators believe that his character's psychopathologies are not entirely healed (Segismundo has submissively followed the external impositions, instead of truly embodying the change). This, even though

other members of the public might discard the momentary reiteration of his symptomatology and think it negligible to their interpretation of an ordered ending.

The two most noticeable fundamentalist aspects of Segismundo's plot-arc are: (a) the insertion of few extra-textual scenes/actions and (b) the construction of a teleological path that more or less mirrors that of the première: one which evolves from a negative (*cuerpo*) to a positive pole (*alma*). However, the desired distancing or critical effect is not entirely conveyed by the liberties taken regarding the "original" Prince and the play-text. His psychopathologies are so introspective and their externalisations so "weak" that his violence does not affect us enough to question our relation to it –as Bieito will do, four years later, through Notario's exaggerated corporeality. A softened, realist, and cerebral conception of the protagonist prevails, to the detriment of the few moments of physicality and ideological provocation (e.g., the liberation scene). These instances –less lightly treated– would have pushed this production towards the wet pole of the compass, rather than to the dry one.

Part II: Colomé-Basilio

II.1. Basilio's entrance and the *pebetero* scenes: hieratism and degradation

Colomé-Basilio's dramatic change is opposed to Mari Sánchez-Segismundo's: it starts with security and ends with fragility. The 'corte ilustre de Polonia' speech [589-843] establishes the first; the *pebetero* scenes, the second. The mutation from one to another happens in terms of the King's psychological degradation –which is comparable to the première's fall from spirituality to corporeality.

The negative arc of Basilio's conflict probably influenced García Valdés' decision to cast Héctor Colomé, known for being an 'actor de rostro duro, edad indescifrable en pantalla

y voz potente'. [228] The King's initial potency is supported by the player's physique. An individual with a solid, juvenile appearance responds to the need to build a height from which to fall, a wholesomeness to corrupt. Additionally, these features are opposed to the early modern, the 2000, and the 2012 Basilios:

> la elección de este actor distanciaba a Basilio de la imagen del rey anciano y caduco que sugiere el texto y que han presentado otras escenificaciones, y apuntaba, por el contrario, hacía un soberano poderoso, seguro de sí mismo y de los resultados que le proporcionan sus estudios de astrología, dueño de la situación, rector de los destinos de Polonia y convencido de sus propios criterios.[229]

Unlike the other monarchs analysed in this study, this 'rey' is not an 'anciano y caduco'. The 'distanci[a]' in age is particularly evident regarding Álvarez (who, in 2000, interprets decrepitude as one of the main features of Basilio). Colomé's portrayal as 'soberano poderoso' and as psychologically 'seguro de sí mismo' is introduced by his entrance: 'entra el rey con paso seguro, cubierto con una majestuosa capa azul cobalto y con gafas oscuras sobre sus ojos, elementos que, sin duda resaltan su condición de astrólogo'.[230]

The actor's secure strides contrast with Mari Sánchez's frenetic pace and depressed bearing. Likewise, the 'majestuosa' quality of his cape is opposed to the pitifulness of his son's naked torso, his straightjacket, and the armour forced upon him. Another element of the costume that positively portrays Basilio is the 'gafas oscuras': they connote his 'condición de astrólogo'. This wisdom will be replaced by obstinacy as the play develops.

Colomé's entrance from the row of seats portrays a King that is the 'rector' of Poland's situation and destiny. Contrary to the Prince's internal monologue, the father's first

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[228] Gregorio Belinchón, 'Fallece Héctor Colomé, actor de larga carrera en cine y teatro', *El País*, 1 March 2015: <https://elpais.com/cultura/2015/03/01/actualidad/1425165227_527672.html> [Accessed 17/08/2019].
[229] Eduardo Pérez-Rasilla, 'El Rey Basilio y la Compañía Nacional de Teatro Clásico', in *El teatro clásico a través de sus monarcas*, ed. by Luciano García Lorenzo (Madrid: Fundamentos, 2006), 379-399 (p. 383).
[230] Pérez-Rasilla, 'El Rey…', p. 383.

action is marked by the absence of a fourth wall and by the recognition of the spectators and the external world that they represent. To further emphasise this acknowledgment, he sits down on the throne and addresses the auditorium directly: '…estadme atentos, | […] | corte ilustre de Polonia, | vasallos, deudos, y amigos' [600-604].

For a moment, the audience represents part of Polonia, as 'el discurso metateatral [está] dirigido a la Corte, a los dos sobrinos y a toda la platea del teatro'.[231] This interactivity suggests that Basilio is initially characterised by his openness, sociability (we are his 'amigos'), and political transparency. This is because the political designs concerning the Kingdom are publicly exposed to the 'vasallos' and 'deudos' by him (resembling the première's *justo* and *prudente* King). These capacities are meant to disappear, as he grows increasingly stubborn and self-centred –and the first sign of this is that Colomé stops looking at the audience.

During this speech, Colomé-Basilio sits 'con apariencia imperturbable y con estudiado aplomo' (fig. 15). Vocally, his 'parlamento apoya su fuerza y dignidad sobre el poderío fisco del actor y la gravedad de su voz, impostada, bien proyectada'.[232] The consequence of such gravity is the absence of modulation in Colomé's voice. Gesturally, his body language is limited to his face –and this locus of expression is further restricted by the sunglasses. This sobriety conveys that Basilio's interiority is as colourless as his exteriority –his actions are not being overtaken by his passions (yet); instead, reason guides his deeds. It also links this King to the early modern one, as both adopt a statuesque posture (*estatorio*) and subordinate gestures to declamation (*espiritual*).

[231] Fischer, 'Del texto…', p. 222.
[232] Pérez-Rasilla, 'El Rey…', pp. 383-384.



Fig. 15. Colomé-Basilio's posture is hieratic as he addresses the audience, denoting his political and psychological strength.

Colomé-Basilio is initially 'frío, calculador, maestro en duplicidad y en el arte persuasorio'.[233] This cold and monotonous interpretation of more than three hundred lines of conceptually demanding Calderonian language differs from the lively performance of the same lines in 2000 and 2012. In order to entertain the diverse and easily distracted 21st-century audience, the latter Basilios feel the necessity to "fill up" their respective stages with movement, action, and variation of intonation, as they recite 'este cerebral, calculadísimo y perfectamente estructurado discurso'.[234]

The contrast between the 1996 King and the more recent two manifests a binary in the reception of the CNTC productions in general:

[233] Fischer, 'Del texto…', p. 222.
[234] Ruano, 'Introducción', in Pedro…, p. 58.

> no todos los montajes de la CNTC han cosechado elogios unánimes, siendo la "modernización" uno de los debates más recurrentes, entre la vertiente actualizadora y la más tradicionalista. Los tratamientos escénicos han sido, en efecto, variados, algunos de corte ortodoxo (mantenedores de la carga retórica y los códigos del Siglo de Oro), otros más instalados en ambientes y estéticas del presente.[235]

García Valdés' version possesses both 'vertientes'. It modernises Segismundo's plot and presents a youngish Basilio, for example. However, at the same time, it is traditionalist in its preservation of the play's declamatory and rhetorical imprint (in speeches such as this one). In face of the tedium imposed by such orthodoxies, present-day directors like Dave Dalton recommend that practitioners of *comedia* in performance 'play it fast, play it hard –like Punk Rock'.[236] For García Valdés, it might be that conveying Basilio's statuesque characterisation and differentiating it from Segismundo's frenzy is more highly valued than an engaging tempo –something that cannot be 'elogi[ado]'.

However, one scene later, Colomé-Basilio reveals that he is 'un personaje no estático y monolítico sino complejo y ambiguo, que va evolucionando en el acto de la representacion'.[237] As the verb *evolucionar* has a positive connotation, this assertion can be modified: the King's dramatic arc is conceived, instead, as an *involución* (regress). The first signs of Basilio's degradation appear when he shows psychological obstinacy for the first time, by disclosing his 'intento | trayendo desta manera | a Segismundo a palacio' [1092-1094] to Clotaldo.

The change of scenes is presented by the introduction of a burning cauldron or 'pebetero'.[238] This prop –which emanates a mysterious green light– is the only element on

[235] Huerta, s.v. Compañía Nacional de Teatro Clásico, p. 180.
[236] Dalton.
[237] Fischer, 'Del texto…', p. 222.
[238] Pérez-Rasilla, 'El Rey…', p. 387.

the empty stage, highlighting its semiotic importance. As it appears only in two of the Palace scenes (inside the King-astrologer's study chambers), it is metonymically related to Basilio.

Clotaldo narrates how, by Basilio's command, he brought a heavily sedated Segismundo to the clinical trial of the Palace scene. Then, he asks for the reasons behind the King's unjustifiable scheme. As an experimental psychologist, Basilio answers that he wishes to prove a hypothesis: if Segismundo's condition 'se mitiga o se templa' [1107], once inside of the Palace/mental institution.

These lines resemble a soliloquy –rather than a dialogue– as Colomé-Basilio ignores his interlocutor, embodying 'la mayor intensidad expresiva y de introspección psicológica de aquél [el soliloquio], en lo que se patentizaría un diálogo del personaje consigo mismo'.[239] This introspection is reinforced by the actors' use of space. Clotaldo remains static and obscured in a dark corner; while the King –oblivious to the external world– nervously moves around, as if following the diverging routes of his conflicted stream of consciousness. The text mirrors such solipsism: when Basilio asks *himself* a question –'¿qué importó haberle traído | dormido desta manera?'– he answers to *himself* –'decir que fue soñado | cuanto vio' [1122-1137]. Colomé's gestural and verbal signs recall Mari Sánchez's *ensimismamiento*.

The actor pauses his speech and very fixedly glances into the *pebetero* (fig. 16), as he says: 'y así llegan | a examinarse dos cosas'.[240] Basilio wants to explore two things: (1) the psychological features of Segismundo's 'condición' and (2) the behavioural consequences of the 'consuelo' [1139-1142] behind the Prince's belief that the test was all a dream (if he fails to surpass it). The indication for treating his son as a guinea pig –i.e., the 'dos cosas'– in the experiment seem directly dictated by the cauldron or, at least, approved by it, as *only* the

[239] Gómez García, s.v. soliloquio, p. 164.
[240] [1137-1138].

King can "communicate" with this object (rather than with the external surrounding). Clotaldo reacts by negatively shaking his head while answering: 'Razones no me faltaran | para probar que no aciertas' [1150-1151].



Fig. 16. Basilio looks inside the *pebetero,* highlighting his solipsism, stubbornness, and propensity for political equivocations.

This scene has been interpreted thus:

> El Basilio que pone a Clotaldo al día respecto del experimento palaciego no parece estar motivado tanto por el bien del país como por intereses propios, pues vuelve la espalda al público y va de un lado al otro del escenario manifestando con estos gestos corporales un violento nerviosismo personal cada vez más desconcertante por la aspereza del instrumento vocal del actor.[241]

Colomé's performance exhibits a departure from Basilio's monolithic stability. This loss is materialised by the actor's running about. The change from the static and seated posture to

[241] Fischer, 'Del texto…', p. 223.

this new restlessness is a physical way to convey a father that, like his son, is possessed by harmful 'nerviosimo personal'.

Colomé also abandons his interactivity and turns his back to the audience. The fourth wall between stage and stalls suggests that Basilio has lost his capacity for openness and communication (with his subjects) and hints at his tendency for authoritative soliloquising. He is no longer motivated by Poland's interests, but by the ambitions of the pseudo-scientist. Likewise, Colomé's vocal roughness (vs. the prior smoothness) implies an internal 'desconc[ierto]' that will not leave the King until the end.

Additionally, Otegui-Clotaldo shakes his head in refusal showing how his superior 'no acierta' in his plans. This reveals Basilio's *obstinación* and his propensity for *equivocaciones* (two negative psychological features presented in the introduction). Both Clotaldo *and* the King know that this wrongful plot/investigation is guided 'por intereses personales'. Nonetheless, Basilio stubbornly decides to go ahead with it, even after being warned of the mistake by Clotaldo, who is Segismundo's 'ayo' [1157] –that is, he who best knows the prisoner/patient and his possible reactions to the 'experimento palaciego'.

Furthermore, Colomé-Basilio's interaction with the object illustrates

> a truism of psychological realism: that actors inhabit the physical lives of their characters and in so doing exploit the behavioral possibilities inherent in all manner of stage props by, for example, reading a newspaper, […] fiddling with desktop items [or gazing into a *pebetero*].[242]

One of the most evident behavioural possibilities behind the player's employment of the cauldron is exposing Basilio's pathologic tendency for introspection. As this prop's emanation "speaks" only to and/or through the King, it represents a metonymic extension of

[242] Andrew Kimbrough, 'Revisiting Eva Marie Saint's White Glove: On Props, Neurons, Subtext, and Empathy', in *The Prop's the Thing: Stage Properties Reconsidered*, ed. by J. K. Curry (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2010), 99-115 (p. 104).

his solipsism and of his alienation from the external world (embodied by the cautioning Clotaldo and the once-addressed audience). Regarding the plot, this introvertive feature will amount to the King's tragic fall. The bellicose impulse from both Segismundo and the rebels is a consequence of the failure of the Palace project –which was supported by the *pebetero*: a mirror of the character's interiority. Therefore, this psychological shortcoming (established through the prop), along with his obstinacy and lack of foresight, constitutes Basilio's hamartia.

Later, when the King's downfall is evidenced by the war that he has brought upon himself, Colomé-Basilio interacts with the *pebetero* again. Alongside the use of the prop, the proxemic relationship between actors is important:

> en la escena VI, cuando Estrella se acerca a él (Basilio no tiene texto) se asoma en el pebetero encendido y colocado en el lado derecho del escenario […], como si escudriñara el futuro o trata[ra] de comprender el misterio de la suerte mutable.[243]

Estrella enters and tries to convince the inoperative King to fight the rebellion by warning him: 'Si tu presencia, gran señor, no trata | de enfrenar el tumulto sucedido…' [2460-2461]. Ignoring her, Basilio walks towards the *pebetero* –instead of 'trata[r] de enfrentar' the situation as a 'gran señor' would. When the King arrives next to it, he 'escudriñ[a]' more intently into it than before, exhibiting a narrowed interest similar to that of his autistic son. Further, like the Prince with the candlestick, the hypnotism produced by the green light alienates the King from the 'tumultoso' world.

To Basilio's left, Estrella reinforces: '…verás tu reino, en ondas de escarlata, | nadar entre la púrpura teñido…' [2460-2665], but the King is deaf and blind to his surroundings.

[243] Pérez-Rasilla, 'El Rey…', p. 387.

His reaction is null even when informed about the imminent 'ruina de [s]u imperio' [2468]. Basilio's psychological blindness (*no ve*) contrasts with the 'verás' of the niece's prompt waring, illustrating that 'Estrella in Spanish means star, which in seventeenth-century Spain, with its great seafaring tradition, could have connoted the one to follow when one is lost'.[244]

The King is lost, closed-off to both the surroundings and Estrella's intention to guide him along the right track. However, he is not blind to what emanates from the *pebetero*. Whatever that might be, it is not an answer to the (dire) *present* circumstances. Rather, through the cauldron, he perniciously 'trata de comprender' 'el *futuro*' or the *past* ('el misterio de la suerte' that has already taken place). This disconnection from current affairs reveals how the King is prone to fail in his ruling task –a feature that has led him to a tragic state: a good ruler should focus mainly on the *here* and *now* (especially with a war being waged against him).

Then, seeing such pathological introversion, Estrella pulls Basilio away from the *pebetero* and tells him: 'todo es desdichas, y tragedias todo' [2467] (fig. 17). A consequence of this very physical reminder of the reality from without is that Colomé-Basilio backs away from the prop – as if suddenly realising the noxious influence of it. His hands are protectively intertwined on his chest –instead of being obsessively clenched on the borders of the cauldron– and he finally looks at Estrella. These signs imply his emergence from his self-containment to the surface of the palpable present.

[244] Lech, p. 179.



Fig. 17. Basilio stubbornly gazes into the burning cauldron until Estrella pulls him away.

Estrella's pull highlights two of the King's psychological weaknesses: his *ensimismamiento* and his *obstinación*. Regarding the first, Estrella forces Basilio to detach from an object with which he is pathologically engrossed –to the point that he cannot respond to the political test with which he is confronted. Regarding the second, the King's stubbornness is evidenced by his inability to listen to the call for action from the outside world until his niece has used physical force against him. Only then can the King hear and see the state of his Kingdom: that 'cada edificio es un sepulcro altivo | cada soldado un esqueleto vivo' [2474-2475].

In conclusion, these scenes show that Basilio's conflict follows the opposite direction to Segismundo's: it is one of psychological deterioration. The stamina shown in the King's first

speech gradually decays as the play develops. Basilio substitutes Segismundo in resembling the patient of a mental institution. This inversion of roles (intrinsic to the play-text) means that, in scenes like those with the *pebetero*, Colomé has to externalise the self-absorption of the *autista*, the frenzy of the *loco*, and the obstinacy of the maniac, as his son did before. These psychic ailments provoke the King's *equivocaciones* that will cause his defeat – constituting, thus, his hamartia.

A similar dramatic arc is drawn in the première. Kingly confidence would have been portrayed by the *comediante* through rhetorical and static gestural means analogous to those presented by Colomé. The performance of Basilio's fall in this production is also comparable with its early modern precedent: in both, it entails an augmentation of physicality (although, in the first, it conveys psychological degradation and, in the second, spiritual corruption). Due to these two coincidences, Colomé-Basilio's plot-line belongs to the fundamentalist pole of adaptation (one of the only innovations is choosing a youngish actor to play the King).

II.2. Father and son's encounter: pauses, hesitations, repressions…

The first encounter between protagonists reveals another phase of the King's psychologised hamartia. After Criado's defenestration, the father enters asking: '¿Qué ha sido esto?' [1440]. The infantilised Prince answers jokingly: 'Nada ha sido. | A un hombre que me ha cansado | de este balcón he arrojado' [1440-1442]. Basilio's reaction is expressed by Colomé thus: 'luego al encontrarse con Segismundo por primera vez, después de haber defenestrado este a un criado, Basilio comunica su turbación mediante esa pausa intencionada que utiliza como muletilla'.[245]

[245] Fischer, 'Del texto…', p. 223.

'Pausa[s]' such as this one represent a common resource used to adapt early modern play-texts into the language of psychological realism. The following statement is as true for Shakespeare as it is for Calderón: in contemporary productions, 'the actor may introduce the classic markers of naturalistic dialogue, such as pauses and interruptions, into the early modern speech' to "revitalize" it.[246] Colomé expresses Basilio's internalised 'turbación' through the extra-textual indicator of growing silent. It also injects naturalism into the affected Calderonian verses (as "common" language abounds with analogous hiatuses). Therefore, by adding everyday paralinguistic "noise" into Golden Age dialogue, Colomé-Basilio's 'muletilla' represents another mechanism to make the conflict approachable to the audience. At the same time, it contrasts with the declamatory orientation of the King's first intervention.

Father and son face each other in silence, increasing the suspense. Then, Basilio approaches Segismundo. The following action is

> acompañada de ademanes peculiares: se quita las oscuras gafas cegadoras ya que está delante de su hijo; extiende la mano como para acariciarle la frente más la retira en seguida; se aclara la voz, y por poco tiene un nudo en la garganta al empezar a expresar su pesar en cuanto al "grave homicidio" cometido por el príncipe.[247]

Three 'ademanes peculiares' by Colomé-Basilio can be analysed in the light of the present psychological interpretation: (1) 'quitar[se]' the sunglasses; (2) 'retira[r]' the hand that is about to caress Segismundo; and (3) 'aclarar[se]' the voice.

(1) The action of taking off 'las oscuras gafas' implies that Basilio has descended another stage in his tragic fall (fig. 18). This is because, during the first scene, the sunglasses were an element that, along with the cape, symbolised the security and wisdom of an

[246] Barker, '"Deared…"', p. 46.
[247] Fischer, 'Del texto…', p. 223.

astrologer-King. Without them, Colomé portrays the loss of such values and reveals his vulnerability (the eyes being a prototypical site for the expression of feelings). The entailed fragility comes as he witnesses the failure of his experiment: with Criado's murder (and his trivial approach to it), Segismundo proves that his behaviour continues to be that of a mentally ill patient.



Fig. 18. Basilio takes his sunglasses off, implying deep psychological pain and conveying a negative stage of his fall.

Basilio's anguished expression suggests the repression of an internalised feeling as, in psychological realism, 'facial expression naturally has a one-to-one relationship with the emotional intensity of a performer; the face automatically forms the appropriate expressive configuration to match the inner emotion'.[248] The King's frown is an external correlative of

[248] Whitmore, p. 86.

an inner impulse –that of sadness provoked by both the incorrigible conduct of Segismundo and the failure of his experiment. However, this passion is not fully manifested (through words, for example), but only hinted at (by gestures): the father holds back from being over-expressive in front of a son who needs to learn to become more stoical.

(2) Afterwards, Colomé extends his hand to 'acariciarle la frente' to Segimundo and instantly withdraws it. This dual gesture is also the expression of a conflicted psychological inclination. Initially, an inherent feeling of love towards his son is insinuated. However, the full materialisation of this motivation is interrupted by a contrasting emotion: disappointment (which is triggered by the defenestration). The sudden ('en seguida') change from one drive to another *within* –and its expression *without,* through the divergent arm movement– exemplifies how García Valdés' actors display diverse and contradictory impulses to perform the status of their characters' conflict. This interpretation is faithful to the première, since the *comediante*-Basilio would also have accompanied the lines of this speech with a contrasting 'jugar de mano' to express disdain for Segismundo.

(3) The hesitation displayed by Colomé's gestures illustrates how 'realism and naturalism str[ive] to omit […] explicit presentations of passion, preferring rather to imply emotion than to describe it'.[249] An implication of feelings –rather than their explicit expression– is also exposed by Basilio's 'adem[án]' of 'aclarar[se] la voz'. The actor's paralinguistic features suggests that a passion wants to be verbalised (loving words to his son?); but it is suddenly repressed by another contrasting one (hatred towards a killer?). The 'nudo en la garganta' –produced by such opposition– prevents him from explicitly

[249] Barker, '"Deared…"', p. 50.

articulating his thoughts and emotions in an explicit way, allowing him only to hint at them. This conveys that the King has lost the oratorical fluency exhibited previously.

Overall, the three gestures that anticipate Basilio's dialogue make manifest that:

> la actuación realista es tanto la correspondencia o correlato entre signo exterior y vivencia interna (en el que ésta última es la causa), como lo inverso: la búsqueda inducida de una vivencia interna que justifique el gesto, la expresión o la acción que es necesario lograr para concretar el plan trazado por la puesta en escena.[250]

During the 20th-century, *La vida es sueño* was widely interpreted following techniques of 'la actuación realista'. García Valdés' production illustrates this through a particular psychologised inflection. A more specific case of such tendency is the performance of the father-son encounter, which abounds with 'gesto[s]' and 'expresi[ones]' –from Colomé– that are 'causa[dos]' –by Basilio's– conflicting 'vivencia[s] interna[s]'. Some of the inner motivations that can be deduced from the acting are: Basilio's problematic love for his son; his ambiguous responsibility as a monarch, a pseudo-scientist, and a father; and his own obstinate, ego-driven desire to implement his therapeutic experiment. Pauses, hesitations, and repentances contribute to convey a thematic ideal of this 'puesta en escena': 'concretar el plan trazado' of Basilio's moral and psychological debasement.

The King finally recites:

> ~~Pésame mucho que cuando,~~
> ~~príncipe, a verte he venido,*~~
> ~~pensando hallarte advertido,~~
> ~~de hados y estrellas triunfando,*~~
> ~~con tanto rigor te vea,~~
> y que la primera acción
> que has hecho en esta ocasión
> +un grave homicidio sea.
> […]

[250] Mauro.

…y, aunque en amorosos lazos
ceñir tu cuello pensé,
sin ellos me volveré,
que tengo miedo a tus brazos. [1448-1475]

As during Segismundo's presentation, the lines crossed-out above are almost imperceptible from the videorecording. Basilio's once-resounding intonation is now weak, echoing his internal fragility. The same can be said about the two pauses (asterisks above): they represent correlatives to an internalised sorrow. They are introduced precisely before Basilio's depressing acceptance of the failure of his plan (the recognition of the 'triunf[o]' of Segismundo's 'tanto rigor', rather than his rebuttal of the star's omens). Colomé's furrowed brow also reveals (without) this 'pesa[r]' (within).

The actor's hands are clenched together (maintaining the posture assumed after repenting of caressing Segismundo). However, just before mentioning the son's 'grave homicido', the father's arms suddenly jolt forwards (marked by the cross above). This twitch reveals the character's anxiety at the prospect of becoming another victim of his son's madness. Unexpected and uncontrolled body movements are a common consequence of fear –and cowardice is a flaw in any ruler, as in the première.

On a thematic level, the last four lines allude to: (1) Basilio's intention to embrace Segismundo and, instead, (2) 'volver[se]' 'sin ellos' ('[s]us brazos'). The repentance entailed by these words was literally performed moments before by Colomé (as analysed in the previous sub-section). These verses were anticipated and mimicked by the actor's contradictory arm movement (during the previous pause). Due to this verbal reiteration of the gestures already staged, Calderón's words can be re-interpreted either as a self-reflection on, or as a recommendation of, the acting style (to be) followed in the 1996 mise-en-scène: the players' stage business (should) possess an internal or mental motivation, depending on

the characters' dramatic status. That is why, for example, Colomé-Basilio's performance of 'ceñir tu cuello' and that of repentance of this expression were anticipated by 'pens[amientos]'.

Afterwards, the father realises that, by taking his glasses off, he has revealed these internal weaknesses. As a response, 'enseguida vuelve a ponerse Basilio las gafas, como si se arrepintiera de haber ido demasiado lejos, de haber sido demasiado sincero y quisiera protegerse de nuevo'.[251] 'Arrep[entimiento]' seems to be one of the most noticeable traits of Basilio, a problematic one in someone with responsibilities such as a King and father; 'sincer[idad]' is a feature rarely exhibited by him.

Then, father and son engage in a discussion regarding the sentimental debts owed to each other, as both actors run around the stage, inspired by their characters' intrinsic anger and embodying the *locura* that runs in the family's genes. Basilio shows 'un incontrolado pánico escondido bajo una violenta brusquedad exterior'.[252] The existence of an emotion 'bajo' the actor's movements and gestures is a basic tenet of psychological realism, entailing that, from now on, an 'incontrolable pánico' will be a central drive for the King's 'brus[co]' behaviour –another element of his hamartia. In the première, Basilio's fear would have also entailed an increase in the player's corporeality.

Colomé-Basilio's nervousness turns into anger, threatening to slap Segismundo after he calls him 'viejo y caduco' [1505]. However, he stops, repenting, once again, before fully completing the smack. Introspection –a mark of this staging's within-without binary– is hinted at by this repression, as 'el tono y el ademán del actor, pues, permiten que se manifieste

[251] Pérez-Rasilla, 'El Rey…', p. 385.
[252] Fischer, 'Del texto…', p. 221.

la emoción contendida bajo la palabra'.[253] 'Contenida bajo' the actor's 'ademán' is the King's inner motivation: the 'emoción' of fury aroused by Segismundo's insult. The result is the gestural implication of hesitation in: (1) the preparation of the slap (stimulated by Basilio's fury) and (2) the drawing of the hand back (as he realises that he is about to commit an indecorous action for a King).

To sum up, this moment in the plot emphasises that 'las dudas del rey Basilio deciden la acción dramática'.[254] Faithful to the play-text, this King's indecisions are greatly to be blamed for the war to come. One might wonder whether the events of the 1996 *La vida es sueño* could have turned out differently if Basilio had shown political security throughout and had not backed away from exhibiting love to the vengeful Segismundo. By stressing the father's hesitation in a psychological manner –embodied in, for example, the performance of Basilio's many repentances and pauses–, this production reveals one of its fundamentalist approaches to Calderón's *comedia*: Colomé-Basilio's psychic decadence mirrors the spiritual degradation of the première's King.

Additionally, the functionality of the gestures followed by Colomé here can be related to that displayed during both the première and the 2012 version. The actors from the three performances use their hands and arms to portray similar –negative– aspects of the King's characterisation. In the early modern theatre, the *comediante* probably portrayed *desdén* through a conventionalised and physicalised 'jugar de manos'. In 2012, Notario takes these histrionics a step further and, with clenched fists, hits the bench next to Portillo-Segismundo.

[253] Fischer, 'Del texto…', p. 224.
[254] María Andueza, 'Libertad/destino en *La vida es sueño* de Calderón', in *400 años*…, coord. by González, 139-154 (p. 145).

However, although Colomé uses his upper limbs for analogous meaning-making goals, they represent repression rather than the absolute embodiment of the sense of aggression (as in the other two). Consequently, Basilio's repentance from hostility confirms García Valdés' –dry– tendency to shy away from taking the most evident route to present critical/political insights in this drama: through violence.

II.3. The 'teatro funesto' scene: Basilio's *desquiciamiento*

In the 'teatro funesto' speech, Colomé underscores Basilio's psychotic aspects to connote his fall, while including a moment of anagnorisis. Two descriptions from theatre critics can be used as a starting point to examine it. First:

> …Basilio irrumpe en escena, primero corriendo, después andando en distintas direcciones, agitando, moviendo los brazos, gritando su parlamento (vv. 2428-2443), desaforado, perdiendo por momentos su habitual compostura, con intensidad y con desesperación que se acentúa progresivamente. La situación va adquiriendo un aire violento.[255]

Second, the following critique of the production as a whole can be applied to describe this scene in particular:

> Uno de estos montajes muy de ahora deja el escenario en una triste desnudez a la que otra manía actual, la obsesión de lo oscuro, suma en zonas larguísimas de invisibilidad. Probablemente para compensar, los actores y las actrices gritan que se las pelan y en vista de que el amplio escenario es un desierto en penumbra, tratan de llenarlo corriendo deportivamente del coro al caño y del caño al coro de los desolados metros vacíos de lo que la modernidad llama espacio escénico.[256]

Both authors highlight that Colomé conceived Basilio's speech 'gritando su parlamento' 'que se las pelan'. They affirmed that the blocking of the scene was 'andando en distintas direcciones' and 'corriendo deportivamente'. These 'desaforado[s]' verbal and gestural

[255] Pérez-Rasilla, 'El Rey…', p. 386.
[256] López.

features mark the King's ultimate 'p[érdida]' of 'compostura'. The final phase of his 'progresiv[a]' subjugation to his flaws is conceived by the actor looking 'bastante desquiciado en plena batalla' (as a third critic noticed).[257]

His entrance is anticipated by the sinister tolling of a minor chord, which preludes the acting of madness. Colomé 'irrumpe en escena', turning his back to the audience and reciting: '¿Quién, Astolfo, podrá parar, prudente, | la furia de un caballo desbocado?' [2438-2439]. By facing away from the stalls, Basilio establishes a contrast with the previous interactivity of an uncorrupted monarch. If this on-offstage communication conveyed openness, the establishment of the fourth wall evidences his despotic self-centredness.

Colomé says '¿Quién detener de un río la corriente | que corre al mar; soberbio y desbocado?' and turns away from Astolfo, extends his left arm, and looks at the left side of the stage. Then, his body rotates anti-clockwise while he yells to his nephew: '¿Quién un peñasco suspender, valiente, | de la cima de un monte, desbocado?'[258] By turning from left to right, the actor's body locates the sources of the character's adverse situation in the stage-space: due to his equivocations, he is surrounded by enemies storming from *all* directions. During the première's interpretation of this scene, the *comediante* would have had recourse to a similar use of gestures to draw imaginary spatial distinctions on the *corral* –a stage as bare as this one.

Additionally, the way these lines are performed –with frenetic kinesics– can be connected to the content of the words. The lack of 'pruden[cia]', 'soberbi[a]', and 'val[entía]' motivates the gestural expressions of a hopeless madman. These three values can be assigned to the initial Basilio and were conveyed through a monolithic posture. In contrast, now, the

[257] Fischer, 'Del texto…', p. 231.
[258] [2431-2433].

King is imprudent, un-sumptuous, and cowardly, and the corresponding body expression is unsteady.

These inner flaws are also disclosed through Colomé's use of space: he shuffles around the *tablado* (as if cowering away from the circumstances), losing the corporeal stability that was a sign of his past dignity. In the actor's interpretation as a whole, this seemingly anarchic employment of corporeality adds to the more reserved and subtle stage business from previous scenes. This provides Basilio's characterisation with contradictions, ambiguities, and very human flaws, illustrating how

> in the theatre body techniques can be as important as more overtly expressive behaviours, […] in the service of ever greater psychological realism (the way a person walks, runs, sits, and stands being fundamental to that person's being).[259]

The King's complex 'being' is also built by Colomé's act of dividing the next part of the speech into two verbal and gestural segments. The first line is said to Astolfo on the right side of the stage: 'Pues todo fácil de parar sería'; the second towards the dark and empty left border: 'más que del vulgo airado la osadía'.[260] The different focal points of these words reinforce Basilio's anxiety in front of an ambushing 'vulgo' –they come from left *and* right.

This fright contrasts with the rebel army's alluded 'airad[ez]'. His lack of 'osadía' is concretised by jolting kinesics and unfocused linguistic communication, which work in the service of the character's psychology. The latent critique here is that, when faced with adversity, daring and capable leaders should show firmness in their external expressions – rather than a lack of discipline.

[259] McAuley, p. 116.
[260] [2432-2433].

Additionally, by facing Astolfo and then turning away from him, Colomé emphasizes the King's hesitancy. Basilio cannot make up his mind between reacting to the war –with his nephew as his captain– or remaining stagnant with fear. This indecision contrasts with Astolfo's bellicose resolution, which is expressed later: 'Dadme un caballo y, de arrogancia lleno, | rayo se vuelva el que blasona trueno'.[261]

Colomé-Basilio then looks to the back of the stage and sprints towards it, reciting: 'Díganlo en bandos el rumor partido'. At the border, the designer placed two immense walls with a gap between them. The actor stops before this opening and says: 'pues se oye resonar en lo profundo | de los montes el eco repetido'. The space mirrors the text as the 'montes' are represented by the two panels of the scenery and the abysmal 'profund[idad]' (where the echo repeats itself) by the opening.

Still looking into the gap, the King screams 'unos "Astolfo"'. Then, he compliments: 'y otros "¡Segismundo!"' [2436-2439]. However, as he mentions his son, his tone is pessimistic. He has also turned and faces the inside of the stage. Why does Colomé-Basilio suddenly change his interpretation from disarray to depression? What is the inner motivation for such an external mutation?

The answer can be found in the fact that, beyond the purpose of illustrating the words in the text, the scenery acquires a particular symbolic function here, since 'las medidas desproporcionadas de las paredes, y el cielo vigilante que acecha tras ellas, ponen de relieve la vulnerabilidad del hombre'.[262] This scene represents the only time in the production when an actor interacts with these props –projecting them from the background and granting them

[261] [2450-2451].
[262] Nieto.

metaphorical meaning. Hence, nowhere is man's –Basilio's– vulnerability more accentuated than when Colomé comes close to these elements in order to re-signify them.

This symbolism also depends on the fact that, as Colomé comes closer to the walls and away from the audience, the scenery makes him look –literally– microscopic and –metaphorically– defenceless. The external world (which is the immediate referent for Vergier's décor) seems to be eating away the King's initial monolithic bearing. This contrast is reinforced by the play-text: Basilio confronts the excruciating circumstances of the 'resona[ntes]' armies, physically and psychologically dwarfed by the surrounding 'montes', and suffocated by the 'profund[idades]'. If, at the beginning, the throne –forcing a hieratic posture from the actor– conveyed the King's self-assurance, here, the massive walls –minimising his anatomy– connote the opposite: the sweeping victory of his flaws set against an imposing environment.

