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MARK J. MASCIA

LOPE de Vega's poetry collection entitled *Rimas humanas y divinas del licenciado Tomé de Burguillos*, published in 1634, is known for a variety of sonnets, some of which have a parodic or ludic intent and which either overtly or implicitly make judgments about poetry and the quality of literary discourse. Many of these sonnets thus contain a certain metapoetic aspect. As with a large number of Lope's earlier sonnets, such as those found in the *Rimas* (1602), the element of love as a catalyst for poetic composition remains within the lyric, yet the sonnets' focus has changed somewhat. With the appearance of Lope's alter ego, Burguillos, the poet consciously parodies elements of classicism and Petrarchism – without condemnation, but rather for the purposes of literary experimentation – in his frequent portrayal of a common woman, identified only as Juana. In crafting these poems, Lope/Burguillos creates a dialectic of *burlas* and *veras* in both a mimetic sense and in a more esthetic or literary one: idealized female beauty is subverted through the glorification of a more commonplace feminine object, while the time-honored poetic conventions which favored the former are deconstructed and replaced by a new anti-norm of female objectification. At the same time, Lope invents his own literary personage as a cover for his real identity.

“Celebró de Amarilis la hermosura” (1245), titled “Propone lo que ha de cantar en fe de los méritos del sujeto”, openly introduces the figure of Juana for the first time in this collection and details the reason for

which Tomé writes, his obvious love of her. It also acknowledges its intertexts and includes a brief reference to its style. The first half of the poem contains the acknowledgment of the traditions which Tomé inherits, those of female objectification.

Celebró de Amarilis la hermosura
 Virgilio en su bucólica divina,
 Propercio de su Cintia, y de Corina
 Ovidio en oro, en rosa, en nieve pura;
 Catulo de su Lesbia la escultura
 a la inmortalidad pórvido inclina;
 Petrarca por el mundo, peregrina;
 constituyó de Laura la figura. (1-8)

Five different poets, four from Antiquity and one from the modern era, are all included for their respective glorifications of a beloved female. The pairs of poet-beloved are Vergil-Amaryllyis, Propertius-Cynthia, Ovid-Corina, Catullus-Lesbia, and Petrarch-Laura. Some of the key words which characterize these ideal figures of beauty rhyme: "hermosura" (1), "nieve pura" (4), "escultura" (5), and "figura" (8). Lope's literary voice implies itself by briefly making reference to the poets whom he considers classical models. Of particular interest is the figure of Vergil, author of a "bucólica divina" (2) and Catullus, whose description of Lesbia, as well as Lesbia herself, are likened to a statue which leans "a la inmortalidad" (6). The blending of written poetry and the plastic arts is evident as well. Tomé additionally includes the very poet whose conventions he is to parody, the wandering Petrarch, but still honors the poets he mentions for commendable work and for giving him an inspiring tradition.

A transition occurs with the first tercet, where Tomé's voice is saliently implanted into the text and where his intentions and opinions are stated. Qualitative judgments are easily observable in this sonnet's ironic ending:

yo, pues Amor me manda que presuma
 de la humilde prisión de tus cabellos,
 poeta montañés, con ruda pluma,
 Juana, celebraré tus ojos bellos:
 que vale más de tu jabón la espuma,
 que todas ellas, y que todos ellos. (9-14)

Compelled by Love to write, Tomé judges himself for his style, and appears to place himself on a level beneath the poets mentioned in the quatrains, as he is “poeta montañés, con ruda pluma” (11). Yet, this qualitative judgment is not very self-deprecating, when considering the statements offered in the concluding strophe. After restating his reason for writing in line 12, Tomé mocks the very traditions and conventions he previously acknowledged and places both his object (Juana) and his own subjective gaze on a level above that of the aforementioned poet-beloved couplings. The inversion of the washerwoman-cum-idealized object is captured in the final two lines. While the mere foam of her soap is more worthy “que todas ellas”, it – or its characterization by Tomé through verse – also is more worthy “que todos ellos” (14), that is, more worthy than the poets themselves.

