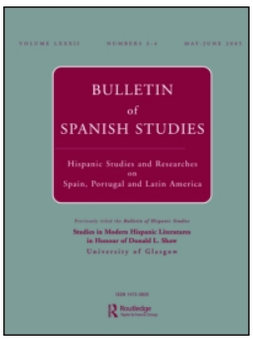

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Cantigas d'escarnho and *serranillas*: The Allegory of Careless Love

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More than two decades ago, Keith Whinnom listed as one of his 'three forms of distortion' in medieval Spanish literary historiography the failure of critics to come to terms with the large body of obscene literature written in late-medieval Spain:

> The critics who have had something to say about the tradition of obscenity in medieval literature tend to throw in the phrase 'the reverse of the medal'; it suggests that there are two rigidly separate kinds of writing, and that the historian can, without prejudicial consequences, ignore the matter which disturbs and embarrasses him. The traditions, I believe, are more integrated than this image suggests, and the ignoring of the obscene produces consequential distortions.[1]

It is safe to say, I believe, that the distortion Whinnom spoke of still exists. Although today's critics are, perhaps, more willing to deal with the obscene in medieval Castilian literature than were those of twenty years ago, the tendency to treat this material as distinct from, not in communication with, the body of (how else can we say it?) non-obscene literature still survives. Those *cantigas d'escarnho e mal dezir* which M. Rodrigues Lapa characterizes as 'obscenissima[s]' are a part of the medieval corpus and though we may confront them personally with disdain for their lack of literary qualities, with disgust, or even with prurient interest, I think it is important to understand their place in the corpus.[2] After all, the Wise King himself, perhaps better known in the world of the *cantigas d'escarnho* as the Wise Guy, is responsible for some of the most obscene of these poems. In this study I will explore some ways in which this so-called marginal literature may help to expose the workings of the literature which we treat as central.

I will make two main points in the course of this study. The first concerns the function of obscene literature in the medieval world. Our own view of this literature places it in categories which are marked negatively: pornographic, scatological, obscene; or in other categories, such as 'bawdy', which treat it as not serious, of little or no literary merit. I do think pornographic or simply suggestive literature constituted a discrete literary category in the medieval mind, and I believe that this category was no doubt viewed negatively by some people at some times. But what I want to suggest is that we must move beyond these medieval and modern categories. 'Pornographic' or simply 'bawdy' literature had a clear place in the vast interlocking system which was medieval literature. Could it be, in fact, that that place might be located in the old Horatian category of *utile*?

I have just referred to medieval literature as a 'vast, interlocking system', and this is my second point: the same literary ideas, moves, assumptions, theories which produced mainstream literature also produced marginal literature. The system of medieval literature is a series of chain reactions, an accretion of gloss and commentary, *remaniement*. It is the absorption of gloss into text and the transformation of poetry into prose or of prose into verse. It is a constant shifting of sense from level to level: from literal to allegorical to anagogical and on to equally allegorical sub-levels such as parody and, yes, the obscene. Even if we ultimately decide to situate vulgar, tasteless literature on a different level from the one on which we situate great literature, the very crudity of the former may lay bare for us the more complex, but invisible, inner workings of the latter.

The following scatological perversion of a song by Bernart de Ventadorn might at first appear to be a sort of *caso límite* of medieval obscenity, a parody beyond redemption, driven only by a simple search for the most distasteful images it can conjure in echoing the courtly song.

Bernart de Ventadorn	Anonymous
Quan la freid' aura venta	Quan lo petz del cul venta
Devès vòstre païs,	Dont Midònz caga e vis,
Vejaire m'es qu'eu senta	Vejaire m'es qu'eu senta
Un vent de paradís	Una pudor de pis
Per amor de la genta	D'una orrida sangnenta
Vas cui eu sui aclís,	Que tot jorn m'escarnís,
On ai mesa m'ententa	Qu'es mais de petz manenta
E mon coratge assís,	Que de marabodís.
Car de totas partís	E quan jatz [sus] son pis,
Per lèis, tant m'atalenta.	Plus put d'autra serpenta.[3]

At first reading it seems that such a poem can merit little scholarly comment. Yet our view of this poem changes considerably when we read it in conjunction with a passage on the cures for love madness (*amor hereos*) from Bernardus Gordonius' *Lilium Medicinae*, originally written in Montpellier around 1300. I quote here, in its fifteenth-century Castilian translation, the cure which the doctor is to undertake when all other cures (pleasant distractions, other women, floggings) have failed:

> Verdadera mente esta pasion es vna especie de melancolia. E final mente si otro consejo no tuuieremos, fagamos el consejo de las viejas: porque ellas la disfamen & la desonesten en quanto pudieren, que ellas tienen arte sagaz para estas cosas mas que los ombres. E dize Auicena que algunos son que se gozan en oyr las cosas fediondas & las que no son licitas. Por ende busque se *vna vieja de muy feo acatamiento con grandes dientes & baruas & con fea & vil vestidura: & traya debaxo de si vn paño vntado con el menstruo de la muger*. & venga al enamorado & comiençe a *dezir mal* de su enamorada: *diziendo le que es tiñosa & borracha & que se mea en la cama* & que es epilentica: & fiere de pie & de mano: & que es corrompida: & que en su cuerpo tiene torondos, especial mente en su natura: & que le fiede el fuelgo & es suzia: & diga otras muchas fealdades: las quales saben las viejas dezir: & son para ello mostradas. E si por aquestas fealdades non la quisiere dexar, saque el paño de la sangre de su costumbre de baxo de sy: & muestre

> gelo subita mente delante su cara: & de le grandes bozes diziendo: 'mira que tal es tu amiga commo este paño.' E si con todo esso non la quisiere dexar, ya no es omne salvo diablo encarnado enloquecido: e dende adelante, pierdase con su locura.[4]

This passage suggests that in the medical context the vulgar parody of Bernart's song can be defended as *utile*.[5]

As we read Gordonius' final and most radical cure for the disease of love we note first of all how much it shares, in the foulness and vividness of its description of the love object, with the Old Provençal poem. We may signal the overall theme of biological processes gone awry and, more specifically, the appearance of bed-wetting in both texts. The likeness becomes still more striking when we examine some variants in the poem. In a second manuscript which includes this gem, the fifth line ('D'una orrida sangnenta') reads 'D'una velha merdolenta'.[6] Still more intriguing is the fact that the 'velha' (or 'orrida'), in addition to being bloody (presumably with menstrual blood), rails at the poet ('que tot jorn m'escarnís'). Could her 'escarnho' of the poet be on the same topic that the *viejas* in Gordonius' text employ to cure lovesick youths?

Both texts also play upon the implicit lesson that as the 'velha' is now, so too, one day, will be the woman who is the object of such mad passion. In a move which we shall see again later in this study, the beloved is, in effect, transformed into the *velha*. In Gordonius' text, the *velha*, in addition to describing in lurid detail the secret flaws of the beloved, represents in her own person the final way of all flesh. In the Provençal poem, this transformation is worked out through the imagination of the lover himself: 'vejaire m'es qu'eu senta'. It is the quintessential Proustian experience *a lo obsceno*.

