

REVERENDO PADRE FRAY BUGEIO MONTESINO DECODES MENA

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Laberinto de fortuna (1444) is the most commented upon vernacular text produced in the court of Juan II of Castile. Ever since the first printing in 1481, it became a point of study documented in early marginal commentaries, Hernán Núñez's *Glosa* (1499), and Francisco Sánchez de las Brozas's, "El Broncense", *Anotaciones* (1582). But the highly regarded status of Mena's *Laberinto* and its appropriation as Castile's epic narrative had its detractors, as noted in the literary and critical texts of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and the sardonic and lewd anonymous text, *Carajicomedia* (1519). This article analyses the relationship between these two texts, and how they enhance each other, even if they have opposing intents.

Carajicomedia's ability to convey meaning is as strong as in 1519, even after its banishment. It still can challenge *Laberinto's* official discourse. It thrives on the latter's constructs and discourses. Its actualization depends upon the knowledge of the previous narratives. The correlation between *Laberinto* and *Carajicomedia* is interdependent. As textual allegories, they present complex structures that shift their meaning, even at the very moment of reading. The complexity of these texts resides not the impossibility of concretizing a unique interpretation, but in the

fact that from each reading, a new one arises, the points of reference shift, transforming their allegorical meaning *ad infinitum*.

The mirroring of these two epic poems opens new interpretative expectations to reconsider, as done by Barbara Weissberger whose opinion is that "On a material level *Carajicomedia* debases the status of *Laberinto* as equal in wisdom and philosophical auctoritas to the classical epics, a status created in part by the poem's Medieval and Golden Age commentators like Hernán Núñez and 'El Brocense'" (226). María Eugenia Díaz Tena argues that *Carajicomedia* attacks Queen Isabel's reputation, and includes this work in the anti-isabeline literary production. Tena bases her conclusion on the fact that most of the prostitutes are named Isabela, and according to her, it aims to deconstruct the image of the queen. She agrees with Carlo Varo who stated that "Juan de Mena produce una España unificada férreamente bajo sus reyes, la *Carajicomedia* parece burlarse de la reina Isabel de Castilla, quien, en cierto sentido, lleva a la práctica los sueños del pueblo" (10). Though perhaps a compelling argument, the mere fact that some of the prostitutes carry the name Isabela is not convincing enough. It is the institution of the monarchy that is being attacked.

Frank Domínguez makes King Fernando the target of the sardonic text. For him it is a clear and lewd attack against the person of the Catholic King. He states that it mocks his impotence and frustration for not being able to conceive a child with his second wife, Germana de Foix: “*Carajicomedia* no es sobre los últimos años del reinado de Isabel, como se piensa, sino sobre la regencia y muerte de Fernando el Católico, y probablemente fue escrita poco después de su muerte en 1516”. (“*Carajicomedia* and Fernando...”, 1) He disagrees with Varo and Tena, and concludes that such relation between the Isabelas and Queen Isabel is not there. On the contrary, according to his reading, it is not an anti-isabeline production but an anti-fernandine one, a point made by Linde M. Brocato: “*Carajicomedia* seems to call the social / sexual scene in Spain as it sees it: juicy, yes, but filthy and corrupt as well”, and adds that like *Laberinto*, it “locates the social problem not just in lascivious women but rather in insufficient virility, especially old men” (353). Antonio Pérez-Romero disagrees with these critics and concludes that it is “more than an erotic or obscene work; it is a carefree, playful, burlesque, and above all meant to mock and corrode official idealism and its language” (68).