Through the original act of self-denial, Tomé is really engaging in an act of self-aggrandizing, much the same way he magnifies the constructed beauty of Juana in spite of her common appearance and unremarkable background. As a result, Tomé exposes the literary traditions – important as they are to acknowledge as general sources of material and as the work of poets who came before – as artistic constructs which exemplified female beauty, just as his own magnification of Juana is a simple (and ludic) construct. Carreño’s analysis of the sonnet details Tomé’s relationship to the other poets:

Muestran estos versos un conocimiento, por parte de Lope, de la tradición amorosa. Tenemos un breve catálogo de seis grandes amantes y de sus amadas. Su objeto es realzar, irónicamente, su amor hacia Juana, un nombre de los más comunes en español. Los exempla del amor (vv. 1-8) quedan degradados; superior a todos ellos es el amor hacia Juana (v. 14), admitiendo, sin embargo, la rusticidad de quien canta («poeta montañés», v. 11), su objeto, (v. 12) y su oficio, lavandera (v. 13). (*Poesía selecta* 445n)

Similarly, Vitiello observes the irony in the way in which Tomé examines beauty and its portrayal according to tradition:

Two important features [of the five other poets] emerge: their use of stylized o[r] symbolic nomenclature giving dignity to the objects of adoration and their divinization of these paragons of beauty. By way of contrast, Juana is perhaps the most common of Spanish names, and her portrait «in soapsuds», set off against that «en oro, en rosa, en nieve pura», accentuates her mundane nature. Once again, Lope’s double-edged irony comes to the fore. He diminishes the nobility of the *exempla*, yet admits them into his pantheon of lovers and ladies; and boasts of the superiority of his goddess but, from a realistic point of view, recognizes her inferior station. (101)

Tomé only validates himself by assuming a tone of reverence and false humility in the first three strophes.

The collection's next sonnet, "A ti la lira, a ti de Delfo y Delo" (1245, 1246), informally titled "Dedicatoria de la lira con que piensa celebrar su belleza", contains further elements of the *burlas/veras* dichotomy involving Juana and female objectification. As in Petrarchism, the superiority of the beloved over her male observer is the key relationship between subject (poet) and object (Juana) in the poem. However, this relationship is itself an object as well.

A ti la lira, a ti de Delfo y Delo,
 Juana, la voz, los versos y la fama;
 que mientras más tu hielo me desama,
 más arde Amor en su inmortal desvelo.
 Crióme ardiente salamandra el cielo,
 como sirena a ti, menos la escama;
 para ser mariposa no eres llama,
 fuerza será mariposar en hielo. (1-8)

The direct metapoetic allusion is contained in the first two lines, in which Tomé openly dedicates this poem, as well as all his poetry metonymically, to Juana. As he does on numerous other occasions, Lope alludes to his recognition as a poet by including the element of "fama," based on his portrayal of Juana.

This portrayal, however, subtly mocks Petrarchist conventions, as Juana is in reality a washerwoman by the Manzanares River. Lope parodies these conventions by wishing to remain eternal for his treatment of an ordinary lower-class woman, whose very name is also ordinary. Carreño notes Joaquín de Entrambasaguas' comment regarding the various literary trends (and their subsequent Lopesque inversions) visible here: "Lope se propuso realizar . . . la caricatura barroca del amor renacentista, en torno a sus relaciones con ella, salpimentándola con alusiones burlescas a la mitología y a la poesía culta" (*Poesía selecta* 446n). The classical or cultist references in these stanzas can be seen in "Delfo y Delo" (1); the "salamandra" (5), which, as Carreño explains, is an ancient symbol of resistance to fire as well as fire itself; and the "sirena" (6), reminiscent of the sirens of Ulysses, though without the "escama" here. Note as well the antitheses between "hielo" and "arde" in the first quatrain, and "llama" and "hielo" again in the second. Petrarchist

notions of love can be seen in the likening of Juana to "hielo" (3 and 8) for her disdain. Tomé, for his part, is likened to a butterfly (via the metaphor of "mariposa" and its corresponding verb, "mariposar", in lines 7 and 8) who is normally attracted to light and fire (the "llama" of line 7) but who is met with Juana's cold reaction.

With subtle humor, Lope crafts the rest of the poem around this *time-honored poetic relationship*:

Mi amor es fuego elemental segundo;
de Scitia tu desdén los hielos bebe:
tal imposible a mi esperanza fundo.
Pues a decir que fuéramos se atreve
(cuando no los hubiera en todo el mundo)
yo Amor, Juana desdén, su pecho nieve. (9-14)

Lope likens his love to one of the four classical spaces, "fuego elemental segundo". In addition, her frigid disdain is likened to the cold, distant lands of Scythia (10); again, Lope's figurative "fire" and Juana's "ice" are contrasted. Finally, Lope concludes the poem with a definition of terms according to this Renaissance amorous convention: he likens himself to "Amor", Juana to "desdén" incarnate, and her breast to "nieve" (14). The comparison of the breast to snow contains a twofold meaning: her skin is white, and the emotional center of her breast, her heart, is disdainful towards Lope.

