EL DOCTOR MIRA DE AMESCUA

AN EXAMINATION OF HIS PLAYS WITH AN INTRODUCTORY BIOGRAPHICAL STUDY

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ABSTRACT

El doctor Mira de Amescua is one of the lesser known dramatists of Spain's tremendously fertile Golden Age. His dramatic works have received little critical attention, with the exception of El esclavo del demonio, which has been regarded as his best work since the nineteenth century. Mira was highly respected as a dramatist by his contemporaries, but none of them single out this play as being of exceptional quality. This study therefore examines the whole range of his dramatic production, except for his one-act, eucharistic drama (the autos), and three plays he wrote in collaboration with other dramatists.

The first chapter of the thesis is an introductory biographical study, which determines that Mira died in 1644 and was probably born no earlier than 1575. He appears to have been active as a dramatist, however, from before 1602 only until 1632; this period which is divided into two parts by a lengthy stay in Italy (1610-1616). The second chapter presents the evidence concerning the works that have been attributed to him, and lists the sixty-five extant works he probably wrote, dating tentatively about a third of them.

Mira's theater is examined according to a new classification which is presented in Chapter Three. The classification makes a fundamental distinction between the religious theater, in which the affairs of men are directly influenced by supernatural beings, and the secular theater, in which men are entirely responsible for their own actions. In a world in which God does not intervene, tragedy, tragicomedy, and comedy are possible.

A group of the religious plays, including El esclavo del demonio, deal with the relative importance of predestination and free-will in achieving salvation. These plays were probably written as a result of the controversy between the Jesuit Molina and the Dominican Báñez which took place during the earlier years of Mira's life. This subject is the only one that is not common to Mira's religious and secular plays.

The thesis examines the interaction between the inexorable progress of Fortune, a disembodied force which is allied to time

and death, and the necessity of a man's finding his real identity by knowing himself (conocerse) and gaining nobility by overcoming himself (vencerse). In the religious plays he must overcome the promptings of the devil and follow the way of God; in the secular plays he must overcome the promptings of his passions and follow the way of reason. In the last of his plays Mira emphasises that a man must fuse the virtues of the courtier and the Christian and be orderly (galán), brave (valiente), charitable (liberal), and prudent (discreto).

The thesis also examines Mira's presentation of tragedy, tragicomedy, and comedy, and traces the development of his dramatic techniques. In his mature works he fused the implicit duality of the interaction between his principal themes with his fondness for duality or multiplicity in his characterisation, language, and narrative technique, to produce finally a balanced and symmetrically patterned, but fully integrated, structure.

The development of Mira's technique is a microcosm of the development of the whole Golden Age theater, beginning with the rudimentary form of the end of the sixteenth century and ending with the sophistication of Rojas Zorrilla, Moreto and Calderón. It is not possible to state categorically that Mira was responsible for the way the Golden Age theater developed, because his mature works were produced during the two decades in which nearly all the well-known dramatists were writing (1615-1635). He is not of interest principally as an influence on the development of the Golden Age theater, however, for his best plays rank with the finest productions of the Spanish stage.

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INTRODUCTION

This examination of the plays of Mira de Amescua is the first serious attempt that has been made to study his theater as a whole. Mira has long been best known to scholars as the author of El esclavo del demonio, and the critical approach to his theater has been conditioned by that factor. While it is impossible to ignore completely the opinions of generations of critics, it will be seen that Mira was held in high esteem by his contemporaries, none of whom single out El esclavo del demonio as worthy of special praise.

There have been several studies written about other works by Mira, but the majority of them have concentrated on individual plays rather than on his whole theater. The principal exception is the study of Emilio Cotarelo y Mori (see below, p.8ff and p.38ff), which deals with all the plays that Cotarelo believed Mira to have written. Cotarelo's study is in the form of a catalogue and a large part of it consists of bibliographical information; although by no means exhaustive, it remains the most extensive and detailed treatment of the subject. I referred to it frequently while compiling the material presented in the second chapter of my thesis.

The critical parts of Cotarelo's study are less informative, for he accepts the critical attitude taken by Adolph Friedrich von Schack in the middle of the nineteenth century and by Theodor G. Ahrens in the beginning of the twentieth century. Schack made a savage attack on Mira both as a man and as a dramatist;[1] Ahrens was less violent but suggested that Mira's plays—in common with the rest of the Spanish Golden Age theater—were more interesting for their sociological value ("Ihre Wichtigkeit für die Kultur") than for their literary value ("Ihre literarische Bedeutung").[2] Cotarelo does not go to the extremes of either Schack or Ahrens, but neither does he make any significant alterations to their point of view.

The work of recent scholars has been more favorable to Mira, but any study of him must acknowledge the debts owed to the editions and accompanying studies of Ramón de Mesonero Romanos in the Biblioteca de Autores Españoles, Angel Valbuena Prat in

Clásicos Castellanos, and Claude E. Aníbal (see below, p. 38ff).

The first chapter of the thesis is an introductory study of the life of the dramatist. Such a study was considered essential for various reasons. The first of these was to establish the chronology of Mira's life so that he could be compared to his contemporaries. It is of fundamental importance to know that he was one of the older Golden Age dramatists, and was writing plays in the early infancy of Calderón, and perhaps even before the younger dramatist's birth. It is also of fundamental importance to know that although he lived until 1644, by which time many of Calderón's most important plays had been written, Mira appears to have retired from his literary pursuits twelve years earlier, in 1632.

A second reason for the biographical study was to discover if there were any events in Mira's life which may have had a significant influence on his theater. This proved to be the case, for there is a perceptible difference between the plays written before and after his stay in Italy (1610-1616). The real significance of this change cannot be fully appreciated, however, until further evidence concerning the dates of his plays appears. Also it is only possible at present to speculate on the reasons for this change, which could have been brought about by the intellectual climate of Naples, the influence of the Argensola brothers, a personal change of opinion, or by a combination of these reasons.

A third reason for the biographical study was to examine the relationship between Mira and the other writers of the period. I have collected as many contemporary opinions as possible in order to show what others thought of him. It was interesting to discover that he appears to have been on good terms with many of his contemporaries and to have been admired by them.

The final reason for the introductory study was a scholarly one. Once I had begun to investigate the details about his life which had been accepted as facts, I soon discovered that many were at best very doubtful and others were completely erroneous. I therefore decided to check the earliest sources I could find. Unfortunately I have not been able to add very much to the scanty

store of knowledge about Mira's life, because of the disappearance of the most fundamental document. I hope, however, that this study will place the life of Mira de Amescua into a truer perspective.

The first stage of the examination of the works of an author is to decide which works he wrote. In the second chapter of the thesis I present as succinctly as possible the available evidence concerning Mira's dramatic production; this evidence is presented in five tables. A sixth table uses the evidence in the first five tables and that of previous scholars to give as precisely as possible the chronology of Mira's plays. This table has two purposes: first it is useful as a supplement to the biographical study; second it was very useful in the production of the classification of the plays which is the subject of Chapter Three.

In the third chapter I present a new method of classification of the works of Mira de Amescua. It is not yet possible to state whether this method can be applied to all Golden Age dramatists, but it is certainly valid for the works of Francisco de Rojas Zorrilla as well as for those of Mira. There are a few of Mira's works which this classification does not take into consideration. First, those few plays that I was unable to obtain due to their inaccessibility. Second, three plays which Mira wrote in collaboration with other dramatists. It was impossible to include the first group in the classification because I had not read them, although El mártir de Madrid and El clavo de Jaël are clearly religious plays. It was impossible to include the second group because the classification depends upon the total narrative structure and in each case Mira wrote the first section of the play.

Chapters Four, Six, Seven, and Eight deal with the various categories listed in Chapter Three. The first group is the religious plays which are discussed in Chapter Four. The chapter does not discuss the autos for two reasons. In the thesis I am concerned with Mira's handling of the comedia form and, although his treatment of the auto may be similar at times, the auto is based on different criteria. Second, the form has been discussed in a recent thesis (see below, p. 62&95). In the chapter I

concentrate on two aspects of Mira's technique: theme and structure. I have examined in detail the theme of salvation which does not recur in the secular drama. I concentrated on the structure of the religious plays, because these are on the whole apprentice works, and, although they contain some fine sections, they must be regarded as being experimental works in which Mira was testing situations, techniques and combinations. The principal weakness of the religious plays is structural but they do provide clear indications of the way Mira was to develop in his theater.

Chapter Five is different from the chapter that precedes it and from the three that follow it. In the chapter I describe three aspects of the technique of Mira de Amescua. The first of these is the theme of Fortune. I have discussed this theme in a separate chapter because it plays such a prominent part in the secular theater of Mira de Amescua—and to a lesser extent it can also be found in the religious theater. Mira's presentation of the theme is not greatly different from that of his contemporaries—indeed the theme is one of the great commonplaces of the literature of the period. Finally, Mira's presentation of the theme does not vary significantly between the three groups of secular plays, and the theme provides a necessary background to his secular theater.

The chapter also describes briefly two other aspects of Mira's technique, which are common to all the plays. The characterisation and the language are fundamental aspects of a dramatic work and they are both subjects which deserve a much fuller treatment, and indeed they both provide sufficient material for separate studies. In the chapter I have therefore concentrated on the most outstanding features of both the characterisation and the language, and, especially, the features which have a bearing on the structure of the plays. Mira's use of double or twin characters, and of the figures and tropes of rhetoric reveal the interest that he had in the ambiguity of the world.

In Chapters Six, Seven, and Eight I examine Mira's tragedies, tragicomedies, and comedies. I pay special attention in the chapters to the thematic content of the secular plays. The theme of identity and nobility forms a counterpart to that of Fortune,

but it varies slightly between the various groups of plays. In the tragedies men are seen as being incapable of finding self-knowledge and succumb to Fortune, whereas in the comedies they are capable of overcoming both themselves and Fortune. The heterogeneous tragicomedies sometimes appear to be tragedies in which Fortune is benevolent, sometimes appear to be comedies in which Fortune is malevolent, and at least once—in La rueda de la Fortuna, an early secular play—the themes of Fortune and identity, and the genres of tragedy and comedy appear to be in perfect balance.

In Chapter Six I pay special attention in my interpretation of the plays to the tragic flaws in the characters of the heroes: it is these flaws which interact with Fortune to cause the tragic catastrophes.

In Chapter Seven I pay special attention in my interpretation of the plays to the ways in which the tragicomedies are resolved. This is achieved either through the plot or the language. In the first case something happens fortuitously and a catastrophe is avoided; in the second case the catastrophe is avoided by the ingenious language of one of the characters. I also pay special attention in the chapter to the way in which an image or a theme is used to link together apparently disparate and unconnected elements; the title of the play frequently being the key to the image or the theme.

In Chapter Eight I pay special attention in my interpretation of the plays to the way Mira combines elements of his characterisation, elements of his language, and elements of his narrative so as to produce a patterned or symmetrical structure. In the last of his plays, Mira employed his fondness for double characters, rhetorical figures and tropes, parallel situations, with the themes of Fortune and identity and nobility and forged them into an elaborately patterned and carefully integrated unit.

In Chapter Nine I present my conclusions about the theater of Mira de Amescua. Throughout the thesis, but, especially, in this chapter, I refer to the other Golden Age dramatists. A more detailed study of Mira's relations with them and the

influences they had on each other would be very illuminating, but it was not possible to undertake such a study for three reasons. First, there was too little known about Mira's technique to form a sound basis for such a study. Second, because of the scarcity of plays whose precise dates are known, such a study would have to be based to a large extent on conjecture, since it is frequently impossible to know who exerted influence on whom. Finally, the amount of material already in my thesis would have meant that the inclusion of such a study would have swelled it to monumental proportions.

For the reasons given above, this thesis is intended to examine the plays of Mira de Amescua so as to gain a clearer insight into his dramatic technique and the way it developed, and I hope that my conclusions will help measure more accurately his dramatic achievement and his place in Golden Age Literature.

NOTES TO INTRODUCTION

[1] *Geschichte der dramatischen Literatur und Kunst in Spanien* (Frankfurt am Main, 1854), II, 456-7.

[2] *Zur Charakteristik des spanischen Dramas im Anfang des XVII. Jahrhunderts* (Ph. D. thesis, Halle-Wittenberg, 1911), p. 10.

CHAPTER ONE: BIOGRAPHICAL STUDY

Antonio Mira de Amescua was born in the city of Guadix, in the province of Granada. He was the illegitimate son of a member of one of the principal families of the city. Because he was born into such a family much is known about his forbears; because he was illegitimate many of the facts surrounding his birth and early years are shrouded in mystery. The fullest account of his life is to be found in Emilio Cotarelo y Mori's article 'Mira de Amescua y su teatro,'[1] which is based on articles by Fructuoso Sanz[2] and Torcuato Tárrago.[3] These were in turn based on an Expediente de pruebas de limpieza de sangre which both men had discovered independently in the archives of the cathedral at Guadix.

A careful examination of this expediente would certainly throw light upon some of the mysteries. Unfortunately this document has disappeared from the archives in Guadix.[4] It is to be hoped that, one day, it will reappear. In spite of the lack of this fundamental document, it is still possible to throw into relief some of the mysteries by a close examination of Cotarelo y Mori's text and sources.

Because of the dramatist's irregular birth, the names by which he is known—Mira de Amescua—are not the usual combination of paternal and maternal surnames. He adopted both of his father's names, rather than his mother's, which were Torres Heredia.[5] The fact that he did not adopt the usual combination of names is not unusual during this period in Spain.[6]

The form and spelling of the name—Mira de Amescua—have been accepted by all critics since the comments on Mira's life and death by Rodríguez Marín in his life of Pedro Espinosa.[7]

Rodríguez Marín in his Pedro Espinosa (pp. 91-2note) talks of the Amescua family:

> Llámole Amescua, y no Mescua, como comúnmente se le nombra, porque él firmaba de aquella manera. El apellido parece haberse originado del nombre de un río de Navarra, que lo da a dos pueblos: Amescoa Alta y Amescoa Baja.

This was quoted by Cotarelo y Mori (p. 468) and Rodríguez Marín's statement is confirmed by Gonzalo Argote de Molina in his monumental Nobleza de Andalucía. The following quotation from this work may also furnish further evidence to support Mira's authorship of La próspera fortuna de don Alvaro de Luna y adversa de Ruy López de Avalos. Argote de Molina writes in Chapter CXCIX:

> Era el Alcayde Pero Díaz de Navarrete muy privado del Condestable D. Ruy López Dávalos y fue Lugarteniente de Adelantado de la Frontera[y Alcayde de Xodar] . . . . Entre los descendientes deste Alcayde de Xodar, fue uno Garci Fernández de Navarrete. . . ; fue capitán de infanteria en la conquista del reino Nápoles. . . , donde fue muy estimado. Casó en Baeza con Inés de Amescua, hija de Diego de Amescua, linage muy antiguo en aquella ciudad, cuyos pasados fueron señores de la Dehesa, que hoy se llaman de Amescua. Y tuvieron su enterramiento en la capilla mayor de la iglesia catedral, al lado de la Epístola. Cuyo linage fue tan noble, que en el año de mil y cuatro-cientos y treinta y siete, el concejo de Baeza hizo gracia a Sancho Díaz de Amescua de ayuda de costa, atento que era hijodalgo y natural della, y de buen linage viejo, pobre. Su solar es en el reyno de Navarra, la casa de Amescua, que le dio apellido, de la cual fue Garci Ximénez cavallero de los más principales de las montañas de Navarra, señor de la casa de Amescua y Abazurza, que según refieren historias antiguas, fue electo año de setecientos y diez y seis por el rey de Navarra, como hace memoria Estevan de Garivay en el capítulo 7 del libro veinte y uno de su historia. . . . El capitán Francisco de Amescua Navarrete, Regidor de Guadix, fue primero alférez de Antonio Moreno el Viejo, y después capitán de infantería en Italia y en la jornada de Ungría.8

This passage reveals at least four things worth remembering. First, Mira de Amescua's family was connected, however remotely, with Ruy López de Avalos: the connection may seem tenuous, but it would not be improbable that family tradition should be that the Amescuas regarded themselves as belonging to the party of Ruy López (see below, p. 194). Second, it confirms what Rodríguez Marín has to say concerning the connection of the name of Amescua with Navarre (see above, p. 8). Third, it makes plain that the Amescuas were an extremely old and highly regarded noble family. Finally, the fact that Francisco de Amescua Navarrete was regidor of the city of Guadix confirms that this was the family to which the Amescuas belonged.9

The next mention of the family appears to be in the Expediente de pruebas de limpieza de sangre, which is described as fully as is possible in the Appendix.[10] On Mira's father's side the report goes back three generations and reveals that Mira's great-grandfather was Juan de Mira "criado de los Reyes Católicos y uno de los conquistadores de las ciudades de Baza y Guadix."[11] This last named event took place on 4-5th December 1489. Juan de Mira married Marina Páez de Sotomayor and "ambos tuvieron repartimiento de casas y tierras en el que los reyes hicieron de aquella ciudad." (Sanz, p. 568). The child of this marriage was Antonio Mira, "hombre pequeño y gotoso" (Sanz, p. 568), who left Baza to marry Luisa de Amescua, and the couple lived in Guadix.

Antonio Mira and Luisa de Amescua had three children: a son, Melchor, and two daughters, Isabel and María. None of the three ever married, but Melchor became the father of the dramatist, Antonio. The witnesses state that Juan de Mira (the dramatist's grandfather) died between 1564 and 1570 and that his wife had pre-deceased him by two years. Sanz quotes the opinions of some of the witnesses to show the status of the dramatist's family:

> Por parte de los Amescua, tiene en esta ciudad de Guadix muchos deudos muy principales y caballeros con este dicho apellido (Sanz, p. 569).
>
> Por parte de los Mira estaba el electo Arcediano emparentado con las principales y más nobles familias de Baza (Sanz, p. 569).
>
> He visto comunicarse al Melchor y al doctor Mira de Amescua, y tratar como parientes con don Francisco de Peralta y don Diego de Espinosa y Andrés de Veas (Sanz, p. 569).
>
> Han sido reputados los Miras y Amesquas y tenidos assí mismo de caballeros de lo más principal desta ciudad y en ella están emparentados con los mejores y de los más principales, como son Salazares, Pérez de Espinosa, Santolallas, Peraltas, Veas y assí muchos otros(Sanz, p. 569).

The maternal genealogy of Mira de Amescua is less clear if, apparently, equally illustrious. He was descended from don Francisco Heredia and doña Francisca Morales. The former

was a native of Berja in the Alpujarras of Granada and was a brave soldier:

> Mereció que el rey le nombrara alcaide de la fortaleza de Salobreña y gobernador, como es público y notorio, en esta tierra y en toda esta costa, y fue capitán de la gente de a caballo de esta villa, de Adra y su partido, hasta que murió. . . en la noche de navidad del año 1567 ó 68 que fue la rebelión de los moriscos (Sanz, p. 570).

One of the witnesses describes the valiant death of the captain:

> Murió a manos de los moros en defensa de la santa fe católica y de la jente desta villa cuando los moriscos se alzaron en este reyno. Y esta testigo se halló presente en la iglesia desta villa con muchos cristianos que se abían recoxido en la dicha yglesia por la fuerza de los moros, la noche de nabidad del primer año de la guerra, de adonde los dichos moros sacaron al dicho Capitán con otros muchos cristianos, y los hicieron pedaços en la plaça de esta villa que está delante de la puerta de la iglesia a donde estaba esta testigo. . . (Sanz, pp. 570-1).

The captain's wife, doña Francisca Morales, lived in Berja mourning her husband until her own death between 1603 and 1608.

The relationship of this couple to the dramatist is far from clear. In the questions directed to the witnesses they are regarded as the dramatist's grandparents. (See Appendix below, pp328-31). Sanz summarises the family history as follows:

> Doña Beatriz de Torres y Heredia, su madre [del dramaturgo], procedía de las Alpujarras de Granada; era natural de Berja y descendiente de los héroes que dieron su vida por defender a la Religión y a la Patria en la rebelión de los moriscos; noble con la nobleza de la sangre derramada valientemente por su padre en aquella guerra, y noble asimismo por su madre, hija legítima de don Francisco de Heredia y doña Francisca Morales los cuales tuvieron en su matrimonio otros tres hijos: doña Francisca, don Antonio y don Cristóbal. En la hermana mayor, doña Francisca, puso sus ojos, y se casó con ella, el caballero de Almería don Cristóbal de Cabrera y Benavides. Don Antonio siguió la carrera de las armas, y en 1631 era capitán de Infantería en las islas de Madera; don Cristóbal, sargento mayor en las Islas Canarias, y doña Beatriz ya se ha dicho como vino a Guadix y entabló relaciones con don Gaspar (Sanz, pp. 569-70).

Two points in this passage are ambiguous. The first is the introduction in the last line of the mysterious don Gaspar. It would seem that Sanz has confused Melchor with Gaspar (through the association of the names of two of the magi). The second and more important point is the apposition of the words madre and hija in line 7; this seems to mean that the mother of Beatriz was the daughter of don Francisco, which would suggest that he was the dramatist's great-grandfather. There are other details which would support this idea. There is no indication of the origin of the name Torres, who was presumably Beatriz de Torres Heredia's father. Another factor is the inconsistency of the dates and ages. Beatriz must have been of childbearing age by 1575, or at the latest by 1578 (see below, pp.16-8). If both her brothers were much younger than she, they might have been born shortly before the death of don Francisco Heredia in 1567 or 1568. This would mean that in 1631 they were at least 63—a very advanced age for active soldiers at that period.[12]

Despite the inconsistencies and deficiencies of the testimony, or the report of it, there appears to be no reason to doubt Sanz's summary of the findings of the tribunal:

> La limpieza de sangre y noble calidad de esta familia las reconocen cuantos fueron preguntados por este particular. Así, por padre y madre vino de nobleza rancia el doctor Mira de Amescua (Sanz, p. 571).

These are the antecedents of two people whose relationship and characters need to be examined as closely as possible. What were Melchor Amescua y Mira and Beatriz de Torres Heredia like, and how did they come to give birth to Antonio Mira de Amescua? The first question is more easily answered than the second:

> Melchor Amescua y Mira. . . durante su vida fue una de las principales figuras de Guadix, caballero que en las fiestas reales y actos públicos salía a jugar cañas, torneos y otros juegos. Tuvo los honrosos oficios de Regidor, Alcalde de la Santa Hermandad, Alcalde de Aguas y Alcalde muchas veces por la Ciudad. . . . Murió. . . por los años de 1601 a 1605 (Sanz, pp. 567-8).

The expediente seems to go into the most painstakingly accurate detail about everything but the most essential

facts for a biography of the dramatist. This is especially true where it concerns the somewhat mysterious and romantic figure of Beatriz de Torres Heredia. She is described, rather enigmatically, as "joven de buen cuerpo, blanca, fresca" (Sanz, p. 557). She left her native Berja to journey with her aunt and uncle, doña Constanza Vázquez del Oso and don Matías Figueras, to the city of Guadix, where the latter was a doctor.[13] Neither the date of this move nor the reason for her adoption by her aunt and uncle are mentioned. Beatriz was brought up by her aunt and uncle in their house in the parish of San Miguel in Guadix and "la honraban como merecía, por sus cualidades, buenas, como aseguran los que la conocieron" (Sanz, p. 557).

Although it is not certain, it appears that it was doña Constanza who introduced Beatriz to Melchor, albeit somewhat indirectly. Don Matías was friendly with doña Juana and doña Beatriz de Montiel, and his wife and niece cemented the friendship. Doña Isabel and doña María Mira y Amescua and their brother, Melchor, lived in the house next door to that of these two sisters "tan juntas, que las mujeres se pasan de una casa a otra en cuerpo, como si las dos fueran una misma casa" (Sanz, p. 558). The friendship was to bear fruit:

> El dicho doctor don Antonio Mira y Amesqua es hijo natural de Melchor Amesqua y Mira y de doña Beatriz de Torres y Heredia, ambos a dos libres y solteros, los quales tuvieron trato y comunicación mucho tiempo, durante la qual hubieron y procrearon por su hijo natural al dicho don Antonio. . . ; y este testigo oyó decir muchas veces que el dicho Melchor se había de casar con la dicha doña Beatriz, pero que no se casó con ella ni con otra ninguna (Sanz, p. 557).

Another witness, who had been a servant in the house of don Matías for nine or ten years during which time Antonio had been born, adds the following details:

> Trató Melchor de casarse con la doña Beatriz, por doncella honrada y principal, mediante lo cual los susodichos trataron amores entre sí, resultando de ellos tuvieron y procrearon al don Antonio Mira de Amescua. Recién nacido, se lo trajo a su casa su padre Melchor (Sanz, p. 558).

This testimony presents three of the most puzzling aspects

of the whole affair. First, why did the couple never marry? Second, why was the newborn child taken to the house of the father? Third, when did all this occur—in what year was Mira de Amescua born?

Cotarelo y Mori attempts to answer the first two questions by suggesting that Beatriz died in childbirth. In order to prove this he suppresses some of the evidence:

> Melchor de Amescua no se casó nunca con ella, quizá por haber muerto prematuramente (2); y los testigos añaden, como en disculpa, que tampoco él se casó con otra ninguna. Pero sí recibió como hijo y en su propia casa, apenas nacido, aquel pobre fruto de sus malogrados amores (3) (Cotarelo, p. 471).

Cotarelo supports his idea with the evidence he gives in the following notes:

> (2) En las pruebas no se vuelve a citar a la madre.
>
> (3) "Recién nacido se lo trajo a su casa su padre Melchor" dice una mujer que estaba sirviendo en casa del doctor Figueras cuando esto ocurría. Doña Beatriz de Montiel, de Guadix, dice "que se halló presente en casa de Melchor de Amescua, su padre, cuando se le traxeron recién nacido." Otro testigo, Francisco Hernández, añade "El dicho Melchor de Amescua lo llevó a su casa, donde lo crió y alimentó como a tal su hijo, dándole amas y lo demás necesario, y doña Isabel y doña María de Amescua, doncellas, hermanas del dicho Melchor, lo criaron y regalaron como a su sobrino." En el extracto de Tárrago, doña Antonia de los Angeles, monja beata, dominica, dice que don Antonio nació en la casa de su padre y "que criaba un ama con mucho regalo." Otro testigo, el licenciado Andrés Rodríguez de Cózar, dice que Mira "nació en la parroquia mayor." Hay, pues, un drama oculto en estos hechos; porque ni aun amamantar a su hijo le dejaron a doña Beatriz, cosa que ella, de seguro, habrá implorado, por descastada que la supongamos si no es que como decimos arriba, hubiese fallecido en edad temprana y acaso al dar al mundo a su hijo (Cotarelo, p. 471note, the stress is Cotarelo's).

One of the testimonies which he gives is continued and the remainder of the quotation shows that doña Beatriz is mentioned after Mira's birth, and refutes the suggestion that she died in childbirth. The testimony is that of Francisca (not Francisco) Hernández, Beatriz's erstwhile maid. The sentence is continued as follows:

> (lo criaron y regalaron como a su sobrino) y hijo de su hermano, y esta testigo lo vido ser y pasar ansí todo el tiempo que estuvo en la ciudad de Guadix, porque yba muchas beces por sí y en nombre de la dicha doña Beatriz de Torres y Heredia a bisitar a el dicho don Antonio (Sanz, p. 560).

This testimony is supported by that of another witness, who also makes clear that "en nombre de" does not refer, as might be suggested, to a request of the mother before she died:

> La madre, unas veces por su criada y otras en persona, se presentaba en la casa vecina a la del Melchor y en la misma casa de Melchor, lo acariciaba y regalaba como a su hijo, lo llamaba de tal su hijo, y así el dicho doctor Mira de Amesqua trataba y respetaba a la dicha doña Beatriz de Torres como a su madre y en las conversaciones que esta testigo vido, que fueron muchas, la decía madre, y ella a él hijo (Sanz, p. 560).

It was unfortunate that in making the suggestion that Beatriz had died in childbirth, Cotarelo failed to finish reading one sentence, and ignored the sentence which follows it on the same page.

It is possible that the answer to the question of why the two lovers never married is to be found in one of Mira's plays—La fénix de Salamanca:

> En medio de sus regalos[de mis padres]
> y mi mocedad inquieta,
> vino a Valencia una dama,
> con sus padres, desde Huesca.
> Gente de mediano estado,
> que entre las demás, plebeya
> ya la patricia, tenía
> buen lugar por su llaneza.
> Vila, parecióme bien,
> visité su casa, améla
> tanto, que creció el amor
> hasta casarme con ella.
> Sentidos mis padres de ello,
> retiráronse a una aldea,
> donde acabaron sus días
> de vejez y de tristeza. 14

There are differences: the names of the towns are not the same; Beatriz travelled with her aunt and uncle, not with her parents; doctors, from the evidence of Mira's plays, would have been regarded as de mediano estado at best; the love affair of Melchor and Beatriz ended not in marriage but with the birth of a child. Also the phrase visité su casa is an unusual one for the hero of a Golden Age comedia. It is possible that the reaction of Garcerán's parents reflects that of Melchor's, and it may help to explain the reason he never married Beatriz. Since the passage describes

a social attitude rather than specific facts, this rather tenuous evidence may be of some importance.[15]

The third question is that of the date of Mira's birth. Sanz (p. 559), Tárrago (p. 307), and Cotarelo (p. 471) all agree that there is no record of the baptism of the infant Antonio. This might have taken place in Beatriz's parish of San Miguel, in Melchor's parish of El Sagrario, or possibly in a neighbouring town so that the fact of the birth would not be known in the city. Without the baptismal record, the only evidence is that of the expediente which Sanz summarises "puede conjeturarse entre los de 1574 a 1577, por lo que resulta de las declaraciones de los testigos, los cuales. . . le atribuyen, en 1631, la edad de cincuenta y cuatro a cincuenta y siete años" (Sanz, p. 559). Cotarelo uses the same evidence but comes to different conclusions:

> Uno de los testigos. . . dice conocer a don Antonio "desde que nació, que habrá cincuenta y cuatro a cincuenta y seis años." Otros le suponen de cincuenta y siete. La primera cifra no puede admitirse porque en 1600 era ya mayor de edad, o sea de veinticinco años. Sólo quedan como fechas probables de su nacimiento las de 1575, 1574 ó bien 1573; la segunda parece preferible (Cotarelo, p. 472).