Pérez Romero states that, in fact, the author exalts women’s emancipation, and it “may actually convey feminist attitudes. The women discard official male idealism in all its forms”, and adds, “I think this document is extremely clear in word and purpose, and that it attests to a very significant variety of subversity in the period under consideration” (69). An idea shared by Adriano Duque who, also, agrees with Tena and Varo’s assertion that it is a clear attack on Queen Isabela, but he adds that “*Carajicomedia* presents the world upside-down, genitalized and focused not so much on the denigration of women as on the laughable impotence of the phallus [...]. The true winner is not the phallus or the vaginas, but *luxuria* itself” (103). Pérez-Romero disagrees with Álvaro Alonso who concluded that there is no ideological intent be-

hind this sardonic work, nor any moral or political purpose. For Victoria Arbizu-Sabater *Carajicomedia* “contiene un mensaje feroz y obsceno sobre la política, la sociedad y la moralidad de su época mediante una antiexclamación del poder femenino a través de su sexualidad” (38). As these critics argue, the *Carajicomedia* is a misogynous text that debases the role of women in society by attacking Queen Isabel, La Católica, but it is used at the same time to attack male sovereignty by criticizing Fernando, El Católico. The focus of this article is to present an analysis of how these two texts feed each other’s message, accentuating the deficiencies of official discourse.

Mena fashioned the meta-narratives with one explicit message, and to present Juan II of Castile a narrative that justified his rightful claim to the creation of a strong monarchical state. It is a highly propagandist epic poem that exalts the figure of the king as having the sole responsibility in leading the destinies of his kingdom, and achieving the dream of reestablishing the unity of the kingdoms that made up the fabric of the Iberian Peninsula. It becomes the epic poem of early modern Castile, and reinforces official ideology. Mena presents Juan II of Castile a text that will help him comprehend his own function within his kingdom, not just as the apex of the social structure, but as part of the teleological mission imposed upon him by history.

Mena presents the chaotic and corrupt condition of the kingdom of Castile and responds with a statement directed to Juan II of Castile. He creates a text that, as José Manuel Nieto Soria claims, was part of the instruments of propaganda used in the xv century by the Trastamaran dynasty with the sole purpose of legitimizing their claim to the throne:

Todos los recursos de la propaganda son utilizados en sus distintas posibilidades: los recursos retóricos, simbólicos, ceremoniales e iconográficos. Sobre ellos se aplican las técnicas retóricas necesarias para favorecer una lectura de las representaciones ofrecidas en el sentido de que más convenga de cara a promover

el mayor consenso posible en torno a la pretensión política perseguida. (31)

It is an apology that defends the role of the king as heir to the throne. He lauds his divine nature by constructing a text that places the king as the inheritor of a teleological mission: to unify the kingdoms of the Iberian Peninsula, ending the constant civil wars that impede its ultimate purpose of restoring the course of history fragmented in 711.

The need to establish these claims required the creation of a propagandistic apparatus directed and controlled by the spheres of power, where each one defended its own claims and position. *Laberinto* establishes a discourse that defends the positions and ambitions of the Trastamaran dynasty. It mythologizes the figure of the monarch by contrasting the virtues of past historical and mythological figures with his person. He places his argument within a teleological discourse that reinforces the continuity between past and present.

The political implication brings into play the *Carajicomedia's* parody of *Laberinto*. Its propagandistic discourses were prone to counter-propagandistic disapproval, questioning their ideological message and official discourse. Mena addresses his work to the king, Juan II of Castile:

Al muy prepotente don Juan el segundo,
aquel con quien Júpiter tovo tal zelo
que tanta de parte le fizo del mundo
quanta a sí mesmo se faze del çielo,
al grant rey de España, al Çesar novelo;
al que con Fortuna es bien fortunado,
aquel en quien caben virtud e reindao,
a él, la rodilla fincada por suelo.

(65)¹

He uses a clear voice as he dresses his text with the veil of allegory, accentuates the role of its princi-

pal recipient, and reaffirms the authority of the king. He argues in favor of the ideological claims held by the Trastamaran dynasty. In contrast, the anonymous author of the *Carajicomedia* dedicates his text to Diego Fajardo's "carajo":

Al muy impotente carajo profundo
de Diego Fajardo, de todos ahuelo,
que tanta de parte se ha dado del mundo
que ha cuarenta años que no mira al çielo;
aquel que con coños tuvo tal zelo
cuanto ellos de él tienen agora desgrado,
aquel que está siempre cabeça abaxado
que nunca levanta su ojo del suelo.