I conclude that pornographic poems such as the parody of Bernart de Ventadorn can possess redeeming social importance in the medieval context: they may serve to dissuade a lovesick youth from an obsessive and damaging love. That is, they may save him from precisely the sort of love portrayed, and advocated, in the courtly lyric which has, in turn, generated this parodic poem. Indeed, as the courtly love lyric details the psychological processes behind and the progress of one man's love illness, so this poem might be seen as a similar portrayal of the lover's cure.

But we can go beyond this, I think. In a total reversal of our own system of values, the bawdy poem comes down on the side of sanity while the courtly love poem, the *canso*, emerges on the side of madness, diabolic possession, and the loss of the soul. Thus, if we accept the *canso* as a lyric narration of an obsessive love, and if we grant the medieval doctors their belief that in real life this obsession is a dangerous disease which must be cured, and if we accept the doctors' assertion that such graphic descriptions are effective cures, then we have no choice but to agree that pornographic poems such as the one cited here can serve a function, can be considered as *utile* within the literary and social system in which they operate.[7]

The idea that obscene literature participates fully in the overall moral and moralizing goals of medieval literature may trouble us at first. We may prefer to see this literature as a rebellion against these very goals. And yet the description of the foulnesses of the human body, and especially of the female human body, is one of the great commonplaces of medieval Christian literature. Graphic description finds

its place, not only in pornographic and medical literature, but in the works of the moralists as well: the *Libro de miseria d'omne* (see especially stanzas 1–71) and the writings of Ramon Llull are two places which come to mind immediately.[8] I think there is strong reason, then, to believe that certain types of 'obscene' literature may have served on some occasions the same ethical purpose so commonly mentioned in *accessus* and moralizing literature: that of dissuading the reader from illicit, damaging and ultimately damning behaviour.

This brings us to my second point: that bawdy literature helps us get a glimpse of the inner workings of that grinding intertextual mill which is medieval literature in its totality. We have just seen how courtly literature generates its opposite, an obscene poem which is also a *remedium amoris*. The second example is a few lines from the most famous poem in the Provençal corpus together with a burlesque and bawdy *razo* which it has generated.

Can vei la lauzeta mover
de joi sas alas contra.l rai,
que s'oblid'e.s laissa chazer
per la doussor c'al cor li vai . . .

RAZO

. . . E apelava la B[ernart] 'Alauzeta,' per amor d'un cavalier que l'amava, e ella apelet lui 'Rai.' E un jorn venc lo cavaliers a la duguessa e entret en la cambra. La dona, que.l vi, leva adonc lo pan del mantel e mes li sobra.l col, e laissa si cazer e[l] lieg. E B[ernart] vi tot, car una donzela de la domna li ac mostrat cubertamen; e per aquesta razo fes adonc la canso que dis: Quan vei l'alauzeta mover . . .[9]

The *razo* is certainly not, as Boutière/Schutz would have it, 'un essai d'interpretation, fort maladroit, des trois premiers vers de la pièce.'[10] Rather, it is a revealing example of the medieval intertextual machine at work. The moves which go on here both parody and complement another section of the machine: that section which would transform texts as diverse as the Bible and the *Metamorphoses* of Ovid into allegories of divinely revealed history. Here, we see an opposite motion. In place of an allegorical reading, or perhaps, better, as another form of allegory, we have what we might call a 'hypo-allegorical' reading of the poem.[11] The hypo-allegorical reading stolidly strips the poem of all its lyric richness, refusing to be led into metaphoric flights of fancy. This does not mean that the *razo* strips the poem of metaphor, however. It merely means that the *razo* seeks the lowest possible level of metaphor: the 'wings' are not the literal wings of the lark, for example, but rather the metaphorical wings of Alauzeta's cloak which she moves against her lover Rai. And the very courtly tradition which the *razo* is spoofing can serve as a source of hypo-allegory. Shouldn't any reader of the courtly lyric be convinced that 'Alauzeta' and 'Rai' are the *senhals* of two lovers?

More interesting, however, is the way in which the *razo* begins to challenge the innermost workings of the lyric form itself, to expose them. In the poetics of the hypo-allegorical reading, the first-person lyric point of view, which in the traditional *canso* is considered to be a *sine qua non* of the genre, must also have its careful justification. 'Quan vei' requires a literal explanation of just how it was that Bernart was able to witness this scene. In the course of the hypo-allegorical reading,

that which is taken for granted about the lyric, can no longer be taken for granted. It, too, must be explained. In the process, the courtly poet is reduced to the rôle of envious voyeur.[12]

One final point about this *razo*: in the first poem we saw how the language of Bernart's *canso* generated a new lyric, driven by Bernart's original rhyme scheme, the irresistible parody of fresh breezes (and of the poet's own ventositous last name), together with a relentless search for the most grotesque and scatological imagery possible. In the *razo*, the lyric generates another generic form: a prose narrative.[13] From the lyric about the lark dancing on the air, the author of the *razo* has produced a little bawdy tale, complete with conniving damsels, lustful ladies and impotent, voyeuristic love poets.

When we turn to the literature of the Iberian peninsula we find further examples of the power of lyric to generate narrative. But the lyric poetry in question is not the high courtly lyric. Rather it is the Galician-Portuguese *cantiga d'escarnho*, and specifically those *cantigas d'escarnho* which take delight in bawdy *double entendre*. Before looking at an example, it is worthwhile to explore a rare case in which 'literary theory' is applied to bawdy literature. I am referring to the fourteenth-century *arte de trobar* which is found at the beginning of the *Cancioneiro Colocci-Brancuti*:

> Cantigas d'escarnho son aquelas que os trobadores fazen, querendo dizer mal dalguen, en dizer-lho per palavras encubertas que ajan dous entendimentos, pera lhe-lo non entenderen ligeiramente; e estas palavras chaman os clerigos *equivocatio*. Estas cantigas se poden fazer outrossi de meestria ou de refrã. E pero que algũus dizen que á i algũas cantigas de joguete d'arteiro, estas non son mais ca d'escarnho nen an outro entendimento; pero er dizen que outras á i de risadilha (ms. risaoelha), estas ou seeran d'escarnho ou de mal dizer, e chaman-lhes assi por que rien ende a vezes os omes, mais non son cousas en que sabedoria nen outro ben aja.
>
> Cantigas de mal dizer son aquelas que fazen os trobadores descubertamente, e elas encerran palavras que queren dizer mal e non averan outro entendimento senon aquel que queren dizer chãamente. (Lapa, ix)

The text is important for it recognizes one of my two main points: that the language of medieval textual commentary can be applied to the sort of bawdy text we have been examining and that, indeed, the author of this fourteenth-century commentary saw the *cantiga d'escarnho* as subject to the same literary laws as the courtly *cantiga de amor*. Like the texts discussed by clerics, the *cantiga d'escarnho* works, through *equivocatio*, on the double meaning of certain words. In fact, it is a well-known cleric indeed who gives us a definition of *equivocatio*: 'est enim aequivocatio unius et eiusdem nominis diversa significatio' (St Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I.13.5).[14]

The following Galician-Portuguese poem represents a type of 'suggestive' literature different from that found in either of the previous examples. In the perversion of Bernart's courtly song, the images are all too clear. In the original song to the lark, the images are equally clear but have a double referent which, as experienced readers of love poetry, we can also identify confidently: the exalted (and depressed) state of the lover's heart. It is the task of the burlesque *razo* to

identify yet a third interpretation, the naughty scene which the poem is really about. In this Galician-Portuguese poem, on the contrary, nothing is very clear:

Un cavaleiro avia
ũa tenda mui fremosa,
que cada que nela siia,
assaz lh'era saborosa;
e un dia, pela sesta,
u estava ben armada,
de cada parte 'speçada
foi toda pela Meestra.

