

Don Quijote and the “Entremés de los romances”: A Retrospective

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In 1874 Adolfo de Castro drew attention for the first time to parallels existing between an anonymous interlude, the “Entremés de los romances,” and the first chapters of *Don Quijote*. No common source for the two texts has ever been found, and the parallels between them are so close and so numerous that no one has denied that one text must imitate the other. But which imitates which? The debate over this point has continued down to the present day, and even today there is no consensus.¹ A guide through the maze of evidence and counter-evidence, of argument and counter-argument, may therefore be welcome, as may the chronological bibliography provided.²

¹ In 1986 Murillo argued for Cervantine originality; in 1987, Gaos, in his edition of *Don Quijote* (I, 117) considered Cervantine indebtedness “probado cabalmente.”

² For purposes of brevity, repetitions of arguments, obvious errors, and corrections of such errors are usually omitted. [Ed. note: because of the value of a chronologically-arranged bibliography on this topic, the citation form departs from the MLA norm and organizes comments on the “Entremés de los romances” by date.]

Editions of the "Entremés de los romances."

The first modern edition of the *entremés* was published by Adolfo de Castro in 1874. His text (143–74) was based on the somewhat defective one contained in an unidentified edition of the *Tercera parte de las comedias de Lope de Vega y otros autores con sus loas y entremeses* (Valencia, 1611; Barcelona, 1612; Madrid, 1613), with additions made from the fuller text of a *suelto* belonging to Fernández Guerra (n.p., n.d.), of which Castro wrote (143): "se asemeja, en el papel y tipos, a las publicaciones de surtido que salían de las imprentas de Madrid a principios del siglo XVII."³ Cotarelo y Mori's 1911 edition (I, 157–61) used the text of the 1612 edition of the *Tercera parte*, the scholar making no reference to Castro's work, which, however, he had apparently used for the text of other interludes in his collection, and Dámaso Alonso's 1936 edition (123–44) was based on a collation of the 1613 *Parte* text, Castro's text, and published versions of ballads included in the *entremés*.

In the debate, reference has usually been made to the Cotarelo edition; in any case, textual variants are not significant and have not given rise to any discussion. For the sake of bibliographical completeness, we here record the existence of a seventeenth-century edition that has so far escaped notice. Comparison suggests that it was based on the 1612 *Parte* text; its publication in Lisbon in 1647 testifies to the enduring popularity of the interlude.⁴

³ Millé (1930: 137–38) suggested that the *suelto* might have been a fragment of the *Tercera Parte*. In 1956 Astrana Marin made the same suggestion (VI, 491 n.), with specific reference to the 1611 *Parte*. Both, it seems, had overlooked Castro's comments.

⁴ The copy in the British Library is one of a collection of twelve *entremeses*, bound in at the end of a collection of Tirso de Molina's plays. These *entremeses* form only ff. 265–301 of a larger work. The *entremés* collection is preceded by a page of notes in the hand of J. R. Chorley. He lists the interludes and makes suggestions about their authorship, but confesses complete ignorance about the "Entremés de los romances."

Of the work from which the pages are taken he says: "La impresión [sic] en que aquí van juntos es un fragmento de un libro de *Comedias en colección*, no conocido que yo sepa de los bibliógrafos modernos, —y que se ha adquirido recientemente (1864) el *Sen.º Gayangos*, habiendole comprado en Madrid en Febrero de dicho año.—Fue de los libros del Duque de Híjar. Se intitula: "*Doze*

Performances of the “Entremés.”

No notice of any specific performance has come down to us. Castro (1874: 133) claimed that it was performed before the publication of *Don Quijote*, more specifically (132) in 1604 with Lope de Vega’s *La noche toledana* (in which the birth of Philip IV in 1605 [!] is mentioned). This claim was rejected by Cotarelo y Mori in 1920 (54) as “una de aquellas falsedades que [Adolfo de Castro] sin gran empacho cometía,” a rejection accepted implicitly or explicitly by all later scholars.

Authorship of the “Entremés.”