Leaving aside the question of Mira's majority, which I shall return to later, Cotarelo's figures need to be examined. The year of the expediente was 1631, the witnesses attribute to him an age of 54 to 56 or possibly 57. Sanz correctly deduces $\begin{array}{r} 1631 \\ -\ 57 \\ \hline 1574 \end{array}$ to $\begin{array}{r} 1631 \\ -\ 54 \\ \hline 1577 \end{array}$; Cotarelo, on the other hand produces the figures 1573-1576: nowhere does either Sanz or Tárrago make any statement which justifies the first of these dates.

Cotarelo supports his choice of 1574 with some inconclusive evidence:

> El testigo Andrés de Cózar manifestó que hacía más de cuarenta y nueve años que conocía al doctor Mira. A un niño sin uso de razón no puede aplicarse aquel verbo. Serían de la misma edad y el conocimiento empezaría a los ocho años o poco antes (Cotarelo, p. 472).

This argument is objectionable on three counts. First, no more faith is to be placed in the witness's memory than in

that of others, and so his forty-nine years cannot be regarded as completely accurate. Second, Sanz states that all thirty-one witnesses—including Andrés de Cózar—were "todos ellos de más edad que el pretendiente" (Sanz, p. 554). Third, the decision that a child begins to know people at the age of eight is arbitrary to say the least. This piece of evidence proves only that Mira was born during the 1570's.

Cotarelo produces a second piece of evidence which is of more substance but is still far from conclusive:

> En 1600 fue nombrado Mira, como veremos, alcalde mayor de Guadix; para éste y otros cargos semejantes se necesitaba tener veinticinco años cumplidos (Cotarelo, p. 472).

This may be true, and if Cotarelo's facts are correct—and I have no evidence to the contrary—their application must be questioned. First, nobody seemed to be very sure of Mira's exact age in 1631, so it would be quite possible that they were as unsure in 1600. Second, the standing of the family in the city would make it possible that he was given this appointment without being twenty-five.[16] Third, Cotarelo's arguments would suggest to me that Mira's appointment as <u>alcalde</u> in 1600 was because he had just turned twenty-five. The date of 1575 is in no way ruled out by Cotarelo's arguments, and the date seems preferable since there is in fact only one witness who says he might be as old as 57—that is, born in 1574.

An independent researcher, Rodríguez Marín, in his <u>Pedro Espinosa</u>, says:

> Estudiante era de Teología y no pasaba de diez y ocho años cuando, tomada la ciudad de Cádiz por los ingleses, en julio de 1596, hallaba en su valiente lira patrióticos y robustos acentos (p. 95).

Unfortunately he gives no evidence to back this up, and it would suggest Mira's birthdate to be no earlier than 1578. Rodríguez Marín's statement is no proof, but would support a later rather than an earlier date. Cotarelo mentions the same poem: "Antes había escrito, en 1595, una mediana y muy oscura canción sobre el desembarco en Cádiz de la escuadra inglesa." (Cotarelo, p. 473). He unaccountably dates the poem

one year before the event occured.

These are the facts concerning the birth of the dramatist, and the hypotheses which have been made from them. It is to be regretted that the present study can add nothing new and positive, but many of the facts about Mira's birth which have been accepted as definite, can be seen to be open to question, or positively inaccurate. Perhaps new information will be forthcoming one day to help clarify many of these obscurities. Until new information appears, a birthdate of 1575 can be postulated from the evidence which is available at present.

There is very little information about the childhood and youth of Mira de Amescua "envueltas en sombras, como las de la generalidad de los hombres" (Sanz, p. 560). The testimony already quoted (see above, p. 14) says that he was brought up by his father, and this is supported by further evidence:

> Dicho Melchor, su padre, lo crió y alimentó en su casa por tal su hijo desde que nació hasta que murió el dicho Melchor. Doña Isabel y doña María, doncellas y hermanas del dicho Melchor de Amesqua, que vivían con él en su casa, criaban y regalaban al dicho doctor don Antonio Mira de Amescua como a su sobrino; sábelo este testigo porque trató y comunicó a todos los susodichos (Sanz, pp. 559-60).

Tárrago tells a little more about this part of Mira's life. One witness, Luis Pérez Cardeder, says that "siendo niño jugaba con Mira de Amezcua en la puerta de su casa" (Tárrago, p. 307). Another witness states:

> Melchor de Amezcua. . . lo crió y alimentó en su casa y le dio estudio en la ciudad de Guadix y en la de Granada, hasta ponerlo en estado de sacerdote, tratándole siempre honrada y principalmente como tal su hijo(Tárrago, p. 307).

He goes on to provide further information about Mira's education:

> Doctor Mira de Amezcua. . . fue colegial unos cinco o seis años en el Colegio Imperial de San Miguel de Granada, en donde estudió las facultades de Leyes y Canones (Tárrago, p. 307).

Another witness confirms this "por haber sido su condiscípulo en los estudios de canones y leyes" (Sanz, p. 561).

Mira de Amescua was educated at the Colegio Imperial de San Miguel, which was a college of the University of Granada. It had been founded earlier than the university, in 1526, by Charles V, the emperor. It is almost certain that this was a Jesuit college.[17] It can also be seen that contrary to the statement of Rodríguez Marín (see above, p. 17) and the following statement of Barrera: "Dedicóse a la carrera eclesiástica, doctorándose en teología,"[18] Mira was not a theologian but a lawyer, since he studied canon and civil law.

The only other fact about his first twenty-five years is a detail which Sanz found in the Libro 2° de confirmaciones, folio 169 verso, from the parish archives of El Sagrario. The eighth entry on the list shows that "Antonio Mira, hijo de Melchor de Amesqua" was confirmed in Guadix on January 30, 1593 by don Juan Alonso de Moscoso, the bishop of Guadix (Sanz, p. 560).[19]

There is more information about Mira's last forty-four years from 1600. The period is only spasmodically documented however, and there are many gaps. The majority of the documents were published by Rodríguez Marín,[20] and along with the expediente these form the most important source of biographical information on Mira de Amescua. In order to appreciate the exact details of Mira's life these documents must be consulted, but the main facts emerging from them will be summarised in the account of the rest of Mira's life.

In 1600 Mira was still living in Guadix and was appointed alcalde mayor. Since the nomination calls him doctor it is clear that he had graduated by 1600:

> el corregidor de. . . Guadix. . . nombró por su teniente y alcalde mayor. . . al señor doctor Antonio de Mira, abogado, y le dio poder y comisión. . . para que use y exerça el dicho ofiçio de tal alcalde mayor, haçiendo e proueyendo qualesquier autos y sentençias y despachando qualesquier negoçios asi çeviles como criminales (Rodríguez Marín, 'Nuevos datos,' p. 322-3).

The following year, 1601, Mira was involved in a rather complex ecclesiastical dispute. His part in it suggests that Mira was someone to be reckoned with, either because of his

legal training, or possibly because of his character and physique. It appears that the king had given the "preuenda de priorato de. . . baça" to dotor don Francisco de Solorzano. The bishop had sent el liçençiado Juan Ortega de Grixalva to take possession of it, in the name of Solorzano. The abbot and the cauildo at Baza had refused to comply with the request. As a result the bishop, Juan de Fonseca, had appointed "el dotor Antonio de Mira, clérigo, presuitero, vezino desta çiudad" to go with the order to the bishop's provisor in Baza, el liçençiado Yegros, telling him to give up the priorato into the hands of Ortega de Grixalva for Solorzano. If Yegros would not comply, then Mira was to take over Ortega de Grixalva's position and effect the transfer (Rodríguez Marín, 'Nuevos datos,' pp. 321-2). Nothing is known of the results of the transaction, but as it is not mentioned again, one presumes Mira was capable of carrying out the Bishop's wishes.

Mira's physique was the subject of the ambiguous comment by Lope de Vega in his El jardín de Lope de Vega, La Filomena, Segunda parte (1621):

> El divino pincel del mudo Heredia
> (que entera no pudiera) al doctor Mira
> de su figura retrató la media.

It is interesting to see that the name of the unidentified painter is that of Mira's mother. This is the only description of Mira that exists.

Lope de Vega makes the first literary mention of Mira in 1602. His sonnet 165 from the Hermosura de Angélica[21] collection is 'Al Doctor Mira de Amescua.' The next reference is from 1603 when Rojas Villanandro in his Loa de la Comedia from the Viaje entretenido lists "tantos ingenios" among those whom he remembers are:

> El licenciado Mejía,
> el buen don Diego de Vera,
> Mescua, don Guillén de Castro. . . .

There are no definite indications of what the plays were by which Mira was known in 1603.

The first date to which one can ascribe a work is that of La rueda de la Fortuna in 1604. It is again Lope de Vega

who writes about Mira:

> Representa Morales, silba la gente; unos caballeros están presos porque eran la causa desto; pregonóse en el patio que no pasase tal cosa, y así, apretados los toledanos por no silbar, se peen, que para el alcalde mayor ha sido notable desacato, porque estaba este día sentado en el patio. Aplacó esto porque hizo La rueda de la Fortuna, comedia en que un rey aporrea a su mujer; y acuden muchos a llorar este paso como si fuera posible. (From a letter of Lope dated August 14, 1604)

There are two things which require comment in this passage. Barrera in his biography of Lope suggests that it is written in a disparaging tone:

> Nótese con cuan escaso aprecio habla aquí Lope de una obra dramática del distinguido poeta D. Antonio Mira de Amescua, a quien luego puso en las nubes y ya había celebrado en el soneto 165 de las rimas. 22

It is difficult to see Barrera's point of view. Lope very clearly says that the production of the play stopped a near riot, which would suggest that it was a good play.

The second is that there is no mention of Mira's name. In a little book by Rafael Carrasco on the relationship between Lope and Mira, there is a quotation from Lope's Virtud, pobreza y mujer which was published in Lope's Parte 20 (1625) and was given its aprobación by Mira. This passage reveals two things: Morales presented Mira's La rueda, and Lope thought highly of it:

> Roselio ¿Y dónde en efecto vais?
> Celia A la comedia famosa
> que representa Morales.
> Ludovico ¿Famosa? ¿Cómo se nombra?
> Otavia La rueda de la Fortuna.
> Roselio Tienes razón, escribióla
> el doctor Mescua. 23

Mira moved to Madrid sometime between 1601 and 1607, in which year el procurador Jerónimo from Madrid wrote to Francisco de Villalta, the alcalde mayor of Guadix, asking for a copy of Mira's appointment as alcalde mayor in 1600. Mira is described as "residente en Corte de S.M." (Rodríguez Marín, 'Nuevos datos,' p. 322).

Between 1604, the date of Mira's possible move to Madrid, and 1610, the year of his journey to Italy, he contributed to four literary works. He contributed poems to Francisco

Bermúdez de Pedraza's Antigüedad y excelencias de Granada (Madrid, 1608)[24] Obras del insigne cavallero don Diego de Mendoza (Madrid, 1610)[25] Gregorio Bravo de Sotomayor's Historia de nuestra señora de Valuanera (Logroño, 1610),[26] and Diego de Hojeda's La Cristiada (Seville, 1611).[27] The last named poem was probably written before Mira left Spain, which would account for the date. His fifth contribution was to Balbuena's El Bernardo o Victoria de Roncesvalles (Madrid, 1624).[28] The late date is explained when it is seen that the censura is dated 1609. Mira censored this poem and it is interesting for three reasons: evidence of his literary knowledge, his artistic credo, and the fact that one of his own plays is on the subject of Bernardo del Carpio (Las desgracias del rey Alfonso el Casto). The following is Mira's verdict on Bernardo de Balbuena's poem:

> Este poema heroyco, llamado el Bernardo que v.m. me remitió he visto con particular atención y pienso que los españoles ingeniosos dados a la lección de poetas no tienen en su lengua poema como este; porque en la variedad de los sucesos y episodios hallaron imitado a Ludovico Ariosto y en la unidad de la acción y contextura de la fábula a Torquato Tasso; y así merece ser impreso y leído y su autor alabado. También advierto a v.m. que no hay en él cosa contra la fe católica y buenas costumbres. Guarde Dios a v.m. largos años, de casa y Febrero a 9 de 1609 años. El Doctor Mira de Amescua.[29]

The censura reveals that Mira was acquainted with Tasso and Ariosto before his journey to Italy. It also shows that he believed a work of art should contain a variety of events and episodes and unity of action. This credo can be seen in such a play as La rueda de la Fortuna (see below, pp. 208-27).

Mira contributed to no more works until 1618. There is a long period of silence about Mira, which is explained by his journey to Italy with the Count of Lemos. The Count was appointed Viceroy of Naples on August 21, 1608.[30] The viceregal entourage was arranged by the brothers Lupercio and Bartolomé Leonardo de Argensola. The only person of note they included was Mira; they broke pledges they appear to have given to Cervantes and Góngora. This stay in Italy may have been influential on the formation of Mira's dramatic art, for there is a marked change in the plays

written after he returned from Italy (see below, p. 62). This can possibly be ascribed not only to the influence of Italy but also to his relationship with the Argensola brothers, who were inclined to the classical tragedy[31] (see below,pp.156ff).

Before he left Spain, he was appointed chaplain of the Capilla Real in Granada (September 1st, 1609) but there is some doubt as to whether he ever took possession of the position. Sanz quotes the Libro de fundaciones de la Capilla Real de Granada. . . "El doctor Antonio Mira de Mesqua, de Guadix, inmediato poseedor de esta prebenda, tomó posesión a (hay un blanco), año de mil y seiscientos diez" (Sanz, p. 562). The blank space suggests to me that Mira never arrived in Granada to take possession. (Also see below, p. 26 .) The appointment to the chaplaincy is reprinted by Rodríguez Marín ('Nuevos datos,' pp. 323-4).

Mira's trip to Italy is mentioned in the expediente:

> Es muy notorio en esta ciudad que cuando el dicho don Antonio de Mira y Amesqua passó en el reyno de Nápoles con el Conde de Lemos, que fue virrey de dicho reyno, estubo a pique de ser obispo en Italia, y que tubo mucho tiempo el govierno de un obispado de Italia, no se acuerda en qué ciudad, y que dio muy buena cuenta dél (Sanz, pp. 563-4).

This is another example of Mira's capabilities as an administrator. The only proof of Mira's journey that Cotarelo could find was in the Comentarios del desengañado by a rather picaresque character called Diego Duque de Estrada.[32] Cotarelo says (p. 480), that this man was a member of the vice-regal party but, in fact, he arrived in Naples by chance in 1614. It is owing to Duque de Estrada's evidence that Mira was credited with belonging to the Academia de los ociosos. Otis H. Green, in an article published the same year as Cotarelo's study, and which the latter did not see, could find no proof of Mira's membership in this literary coterie. Green did find the first conclusive proof that Mira was in Italy, and discovered that the bishopric in which Mira served was that of Tropea. Reproduced below are the documents Green found:

Nápoles, 26 de febrero de 1615.

> Capellán mayor: Su excelencia dize que Vuestra Señoría informe de lo contenido en este memorial del Doctor Mira en que se pide se le haga bueno el salario de Ecónomo de Tropea hasta que el Obispo tome posesion de aquel Obispado, sin embargo de la orden que se dio por Collateral (Consejo Colateral) para que no exercitase el economato. De Palacio 26 de Hebrero 1615.
>
> Nápoles 11 de junio de 1616.
> Su excelencia dize que del dinero que metera en esa Thesorería Marco Tomar que lo pague Vuestra Señoría al Doctor Mira de Mesqua sessenta y tres ducados que ha de hauer del salario del ecónomo de Tropea conforme a una certificatoria de la regia cámara de la Sumaria despachada a siete deste mes, lo qual manda Su Excelencia que se execute no embargante que no se haya sacado libranza en virtud de la certificatoria, que respecto de la brevedad del tiempo se dispensa agora en esto, que después se sacaran los recados en forma y se darán a Vuestra Señoría para su cautela. Palacio a 11 de junio de 1616. 33

Green also transcribes a third document dated the first of June, 1614, relating to an unnamed Ecónomo de Tropea. These documents are the only conclusive evidence that Mira actually went to Italy. They also reveal the location of the diocesis in which he worked and the fact that he was still in Italy in June, 1616.

During Mira's stay in Italy, Andrés de Claramonte in his Letanía moral (Seville, 1612) calls him "famoso ingenio de España;" Cristóbal Suárez de Figueroa in his Plaza universal de todas ciencias y artes (1615)[34] lists him as "Entre los más famosos poetas dramáticos;" Cervantes in the prologue to his Comedias y entremeses (1615) refers to "la gravedad del doctor Mira de Amescua, honra singular de nuestra nación."

In 1619, he contributed a poem to Hernando de Camargo's Muerte de Dios por vida del hombre (Madrid, 1619)[35] He also censored a poem by Francisco del Castillo, called Nuestra Señora de los Remedios (Madrid, 1619).[36] It is interesting to see that this is another book, censored by Mira, dealing with a subject about which he also wrote.

During this period it would seem probable that Mira lived as an independent gentleman who had leisure to write, but not the need to turn out works at a great rate. Sanz

refers to the houses given to Juan de Mira by the Catholic monarchs and which "eredó el dicho pretendiente" (Sanz, p. 568). This would probably have given Mira sufficient income to live on. There is also evidence of his life style from a selection of correspondence dating from the period 1619 to 1622. This was all gathered by Rodríguez Marín ('Nuevos datos,' pp. 324-9).

The correspondence is lengthy, but can be summarised fairly briefly.

30 October 1619. Letter from Mira and doctor Bartolomé de Llerena in Madrid. Llerena had been in Madrid on leave from the cathedral of Almería; while there he had been offered a canongía in Guadix. Llerena was a native and graduate of Granada and would have preferred to return to his native town. Mira complains that he had not found himself "bien de salud" in Granada, and so they are requesting an exchange of appointments: Llerena to go to the Capilla Real in Granada, Mira to go to Guadix.

16 September 1620. A note, dated nearly a year later, has the following three comments on the request: the request should be granted, but the King should be consulted and they should both vacate their present positions first.

31 August 1621. After nearly twelve more months, Jorge de Tovar, the king's secretary, writes to the Bishop of Guadix asking for clarification of the issue, since Mira has been told to go to Granada, but has made the excuse that as the exchange is pending he is not sure where to go. There is here the first hint that Mira is baulking at his priestly duties.

12 September 1621. The bishop's reply is phrased in general terms but complains of priests who "quieren más las prebendas por el temporal que por el servicio de Dios." The inference to be drawn from the letter is that Mira wanted to live in Madrid.

23 March 1622. Another letter from Tovar, this time to the president of the audiencia y chancillería of Granada, Portocarrero, seeking information. It appears that Mira is not happy because after the exchange with Llerena had been agreed

to, it had fallen through because Llerena had withdrawn his request. Mira now wants to exchange with a Diego de Bracamonte, who has offered a living in Medina Sidonia plus some extra financial inducements. The king's secretary wants to know if Bracamonte is a suitable person.

12 April 1622. Portocarrero replies that Bracamonte is a "clérigo virtuoso" and approves the choice.

There is also a letter from Diego de Córdova, capellán mayor in Granada, which approves the appointment of Bracamonte as well. This letter, which Rodríguez Marín quotes only in part, is the most important of all the documents for a knowledge of Mira. Córdova complains of the behavior of Mira and welcomes the new incumbent:

> por el remedio que da a la falta de residencia del doctor Mira de Mesqua, que a diez años que no entra aquí, ni avemos podido reducillo a que lo haga.

This means that Mira has not been to Granada for at least ten years, which would be since 1612; since he was in Italy at that date, it appears very dubious whether Mira ever went to Granada to take possession of the chaplaincy.

The last letter is dated 3 May 1622 and is the official appointment of Bracamonte to the chaplaincy in the place of Mira.

Before Mira had attempted to make this exchange, he was appointed chaplain to Fernando, son of Philip III, the new ten-year-old cardinal and archbishop of Toledo. He had also attempted to get Juan de Fonseca to collect his money from the Capilla Real in Granada.[37] It appears that the clergy refused to grant this because he had not said the misas y demás preces for the Catholic Monarchs. This information is given by Cotarelo from an unidentified source (p. 486-7).

While this ecclesiastical maneuvering was going on—it is well to remember that Mira was a lawyer—Mira was taking an active part in the affairs of the capital. In 1620 he was engaged to take part in the celebrations in honor of the beatification of San Isidro.[38] In the same year he contributed to Francisco de Herrera's translation of Sannazaro.[39] He also censored Jacinto de Espinel's El premio

de la constancia (Madrid, 1620).[40] There is also another proof of his poetic activities from the pen of what appears to have been the closest of his playwright friends, Lope de Vega:

> Paso, señor excelentísimo, entre librillos y flores de un huerto, lo que queda de la vida, que no debe ser mucho, compitiendo en enredos con Mescua y don Guillén de Castro sobre cuál los hace mejores en sus comedias (Carta al Conde de Lemos, 6 de mayo de 1620).

Mira is simply called by his surname, whereas Castro is given his full name, this would suggest a degree of intimacy with Lope and the Count, with whom Mira went to Italy.

1621 passed without references, but Mira's name occurs frequently in 1622. At the celebrations in honor of the canonisation of San Isidro[41] he won first prize in the poetry competition. Lope refers to him as Capellán de su Alteza. He also came second in the competition celebrated by the Colegio Imperial in honor of the canonisation of St. Ignatius Loyola and St. Francis Xavier.[42] In his description of these celebrations he is again praised by Lope:

> honor del Monte Parnaso. . .
> Sus comedias ingeniosas
> vencen en arte a Terencio
> latino, con su inventor
> Rodio, Aristófanes griego.
> (BRAE, 1930, p. 493)

In 1622, Tomás Tamayo de Vargas in his edition of the poems of Garcilaso praised Mira for his "discurso." In the same year he also collaborated with eight other dramatists in a play called Algunas hazañas de las muchas de don García Hurtado de Mendoza, Marqués de Cañete.[43] Among the poets with whom he collaborated were Belmonte, who organised it, Vélez de Guevara, Guillén de Castro and Juan Ruiz de Alarcón. This is proof of Mira's acquaintance with some of his better known contemporaries. His relations with Alarcón were to become a little strained.

During 1623 Alarcón was given the job of writing poems to celebrate the arrival in Spain of the Prince of Wales, later Charles I of England, who was looking for a wife. In order to carry this out, Alarcón appears to have sought help of

various other poets including Mira (BRAE, 1930, 493-4)[44] Alarcón was attacked by these poets because of their dissatisfaction with him. The poems which attack Alarcón are reprinted in the edition of Alarcón's works in the Biblioteca de Autores Españoles.[45] The poets included in this were Castillo Solórzano, Salas Barbadillo, Vélez de Guevara, Pérez de Montalbán, Tirso de Molina, Quevedo, Góngora, Lope, Mira and four others. The poems are addressed 'A un poeta corcovado, que se valió de trabajos ajenos.' Most complain that Alarcón had refused to pay them, but Mira complains that he himself was the inventor of joint authorship:

> Alarcón, Mendoza, Hurtado,
> Don Juan Ruiz, ya sabéis
> que la mitad me debéis
> del dinero que os han dado,
> porque soy el que ha inventado
> el componer de consuno—
> No pienso daros ninguno—
> Si las leyes son iguales,
> esa cuenta no es muy diestra
> pues cada comedia vuestra
> no saliera a doce reales(BAE, 20, xxxiii).

If Mira's statement is true it might suggest that he was the joint author of more works which were published as being by tres ingenios.

A letter of Góngora from the same year continues the idea of the feud between the two:

> La comedia, digo El Antichristo de don Juan de Alarcón, se estrenó el miércoles pasado. Echáronselo a perder aquel día con cierta redomilla que enterraron en medio del patio, de olor tan infernal que desmayó a muchos de los que no pudieron salirse tan aprisa. Don Miguel de Cárdenas hizo diligencias y a voces invió un recado al Vicario para que prendiese a Lope de Vega y a Mira de Mescua, que soltaron el domingo pasado porque prendieron a Juan Pablo Rizo en cuyo poder se encontraron materiales de la confesión. . . (Carta al maestro Hortensio, 19 diciembre 1623).

Although the two men were released, it is scandalous that they should have been arrested in the first place. It is worth remembering that neither was an irresponsible youth: both were priests, Mira was forty-eight and Lope sixty-one.

The feud between the two men seems to have been a thing of the moment, however, for the first volume of the plays of

Alarcón (Madrid, 1628) was approved by Mira with the words: "Hay en ellas mucha doctrina moral y política digna del ingenio y letras de su autor."[46]

Mira contributed to more works during this period, including Desengaño de amor en rimas (Madrid, 1623) by Pedro Soto de Rojas;[47] Exposición parafrástica del Psalterio (Madrid, 1623) by Valdivielso;[48] Nave trágica de la India de Portugal (Madrid, 1624) by Francisco de Contreras.[49] Mira also approved two works. The first was Epigramas y hieroglíficos a la vida de Cristo (1625) by Alonso de Ledesma.[50] Mira comments that:

> El libro tiene sentencias y agudezas admirables, porque en este estilo es su autor peregrino y singular en España. 8 de diciembre de 1624.

The other book is more important and is the Parte veinte[51] of the plays of Lope de Vega:

> No tiene cosa contra nuestra santa Fe ni costumbres Christianas, merece ser impreso, no sólo para enseñar virtudes morales y políticas, que es el fin de la Comedia, sino para honra de España y admiración de otras naciones: pues si Suidas y Quintiliano se admirauan de que Menandro huuiese escrito ochenta Comedias, qué admiración se deberá a aquél de quien oy se leen más obras escritas en los tres estilos de la Poesía, que de todos los Poetas Griegos, Latinos y vulgares, desde que Museo y Orfeo inventaron el escriuir en verso enseñanças filosóficas. En Madrid 5 de Otubre de 1624. [52]

This testifies not only to the erudition of Mira, but also to the importance he gave to the moral purpose of the Comedia. The aprobación is headed, presumably by Lope, "el insigne ingenio en letras divinas y humanas, el doctor Mira de Amescua, capellán de su Alteza."

There is no lack of evidence of the regard that Lope had for Mira; Rafael Carrasco finds yet another:

> Los siguientes de una LOA que por entonces escribió Lope para ser recitada por su hija Antonia Clara. . . 'Compré comedias famosas/ de Montalbán y de Mescua' Nueva revelación de sus gustos y preferencias. 53

There are few facts known about the rest of Mira's life. His collaboration with other authors was increased with La manzana de discordia, which he wrote with Guillén de Castro; and Polifemo y Circe (1630) which he wrote with Montalbán and the young Calderón. He also contributed to various other

works at this period, including El santo milagroso augustiniano, S. Nicolás de Tolentino (Madrid, 1628) by Fernando de Salgado y Camargo;[54] Francisco Pérez de Navarrete's Arte de enfrenar (Madrid, 1626);[55] Ana de Castro Egas's Eternidad del Rey don Filipe Tercero nuestro señor (Madrid, 1629);[56] in 1630 he approved Alonso Remón's description of the celebration in honor of San Pedro Nolasco (Madrid, 1630).[57] He contributed to Avisos para la muerte (Madrid, 1634)[58] the date when he wrote this must be a matter of speculation.

In a poem he contributed to the Anfiteatro de Felipe el Grande (Madrid, 1631), there is the first mention of any change in his state. The poem is signed by Mira "Capellán de su Alteza i Arcediano de la Santa Iglesia de Guadix." This marks the beginning of the retirement of Mira de Amescua and brings this biography full circle. The expediente de pruebas de limpieza de sangre, which is the basis for the early biography of Mira, was written in order to verify that he was of pure Christian blood, so that he could become archdeacon of the Cathedral of Guadix, (See below, pp328-31). The results of the tribunal were favorable and in 1632 Mira appears to have retired from Madrid to live quietly in Guadix. Rodríguez Marín reproduced the document detailing his taking up the position on 16 June 1632. ('Nuevos datos,' 1918, pp. 330-1).

Before his death he was praised again by Lope, and also by Montalbán and Vélez de Guevara. Lope in his Laurel de Apolo (1630) 'Silva II' says:

> Oh musas, recibid al doctor Mira
> que con tanta justicia al auro aspira
> si la inexhausta vena,
> de hermosos versos y conceptos llena,
> enriqueció vuestras sagradas minas
> en materias humanas y divinas.

Rafael Carrasco in his Lope y Mira also found the following proof of friendly rivalry between Lope and Mira. In a letter to Antonio Hurtado de Mendoza, one of the lesser known poets involved in the satire on Ruiz de Alarcón (see above, pp. 27-8), Lope says:

> Estos días se decretó en el senado cómico que Luis Vélez D. Pedro Calderón y el doctor Mescua, hiciesen una comedia

> y otra en competencia suya el doctor Montalbán, el doctor Godínez y el licenciado Lope de Vega, y que se pusiese un jarro de plata en premio. Respondí que era este año (1628) Capellán mayor de la Congregación (de S. Pedro), y que para el que viene aceptaba el desafío (p. 15).

Whether anything came of this contest is not known, but it is interesting to see that Mira and Lope were regarded as the 'anchor men', and that Mira was associated with Calderón.

Montalbán praised Mira in his Para todos. Los que escriben comedias en Castilla. (1632):

> El doctor d. Antonio Mira de Amescua, gran maestro deste nobilísimo arte, así en lo divino como en lo humano, pues con eminencia singular logra los autos sacramentales y acierta las comedias humanas.

Mira's name might have been expected to appear in the Fama póstuma, prepared by Montalbán on the death of Lope. It would seem fair to suppose that the reason for his non-inclusion in this work was the fact of his retirement to Guadix, where his life was either deliberately cut off from his former life in Madrid, or else because Montalbán did not know he was there. The fact is perhaps less significant if one remembers that only Montalbán, Vélez de Guevara, Rojas Zorrilla, Belmonte and Valdivielso, among the better known writers, signed the Fama póstuma, whereas Quevedo, Tirso, Calderón, Ruiz de Alarcón, Quiñones de Benavente, Coello, Diamante, Cubillo de Aragón, as well as Mira, were among those who did not sign it.[59]

The last literary mention of Mira is in the picaresque novel by Vélez de Guevara, El diablo cojuelo (1641). In Tranco VI the following appears:

> No nos olvidemos, de camino, de Guadix, ciudad antigua y celebrada por sus melones, y mucho más por el divino ingenio del doctor Mira de Amescua, hijo suyo y arcediano.