Na tenda non ficou pano
nen cordas nen guarnimento
que toda non foss' a dano,
pelo apoderamento
da Meestra, que, tirando
foi tanto pelo esteo,
que por esto, com' eu creo,
se foi toda [e]speçando.

A corda foi en pedaços
e o mais do al perdudo;
mais ficaron-lhi dous maços
por ond' o esteo é merjudo,
e a Meestra metuda
na grand' estaca, jazendo;
e foi-s' a tenda perdendo
assi como é perduda.

Per mingua de boo meestre
pereceo toda a tenda;
que nunca se dela preste
pera don nen pera venda,
ca leixou, con mal recado,
a Meestra tirar tanto
da tenda, que já en quanto
viva, seerá posfaçado.
(Conde de Barcelos; Lapa, 324, 2nd ed., 326)

The poem seems to be about a knight who has a tent (or a shop) which is well set up. A feminine entity, named la Meestra (is it another *senhal*?), is apparently responsible for its downfall by taking it over and pulling on the tent pole. In the third stanza the cord snaps, and 'almost everything else' is lost. She is left with two heaps (of merchandise?) and with the fallen tent pole lying at an angle across them. In the final lines of this stanza we see, perhaps, the tent, now poleless, settling slowly to the ground. Now we are told that the tent came down, 'per mingua de boo meestre', presumably the knight of the first stanza. Apparently he allowed, unwisely, the Meestra to pull on the tent so much that he will be a laughing stock for the rest of his life.

It is obvious that there is no literal reading of this poem. If it tells any clear story at all it is through reference to something outside itself, perhaps to a social context now lost to us. But I suspect that even if we knew all the circumstances, people and events referred to in the poem it would not clarify much.

It is also obvious that the poem does not tell a dirty *story*. That is, it does not narrate, as does the *razo* quoted above, a specific erotic event. We cannot plug in an erotic significance for the words of the poem (as we can with 'alas contra.l rai' above) and emerge with a satisfyingly suggestive narration. What is clear, however, is that there are a number of suggestive sexual references here. The 'esteio' is probably the male member on which the Meestra pulls too hard. A scenario of male impotence (exhaustion?) is perhaps narrated in the third stanza, but then how is it that the Meestra ends up lying on a stake? Could this represent some male rival? And what exactly does the 'tenda' itself represent?[15] The most we can say with certainty is that we seem to have to do here with a series of scattered erotic images suggesting male impotence and feminine sexual aggressiveness. This erotic poem is quite different from the first poem or even from the *razo*. We suspect the poem is obscene, but we can find no verifiable obscenities, nor can we construct a linear, erotic narrative.

Into this gap comes the author of the brief *razo* which follows the poem in the *Cancioneiro Colucci-Brancuti*:

> Esta cantiga de cima foi feita a un Meestre d'ordin de cavalaria, por que avia sa barragãa e fazia seus [filhos] en ela ante que fosse Meestre; e depois avia ũa tenda en Lisboa, en que tragia mui grande aver a guaanho; e aquela sa barragãa, quando lhi algũus dinheiros viinhan da terra da Ordem e que o Meestre i non era, enviava-os a aquela tenda, pera gaanharen com eles pera seus filhos; e depois tiraron ende os dinheiros da tenda e deron-nos en outras praças pera gaanharen con eles, e ficou a tenda desfeita; e non leixou poren o Meestre depois a barragãa. (Lapa, 481, 2nd ed., 484)

The knight of the poem, then, is a Meestre of a military order who has a concubine—this explains why the woman of the poem is called 'Meestra'. The *tenda*, it turns out, is indeed a shop, which, while the knight is off fighting the Moors, the concubine takes over, using its proceeds to support her bastard children. The 'tirar tanto da tenda' refers, not to her pulling on a tent but to her (and her sons') taking goods and money out of the shop. And in spite of her duplicity, we are told, the Meestre keeps her on as his concubine.

Now, of course, we are not really convinced that this totally unedifying little narration is what the poem is about either. Although it explains a few more elements than we have been able to explain previously, there are several inconsistencies. For one, in the poem, the knight seems to have been in the *tenda* when it fell apart. In the *razo* he is off fighting the Moors. We are hard pressed to know whether this narrative is really an explanation or is just another spoof: a pretended clarification which, in fact, serves only to highlight, although it in no way explains, the erotic suggestiveness of the rest of the poem by providing a sober, matter of fact *razo*. Again, here, as in the Provençal *razo*, although it is not so neatly linked to the lyric it claims to explain, a new text has been generated. As a narrative, it has its own internal logic. It can stand alone as an *exemplum* of clerical incelibacy and domination at the hands of a woman.

It is worthwhile to inquire just what it is about the poem which suggests to us that an obscene meaning lurks behind it. As in the case of Bernart's poem, the illusive qualities of the lyric genre in the Galician-Portuguese poem have invited the creation of an 'explanation', an exposition of the true events narrated behind the vague letter of the text. It is clear that in this *cantiga d'escarnho* we are dealing with a figurative reading. That is, when we discover that we can make no satisfactory sense of the literal text, we seek a figurative meaning behind the sign for words such as 'tent', 'pole', 'stake', or 'pull'. This is precisely the procedure which Augustine recommends in *On Christian Doctrine* (3.9), in a passage full of fine ironies in the context of our present subject:

> . . . you must be very careful lest you take figurative expressions literally. What the Apostle says pertains to this problem: 'For the letter killeth, but the spirit quickeneth'. That is, when that which is said figuratively is taken as though it were literal, it is understood carnally. Nor can anything more appropriately be called the death of the soul than that condition in which the thing which distinguishes us from beasts, which is the understanding, is subjected to the flesh in the pursuit of the letter. He who follows the letter takes figurative expressions as though they were literal and does not refer the things signified to anything else.[16]

It is clear here that in the Galician-Portuguese poem we are dealing, once again, with a sort of hypo-allegory. We are caught between the vague, literal sense and an obscene figurative sense. The *cantiga d'escarnho* sets up a counter-reading in which the values of Scriptural reading as outlined by Augustine are reversed. Here the literal text seems far less carnal than the figurative reading we draw from it.[17] But the unity of interpretation we achieve, even from our 'figural' reading is limited. We are left with a scattered assortment of erotic images which the *razo* seeks to counter by restoring a new 'historical' reading.

The scattered reading which results from our unvirtuous figural reading of the poem, however, is far more similar to the general run of biblical commentary than to the sustained literal explanation of the *razo*. That is, as in our substitution of parts of the male anatomy for such words as 'tent pole' or 'stake', we are driven by a general erotic theme which we presume is there and by the failure of the poem to make sense at the literal level, so too in biblical commentary a general moral or ecclesiological theme may lead to a loosely connected substitution of terms about this theme but not to any sustained allegorical narration.