(171)²

The author explicitly parodies and mocks the established and recognized canonical work. *Carajicomedia* presents a counter-argument. Its readers must be familiar with Mena and Núñez's works, the pretexts, in order to unveil its subversive aims, otherwise dismissed for its lewdness. José María Balcells summarizes the *Carajicomedia's* closeness to the medieval *exemplum*, but he concludes that "Si la peculiaridad básica de una obra paródica la constituye el remedo del texto parodiado, *Carajicomedia* pertenece consecuentemente al género de la epopeya, aunque como correlato de ser, según decíamos del famoso texto epopéyico del autor cordobés" (400). *Carajicomedia* violently distorts *Laberinto's* message. This highly sardonic and erotic text is corrosive, and shows existing fractures in the official discourse, shifting the meaning of the official text. The danger lies in the fact that it goes after a text that exalts the monarchy as an institution, and not on a personal level as the above critics claim. It challenges the very core of the language that binds the Spanish Monarchy together. It attacks the values prevalent in the *Laberinto*, and questions the effectiveness of the official narrative.

¹ I use Carla de Nigris' edition of *Laberinto de fortuna*.

² I use J. A. Bellón y P. Jauralde Pou's edition of *Cancionero de obras de burlas provocantes a risa*.

The dissident reading is reinforced by positioning both texts as mirroring each other. The anonymous displays the ideological cracks within a system, where the values defended do not correspond to the other reality fashioned in the *Carajicomedia*. Its erotic nature diverts the official position via the coarseness of its language, as Weissberger stated:

it is necessary to reiterate that *Carajicomedia's* transgression of "high" culture is profoundly contradictory. True, the parodist mocks the masculine, authoritarian, repressive values that Mena urged on the weak king. But he simultaneously attacks the dangerous appropriation of those same values by Isabel, both in her anomalous status as female sovereign and in her virile self-fashioning. In this sense, the poem's contestatory aim is deeply comprised. (234)

The close relationship between *Laberinto* and *Carajicomedia* accentuates the inherent allegorical nature that is implicit and explicit to them at the same time. Mena framed the ideological discourses prevalent in the literary creation of the fifteenth century. Now, it is used to question such ideological and proto-nationalistic discourses.

Carajicomedia takes into consideration the lower stratum of society in order to present a corrosive attack on the official discourse that Mena defended. His aims are depicted in the first lines of the work. He positions one text against the other: the official vision of Castile in front of the mirror, where a harsher reality is presented. They function in relation to each other and within their respective divergent discourses: one that tries to reinforce the establishment of a strong absolute monarchy against the other that subverts, as in Mena's depiction of Providence:

"O tu princesa e dispoñedora
de gerarchías e todos estados,
de paz e guerras, e suertes e fados,
sobre señores muy grande señora,
así que tú eres la gobernadora

e la medianera de aqueste grant mundo,
¿y cómo bastó mi seso infacundo
fruir de coloquio tan alto a deshora?"

(75)

Providence becomes *Luxuria*:

"¡O puta vieja y dispoñedora
de la clerezía y todos estados,
de formas, de virgos, de suertes y hados,
y en ser hechizera maestra y señora!
O gran alcahueta, o gran sabidora,
remedia mi triste carajo infacundo
que tan lagrimoso ha sido en el mundo,
que ya traspassado ni canta ni llora".

(180)

The House of Fortune, the allegory of Castile, is now the House of *Luxuria*:

Bolviendo los ojos a do me mandava,
vi más adentro muy grandes tres ruedas:
las dos eran firmes, inmotas e quedas,
mas la de en medio boltar no çesava;
e vi que debaxo de todas estava,
caída por tierra, gente infinita,
que avía en la fuente cada qual escripta
el nombre e la suerte por donde pasava,

(90)

[...]