The interlude has always been published as anonymous, but various conjectures as to its author have been advanced. Castro (131) believed that it was Cervantes himself: “trazó una especie de bosquejo de [su libro].” The grounds for his belief: so inventive a writer could not possibly have borrowed the idea of *Don Quijote* from a known interlude, and would have been accused of literary theft if he had (133–34). Menéndez Pidal was later to comment (1924: 92) that to think that Cervantes’ contemporaries would accuse him of literary theft was “desconocer en qué estriba la originalidad del artista y es, además, desconocer el siglo XVII.” Only one other scholar has even entertained the possibility of Cervantine authorship: Northup (in his 1922 review of Menéndez Pidal’s 1920 *Aspecto*) pronounced it “worthy of consideration,” making as he did so a point made by nobody else: it is dangerous to base conclusions about authorship on a stylistic analysis of a short interlude, half of which consists of quotations.

Millé (1930: 120–23) also gave thought to the question, examining the claims to authorship of Lope (rejected, since Millé considered him to be the target of the interlude); of Góngora (possible, since he was the open enemy of Lope, although the “Entremés”

Comedias las mas grandiosas que hasta aora han salido de los meiores y mas insignes Poetas. *Segunda Parte.* En Lisboa. En la impr.^a de Pablo Crasbeck. año 1647. a. c. de Juan Leite Pereira..4.º.”

The “Entremés de los romances” occupies ff. 273^v–76^v. Press-mark: 11728h.9(13).

lacks his biting wit); and of Juan de Salinas (possible partisan of Góngora and possible enemy of Lope, deserving only of “a vague suspicion of paternity”). Dámaso Alonso (1936 ed. 151) called Millé’s suggestion that Góngora might have written the interlude “absurd,” but did not enlarge. The question remains open.

Description of the “Entremés.”

The interlude consists, by Asensio’s reckoning (1965: 75), of 478 [sic] lines, almost all *romance* or *romancillo* lines, at least 248 of which derive from known ballad collections. It concerns Bartolo, who appears “de labrador,” has been recently married to Teresa, and who “De leer el romancero / ha dado en ser caballero, / por imitar los romances: / y entiendo que a pocos lances / será loco verdadero.” Accompanied by Bandurrio (a kind of soldier-squire), he is off to the wars, his sister Dorotea explaining that “mi hermano Bartolo / se va a Ingalaterra, / a matar el Draque / y a prender la reina.” Later the scene changes and we are shown Marica and Simocho having a lovers’ quarrel; enter Bartolo “armado de papel, de risa, y en un caballo de caña,” reciting a ballad; he tells Simocho to release Marica, and attacks him with his lance; Simocho seizes it and beats Bartolo with it, stretching him on the ground; exit Simocho; Bartolo laments his misfortune, blames his mount [now a donkey!⁵], and says he cannot move. His family find him and carry him home, he all the while reciting ballad-line after ballad-line in nonsensical fashion; they put him to bed. Later, after musicians have sung, “se asoma Bartolo por el alto del tablado en camisa.” The piece ends with all shouting “¡Fuego, fuego!”

Much of the substance of the piece is provided by quotations from *romances artísticos*, the most prominent being “Hermano Perico” (complete: lines 132–92), “Ensíllenme el potro [sic for “asno”⁶] rucio / del Alcaide Antón Llorente” (31–45, 63–74, 76–78), “La más

⁵ “De una desgracia tan brava / no tengo la culpa yo; / túvola el asno, que no / corrió cuando le arreaba.” See next note.

⁶ The author absent-mindedly wrote the first line of Lope’s ballad, instead of the first line of Góngora’s parody, which read “asno.”

bella niña (93–94, 97–98, 101–02, 105–10, 126–27), “Cabizbajo y pensativo” (203–20, 225–29), and “Mira, Tarfe” (237–50, 257–60). Also included are 26 lines from the old version of “¿Dónde estás, señora mía?” (291–300, 305–12, 323–24, 349–54). In one passage (399–416) Bartolo cites in succession the first line of eighteen different *romances*. The first line of the final *tonadilla*, “Frescos airecillos,” is that of a 1590 Lope de Vega poem (Millé, 72 n. 83). Persons mentioned in the ballads appear as characters on the stage: so “Hermano Perico” provides the characters Bartolo, Perico, and Dorotea, “Ensíllenme el asno rucio” Antón (as Bartolo’s father), Bandurrio (as his squire), and Teresa (as his wife), while “Cabizbajo y pensativo” supplies Simocho and Marica. Liberties are taken with the ballad-lines to meet dramatic needs: lines are skipped, and their order and wording changed as thought necessary by the author.

