

## The Other Pinheiro Chagas: Calderón de la Barca's Reflection in the Mirror

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**Abstract.** This article analyzes two novels by Pinheiro Chagas as fictional transpositions of plays by Calderón de la Barca. Of interest to both Golden Age scholars and Portuguese literary critics alike, this study argues that Pinheiro Chagas, seldom remembered for much more than his involvement with the 1870s generation, was an important literary critic and novelist, whose writing serves as a precursor to the trend of historical novels to stress plot development and patriotic values, rather than amorous intrigue. In *A mantilha de Beatriz* and *A Marquessa das Índias*, the use of humor, the interweaving of disguise and misunderstandings, along with the reversal of hypo- and hypertext through an anachronistic literary appropriation, combine and allow Pinheiro Chagas to legitimize the prominence of Golden Age models and Spanish culture in his (overtly) ambiguous discourse.

It is not always the writers who are the most popular, the most widely read or the most highly respected during a particular period that are held in the highest appreciation by literary history or subsequent literary criticism. The study of texts and the reading of periodicals contemporaneous to specific works may prove surprising, and change opinions hitherto considered absolute and universal. During the nineteenth century, a time of major transformations in terms of mentalities, which undoubtedly reflected changes occurring in the social and economic balance, there are blatant examples of

these differences, clearly showing the disparity which may exist between what was valued by an epoch and what cultural distance or changes of aesthetic perspective consider noteworthy. The modern-day reader of an average cultural level associates the name of Pinheiro Chagas to the "Good Sense and Good Taste" issue started by Antero de Quental, the herald of new ideas, in his struggle against the repetitive, end-of-era nature of the literature of the time, and the lack of literary common sense. Pinheiro Chagas proudly claimed that he himself was a revolutionary who was radically opposed to what was popular in his time. However, the author of *A mantilha de Beatriz* must be remembered for much more than a feeble, indirect contribution to the brilliance of the future Generation of 70. Pinheiro Chagas was a notable literary critic who played an important role in the cultural scene of his time, not only writing studies on the works of Camilo Castelo Branco, Arnaldo Gama, Teófilo Braga, António Feliciano de Castilho, Gonçalves Dias, Rebelo da Silva, Júlio Dinis, Silva Gaio, and others, but also as a novelist in his own right, whose books were widely read and appreciated. His historical novels stand out from his Romanesque novels, and although they can be considered strongly influenced by the school of Herculano, they are different in the way that they include historical discourse, which oscillates between placing amorous intrigue in a secondary position (*A corte de D. João V*, 1868; *Os guerrelheiros da morte*, 1872; *O terremoto de Lisboa*, 1874; *As duas flores de sangue*, 1875; *A mantilha de Beatriz*, 1878; e *A Marquesa das Índias*), the importance given to true historical events, though with a special emphasis, due to the plot (*A máscara vermelha* e *O juramento da Duquesa*, both written in 1873) and an almost exclusive emphasis on the deeds of forefathers (*A jóia do Vice-Rei*, 1890; *A descoberta da Índia contada por um marinheiro*, 1891; and *O naufrágio de Vicente Sodré*, reprinted in 1894). These last three novels already show a different conception of the historical novel, as can easily be seen from the words of Pinheiro Chagas himself, as in the introduction to *A jóia do Vice-Rei*:

The historical novel as understood by Walter Scott or Alexander Dumas is rather outdated. The idea of making history the background to a narrative and allowing the invention of imaginary scenes brought many serious drawbacks, intertwining lies with truth to such an extent that our generation, anxious for exactitude began to criticize this adulteration which, in their understanding, put erroneous ideas into the minds of the readers. (5, trans. mine)

At the beginning of the twentieth century, a time marked by political, economic and social crises, there was a significant increase in nationalistic publications, the aim of which was to sublimate the trauma associated with having to surrender to the demands of England and with constant political instability. In the historical novels of the beginning of the nineteenth century, patriotic values were particularly exalted, with less emphasis being given to amorous intrigue. Pinheiro Chagas was in some way a precursor of this trend, which continued more or less until the nineteen-twenties.