Basilio's realisation that he confronts a 'desproporcionad[a]' situation brings about another symptom of his melancholic *ensimismamiento*. Colomé mumbles the words of the soliloquy –making the spectator think Basilio is speaking to himself. This action implies that the character is undergoing a state of personal recognition or self-reflection that stands for the character's anagnorisis. The King has finally become aware that his many political equivocations have led him and Poland to this most susceptible state –a susceptibility figuratively suggested by his smallness in front of the walls. This awareness is further emphasised by Basilio when, lines later, he accepts his culpability: 'yo mismo, yo, mi patria he destrüido' [2459].

Then, Colomé walks towards the spectators, addressing the following lines directly (fig. 19):

<u>El trono de Polonia reducido</u>

con artera intención a horror segundo
teatro funesto es, donde importuna
representa tragedias la fortuna.[263]

In this production, the meaning of the meta-dramatic moments (of actor-audience interaction) is achieved through two resources: (1) the content of words recited and (2) the action taking place.[264] Hence, its function in this scene is opposed to that fulfilled during Colomé-Basilio's introductory speech. At the beginning, Basilio talked –to us– about a rationalised plan to solve Poland's immediate problem: being heirless; at the end, he accepts (with an irrational tone) that the same throne has been cheapened due to Segismundo's rebellion. As opposed to the verbal strength displayed then, now, Colomé recites the lines underlined above with an *aflautamiento* similar to the Prince's. Faithful to this play's change of roles, the father's voice assumes the negative connotations associated with the son's tone: its high-pitch is symptomatic of psychic disfunction.

Additionally, Basilio's seated/standing opposition acquires new symbolism with the actor's pace. As he recites these lines, Colomé emerges from the dwarfed position assumed in relation to the backwalls. His silhouette becomes bigger and more hostile as he comes closer to the audience (he is intent upon reaching us). This hostility is opposed to Basilio's gentleness as he sits and recites his introductory speech from a middle-stage position.

The text implies that Basilio considers himself part of a metatheatrical abomination: he is an actor trapped inside of a 'teatro funesto'. In quixotic fashion, this self-referential delusion is related to the corruption of his rational mind, which has witnessed the traumatic 'reduc[ción]' of his Kingdom by the civil war. Part of his hallucination is the public (the

[263] [2440-2443]
[264] As Lech, 'I am using metatheatre in a broad manner as a theatrical work that engages with itself as a theatre that is a space of interactions between actors and audiences, in short, a space of performance': p. 176.

audience being a central aspect of theatre), which menaces him to further shatter his sanity. As a reaction, Basilio approaches the spectators with the intention to expel the fictional nightmare from his visual field by means of his towering figure and hostile approach. Consequently, one of Calderón's most distinguishing stylistic features –metatheatre– is used to establish two radically different points of characterisation in 1996: the King's security (during his presentation) and his madness (during his degradation).

Finally, he is stopped by Astolfo before arriving at the front row and further expressing the uncomfortable harassment of a 'desquicia[do]' towards the audience. The nephew pulls the King's fixated body and forces him to face and hear him: 'Suspéndase, señor, el alegría…' [2444]. Basilio's solipsistic mirage is shattered ('susp[endido]') by the physical action of a secondary character. As with Estrella, Astolfo connotes both his own bellicose decisiveness (as opposed to the King's passivity) and his uncle's disconnection with the surroundings (as opposed to his engagement).



Fig. 19. In the final act of his dramatic and psychological degradation, Basilio looks directly at the audience.

In conclusion, there is a tendency in contemporary adaptations of the 'teatro fuesto' scene to perform it with extreme physical agility –a fact that is faithful to the *corporal* technique probably followed by the *comediante* (although not always implying *temor*). However, in each of the three CNTC versions, the actors use their body to imply different features of their respective Basilios' decadence: madness (here), victimhood (in 2000), and emotional disarray (in 2012). This divergent conception of the King's final characterisation is owing to each director's interpretation of a contemporary theatrical style: psychological realism (here), physical theatre (in 2000), and emotional acting (in 2012).

Colomé's legacy as the first Basilio of the CNTC is paradoxical. As with Segismundo, his engagement with violence is not persistent enough to be considered a thematic feature

that the performance intends to question –losing, as a consequence, a degree of critical edge or "wetness". He even prefers to reconfigure and mollify his character's latent aggressiveness through repression and hesitation. However, in this last scene, the spectators are forced to witness one of the most daunting consequences of psychologically inflicted trauma through the figure of the King: the loss of ontological certainty, of the limits between reality and delusion. The audience can feel the hints of a distancing effect or frisson, which is valuable in terms of the almost non-existent politics of this production.

Conclusion: critical *ensimismamiento*

I have shown how the performance of the CNTC 1996 *La vida es sueño* has the intention of portraying the main roles in a psychological light. Segismundo and Basilio are acted by Mari Sánchez and Colomé, who consider the tools of characterisation proper to the theatrical language of psychological realism. They conceive the protagonists as possessing an inner life that justifies or motivates their external expressions. The within/without interplay acquires the form of psychopathology, with the dramatic conflict of son and father interpreted in terms of mental dysfunctions.

In order to characterise Segismundo as a *loco* and *autista,* Mari Sánchez initially follows at least four acting resources: (1) paralinguistic features such as his *aflutada* voice; (2) his gestures, including the fidgeting head and smirk; (3) his movement around the stage, embodied by his frenetic sprints and his *ensimismamiento*; and (4) his proxemic relationships with other characters/actors, exemplified by his fetishism regarding the ladies' hands and his depressed submission to the rebel soldiers. These aspects gradually mutate to portray the Prince's –partial– dramatic evolution: (1) his voice becomes deep and resonant; (2) his posture is more hieratic and stable; (3) his pace is steady and calm; and (4) he shows

sociability towards others. The reason behind such a behavioural adaptation is the –partial– success of a therapeutic process: Mari Sánchez shows that the sanction of Segismundo's second imprisonment and the clinical experiment of the Palace scene have somehow worked. I insist on calling it a *partially* successful therapy and a *partial* dramatic evolution since the Prince displays what can be interpreted (by more sceptical audiences) as remnants of the psychiatric disorders during the final moments of the dénouement.

On the other hand, Colomé initially denotes Basilio as a strong and capable King through: (1) his paralinguistic features –a particular attention to declamation–; (2) his body movement –a seated position–; (3) his blocking –a monolithic bearing–; and (3) his proxemic relationships –a direct address to the public. However, the actor soon adapts these features to convey an individual who, like his son, is driven by internal turmoil. From the first *pebetero* scene until the end of the production, he displays: (1) a lower tone of voice and hesitant pauses in his speech; (2) repentance in his arms and hand gestures and the facial expressions that imply repressed emotions; (3) his frenetic running; and (4) stubbornly gazing into the self-serving cauldron and ignoring other characters and the audience. These externalised aspects of Colomé's performance portray the King's gradual path towards his final psychic corruption.

One of the reasons behind presenting a psychologised and realistic version of *La vida es sueño* is to update and humanise Calderón's supposedly outdated, abstract drama. If, superficially, this modernisation seems reformist in its interpretation of the play-text, upon closer inspection it might actually exemplify the opposite. This is because contemporary criticism has come to discover, dust-off, and revisit 'la intuición psicológica de Calderón',

and the practice of the *comedia* might have lagged behind.[265] An example of such intuition and its connection to the present argument is the early modern *espiritual* technique, which would have been employed during more reflexive and introspective moments of the performance or to present the character's internal feelings and thoughts –although in many cases with a moral intention behind (e.g., Segismundo's dénouement).[266]

Similar meaning-making aims are interpreted in García Valdés' use of psychological realism, characterising his mise-en-scène as fundamentalist in its most general approach: that of the choice of theatrical language. However, such method of staging contains several specific features which are innovative (at least regarding Calderón's text). The most crucial one is the tendency to pathologise psychology –that is, to understand the protagonists' conflicts in terms of their positive or negative relation to their inner derangements. However, as noted in this chapter's introduction, previous productions of this *comedia* had also portrayed Segismundo's and Basilio's internalisation and *ensimismamiento* before García Valdés –thus reducing the reach and weight of his aesthetic input into the history of *La vida es sueño*'s performances.

Regarding its importance in terms of ideological and political objectives, García Valdés' modernising the play-text this way paradoxically involves failing to engage with what I think is the most contemporary aspect of Calderón's drama: violence. This is because psychopathology renders these characters blameless for their behaviour by taking away agency and assigning it to an un-called for, inevitable, and incurable "illness"; it makes them

[265] Ontañón, p. 137.
[266] The connection between the première's style of the *espiritual* and psychological realism is further evidenced if you 'read Stanislavski and his proponents and one finds a *spiritual* rhetoric which valorizes emotion and the inner life': Bridget Escolme, *Emotional Excess on the Shakespearean Stage: Passion's Slaves* (London: Bloomsbury Arden Shakespeare, 2014), p. xxiv.

hesitant to fully conceive aggression and/or forces them to repress it; or, more generally, it weakens the instinctive expression of anger –for instance, through fetishisation. Autism, immaturity, solipsism, and obstinacy steal Segismundo's and Basilio's responsibility for an assassination and for Poland's misery. To recapitulate only two of the clearest examples relating to the utmost show of violence –that is, war: the Prince is forced to take part in it by the rebels and the King shows uncertainty between responding to the call for battle or remaining idly soliloquising with the cauldron.

As the play-text implies, and the other two CNTC productions demonstrate, the stress on Segismundo's cold-blooded *fiereza* and/or on Basilio's physicalised abusiveness were possible routes to be taken by the director. Consciously or unconsciously, García Valdés decides to ignore this –"softening" the conflict (perhaps to please the conservative audience of mid-90s Spain). Instead, the portrayal, reflection, and questioning of cruelty takes a secondary role –literally– as it is embodied by *secondary* characters: Clotaldo, the rebel army, Astolfo, and, even, Estrella.

Due to such clear avoidance to critically provoke and politically engage with the audience, the 1996 CNTC production should be catalogued as dry/fundamentalist: it is cerebral (psychological) rather than physical (passionate); realistic rather than abstract; and, most of all, conservative rather than radical. In 2000, Bieito strove –to the point of exaggeration– to challenge this show of (performative and) critical *ensimismamiento* (the protagonist's main featuring influencing the mise-en-scène's tone). In doing so, as the next chapter shows, he created the first truly political version of the play ever seen on the Spanish stage.

Chapter III: Physicality, Violence, and Voyeurism in Poland/Castile:
Bieito's CNTC 2000 *La vida es sueño*

Introduction: physicality/complicité, violence/victimisation, and politics

Calixto Bieito's *La vida es sueño* (co-produced by the CNTC and Focus) premièred on 27 March 2000, at the Teatre Romea, Barcelona.[267] An English-language version of the mise-en-scène had already been successfully staged in New York and London. This auspicious reception was not fully shared by the Spanish spectators, something not uncommon in the assessment of the work of European theatre's enfant terrible whose 'vivid productions have electrified audiences and challenged the critics'.[268] The ambiguous judgement notwithstanding, both detractors and supporters pointed to (1) two acting and (2) two thematic aspects which function to convey (3) the production's political implications –the most idiosyncratic angle of 'Bieito's revisionist view'.[269] This tripartite partition structures the following analysis.

(1) Regarding the acting resources, the 2000 mise-en-scène is, initially, (a) 'una apuesta por la acción física y la gestualidad de los actores'.[270] The second aspect (b) is based on the fact that the director 'ha tratado de hacer un montaje "interactivo" en el que los actores

[267] *La vida es sueño*, Compañía Nacional de Teatro Clásico, dir. by Calixto Bieito, Teatro Romea, Barcelona, 2000 (Archive video, Centro de Documentación Teatral): <http://teatroclasico.mcu.es/2010/08/28/la-vida-es-sueno-2000/> [Accessed 5/10/2019]. It should be noted that the work of a consecrated Castilian author (Calderón) was staged in a Catalan theatre –unlike the other CNTC's *La vida es sueño* which premièred at the very Madrid-centred Almagro. This happened during the celebrations of the fourth centenary of the author's death.

[268] Michael Coveney, 'Shock treatment', *The Guardian*, 7 August 2004: <https://www.theguardian.com/music/2004/aug/07/classicalmusicandopera> [Accessed 14/06/2021]. For an example of the rejection of Bieito's approach, see: Juan Antonio Vizcaíno, 'Los rotuladores del Prado', *La Razón*, 10 October 2000: <http://elmeteoritodelteatro.blogspot.com/2010/07/los-rotuladores-del-prado.html> [Accessed 14/10/2019].

[269] Michael Billington, 'Blood and Guts', *The Guardian*, 30 March 2002: https://www.theguardian.com/culture/2002/mar/30/culturaltrips.art [Accessed 14/07/2020].

[270] Purificació Mascarell, 'Revisión del canon clásico y transgresión escénica: *La vida es sueño* de Calderón por Calixto Bieito (2000)', *Cuadernos de Aleph*, 7 (2015), 129-150 (p. 137).

comparten sus monólogos con el público'.[271] This chapter examines how Joaquín Notario (Segismundo) and Carlos Álvarez (Basilio) employ physical action (a) and on-offstage interactivity (b) to convey the protagonists' characterisation and their dramatic conflict.

(A) The first aspect, gesturalism, is a characteristic of 'physical-theatre' in which 'the primary means of creation occurs through the body rather than through the mind' or the word.[272] Physicality highlights the corporeally-, movement- and space-oriented features of a given production, rather than its declamatory and cerebral ones. Hence, it belongs to the wet category of adaptation and is normally connected to the reformist approach.

(B) On the other hand, the production's second feature, interactivity, is encompassed by 'the term complicité [that] defines the relationship struck between actor and audience which operates when "performer and audience create the piece together"'. Actor-audience complicité usually partakes of dramatic practices such as Bieito's, as 'physically-based theatre is predicated on an absence of any fourth wall, allowing a direct and open relationship to operate, a heightened imaginative collusion between spectators and the action on stage'.[273] Both (a) and (b) are intrinsically related since an emphatic body expression –rather than a more subtle one– is essential to engage the onstage with the offstage. Consequently, a question scrutinized here is: how does (a) the actors' gesturally energetic stage business in the 2000 adaptation (b) invite the spectators to construct the dramatic, thematic, and/or political meaning of this version?[274]

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[271] Belen Ginart, 'Calixto Bieito afirma que "La vida es sueño" es el "Hamlet" del teatro español', *El País*, 22 March 2000: <https://elpais.com/diario/2000/03/22/catalunya/953690857_850215.html> [Accessed 11/10/2019].

[272] Dymphna Callery, *Through the Body. A Practical Guide to Physical Theatre* (London: Routledge, 2001), p. 4.

[273] Callery, p. 104.

[274] The director's conception of theatrical interactivity can be interpreted as fundamentalist regarding the première for: 'en este espectáculo h[a] intenatado volver a los orígenes de la obra, que pretendía involucrarse

(2) The primary function of these two acting resources is to establish the two main themes of this production: violence and victimisation. Through physicality and complicité, 'el director parece haber querido hacer de esta obra un emblema dramático de la violencia'.[275] Victims appear as a consequence of violence, revealing that 'sin apenas reescribir a Calderón, este montaje ahonda en las miserias humanas'.[276] Bieito divides his Poland into the inflictors of abuse (Segismundo and Clarín) and those who suffer from it (Basilio, Rosaura, and Criado). Why, from all the play's themes, did the director choose the cruelty/suffering binary to emblematically rewrite *La vida es sueño*?

(3) There is an ideological reason behind the thematisation of brutality. Bieito's political re-reading of Calderón's script might be influenced by the ideas of one of the precursors of physical and interactive theatre: Antonin Artaud. For Artaud –and his Theatre of Cruelty–, as for Bieito:

> l'action du théâtre […] est bienfaisante, car poussant les hommes à se voir tels qu'ils sont, elle fait tomber le masque, elle découvre le mensonge, la veulerie, la bassesse, la tartuferie…[277]

An action-oriented *La vida es sueño* aims to unmask contemporary audience's problematic relationship with violence and victimisation. Abuse and martyrdom are conceived through *on*stage resources –physicality and complicité– and are meant to inspire the questioning of their *off*stage correlatives, ideally to improve social 'mensonge[s]' and 'bassesse[s]'. Bieito pushes the spectators to see themselves as they are, placing the act of watching at the centre

con el público al modo en que lo hace un actor de cabaret': Calixto Bieito, 'Conversaciones con el Director de *La vida es sueño*', *Cuadernos de teatro clásico*, 15 (2001) 97-100 (p. 98).

[275] Pedraza, 'Tres espectáculos…', p. 32.

[276] Sergio Adillo Rufo, 'La adaptación de un texto clásico para su puesta en escena hoy. El caso de *La vida es sueño*', in *Diálogos…,* ed. by Bastianes, 1-21 (p. 13).

[277] Antonin Artaud, *Œuvres complètes IV* (Paris: Gallimard, 1964), p. 39. Bieto's style is linked to Artaud's notions of theatre: 'su apuesta por la tragedia (Shakespeare, Calderón, Valle) culmina en espectáculos transgresores, en los que campea el sexo y la violencia en una suerte de nuevo teatro de la crueldad': Huerta, s.v. Bieito, Calixto, p. 84.

of this adaptation's ethical debate (an act metaphorised by the massive mirror of the setting which reflects the house).

To assign critical weight to *seeing*, the actors constantly place the public in a situation of 'complicit voyeurism': instances 'when the audience is forced to observe a moment of violence involving nudity and[/or] humiliation and is unable to intervene'. The on-offstage (physical) interactivity assigns the spectators an uncomfortable role, underscoring their sensation of helpless fixity. Once digested, this experience might motivate them to reflect about analogous moments in the space where their position is (relatively) un-fixed: the extra-fictional world. In other words, the shock created by the imposition of observing abuse –in a sexualised fashion– 'becomes an active source of pleasure which can heighten the viewing experience and deliver a thrilling ride of emotions and insight'.[278] The transmission of insight through sight, or reflection through emotion, is discussed as one of this version's main –wet and reformist– contributions to the history of *comedia* in performance (in relation, mainly, to the other two drier and more conservative CNTC productions of *La vida es sueño*).[279]

The order of the chapter is as follows: Part I centres on three salient moments of Notario-Segismundo characterisation as a corporeal, interactive, and violent individual. It shows how dark comedy and sexual aggression guide the Prince's conflict, while stimulating the public's critical (self-)questioning of abuse. Part II focuses on Álvarez-Basilio and his

[278] George Rodosthenous, 'Introduction: Staging at the Forbidden: Legitimizing Voyeurism', in *Theatre as Voyeurism. The Pleasures of Watching*, ed. by George Rodosthenous (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 1-25 (p. 7 and 17). The actors' 'engaging in […] body techniques' and 'subjected to extreme conditions […] force the spectator into a voyeuristic complicity with the violence and reveal a troubling underside to the "performance contract"': McAuley, p. 120.

[279] *Comedia* researchers have mostly disregarded the role played by the audience in the contemporary stagings of Calderón and Lope. An example of how other scholars have approached spectatorship as a pathway to study classic authors in performance is: Matteo A. Pangallo and Peter Kirwan (eds.), *Shakespeare's audiences* (New York: Routledge, 2021). Hence, this chapter is a contribution to this emerging field in the research of Golden Age drama.

physical show of weakness and victimisation. It argues that these features –presented through complicité– are the root of the King's tragic fall and trigger insights about the onlookers' attitudes towards the abused. The conclusion discusses Bieito's politics in light of Calderón's intentions and the fundamentalist/reformist and wet/dry dichotomies.

The scenographic elements of the 2000 *La vida es sueño* need to be introduced before the analysis begins. The feature that initially distinguishes this from the other CNTC productions is its agitated tempo. Bieito tries to 'potenciar' the dramatic-arc by executing it 'a un ritmo de thriller' and ensuring that 'el ritmo va[ya] endiabladamente rápido'.[280] This swiftness works to keep the spectators on the edge of their seats, making them vulnerably close to the staged violence.

The sombre palettes of Velázquez, Goya, and Buñuel serve as visual inspiration for the stage-décor and lighting design by Bieito and his scenographer (Carles Pujol), creating a minimalistic but highly evocative space.[281] An example of this semiotic richness is how they 'hici[eron] un círculo de grava que podría ser la piedra de El Escorial después de caer una bomba'.[282] Even the most minute detail of the scenery –the design of the floor– is subservient to the director's thematisation of violence. Brutality is more befittingly orchestrated when it takes place in the debris of an equally brutal event: a bombardment. The reference to El Escorial stems from the director's ideological objective: the story of political turmoil –of an

[280] Bieto, 'Conversaciones…', p. 98.
[281] See: Hilda Cabrera, 'Un renacentista en el San Martín', *Página 12*, November 30 2009: <http://www.pagina12.com.ar/diario/suplementos/espectaculos/10-16169-2009-11-30.html> [Accessed 11/02/2021].
[282] Bieito, 'Conversaciones…' p. 99.

heirless Kingdom and its civil war– develops among the rubble of one of the most recognisable symbols of Spanish (monarchic) identity.

The most symbolically fertile element of the scenery is a 'giant suspended mirror […] where the audience [is] as implicated as the performers'.[283] By its motion up and down and from side to side, this prop functions to convey a change of physical or metaphysical location: 'el gran espejo de mil kilos [a] veces es el cielo del campo de batalla, a veces el espejo del palacio, a veces la búsqueda del yo'.[284] However, it has a complementary, more emblematic role: as it points offstage, the 'audience's complicity' is emphasised as the 'mirror that hangs above them in an increasingly precarious manner implicates them both visually and metaphorically in the onstage action'.[285] At several moments, the mirror's reflection allows the spectators to *see* themselves voyeuristically *seeing* unscrupulous behaviour (whose ethical ramifications, as will be shown, can be disputed and amended).

The music also possesses a double functionality: first, to transition between scenes and, second, to stress the thematic courses of the performance. To transmit the latter, Bieito chose the genre of flamenco. The duo of José Miguel Cerro's vocals and Manuel Gómez's *cajón* is charged to underscore that:

> si *La vida es sueño* es una obra que plantea interrogantes sobre el significado de la existencia y sobre el papel que cada uno desempeña en ella, el flamenco, con su hondura y su desgarro, es ideal para mostrar la desesperación, la angustia o el sinsentido humanos.[286]

Singing and drumming provide the acoustic atmosphere of anguish, a background suitable for this nihilistic staging. At the same time, they complement –viscerally and sensorily– the

[283] María M. Delgado, 'Calixto Bieito: A Catalan Director on the International Stage,' *Theatre Forum*, 26 (2005), 10-24 (p. 22).
[284] Bieito, 'Conversaciones…', p. 99.
[285] Wheeler, *Golden Age*…, p. 202.
[286] Mascarell, 'Revisión…', p. 142.

production's cognitive aims: 'plantea[r] interrogantes' about human senselessness (and the role 'cada uno desempeña' when seeing and hearing it). Additionally, as with El Escorial, flamenco is intrinsically connected to the notion of Spanish national identity –a notion that Bieito is keen to dispute (presenting its most 'desgarra[antes]' visages).

Finally, fascism represents the bridge between violence and Spanish politics. The mid-20th-century costume design by Mercè Paloma is the element that recalls the specter of Francoism most clearly. For example, along with the rebel soldier's costume, that of 'Clotaldo [denota] a un militar de cualquier dictadura'.[287] The constant references to the (recent) turbulent history of Spain –such as the 'dictadura'– remind the audience of their own socio-political context, rather than of Calderón's cultural horizon (as in 2012). For, as Bieito stated, 'para mí esa Polonia tiene mucho que ver con Castilla'.[288] It is with this Poland/Castile as background that Notario-Segismundo's and Álvarez-Basilio's performance develops.

Part I: Notario-Segismundo

I.1. Imitating the *brutos*: Segismundo's animalisation and haptic touch

Segismundo's first words are screamed, not recited, from beyond the stage: '¡Ay, mísero de mí! ¡Y ay, infelice!' [102]. Notario's paralinguistic features associate the 'm[iserable]' and 'infeli[z]' condition with anger –rather than with other more internalised drives, as has been traditionally interpreted (e.g., the *ensimismamiento* of the 1996 Prince). This link gives away

[287] Bieito, 'Conversaciones…', p. 99. Another example of the thematisation of fascism that, due to the constraint of this study, will not be addressed is: 'that the declamatory style closely resembled traditions nurtured in the dictatorship period was indicative of the deliberative cultivation of a Francoist aesthetic': Wheeler, *Golden Age*…, p. 202.
[288] Bieito, 'Conversaciones…', p. 99.

Bieito's paradoxical directorial approach from the start: both iconoclastic to theatrical conventions of his time (reformist) and faithful to Calderón (fundamentalist). Indeed, he defends the introduction of violence as the play's sub-text –a variation from previous productions– with an argument based on the script: 'en esta obra, las palabras ira, violencia, rabia y furia son las que más se repiten, porque trata de personas que intentan apaciguar su ira y su odio'.[289] The 'person[a]' whose struggle against 'ira' and 'odio' is the most strenuous is Segismundo –and this atypical characterisation is supported by the director's close reading.

Driven by textually inspired 'furia', Segismundo enters running. As Notario arrives at the front, he frantically kneels on floor, introducing his 'performance of Olympic athleticism'.[290] In the meantime, the audience's senses are hit by the clamorous drumming of the *cajón* and the visceral *quejíos* from the flamenco duo.

Those in the stalls must have experienced the impact of the 'furi[osa]' appearance of the half-naked animal-man very vividly: Notario has just enough space to stop before flying offstage and colliding with them. This inaugurates a series of episodes in which the actors' emphatic kinesics –literally– brush the audience. Notario's entrance can be read in light of a critique made of the prodution as a whole: 'en muchos momentos, al revolcarse los intérpretes por el suelo, la gravilla sale disparada hacia el público cercano a la batería […] Laura Olmo, recibió un "gravillazo" en un ojo'.[291] The protagonist's skid at the limit of the stage projects these stones beyond it, potentially harming someone fixed to their seat (like Laura Olmo).

This dangerous arrival contrasts with Mari Sánchez's cowed entrance –as the actor respected the fourth wall, through inner monologue. In contrast, Notario ignores the

[289] Bieito, 'Conversaciones…', p. 98.
[290] Ben Brantley, 'Metaphysical Wrestling, With No Holds Barred', *The New York Times*, 14 October 1999, p. 5.
[291] Arcadio Baquero, 'Extravagante homenaje a Calderón de la Barca', *ABC Madrid*, 16 October 2000, p. 122.

fictional/non-fictional barrier and projects elements belonging to the first into the latter. The latent or tangible damage experienced from these *gravillazos* conveys a moment of actor-audience complicité. It allows those close to the 'batería' to experience first-hand –and, hence, to cognitively assemble– the main feature of Segismundo's characterisation: violence.

Notario remains silent for the audience to focus on how:

> Segismundo se presenta como un energúmeno (pura energía represada que estalla). Haro Tecglen recordaba, con razón, las creaciones de La Fura dels Baus: violencia agresiva o acobardada, según las situaciones. Su cabeza rapada, la pesada cadena que arrastra y hace girar peligrosamente, el torso desnudo y sudoroso son una eficacísima trasliteración al moderno alfabeto escénico del traje de pieles con que Calderón concibió a su protagonista.[292]

A depiction as an 'energúmeno' touches upon the two main features of this Segismundo: he is a 'persona furiosa, alborotada'.[293] These adjectives are also faithful to the première's Prince who, at first, was furious and kinetically rowdy (*motorio*). His initial 'repres[ión]' and consequent 'estalla[r]' were embodied by the image of Mount Etna –which Notario's body language emulates as well.

Fury further materialises in the handling of the chain, which the actor spins 'peligrosamente'. As with the gravel, the employment of this prop directs a sense of palpable hazard from on- to offstage. When Notario twirls the chain, the spectators probably flinch for fear that it might transcend the stage and hit them. Their discernment of a diegetic event is complemented with a somatic (extra-diegetic) reaction, reinstating the audience-actor complicité: Segismundo's anger is fully intelligible once it has been felt in the audience's own skin.

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[292] Pedraza, 'Tres espectáculos…', pp. 32-33.

[293] Real Academia Española, *Diccionario de la lengua española*, s.v. energúmeno: <https://dle.rae.es/?id=FGH7SjO> [Accessed 12/10/2019].

The comparison with 'las creaciones de La Fura dels Baus' exhibits Bieito's exploration of avant-garde aesthetics, such as those staged by the Catalan company through their employment of physicality and interactivity.[294] La Fura's forward-looking stamp is coupled with corporeal action, for their manifesto extols their 'capacidad de unir y adaptar carnalidad y misticismo'. Their poetic declaration also alludes to the fact that they (very "wetly") 'redefinieron el espacio de actuación –trasladándolo a espacios no convencionales– y cambiaron de pasivo a activo el papel del público, rompiendo de esta forma la "cuarta pared"'.[295]

A Fura-like carnality can be appreciated in Notario's naked torso and athletic entrance, which are inserted into the ambience of 'misticismo' proper to 'un cuento tenebroso con una magia oscura y castellana' (as Bieito describes his mise-en-scène).[296] Additionally, a meaning-making technique shared by the 2000 actors and La Fura is to transcend the non-conventional space in which they insert their staging. Through the sensory stimulating elements of such space (e.g., the *gravillazos* and chain), Bieito's players stir the audience to viscerally experience brutality, the chief subject of the production –thus shifting their role from 'pasivo a activo'.

A fundamentalist aspect supplements these reformist features: Segismundo's demeanour recalls the première's skin costume. The 'trasliteración' from the "original" disguise to the contemporary one entails that both Princes are introduced as uncivilised beings, owing to their lack of human clothing (symbolism re-applied to Álvarez-Basilio at the end). This foreshadows Segismundo's animalised hamartia, which will be portrayed in

[294] To appreciate La Fura's "wetness", see *Accions* (1984): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qx-WEL0_6Hk> [Accessed 2/06/2021].
[295] See, La Fura dels Baus webpage, at: <https://www.lafura.com/la-fura/> [Accessed 9/09/2019].
[296] Bieito, 'Conversaciones…', p. 99.

subsequent scenes through kinetically rich stage business. The 2000 Segismundo's dramatic arc is drawn neither by his psychology (as in 1996) nor by his emotions (as in 2012), but by his blind passion (as, probably, in 1629-1636). Regarding this re-working of the Prince's instinctive flaw, Bieito affirms that: 'en aquellos años [the 1600s], los actores no conocían a Stanislavski [as in 1996] ni tenían idea del método [as in 2012]'.[297] Unfaithfulness to the contemporary performative tradition renders this version, paradoxically, faithful to Golden Age practice.

Notario then glances at the house with confusion, acknowledging the presence of voyeuristic witnesses (and possible victims) of his chaos. He starts very quietly: 'Apurar, cielos, pretendo…' [103]). However, Notario's enunciation grows louder until the end of the speech, where he (literally) spits the words to those seated, letting them experience his cruelty very vividly.

As he recites '¿qué privilegios tuvieron | que yo no gocé jamás?' [121-122], he slams the chains on the gravel. They fall menacingly close to the first row, stirring the public to carnally feel (owing to the potential harm) Segismundo's resentment for 'privilegios' 't[enidos]' by the animals and 'jamás' by him. The audience's true acknowledgement of the motivations that trigger part of Segismundo's conflict –his furious quest to 'go[zar]' such denied rights– highly depends on the relationship established between this hostile action (onstage) and their frightful *re*action to it (offstage). Additionally, this semiotically consequential use of a prop contrasts with Mari Sánchez's delicate handling of the relatively

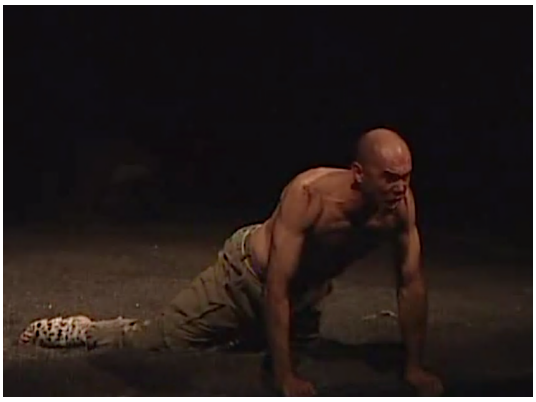
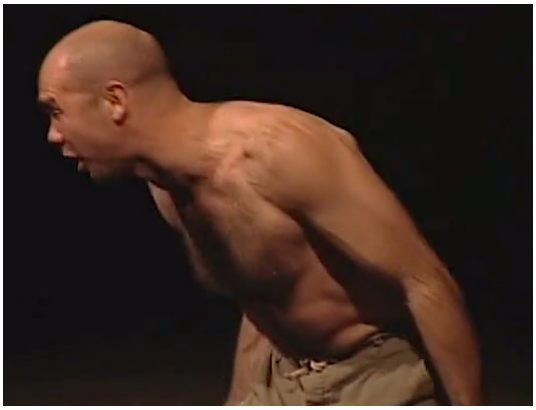
[297] Bieito quoted by Ginart.

non-functional candelabra, exemplifying the opposition between a corporeal (and wet) and a mental (and dry) approach to the same lines of the script.

Notario imitates the corporeal attributes of the animals of this monologue, with a further stress on their cruelty –a fundamentalist decision as Calderón depicts them as 'atrevido[s] y cruel[es]' [129-145] (as studied in Chapter I). The technique to transmit such impiety is physical. Therefore, as in the première, when Notario describes 'el ave' as a 'flor de plumas | o ramillete con alas' [125-126], he extends his arms to the sides and upwards, outlining a pair of wings (fig. 20). Then, with 'el bruto' [133], he stretches out in a reptilian position and grabs the border of the stage –underscoring the tension of his muscles and his upsetting closeness to the audience. Notario becomes a 'Caliban-like creature on all fours' (fig. 21).[298]

As Segismundo has been screaming his lines, when he describes the fish 'que no respira' [143], Notario is breathless, and his body reflects the anatomic strain of someone drowning. He then recites 'cuando a todas partes gira' [147] and choreographically rotates his body (fig. 22). Finally, with the line relating to 'el arrollo' –depicted as a 'culebra | que entre flores se desata' [153-154]– he extends his joined hands forwards and, moving from left to right, portrays the snake's sneakiness (fig. 23).

[298] Fischer, 'Calderón and the "Warrant of Womanhood". *Life's a Dream* (*La vida es sueño*)', in *Reading…*, p. 179.


Figs. 20-23. Notario-Segismundo imitates the cruelty of the *brutos* –through physicality and his proximity to the audience.

Overall, the mimicry of each *bruto*'s movements introduces this production's reliance on 'un trabajo físico encomiable' from the actors –corroborating, in particular, that 'en el caso de la interpretación de Joaquín Notario, se trata probablemente del papel con mayor énfasis en el movimiento corporal de todos los que ha asumido durante su trayectoria en la Compañía'.[299] The effect of this acting resource in the plot is the animalisation of the role, a feature loyal to Calderón and overlooked by other (psychological) adaptations. Feverish instincts –rather than psychologic derangements or uncontrolled emotions– are the fundaments of this Prince's hamartia and downfall.

[299] Mascarell, 'Revisión…', p. 143-144.