Jeremiah 10:20 provides an example of the procedures of biblical interpretation, especially convenient because it includes several of the same images found in the Galician-Portuguese poem: 'Tabernaculum meum vastatum est, Omnes funiculi mei dirupti sunt, Filii mei exierunt a me, et non subsistunt. Non est qui extendat ultra tentorium meum, Et erigat pelles meas.'[18] The *glossa ordinaria* provides the standard reading of this verse: 'Plangit ierusalem tam facilem factam subuersionem suam'.[19] Hugh of St Cher, building no doubt on the traditional allegorical significance of Jerusalem as the Church, offers a 'mystical' reading of the passage in his own gloss, however:

> Sic autem et mystice deplorat ecclesia videns totius ruine sue esse causam peccata prelatorum, que dominum non quesierunt sed magis mundi gloriam

> et vanitatem. Que ecclesia vocat se tabernaculum quia in ea accipiuntur arma .s. sacramentorum et virtutum ad pugnandum contra diabolum . . . Dicit etiam funiculos suos dirutos, id est precepta et prohibitiones . . . His enim funiculis tenetur ecclesia ne cadat. Filii mei exierunt a me et non subsistunt: quia non sunt reuersi per penitentiam et cetera cum tamen dicatur prelatis.[20]

The tabernacle or tent is the Church, destroyed by the sins and vainglory of the prelates. The cords of the tent are, logically, those things which hold up the tent but which are now severed: precepts and prohibitions. The sons have left and do not survive because they have not returned to the Church through true penance. This too is the fault of the prelates.[21] In the same way that we have constructed a vague scene of 'male impotence and feminine sexual aggressiveness' around the events of the fall of the Meestre's tent (or shop) and an erotic theme we perceive there, so Hugh of St Cher has constructed his own scene of the destruction of the Church at the hands of prelates out of Jeremiah's oracle, using his own moral and ecclesiological themes as guide. The same moves which produce our immoral reading also produce Hugh's moral reading.

There is yet another series of texts in which I think a similar relation among lyric, narrative and hypo-allegory exists: the *serrana* episodes in the *Libro de buen amor* of Juan Ruiz, Archpriest of Hita. The four lyric *serranillas* are preceded by *cuaderna vía* narratives which seem to tell of the same encounter with a *serrana* described in the lyrics which follow but which differ from them in sometimes substantial ways in their recounting of events.[22]

It is clear, first of all, that Juan Ruiz is setting each of these narratives up as a first-person auto-*razo* for the lyric which follows, explaining, in the manner of the two *razos* we have discussed above, the 'historical' events which generated the lyric: 'fiz de lo que y passó las coplas deyuso puestas' (958d).[23] 'De quanto que pasó fize un cantar serrano, / éste deyuso escrito, que tienes so la mano' (996ab).

Let me first deal with the question of allegory or *double entendre* in these poems. We have seen that the mid-fourteenth-century author of the *arte de trobar* finds examples of clerical, i.e. learnèd *equivocatio* in the *cantigas d'escarnho*, including, presumably, those based on obscene *double entendre*. We also know that Juan Ruiz frequently asserts that there is an allegorical reading to his book, most notably at the beginning: 'Las del buen amor son razones encubiertas' (68a), or 'Do coidares que miente dize mayor verdat' (69a). And Juan Ruiz returns to his assertion of an allegorical reading for his text at the end:

> Fizvos pequeño libro de testo, mas la glosa
> non creo que es chica, ante es bien grand prosa,
> que sobre cada fabla se entiende otra cosa
> sin la que se alega en la razón fermosa. (1631)

These suggestions that the reader seek a hidden, higher sense to his book come at places in which we might expect them—exordium, conclusion—as guides to the interpretation of the *libro* which follows or precedes. I think it is very interesting, especially in light of the Galician-Portuguese *arte de trobar*, which associates *equivocatio* with *escarnho* and *mal dezir*, that one of the few other places he makes such assertions about his book is in the second *serrana* episode:

Rogóme que fincase con ella esa tarde,
ca mala es de amatar el estopa de que arde;
dixel'yo: 'Estó de priessa, ¡sí Dios de mal me guarde!'
Assañóse contra mí, resçelé e fui covarde.

Sacóme de la choça, e llegóme a dos senderos:
amos son bien usados e amos son camineros;
andé lo más que pud aína los oteros,
llegué con sol temprano al aldea de Ferreros.

D'esta burla passada fiz un cantar atal:
non es mucho fermoso, creo que nin comunal;
fasta que el libro entiendas, d'él bien non digas nin mal,
ca tú entenderás uno e el libro dize ál.
(984–86; italics mine)

We may ask ourselves what possible mistakes in interpretation (or *equivocatio*) we might fall into in reading these simple lyrics and the *cuaderna vía* narrations which accompany them. What is the 'book' saying that we will not understand? And what is it we might understand that might make us 'dezir mal' about the book? What indeed might be the 'other sense', the 'allegorical' sense, behind these lyrics?

Some interesting answers to these questions come in Monique de Lope's study, *Traditions populaires et textualité dans le 'Libro de buen amor'*.[24] She finds numerous erotic meanings for such apparently innocent terms as the *camino*, *sendero*, *fuego*, *pan*, not to mention far more obvious references such as *conejo*. Basing her interpretation on these references, de Lope evolves an erotic alter-text for the *serrana* episodes. But she points out that '. . . le sens érotique émerge souvent du discours sans présenter avec lui de cohérence, sans être rattaché par le moindre lien logique à ce qui est dénoté'.[25] The situation de Lope describes for the erotic references in the *serrana* episodes is remarkably similar to that we have discovered for the Galician-Portuguese *cantiga* of the *tenda* and in Hugh of St Cher's interpretation of Jeremiah's lament over the fall of his own tent. There are a series of scattered erotic (or moral) references which start to tell a tale but cannot be made to conform in any coherent way to the events narrated in the lyric. Could this be the other meaning that Juan Ruiz is referring to?

Lest we doubt that such a second, scattered erotic meaning is there, we need merely to read the stanza immediately preceding the one we have been discussing. We may ask ourselves just why the *serrana* shows the protagonist two paths. It seems to have little to do with the logic of the story itself. What might those two paths, both well-used, both passable, represent in the alter-text which Juan Ruiz asserts is present? What might the fact that he goes as fast as he can among the hills tell us about his choice of paths?[26]

We could, of course, go on with this, but for me the interesting question is the precise way in which Juan Ruiz is playing with his readers. When he says that we will understand one thing while the book says another does he mean that we are likely to miss the erotic *double entendres* he has scattered there? Is he, with all too typical disingenuousness, saying that we, the readers, have dirty minds and will no doubt be reading all sorts of naughty images into a text as pure as the driven snow of the Guadarrama? Or is there, in fact, another, more complex text discernible in

the *serrana* episodes which we may miss entirely? I hope to tie the various threads of this study together, by beginning to work out an answer to the question of just what this other text might be.