However, the subject of this article is two short novels which demonstrate a very original use of the discourse of history, since, although the novels are apparently centered on the plot, the fact is that this plot itself is a rewriting of earlier works. The narrators in *A mantilha de Beatriz* and *A Marquesa das Índias* present their stories as though they had been the inspiration behind two plays by Calderón de la Barca: "Altering, modifying, cutting and adding, as is the right of a playwright and a genius, Calderon used the story we humbly tell as a background to the plot of his comedy *Antes que todo es mi dama*" (*A mantilha de Beatriz* 173, trans. mine); "[...] she [the Marquesa] was certainly the one who told the story as it is told in the Spanish tradition, and Calderon used it again as a plot for one of his comedies—*Peor está de lo que estaba*,<sup>1</sup> which we used extensively in reconstructing this narrative" (*A Marquesa das Índias* 245, trans. mine).

This artifice is an interesting case of legitimization of appropriation, simultaneously playing with the reality of the copy and the change in its meaning, by wrongly stating the relationships of hypotext and hypertext. This subversion enables the past to be apprehended in a different way, and although this is only given a passing mention, it is situated at a humorous level, which is difficult to ignore. The deliberate lack of precision in stating the authorship is reflected in the inclusion of anecdotal or vague historical details, with no care being taken to adopt a didactic stance or to question these past events.

The importance attributed to Spanish culture in these two novels clearly reveals that the predominance of French, English and German culture in the Romantic period in no way excluded knowledge and assimilation of Spanish works, which would have been as widely read as those of other European countries. While Herculano and Garrett mainly refer to Walter Scott and Victor Hugo, using their historical novels as models to be imitated, Pinheiro Chagas places the diegesis in the sixteenth or seventeenth century, in order to allude to Calderón, making him contemporary to other characters in the

novel, and thus able to be influenced by the supposedly real. This prevalence is most evident in a text by the author himself, entitled "Da iniciativa litteraria dos Portuguezes na Península Hispânica" (*Novos ensaios críticos* 68-104), the first part of which is called "A litteratura portugueza nas suas relações com a hespanhola," where it is clearly stated: "This brotherhood, tempestuous, yes, but nonetheless true, is mainly seen in popular poetry" (73, trans. mine); "Comedy, the genre in which the Spanish excelled, and which enriched by the colossal talents of Lope de Vega and Calderon served as a model for Europe [...]" (84, trans. mine); "[...]" where, with immortal splendor, the brilliant constellation of Vega and Calderon would shine" (93, trans. mine).

It is curious to note that the two names mentioned are precisely those that the author evoked in the two novels in question. Nevertheless, it is odd that Pinheiro Chagas made a mistake in attributing a play by Lope de Vega to Calderón, at the very beginning of *A mantilha de Beatriz*: "One of the most lyrical plays by Calderon was being staged in one of the patios of Madrid, a play whose very title is as melodious as music, which is fully justified by the heavenly, idyllic nature of the plot: *No todos son ruiseñores*"<sup>2</sup> (5, trans. mine). This comedy, written in 1635, is in fact by Lope de Vega, although Pinheiro Chagas had already attributed it to Calderón in *Desenvolvimento da litteratura portugueza—These para o Concurso da 3<sup>a</sup> Cadeira do Curso Superior de Letras*, in 1872: "[...] On the Peninsula we have gained a reputation for fine lovers, which is frequently revealed, such as for example in *No son todos riuosenores* by Calderon, where a Portuguese song is heard, all mournful and tender [...]"<sup>3</sup> (36, trans. mine).

*A mantilha de Beatriz* begins with the enactment of this play and although in the text no reference is made to its plot, the truth is that it contains many ingredients which are very similar to those to be found in the comedies (1648 and 1640 respectively) by Calderón, which are at the basis of the diegesis of the two works: problematic love affairs, masked characters and humorous misunderstandings.

Pinheiro Chagas imitates, transposes and updates the sixteenth-century plays, capturing and making use of the particular idiolect of these plays, identifying stylistic traits and themes and generalizing them. In other words, creating a template for imitation, which allowed him to transfer the idiolect to another genre, with powerful effects on the analysis and awareness of what *had been read*.<sup>4</sup> This is thus another way of modifying a pre-existing discourse, no longer the discourse of historians but that of fiction itself, which seems to be surprisingly similar to the former, as it opens up infinite possi-

bilities for rewriting, only similar in minor aspects, but never in the basics.