The discrepancy between three perspectives of the same story and of its protagonist's characterisation reveals a binary in traditional performative practices, in general, as 'Westerners have thought about acting as something that happens from the "inside-out" or the "outside-in". Many schools characterize acting as either a psychological ("inside-out") process, or as one that is physical in origin ("outside-in")'.[300] In the CNTC, *La vida es sueño* had been staged through both performative processes: García Valdés' and Pimenta's adaptations epitomize the first and Bieito's the second.

This divergence has repercussions in the drawing of the play's dramatic conflict. While the psychological versions tend to accentuate the protagonist's internal growth, physical reworkings highlight the external manifestation of his vices. This makes both the inside-out and the outside-in reinterpretations fundamentalist in their own way, since the Calderonian Segismundo is conceived as possessing both sides (a composite of *alma-cuerpo*). Behind such aesthetic objectives, ideological innuendos are sometimes shrouded: the internal productions rely on the script's good-bad dialectic to instruct on moral issues (as in 2012); the external ones normally explore the intricacies of the play's violence to question them (as in 2000). Notario-Segismundo's brutish animal kinetics illustrate, from the start of the mise-en-scène, Bieito's alliance with physical, rather than with psychological/emotional acting.

Finally, along with the *gravillazos* and the chain, the immediacy assumed by the interaction between Notario's beasts and the spectators –and their perception of cruelty on the verge of surpassing the limit of the stage– stimulates their 'haptic touch'. This phenomenon implies that 'sight can become tactile through looking and looking again at the

[300] Rick Kemp, *Embodied Acting* (London: Routledge, 2012), p. XV.

sensual aesthetic of the work, which activates a sensory involvement akin to touch within the act of looking alone'.[301] Notario's parody of barbarism is substantiated by fleshy resources – which, steadily and proximally repeated in the space of a few lines, set in motion a (quasi-)tactile reaction in the onlookers. This synaesthesia materialises in the vivid reaction of those in the first rows, who back away every time Segismundo invades their space with different parts of his anatomy (fig. 21). The functionality of this form of complicité will become clearer as the plot unravels and the Prince targets his violence towards the characters in the Palace: Bieito wants us to experience –as palpably as possible– a virtual version of the victims' suffering for us to recognize it when it happens within the diegesis.

I.2. Segismundo and Clarín: corrective laughter

Ruiz-Clarín also observes such intrusive interactivity at the beginning of the Palace scene. His entrance happens from the right gallery, not from the stage. He moves in-between the seats, climbing them, and disturbing those seated. As Ruiz stands on the arms of a chair, the head of a spectator is in-between his legs (near his genitals). Those around him look afraid of him falling and hitting them –but cannot do anything about it.

Clarín selects a bald man in the public, takes a card, spits on it, and sticks it on the shining head –the audience laughs. However, this cheerfulness is not shared by everyone: the victim exhibits embarrassment, unfairly spotlighted and humiliated due to his physical appearance. This extra-textual pantomime outlines the *gracioso* as:

> provocador, desvergonzado, audaz, corrosivo, próximo al artista de cabaret en su despliegue de recursos teatrales, este Clarín al gusto de Bieito se instituye en surtidor escénico de frescura y diversión.[302]

[301] Josephine Machon, *Immersive Theatres: Intimacy and Immediacy in Contemporary Performances* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), p. 78.
[302] Mascarell, 'Revisión…', pp. 143-144.

Ruiz-Clarín draws his interpretation close to that of a very contemporary theatre practitioner: the cabaret actor. Ruiz displays the 'condición de intimidad que ofrece' this genre by relating face-to-face with audience members. The reproof implied by coercively singling out a spectator –who is laughed at, rather than laughed with– answers to the fact that 'el cabaret es idóneo […] para ofrecer espectáculos de fuerte contenido crítico'.[303]

The case of the hairless audience member illustrates the performative stratagem to be followed by this clown: blending mockery, interactivity, and victimisation. It also reinstates Bieito's actors' teasing out of the main traits of their characters' personalities (violence, comedy) on the public, before aiming them at other inhabitants of Poland/Castile. This assigns an active role to the spectators, who establish –by way of direct experience– not only the thematic lines of this production but also its political agenda. This sub-section is meant to evidence how, for Bieito's ideologically-obsessed art, 'laughter is, above all, a corrective'.[304]

Clarín influences Segismundo as: 'la procacidad que asoma en varios momentos de la acción [está] no sólo a cargo de Clarín sino también del propio Segismundo'.[305] Their sharing of 'procacidad' is the consequence of the *gracioso* being the first individual met by the Prince outside his captivity –assuming, thus, the role of his mentor ('Tú sólo, en tan nuevos mundos,

[303] Gómez García, s.v. cabaret, p. 129.
[304] Henri Bergson, *Laughter: An Essay on the Meaning of the Comic*, trans. by Cloudesley Brereton and Fred Rothwell (New York: Dover Publications, 2013), p. 132. I follow Bergson's approach understanding that laughter might be one of the most ambiguous elements in theatre –and, hence, a challenge for any spectator/critic. My intention is not to oversimplify Bieio's semiotically-rich ambivalences and obscurities, but to highlight *one* among many interpretations of his approach to the comic.
[305] Guillermina I. Costantini de López, 'Teatro: *La vida es sueño*', *Revista Criterio*, 2363 (2010): <https://www.revistacriterio.com.ar/bloginst_new/2010/09/01/teatro-la-vida-es-sueno/> [Accessed 23/10/2019].

| me has agradado' [1336-1337]). The first example of this 'agrad[o]' is Segismundo's and Clarín's mistreatment of Criado, interpreted by Victor Rubio –an actor with dwarfism.

Criado appears to interrupt Segismundo's aggression against Clotaldo. The Prince answers '¡vive Dios!, | si os ponéis delante vos, | que os eche por la ventana' [1313-1315], preparing the audience for the sadism to come. After, tray in hand, Criado starts spooning soup to Segismundo, who spits out the liquid, scornfully spraying the stalls. Then, the Prince snatches the tray from Criado and slams it on the floor, a few feet from the spectators. Their reaction –frightfully cringing in their seats– exhibits another instance of Notario providing a (somatic) taste of the violent tension being built onstage, which will end-up with Criado's defenestration.

Criado interrupts Segismundo again after the Prince abuses Astolfo, warning him that the Muscovite 'Es grande'. In response, Notario stands over the throne's arms and, from that 'grande' position, answers 'Mayor soy yo' [1371] to the dwarf who remains standing, diminished on the ground. The contrast, achieved by the actors' proxemics, is meant to ridicule Rubio's dwarfism. The re-signification of Calderón's words contributes to the mockery: by 'grande' and 'mayor', Notario-Segismundo means height –which the secondary character lacks– not power (as suggested by the text). The success of the caricature of a disability is evidenced by the audience's giggling.

However, this sound possesses a different timbre to the joviality of carefree laughter, as:

> theatre of social criticism often satirizes what is wrong with society, and this induces a laughter that is not warmed by remembrance or empathy. It is not the shared laughter of acceptance but the laughter of distance, criticism, and rejection.[306]

[306] Paul Woodruff, *The Necessity of Theatre. The Art of Watching and Being Watched* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 192.

Like the bald man, Rubio-Criado is singled out due to his (anomalous) physique. The consequence of this satirical action is a laughter meant to bring a reflective attitude towards those abused in/by society. One of the many questions the spectators might ask themselves is: why is it so easy to enjoy a joke about the bullying of a disabled man –who, as Segismundo has warned, will end up being killed? After this "merriment", a critical distance could be created which, ideally, will lead to the rejection (offstage) of mistreatments such as those shown (onstage).[307]

Subsequently, Segismundo screams 'y quién os mete en aquesto?', grabs Criado, and –because he is not 'grande' in stature– tries to lift him up.[308] Then, as Estrella appears onstage, the Prince runs towards her and forcefully puts his head between her legs, to which Criado warns: 'Advierte, señor, que no | es justo atreverte así…' [1411-1412]. The frustration of Segismundo's carnality is answered by an ultimatum to Criado and a second notification to the spectators of violence about to happen: 'También oíste decir | que, por un balcón, a quien | me canse sabré arrojar' [1422-1424]. Next, Criado produces an unconsciously self-parodic answer, amplifying the mockery of his disability: 'Con los hombres como yo | no puede hacerse eso' [1425-1426]. Decontextualised from what was meant by Calderón (that Criado has important political status), it is precisely with men like Rubio –small in stature– that 'arroja[mientos]' from 'balc[ones]' more easily 'puede[n] hacerse'.

Rubio directs his words to the house, an interpellation with two functions: (1) further stressing the distancing and critical effect behind the spectators' mockery (as its object accusingly and uncomfortably looks at those who ridicule him); (2) making them aware of

[307] In other words, 'laughter "corrects men's manners". It makes us at once endeavour to appear what we ought to be, what some day we shall perhaps end in being': Bergson, p. 18.
[308] [1374-1375].

their inability to –directly– intervene in the aggression about to occur (Segismundo has twice alerted them about his intentions). At the same time, Clarín, who has assumed a 'grande' position on the throne, points at him and starts laughing (fig. 24). Again, the audience imitates the cabaret-like actor's reaction because 'however spontaneous it seems, laughter always implies a kind of secret freemasonry, or even complicity, with other laughers, real or imaginary'.[309] Clarín's charisma invites the audience to join the society of bullies established with Segismundo –laughter bridging the gap between the real (the Romea) and the imaginary (Poland/Castile).

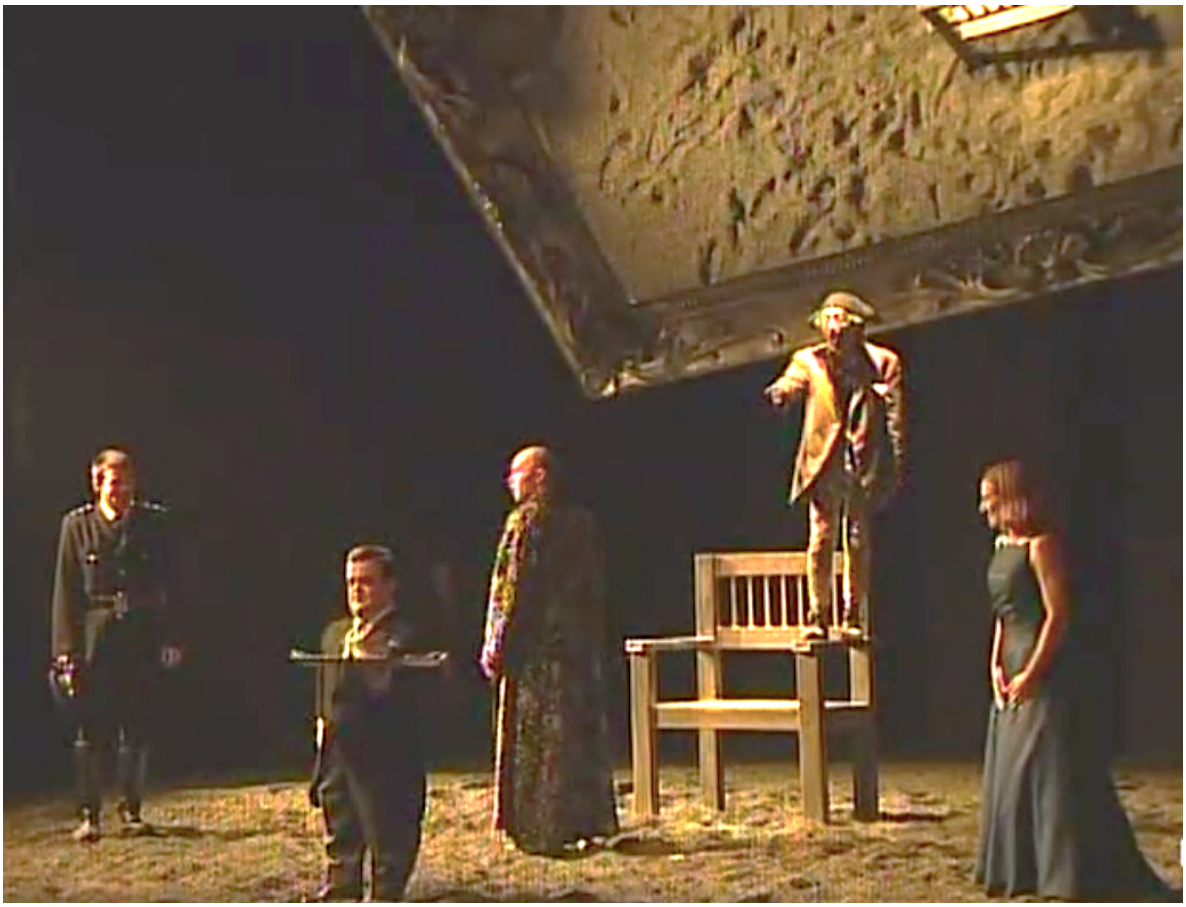


Fig. 24. Rubio-Criado addresses the spectators, self-parodically informing them that he cannot be defenestrated –which is received with laughter.

[309] Bergson, p. 11.

Segismundo grabs Criado by the shoulders, tells him '¿No? | Por Dios que lo he de probar' [1426-1427], and guides him to the back. Tensely, the *cajón* drums while Astolfo, Estrella, and Clarín cheer (mirroring the controversial cheering beyond the stage). The *gracioso* comes close to the stalls and "masturbates", employing his hat as a "penis" and directing the "ejaculation" (drawn with the sudden opening of the hand) towards the public.

The timing of Ruiz's grotesque movement –while Criado is being executed– implies that Clarín is sexually aroused by violence (a pathology which will later appear in Segismundo). Additionally, his aiming the "fluid" at the spectators represents another case of their acquaintance with the assaults to be executed onstage (foreshadowing, for example, Rosaura's rape scene). Here, they go through a notional form of non-consensual sexual abuse by becoming the recipients of the *gracioso*'s "self-pleasuring" while being fixed to their chairs.

Criado's sudden scream makes the party stop. Then, Segismundo enters and, with an intimate tone, confesses his crime: 'Cayó del balcón al mar' [1430]. In this scene, 'la tensión es elevada y una pausa resalta la situación de indefensión del enano por su minusvalía. La opción dramatúrgica de escoger a un actor con estas características potencia lo anterior'.[310]

The defenestration depicts how physicality prompts Bieito to imbue the script with criticism. The casting of someone with such obvious anatomic particularities and the parodic exploitation of them boosts the spectators' recognition of the victim's 'indefensión', set against the executioner's corporeal "normalcy". Two extra factors contribute to this sense of problematic helplessness: the audience's fixity in their seats (making them unable to intervene) and their having been warned twice of the killing. The uncomfortable awareness

[310] Begoña Gómez Sánchez, *La poética de la puesta en escena: Calixto Bieito* (Madrid: Fundamentos, 2018), p. 82.

of Criado's disadvantage (seconds after mocking him) might be aimed at stimulating those at the Romea critically as: 'when drawn towards conflictive attitudes, watchers must stop laughing and start thinking'.[311]

Another conflictive attitude with which the spectators are faced is discrimination, as 'la tiranía de Segismundo es como un juego con el que se reflejan temas como la diferencia de clases y la intolerancia ante las minusvalías físicas'.[312] Hence, their role is to transcend the initial moment of mocking 'juego' of such biases and question real-life abuses against both physically disabled individuals –the actor is a dwarf– and members of different social classes –the character is a Criado. Laughter is the catalyst for the reflection and rejection of these unequal power dynamics, 'the comic being so frequently dependent on the manners or ideas, or, to put it bluntly, on the prejudices, of a society'.[313] Have prejudices –such as 'tiranía[s]' against physical and economic disparities– become so normalised in 21st-century society that we can laugh at them (Bieito might want the spectators to ask themselves)? The self-questioning of questionable cultural manners is absent from both the 1996 and 2012 versions and the play-text, embodying one of the many exceptionalities which typify the 2000 production as wet and reformist.

Another instance of Segismundo's and Clarín's dark comedy occurs when, after the liberation scene, Clotaldo surrenders and kneels down before the Prince: 'a tus reales plantas llego, | ya sé que a morir' [2391-2392]. Notario-Segismundo responds 'Dame los brazos' to Clotaldo, who, surprised, answers: '¿Qué dices?' The Prince replies with words that imply a possitive

[311] Woodruff, p. 193.
[312] Gómez Sánchez, p. 82.
[313] Bergson, p. 95.

evolution: 'Que estoy soñando y que quiero | obrar bien' [2398-2400]. As is suggested in these words, by now, the *hombre-fiera* has already undergone his anagnorisis –realising that his flaws stem from passions and instincts.

However, this apparent faithfulness to the Calderonian Prince's moral growth is taken in an opposite direction by Bieito. Clotaldo's informing Segismundo that his loyalty is for Basilio inspires a violent reaction –differing from the *mixto* technique probably used by the *comediante* here (to portray a partially restrained character). The *energúmeno* screams '¡Villano, | traidor, ingrato!' [2410-2411] and holds Gelabert's face, as if wanting to gouge Clotaldo's eyes out. Segismundo releases Clotaldo by pushing him to the floor. Then, he steps out of the scene, purposely leaving his victim to the mercy of the other opportunists – the soldier and Clarín– who, inspired by the aggressivity of his leader, kick Clotaldo in the back.

As the rebel restrains Clotaldo, Clarín takes his "penis" out and "urinates" on the prisoner's face (fig. 25). After every squirt of urine, the clown glances at the audience –who, again, laughs at this show of mismatched power dynamics. The (supposedly changed) Prince does absolutely nothing to stop brutality from happening while he is in command, giving a despotic accent to his cruelty. As Clarín's humiliating behaviour highlights the polar positions between the subjugated and their assailants, this scene's symbolism can be connected to Bieito's thematisation of '[e]l autoritarismo y la represión que h[a] vivido, y h[a] querido aprovecharlo para componer este cuento tenebroso'.[314] In 1996, this same moment was deleted to convey the opposite of 'tenebros[idad]': Mari Sánchez-Segismundo's positive (psychological) evolution.

[314] Bieito, 'Conversaciones…', p. 99.



Fig. 25. Taking advantage of Clotaldo's submissiveness, Clarín "urinates" on his face, as he looks back at the complicit public.

What is the intention behind eliciting laughter at the obscene show of 'represión' of a surrendered man? *One* of the possible answers might lie in the fact that, through comedy, this ambiguous scene:

> expresses an individual or collective imperfection which calls for an immediate corrective. This corrective is laughter, a social gesture that singles out and represses a special kind of absentmindedness in man and in events.[315]

[315] Bergson, p. 63.

Collective imperfections –chiefly, violence– are constantly singled out through the actors' diverse stage business. One of these performative methods is the provocation of laughter –a gesture that, if used satirically or with a corrective intention (as with Bieito), helps to identify unconscious negative impulses within society. For example, laughing at Criado's defenestration might be a route to question the mistreatment of the handicapped. Likewise, giggling at Clotaldo being "urinated on" might emphasise the spectators' ethical carelessness when witnessing torture: they forget what is really at stake in the scene –the abuse of an individual via authoritarianism– by means of the coarsest scatological gag. After celebrating Clarín's mockery, some of the laughers might take a step back and reflect on their absentmindedness towards the captured man's suffering and on what it symbolises beyond the stage, because 'caring about people in the make-believe world of mimetic theatre may strengthen your ability to care about people offstage'.[316]

I.3. Rape and masturbation: Segismundo's sexual violence and voyeurism

For some critics, moments like those where Segismundo displays his sexual violence contribute to enhance 'Bieito's reputation as a purveyor of pornography for the stage'. [317] In a less conservative view, however, they exemplify –along with dark comedy– dramatic methods that reinstate the director's inquisition of inhumanity. Such an objective is exposed from the first scene: when the *energúmeno* meets Rosaura, he forcefully puts his head between her legs. Later, as he encounters his cousin, 'debido a su idiosincracia más primitiva, le sube el vestido y huele su sexo mostrando al público la ropa interior de Estrella'.[318] With

[316] Woodruff, p. 20.
[317] Delgado, 'Calixto…', p. 18.
[318] Gómez Sánchez, p. 82.

this 'mostra[r]', Notario not only reinforces his role's primitivism, but forces an occasion of voyeurism on the audience, who uncomfortably contemplate the actresses' panties.

A more sensationalist staging of Segismundo's mixture of sexuality and interactivity is his second meeting with Rosaura. At the start, the Prince picks the lady up and dances around with her over his shoulders –evidencing how, in this mise-en-scène, the physical sometimes triumphs over the verbal. That the audience's attention is focused on the actor's body, rather than on the words, justifies the consideration that 'Bieito monta –exagero– un espectáculo de danza contemporánea a partir de la trama calderoniana'.[319]

Such playfulness turns violent when Rosaura says 'Pues si tú no la das [la licencia para irme], tomarla espero' [1630] and tries to caress Segismundo's face to calm him down. His answer is 'harás que de cortés pase a grosero' [1631] and 'gros[eramente]' grabs her hand and twists it. The dormant animal reappears, highlighting his hamartia through the contrast between his initial dancing gaiety and his final cruelty (a facet which will bring him to the tower again). The performance of the rest of the dialogue is triggered by such primitivism –one that brings back the theme of abuse against more susceptible social classes: Rosaura confesses to being Estrella's maid. Notario twists Gallardo's arm; lifts her threatening: 'arrojaré tu honor por la ventana' [1645]; pushes her to the ground; kicks her while she crawls on the floor; pulls her hair; and shoves her to the edge of the stage.

Segismundo orders 'dejadnos solos' [1664], plays with Rosaura's dress, and lies on top of her. Then, the martyr faces the audience and recites: 'Yo soy muerta' [1665]. Gallardo extends one hand as if asking for help –breaking the fourth wall and acknowledging the presence of the voyeuristic public sitting in the darkness, about to witness rape, and unable

[319] Vicenç Villatoro, '¿Y si Calderón no fuese un clásico?', *El País*, 3 December 2000: <https://elpais.com/diario/2000/12/03/catalunya/975809241_850215.html> [Accessed 12/10/2019].

to intervene. This prepares those offstage to obtain 'the pragmatic consequences of purified vision [which] begin when an audience acknowledges that they are more than voyeurs in the darkness'.[320]

Seeing this interaction, Segismundo covers Rosaura's mouth and whispers into her ear: 'Soy tirano, | y ya pretendes reducirme en vano' [1666-1667] (fig. 26). This implies that his awareness of being seen further excites him (a voyeur of the voyeurs). The Prince searches for the lady's genitals, takes his "penis" out, and rams against her body. Clotaldo interrupts the assault.



Fig. 26. Segismundo attempts to rape Rosaura –who looks at the spectators, extends her hand, and directs her words to them.

Unrepressed sensualism, brought about by vigorous body expression, makes this Segismundo stand out from his CNTC peers –who are, in contrast, asexual and appeased. The same attempted rape was performed, four years before, as a corollary to Segismundo's

[320] Diana Culberston, 'Sacred Victims: Catharsis in the Modern Theatre', *Cross Currents*, 41 (1991), 179-194 (p. 192).

autistic nature: psychopathologies replaced the textual cues for carnality. Disparities such as this illustrate how 'Calixto Bieito se aleja de cualquier aproximación psicologista [e.g., the 1996 version] y presenta a un Calderón salvaje, corpóreo, físico, animal'.[321]

A similar mitigatory criterion is followed in 2012, since Portillo-Segismundo's relation to Rosaura is one of harmless emotion –at some point, it is (s)he who cowers away from her fury, rather than the other way round. Is her non-sexual interpretation of the role a (regrettable) corollary of the cross-dress (presenting woman-to-woman, instead of man-to-woman relationships)? As opposed to these "softened" (and dry) adaptations, Bieito's (wet) version suggests that the Prince's drive for a rape resides in is his pre-human and de-humanising thrust. A corporeal animality would have also predominated during the première's proxemics between Segismundo and Rosaura (without Bieito's final obscene addition).

Additionally, Rosaura's cry for help exposes the spectators watching a moment of sexual violence and their inability to –directly– intercede. However, precisely due to such an incommodious position, they can acquire a critical –indirect– access to the event, as:

> plays of voyeuristic nature could possibly induce some feelings of guilt in the audience as they become self-aware that they are complicit in the culturally shameful act of watching "forbidden" pleasures [and perversions] onstage.[322]

The voyeuristic aspect of this scene induces guilt and shame in the audience, feelings which might have been initially triggered by a somatic component (or haptic touch). This is because, in Bieito's productions, 'even fans flinch from the sometimes predictable displays of sexual violence'.[323] The spectators' muscle memory recognises the negative connotations of the

[321] Francisco Valcárcel, 'Calderón, hoy', *El Diario Montañés*, 25 September 2000 (no page number).
[322] Rodosthenous, p. 13.
[323] Julius Purcell, 'Calixto Bieito interview', *Financial Times*, 10 May 2013: <https://www.ft.com/content/15eba112-b408-11e2-b5a5-00144feabdc0> [Accessed 9/02/2021].

flinching and recoil induced by the closeness of rape –as they have flinched and recoiled when they were exposed to similar virtual forms of abuse (for example, Clarín's "masturbation"). The effect of such sensory connection with what is being staged is that it makes Rosaura's pain more vivid for the empathetic onlookers: analogous suffering (though less extreme) has been faced by them since the *gravillazos*.

Only after this corporeal reception can cognitive self-awareness occur. The sharpness of such visceral experience –hand-in-hand with the guilt felt– allows the questioning of cultural practices that are censorable or forbidden, exemplifying how 'theatre bec[o]me[s] conspicuous for its obsession with freeing spectators from their prisons and their obedient and servile attitudes'.[324] The conspicuousness of the director's ideological objectives is materialised in the obvious highlighting of the spectators' lack of response to Rosaura's cry for help (as she is being raped). This induced sense of apathy (a "real" reply is not a norm in Western theatre) might remind the unresponsive audience of the many forms of servile acceptance, unconcern, and overlooking of sexual violence in contemporary society.

The discomfort inspired by onstage business might have pragmatic applicability offstage by producing a critical attitude towards analogous acts of abuse –and the complicit indifference sometimes shown towards them– in day-to-day life. It is in the non-fictional referent to this imaginary Poland/Castile where the witnesses can intervene by changing their opinion and their consummatory acts to avoid the replication and normalisation of such deviances, as 'a good audience is capable […] to see themselves for the human being they

[324] Patrice Pavis, *The Routledge Dictionary of Performance and Contemporary Theatre*, 'Movement', 'Participation', paragraph 23, trans. by Andrew Brown (London: Routledge, 2016), [Calibre E-book viewer EPUB]. Retrieved from <http://bodleian.ldls.org.uk>.

are and take responsibility for their part in the ongoing drama of being human'.[325] Our responsibility is to try to liberate our sight, our emotions, and our minds (in that order) from the prison of indifference –towards those who suffer (sexually or otherwise). The blend of physicality, interactivity, and politics makes this scene one of the "wettest" of the production (and of all the performances of the *comedia* I have seen).

There is another scene where Bietio takes 'the art-as-pornography issue to an even higher level'.[326] The topic of sexual violence appears, again, in the scene that anticipates the '¿Qué es la vida?' monologue [2148-2187] (a moment interpreted by Notario mildly, by sitting on the floor and lowering his tone of voice). After Segismundo's chaotic behaviour in the Palace, he wakes up in the cave/tower and relates his experience to Clotaldo. Meanwhile, the captor scrubs the prisoner's body with a piece of cloth and water –underscoring the symbolic symbiosis between flesh and flaw. The scrubbing represents an attempt to metaphorically cleanse or purify the site of sinning: incarnated instincts brought about Segismundo's fall. A focus on the torso underscores a hamartia that is literally *embodied* –not fashioned by the character's mind or emotions (as in the other CNTC versions).

Segismundo remembers that 'dos veces [l]e daba muerte [a Clotaldo]' [2130], loses his tameness and attacks his captor/cleaner. Clotaldo reacts by pushing Segismundo to the floor. There, the protagonist remembers Rosaura ('Sólo a una mujer amaba' [2134]), puts his hand inside of his pants, and begins to "masturbate", increasing the rhythm as he gets more

[325] Woodruff, pp. 142-143. However, 'perhaps the only people with the right to look at images of suffering of this extreme order are those who could do something to alleviate it […] or those who could learn from it. The rest of us are voyeurs, whether or not we mean it to be': Susan Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others* (London: Penguin, 2003), pp. 36-37.
[326] Coveney.

aroused (fig. 27). The show of lust lasts for several, uncomfortable seconds and, as this happens, Notario's gaze is fixed upon the spectators –who assume the role of inspiration for such self-pleasuring (and who, again, are unable to intervene).



Fig. 27. Notario-Segismundo "masturbates". His gaze is fixed on the audience, establishing a problematic moment of complicité.

Notario's actions underscore Segismundo's tragic condemnation to repeat the same perversions –overlooking the anagnorisis implied in the play-text. By overtly "masturbating", he connotes a relapse into sexual and instinctive behaviour, even *after* being punished for these somatic excesses with his re-imprisonment and *after* the "purifying" bath just given by

Clotaldo. Such carnal regression will be inconceivable twelve years later, with Portillo's morally exemplary Prince.

Beyond the implications to the dramatic arc, this scene consists of a game of gazes: the spectators glance at Segismundo, who looks back at them (and, in the background, Clotaldo and Basilio witnesses everything). Here, the Prince's directed scrutiny functions in an analogous way to the massive mirror of the décor: it reflects the audience's activity back at them. That is, by adding (self-)pleasure to a peeping attitude, Segismundo momentarily doubles the onlookers' role as voyeurs, for 'voyeurism of theatre audiences comes from […] the pleasure of seeing human relations in their most conflictive and passionate forms'.[327] However, as a sequel to Segismundo's bestial characterisation, Notario includes an element of sexual violence to this imitated attitude. This thematic insertion opens the scene to critical readings, illustrating one of Bieito's most 'challenging interpretations of stage and opera classics [that] have been dismissed by some as pornographic sensationalism and praised by others as revelatory'.[328]

This addition of cruelty (and criticism) comes from the fact that in any voyeuristic interaction there are two poles: the voyeur's enforcing one and the one forced upon the "voyeured" (by the voyeur). The first one belongs to the executor of violence (Segismundo), who extracts pleasure from an unconsented source; the second belongs to its victim (the spectators), who embody the source of such unwelcomed gratification. Therefore, Notario-Segismundo's "masturbation" –an explicit manifestation of voyeurism– entails another virtual instance of aggression from the on- to the offstage, since the public have not approved to be the visual inspiration for such perverse delight (or have they, by paying for their ticket?).

[327] Anne Übersfeld, 'The pleasure of the spectator', *Modern Drama*, 25 (1982), 127-139 (p. 136).
[328] Coveney.

Consequently, the public indirectly assumes the role of the sufferer of Segismundo's (venereal) brutality –one that has already been imposed upon certain characters (e.g., Rosaura).

As in other moments of complicité, Bieito's intention is for the spectators to endure some of the cruelty displayed diegetically –in order to dispute it extra-diegetically. In the director's interpretation, aggression is built upon the abuse of marginalised sectors of society (e.g., a disabled man and women) by those in the places of power (e.g., a Prince). Voyeurism emulates such a power dynamic: the voyeur exerts a control over the voyeured, whose incapacity to react or unawareness puts them in a disadvantaged position –a position that, the spectators, stuck in their seats, momentarily inhabit. By obliging the onlookers to distinctly withstand such a hostile liaison (without being able to stop it), this production aims at making them sense and, hence, defy such abusive/authoritarian offences in their own real-life Polands/Castiles. Overall, Bieito's constant evidencing of the overlap between the fictional and the non-fictional worlds –through interactivity– is crucial to the conception of many of this production's meaning-making and ideological goals, since 'the frame of artificiality activates the members of the audience as it reminds them that they are the ones who ultimately decide on meanings and the success of the performance'.[329]

Part II: Álvarez-Basilio

II.1. Basilio's presentation: his weaknesses and the public's clapping

[329] Lech, pp. 181-182.

Álvarez's 'figura del rey Basilio en esta escenificación se muestra compleja, y hasta contradictoria por momentos'. Nonetheless, his contradictions 'no impide[n] […] que se muestren los aspectos vulnerables del personaje: miedo, pérdida de compostura, dolor superior a sus fuerzas'.[330] In contrast to Colomé-Basilio (a strong King during his presentation), conveying a pitiful lack of stamina is a primordial feature displayed by the 2000 actor's physicality and complicité.

Basilio's enters dressed in a "civilised" tuxedo (which will change to a dressing-gown/nakedness as he loses his composure). The King's first action is to interrupt a quarrel between Astolfo and Estrella. As a result, 'se han suprimido las aclamaciones con las que los sobrinos lo reciben en el texto calderoniano'.[331] This means that Basilio's characterisation by his closest servers as 'Sabio Tales' and 'docto Euclides' [580] is cut out from this version

Without these epithets, it seems that the King's functions are reduced to breaking up trivial fights between the members of his court, rather than governing his Kingdom 'sabi[a]' and 'doct[amente]'. It also implies that his entourage do not consider Basilio wise enough to rule (a consideration evident in the text and other productions). Through an adaptation of the script, the King's political flaw is introduced. This shortcoming embodies his hamartia, as his incapacity to rule will lead him to a victimised position regarding his son's rebellion.

Then, Basilio holds both cousins' hands. While he recites 'ya sabéis, estadme atentos' [600], he childishly runs with them to the centre-front –emphasising the choreographic-inspired blocking, as the actors look like dancers parodying a ballet piece. The anomalous movement makes the King resemble a demented and infantilised adult playing with two friends, an infirmity which will lead him to experience disgrace since old people and innocent

[330] Pérez-Rasilla, 'El rey…', p. 399.
[331] Pérez-Rasilla, 'El rey…', p. 390.

children (vulnerable individuals) are prone to become targets of brutes with power. Later, when such abuse is staged, the audience will understand that the director's pragmatic intention is to unmask such unequal power dynamics, as 'human history is replete with society's victims, chosen because they are weak'.[332] Old people are added to Bieito's list of weak –and hence abused– beings: women, dwarfs, prisoners, etc.

Álvarez mentions that, 'en el mundo', he has deserved 'el sobrenombre de docto' [604-606]. Basilio's self-proclamation should be contrasted with the omission of the cousins' celebration of his wisdom (and to certain spectators this would have been obvious and meaningful). The King is the only character who smugly alludes to his supposed knowledge and the only one who trusts it. This flaw is further emphasised by Clotaldo's later retort to Basilio's plans: 'razones no me faltaran | para probar que no aciertas' [1150-1151]. In part, it is owing to this unreasonableness that Basilio will end up being defeated in the civil war.

Another significant deletion from the Calderonian script is the line that refers to the 'corte ilustre de Polonia' [602] –a modification suggesting that Álvarez-Basilio ignores his court when addressing matters of state. In contrast, Colomé's King accompanied this same line by looking directly at the audience, connoting such strengths as inclusiveness. The textual cut and the difference between both productions insinuate that the 2000 monarch imposes –rather than discusses– his decision (to bring Segismundo into the Palace) upon Poland/audience, in his first portrayal of ruling ineptitude and/or authoritarianism. How can a King rule without the ability to communicate effectively with his subjects if he is not to be seen as an inept or a tyrant? Nothing would have been more discordant for the early modern

[332] Culberston, p. 191.

audience than this questioning of the King: a factor that signals Bieito's interpretation of this instance as reformist.

These textual adaptations anticipate the physical conception of the themes of fragility and victimhood in three instances: (1) the handling of Estrella's shoe; (2) the religious crossing; and (3) the performance of a heart attack. Along with its relation to the drama, a primary function of this varied kinetic work is to "fill-out" more than three hundred lines of Baroque dialogue with entertaining action. In contrast, Colomé-Basilio remained static during his presentation –a fundamentalist feature that negatively typifies it as boring.