Parallels between novel and interlude.

Scholars are agreed that the parallels between the interlude and Chapters 4, 5, and 7 of *Don Quijote*, Part I, are so close and numerous that they cannot be the work of coincidence. We here summarize the specific similarities severally noted by Adolfo de Castro (1874: 134–39), Menéndez Pidal (1924: 29–35), Dámaso Alonso (1936: 17), and López Navio (1960: 165–72). Bartolo and Don Quijote both (1) go mad from reading ballads/novels of chivalry; (2) dress up in armor; (3) go forth ready to fight; (4) have a hostile encounter; (5) are beaten with their own lances; (6) are left stretched out on the ground; (7) are unable to rise; (8) blame their misfortunes on their mounts; (9) think they are Valdovinos and recall lines of the “Marqués de Mantua” ballads; (10) are taken home and en route imagine themselves to be figures from the *romances moriscos*; (11) are put to bed and go to sleep; (12) wake up with minds inflamed with incidents from other ballads; (13) interrupt the wedding/scrutiny with their shouts. Also, in each work, a character curses the ballads/novels of chivalry.

Yet other specific parallels may be established. In the *entremés*, Bartolo, returning home, recites a *centón* of first lines of eighteen ballads, a review if you will of the literature that has sent him mad;

in the novel, in the scrutiny of the library, we have a review of the literature that has sent the *hidalgo* mad; if the interlude ends with the chorus “¡Fuego, fuego!” the scrutiny ends with the burning of the books. Members of Bartolo’s family go in search of him and bring him home; in later developments in the novel, close friends of Don Quijote go in search of him and bring him home. Finally, Bandurrio’s remark, “Pues metámosle acostar, / que el loco durmiendo amansa,” and Antonio’s comment, “Pues como él duerma, el sentido / volverá a cobrar sin falta” (*Colección*, I, 161, col. 2), foreshadow the end of Part II of the novel.

Castro (1874: 131) had claimed that “todo el pensamiento del *Quijote*” is to be found in the lines “De leer el romancero” already quoted (without bothering to explain why then the novel, except for one adventure, is overwhelmingly concerned with the novels of chivalry). Surprisingly, his claim was supported by the young reviewer Menéndez y Pelayo (1874: 286), who volunteered the suggestion that Bartolo and Bandurrio were the first sketches of knight and squire, a view also arrived at, apparently independently, as late as 1929, by Cirot (*Gloses* 1). But by then his was a lone, unheeded voice: in 1920, Menéndez Pidal, arguing for Cervantine imitation (1924: 34–41), had presented it as a temporary aberration (affecting only Chapters 4, 5, and 7) that was in itself proof of the novelist’s indebtedness; only in Chapters 5 and 7, he had argued, does the protagonist lose the idea of his own personality, and no ballads are mentioned in the *escrutinio*. Such arguments provided the focus for all later discussions of the parallels. (García Soriano [1944: 66] is quite simply in error when he states that Menéndez Pidal was of the opinion that the interlude “bien pudo sugerir a Cervantes la creación del tipo de Don Quijote.”) In 1936 Dámaso Alonso (17) gave his strong support to the medievalist by agreeing with him that Cervantes’ imitation of the *entremés* was “un elemento allegadizo que ha pasado a [la novela] fraguado ya y formado.”

Cotarelo y Mori, faced with Menéndez Pidal’s argument that the novelist’s imitation of the interlude was a temporary aberration, soon corrected, made telling reply: “Si Cervantes comprendió que estaba en terreno falso, ...¿por qué no corrigió su obra antes de

imprimirla? No se explica” (1920: 58). His question was an excellent one for the time, and remained unanswered, then and afterwards. Only later did research into Cervantes’ methods of revision demonstrate his apparently ingrained preference for revision by addition, transfer, or substitution rather than outright deletion.⁷

The crux of the matter.