It is reassuring to see Guadix's cultural claim to fame raised above its economic one.

Mira's period of retirement in Guadix was far from uneventful. In his Pedro Espinosa, Rodríguez Marín collected all the documentary evidence concerning the events of June 1633. On June 7th, Mira became annoyed at the fact that Jusepe Rodríguez had been appointed colector for the Río de Alcudia. He called

Rodríguez a sastre, and was displeased that a "caballero, sacerdote, beneficiado y deudo suyo" had been overlooked. He left the cabildo "Dando voces descompuestas, sin hacer venia al Cabildo, y dando un golpe a la puerta dél." He appears to have shouted that "en Ginebra no se podía hacer lo que aquí se hacía." The Cabildo then decided to suspend him from joining or voting in its meetings, to fine him ten ducats, and to report him to the bishop with a request that he should make the archdeacon moderate his behavior. However, on the following morning, Mira "ocasionó al señor Maestrescuela grandes pesadumbres." Exactly what this entailed is not clear.

On June 10th the cabildo met again and fined Mira a further 44 ducats. Both Mira and the Maestrescuela were presos at this point, and the cabildo wanted the bishop to take action since Mira "desde que entró en esta Santa Iglesia ha tenido varias pesadumbres, ocasionando a ellas muchos señores capitulares, como es notorio, y no ha tenido enmienda. . . , se sirva señor obispo de reparar en estos inconvenientes." The matter was resolved at a further meeting of the cabildo on June 17th, with the bishop present. The cabildo asked the bishop not to go further with the action, he agreed, asking if he should give Mira a reprimand. The cabildo decided that it should be in private not in public. Mira was consequently released, and the bishop said that Mira was "muy arrepentido y pesaroso de lo hecho, y con muchos deseos de mostrarse servidor del Cabildo y dar la satisfacción en presencia de S. S.a."[60]

The incident appears to have terminated there. The conclusions to be drawn from the incident are either that Mira was always irascible,[61] or that this was an unusual occurence since there is no other evidence to support his having a short or violent temper.

In 1638 there is a document showing that Mira headed a tribunal on the behavior of the other clerics and lay members of the cathedral community. The document is only interesting as one of the few examples of Mira's prose, and for the fact it shows that he was now a solid part of the cathedral community (Rodríguez Marín, 'Nuevos datos,' p. 331-2).

The last document of all is one that was reproduced by Rodríguez Marín in his Pedro Espinosa:

> En ocho días del mes de septiembre de mil seis cientos cuarenta y cuatro falleció el señor Arcediano doctor don Antonio Mira de Amesqua. Recibió los Santos Sacramentos. Otorgó su testamento cerrado ante Pablo Hinojosa, escribano público. Enterróse en esta sancta iglesia. Fue a su entierro su Ilustrísima y el Deán y Cabildo. Albaceas el doctor don Diego Gómez de Mora y el doctor Antonio Mesas, canónigo y racionero de esta sancta iglesia, y heredera su ánima. Dije la misa de Vigilia, y lo firme ut supra.—Hierónimo Alfocea de la Obra. 62

NOTES TO CHAPTER ONE

[1] Boletín de la Real Academia Española, 17 (1930), 467-505, 611-658; 18 (1931), 7-90. All future references to this journal will appear as BRAE.

[2] 'El Dr. Antonio Mira de Amescua: Nuevos datos para su biografía,' BRAE, 1 (1914), 551-72.

[3] 'El Doctor Mira de Amezcua,' La ilustración española y americana, Suplemento al num. 43 (1888), 307. [Previously published in El Lunes de el Imparcial, (16 September 1878)]

[4] Don Manuel Ballesteros, canónigo lectoral de la Santa Iglesia Catedral de Guadix, in a letter to the author, dated 23 January 1973, said it "seguramente. . . desapareció con otros valiosos documentos de nuestro Archivo en tiempo de la dominación marxista. . . . Suponemos que. . . fue presa codiciada en el expolio si es que no fue pasto del fuego."

I would like to express my gratitude to don Manuel Ballesteros and to the Vicar General of the Diocesis of Guadix for their cooperation and efforts in trying to locate the expediente.

[5] Valbuena Prat has suggested that "Los apellidos de la madre podrían hacer pensar en un origen gitano." (Mira de Amescua, El esclavo del demonio, [Clásicos Ebro, Zaragoza, 1970] p. 10.) Valbuena was perhaps thinking of Federico García Lorca's Romancero Gitano, in which one of the gypsies is called Antonio Torres Heredia.

[6] At least two other major Golden Age writers did not conform: Góngora and Rojas Zorrilla both used maternal surnames.

[7] F. Rodríguez Marín, Pedro Espinosa. Estudio biográfico, bibliográfico y crítico, (Madrid, 1907), pp. 91-5.

[8] Nobleza de Andalucía. Nueva edición ilustrada. . . del señor don Manuel Muñoz y Garnica, Jaen, 1866. (Jaen, 1957) pp. 639-43.

[9] This portion of Argote de Molina's book was apparently unknown to Cotarelo y Mori and to Rodríguez Marín.

[10] See below, pp 328-31, where the expediente is described from the details given by Sanz and Tárrago.

[11] Sanz, p. 568.

[12] It is possible that a section of the play La casa del tahur might provide further evidence of a deliberate confusing of generations. In the play a mother deliberately confuses her identity with that of her daughter, so as to deceive a suitor who is seeking the daughter's hand. In the sequence the common surname of mother and daughter is Heredia. (La casa del tahur, 2558-78 [For edition see below, p. 154 note].)

[13] Prof. Arsenio Pacheco has suggested to me that medicine has been traditionally one of the professions followed particularly by Jews; and it is possible that doctors were one of the professional groups most exposed to suspicions about their limpieza de sangre.

[14] Mira de Amescua, Teatro II, ed. A. Valbuena Prat (1928; rpt. Clásicos Castellanos, Madrid, 1957). lines 853-68.

[15] It has been previously suggested that there may have been doubts concerning Beatriz's limpieza de sangre (see above, pp. 8&34) This is another possible reason why she and Melchor never married.

[16] Prof. H.V. Livermore suggested to me that Cotarelo's basis for thus dating Mira's birth was inconclusive for this reason.

[17] See A. Domínguez Ortiz, Crisis y decadencia de la España de los Austrias, pp. 29-30. It is possible to reach this conclusion from certain clues given by Domínguez Ortiz. He says that in 1582 El. P. Pedro de León accompanied el P. Juan Gerónimo "rector del colegio de Granada" to Sanlúcar de Barrameda on a mission at the request of the Duke of Medina Sidonia (p. 29). The Duke "agradecido. . . a tan señalado servicio, propuso al P. Pedro de León ceder a sus padres un pedazo que se había reservado de la casa que había cedido a la Compañía enfrente de la parroquia de San Miguel, tan necesario para el ensanche del colegio de la Compañía"(p. 30). The evidence is not conclusive since one can only infer that the college was that of San Miguel in Granada, of which Gerónimo was presumably the rector.

[18] Cayetano Alberto De La Barrera y Leirado, Catálogo bibliográfico del teatro antiguo español. . . Madrid, 1860. (Támesis, London, 1968), p. 255.

[19] The confirmation date would seem to support a later rather than an earlier birth date. Without evidence of the custom of the period, however, this fact cannot be used as proof.

[20] 'Nuevos datos de algunos escritores de los siglos XVI y XVII,' BRAE, 5 (1918), 321-332.

[21] Cristóbal Pérez Pastor, Bibliografía Madrileña de los siglos XVI y XVII (1907; rpt. 3 vols., Amsterdam, 1971), II, #826, 31.

[22] Cayetano Alberto de la Barrera y Leirado, Nueva biografía de Lope de Vega, (Madrid, 1890), p. 134.

[23] Rafael Carrasco, Lope de Vega y Mira de Amescua (Guadix, 1935), p. 19note.

[24] Pérez Pastor, II, #992, 133-4; and J. Simón Díaz, 'Textos dispersos de clásicos españoles' Revista de Literatura 18 (1960), 169-70.

[25] Pérez Pastor, II, #1096, 183; and Simón Díaz, pp. 171-2.

[26] Simón Díaz, p. 171.

[27] Simón Díaz, p. 172.

[28] Pérez Pastor, III, #2049, 189; and Simón Díaz, p. 179.

[29] Simón Díaz, p. 179.

[30] Alfonso Pardo Manuel de Villena, El Conde de Lemos: Un Mecenas Español del Siglo XVII, (Madrid, 1912). This book contains all the details of the Count of Lemos's Viceroyalty.

[31] Alfredo Hermenegildo, La tragedia en el renacimiento español (Barcelona, 1973). This book, among others, discusses the ideas of the Argensolas, pp. 24-36.

[32] In Memorial Histórico Español, Vol. 12 (Madrid, 1860)

[33] Otis H. Green, 'Mira de Amescua in Italy,' Modern Language Notes, 45 (1930), 317-9.

[34] Pérez Pastor, II, #1370, 363-6.

[35] Pérez Pastor, II, #1587, 478.

[36] Pérez Pastor, II, #1589, 479-80.

[37] Pérez Pastor, III, 427.

[38] Pérez Pastor, III, 427-31.

[39] Sanazaro español, los tres libros del parto de la virgen nuestra señora (Pérez Pastor, II, #1697, 457-9)

[40] Pérez Pastor, II, #1655, 522; and Simón Díaz, p. 179.

[41] Pérez Pastor, III, #1905, 130-1.

[42] Pérez Pastor, III, #1861, 100-1.

[43] Pérez Pastor, III, #1809, 74.

[44] Al príncipe de Gales (1623) (Pérez Pastor, III, #1967, 161).

[45] Vol. 20, XXXII-IV. All future references to this series will appear as BAE.

[46] Simón Díaz, p. 180.

[47] Pérez Pastor, III, #2020, 177; and Simón Díaz, pp. 172-3.

[48] Pérez Pastor, III, #2028, 181; and Simón Díaz, pp. 173-4.

[49] Pérez Pastor, III, #2055, 194.

[50] Pérez Pastor, III, #2173, 276.

[51] Pérez Pastor, III, #2233, 305.

[52] Simón Díaz, pp. 179-80.

[53] Lope y Mira, p. 15.

[54] Simón Díaz, p. 175.

[55] Simón Díaz, pp. 174-5.

[56] Simón Díaz, pp. 175-6.

[57] Simón Díaz, pp. 176-7.

[58] Simón Díaz, pp. 177-9.

[59] Barrera, Nueva biografía de Lope, pp. 506-7.

[60] Rodríguez Marín, Pedro Espinosa, pp. 91-5.

[61] Cf. "era de carácter colérico e impaciente" (A. Valbuena Prat, ed., Mira de Amescua, Teatro I [1926; rpt. Clásicos Castellanos, Madrid, 1959], p. xv).

[62] Rodríguez Marín, Pedro Espinosa, pp. 91-5.

CHAPTER TWO: AN INVESTIGATION OF THE AUTHORSHIP AND CHRONOLOGY OF THE DRAMATIC WORKS WHICH HAVE BEEN ATTRIBUTED TO MIRA DE AMESCUA

Since the death of Mira de Amescua in 1644, various bibliographers and critics have credited him with having written one hundred plays and autos.[1] In order to examine the plays of Mira de Amescua, it must be decided which of these dramatic works can be ascribed to him with any certainty. The mass of evidence is very complicated and it has therefore been placed in six tables. The first five tables have two purposes. First to decide which plays can be regarded as having been written by Mira de Amescua: the five tables set out the available evidence and the deductions that can be made from that evidence. The second purpose of the five tables is to list all the extant manuscripts of the plays and the first editions of plays[2] that were published during the seventeenth century. This information is divided into four sections, each of which bears one of the following numbers:

(1) Any lack of unanimity among the bibliographers concerning the authorship of the play. If there is no entry it means that all the bibliographers ascribe the play to Mira.

(2) Any lack of unanimity among the bibliographers concerning the title of the play. The bibliographers may not give the full title, but this is not noted unless they believe that part of the title belongs to a separate play. If there is no entry it means the bibliographers agree about the title.

(3) A list of all manuscripts of the plays—most of which are in the Biblioteca Nacional in Madrid—and a list of all seventeenth century first editions of the plays. If there is no entry it means that there is no known seventeenth century edition of the play. In every case the manuscript or the edition credits Mira with the play unless otherwise noted.

(4) References to any works which contain explanations of any of the problems listed in the five tables.

The plays are divided into the following five tables:

A. Plays which are almost certainly by Mira.

B. Plays which were written in collaboration with other authors

and in which Mira's contribution is almost certain.

C. Plays which are probably by Mira, but about which the evidence is not conclusive.

D. Plays which are probably NOT by Mira, but about which the evidence is not conclusive.

E. Plays which are almost certainly NOT by Mira.

In every case the conclusions are based on the available evidence and it is always possible that the discovery of new evidence might alter these conclusions.

In these five tables the following abbreviations will be used to refer to the works of the bibliographers and critics: Amella;[3] Anfbal;[4] Barrera;[5] Cotarelo;[6] Medel;[7] Mesonero Catálogo;[8] Mesonero Indice;[9] Morley and Bruerton;[10] Paz y Meliá;[11] and Valbuena Prat.[12] Cross references within these tables are indicated by the number ascribed to the title, e.g. No. 36.

Information concerning the most modern editions of the plays, and about the editions used in this thesis, will be found in the Bibliography of the Plays examined.

The final table in this chapter presents the available evidence concerning the chronology of Mira's plays. A description of the details concerning this table immediately precedes it (see below, pp. 51).

TABLE A: PLAYS WHICH ARE ALMOST CERTAINLY BY MIRA

1. La adúltera virtuosa (2) Barrera (p. 260) and Mesonero Catálogo give the subtitle Santa María Egipciaca. This almost certainly belongs to La mesonera del Cielo (No. 35).
2. La adversa fortuna de don Alvaro de Luna (1) This play was the subject of great controversy until the discovery of Mira's autograph manuscript in 1943 conclusively settled the question. (3) The autograph manuscript is not in the Biblioteca Nacional, but in the library of don Arturo Sedó Guichard. Segunda parte de las comedias del Maestro Tirso de Molina (Madrid, 1635). [Attributed to Tirso.] (4) Adversa fortuna de don Alvaro de Luna, ed. Luigi de Filippo (Florence, 1960), pp. xx-xxviii gives a good account of the history of the attributions of the play.

3. Amor, ingenio y mujer

(2) Barrera (p. 259) and Mesonero Catálogo both falsely consider this to be an alternative title to La tercera de sí misma (No. 54). Although both plays use the refrain Amor. . ., they are very different plays.

4. El amparo de los hombres

5. El arpa de David

(2) Barrera (p. 259) calls this an auto.

(3) There are two MSS.: 15.516, seventeenth century; 16.326 eighteenth century (Paz y Melíá, 266).

6. El caballero sin nombre

(3) Parte treinta y dos. Doce comedias de diferentes autores (Saragossa, 1640).

7. Los caballeros nuevos

(1) Mesonero Catálogo omits this play, but in Mesonero Indice (p. xxvii) it is listed with the sub-title Los carboneros de Francia and credited to Lope.

(2) The MS. bears the sub-title Y carboneros de Tracia, which is written in a different hand from the rest of the play. The Tracia appears to be a misreading of Fracia. Barrera comments that the play is 'diversa de la titulada Los carboneros de Francia y Reina Sevilla' (p. 259), on account of this sub-title. See No. 8.

(3) MS. 15.284, dated 7 March 1608 (Paz y Melíá, 510).

8. Los carboneros de Francia Y Reina Sevilla

(2) This play has caused some confusion with Los caballeros nuevos, (cf. Barrera, p. 259). See No. 7.

(3) MS. 15.658, late seventeenth century, has the title Reina Sevilla y carboneros. . . ; MS. 17.448[8], seventeenth century, consists of Act One only (Paz y Melíá, 3115).

Parte treinta y nueve. Comedias nuevas (Madrid, 1673).

9. En la casa del tahur poco dura el alegría

(3) MS. Res. 118, dated 20 December 1616, is partly autograph (Paz y Melíá, 590).

10. El clavo de Jaël

(1) Omitted by Medel; Mesonero Catálogo lists it as being by Mira, but Mesonero Indice credits it to Lope (p. xxviii).

(3) MS. 15.331, seventeenth century 'Tiene algunas enmiendas de mano de D. Francisco de Rojas' (Paz y Melíá, 675).

11. El conde Alarcos

(3) Quinta parte de comedias nuevas (Madrid, 1653)

12. La confusión de Hungría

(3) Parte treinta y cinco. Comedias nuevas (Madrid, 1670).

13. Cuatro milagros de amor

(3) MS. 15.252, nineteenth century (Paz y Meliá, 853)

14. La desgraciada Raquel

(1) Credited to Diamante and published as La judía de Toledo.

(2) As well as La judía de Toledo the play is also known as La desdichada Raquel and La desgracia de Raquel.

(3) The MS. which belonged to George Ticknor and is now in the Boston Public Library confirms that this play and that published under Diamante's name are identical. The MS. bears a date of 1 April 1625, when it was submitted for approval. This was refused, but was later accepted, and the date was changed to read 1635. Barrera read the Spanish translation of Ticknor's History of Spanish Literature, and repeated the error which the translator, Gayangos, had made, stating that the MS. date was 1605 (p. 255).

Parte veinte y siete. Comedias nuevas (Madrid, 1667), [Attributed to Diamante].

(4) Donald A. Murray, 'Mira de Amescua's La desgraciada Raquel (Ph. D. thesis, Stanford University, 1951), p. 257 clarifies the confusion over the date of the play.

15. Las desgracias del rey don Alfonso el Casto

(2) Medel (p. 173) lists the king as Alonso.

(3) Flor de las comedias de España de diferentes autores (Alcala, 1615; Barcelona, 1616).

16. El ejemplo mayor de la desdicha y el capitán Belisario

(1) Mesonero Indice is the only place it is credited to Lope (p. xxxii), the first edition credits it to Montalbán.

(3) MS. Res., 112, dated 1625, is autograph and bears underneath Mira's signature the approval and signature of Lope de Vega; MS. 16.906 is dated 1635 (Paz y Meliá, 1172).

Parte veinte y cinco. Comedias de diferentes autores (Saragossa, 1632), [Attributed to Montalbán].

17. El esclavo del demonio

(3) Tercera parte de comedias de Lope de Vega y otros autores (Barcelona, 1612; Madrid, 1613).

18. Examinarse de rey o más vale fingir que amar

(3) MS. 14.953, seventeenth century (Paz y Meliá, 1357).

19. Auto. La fe de Hungría

(3) MS. 15.318, seventeenth century (Paz y Meliá, 1388).

20. La fénix de Salamanca

(3) Parte tercera de comedias nuevas (Madrid, 1653).

21. El galán secreto

(3) Parte treinta y quatro de comedias nuevas (Madrid, 1670).

22. Galán, valiente y discreto

(3) MS. 17.025, dated 1636; MS. 15.323, seventeenth century (Paz y Meliá, 1188).

Parte veinte y nueve de comedias de diferentes autores (Valencia, 1636).

23. Auto. El heredero

(1) Mesonero Catálogo and Indice omit this auto.

(3) Autos sacramentales con quatro comedias (Madrid, 1655).

24. Hero y Leandro

(1) Mesonero Indice credits the play to either Lope or Mira (p. xxxv). Calderón mentions the play in his La dama duende (Jornada I, ll. 23-30) as being by Mira. La dama duende is from the year 1629.

(3) MS. 15.367, seventeenth century; MS. 15.264, nineteenth century (Paz y Meliá, 1652).

25. La hija de Carlos V

26. El hombre de mayor fama

(3) Doze comedias de Lope de Vega. Parte veynte y nueve (Huesca, 1634), [Attributed to Lope].

27. Auto. La santa Inquisición

(3) MS. Res., 68, dated 10 May 1625 (Paz y Meliá, 3305).

(4) Menéndez y Pelayo published this in his edition of Lope's plays, which have been republished in BAE, 158. In his introduction Menéndez y Pelayo admits it is almost certainly by Mira, but he thinks it of interest because it is one of the few works to deal with the Holy Office. He is a little dubious about his own logic (BAE, 158, 241).

28. Auto. La jura del Príncipe de Asturias

(3) MS. 17.098, is dated 1633 but it states that the auto was first performed in 1632. (Paz y Meliá, 1865).

29. Las lises de Francia

(3) Parte cuarenta y quatro. Comedias nuevas (Madrid, 1678).

30. Lo que es no casarse a gusto

(1) Medel and Mesonero Catálogo omit it, but Mesonero Indice credits it to Mira (p. xxxvii).

31. Lo que le toca al valor y Príncipe de Orange

(1) Barrera says 'Es, según el señor Durán, la atribuída a Tomás Osorio en la Parte cuarta con título de El rebelde al beneficio' (p. 260). According to Cotarelo (pp. 17-8) this Osorio was an actor and his name would probably have been on a copy of the play, and that a printer erroneously thought it was that of the author.

(3) Laurel de comedias. Quarta parte (Madrid, 1653), [Attributed to Osorio].

32. Lo que puede el oír misa

(3) Primera parte de comedias nuevas (Madrid, 1652).

33. Lo que puede una sospecha

(3) Laurel de comedias. Quarta parte (Madrid, 1653).

34. El mártir de Madrid

(1) Mesonero Catálogo omits this play.

(3) MS. Res., 107 is an autograph manuscript, and bears the approval date of 1619; MS. 16.886, seventeenth century, has the subtitle, No hay mal que por bien no venga (Paz y Meliá, 2231).

35. La mesonera del Cielo y ermitaño galán

(3) Parte treinta y nueve de comedias nuevas (Madrid, 1673). See No. 1.

36. Auto. La mayor soberbia humana de Nabucodonosor

(3) Navidad y Corpus Christi festejados (Madrid, 1664).

37. Auto. El monte de la piedad

(2) Mesonero Catálogo omits the la from the title.

(3) MS. 15.490, seventeenth century (Paz y Meliá, 2426).

38. Auto del nacimiento de Cristo nuestro bien y sol a medianoche y estrellas a mediodía

(1) Mesonero Indice credits it to Villegas (Juan) or Mira (p. xlviii).

(2) This auto is commonly referred to as Sol a medianoche to distinguish it from No. 39.

(3) Navidad y Corpus Christi festejados (Madrid, 1664).

39. Auto del nacimiento del señor

(1) Mesonero Catálogo omits it, Medel has it as anonymous (p. 271).

(3) Autos sacramentales con quatro comedias (Madrid, 1655). See No. 38.

40. No hay burlas con las mujeres o casarse y vengarse

(3) Quinta parte de comedias escogidas (Madrid, 1654).

41. No hay dicha ni desdicha hasta la muerte

(1) Medel lists two works: No hay dicha hasta la muerte which he lists as anonymous, and No hay dicha ni desdicha hasta la muerte which he credits to Rojas (p. 216).

(3) Autograph MS. Res., 76, dated 20 July 1628; MS. 14.920, dated 1685 (Paz y Melíá, 2555).

Parte quarenta y cinco. Comedias nuevas (Madrid, 1679).

42. No hay reinar como vivir

(3) Comedias varias. Parte treze (Madrid, 1660).

43. Auto. Nuestra señora de los remedios

(1) Mesonero Indice credits this to Calderón (p. xli).

(3) MS. 16.724, seventeenth century; MS. 16.872, seventeenth century (Paz y Melíá, 2631).

44. Obligar contra su sangre

(3) MS. 18.142, has approval date of 1638 (Paz y Melíá, 2656).

45. Auto. Los pastores de Belén

(1) Barrera and Mesonero Catálogo omit this title; Mesonero Indice credits it to Gaspar Lozano (p. xlii). Medel says there are two parts by different authors, both unknown (p. 269).

(3) MSS. 16.431 and 15.211, both seventeenth century (Paz y Melíá, 2771).

46. Auto. Pedro Telonario

(3) MS. 16.636, seventeenth century (Paz y Melíá, 2792).

47. El primer Conde de Flandes

(1) This is attributed to Zárate by Medel (p. 227) and Mesonero Indice (p. xliii). [Zárate was born ca. 1620, and could not have written this play in 1616].

(3) MS. 16.688, written in the late eighteenth century, bears the date 24 November 1616 (Paz y Melíá, 2963).

Parte veinte y nueve de comedias nuevas (Madrid, 1668).

48. Auto. El Príncipe de la Paz y transformaciones de Celia

(4) Menéndez y Pelayo saw this attributed to Lope in a catalogue of the London bookseller Salvá (1829-34) and he used this as a pretext for publishing it in the works of Lope (republished in BAE, 158), because he liked the piece 'Obra poética de mérito nada vulgar' (p. 240).

49. Los prodigios de la vara y capitán de Israel

(3) Parte treinta y ocho de comedias nuevas (Madrid, 1671).

50. Auto. Las pruebas de Cristo

(1) Mesonero Catálogo omits this, but Mesonero Indice credits it to Mira (xliv). Medel lists it as anonymous (p. 270).

(3) MS. 16.690, seventeenth century (Paz y Meliá, 3018).

Autos sacramentales con quatro comedias (Madrid, 1655).

51. La rueda de la Fortuna

(3) Flor de las comedias de España de diferentes autores (Alcala, 1615; Barcelona, 1616).

52. El santo sin nacer y mártir sin morir. San Ramón

(1) Mesonero Catálogo omits this and Mesonero Indice credits it to Doctor Ramón as Mártir sin morir y santo. . . (p. xxxviii). Medel, similarly credits it to Doctor Ramón (p. 244).

(3) MS. 14.834^{10}, seventeenth century (Paz y Meliá, 3314).

Doze comedias de varias autores (Tortosa, 1638), [anonymous].

53. Los sueños de Josef y más feliz cautiverio

(2) Mesonero Catálogo omits it, in the Indice he has it as anonymous with the title Los sucesos de Faraón y más feliz cautiverio (p. xlix). Medel omits it, Cotarelo (p. 63) has the title as Los sueños de Faraón y. . . .

54. La tercera de sí misma

(2) This is erroneously considered a sub-title for Amor, ingenio y mujer (No.3) by Barrera (p. 259) and Mesonero Catálogo.

(3) MS. 17.149, dated 1626, signed by the copyist, Juan Calderón (Paz y Meliá, 3497).

Parte ocho de comedias nuevas (Madrid, 1657).

55. Vida y muerte de la monja de Portugal

(3) MS. 17.428, dated 1670 (Paz y Meliá, 3779).

Parte treinta y tres de comedias nuevas (Madrid, 1670).

56. Vida y muerte de San Lázaro

(3) MS. 16.805, with censure date of 1688, with poems and corrections in Mira's handwriting (Paz y Meliá, 3783).

Autos sacramentales con quatro comedias (Madrid, 1655).

TABLE B: PLAYS WRITTEN BY MIRA IN COLLABORATION WITH OTHER AUTHORS, IN WHICH MIRA'S CONTRIBUTION IS ALMOST CERTAIN

57. Algunas hazañas de las muchas de don García Hurtado de Mendoza, marqués de Cañete

(1) Attributions are complicated for this play. It was organised by Belmonte, who wrote the end of the first act and the end of the third act. The rest of the play was written as follows: Act One, Mira and the Conde del Basto; Act Two, Ruiz de Alarcón, Vélez de Guevara, and Fernando de Ludeña; Act Three, Jacinto de Herrera, Diego de Villegas and Guillén de Castro.

(3) Printed in Madrid in 1622 in the name of Belmonte. See Pérez Pastor, Bibliografía Madrileña, III, #1809, 74.

58. La manzana de discordia y robo de Elena

(1) Written in collaboration with Guillén de Castro.

(3) MS. 15.645, seventeenth century (Paz y Meliá, 2195).

(4) Eduardo Juliá Martínez in his edition of Guillén de Castro, Obras (3 vols., Madrid, 1927) postulates that 'nos inclinamos a creer que la primera jornada, quizá en su totalidad, sea de Mira de Amescua, y la tercera de Guillén de Castro' (3, xxvii). He makes no comment on the second act.

59. Polifemo Y Circe

(1) Written in collaboration with Montalbán and Calderón.

(2) Mesonero Catálogo gives title as Circe y Polifemo.

(3) Ms. Res., 83, Act Two is autograph of Montalbán, dated April 1630; Act Three is autograph of Calderón, undated; the first act is not autograph but has always been credited to Mira. There are two other MSS.: 15.052, eighteenth century, and 15.053, nineteenth century (Paz y Meliá, 2916).

TABLE C: PLAYS WHICH ARE PROBABLY BY MIRA, BUT ABOUT WHICH THE EVIDENCE IS NOT CONCLUSIVE

60. La adversa fortuna de don Bernardo de Cabrera

(1) Medel lists two plays, one by Lope and one by Mira (p. 145). Cotarelo says 'En los prólogos a los tomos 3 y 8 de la nueva edición de Obras de Lope de Vega [Madrid, 1916 and 1930] creemos haber demostrado que sólo Lope es el autor de ambas obras dramáticas' (1931, p. 82). His reasons, based on internal evidence, are less than conclusive. Aníbal stated his belief in Mira's authorship of the plays (pp. 149, 152-61), and his reasoning assumed much greater weight with the discovery of the autograph manuscript of La adversa de don Alvaro (No. 2), which he also championed (pp. 136-149). Morley and Bruerton reject this play as being by Lope adding 'The same poet, perhaps Mira de Amescua, probably

wrote both the Bernardo de Cabrera plays' (p. 332).

(3) Doze comedias de Lope de Vega Carpio. Parte veynte y nueve (Huesca, 1634), [Attributed to Lope].