The rewriting undertaken by Pinheiro Chagas is above all the rewriting of other/others' texts, as History is nothing more than a tenuous stage upon which the action takes place. In *A mantilha de Beatriz*, the references to D. Afonso VI and to the political situation are sparse and are included in order to stress the incapacity of the king, soon to be replaced by his brother: "Unfortunately, Lisbon and its surrounding area are full of wrongdoers who are stopped by no one. And how can they be checked if the worst of all wrongdoers is the king himself [...]" (24, trans. mine). The rapid allusions to the social context are mere accessories to the plot and have little or no importance for the overall meaning of the work itself. The title of Chapter XV, "On how the author, due to the need to follow his characters, finds himself in the Olympic realms of Portuguese politics" (*A mantilha de Beatriz* 122, trans. mine), is both suggestive and ironic. The minor importance of History is underlined, as is the lack of pragmatism and concrete measures. In *A Marquesa das Índias*, there is even less inclusion of historical discourse, limited to a few references to the creation of local color, vital for the situation of the characters in that context. In the first lines there is immediate reference to the topics of date and place ("We are in India. Thirty five years have gone by since the audacity of Vasco da Gama opened up those marvelous regions to trade and to Portuguese dominion." *A Marquesa das Índias* 5, trans. mine) followed by a number of descriptions that are rather more picturesque and didactic than they are necessary.

But, as has already been said, the real transgression is at the level of the fiction itself, where two pre-existing texts are transposed and disguised. Indeed, there is even a third text as we saw in *No son todos ruiseñores*, by Lope de Vega (but wrongly attributed to Calderón), which seems to be deeply embedded in the work and difficult to ignore. Containing all the elements of the plot of *A mantilha de Beatriz* and even of *A Marquesa das Índias*, Lope de Vega's comedy tacitly prepares—since nothing is overtly mentioned in the text—the later *diegesis*. The importance of the mask, an accessory which almost all the characters possess, on the one hand helps to hide their identity, and on the other reveals the various games of power and seduction which occur in the text and which give rise to irony, mistaken identities, and humorous situations, clearly seen in the tirade by Leonarda, the main female character, when she plays with the title, the proverb underlying it and unmasks all the misunderstandings created throughout the play: "For now



if you remember / that in the gardens of love / you had better be careful / for not all those who sing among the flowers / are nightingales?" (Lope de Vega 183, trans. mine).

Assuming that in a work of literature nothing happens by chance, the purpose of Lope de Vega's work cannot and should not be questioned, as the whole plot of *A mantilha de Beatriz* is affected by it, directly appealing to a common cultural code with the reader. More ingenious still is the artifice used at the end of each of the novels, when the narrator claims that Calderón de la Barca was inspired by his (the narrator's) stories, creating irony which is only effective if the reader is the accomplice of the reader/audience, sharing the same codes and recognizing the various echoes suggested by the text.<sup>5</sup>

Moving on to an analysis of the humor in the two novels by Pinheiro Chagas, we will first look at the question of the mask, already mentioned, as we have seen, in the opening scenes of *A mantilha de Beatriz*, in order to take a look at the way in which comedy creeps into the cracks of a discourse full of ambiguities which lie at the heart of the intrigue.

By unilaterally or bi-laterally concealing identities, the mask contributes to increasing the mystery, giving rise to misunderstandings and comedy. If in *A mantilha de Beatriz* disguise is found at the more complex level of discourse and feelings, (just as in *Antes que todo es mi dama*, by Calderón), in *A Marquesa das Índias* (or in *Peor está que estaba*), the majority of the characters are disguised, leading to misunderstandings caused by deliberate confusion of identities which are perversely abused.

