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In Search of the *Auto de Amores*: Exploring the Possibility of a Representation on Stage

A Poetics of Subjectivity

In a suggestive essay entitled “*Cancionero* Poetry and the *Celestina*: From Metaphor to Reality,” Theodore L. Kassier explains how various aspects of the lyric poetry collected in numerous *cancioneros* throughout the Spanish realm in the course of the fifteenth century become integrated into the fabric of the famed *Tragicomedia de Calisto y Melibea*, better known as *Celestina*. Adopting the method followed in studies by Stephen Gilman and Carmelo SamonB, Kassier profiles a poetics of assimilation in terms of the manner in which Fernando de Rojas, presumed author of *Celestina*, transforms the conventional topics of *cancionero* lyricism. Following is Kassier’s description of Rojas’s technique, a momentous literary phenomenon, which Kassier calls “literalization:”

The nature and extent of the relationship between the work’s [*Celestina*’s] plot and the conventions of troubadour poetry are suggested by the process employed with the conventional hawk, garden, walls, and ladders. In all of these cases, Rojas takes the conventional metaphors of that poetic tradition, some extended to their poetical use into allegory, and envisions them literally, making them real components of the work’s action. While the hawk, garden, ladders and walls are to begin with concrete representations of abstract notions, and therefore easily used “literally” in the *Celestina*, the process of literal envisioning is applicable also to the more abstract “sacro-profane hyperbole.” (19)

Thus, Kassier takes up a number of topics – the ones mentioned in the passage, and a few others, such as Fortune and witchcraft added later – and shows the radical shift that Rojas brings about from the realm of fiction and allegory to that of the workaday world.¹

Kassier’s cogent argument has inspired me to explore the dimension of a “literalization” analogous to the one discussed in the aforementioned article. From my perspective, the shift from the literary to the literal is envisioned in a kind of text that becomes an emblem of subjectivity as well as an existential icon of the lover’s experience. My purpose is to illustrate the distinctive characteristic of that text through the landmark evolution brought about in the poetics of solitude and subjectivity by none other than AusiBs March, the stellar poet who flourished in Valencia in the first half of the fifteenth century.

In the light of abundant evidence adduced by a burgeoning bibliography, AusiBs March, even though far from enjoying the wide recognition an author of his caliber doubtless deserves, is emerging as a central figure, towering, at the dawn of the Renaissance, over the vast panorama of peninsular literature of both the Catalan and Castilian domains.² Worthy of note is the following

incisive observation, proffered by Robert Archer, one of the leading authorities on AusiBs March, concerning the mismatch of merit and renown in the poet's case:

It is . . . tempting to speculate that had March written in Spanish instead of in a language which was soon to lose its political currency, he would be now undoubtedly more widely recognised as the finest lyric poet in the Iberian Peninsula before the sixteenth century, and as one of the greatest in the fifteenth century Europe as a whole. (*The Pervasive Image: The Role of Analogy in the Poetry of AusiBs March*, ix)

Besides Archer, a number of prominent critics, Lola Badia, Costanzo Di Girolamo, Josep Miquel Sobrer, Marie-Claire Zimmermann, among others – let's call them representative *ausiasmarquistes* – come to grips, sooner or later, with a key quality that Harold Bloom, in one of his recent public lectures, underscores precisely in March's poetics. Bloom refers with great admiration to March's "fierce personalism." It is fair to say that these distinguished students of AusiBs March approach such "fierce personalism" with sundry nomenclature and from different angles. Sobrer and Zimmermann rely on the intuitive method and, as the title of their studies indicate, delve into, respectively, the sense of isolation and egocentrism experienced by the poet's persona. Archer and Di Girolamo take an analytical route and deal with issues of language and rhetoric. Within the group Badia is the chief exponent of the historical perspective, which conditions her shrewd investigation of the literary tradition coming to a head in and emanating from the great bard from Valencia.

In my own studies on March I envisage a metaphysical analysis of the type that leads to the discovery of what may be called "lyrical syncretism" or "syncretic lyricism."³ The labels designate the uncanny articulation of two concomitant textual operations: one directed to a personal or lyrical focus, the other oriented toward a cosmic, epic scope (Cocozzella, "AusiBs March's 'Encyclopaedic Form: Toward a Poetic of Syncretism.;" "AusiBs March's *Imitatio Christi*: The Metaphysics of the Lover's Passion"). Also, the metaphysical approach allows a direct connection with some salient (four in all) facets of AusiBs March's aesthetic, which here we can only list and summarily describe: 1) the refurbishment of language; 2) the development of a special mimetic function of the poetic expression; 3) the fashioning of crucial rhetorical devices, inherent in a type of lyricism that turns out to be an existential correlative of experience or life itself; 4) the implications of this lyricism especially in terms of the preter-rational phenomenology of conversion.

Although, as I have indicated, an extensive commentary would be out of the question on this occasion, a few observations are in order concerning these fundamental characteristics of March's revolutionary *ars poetica*. We may notice, to begin with, that March's semantic renewal, to which Di Girolamo devotes an enlightening, seminal essay, constitutes a close analogue for the poetics of literalization discussed by Kassier. Di Girolamo describes March's use of language in the following terms:

any word used by A. March is precise and has few possible secondary meanings or overtones: this explains why terms, avoided by his predecessors, are present in his vocabulary. And this is one of the most important aspects of his language: it is semantically concrete, in contrast with the semantic hypertrophy of the troubadours; one might almost speak of "verbal realism," and this is the only sense in which "realism" can be used with reference to A. March. In contrast to his contemporaries or predecessors, he has attempted a reduction of the poetic word, bringing to it a less elevated level, and rendering its interpretation possible without

the help of any medieval semantic or stylistic filters. (236)

As for the mimetic function listed above, we may rely on Archer's explication focussed on the rhetoric of what Archer calls the here and now ("l'ara i aquí") (*Aproximació a AusiBs March* 20).⁴ In his *Aproximació a AusiBs March*, Archer takes up such characteristics as the saltatory rendition of the monologue ("monòleg caracteritzat per diversos salts des d'un punt de vista a l'altre") (17), the rejection of the discursive format of the moralistic treatise ("la forma discursiva del tractat moral") (17), the dramatic rather than logical underpinning of the poetic structure ("un moviment anímic en comptes d'una estructura intel·lectual," or "la forma . . . essencialment dramàtica") (20), the immediate representation ("simulació en l'actualitat") of mental states ("estats mentals") (22). Archer brings to light, also, an occasional "resultat de la decisió de March de rebutjar el compromís didàctic" (47). In other words, in poems like "El cant espiritual," the strained coherence of March's philosophical and theological disquisitions imply a less than wholehearted commitment to an intention or desire to explicate a doctrinal proposition. Archer makes no bones about the appearance of deflected expectations in some of March's signal compositions. This is especially true of *Cants* XXVI, XXXI, XXXII, in which, as Archer states, "[l]es nostres expectatives d'una unitat semàntica final a primera vista semblen ser decebudes . . ." (89). Apropos of *Cant* XXXIX Archer goes as far as to envisage an annihilation of meaning: "la tornada anul·la el sentit d'integritat retòrica" (92)