La qual me respuso: "Saber te conviene
que de tres edades que quiero dezir:
pasadas, presentes e de por venir;
ocupa su rueda cada qual e tiene;
las dos que son quedas, la una contiene
la gente pasada, e la otra futura;
la que se buelve en el medio procura
la que en el siglo presente detiene.

(90)

In comparison:

Bolviendo los ojos a do me mandava
vi entre mis piernas puestas tres ruedas:
las dos redondas pendientes y quedas,

en medio otra larga derecha se estava;
y vi que debaxo de ellas quedava
caída por tierra la gente infinita,
que gran parte de ella de suso va escrita,
sin otra mucha que no me acordava.

Vi la una rueda, que no se movía,
que dentro de mi cuerpo se quería meter,
y la otra de floxa quería caer
y un túrbido pelo mi pixa encobría.
Yo, que de tal plazer no tenía,
fiz de mi dubda complida palabra
a mi guiadora, rogando que me abra
aquesta figura de qué procedía.

[...]

La cual me repuso: “Saber te conviene
que en las tres hedades que quiero dezir—
—presente, passada y la por venir—
tu gran impotencia mayor culpa tiene;
mas yo que te guío haré que resuene
tu fama por clara y no por oscura,
y que te desculpe tu obra futura,
y aun la passada que no te condene.

(196)

Carajicomedia demythologizes Mena's intents by distorting its main message and adding value to the *Laberinto*, and thrives on its notoriety. Both literary productions respond to certain needs of the living, in other words, the necessity of justifying a political agenda. There is always an aspect in the process of interpretation that resurfaces, and consequently adds new information that forces the text into a new analysis that enhances and deforms the predecessor's. *Laberinto* is the imitated higher object; its elevated tone and its defense of the elitist ideology contrast with the bawdy tone of the *Carajicomedia* that depicts an unapologetic portrait of the corruption and denigration of society without repentance.

The parodial nature of the *Carajicomedia* is not only implicit in the imitation of the style and framing, but in the name of the implied author. The

etymology of the name “Bugeo” implies the mirroring aspect of the composition. It presents the correlation between the original text and the imitation. Varo claims that “Bugeo” is a word with Arabic roots: “bugia o bogia, bugiot or bogiot [...] que significan «mono» o «mico»” (20). Even if it seems trivial to point out this aspect, it provides an important clue as to the nature of the *Carajicomedia* in relation to the *Laberinto*. The monkey, “mono”, is a simian in reference to its close appearance to man, but debased, which is the origin for the word “similitude”. Domínguez argued that the name “Bugeo” is a deformed form of the word “bujio”, “monkey”, which was often associated with the mirror and it is used to represent *luxuria* in Christian iconography: “in time, the adjective «bujio» was replaced by «mono» in Castilian, although it survived in Portuguese and Catalan [adding that] the name reveals that not only Fray Bugeo is from Bujía but recalls the monkey's allegorical significance and of one of its frequent attributes: the mirror” (5). As is common in the literature of the Middle Ages, and as Domínguez discusses in his study, the monkey was an inferior representation of man: “animals like the ape that resemble man so much that they are occasionally considered to have souls illustrate the corruption of the will by sin and warn against vanity and lust” (6).

Carajicomedia was a contemptible aspirant to Mena's *Laberinto*. The allusion made in the alleged author's name “Bugeo” contextualizes the very nature of the text. As a monkey is “an unworthy pretender to human status, a grotesques caricature of man, [...] became the prototype trickster, the sycophant, the hypocrite, the coward, as well as of extreme physical ugliness” (Janson, *Apes*, 14-15), so is the *Carajicomedia* in regards to the *Laberinto*. The anonymous author employs his text to decode the ideological content presented in the *Laberinto*:

Síguese una especulativa obra intitulada “Carajicomedia”, compuesta por el Reverendo Padre Fray Bugeo

Montesino, ymitando al alto estilo de las Trezientas del famosísimo poeta Juan de Mena. Dirigida al muy antiguo carajo del noble cavallero Diego Fajardo, que en nuestros tiempos en gran luxuria floreció en la ciudad de Guadalajara, por cuyo fin sus lastimados cojones fueron llevados y trasladados en la Romana ciudad, cuya vida y martirio la presente obra recuerda. (170)