This conclusion contains another parodic and subtly metapoetic element: Lope humorously dares to make himself, an ordinary poet, and Juana, an ordinary woman, unique. Such a reference is in the penultimate line: "cuando no los hubiera en todo el mundo" (13). A symbiosis of object and vehicle is also achieved: on one level, Juana is the poem's object, and the sonnet is the vehicle in which she is described. Yet on another level, it is poetry that is itself the object of the poet's gaze, while Juana is the vehicle which, as a pretext for writing, allows Lope to observe his own craft. Andrés Sánchez Robayna explains the function of parody here: "La parodia es uno de los eslabones de la cadena de esta tradición. La parodia es, en efecto, una de las transformaciones del *petrarquismo* ya elevado a estereotipo retórico, a hiper-norma en decadencia" (38).

The sonnet "Juanilla, por tus pies andan perdidos" and informally titled "Hipérbole a los pies de su dama; que este poeta debió de nacer en

sábado" (1259-1260), is a less overtly metapoetic examination of the description of Juana. The poem revolves around the conceit of "pies" as an element of double meaning: Juana's feet (the description of physical appearance) and the metrical "pies" of the poem (and the ways in which other poets have written).

Juanilla, por tus pies andan perdidos
 más poetas que bancos, aunque hay tantos,
 que tus paños lavando entre unos cantos
 escureció su nieve a los tendidos.

Virgilio no los tiene tan medidos,
 las musas hacen con la envidia espantos;
 que no hay picos de rosca en Todos Sa[n]tos
 como tus dedos blancos y bruñidos. (1-8)

On a deeper level, however, the poem treats the theme of poetry itself. Lope describes poets' typical reactions towards a subject like Juana: many of them "andan perdidos" (1) by her feet, more than there are "bancos" (2), a word meaning both accountants and riverbanks, as Carreño notes. In addition, Vergil's feet were never so finely calibrated and of such a perfect size as Juana's – "Virgilio no los tiene tan medidos." Lope humorously places Juana on a level above one of his classical inspirations, Vergil, and thus eternalizes her physicality in a rather untraditional way. Even the muses are filled with "envidia" (6) at Juana and at the composition that has taken place to support Juana's "beauty". It should be added that Vergil's "pies" here more specifically refer to the hexameter, as Carreño observes (458n).

The tercets highlight Lope's self-conscious use of hyperbole to demonstrate the parody which he gently visits upon Petrarchist conventions. Lope focuses once again on Juana's "pies" on the purely mimetic level:

Andar en puntos nunca lo recelas,
 que no llegan a cuatro tus pies bellos,
 ni por calzar penado te desvelas.
 Que es tanta la belleza que hay en ellos,
 que pueden ser zarcillos tus chinelas,
 con higas de cristal pen[n]dientes dellos. (9-14)

The hyperbole is so forced that Lope describes her feet as gaudy ornamentation, the "zarcillos . . . / con higas de cristal pen[n]dientes dellos"

(13, 14). The tables are again turned on traditional convention, using not only the figure of Juana in general but also her feet in particular – feet normally understood to be well-worn, bony, and callused, the feet of a poor person – as a tool for mocking the familiar Renaissance intertext. Yet another meaning can be assigned to the poem: Lope, as he does so often throughout this collection under his pseudonym of Burguillos, justifies himself as a poet who wishes to create his own work and abandon convention.

Finally, in “Juana, mi amor me tiene en tal estado”, informally titled “Encarece su amor para obligar a su dama a que lo premie” (1265), Burguillos is immediately placed in an inferior position with respect to Juana, who is established as the “beloved tyrant” frequent in the Renaissance lyric. The effects of love can be seen in what Burguillos is unable to do. However, the tone in this work is one of irony and ludism:

Juana, mi amor me tiene en tal estado,
que no os puedo mirar, cuando no os veo;
ni escribo ni manduco ni paseo,
entretanto que duermo sin cuidado. (1-4)

This poem clearly refers to the poet's inability to write due to his being held so firmly in love's spell – his “estado” is characterized as its rhyming element, “sin cuidado” (1, 4). Yet, he does write, and proceeds to complete not only the strophe but also the rest of the poem. A subtle parody of elaborate lexical devices is contained in “manduco” (3), as clearly “comer” is a more common alternative.¹ Burguillos contains simplistic logic in the second line as well, since he is naturally unable to gaze upon Juana when she is not even there for him to view.