Some citations from the fourth and final of the *serrana* episodes can help us to answer this question:

> En el Apocalipsi Sant Joan Evangelista
> non vido tal figura nin de tan mala vista;
> a grand hato daría lucha e grand conquista:
> *non sé de quál diablo es tal fantasma quista.*
> . . . . . .
> el su pescueço negro, ancho, *velloso*, chico . . .
> . . . . . .
> *dientes anchos e luengos, asnudos e moxmordos,*
> las sobreçejas anchas e más negras que tordos:
> *¡los que quieren casarse, aquí non sean sordos!*
> . . . . . .
> Mayores que las mías *tiene sus prietas barvas*;
> *yo non vi en ella ál*, mas si tú en ella escarvas,
> creo que fallarás de las chufetas darvas;
> valdríasete más trillar en las tus parvas.
> *Mas, en verdat, sí, bien vi fasta la rodilla*:
> . . . . . .
> Más ancha que mi mano tiene la su muñeca,
> vellosa, pelos grandes, pero, non mucho seca . . .
> (1011–17 *passim*)
>
> A la deçida
> di una corrida,
> fallé una serrana
> fermosa, loçana
> e bien colorada
>
> Dixe yo a ella:
> 'Omíllome, bella.'
> (1024–25)

In discussing this episode, Monique de Lope has examined the fact that the narrative *cuaderna vía* section describes the grotesque ugliness of this most awful of all possible *serranas* while the lyric section refers to her as 'fermosa . . .' Continuing work previously carried out by James F. Burke, de Lope argues that the protagonist's sudden courtesy is not intended to be ironic, as many readers of the *Libro de buen amor* have understood it.[27] Rather, it is a reflection of folklore themes of the *serranas* as capable of disguising themselves as beautiful young women. What is being illustrated here, according to de Lope, in the puzzling contradiction between *cuaderna vía* and lyric sections, is the dual nature of this folkloric character.

It is not necessary to turn to folklore to find variations on this theme, however. We can find it in works as closely related to the *Libro de buen amor* as 'The Wife of Bath's Tale' and, most importantly, united with the Christian and moralizing goals

we have already suggested for such graphic descriptions of the grotesque hidden nature of the love object in the *femmina balba* scene of Dante's *Purgatorio 19*. And as we compare the verses I have selected with the description of *las viejas* brought in to describe the grim realities of the beloved's body to the love-sick patient we can see many parallels. Among the most obvious are the big teeth and 'barvas'.

But there are also more subtle and, I think, more interesting parallels: in the same way that the *serrana* must be loved by a devil, so, in Gordonius' text, the lover not cured by the *vieja*'s graphic description of his beloved is himself a 'diablo encarnado'. Is there some connection? Is there contained in this *serrana* episode the same sort of lesson about physical love which Gordonius hopes the *viejas* will teach his love-mad patient? Is, in fact, Juan Ruiz suggesting in his double, contradictory portrayal of the *serrana* as grotesque and 'fermosa' the same sort of contrast between the lover's imagination and reality (or between courtly *canso* and scatological parody) which we have discussed above? Is he suggesting, after the manner of the moralists, that the *serrana* is the grotesque reality which lurks behind 'el loco amor del mundo'?[28]

We may be tempted to reject this suggestion out of hand. Yet this becomes difficult when we consider line 1014d: '¡los que quieren casarse, aquí non sean sordos!' This is precisely the pose Juan Ruiz adopts when he is teaching a lesson. 'Dueñas, aved orejas, oíd buena lición, / entendet bien las fablas, guardatvos del varón' he says in 892ab. Or '. . . oya bien tu oreja' (162d), or, commenting on the treachery of 'estas viejas troyas', 'si as orejas, oyas' (699c and d).

The reference to the *Apocalypse* of St John may help us to resolve this problem: 'En el Apocalipsi Sant Joan Evangelista / non vido tal figura nin de tan mala vista' (stz. 1011ab). Clearly, the reference is here for more than the obvious comparison with the grotesque beasts which appear there. We note Juan Ruiz's play on precisely the literal/figural problem I have discussed above. It is vintage Juan Ruiz that he manages to set these two interpretative modes against each other using the word 'figure' itself. Does he mean it literally or figuratively? Is he suggesting that, like the beasts of the *Apocalypse*, the *serrana* figures something else?

However, it is the etymological sense of *apocalypse*—uncovering, 'revelation'—which is most intriguing here, for what follows is, in effect, a grotesque striptease. Following the initial description of the *serrana*'s charms, Juan Ruiz declares he has come to an end: 'yo non vi en ella ál' (1015b). But he suggests that if we scratch (the verb 'escarvar' suggests scratching mange) around on her we will find 'de las chufetas darvas' (1015bc), a phrase that has not yet been satisfactorily explained. Then, with the sort of smirking coyness he has shown on other occasions, Juan Ruiz tells us 'Mas, en verdat, sí, bien vi fasta la rodilla' (1016a).[29] There follows a further description of the *serrana*, more grotesque than the first, ending with the apocalyptic: 'dígote que non vi más nin te será más contado, / ca moço mesturero non es bueno para mandado' (1020cd).[30]

It seems to me that in this two-stage striptease an act of revelation is taking place, a revelation which links the episode most clearly to the didactic, literary and medical traditions we have been discussing. In Dante's *Purgatorio 19*, which I have already mentioned in reference to the *serrana* episodes, Virgil rips the siren's clothes, revealing to Dante a foulness which breaks her spell over him: 'L'altra prendea, e dinanzi l'apria / fendendo i drappi, e mostravami 'l ventre; / quel mi svegliò col puzzo che n'uscia' (19.31–33).[31]

But this is a single unveiling. In Gordonius we have, in a sense, two stages: first the *vieja* harangues the lover verbally, but when this fails she reveals the cloth soaked in menstrual blood: 'E si por aquestas fealdades non la quisiere dexar, saque el paño de la sangre de su costumbre de baxo de sy'. Llull's story of the honest lady also involves a double unveiling. First she shows herself to the lustful bishop in her *camisa* (see n. 8); then she removes the shift in order to reveal herself 'tota nua'. It is in the *Libro de miseria d'omne*, however, that the 'double unveiling' is treated in a way most similar to that found in the *Libro de buen amor*. In both *cuaderna vía* pieces, it is the narrator who, by his coy reluctance (and immediate acquiescence) to impart information to the reader, creates a two-stage revelation.

Las malezas d'esa sangre quiérovoslas recontar
las mieses que ella tañe nunca las dexa granar,
e las yerbas en que cae todas las faze secar;
otras naturas ha malas que me las quiero callar.

Dezir-vos-hé una d'ellas no.l querades olvidar:
quand la muger ha su flor, no.l querades trobejar,
ca si por[a] aventura estonce se empreñar
muchos nascen coxos, mancos e ciegos por adestrar.[32]

The revelation here, of course, is not that of the foulness or grotesqueness of an individual woman, but of a secret of Woman's nature. Nevertheless, I believe we can see in the works we have been discussing—the Provençal *graffito*, Gordonius, Llull, Dante, *Libro de miseria d'omne*—a whole loose cluster of images involving *viejas* with *barvas* and the revelation of the various foulnesses of the beloved's body, especially menstrual blood, used as a means to dissuade the reader from earthly passion. And, although Juan Ruiz does not seem to suffer the almost pathological preoccupation with menstrual blood, I think his debt to this tradition in the *serrana* episodes is also clear.[33]

I would submit, then, that the reading of the *serranillas* and accompanying *cuaderna vía* narrations as part of a specific programme of dissuasion from the 'loco amor de este mundo' makes perfect sense. In suggesting to readers (perhaps they are clerics) who 'want to get married' that they listen to his description of the *serrana* with particular care, Juan Ruiz is taking the rôle we have seen Gordonius assign to *las viejas*.[34] In revealing in lengthy and graphic detail the grotesqueness of the *serrana* he is seeking to dissuade them from a careless, enslaving and destructive earthly love.[35]

NOTES

1 *Spanish Literary Historiography: Three Forms of Distortion* (Exeter: Univ. of Exeter, 1967), 20.