Elsewhere, I have come upon a counterpoint of sorts for the dynamics of instability that Archer points out in March's discourse. At issue is the end product of literary creativity that calls to mind Ortega y Gasset's famed principles and Unamuno's esthetic concerns.⁵ The following excerpt from my own study provides the essential illustration for the concepts that I introduce here:

Borrowing Ortega y Gasset's famed terminology, we may observe that the quest for truth moves AusiBs March to come to grips with the complex existential interplay between his *yo* and his protean *circunstancia*. Out of March's coming to terms with his reality, blossoms his insight into a *mimesis* of the dynamics of the lover's psyche, in particular, and, in general, of life itself. A natural outgrowth of March's *mimesis* is a model of structure stemming not from a preestablished mold but, rather, from the evolution – the *creación vivípara*, Unamuno would say – of an organic whole, always in flux as it mirrors in kaleidoscopic display, the various aspects of the lover's existence. Structure for AusiBs March is removed as far as possible from the static or, for that matter, from the ecstatic. Far from responding to a prearranged plan, it impresses the reader with the apprehension of the immediate, even as it conveys the poet's dramatic involvement with the minute-to-minute unfolding of human experience. In the final analysis, such a structure strikes us as an intriguing forerunner – a fifteenth-century analogue of sorts – of the modern device of the stream of consciousness or of Unamuno's notion of the *creación a lo que salga*. ("AusiBs March and the 'Truth' of the Troubadours" 116)

Closely related to the *mimesis* profiled here, there follows, third in the list specified above, the characteristic of a "life-text," to coin a term. The label refers to the ultimate manifestation of "literalization:" the full-fledged interface between the literary mode and the immediate representation of lived experience through common everyday language. What is at play here is, particularly, the highest degree of intercommunication between the allegorical realm and the ordinary world. Arguably, this interface or intercommunication is brought into effect by

the existential bond illustrated by the synergy between *hyle* and *morphe*, the two principles of the Aristotelian-Scholastic system, appropriately called *hylemorphism*. One extraordinary passage – namely, the extended simile that comprises vv. 9-24 of *Cant V*, one of March’s earliest poems – may be taken as an illustration of how the transcendent, idealized lover perfects the *vivencia* of the poet’s persona in much the same fashion as *morphe* actualizes the potential inherent in *hyle* and thereby brings *hyle* into full existence (Cocozzella, “AusiBs March’s *Imitatio Christi*: The Metaphysics of the Lover’s Passion” 428-9). Evidently, AusiBs March envisages the process of literalization in terms of the symbiosis that, in the aforementioned study, I perceive “between the transcendental ideal of the troubadouresque ‘saint of love’ and its immanent counterpart, the flesh-and-blood individual, who strives to transform suffering into an instrument of perfectibility” (“AusiBs March’s *Imitatio Christi*: The Metaphysics of the Lover’s Passion” 428). From this follows that, as I point out in my study already mentioned,

March shares with such popular authors as the novelists Juan de Flores and Juan Rodríguez del Padrón the orchestration of two motifs, which Antonio Prieto, apropos of Juan Rodríguez’s masterpiece, *Siervo libre de amor*, calls the “caso normativo,” eminently exemplified in the heroic protagonist (the canonized Ardanlier), and the “caso concreto,” embodied by *el amador* Juan Rodríguez himself (Prieto 36-7). Beyond these fundamental affinities with the *cancionero* poets and kindred authors, AusiBs March, in the final analysis, lays bare the metaphysics of a complementary interaction, perceivable at the very core of the lover’s existence. The interaction may be postulated as follows: the *caso normativo* (the ideal lover) is to the *caso concreto* (the specific authorial persona) as, in the hylemorphic system, *forma* is to *materia*. (“AusiBs March’s *Imitatio Christi*: The Metaphysics of the Lover’s Passion” 429).

We will bear in mind that *forma* and *materia* are the Scholastic terms corresponding to the Aristotelian *morphe* and *hyle*.

The hylemorphic structuralism evinced in *Cant V* involves the process of conversion, which we have listed as the fourth characteristic of AusiBs March’s esthetic. In *Cant V* conversion is presented in the radical sense in which the term becomes associated with a key motif introduced by March himself: the motif of the “volum / d’aquell saber que sens amor no dura” (vv. 19-20). William R. Cook, Ronald B. Herzman, and John Freccero dwell upon the all-important role of the “book” as initially manifested in the topic of the conversion in Augustine’s *Confessions* and eventually parodied in the episode of Francesca and Paolo in Dante’s *Inferno* (5.73-142) (Cook and Herzman 97-8). March, as one may expect, evolves his own ingenious notion of the book or “volum” and, thus, evokes the wide context of the Christological analogy. March, in other words, conceives conversion as *imitatio Christi* on two fronts: on the one hand, he presents the earthly lover – the traditional *mártir de amor* portrayed in the *canciones* and kindred compositions – in communion with the suffering Christ; on the other hand, the Valencian poet intuits in the life-text a reflection of the primordial “Word” as announced in the prologue of St. John’s Gospel (“AusiBs March’s *Imitatio Christi*: The Metaphysics of the Lover’s Passion” 432).

The Heirs of AusiBs March

The present discussion shows clearly enough that to highlight the salient attributes of March’s ingenious creativity is to confirm the poet’s central role as the outstanding figure portrayed in Archer’s statement quoted above. There is considerable evidence that attests to the

centrality of March's position, manifested especially in the powerful sway of his influence upon the likes of Garcilaso de la Vega, Gutierre de Cetina, Lope de Vega, Francisco de Quevedo, among others – in short the luminaries of the Spanish Renaissance and *siglo de oro* (McNerney, especially 114-9; Riquer, *Història de la literatura catalana* 2: 558-68; Cocozzella, “Salient Trends in Ausiàs March Criticism: Toward a Holistic Approach” 29-32).⁶ It is fair to say that one area of March's influence that calls for more attention than it has received pertains to the bequeathal of March's text of subjectivity to a group of writers close to home – those that flourished in Barcelona and Valencia in the second half of the fifteenth century. The group includes a number of Catalans, such as Francesc Alegre (*Somni de Francesc Alegre recitant lo procés d'una qüestió enamorada*), Pere Joan Ferrer (*Pensament fet per Mossèn Pere Joan Ferrer*), Romeu Llull (*Lo despropriament d'amor*), Francesc Moner (*La noche*), Bernat Hug de Rocabertí (*La glòria d'amor*), Pere Torroella (*Tant mon voler*). There are, also, notable Valencians, such as Francesc Carrós Pardo de la Casta (*Regoneixença i moral consideració contra les persuasions, vicis i forces d'amor*), El Comendador Escrivá (*Querella ante el Dios de Amor*), and Joan Roís de Corella (*Tragèdia de Caldesa*). Martí de Riquer's *Història de la literatura catalana* provides the indispensable data for a general orientation on the careers of these authors. From Riquer we learn that they are March's younger contemporaries, who came of age in the course of the first two decades immediately after the poet's death.⁷ The foregoing list may be expanded to include the name of Lluís de Vilarrasa, himself, in all probability, a Valencian, coetaneous or slightly older than March (Riquer, *Història de la literatura catalana* 3: 43-8). This does not impede his being one of March's most accomplished followers. Apropos of Vilarrasa's eight extant poems Riquer observes that “constitueixen potser la manifestació més antiga, i amb tota seguretat la més reeixida, d'imitació o influència d'Ausiàs March” (*Història de la literatura catalana* 3: 43). Worthy of mention is, also, Francesc Ferrer, author of *Lo conhort*, whom Riquer finds difficult to identify (*Història de la literatura catalana* 35-43).⁸

The trailblazing research and publications of scholars such as Pedro Manuel Cátedra, Antonio Cortijo Ocaza, and Roxana Recio reveal that a study of the literary output of these authors, some of whom mastered with great skill and expertise both Catalan and Castilian, proves to be highly rewarding particularly because the broad intertextual orientation of these authors allows them an impressive breadth of vision and depth of insight. Evidently, they learned from Ausiàs March with great success the lesson of “syncretic lyricism.” There can be little doubt that, among these accomplished masters of the intertext, special recognition must be accorded to Fra Francesc Moner for his distinguished emulation of March's esthetic of solitude and subjectivity.