The second strophe further debases the poet by characterizing his economic condition as one of indigence. In mentioning a normally irrelevant topic – the poet's financial matters – Lope further parodies the Renaissance traditions by ridiculing the love-stricken poet as not only

¹ This appears to be an attempt on Lope's part to deconstruct the lexicon of his *culterano* competitors by using it in humorous ways. The vast majority of the other words contained in the poem are common to everyday usage, in both Lope's day and ours. Carreño includes the following brief description of the context in which “manducar” is normally used: “voz usada en estilo festivo” (461n). In such an instance, Lope is being “festive” in his parody of convention, and in taking small shots at the fashion of using euphuistic speech.

dependent upon a physically mediocre woman but also as a destitute man. Because of his intense feelings for Juana, Burguillos cannot even attend to the daily necessities of life.

Por no tener dineros no he comprado
 (¡oh Amor cruel!) ni manta, ni manteo,
 tan vivo me derrienga mi deseo
 en la concha de Venus amarrado. (5-8)

A specific reference is made to Burguillos' (fictitious) state as a cleric, as seen in "manteo" (6), a cleric sinfully taken by the sight of Juana. His burden is ridiculed through ironic exaggeration, using the verb "derrenegar" (7), as the poet is likened to a pack animal incapable of self-reflection. In addition, the reference to "la concha de Venus amarrado" (8) is reminiscent of Botticelli's famous painting of the birth of Venus.

The second part of the poem details the precise intertextual debt which the poet has to another, for the final line in the first part above. The poet also metapoetically refers to his own sonnet and offers an excuse for his deliberate act of "plagiarism."

De Garcilaso es este verso, Juana;
 todos hurtan, paciencia, yo os le ofrezco;
 mas volviendo a mi amor, dulce tirana,
 tanto en morir y en esperar merezco,
 que siento más el verme sin sotana,
 que cuanto fiero mal por vos padezco. (9-14)

Although Lope brazenly copied an exact line of Garcilaso's, he credits him with equal directness.² His excuse is simply that "todos hurtan" (10). Lope is dependent in two ways: he depends upon the common Juana for his very being, and he depends upon a rich tradition of courtly love poetry as a writer. His beloved Juana is rhymed with her paradoxical description, "dulce tirana" (11). The informal title of the poem is implied as he boldly declares that he deserves a reward for his suffering – something not so brazenly done in the Renaissance lyric – hence adding another ludic element by eliminating the passivity of the smitten

² The line comes from Garcilaso's "Canción V", as Carreño indicates (461n). He also notes that an earlier critic, M. Herrero-García, had not noted the satirizing tone in Lope's composition.

male poet of Petrarch's day. The final element of humor is in Lope's inclusion of the ridiculed poet as indigent and naked: "que siento más el verme sin sotana, / que cuanto fiero mal por vos padezco" (13-14). While Juana has captivated Burguillos and deprived him of his will, he cannot purchase the habit which he needs as a priest and thus feels even more embarrassed and bereft.

Though Juana and Burguillos' love are the principal elements of the poem, it is the way in which these elements are detailed (as seen in the Garcilaso citation) which lends the poem uniqueness among the Juana poems. Vitiello provides an adequate summary of the Burguillos-Garcilaso relationship here: "Burguillos, confessing his theft, laughs at the Renaissance practice of direct borrowing from other poets (while doing it himself), gives the rhythm a very Garcilasan ring, and parodies the idea . . . of the lady as muse and mistress of the poet's soul" (93). Finally, Tomé masks the self-mocking voice of an older Lope; as Pedraza Jiménez notes, "Lope, que tanto habló del amor y por cuya causa se vio tantas veces en 'tal estado', se burla de sí mismo y de la tradición literaria en que había expresado sus apasionamientos juveniles" (627).

As any Hispanist knows, and as the reading public in general knows as well, Lope's *unusually prolific career as a writer lent itself to an innumerable variety of themes*. Perhaps it is due to this fact that Lope was able to evolve over the years and create a double, Burguillos, who in turn was able to create poetry that directly responded to the creations of others who had come before. It is in this self-reflective poetic response that the reader can see one particularly fascinating (as well as humorous) instance of subverting conventions and questioning the "reality" which infuses different lyrical traditions. It is hoped that further study will be undertaken in these often metaliterary – and entertaining – works of art.

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