Following his self-confessed wisdom, Álvarez-Basilio 'juega cariñosamente con los pies y las faldas, primero, y con los ojos y el rostro, después, de Estrella, quien inicialmente parece asustarse o escandalizarse' (fig. 28).[333] The King's 'jueg[o]' 'escandaliza[nte]' occurs when he metaphorically refers to the stars thus: 'esos círculos de nieve, | esos doseles de vidrio' [624-625]. No evident semantic connection exists between Basilio's words, Álvarez's gestures, and the proxemic relationship between both actors. The lack of coherence suggests that the action is nonsensical and underscores the King's disconnection from his socio-political milieu. Self-imprisoned in his solipsistic world of astrology, Basilio behaves with irreverence –'extravagante[mente]'– and without social etiquette –'con acciones familiares y acaso lúbricas'.[334]

Basilio's extravagances foreshadow his decadence: a capable King knows how to decorously relate to the surroundings he rules and understands the social conventions of his Kingdom. His senselessness increases the propensity to fall victim to stronger, more lucid,

[333] Pérez-Rasilla, 'El rey…', p. 390.
[334] Pérez-Rasilla, 'El rey…', p. 390.

and more pragmatic leaders (such as Segismundo). Furthermore, the acting for this scene in the première was read through Carducho's model of the *prudente*, entailing that the *comediante*'s hands would have been extended towards the "higher things" of the foretelling stars. In contrast, Álvarez guides his hands to the "lower things" of Estrella's shoes to suggest that, unlike the early modern counterpart, the 2000 monarch cannot be positively qualified as prudent.



Fig. 28. Álvarez-Basilio plays with Estrella's shoe, a senseless action that presents his weaknesses.

Another case of Basilio's fragility is presented through Álvarez's interpretation of the narration of Segismundo's birth. These lines introduce foreshadowing cataclysms such as 'el mayor, el más horrendo | eclipse que ha padecido | el sol desde la muerte de Cristo'.[335] As he

[335] [690-691].

mentions the name of Christ, the actor 'se santigua, respetuosa y maquinalmente, y es seguido por Estrella y Astolfo'.[336]

The expression stands out as it represents the only religious gesture in a version by a director from a Catholic culture and who was educated by priests. This particularity is further highlighted in contrast to Pimienta's adaptation, which intends to portray Segismundo as the prototype of the Christian Prince, through kinesics that suggests devotion. In Bieito's secular –and, even, frankly heretical– mise-en-scène, such a portrayal of piety can be interpreted parodically since, along with black humour, he shares 'with Buñuel […] a fierce anticlericalism shaped by a Jesuit education'.[337]

With Bieito's personal context in mind, he negatively re-signifies the positive spirituality of the play-text by the specific way Álvarez's gesture is conceived: its 'maquina[l]' style suggests that automatism controls Basilio's beliefs and conduct. This manner of 'santigua[rse]' connotes that one of the character's main flaws is his unmeditated and mechanical trust of metaphysical forces, divine or profane (both equated by Basilio: 'Al *cielo* y a *Dios* pluguiera… [1488]). A blind trust in the designs presented by the (sacred/secular) skies leads him to imprison his son for the first time, one of the reasons for the future war ('A Segismundo, mi hijo, | el influjo de su estrella | […] amenaza' [1098-1100]). Partly due to his irrational faith in the immaterial and unproven (the 'estrella[s]' and 'Cristo'), the father will end up suffering from the brutality of his sceptical son –and Álvarez's crossing augurs this lesson.

[336] Pérez-Rasilla, 'El rey…', p. 390.
[337] Delgado, 'Calixto…', p. 23.

Physicality also conveys the third case of Basilio's weakness/victimisation during his presentation. As the King mentions that 'los cielos se enfurecieron | temblaron los edificios' [696-697] when Segismundo was born, Álvarez's gestures and voice become agitated. Seeing him thus, Estrella tires to calm him down. In the climax of such paroxysm, Basilio prognosticates that the Prince's

> …reino vendría
> a ser parcial y diviso,
> escuela de las traiciones
> academia de los vicios. [714-717]

Then, Álvarez grows silent and holds his chest, as if suffering from a heart attack (fig. 29). Estrella extends her arms to help Basilio, implying dependency of external aid as a feature of this child-like old man. The cause of this cardiac arrest is dual: physical –a fragile and aged body– and psychological –a reaction to the abuses to be committed against him by his son as predicted by the heavens. The negative implications behind the presentation of a physically *and* psychologically feeble King at the start of a tragedy are too numerous to name here. The number increases considering that part of this speech deals with the absence of the Kingdom's succession and with the foretelling of 'traiciones' and 'vicios' to be committed in Poland.



Fig. 29. Basilio suffers from a stroke, a physical/psychological show of weakness which portends his political downfall.

The propensity for Basilio's victimisation has been straightforwardly introduced to the spectators through the leading acting resource employed by this production: physicality. The secondary one –complicité– has more ambiguous overtones during this scene. Although the spectators understand (and begin to commiserate with) Basilio's weaknesses, the actor's interaction with them is not meant to make them entirely sympathetic to his character.

The first reason for such dislike is Álvarez's characterisation of an authoritative, inept, and anti-social King, traits exemplified by (1) his lack of address to the offstage as 'corte ilustre de Polonia' and his incapacity to hear another's opinion about state matters (Clotaldo); (2) his mechanical trust of metaphysical forces (which typifies him as superstitious); and (3) his lubricious relation to his own niece. These aspects also call into question the King's supposedly altruistic intentions for the Kingdom's wellbeing

(hypocritically, he confesses that his schemes are inspired by patriotic love: 'por lo que los amo…' [828]). Álvarez-Basilio's actions make it difficult to (initially) sympathise with a liar and an egotist. Additionally, his reception as unlikeable presents a disparity with respect to both the première and the 1996 Basilios, who were conceived as engaging, though fallible, monarchs.

A concrete illustration of this antipathy occurs when Basilio mentions that, if Segismundo fails to correctly behave, 'os daré reyes más dignos | […] pues serán mis dos sobrinos' [829-831]. As he reaches this conclusion, Álvarez starts clapping to celebrate his *own* political manoeuvre: crowning the equally antipathetic Astolfo and Estrella as King and Queen of Poland, rather than its true heir, Segismundo. Meanwhile, he looks very intently at the spectators, implying that he wants to motivate them also to clap and, indirectly, to agree with the polemic measures taken –but, at first, no one follows. Seeing this antipathy, Álvarez commandingly nods to the public to join him. Only after a tense silence does the applause start timidly sounding from the house.

Physical resources such as the actor's gaze, his head movement, and the pause in the action (which, during every staging, lasts as long as necessary for Álvarez to receive a response) function to include the spectators in the happenings of the play. If 'joining in a game of make-believe […] is what you are doing when you are complicit' in theatre, in this scene this participation is literally materialised by the audience's clapping.[338] The allusiveness of such 'joining in' is stressed by the unusualness of applause in the *middle* of a performance (rather than at the end). What is the meaning behind this case of audience inclusion into *La vida es sueño*'s fictional 'game'?

[338] Woodruff, p. 129.

One answer is that Álvarez-Basilio is such an uncharismatic and unpopular ruler that he is unable to provoke a natural and spontaneous reaction –not even clapping– from his own on- and offstage 'vasallos, deudos, y amigos' [603]. This Basilio is not followed as a prudent or benevolent King should be (as in the première). He must command a response (through the nodding) that other leaders would normally get unsolicited.

His polemical political ideas are not instantly accepted –a literal sign of such approval being the applause. Rather, those who (momentarily) play the role of Poland –the public– hesitate to display their compliance. Retrospectively, this show of lack of leadership helps to justify why a rebellious *vulgo* (comprised precisely of part of the onstage 'vasallos') can rise against this unpopular politician.

The spectators' conflictive attitude here contrasts with that assumed by them in the next scene: Clarín's abuse of the bald man in the public. As opposed to Basilio's forced clapping, they promptly laugh at and celebrate the *gracioso*'s bullying joke –as they will with the comedy that follows, even when it acquires aggressive undertones. A critical reading can be applied to Bieito's differentiation between a forced-upon reaction (Basilio) and a spontaneous one (Clarín), as 'nothing he does is without dramatic point or purpose'.[339] Through this contrast, the director might be testifying to the spectators' empathy with some of the bullies and brutes of the play and society (the *gracioso*) and, at the same time, the public's inability to identify with the weak victims (the King). This ambiguous position will contribute to the feeling of guilt and shame later, when the audience witnesses how "real" violence begins to be exerted on the un-sympathetic by the sympathetic characters (Criado's bullying/killing being the first example).

[339] Coveney.

The unexpected gesture with which Álvarez-Basilio ends this speech also reinforces the idea of being (initially) disliked by the audience. The actor recites 'como esclavo os lo suplico' [843] directly to the stalls as he kneels. This gesture insinuates that the King is 'suplic[ando]' the spectators for a sympathy which is automatically given to other individuals (such as Clarín), but not to him. Álvarez turns this rhetorical line (which would have been unlikely to be staged so literally by a grave King during the première) into a kinetic guideline, to implore the audience/Poland to accept him and his plans.

Additionally, in the play's dénouement, Basilio also kneels in front of his victorious son (fig. 30). There, his words are: 'si a mí buscándome vas, | ya estoy, príncipe, a tus plantas' [3146-3147]. The postures assumed by the actors then –Notario stands up, while Álvarez bows– gesturally illustrate the two main roles assumed by the characters throughout Bieito's production: that of the strong victimisers (Segismundo) and that of weak victims (Basilio). This differentiation finds its first expression in the father and son's first meeting –analysed in the next section.

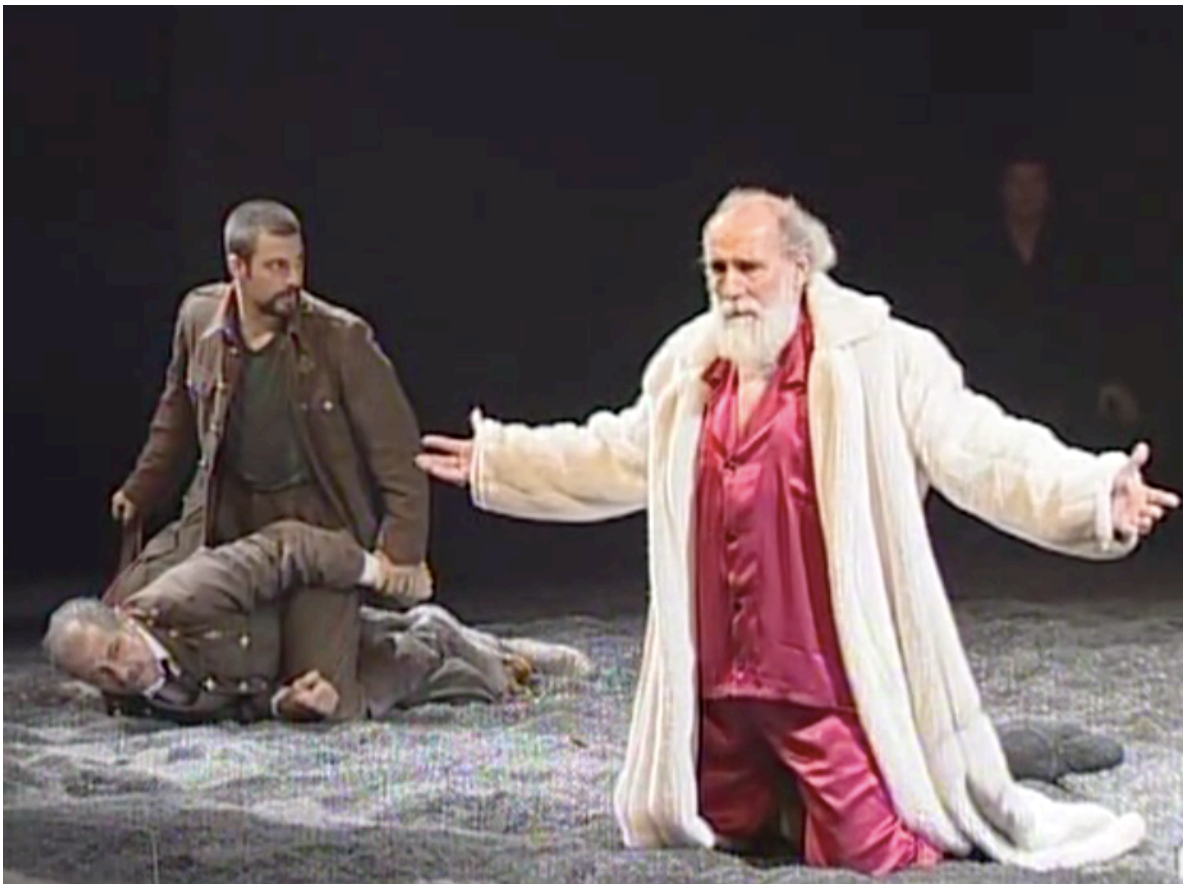


Fig. 30. Basilio kneels in front of Segismundo –denoting, physically, the opposition between victimised/father and victimiser/son.

II.2. The horse and the lipstick: Basilio's temporary violence and his decadence

As in 1996 with Colomé-Basilio's *pebetero*, the 2000 King's characterisation is conceived through the interaction with stage props. One of the most allusive examples of this happens when, after Segismundo kills Criado, Álvarez's 'Basilio appeared as an inept and spoofed figure, sporting a tuxedo and caressing a bobby horse (was that fetish perhaps the external manifestation of a bad conscience for the way he had treated his infant son?)'.[340] The employment of the toy as a 'fetish' or an 'external manifestation' of a sub-text –'bad conscience'– reveals that, in this production, material elements acquire a cardinal importance in establishing meaning, sometimes at the expense of the script. This reformist approach is

[340] Fischer, 'Calderón and the "Warrant…"', p. 175.

also exemplified by the fact that Basilio's 'inept[itude]' and his being a 'spoofed' version of a King are conveyed through mixing two discordant physical elements –a tuxedo and a toy horse–, an incoherence whose symbolic corollary is a feeble or childish mind. Furthermore, the quotation's unfavourable description of the character highlights the unsympathetic relationship initially established between Basilio and the audience (here represented by the critic).

Álvarez walks to the centre-front and, holding the horse, calmly recites: '¿Qué ha sido esto?' [1440]. Segismundo answers with a comic retort, provoking Basilio to scream: 'Pésame mucho que cuando | príncipe, a verte he venido | […] con tantos rigores te vea' [1448-1452]. The King portrays a verbal force that contrasts with his previous fragility (paralinguistic features more akin to the other two, less decrepit, CNTC Basilios).

Basilio's momentary 'rigo[r]' is further denoted by Álvarez's slamming the toy to the ground, while reciting: '¿Con qué amor llegar podré | a darte agora mis brazos…?' [1456-1457]. The movement's aggression mirrors that of Segismundo's slamming of his chains or the tray (and, as there, the audience might also have flinched here). Then, the King pushes the Prince to the floor and hits him on the back, demonstrating that even the weakest of victims –such as a decrepit old man– is capable of brutal acts. A controversial idea becomes obvious: in contemporary society (metaphorised by Poland/Castile), cruelty is omnipresent.

This tangible interpretation of duress is radically different from Colomé-Basilio's repression of it (through the repentance of slapping Segismundo), in the same scene. More related to Álvarez's performance is the emotional 2012 Notario-Basilio, who externalises his frustration with Portillo-Segismundo by hitting the bench next to him (although never touching him). The 2000 stage behaviour also presents similarities to the performance of

desdén probably shown by the *comediante*-father towards the one playing the son*:* both actors, four-hundred years apart, exploit their physicality to reprimand the Prince.

However, the King's strength is temporary: his fallibility soon returns. Segismundo reacts and rises above his father, screaming at the King who, getting up, manages to push his son again. Conscious of his imprudent deed, Basilio backs away with a terrified look on his face. At the same time, he hugs the toy horse, interposing it between himself and the other character (fig. 31). The prop acquires the connotation of a protective barrier against the son's brutality (Segismundo has just committed murder and Basilio fears it will be repeated against him). It also reminds the audience of a bullied child safeguarding his most precious toy from the bully who wants to snatch it away.



Fig. 31. Álvarez-Basilio uses the toy horse as a barrier (to protect himself from Segismundo) and as a precious belonging (to stress his infantilised characterisation).

The contrast between the father's initial violence and the sudden return of his brittleness denotes the fugacity of the King's power: it is as 'viejo y caduco' [1504] as the

individual himself. Concerning Basilio's plot, this represents the first scene where his victimhood is staged and not only anticipated (as in his presentation). Hence, the audience can notice that the King's 'v[ejez]' and the consequent (mental, political) 'caduc[cidad]' constitute his hamartia: these flaws will bring about a generalised Kingdom-wide version of the violence individually exerted by Segismundo here (cruelty moving from the personal to the social sphere).

The simultaneous presence of the main actors onstage for the first time and their different physiques underscore a contrast between the protagonists (something only hinted at when they appeared separately). On the one hand, Notario's youth and physical sturdiness are essential elements to convey that 'Segismundo no respeta a nada ni a nadie y arremete contra su padre anciano'.[341] On the other hand, Álvarez's 'anciani[dad]' is fundamental for portraying someone who is 'arremet[ido]' against and not 'respeta[do]': a victim.

Furthermore, the father's and the son's different corporeal engagement with violence illustrates one of Bieito's implied thematic binaries: 'creo que este texto [es] […] capaz de resumir a la vez el anarquismo y el fascismo'.[342] As in fascism, the King's cruelty is systematic, totalitarian, and mediated through the fetishisation of historically-significant objects and symbols (e.g., the rocking horse).[343] It is a force grounded in the past; hence, its decrepit essence easily turns it into its opposite: victimhood. Basilio's planning of the Palace

[341] Gómez Sánchez, p. 83.
[342] Bieito, 'Conversaciones…', p. 98. This is also noticed by Wheeler: 'the production in its entirety can be read as an interrogation into the audience's complicity with the performativity and performability of both fascism and Calderón's play-text': *Golden Age…*, p. 202.
[343] Indeed, 'scholars have also likened fascism to religion, for its reliance on myths, symbols, rituals, and commemoration in both ideology and practice': Marit A. Berntson, 'Fascism', in *Oxford Bibliographies in Sociology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021): <DOI:10.1093/OBO/9780199756384-0082> [Accessed: 10/06/2021].

scheme –in its meticulous dosing of micro-aggressions– recalls this totalitarian ideology, which sees 'violence as instrumental [for a political agenda] rather than self-actualizing'.[344]

In contrast, Segismundo's hostility is 'self-actualizing', that is, gratuitous. Its eventually-acquired anti-authoritarian and emancipatory features (as the Prince's leadership of the *vulgo* rebellion against the monarch shows), embody 'anarchism's rejection of statist politics'.[345] This expression of havoc looks towards the future; hence, it is radical and unstoppable.[346] Alongside such scenes as Rosaura's attempted rape, this bipolar display of politicized brutality exhibits how 'Bieito comes with the additional, unselfconscious agenda of the post-Franco performing arts in Spain, which is one of vehement sexual candour and political anarchy'.[347]

There is another very suggestive interaction with a stage prop –red lipstick–, representing both an extra-textual (and reformist) addition inserted during Segismundo's "masturbation" and another instance in which Bieito 'desgrana la incertidumbre y la fragilidad humana'.[348] The imprisoned Prince lies on the floor, as Basilio enters driven by 'la necia curiosidad | de ver lo que pasa aquí | a Segismundo'. Then, the King 'retírase', in order not to be seen by his son [2050-2052, 2081]. This 'curiosidad', the act of 'ver', and the fact that the actor assumes a 'ret[irada]' onstage position give the audience a clue to interpret Basilio's role in this scene: that of an unrevealed (and unwanted) onlooker of violence.

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[344] Roger Eatwell, 'Fascism', in *The Oxford Handbook of Political Ideologies*, ed. by Michael Freeden and Marc Stears (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013): <DOI:10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199585977.013.0009> [Accessed 10/06/2021].

[345] Benjamin Franks, 'Anarchism', in *The Oxford…,* ed. by Freeden: <DOI:10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199585977.013.0001> [Accessed 10/06/2021].

[346] This reading of fascism and anarchism is broadly based on: Carlos M. Rama, *Fascismo y anarquismo en la España contemporánea* (Barcelona: Bruguera, 1979).

[347] Coveney.

[348] Calixto Bieito, *Programa de mano de* La vida es sueño (Madrid: Ministerio de Cultura, 2000), p. 14.

Before assuming this position, the King steps next to his son and sets down Segismundo's chains, an emblem of arbitrary imprisonment. The reintroduction of the prop implies that the Prince is shackled for a second time –but, now, by his own father, rather than by lackeys. Hence, Basilio, who has come to represent the victim, here assumes the part of victimiser, reinstating a leitmotif of Bieito/Calderón's story: the ubiquity of violence.

Then, Basilio pries something away from the unconscious Segismundo: a red lipstick. The father takes it, looks at it and, as he walks away, he dolefully cries 'Clorilene, Clorilene' –connecting the prop to the memory of Basilio's dead wife (who died giving birth to Segismundo). Like the rocking horse, it represents an object from the pre-dramatic past which is brought back through Álvarez's actions. The audience might imaginatively reconstruct a portrait of a young, pregnant, and joyful Clorilene (mere months before dying), painting her lips with red (a colour implying misfortune).

This supplement of action to Calderón's script reinforces the idea that Segismundo committed the first of many deeds of brutality against his father even before being conscious of it ("killing" his mother in childbirth). The "aggression" was denounced by the victimised King in his presentation (but is not summoned again in the play-text): 'nació Segismundo, dando | de su condición indicios, | pues dio la muerte a su madre' [702-704]. However, Bieito milks a textual factor (a verbal allusion from the first *jornada*) to insert an extra-textual addition (an interaction with a prop in the second *jornada*) with the intention to recall the offender-offended binary and reshape *La vida es sueño* as an allegory of cruelty. As Álvarez's physicality is fundamental to convey this critical outlook on the script, this scene embodies

one of the "wettest" instances of the production –a re-elaboration of the drama inconceivable for García Valdés or Pimenta and their more conservative interpretations.[349]

After Segismundo "masturbates" and falls asleep, Basilio is spotlighted. The King starts painting his lips red with the lipstick as he produces a long and high-pitched squeal (fig. 32). Still bemoaning both his wife's death and the voyeuristic violence just witnessed, he abandons the stage. This action substitutes Clotaldo's *aparte*: 'Enternecido se ha ido | el Rey de haberle escuchado' [2138-2139]. In Bieito's version, the King's 'enterneci[miento]' is achieved though physical resources –i.e., the actor's use of the prop– rather than verbal ones (contrasting with Colomé-Basilio's emphasis on declamation).

[349] Teatro Inverso's *Rosaura* (2018) also resorts to a circumstantial textual factor (Rosaura's single mention of her mother: 'Violante, mi madre…' [2810]) to explore both new (extra-textual) plotlines and implied political innuendos. Revisiting the figure of Violante –and creating a "part" for her– is one of the strategies followed by this adaptation to reshape *La vida es sueño* 'as an arena of contention in which women struggle against men for control of their lives': Christopher D. Gascón, '*La vida es sueño* Reimagined: Inversion, Mimicry, and Communitas in Teatro Inverso's Rosaura (2018)', *Comedia Performance*, 17 (2020), 25-44 (p. 25).



Fig. 32. Basilio paints his lips, a sign of his victimhood and a method to question the spectators' consumption of violence.

From the 'multitud de perfiles' assumed by Álvarez throughout the play, in this scene, Basilio undertakes those of the 'asustadizo' and 'demente'.[350] These signs of fragility –sub-text for the painting of the lips– possess two origins: a past and a present one. Regarding the first, the dreadful memory of Clorilene's untimely death pushes the King to em*body* this pain: dementedly marking his face with a trace of a vanished past. Regarding the second, the sight of his son's incurable intemperance is the cause for the King's losing his mind –the external expression of which is to incongruously put makeup on. Both motives manifest a gradual

[350] Mascarell, 'Revisión…', p. 144.

performative mutation: as the dénouement approaches, the sufferer's guise assumes more relevance in the characterisation of the father (as fear in the première) and in driving Álvarez's stage behaviour.

Furthermore, to fully understand the implications of Basilio's reaction, it needs to be considered that Segismundo's "masturbation" (which triggers such derangement) is observed by two types of witnesses: offstage –the complicit and voyeuristic spectators– and onstage – Clotaldo and Basilio. The King's undertaking of this witnessing position is further emphasised by Álvarez's placing himself in an obscured, peripheral area of the stage (reminiscent of the house), as he accepts to undergo an exegetic exercise proper to the theatre onlooker: 'escuchemos, pues' [2063]. At the same time, beyond the *tablado*, the spectators *see* Basilio and Clotaldo *seeing* the Prince *seeing* them (in a sexualised fashion). This triangle of gazes places the act of viewing at the centre of the dramatic action –and, due to the sexual deed developing onstage, that of voyeurism, as well. Therefore, the symbolism of Basilio's stage behaviour is intrinsically connected to the appointment of watching as the motif of this episode.

Álvarez-Basilio's simulation of the spectators' duty –and his consequent demented recoil– might be a route to question how 'citizens of modernity, consumers of violence as spectacle, adepts of proximity without risk, are schooled to be cynical about the possibility of sincerity'.[351] The 2000 production's exploitation of the socially "corrective" function of laughter can be extracted from the comic moments and adjusted to this tragic one: "un-schooling" modern approaches to social stigmas. This implies that Basilio's reaction to the spectacle of sexual violence (specifically his son's voyeurism) might entail a lesson in

[351] Sontag, p. 99-100.

sincerity for the spectators to take home and apply to their offstage reality. Part of Bieito's intention behind (1) presenting the many cases of violence so close to them and (2) emphasising that their immobile adherence to their seats puts them in a riskless and uncommitted position is: (3) to theatrically mimic contemporary society's cynicism regarding the many extra-diegetic correlatives of Segismundo's "masturbation" (or Rosaura's attempted rape or Criado's defenestration).[352]

Therefore, Álvarez-Basilio's portrayal of an onlooker's response to cruelty might hint at an ethically suitable –magnified– manner to engage with such issues (in Poland as in Castile): emotionally. The actor's exaggeration of his character's affects works to stress the difference between his sentimental involvement and the public's lack of engagement. Such contrasting histrionics are effective: after the King's moaning, the theatre grows entirely silent, a silence that suggests (self-)reflection. Are we preoccupied enough with these issues –e.g., sexual violence– or do we, rather, turn a blind eye (someone at the Romea might ask themselves here)? Through very visceral means, this scene might be Bieto's implicit and more political way of setting forth the idea that

> the art of watching is as important in life generally as it is in theatre. Learning to pay attention to others is basic to live ethically. […] To live well as human beings, we need to be moved in good ways by emotions that are about others.[353]

Physicality and interactivity in this adaptation function to inspire the audience to be moved and to understand the suffering provoked and endured by *others*. This production might invite us to assume "real-life" counterparts of Basilio's (particularly melodramatic) reaction to

[352] Due to such on- offstage symmetries, the décor's mirror embodies a symbolic reiforcement of the methods taken in the production to convey its political message as: 'el espejo es uno de los símbolos más característicos […] por representar […] la ambigüedad de lo real e irreal'; 'en este montaje de la CNTC, la tierra y el espejo sugieren todo tipo de dialécticas (hombre/cosmos, destino/libre albedrío, *realidad/ficción*)': Nieto.
[353] Woodruf, p. 142.

"real-life" counterparts of Segismundo's "masturbation" (i.e., voyeuristic abuse of innocent victims and the power dynamics behind it). Acknowledging that society's gaze needs to be re-educated –when witnessing violence– is the first step towards building a more just society (Poland, its inhabitants, and their attitudes being a hyperbolic metonym of our own world).

II.3. The 'teatro funesto' scene: Basilio's nudity and the mirrored gaze

The 'teatro funesto' scene has been interpreted as 'el momento más relevante y acaso también el más polémico del espectáculo'. Álvarez's body language and direct address here 'ofrece[n] algunas de las imágenes más poderosas y arriesgadas del espectáculo'. Riskiness is materialised in the actor's entering the scene naked, highlighting 'el desvalimiento, el miedo y el desconcierto del personaje de Basilio'.[354]

Nakedness is the director's method of connoting the King's degradation, precisely when the rebels surround the Palace. If, at the beginning, Notario-Segismundo's uncovered torso established that a lack of clothes signifies both animalisation and deprivation of humanness, at the end, Álvarez-Basilio's total nudity is a hyperbolic reinterpretation of this symbolism. Additionally, the flashing of an old-man's genitals to convey war-induced trauma epitomises Bielto's avant-garde resourcefulness, as

> the presence of stage nudity […] becomes a powerful directorial tool for the director/auteur to provoke, scandalise, get noticed, outrage, titillate, and excite the unsuspecting and, at times, conservative audiences by converting them to complicit voyeurs.[355]

Through Álvarez's nudity, the (conservative) spectators of the Romea are turned into witnesses of a humiliating moment of privacy –humiliation that is a result of brutality. The

[354] Pérez-Rasilla, 'El rey…', pp. 396-397.
[355] Rodosthenous, p. 1.

pragmatic outcome of exciting the public's senses in this way is for them to self-examine their mindset vis-a-vis similar portraits of dehumanisation by civil strife. If Bieito previously centred his inquisitiveness on the sexual expression of abuse, now he turns towards its link with war (another very contemporary topic).

The moving down of the décor's mirror to ground-level accompanies this scene to stress that the faculty of sight is at the centre of its semiotic intricacies: here, Bieito 'lo lanz[a] contra el público, que se ve reflejado en él'.[356] As the spectators *see* themselves *seeing* in the mirror, they can acknowledge their position of engagement or disengagement regarding (real-life correlatives of) the dehumanising events of Poland/Castile. The perspective of their own gaze and facial expression from "outside" allows them to become aware of, for example, either their lackadaisical enjoyment or their concerned affliction vis-a-vis the staged martyrdom. The evolution from unconscious reactions –smiling, for the first; frowning, for the second– to the consciousness of them (through the reflection of their faces/gestures in the mirror) can be an exercise to be applied in day-to-day life to learn to care for others (in situations analogous to Basilio's). In other words, Bieito seems to ask the public: how (dis)engaged would you look if a mirror such as this one were to suddenly appear to replicate your response when witnessing extra-fictional violence/victimhood?

The actor's stage behaviour also underscores the thematic preeminece of the gaze: 'presa del desconcierto, del giro de los acontecimientos', Álvarez runs around, 'cual gallina asustada, mirando el enorme espejo que se abalanza sobre su cabeza'.[357] The addition of the eyes of the voyeured into the reflection of 'mira[das]' in the mirror increases the voyeurs' uncomfortable position: Basilio *sees* them *seeing* themselves voyeuristically *seeing* him

[356] Bieito, 'Conversaciones…', p. 99.
[357] Mascarell, 'Revisión…', p. 139.

naked. Such recognition asks those offstage to further question the ethics of their (morbid) witnessing as its prey-like object behaves evidently 'desconcert[ado]' at being watched.

Vulnerability is also denoted through Álvarez's blocking: he portrays the loss of his humanity and individuality by running around the stage like a *hen*. In the 1996 conception of this scene, the impact of the dire events on the King's psyche was also presented through frenetic pacing. However, the addition of nakedness to Basilio's kinetic turmoil further adds a note of "wetness" and reformism that spells out why, in the criticism of Bieito's adaptations, 'the row rages on about interpretation versus gratuitous sensationalism'.[358]

Álvarez-Basilio then crouches behind the throne and hugs its arm –an action with similar implications to those connoted by the toy horse: that of a feeble and traumatised individual looking for protection from adverse circumstances (fig. 33). This exhibition of fragility in a King reinstates his hamartia. The audience might consider that a strong monarch would neither allow a civil war to erupt in his Kingdom nor shy away to avoid such conflict.

[358] Coveney.



Fig. 33. Álvarez-Basilio crouches behind the throne and hugs one arm of it, as a victim protecting himself from violence.

In a weak voice, Álvarez recites:

> ¿Quién, Astolfo, podrá parar, prudente,
> la furia de un caballo desbocado?
> ¿Quién detener de un río la corriente
> que corre al mar; soberbio y despeñado?
> ¿Quién un peñasco suspender, valiente,
> de la cima de un monte, desgajado? [2428-2433]

Unstoppable and cruel 'soberbi[a]' is the force underlying the imagery denoted by these words. It implies that Basilio is martyred by a *vulgo* which advances with a brutality superior to crazed 'caballo[s]', 'río[s]', or 'peñasco[s]'. The King's waning out of 'pruden[cia]' and 'val[entía]' –fundamental values to fight against such 'desbocado' power– leads him to such

an impasse. The kinetic parallel for these lines is Álvarez's imitation of an imprudent and scared *gallina.*

The actor's gestural painting of cowardice is reminiscent of the première's portrayal of *temor* by the *comediante* (although hyperbolically re-worked). This case shows how Bieito's physical theatre shares the kinetic emphasis of the early modern *corporal*/*motorio* acting technique –paradoxically allowing the qualifier of "fundamentalist" to be applied to this scandalous scene. Regarding the CNTC productions, one of the emotions portrayed by Notario during this moment in 2012 is also hen-like fear –although he includes other affects. In 1996, Colomé also displayed anguish, but emphasised its frenetic features, rather than its more depressed side. Overall, the three directors seem to share a similar physical approach to these highly figurative lines; their objective is also related: to portray the King's dismay.

Then, Astolfo enters and puts a dressing gown over Basilio's shoulders. The Muscovite's action covers the character's 'desamparo, su debilidad, [que] se plasma[n] en su cuerpo viejo tiritando bajo un batín de seda mal anudado'.[359] The use of the 'batín' also entails the recognition of peepers of the King's sorrowful nakedness beyond the stage (Astolfo looks at the house). This deed has an impact on the character's political degradation: Astolfo is trying to cover the Kingdom's government fragility –metaphorically embodied in the aged and withered body of the head of state– from the voyeuristic gaze of the spectators/*vasallos*. Hence, during a civil war between the two possible successors of the throne, Basilio's ruling 'abatimiento final [es] metaforizado en un desnudo patético y triste signo del desamparo'.[360]

[359] Mascarell, 'Revisión…', p. 139.
[360] Pedraza, 'Tres espectáculos…', p. 33.

Álvarez comes close to the stalls while loudly declaming: 'Pues todo fácil de parar ha sido, | y un vulgo no, soberbio y atrevido' [2434-2435]. Then, his hollering tone (entailing 'desamparo') changes to an intimate one as he recites: 'Díganlo en bandos el rumor partido, | que se oye resonar en lo profundo | de los montes el eco repetido' [2436-2438]. Then, the actor makes a 'Shhhhhh' sound while he moves his hand from one end to the other of the auditorium.

This extra-textual, gestural, and interactive insertion possesses similar semiotic functions to those of the clapping during Basilio's first speech. Álvarez's shushing demands the audience's silence to "hear" the ominous echoes produced by the armies –that is, to complicitly imagine part of the fictional content. Their role is to recreate the noise of the diegetic armies with their own extra-diegetic conception of peril.

The spectator's personal "filling-in" of semiotic information can make them more aware of the direness Basilio faces, empathetically understanding his victimised position (and, maybe, feeling ashamed for initially disliking him). This is because their own perception of war-induced cruelty/suffering is imaginatively manifested in the "gaps" of the empty stage –following Basilio's cue. As this cognitive and emotional involvement unfolds, the public might wonder if their engagement with the actual victims of the dehumanising wars of the 20th- and 21st-centuries is as committed as it is *now* with this very "naked" and intimate profile of the abused. Do they need to see such explicit portrayal of 'abatimiento' to leave their cynicism behind and try to re-educate their gaze?