The great battle of the debate was fought over the date of composition of the interlude, and the consequent priority of novel or *entremés*. Some scholars (e.g. Menéndez Pidal, Millé y Giménez, García Soriano, López Navio) accumulated evidence that the interlude harked back to the 1590s, and that Cervantes had therefore imitated it; others (e.g. Cotarelo y Mori, his son Cotarelo Valledor, Schevill, Astrana Marín) rose in defense of the novelist’s good name, equated with his immaculate “originality.” Rodríguez Marín, in successive editions of the novel, sat uneasily on the fence, anxious not to offend either Menéndez Pidal on the one side and Cotarelo *père* on the other. Schevill is an example of the out-and-out pietist: the very number of close parallels between interlude and novel is in itself proof that Cervantes did not imitate the dramatic piece: “Cervantes no imita sus fuentes con tanta minuciosidad” (1928: I, 417). (The scholar is being disingenuous or forgetful: he knew very well from his own research that Cervantes was capable of close imitation of another author.⁸) Menéndez Pidal tellingly made the point that it is precisely comparison with the interlude that shows the originality and creative power of Cervantes: “Para sacar del ‘Entremés’ los primeros capítulos del *Quijote* se necesitó un gigantesco esfuerzo creador” (1940: 26).⁹

⁷ For examples, see our articles “The Composition and Revision of ‘La española inglesa,’” “The Composition and Revision of *La Galatea*,” and “Revision in *Don Quixote*, Part I.”

⁸ See his “The Question of Heliodorus” (on imitation of the Greek author in *Persiles y Sigismunda*). For modern evidence of Cervantes’ close adherence to texts of Equicola, see López Estrada 89–92 and Stagg, “Plagiarism.”

⁹ Unfortunately, the wording here is misleading, seeming to suggest that the whole conception of the novel was taken from the interlude. Elsewhere the

The source of the "Entremés."

In 1920 Menéndez Pidal, in a famous lecture (*Un aspecto en la elaboración del Quijote*), brought things to a head by identifying what was, he claimed, the main source of the interlude: *Flor de varios y nuevos romances*, 1.^a, 2.^a y 3.^a partes, Valencia, 1593. This work, he said, included all of the 31 *romances cultos* quoted in the interlude, to be found together in no other collection before or after, not even the *Romancero general* of 1600 (*Aspecto* 1924: 27 n. 1). Regrettably he did not, then or ever, identify the 31 ballads involved. In 1930 Millé repaired this omission with a list (1930: 206–07)¹⁰ that served as the basis for all later discussions; at the same time he stated that four of the 31 ballads were not in the edition of the *Flor* indicated by Menéndez Pidal. In 1940 the latter (*De Cervantes*: 52 notes 5, 5a), while "provisionally" referring readers to Millé's list, confused them by declaring (as in all later treatments) that 30 of the 33 ballads (our italics) quoted in the interlude had come from the *Flor*—again without further explanation. His unexplained variation in Millé's figures has been generally ignored.

Both Menéndez Pidal and Millé, relying on Foulché-Delbosc,¹¹ had assumed that the 1593 edition of the Valencia *Flor* had been preceded by others of 1588 and 1591, Millé, for example, building historical arguments on that basis (210). But in 1956 Rodríguez-Moñino brought evidence (98–99) that neither of those editions had ever existed.

Of the four interlude ballads absent from the Valencia collection Millé (218–19) points out that "Ardiéndose estaba Troya" and "Entró la mal maridada" were already well known before 1592, and that "Si tienes el corazón" deals with the Tarfe-Zaide theme, exploited in the *Flor's* third *Parte*. As for "Cabizbajo y pensativo," Menéndez Pidal (1940: 52 n. a) states that it is listed in the Index of the incomplete copy of the Valencia *Flor* in the Biblioteca Nacional.

scholar argues clearly that Cervantes' imitation of the "Entremés" is a temporary deviation from a path already chosen.

¹⁰ Confirmed in the "Post Scriptum," pp. 217–19.

¹¹ Nos. 5 (75) and 8 (76) of his catalog.