2 *Cantigas d'escarnho e de mal dizer dos cancioneiros medievais galego-portugueses* (n.p.: Editorial Galaxia, 1965), 42, general note. Future citations to this edition will be included parenthetically in the text. There is a second edition (1970) which lacks the original preface. In citations not found in this preface, I include parenthetical references to the second edition as well, when they differ from the first edition.

It seems to me that one of the most interesting (or disturbing) things about 'obscene' literature is that it is one of the few types of medieval literature which retains its power to move us directly, with

an immediacy that the medieval love lyric or even the religious lyric rarely matches. This type of literature is dangerous, for it threatens scholarly objectivity and, by its very timelessness, takes away the comfortable lens of history.

3 Pierre Bec, *Burlesque et obscénité chez les troubadours* (Paris: Stock, 1984), 173–75. Bec gives the following translation of the text on the right: 'Quand le pet du cul vente / D'oú ma Dame chie et vesse, / Il semble que je sente / Une puanteur de pisse / D'une horrible saignante / Qui toujours de moi se raille, / Qui est plus riche en pets / Que de maravédis, / Et quand elle est couchée sur sa pisse, / Elle put plus que toute autre serpente' (175). It is interesting to note that the first line represents an *emendatio ope 'ingenii'* by Bec (and other editors) from 'pel de cul' to 'petz de cul'. The rules for editing serious texts apply to obscene texts as well: 'Nous acceptons . . . l'émendation proposée de *petz*, en relation sémantique avec le verbe *ventar*, et le vers 7' (175, n. to l. 1).

4 Bernardus Gordonius, *Lilium Medicinae* (1300), ed. of 1495, after Dennis P. Seniff, 'Bernardo Gordonio's *Libro de medicina*: A Possible Source of *Celestina*?', *Celestinesca*, X, (1986), 13–18 (at p. 16). On Gordonius, see Luke E. Demaitre, *Doctor Bernard de Gordon: Professor and Practitioner*, Studies and Texts 51 (Toronto: Institute of Medieval Studies, 1980). There is a growing bibliography on *amor hereos*. John Livingston Lowes, '"The Loveres Maladye of Hereos"', *MP*, XI [1913–14], 491–546, is generally considered the seminal modern contribution, but see the earlier article by Hjalmar Crohns: 'Zur Geschichte der Liebe als "Krankheit"', *AKG*, III (1905), 66–86. The first Hispanist to deal with the topic in medieval Castilian letters, so far as I know, was F. A. de Armas ('*La Celestina*: An Example of Love Melancholy', *RR*, LXVI [1975], 288–95). For Golden-Age Castile see John Thomas Cull, *Love Melancholy in the Spanish Pastoral Novel* (Diss., U of Illinois-Urbana, 1984); John Dagenais, 'El amor y el proceso creador en Lope de Vega', *Anuario de Letras*, XXI (1983), 223–36; and Daniel L. Heiple, 'The "Accidens Amoris" in Lyric Poetry', *Neophilologus*, LXVII (1983), 55–64. Mary Frances Wack has recently devoted several useful studies to the topic. See n. 7.

5 In its acknowledgement that there are some people who take delight in hearing filthy and illicit things, Gordonius' text also gives us the beginnings of what Glending Olson has called the 'recreational justification' for literature (*Literature as Recreation in the Later Middle Ages* [Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell U.P., 1982], especially 90–127). If Avicenna is correct, obscene literature may provide *delectatio* as well as *utilitas*.

6 Bec (175, n. to l. 5) proposes another emendation—'d'una velha sagnenta'—which brings us still closer to Gordonius' text.

7 On the relation between these medical texts and the 'real world' see Mary Frances Wack, 'The *Liber de heros morbo* of Johannes Afflacius and its Implications for Medieval Love Conventions', *Speculum*, LXII (1987), 324–44. Although most students of *amor hereos* in literature have tended to take the medical texts as merely an extension of themes found in the love literature of the Middle Ages (a view certainly encouraged by Gordonius' frequent citation of Ovid), Wack argues that *amor hereos* was perceived as a genuine disease which physicians interested in the health of their patients sought to cure. 'When these "symptoms" [of love madness] then appeared in literary texts, a work such as the *Liber de heros morbo* may have enabled audiences to construe the ambiguous play of literary conventions . . . in light of technical and pragmatic knowledge. Literary love conventions need not have remained a self-enclosed, self-referential aesthetic game once medical diagnoses had revealed their applicability to the real world of passion and death' (343).

8 For the *Libro de miseria d'omne*, see the edition by Jane E. Connolly, *Translation and Poetization in the Quaderna Vía: Study and Edition of the Libro de Miseria d'Omne* (Madison: Hispanic Seminary of Medieval Studies, 1987), discussed below. There are many such passages in Llull's works. Perhaps the most well-known (because it later became a part of Llull's own legendary biography) is the story of the lustful bishop who is cured when the woman whom he is pursuing reveals to him her 'camisa, que era sutza de sutzetat vergonyosa a nomenar' (Ramon Llull, *Obres essencials*, 2 vols. [Barcelona: Editorial Selecta, 1957–1960], I.427 [*Libre de meravelles* Book VIII, Chapter 71].

One of my favourite examples of the use of the foulness of the beloved's body as a means of dissuasion from earthly passion appears in Juan Luis Vives' treatise *De Institutione Foeminae Christianae* (1523) (see *Opera*, 2 vols. [Basel, 1555]). Vives recommends to all young women the example of a Barcelona woman who adopts a gentle but effective version of the doctor's final cure for the disease of love: 'Fuit Barcini [femina], quae ut amatorem suum perditum ad mentem reuocaret, brassicas putres sub axillis aliquandiu tenuit. Edit item brassicas crudas, et propius ad amatorem

accedens, tanquam secretum colloquium expetens, teterrimo illo foetore in perpetuum ab se illum absterruit, ac fugauit' (Vives, *Opera* 2,688). Such techniques, of course, had long before formed the basis of Ovid's *Remedia amoris*.

9 J. Boutière, A. H. Schutz *et al.*, *Biographies des troubadours: Textes provençaux des XIIIe et XIVe siècles*, 2nd ed. (Paris: Nizet, 1973), 29.

10 *Ibid.*, p. 29, n. 1. See Judson B. Allen, 'Commentary as Criticism: Formal Cause, Discursive Form, and the Late Medieval Accessus', in *Acta Conventus Neo-Latini Lovaniensis: Proceedings of the First International Congress of Neo-Latin Studies (Louvain 23–28 August 1971)*, ed. J. Ijsewijn and E. Kessler (Munich: Fink, 1973), 29–48 (36–37), for interesting comments on the 'literalism' of certain medieval readings and how they eventually produce new texts.