Next, the line 'unos "Astolfo" y otros "Segismundo"' [2439] is accompanied by Álvarez's fidgeting head movement, an extra accent of his dementia. This facet is further stressed by the deranged chuckle which accompanies the lines featuring Segismundo's act of political theft: 'El dosel de la jura, reducido | a segunda intención, a honor segundo'. Another

hysterical laugh is produced after he yells the last lines of the speech: 'teatro funesto es, donde importuna | representa tragedias la fortuna' [2440-2443]. Might the repetition of Basilio's cackles also be intended to parody the audience's laughter at moments of violence –shamefully reminding them of the initial sympathy given to the bullies (Clarín) and denied to the bullied (Basilio)?

These words are also accompanied by one of this production's most suggestive moments of audience-actor interaction. Álvarez extends his arm and points at the house. Then, with the word 'teatro', he moves it from right to left and up to down, taking in the entirety of the Romea (fig. 34).



Fig. 34. As Álvarez-Basilio mentions the word 'teatro', he points at the spectators, including them in Calderón's metatheatrical commentary.

The acting of these lines typifies how Bieito 'provid[es] uncomfortable readings that rediscover the theatricality of the medium and stimulate enquiry into the ways these cultural works shape how we see and, crucially, how we act'.[361] The notion of theatricality is heightened by Álvarez's combining of Calderón's self-referential words with his interactive kinesics (pointing finger and direct address). Here, the director rediscovers this metatheatrical reference by employing it as an allusion to another constituent of the medium of 'teatro', along with its fictional elements: the audience (which also stands for the noun *teatro*). This presents a contrast to other productions, where Basilio's allusion to theatre is interpreted only as a metaphor of the character's *inter*-diegetic environment –one that comes to resemble a tragedy and he a player in it due to his adverse 'fortuna'. In contrast, the 2000 reading includes us –the *extra*-diegetic– through Álvarez's complicité.

As a corollary to making the public interlocutor *and* referent of the speech, 'how we see' –'funest[as]' 'tragedias'– is further thematised: the main function of the audience in theatre being to see (and to listen). Bieito emphasizes this incorporation of watching into the dramatic semiosis through a stage method he has used before. He places the mirror to reflect the spectators' gaze –that is, the sense through which their task is fulfilled– and 'lo h[ace] con las luces de la sala encendidas para que el efecto sea más claro y contundente'.[362] As the director will repeat in his operatic adaptations, these lights suddenly reveal 'el público, una masa gris, convertida en voyeur'.[363]

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[361] María M. Delgado, 'Journeys of cultural transference: Calixto Bieito's multilingual Shakespeares', *Modern Language Review*, 101 (2006), 106-150 (p. 108).
[362] Bieito, 'Conversaciones…', p. 99.
[363] Coco Rodemann, 'Berlín: Bieito, pedofilia y "Los estigmatizados"', *Ópera actual*: <http://opera.backstagemagazine.es/index.php/criticas2/criticas/106-2018/enero-2018/1030-berlin-bieito-pedofilia-y-los-estigmatizados> [Accessed 29/01/2021].

The objective of Álvarez's naming us ('teatro') and pointing at us, while Bieito spotlights/reflects the house through the mirror, might be to 'stimulate enquiry' into the reception of unfortunate events –such as the one Basilio is going through in this precise moment. Through these resources and the text, the director explores the paradoxical fact that:

> the pleasure of experience, even of experiences that may otherwise be defined as negative –anxiousness, fear, guilt, shame, embarrassment, etc.– may end up being felt positive, stimulating, or challenging attributes of encountering an event.[364]

The final uncomfortable revelation of the spectators' role as witnesses of disgrace reinforces how, throughout this scene, Álvarez imposes all sorts of negative experiences upon them: for example, anxiety at the prospect of being more vividly involved in the 'importuna' action; fear of what does or does not appear in the mirror's reflection; guilt for initially sympathising with the abusers, rather than with the abused; shame for voyeuristically witnessing the naked body of an old man; embarrassment at their cynical reception of episodes of dehumanisation, etc. These myriad conflicting feelings are, however, positive in a pragmatic sense, as they might stimulate us to challenge 'how we act' –through the questioning of 'how we see'. Are we ethically responsible towards catastrophic incidents such as those portrayed by Álvarez-Basilio –and which provoke him to hyperbolically compare his life to the baleful actions of the 'teatro'? Are we schooled in the most humane way to encounter 'tragedias' (such as the one in which Basilio believes to be 'representa[ndo]') –in- and outside the Romea? No matter how much questions like these might vary when confronting this scene (depending on each spectator's personal context), its function is to manifest how 'the audience would prefer to

[364] Adam Alson, 'Audience participation and neoliberal value: risk, agency and responsibility in immersive theatre', *Performance Research*, 18 (2013), 128-138 (p. 130).

be voyeurs who gaze at the stage from the darkness. But tragedy always includes the audience'.[365]

Conclusion: an exceptional interpretation of *La vida es sueño*

Notario's and Álvarez's employment of physicality and complicité conveys Segismundo's and Basilio's characterisation and dramatic conflict, engages with the themes of violence and victimhood, and inspires the audience to question (and, ideally, improve) their attitudes towards such problems on- and offstage. The Prince is conceived as an *energúmeno* –as opposed to the 1996 *autista*– entailing that his hamartia and plot-arc are linked to his instincts and animality (as in the première). This aggressive flaw is expressed through: (1) Segismundo's dark comedy, which inspires problematic laughter; (2) his uncontrolled sexual impulse –placing the public uncomfortably close to such misdeeds–; and (3) his abuse of the characters and the audience –to make the latter experience a similar form of virtual suffering as the former. In contrast, the King is portrayed as a *gallina* –as opposed to the 1996 hieratic Basilio–, denoting that his hamartia and decadence are connected to his feebleness and propensity for victimhood (unlike the première). These aspects of his characterisation are displayed by: (1) physical weaknesses (a heart attack) and psychological ones (the demented painting of his lips); (2) the degradation of brief moments of brutality; (3) his final nakedness (which further problematises cruelty in its war-induced expression).

The analysis of these elements led to the discovery of 'Bieito's unshakeable creed [:] that every old play and opera should be performed as a new play and opera and that the true criterion is not how it stands up to past interpretations, or to its reputation, but how it speaks

[365] Culberston, pp. 190-191.

to us today'.[366] A nuance should be added to this conclusion: the very 'new' resources of physicality and complicité paradoxically also bear a relation with how the 'old play' of *La vida es sueño* would have been staged. For example, Notario recuperates Segismundo's corporeality –at the same time as he 'stands up' to previous contemporary Princes and their *ensimismamiento*. The re-establishment of the instinctiveness of the première's protagonist (probably embodied by the *comediante*'s *corporal/motorio* technique) seems to be an aesthetic goal in Notario's personification. This case represents the clearest evidence supporting the cataloguing of the body language of Bieito's actors as fundamentalist.

However, many features of this physical approach can also be read as unfaithful to Calderón's play-text or as reformist. Two samples stand out: (1) Segismundo's anagnorisis and his consequent humane evolution are understated by Bieito. The (politically driven) conception of the Prince's never-ending cycle of violence prevents Notario from assuming an acting adjustment which would have been analogous to the early modern *espiritual/estatorio* technique. This would ideally have happened when the teleological script suggests a mutation from the negative to the positive pole of the character's behaviour (around the middle of the play). Twelve years later, Portillo-Segismundo will come up with the modern-day equivalent for such a shift: emotion regulation is a performative tool which emphasises the individual's rational and moral growth.

(2) A physicalised portrayal of a King –who suffers from very material ailments from start to finish– downplays Basilio's initial majesty and grandeur. These qualities are evident in the play-text and probably portrayed by the *comediante* through a hieratic and vertical posture (subordinates of the *espiritual*/*estatorio* technique). Its repercussion in the dramatic

[366] Coveney.

conflict is that Álvarez-Basilio's tragic fall is not as tragic as it was meant by Calderón, lacking the primordial "height" from which to catastrophically fall: un-grandiloquently, the *gallina* King stays *gallina* all the time. Overall, both the son's and father's cases evidence a dissociation from the classic (Aristotelian) arc of tragedy and its tonal bipartition: this genre's shift from negativity to positivity, or vice versa, is ignored in 2000. Instead, Bieito decides to keep his plot as pessimistic as possible throughout –perhaps suggesting bleakness as an opening note for the new millennium.

Regarding the second most relevant acting resource –complicité–, a degree of on-offstage interactivity can be listed as faithful to the première's acting practices (as Bieito and critics noted).[367] However, Segismundo's and Clarín's –violent– intrusion into the audience's personal space represents such an overemphatic reinterpretation of this resource that it appears as an ultramodern and iconoclastic directorial decision to those unaware of the playing at the *corrales*. Likewise, Alvarez-Basilio's directed address is contrary to an early modern King, who, following the rules of decorum, would have maintained certain royal distance with the *patio* (and his nudity is unimaginable there). These examples point to the paradoxical fact that, due the *absence* of a fourth wall in Golden Age theatre, the *breaking* of it in Bieito's adaptation can be interpreted either as a fundamentalist/dry or as a reformist/wet characteristic. The choice of one or the other depends on how, in a particular case at hand, such intrusions contrast with the moral –rather than the aesthetic– codes proper to Calderón's society (e.g., Rosaura's attempted rape).

[367] Indeed, 'también se empleaba acertadamente un recurso actoral que proporcionaba una mayor sugestión sobre el receptor: acorde al momento histórico en que se escribió el texto de Calderón de la Barca, los actores interactuaban con el público y se dirigían a él': Gómez Sánchez, p. 75.

The comparison between Bieito's version and the early modern one becomes thornier when two issues are tackled: (1) this production's main thematic aspects –violence and victimisation– and (2) its pragmatic intention: to stimulate a critical insight from the spectators and their attitudes towards these cultural stains. Behind this exegetic difficulty is the fact that the juxtaposition entails a dialogue between the dramatic and ideological objectives of a postmodern director (who is still alive in 2021) and those of a troupe of *comediantes*, their *autor*, and *poeta* (who lived four-hundred years ago). Of course, as with Bieito, Calderón included references to his immediate political context in this and other plays. However, as opposed to the director's explicit and sensationalist revelation of social ills, the playwright resorted to a more 'embedded critique' –a 'strategy of "decir sin decir"'.[368] It can be safely supposed that, as their *poeta*, the *comediantes* would have also performed 'pointing out in suitably discreet fashion the dangers' that besieged their social milieu.[369]

The same analytical short-circuit between historically distant theatrical frameworks can be argued considering the feelings of discomfort and guilt provoked in the 2000 audience. While it is safe to suppose that Calderón's *comediantes* maintained a relatively "respectful" distance between themselves and the *corrales*' attendees, Bieito's players treat their onlookers "disrespectfully": for example, they are (virtual) recipients of a cruelty also expressed (hyperbolically) towards the characters. The audience's active role in the modelling of meaning (complicité) brings about a critical and political awareness that (again, it is safe to suppose) was absent from, say, the *mosqueteros'* mind at the end of the *comedia*.

[368] Ancell, p. 65.
[369] Melveena McKendrick, *Playing the King: Lope de Vega and the Limits of Conformity* (Woodbridge: Tamesis, 2000), p. 31.

Finally, the relevance of Bieito's version immersed in its own concomitant context ought to be scrutinized –which is maybe the hardest task of all. Aside from personal taste and/or critical disdain, this production's singularity against the background of the tradition of *La vida es sueño*'s performances is undeniable, as 'this overt politicization is the exception rather than the norm in *comedia* performance'.[370] Due to its exceptional status, it has become *the* benchmark against which other interpretations are positively or negatively compared, praised, or condemned.

This contrast may be one of the reasons why certain elements of an adaptation staged only four years before Bieito's (García Valdés') look twenty or thirty years older than its successor: its "dryness" is fully evidenced set against its inheritor's "wetness". The vivid and dynamic Segismundo and Basilio of 2000 eclipsed the rather timid and psychologically hesitant peers from 1996. Likewise, as opposed to (yet another) psychological interpretation of the drama, the theme of violence seems to be, if not more relevant to the contemporary socio-political circumstances, more memorable in the history of performances of Calderón. While it might be impossible to prove whether the shock inspired by Bieito had the desired pragmatic consequences (to change the audience's attitudes towards cruelty), it did, nonetheless, have a lasting effect: after his cruel *La vida es sueño*, the director's fame skyrocketed (something not enjoyed by the practically unknown García Valdés).

Twelve years had to pass until someone decided to contest Bieito's legacy: Helena Pimenta. As will be shown in the next chapter, her CNTC version is everything that the 2000 is not: emotional rather than physical, monumental rather than minimalistic, Christian rather than heretic, fundamentalist/dry rather than reformist/wet, and, most importantly,

[370] Wheeler, *Golden Age*…, p. 203.

conservative rather than ideologically engaged. However, both productions coincide on one central aspect: Calderón's masterpiece is complex and contradictory –and embraces interpretations from polar extremes of the aesthetic and political spectrum.

Chapter IV: Emotions and Emotion Regulation in a Conservative *La vida es sueño*: Pimenta's 2012 CNTC Performance

Introduction: Emotions and emotion regulation

The course taken by Helena Pimenta's *La vida es sueño* was opposite to the one followed by Bieito twelve years before. He tested his production in the more broad-minded scenes of New York and London before presenting it in Spain. In contrast, on 6 July 2012, Pimenta's mise-en-scène had a small-town première (at the Hospital de San Juan, Almagro), which eventually evolved into a world-wide touring piece, becoming the most widely-viewed adaptation of a Golden Age play.[371] If Bieito's initial internationalism is largely to be credited for his edginess, the domestic inception of Pimenta's staging could have influenced its parochialism.[372] This chapter explores how this "dryness" –as opposed to the predecessor's "wetness"– is expressed by the players and discusses the reasons behind it.

As has become evident in previous chapters, dry versions are commonly based on fundamentalist approaches to the script –and Pimenta's production is no exception to the rule: 'Helena ha hecho una lectura profunda y emocional del texto'.[373] This means that the production's 'emocional' interpretation –its main stylistic feature– strives to be justified by Calderón's words (a rule not fully followed by Bieito and his extra-textual additions). The equation of emotion plus (textual) accuracy is also a maxim that influenced the director's

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[371] *La vida es sueño*, Compañía Nacional de Teatro Clásico, dir. by Helena Pimenta, Teatro de la Comedia, Madrid, 2012 (Archive video, Centro de Documentación Teatral): <http://teatroclasico.mcu.es/2015/09/09/la-vida-es-sueno-calderon-de-la-barca/> [Accessed 18/12/2019]. See: <https://madridesteatro.com/blanca-portillo-vuelve-a-madrid-con-la-vida-es-sueno/> [Accessed 18/12/2019].

[372] The following critique of her 2019 production can be applied to that of 2012: 'Helena Pimenta dirige a la Joven Compañía de Teatro Clásico en una versión de *La Vida es Sueño* que pretende ser moderna y termina siendo demasiado conservadora': Hugo Álvarez, '"El Gran Mercado del Mundo", u otro teatro clásico es posible', *Butaca en anfiteatro*, September 2019: <https://butacaenanfiteatro.wordpress.com/2019/09/27/el-gran-mercado-del-mundo-u-otro-teatro-clasico-es-posible/>[Accessed 17/07/2021]. This, even though the stagings of the Joven tend to be more experimental.

[373] Ignacio García, 'Entrevista a Ignacio García, selección y adaptación musical', in '*La vida es sueño' de Calderón de la Barca, Cuadernos Pedagógicos*, vol. 42, ed. by Mar Zubieta (Madrid: Compañía Nacional de Teatro Clásico, 2012), p. 62.

work with the actors: 'necesitamos contar con actores capaces de realizar un gran trabajo emocional. Con rigor y emoción se obtienen momentos de gran belleza'.[374] Hence, this chapter centres on the performance of emotions by Blanca Portillo (Segismundo) and Joaquín Notario (Basilio), on their use as tools to convey the characterisation and dramatic conflict, and on their (un)faithfulness to Calderón's script and the performative tradition.

If Pimenta 'siempre quis[o] contar la obra desde la emoción, desde el ser humano', then, the methodological approach should echo her aesthetic and idelogical desires.[375] A coherent framework for the director's objectives is the functional theory of emotions, which emphasises emotions' relationship with the individual's environment (and which represents an innovative approach to the study of the *comedia*). Two ideas are applied from this postulate: (1) this theory's definition of emotions and (2) emotion regulation. Regarding (1), the behaviour of this production's characters constantly illustrates that:

> emotions are the convergence of the (im)possibilities offered by the surroundings or situation with the (im)possibilities the individual has with respect to satisfying his concerns. Both the threat as well as the hope of satisfying concerns set the emotion process in motion. Emotions arise in "the interaction of the situational meanings and concerns" (Frijda 1988: 352).[376]

Emotions depend on the context of each human (in this case: Segismundo's and Basilio's) and arise from the interaction/conflict between their desires and their reality. The frustration

[374] Pimenta's interview in: Hilda Cabrera, '"El teatro clásico español debe hacerse con el corazón"', *Página 12*, 4 November 2012: <https://www.pagina12.com.ar/diario/suplementos/espectaculos/10-26912-2012-11-04.html> [Accessed 10/01/2020].
[375] Helena Pimenta, 'Entrevista a Helena Pimenta, directora de escena de *La vida es sueño*', in *Cuadernos…*, ed. by Zubieta, p. 41.
[376] Elly A. Konijn, *Acting Emotions* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2000), p. 57. *Comedia* researchers have mostly disregarded contributions to the study of performance such as Konijn's –an analysis which was 'conducted among professional actors in Netherlands, Flanders and the United States', but not Spain: p. 17. As noted with other methodologies, to ascertain how different theories of emotions have been fruitfully applied by earlier scholars and/or practitioners, one needs to refer to the field of Shakespearean studies. See, for example: Emily Lang Madison, 'Stages of Emotion: Shakespeare, Performance, and Affect in Modern Anglo-American Film and Theatre' (unpublished doctoral thesis, Columbia University, 2020).

resulting from the attempt to reconcile these two produces negative affective processes. Contradictions are their trigger –and *La vida es sueño* abounds with them. Beyond the single play, theatre is an art-form especially dependant on contrasts –proving the applicability of the present methodology to 'drama [which] is usually expected to represent stories showing situations of conflict between characters'.[377]

From the psychologist's perspective, rather than from the philologist's, drama also represents a good testing ground for the study of how humans express feelings, as 'dramatic action is usually characterized by a great diversity and high concentration of emotions, varying in quality and intensity'.[378] From this diversity, the focus is on the three most highly concentrated in a tragedy like *La vida es sueño* and in a "serious" approach to it such as Pimenta's (cf., Bieito's comedy). These are: '*anger* (aggression, attack, hate)', '*sadness* (crying, sorrow, grief, depression)', and '*fear* (anxiety, panic)' –as described by Susan Bloch, Pedro Orthous, and Guy Santibañez-H (relating to theatre) and by Nico Frijda (relating to every-day life).[379] This study shows how the Prince's and the King's display of sadness, anger, and fear are connected to their desires to satisfy their concerns with regard to their dramatic context and how their success or failure moulds the different stages of their personalities.

Concering (2), since the presence or absence, increase or decrease of these three emotions in this or that moment of the play is also a defining feature of Pimenta's *La vida es sueño*, the second theoretical idea followed is 'emotion regulation'. This notion is defined as

[377] Baldick, s.v. drama, p. 97.
[378] Konijn, p. 59.
[379] Susan Bloch, Pedro Orthous, and Guy Santibañez-H, 'Effector Patterns of Basic Emotions. A Psychophysiological Method for Training Actors', in *Acting (Re)Considered. Theories and Practices* ed. by Phillip B. Zarrilli (London: Routledge, 1995), 198-218 (p. 200). See also: Nico H. Frijda, *The Emotions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986).

'turning down (decreasing) the experiential and/or behavioural aspects of negative emotions such as anger, fear, and sadness'.[380] Both the son's and the father's temperament and plot-arc are related to its presence or absence. Their hamartia, anagnorisis, and dénouement depend, first, on the emotions shown by the players and, second, on the degree to which the characters manage (Segismundo) or fail (Basilio) to control them. Beyond the purely dramatic, Pimenta's ideological objectives and moral message are also related to her characters' behavioural amendments.

Which are the acting resources that allow the researcher/spectator to identify emotions and their (lack of) regulation? The first two resources are very specific, as 'each emotion […] has unique signals, the most identifiable being in the face and voice'.[381] The third one is more general, involving the whole body, as 'in the theatre, however the actors may have determined the emotional content of […] a scene, it is their physical actions in space (gestures, moves, looks) that will articulate it for the audience'.[382] The fourth one is based on the relations established between players and space –a focal point stressed in this staging due to the metaphoric weight assigned to the décor by Pimenta. If 'Helena siempre ha tratado los espacios e incluso el vestuario como una referencia psicológica y simbólica', here it is established that she uses it with an emotional reference as well.[383]

Therefore, the hermeneutical process adopted to describe and analyse emotions considers the actors': (1) paralinguistic features; (2) facial gestures; (3) posture and body movement; and (4) interaction with the stage-space. The order of the chapter is as follows.

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[380] James J. Gross, 'Emotion Regulation', in *Handbook of Emotions*, ed. by Michel Lewis, Jeanette M. Haviland-Jones, and Lisa Feldman Barret (New York: The Guilford Press, 2008), 497-512 (p. 500).
[381] Paul Ekman, *Emotions Revealed. Understanding Faces and Feelings* (London: Phoenix, 2004), p. xv.
[382] McAuley, p. 94.
[383] Alejandro Andujar and Carmen Mancebo, 'Entrevista con Alejandro Andujar y Carmen Mancebo', in *Cuadernos…*, ed. by Zubieta, p. 54.

The first part concerns Portillo-Segismundo's performance of anger and sadness, and of his gradual emotion regulation in three salient scenes.[384] The second part centres on Notario-Basilio's interpretation of an emotionally unregulated King in three moments of his evolution –presenting sadness, anger, and fear. The conclusion discusses the causes behind and implications of portraying Calderón's masterpiece through a conservative or dry scope.

Before beginning the analysis, the general aspects of Pimenta's stage-decor need introducing. One of the main differences between this CNTC version of Calderón's masterpiece and the previous two is the fact that 'ante la sobriedad y ambigüedad de las escenografías de 1996 y 2000, se opone ahora un decorado detallado y elegante que en primera instancia se identifica con el palacio'. Alejandro Andújar y Esmeralda Díaz's design for this eye-catching ochre box of a stage is monumental and technologically complicated. Consequently, the ambiguity of minimalism and its invitation for symbolic/metonymic assignations from the audience (in García Valdés' and Bieito's productions) is replaced by spatial comprehensiveness (in Pimenta's). However, this décor shares with the other two a double functionality: being 'capaz de representar el palacio y la torre cuando así lo requiera'.[385] Different doors establish the distinction between the setting of the father (Palace) and that of the son (cave/tower).

The contrast between both locations, and their inhabitants, is also presented through Juan Gómez-Cornejo's lighting design. While Segismundo's cave is suggested through a torch-like light emanating from the trapdoor, Basilio's Palace is conceived by light brightly emanating from the ceiling's opening. As well as aiding characterisation, the lights are used

[384] To avoid any confusion, the pronoun he/him/his is used when referring to both Portillo/actor and Segismundo/character.
[385] Nieto.

similarly to other CNTC productions 'to indicate the focal area of attention'.[386] Therefore, the characters' monologues –and their emotional interpretation of them– are purposely spotlighted. This represents an innovative approximation set against the previous versions, which preferred to present their monologues as part of the "natural" stage action with "normal" light, not as deviations from "reality". Otherwise, Gómez-Cornejo's blue and grey palette establishes the ambience of hopelessness in a performance dominated by the tragic feelings of sadness, anger, and fear.

Andújar and Carmen Mancebo designed the costumes following this spartan, ochre colouring: 'el vestuario es elemental y sobrio'.[387] This sobriety in Basilio's and Segismundo's external attributes underscores the "colourful" excesses of their internal states. In particular, Notario-Basilio's dramatic degradation is conveyed by the change of his kingly attire to a torn-off tunic in the dénouement –a corruption marked, in 2000, by Álvarez-Basilio's nudity.

These three visual aspects, 'la escenografía, la iluminación y el vestuario suenan al unísono para recrear el siglo XVII'.[388] The Spanish Baroque of the 17th-century is also recalled by Ignacio García's live music; he was 'siempre trabajando como punto de partida con la época barroca'.[389] That the elements of the setting intend to emulate the author's 'siglo' and 'época' is based on a temporal distinction, rather than a theatrical one. In other words, through the background elements, Pimenta means to recreate the atmosphere of a Palace in Calderón's Madrid, rather than an early modern *corral* (where his play was actually staged).

[386] Fischer, 'Calderón and Semiological…', p. 11.
[387] Izquierdo, p. 214.
[388] Nieto.
[389] García, 'Entrevista…', p. 64.

The monumentality and technology employed to conceive the former contrasts with the minimalism of the latter.

Why is Pimenta's setting devised to convey an idea of faithfulness to the *comedia*'s cultural horizon, instead of looking for authenticity regarding its stage practice? An answer to this question might be that the director's pseudo-archaeological endeavour (epitomized by the awe-inspiring stage décor) has 'los objetivos de llevar gente al teatro'.[390] A marketing strategy might have been conceived to make the public believe they were buying tickets to see the "real" Calderón –that is, his "monumental baroqueness". This is reinforced by the fact that most of the spectators are partially unaware of the real –that is, austere– conditions of *La vida es sueño*'s "original" staging. Indeed, there is an undeniable

> atracción que despierta en el espectador este tipo de escenografías […] hay un cierto exotismo en las decoraciones escénicas que recrean ambientes clásicos, lo que provoca la fascinación en el público actual.[391]

This market-oriented procedure might be one of the most noticeable consequences of the fact that 'the *comedia* –still in a nascent stage of modern performance history– is typically conservative in its casting and staging'.[392] This conservativism is embodied by Pimenta's decision to avoid risky directorial decisions with the décor –such as Bieito's *grava* floor or the massive mirror. Instead, she preferred to present an eye-catching and 'clásic[o]' background for Calderón's masterpiece to 'provoca[r] fascinación' and, hence, monetary success.

The same crowd-pleasing ideal can also be seen in the casting, which sacrifices the acting edginess already sanctioned in other performances of the script (such as in the 2000

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[390] Marcos Ordóñez, '"La vida es sueño", pros y contras', *El País*, 12 October 2012: <https://elpais.com/cultura/2012/10/10/actualidad/1349865042_115673.html> [Accessed 24/09/2020].
[391] Nieto.
[392] Sarah Anne Grunnah, 'Performing Gender on the English-language Stage: Tirso de Molina's *comedia urbana*' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Oxford, 2019), p. 55.

one with, for instance, physicality) to focus on the *taquilla*. This foreswearing is manifested in the choice of Segismundo to be played by Blanca Portillo –a *chica* Almodóvar in the blockbusters *Volver* (2007) and *Los abrazos rotos* (2009).[393] Part of the rationale behind such a decision might have been the CNTC's (successful) attempt to popularise and monetise the *comedia* –bringing in a movie-star and her acting mannerisms– instead of trying to re-interpret it through innovative or "purely" theatrical vocabularies (e.g., actor-audience complicité).[394]

Additionally, this expression of cross-dressing cannot be understood as iconoclastic (not even when it maybe represents a first in the performative tradition of the play). Rather, it more likely responds to 'a trend that had become increasingly normalized on the British stage' and other, more progressive theatres of Europe.[395] Picking a woman to play Segismundo would have been considered an experimental (wet) decision if it did not *already* represent a standardised practice on other (more state-of-the-art) stages since, at least, the 90s. As fallout of this lack of real critical functionalism, Portillo's performance is not conceived of as making a statement on sexuality or gender roles. Indeed, the act*ress* dresses, looks, and acts like a man. Thus, the emotions portrayed by her are those proper to a traditional (heteronormative) male version of Segismundo, like those before her.

Likewise, the fact that Basilio is played by Notario seems also like a orthodox choice from the director, since his 'carrera profesional está más vinculada al teatro clásico y a la

[393] One needs to read *any* review of the production to ascertain the importance that such a casting choice had on its commercial success.
[394] These marketing strategies were also noticed by Wheeler, who affirmed that: 'Helena Pimenta has prioritising rising [*sic*] the profile and cache of the productions, casting stars, increasing the number of co-productions, courting a wealthy middle-aged clientele through such schemes as "Amigos de los clásicos" and touring internationally': 'The Place…'.
[395] Wheeler, 'Golden…', p. 272.

Compañía Nacional de Teatro Clásico' than to any other sort of acting work.[396] His presence onstage implies a sense of continuity with the performative style sanctioned by the *Compañía*, rather than a break from it. Therefore, the emotional performances of these two actors develop against the background of this conservative staging and casting.

Part I: Portillo-Segismundo

I.1. Segismundo's presentation: a lion(ess) and a *llorica*

Portillo-Segismundo's first words are heard through the sound system: '¡Ay, mísero de mí! ¡Y ay, infelice!' [78] –a technological upgrade unseen in previous austere productions. Following Elam's description of 'emotions associated with paralinguistic features', Portillo's voice portrays 'sadness': it is 'soft' in 'loudness', 'low' in 'pitch', 'resonant' in 'timbre', 'slow' in 'rate', 'downward' in 'inflection', and 'slurred' in 'enunciation'.[397] Next, Segismundo slowly ascends from the trapdoor/cave, facing the wall; his neck is chained to the opening and his back is hunched in a flexed posture of depression.[398] The delay in Portillo's entrance contrasts with her predecessor's: in 2000, Notario's sudden appearance surprised the audience to engage them with the stage action. Here, the public remains un-called upon and unmoved.

As Portillo-Segismundo emerges, a dim light from the hole projects his shadow onto the backwall. Along with the actor's voice and posture, this 'breve luz' [85], the trapdoor

[396] Francisca Ramírez, 'Joaquín Notario: El actor que descubrió el teatro clásico escuchando los versos de Calderón', *ABC*, 21 June 2019: <https://www.abc.es/espana/castilla-la-mancha/toledo/abci-teatro-joaquin-notario-actor-descubrio-teatro-clasico-escuchando-versos-calderon-201906201730_noticia.html> [Accessed 13/10/2020].
[397] Elam, p. 73. This is an adaptation of a table regarding acting of emotions.
[398] See: Bloch, p. 202.

where it emerges, and the silhouette connote the first instance of Segismundo's emotional evolution. Concerning the opening's symbolism, Gómez-Cornejo established that 'la cueva, [es una] escotilla que nos sumerge en el mundo de los sueños, en el mundo de Segismundo'. He also commented on the negative implications behind this 'cueva' and the 'luz' emanating from it: 'la trampilla, el escotillón, nos da […] una luz de encierro, de oscuridad de velas y antorchas; la luz del día no llega a ese mundo fantasmagórico'.[399]

Such is the allegorical background against which the Prince's first emotions will be staged. Hence, the phantasmagorical quality of the light from 'la trampilla' mirrors Segismundo's earliest situation: the "night" of his transformation –where 'oscuridad', spatially and emotionally, predominates. This adverse condition will progress towards the "day" of the ending –where 'la luz del día […] *llega*' to the stage-space and, correspondingly, the regulation of feelings and rationality "illuminate" Segismundo's deeds.

This mutation in the protagonist's plot-arc is accompanied by a modification in the lighting: 'el mundo de las sombras' of the beginning eventually gives way to an increase in the stage's brightness.[400] For that reason, Portillo-Segismundo's last rational speech takes place in a totally lit-up *tablado* –the opposite of the first scene's torch-like atmosphere. As Pimenta acknowledged, with 'Blanca hablábamos de que en la escena final esas sombras que han ocupado el escenario se alejan'.[401]

Next, Segismundo steps out of the 'escotilla', stops at its entrance, and, in front of his own shadow, repeats: '¡Ay, mísero de mí! ¡Y ay, infelice!' [102]. Three simultaneous actions

[399] Juan Gómez-Cornejo Sánchez, 'Sobre la luz y otras cosas. Juan Gómez-Cornejo Sánchez, diseño de iluminación', in *Cuadernos…*, ed. by Zubieta, pp. 58-59.
[400] Gómez-Cornejo, pp. 58-59.
[401] Helena Pimenta, 'Entrevista a Helena Pimenta. Figuras. Centro de Documentación Teatral. INAEM', online video recording, YouTube, 2016: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LQNw_wzEZwI&t=2027s> [Accessed 7/01/2020].

link Portillo's characterisation with his silhouette: (1) his fixed gazed upon it (as if looking into a revealing mirror); (2) the extending of his arms to magnify its shape (magnifying, thus, its importance); and (3) the reciting of the line towards it (as if its content referred to it). As in 1996, these features imply that Segismundo's miserable state emanates from an intrinsic 'oscuridad', which is externalised in the shape of a shadow (fig. 35).



Fig. 35. Segismundo gazes upon and talks to his shadow –a metaphor of his "shadowy" emotional interiority.

Portillo-Segismundo holds the chain's collar and furiously tries to rip it off (fig. 36). He shakes from left to right, 'in the manner of a lion(ess) trapped in cage'.[402] This sudden animalisation of his mannerisms entails a change of behavioural drive from sadness to 'anger', where 'muscular tension is often increased', displaying 'readiness for forceful movements or actual exertion of force […] within an active, action-ready framework'.[403]

[402] Wheeler, 'Golden…', p. 285.
[403] Frijda, *The Emotions*, p. 19.

Such kinetic vehemence is materialised in the Prince's battle against his 'carg[a]' 'de' 'prisiones' [97] (a framework which abounds with the possibility of action, as a prisoner is always ready to escape). The protagonist's relaxed muscular volume of sorrow tenses with irritation –showing, for the first time, 'la ira de niño tiránico (o Calígula salvaje)'.[404] Portillo's movement-oriented performance here is analogous in its fury to Notario-Segismundo's slamming of his chains upon entering the Romea; their difference relies on the latter's well-lit proximity to the stalls and the former's obscure distance from them.



Fig. 36. Portillo-Segismundo performs anger as a trapped lion(ess), fighting to release himself from the chains.

Segismundo then recites:

Apurar, cielos, pretendo,

[404] Ordóñez.

ya que me tratáis *así*,
qué delito cometí
contra **vosotros** naciendo. [103-106]

These lines can be read with the functional theory of emotions as a background (entailing an affective response to the contraposition between circumstances and desire). Segismundo's 'delito' of 'nac[er]' represents the grounds behind the baffling situation he furiously confronts: his captivity. His contradicted concern is embodied in the questioning verb 'pretendo'. This means that he emphatically ('Apura[ndo]') wishes to know why he is 'trata[do]' in such an unfair fashion simply for being born. The lack of satisfactory answer and consequent change of condition –that is, of a correlation between circumstances and desire– sets the Prince's emotional process (anger) in motion.

This frustrated relation is noticeable in Portillo's vocal features, which display 'anger': 'loud' in 'loudness', 'high' in 'pitch', 'blaring' in 'timbre', 'fast' in 'rate', 'irregular up and down' in 'inflection', 'irregular' in 'rhythm' and 'clipped' in 'enunciation'.[405] Segismundo-Portillo's 'anger-aggression' also manifests in his 'facial muscles [which] are tense, and the lips are tightly pressed together; the eyes are semi-closed'.[406] These resources, along with the torn-off costume, give the Prince a chaotic look, which represents an infantilised version of the première's *salvaje*.