A certain degree of ingenuity is then crucial to comedy, insofar as it is necessary to create an illusion which must be plausible, based on a game of "relationships and relativization" (Veja 63), couched in ambiguity which gives rise to the confusion of various meanings with their subsequent counter-interpretations.<sup>6</sup> By its very nature, as Lélia Parreira Duarte points out, laughter always has "a social and didactic function" (15), debunking the dominant ideology, given its irreverence towards established values and lack of sensitivity, which is fundamental for the necessary distancing for a critical attitude, a crucial factor in the creation of comedy.<sup>7</sup> Isabel Ermida defends the existence of what she calls the theory of hostility, of liberation and incongruence, in an attempt to define the aesthetics of laughter and to understand the conditions necessary for its appearance.<sup>8</sup> The theory of hostility assumes the inequality between the characters, with the resulting effect that the perception of this inequality is the motive for laughter on the part of the character

who considers him/herself superior;<sup>9</sup> the second theory is based on the idea that humor works as sublimation for states of tension or suppression;<sup>10</sup> and finally we cannot forget the importance of the juxtaposition of different or incompatible semantic fields.<sup>11</sup> In the texts under study, the situational details that give rise to humor must be borne in mind, including play on words, asides and misunderstandings.<sup>12</sup>

Misunderstandings, which are present throughout the two novels, were already a fundamental ingredient in the plays of Calderón that served as a basis for the plot. Although they are never main characters, servants play an important role as driving forces and are crucial for diegetic development, causing things to happen or slowing down the pace of events. They may even be aware of the traditional role to which they are destined, commenting on it or trying to change it with constant allusions to the canons:

HERNANDO –Let us not take any notice  
but let us do something else instead  
which is new in the theatre

MENDOZA – And what is that?

HERNANDO –Let us be friends  
as our masters are,  
for it is very outmoded  
for servants to quarrel  
all the time.

(Calderón de la Barca, *Antes que todo es mi Dama* 3-4, trans. mine)

As Calderón foresaw, the servants in Pinheiro Chagas's novels are mutual accomplices, not only in inventing strategies to move the action forward, but also in making ironic comments about their masters' behavior who, unaware of certain facts, end up creating hilarious situations of confusion. Let us look at the comments made by Inês, Beatriz's maid, at two paradigmatic moments of confusion and ignorance on the part of those involved. When Francisco de Mendonça, who is in love with Beatriz, overhears a conversation between the latter and Estêvão, her suitor, he once again begins to distrust the moral integrity of his beloved. Inês's aside is, on one hand, a criticism of male jealousy, but, on the other hand, it is also there to clarify any possible doubt on the part of the reader: "– Oh yes! Yes! Poor, Beatriz! It's always the same story. Only yesterday we had the case of the mantilla and today it's going to be the same non-

sense! Oh, Dear God in Heaven! Why didn't you give men more brains?" (*A mantilha de Beatriz* 78, trans. mine). The same process is used when D. Álvaro innocently closes the doors of the house so that no strangers can come in and, without realizing what he is doing, pushes his daughter's lover into her room. Inês says: "— That's what you could call taking timely precautions! D. Álvaro doesn't want her to receive male visitors in the drawing room and so he locks them up in her bedchamber" (*A mantilha de Beatriz* 87, trans. mine).

Humor caused by mix-ups is a constant feature of the works we have been looking at. In the two comedies by Calderón, which function as hypertexts of the novels, there is a series of misunderstandings and cases where appearance is taken for reality, which contribute to developing the action and to making the audience laugh, because the implicit often becomes a crucial part, not only for the development of the plot, but also in the creation of humor.<sup>13</sup> Indeed, it is precisely what is implicit that becomes crucial at the moment when the misunderstanding is resolved, suddenly revealing its hidden components or at the same time alluding to true and figurative (ironic) meaning. In *Peor está que estaba*, Calderón develops the plot through repetition of the title every time something happens to make the previous situation worse. At the end of the play, the manservant, Camacho, makes ironic reference to the expression, giving it double meaning: if, on one hand, marriage is the happy ending in works of fiction, on the other hand, such as for example in *A Marquesa das Índias*, the couples formed are not the most desirable, although they are the most convenient. Let us look at Camacho's words: "— El "Peor está que estaba", / nunca ha encajado más bien / que ahora que están casados" (346).<sup>14</sup> Subtlety of speech is one of the ingredients of humor, since it reveals as it conceals, making known to the reader things that the characters involved cannot comprehend because of lack of information.