The “Marqués de Mantua” ballad is quoted in the interlude in the old version: “¿Dónde estás, señora mía, / que no te duele mi mal? / De mis pequeñas heridas / compasión solías tomar.” Cervantes’ text differs in the third and fourth lines: “o no lo sabes, señora, / o eres falsa y desleal.” Pellicer, in his 1852 edition of *Don Quijote*, had stated (I, 360) that the Cervantes version was by Treviño and was printed in Alcalá de Henares in 1598. This is true, and Astrana Marín (1956: VI, 493–96) and Palacín Iglesias (1965: 73–75) used this fact to reject Cervantes’ indebtedness to the interlude. We now know that the second, newer version was already in print in 1591, in the Barcelona *Flor*.¹² Cervantes, by substituting the more modern wording, was correcting an “anachronism” in the interlude’s topical text.

The dating of the “Entremés.” The “Entremés” as prior to Don Quijote.

The debate about the date of the composition and/or performance of the interlude must be viewed against the background of the literary history of the period.

The *romances artísticos* were immensely popular in the last two decades of the sixteenth century. From 1589 onwards they reached the eager public as successive *Partes* of the *Flor de romances*, each successive *Parte* containing more of the latest “hits.” As Menéndez Pidal put it: “Bien se ve cómo el público ansiaba novedades en estos tomitos tan continuamente impresos y reimpresos” (1953: II, 118). The most distinctive and popular type of ballad at first was the *romance morisco*, which, in the first *Parte* of 1589, represented 40% of the contents (1957, Menéndez Pidal, *Mis páginas preferidas* 255). But thereafter it gradually declined in popularity: from 1601 to 1604, only one new Moorish ballad was published; in 1605, four “insignificant” examples. “Después, nada” (1953 Menéndez Pidal: II, 160).

The most famous and prolific author of *romances moriscos* was Lope de Vega, who, especially in the 1580s, chronicled in Moorish dress his own disorderly life and love-affairs. Over against him was his arch-enemy, Góngora, who engaged him in the bitterest of

¹² 1957: Rodríguez-Moñino, ed., II f. 100f.

literary duels, parodying unmercifully Lope's most popular ballads. And all the while the Spanish public sat back and reveled in the scandals and the fun.¹³

The "Entremés de los romances" reflects perfectly that specific moment in Spanish social history: an *entremés* all in *romance* measure, with a *morisco* content of 42% of examples mentioned (!), introducing the two "stars" Lope (Bartolo) and Góngora (Bandurrio),¹⁴ including the Cordovan's famous parody of Lope's equally famous ballad, "Ensíllenme el potro rucio," with Bartolo, "casado de cuatro días," leaving to fight the English reminding the audience of Lope deserting his three-week bride to join the Armada, and the play's conclusion with lines from the ballad "Ardiéndose estaba Troya," a product of Lope's passionate and highly publicized affair with Elena Osorio, whose first name ends the interlude, and whose lawsuit (naming Lope de Vega for libel) had engaged in the late 1580s the rapt attention of the whole of Madrid.¹⁵ Add to all this a rich offering of quotations and reminders of the most recent and popular ballads of the day, and you have a splendid illustration of Menéndez Pidal's dictum (1924: 29 n.) that "mientras no haya positivas pruebas en contrario, hay que suponer que el teatro cómico se mueve dentro de la época actual y de la vida diaria y familiar a todos." The interlude's very topicality points to a date of composition close to, say, 1590, and in any case makes nonsense of all arguments to the effect that it was written for an audience of 1605 or later.

Menéndez Pidal, seeking a precise dating for the interlude, concentrated on Dorotea's announcement that Bartolo was off to kill Drake and capture the Queen. Drake died in January, 1596, Queen Elizabeth in 1603. Bartolo's boasted intention (taken verbatim from the pre-1588 ballad "Hermano Perico") would have appeared inappropriate in post-Armada Spain until national naval confidence had been restored, an event signaled to Menéndez Pidal by renewed preparations for the invasion of England made in 1596

¹³ For all this see Millé (1930: *passim*).

¹⁴ Millé (1930: 156–57) presents evidence for this identification.

¹⁵ See Tomillo and Pérez Pastor.

(not serious), 1597, 1601, and 1602. On this basis, in 1920 (1924: 28–29 n.) he chose 1597 as the most probable date of the *entremés* (though the news of Drake’s death must already have reached Spain, and the vogue of the Moorish ballads was coming to an end). In 1940, correcting his obviously flawed argument, he recalled that in 1591 Alonso de Bazán had defeated the English off the Azores, thus renewing enthusiasm for the invasion of England. Wrongly believing that an edition of the Valencia *Flor* had been published in 1591 (see above), and presumably bearing in mind the need for speedy publication in a time of rapidly-changing literary fashions, he concluded: “Poco después de esta victoria es la fecha más probable del ‘Entremés’” (1940: 53). In 1957 he reaffirmed this conclusion (II, 187), which remained his final view of the matter.