61. El animal profeta y dichoso parricida San Julián

(1) Mesonero Indice credits this to Lope (p. xxv), but in his Catálogo he says 'Creo sea de Mirademescua (p. xlvi). Cotarelo quotes Menéndez y Pelayo 'Del examen interno de la comedia resultan, a juicio de Menéndez y Pelayo, de cuyo sentido crítico y conocimiento de Lope, no puede uno, sin grandes pruebas, apartarse ni dudar, mayores indicios a favor de este gran poeta que al de Mira' (pp. 82-3). Morley and Bruerton have the grandes pruebas and reject Lope's claim saying 'the play, if Lope's has been recast' (p. 257). Cotarelo supports Lope's authorship on two grounds: first Menéndez y Pelayo's subjective evidence, second the fact that 'a nombre de Lope se imprimió en un tomo del siglo XVII, que vio don Juan Isidro Fajardo, y que hoy no conocemos, y la tradición bibliográfica constante, que mantiene dicha atribución a favor de Lope durante el siglo XVIII' (pp. 82-3). The evidence seems to favor Mira rather than Lope. It is a choice between an extant MS. of 1631 and a non-existent seventeenth century printed edition.

(3) MS. 16.899, dated 1631; MS. 14.980, seventeenth century, MS. 16.691, early eighteenth century (Paz y Meliá, 221).

62. Nardo Antonio, bandolero

(1) Amella lists El valiente Nardo Antonio by Mira (p. 378). Despite this contemporary evidence, all the bibliographers credit it to Lope, until the twentieth century. Cotarelo accepts Mira's authorship (p. 40) and Morley and Bruerton reject Lope's authorship (p. 321).

(3) Parte veynte y ocho de comedias de varios autores (Huesca, 1634), [Attributed to Lope].

63. El palacio confuso

(1) Amella lists this as being by Mira (p. 378); Medel also credits it to Mira (p. 221); Mesonero Indice credits it to Mira or Lope (p. xlii). Cotarelo accepts Mira's authorship (pp. 49-50). Charles Henry Stevens in his edition of Lope de Vega's "El palacio confuso" (New York, 1939), however, supports Lope's authorship: 'Presented with all these details, relating our play as they do to the work of Lope, we must find it difficult now to admit Mira as our author in place of Lope. All our evidence, voluminous, detailed, and at times somewhat inconclusive, indicates that it was Lope de Vega who composed El palacio confuso' (p. lxxiv). The evidence he gathers is circumstantial, and could be made to prove Mira's authorship as well. Stevens' conclusion is invalidated by the work of Morley and Bruerton, who reject Lope's authorship (p. 317).

64. Próspera fortuna de don Alvaro de Luna y adversa de Ruy López de Avalos

(1) This play (with the Adversa fortuna [No. 2]) has generally been credited to Tirso, for it was published in his Segunda Parte (Madrid, 1634). Aníbal advocated Mira's authorship of this play (pp. 129-135). The discovery of the autograph MS. of the Adversa fortuna weighs the balance very heavily in Mira's favor.

(3) MS. 17.101, seventeenth century, with the title Ruy López De Avalos, and with a very strange note by Paz y Meliá 'Es la de Lope: Adversa. . . ?' (Paz y Meliá, 3218).

Segunda parte de las comedias del Maestro Tirso de Molina (Madrid, 1635), [Attributed to Tirso].

65. La próspera fortuna de don Bernardo de Cabrera

(1) The claims and counter-claims about this play are much the same as for its second part, La adversa fortuna. . . (No. 60). Medel has the following entry:

Próspera fortuna—de Lope.
Próspera fortuna—Don Bernardo de Cabrera (p. 230).

What it means is not very clear. Aníbal advocates Mira's authorship on the basis of the name, or pseudonym, Lisardo (pp. 150-161). Morley and Bruerton reject Lope's authorship, and suggest that both parts are by one man, perhaps Mira (p. 332).

TABLE D: PLAYS WHICH ARE PROBABLY **NOT** BY MIRA, BUT FOR WHICH THE EVIDENCE IS NOT CONCLUSIVE

I. El condenado por desconfiado

(1) This is generally considered to be by Tirso, but Aníbal suggests the possibility that it is by Mira (p. 175ff.). Menéndez y Pelayo thought it was by Tirso, but allowed the possibility that Mira may have been the author 'único entre los autores de segundo orden que podía imaginar algo semejante' ('Calderón: Dramas religiosos' in Estudios y discursos de crítica histórica y literaria, vol 3 (Madrid, 1941), 201. Another article supporting the view of Aníbal is Lidia Santelices, 'El probable autor de El condenado. . .,' Anales de la facultad de Filosofía y Letras (University of Chile, Santiago, 1936), pp. 48-56. The evidence is too inconclusive, however, to decide against Tirso's traditionally accepted authorship.

II. El negro del mejor amo

(1) This is generally attributed to Mira, although Medel creates confusion by listing three plays—one by Mira, one by Lope and one by Juan Vélez (p. 215). Lope did write a similar play with the title El santo negro Rosambuco. Cotarelo quotes a MS. 17.317, which he says is the same as that credited to Mira (p. 84). This MS. ends with a few lines stating the play to be by Luis Vélez. It is worth

remarking that Medel and Cotarelo do not agree as to which Vélez de Guevara should be credited with the play.

III. El pleito que tuvo el diablo con el cura de Madrilejos

(1) This play was a joint effort of three men, and most of the bibliographers credit it to Mira, Vélez de Guevara and Rojas Zorrilla. Cotarelo quotes the line 'ya no se usan copetes,' and goes on to argue that since copetes were not banned until 1639, the play must have been written after that date, which would make Mira's claim to a contribution very doubtful (p. 85). It is possible that this line was added to the play to give it topical reference, and that it was, in reality, written much earlier. There is no proof either way, however.

IV. La ventura de la fea

(1) This play is incomplete. Aníbal states his belief in Mira's authorship (p. 176ff.); Morley and Bruerton reject Lope's (p. 353). The evidence is not conclusive.

TABLE E: PLAYS WHICH ARE ALMOST CERTAINLY **NOT** BY MIRA

V. El alcaide de Madrid

(1) Listed by Amella (p. 378), unknown.

VI. El capitán de Israel

(2) Listed as separate play by Medel (p. 162). Los prodigios de la vara has this as its sub-title. See No. 49.

VII. Los celos de Rodamonte

(1) Sometimes attributed to Mira. Cotarelo explains that it was published under Mira's name in 1638 (p. 83). Cotarelo shows it to be by Lope, and Morley and Bruerton accept it as being definitely by Lope (p. 140).

VIII. El cisne de Alexandria

(1) Listed by Amella (p. 379), unknown.

IX. El conde don Sancho niño

(1) Listed by Amella (p. 379), unknown.

X. El cuerdo en palaua

(1) Listed by Amella (p. 378), not even the meaning of the title is known.

XI. El desengaño en celos

(1) Amella lists this (p. 378) and although nothing is known about it, it is possible that this—and other titles he lists—are sub-titles, cf. El examen de maridos (No. XIII).

XII. El Duque de Memoransi

(1) Listed by Medel (p. 178) but it is otherwise unknown.

(2) The title is probably a form of Montmorency.

XIII. El examen de maridos

(1) This is listed by Amella (p. 378).

(2) This is probably the sub-title for either Galán, valiente y discreto or Cuatro milagros de amor. It means that one of these plays is slightly earlier than has so far been thought. It seems probable that other titles on Amella's list may also be sub-titles. See No. XI.

XIV. Auto. La fe de Abrahám

(1) Barrera is the only bibliographer to attribute this to Mira (p. 260). Mesonero Indice has it by 'tres ingenios' (xxxiii). Cotarelo believes it to be anonymous (p. 83).

XV. El gran cardenal de España

(1) Listed by Amella (p. 379), unknown.

XVI. Primera del Juicio

(1) Listed by Amella (p. 378). See No. XVII.

XVII. Segunda del juicio

(1) Listed by Amella (p. 378), with No. XVI; both are unknown.

(2) It is possible that these two titles could refer to one of Mira's two part plays, either Alvaro de Luna or Bernardo de Cabrera could be their protagonist.

XVIII. El marqués de las Navas

(1) Cotarelo refers to the volume which erroneously attributes the play to Mira (pp. 83-4).

(3) Lope's autograph manuscript dated 22 April 1624, exists and is accepted by Morley and Bruerton (p. 46).

XIX. Los mártires del Japón

(1) Medel (p. 206), Barrera (p. 260) and Mesonero Catálogo credit this to Mira, either as a play or an auto. There is nothing else known about the play.

XX. Los mártires de Madrid

(2) This has been attributed to Mira by Mesonero Catálogo among others, probably through confusion with Lope's auto of the same title, and Mira's play El mártir de Madrid (No. 34).

XXI. Más vale fingir que amar

(2) Mesonero Catálogo lists this as a separate play, but it is the sub-title to Examinarse de rey (No. 18).

XXII. Auto. El pastor lobo y cabaña celestial

(1) Medel attributes this to Mira (p. 269), Barrera (p. 260) and Mesonero Catálogo repeat this attribution.

(4) Menéndez y Pelayo explains that it is by Lope, but was once published in Mira's name, hence Medel's error (BAE, 157, lix).

XXIII. El Príncipe de Orange

(2) This is listed by Medel (p. 228) as a separate play, but it is the sub-title to Lo que le toca al valor (No. 33).

XXIV. El príncipe don Carlos

(1) This is listed by Amella (p. 379), unknown.

XXV. El purgatorio de San Patricio

(1) This is listed by Amella (p. 379). There is a play of this title believed to be by Calderón, from the same period (1628).

XXVI. Reina Sevilla

(2) This is listed by Medel as a separate play (p. 162). It is the sub-title to Los carboneros de Francia (No. 8).

XXVII. El rey don Alfonço el sabio

(1) This is listed by Amella (p. 379), it is unknown.

(2) It is possible that this title refers to Las desgracias del rey Alfonso el casto (No. 15).

XXVIII. El rico avariento

(2) Medel lists this as a separate play (p. 236) it is the sub-title for Vida y muerte de San Lázaro (No. 56; see also No. XXXII).

XXIX. Auto. Ronda y visita de la cárcel

(1) This is credited to Mira by Medel (p. 270) and by Mesonero Catálogo, both omitting the la. Cotarelo also mentions it (p. 78). There is no trace of the auto.

XXX. San Benito de Palermo

(2) This is credited to Mira by Medel (p. 238), but it is the sub-title of El negro del mejor amo. The latter play is probably not by Mira anyway. See No. II.

XXXI. Ruy López De Avalos

(2) This is listed by Medel as a separate play. It is the second part of the title Próspera fortuna de don Alvaro de Luna. . . (No. 64).

XXXII. San Lázaro

(2) This is listed by Medel as a separate play (p. 240) and it is the third variation he gives of the play Vida y muerte

de San Lázaro (No. 56; see also No. XXVIII).

XXXIII. San Ramón/ Doctor Ramón

(2) These are two variants, listed by Medel (p. 242) and Barrera (p. 260) for Santo sin nacer. . . (No. 52).

XXXIV. Auto. La Viña

(2) This is listed by Cotarelo (p. 81). It is another title for El heredero (No. 23). See Valbuena, p. xxvinote.

XXXV. La victoria de las malmas

(1) This is listed by Amella (p. 378). Nothing about it is known, not even the meaning of the title.

It is possible to date only about a third of the dramatic works of Mira de Amescua. These dates have been obtained from six different sources, only one of which can be regarded as being precise. (1) When Mira has dated the manuscript himself it gives the precise date when he finished writing the play.

Four of the six sources provide the terminus ad quem:
(2) Any date written on the manuscript by somebody other than Mira. This is usually the date of the aprobación or censura.
(3) The play may also be dated from the external evidence of dated documents. Dates obtained in this way are usually those of productions of the play.
(4) The play may also be dated from the external evidence of other plays. Dates obtained in this way present a double uncertainty, since the date of the composition or production of the other play may not be certain.
(5) The date of the first edition of the play. It must be remembered that the shortest known time-lag between the aprobación of a play and the first edition is seven years, in the case of El ejemplo mayor de la desdicha (1625-1632).

(6) The plays may also be dated from internal evidence. This method of dating is the least accurate and since it depends on events, monarchs, fashions, or social customs it may give either a terminus ad quem or a terminus a quo.[13]

The date of each play in the following table must therefore be regarded as a terminus ad quem unless otherwise stated.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE OF MIRA'S DRAMATIC WORKS

1604	La rueda de la Fortuna. External evidence of a letter of Lope. First published 1615.
1606(a quo)	La hija de Carlos Quinto. This play was written to eulogise the definitive choice of Madrid as Capital of Spain in 1606. (See J.H. Elliott, Imperial Spain 1469-1716[Penguin Books, 1970], p. 305.) I am grateful to Prof. H.V. Livermore for pointing this fact out to me. First published in the eighteenth century.
1607	La fénix de Salamanca (See Valbuena, p. xxvi.) First published in 1653.
1608	Los caballeros nuevos. Dated MS. Unpublished.
1609	El santo sin nacer. (See Valbuena, p. xxvi.)
1613	El Esclavo del demonio. First publication. (See Pérez Pastor, II, #1256, 275.)
1615	Las desgracias de Alfonso. First publication.
1616	La casa del tahur. Dated MS. First edited in 1970. El primer Conde de Flandes. Dated MS. First published in 1668.
1619	El mártir de Madrid. Approval date on MS. Unpublished.
1621(a quo)	No hay burlas con las mujeres. (See Cotarelo, p. 493.) First published in 1653.
1622	Algunas hazañas de Mendoza. First publication.
1624	Adversa de Alvaro. Dated MS. First published in 1634. Amor, ingenio y mujer. (See Cotarelo, p. 500.) First published ca. 1640.
1625	El ejemplo de la desdicha. Dated MS. First published in 1632. La inquisición (Auto). Dated MS. First published in 1893. La desgraciada Raquel. Dated MS. Date altered to read 1635. First published in 1667.
1626	La tercera de sí misma. First publication.

1628(precise date)	No hay dicha ni desdicha. MS. dated by Mira. First published in 1679.
1629	Hero y Leandro. MS. Mentioned by Calderón in La dama duende. First edited in 1951.
1630	Polifemo y Circe. The second act is a dated MS. of Montalbán. First published ca. 1840.
1630-2	Galán, valiente y discreto. (See Cotarelo, p. 500 and the edition of W. Forbes [Madrid, 1973] pp. 25-33.) First published in 1636.
1631	El animal profeta. MS. copy, dated. First published in the eighteenth century.
1632	La jura del príncipe. (Auto) MS. bears production date. First edited in 1971.
(a quo)	Cuatro milagros de amor. Mention made of the Jura del Príncipe Baltasar Carlos in March, 1632. First published in the eighteenth century.

Since Mira seems to have abandoned his literary life in 1632-3, when he retired to Guadix, unless fresh evidence to the contrary is found, it must be assumed that all his plays had been written by this date.

Mira appears to have been fairly diffident about his plays, and only six were printed during the years of his literary activity. Because of this, any attempt to verify authenticity, date, and text of the plays is exceedingly difficult.

NOTES TO CHAPTER TWO

[1] Mira de Amescua's non dramatic works are not considered in this thesis.

[2] In two cases, the first two editions have been listed, because in both cases the collections of plays were republished just one year after the first editions.

[3] 'Memoria de la roba y comedies que Hieroni Amella dona en comanda y en peñora del debit a Hieroni Alfonço, clauari del Hospital General' (June 14, 1628), Bulletin Hispanique, 8 (1906), 377-9.

[4] Claude E. Anfbal, Mira de Amescua—Lisardo his pseudonym (Columbus, Ohio, 1925).

[5] Cayetano Alberto de la Barrera y Leirado, Catálogo bibliográfico y biográfico del teatro antiguo español: Madrid, 1860 (London, 1968), pp. 258-60.

[6] Emilio Cotarelo y Mori, 'Mira de Amescua y su teatro,' BRAE, 17 (1930), 467-505, 611-58; 18 (1931), 7-90.

[7] Francisco Medel del Castillo, 'Indice general alfabético de todos los títulos de comedias que se han escrito por varios autores, antiguos y modernos. Y de los autos sacramentales y alegóricos, assí de don Pedro Calderón de la Barca, como de otros autores clásicos. Madrid, 1735.' Revue Hispanique, 75 (1929), 149-369. [There is a list of all plays attributed by Medel to Mira on pp. 319-20.]

[8] Ramón de Mesonero Romanos, 'Catálogo cronológico de los autores dramáticos, y alfabético de las comedias de cada uno. Parte Primera (1588-1635),' BAE, 45 (1951), li.

[9] Ramón de Mesonero Romanos, 'Indice alfabético de las comedias, tragedias, autos y zarzuelas del teatro antiguo español, desde Lope de Vega hasta Cañizares,' BAE, 49 (1951), xxxiii-li.

[10] S. Griswold Morley and Courtney Bruerton, The Chronology of Lope de Vega's 'Comedias' (New York, 1940).

[11] A. Paz y Meliá, Catálogo de las piezas de teatro que se conservan en el departamento de manuscritos de la Biblioteca Nacional, vol. 1 (Madrid, 1934). The references are to the numbers given to the titles by Paz y Meliá in his catalogue.

[12] Angel Valbuena Prat, ed., Mira de Amescua, Teatro I, pp. xxv-li.

[13] This is especially true in the case of monarchs, for any play which mentions Philip III as the reigning king must have been written before 1621. On the other hand, any play which mentions Philip IV as reigning king must be dated after 1621. This method of dating is the least accurate since it frequently depends on one or two words which may or may not have been written by the author, especially considering the corrupt state of many texts of Golden Age plays.

CHAPTER THREE: A NEW CLASSIFICATION OF THE PLAYS OF MIRA DE AMESCUA

No satisfactory method exists of classifying the plays of the Spanish Golden Age. The traditional method is a descriptive one which is concerned with the sources or settings of the plays rather than with their dramatic qualities. An example of this type of classification is that used by Valbuena Prat in his editions of El esclavo del demonio:

VALBUENA PRAT'S FIRST CLASSIFICATION OF MIRA'S DRAMATIC WORKS[1]

OBRAS DE TEATRO DE MIRA DE AMESCUA (1)

- Autos sacramentales....
  - Pedro Telonario
  - Las pruebas de Cristo
  - La jura del Príncipe
  - La mayor soberbia humana de Nabucodonosor
  - El heredero
- Comedias
  - Bíblicas.....
    - Los prodigios de la vara y capitán de Israel (Historia de Moisés)
    - El clavo de Jaël (Idem de Débora, Lisara y Jaël)
    - Vida y muerte de San Lázaro (Parábola del rico avariento)
    - El arpa de David
  - De Santos....
    - El santo sin nacer y mártir sin morir
    - La mesonera del Cielo
    - El esclavo del demonio
    - Vida y muerte de la monja de Portugal
  - De historia y leyenda extranjeras...
    - El ejemplo mayor de la desdicha y capitán Belisario
    - La rueda de la Fortuna
    - Los carboneros de Francia
    - El conde Alarcos (La acción pasa en Francia)
  - De historia y leyenda nacionales....
    - Lo que puede el oír Misa
    - La desdichada Raquel
    - No hay dicha ni desdicha hasta la muerte
    - Obligar contra su sangre
  - Palaciegas...
    - Galán, valiente y discreto
    - El palacio confuso
  - De intriga y costumbres..
    - No hay burlas con las mujeres
    - La Fénix de Salamanca
    - Lo que puede una sospecha
    - La tercera de sí misma

(1) Cito únicamente las más conocidas o que considero capitales para su estudio. Las restantes caben en cada uno de los grupos.

VALBUENA PRAT'S SECOND CLASSIFICATION OF MIRA'S DRAMATIC WORKS[2]

Comedias..	BIBLICAS: El clavo de Jael, Los prodigios de la vara, y Capitán de Israel, El arpa de David, Vida y muerte de San Lázaro.
	DE SANTOS: El esclavo del demonio, El santo sin nacer y Mártir sin morir, La mesonera del Cielo.
	HEROICAS: El ejemplo mayor de la desdicha, La rueda de la Fortuna, El conde Alarcos, La desdichada Raquel.
	DE CAPA Y ESPADA: La Fénix de Salamanca, La tercera de sí misma, La casa del tahur.

The method has many shortcomings, which will be apparent from comparing the two classifications used by Valbuena:

(1) His categories change and plays which are placed in separate categories in one classification are grouped together in the other: Comedias de leyenda y historia extranjeras and Comedias de leyenda y historia nacionales become grouped as Comedias heróicas.

(2) The titles of categories change completely: Comedias de intriga y costumbres become Comedias de capa y espada.

(3) Some plays appear to fit into more than one category: Vida y muerte de San Lázaro as the title suggests could also be classed as a Comedia de santos.

(4) This system links together plays which are basically very different, but which happen to share a source or a setting: Lo que puede el oír misa is a religious play; La desdichada Raquel and No hay dicha ni desdicha hasta la muerte are tragedies (see below, pp.156ff); while Obligar contra su sangre is a tragicomedy (see below, pp.197ff) which is closer in spirit to the Comedias de intriga or the Comedias de capa y espada than to the other three plays.

(5) The categories are inaccurate: Sancho Osorio in Lo que puede el oír misa is much closer to the Christian concept of a Saint than María, La monja de Portugal.

In general, this type of classification can be attacked on three major issues:

(A) It is cumbersome. The logical conclusion of the method is to have a different category for every single play.

(B) It is imprecise. It links together plays which are only superficially similar. It leads to the error of plays being judged according to the classification, for example, an "historical" play may be judged as history not as drama.[3] It is impossible satisfactorily to classify plays which have no readily identifiable source or setting; once the critic has assigned the biblical, mythological, hagiographical and historical plays, he is bewildered by the problem of classifying the rest of the dramatic production of an author. Plays with non-identifiable settings or sources are ascribed in an apparently haphazard fashion to the categories Comedias de intriga, Comedias de costumbres, Comedias palaciegas etc. as if other plays lacked these qualities.

(C) It is neither very meaningful nor very helpful. The classification links plays which have no dramatic similarity and separates plays which are dramatically similar but set in different places or times.

This thesis does not use the above method of classification for these reasons, but one element of it has been retained: the subject matter and the dramatis personae have been considered in order to divide the plays into the religious theater and the secular theater of Mira de Amescua.[4] The principal characteristic which distinguishes the religious plays from the secular plays is the indisputable knowledge of the existence of God(see below, pp.62ff) and the appearance on stage of supernatural—angelic or infernal—beings. Since these two theaters have very different premisses, they will be further classified by using two different sets of criteria.

In the classification used in this thesis all the dramatic works listed in Tables A and C in Chapter Two (see above, pp. 38-47) have been included except for five plays which I was not able to obtain—El caballero sin nombre (No. 6), Los caballeros nuevos (No. 7), El clavo de Jaël (No. 10), Examinarse de rey (No. 18), and El mártir de Madrid (No. 34).[5]

It is possible to divide the religious theater into three main groups. The first group is the autos, which are differentiated from the plays by their form. Mira wrote thirteen autos.

THE AUTOS

1. La fe de Hungría (No. 19)
2. El heredero (No. 23)
3. La inquisición (No. 27)
4. La jura del príncipe (No. 28)
5. La mayor soberbia humana (No. 36)
6. El monte de la piedad (No. 37)
7. Auto del nacimiento y sol a medianoche (No. 38)
8. Auto del nacimiento de nuestro señor (No. 39)
9. Nuestra Señora de los Remedios (No. 43)
10. Los pastores de Belén (No. 45)
11. Pedro Telonario (No. 46)
12. El Príncipe de la Paz (No. 48)
13. Las pruebas de Cristo (No. 50)

The religious plays can be divided into two groups. The dominant concern of the first group is the subject of salvation. The group is far from homogeneous but has two further distinguishing characteristics. In most of the plays there appear on stage both good and evil supernatural beings—normally angels and devils. In several of the plays one or more of the protagonists die and their eternal reward is revealed. There are eight such plays.

THE RELIGIOUS, "SALVATION", PLAYS

1. El amparo de los hombres (No. 4)
2. El animal profeta (No. 61)
3. El esclavo del demonio (No. 17)
4. El hombre de mayor fama (No. 26)[6]
5. La mesonera del Cielo (No. 35)
6. El santo sin nacer (No. 52)
7. Vida y muerte de la monja de Portugal (No. 55)
8. Vida y muerte de San Lázaro (No. 56)

The second of these groups contains those plays in which man receives aid from God to enable or exhort him to achieve his goals. As a result the Divine intervention is benign and manifests itself as an angel or as the voice of God or of Christ. There are eight such plays.

THE RELIGIOUS, "NON-SALVATION", PLAYS

1. El arpa de David (No. 5)
2. Las desgracias del rey Alfonso el casto (No. 15)
3. La hija de Carlos V (No. 25)
4. Las lises de Francia (No. 29)
5. Lo que puede el oír misa (No. 32)
6. El más feliz cautiverio (No. 53)
7. El primer Conde de Flandes (No. 47)
8. Los prodigios de la vara (No. 49)

The secular plays of Mira de Amescua can be classified satisfactorily by using the traditional, neo-Aristotelian system of Tragedy, Comedy, and Tragicomedy. These three forms are discussed in detail in the relevant chapters of the thesis.[7] In order to assign the plays to the three categories, however, certain aspects of the plot must be considered at this point.

The first of the three categories is the tragedies. These are distinguished by:

(1) their emphasis on one character, who becomes the hero of the play;

(2) the death or grave suffering of the hero who fails to achieve his goals;

(3) the overall tone of the plays which is predominantly serious and somber. There are eight tragedies.

THE TRAGEDIES

1. Don Alvaro de Luna (Two Parts) (No. 2 and No. 64)
2. Don Bernardo de Cabrera (Two Parts) (No. 60 and No. 65)
3. La desgraciada Raquel (No. 14)
4. El ejemplo mayor de la desdicha (No. 16)
5. Hero y Leandro (No. 24)
6. Lo que le toca al valor (No. 31)
7. Nardo Antonio (No. 62)
8. No hay dicha ni desdicha hasta la muerte (No. 41)

The tragicomedies are distinguished by:

(1) their emphasis on more than one protagonist, frequently including an evil protagonist;

(2) the happy ending after the potential death or grave suffering of the good protagonists, the happy ending may include the death or grave suffering of the evil protagonists;

(3) the overall tone of the plays, which is serious but not

necessarily somber. There are ten tragicomedies.

THE TRAGICOMEDIES

1. La adúltera virtuosa (No. 1)
2. Los carboneros de Francia (No. 8)
3. El Conde Alarcos (No. 11)
4. El galán secreto (No. 21)
5. Lo que es no casarse a gusto (No. 30)
6. Lo que puede una sospecha (No. 33)
7. No hay burlas con las mujeres (No. 40)
8. No hay reinar como vivir (No. 42)
9. Obligar contra su sangre (No. 44)
10. La rueda de la Fortuna (No. 51)

The comedies are distinguished by:

(1) their emphasis on more than one protagonist;

(2) the happy ending of the play;

(3) the overall tone of the plays which are never somber, although they may be serious. There are eight comedies.

THE COMEDIES

1. Amor, ingenio y mujer (No. 3)
2. La casa del tahur (No. 9)
3. La confusión de Hungría (No. 12)
4. Cuatro milagros de amor (No. 13)
5. La fénix de Salamanca (No. 20)
6. Galán, valiente y discreto (No. 22)
7. El palacio confuso (No. 63)
8. La tercera de sí misma (No. 54)

The remainder of this thesis will discuss the plays using this classification.

NOTES TO CHAPTER THREE

[1] Teatro I, pp. xxvii-xxviii.

[2] El esclavo del demonio (Clásicos Ebro, Saragossa, 1970), p. 16.

[3] Cf. Cotarelo "La obra pretende ser histórica. . . pero no hay en ella nada de historia" (p. 58, the stress is mine). Cotarelo then attacks the play for the inaccuracy of its history.

[4] Erich Auerbach in Mimesis, trans. Willard R. Trask (Princeton, N.J., 1971) suggests that religious and secular drama are in reality two separate genres (p. 160).

[5] Numbers in parenthesis in this chapter refer to the numbers in Tables A and C in Chapter Two of this thesis.

[6] See below, p. 84-5 , for the reasons for including this play about the myth of Hercules.

[7] For tragedy, see below, pp. 156ff.
For tragicomedy, see below, pp. 197ff.
For comedy, see below, pp. 259ff.

CHAPTER FOUR: THE RELIGIOUS PLAYS

The plays of Mira de Amescua are all concerned with the same basic ideas. They deal with the ethical and moral problems of man's existence in the world. Mira is always concerned with what Otis H. Green has called "Fortune from the roof-tiles downward."[1] The religious theater also deals with other ideas which Green calls "Fortune from the roof-tiles upward." This chapter will concentrate on the latter and on the other characteristics which distinguish Mira's religious theater from his secular theater.

Mira wrote his last _auto_ in 1632, but the evidence points to the fact that the majority of his religious plays (_comedias_) were written in the first half of his literary life. From the evidence which is at present available it is not possible to say that at one point in his life he stopped writing religious plays; but it does show that the plays he wrote before 1616 are almost entirely religious, while those written after 1616 are almost entirely secular.

The _autos_ are a special case, since by definition they treat religious themes. This dramatic form underwent a development which may be parallel to that of the other dramatic forms (see below,pp.298-9), but is separate from them. Because they have always been regarded as a separate genre and have been studied as such,[2] they will not be discussed in this thesis.