The result of this is that various characters believe they are acting and speaking freely, when they are no more than puppets in the hands of those who truly control the development of the plot.<sup>15</sup> D. Álvaro, the father of Beatriz, D. Estêvão, brother of Clara, and even their respective suitors, Francisco de Mendonça and Luís de Meneses, are unwittingly involved in misunderstandings caused by the ladies or by the servants, determined to serve the amorous interests of their masters rather than those of paternal or fraternal authority. The same occurs in *A Marquesa das Índias*, when Jorge Cabral and João Santiago are deceived by the deliberate fabrications of Catarina, who plays a game of ambiguity with the two men, her unattractive



betrothed and the attractive stranger, who is obviously promised to Dolores, the adventuress, from whose nickname comes the title of the novel. Indeed, the intrigues are caused by successive schemes, which, by hiding the truth, complicate matters instead of simplifying them, as there is a tendency for [mis]identification of opposing characters, giving different meanings to the same scene.<sup>16</sup> In *A mantilha de Beatriz*, the problem caused by the wearing of the mantilla in the first few pages of the novel (Francisco gives the mantilla to Beatriz, who, in order to be able to wear it, asks her neighbor Clara to put it on and pretend to offer it to her, so that she can wear it without any problems from her father), gives rise to a number of misunderstandings which are crucial to the structure of the diegesis, which is similar to what happened in *Antes que todo es mi dama*, by Calderón de la Barca. The scene will thus be interpreted in different ways, according to the characters, hiding from some that which is revealed to others, obliging them to successively reinterpret the clues that are provided.<sup>17</sup> In fact, we could almost say that no character is always in total possession of all the facts, so that the comic effects have a number of origins and a number of outcomes. Often, the explanations are not completely truthful and therefore only the reader and one or more minor characters (usually the servants) can guess their implications, as they have an understanding of the reality beneath the appearances.<sup>18</sup> This is what happens in *A mantilha de Beatriz*, with the change of owners of the mantilla and the temporary change of identity of Luís de Meneses, who says he is Francisco de Mendonça, in the belief that he is defending his friend, causing the confusion which will endanger his relationship and that of the person he so much wanted to protect. In *A Marquesa das Índias* the difficulty in knowing true identities, made worse by the frequent use of the mask, leads to a situation in which the main characters are never who they seem to be, creating comic effects and leading to ambiguity, unusual, absurd, and ridiculous situations through repetition and an accumulative effect which is emphasized in the repetition of Calderón's phrase "from bad to worse."

This ambiguity is clearly present in dialogues, whose real meanings have to be looked for in what is implicit and often left unspoken, but nonetheless present, and crucial for the triggering of comic incongruence.<sup>19</sup> Let us look at the following dialogue between Beatriz and Inês, the maid, the former complaining that Luís de Meneses had taken on the identity of her beloved.

– Taking the name of Francisco de Mendonça!

- He didn't take it. His father gave it to him!
- To want to wed me!
- He is not the one who wants it. It is his father who is obliging him.
- Agreeing to stay under the same roof!...
- His father has closed the doors, and I wouldn't put it past him to bolt the windows to stop him escaping. (*A mantilha de Beatriz* 104, trans. mine).

A dialogue between D. Álvaro and Francisco de Mendonça (who the former calls Luís de Meneses, for the above-mentioned reasons) appeals to what Isabel Ermida calls irregularities of logic, which border on the absurd:<sup>20</sup>

- [...] Did you know I found this man hiding in my daughter's room, and that he swore he only wanted her as his wife and that his dearest wish would have come true if yesterday these two souls, who adore each other, could have been joined in Holy Matrimony? Did you know that moments after having sworn all this he fled like a thief in the night, without paying his debt of honor? Did you know all this, Sr. Luís de Meneses?
- I know, replied Francisco de Mendonça, sadly, that my friend is guilty of imprudence. (*A mantilha de Beatriz* 112, trans. mine)

Similar exchanges can be found throughout the novel, producing comedy and leading to some instability in characters who are normally able to push the narrative forward. The following tirade by Gonçalo, Francisco de Mendonça's manservant, demonstrates this disconcertment: "– But what on earth is all this muddle?, grumbled Gonçalo from the other end of the room. Who exchanged my master? Has he gone deaf now and is he no longer Francisco de Mendonça? I have to get this sorted out because I need to know who is going to be paying my salary" (*A mantilha de Beatriz* 56, trans. mine).