At this point it is appropriate to intercalate a sketch of Moner's biography. A Catalan to the marrow of his bones, Fra Francesc Moner was born in Perpignan in late 1462 or early 1463.⁹ In all probability he received the baptismal name of Pere, the same as his father's. His short, eventful life is reflected in the career of a gifted writer, who became engaged in a variety of services at the royal court, in the palaces of the aristocracy, and in the armed forces both on land and at sea until he decided to take the monastic vows. At a very young age he served as a page at the court of John II of Aragon, father of Ferdinand, better known as Fernando el Católico, husband of Isabel of Castile. While still a teenager, Moner spent some two years in France in the entourage of an unidentified nobleman of that country. In his early twenties, Moner, who had enlisted in the military around 1481, participated in the war against Granada. In 1485 or thereabouts, he entered a period of intense literary activity as he took up residence in Barcelona in the household of his Maecenas, Joan Ramon Folch, Duke of Cardona. Moner's career

flourished despite a rather problematic relationship with a woman, who proved to be the obsession of his life. The crisis, psychological and otherwise, precipitated by this unfortunate affair, led the author to join the religious community of the *Observancia*, the most rigorous branch of the Franciscan order. The period Moner spent in the monastery first in Lleida and later in Barcelona lasted no more than one year – the last of his life. As for the detail of Moner’s untimely death at the age of twenty-nine, it is useful to quote directly from the invaluable account provided by a Miquel Berenguer de Barutell, who identifies himself as the author’s “primo hermano que fue mío.” Here is Barutell’s pertinent statement:

Murió [Moner] en esta casa de Barçelona de la misma orden, a do vino por serle más natural, y parece que no sin misterio, porque al cabo del aZo o poco más, el día mismo que le hizieron professo. . . . (231)

An aura of suspicion envelops the bare-bone facts. Evidently Moner’s death occurred the very day he took his final vows. One may ponder the ominous implications of that most laconic of remarks: “y parece que no sin misterio.” Did Moner commit suicide?

Harking back to Moner’s distinctive achievement, we may assert that our Fra Francesc, while following in AusiBs March’s footsteps, developed his own mimetic technique and concomitant rhetoric, emblematic of what he calls “letras matizadas del sentido.” This striking phrase, which occurs in the exordium of a long poem, written in Castilian under the title of *Sepultura d’amor*, refers to a literary text (“letras”), the special nature of which is determined by two factors: first, the nuances (that is, the multiplicity and variability of tones), inherent in the operation of *matizar*; second, the ambiguousness of the term *sentido*, which encompasses a wide field of signification ranging from the notion of *sense* to that of *sentiment*. This means that Moner strives for a poetic composition, in which intellectual and emotive components coexist in a delicate balance and in a mutual complementarity that, to put it in metaphorical terms, calls to mind the synergy operating in a chemical reaction.¹⁰

Moner strives for a poetic expression that may well turn out to be a fair match for AusiBs March’s rhetoric of the here and now. The esthetic principle operative in “letras matizadas del sentido” covers a lot of ground: it informs practically Moner’s entire *oeuvre*. More often than not it may manifest itself in the compulsion toward the rhetoric of reasoning through methodic exposition in counterbalance with the animus of the debate. Witness the following passage in which the speaker (Moner’s persona) counters *Amor*’s reproaches by commingling the resentment for the mistreatment he claims he has received from *Amor* and the *amada* with the effort to marshal a point-by-point rebuttal (*primero . . . después . . .*):

– Bien pensé que tus palabras me daZarían, como es cierto me daZan en sólo dar razón al enemigo de Razón. Pero plázeme responderte porque conoscias que más te conosco. Tu dexiste primero que acuse a quien he bien querido y que tú no tienes culpa. Después has quesido emprender escusar a tu y a ella, diziendo de ti que me has haprovechado y hecha honrra, y d’ella que me ha sido de más bien que de mal causa. A tu quiero acusar y d’ella quexarme. (*La noche*, ll. 255-64; *TMPW* 103-4)

This is but a small sample of a diatribe that continues in much the same vein – reasoned argumentation charged with emotional impetus – for quite a few paragraphs (*La noche*, ll.265-331; *TMPW* 104-8). This blend of reason and emotion is documented, also, in most of Moner’s short prose compositions, written some in Catalan (the two *glosas*) and some in Castilian (the ten *Cartes a l’amada*, the *glosa* known as *Retrets a l’amada*, and the *Comiat*).

Styled as a worthy token of Moner’s emotive ratiocination, *Carta IV* provides, from

among Moner's short compositions in prose, a suitable base for analysis especially in comparison with kindred pieces by other authors. A quotation here in full of the *carta* will make the text conveniently available for precise references. The amatory epistle reads as follows:

La vista de vostra merçII, esta nit me desermB l'entendre, perquII la voluntat posB tota ma pobre cosa en rebolta.

Aprés, nunca he cessat pensar en com és veritat qu'és major repßs amar que ésser amat. Y en asß no sols m'aporta la querella ser justa, mas també perquII vull defendre l'estat en quII tota ma vida 'm só criat. Moltes rahons me són parcials, mas en una sola me assole, y és aquesta: ningú ama sens delit, ni ningú se delita sens amor. Lo que no ama y és amat, ninguna cosa pot posehir que molt stim, perquII, no amant, no's delita. Lo que ama y no és amat, amant se delita; y per bé que no posehesca lo voler de qui ama, posehex la conexensa que l'obliga, ab la qual aleuge sos mals. Y lo que no ama y és amat, la conexensa que té de qui no ama no li fa ningú bé; y lo cor gentil, per bé que no sia amat, se delita més en contemplar les perfeccions de qui ama, que no fa en pensar les de si mateix la hora que creu que per elles és amat.

Y per yo millor entendre-u, dó a mi mateix per exemple, que fa jura a vostra merçII tres anys m'B durat. Que si tot lo món me volgués bé, y[o] a sa requesta no m'i girara, sols per no destorbar-me de amar una que nunca 'm volgué ni may me féu merçIIs.