The basic premiss of the religious plays is the transitory nature and impermanence of the material world, in contrast to the world beyond.
This is expressed in _El arpa de David_:[3]

> ¡Ay, mi Jonatás! Advierte
> qué breve, qué transitoria
> es deste mundo la gloria. . . etc.(1370-93)
> Decir podemos
> que juego y burla parécen
> los sucesos deste mundo;
> sólo el cielo los entiende. (1593-6)

Similar sentiments are expressed by the celibate, monk-like king, Alfonso II in _Las desgracias del rey Alfonso el casto_:[4]

> Esta vida es humo y sombra. . . .
> Los reinos y monarquías
> de cualquiera rey o reina

son las olas del mar frías
sólo Dios por siglos reina,
que el hombre reina por días.
Ningún rey seguro viva,
que el imperio que celebra
es de vidrio o flor altiva
que entre las manos se quiebra
o que el aire la derriba. (folio 5)

Alfonso's sister repeats the idea:

Gustos de esta vida
fin amargo han de tener. (folio 5)

In La hija de Carlos V,[5] Juana, the protagonist, emphasises the same idea. Her words clearly define the nature of God:

Todo es sin Dios vanidad
sin Dios todo es sombra avara,
Todo su poder declara
que el hombre de más poder,
muriendo para en no ser,
y Dios en sí mismo para.
Esta es una efigie rara
del archiduque mi abuelo,
espejo en quien me consuelo.[6] (1600-7)

At the end of the play, she withdraws to a convent with the words:

En ese traje confundo
del siglo las vanidades,
porque vos sacáis verdades
de las mentiras del mundo. (2539-42)

The same theme can be found in El esclavo del demonio.[7] The conversion of Lisarda is brought about when she reflects on the contrast between this world and the world to come:

La fábrica del mundo, comparada
con la celeste máquina en su punto,
y la gloria del hombre, es un trasunto,
de la angélica empresa derribada.
Parece la presente edad, pasada,
si la eterna de Dios contempla junto,
y al fin de largos años ve difunto
el cuerpo envuelto en humo, en sombra, en nada.
La vida, el mundo, el gusto, y la gloria vana
son junto nada, humo, sombra y pena.
Del alma, que es eterna, el bien importa
Pues ¿cómo una mujer, siendo cristiana,
se opone contra Dios y se condena
por el gusto que da vida tan corta. (1984-97)

The conversion of Gil de Santarem (St. Giles of Santarem) in the same play is also effected by his realisation of the truth of these ideas:

Contempla estos gustos, mira
que no sólo breves son,
pero que son de mentira. (2745-9)

The indisputable knowledge of the existence of God and the world to come is the principal characteristic which distinguishes the religious plays from the secular plays. As a result there is a group of plays which deal with the problems of salvation and how man achieves it. Because of the structure of the plays, the fact of man's salvation or reprobation can be shown as a certainty.

Part of Mira's interest in this subject was probably the result of a controversy that took place during his early life. In 1588-9 a Jesuit, Luis de Molina, published his work, Concordia liberi arbitrii cum gratiae donis, divina praescentia, providentia, praedestinatione et reprobatione, in Lisbon. This was attacked very shortly afterwards by the Dominican, Domingo Báñez, in his Apología en defensa de la doctrina antigua y católica por los maestros dominicanos de la provincia de España contra las afirmaciones contenidas en la Concordia de Luis de Molina sobre la gracia, presciencia, divina providencia, predestinación y reprobación.[8] These two works caused a controversy of such magnitude that in 1594 "a law of silence forbade further writing or debate while the papacy considered the question."[9] The rest of the affair is described by Father Copleston:

> The dispute between the Dominicans and the Jesuits induced Pope Clement VIII to set up a special Congregation in Rome to examine the points at issue. The Congregation is known as the Congregatio de auxiliis (1598-1607). Both parties had full opportunity to state their respective cases; but the end of the matter was that both opinions were permitted. At the same time the Jesuits were forbidden to call the Dominicans Calvinists, while the Dominicans were told that they must not call the Jesuits Pelagians. In other words, the different parties could continue to propound their own ways of reconciling God's foreknowledge, predestination and saving activity with human freedom, provided that they did not call each other heretics. 10

The most remarkable aspect of this debate is that there was no real disagreement about the conclusions, but only about how these conclusions should be reached. Molina and Báñez, with St. Thomas Aquinas and St. Augustine before them, believed they had found the perfect compromise between predestination and free-will. Aquinas states this quite plainly, using the

words of St. Augustine to support his own point of view:

> Two things must enter into it; Divine grace, which is the principal agent, and the human will, which cooperates with grace. Accordingly, Augustine says: "He who created you without you, will not justify you without you." 11

It was against this background that Mira wrote five plays on the subject of how man achieves salvation. El animal profeta, El esclavo del demonio, and La mesonera del Cielo deal with the subject of the controversy, that is, how to reconcile free will and predestination. Vida y muerte de San Lázaro deals with the parable of Dives and Lazarus and the possibility of salvation for the rich and the poor. El amparo de los hombres combines the two themes.

Four principal sections of the four plays that deal with free will and predestination will be discussed. These four sections are:

(1) the situation at the beginning of the plays;
(2) the temptation and the fall of the protagonists;
(3) the attitude of the protagonists after they have fallen and their relationship with the devil;
(4) the conversion of the protagonists and the discomfiture of the devil.

The problem of free will and predestination is most clearly expressed in El animal profeta. The theme is presented first in a comic subplot. Vulcano acts as the go-between for Julián and Irene. When her father appears, Vulcano pretends to be a Mercader de piedras in order to explain his presence. Her father, Alejandro, is something of a hypocrite and announces to his daughter:

> Ni aun el Cielo puede
> vencer el libre albedrío (p. 397)[12]

As soon as she leaves he asks Vulcano for the precious stone called zarabullí "con que no hay mujer segura" (p. 398). Alejandro's behavior reveals the ambivalence of the attitude of many people, for they support free will or the lack of it according to what suits them.

It is this contradiction which characterises the protagonist, Julián (St. Julian the Hospitaller). In the first act

of the play he discusses the subject of predestination and free will with his parents, Julián supporting predestination. The vision of God he presents is a negative one, for he sees God as the great avenger who is to be feared. His attitude also reveals the great moral danger of predestination and moral irresponsibility:

> El que dispone
> sobre todo, es Dios; de Dios
> son dependencias conformes
> los sucesos de este mundo
> las desdichas de los hombres.
> Si está de Dios, padres míos,
> más fuertes e inexpugnables
> me encerréis, las abre y rompe
> una palabra de Dios,
> y me perderéis entonces. (p. 399)

His view is accepted up to a certain point by his father, Ludovico, but with the reminder of the words of St. Augustine that"He. . . will not justify you without you" (see above, p.65):

> Es verdad, hijo; mas piensa
> que Dios ha dado a los hombres
> libre albedrío, y en éste
> deben los cuerdos varones
> prevenirse a las desdichas
> y resistar a sus golpes
> antes que a sus puertas lleguen,
> que no porque hay opiniones
> que está el fin determinado
> al punto que nace el hombre,
> el justo que se remita
> a lo que así se dispone.
> Obrar bien es acertado,
> librándose de ocasiones
> donde peligra la vida,
> es de prudentes varones;
> mas tomarla con su mano,
> es acto bárbaro y torpe. (p. 399)

Ludovico's ideas form the basis for the structure of so many plays by Mira de Amescua. Men are tested in the world. These tests depend on circumstances and how men react to the opportunities(ocasiones) which are offered to them. The theme of "opportunism" is developed much more fully in other plays (see below,pp123-7).

Julián does not accept his father's opinion. But very shortly afterwards he is put to the test. He discovers that he is destined to kill his parents (p. 400). He now rejects

his own view of predestination and decides that:

> . . . Venceré
> los efectos de mi estrella. (p. 401)

This decision is repeated:

> Así pienso vencer yo
> mi estrella. (p. 406)

He therefore flees from Albania and goes to Ferrara. His decision to flee is less the result of any moral conversion, than the result of pride: he wishes to overcome his own destiny. The situation of Julián is very similar to that of Oedipus for both decide to flee from their parents in order to cheat fate. In both cases the prophecies can only be fulfilled by the two men seeking to escape their threatened destiny.

Julián's decision to flee from Albania is seen by him partly as a conflict between his love for his parents and his love for Irene. He chooses to forsake the woman he loves in order to save his parents. He does not see it as merely a choice between sexual and parental love, however, for he believes that by running away he will also avoid murder:

> No es bien perder lo más
> por quedarse con lo menos. (p. 401)

The situation in the other three plays is not presented in such theoretical terms and is not as complex. The conflict in these other plays is between Divine love and sexual love and the element of parental love, if present, is not a major force.

El esclavo del demonio treats the subject of marriage and sexual immorality, as well as that of predestination and free will. The play opens with Marcelo disposing of his daughters. He regards them as chattels and has not asked their opinion, for he is intent on satisfying his own desires not theirs:

> Una monja, otra casada;
> quedará mi casa honrada. (66-7)

The obedient Leonor says: 'Tu esclava he de ser' (74). Her sister, Lisarda, however, will not accept his tyrannous behavior: 'Y yo/ he de ser hija inobediente' (74-5). The situation is parallel to that of Julián in El animal profeta, for Leonor accepts the decrees of fate, while Lisarda rebels

against them.

Lisarda and Marcelo then argue about the situation. She tells him that she loves Diego, who had killed her brother, and who consequently is hated by Marcelo. Lisarda informs her father that "Fuerza de estrellas me inclina" (107), and he replies that "No se fuerza la que es buena" (108). Marcelo's statement is apparently the most Christian, but his attitude is far from Christian. He is like Alejandro in El animal profeta (see above, p. 65), who chooses to support whichever view suits him. Marcelo is angry with Lisarda for not resisting the force of love, but expects her to bow to his own designs: he values himself above the stars.

Marcelo's reaction to Lisarda's refusal is extreme. He curses her: the malediction is specifically sexual, for he contrasts Lucrecia and Penelope, who were symbols of chastity, with Flora and Lamia, who were classical courtesans.[13] The speech shows how closely the concepts of honor and sexual virtue were linked:

> Plega a Dios, inobediente,
> que casada no te veas,
> que vivas infamemente,
> que mueras pobre y que seas
> aborrecible a la gente.
> Plega a Dios que, destruída,
> como una mujer perdida,
> te llamen facinerosa,
> y en el mundo no haya cosa
> tan mala como tu vida. . . .
> Quien ve tanta desvergüenza
> también verá mi deshonra,
> porque en la mujer comienza
> a morir crédito y honra
> cuando pierde la vergüenza
> Hija que al padre desprecia
> viva y muera con infamia;
> siga como loca y necia
> a la antigua Flora y Lamia,
> no a Penélope y Lucrecia. (121-45)

Leonor is much less passionate than her father and suggests:

> . . . Si está porfiando
> una mujer, yo te digo
> que es mejor consejo blando
> que colérico castigo. (157-60)

She advises her father to ask Gil to intervene:

> Para que a don Diego pida
> se contente del rigor

con que fue nuestro homicida
sin pretender el honor
que es de los nobles la vida. (166-70)

Both Leonor and Marcelo are concerned more with honor than with virtue, and it should be noted that Leonor is convinced that honor is something which belongs to nobles. This contrasts strongly with the idea that is to be found in El Santo sin nacer[14] among other plays, which answers the following query:

Por ser pobre ¿no es honor
el del pobre? (p. 24)

A similar situation to that of El esclavo del demonio is seen to exist in El amparo de los hombres.[15] The father, Horacio, attempts to force Julia to marry whom he chooses, but she replies:

Si tú procuras casarme
¿no es bien que a mi gusto sea? (389-90)

Her words emphasise that the question of marriage is similar to that of salvation, and indeed Julia is compared to glory in lines 1585 and 1589. Julia points out that both her father's consent and her own free choice are necessary, just as salvation needs free choice and God's grace. Julia determines to resist her father, however:

Aunque el padre mío. . .
quiere mi intento estorbar,
es querer medir el mar
o volver atrás un río. (636-41)

La mesonera del Cielo[16] deals with the subject of the temptation, the fall, the repentance, and the salvation of St. Mary the Egyptian (María). The play presents the story of St. Mary, and that of her uncle, St. Abraham (Abrahán). The stories of the two are in sharp contrast for Abrahán is seen to be capable of resisting all temptation while María is unable to do so.

Abrahán marries Lucrecia at the beginning of the play, but decides to abide by the teaching of St. Paul (978-98) and refuse to consummate the marriage. He determines to "huir la ocasión" (855). He is later tempted by the reappearance of Lucrecia who is searching for him and is anxious to consummate their union. Abrahán is again able to resist temptation, although he has to struggle with his desire for Lucrecia, his pity for her, the

urgings of the devil, and of the opportunity that is offered to him:

> Tirad la rienda,
> razón superior! Córcovos
> no dé el caballo apetito,
> que si camina brioso
> dará con la carga en tierra. (1559-63)
> Terrible ocasión es ésta (1595)
> mas con el favor de Dios
> he de salir victorioso. (1619-20)
> Esta es mayor confusión
> que aprieta más la ocasión. (1662-3)
> Que es cosa dificultosa
> pelear con mujer hermosa
> y no dejarse vencer. (1666-8)

In contrast to him, his niece, María, allows herself to be conquered by the ocasión (1877). Her fall is urged on her by the devil who summons up espíritus lascivos to his aid. She is unable to resist the opportunity to satisfy her desire with her lover, Alejandro:

> Allí las penas eternas
> me amenazan rigurosas,
> aquí la ocasión me aprieta. . .
> a Dios temo, amor me incita. . . . (1988-93)

María's fall is thus seen to be closely related to the concept of free will, for she has freedom to resist or accept an opportunity and she freely chooses to sin.

Her fall is very similar to that of Gil in El esclavo del demonio. Gil is described by Leonor as "El santo/ que Coimbre reverencia" (162-3). Diego contrasts himself to Gil—"Uno es flaco y otro fuerte" (233)—but the speech is a clear example of Mira's use of dramatic irony. On Gil's first appearance, he seems to bear out the description of him given by Leonor, but, in reality, he is a young man who is rationally aware of the need to be good, but whose lack of experience is such that he is unable to resist temptation when the opportunity arises. Gil harangues Diego twice (235-347; 407-48), and exhorts him to overcome his desire for Lisarda. His ideas are summed up in the refrain:

> Gil — Busca el bien, huye el mal, que es la edad corta, y hay muerte y hay infierno, hay Dios y gloria. (300-1; 334-5)

The irony of the situation is pressed home by Mira when later in the play (1970-1), Diego uses Gil's own words to urge him

to relinquish his life of sin. In the event Gil's words appear to be those of an untested scholastic rationaliser—indeed of a self-satisfied hypocrite—rather than those of a Saint.

In the first act, Diego had decided to seduce Lisarda:

> A Lisarda he de gozar,
> pues bien me quiere. (207-8)

He is dissuaded by Gil's first harangue, but has second thoughts:

> Temo perder
> la gloria desta mujer (405-6)[17]

As Diego is preparing to mount the ladder in order to seduce Lisarda, Gil appears for a second time and preaches to Diego again. The speech uses the image of the unbridled horse of passion:

> Refrena, pues, tu apetito,
> porque es bestia maliciosa
> y caballo que no para
> si no le enfrenan la boca. (314-7)

It links together the ideas of goodness and light, evil and darkness:

> Quien hace mal, aborrece
> la luz y busca la sombra. (338-9)

The speech also introduces two themes that are always closely linked: the concept of rising and falling and that of the Tower of Babel. Nimrod (Nembrot) is regarded as having been responsible for the Tower of Babel and he is consequently used by Mira to symbolise satanic pride which attempts to rival God:

> ¿Adónde subes?
> piedra arrojada a las nubes
> que sube para caer?
> Bajen tus altivas plantas
> movidas de torpe amor,
> Nembrot que torres levantas
> contra el cielo del honor
> de aquestas doncellas santas. (407-14)

Diego's reaction to this speech is to desist from his plan of seduction. His words, and a later speech of Gil, reveal the third theme which is closely linked to that of Nimrod and rising/ falling—Icarus:

> Diego — Me has quebrado las alas. . . (459)
> Gil — Quien ha subido
> hasta la divina esfera,
> pero cual Icaro he sido
> que volé con fe de cera
> y en el infierno he caído. (611-5)

Gil's last words show the connection of the Icarus theme to that of man's falling into sin.

After Diego has left, Gil decides:

> Que a Lisarda gozaré,
> sin ser conocido, entiendo. (520-1)

the irony of the situation is manifest. Everything he had said to Diego now reflects on his own conduct. Gil's sin is not only a sexual one. Diego could be excused because he and Lisarda were in love; Gil's conduct is inexcusable because it is the result of desire not love, because he takes advantage of the opportunity, and because he uses deceit. When Gil decides to seduce Lisarda "sin ser conocido" he is, in a sense, denying his own identity[18] and, by doing so, he is increasing the confusion of the world (see below, pp.269-70).

The sin of Julián in El animal profeta also depends on identity and the need to know oneself. There is a double sense of identity in this play. Julián falsely suspects his wife, Laurencia, of being unfaithful. Because of his suspicions he decides to avenge his honor:

> ¡He de matarlos!
> Quedará mi honor eterno. (p. 412)

In this sense, he is "not himself." This leads him to kill the couple he discovers sleeping together in his bedroom. It is only after he has acted without prudence and murdered them that he discovers they are his parents, who had followed him to Ferrara and had been given the bed by his virtuous wife. Julián is horrified at the fulfillment of the prophecy that he would become a parricide. The implications are clear. He was capable of preventing the decrees of fate from taking effect as long as he was prudent and acted virtuously, but as soon as he gave way to an evil passion and allowed his free will to be controlled by circumstances, the prophecy came true. Ironically, Ludovico's words come true, for his son finds that sin needs both opportunity, or circumstance, and free choice.

Julián is unusual among Mira's sinners, for having once sinned, his only desire is to gain absolution. In contrast, María in La mesonera del Cielo and Lisarda in El esclavo del demonio[19] are not satisfied with their first taste of sin, but decide to give themselves up to a life of sin. Their decision

is encouraged by the devil in both plays.

The devil is pleased at María's loss of virginity, but his words emphasise that this is a relatively trivial sin:

> La suerte está echada; furias,
> incitadla de manera
> que ella quede esclava mía,
> llorando en cárcel perpétua,
> por este pequeño gusto,
> ansias, tormentos, penas. (2003-8)

The devil's plans seem to be achieved for María decides:

> Que voy, perdida el alma
> a que se pierda el cuerpo. (2167-8)

She becomes a prostitute (moza de mesón or mesonera) and her view of the world is perverted by her sense of sin:

> Interés es mi trato. (2697)
> El oro y el comer son mis amores. (3197)
> Pero ya soy tan mala.
> que Taez no me iguala,
> y soy tan gran ramera
> que me rindo a dar gusto a cualquiera.
> (2613-6)

Her words remind the audience of the possibility of her repentance and conversion through the comparison with Thais, for the legendary Thais was the stock example of the reformed and repentant courtesan.[20]

In El esclavo del demonio, Lisarda is equally desirous of enjoying her sins to the fullest extent:

> El mundo me ha de llamar
> Semíramis la cruel,
> y en cuantos pasen por él
> quiero enseñarme a matar. (1121-4)
> Hoy verá el mundo en mi vida
> el extraño atrevimiento
> de un alma que va perdida. . .
> porque tales suelen ser
> las obras de una mujer
> que está sin honra y sin Dios. (1156-63)
> Hecho será que me asombre,
> que a la mujer nadie iguala
> en celo y piadoso nombre;
> pero cuando da en ser mala
> es peor que el más mal hombre (1179-83)

Lisarda, like María, wants to enjoy to the full the sins of the flesh. It is significant that Lisarda compares herself to Semiramis, who was frequently regarded in Golden Age Spain as the symbol of sexual promiscuity and perversion, because she

was believed to have fallen in love with her own son. María and Lisarda both desire the sins of the flesh and their subsequent repentance and salvation are easily achieved.

In strong contrast to them is Gil in El esclavo del demonio. He is a theologian and his sin is a metaphysical one. His words stress that he does not commit sin for reasons of physical desire, but because of the knowledge that it is sin:

> Yo pienso ser
> un caballo desbocado
> que parar no he de saber
> en el curso del pecado. (702-5)
> Soy, ciego con mi error,
> hidrópico pecador,
> y tengo sed de pecados. (1126-8)
> Ese intento temerario
> me agrada por lo que tiene
> de pecado extraordinario. (1176-8)

Gil sees and desires Leonor. His wish to enjoy her is not the impulse of the moment, as his seduction of Lisarda had been, but is conscious and premeditated. The seduction of Lisarda was no more than a pecadillo, his desire for Leonor is a conscious desire to sin:

> Por ti, divina Leonor,
> haré otro grave delito,
> que el pasado fue en error
> y éste es un ciego furor
> nacido de un apetito. . ..
> Váyanse, pues, al aldea,
> que allá la pienso gozar. (1254-63)
> Por gozar de ti, Leonor
> daré el alma. (1377-8)

Gil is now ready to make a pact with the devil, and the latter stresses the enormity of the sin which Gil desires because it involves not only adultery and rape, but also incest (1424). Gil embraces the devil's offer willingly:

> Pues ha hallado maestro
> para enseñarme a pecar. (1563-4)

The devil, wishing to make sure of two souls, makes the pact with both Gil and Lisarda. The former is willing to deny God and everything that the devil demands him to, but Lisarda refuses to deny the Blessed Virgin Mary:

> Si a los dos niego ahora,
> ¿Quien será mi intecesora,
> si me arrepiento después. (1543-5)

At another time the devil may have been more exigent in his demands, but he is more concerned with Gil than with Lisarda.

The conversion of Lisarda is dramatically convincing. She is sated with her crimes and her disillusionment is revealed in her sonnet 'La fábrica del mundo' (1984-97, see above, p. 63). This is the critical moment in her life. Lisarda is poised between good and evil. Three events now take place which are decisive. First, she is offered the opportunity to avenge herself on Diego. She tries to kill him (2022) but is unable to:

> Si te perdonan las piedras,
> piedra soy y así me ablando. (2032-3)

She frees Diego and he leaves. Her conversion is now probable, but not certain:

> Ya, Dios Santo, me dispongo
> por serviros a morir,
> aunque lo quiera impedir
> el infierno a quien me opongo. (2066-9)

The second decisive event confirms her conversion. She meets Lísida. The name of this virtuous peasant girl is significant: she is Lisarda's double. This device is that of the tradition which contrasted Mary and Martha and identified the former with Mary Magdalene; this same comparison is made by Lisarda:

> Que si aquesta ha sido Marta
> yo puedo ser Magdalena. (2100-1)

Lísida had successfully rejected the advances of Gil, and the contrast between her resistance and Lisarda's compliance confirms Lisarda in her repentance. The third decisive event is when she meets the elderly, noble peasant Arsindo. She offers to become his slave so that he can sell her to recoup his losses.[21]

The conversion of Lisarda begins with disillusionment. She is then placed in a situation in which she must use her free will to choose to do good or evil. Having made the choice, she sees what is really a "vision" and this reinforces the idea that man is always free to choose good over evil. Her conversion is ensured when she voluntarily chooses to do good to someone else by harming herself.

The conversion of Lisarda is presented in a way which is not only theologically acceptable, but also humanly and

dramatically satisfying. Perhaps it is the contrast with this conversion that makes the conversion of Gil unconvincing, or perhaps it is the fact that Mira had exhausted his dramatic resources with this first conversion. Whatever the truth may be, the conversion of Gil is far less successful dramatically. This is one of the major weaknesses of El esclavo del demonio.

Early in their relationship the devil had urged the idea of predestination on Gil:

> Si predestinado estás
> la gloria tienes segura. (1399-1400)

Gil is convinced by this argument:

> Y así viene a ser la mía
> desesperación de gusto (1453-4)

He denies God and refuses to accept responsibility for his actions. Gil later justifies his banditry to the Prince with the words:

> Sólo Dios conoce
> los que están predestinados (2494-5)

The danger of this attitude is clear; if man has no free will then there is no need for morality. Predestination leads to moral anarchy and the implication of the play is that the concept of predestination is a device of the devil to make men choose the life of the passions rather than the life of virtue. The heresy of predestination is confirmed by Gil's later statement that he is able to repent "Estando libre en mí mismo" (2836).

The actual conversion of Gil has three sections. The first is a long speech in which the devil tempts Gil with the vision of a fantastic city (2524-2671). Gil rejects everything that the devil offers, for he only wants Leonor, and the devil promises her to him. The second section concerns the appearance of Leonor, and is somewhat tasteless. Gil goes into a cave to enjoy the favors of the vision that he believes to be the woman he desires. His discovery that he is embracing a skeleton (2721ff.) finally makes him realise that:

> Gustos al fin desta vida
> que todos paran en muerte. . . .
> Contempla estos gustos, mira
> que no sólo breves son,
> pero que son de mentira. (2728-49)

Gil is now free to break his pact with the devil, since the latter has not kept his part of the bargain. Accordingly, Gil answers sophistry with sophistry:

> Y yo cuando te dejé
> nunca perdí la esperanza
> aunque he negado la fe. (2817-9)

Since the conversion of Gil depends on a supernatural event, so the third section—confirmation of his conversion—is also supernatural. The technique is that of the autos rather than that of the plays and there is a battle for Gil's soul which is won by his guardian angel.

The situation is handled more convincingly in El amparo de los hombres. In this play, which may very well be a reworking of El esclavo del demonio, the devil tempts Carlos and urges him to possess Julia by force:

> Pues a un hombre bien nacido
> ¿le causa el amor cuidado?
> Si resiste la mujer
> forzarla; si el padre impide,
> darle la muerte. (1743-7)

Carlos rejects this advice:

> No quiero por fuerza
> cosas que de gusto son. (1749-50)

The devil then tempts him with other girls who will willingly surrender their virtue. Carlos again resists:

> Que es necio quien por la hacienda
> en olvido pone a Dios. (1823-4)

The devil determines to overcome the scruples of Carlos and tempts him again in a speech (2293-2323) which serves the same function as the long speech in El esclavo del demonio (see above, p 76). When his words fail to overcome Carlos, he resorts to an erotic vision of Julia. Carlos still resists and the devil determines to play his last card:

> ¿Perdonaráte Dios, necio cobarde? (2417)

Like the devil in El esclavo del demonio he insists on the impossibility of repentance. He stands for the concept of predestination: if man is not free to choose good or evil and is therefore not free to achieve his own salvation, he may as well enjoy himself. Carlos, however, defeats the devil by insisting on the omnipotence and the mercy of God:

Demonio ¿Perdonaráte Dios, necio cobarde?
Carlos ¿Quien cómo Dios? (2417-8)

It is this concept which is also the means of the salvation of Julián in El animal profeta, and María in La mesonera del Cielo. Julián is tempted by the devil, who reveals Julián's parents burning in Hell. But the words of the gracioso, Vulcano, convert Julián:

Si es Dios
todo lo puede. . . (p. 423)

When Julián believes this, he sees his parents' souls ascend from the fire—not of Hell but of purgatory—to Heavan. The play praises God who is "amante" and "piadoso" but not "justiciero" (p. 426). The conversion of María in La mesonera del Cielo is brought about by Abrahán who tells her:

Este es Cristo, que en el árbol
de la cruz, un tiempo infame,
derramó con abundancia
sangre y agua en que te laves. (3320-3)

The conversion of Julián and María suffer from the opposite faults to the conversion of Gil. The latter depends on supernatural—miraculous—events and loses credibility because it is externalised and Gil does not seem to be involved very closely in the struggle. The conversion of Julián and María is achieved without there being any real struggle. The conversion of Gil is melodramatic; that of Julián and María is not dramatic at all.

One of the most interesting aspects of these plays is the character of the devil. In both El esclavo del demonio and La mesonera del Cielo the reason he tries to win the souls of men is very clearly stated. Traditionally Satan was God's favorite angel who had tried to rival God and who was then cast out from Heaven. The devil is thus the prototype of the favorite who tries to replace his master. This tradition is accepted and presented by Mira in La mesonera del Cielo:

Yo soy. . .
del Señor más poderoso. . .
hechura, y en tanto grado
me aventajo de los otros
privados suyos. . . .
Sólo me faltaba entonces
sentarme en su regio trono. . .
y el rey. . .
. . . decretando

que en privación de su rostro
me condena para siempre. . . .
(1365-460) 22

This tradition is of some importance, for the devil has vowed to have vengeance. He is incapable of avenging himself on God but he outlines his designs in a sonnet from El esclavo del demonio:

Soberbia fiera soy, nada perdono;
tres partes derribé de las estrellas
para que al coso deste mundo bajen.
Heridas tengo, y por vengarme de ellas
coger no puedo a Dios porque está en trono,
y me vengo en el hombre, que es su imagen.
(2698-709)

The same idea is expressed by the devil in La mesonera del Cielo:

Pero yo me vengaré
del mismo Dios en María. (3434-5)

The four plays—El esclavo del demonio, El animal profeta, La mesonera del Cielo and El amparo de los hombres—present in uncompromising terms the fact that man is free to choose good or evil. They are all orthodox and acceptable at a theological level; all but the conversion of Gil is convincing at a human level; but only the conversions of Lisarda and Carlos are dramatically satisfying. From a dramatic point of view, the most successful of the plays which deal with the subject of salvation are El amparo de los hombres and Vida y muerte de San Lázaro.

The two plays use the same dramatic device. Each play has two protagonists who are rivals for the hand of the same girl and are opposites in character.[23] Both plays deal with the fortunes of the two protagonists, who are envisaged as being fixed to the opposite sides of Fortune's wheel (see below, p. 102ff). This is expressed by Carlos in El amparo de los hombres:

A mi mal estás opuesto.
En un peso nos ha puesto
la Fortuna, que a las nubes
te va levantando, y subes
porque yo baje más presto. (1186-90)

It is worth remembering that fortune in English and Fortuna in Spanish have two different but linked meanings: luck and wealth. Both meanings derive from the Latin Fortuna/ Fortunae.

At the beginning of El amparo de los hombres Carlos is a rich man and Federico a pauper; at the beginning of Vida y muerte de San Lázaro Lázaro is a rich man and Nabal a pauper. During the course of the first act of each play, the rich man loses his fortune and the poor man becomes rich. But the two plays develop a similar situation very differently.

In El amparo de los hombres, the wealthy Carlos loves Julia. She returns his love, but her father, Horacio, objects to the union. His reasons are that Carlos is a "playboy." Although Horacio is justified in these objections, it must be said that Carlos' faults are seen as an excess of love and charity: he is too free with his money and his amorous attentions. Carlos' faults are not inherently evil but are rather the result of a lack of prudence.