Portillo accompanies 'así' (in italics above) by extending an aggressive pointing finger at the 'cadenas' –a prop that indicates his wrongful 'trata[miento]'. The actor also glances at the ceiling and moves his hand in a recriminatory fashion towards it, shouting 'vosotros' (in bold). This pronoun stands for the entity he thinks is responsible for his

[405] Elam, p. 73.
[406] Bloch, p. 203.

discouraging confinement: the 'cielos'. The visual emphasis on the heavens is the first suggestion of Pimenta's plan to accentuate the textual references to Christianity.

Overall, this scene represents one of the few moments in which the Prince's vigour (as implied in the text) is faithfully performed: 'chained at the neck to a stake, Segismundo radiates pent-up physical energy and rage'.[407] Raging energy is a feature which would have typified the première's protagonist as well –through the *comediante*'s employment of physically-galvanised models such as *ira y furia*. It was also a trait of Notario-Segismundo, in 2000 –although his interpretation acquired a more hyperbolic and audience-focused path. Hence, up until this point, the 2012 production remains deferential to both its immediate predecessor and its early modern one.

Leonine anger ends with the reappearance of sadness during the following lines, which include the depressing acknowledgement: 'aunque si nací, ya entiendo | que delito he cometido' [107-108]. Consequently, Portillo 'no hace un Segismundo machote sino tierno y un poco llorica, un Segismundo desvalido y casi adolescente, que cuando es malo parece sólo travieso'.[408] Along with the lion(ess), the performance of a *llorica* is the main feature of the 2012 Prince –as the *autista/loco* was in 1996 and the *energúmeno* in 2000. His tender 'trav[esuras]' model him as a capricious 'adolescente'. Can this lack of 'machote' characterisation be inspired by the fact that the protagonist is a woman (cross-dressing), directed by another woman?[409]

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[407] Wheeler, 'Golden…', p. 285.
[408] José Catalán Deus, 'Blanca Portillo hace un tierno Segismundo en "La vida es sueño"', *Periodista Digital,* 23 September 2012: <https://www.periodistadigital.com/cultura/cine-y-teatro/20120923/blanca-portillo-tierno-segismundo-vida-sueno-noticia-689401187039/> [Accessed 4/11/2019].
[409] Indeed, 'en esta ocasión no estamos ante un espectáculo que haya sido feminizado deliberadamente. Pero el hecho de que además de protagonizada por una mujer, esta obra esté dirigida por otra, Helena Pimenta […] hace inevitable que esta *Vida es sueño* esté atravesada por la mirada femenina': Liz Perales, 'Segismundo en el

Portillo approaches the border of the trapdoor and sits down –emulating Mari Sánchez's depressed posture in 1996. His voice is soft, and the pitch low, as he –sadly– acquiesces to his frustrating circumstance: the 'castig[o]' for 'el delito de nacer' [116]. Gesturally, the actor displays 'the prominent features [of sadness], including that of the depressed corners of the mouth' and his 'eyebrows drawn downward, [showing] the "clouded brow"' (fig. 37).[410] The energetic kinetics are lost, paradoxically when the text refers to the *fieras* and their cruelty [123-163].

Instead of the corporeality of anger, with 'sadness-crying', 'the posture is relaxed […] leading the body to a posture in which flexion predominates'.[411] By sitting down, Portillo reduces his muscle tone –and, hence, his potential for reaction–, hinting at his character's resignation to the adversity. Thus, instead of the Calderonian Prince's activity, his contemporary peer is characterised by passivity. This pacification can be catalogued as reformist if contrasted with the hypothesis established in the first chapter regarding the première's performance of these lines –which would have stood out due to their kinetic dynamism as the *comediante* emulated the animals' instinctiveness.

reino de las mujeres', *El Cultural*, 29 June 2012: <https://elcultural.com/Segismundo-en-el-reino-de-las-mujeres> [Accessed 6/01/2020].
[410] Frijda, *The Emotions,* p. 22.
[411] Bloch, p. 202.



Fig. 37. Portillo-Segismundo embodies a *llorica*, in a reformist interpretation of Calderón's animal lines.

Instead, Portillo's reading of the depiction of the brutos is performed as a crescendo of despair –punctuated by weeping. He begins crying as he recites: 'Nace el pez, que no respira' [143]. His eyes become full of tears with: 'Nace el arrollo, culebra | que entre flores se desata' [153-154]. Finally, during 'y, teniendo yo más vida, | ¿tengo menos libertad?' [161-162], Portillo-Segismundo whines like a protean teenager, disappointed by the acknowledgment of his privations set against the creatures' plenitude. However, the most salient performance of the *llorica* state comes *after* Portillo glances, again, at the backwall shadow –as it visually reminds him of his unfavourable condition. The excessiveness of feeling is further portrayed by the actor holding his hair with both hands to signal anguish.

Portillo's display of passion here is textually justified: 'en llegando a esta *pasión*' [163]. However, in Portillo's humanistic, rather than animalistic, insight, this sentiment assumes an abstract, rather than a literal, tone –literality probably staged by the *comediante*'s embodiment of each *bruto*'s particularised monstrosity. The brutishness behind this cue was followed by Notario-Segismundo establishing an opposition between two different contemporary accounts of Segismundo in their liaison to the "original" one. While Bieito's protagonist was –faithfully– an instinct-driven beast and the expression of such a flaw was external and somatic, Pimenta's hero –unfaithfully– suffers from a human struggle and his gestures suggest a more internalised and personal weakness. An outside-in style opposes an inside-out performative proposal, exemplifying –through the same script– the two main acting courses taken in Western theatre (as considered in the previous chapter).

Portillo-Segismundo's feeling is motivated by the conflict between: (1) the circumstance of his 'cárcel' [280] and (2) the desired freedom enjoyed by the beasts. This latter is embodied by the Prince's emphatic repetition of the word 'libertad' [132, 142, 152, and 162], as well as his constant allusion to the ontological 'privilegios' he has and the animals have not: 'ten[er]' 'más alma', 'mejor distinto', 'más albedrío', and 'más vida' [131-161]. The paradox established between the reiterative thematisation of emancipation as conceived by an enchained individual causes weeping, because:

> in weeping, the person abandons his efforts for coping; he breaks down. Weeping implies surrender in the face of persisting reasons for activation: persisting threat, deprivation or frustration.[412]

Segismundo's desire (for freedom) is confronted with the persisting deprivation (brought about by his imprisonment): his wish for this 'privilegio tan suave, | excepción tan principal'

[412] Frijda, *The Emotions,* p. 53.

[169-170] is endlessly unsatisfied. As he cannot unchain himself and revel in the sovereignty given to lesser beings, he breaks down in tears, producing a verbal complaint to the 'cielos' in a posture connoting surrender and abandonment (sitting down). Portillo's corporeal expression –and crying, in particular– signals the Prince's incapacity for coping with calamity. The show of undisciplined emotion so early in the production –and as his misfortune is stated in the play-text– reveals this Segismundo's hamartia.

How are Segismundo's weeping and raging related to the dramatic conflict and action to come? The answer to this question can be revealed through the unpacking of part of the metaphorical meanings behind the shadows and darkness. To do so, we need to consider Pimenta's allusion to the conception of 'una escenografía […] muy sobria toda, con esa oscuridad de esa especie de pecado original'.[413]

The initial 'oscuridad' spatially corresponds to the presentation of Segismundo's unchecked display of anger and sadness. Hence, through a metonymic process (in an atmosphere/characterisation or external/internal link), the symbolisms assigned to the darkness of the 'escenografía' (in general) can be extended to the Prince's emotional state (in particular). This relation is further symbolised by another 'oscuridad': his projected shadow. Therefore, Segismundo's 'pecado original' –or, translating Christian terms to dramatic ones, his hamartia– is being a *llorica* and a lion(ess).

Elaborating on Pimenta's religious comparison, the protagonist's negative ("shadowy") emotional state will produce his *fall* –in the same way as Adam and Eve *fell* from Paradise after committing the Original Sin. These sinful affects will inspire the numerous insults and eventual defenestration in the Palace and, hence, will be responsible

[413] Pimenta, 'Entrevista…Figuras…'.

for bringing him 'desde' the 'palacio' back to the 'monte', due to his impossibility to 'medi[r] con más espacio | [sus] acciones severas' [1432-1435]. This negative pathway, however, takes the opposite, possitive direction after the anagnorisis, as 'Segismundo was as affective and effective in this new role as Portillo was at embodying a character whose trajectory is […] exemplary'.[414]

I.2. Segismundo's anagnorisis: emotion regulation and self-punishment

As with the 'pecado original' of the hamartia, Segismundo's anagnorisis has a Christian interpretation. For Juan Mayorga (the adaptor) and Pimenta, his eventual 'forma de ejercer el poder tiene, desde [su] punto de vista, una lectura cristiana. Segismundo es un príncipe cristiano'.[415] Before the Prince's assumption of Christian self-control, one of the most suggestive examples of this production's religious innuendos is conveyed through the stage machinery (highlighting Pimenta's reliance on the décor to establish her dramatic *and* ideological objectives).

After the Prince fails to behave in the Palace, Segismundo is reintroduced to the cave using a harness hanging from the ceiling (fig. 44). This device was employed before (but in the opposite direction), when he was carried from cave to court. Then, 'la ascensión de Segismundo (Blanca Portillo, sujeta por un arnés) […] dota a la escena de un cierto carácter religioso o divino'.[416] Following this religious sub-text, Portillo-Segismundo's descent back

[414] Wheeler, 'Golden…', p. 286.
[415] Perales.
[416] Nieto.

to the cave further conveys the idea of the Fall of Man through stage resources, that is, the return to the "shadowy" and emotional Original Sin of the start.[417]

Subsequently, Clotaldo leaves Segismundo in his prison warning: 'Segismundo, que aun en sueños | no se pierde el hacer bien' [2146-2147]. As the Prince is left alone, the lighting changes. The atmosphere returns, momentarily, to the torch-lit semi-obscurity of the first scene –an external correlative to the internal "dark" condition of the protagonist's sinful '[*no*] hacer bien'. Another detail making this scene and Segismundo's presentation mirror each other is that his shadow is reflected again on the back wall. However, as the speech progresses and the recognition of the possibility for fitter behaviour is made verbally explicit, the stage lights-up and this metaphoric *oscuridad* gradually disappears from the background. The function of Segismundo's soliloquy –which "illuminates" the character's consciousness– correlates to the brightening-up of the space.

Portillo's posture also relates both first and second cavern scenes. Throughout this speech, Segismundo sits on the floor, in the same position assumed during his presentation. Now and then, the Prince's body language, unflexed and low in muscular tone, possesses the pathetic apathy of sadness: 'the body "hangs" as it were' (fig. 38).[418] Hence, it establishes a parallel between the foundation of the character's uncontrolled affective essence (then) and the modulation of such condition (now). The character's –emotional– hamartia and his –emotionally regulated– anagnorisis become symbolically coupled owing to the actor's posture. Portillo's stage behaviour can be seen as a contemporary analogue of the

[417] Wheeler also noticed that 'in an innovative piece of staging, Segismundo was lowered from the ceiling suspended on a hook –a striking visual image used for most of the production's publicity material– as the Prince was taken from his cave to his (rightful?) place in the palace': 'Golden…', p. 285.
[418] Bloch, p. 202.

disapassionado and *melancólico* –gestural models probably followed in the première during this scene and which entail sorrowfulness and prostration.



Fig. 38. The performance of sadness during Segismundo's anagnorisis symbolically connects it with his hamartia.

Portillo begins the speech: 'Es verdad; pues reprimamos | esta fiera condición | esta furia, esta ambición' [2148-2150]. These lines can be read through the notion of emotion regulation. At a grammatical level, the verb 'reprim*amos*' in the first person suggests a self-induced repression of the negative 'condición' of 'furia' and/or sadness. Portillo-Segismundo accompanies this textual call for a behavioural adjustment by closing his eyes while reciting it –to convey the internalisation of such restraint, an effort requiring his utmost concentration (not his gut reaction).

Along with this gesture, from beginning to end and 'in sharp contrast to convention, Portillo did not deliver the keynote soliloquy […] as a grandiloquent and defiant existential wail, but seated on the stage floor, face down, struggling to hold back the tears'.[419] An indolent corporeality and tearfulness are two acting choices applied to this speech to thematise the control of feelings rather than other, more conventional sub-texts –such as its implied metaphysical topics, usually played with a hieratic posture and a kinetic pomposity. Portillo ignores the pseudo-existentialism of more fundamentalist Segismundos and prefers to gaze sheepishly at the floor, overlooking the philosophical values of the soliloquy in favour of instructing on humility and Christian self-discipline.[420]

This un-conventional stage business is the visual illustration of 'emotions […] [which] result from the interaction of an event's actual or anticipated consequences and the subject's concern'.[421] Portillo's interpretation reveals that the most famous words of Golden Age drama can be understood and performed as the aftermath of the conflictive interrelation between: (a) the outcome of Segismundo's negative behaviour at the Palace and (b) his wishes. Two textual examples will suffice to elucidate this point.

The first one is the pathetic interjection found in the middle of the speech '¡desdicha fuerte!', which anticipates: '¡Que hay quien intente reinar | viendo que ha de despertar | en el sueño de la muerte!' [2164-2167]. Regarding (b), Segismundo implies that he desires the '[d]icha' of the freedom briefly enjoyed while he 'reina[ba]' in the Palace. This hope

[419] Wheeler, 'Golden…', p. 286.
[420] An example of this defiant existential wail is Julio Núñez's performance of this speech in the classic production of *La vida es sueño* (1967) for Estudio 1, directed by Pedro Amalio Lopez: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fcJ987ZtxXk>, online video recording, YouTube, 2012 [Accessed 16/10/20].
[421] Frijda, *The Emotions*, p. 6.

contradicts (a), the event's consequence: his second imprisonment (compared to the 'muerte') due to his intemperate actions.

A result of acknowledging this contrast is that Portillo recites this line introducing a pause in the rhythm of his speech and staring blankly at a point in space –as if sorrowfully reminiscing about his past and desired situation. The conspicuous presentation of the elements implied in the emotional process –precisely in one of the most canonical texts of a theatrical tradition so far ignored by studies of affects and performance– proves the importance of interpreting the *comedia* through this framework.

The second example including a textual cue for an emotional interpretation is:

> Yo sueño que estoy aquí
> destas prisiones **cargado**,
> *y soñé que en otro estado*
> *más lisonjero me vi*. [2178-2181]

The performance of 'cargado' reinforces the separation of these lines into two meaningful segments: Portillo weeps as he recites it. The central concept of the first part is 'sueño' (present tense of *soñar*) and corresponds to Segismundo's actual situation and the event's consequence (a): the 'aquí' of his 'prisiones'. To transmit this distinction, the actor accompanies these words by looking at the *right* side of the ceiling (underlined above). The second section contains 'soñé' (past tense) and connotes the Prince's desired and lost hope (b): the 'otro estado' of the Palace. For this moment, Portillo's action is to glance at the *left* side of the roof (in italics). That the foregone state is 'más lisonjero' than the one the character is currently 'cargado' with is a disappointment which produces sadness.

Portillo's head movement from right to left emphasises the difference between present and past, consequence and concern, and '…todo [lo que] se acabó | y esto [que] sólo no se acaba' [2136-2137]. In terms of setting, this opposition is represented by the

cave/shadow and the Palace/light. In terms of performance, it is illustrated by the actor's reciting of Calderón's words –sorrowfully– with a soft, low slur. His face also conveys this feeling: the corners of the mouth are turned down, and the eyebrows drawn downward. As this happens, Segismundo apprehensively squeezes the end of the chain –passion possessing every centimetre of his body.

The concept of *soñar* is reintroduced later with: 'sueña el que agravia y ofende' [2174]. This line encompasses an instance of anagnorisis, as Segismundo becomes aware that it was he who 'soñ[ó]' –i.e., committed– the 'agravi[os]' and 'ofen[sas]', driven by his *llorica* and *tiránica* disposition in the Palace. Segismundo's recognition of self-blame is translated by Portillo's moving of his hands (still holding the chain's collar) towards his own chest, emulating the gestures of the Catholic *mea culpa.* At the same time, tears well up in his eyes (fig. 39).



Fig. 39. As Portillo-Segismundo recognises his hamartia –offending and aggravating due to his emotional excess–, he is overtaken by weeping.

Portillo continues his monologue, occasionally pausing to breathe, as a physiological method to control weeping. With '¿Qué es la vida?: una ilusión' [2183], Segismundo's tearfulness acquires a hyperbolic air. An upsetting awareness makes the character break down: that every 'estado' (the present/imposed and the past/desired) is nothing more than 'una ilusión' and that the distinction between 'sueño' and 'soñé' is 'una ficción' [2182]. After 'y el mayor bien es pequeño' [2185], he introduces a longer break, emphasised by the loss of his voice – marking the pain behind resigning to admit perpetual dissatisfaction as the condition of man.

This anomalous pause before the conjunction 'que' (after the word 'pequeño') presents a hiatus from the emotion previously displayed. Then, Portillo surprisingly puts the chain's collar he is holding on his own neck and produces a long sniffle to terminate his

weeping (fig. 40). Only after chaining himself and after having controlled his sorrow, he completes the phrase '…*que* toda la vida es sueño' [2186], uttering it with a much calmer tone than those which preceded them and by looking straight at the spectators, rather than at the floor as before. This establishes a contrast, through kinetic means, between the two conditions: passion and reason.

This opposition is drawn on Portillo's facial features, which are more sober than the *llorica*'s anguished frown, as the conversion towards Christian self-control advances. This change is related to the one implied in the première, where a *corporal* technique is supplanted by an *espiritual* one, and an emphasis on movement by an emphasis on declamation. Neither the 1996 nor the 2000 Segismundo stressed this adjustment with such an evident stylistic shift as the one presented by Portillo, remaining, instead, with visible traces of their psychopathologic and animalised hamartias, respectively.



Fig. 40. Portillo-Segismundo puts the chain's collar on his own neck –symbolising the self-control undergone during his anagnorisis.

An aspect which also stands out from Portillo's interpretation of this scene, set against her predecessors', is the employment of a prop as a resource to connote a significative development in the plot-arc. This is a consequence of the fact that, in contrast with more minimalistic dramatic conventions,

> in the narrative/character/text-based theatre of the mainstream Western tradition, objects […] have come increasingly to serve the actor as an instrument through which a character's state of mind or emotional state can be articulated.[422]

[422] McAuley, p. 186.

In this 'mainstream' *La vida es sueño*, the chain's collar is one of the 'objects' through which the actor portrays a change in his character's 'emotional state' (another one is the harness). That the functions of this prop –to repress and restrain– are self-inflicted entails that Segismundo recognizes that his behavioural flaw needs to be inhibited and punished. Hence, as a complement to the acting, the chains are another tool to convey the Prince's regulation of the negative feelings which previously influenced him to insult and murder. Additionally, the self-imposed manipulation of this prop implies that the affective evolution 'articulated' through it is inspired by Segismundo's own 'mind'. For the first time, the protagonist's transition is not induced by others (as in his appearance in the Palace and in his first and second imprisonment), introducing a sense of moral self-evaluation behind this action.

Finally, Portillo-Segismundo gets up –abandoning the posture of depression/melancholia– and, walking towards the trapdoor, delivers a statement of resignation: 'y los sueños, sueños son' [2187]. Undermining the vocal grandiloquence of convention, Portillo pronounces these words in such a low tone that they are barely audible from the video-recording. As he realises that every situation –every *sueño*– is a frustrating one, the re-enchained Prince descends the prison's stairs and disappears, announcing that 'now *desengañado*, Segismundo will henceforth use his free will to overcome his "fiera condición" (I. 2149), in order not to endanger his soul'.[423]

The soul-searching ideal behind the 2012 anagnorisis of Segismundo entails a psychological orientation close to the one noticed in 1996, since: 'la gran enseñanza de Portillo aquí termina siendo una terapia cercana al psicoanálisis, en la que vemos como un ser logra dominar y

[423] J. B. Hall, 'The Problem of Pride and the Interpretation of the Evidence in *La vida es sueño*', *The Modern Language Review*, 77 (1982), 339-347 (p. 342).

gestionar la inmensa rabia que le invade'.[424] Although, later, the Prince still exhibits signs of fury and melancholy (e.g., supporting the war against his father; trying to 'goza[r]' Rosaura [2956]), these moments are always accompanied by rational and/or moral (self-)reflection on the need for emotional discipline (e.g., 'Pero el vuelo abatamos | espíritu…' [2664-2665]; 'acudamos a lo eterno' [2982]). In all these cases, Portillo-Segismundo's performance is directed at showing the ways to '[auto]dominar[se] y [auto]gestionar[se]' in a particular therapeutic fashion.

The therapy of feelings that is Pimenta's interpretation of Segismundo's progress is faithful to Calderón's Prince, as:

> a partir del momento en que se despierta en la torre, empieza a dominar gradualmente en el personaje su racionalidad […] hasta que al final se nos presenta *como un personaje en pleno dominio de sus emociones,* inscrito totalmente en la ideología de su época y de su sociedad.[425]

The 'dominio de sus emociones' by the textual Segimsundo can be framed within the definition of emotion regulation. This means that the "original" protagonist follows a teleological plot-arc which is analogous to the one taken by Portillo-Segismundo: from the "night" of his 'emociones' to the "day" of his 'racionalidad'. The moment marking the start of such evolution in the play-text also coincides with the beginning of the 2012 protagonist's affective 'gesti[ón]' –in both, it happens after the Prince 'se despierta en la torre' (in contrast, in 1996, it was imposed by the rebels a scene later and, in 2000, it never really occured). Finally, the word 'gradualmente' also describes the performance of Pimenta's protagonist: the lion(ess) and the *llorica* are states that only entirely disappear at the very end. Taking this comparison into account, the thematic cornerstone of Pimenta's interpretation –emotion–

[424] Rosana Torres, 'Portillo abduce a Segismundo', *El País*, 7 July 2012: <https://elpais.com/cultura/2012/07/07/actualidad/1341693383_707743.html> [Accessed 18/12/2019].
[425] Ruano, 'Introducción', in Pedro…, p. 49. Emphasis added.

typifies this production as fundamentalist (although, as shown in the next section, particular elements are reworked to "uncomplicate" the protagonist's final exemplarity).

I.3. Segismundo's rationality: an exemplary and "closed" dénouement

One of the main differences that sets Pimenta's project apart from previous adaptations is the interpretation of the play's end [3158-3319]. This section focuses on five specific moments which exhibit such deviation. As opposed to the intricacy of Segismundo's dénouement in 1996 and 2000, Pimenta presents an exemplary and "closed" conclusion for her Prince, highlighting his 'elección de la bondad'.[426] This was part of the director's work with Portillo as, in the rehearsals, 'Blanca relataba el deseo de ser una persona que construye, no que destruye'.[427] In contrast, by displaying signs of violence (in 2000) and of psychopathology (in 1996) at the play's resolution, those Segismundos insinuated destruction, rather than construction.

After Basilio accepts his defeat, the back door opens and Segismundo and his army appear. Notario-Basilio kneels before the invader (fig. 54). A moment of suspense is created by the expectancy of the fulfilment of the stars' omens: a revengeful treatment of the father by the son, like the one displayed towards other characters before. However, instead of a raging Caligula, a self-composed Prince forgives the King, a display of attitudinal revindication showing how the protagonist 'tenía todas las papeletas para ser un psico-killer y opta por construir'.[428]

[426] Julio Bravo, '"El teatro es mucho más que una manera de pasar el rato"', *ABC*, 8 October 2012: <https://www.abc.es/20121007/cultura/abci-blancaportillo-201210052016.html> [Accessed 6/01/2020].
[427] Pimenta, 'Entrevista... Figuras...'.
[428] Bravo.

The next two actions present a variation from the way the actor/character behaved previously. First, he glances at the auditorium, preparing the spectators for the presentation of a moral dictum –instead of facing away, as he did in emotional interventions. Second, he walks downstage, occupies the stage's apron, and commences: 'Corte ilustre de Polonia' [3168]. The meaning of this location should be traced to the symbolisms established by Pimenta: 'el espacio metateatral, que está entre el palacio y el público, es un espacio de reflexión, de monólogos donde el espectador se siente muy aludido'.[429]

The quality of 'reflexión' of such a space contrasts with the *emoción*/*pasión* experienced by the protagonist throughout his vicissitudes. As the connotation of the apron mirrors Segismundo's newly-acquired rationality, Portillo occupies this area for the first time to reinforce such change –before, he had mainly moved in the shadowy background (in the Palace, when Segimsundo's mischief was at its worst, he even acted behind a piece of translucent cloth). Additionally, this metatheatrical spot in the Hospital is used similarly to the centre-front in the Romea: inhabiting them allows the players to include the audience in the action (although this proximity had aggressive undertones in 2000, absent twelve years later).

Along with the onstage position, Portillo transmits Segismundo's maturity by calmly pacing around, instead of evoking a lion(ess), as when he previously ran from corner to corner. A contrast is also created between his vertical self-possession in this (contemplative) moment and the flexed seated posture in the two (emotional) speeches already analysed. In that erect bearing, Portillo-Segismundo 'address[es] the audience and the other characters on

[429] Pimenta, 'Entrevista… directora…', p. 43.

stage face-on for the first time, adopting the rhetoric and pose of a lawyer addressing a jury or an MP parliament'.[430]

The comparison between the actor-character's disposition and that of a lawyer matches the rationalisation of Segismundo (the substance of such profession being analytical, rather than affective). Consequently, instead of facing down (as before), the Prince looks straight ahead, unashamed of his morally exemplary message and, as an advocate, confident in the case he is making. The rhetorical orientation of this speech limits Portillo's movement to his hands, which, rhythmically swaying from side to side, work to didactically accompany the composed intonation and prudent ideas –reminiscent of the *comediante*'s focus on declamation. His facial features can be described as dispassionate, a neutrality which reveals an adaptation of gestural 'papeletas' from that of a psycho-killer to that of a parliamentarian.

To further understand Portillo-Segismundo's emotion regulation, it is convenient to zoom in on two specific scenes: (1) Segismundo's mention of the anguish after seeing 'rendido a mis pies a un padre* | y atropellado a un monarca' [3234-3235] and (2) his managing of 'vencer[se]' by ordering: 'Astolfo dé | la mano luego a Rosaura' [3258-3259]. The offset of these two situational meanings contradicts Segismundo's concerns: he despises his father's humiliation and still wants to possess the lady. These discrepancies spark the character's pathos. In both moments, the passion initially possessing Segismundo –sadness– is reproduced by Portillo's voice (slow in rate, downward in inflection) and facial features (downturned corners of the mouth, eyebrows drawn downward, and tears) (fig. 41).

[430] Wheeler, 'Golden…', p. 286.



Fig. 41. Portillo-Segismundo displays the physical signs of sadness before giving Rosaura's hand to Astolfo.

However, the portrayal of rationality substitutes that of feeling, forwarding the completion of Segismundo's virtuous cycle. Following the initial weeping, Portillo takes a meaningful pause (marked with an asterisk), as he takes a step forward to the apron. With a deep breath, which helps him to hold his tears back, he resumes his speech, endorsing the most 'grand[e] vitori[a]' of his regulation: 'vencerme a mí' [3256-3258]. Portillo-Segismundo's serene paralinguistic features, sombre and inexpressive gestures, and hieratic bearing are the external correlatives of moral growth. This description of the acting represents a contribution to the critical vocabulary of the study of emotions in theatre –because this field focuses on the staging of emotions *only*, overlooking the expression of their regulation.

Segismundo's 'vencer[se]' is further disclosed by the absence of Soldado 1's punishment scene, a textual adaptation which emphasises Portillo-Segismundo's embodiment of 'el paradigma de la capacidad del hombre de construirse de la nada'.[431] As examined in the first chapter, this moment of the première would have challenged a straightforward interpretation of the Prince's spiritual evolution (with a return of the *corporal/motorio* technique in the *comediante*'s expression). However, 'en la propuesta de Pimenta, el joven heredero del trono no castiga al militar que le liberó de la torre'. With this decision,

> se busca subrayar el carácter ejemplar del aprendizaje moral de Segismundo y desactivar el final pesimista de la obra. El mensaje de *La vida es sueño*, entonces, se vuelve optimista: hasta el ser más cruelmente atormentado y animalizado puede superarse y convertirse en un ciudadano ideal.[432]

The deletion of these lines overlooks a tinge of nihilism probably presented by Calderón to problematise and "open-up" Segismundo's final conduct. This unfaithfulness to the "original" acquires extra weight if the 2012 dénouement is contrasted with that of 1996 and 2000 –whose final messages were anything but 'optimista'. There is an ideological reason behind such reformism: the reiteration of Pimenta's (Christian) idealism. The deactivation of textual/performative features which would have undermined Segismundo's clear-cut overcoming of emotional torments is stimulated by the director's 'fe en la capacidad de autosuperación del ser humano'.[433]

To further discuss this issue, an exercise of counterfactual literary criticism can be introduced by imagining a hypothetical reading of a possible pathway this production could have taken if Soldado 1's punishment had been staged. Portillo-Segismundo would have

[431] Pimenta, 'Entrevista… directora…', p. 44.
[432] Mascarell, 'Revisión…', p. 145.
[433] Adillo, 'La adaptación…', p. 17.

portrayed the lion(ess)' anger, re-animalizing the role as he (unfairly) sanctions the rebel. A consequence of the reinstatement of his hamartia would have been the questioning of the categorical –and dry– conception of human conduct that Pimenta establishes from the beginning. This is because moralising and unambiguous decisions such as those taken by her 'resta[n] complejidad y aristas al personaje de Segismundo al circunscribirlo dentro del marco de la ética contemporánea'.[434]

Instead of tackling the "wetness" of entangling the protagonist's ethics, the director prefers to show how 'individuals must learn their culture's "display rules", which concern when, where, to whom, and how to express emotions in culturally acceptable ways'.[435] In this mise-en-scène, the mastery of emotion regulation –i.e., the understanding of the 'acceptable ways' to display affects– substitutes the presentation of a more thought-provoking ending. Independently from a discussion on how (un)faithful to Calderón's intentions the removal of this scene is, its sub-text remains the avoidance of engaging with *La vida es sueño*'s most contemporary and politically relevant topic: violence. This case illustrates how textual reformism is not necessarily tied to critical "wetness" but can also convey the opposite.

Portillo's performance of Segismundo's last lines can be analysed by adapting, into a positive variant, the definition of emotions presented in the introduction. This is because this moment portrays the matching (rather than contradiction) of the circumstances with the Prince's 'dicha humana' [3313]. The satisfaction (rather than frustration) of his 'ansias' [3306]

[434] Mascarell, 'Revisión…', p. 145.
[435] Elizabeth A. Lemerise and Kenneth A. Dodge, 'The Development of Anger and Hostile Interactions', in *Handbook…,* ed. by Lewis, 703-741 (pp. 730-731).

cancels the over-emphatic display of negative feelings. The situation finally favours Segismundo: he has won the war, forgiven his father, and married Estrella –actions entailing the culturally-corrected ways of displaying affects.

Performatively, this is expressed by the Prince sitting on the bench downstage-left, no longer lying down on the floor. From that "civilized" piece of furniture, he reflects on how every (emotional) state 'pasa como sueño' [3314]. Portillo's voice is oratorical (contrasting with his previous intemperateness), and his frown has disappeared (replaced by a humourless visage). These physical features are proper to someone who has been 'cor[onado]' as a Christian Prince by his recent rational 'hazañas' [3253] (fig. 42).



Fig. 42. The signs of Segismundo's unrepressed emotions have disappeared from Portillo's expression after undergoing regulation.

Then, Portillo-Segismundo stands up and walks towards the backdoor. Denoting humility (with head down and taking small steps), he finishes 'pidiendo de nuestras faltas, | perdón…' [3317-3318], crossing the opening, and closing the door behind him (fig. 43). These lines represent the conventional way of ending a Golden Age play-text/performance: the *poeta* asks for 'perdón' for the performative 'faltas' committed by the *comediantes* and witnessed by the public. However, in the 2012 staging, these flaws would more likely be

interpreted by a contemporary spectator as the moral faults –rather than the acting ones– committed by two emotionally-unrestrained beings: Basilio and Segismundo.



Fig. 43. Portillo-Segismundo closes the door behind him –a stage element which mirrors his exemplary path.

Furthermore, the act of shutting of the door possesses emblematic connections with Portillo's constructive conception of Segismundo, as 'in the theatre, the door, or material means providing access from the offstage to the onstage, is especially charged with symbolic significance'.[436] An argument can be made that the many openings of Pimenta's stage-space are a metaphoric corollary of the 2012 Prince's emotional voyage. This allows the following statement, regarding the relation between doors and life, to be applied to Segismundo's case:

[436] McAuley, p. 87.

'if one were to give an account of all the doors one has closed or opened, of all the doors one would like to re-open, one would have to tell the story of one's entire life'.[437]

Due to the importance given to space in this version, the Prince's 'entire [emotional] life' is mediated by the opening and closing of the different stage doors and by the crossing of them. His entrance into the dramatic world –his theatrical "birth"– happened through the ascent of the *escotilla*. This opening (and its phantasmagorical light) introduced the character's emotional hamartia –initialising his performative 'story'.

Additionally, Segismundo entered the Palace by elevating Portillo in a harness from the trapdoor to the stage. In contrast, he returned to the cave by being lowered in the same device from the ceiling's opening to the floor (fig. 44). After this visually striking downfall, Segismundo recited the '¿Qué es la vida?' speech, marking his anagnorisis and his path towards restraint and rationality. As a consequence of the recognition of his hamartia, Segismundo's self-punishment was shown by the actor descending into the prison of the *escotilla*. Therefore, in the 2012 production, hamartia, anagnorisis, and dénouement are mediated through doors –spaces related to emotions and their control.

[437] Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*, trans. by M. Jolas (Boston: Beacon Press, 1994), p. 224.



Fig. 44. Segismundo descends from the ceiling's opening into his prison –a spatial symbol, with other doors, of the character's pathway of restraint.

In the finale, the closure of the backwall door parallels the culmination of Portillo-Segismundo's capacity 'de dibujarse a sí mismo, de reconstruirse'.[438] In other words, the shutting-down of this portal implies the "shutting down" of the dramatic conflict: in Poland, no other emotional disagreement will be staged by the idealised soon-to-be King. The previous versions' method of interpreting one of the most important nodes of meaning of any theatrical work –the ending– differs from that chosen by Pimenta here. Proxemic relationships between actors/characters determined Segismundo's future in 1996 and 2000 – "opening it up" by his (autistic) grasping of Estrella's hand and by his (violent) pushing of Basilio, respectively. In contrast, in 2012, it is the player's interaction with an element of

[438] Helena Pimenta, 'Imposible negar la naturaleza', in '*La vida es sueño' de Calderón de la Barca, T. Lliure*, p. 5: <https://www.teatrelliure.com/sites/default/files/espectacles/dossiers/la_vida_es_sueno_cas.pdf> [Accessed 7/01/2020].

space, rather than with another individual, which thwarts the audience's imagination to travel beyond that door and question their notions of human moral growth.

Part II: Notario-Basilio

II.1. Basilio's presentation: *parasismos* and *congojas*

Basilio's deeds and Segismundo's conflict are connected by the King's first action: opening and entering the backdoor. This portal will be used by the Prince when he exits and "closes" the plot-arc. In contrast to the son's conclusive operation, his father's arrival represents the "opening up" of the story. A correspondence can be found in the text as great part of the King's first speech is devoted to setting down the pathway of the upcoming events: 'ponerle mañana, | sin que el sepa que es mi hijo | y rey vuestro, a Segismundo' [796-798] in the Palace.