11 Throughout this study I use the term 'allegory' in the basic Isidorean sense: 'Allegoria est alieniloquium. Aliud enim sonat, et aliud intellegitur. . . . Huius tropi plures sunt species, ex quibus eminent septem: ironia, antiphrasis, aenigma, charientismos, paroemia, sarcasmos, astysmos' (Isidore of Seville, *Etimologías*, ed. José Orozco Reta, 2 vols. [Madrid: Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos, 1982], I,37.22). This general meaning should not be confused with the more limited role of 'quid credas' which the term 'allegory' took in traditional biblical exegesis.

12 Indeed we must take Boutière/Schutz to task again, for it is clear that the bawdy tale of Bernart's voyeurism refers to the entire first stanza, not just to the first three lines: 'Can vei la lauzeta mover / de joi sas alas contra.l rai, / que s'oblid'e.s laissa chazer / per la doussor c'al cor li vai, / ai! tan grans enveya m'en ve / de cui qu'eu veya jauzion, / meravilhas ai, car desse / lo cor de dezirer no.m fon' (Martín de Riquer, *Los trovadores*, 3 vols. [Barcelona: Editorial Planeta, 1975], I,384–85).

13 For a larger view of this process see Elizabeth Wilson Poe, *From Poetry to Prose in Old Provençal: The Emergence of the Vidas, the Razos, and the Razos de trobar* (Birmingham, Alabama: Summa Publications, 1984).

14 Cited in *Lexicon Latinitatis Medii Aevi*, ed. Albert Blaise (Turnholt: Typographi Brepols, 1975), under 'aequivocatio'. The Galician-Portuguese *arte de trobar* also allows me to continue my argument that *escarnho*, even in its more obscene examples, was somehow thought to be useful. In contrasting the *cantigas de joguete d'arteiro* and the *risadilha* with the *cantigas de escarnho* and the *cantigas de mal dezir*, the author says that the former contain 'no wisdom or any other good'. This seems to me to imply that the latter two types of *cantiga* are themselves seen as containing some wisdom and good.

15 The 'tent' does have a long history of erotic significance in Hispanic poetry. Ibn Quzman (d. 1160) uses the image quite explicitly in a *zajal* not at all far removed in spirit from the poem we are discussing: 'Hardly had I beheld that leg / And those two lively, lively eyes / When my penis arose in my trousers like a pavilion, / And made a tent out of my clothes' (James T. Monroe, *Hispano-Arabic Poetry: A Student Anthology* [Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1974], no. 26, ll. 43–46 [266]). I wish to thank Gail Dagenais for bringing this passage to my attention.

16 I cite the translation by D. W. Robertson, Jr., *On Christian Doctrine* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1958), 84.

17 The opposite situation is also accounted for by Augustine: '. . . a further warning must be added lest we wish to take literal expressions as though they were figurative. Therefore a method of determining whether a locution is literal or figurative must be established. And generally this method consists in this: that whatever appears in the divine Word that does not literally pertain to virtuous behavior or to the truth of faith you must take to be figurative' (OCD 3.14, *ed. cit.*, 87–88). The limits to which this principle could be pushed are seen in allegorizations of David's adultery with Bathsheba and his role in the death of Uriah, her husband. Pseudo-Bede (early twelfth century) declared David to be a figure of Christ, Bathsheba stood for the Church, and Uriah represented the devil (presumably he would try to come between Christ and His Church). Honorius of Autun amplified this figural reading by suggesting that Bathsheba's bathing (which led to David's crime) figured the baptism undergone by the faithful to cleanse them for their union with Christ. See A. J. Minnis, *The Medieval Theory of Authorship* (London: Scolar Press, 1984), 105.

18 I use *Biblia Sacra iuxta Vulgatam Clementinam Nova Editio*, eds. Alberto Colunga and Laurentio Turrado, 5th ed. (Madrid: Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos, 1977).

19 I use *Biblia Latina, cum Glossa Ordinaria Walafridi Strabonis et Interlineari Anselmi Laudunensis*, 4 vols. (Strassburg, 1481), III:g3v.

20 I use *Biblia Latina cum Postillis Hugonis de S. Charo*, 7 vols. (Basel, 1498–1504), IV:H3r.

I do not indicate abbreviations, transcribe the Tyronian *et* sign as 'et', and resolve 'e with a *cedilla*' in medieval fashion as 'e'.

21 Hugh's mystical interpretation appears to be quite applicable to the errant prelate of the Galician-Portuguese poem, and we note with interest that the exodus of the Meestre's sons appears in the *razo*, not in the poem itself. The *razo*, then, curiously, adds a detail which brings the devastation of the Meestre's tent into closer parallel with the biblical verse and its moral significance for prelates. The addition of this detail suggests strongly that Jeremiah's *escarnho* of Israel and medieval interpretation of it are yet one more referent in this already many-layered *cantiga d'escarnho*.

Allegories of tents were extremely popular in medieval Castile. Those secular allegories found in the *Libro de Alexandre* (2375–2431O) and the *Libro de buen amor* (1265–1301) no doubt drew part of their inspiration from the allegorical exposition of the tabernacle of Exodus 35–40. See, as a good illustration of the genre, the various Christian interpretations given in Alfonso's *General estoria, primera parte*, ed. Antonio G. Solalinde (Madrid: Junta para la Ampliación de Estudios e Investigaciones Científicas, 1930), I:484–88. Burgo de Osma, Ms. 82, contains, in addition to Peter of Poitiers' Psalm commentary (Fridericus Stegmüller, *Repertorium Biblicum Medii Aevi*, 11 vols. [Madrid: C.S.I.C., 1940–1980], no. 6783) which begins 'Facies mihi temptorium in introitu tabernaculi' (fol. 3r), a short treatise, written in what is probably a fourteenth-century Spanish hand entitled *Collectio legum mosaycarum*. This treatise (which I have not yet identified) also includes a brief exposition of the significance of the various parts of the tabernacle (2v). This manuscript is probably the one mentioned in the early fourteenth-century inventory of the cathedral library: 'Item otra summa teologie que incipit' 'facies mihi temptorium' (Timoteo Rojo Orcajo, 'Catálogo descriptivo de los códices que se conservan en la Santa Iglesia Catedral de Burgo de Osma', *BRAH*, XCIV [1929], 655–792; XCV [1929], 152–314 [at XCIV, 662]). That Peter of Poitiers uses the image of the tent as entrance to the tabernacle to write the prologue to his Psalm commentary may shed some light on Juan Ruiz's use of the term 'prólogo' in his own reference to Don Amor's tent: 'non quiero de la tienda más prólogo fazer' (1301d).

22 The bibliography of studies on the Archpriest's *serranillas* is too vast to cite here. In addition to the works I cite below, see Marina Scordilis Brownlee, 'Permutations of the Narrator-Protagonist Configuration: the *Serrana* Episodes of the *Libro de buen amor* in Light of the Doña Endrina Sequence', *Romance Notes*, XXII (1981), 98–101 (98–99), for a summary of the major critical positions taken on this section of the *Libro*.

23 I use the following edition for all citations from the *Libro de buen amor*: Juan Ruiz, *Libro de buen amor*, ed. and intro. Alberto Blecua, Clásicos Universales Planeta, 57 (Barcelona: Editorial Planeta, 1983). Future references will be included parenthetically in the text.

24 Montpellier: Centre d'Études de Recherches Sociocritiques, n.d.

25 *Ibid.*, 88.