The faults in the character of Carlos are in keeping with the tenor of the play, which reveals the perversion of the values of the world. Wealth and desire are seen to be foremost in the minds of the characters—with one or two exceptions. Horacio is guilty of this perversion of values since his main objection to Carlos' liberality is that he will spend all his money. When Federico becomes wealthy through the aid of the devil, Horacio is prepared to support his suit without knowing anything more about Federico's character.

The main target of Mira's satire is the two sycophants, Jorge and Otavio. They forsake the impoverished Carlos and begin to flatter Federico, whose family and background they do not know, but they say "ser rico es el linaje verdadero" (953). They return to the same subject:

Otavio Carlos me parece
que pierde el juicio.
Jorge Ya perdió el dinero
que es lo mesmo que el juicio. (2186-8)

Jorge and Otavio represent public opinion in the play which confuses wealth with virtue, for it equates money with one's family (which includes identity, honor and nobility) and also reason, which is the faculty with which man is endowed so as to distinguish good from evil.

Another target for Mira's satire is Garavís. When Federico had decided to seduce Julia, his servant, Marín, refused to

act as a go-between. His place is filled by the cynical time-server, Garavís. The latter's philosophy is expressed in the words:

> ¿Qué pecho habrá que resista
> los golpes de interés? (1148-9)

His rhetorical question is firmly answered by the decision of Marín not to act as a go-between. Marín is, in effect, the double of Garavís, but he is also offered as a contrast to Jorge and Otavio. This refusal to be a go-between in a dishonorable affair is consistent with the rest of his character:

> Toda mi vida he sido
> a los buenos inclinado;
> y reniego del criado
> que sirve por el vestido. (1317-20)

Federico's attempt to persuade Carlos that he has lost Julia repeats the monetary image:

> Que sólo el interés
> es el cebo que la anima. (1276-7)

But this is contrasted to the true state of affairs. When her maid tells Julia to forget Carlos:

> Pues ya por su vanidad
> es pobre ese caballero. (1467-8)

Julia's immediate reaction shows her real character:

> Necia, ¿quiero yo al dinero
> o al hombre? (1469-70)

The play also presents the pact of Federico with the devil. Federico had been in Carlos' service but had detested:

> Sirviendo a quien procura
> gozar mi divina prenda. (752-3)

The devil encourages this hatred of servitude:

> Aun los que sirven a Dios
> me afligen y avergüenzan. (807-8)

The implications of the pact are clear: in order to be "free" he becomes the slave of the devil. The situation is repeated later with Carlos:

Carlos	Esclavo seré de vos
Demonio	Bien dice, (1718-9)
Carlos	Desde luego soy tuyo,
	por tu siervo menor me constituyo. (2328-9)

Carlos is willing to deny God, but like Lisarda (see above, p 74) he will not deny the Blessed Virgin Mary—"El amparo de los hombres."

El amparo de los hombres is a much more carefully constructed play than El esclavo del demonio. The characterisation is more accomplished and there are no extreme changes of heart. The two protagonists are more convincingly portrayed than Gil, for their drama is internal not external, even though the conclusion of the play resembles that of El esclavo del demonio for the Blessed Virgin Mary begs Christ to forgive Carlos. When the pardon is granted to the latter, the hand of Julia is also given to him by Horacio who says:

> Vi
> que es el gusto lo mejor,
> y así no quise forzar
> el que en Julia conocéis. (2699-2702)[24]

The play is more successful because it has a dramatic coherence which is lacking in El esclavo del demonio (see below, p86-7) and it is unified by the repeated references and images relating to finance—interés, oro, perlas, banco etc.—such as the following description of the devil:

> El amigo que he hallado
> no es banco que está cerrado,
> para que de él no cobréis.
> Sin que libranza llevéis
> a letra vista, os promete
> la riqueza que compete
> a vuestro honor y opinión. . . (1936-42)

Vida y muerte de San Lázaro[25] has a similar theme and a similar unity. The play is the dramatisation of the parable of Dives and Lazarus (Luke, 16. 19-31) which is amplified by the story of Nabal and Abigail (I Samuel, 25)—an episode from the story of David. The play is similar to the auto Pedro Telonario,[26] which deals with the conversion of a miser. The play is a good example of the essential differences between play and auto. The latter concentrates on the central character and everyone else functions as symbols. In the play the characters function as people—even the devil and Custodio, Nabal's guardian angel, come alive.

The play is relatively simple and has a strong internal unity which follows the Biblical parable to its inevitable conclusion with the damnation of Nabal.[27] The theme of the play is easily seen. Nabal says:

¿Quién dice que es menester
virtud para ser dichosa? (p. 127)
Sino soy rico, no siento
modo de salvarme. (p. 129)
Si rico me viera
mejor que Lázaro fuera. (p. 129)

These ideas are rejected by the gracioso, Jordán:

Jordán — Tente, que si eres pobre impaciente
serás un rico avariento. (p. 129)

Nabal is then tested by Custodio who begs alms. Nabal refuses to give him even a good word:

Custodio — Que eres pobre, yo lo creo,
mas de hacer bien el deseo
a nadie faltó en el mundo. . . .
Pobre y necio, qué desdicha! (p. 130)

When Nabal receives money, Custodio is again refused alms; and says:

Tienes
ya qué dar y estás más tirano,
más fiero y más inhumano. (p. 132)

The speech links the three adjectives which are applied to people who deny their human nature: when someone is not charitable he is inhuman, tyrannous and beast-like.

Lázaro makes an important pronouncement about the nature of wealth (see below, p 216) and charity:

Lázaro — [Los ricos] son mayordomos de Dios,
dispensadores
que su hacienda administran,
repartiéndola bien entre los pobres.
(p. 135)

Nabal rejects this idea and in a prophetic speech announces both his own attitude and the punishment it will receive:

Nabal — Sufriré la sed ardiente y dura
antes que a ser piadosa. (pp. 135-6)

Nabal is warned of a residencia, a gracioso pun on the Day of Judgement,[28] and is described by Jordán as "avaro está toda la vida" (p. 138). Nabal's final sin is to waste a glass of water rather than give it to a beggar. This condemns him to suffer unquenchable thirst while watching Lázaro drink as much as he wants.

Vida y muerte de San Lázaro is unusual because one of the protagonists is condemned, but all of the plays of Mira de Amescua which deal with salvation have the same basic ideas. The

material world is an impermanent, transitory place in which men's fitness for the world to come is tested. Within the context of this world, men are free to choose Good or Evil and they are always free to change their minds and repent and choose Good after having made the decision to do Evil. Mira does not follow any particular school of thought, but always keeps in mind the two essentials stressed by St. Thomas Aquinas:

> Divine grace, which is the principal agent, and the human will, which cooperates with the grace (see above, p 65).

The characters gain salvation after very different lives. Abrahán and Lázaro are able to resist temptation and live holy lives. María sins physically but does not deny God. Lisarda and Carlos deny God but not the Blessed Virgin Mary, their sin is mainly physical and they atone for the sin through a physical penance. Gil and Federico enter fully into pacts with the devil, but are saved by the infinite mercy of God and atone for their metaphysical sins by a life of holiness—Gil becomes a Dominican, Federico becomes a Franciscan. Only Nabal is damned, for he is unrepentant despite many attempts to make him see reason.

There are two other plays which deal with the subject of salvation. These are Vida y muerte de la monja de Portugal[29] and El hombre de mayor fama.[30] One of the other religious plays also presents the apotheosis of the hero. This is Santo sin nacer.

Vida y muerte de la monja de Portugal concerns a Portuguese nun, María, who pretends to be holy by faking stigmata. She also encourages various men who are in love with her. The climax of the play occurs when her lovers all arrive for an assignation with her, but are prevented from touching her by a Divine voice. The play adds nothing new to Mira's presentation of salvation, but it re-affirms that a sinner is free to repent and return to God.

El hombre de mayor fama is a problematical play for it narrates the life and death of Hercules. The latter is envisaged as being saint-like, and indeed is called "Hercules santo" by Jupiter (p. 32). The play appears to be based on the following

concept of Hercules:

> Hércules significa el varón virtuoso que desea vencer el deseo de su carne, con quien tiene gran combate y lucha de ordinario. . . . 31

This idea can be seen in Hercules' own words:

> Mas si soy Dios, no es razón
> que al amor esté sujeto,
> vencer quiero mi pasión,
> viva en mí lo que es perfecto
> y muera la imperfección. (p. 11)

Mira's play owes not a little to the tradition of Euripides' Alcestis which portrays Hercules as well-intentioned but not very wise. At the end of the play, after he dies, Jupiter and Juno argue about Hercules (in this sense there is a disagreement between the immortals) and he is eventually apotheosised. It is an unusual play, but, despite its mythological setting, the figure of Hercules is conceived in terms of Christian sanctity.

There is a great similarity between El hombre de mayor fama and Santo sin nacer y mártir sin morir. The latter portrays the life of Saint Raymund Nonnatus (San Ramón Nonnato). He was a Mercaderian who was tortured by the Moors with a spiked gag. He thus becomes a martyr without having died. At the end of the play, he is taken up to Heaven as a Saint and Martyr. There is no element of conflict about the glorification of Ramón, as there is with the apotheosis of Hercules, but both plays are intermediate between the "Salvation" plays and the other religious plays. Whereas the "Salvation" plays present salvation as a goal to which the heroes must strive without being certain of success, in both El hombre de mayor fama and El santo sin nacer the apotheosis at the ending is there to confirm the sanctity of the heroes.

Although all the "Salvation" plays deal with a theological subject, many of their moral or philosophical concerns and conclusions will be seen to be equally valid in the rest of Mira's dramatic works. Many topics that have already been discussed will be found to be developed in a similar way in his other plays.

The quality of the "Salvation" plays varies considerably and is typical of the variation to be found in the whole of Mira's religious theater. In most cases the faults are caused

by weaknesses in the structure or in the dramatic qualities of the plays. Mira was only able to achieve dramatic coherence on relatively few occasions. This may have been due to a lack of experience, for Mira may not have been able to envisage a play written in any other way. It would seem that his stay in Italy broadened his horizons because his later plays are conspicious for their greater dramatic coherence.

The first type of structure which is to be found in the religious plays is that of the multiple plot. Two of the salvation plays use this structure. The first is La mesonera del Cielo. The double plot in the play blurs the focus and diversifies the interest so that the audience is unsure whether Abrahán or María is the central character.

The second, and in many ways the most ambitious of all the plays, is El esclavo del demonio which links the stories of Gil, Lisarda, Leonor, and the two Sanchos. There are valid reasons for the multiple plots of the play, but the fact that these have never been resolved satisfactorily reveals that they are not linked as closely as they should be. One critic describes the sub-plot—that is, that part of the play which does not directly deal with Gil—:

> Szenen, deren Inhalt näher zu betrachten sich für uns nicht lohnt, da sie mit dem Thema des Stückes gar nichts oder nur gar äusserlich zu tun haben. 32

Although he repeats the same idea, Möller supplies the clue to the mystery when he describes the various parts of the "sub-plot:"

> Diese Szenen bringen einerseits absurde Verwicklungen und lächerliche Missverständnisses im Verhältnis zwischen Marcelo und Diego:. . . ; andererseits wird Leonor von zwei Sanchos geliebt. (p. 32)

The relationship of the plots is not readily apparent, but it depends on the concepts of confusion and identity. Gil takes advantage of the confusion of events to enjoy Lisarda "sin ser conocido" (see above, p 72). In this way he loses his identity by pretending to be Diego and by deviating from the virtue which he had espoused. He only re-discovers his identity when he repents. It is also to be noted that when Lisarda repents and becomes a slave, she hides her identity using the name Pecador (2336). Similarly the devil appears with the

assumed name Angelio. The sub-plots also deal with confusion and identity. Diego is bewildered by events and is finally imprisoned for crimes he did not commit. There is similar confusion of identities in the plot that deals with Leonor and the two Sanchos.

El esclavo del demonio fails to fully justify this multiplicity of interest, and the reasons for its failure are probably closely linked to the reasons for its fame. It attempts a great deal, it is very ambitious in its portrayal of the world, but any successful attempt to present the confusion of the world may be confusing by its very nature. The play is successful in presenting the confusion of the world and its deceptions, contrasting this to the unity and permanence of God and the world to come.

The second type of structure is the chronicle play. This is by far the commonest for it is to be found not only in four of the "Salvation" plays but also in all the religious plays which do not deal with salvation.

Among the "Salvation" plays, this structure is to be found in Vida y muerte de la monja de Portugal and El hombre de mayor fama: the latter narrates or presents on or off stage the majority of events from the life of Hercules. The only unity that can be found in either play is that provided by the heroine and the hero respectively. The other two salvation plays that use this structure vary it slightly. Santo sin nacer y mártir sin morir is divided into two parts. The first concentrates on the birth of the hero; the second on his death. In both parts the dramatist is concerned with revealing the truth behind the two paradoxes in the title.[33] El animal profeta divides the action into three parts, each corresponding to an act. Jornada I presents the prophecy of Julián's parricide and his attempt to thwart his fate; Jornada II presents the parricide; Jornada III presents his repentance and salvation.

These four plays illustrate clearly the weaknesses of this type of structure. The characters have a tendency to become puppets in the hands of the dramatist. Hercules is rushed from one adventure to another and is never allowed the chance for his character to be shown in any depth. Everything in the play

is subordinated to the episodes of the plot. On the other hand, Julián and Ramón are given more opportunity for their characters to develop, but these are subordinated to the demands of the theological lesson. In both cases the chronicle structure detracts not only from the presentation of the characters of the heroes, but also seriously undermines the drama of their situations.

The majority of the religious plays which do not deal with salvation have the simple form of chronicle structure. Three of these plays are based on Old Testament material and the only unity they have is provided by the source material and by the character of the hero who is one of God's chosen. The best structured of these three is El más feliz cautiverio[34] which presents the story of Joseph and his brothers. The play follows the original closely and because the story in Genesis is very straight forward, gradually leading to the climax of the arrival of Israel and his sons in Egypt seeking help from the now powerful Joseph, the play also attains a certain degree of unity. The hero, Joseph, is characterised by his father, "ése su virtud eleva" (p. 7), and this links Joseph to David in El arpa de David and Moses in Los prodigios de la vara.[35] The latter, as a boy "deshizo la figura del Dios Anón" (p. 156); God returns the favor by blinding Masar, Moses' would-be executioner, and ordering him to let Moses go free (p. 178). David is very similar and his character is clearly revealed in his own "Dios me anima, Dios me esfuerza" speech (833-50), and in Jesse's words to the angel, when he withdraws his own claims to his son:

> Si ha de ser para que os sirva
> la privanza de David. (1702-3)

The structural unity of the three Biblical plays varies considerably because of several factors. Los prodigios de la vara contains many episodes from the life of Moses, but it leads to a dramatic climax with the Exodus of the Israelites and the confusion of Pharaoh. El arpa de David has a similar wealth of episodes, but it does not lead to any dramatic conclusion. Indeed the play appears to lack a sense of direction for the first two acts concern David, Saul and Goliath; while the last act presents the episode of David, Bathsheba, Urias, and Nathan.

Similar comments apply to religious plays based on historical material. The hero of Las desgracias del rey Alfonso el casto is Bernardo del Carpio and the words applied to him could be applied mutatis mutandis to many of the heroes of the other religious plays:

> Ha de ser hombre
> que a España sirva de amparo
> porque a veces saca Dios
> grande bien de un gran pecado. (folio 6)

The play is another example of Mira's ability to choose good plots, but his inability, at this stage of his career, to confine himself to portions of a story in order to create a coherent artistic unit. This weakness is also clearly seen in another historical play—Las lises de Francia.[36] This is an interesting play for it traces the development of the character of Clodobeo (Clovis I), King of the Franks, from a mysoginistic, cruel pagan to a Christian and kindly king who is deeply in love with his saintly wife, Crotilda (St. Clothilde or Clotilda).

A further weakness of Las lises de Francia is the presence of an exceedingly complicated sub-plot which rivals the main plot for the audience's interest.[37] The conclusion of the play—the wholesale conversion of the Franks—is more remarkable for it religious enthusiasm than for its dramatic appropriateness. This is a trait it shares not only with El arpa de David and Las desgracias del rey Alfonso el casto, but with many autos.

The weakest of the plays from a structural point of view is La hija de Carlos V, which lacks any plot in the normal sense. It consists of a large number of episodes concerning the last years of the Emperor. The play would appear to have two purposes, neither of which were dramatic. The first was religious in intent and was to celebrate the Emperor's retirement from the bustle of the world:

> La sotanilla es, señor,
> caja de preciosas perlas,
> pues cubrirá la humildad
> majestad que fue soberbia. . . .
> Excedes al Saladino,
> que en la muerte se desprecia,
> porque esta vida acomodas
> para conquistar la eterna. (2450-66)

The second was to celebrate the choice of Madrid as the capital

of Spain (1606).

Lo que puede el ofr misa[38] is the religious play which is most like an auto, and the story of Sancho Osorio was used by Calderón for his auto La devoción de la Misa. Structurally the play is very skilful. Each of the three acts narrates an episode in the life of Sancho Osorio, the three episodes are closely interlinked, and they all demonstrate the truth of the title phrase. The inherent drama in each of the episodes is fully exploited by the dramatist. Unfortunately the play is based on a very naïve view of the world and as a result it is unlikely to appeal to any but the very religious or those who have great ability to suspend their disbelief. Each act presents a situation in which an angel appears to fight Sancho's battles for him because in each case the latter has chosen to hear his daily Mass instead of fighting.

Lo que puede el ofr misa reveals Mira's ability to use dramatic structure skilfully. There are three other religious plays which reveal the same ability and which do not suffer from the naïveté of Lo que puede el ofr misa. All three plays use a form of structure that was to be used by Mira on many occasions: El primer Conde de Flandes;[39] Vida y muerte de San Lázaro and El amparo de los hombres all exploit the device of the double.[40]

El primer Conde de Flandes is the only one of the three which is basically a chronicle play. Like El cautiverio feliz and Los prodigios de la vara the play has an overriding unity of plot because all the episodes form part of a development which leads up to the establishment of the independent County of Flanders by Balduino (Baldwin Bras-de-fer). The success of the play is also created by Mira's conscious structuring of characters and episodes. Within the play there are a series of doubles, which are not fixed, but may change from episode to episode. In this way King Luis (Louis the German) and King Carlos (Charles II) are contrasted, as are their respective sons, Carlos and Rodulfo; in some episodes Balduino is contrasted to Rodulfo, while in others he is contrasted with Lamberto. The device of the double is used in every instance to contrast Good with Evil; truth, honor, and loyalty with falseness, deceit, and rebellion. The conscious use of structure in the

play allows Mira to take a firm moral stand without the play's becoming a sermon. El primer Conde de Flandes is structurally and dramatically as sound as Lo que puede el oír misa, but the nature of the supernatural intervention in the play does not detract from its credibility as it does in the latter play.[41]

Mira's theater has been criticised by Valbuena Prat in the following terms:

> De una sola comedia se pueden sacar temas para varias obras. (TeatroI, p. xx)
>
> Se amontonan sucesos incidentales y no se llega a una poderosa unidad(Teatro I, p. xxviii)

Three of the plays Valbuena Prat chooses to support these statements belong to the religious theater: El esclavo del demonio, La mesonera del Cielo, and El arpa de David. I believe that his criticism is indeed valid for all the religious plays except El primer Conde de Flandes, Vida y muerte de San Lázaro, and El amparo de los hombres in which Mira achieves dramatic unity and coherence.[42] I also believe that La rueda de la Fortuna is the only one of Mira's earliest plays in which he achieves real dramatic coherence (see below, p 208ff).

Valbuena Prat also makes the following statement concerning Mira's theater:

> El teatro de Mira se halla absolutamente comprendido en el ciclo de Lope (Teatro I, p. xviii).

and goes on to describe this theater of Lope de Vega:

> Lope crea un drama extenso, de elementos múltiples, conplejísimo exteriormente, con algo de atolondramiento, de vértigo, que nos arrebata (Teatro I, p. xix)

This assessment of Mira's theater applies to the majority of the religious plays and to some, but not all, of the tragicomedies. It does not apply to the majority of the tragedies and comedies.[43]

In his aprobación of Bernardo de Balbuena's Bernardo Mira stated what he considered to be the outstanding qualities of that work: "variedad de los sucesos y episodios" and "unidad de la acción y contextura de la fábula" (see above, p 22). The religious plays reveal Mira's attempts to follow these

precepts. The majority of them were written while Mira was still comparatively inexperienced in the theatrical world and probably reflect his experiments with the form as it existed during the first decade of the seventeenth century.

The weaknesses of the religious plays are varied and reveal an inability on the part of the dramatist to successfully blend together the various elements which make up his plays. The principal weaknesses of the religious plays is that in the majority of the "Salvation" plays the characters are subordinated to the theme, while in the majority of the other religious plays the theme is subordinated to the characters. A further weakness is the inclusion of too many episodes or the unsuccessful attempt to fuse together two plots which are very different.

El esclavo del demonio, La mesonera del Cielo and El animal profeta are clear examples of the characters being dominated by the theme. In all three plays the protagonists seem more like puppets which are manipulated by the author than like real people. The first two also suffer from their unsuccessfully fused double plots. In contrast to these are plays such as El hombre de mayor fama, Los prodigios de la vara, and El arpa de David. In these chronicle plays the dramatist is more intent on celebrating the great deeds of these champions of God than in exploring the ramifications of their moral culpability. David, Moses, and Hercules all commit murder in the course of their adventures but they do not suffer the consequences because they will do good in the long run. The three plays also have far too many episodes preventing the heroes' characters from being more fully developed.

Mira was only able to reconcile the various elements in three religious plays. In these he was to discover that he could only do this by the use of careful structuring. The structure that he found would work best for him was the device of the double, and in these plays, as in his most successful secular plays, Mira used this device not merely as part of his characterisation, as he had in El esclavo del demonio, but as part of the basic structure of the play itself. He discovered that this device could be used to fuse together themes, characters, and episodes into an organic whole. The device

enables him to retain the sort of plots that predominate in the religious plays and fuse them together in such a way that each episode or each part of the plot is necessary to the other episodes or part of the plot.

The final importance of the device is that it can be used to symbolise the two most prominent ideas in Mira's theater: Fortune and Identity. The double symbolises the fact that men's situations can change and that it is easy for men to move from good fortune and wealth to bad fortune and poverty and vice versa—Nabal/ Lázaro (Vida y muerte de San Lázaro), Carlos/ Federico (El amparo de los hombres). It also symbolises the idea that men must seek to know themselves and others in the world, and that it is easy to confuse the identity of doubles and, by implication, that it is easy to confuse the world of passion and desire with the world of reason and prudence. In the religious plays the latter is equated with God and religion, but even without the certainty of God's existence and his consequent intervention in the affairs of men, men must still seek to choose and to follow the path of virtue.

The religious plays of Mira de Amescua contain all the themes, ideas, preoccupations, characters, and techniques of his theater as a whole. If Mira had written nothing else he would be an interesting but very minor contributor to the Golden Age theater, who added very little to the development of the comedia. Many critics have regarded Mira in this light because they have given such prominence to his religious theater. In 1926 Valbuena Prat wrote of El esclavo del demonio that "es la obra capital de nuestro autor;"[44] he was of the same opinion over fifty years later: "su mejor comedia."[45] Of the same opinion among recent critics are Francisco Ruiz Ramón: "la obra maestra de Mira de Amescua,"[46] and Duncan Moir: "Mira's best play."[47] Other critics such as Angel del Río[48] and Charles V. Aubrun[49] have emphasised the importance of Mira's whole religious theater. Valbuena Prat also contended, as noted above, that Mira's theater was "absolutamente comprendido en el ciclo de Lope"[50] and he was of the same opinion when he later consigned Mira to the "Escuela de Lope."[51] Cotarelo y Mori favored this view and enlarged upon it:

> Desde luego puede afirmarse que Mira no es más que un discípulo y continuador de Lope de Vega. No introdujo ningún cambio en la manera de concebir y presentar el drama nacional. 52

Recent critics have agreed with this view and have likewise regarded Mira as little more than a "pupil" of Lope and a member of the "Ciclo Lope de Vega"[53] or the "School of Lope de Vega."[54]

Valbuena Prat was vaguely aware, however, that in the theater of Mira de Amescua there is a struggle to find something more, something new:

> Podemos ver[en Mira]lo esencial del sistema dramático de Lope adaptado con personalidad propia, una tendencia a los temas nuevos y extraños en su tiempo, vacilación entre el estilo sencillo de Lope y el recargado y magnífico de Góngora y Calderón, facilidad en la concepción de argumentos, cierta alteza de pensamiento e intención ética. . . y un notable brío y energía dramática. 55

The same ideas occured to Duncan Moir and he states much more clearly that Mira

> Began to show a richness of thematic and symbolic content in many of his plays which indicates a move towards the complex but coherent thematic unity of the Calderonian school. . . . Mira also moves towards the style of the Calderonian school in his blending of the often straightforward poetic language of the school of Lope with the more complex, Gongoristic diction, which, in the drama, reached its height in the mature plays of Calderón. 56

The religious plays of Mira de Amescua contain many sections that are of great interest, but they are comparatively early works and most reveal marks of artistic immaturity. Despite this, most critics have paid attention to El esclavo del demonio and the other religious plays because these have been studied by others before them. Among his contemporaries, however, Mira does not appear to have been best known for writing El esclavo del demonio. His best plays are those which reveal his closeness to the"Calderonian School" and these are not to be found, on the whole, among his religious plays but rather among the later secular plays of his artistic maturity.

NOTES TO CHAPTER FOUR

[1] Spain and the Western Tradition, vol. 2, (Madison and Milwaukee, 1964), 304.

[2] Phyllis I.P. Mitchell, 'The Autos sacramentales of Mira de Amescua,' (Ph. D. thesis, Johns Hopkins, 1972)

[3] All quotations are from El arpa de David, edited by Claude E. Anfbal (Columbus, Ohio, 1925). This edition is based on the manuscript in the Biblioteca Nacional in Madrid. Cotarelo, pp. 620-4. I have modernised the spelling, accentuation and punctuation of all the quotations from Mira's plays in accordance with the Normas of the Clásicos Castellanos series. All references to lines in a play will appear simply as a number (e.g. 1370-93). References to pages will appear as p. 399; references to folios will appear as folio 5.

[4] All quotations are from Comedia famosa / de las desgracias / del rey don Alfonso. / Compuesta por el doctor Mira de Mescua published in Flor de / las comedias / de España de diferentes / autores. / Quinta parte (Alcala, 1615) folios 1-31. This is the first edition of the play. Cotarelo, pp. 645-6.

[5] All quotations are from Karl Ludwig Selig, 'Mira de Amescua's La hija de Carlos V' (unpublished M.A. thesis, Ohio State University, 1947), which is based on the only known extant edition of the play. Cotarelo, pp. 9-12.

[6] This idea occurs in La próspera fortuna de Alvaro de Luna, p.19

[7] All quotations are from Comedia Famosa de El esclavo del Demonio compuesta por el doctor Mira de Amescua edited by Angel Valbuena Prat in Teatro I, pp. 1-153. Valbuena's edition is based on the 1613 Madrid edition, which is very similar to the slightly earlier Barcelona edition which forms the basis for Milton A. Buchanan's edition, Comedia famosa del esclavo del demonio compuesta por el doctor Mira de Mesqua (Barcelona, 1612) (Baltimore, 1905). See Cotarelo, pp. 649-52. I have also consulted Valbuena's edition in the Clásicos Ebro series (Saragossa, 1970). There are many other editions of this play, which is the only one of Mira's to appear regularly in anthologies. Until very recently it was the only one of Mira's plays to appear in anthologies, except for Mesonero's selection of five plays in the BAE (La rueda de la fortuna; Galán, valiente y discreto; La fénix de Salamanca; Obligar contra su sangre; No hay dicha ni desdicha hasta la muerte.) Mesonero (p. VIII) says that he did not include El esclavo because Caer para levantar had already appeared in the selection of Moreto's plays in the BAE (vol. 39). Mesonero describes the latter play as a "servil refundición" of Mira's play by Moreto, Cáncer y Matos Fragoso "y tanto, que no me ha parecido conveniente reproducirla aquí." (p. 8).

[8] Reprinted in Vicente Beltrán de Heredia, ed., Domingo Báñez, Báñez y las controversias sobre la gracia: Textos y documentos (Madrid, 1968).

[9] B. Hamilton, Political Thought in Sixteenth Century Spain (Oxford, 1963), p. 183.

[10] F. Copleston, A History of Philosophy, vol. 3 (London, 1950), 344.

[11] Selected Writings of St. Thomas Aquinas, trans. R.P. Goodwin (Indianapolis, 1965), p. 139, translated from De veritate, published in Quaestiones Disputatae, ed. R.M. Spiazzi, 2 vols. (Rome-Turin, 1954).

[12] All quotations are from El animal profeta y dichoso parricida San Julián, edited by Marcelino Menéndez y Pelayo in BAE, 178 (Madrid, 1965), 179-224. Menéndez y Pelayo published it in this volume believing it to have been written by Lope. I received Shirley Tock's unpublished Ph. D. thesis, 'Mira de Amescua's El animal profeta' (University of Missouri, 1972) when my own thesis was well advanced.

[13] See Teatro I, p. 13, note to lines 144-5.

[14] All quotations are from Famosa / comedia del / santo sin nacer, y mártir sin morir, que es San Ramón Nonat published anonymously in Doce comedias / de varios autores (Tortosa, 1638), folios 23-46, which is the only known extant edition of the play. Cotarelo, pp. 60-3.

[15] All quotations are from Wilfred Wilenius, 'A Tentative Edition of El amparo de los hombres' (unpublished M.A. thesis, Ohio State University, 1951). This edition is based on the only known extant copy of this play, which I also consulted, and which is one of the sueltas in the collection housed in the Staatsbibliothek in Munich (Cotarelo, pp. 618-20), entitled El amparo de los hombres, / Comedia / famosa / del doctor Mira de Mesqua (No place, no date).