Responses. The interlude subsequent to the novel.

Menéndez Pidal had built a strong case, and his views were to continue to appear before the public in a series of publications, editions and translations until 1957 (see Chronological Bibliography). He had been ably seconded, as we have seen, by Millé (1930), and was to receive the support of such scholars as Herrero García (1930), Dámaso Alonso (1936), García Soriano (1944), López Navio (1960), Varo (1968), and others. It is time now to consider the arguments of those in the opposite camp.¹⁶

The first of these—Adolfo de Castro (1874: 133), Cotarelo Valledor (1915: 723), and Rodríguez Marín (1916: VII, 201)—all advanced the argument that the references in the interlude to Drake and Queen Elizabeth indicated the date of the action, not of composition. Cotarelo y Mori, in his review of Menéndez Pidal’s essay (1920: 55–58), put forward this argument yet again, and was, together with his son, sharply reminded by the Master, in his 1940 reply to Cotarelo y Mori’s review (1940: 54), of “la clara diferencia entre el arcaísmo

¹⁶ Sánchez (1975 and 1991) provides a purely descriptive treatment of Menéndez Pidal’s thesis and a few of the reactions to it. In the latter article his thrust is to make the case for *Don Quijote*’s debt to the *romancera*. Eisenberg takes a contrary position, distinguishing between Don Quijote’s and Cervantes’ positions on the *romance* and *romancera*.

fundamental de la novela histórica y el actualismo de la comedia de la vida cotidiana.”

None of these early loyalists ever intervened again, but a lone rear-guard action was fought by Schevill from 1928 to 1933. In 1924 Menéndez Pidal (28 n.), presumably recalling Rodríguez Marín's 1916 suggestion that the dramatist could have gone to the *Romancero general* of 1600 for material, had pointed out that some of the ballads quoted by Bartolo never appeared in that voluminous collection.¹⁷ Schevill (1928: I, 417) now made the strange suggestion that the *entremesista* could, in 1605, have been “inspired” by the 1593 *Flor*, but added (I, 418) the comment that the *Romancero general* justified parody even more than the earlier *Flores*. The chain of reasoning, if any, escapes one. Schevill further asseverated that the term “romancero” employed in the interlude was “hardly” used before 1600, a belief of which both Millé (1930: 135) and Menéndez Pidal (1940: 56) were no doubt happy to disabuse him. His unworthily sarcastic review of Millé's book in 1931, and his absurd claim in 1933 (26) that Menéndez Pidal had reached his conclusions “without stating his reasons” brought his intervention to an embarrassing close.

After the hiatus imposed by two wars, the debate took on a different complexion, when opponents of Menéndez Pidal's thesis, presumably unable to shake its arguments, based on ballad history, turned to theatrical history in the hope of proving that the *entremés* came into being after the publication of *Don Quijote*.

Any such enterprise was bound to be extremely difficult, given what Asensio (1965: 63), with reference to the growth of the *entremés* from 1600 to 1620, calls “el naufragio casi total del teatro menor y la dificultad de datar los escasos restos.” As a result, arguments in this area tended to be based on generalizations and speculations. We in turn will here offer two general observations. First, the true statement that the *entremés* was published in Part III of Lope's plays (Valencia, 1611; Barcelona, 1612; Madrid, 1613) was too often distorted by the addition of an assumption. So Cotarelo y Mori (1920:

¹⁷ Both Millé (1930: 208) and Menéndez Pidal (1940: 52–53) gave a total of seven.

52): “el entremés se había publicado *por primera vez* [our italics] en 1611”; so Schevill (1928: I, 417): “dicho ‘Entremés,’ que fue publicado *por primera vez* [our italics] en 1611; so Murillo (1986: 355): “el anónimo ‘Entremés se publicó *por primera vez* [our italics] en la III.^a Parte.” This assumption is paralleled by a curious reluctance to examine the significance, if any, of the *suelto* described by Adolfo de Castro as of the early seventeenth century, from which he was able to repair deficiencies in the text of the 1611–13 editions and which is therefore presumably of earlier provenance.