Y en son servey é sentit infern y, també, paraýs terrenal; y vuy en lo de vostra merçII só estat en purgatori, y gloriós fins al tretzIIIn cel, que faria fi. (*Oc* 102-3)

Clearly, the subjective tone of of this wholehearted confession, rife with compulsive explanation (“moltes rahons me són parcials . . .”) and cathartic complaints (“m'aporta la querella ser justa”). Here we are regaled with an unusual if not unique version in prose of the most impressive traits of AusiBs March's *cants* – especially, as we have had occasion to point out, the kaleidoscopic exhibition of egocentrism, explored by Sobrer and Zimmermann, and the protean rhetoric of “l'aquí i ara,” deftly analyzed by Archer. In the first sentence of *Carta IV*, the expression “me desermB l'entendre,” an epitome of the entire letter, may be perceived as an echo of “e ja en mi altlerat és l'arbitre” (v. 104 of March's *Cant CV*). As an emblematic embodiment of Moner's text of interiority, *Carta IV* presupposes an introspective penchant and a thrust toward an immediate witnessing of experience – an empirical moment-to-moment self-analysis, which in Moner's as well as in March's outlook, leads to apprehend the impact of authenticity.

With all due allowances for the necessary conditions of a rigorous and cautious *mutatis mutandis*, it would not be far-fetched to discern a basis for an essential parallelism between the engrossing sophistry of Moner's *Carta IV* and the self-centered ratiocination of Hamlet's famous “to be or not to be” soliloquy. In both texts a contorted diction concretizes a conflicted state of mind. Both texts reflect a nightmarish mood that foreshadows, in turn, a tragic mode. The analogy with the most exemplary of Shakespearean passages is adduced here in an effort to underscore the dramatic impact and theatrical potential – in short, the exemplary qualities of Moner's textuality. A further probing into these qualities within and beyond the boundaries of the monologue reveals in Moner's language, especially in the context of a dialogic modality, some close affinities with AusiBs March's quintessential rhetoric. The aforementioned exordium of *Sepultura d'amor*, for instance, and numerous similar passages throughout Moner's production that lend themselves handily to dramatic recitation show, no less dramatically than do March's lyrics, repeated indications of the revitalization of common everyday speech. Witness the

expressions “y pues la cosa va así” and “sól’os demando este sí” in the introductory verses of *Sepultura d’amor*, and “mas la cosa estB en son lloch” in the first stanza of *Bendir de dones*, the longest of Moner’s Catalan poems. For yet another telling example we may cite the entire second stanza of the *Bendir*.

Com de vós me fuy partit
disapte, tart com sabeu,
los galls, cantant per delit,
senyalaven mija nit.
Yo passava per la Seu,
de la porta del Palau
fins a la plassa del Rey,
fatigat, pensant al clau
que m’B fet lo cor esclau
de congxa sens remey. (Vv. 11-20)

Here the language of the market place is successfully employed to recount habitual actions (the protagonist’s leave-taking from his ladylove and his nightly stroll), to evoke a familiar setting (the surroundings of the Cathedral in Barcelona), and to bemoan a heartache (a concrete reference to the sharp pangs of a tormented psyche). The point to be made is that, among the heirs of AusiBs March, Moner does March himself one better in adapting revitalized language to the creation of a staging effect.

There is plenty of evidence, also, that toward that very effect, Moner tones down to a considerable extent the indices of intertextuality that his cohorts – the likes of Francesc Alegre, Francesc Carrós, Hug de Rocabertí, Pere Torroella, not to mention Roís de Corella – display exuberantly for their own purpose. Antonio Cortijo OcaZa is well aware of this type of eye-catching exhibition in one of the chief exponents of the intertext. Apropos of Alegre’s *Somni* that scholar cogently observes:

Alegre busca atraer al lector mediante una complicada red de relaciones intertextuales que emparentan su texto con un gran conjunto de géneros literarios. . . . Asimismo, un estilo retórico y complicado, más que oscuro en ocasiones, contribuye a crear la estructura barroca de la composición y crea una complicada organización narrativa que recuerda los *draps* que se mencionan en la visión. . . . (La evolución genérica . . . 185)

In attenuating the high level of complexity underscored by Cortijo OcaZa – the “complicada red de relaciones,” the “estilo retórico y complicado,” the “complicada organización” we have just referred to – Moner, doubtless, follows in AusiBs March’s footsteps just as he does in deviating sharply from that “semantic hypertrophy” that, according to Di Girolamo, AusiBs March finds objectionable in the troubadours (Di Girolamo 236). As we may recall, Di Girolamo argues that March carries out “a reduction of the poetic word, bringing to it a less elevated level” and does away specifically with “any medieval semantic or stylistic filters” (236).

Thus, March’s inspiration motivates in Moner’s *oeuvre* a streamlining of style, which conditions, in turn, the invention of the inner theater of the psyche. Moner’s idea of a theater – his concept of theatricality – stems from his intuition of a stage-worthy psychic space and soulful place. What may be advanced as Moner’s quintessential theatrical performance takes place, characteristically, within the realm of the allegory. A case in point is a prose work, written in Castilian, entitled *La noche*, which happens to be Moner’s longest composition. An efficient approach to *La noche* is through a review of some memorable moments, which deliver at face

value the impact of a representation on the stage. The first passage that begs for attention is of a reflective, mournful nature. It marks the inception of a startling transition from the openness of a familiar landscape – that of the Catalan hinterland – to the depressing interiority of a strange, gloomy castle. Let us hear firsthand the woes of a star-crossed lover if there ever lived one:

Poco tardaron a moverse en mi alma los pensamientos tristes como enxambre en colmena. El corazón rompía de apretado. Yo m'esforçava por no llorar, teniendo malicia que mi dolor como los otros comunes se quexasse, mas no pudo ser que las amargas lágrimas no sobreveniessen por su camino vezado.

Quería la pasión dar voces, pues de justa querella tenía sobra; pero el callar para mí era más encaesser porque dava lugar al pensar y también porque cualquiera razón era falta, por lastimera que fuesse. Es syerto que la palabra, liviana o de peso, me diera alyvio. Mas la pena del enmudesser se vengava de mí mesmo, my mayor enemigo; y esto me hazía querer bien a mi mal.

Pero en pensar dónde todo me viene, todo me dava dolor y más dolor porque me dolía de agena culpa, y no sabía alegrarme de verme escarmentado. Byen que tarde, que ahunque diga el refrán que más vale engaZar, digo que en esto más quiero ser engaZado pues la limpiesa del corazón sea salva. (*La noche*, ll. 39-60; *TMPW 75-6*)

Here the reflections of the protagonist – the author's alter ego – consist of a string of lamentations that emanate from a mind at war with itself. The afflicted lover delves into a disconcerting *psychomachia* that is being waged between, on the one hand, the natural inclination to vent one's passion in weeping spells and, on the other hand, a perverse masochistic compulsion to repress any ostentation, cathartic as it may be, of sorrow. Illustrative of this unwholesome condition are the lover's self-conscious musings, such as the ones revealed in a confessional tone straight from the pit of despondency.

As for the theatrical impact that struck our attention to begin with, the passage conveys the dynamism of a forceful preter-rational strain. This expressionistic verve, quite proper to the *letras matizadas*, involves, to be sure, the exclusion of the "semantic hypertrophy," rejected, as we have seen, by AusiBs March. That same property of the *letras* does not exclude, however – on the contrary, it stresses – the hyper-ratiocination of the conceit, that is the obsessive mulling over the turns and counterturns of the psychological turmoil. From a strictly theatrical perspective, then, the hyper-ratiocination of those *letras* projects itself on the stage as a kind of Brechtian *gestus* of despair and alienation or, again with all due consideration of *mutatis mutandis*, as a sort of Hamletian vacillation of *sic et non*, "to be or not to be."