[16] All quotations are from La mesonera del Cielo. Comedia famosa del doctor Mira de Mescua, edited by José María Bella in Teatro III (Clásicos Castellanos, Madrid, 1971), pp. 1-160. Bella's edition is based on the 1673 Madrid edition (Cotarelo, pp. 31-39). All future references to Bella's edition will appear as Teatro III. I also consulted Karl C. Gregg's unpublished Ph. D. thesis 'A Critical Edition of Antonio Mira de Amescua's La mesonera del Cielo.' (Syracuse University, 1968).

[17] It will be noted that this image and many others in this scene make the comparison between the soul winning glory and the man winning the woman (see above, p. 69 and below, p. 82.)

[18]
Nadie sus defectos ve;
amor propio es amor ciego:
bien dice el proverbio griego
que la mayor ciencia fue
el conocerse a sí mismo.

La próspera de Alvaro, p. 1971. (For edition see below, p.151 note.)

[19] Also Federico in El amparo de los hombres and Nabal in Vida y muerte de San Lázaro. See below, pp 79ff .

[20] See Teatro III, p. xvii and p. 113, note to line 2614.

[21] This ending in which a moral triumph is gained through physical defeat is similar to that of Nardo Antonio (see below, p. 168ff) and, as Valbuena Prat points out, it is similar to that

of Schiller's Karl Moor (see Teatro I, p. 99, note to lines 2212 y sig.)

[22] For a discussion of the theme of favor, see below, pp. 109-16.

[23] The device of the double has already been described in the case of Lisida/Lisarda in El esclavo del demonio (see above, p. 75) and it is used by Mira in many of his most effective and most successful plays, e.g. La rueda de la Fortuna (see below, p. 131ff), Don Bernardo de Cabrera (see below, p. 120ff), No hay dicha ni desdicha hasta la muerte (see below, p. 120ff), El palacio confuso (see below, p. 275), Amor, ingenio y mujer (see below, p. 272). He is fond of the device because it implies both the concept of Fortune, with one of the doubles rising as the other falls, and the concept of identity, for they are frequently regarded as virtually being identical twins whom people cannot tell apart. (see below, p.303note).

[24] This conclusion reinforces the idea that the winning of the hand of the woman is a reflection of the winning of Grace.

[25] All quotations are from Vida y muerte de San Lázaro. / Comedia famosa / del doctor Mira de Mescua published in Parte nueve / de comedias / escogidas de los mejores / ingenios de España (Madrid, 1657), pp. 125-67, which was the second edition of the play. It had been published first in 1655 (Cotarelo, pp. 67-8).

[26] See Teatro I, pp. 159-95.

[27] An unusual occurrence. The only well known plays of the period that definitely condemn a character to Hell are El burlador de Sevilla and El condenado por desconfiado.

[28] "At the end of his term the viceroy [and other officials] must subject himself to the residencia, a judicial review conducted by a Judge appointed by the Crown and before whom his entire record was exposed to public view" (Hubert Herring, A History of Latin America [New York, 1965], p. 16) As with other institutions in the New World, the residencia was used first in the peninsula.

[29] All quotations are from Comedia famosa./ Vida y muerte de la / monja de Portugal / del doctor Mira de Mescua published in Parte treinta y tres / de comedias / nuevas, nunca impres- / as, escogidas de los mejores / ingenios de España. (Madrid, 1670), pp. 165-200, which is the first edition of the play. Cotarelo, pp. 64-7.

[30] All quotations are from El hombre de mayor fama. / Comedia / famosa / del doct. Mira de Mesqua (Seville, no date). I have also consulted another suelta from the collection housed in the Staatsbibliothek in Munich: El hombre de mayor fama./ Comedia famosa / del doctor Mira de Mesqua (No place, no date). It is possible that the latter copy is the same as the 1634 Huesca edition mentioned by Cotarelo, pp. 12-6.

[31] Juan Pérez de Moya, Philosophía secreta, (Madrid, 1927), II, 114. The first edition dates from 1585.

[32] Wilhelm Möller, Die Christliche Banditen-Comédia (Hamburg, 1936), p. 32.

[33] The hero, San Ramón, is born posthumously by a section, and becomes a martyr without dying.

[34] All quotations are from Comedia./ El más feliz / cautiverio / y/ los sueños de Josef (Madrid, 1792), an anonymous suelta, which is the only known edition of the play. Cotarelo only knew of it through Barrera, with the more accurate title of Los sueños de Faraón (p. 63). It was Anfbal in his study Lisardo—his pseudonym (p. 11) who identified this play.

[35] All quotations are from Comedia famosa./ Los prodigios de la vara y capitán de Israel / del doctor Mirademescua published in Parte treinta y siete. / Comedias / nuevas, escritas por los / mejores ingenios de España (Madrid, 1670), pp. 153-203, which is the only known extant edition of this play (Cotarelo, pp. 55-7).

[36] All quotations are from Carole Louise Krumm, 'Las lises de Francia. A Partial Edition.' (unpublished M.A. thesis, Ohio State University, 1946), which is based on the only known extant edition. See Cotarelo, p. 16.

[37] The sub-plot of this play fascinated Mira. He used it on three different occasions in three different types of plays. It is used as a part of the plot in Las lises de Francia and the tragicomedy Los carboneros de Francia, but it becomes the comedy La tercera de sí misma. A detailed study of these three plays would be very revealing of the change in Mira's dramatic technique.

[38] All quotations are from Adrian Timothy Pickering, 'Mira de Amescua's Lo que puede el oír misa.' (unpublished M.A. thesis, Ohio State University, 1947), which is based on the 1652 Madrid edition. See Cotarelo, pp. 20-5.

[39] All quotations are from El primer Conde de Flandes./ Comedia famosa,/ de don Fernando de Zárate published in Parte veinte y nueve de / comedias/ nuevas, escritas por los mejores / ingenios de España (Madrid, 1668), pp. 273-323, which is the only known extant edition of the play. Cotarelo notes that Zárate could not be the author since there exists a manuscript in the Biblioteca Nacional in Madrid dated 1616 'fecha en que probablemente no había nacido Zárate' (pp. 52-5).

[40] These last two plays have been examined in detail before (see above, pp. 69, 77-8, 79-84).

[41] Balduino receives advice and encouragement from an image of Christ, but he has to fight his own battles.

[42] From the point of view of structure, Lo que puede el oír misa also achieves unity and coherence.

[43] It is worth noting that Valbuena describes the following three plays as "obras perfectas"—La fénix de Salamanca, La tercera de sí misma and No hay burlas con las mujeres (Teatro I, p. xxii).

[44] Teatro I, p. lii.

[45] El teatro español en su siglo de oro (Barcelona, 1969) p. 167.

[46] Historia del teatro español (Madrid, 1967), p. 231.

[47] Edward M. Wilson and Duncan Moir, The Golden Age Drama 1492-1700 (London, 1971), p. 83.

[48] Historia de la literatura española (New York, 1948) pp. 274-5.

[49] La Comédie espagnole (1600-1680) (Paris, 1966), pp. 69-70.

[50] Teatro I, p. xvii.

[51] El teatro español, pp. 167-70.

[52] BRAE, 18, 1931, 88.

[53] Ruiz Ramón, pp. 229-35.

[54] Wilson and Moir, pp. 82-4.

[55] Teatro I, p. xxiv.

[56] Wilson and Moir, pp. 82-3.

CHAPTER FIVE: A CONSIDERATION OF THE THEME OF FORTUNE, THE CHARACTERISATION AND THE LANGUAGE OF THE PLAYS

In this chapter consideration is given to Mira's handling of three aspects of his art—his conception of the theme of Fortune, the general tendencies of his characterisation, and the outstanding characteristics of his poetic language.

The study of these is not intended to be either exhaustive or definitive, nor is it the purpose of the study to bring to light any great originality in Mira's treatment of them. On the contrary, the chapter is intended merely to point out the salient characteristics of all three aspects of Mira's work.

The first, and by far the longest, section deals with the theme of Fortune and its many facets. Mira's conception of Fortune is not very different from that of his contemporaries, and his plays seem to be based on Golden Age commonplaces. The chapter describes Mira's presentation of Fortune which forms a large percentage of the philosophical basis of his secular plays. The other two sections consider Mira's characterisation and language in a similar fashion.

These three elements have been isolated because they are basically similar throughout the whole of Mira's theater, although they may undergo a certain amount of development with the progression of time. This development will be remarked upon in the treatment of the three subjects.

Certain characters in the secular theater of Mira de Amescua, such as Bernardo de Cabrera in the Adversa fortuna de Bernardo de Cabrera,[1] have the same confidence in the world to come as the heroes of the religious plays. Bernardo says:

> Solamente al Cielo
> suben para no bajar. (p. 72)
> Ya amigo, ha llegado el día
> en que la desdicha mía
> tiene fin. . . .
> En los hados no hay firmeza. . . .
> Sueño es la vida pasada,
> la fortuna imaginada;
> la presente no es segura,
> y ansí el morir es ventura,
> porque la vida no es nada.
> Sombra fue desvanecida

mi ventura, y fue una flor
marchita un tiempo, y cogida,
fue un relámpago, un vapor
y aquesto mismo es la vida. (p. 96)

But the structure of the secular plays does not support this idea for God is no longer seen to take a hand in men's affairs, as He does in the religious plays. In No hay dicha ni desdicha hasta la muerte[2] the hero no longer refers to God's power as a certainty, but as a possibility—or probability.[3] The anacoluthon is Mira's:

Si la potencia divina
es quien la Fortuna mueve,
desconfiar no se debe
pues donde no se imagina. . . . (1700-3)

The philosophy that is to be found in the secular plays is based on one idea which is at least as old as Sophocles. The closing lines of his Oedipus Tyrannus expresses quite clearly the moral:

> Then learn that mortal man must always look to his ending,
> And none can be called happy until that day when he carries
> His happiness down to the grave in peace.

No hay dicha ni desdicha hasta la muerte develops this idea most fully:

Digo, pues, que la desdicha
es vivir desconfiando.
Nadie sabe en qué ni cuándo
ha de venirle la dicha.
¿Cuántos en lo que tuvieron
por dicha su muerte hallaron?
¿Cuántos, cuando no pensaron,
ricos y alegres se vieron?
Don Vela, mientras vivimos
no hay buena ni mala suerte
hasta que llegue la muerte
que es el fin a que nacimos.
Morir bien y a la vejez
es la dicha verdadera
y ansí el hombre hasta que muera
no puede, no, ser juez
de su mala o buena suerte.
Vivir es dicha. Al morir
la dicha se ha de advertir
si es mala o buena la muerte
Quien muere bien es dichoso;
quien muere mal es desdichado. (1734-55)

The idea is also expressed in the play in four prominent positions. It is the title of the play. It forms the closing

lines to the first act:

> Ningún sabio se ha llamado
> dichoso ni desdichado
> hasta que llega la muerte. (812-4)

It is contained in the dying words of the tragic hero, Porcellos:

> ¡Qué proverbio tan discreto!
> No hay dicha ni desdicha hasta la muerte.
> (2624-5)

It also forms the final lines of the play:

> Murió un hombre sin segundo
> y ansí se ve que en el mundo
> no hay dicha ni desdicha hasta la muerte.[4]
> (2739-41)

Porcellos' dying words, which refer to the idea as a proverbio show that for Mira the concept was a commonplace, and was not intended to be offered as an original idea. The final lines of the play express clearly what the importance of the ideas are in Mira's theater. He intends his plays to demonstrate and be examples of certain truths. This exemplary nature of Mira's theater can also be seen in the title El ejemplo mayor de la desdicha.

Mira's view of the rôle of Fortune in the world is developed most fully in La rueda de la Fortuna, which is one of the earliest of his plays. The last lines of the play present very clearly the theme and its main image:

> Y la historia prodigiosa
> aquí tiene fin, senado
> no la rueda de la Fortuna,
> porque siempre está rodando. (3475-8, p. 22)[5]

The wheel is the traditional image of Fortune, a subject which has been examined by Howard Patch, who concludes that:

> The point then, is this: that the main tradition from classical literature is the figure of Fortune turning her wheel, on which mankind and the estate of man depend, and that this idea has some actual beginnings in early Roman times. 6

Patch continues that "at one time or another the circular form has been used to typify speed, travel, guidance, the endless round of monotonous existence, changeableness, the sun, the earth, God and eternity." (p. 147). The wheel turns inexorably and eternally and is controlled by a force which may or may not be identified with God, for "according to such writers as

Lactantius and St. Jerome. . . the Goddess is more or less identified with the spirit of evil" (Patch, p. 16).

This circular movement is envisaged as being a vertical movement with men beginning at the bottom (sum sine regno), moving upward (regnabo) to the top of the wheel (regno) and then moving downwards (regnavi) and returning to the bottom position. Mira identifies with the top of the wheel the happiness of man (dicha) and with the bottom his misfortune (desdicha). Because of the fact that the wheel is always moving there is no guarantee that man will retain any particular position on the wheel. A man's happiness and fortune can only be determined at his death (No hay dicha ni desdicha hasta la Muerte).

Both Patch and Gottfried Kirchner[7] concentrate on the figure of the Goddess Fortuna herself, but in Mira's theater there are very few specific references to the Goddess: Mira envisages Fortune as a disembodied power. One reference to the Goddess Fortuna is to be found in Vida y muerte de San Lázaro, and this reference includes another of the traditional images of the Goddess:

> La Fortuna
> tiene el pie sobre una bola
> porque no hay firme edificio
> fundado en base redonda. (p. 142)

Patch (p. 61) comments that the ball is often equated to the moon and that through this image Fortune is frequently compared to the Blessed Virgin Mary.

The image of the wheel of Fortune is fairly common in Mira's plays. It is found frequently in the play which uses the image as its title:

> ¡Ah, rueda de la Fortuna! (3034, p. 20)
> Mira la que has de elegir,
> que ésta es rueda de Fortuna. (3165, p. 21)

The spinning-wheel is used in the play as a reminder of the image:

> A vencer los persas fui,
> y en los cuernos de la luna
> la rueda de la Fortuna
> me subió, pero caí
> y en una plaza me vi
> con una rueca en el lado. . . .
> (1543, p. 11)[8]

The symbolism of the spinning-wheel is emphasised when the Emperor, Justinian, condemns Leonicio to be given women's clothes and a spinning-wheel, calling him "Parca de la patria" (334, p. 4). These words make clear the connection between the two wheels, for the classical Parcae or fates spun the thread of life, measured it and then cut it off.

The image of the wheel is also to be found in Las desgracias del rey Alfonso el casto:

> Ah, rueda de la Fortuna
> que apriesa tus vueltas das. (folio 25)

In El hombre de mayor fama:

> sin que la fortuna
> revuelva contra ti su veloz rueda. (p. 2)

In El esclavo del demonio:

> Pues dio Fortuna esta rueda
> para que yo vengar pueda
> mis hijos. . . . (2212-4)

There are also direct references to the image in El ejemplo mayor de la desdicha (188, 1893-4)[9] No hay dicha ni desdicha hasta la muerte (65, 96); Amor, ingenio y mujer (pp. 382, 406);[10] El amparo de los hombres (1168).

Mira's plays also make indirect reference to the image of the wheel. These can be found in Vida y muerte de la monja de Portugal:

> Todo en fin es mudable,
> nada hay firme, todo rueda. (p. 172)

In Vida y muerte de San Lázaro:

> El tiempo lo muda todo
> y lo acaba la Fortuna. (p. 126)

In El esclavo del demonio:

> Fortuna, no des vaivén. (220)

In El ejemplo mayor de la desdicha:

> ¡Con qué priesa, con qué priesa
> se cambia la humana suerte! (2370-1)

In No hay dicha ni desdicha hasta la muerte:

> Considera, señor, cuán poco dura
> la dicha de los hombres. . . .
> El que ayer fue un imperio generoso
> hoy es despojo vil de la fortuna. . . etc.
> (563ff.)

In La próspera fortuna de Bernardo de Cabrera:[11]

> Deshacen un buen suceso
> celos, tiempo y mundo vario. (p. 673)

In La adversa fortuna de Bernardo de Cabrera, Lope addresses "La inconstante Fortuna" (pp. 61-2) and Bernardo hears a song with the refrain:

> Porque el bien y el agua
> no saben parar. (p. 63)

And in La próspera fortuna de Alvaro de Luna:[12]

> Desta suerte es la Fortuna:
> siempre corre, siempre vuela,
> siempre delante, atrás nunca. (p. 1968)

The idea is expressed at greater length in La rueda de la Fortuna:

> A los principios fue nuestra
> la victoria, mas, señor,
> la Fortuna tiene siempre
> mudable la condición:
> vueltas de ruedas veloces,
> humo negro, tierna flor,
> blanca sombra, débil caña,
> cosas inconstantes son;
> no hay cosa firme y estable;
> lo que cuerpo es hoy,
> mañana es cadáver frío;
> todo va en declinación. (236-47, p. 4)

These are the words of the returning general, Leonicio, who had been defeated. His friend, Filipo, who has just returned victoriously, uses the same arguments to defend Leonicio. Leonicio emphasises that man can fall from fortune to misfortune, Filipo emphasises that the opposite is also true:

> Casos de Fortuna han sido,
> y así no ha de estar, señor,
> desconfiado el vencido,
> ni seguro el vencedor;
> no hay en el mundo igualdad,
> ni estado en seguridad,
> espera quien desconfía:
> que a la noche sigue el día,
> bonanza a la tempestad;
> los estados son violentos,
> y ansí, con estas memorias,
> los humanos pensamientos
> esperan grandes vitorias
> tras de grandes vencimientos.
> Tal afrenta no le des,
> que según el mundo es
> inconstante, adverso y vario,
> hoy le venció su contrario
> para que él venza después. (368-86, pp. 4-5)

The theme is also to be found in Las desgracias del rey don Alfonso el casto:

Todo tiene su fin,
todo tiene su muerte
todo mal tiene remedio. (folio 8)
Soy río
que tornar no puede atrás. (folio 15)
Dos Contrarios tiene el mundo
que son la muerte y el tiempo,
ellos deshacen sus cosas. (folio 22)

These words stress that there are four things which are always moving and which can never be stopped. All four are usually linked together: Fortune, time, death and water.[13]

Perhaps the most striking use of these four is the image which is found in El arpa de David and La adversa fortuna de Bernardo de Cabrera. The image is less successful in El arpa de David (sonnet, 2072-85), because it is not as fully developed and does not include the ideas of the water cycle of evaporation/condensation/precipitation. Bernardo de Cabrera uses three décimas in a rhetorical manner. The first describes the cycle; the second draws the moral conclusions; the third applies these conclusions to Bernardo himself. The most important of the three is the second:

Va, porque en el agua nace;
con los rayos del sol sube,
y en forma de parda nube
sombra en los aires hace;
el mismo sol la deshace
y en agua torna su esfera,
Tras de su edad placentera
muere el hombre y se resuelve,
y a ser ceniza se vuelve,
que es su primera materia. (p. 85)

Fortune in Mira's plays is usually presented as a disembodied power which turns the wheel of time and death inexorably and eternally. Fortune is usually envisaged as a completely neutral force, but this is not always true. Men are occasionally convinced that fortune smiles on them. Such is Bernardo in his Próspera Fortuna, who is one of the few characters in the secular theater to believe implicitly in the existence of God (see above, p.100-1):

Dios es el dueño de todo,
que, sin El, no hay causa alguna. . . .
De mí os podré asegurar:
nunca reñí sin herir,
nunca jugué sin ganar,
no pedí sin recibir

y no amé sin alcanzar.
Esta dicha, y conocerte,
a pretender me convida
fiado en mi buena suerte;
démela Dios en la muerte
ya que me es mudable en la vida. (p. 637)

This attitude is unusual in the secular plays. It is reminiscent of the attitudes of the heroes of the religious plays, but in the secular plays there is no evidence that God will aid men in this world.

A much more common attitude in the secular theater is that of Lope in the same play. Lope is the opposite of Bernardo in all things, although they are great friends. Lope is in fact Bernardo's double (see below, p. 131ff). Lope says:

aun es mi vida
en extremo notable desdichada;
no escapé de pendencias sin herida;
pretendiendo, jamás alcancé nada;
ni jugué sin perder, ¡estrella airada!
que debió de ser de mi fortuna ocasionada.
(p. 637)

The same attitude can be seen in No hay dicha ni desdicha hasta la muerte: where Vela says:

Echó la Fortuna el sello
en perseguirme. (2120-1)

Belisario, in El ejemplo mayor de la desdicha may attempt to overcome Fortune, but he has the same attitude concerning it:

Ansí
seré el ejemplo mayor
de la dicha en este amor. . .
aunque Fortuna envidiosa
use rigores conmigo. (1456-63)

Similarly in La rueda de la Fortuna, Mitilene describes Fortune as "dudosa, adversa, esquiva" (474, p. 5). In El amparo de los hombres Carlos is also convinced of the malevolence of Fortune:

Fortuna, la rueda ten. . .
en el bien eres mudable,
y sólo en el mal estable.
Dichoso, Fortuna, fuera
aquél que no te tuviera
contraria ni favorable. (1168-74)

This can also be seen in El esclavo del demonio:

Muchos derribó Fortuna. . .
. . . [there follows a long list of them]. . .

Hasta morir no hay seguro
en aqueste mundo estado. (2464-93)

The same attitude is expressed by Ruy López in Próspera fortuna de Alvaro de Luna:[14]

¡Ah, Fortuna! ¿De qué sirve
que en estos siglos pasados
me diese honra y riquezas,
si de un golpe me has quitado
el honor a la vejez? (p. 1983)

The idea expressed by Ruy López is that Fortune will raise a man only to bring him down again. In Amor, ingenio y mujer both the hero and heroine are afraid of being raised by Fortune because they believe that they must inevitably be destroyed by Fortune's caprice:

Enrique — Fortuna
¿qué es esto? Tan importuna
conmigo vienes a estar,
que no se puede esperar
en ti firmeza alguna. (p. 390)

Matilde — ¿Qué es esto, Fortuna mía?
Donde me llevas ansí
con tal loco frenesí
que de mi ser me desvía?
No me acabe tu porfía
en tan confuso penar.
Da a mi remedio lugar,
y pues que nunca estás queda,
dame lugar en tu rueda
por tener que derribar. (p. 382)

Enrique is even more afraid because he believes that his destiny is controlled—as it is—by Matilde (mujer) and Carlos (niño):

Niño es Carlos, y unos días
muestra amor, y otros enojos,
inconstantes son sus ojos
para las fortunas mías,
Matilde a estas rejas frías
mercedes me suele hacer;
Fortuna yo la he de ver.
Mas ¿qué remedio me queda
si están moviendo tu rueda
un niño y una mujer? (p. 406)[15]

The same fear of Fortune is to be found in El galán secreto:[16]

¿Qué es esto, Fortuna,
tan aprisa me levantas
para humillarme tan presto?
Hoy acabó mi esperanza. (p. 343)

In El ejemplo mayor de la desdicha, Belisarius addresses Fortune for the same reasons:

> No hay más que subir. . . .
> Fortuna, tente; Fortuna
> pon en esta rueda un clavo. (1883-94)

The irony is that when Belisario utters these words his fortune has already passed its highest point and is starting to go downhill. The same situation is developed more fully in La adversa Fortuna de Alvaro de Luna. At the end of the crucial scene in the play, which is the cause of Alvaro's downfall, Alvaro believes that he has beaten Fortune:

> Hoy ve el curso de mi vida,
> con esto, fija a mis pies
> a la Fortuna, si es
> Isabel agradecida. (1662-5)

Fortune is not still, however, and he is showered with new honors. At the end of the second act he says:

> Detente, dicha, detente;
> fortuna, no quiero más. (1978-9)

These words have the same irony as those of Belisarius, for both men are already beginning their precipitous falls, although they do not realise it as they speak.

Neither Belisarius nor Alvaro are aware of their imminent fall because men are incapable of seeing the true size of Fortune's wheel and can thus never know whether they will go up or down; nor can they know when the wheel has reached the top or the bottom of its cycle.

All of these conceptions follow the literary traditions of Fortune as described by Patch. He mentions many of the outstanding features ascribed to Fortune. It was changeable and was likened to a weathercock (p. 49) and to the moon (p. 50). It was like glass, frail and brittle (p. 51) and thus it was easy to break your good fortune. "The higher we are exalted, the further we fall" (p. 55) a feature that explains the fear of Fortune's favors. A closely related idea was that "Fortune controls royal offices" (p. 60) for

> The court is of course a smaller world, a specialised microcosm, and thus forms a suitable background for the changes of fortune's favor (p. 59).

The court is a microcosm which is controlled by the monarch, who is frequently likened to God. In Lo que es no casarse a gusto[17] the comparison between the king's power and providence

—or God's power—is stated explicitly:

> Es de la divina omnipotencia
> de Dios el rey segunda providencia.
> (p. 182)

The idea of the similarity between the monarch and God is found in El palacio confuso:[18]

> Subir a la majestad
> es dejar de ser humano
> y un amago soberano
> de la infinita deidad. (p. 325).

In Próspera fortuna de Alvaro de Luna:

> Sus hechuras
> tiene cada rey, y quiere
> parecer a Dios. (p. 1968)
> Alguna deidad oculta
> vive en los reyes. (p. 1969)

In Adversa fortuna de Alvaro de Luna:

> Pequeño Dios es el rey. (2475)
> Rey, digo; Dios en la tierra. (2687)

In No hay dicha ni desdicha hasta la muerte:

> Porque es majestad sagrada. (402)

In El ejemplo mayor de la desdicha:

> Los reyes por privilegio
> dioses de la tierra son. (1954-5)
> Breve rasgo
> es de Dios el rey. (1831-2)

A similar idea is expressed in La desgraciada Raquel:[19]

> Es menester que conozcas
> que los reyes los da el cielo. (p. 16)

In La adversa fortuna de Bernardo de Cabrera adverse comparisons are made between the king and God. This play retains in the character of Bernardo himself a strong religious element (see above, p 101-2):

> Los reyes a Dios nos parezcamos (p. 69)
> Sólo Dios, que es soberano
> tiene grandeza infinita
> cuanto da a ninguno quita
> mas cuando da el rey humano
> como no es igual a Dios
> a uno quita, a otro da (p. 72)
> Pero el rey es luz de estrella
> sólo Dios es luz del sol. (p. 95)

Bernardo's attitude is reminiscent of that of David, in El arpa de David, when he addresses God with the words:

Me avisas como a los reyes
jamás la muerte perdona. (2256-7)

David's later words are also pertinent because the favor of monarchs is equally fleeting whether there is Divine favor or not:

El bien no sabe parar;
si el procediera
del cielo, perpetuo fuera;
si es del mundo ha de volar. (2574-7)

Within the microcosm of the court, the theme of favor is a lesser repetition of the theme of Fortune—with the one difference that the controlling power is human and fallible.[20]

Within the sphere of the court, there may be other microcosms and just as the king is the reflection of God, so the favorite is the reflection of the king, and he may also have his favorites. This chain of reflections is endless. The existence of the chain is acknowledged explicitly by Lázaro[21] in the Adversa fortuna de Bernardo de Cabrera:

Lázaro — No hay persona más privada
del Almirante Cabrera,
en esta casa que yo. . . .
Contador — Vuestro esclavo quedaré,
si hacéis que éste se provea,
y vuestra hechura.
Lázaro — ¿Esto es
ser dichoso? Enhorabuena.
Privado soy de un privado. (p. 83)

The idea of the servant being his master's privado is also to be found in the Próspera fortuna de Bernardo de Cabrera. The words are again Lázaro's:

Siempre un escudero trata
con su criado las cosas
más secretas de su casa.
Como él sólo es su privado,
parten la mesa y la cama,
y suelen vestirse a veces
un camisón y unas calzas. (p. 665)

The theme is also to be found in El ejemplo mayor de la desdicha, in which Belisarius is the 'privado' (862) of the emperor. The three men who become friends of Belisarius use expressions that men use to their masters or creators: the sentiments of obligation and gratitude are those that men owe to God—or the monarch:

Leoncio — Tu esclavo soy, general. (77)

Narses ¿Cómo puedo ser ingrato
al que procura mi bien? (858-9)
Filipo Mucho me obligas. . . (1212)
. . . porque ansí
conozca mi obligación. . . (1215-6)
. . . El agradecer
es de honrados pensamientos. (1221-2)

In the same play, Belisarius comments on the fact that the microcosm of the court (or the palace) is a dangerous place:

Desde César, el imperio
todo es tragedias y muertes
de varones principales.
Por invidia o por venganza,
teatros son de la mudanza
los palacios imperiales. (1148-53)

The danger of courts and palaces is that the king is omnipotent but is not omniscient—he has God's power without His knowledge. The theme is Biblical in origin: "Put no faith in princes" (Psalms, 146.3). It is to be found in La próspera fortuna de Bernardo de Cabrera:

¡Ah desdichado de aquel
que pone su confianza
en rey humano! ¡Maldigo
el que bien del hombre aguarda! (p. 665)

In El ejemplo mayor de la desdicha:

Publicad la ingratitud
de los monarcas del siglo (2564-5)

In the Adversa fortuna de Alvaro de Luna:

Bien sabéis, rey verdadero,
pues sois el original
de mi rey, que es rey mortal,
que por su ofensa no muero,
por las vuestras sí. (2777-80)
¡Alerta, humanos, alerta,
no confiéis en el hombre! (2795-6)

And in the Próspera fortuna de Alvaro de Luna:

Señor, si los corazones
veis vos sólo, y los humanos
reyes no los pueden ver,
sólo a vos, rey justo y santo
servir debemos los hombres. (p. 1983)

This religious note can also be found in El ejemplo mayor de la desdicha:

Todo favor es violento
cuando no viene de Dios. (2348-9)

In the secular plays, however, there is no indication given

that God will favor men either before or after death.