In *A Marquesa das Índias*, the use of the mask favors the exchange of identities and the resulting misunderstandings. Not even Catarina, the main character, has all the information, and ends up, through no fault of her own, being deceived, which leads to a conclusion not entirely to her liking. She really believes she is betrothed to João Santiago, which is not so:

- Oh! exclaimed Catarina, how good you are! It is a cause of great joy to me to know that this [marriage] will not be the cause of pain or worry to my father.
- It is just as well that everything is being resolved!, exclaimed Jorge, smiling. But,

brave mediator, do not fail to give the good news to the person it mainly concerns.

Catarina stared at him in amazement.

– Who are you referring to? she asked.

– The *marqueza*, of course!

– The *marqueza* is the one whom it concerns!, replied Catarina, completely confused by this new complication.

– Well, who have we been talking about, little foolish one?

– We have been talking about the *marqueza*? enquired Catarina, in amazement.

– Oh! I understand... naturally you didn't know that the nickname of the lady I sent home accompanied by the mayor is the *marqueza*.

– The *marqueza*! exclaimed Catarina. But who gave me that nickname?

– To you? retorted Jorge, in surprise;

(*A Marquesa das Índias* 121-22, trans. mine)

The comic effect is increased by the rapid succession of misleading events which culminates in the dénouement, when all the misunderstandings are cleared up and equilibrium is restored.

*A mantilha de Beatriz* and *A Marquesa das Índias* differ from the other works by Pinheiro Chagas, as they neither emphasize historic reconstruction, which is just a backdrop, nor do they undertake a serious study of movements or influences. These two novels take up the stories of two comedies by Calderón, *Antes que todo es mi dama* and *Peor está que estaba*, setting the action in Calderón's time (though *A Marquesa das Índias* is set in 1533 and Calderón's play in 1640), claiming that the Spaniard was inspired by the stories of people in the novels. This inversion of hypertext and hypotext gives Pinheiro Chagas the modern trait of subverting someone else's discourse, denying its originality on the surface, but reiterating his debt to it in the deeper structure.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> The correct title of Calderon's play is *Peor está que estaba*.

<sup>2</sup> The correct title of this play is *No son todos ruiseñores*.

<sup>3</sup> The Portuguese song to which the author alludes functions as a sort of deep structure of the plot and goes as follows: "The dawn star appears / morning is coming: / remember, my love / do not sleep, my dear. / Oh, oh, oh! / Already your neighbours / are all rising, / and the little birds / on the branches are singing; / I am troubled by worries, / and by fears: / remember, my love / do not sleep, my dear / Oh, oh, oh!" (Lope de Vega, *No son todos ruiseñores*... 149, trans. mine).

<sup>4</sup> According to Gérard Genette: "For to imitate a particular text in its particularity first

means that one should establish that text's idiolect—i.e., identify its specific stylistic and thematic features—and then *generalize* them: that is, constitute them as a matrix of imitation, or a network of mimetisms, which can serve indefinitely. [...] It can be imitated only indirectly, by using its idiolect to write another text; that idiolect cannot itself be identified except in treating the text as a model—that is, as a genre" (83-84).

<sup>5</sup> As Philippe Hamon states in *L'ironie littéraire*: "Irony is a selective and partial communion which is done behind someone's back, a type of test that the person using the irony does on his spectators or readers to check their ideological competence [...] communicating with the other part of the audience who have become accomplices" (125, trans. mine). In the same study he previously argues that: "This mimesis of the discourse of others may go as far as extreme insolence, which literally consists of using this discourse as an echo." [...] "It could even be hypothesized that all ironic texts are the 'mention' or echo of a previous text" (23; 25, trans. mine).

<sup>6</sup> As Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca writes: "We had noted the importance of naïveté and of blindness, crucial to comedy" (407). See also Celestino F. de la Veja who states that "Subjective comicality demands, therefore, a comic character, a naive provoker [...]. The same answers are so equivocal, they are endowed with such double meanings and contradiction that they don't leave you any choice - you remain completely perplexed" (61); and Bergson who writes: "Any group of acts or events which, interweaved with each other, give us the illusion of life and the clear feeling of a mechanical arrangement can be considered comic [...]" (60, trans. mine).