The most eloquent prima facie evidence of the theatrical constitution or viability of *La noche* resides, without doubt, in the presentation of the allegorical personages. These are paraded by the protagonist, in the function of a first-person narrator, at significant junctures of the plot; and the parade is turned into a visual event – a veritable spectacle in the full sense of the term – thanks to the graphic description of those specific details – the colorful apparel, the gestures, expressions, movements – that have all the makings of a stage direction. For one appropriate example of these impressive apparitions, we may turn our attention to the protagonist's encounter with *Costumbre* (Lady Custom), the first denizen of the castle he happens to meet. Here is how the episode is vividly brought to life before our very eyes:

En esto vi que me havía abierto la puerta una donzella moça y hermosa en cabellos rubios y crespos. Trahía vestido un brial de terciopelo verde, broslado alrededor d'unas luzérnigas muy naturales y de letras que dezían:

Quando el sol de la doctrina
falta en los grandes y grey,
yo soy tenida por ley.

No trahía otra cosa encima. Descubría los pechos toda desbrochada. Eran tan lindos qu'era maravilla. Vi que no me hablava sino que se reya. (*La noche*, ll. 132-43; *TMPW* 88-922)

No less evocative of a full-fledged *mise en scene* is, in all its visual appeal, the apparition of *Esperanza* (Lady Hope), eighth personage (after *Costumbre, Amor, Odio, Deseo, Aborrecimiento, Deleite, Tristeza*) to come out, as do all her cohorts from their respective chambers, and greet the distressed lover. The following straightforward quotation will suffice to convey the vivaciousness of Lady Hope's portrait:

Las oras subí más adelante, y luego s'abrió otra puerta a la parte derecha, donde vi sallir otro personaje d'esta manera: una donzella d'un gesto que para ser hermosa no le faltava nada. Venía vestida d'un brial de chamelote de seda blanco, un hábito de terciopelo leonado, y una mantilla, ensima, de paZoz verde muy fino, enforrada en raso del mismo color, toda sembrada d'unos casos de oro, d'estos con que muestran escrevir a los mochachos, y unas letras alrededor que dezían:

De todos, si se m'antoja,
se cumple l'abecedario
sin hallar punto contrario.

Io l'estuve mirando la invención que, por dezir lo cierto a Vuestra SeZoría, no se m'entendía. Quise preguntalle quién hera por entrar en el secreto, mas turbóme lo que allí se hizo. Que vi entre ella e mí poner una mesa de campo, muy ancha, y después hechar una alhombra encima sin que nunca pude ver quién la servía. Yo me maravillava y ella se rehía. Stonçes sacó, no sé de dónde, unas agallas, y puestas ensima la mesa con todo su aparejo, empassó a jugallas muy más sotilmente que nunca vi. Yo esperava que acabasse, mas nunca se dexava. (*La noche*, ll. 596-621; *TMPW* 128-30)

The *Auto de Amores*

In tracing the background of Moner's text we perceive at a glance its affiliation with AusiBs March's artistic enterprise in general and with that poet's subjective orientation in particular. What we notice, also, is Moner's deft assimilation of a variety of factors: those derived from March's esthetic of subjectivity and from other sources. Most importantly, Moner fashions his thoroughly assimilated intertextual compound into a theatrical modality, an eminent specimen of which turns out to be, precisely, Moner's prose work entitled *La noche*. In fact, there is every reason to believe that *La noche* is one of the main exemplars of a little known and practically forgotten theatrical genre, for which some critics have proposed the label of "auto de amores."

For a quick review of the scholarship that has led to the definition and classification of the *auto* in question, it is convenient to quote here the account I myself have provided in a recent publication:

On the basis of the information derived from the text of *Triste deleytación*, a work which Michael Gerli, one of its first editors, classifies as a "sentimental romance" (Gerli viii), Fernando Lázaro Carreter recaptures both the name and the essential characteristics of a genre exemplified by *Querella ante el Dios de Amor*, a

composition by El Comendador Escrivá.¹¹ In a handful of articles published in the wake of Lázaro Carreter's groundbreaking commentary, I myself have argued that the categorization of "auto de amor" may be expanded to include such pieces as Francesc Moner's *La noche*, and Rodrigo Cota's *Diálogo entre el Amor y un viejo*, and, probably, Francesc Carrós Pardo de la Casta's *Regoneixença e moral consideració* (Cocozzella, "Fray Francisco Moner's *Auto de Amores*" and "Fray Francisco Moner's Dramatic Text"). . . . It is appropriate to acknowledge here the contribution of Josep Lluís Sirera, who calls attention to the anonymous *Diálogo del viejo, el Amor y la hermosa*, a full-fledged theatrical composition patterned after Cota's *Diálogo*, and explores the stage-worthy qualities of two poems: Fernán Sánchez Calavera's *desir* ("Ffuy a ver este otro dia" [Dutton 1663]), listed as no. 537 in the *Cancionero de Baena*, and Pedro Cartagena's "Si algun dios de amor auia" (Dutton 0903), collected in the *Cancionero general* ("Diálogo de cancionero y teatralidad"). In effect, Sirera posits the possibility of extending the list of the *auto de amores* by the inclusion of the compositions he discusses. In another pioneering study Sirera conducts a thorough textual analysis of Escrivá's *Querella* and substantiates its classification as an *auto de amores* ("Una quexa ante el Dios de Amor . . . del Comendador Escrivá como ejemplo posible de los autos de amores"). ("The Theatrics of the *Auto de Amores*" 74-5)¹²

A detailed study of Moner's *La noche* would be out of the question here. Suffice it to point out, for the time being, that *La noche* illustrates the essential qualities of the *auto de amores* – namely, the intensity of a compendium, the focus of subjectivity, and the intention of a dramatic-theatrical composition. As a congenital trait, the compendium confers to the *auto* – especially at the stage of evolution in which the genre reaches its full development – the characteristics of an icon of the love-centered literature in vogue in the Catalan and Castilian domains during the late Middle Ages and the early Renaissance. In fact, *La noche*, as the *auto de amores* par excellence, conforms to an esthetic of *multum in parvo* – it captures, that is, within a distinctive compact structure, a semiotic realm that encompasses rational, emotional, and pre-rational modes of expression and representation. The focus we have just mentioned as the second characteristic of the *auto* is an index of the transition from the text of solitude to that of subjectivity – a transition brought about, as we have seen, in the admirable lyricism of AusiBs March and, subsequently, in multifarious compositions by Catalan and Valencian authors of March's school during the second half of the fifteenth century. Evidently, among these authors Moner deserves special credit for creating and developing the third characteristic mentioned above – that of dramatic dynamism (*vis dramatica*) and theatricality. In short, it may be argued that in *La noche* Moner puts on stage the *ars poetica* of "letras matizadas del sentido" ('written text nuanced with sense and sentiment') -- *écriture*, that is, as signifier imbued with intellectual and emotive communicability. By the same token we may add that the *auto de amores* enacted in *La noche* presents a theatrical version of the esthetic that emanates, ultimately, from AusiBs March's ingenious elaboration of the intertext.