Notario reflected on his character's responsibility for triggering the action when building up the role: 'el rey Basilio es el personaje que desencadena todo el conflicto de esta aventura maravillosa…'.[439] The King's 'desencadena[miento]' was also recognized by Pimenta: '[es] la causa de toda esta tragedia, el acontecimiento original, la acción de Basilio'.[440] What is the relationship between the conception of the King's sparking of the conflict and this production's emotional framework?

To answer this question, this section centres on three moments where Notario-Basilio's performance exhibits a feeling-oriented characterisation similar to Portillo-

[439] Joaquín Notario, 'Entrevista con Joaquín Notario /Compañía Nacional de Teatro Clásico – 2012', online video recording, YouTube, 2012: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bi-9Yv4RHZI> [Accessed 8/01/2020].
[440] Pimenta, 'Entrevista… directora…', p. 43.

Segismundo's, consequently 'da[ndo] la sensación de que hay una importante corriente genética entre ambos. Este Segismundo está clarísimo que es hijo de este Basilio'.[441] This family resemblance is initially materialized in the pathetic interpretation of the following lines:

> Más me valiera que el cielo,
> antes que yo hubiera sido
> intérprete de sus cifras
> y de sus señas registro,*
> diese final a mis días,
> como primer **desperdicio**
> de sus **iras**, y que pronto
> mi final **hubiera sido**.[442]

Basilio's hyperbolic expression embodies a guideline for a pathetic performance –hence, it can be read through the framework of the functional theory of emotions. This is because Basilio's words (the yearning for his own death) are the product of a conflictive relationship between: (a) his desire (to have a normal father-son and King-Prince relationship) and (b) his circumstance (being the interpreter of Segismundo's destiny and, consequently, becoming his jailer, as he took the 'determin[ación] de encerrar | la fiera que había nacido' [734-735]). The grief felt due to his mistreatment brings about an emotionally-inspired 'remedio': 'ponerle mañana | […] a Segismundo | […] en mi dosel, en mi silla' [796-800]. In other words, the 'motivación de Basilio es […] [que] no quiere ser injusto con su propio hijo'.[443] The chain of consequences of circumstances>desire>emotion>action exemplifies a central postulate of the method chosen to analyse this production: that '"emotion" is […] not truly an emotion without a change in action readiness: a tendency, an urge or an impulse to act or

[441] Torres, 'Portillo…'.
[442] [644-651].
[443] Ruano, 'Introducción', in Pedro…, p. 58.

to refrain from acting'.[444] Therefore, the 2012 *La vida es sueño*'s plot-line is the result of the King's urgency to change the circumstances –due to the extreme affects felt.

Faithful to the textual guideline of emotion, Notario depicts sadness with similar paralinguistic features as Segismundo's: his vocal tempo is slow and its inflection downward. However, the cadence grows boisterous at the end of this tirade (in bold above), as a performative correlative for the textual overstatement: that he rather 'hubiera sido' a 'desperdicio' of destiny's 'iras' than feeling such distress for his guiltiness in his son's adversity. A preoccupied brow also appears on the actor's face and a depression at the corners of his mouth. His breathing becomes agitated, so he tries to control it by taking a deep breath (asterisk above). However, his failure at this self-restraint is expressed by the wringing of his hands, as if squeezing life out of his own imaginary neck, 'd[ándose] final a [sus] días' (fig. 45).

[444] Konijn, p. 70.



Fig. 45. Notario-Basilio shows the signs of sadness as he narrates Segismundo's frustrating story.

The connection between self-harm and unrestrained emotion is reinstated later: 'a quien le daña el saber | homicida es de sí mismo' [654-655]. These words also elaborate on Basilio's frustrating situation (his ominous past 'saber'), which he now needs to readdress with actions (by bringing his son home). The distressing implications behind such recognition cause Basilio to grip the back of the throne in order not to fall, defeated by despair. Through the chair, Notario conveys a drop in muscular tone from an excess of feelings.

After, the King sits to recover and continues narrating Segismundo's birth. By acquiring the hunched posture of despair, the actor makes his character look older –and,

hence, in greater need of an heir– than ever. Notario's actions here can be compared to the different uses given to the throne by the other two CNTC Basilios (each influenced by the objectives of their respective productions). In 1996, it portrayed his initial security and, in 2000, it hid him from the approaching *vulgo*.

Sorrow is also displayed when Notario-Basilio describes the fate of his wife, Clorilene. Despair is a reaction stemming from the dispute between his desire (for her to be alive) and the disappointing fact (of her being dead). Following the first mention of her name –'En Clorilene'–, Notario adds a suggestive pause before completing the line with 'mi esposa' [660]. This silence can be catalogued as reformist: the introduction of a caesura in the middle of an *octosílabo* differs from its canonical reading.[445] Emotion is, once again, to be blamed for such an anomaly. Indeed, Vicente Fuentes, the CNTC's *asesor de verso*, recognised that:

> el silencio nos abría nuevos paisajes; su uso decía mucho de este océano de palabras, pues al callar, hacíamos entender algo y creábamos un efecto nuevo, y *surgía una emoción de un pensamiento*; de una duda, un silencio elocuente.[446]

Notario's 'callar[se]' adds a moment of vulnerability and doubt: it seems as if the character's voice breaks away from the anguish felt. Gesturally, the split verse is complemented by a downward and resigned head movement by the decadent King. Additionally, recalling the distinction established in the previous chapter between internal and external acting, this silence can be described as a resource proper to the former technique as it 'surg[e]' from a 'pensamiento'. A hesitation such as this would have been antithetical to the 2000 externally-oriented production and its trepidatory rhythm. Another diversion from the theatrical

[445] See: Antonio Quilis, *Métrica española* (Madrid: Ariel, 2008), pp. 79-81.
[446] Vicente Fuentes, '¿Qué tiene *La vida es sueño*? Vicente Fuentes, asesor de verso', in *Cuadernos…*, ed. by Zubieta, p. 69. Emphasis added.

tradition is that Notario's hiatus and its emotional sub-text opposes the cerebral 'océano de palabras' of the Calderonian Basilio's first verbose speech. The 'elo[cuencia]' created through it also differs from Colomé's declamatory dullness in 1996.

Sadness metamorphoses into anger when Basilio narrates how Segismundo's birth was anticipated by 'el mayor, el más horrendo | eclipse', by 'incendios vivos', and by the 'tembl[or] [de] los edificios'. The first sign of such mutation is that if, lines before, Notario-Basilio had fought for breath to convey sorrowful vulnerability, now his 'breathing pattern is characterized by [the] high frequency and high amplitude' of 'anger/aggression'.[447] This emotion is also implied by Notario's mimicking such 'parasismos' [688-695] (as he defines the catastrophes): his blasting timbre reminds us of the sounds of a 'tembl[or]'; his facial gestures are as 'horrendo[s]' as cataclysms; and 'incendios vivos' stem from his eyes.

The King also menacingly points his finger, as he holds the chair very firmly: seemingly afraid of being 'eclips[ado]' by his own catastrophic passion (fig. 46). In 2000, Álvarez also displayed kinetic intensity to portray how Basilio's memory of 'el mayor' *parasismo* leads him to a heart attack. These performances suggest that, contrary to both the première's and the 1996 version's oratorical orientation, contemporary actors explore more action-motivated possibilities to interpret this speech.

[447] Bloch, p. 203.

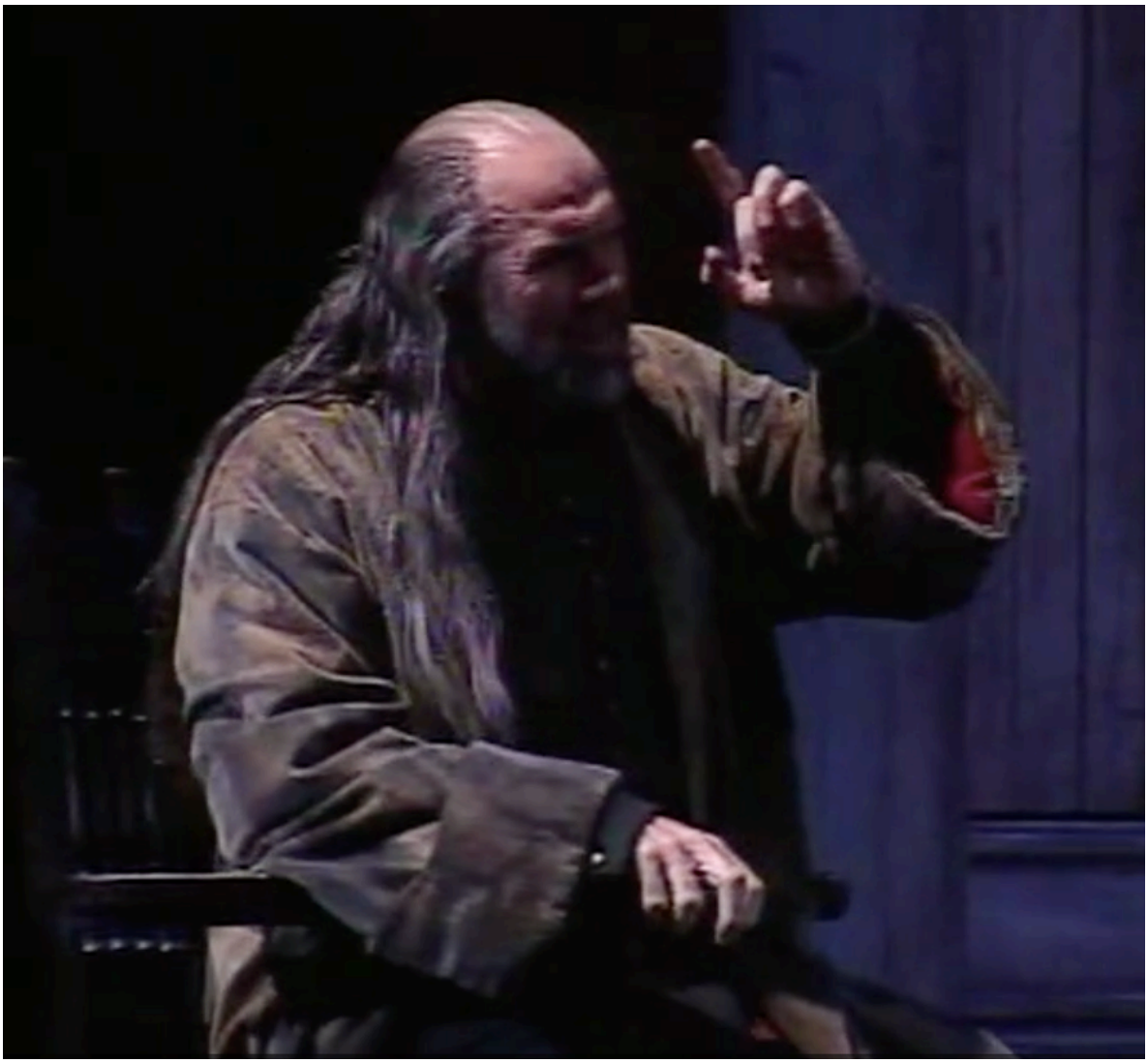


Fig. 46. An angry Notario-Basilio holds to the arm of the chair, displaying his propensity to be overtaken by feelings.

Next, the rhythm of Notario's enunciation slows down as he recites that Segismundo 'dio la muerte a su madre' [704], while he frowns and begins to cry. His menacing intentions (expressed by his pointing finger) disappear as he makes a fist with his left hand: a squeeze which connotes his frustration regarding the situation. The gestural display of contrasting feelings in the space of a few lines –from anger to sorrow– establishes Basilio's fault: a changeable temperament is indecorous for a King. A character so easily controlled by his

unpredictable feelings is a character prone to fall victim to them, thus establishing the 2012 father's hamartia.

Yet another emotional nuance is introduced by Notorio while he recites: '(¡con qué *congoja* lo digo!)' [723]. In the play-text, this line represents one of the few instances which deviates from the declamatory uniformity of this speech:

> pero más importante, como señala Ruíz Ramón, es que durante este cerebral, calculadísimo y perfectamente estructurado discurso, "el único momento en que se produce una descarga de emoción es aquél en el que al imaginarse a sí mismo, Basilio, personal y físicamente, a las plantas de Segismundo deja escapar ese incontenible '¡con qué congoja lo digo!' (v. 723), único verso cargado de subjetividad en un discurso de doscientos setenta y dos versos". [448]

As with the abovementioned silence, this interjection is a parenthetical interruption of the speech's rhetorical orientation and is introduced to communicate the character's susceptibility (in both text and production). This 'congoja' results from the incongruity between Basilio's 'subjetividad' (imagining himself…) and the foretold situation (…physically surrendering to Segismundo) –evidencing the correlations between the *comedia*/production and the functional theory of emotions. Hence, being faithful to the text's implications, Notario displays a clear 'descarga de emoción' to decorously conceive this line's intentions: introducing another eloquent silence and guiding his right hand to his face as if covering his tears (a sign of his flaws) (fig. 47). However, unfaithfully, the acting of these *congojas* is extended beyond this 'único verso', influencing the interpretation of the entirety of a 'discurso' "authentically" conceived as 'calculadísmo' by Calderón.

[448] Ruano, 'Introducción', in Pedro…, p. 58.

Furthermore, Mayorga potentializes the sub-text of emotion by changing this line's original location in the play-text to a new one in his script. From its marginal position (in-between 'a sus pies me había de ver' and 'siendo alfombra de sus plantas' [722 and 724]), the adaptor moved it to the end of the tirade, placing it after 'había de poner en mí | las plantas y yo rendido | a sus pies me había de ver'. A conclusive, rather than parenthetic, place confers semiotic importance to these words –proving, once again, the pre-eminence of emotion in shaping simultaneously this production's microscopic level (the adaptation of the text) and its macroscopic one (the acting and the space). In sync with these intentions, the rest of King's presentation is performed with similar emotional nuances (allowing the conclusions from the previous examples to be applied to other sections of the speech).



Fig. 47. An emotional King covers his weeping –a sign of the many *congojas* which constitute his hamartia.

II.2. Father and son's encounter: an *azotador* Basilio

The two main triggers for the action of this production are: (1) the behaviour inspired by the negative emotions of King and Prince and (2) how these two characters manage (Prince) or fail (King) to control them. The most extreme expression of such failure is exposed during Basilio and Segismundo's first encounter (hence, the importance of analysing it). To understand the full meaning of this scene, the event that anticipates it –the murder of Criado– should be considered first.

The political undertones of the defenestration are radically different in Pimenta's version and Bieito's mise-en-scène. If, in 2000, it worked to reveal the violence committed against the weakest members of society (those with disabilities), in 2012, it remains critically un-functional and dry. Notario presented an *energúmeno* who forcefully carried the dwarf-Criado and threw him from the balcony. In contrast, Portillo refrains from such an ideologically challenging proxemic relationship: instead, he lets the secondary character run towards the window and to his own death (as if voluntarily). This toned-down presentation of Segismundo happens, paradoxically, at a moment when his chaotic nature would typically be shown (as textually required). Behind this adaptation is Pimenta's conservativism, elucidated by her avoidance of such problematic issues as a cold-blooded assassination.

The King then enters, asking: '¿Qué ha sido esto?' [1440]. Initially, Notario portrays a composed monarch (unlike Álvarez-Basilio in 2000 and his show of decrepitude). Both characters assume polar positions on the stage: Portillo-Segismundo downstage-right; Notario-Basilio downstage-left. To emphasise this spatial difference, Segismundo sits down on a bench and adopts a protective posture (bending his head downwards, putting a protective

hand over it, and hugging his legs with both arms). This kinetic expression helps the actor to connote his character's 'fear': 'the body remaining in a withdrawal or crouching-like position'. Another reinforcement of the role's nonviolence is displayed here, as 'passive fear […] consists in a reaction of withdrawal from stimulus'.[449] With this, one more emotion is added to the repertoire of Segismundo's behavioural inconsistencies (proving the prominence of affects in Pimenta's refashioning of the tragedy).

In contrast to his son's inertia, Basilio assumes a ready-to-attack stance –embodying the frightening stimulus from which Segismundo shies away. The opposition in the proxemic relations between the two individuals during their first interaction echoes those which structure the plot-arc, as Pimenta stated: 'nos fijamos en los contrastes, en los extremos que hay en toda la obra, en las enormes contradicciones'.[450] A contrast in the actors' blocking reflects a thematic contrast: Basilio's moral degradation and Segismundo's exemplary evolution –as the former *actively* looks for conflict, while the latter *passively* retreats from it.

Portillo's panic diverges from the ironic guiltiness implied by the text; considering, for example, Segismundo's sardonic answer to his father: 'A un hombre que me ha cansado | de ese balcón he arrojado' [1441-1442]. The actor recites these lines as a frightened victim, rather than as a frightening executioner (as in 2000). This highlights Notario's imposing bearing and, hence, his characterisation of Basilio as the soon-to-be perpetrator of violence, a role conventionally embodied by Segismundo in other staggings. From this position of superiority, in the following dialogue, the father will verbally (and physically) abuse his son (instead of the other way around). The intention to present Segismundo as an unpolluted emblem of emotional dominion and Basilio as the opposite is so conspicuous that it forces

[449] Bloch, pp. 203 and 202.
[450] Pimenta, 'Entrevista… directora…', p. 43.

Pimenta to swap the dramatic functions traditionally assigned to the main characters – representing a reformist approach to the text with a dry ideological intention behind it.

Notario-Basilio's recrimination against Portillo-Segismundo is first conceived as sorrow, following the textual cue: 'Pésame mucho…' [1448]. After a brief show of 'p[esar]', irritation takes over when he mentions 'un **grave** homicidio' [1455] and as he 'mir[a] **el lugar** sangriento'.[451] These words are recited with the piercing timbre and fast rate of anger –a passion triggered by the realisation of the disparity between his desire (of Segismundo's optimal behaviour) and the situational meaning (of his becoming a murderer).

This is supported by a 'fierce glance: fixed stare, eyes slightly widened, eyebrows contracted'.[452] Notario fixes his recriminatory glance on the 'lugar sangriento': the window from which Criado was "pushed". His posture is one of tension about to boil over, displaying aggression's 'readiness for attack'.[453] The actor releases this strain by menacingly shaking the same 'brazos' that, in the text, promise an embrace as 'amorozos lazos' [1471-1472].

From his victimised position, the *llorica* starts to cry. Seeing his son in a fit of pathology unfit for an heir to the throne, Basilio's anger increases. Paradoxically, from this moment on, the King succumbs to the same emotional excess that he censures, as illustrated in the following lines:

> Al cielo y a **Dios** + pluguiera
> que a darte el ser no llegara
> porque tu voz no escuchara
> ni tu **atrevimiento** viera.[454]

[451] [1464].
[452] Frijda, *The Emotions*, p. 19.
[453] Frijda, *The Emotions*, p. 19.
[454] [1488-1491].

Emphasis is put on 'Dios' and 'atrevimiento', through the actor's blaring paralinguistic features –one of the most noticeable features of 'anger', where 'the mouth can be contorted, and the voice is usually loud, up to shouting'.[455] By stressing 'Dios', Notario suggests that the King expects Segismundo's behaviour to be like that of a *Christian* Prince. As a method to display how distant his son really is from this moralising aim, the second word yelled by the actor –'atrevimiento'– illustrates the Prince's irreligiousness or, in dramatic terms, his hamartia: his daring behaviour is driven by aggression and sorrow.

Notario-Basilio makes a fist with his left hand, after pronouncing 'Dios' (marked with a cross) and shakes it toward his son illustrating how, in anger, 'the muscular tonus is increased in all the anti-gravitational muscles, in particular in those muscles related to a posture of attack' (fig. 48).[456] Basilio's anatomy strengthens in preparation to hit the withdrawn Segismundo, in another act of unreasonable (and unconventional) passion. The disparity between a weak son and a strong father challenges the exegetic and performative tendency to place the majority of the play's force on the Prince, rather than on the King.

[455] Frijda, *The Emotions,* p. 19.
[456] Bloch, p. 203.



Fig. 48. Notario-Basilio displays anger and readiness to attack –contrasting the textual characterisation of the King as old and weak.

The rationale behind Notario's aggression becomes clearer when we adopt 'a functionalist perspective on emotion': 'when there is an obstacle to goal attainment, anger's function is to overcome obstacles to achieve goals'.[457] The King would like to overcome the obstacle presented by the emotionally immature heir to a soon-to-be heirless Kingdom –a difficulty embodied by the murder of a Palace servant. Basilio's goal is either to transform Segismundo into a judicious successor (proving the stars wrong and placing him on the throne) or to evidence his immutable brutishness (proving the stars right and placing Astolfo

[457] Lemerise, p. 730.

on the throne). This contrast is stressed textually, as the King enters this scene 'pensando hallar[lo] advertido, | de hados y estrellas triunfando' [1450-1451].

The fact that the reality of a murder diverges from Basilio's 'pensa[miento]' –as an obstacle to the completion of a certain goal– guides Notario's reaction: he angrily prays to God for Segismundo's non-existence ('darte el ser no llegara'). His death could solve Poland's problems: the hereditary issue would be settled with Astolfo being Basilio's sole successor. A significant opposition is created here for, in the first speech, the King asked for his own death –and, there, his emotion was sadness. With this, a postulate could be added to the theory of emotions: self-harm turns into harm as the emotion changes from sadness to anger.

Segismundo reacts to his father's recriminations by quickly standing up from his victimised position and recalling his aggressivity. He walks around like a caged lion, menacingly approaching the King, calling him: 'tirano de mi albedrío' [1504]. A face-to-face clash takes place before Segismundo's breaking down crying with 'pues eres tú mi deudor' [1519], becoming, once again, a *llorica*. Basilio's reaction to the accusation of tyranny and parental debt, and to witnessing his son's susceptibility, is to race towards him as if to physically concretise his vexation. The Prince quickly returns to his corner and assumes his crouching position –his fright being the third emotion shown in the space of few lines.

Notario approaches Portillo, stops in the middle of the stage, and shouts: 'cumplió su palabra el **cielo** | y al **cielo** contra ti apelo'.[458] He accompanies both 'cielo[s]' by imposingly pointing at the sky. This vocal and gestural stress reinstates both Basilio's yearning that

[458] [1521-1522].

Segismundo's behaviour should follow the rules sanctioned by the heavens and this production's religious resonances. If, twelve years before, Bieito shunned away from (or even parodied) the textual references to Christianity, Pimienta employs all the resources available to her to give them a life that had been lost on the 21st-century's secular stages.

Basilio sprints towards Segismundo, yelling: 'soberbio y no bien nacido'.[459] When Notario arrives next to Portillo, he suddenly begins hitting the Prince's bench with both hands, a few inches away from him (fig. 49). The actor repeats the movement three times, conveying the most violent action of this "softened" performance (apart from a brief battle scene) and further evidencing Pimenta's intention to tone down the intrinsic nihilism of Calderón's story (as an exception that proves the rule). Then, Notario-Basilio fixes his tangled hair, wipes his eyes, and warns: '…mira bien lo que te advierto: | que seas humilde y blando | porque quizá estés soñando' [1527-1530]. Paradoxically, this King has neither displayed 'humild[ad]' nor 'bland[ura]'.

[459] [1523].



Fig. 49. Driven by uncontrollable anger, Basilio hits the bench next to Segismundo –illustrating a reformist hamartia: this King's behaviour is driven by emotions.

This inability to restrain aggressive displays of anger embodies Basilio's hamartia, as 'once aroused, an emotion brings forth an action tendency which dominates the control of the execution and actions. In other words, one cannot put up resistance to the impulse to "attack" or to "flee"'.[460] The King's emotionally-inspired 'action tendency' (only hinted at before by his non-emphatic display of fury) is actually concretized in his striking of Segismundo's bench. The "flawed" quality of such behaviour is sustained by the fact that: (1) self-possession (or resistance to impulsivity) is a value expected from an old and wise

[460] Konijn, p. 71.

King and (2) the absence of such control will bring about the character's downfall, as Segismundo will eventually take revenge for this mistreatment (among others).

Regarding the conflict, Basilio's uncontrolled emotions contrast with Segismundo's gradual self-control. If the story of the Prince is one of (rational) construction, that of the King is one of (irrational) deterioration. While Segismundo ascends towards moral education and the repression of passion, Basilio descends towards unrestrained and desperate behaviour. The scene of their first encounter represents a middle ground where both characters' opposing paths meet –hence, its emotional power.

The conception of the 2012 King also has a notable impact considering the CNTC historically. Talking about the performance of his 2000 Segismundo and his 2012 Basilio, Notario stressed the centrality of violence in the construction of these roles: 'antes tenía este personaje que sufría el azote del padre y ahora me convierto en el padre que azota al hijo'.[461] Pimenta reinforced such issues as 'la violencia que ejerce el padre sobre el hijo es terrorífica'.[462] Thus, Notario-Basilio can be characterised as an *azotador* –who contrasts with the 1996 hieratic and the 2000 *gallina* Kings. Additionally, the two roles assumed by Notario twelve years apart from each other illustrate how radically different productions become linked through brutality (whether a trait of the son or the father): a sign of this theme's centrality in driving *La vida es sueño*'s possible conflicts (even when the attacker/victim dichotomy is interchanged, as in 2012).[463]

[461] Notario.
[462] Pimenta, 'Entrevista... Figuras…'.
[463] In the 2019-2020 production of *La vida es sueño* by Mexico's CNT, there was an extra-textual scene that can be used to highlight the singularity behind presenting a violent version of Basilio. After Basilio's presentation, Arturo Beristain's King was left alone for a few seconds in the empty space of the Sala Héctor Mendoza. Then, the actor took his belt off and, like a *disciplinante,* started hitting himself on the back with it. A 2020 self-*azotador* (Mexican) Basilio contrasts with a 2012 *azotador* (Spanish) King.

II.3. The 'teatro funesto' scene: Basilio's emotional *resquebrajamiento*

So far, Pimenta's interpretation of Calderón's script has been analysed considering 'emotions as functional expressions of the individual in response to his environment'.[464] One of the scenes that illustrates the applicability of this method to the *comedia* the most is the 'teatro funesto' scene [2428-2443]. There, Basilio's emotions respond to the dire situation he confronts: the civil war. The correlation between theory, performance, and text is demonstrated by the fact that an increase of the emotional response by Notario goes together with the augmentation of Basilio's adversity –which echoes the gradual increase in fearfulness in each line of the tirade. Hence, this speech can be divided into three sections, containing distinguishable and growing stages of the display of: (1) fear, (2) anger, and (3) sadness.

The acting of these emotions is anticipated by yet another visually striking feature of Pimenta's production: the fracturing of the ceiling. The change of scene from Segismundo's battlefield to Basilio's Palace is introduced by a deafening sound coming from beyond, as parts of the dome fall apart. Basilio, Astolfo, and Estrella appear glancing at the debris from the Palace's roof (fig. 50). This stage device is interpreted thus:

> el contundente efecto del bombardeo del palacio […] evidencia la violencia desatada y deja al descubierto un mundo que se resquebraja, que se muere desangrado en los chorros de arena y escorias que caen de la techumbre...[465]

The director's employment of the different stage 'efecto[s]' as meaning-making devices is 'contudente' if set against the minimalistic machinery used by Bieito and García Valdés. This specific resource's functionality denotes the 'violencia desatada' of the war (normally

[464] Konijn, pp. 56-57.
[465] Felipe B. Pedraza Jiménez, 'Coloquios teatrales: la Compañía Nacional y las Jornadas de Almagro,' *Cuadernos de Teatro Clásico*, 28 (2012), 167-193 (p. 190).

conveyed only through reciting the words of the text, as in other versions) and to which Notario-Basilio will respond emotionally. It also states the consequences of the King's flaw: with the bombardment, the father is paying for the *azotes* given to his son (commander of the opposing army).

Furthermore, a disintegrating stage-space mirrors Basilio's emotional downfall because, as with the cave for the Prince, the Palace is the location metonymically associated with him. Therefore, the 'muer[te]' of this royal 'mundo' is an allegory of the King's 'desangra[miento]', showing how, at the end, while Basilio counter-exemplarily 'cae', Segismundo exemplarily *se construye*. This spatial correlation will become clearer in the following scene, where Notario-Basilio's display of negative emotions (as a response to this attack) turns him into an 'escori[a]' of a ruler: being overwhelmed by these feelings prevents him from (re)acting to the aggression and fulfilling his royal duties.

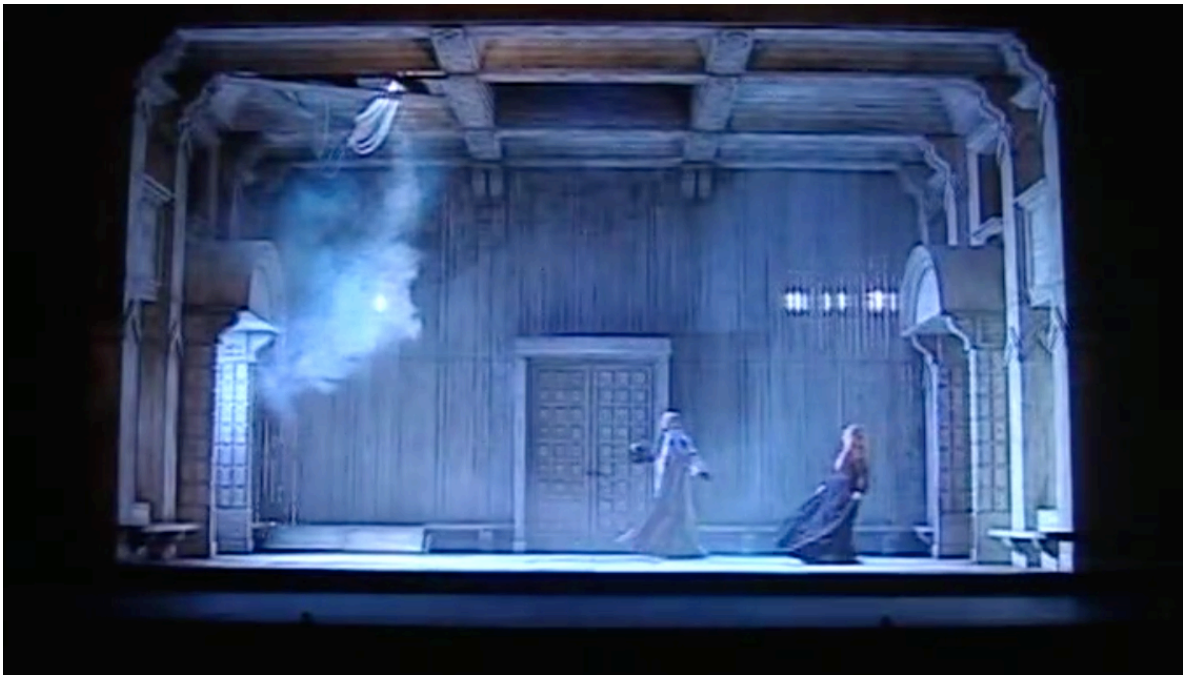


Fig. 50. The *resquebrajamiento* of the Palace ceiling is a symbol of Basilio's emotional degradation/disintegration.

(1) Subsequently, Basilio runs and exits the opening upstage-right for a few seconds to see what is causing such violence. The King emerges walking backwards, withdrawing from the bloodbath beyond, and conveying 'fear [which] denotes dread of impending disaster and an intense urge to defend oneself, primarily by getting out of the situation'.[466] This feeling is related to the collision between: (a) the character's environment (the 'impeding disaster' announced by the bombardment) and (b) his concern (saving his life by leaving). The discrepancy is related to the textual hyperbole: (b) the King's self-preservation instincts clash against (a) an unstoppable 'furia de un caballo desbocado'; a relentless 'corriente [de un río] | que corre al mar; soberbio y despeñado'; and 'un peñasco […] | de la cima de un monte, desgajado' that nothing can 'suspender, valiente' [2429-2433].

To manifest the content of these lines, Notario-Basilio's tone is anxious. His facial features give away 'fear': 'eyes open, mouth open, lips retracted, eyebrows raised'.[467] As he steps back from the sight of war, he holds the door's frame and hides his body behind it, an action that, as with the throne before, signals his emotional excess: the King needs to hold something solid in order not to fall from the shocking –*resquebrajante*– passion felt (fig. 51). This physical conception of lack of 'soberbi[a]' and 'val[entía]' is related to the presentation of both the *comediante*'s *temeroso* Basilio and Álvarez's *gallina* King. As a reinforcement of the '¡Horror terrible!' [2456] experienced by the 2012 sovereign, the onstage musicians play an ominous tune employing wind instruments –a hint at the seven trumpets of the Apocalypse.

[466] Arne Öhman, 'Fear and Anxiety. Overlaps and Dissociations', in *Handbook…*, ed. by Lewis, p. 710.
[467] David Matsumoto, Dacher Keltner, Michelle N. Shiota, Maureen O'Sullivan, and Mark Frank, 'Facial Expressions of Emotions', in *Handbook…*, ed. by Lewis, 709-729 (p. 213).



Fig. 51. After withdrawing from the opening, Basilio observes the impending disaster with fear.

(2) The background music is suddenly interrupted by the sounds of two war drums. Incited by these noises, the King runs towards Astolfo while shouting: '**Escucha** al reino en bandos dividido'.[468] The 'divi[sión]' of the 'bandos' is aurally conceived through the two separate percussions, a bellicose provocation that inspires Notario-Basilio to perform anger. This passion is more noticeable in his paralinguistic features (irregular rhythm and clipped enunciation), articulated through an open, contorted mouth.

'Anger-aggression' is also shown in the actor's 'muscular tonus [which] is increased in all the antigravitational extensor muscles of the body, in particular those muscles related

[468] [2436].

to a posture of attack'.[469] This anatomical tension is revealed as Basilio intemperately moves from left to right, echoing the objective of both the 1996 and 2000 Kings in this scene: "filling-out" their respective empty stages with movement. Furthermore, as in the première, this kinetic work helps the player to draw imaginary semiotic distinctions inside and outside the dramatic space: Notario-Basilio's stretched left hand points beyond the opening (the direction of the adverse situation); while, at the same time, he faces Astolfo to the right (who embodies a possible solution to such adversity).

The King fiercely glances at his companion, then back at the door. This active bodily expression suggests that, for a moment, the King is ready to (counter)attack with Astolfo as his champion (fig. 52). As opposed to his withdrawn posture before, now the King's gestures convey his readiness to organise 'la defensa ya de [su] corona' [2486] –an enterprise unseen in his previous, rather cowardly, CNTC peers.

However, the disturbance caused by the sudden change from fear to anger in few seconds leads Notario-Basilio to an 'emotional shock' which 'may just represent disorganization due to sudden impact that cannot be managed'.[470] The disarray happens precisely when he tries to reproduce how the 'bandos' call their leaders ('unos "Astolfo" y otros "Segismundo"' [2439]) and more hostile drumming is heard. As a consequence, the King staggers backwards as if about to faint.

Behind this performance is the implication that the weight of the circumstances totally eclipses Basilio's capacity for reacting, leaving him defeated by a cascade of emotions – which contrasts Segismundo's accomplishment of behavioural regulation. Then, exhausted by the impact of passions, he falls back on the backwall bench. While the shock lasts, Astolfo

[469] Bloch, p. 203.
[470] Nico H. Frijda, 'The Psychologists' Point of View', in *Handbook…,* ed. by Lewis, 68-87 (p. 81).

unemotively contemplates the King. The Muscovite's serene posture diverges from the Pole's unruly body language to stress the political pragmatism of the former against the yielding of the latter.



Fig. 52. Notario-Basilio angrily runs around the stage –an action leading to emotional shock.