The “especulativa obra” takes the reader into a voyage through the lower stratum of society, into a risky adventure where he will map the marginal spaces. Its author states that it was composed “ymitando el alto estilo de las «Trezientas»” (170). The imitation turns the elevated nature of Mena’s work into a mockery, displaces its intentionality and forces the reader to look into the mirror and cast doubt on the official discourse. It emulates a previous text, imitating its form and content. It deforms it in order to place one against the other, as in a mirror, thus turning the world upside down and showing the fracture of the parodied text, which forces the reader to question its very nature:

Como el que tiene el espejo delante,
maguer que se mire derecho en derecho
se parte pagado, mas no satisfecho
como si viese su mismo semblante,
tal me sentía por el semejante,
que nunca así pude fallarme contento
que no desease mirar más atento,
mi vista culpando por no ser bastante.

(72)

As Mena stated, the anonymous author distorted:

Como el que tiene ell’espejo delante,
maguer que se mire derecho en derecho,
ni parte contento, ni va satisfecho
si halla que tiene ruin el semblante,
todos los coños por el semejante
de ver mi carajo no ay uno contento,
que murmuradores, quejosos los siento,
mi fuerça culpando por no ser bastante.

(177)

It plays with the idea of resemblance where the reader recognizes the image he is distorting, which is crucial for the parody to be effective. He positions a highly elevated discourse against a lewd and debased discourse. He degrades the imagined world of the elites and presents the world of marginal society to counter the official meta-discourses. The anonymous deforms the meta-narrative constructed by Mena. The result resembles the deformed images produced by a mirror with flaws, one that, due to its low quality, reflects a blemished image:

E porque parece cosa contemplativa y devota para reír, acordé de la trasladar del fengido lenguaje en que, casi como infición poética, estava en este cruel castellano en que va; y assí mismo, sobre ello, lo mejor que según mi devoción pudiere, declararé algunas oscuras sentencias que en ella ay con alegaciones de los asuetos autores que en ella se verán, considerando el trabajo que en ello tomase ser servicio a vuestra merçed y provecho a los oyentes y a mí, descanso. (171)

He claims that he found a manuscript written by an alleged author: Fray “Bugeo” Montesino, which implies a conscientious purpose: “Como un día entre otros muchos oradores me hallase en la copiosa librería del colegio del señor Sant Estravagante donde al presente resido leyendo unos sermones del devote Padre Fray Bugeo Montesino, hallé la presente obra que este Reverendo Padre copiló para su recreación después que corrigió el Cartuxano” (170). The author states that he purposely imitated Mena’s work, and, indirectly Núñez’s commentary, and clearly emulates their style and framing.

Carajicomedia is a grotesque caricature of the elevated tone of Mena’s work, and its ugliness lies in the subject matter: Diego Fajardo’s “carajo”:

Pues como tú, vieja, regir tales cosas
con grandes maneras y orden te plaze,
pon en mi miembro algo que alce
las venas vejazas, que están deseosas

de ver sus narices sañudas, mocosas,
y haz que se queden así tan eternas
que a todas las cricas futuras, modernas
espanten y pongan menazas furiosas.

(174-175)

[...]

Assí puta vieja, cruel, aborrida,
viendo tus gestos que son infernales
mi par de cojones se ponen iguales
y aprietan mi pixa, que está muy sumida;
mas ya porque sea de ti socorrida,
pues bive la triste marchita y en rueda,
llévame vieja allá donde pueda
alçarse con gozo de tan caída.