Pre-war, Cotarelo y Mori had argued (1920: 53) that “en aquella época” [?] *entremeses* and *loas* were usually printed (“solían imprimirse”) with the plays with which they had been performed, and gave as examples the twelve interludes in Part I of Lope’s plays, and others in Parts III, VII, and VIII, ignoring as Millé was later to point out (1930: 121 n. 150), the complete lack of them in II, IV, V, VI, IX, X, XI, XII, XIII, XIV, XV.... Nor did Schevill help his cause by admitting (1928: I, 417) that “muchos entremeses fueron publicados *años después de ser representados*” (our italics).

Astrana Marín, insulting Menéndez Pidal as was his wont (“idea estúpida,” “clarísimos disparates”), chastised him (1956: VI, 490) for not producing any evidence relating to the first performance of the interlude. (Neither did Astrana Marín; lack of surviving evidence of performance—see Asensio’s warning above—is no proof of lack of performance.) He found it strange that an interlude allegedly written in 1591 should not have been published until 1611 or 1612, and then in a volume of new plays, with one of which it had been performed. (No evidence is offered that the *entremés* had *not* been published in the period indicated or *had* been performed with one of those plays.)

Astrana Marín states that successful *plays* (our italics) were *usually* (our italics) published three or four years after their debut, *if* (our italics) the publisher could collect twelve *plays* (our italics) likely to sell, *if* (our italics) the actors had made their money out of them, and *if* (our italics) the company acquiring the manuscript ran no risk in the transaction. He therefore concludes that the interlude was written after the publication of *Don Quijote*, between 1605 and 1608.

(No comment seems necessary.)

Later, Asensio, anxious to establish a late date for the composition of the *entremés*, challenged Menéndez Pidal's argument in favor of "la actualidad" of the interlude's action by claiming that, on the stage, "las referencias a obras poéticas mantienen su oportunidad mientras la poesía se lee o canta" (1971: 74), (thus playing right into the hands of the medievalist, who had shown that the vogue of the *romances moriscos* was moribund in 1597).

The interlude's use of the ballad-line for pure dialogue, he also reasons, points to a date in the early years of the seventeenth century, since it is "improbable" that its author would have anticipated Lope's practice. (The reasoning is false: since something like half of the *entremés* consists of quotation of ballad lines, the author would obviously have found it more convenient and appropriate and pleasing to compose all of it in such lines; the whole aim of his farce was to deride literary fashion, not conform to it.)

Murillo's paper, we are told, was written with a view to "rectifying" Menéndez Pidal's thesis in the light of the "nuevos datos" offered by Asensio (1971: 353). These, states Murillo (1986: 355) compel belief that the *entremés* was probably written after 1605. They are, first, that the interlude was first (!) published in the *Tercera Parte* of Lope's plays (something generally known since the publication of Castro's book in 1874); secondly, Asensio's declaration that the interlude consists of 478 lines (we fail to see what light this information—even were it correct—sheds on the controversy); and, thirdly, Asensio's argument that the interlude's use of the ballad-line indicates a late date of composition (dealt with above).

Murillo, while insisting that the *entremés* is wholly derived from the ballads ("es todo él, como dice Eugenio Asensio, un verdadero centón" [355]), also insists that what he calls the "idea-eje"—that Bartolo should be able to read—is derived from *Don Quijote*. (In fact it matters not at all to the action of the *entremés* whether Bartolo had read the ballads, had heard them repeatedly, or had often joined others in singing them: it matters only that he *knew* them.)

Obviously borrowing from Schevill, Murillo (356) reaches the "tentative conclusion" that the dramatist "could have used" the 1593

Flor for a parody "inspired" by the vogue of the *Romancero general* of 1600, after he had seen, or heard about ("teniendo noticias"), Cervantes' book or manuscript. But this conclusion raises all kinds of objections. Of course, if the dramatist had only "heard about" the novel, the many close similarities between it and the interlude must qualify as miracles. If the parody was "inspired" by the vogue of the *Romancero general*, why was it not based on this work? Why would the author feel the need to go back to any edition of the *Flor*? Why would he have chosen the 1593 collection in particular? Are we to believe that in 1605 he remembered that virtually all the ballads quoted by Cervantes in Chs. 4, 5, and 7 had been published together in that issue of the *Flor*? Why, in or around 1605, when the "Morisco" fashion was dead and politically incorrect as well, would the *entremesista* have wished to resurrect it? As Cotarelo y Mori might have remarked: "No se explica."