<sup>7</sup> As Denise Jardon writes "One of its essential characteristics is as a debunker; comedy is irrelevant not only about life and death, God, any institutions at all, but also towards man, and his many vanities and stupidities" (25, trans. mine). See also Bergson "Let us now note how a symptom not less worthy of notice, insensitivity, normally accompanies laughter" (11, trans. mine).

<sup>8</sup> See Isabel Ermida, *Humor, linguagem e narrativa—Para uma análise do discurso literário cômico* 39-56.

<sup>9</sup> "[...] humor is seen as an interactive phenomenon, based on a relationship of inequality between two or more characters, where the *perception* of that inequality is the reason for the amusement of the character who considers him/herself to be superior" (Ermida 40, trans. mine).

<sup>10</sup> "Finding in humor a way of escaping inhibitions and repressions imposed on the individual by society is a theory which has gained great acceptance since the end of the nineteenth century" (Ermida 47, trans. mine).

<sup>11</sup> "The idea that humor comes from the combination of different things, and that it depends on the element of surprise which arises from that, is one which has gained great popularity nowadays" (Ermida 50, trans. mine).

<sup>12</sup> "Because it is created from a specific situation and also because of the spontaneity which characterizes it, situational humor is difficult to reuse" (Ermida 190, trans. mine).

<sup>13</sup> Hamon writes: "Many effects of irony play on the reconstruction of what is implicit (the *sous entendu*) which is never the complete opposite of what is explicit" (21-22, trans. mine).

<sup>14</sup> "'From bad to worse,' / never was as true / as it is now that they are married" (trans. mine). The original is important here as the phrase draws from the title of Calderón's play *Peor está que estaba*.

<sup>15</sup> As Bergson states: "There are many comic scenes in which a character believes he/she is speaking/acting freely, consequently conserving what is a basic quality of life, but who, seen in another way, is a mere toy in the hands of another character who amuses him/herself at their cost" (66-67, trans. mine).

<sup>16</sup> See Isabel Ermida "Contrast and heterogeneity alone are not enough; there must be a conjugating relationship which will bring together all the different elements under the aegis of similarity. In other words, the comic comes from the union of opposites" (53, trans. mine).

<sup>17</sup> As Bergson writes: "A situation is always comic when it belongs at the same time to two completely independent sets of events and when it is possible to interpret it in two completely different ways" (80, trans. mine). See also Ermida "[...] the negotiation of humorous meaning does not happen in the same way [for all concerned]: it is the duty of the transmitter, the one who understands the *secret* of the text, to hide it, not sharing the elements which are necessary for deciphering it; the receiver's duty is to 'foresee,' to 'make mistakes,' and to 'restart' the process until the enigma is solved" (206, trans. mine).

<sup>18</sup> See Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca: "We have noted that most theories of comedy assume that it is created when phrase A is mistaken for phrase B, in other words when appearance is taken for reality" (402, trans. mine).

<sup>19</sup> See Margarida Amélia de Sá Vieira Mouta: "By hiding or showing the signified, the signifier no longer establishes a univocal relationship and the message becomes ambiguous" (46). "These acts mobilize strategies which highlight certain potentials of the language, that humor makes haste to explore, appealing to an underlying knowledge, a shared universe, which is not necessarily verbalized but that intervenes in the act of language, in a profoundly active way" (98). See also Ermida: "But the reasons why humor *doesn't state*, rather than *stating*, are not, in fact, gratuitous: the apparently deceitful characteristic of humorous discourse hides fundamental goals, vital for the success of the communicative interaction. [...] in general, humor uses what has not been said as an essential means to increase the comic incongruence, that is, an indispensable strategy for its own survival as humor" (208, trans. mine).

<sup>20</sup> "The intrinsically incongruous character of humor, manifested in the momentary fusion of two incompatible matrixes, gives it a very personal logic—a pseudo-logic, supported by a paradoxical base, which inverts the usual expectations and installs a constant element of surprise" (97, trans. mine). Ermida also states: "In fact, *nonsense* is an unresolved and irresolvable incongruence, precisely because it lacks meaning, and it depends on that lack" (101, trans. mine).

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