An Illustration as Evidence

In support of the presentation of Moner's *La noche* as *auto de amores*, one piece of evidence is of the utmost significance. The evidence consists of the large woodcut illustration that occupies the entire fol A2v, situated immediately before the text of *La noche* in the *editio princeps* of Moner's works.¹³ Doubtless, the engraving refers to the castle, within which the

allegorical action of *La noche* takes place. The following passage excerpted from the text of *La noche* describes the essential features of that castle:

Estonces me vi delante una maravilosa fortaleza en una montaya muy alta, pero sin padastro. Tenía barrera y cava ancha y honda a quatro anglos hecha, y a cada uno de ellos, un cubo. En el cuerpo del castillo, en un lado, la torre d'omenage. (*La noche*, ll. 101-6; *TMPW* 82-5)

Allowing for some minor discrepancies attributable to the technical side of the preparation and usage of the woodcut, there is a substantial correspondence between the text quoted here and its pictorial correlative (see reproduction). The picture accounts for the rampart (*barrera*), the moat (*cava*), the four towers situated at the corresponding corners, and the keep (*torre de homenaje*). Visible are, also, the burning sticks in the patio, a detail that mirrors the written description: “púseme dentro en el patio, en medio del qual ardía un fuego de muy grandes llamas” (*La noche*, ll. 111-3; *TMPW* 86). In addition, the narrator tells us that

“Lleguéme más al fuego y vi qu'era de tea. Tomé un tizón entra muchos y con su lumbre fuy por todo el patio hasta tanto que llegué en una portesuela cerrada” (*La noche*, ll. 120-3; *TMPW* 86-7).

In the light of this confession, the male figure we see in the woodcut holding a stick in his hand does not constitute any surprise. Obviously, this is a representation of the protagonist who explains that “puestos los ojos en tierra, entré por la puerta, la tea ardiendo en la mano, y vime al pie d'una scalera cubierta que venía rodeando” (*La noche*, ll. 160-3; *TMPW* 93). It is not hard to see that the engraver takes good care to translate the spiral staircase into a visual image in the area right in front of the torch-bearing figure.

So much for the parallelism perceivable in some specific features through a comparison between two media: the verbal (the text of *La noche*) and the visual (the woodcut engraving or, to use the Spanish term, the *grabado*). What bears concentrating upon is the primary function of that *grabado* as indicator of a dramatic impact. What impresses us most about the woodcut is its pointedness in recapturing at one glance, with the efficacy of a snapshot, the quintessential dynamism that reverberates throughout the text of *La noche*. All in all, the *grabado* emblemizes the plot by demarcating two contrasting but complementary fields of action. These may be localized as distinct areas of a stage. The foreground is the locus of the dialogue, epitomized by the countenance, gestures, and overall demeanor of the two central personages: the author's persona, engaged in conversation with the comely maiden, recognizable as *Costumbre*. The background, by contrast, is the space of the upward movement, expressed by the mail figure, another representation of the protagonist, poised to walk up the spiral staircase. For the remaining significant elements included in the *grabado*, I will quote the description provided in one of my previous publications:

Even in a summary review we should not fail to take into account the blatant presence of the menacing eagle, whose violent intervention the narrator decries in no uncertain terms:

Mas mi dicha, que siempre más me desdicha, truxo, no sé de dónde, una águila caudal – creo qu'era – pero d'escandalar. Y me asió, hiriéndome con sus uZas tan cruelmente y con tanta furia que en tierra me derribó. (*La noche*, ll. 1701-5; *TMPW* 201-2)

We are left pondering the ironic overtones emanating from the jarring epithet: “águila d'escandalar.” In its variant *escandallar*, common to both Castilian and Catalan, the verb means ‘to plumb or sound depths.’ So, the noble bird, far from affording the disappointed narrator the exhilarating experience of a soaring flight,

causes him, rather, to plummet precipitously to the ground. The *grabado* recaptures the whole nightmarish incident to great dramatic effect at the moment when the narrator and the swooping eagle stare at each other fixedly, bewildered the one, ferocious the other. Yet another item not to be overlooked is the picture of the resplendent sun added at the upper right-hand corner of the *grabado*. This is, we realize, an allusion to *Costumbre*'s amazing dress, "un brial de terciopelo verde," on which we find embroidered "unas luzérnigas muy naturales" and the following inscription:

Quando el sol de la doctrina
falta en los grandes y grey,
yo soy tenida por ley. (*La noche* ll. 137-9; *TMPW* 90)

A full explication, which we cannot go into here and now, would have to consider why the intruding eagle obstructs the vision of "el sol de la doctrina" from Moner's torch-in-hand persona. ("The Theatrics of the *Auto de Amores*" 90-1)

Thus, the *grabado* helps us identify and explore the topography of a stage, in which the plot of *La noche* may be articulated effectively in its two overarching dimensions. On the one hand, we witness the unfolding of a dialogue, which turns out to be a *monodílogo* of sorts B la Unamuno: the author's persona confronts his conflicted self, projected onto the allegorical passions the protagonist meets on his walk up the staircase. For all intents and purposes the damself of the *grabado* stands for all those allegorizations (eleven in all). On the other hand, we are given to contemplate the protagonist's compulsive drive to rise above the infernal regions of his lovelorn psyche. The ultimate frustration of the protagonist's efforts and the catastrophe made explicit in the denouement of *La noche* may be surmized by what, on another occasion, I call the "very significant, if not the most significant, spatial determinant in *La noche* . . . symbolized, in the *grabado*, by the position and concomitant attitude of the stair climber and the eagle with respect to each other" ("The Theatrics of the *Auto de Amores* 96). Pertinent to the present discussion is, also, the following commentary provided on that occasion:

The eye contact between the two figures proves to be an arresting detail, indeed. The hopeful, earnest look on the man's face meets with the glowering countenance of the bird. The ascending movement of the one is abruptly halted by the descending assault of the other. Here the intervention of the *águila d'escandalar* has an effect diametrically contrary to that produced by the eagle in Dante's *Purgatorio* (9.19-33) or in El marqués de Santillana's *Infierno de los enamorados* (vv. 537-44). Far from an experience of ultimate catharsis and liberation evoked by these two outstanding literary examples, in *La noche* we witness the abortion of a strenuous effort to rise above the dark abode of the passions into the sunlight of sound doctrine (*el sol de la doctrina*). Moner's eagle, then, sets the *ne plus ultra* of the aforementioned *infierno de los enamorados* or the *cárcel de amor*, to use, as the author of *Celestina* would put it, another "palabra preZada." Consequently, that inescapable eye-contact between man and beast demarcates the unsurpassable boundary between inner and outer space. ("The Theatrics of the *Auto de Amores* 96)

If, in our analysis of the *grabado*, we shift our attention from the topography of the stage to the obvious overall iconography of the castle we are met with countless theatrical implications. The "maravilosa fortaleza" that provides, in Shakespeare's terms, a "local habitation and a name" for the allegorical vision of *La noche* brings to mind, unmistakably, the no less imposing

massive *castillos* and *rocas* (*castells* and *roques* in Catalan) that became a *sine qua non* in the elaborate religious and civic celebrations, widespread throughout the Castilian and Catalan domains during the late Middle Ages and particularly in Moner's lifetime. Critics have shown special interest in how festivities of this nature are reflected in the glittering episode of the royal wedding (the English king and the French princess), recounted in chs. 41-55 of *Tirant lo Blanc*, the nonpareil novel by Joanot Martorell and Martí Joan de Galba (Cocozzella, "Roques and Pageantry," Massip, Oleza Simó). Lest there be any doubt concerning the close correspondence between fictionalized account and historical fact, Francesc Massip concentrates on the castle of Love (*roca de Amor*), minutely described in chapter 53 of *Tirant* and adduces abundant evidence to demonstrate that the mechanical devices built in that *roca* are not any different from the ones "commissioned by the royal house of Aragon in order to celebrate the coronation of Martí l'HumB in 1399 and of Ferran d'Antequera in 1414" ("Topography and Stagecraft in *Tirant lo Blanc*" 88).