But it was Menéndez Pidal who expressed the biggest objection to any suggestion that the interlude imitated the novel: "No se concibe remedio de una obra, famosísima desde el momento de su aparición (y aun de ser impresa), sin que en el remedio aparezca la menor alusión a Don Quijote, ni a Sancho, ni a Rocinante, nombres que anduvieron en seguida en boca de todo el mundo, irremplazables por ningún otro nombre" (1950: II, 428).

Murillo, the latest—and perhaps last—apologist for Cervantine "originality," admits his perplexity before this last argument: "quedaría enigmático que no hiciera ninguna alusión al *Quijote*" (356); the parallels between novel and interlude he likewise regards as "enigmatic"; and he finds "enigmatic" the manner in which playwright and novelist treat the "Marqués de Mantua" ballads (356–57). But still he claims that "el entremesista ha imitado a Cervantes" (357). We salute his loyalty. Yet with his threefold invocation of the "enigmatic" he may well have tolled the death-knell of the pietist cause.

Epilogue.

Rodríguez-Moñino, with his remarkable bibliographical contributions (1956, 1973, 1975), has made available to today's students of

the Golden Age ballad a wider range of reliable texts than earlier scholars ever knew.

As a result, we can state that presently-known editions of the first three Parts of the *Flor de romances* (the only ones involved) with substantial parallels with the interlude comprise the following: Lisbon, 1592: 28 ballads; Valencia, 1593: 27; Alcalá, 1593: 23; Madrid, 1593, 1595, 1597: 24.

No copy of the Lisbon *Flor* was generally available until 1971 (1957 Rodríguez-Moñino, vol. 3). Its contents (1975 Rodríguez-Moñino, No. 213) are identical with those of the Valencia, 1593, edition, except that it contains the text of the ballad “Cabizbajo y pensativo,” which, by a strange printing error, is omitted from the Valencian edition, though listed in its *Tabla*. (Menéndez Pidal—1940: 52 n. 4a—inspected that *Tabla* in the imperfect Biblioteca Nacional copy [R-9.799], and would naturally have assumed that the ballad had been printed on missing pages.) The title page of the Lisbon edition indicates that it is the first to offer Part III (“Añadio se a ora la tercera parte en esta vltima impression”), and its *licencia* is dated 1 October 1591. Topicality being then all-important, it is highly probable that the *entremesista* availed himself as quickly as possible of this edition with the newly-added Part III (and including “Cabizbajo y pensativo,” which contributes to the action of the interlude). The 1593 Valencia reprint, coming later and omitting that ballad, is less likely as source of the *entremés*.

Menéndez Pidal, as we have seen, wrongly believing in the existence of a 1591 edition of the 1593 Valencia *Flor*, had concluded that the interlude had been written shortly after Alonso de Bazán’s victory off the Azores. Our re-identification of the interlude source lends even greater verisimilitude to that conclusion. The *Revenge* was captured on 10 September 1591 (Spanish calendar), and some time must have elapsed before news of the engagement reached Spain and spread through the country, arousing the enthusiasm suggested. The Lisbon *Flor* was licensed on 1 October. The coincidence of dates and events is quite remarkable, and the probability of a date for the *entremés* of early 1592 thereby reinforced.

Strangely, in a debate so protracted, questions still remain to be

asked or answered. As Northup shrewdly remarked, in his 1922 review of Menéndez Pidal's paper, "The whole matter is bound up with the question as to when Cervantes began the writing of the first chapters." It was probably as well that *that* question was not in fact pursued; otherwise the "interlude debate" might have become embroiled and forgotten in unfocused controversy on the broader issue. It nevertheless remains true that only when mutually compatible solutions have been found for both problems will it be possible to apply closure to the now 127-year-old debate that has here occupied our attention. But that must be another story.

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