26 De Lope also ponders why there are *two* paths: 'Mais pourquoi *deux* chemins, et non plus un? Ce n'est pas au niveau dénotatif qu'on y comprendra grand-chose.' She explains this mystery through reference to a Golden-Age poem in which 'la mention d'un grand nombre de chemins peut exprimer le nombre de fois que l'acte sexuel a été réalisé'. De Lope also passes along an explanation offered her by Jacques Joset: '. . . ces deux sentiers sont sans doute aussi une métaphore des deux voies, également naturelles, mais dont l'une est peccamineuse, de l'accès érotique à la "serrana" ' (108, n. 16).

27 James F. Burke, 'Juan Ruiz, the *Serranas* and the Rites of Spring', *JMRS*, V (1975), 13–35.

28 The controversy concerning the extent to which the lyric *serranillas* represent an 'idealization' of the events recounted in the *cuaderna vía* sections is the starting point for R. B. Tate's 'Adventures in the "sierra" ', in '*Libro de Buen Amor*' *Studies*, ed. G. B. Gybbon-Monypenny (London: Tamesis, 1970), 219–29. My reading, which finds significance in the juxtaposition itself of two contrasting images of the fourth *serrana*, is in clear opposition to that proposed by Tate: 'The purpose of each individual lyric is fairly clear, as is that of the sum total of the narratives, but juxtaposed they create no recognisably clear pattern other than that of exuberant variety' (227). My own position is that in a culture as fond of juxtaposition of opposites and contrasts as that of medieval Europe we must recognize juxtaposition itself as a form of signification, that is, we must consider (even if we find no clear textual links) the fact that Juan Ruiz or someone else placed these two forms together to be of significance. My study offers one possible explanation of what is being signified in the case of the fourth *serrana*. On the theme of juxtaposition and *serranas*, I note two poems by Carvajales which show similar thematic juxtaposition in the *Cancionero de Estúñiga*. The first is a *serranilla* with (to me) clear debts to Juan Ruiz's final *cuaderna vía* 'vestiglo'. The second

(also considered to be a *serranilla* by Nancy F. Marino, 'The *Serranillas* of the *Cancionero de Stúñiga*: Carvajales' Interpretation of this Pastoral Genre', *REH*, XV [1981], 43–57 [54]), immediately follows the first and describes another 'ninna loçana' full of 'fermosura natural' (cf. *LBA*, l. 1024d, cited above) seen bathing 'en una corte camisa' (*Cancionero de Estúñiga; Edición paleográfica*, eds. Manuel and Elena Alvar [Zaragoza: Institución 'Fernando el Católico', 1981], 273–74 [nos. 151–52], ll. 3, 7, and 6 [I regularize long 's']).

29 Cf. 161: 'Una tacha le fallo al amor poderoso, / la qual a vós, dueñas, yo *descobrir* non oso; / mas, porque non me tengades por dezidor medroso, / es ésta: que el amor sienpre fabla mentiroso' (italics mine). Still more germane to the topic under discussion is stz. 447ab: 'Tres cosas non te oso agora *descobrir*, / son tachas encobiertas, de mucho *maldezir*' (italics mine). Of course, Juan Ruiz gleefully reveals these *tachas* in the stanza immediately following, and the first of them (together with its link to things diabolic) is completely familiar by now: 'Guarte que non sea bellosa ni barbuda: / ¡atal media pecada el huerco la saguda!' (448ab).

30 Blecua translates 1020d as 'No te quiero relatar más, porque irás a contarlo por todas partes, cambiando mi relato'. It is interesting, then, to read these lines in the context of the epilogue to the vision of that other messenger, St John of Patmos (22:18–19): 'Si quis apposuerit ad haec, apponet Deus super illum plagas scriptas in libro isto. Et si quis diminuerit de verbis libri prophetiae huius, auferet Deus partem eius de libro vitae . . .'

31 I use the following edition: Dante Alighieri, *The Divine Comedy*, ed. and trans. Charles S. Singleton, 6 vols. (Princeton: Princeton U.P., 1973). Among other interesting parallels between Dante's dream vision and the *serrana* sequence are the coldness of the morning which forms the background of the episode ('Ne l'ora che non può'l calor diurno / intepidar più 'l freddo de la luna' [19.1–2]) and parallels the coldness of Juan Ruiz's *sierra*. There are verbal similarities as well. The *serena* introduces herself to Dante thus: '"Io son," cantava, "io son dolce serena, / che' marinari in mezzo mar dismago"' (19.19–20). The first *serrana* introduces herself, 'Yo só la Chata rezia que a los omnes ata' (952d). Although Burke does not cite Dante in evidence, I believe Dante's *serena* adds support to Burke's suggestion that Juan Ruiz was making a pun on the word 'siren' in these episodes (Burke 26–27). We should remember, too, that Dante is also in the 'sierra' in this passage and it is the month of March.

32 I use the edition by Connolly (see above n. 8), stanzas 36–37. I suppress italics used to indicate abbreviations in the edition and substitute a period for the raised dot.

33 If we agree that the 'two-stage' revelation is an essential part of the tradition to which Juan Ruiz is referring here, this becomes yet another argument for the presence of stanzas 1016–20, found in Ms. S but not in Ms. G, in the 'first redaction' of the *Libro*. On the question, see Joset's balanced note in his edition of the *Libro* (Clásicos Castellanos, 14 and 17, 2 vols. [Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1974] II,61, textual note 1016–20 and the bibliography cited there). See also the note to these lines in G. B. Gybbon-Monypenny's edition of the *Libro* (Madrid: Castalia, 1988), 323, n. 1016–20.

34 On the theme of clerical 'marriage' in the *Libro de buen amor* see Anthony Zahareas, 'Celibacy in History and Fiction: The Case of the *Libro de buen amor*', *I&L*, I (1977) No. 2, 77–82. See also his 'Structure and Ideology in the *Libro de buen amor*', *La Corónica*, VII (1979), 92–104, and Jesús Menéndez Peláez, *El Libro de buen amor: ¿ficción literaria o reflejo de una realidad?*, 2nd ed. (Gijón: Noega, 1980). All of this leads me to advance a reading of those delightful and vexing lines at the close of the Archpriest's book: 'Buena propiedat á, doquiera que se lea, / que si lo oye alguno que tenga mujer fea, / o si muger lo oye, que su omne vil sea, / fazer a Dios serviçio en punto lo desea' (stz. 1627). Without wishing to take away any of the fun of these lines, could we not also see them as referring to the man or woman who (in the course of reading the Archpriest's book) has seen through the veil of the flesh to the grotesque realities beneath and who has turned to the service of God? This reading gains in attractiveness when we see it as Juan Ruiz's own *remedium* to the situation he describes in stz. 404, in his 'pelea' with Don Amor: 'Fazes por *muger fea* perder omne apuesto, / piérdase por *omne torpe* dueña de grand repuesto' (italics mine). The version in Ms. G supports even more clearly the reading of stz. 1627 as a direct response to this stanza: 'pierde se por *vil* omne dueña de grant rrepuesto' (Juan Ruiz, *Libro de buen amor*, eds. Manuel Criado de Val and Eric W. Naylor, 2nd ed. [Madrid: C.S.I.C., 1972], 111; I suppress special signs and indication of abbreviations; italics mine).

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