(175)

The anonymous author presents a highly subversive text. It questions the validity of authorized discourses by rewriting Mena's text with a grotesque deformation. It is a clear document of the counter-ideological production that was prevalent against the institution of the modern state and gives the reader a hint about the main topic of the work, its impotence:

—O tú, Luxuria, me sey favorable,
dándome alas de ser muy furioso;
y tú no consientas tal caso injurioso,
en éste tan tuyo y tan amigable,
que estoy tan perdido, irrecuperable,
que ya no se espera de mí más simiente;
soy aborrecido de toda la gente,
que no ay en el mundo coño que me hable.

(172)

Carajicomedia is no moralizing treatise, but a speculative one that makes a parody of how rhetoric fails to present the truth for what it is. It presents its subject matter in its purest raw form, naked, and without any hesitation discusses a theme that breaks every aspect of decorum: the degradation of moral and virtuous values defended under Isabel's reign. It pivots two different discourses with clear distinct purposes.

This framing falls within the propagandistic apparatus created under the Trastamaran rise to power, as is outlined in the *Laberinto*. Ironically, it is a woman, Isabel, who fulfills the longstanding prophecy of uniting the kingdoms under one monarchy.

These two texts are interrelated, one dependent on the other. The parody shows the reality of the moral debasement of the elites and their hypocrisy. *Carajicomedia's* covering is not beautiful and it does not hide its intent. The anonymous knows that the theme of his work, Fajardo's "carajo", is controversial, yet, it presents the cracks within the official discourse. But at the same time it is a speculative work about the debasement of the human condition, as seen through the lustful life of Diego Fajardo's "carajo", which does not conceal the fact of this rude text under a veil of beautiful and ornate language. The burlesque text presents the fissures within a system formed by a questionable and unrealistic discourses and narratives that do not correspond to the true social order, produced by them and only for them. As Balcells stated:

A vueltas de cuanto antecede, *Carajicomedia* no circunscribe su práctica paródica a un único subgénero, el de la epopeya, sino que la amplía a otro: el de las obras de devoción y más específicamente aquellas que incorporan comentarios, parcela de la escritura religiosa en la que había destacado justamente el franciscano, y confesor regio, fray Ambrosio Montesino. (402)

Carajicomedia was discontinued from publication because it did not sanction the discourse produced by the official system imposed by the Catholic Kings, which silenced the stories of the marginalized subjects. Its subversive nature expands beyond Mena's *Laberinto*.

Carajicomedia exposes the fractures in this type of elitist discourse. It is a mock-epic that narrates the lives of the prostitutes with whom Diego Fajardo had contact; it narrates the life of his "carajo", but it

does not idealize him. It did not present an argument that defended the official discourse or the ideological ideals represented by the Catholic Kings, Fernando and Isabel, nor did it expand on their mystification as the harbingers of moral and virtuous Catholic values. It breaks away and forces the reader to look in the mirror; it questions the corpus of literature that exalts the official discourses. The figures that adorn it are of the lowest condition, socially and morally bankrupt:

Y todas las putas de esta escritura
viéndome solo, arrecho y seguro,
alçan sus faldas, mas yo no me curo
sino de salir de tanta estrechura.
Mi necio carajo atento procura
mirar bien los gestos de coños atantos;
más largos cojones le ponen espantos,
que quite su vista de tan fea figura.

(176)

The protagonist is a man with all his moral errors, there is nothing really exemplary about his life. It also counters the discourses portrayed by the books of genealogies and lives of saints, where their protagonists are iconic models of virtuosity and morality, as in Don Álvaro de Luna's *Libro de las claras e virtuosas mugeres* or Fernán Pérez de Guzmán's *Generaciones y semblanzas*. The protagonists do not have a scratch in their cloak of virtuosity, in contrast to those of the prostitutes portrayed in the *Carajicomedia*: "In all, sixty-six whores are named in the poem, an entire «estirpe de putas atán luxuriosa» (179) that mocks the Gothic «estirpe de reyes atán gloriosa» (43) Mena proudly claims for Spain". (Weissberger, "Male" 227) *Carajicomedia* presents a debased society, it exalts the faults of its protagonists, the long list of prostitutes, and it does not trivialize their standing in society nor hides the true topic of the work:

Es impotencia un descaimiento
de pixa y cojones después de ya cuando

la barva del ombre está blanqueando,
remoto por obras y por pensamiento;
no solamente por viejo yo cuento
quien barba y cabello en blanco trasmuda
mas el que de floxa hodiendo trasuda
y da cojonazos a prisa sin tiento.