(3) The final instance of Basilio's emotional disorganization unfolds in the form of sadness. Baleful music is, again, the soundtrack for these pessimistic lines:

> El <u>suelo</u> de <u>Polonia</u> convertido
> en escena infernal que asombra al mundo
> <u>teatro funesto</u> es donde importuna
> representa tragedias la **fortuna**.[471]

These lines are recited at a slow pace. The quality of the underlined words is slurred, establishing an equivalence between the concepts of Poland and theatre. 'Fortuna' is shouted at Astolfo (in bold) to reinforce that the circumstances Basilio faces are so dreadful and unsurmountable that they seem as if capriciously "played" by chance.

[471] [2440-2443].

This '[desa]fortuna[do]' state has a performative correlative in Notario's facial gestures ("clouded" brow and depression at the mouth's corners), his body language (low muscular tone and "hanging" body), and eyes (tears) –revealing that it is him, not Segismundo, who is the *llorica* in the end (fig. 53). The expression of yielding exhibits the absolute frustration of Basilio's concerns confronted with the unchangeability of the situation. It also anticipates Basilio's verbal acceptance of capitulation: 'Si ha de ser, la defensa es imposible' [2454].

Sorrow connects Basilio's submission not to 'enfrenar el tumulto sucedido' [2461] with the particularly introspective quality of these lines –which represent the first realistic self-analysis of the 'infernal' condition confronted by 'Polonia'. This connection is established since 'the experience of sadness turns our attention inward, promoting resignation and acceptance'.[472] The *octavas* –and Notario's accompanying performance of them– represent the most noteworthy moment of inwardness and scrutiny in a King that, previously, has only understood reality emotionally.

In dramatic terms, this depressed –but enlightening– brooding can be translated as the character's anagnorisis. As with Segismundo, the King's emotional hamartia corresponds to an emotional anagnorisis. Another textual cue for Basilio's recognition comes later, with the acceptance of his own flaw: '*yo mismo*, *yo*, *mi* patria he destrüido' [2459]. The staging of this also reinforces the sub-text of acknowledgement: as he recites these words, Notario holds the sandy debris produced by the bombardment, as if becoming self-aware of his own degradation.

[472] George A. Bonanno, Laura Goorin, and Karin G. Coifman, 'Sadness and Grief', in *Handbook*..., ed. by Lewis, 797-810 (p. 799).

Returning to the 'teatro funesto' scene, its metatheatrical content can also be interpreted as being triggered by emotions. This is evidenced by the fact that, as Basilio presents it (introspectively understanding that he is nothing other than a 'representa[nte]' playing 'tragedias'), Notario's stage behaviour displays sadness. Hence, this particular gesture, accompanying Calderón's self-referential conclusions, suggests that intense emotional disarray can lead the individual to reflect on essential ontological matters of existence. Metaphysical and meta-dramatic deliberations –such as comparing a suffering life to the direness and absurdity of a tragedy– might only be conceivable by minds drowning in despair, as Basilio's in 2012. In 1996 and 2000, this scene was also interpreted as the father's arrival at a "different" and crazily clarified mental state, through his experience of duress. However, in neither of these productions could sadness be seen in the rather maddened Basilios.



Fig. 53. Sadness leads Notario-Basilio to assume a prostrated posture (externally) and an introspective stance (internally).

Considering the importance given to space by Pimenta, Notario-Basilio's blocking has a metaphorical relation to a building (or Palace) which falls apart: *que se resquebraja*. Initially, the King has the vertical posture of an edifice, as he withdraws from the opening with fear. Then, there is a destabilising phase where anger dominates, and he moves from side to side of the stage –as when 't[iemblan] los edificios' [697]. The consequence is that the character/building undergoes a stage of structural destabilisation with an emotional shock. Finally, mimicking a construction being demolished, the King's body crumbles down with sadness on the backwall bench.

Inherent to such disintegration is Notario-Basilio's pathway of emotional excess. The *parasismos* and *congojas* felt throughout this production literally and metaphorically push the King up against the wall. Furthermore, the dénouement (which follows the 'teatro funesto' scene) starts with the father collapsed, lying face down on the floor. In front, the victorious Portillo-Segismundo stands very vertically and authoritatively (fig. 54). Descent and ascent are clear spatial and kinetic vectors that help the 2012 actors to physically portray the opposing directions in their characters' emotional conflict.



Fig. 54. At the start of the dénouement, a defeated –*resquebrajado*– Basilio lies face-down on the floor in front of a redeemed –*construído*– Segismundo.

Conclusion: a conservative reinterpretation of *La vida es sueño*

Pimenta's *La vida es sueño* reworks Calderón's drama from the perspective of emotions. Portillo-Segismundo and Notario-Basilio display anger, sadness, and fear through their: (1) paralinguistic features; (2) gestures; (3) body language; and (4) interaction with the stage-space. These aspects are analysed through two aspects of the functional theory of emotion:

(a) negative emotions result from the convergence between the individual's concerns and their surrounding/situation; and (b) emotion regulation. The first conclusion to be extracted from this interdisciplinary experiment is methodological: it provides evidence of the applicability of this approach to analyse the *comedia* in general. Additionally, as this procedure bridges the gap between dramatic and extra-dramatic expressions of emotions, it can aid psychologists –not only philologist– to identify and study human behaviour through theatre.

Regarding (a), the Prince behaves as a lion(ess) and *llorica* because he finds himself unfairly confined and desires freedom. The King sets the conflict in motion and manipulates its actors inspired by his wish to change a context that has him emotionally overwhelmed. These emotions lead both characters to behave negatively, establishing a link between their hamartia and the experience of uncontrolled affects (as with psychopathology in 1996, and violence/victimisation in 2000).

Regarding (b), Segismundo's exemplary pathway to become a Christian Prince is conveyed by attuning his pathological conduct. This entails a process of anagnorisis: recognising that his sorrowful and aggressive behaviour brought about his downfall and deciding to punish himself and act rationally. The King's pathway is counter-exemplary. His debasement is embodied by his lack of restraint when possessed by anger or sadness. The hamartia of an *azotador* eventually leads to his defeat and to a moment of anagnorisis, conceived as the recognition of his yielding to the circumstances and as a meta-physical/theatrical reflection.

What is the 2012 production's position regarding the première and *La vida es sueño*'s performative tradition? First, Portillo-Segismundo's path of emotion regulation is similar to

that probably presented by the *comediante* through a gradual change of acting technique from the *corporal/motorio* (in the beginning) to the *espiritual/estatorio* (at the end). Both imply a moral progression through a loss of physicality. Likewise, Notario-Basilio's emotional debasement can be compared to the *representante*'s technical mutation from the *espiritual/estatorio* (in the beginning) to the *corporal/motorio* style (at the end). Both imply a moral degradation through an increase in kinetic vigour.

Alongside Pimenta's rigour vis-a-vis the play-text, this connection between her actors' technique and the *comediantes*' represents the most notable feature which typifies her approach as fundamentalist in its adaptation (rather than experimental). However, there are considerable exceptions in the performance which differ from both the performative reconstruction established in the first chapter and the script. The most noticeable one is Portillo's overall lack of emphatic kinetic work, which brings about the overlooking of the semiotic suggestiveness behind it: for example, the nihilism of a corporeally animalised/instinctive Segismundo is disregarded. The character of Basilio is also influenced by reformism: as Álvarez before him, Notario "fills out" the stage-space with movement, contrasting his role with the declamation-oriented one from Calderón's time (as well as with Colomé's in 1996). The appraisal of reformist practices such as these can be negative –understanding them as shortcomings (as with the Prince)– or positive –thinking of them as additions (as with the King)–, depending on the kind of spectator who confronts the phenomena: here, the perspective presented has been of someone who more easily values challenges to canonical readings.

As for the immediate performative tradition, Pimenta's internalised slant –in its focus on feelings– is closer to García Valdés' (although his intention was to scrutinize the characters' psychopathologies), than to Bieito's and his externalised outlook. The place

assigned to physicality in 2000 is overtaken, in 2012, by the performance of emotions –a style with less edginess than its predecessor, less symbolic ambiguity, and more semiotic straightforwardness (hence, it could have been easier to digest for the middle-to-upper class public for which it is targeted). This disparity in the acting has a spatial correlative: while Bieito's (and García Valdés') minimalist décors lent themselves to more metonymically-rich imaginary interconnections between the audience and the action, Pimenta's monumental stage partially closes itself off to offstage exegesis, as if already answering all the possible questions through its detail and lack of structural and suggestive "gaps".[473]

This leads to the consideration of the ideological implications of Pimenta's production. Again, it should be stressed that the opinions expressed about these issues come from *one* type of spectator (who developed his aesthetic taste watching experimental theatre by independent Mexican companies, rather than, say, West End or RSC productions). Hence, the argument made so far exposing the 2012 *La vida es sueño*'s "dryness" is influenced by personal experience –a subjective feature which, however, can be easily verified if anyone wishes to replicate it, by attending, for example, Almagro's festival.

Due to expensive ticket prices, no student discounts, lack of affordable accommodation and food, etc., Almagro discourages young public from attending the CNTC premières (which debut there, and months after at the Teatro de la Comedia in Madrid). On the Friday, Saturday, and Sunday nights of July –when Pimenta's stagings happened– the plaza Mayor of this tiny Manchego town swarms with middle-to-old age, white, visibly

[473] A more thorough appraisal/critique of Pimenta's conception of stage-space can be found in: Eduardo Paredes Ocampo, 'The Tangible/Intangible Dialectic in *La dama duende*: A Critical Appreciation of the CNTC's 2017 Production', *Comedia Performance*, 16 (2019), 50-71.

wealthy couples, who come from nearby Madrid for a cultural weekend *escapada*. At this sight, one wonders: where are, for example, the less financially-stable coffee-drinking vegan hipsters from La Latina and Malasaña?[474] The consequence of the (un)conscious disregard of more juvenile interlocutors is that the performances do not share the ideological and aesthetic values *normally* assigned to this sector of the society (as they do not "talk" about them): more accustomed to, and consumers of, critical bluntness and less tolerant of feel-good and conventional artistic expressions.[475]

This sociological background explains part of Pimenta's dry and "softened" approach to a play-text which has proven to be compatible with more experimental and politically engaged directorial stances. There are at least three concrete examples where this (commercial) orthodoxy might have permeated the aesthetic artifact (be it a criticisable strategy or not). First and foremost, except for Basilio's *azotes*, this staging avoids examining and questioning the all-pervasive theme of violence (e.g., the removal of Soldado 1's punishment scene). A regrettable outcome is that a crucial issue for today's society, about which younger generations have become particularly vocal, sexual violence, is conspicuously absent in a production by a woman director –if contrasted to the biting accent given to it by a male director, Bieito, twelve years before (e.g., Rosaura's rape attempt).

[474] This distinction is drawn *even* spatially: AlmagrOff –the part of the Festival Internacional de Teatro Clásico welcoming independent and avant-garde reworks of the classics by novel theatre companies with young actors– takes place at the Teatro La Veleta, which is a couple of miles from the town's centre. To arrive there, one needs to take a special bus or walk in the hot Spanish summer sun.

[475] Maybe this can be the cause behind the intention of making the 2021 version of Almagro 'un festival accesible, inclusivo e igualitario. "Teatro de la vida, en el que cabemos todos", decía Ignacio García, ya con la vista puesta en la edición número 45…': Mireia Morollón, 'El Festival de Almagro termina con un 90% de ocupación y más de 23.000 asistentes', *SER*, 26 July 2021: <https://cadenaser.com/emisora/2021/07/26/ser_ciudad_real/1627299445_544477.html> [Accessed 9/08/2021].

If any violence needs to be manifested, Pimenta seems to be careful to detach it from a historical or contemporary context. Her dry attitude diverges, once again, from Bieito's method: to highlight brutality's connection with fascism. Contrary to the 2000 one, this Poland in no way resembles Francoist Castile. Can this distinction be used as a sign –a small but significant one, aesthetic rather than purely political– of the rise of conservative attitudes in Spain (exactly one year before the founding of the hard-right political party VOX)?[476]

Furthermore, Pimenta's decision to stress emotional dominion or to negatively portry its absence overshadows the conception of the individual as a complex and contradictory being –a notion hinted at by the play-text and foregrounded by the two previous productions. An example of this is that Portillo-Segismundo's uncomplicated closure and the absence of paradoxes in his personality prevents the audience from speculating about his transformation and questioning their own notions of adaptation and moral advancement at the end of the performance. This exegetic process would have been more alluring if presented to younger spectators (as their own development is still incomplete and constantly asks for critical revision and problematisation), rather than to older ones (whose lifeline's self-definition is mostly unequivocal and whose personal and physical growth has all but concluded). This, along with the many references to Catholic dogma, imply that Pimenta is interested in reviving an adage in Calderón's interpretation: that his plays contain unique ethical values

[476] In the discussion following Wheeler's paper 'The Place…', a suggestion was made by the author about the possible angle VOX might take with regard Siglo de Oro: it would be fundamentalist and dry, using the terminology chosen in this study. See, for example, the following proposition of law to turn the Golden Age into immaterial world heritage: 'Miriam Turiel (VOX) pide declarar el Siglo de Oro de la literatura española Patrimonio Inmaterial de la Humanidad', *VOX Valencia*, 23 April 2021: <https://www.voxespana.es/noticias/miriam-turiel-vox-pide-declarar-el-siglo-de-oro-de-la-literatura-espanola-patrimonio-inmaterial-de-la-humanidad-20210423> [Accessed 19/07/2021].

for Christian prosperity.[477] The director's proposal might be justifiable, or it might not, but, in any case, "conservative" would be the adjective best suited to it.

[477] See: Wheeler, *Golden Age…,* p. 24.

Conclusion: Adaptation, Relevance, and Survival of *La vida es sueño* and the *Comedia*

Throughout history, the survival of theatrical traditions has been called into question by hiatuses in the normal rhythm of life brought about by social emergencies –such as the one which has taken over the world during 2020-2021 due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Wars, dictatorships, or health crises have suffocated countless dramatic practices.[478] Those which have manage to outlive these challenges have done it only after undergoing the most extreme adaptations, proving their relevance in contrast to those who were vanquished.[479] In this year-and-a-half of intermittent lockdowns, productions have been cancelled, spaces closed, and 'algunos de los que pasa[ron] hambre [fueron] actores, directores, gente del mundo de la escena que después de unos meses en el dique seco estaban sin recursos'.[480]

However, there have also been cases of extreme resilience and agility in response to this drying dock. I have witnessed these values in the productions presented for this year's Festival Teatro Clásico MX, which illustrate part of a 'giro digital' undergone 'con el fin de mantener a flote a la comedia durante un confinamiento riguroso'.[481] The digitalization of a canon which some conservative critics would want immovable and sacredly stable has met with support and opposition, for plentiful are its 'implica[ciones] para un medio

[478] E.g., Federico García Lorca's La Barraca with the advent of the Spanish Civil War.
[479] E.g., Shakespeare's minimalistic productions inside the POW and labour camps during WW2. See: Ton Hoenselaars, 'Captive Shakespeare', in *The Oxford Handbook…,* ed. Bulman, 139-154.
[480] Justo Barranco, 'Los efectos de la crisis del coronavirus en el teatro', *La Vanguardia*, 08 July 2020: <https://www.lavanguardia.com/cultura/20200708/482187304237/efectos-crisis-coronavirus-teatro-actores-abismo.html> [Accessed 29/07/2020].
[481] AHCT webpage, at: <http://www.wordpress.comedias.org/conferences/ahct-almagro-2021-2/> [Accessed 4/08/2021]. Today, theatrical practices are presented as a "vaccine" to fight back the pandemic and its negative consequences. Take, for example, what was said about 'esta edición del Festival de Almagro [2021, que] pone de manifiesto la importancia de vencer a la pandemia para así reencontrarnos con los nuestros, con el teatro…': Nuria Espert, 'Festival de Almagro, el teatro como vacuna frente al dogmatismo y la sinrazón', *El Asombrario & Co*., 03 July 2021: <https://elasombrario.publico.es/festival-de-almagro-teatro-vacuna-dogmatismo/> [Accessed 04/08/2021].

intrínsecamente vivo como es el teatro'. A consequence of this critical stir-up is that one of the three working groups of the 2021 AHCT (virtual) Symposium dealt exclusively with this phenomenon and was revealingly called 'The *Comedia* under Siege: Confinements, Digitalization, and the Future'.[482]

The importance of reconsidering the new *technical* life of Siglo de Oro theatre is unquestionable. Nonetheless, it should be noted that the *comedia* has endured a more punishing 'siege' than a forced change of format and that critical endeavours should focus on it: one concerning its *content*. Even before Covid-19, its lack of pertinence was endangering this theatrical tradition, precisely 'in a time when the selection of plays for performance at theatre is competitive, when Shakespeare is the safe choice…'.[483]

In those latitudes where Calderón and Lope are still being staged, their level of competition is often conditioned by how their reworkings responds to the socio-political background which, this year, saw movements like Black Live Matters and #MeToo. This makes it fundamental to question whether Golden Age drama –written mostly by white European men four-hundred years ago– can still say something that somehow echoes these claims while being commercially successful at the same time.[484] Questions such as these indirectly inspired one of the central issues discussed in this study: following the specific case-study of *La vida es sueño* and four of its performances, it deliberated on how a formal

[482] AHCT webpage.
[483] Grunnah, p. 249. An example of this is the relocation of the AHCT symposium from El Paso (USA) to Almagro (Spain). As heard from the organizers while this decision was being made, the productions staged during the International Siglo de Oro Drama Festival in Chamizal –which coincided with the congress and indirectly formed part of it– had ceased to be intellectually- and critically-compelling for them. In contrast, the versions from the Spanish festival seemed to be more varied and thematically appealing for them to base their new research interests on. Consequently, the long-lasting Chamizal Festival, whose audience consisted mainly of members of the congress, is doomed to disappear.
[484] See: Bruce R. Burningham in 'Minding the Gap: Thoughts on the *Comedia* in the New Millennium', paper presented in *Resuscitating*…

resource –the acting– became a route to expose (in)valid meanings with respect to both the ideological and aesthetic context on which they were based.

Although the concentration of this work has been on a single play-text and its adaptations, its method can be applied to the –practically inexhaustible– catalogue of Siglo de Oro theatre and its –still incipient– performance history. To replicate this experimental procedure, the spectator/critic needs only to "thickly" describe/recreate the player's paralinguistic features, gestures, body language, and use of space. These aspects are foundational to: (a) convey diegetic meanings such as characterisation and dramatic conflict and (b) to articulate extra-diegetic ideological objectives. A certain objectivity is guaranteed if the toolkit tested on the phenomenon is related to it (the theory being immanent to the practice). Historical accounts, reviews, interviews, and other critics' approaches can reveal which kind of theatrical language is followed by the troupe and/or director and, therefore, which method is best suited for the exegetic exercise.

The method tested in Chapter I applied Pinciano's, Alcázar's, and Carducho's ideas, together with contemporary criticism on the *comedia*, to Calderón's 1632-34 *suelta*. The mixture of primary and secondary sources structured the reconstruction of the hypothetical performance of *La vida es sueño*'s première –elements of which were subsequently set against their analogues in contemporary productions to ascertain their level of fidelity. This restoration showed how stylistic features –the *corporal/motorio*, the *corporal/espiritual-mixto*, and the *espiritual/estatorio*– would have been observed by the *comediantes* playing Segismundo and Basilio to (very conventionally) portray a thematic binary implied in the play-text: the ontological opposition between *cuerpo* and *alma*. These abstract notions were complemented by specific paradigms: Carducho's descriptions of models of the visual arts.

Textually, the Prince's animalised and chaotic behaviour betrays his attachment to the body, a negative condition which improves through a coupling with the soul, in a gradual moralisation of the role. Performatively, this mutation would have been represented by a technical one going from the physical to the declamatory. The resulting scheme is: *corporal/motorio* (hamartia)> *mixto* (anagnorisis)> *espiritual/estatorio* (dénouement). Regarding the King, his actions are morally and spiritually driven during his presentation (when the *comediante*'s style would have been declamatory); gradually, the father comes to resemble the son in his passionate degradation (assuming more of a physical stance in his acting). The player's transition would have displayed a pattern similar to the following: *espiritual/estatorio* (presentation)> *mixto* (hamartia)> *corporal/motorio* (anagnorisis/ dénouement). With this performative variation in mind, it seems safe to suppose that dramatic changes –a chief feature of the *comedia*– would have been performed with more histrionic emphasis at the *corrales* than what is normally seen on contemporary stages.

Chapter II, which dealt with the 1996 CNTC production, also explored how technical issues –those proper to psychological realism– were implemented to convey an idiosyncratic thematic interpretation of the script; that is, a psychic and psychotic conception of the characters. This chapter engaged with two complementary evaluative apparatuses (as presented in the Introduction), which measured the three productions' level of (in)fidelity to the première's text/performance –fundamentalist/reformist– and their (ir)relevance regarding the aesthetic and socio-political environments –dry/wet. The verdict for García Valdés' mise-en-scène was that: (1) it presented a compromise between fundamentalism and reformism – cautiously following Calderón's sacralised script, and hence adding few extra-textual interventions; but it also contravened the *corporal-espriritual* binary by both "softening" Segismundo (suffering from internalised autism, in lieu of physicalised cruelty) and

"strengthening" Basilio (too young and sturdy to emulate the spiritual gravity of the première's King). (2) It was catalogued as dry, since it toned down the play's intrinsic and critically charged violence to stress, instead, a psychologically driven conflict (pathologies and immaturities pre-empted the individuals from their guiltiness behind their antisocial actions).

However, García Valdés' project possessed certain merits, considering his caution as he faced being the first director (of only three) to stage Calderón's masterpiece by the *Compañía* and the high expectations and pressure this would have brought. For example, rather than maintaining Segismundo's conflict as an ontological confrontation between the outdated notions of *cuerpo* and *alma*, it modernised the protagonist's personality by giving him a recognizable dramatic process for psychologically sensitive 20th-century audiences: his hamartia entailed a fight against his own pathologized mind. Likewise, his plot-arc mirrored a behavioural therapy, a teleology chosen to be identifiable by spectators accustomed to a similar course of behavioural "growth" or "improvement". Another contribution to this play's performative tradition was the unconventional portrayal of Basilio. Although boringly declamatory at certain moments, the casting of a youthful King, whose degradation was more psychic than spiritual, and who displayed suggestive interactivity with a prop (the cauldron) to convey his solipsism, proved that there are still facets to explore from a character often thought as being absolutely explained by countless textual and performative interpretations.

Bieito's 2000 *La vida es sueño* (analysed in Chapter III) was assessed by the same standards to prove its (lack of) attachment to Calderón and its (lack of) social purpose. Although, unlike its predecessor and successor, the appraisal of the production made in the chapter was mostly positive, it should be recognized that its sensationalism and

grotesqueness sometimes thwarted a comfortable aesthetic experience, leading the critics and the most susceptible sectors of the public to reject moments such as Rosaura's attempted rape or Segismundo's "masturbation". The most negative consequence of this might have been expressed in the stylistic U-turn taken by the CNTC afterwards: the post-Bieito era is marked by the spurning of projects whose main aesthetic and commercial mechanism is provocative experimentation with the classics. After 2000, the *Compañía* returned to its distinctive mainstream and risk-free stagings –a criticisable move, since its second *La vida es sueño* introduced one of the fundamental steps needed to be taken in any theatre company's road towards maturity: its recurrent flirtation with the avant-garde.[485]

Hence, reformism and "wetness" most accurately describe a production which –very loosely based on a Baroque script– introduced fascism and anarchism, dark humour, voyeurism, sexual and class violence, and a critique of how we witness problematic aspects of our society. These subjects –and their political implications– were conceived by two main acting mechanisms: physicality (emphasis on corporeal and movement-oriented features) and complicité (actor-audience interactivity). Although these two elements introduce a touch of 21st-century vanguard into the language of the 1600s, paradoxically they can also be indexed as fundamentalist. Indeed, the first is related to the early modern *corporal/motorio* technique (disregarding, however, any contemporary correlative to the *espiritual/estatorio* one) and the second echoes the on-offstage relations of the *corral* (although in a particularly hyperbolic way).

Due to such semiotic and ideological complexity, if I were to set the standard by which future CNTC productions (and, indeed, any staging of a *comedia*) should be inspired,

[485] Bieito's case at the CNTC can be compared with Peter Brook's at the RSC.

I would select Bieito's proposal. Its defiance of traditionalism, revising the old-fashioned methods of adaptation of classical theatre to please the more demanding, but also more forward-looking, scenes of New York and London, guaranteed its survival. His riskiness paid-off with his *La vida es sueño*'s relevance: after two decades, it is still discussed in and outside academia, while the critical effusiveness initially brought about by Pimenta's mise-en-scène has died down after only nine years.

The contradictions between both versions were further discussed in Chapter IV, by interpreting the conservativism of the 2012 *La vida es sueño* as a counterbalance to the previous over-politization of the play-text. One of the most evident examples of Pimenta's restoration was that it purged Calderón's actions of all references to the present; unlike the 2000 Poland, the 2012 one bore no resemblance to contemporary Castile (as her predecessor proposed). Instead, the latter searched for a visual resemblance with the 17th-century Baroque (in its historical, rather than theatrical, basis).

The outcome of this was the frustration of this production's most direct route towards relevance: talking to us through easily identifiable testimonies of the present moment. Without this exercise in modernization, Pimenta's undertaking possessed little to no critical merit, avoiding questioning current cultural controversies (e.g., violence), and making it impossible to refer to it as wet. In contrast, its "dryness" was manifested by a myriad of decisions, such as the deletion of the Soldado 1 punishment scene. Its consequence –showing Segismundo's story as one of unpolluted behavioural control– minimized the complexities behind human moral growth and hampered an open and thought-provoking ending (Pimenta thus limited the audience's wondering: what happens next?).

However, from a conservative perspective (which, although not shared here, should be acknowledged), the value of the 2012 production relied on the aesthetic consistency of

applying acting resources –the performance of emotion/emotion regulation– to convey a moral/ideological message –that anyone, no matter the adversity of their context, can improve themselves through the restraint of passions (Portillo-Segismundo) and/or through the self-awareness of being controlled by feelings (Notario-Basilio). Be it relevant or not to modern-day rather a-moral societies, the reestablishment of ethical questions and their Catholic allusions at the centre of Calderón's tragedy served as a direct path to access his cultural horizon –representing, however, an archaeological/historical endeavour rather than an aesthetic one. These factors, accompanied by an understatement of physicality and an emphasis on monologues, were fundamentalist for their faithfulness to one of the première's stylistic parameters (which Bieito overlooked): the *espiritual/estatorio*. In other words, Pimenta's actors mirrored a hieratic and declamatory-oriented early modern technique through "clean" proxemic relationships, kinetic work lacking bodily over-stress, and a gracefully rhythmic recitation of the verse.

Furthermore, the mise-en-scène's most significative resources –the uniformity in the acting of recognizable emotions (which implied the clarification of the intertwined moments of the protagonists' conflicts) and the general aesthetic embellishment of a monumental setting– contrasted with the minimalism, ambiguity, and cosmetic haziness of Bieito's grotesqueness and García Valdés' chiaroscuro. Due to the evocativeness entailed by these lasts two, at certain points of the 1996 and 2000 versions, the spectators might have felt as if there was too much happening onstage at once. As a response, Pimenta was keen to correct such a polysemic "defect" by both limiting the stage business to the acting of *one* discernible emotion at a time and presenting a detailed and partially un-suggestive décor. At a cognitive level, these decisions might have forced the public to focus on a single message –the

director's– instead of foregrounding a fertile vagueness for them to come up with their own interpretations of certain actions, to "fill-up" such semiotic gaps.

With this summary of my conclusions in mind, the contributions and setbacks of this thesis, and their implications for future research, should be presented. These can be divided into three: (1) those concerning *La vida es sueño*; (2) those touching the *comedia* in the field of performance studies; (3) and those relating to the practice of Golden Age theatre on the contemporary stage.

Pertaining to (1), this study employed for the first time the *suelta* as a corpus to examine the tacit stage directions in Calderón's tragedy. The procedure might be imitated with this and other *comedias* to guarantee a considerable level of closeness with the theatrical (rather than textual) realities.[486] Notwithstanding such proximity, the historical certainty of this text is still questioned and any verdicts regarding it can only be hypothetical, making it a less "reliable" and scientifically-endorsed primary source than its 1636 analogue (probably adapted and approved by Calderón himself). A pathway is possible for a project which compares the acting features of both versions and their implications regarding the play's topics.

This research has also read the play-text as tied to a thematic binary –the *cuerpo*/*alma* one–, allowing for a reassessment of the protagonists' characterisation and dramatic conflict different from widespread discernments (e.g., those relating to the *libre albedrío* or *desengaño*). An obvious limitation of this is the neglect of the topical richness of *La vida es sueño*. Furthermore, as this script possesses not only metaphysical but also metadramatic

[486] A good starting point is the *Survey of Spanish* comedias sueltas *printed before 1834 in the collections of US libraries*, at: <https://comediassueltasusa.org> [Accessed 2/08/2021].

complexities, any focus on a given motif is condemned to partially ignore the structuring functions of the very Calderonian self-referentiality (e.g., interpreting Segismundo's Palace experiment as a play-within-a-play). Taking this survey's four interpretations of the 'teatro funesto' scene as models, a supplementary investigation might consider how the tragedy's metatheatre is expressed by the actors, as they embody their respective styles and articulate ideological aspirations.

Specifically concerning the main roles, a contribution to the field is that this perspective re-instates Segismundo's initial primitive cruelty and the problematic and open nature of his final improvement. Likewise, part of Basilio's downfall is related to his disdainful treatment of his son (and preference for Astolfo), rather than only to his own personality. A corollary of this interpretation is that it reassesses the most famous *comedia* as an emblem of violence –a more relevant reading for today's bloodthirsty reality than other, less consequential, exegeses concerned with, for example, the play's influences. A downside is that the text also lends itself to alternative optimistic outlooks (e.g., Segimsundo's last speech), which research stressing its nihilism tends to disregard.

Regarding (2), the primary sources employed here can provide a basis for the reconstruction of other *comedias'* stagings –since Pinciano's, Alcázar's, and Carducho's notions are generic to their respective aesthetic expression rather than exclusive to a single work. Pinciano's *corporal-espiritual* dichotomy in particular lends itself to macro-historical comparisons with the two main acting techniques in Western contemporary theatre (as presented in the third chapter): the internal (comparable to the *espiritual* style) and the external (tantamount to the *corporal*). However, this pathway overlooks a parallel route of reconstruction, which considers the characters/actors as *figuras* (*galán*, *primera dama*, *viejo*, *gracioso*, etc) possessing identifiable and conventional stage behaviours. Another limitation

is that the applicability of this method might be restricted to the genre of tragedy, evading other dramatic discourses such as (tragi-)comedy (which probably stressed the physical over the declamatory). Forthcoming efforts could engage with these two open questions.

Additionally, this study's initial intention was to readdress a very striking gap in previous research on performative practices, in general, and on the *comedia*, in particular: the overlooking of the actor (early modern and contemporary). Inspired by Shakespearean criticism, which has somehow managed to partially address this issue, this thesis has been dedicated to paving a possible new path to explore Calderón's or Lope's plays by focusing on the individuals who gave them –and still give them– life onstage and without whom these dramatists' artistry might have never been known. As this endeavour was being undertaken, I found myself reflecting on a complementary relationship that is as paramount to (post)modern theatre as the exchanges between the players: that is, the one established between them and directors. Hence, this thesis has been about García Valdés, Bieito, and Pimenta as well, and about their aesthetics and ethics. The setback of this focus on individuals is that a complete discussion of any staging ought to refer more thoroughly to features considered here as background for their personal work (the setting, lighting, costume design, music, etc.). However, I hand over this task to someone less hypnotised by the magic of acting.

The comparison between a hypothetical première and three modern productions has opened the door for future examinations aiming to understand performative (vs. textual) relationships between two cultural horizons. This lacuna is far from being filled, and this study is only a stepping-stone in that direction. A recommendation for anyone interested in taking this route is to select a play-text possessing a more documentarily verifiable staging history than that of *La vida es sueño*: one that can be related, at least, to the date of its

première and, ideally, to the troupe of *comediantes* performing it and to the space where it was played.[487] Certainty concerning these material factors would give scientific validation to the hypothetical assertions which are so germane to any work of temporal reconstruction.

The "immanent" method chosen to analyse the four stagings through their own stylistic language proved useful in highlighting the formal, thematic, and political aspects which set them apart from each other. This particularizing slant is an advance on the techniques practised thus far to scrutinise the *comedia* in (pre)modern performance and their tendency to implement one overarching and generalizing framework to address several productions (e.g., Fischer's semiotics). It also allowed me to introduce interdisciplinarity (e.g., elements from psychology) to a field that is yet to enjoy the benefits of such a theoretical "turn" (among many others). However, the advantages of concentrating on similarities (rather than differences) to bring together several productions cannot be denied, and this case could have benefitted from it by implementing, for example, general notions from the theory of violence in theatre to each of the four chapters.[488] I leave this as an enticement for inquiries to come.

This exploration has also attempted to bring together the three main trends in the research on modern-day stagings of the *comedia*: the historicist, the theoretical, and the political. Nevertheless, stress was put on these last two, considered to represent the most compatible ways to understand this aesthetic expression in the discursively mediated and politicised 21st-century. Supporting methodological interconnectivity is an enhancement to the discipline because it presents theatre in its authentic multifaceted character; that is, as an

[487] A good starting point is looking at Universitat de València's project *CATCOM: Base de datos de comedias mencionadas en la documentación teatral (1540-1700)*, at: <https://catcom.uv.es/consulta/> [Accessed 7/09/2021].
[488] From, for example, Lucy Nevitt, *Theatre & Violence* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013).

art form particularly influenced by both aesthetic and the extra-aesthetic environments. Again, the downside of this interconnectivity is a reduction in focalisation and inability to fully exhaust topics which straddle the four productions discussed here –such as their (lack of) critical content and their (avoidance of) questioning the audience's values.

Finally, another first in the inquiry of Golden Age drama is the combination of two analytical parameters: (a) those measuring the productions' (un)faithfulness with the textual/performative factors of an "original"–fundamentalism/reformism– and (b) those relating to their experimental and political features –dry/wet. These binaries need to be applied to the analysis of other scripts and their stagings, in contexts different from Spain and the CNTC, in order to surpass their descriptive nature and acquire a theoretical status. Testing these ideas, elaborating on their implications, and nuancing and expanding some of the conclusions established here (for a single play) will eventually lead to the simplification of the job for future researchers. This, if they wish to overcome the purely explanatory facet of a certain type of conventional literary "criticism" and engage with the (informed) articulation of their personal valuation and judgement of a given production.

This leads to the reflection of (3): the ramifications of this research regarding the practice of the *comedia* today –and tomorrow. Although this study is presented mainly as an exchange with academe and predominantly concentrates on the immediate past, I believe it can also speak to directors and actors of the Siglo de Oro canon and give pragmatic lessons for the immediate future. Indeed, those who wish to stage *La vida es sueño* or other *comedias* can consider the conclusions established here as guidelines for the type of production they want to present: one which considers the conflicts the individual faces as intrinsically related to their psychology (as in 1996); one which foregrounds politics and criticism as the most essential functions of theatre (as in 2000); or one which humanises a four-hundred-year-old

play-text by filling it with emotions and revitalising its moral lessons (as in 2012). In any case, in these challenging times –when the fate of theatre has been put into question by a deadly virus– studies which (in)directly set out how different productions adapt to various contexts, find their relevance or fight against their lack of it, and, finally, guarantee their survival are indispensable to save this art-form from disappearing.

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