Congruent with mounting evidence is, then, the deduction that Moner's fertile imagination derived inspiration from the pageantry sponsored by the church and the court on various occasions. Take, for instance, the Corpus Christi processions, replete with miscellaneous theatrical performances, which, as Charlotte Stern shows, were prevalent no less in Spain than they were in England and France (21-2). Of course, Moner had every opportunity to witness these processions and, in all probability, saw the spectacular display accompanying the marriage of the King of Naples with Juana, daughter of Juan II de Aragón, in Barcelona on 28 July, 1477 (Cocozzella, *1 Introducció* 7).¹⁴ Indeed, judging from contemporary descriptions, the latter event does not pale by comparison with the chivalric splendor evoked by the ingenious pen of a Martorell or a Galba. Some internal evidence harvested from *Bendir de dones*, Moner's longest Catalan poem, and *Momería*, one of his shortest Castilian pieces of an unquestionable theatrical nature, indicates the availability to Moner of the same type of venue and staging apparatus documented in Valencia in 1373 (Ferrer Valls 313) and in Zaragoza in 1414 (Ferrer Valls 314, Massip 88-9).¹⁵ In view of the particular circumstances of Moner's career, it becomes evident that his idea of a theater is conceived in terms of an urban or palatial setting. We instinctively think of places such as the Plaça del Rei in Barcelona or some large hall in the royal palace or the mansion of the Cardonas, Moner's patrons.

In order to round out discussion of the circumstances of Moner's interest and probable involvement in the theater, we will bear in mind the sponsorship that worthy members of the highest ranks of the aristocracy provided, according to Sirera, not only in Valencia (the likes of the Condes de Oliva, the Duques de Gandía, the Duques de Calabria) but also in Rome (the Borja papacy) and Naples (the Aragonese dynasty) ("Una quexa ante el Dios de Amor" 268). There is no reason to doubt that Moner and other authors still to be identified enjoyed in Barcelona the same level of patronage common in the cultural centers mentioned by Sirera.

Conclusion

A quick review of a process, which Theodore L. Kassier calls "literalization," has broached a full-fledged discussion on the "Hispanic intertext of subjectivity." The term "intertext" encompasses the notion of a literary construct that stems from multiple sources. The designation of "Hispanic" serves to contextualize the complex and multifarious entity within specific attributes of authorship and the concomitant coordinates of time and place. Thus, such intertext becomes associated with the creativity of not only AusiBs March, the Valencian poet worthy of international renown, but also a sizeable group of outstanding authors, in many

respects March's heirs, who flourished in Valencia and Barcelona (or in the surroundings of these cultural centers) during the second half of the fifteenth century.

The term "Hispanic" is not amiss as indication of, also, a particularly revealing dimension of international projection and outreach. In the first place, the authors in question, by following in the footsteps of the great bard from Valencia, turned out to be notable masters of the intertext in their own right. Secondly, they became exponents of an international orientation by virtue of their wholehearted response to the momentous historical circumstance in which they lived. Of no mean significance is the fact that the lives of these talented writers coincided with the surging tide of *mesianismo* – that peculiar brand of Manifest Destiny fomented by the ultra nationalistic vision of Fernando de Aragón and Isabel de Castilla.¹⁶ Motivated by the compelling spirit of *mesianismo*, the large majority of these distinguished heirs of AusiBs March managed to gain utmost proficiency in not only their native Catalan (or the Valencian brand thereof) but also the Castilian language, which was gaining undisputed ascendancy, prestige, and officialdom at a national and global scale.

The extraordinary significance of the historical circumstance does not detract in any way from the relevance of AusiBs March's personal contribution to the intertext of subjectivity – precisely the type of subjectivity that has been discussed and analyzed here. In retrospect we notice that upon the intertext AusiBs March brings to bear a radical shift from the process of literalization explored by Kassier to a paradigm of concretization or objectification. What March concretizes and objectifies, ultimately, is the amalgamation of multifarious concerns – linguistic, rhetorical, psychological, metaphysical, theological in nature – into a "life-text," emblematic of a revolutionary notion of a mimesis of experience as a minute-by-minute unfolding of a happening. March, in other words, capitalizes, as Robert Archer points out, on the phenomenology of the event in the here and now.

March, we realize, brings to his successors – particularly the masters of the intertext we have been able to identify – plenty of grist for their own esthetic mills. We have called special attention to the case of Fra Francesc Moner, who developed an ingenious mimesis of what he called "letras matizadas del sentido." This allowed him to assimilate March's various esthetic concerns and condense them into a primordial plot, which articulates two supreme dynamics. These pertain, respectively, to the psychological conflict (the *psychomachia*) and to the fervent aspiration toward the soaring flight of contemplation (the mystical élan), frustrated though that aspiration turns out to be.

As a fit complement to the aforementioned plot Moner proposes, to his credit, the iconography of the castle and adapts it, in turn, to the topography of a stage. Thus, thanks to Moner, the Hispanic intertext of subjectivity comes to a viable theatrical epiphany. There is evidence to suggest that Moner in the company of a few other authors, such as Escrivá, Carrós, and Cota, was quite successful in devising the theatrics and stagecraft of the *auto de amores*. At last, one fact to be underscored has to do with the iconography of the castle conceived in conjunction with the *auto* in question. That conjunction would signal a turning point in the history of Spanish theater. It would constitute in itself documentary evidence of a major transformation: the castle commonly associated theretofore with public ceremonial would be envisaged at that point with an added dimension as the locus of the inner theater of the psyche. This major metamorphosis of *castillos* and *rocas*, the superspectacles in city squares and palatial halls, may well be a sign of the times – one telling index of the transition from the Middle Ages to the Renaissance.