(201)

The voyage maps the route of the known brothels in the Iberian Peninsula, as Alonso states: "Aunque la *Carajicomedia* no es un documento histórico, sino una creación literaria, su presentación de los ambientes prostibularios se corresponde en muchos aspectos con una realidad documentable" (12). This is clearly documented in the text, in the section "Descripción de las putas terrestres visibles y casi invisibles, públicas, carnales y otras espirituales y temporales, 'Ab Utroque'" (183).

The correlation between *Laberinto / Carajicomedia* is an act of reading, a documented act of interpretation that permits to establish how texts circulate from one reader to the next, from one century to the next. *Carajicomedia* demythologizes the *Laberinto* through its parody, at the same time it reinforces the standing of Mena as the premier poet of the fifteenth century. It echoes the idealized world of Mena's *Laberinto* by presenting parody in its raw nature. It exemplifies the absurdity of the world portrayed in High Culture, that of the elites in contrast to the low culture, the marginal, as exemplified by the prostitutes that appear in this document. Its aim is to disrupt the official idealizing discourse that emanates from the spheres of power. In order to achieve this effect, the anonymous author takes a text that is representative, or deemed to portray the values of the elites, and demythicizes its message. It is not accidental that he chooses the *Laberinto* as the main text of his attacks.

Carajicomedia recycles the cultural materials of the past and transforms the pretext, the *Laberinto* into a sham, a discredited text and as such it weakens official discourse. The anonymous author reaches inside the very core of the pretext and rips it apart the

original intent, forcing a new paradigm of meaning. There is a latent intention as he imposes a particular reading. It is his intention to force the reader to follow a path that leads him or her to discover the true authorial intention. This will not be established until the reader wanders into the allegorical text, and he or she takes a walk into the allegorical structure. It displaces meaning, and imposes a new one. The mirroring imposes a different discourse in regards to the ideological meta-narratives that condition the way the reader perceives and understands the world. *Carajicomedia* attacks official discourse by framing the text under a sardonic frame. There is a violent allegorical correlation that escapes the exegesis of the text, one that implicates a forceful intent to discredit a set of established acts that form the basis of the pretexts. The production of textual allegory shreds the pre-allegorical figures from its structural elements, and destroys their meaning. It displaces the original context and empties the sign of meaning in order to create a new meaning. *Carajicomedia* tears apart Mena's allegorical text through a debasing of its language, and as a result its meta-narratives are dismissed. *Carajicomedia* questions the very ideological fabric that forms the official discourse that defends the establishment of the Trastamaran court.

Laberinto and *Carajicomedia* are not as divergent as they seem, even if they use different rhetorical figures to create their works. Their purpose was to present their interpretation of the meta-narratives that are prevalent in Early Modern Castile and transformed into allegorical texts that mythologize or (de) mythologize the ideological discourses. Mena's *Laberinto* was crucial for the promulgation of the propagandistic discourses of the Trastamaran dynasty. *Carajicomedia* defies them. The author decodes the *Laberinto* in order to present his reading, in the form of a parody, and through the sardonic transformation of the elevated nature of Mena's presents a transformed text. As with Núñez's *Glosa*, which transforms the text into an amphitheatre, the anonymous au-

thor of the *Carajicomedia* converts it into a spectacle, a travesty of the established order. Mena created a tapestry that incorporates the meta-discursive narratives prevalent during the fifteenth century, defending the claims of the Trastamanran dynasty. *Carajicomedia* not only complements the message set forth by the *Laberinto*, but it subverts it. The anonymous author shows the reverse side of this tapestry, he takes the reader behind it, and forces him or her to see the cracks within the discursive nature of the text, and fashions his or her own subversive reading.

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