Notes

1. For a seminal discussion of the *hipérbole sagrada*, see María Rosa Lida de Malkiel, “La *hipérbole sagrada* en la poesía castellana del siglo XV.”
2. Riquer provides the essential orientation on March’s life and works (2: 471-568). For a sketch of the poet’s life especially in terms of his outstanding career and far-reaching influence, see Archer, *The Pervasive Image: The Role of Analogy in the Poetry of Ausiàs March* 1-22, and Cocozzella, “Salient Trends in Ausiàs March Criticism: Toward a Holistic Approach.” Eminently representative of this bibliography in recent times are the following two books: *Ausiàs March y las literaturas de su época*, ed. Lourdes Sánchez Rodríguez, and Enrique J. Nogueras Valdivieso; and *Ausiàs March (1400-1459): premier poète en langue catalane*, ed. Martin, Georges, and Marie-Claire Zimmermann.
3. For a concise explanation of this terminology see Cocozzella, “Ausiàs and Garcilaso Revisited: Exploring Syncretic Lyricism” 224-6, “Ausiàs March, herald del Renaixement en Espanya” 78-86, “Salient Trends in Ausiàs March Criticism: Toward a Holistic Approach” especially 36-47, “Trends of Syncretism in Castilian and Catalan Literatures of the Late Middle Ages: Ausiàs March and Other Exponents” 101-7.
4. In this context we may take into account the following comment:

En lloc de fer una descripció *a posteriori* de la seva lluita interior – una narració d’una experiència pretèrita –, March desenvolupa un monòleg en què el poeta s’enfronta amb la seva problemàtica en l’ara i aquí. (*Aproximació a Ausiàs March* 20)
5. For a comprehensive definition of *yo* and *circunstancia*, the well-known mutually complementary principles in Ortega y Gasset’s metaphysics, see Borel 37-76. Díez Taboada (17-8) provides an enlightening discussion of Ortega y Gasset’s terminology together with Américo Castro’s notion of *vivencia*.
6. In “Ausiàs and Garcilaso Revisited: Exploring Syncretic Lyricism,” I undertake, as the title indicates, a one-to-one comparative study.
7. Following are the page references for each author in Riquer’s *Història*, vol. 3: Alegre (249-52), Carrós (246-9), Corella (254-320), Escrivá (359-62), Ferrer (245-6), Llull (195-204), Moner (205-12), Rocabertí (148-60), Torroella (161-86).
8. The study of many of these authors, though not all of them, is facilitated by the availability of critical editions. This is true for the works of Carrós, Francesc Ferrer, Escrivá, Llull, Moner, Rocabertí, Roís de Corella, Torroella, which have been edited, respectively, by José Reyes-Tudela (1987), Jaume Auferil (1989), Lázaro Carreter (1965), Jaume Turró (1996), Peter Cocozzella (1970), H. C. Heaton (1916), Ramon Miquel y Planas (1913), Pedro Bach y Rita (1930) (see the bibliography below).
9. For a biographical sketch of Moner see my *Introducció* 9-28 and *I Introducció* 3-38.

10. Following is the entire first stanza, which contains the memorable verses in question:

– SeZora, por que sepáys
vuestras palabras pesadas
qué han podido,
es menester que leáys
estas letras matizadas
del sentido;
que con ellas acabáys.
Y pues la cosa va así,
que ya m'avéys consumido
sin porqué,
sól'os demando este sí:
que a los otros que an servido,
por mercé,
no los tratéys como a mí. (Vv. 1-14)

11. While conceding that the subject matter of the rare *auto de amores* may well consist of little more than “tópicos literarios del momento,” Lázaro Carreter acknowledges that apropos of Escrivá's *Querella* “cuadra muy bien el término de auto de amores.” According to the same critic, said *Querella* “constituye un espécimen puro de este género, rigurosamente teatral como su nombre indica” (70).

12. For El Comendador Escrivá's special role in the creation of an unusual dramatic genre, see my “El Comendador Escrivá's Legacy: The Valencian *Auto de Amores* of the Fifteenth Century.” All the while, I have explored a possible connection between these paragons of the *auto de amores* and the famous *Tragicomedia de Calisto y Melibea*, better known as *Celestina* (“From Lyricism to Drama”). Worthy of study are, moreover, the genetic links that may be traced through affinities perceivable between the *auto* and some texts of well established renown. Among these texts the following clearly stand out: the *TragIdia de Caldesa* by Joan Roís de Corella, the theatrical performance on an Arthurian theme, described in chap. 202 of *Tirant lo Blanc*, the great novel by the Valencian writers Joanot Martorell and Martí Joan de Galba (Massip, “Topography and Stagecraft in *Tirant lo Blanc*” 98-102), *Egloga II* by Garcilaso de la Vega, the episode of “las bodas de Camacho,” which occupies chaps. 19-22 of *Don Quijote*, pt. II (Cocozzella, “*Roques* and Pageantry: *Artifici* as a Function of Joanot Martorell's Dramatic Text” 30-3).

13. For a description of the *editio*, designated as A, see Cocozzella, *Introducció* 86-90, and *I Introducció* 65-9.

14. For a complete description of this memorable event, see Durán y Sanpere and Voltes 2: 55-60.

15. For a detailed exposition of the theatrical dimension of *Bendir de dones*, see Cocozzella, “The Theatrics of the *Auto de Amores* 100-3. For a text of Moner's *Momería* see *I OC* 154-7, and *Teatro castellano de la edad media*, ed. Ronald Surtz 145-9.

16. I borrow the term “mesianismo” from Juan Bautista Avalué-Arce, who provides the following explanation:

En realidad, y a riesgo de simplificar demasiado las cosas, creo yo que el siglo XV castellano, visto desde este ángulo de su historia espiritual, se puede dividir en un período de auge del profetismo (reinados de Juan II y Enrique IV), y otro período del auge del mesianismo (reinado de los Reyes Católicos), si bien soy el primero en reconocer que en su raíz ambas actitudes están íntimamente enlazadas. (307)

It is instructive, also, to ponder how the *Zeitgeist* is reflected in Moner’s life and works. One may take into account the following excerpt from my biographical sketch on Moner:

La segunda fase del servicio militar de Moner se distingue por otro poderoso impulso hacia el castellanismo. Las citadas palabras de Barutell – “vio cuán buena obra era servir en tal necesidad a Dios y a su príncipe” – sugieren el entusiasmo con el cual el joven autor debió de entregarse a la realización de ese “Brave New World” anunciado por la obra de los Reyes Católicos. “Tomando ora la espada, ora la pluma”, Moner dio clara muestra de su adhesión al ideal fernandino no sólo luchando en contra de los musulmanes por la unificación de la península bajo el signo del cristianismo, sino también fomentando el proceso de castellanización del territorio catalán hasta convertirse, por lo menos durante este período, en uno de los principales exponentes de la ascendencia de la cultura castellana en su tierra nativa. En otras palabras, nuestro autor debió de sentirse muy influenciado por esa atmósfera de exaltación espiritual, propia del reinado de Fernando e Isabel, que algunos estudiosos identifican con el nombre de “mesianismo”. (*Introducción* 12)

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Abbreviations [the works of Fra Francesc Moner]

- A: The *editio princeps* of Francesc Moner's works (see Cocozzella, Introducció 86-90; *1 Introducció* 65-9).
- Oc: Moner, Francesc. *Obres catalanes*. Ed. Peter Cocozzella. Els Nostres CIBssics 100. Barcelona: Barcino, 1970.
- 1 OC: Moner, Francesc. *Poemas menores*. Vol. 1 of *Obras castellanias*. Ed. Peter Cocozzella. Lewiston, NY: The Edwin Mellen P, 1991.
- 2 OC: Moner, Francesc. *Poemas mayores*. Vol. 2 of *Obras castellanias*. Ed. Peter Cocozzella. Lewiston, NY: The Edwin Mellen P, 1991.
- TMPW: Moner, Francesc. "The Two Major Prose Works of Francisco de Moner: A Critical Edition and Translation." Ed. Peter Cocozzella. Diss. Saint Louis University, 1966.

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