Favor is regarded in much the same way as Fortune. Both Bernardo de Cabrera and Belisarius are loath to be raised by the king because of the dangers of falling. In La próspera fortuna de Bernardo de Cabrera, Bernardo says:

> Detén, invicto señor,
> las liberales palabras,
> que no hay sujeto en quien quepan
> tanto amor, tantas mercedes. (p. 665)

In El ejemplo mayor de la desdicha, Belisarius appeals to Fortune:

> Fortuna, tú que me subes
> hasta la región del fuego,
> y como el Olimpo griego
> me has coronado de nubes,
> si me levantas así
> para desdicha mayor,
> o niégame tu favor
> o ten lástima de mí. (775-82)

Despite the appeal he is raised by the Emperor:

> Cástor y Pollux seremos,
> Belisario es mi mitad. (367-8)
> Si tu amigo verdadero
> pienso ser hasta la muerte. (747-8)
> . . . En el privado
> goza el bien de la amistad. (757-8)
> No ha tenido tanto amor
> ningún rey a su vasallo. (988-9)

Belisarius remains aware of the dangers, despite the monarch's assurances:

> El postrer paso
> de la Fortuna, di agora.
> No hay más que subir. (1881-3)

When his worst fears prove true, Belisarius lays emphasis on the fact that what is bad is not the fall but the previous raising of the favorite:

> Fortuna, ya te has cansado. . .
> no es la desdicha el caer,
> Fortuna, sino el subir. (2318-9)
> ¿Por qué allí me habéis honrado
> con magistrados y oficios,
> si era el subirme tan alto
> para mayor precipicio? (2494-7)

One of Belisarius's last remarks reveals a reason why the favors of monarchs are dangerous:

> Mortales, alerta, alerta,
> Esta es la mayor caída

que dieron ni darán
los privados. A mi dicha
no llegó ningún vasallo.
Con el César competía
mi Fortuna. (2708-14)

The favorite is in a vulnerable position because he is made the equal of the king, who then fears the favorite as a rival. The deaths of Belisarius in El ejemplo mayor de la desdicha and Porcellos in No hay dicha ni desdicha hasta la muerte are partly the result of the monarch's belief that his favorite is his rival for the affection of the queen; the deaths of Alvaro de Luna and Bernardo de Cabrera are partly attributable to the monarch's belief that they are his political rivals.

The favorite is also vulnerable because of the envy of others in the court. The theme is to be found in many plays, among them is Los prodigios de la vara:

¡Privanza, privanza!
objeto de embidiosos y enemigos
si el que pide no alcanza
enemigo se vuelvan los amigos. (p. 162)

A variation is found in El más feliz cautiverio. In this instance, Joseph enjoys the favors of God and the king, but the favor that causes his destruction is that of his father. Joseph's capture by his brothers and his being sold to the Ishmaelites is the result of a 'monstruo' (p. 7). His death is reported to his father as having been caused by 'una fiera' (p. 10), which one of the brothers, in an aside, identifies as 'embidia' (p. 10). Joseph similarly ascribes his brothers' hatred of him to 'embidia' (p. 19). Later, but before the new found power of Joseph is revealed to Jacob, the latter wonders if the brothers had really killed Joseph through 'envidia. . . el mayor monstruo' (p. 28). References to the dangers of envy are also found in the Próspera Fortuna de Alvaro de Luna:

Herrera Mas si envidiosos han hecho
que zozobre tu bajel
en las Indias de Palacio. . . . (p. 1990)

Similarly in El ejemplo mayor de la desdicha:

En los palacios más ricos
anda la envidia. . . . (2524)

In the Adversa fortuna de Bernardo de Cabrera:

Aquello mismo sucede
a los hombres que confían

en las gracias de los reyes,
que es frágil y antojadiza.
Gustosa es la privanza,
mesa es esplendida y rica;
pero cuelga de un cabello
un testimonio, una envidia. (p. 657)

In La desgraciada Raquel, the king asks who killed Raquel; Fernando answers very succinctly "envidia" (p. 18).

The theme is developed most fully in the Adversa fortuna de Alvaro de Luna. A memorial attacking Alvaro is sent to King John and it is described as the product of envy (732, 804, 885). The King says:

Quien dice que es ser privado
dicha, miente; de la embidia
es un objeto bizarro. (2706-8)

The closing lines state clearly that the subject of the play is both fortune and envy—and, by implication, favor:

Y acabe aquí la tragedia
de la embidia y la fortuna. (2950-1)

The theme of favor is a very complex one, but Mira tends to concentrate on the human, moral aspects of the theme. It does also have religious connotations and this can be seen in two factors: Mira compares the favorite to Satan, Adam and Christ; he also uses a semi-religious image—that of the "image."[22]

The comparison of the favorite to Satan is clearly expressed in the Adversa fortuna de Bernardo de Cabrera:

No puede un rey estar sin privado,
que Dios también lo tuvo en otros tiempos.
(p. 75)

And in No hay dicha ni desdicha hasta la muerte:

Contra mí mi propia hechura. . . .
Mas ¿qué mucho si en el cielo
sucedió lo mismo a Dios? (1468-75)

In La mesonera del Cielo, the devil relates his own fall from favor (see above, p 78-9). The favorite is compared to Satan because he may attempt to rival his master. In El ejemplo mayor de la desdicha, the Emperor's words could refer either to Satan or to Adam:

¿Es posible que mi hechura
se haya atrevido a mi honor?
¡No es nuevo que a su criador
haga ofensas la criatura! (2280-1)

In each case, the comparison of the favorite to Satan—or Adam—is to a possibility rather than to a fact. In each case it is

the king who sees the favorite as the rebel, whereas, in fact, the favorite is the victim. In this rôle, the favorite may be compared to Christ.

This comparison is made quite explicitly by Ruy López in La próspera fortuna de Alvaro de Luna:

> A Cristo parezco yo,
> que, siendo Dios, le vendió
> el que en su plato comía. (p. 1989)

The comparison is also made of Alvaro de Luna in the Adversa fortuna:

> Imita a Dios (si renombre
> pretendes que al mundo asombre),
> que antes quiso padecer
> que borrar ni deshacer
> esta fábrica del hombre. (2858-62)

The idea that God was prepared to suffer himself rather than destroy man is to be found in El ejemplo mayor de la desdicha:

> Si es el rey un casi Dios
> advertid que El no deshizo
> al hombre, que antes al mundo
> para repalla vino.
> ¡No deshagáis vuestra imagen! (2550-4)

This symbolism serves to re-affirm the idea that the king is like God in his ability to create and destroy. The king is unlike God because he is human and fallible; God prefers to become a sacrifice and serve as an example rather than destroy what he has made.

The image of the "image" serves to reinforce this moral yet again. The speech quoted above from El ejemplo mayor de la desdicha introduces the image, which is repeated in the play:

> ¿Qué desinios
> tenéis hoy en deshacer
> con el borrón del olvido,
> hechura que os sirvió tanto,
> vasallo que tanto os quiso? (2483-7)

The image is used twice by Justinian himself. The first time he uses it, his words reinforce the idea that the king may view the favorite as his rival:

> Velemos, pues, Justiniano,
> porque será suerte dura
> que me borre una hechura
> que dibujé de mi mano. (1324-7)

The second time he wants to protect Belisarius, but in doing so

he is threatening his own wife:

> Mi imagen es, y, otro día
> traerá el acero villano
> contra el mismo original
> la que se atreve al retrato. (1708-11)

Justinian's tragic dilemma is to be forced to choose between them—and to make the wrong decision. At the end of the play he is left with neither wife nor favorite.

In El arpa de David, Micol reprimands Saul with the words:

> A ti mismo te desdices
> si deshaces tus hechuras. (1996-7)

The moral implications are that the king by raising David only to then destroy him is destroying himself. This is true at a moral level because the king is destroying his own prestige by acting irresponsibly.

The image is also found in the Adversa fortuna de Bernardo de Cabrera:

> Con el pincel de amor hice un retrato
> perfeto y a mi imagen parecido,
> borrarle quiero porque es ingrato. (p. 82)

In the Próspera fortuna de Alvaro de Luna:

> Gusto
> de hacer de nuevo los hombres
> a su imagen. (p. 1968)

In the Adversa fortuna de Alvaro de Luna:

> Pluma, pincel que borró
> la imagen y el simulacro
> de la privanza de un rey. (2699-701)

In this play the king laments the fact that he has made a friend of Alvaro because when a king gets too close to someone he loses perspective:

> No le puedo responder
> con la gravedad y el llanto
> de rey, amigo y juez. (2611-3)

and reinforces the idea with the words:

> Cuando
> es la pasión el juez,
> amor propio el abogado,
> la embidia el procurador,
> ¡Ay del reo! (2646-9)

Mira uses the symbolism of the monarch as God and the favorite as Christ, and the image of the "image" to reinforce his moral lesson. This is expressed clearly in El ejemplo mayor

de la desdicha:

> ¡Mal haya el rey que derriba
> sin acuerdo y sin firmeza
> al hombre de quien se fía! (2790-2)

It is also stated in Adversa fortuna de Alvaro de Luna:

> Reyes deste siglo, nunca
> deshagáis vuestras acciones
> ni borréis vuestras hechuras. (2944-6)

The following speech also uses the image and sums up Mira's presentation of the theme of favor:

> Todo era vuestro, señor,
> todo estaba en vuestra mano.
> El hombre vuelve a la tierra,
> las aguas al mar salado,
> a su centro, a su principio
> vuelve todo. No me espanto
> que a vos volviese mi hacienda
> como a su origen sagrado. . . .
> Hoy lástima, ayer embidia;
> hoy fatiga, ayer triunfos;
> bien se ve que está jugando
> la fortuna con los hombres.
> Y vos, Rey, y rey cristiano,
> su instrumento sois. ¿Qué mucho?. . . .
> Acordaos de mí, acordaos;
> no borréis la imagen vuestra;
> no deshagán vuestras manos
> criado que tanto os quiso,
> hechura que os cuesta tanto. (2551-610)

The theme of favor is presented by Mira as an extension of the theme of Fortune. The similarity of the two only serves to point out the differences between them. Fortune is controlled by an omnipotent but omniscient power which is probably God. The microcosm of the court is controlled by the monarch who is omnipotent within that microcosm, but who is far from omniscient and is himself controlled by his emotions. Mira makes explicit comparisons between the two, using religious symbolism and especially the image of the "image", so as to show the dangers of the monarch's favor.

It would seem that one of Mira's purposes in writing the plays about favorites was to give a moral lesson or warning to monarchs and vassals.[23] If a monarch favors someone greatly then that favorite is exposed to great danger. He may become the monarch's rival—either in fact or in appearance—and the monarch will become jealous of his favorite; or the rest of the

court—possibly including the queen—will become envious of the favorite. In either case the result will be the destruction of the favorite. The moral antidote is for the monarch not to favor one person, and raise him up above the level of other men, and for the subjects not to wish to be so elevated.

When a monarch raises a favorite he often calls that favorite his friend. Mira presents friendship in two ways: the first is between those who are not equal. The concept is related to the theme of the double (see below, p 131ff), for the favorite becomes the king's double. This is especially true in El ejemplo mayor de la desdicha and the Alvaro de Luna plays. Justinian attempts to make Belisarius his equal on three occasions:

(1)
Dos anillos con dos sellos
mandé hacer de un propio modo,
porque podamos en todo
ser los dos uno con ellos.
Toma el uno, y la amistad
finezas haga y extremos
Cástor y Pollux seremos.
Belisario es mi mitad. (361-8)

(2)
Con la amistad son iguales
el vasallo y el señor. . . .
Y como la majestad
de un rey no ha comunicado
otro rey, en el privado
goza el bien de amistad. . .
príncipe eres del imperio
y perpetuo dictador. (751-63)

(3)
Mi amigo Belisario. . . (1259)
Amigo leal. . . (1288)
Pues iguales nos formó
la amistad, llega a abrazarme. (1292-3)
Amigo. . . (1303)

Justinian's words on the second occasion stress the dangers of this type of friendship: the favorite is not a king but is feared by everyone as if he were.

In the Próspera fortuna de Alvaro de Luna, the King and Alvaro discuss this type of friendship:

Rey
Como tienes poca edad,
como yo, fuerza es tener
amistad.

Alvaro
¿Favorecer
a un criado es amistad?

Rey
Amistad nace de amor.

Alvaro
Siendo desigual el hombre
que el favor recibe, es llano

que no es amistad. (p. 1967)

Despite Alvaro's words he becomes the King's friend in the Adversa fortuna (734) and later suffers for this friendship. When Belisarius and Alvaro become the friends of the king they become identified with him, but they remain expendable. The presentation of friendship between those who are not equal in rank is another way that Mira deals with the theme of favor. It parallels the image of the wheel because it raises a man to a position in which he is conspicuous and precarious. Because he is conspicuous he attracts the envy or jealousy of others, because he is precarious he needs very little to make him fall.[24]

The other great aspect of this type of friendship is that it is dangerous to approach too near the person of the monarch. The king is likened to the sun in La desgraciada Raquel:

Aunque fuera Alfonso el sol. (p. 2)

In the Próspera fortuna de Bernardo de Cabrera:

cuando el rey, nuestro señor,
como el sol rompe la nube. . . , (p. 658)

In the Adversa fortuna de Bernardo de Cabrera:

El sol que me ha levantado. (p. 85)

In the Próspera fortuna de Alvaro de Luna:

Señor. . .
tenéis un sol en la faz. (p. 1962)

And in the king's own words in the Adversa fortuna de Alvaro de Luna:

Si yo soy el 'sol' de España
y he de iluminar mi 'luna.' (p. 1240-1)[25]

The meaning of the image in this context is ominous. By approaching too closely to the sun of the king, the favorite, is destroyed by the heat of the sun.

The other type of friendship is that between equals. Patch in his study of Fortuna mentions the importance in Medieval literature of the "friend in need" theme (p. 74). It is envisaged by Lope and Bernardo in the Bernardo de Cabrera plays and by Porcellos and Vela in No hay dicha ni desdicha hasta la muerte as a means of overcoming the power of fortune. In both plays the idea is stressed that they have one soul. In the Próspera fortuna de Bernardo de Cabrera:

Si hacemos dos almas una
no temo desdicha alguna. (p. 638)

This idea is repeated in the Adversa fortuna:

> Tenemos
> sola una alma Cabrera y yo. (p. 94)

It is also found in No hay dicha ni desdicha hasta la muerte:

> Si un alma en los dos vive,
> ni es infeliz quien recibe
> ni es más dichoso quien da. (118-20)

The idea of not fearing "desdicha alguna" (see above) is repeated in the Próspera fortuna de Bernardo de Cabrera in an extended image:

> Cuando dos en el verano
> suben a un árbol ufano,
> el que de más fuerzas es
> sube primero, y después
> al otro le da la mano.
> Un árbol es la privanza
> que en su árbol suele ofrecer
> fruto y flores de esperanza,
> y a veces suele caer
> el que las flores alcanza.
> Si el favor un árbol es
> y a mí de subir me priva,
> mi desdicha, como ves,
> trepa bien, y sube arriba,
> porque la mano me des. (p. 645)

The idea is expanded even more in No hay dicha ni desdicha hasta la muerte:

> Dividamos esta vida
> que con un alma tenemos.
> Don Ordoño y don García
> hijos legítimos son
> de Alfonso, rey de León,
> y pretenden este día
> ambos el reino. . . .
> Mi parecer es que aquí
> nos dividamos los dos.
> Con arte se ha de ayudar
> a la fortuna y la suerte,
> que aun siendo fatal la muerte
> tal vez se suele escusar
> con el ingenio y discurso.
> No nos perdamos los dos.
> Al un rey serviréis vos
> y yo al otro, y ansí el curso
> de la rueda de fortuna
> contrastar y detener
> podemos; pues suele hacer
> las mudanzas de la luna. (31-68)

In both plays there is a gracioso plot which reflects the main plot. This is stressed particularly in No hay dicha

ni desdicha hasta la muerte:

> ¿Quieres que los dos seamos
> dos monos de nuestros amos?. . .
> cuanto tuviere, por Dios,
> que ha de ser común de dos,
> ecepto moza y dinero. (126-32)

The last line of this is typical gracioso humor, but it has a serious purpose. In Mira's plays it is common for one friend to aid the other financially but because the friends are so closely connected they often become rivals for the hand of the same woman. This dilemma is expressed clearly by Porcellos in No hay dicha ni desdicha hasta la muerte:

> Entre dos imanes sigo
> la luz de un norte pequeño,
> entre el gusto de mi dueño
> y el provecho de mi amigo.
> Partido está el corazón
> y vivo estando partido,
> porque milagros han sido
> de amistad y obligación. (883-90)[26]

The result of this friendship—which in both plays is intended as a means of overcoming the wheel of Fortune—is that one of the two friends is destroyed while the other replaces him. In La adversa fortuna de Bernardo de Cabrera, the king says:

> Si a Cabrera pensé
> dar por esposo a mi hermana,
> a quien es otro Cabrera
> se le ha de dar. (p. 99)

In No hay dicha ni desdicha hasta la muerte, Vela inherits not only his friend's bride but

> A ese varón heredaste
> sus títulos y su renta;
> sus oficios y a mi cuenta
> quedas siempre, porque amaste
> al que mató esta cuchilla. (2722-6)

Friendship is not seen by Mira as a sure means of overcoming the power of Fortune. Friendship, between those who are equal or unequal in rank, is a dangerous thing if the two friends become too closely identified. The traditional example of this friendship is not that of Orestes and Pylades, but that of David and Jonathan. Mira had dealt with the story in El arpa de David; and when Jonathan makes the shepherd boy his friend he says:

> Te quiero de suerte
> que me iguales (178-9)
> Soy tu amigo, tu igual (1098)

The story of David and Jonathan is ominous because it includes both the idea of friendship between equals (for neither is king), and also the idea of friendship between unequals (Jonathan is a Prince, David is a shepherd boy). David becomes King of Israel, but only through the death of his friend, Jonathan.

Bernardo de Cabrera, Porcellos, and Belisarius are the doubles of their friends and also the favorites and doubles of their monarchs. In all three cases the monarch, partly through envy of the court, fears the rivalry of his favorite and destroys him. The double of the favorite is then elevated to the position of power of the fallen favorite without becoming the friend of the monarch. The danger of both types of friendship is that it destroys the integrity of the identity of the individual, and that one of the friends must be destroyed in order for the other to regain his individual identity. Inevitably it is the favorite who is the victim of this friendship, because his identity is nullified by his position as intermediary between monarch and friend. The downfalls of Alvaro de Luna, Raquel and Ruy López de Avalos do not involve friendship between equals, but all three are destroyed partly through the envy of the court, and Ruy López is replaced by Alvaro.

Mira presents friendship, when it is between those who are not equal or when it is too close, as a potential source of danger rather than as a source of safety. Friendship is not a way of overcoming Fortune but may, on the contrary, be the very cause of Fortune triumphing.

There are means of overcoming Fortune. Patch in his study describes three traditional ways. The first is "to show courage" (p. 13); the second is "to oppose reason to her unreason, to live the life of wisdom" (p. 13); the third is "to devote oneself to those concerns in which Fortune had no part—the activities of virtue" (p. 13). Mira's presentation of these ideas is best seen in his treatment of the theme of "opportunism."

Patch says that Fortune was also known traditionally as Occasio (p. 45)[27] and mentions that "Fortune, standing for Occasio, has a long forelock, while the back of her head is bald" (Patch, p. 116). Once the Occasio or opportunity had gone there

was no way of grasping it again. This gives rise to the Spanish proverb "A la ocasión la pintan calva." It is not the whole story, however, for there is another Spanish proverb: "La ocasión hace al ladrón." The theme of "opportunism" in Mira is the product of both of these tendencies, and indeed Patch relates that "Fortune may easily come to represent the goddess who is in control of the opportune moment" (pp. 115-6)

The theme of "opportunism" is developed most fully in La rueda de la Fortuna. The heroine, Mitilene, is tied to a tree by Teodosio, who wants to rape her. He is chased off by Leonicio. The defenceless girl is discovered by Filipo, who has to overcome his desire for her:

> Con mi amor, esta ocasión
> he de perder la opinión
> de cortesano y leal.
> ¡En qué peligro me veo!
> Los cielos me están mirando
> y aquí me va despeñando
> el caballo del deseo.
> . . . . . -ado[28]
> La buena ocasión es fuerza,
> gozarla quiero por fuerza—
> pero no, que soy honrado.
> Yo la voy a desatar. (1717-28, p. 12)

Filipo then goes on to discuss the subject. Notice that Filipo stresses the idea that "La ocasión hace al ladrón":

> Filipo — La ocasión es poderosa:
> hace al cobarde cruel,
> ladrón hace al hombre fiel,
> a la verdad mentirosa,
> traidor hace al que es leal,
> lascivo al más continente,
> riguroso al que es liberal.
> ¿Cuántos hombres han estado
> en esta resolución,
> y una pequeña ocasión
> ciegos los ha derribado?. . . .
> . . . Como el soldado,
> en las batallas que he dado
> nunca la ocasión perdí;
> si ves que te doy la muerte
> ¿has de dejarte gozar?
> Mitilene — Mil muertes pienso pasar.
> Filipo — Si una mujer es tan fuerte
> que la vida ha aventurado
> por su honra, no es razón
> que venza una tentación
> al que quiere ser honrado.
> Noble soy y temo a Dios
> honra quiero y Dios es gloria. (Desátala)
> (1732-61, p. 12)

Ocasión or opportunity is offered to men. They either succumb to the temptation or else must overcome themselves and, in Filipo's words, achieve honor and nobility.

The temptation offered by opportunity also figures prominently in the plots of Los carboneros de Francia and Las lises de Francia. It is not very fully developed in Los carboneros de Francia.[29] Maganza attempts to use the ocasión (p. 296) of seducing Sevilla by deceit, but a group of peasants arrive to "deshacer / ocasión tan dulce" (p. 297). A similar situation is to be found in Las lises de Francia. In Los carboneros de Francia, Maganza is the monarch's representative, but in Las lises de Francia there are two representatives of the monarch, Leoncio and Aureliano. Leoncio is the more determined of the two and pretends to be the monarch—thus destroying his own identity and usurping the monarch's:

Leoncio — Infunda en esta ocasión
Venus hermosa su estrella:
tus bellos brazos me des. . . .
Crotilda — Yo te los daré después.
Leoncio — ¡Qué ocasiones se han perdido
sólo por ese después! (1088-94)

Contrasted to Leoncio is Aureliano, who is his double in that he follows the opposite course of action and overcomes the temptation offered him:

Mientras descansa y reposa
la ocasión lograr pretendo. . . .
Hoy mi corazón honrado
sigue apriesa lo que veo;
él morirá despeñado,
que es su caballo el deseo,
y corre desenfrenado.
Mi amor me dice que embista,
y la razón que resista. . . .
. . . ¿Por qué permito
dejar tan buena ocasión?
Lo que intento es apetito,
y lo contrario es razón.
Es el gusto breve gloria;
del biem dura la memoria.
Yo he adorado una cautiva,
y mi alma en ella estriba.
¡Vitoria, razón, vitoria! (980-1004)

He later rejoices in this victory:

Y pondré por mi divisa
que yo propio me vencí. (1083-4)

The evil nature of ocasión is clearly expressed in El amparo de los hombres. Federico says of the devil:

> Que es padre de la ocasión
> y está seguro el copete. (1943-4)

In El esclavo del demonio, Gil makes a similar identification between ocasión and evil:

> La fe deste corazón
> huyó, pues que la ocasión
> es la madre del delito,
> que si crece el apetito
> es muy fuerte tentación. (470-4)

In La mesonera del Cielo, Abrahán makes a similar comment:

> Que el huir la ocasión es piedra dura
> para quebrar los ojos al demonio. (859-60)

Abrahán, like Aureliano in Las lises de Francia, introduces the important concept of overcoming oneself—especially in an amorous or sexual context:

> El huir
> de ocasiones amorosas
> es la mayor valentía
> y el vencerse gran vitoria. (265-8)

In La hija de Carlos V, the Emperor reflects on the need to overcome oneself:

> Ea, llegue la ocasión
> en que he de vencerme a mí.
> Para trabajos nací,
> no hay que rehusar los vaivenes
> de la Fortuna. (171-5)

Later in the play, there is a sung recital of all the victories of the Emperor, from his assumption of the throne of Spain to 1555. The recital is interrupted by the song of the semi-gracioso soldier, Andrés de Cuacos:

> Pobre nací, pobre viví
> y pobre me estoy;
> y dáseme un cornado
> del emperador. (727-30, 771-4)

The song has a marked effect on the Emperor, who interprets the moral:

> Que vale un cornado
> más que una imperial corona. (962-3)

The Emperor then decides that:

> Desde hoy el mundo ha de ver
> la mayor victoria en Carlos. (975-6)

The ability to overcome the temptation offered by opportunity is the first step towards being able to overcome oneself and one's passions. The distinction being the difference between the ability to resist a particular temptation on a given "occasion" and the ability to overcome oneself completely so that an individual occasion will not offer any further temptation. The traditional model for this is the temptations of Christ in the Wilderness (Matthew, 4.1-11; Mark, 1.12-13; Luke, 4.1-13). Each of the three temptations is an ocasión which Christ must resist, when he has successfully resisted all three he has overcome himself and no longer needs to fear temptation of that sort.

In many plays characters must struggle to achieve this equanimity. In La hija de Carlos V, the contrast is made between Juana, who is closely involved in the political activities of the peninsula, and her father, who is not. Juana says:

> Enojada
> estoy y vencerme no puedo. (1311-2)

On the contrary, her father, the Emperor, is able to overcome himself:

> De mí mismo he triunfado. . . . (1600)

A similar idea is also to be found in Las desgracias del rey Alfonso el casto:

> Rey de un mundo he de ser hoy,
> pues rey de mí mismo soy. (folio 6)

In El arpa de David, the King is tempted by seeing the nude body of the beautiful Bathsheba (Bersabé):

> Vencer tengo mi apetito,
> que, si a Bersabé visito,
> gloria y gusto puedo hallar,
> pero es locura trocar
> por un breve un infinito. (2588-92)

Despite his resolution, he wavers; then resolves again:

> Mueran las pasiones mías;
> viva sólo la razón.
> Ver no quiero a Bersabé. (3022-4)

But he eventually succumbs to the temptation. David is an important example of how in the religious theater the characters do not always have to face the consequences of their actions because they have God's favor. God intervenes to protect David

from the consequences of his action—which involves both adultery and the murder of Uriah.

David's actions seem to contradict the following words from Los prodigios de la vara. These lines emphasise that a king is just as responsible for his actions as anyone else:

> Deberse este respecto
> al nombre de rey, no al rey
> cuando no merece serlo. . . .
> Razón es que al rey estimen
> los grandes y los pequeños
> pero también es razón
> que no haga el rey malos hechos. (p. 193)

This concept of true nobility is also to be found in Las desgracias del rey Alfonso el casto:

> La verdadera nobleza
> se adquiere con nuestros hechos. (folio 4)

and in El animal profeta:

> Julián — No está en serlo. . .
> el ser caballero un hombre.
> Federico — ¿En qué está?
> Julián — En saber serlo. (p. 409)

Within the secular theater of Mira de Amescua, there are many other attempts made to withstand Fortune. One way is to be brave, for, as Patch says (p. 83), "Fortune aids the bold." This is clearly seen in No hay burlas con las mujeres.[30] The most successful character is Arminda who says:

> En ocasión que es ya tan importuna
> conviene echar pecho a la Fortuna. (p. 479)
> Sea el remedio postrero
> fiarme de la Fortuna. . . .
> Suele la Fortuna hallar
> lo que el discurso no acierta. (p. 487)
>
> Es de poco valor sin duda alguna
> quien no sabe oponerse a la Fortuna. (p. 496)
>
> Para vencer
> importa el atrevimiento. (p. 504)
>
> No hay tormenta alguna
> que ofenda a quien ampara la Fortuna.
> (p. 525)
>
> Venció mi amante porfía
> a mi suerte rigurosa. (p. 525)
>
> puede
> lo que no se logró ayer
> lograrse quizá mañana. (p. 514)

The less successful characters in the play are the less positive ones, Jacinto being the best example:

> Es irritar su Fortuna
> el quejarse sin razón. (p. 488)
>
> Para ver este suceso
> de la Fortuna en qué para. . . . (p. 499)

In El palacio confuso, the Queen is positive and is successful in her desires:

> La industria
> suele vencer la naturaleza. . . .
> La industria es la defensa
> contra el rigor de sus manos
> contra el girar de su rueda
> [de la Fortuna]. . . La industria sea
> quien deshaga este prodigio
> quien este bárbaro venza. (p. 335)

In the tragedies the tone is less optimistic. The Queen in El palacio confuso and Arminda in No hay burlas con las mujeres combine virtue with courage and prudence. Bernardo de Cabrera, on the other hand, believes that to be virtuous is sufficient:

> No; que todo es viento,
> no hay gloria que no se pase;
> solamente la virtud
> da fruto que siempre dura. (p. 73)
>
> Elige medio de suerte
> que ni te tenga el amigo
> lástima ni el enemigo
> envidia. (p. 74)

Ruy López de Avalos in the Próspera fortuna de Alvaro de Luna is very similar to Bernardo in his attitude:

> Obrar bien es lo que importa
> don Alvaro, no me turban
> accidentes, que Dios tiene
> en sus manos la Fortuna. (p. 1969)

In El ejemplo mayor de la desdicha, Belisarius also believes that virtue alone will protect him. His attitude is clearly shown to be imprudent because his servant, Floro, warns him of the realities:

> Belisario — Tengo de hacer bien a todos. . . .
> Su afrenta lleva consigo
> quien mal al bueno desea;
> haga yo bien siempre, y sea
> quien quisiere mi enemigo.
> Floro — Tu misma virtud será,
> que invidias te habrá causado.

Que el malo no es envidiado
y el bueno siempre lo está. (151-60)

Despite Floro's words, Belisarius maintains his attitude:

Hagamos bien, porque al fin
esto no podrá faltarnos. (913-4)

El bien obrar
por sí mismo se ha de amar,
y no porque lo agradezcan. (1224-6)

No se pierde el bien que se hace. (1231)

Porque al fin no hay bien perdido. (1559)

In No hay dicha ni desdicha hasta la muerte, Porcellos is also convinced that this is the right way:

Vivir bien me toca a mí
lo demás le toca a Dios. (1768-9)

The tragedies reveal that dependence on virtue is not sufficient to withstand the power of Fortune, just as the stratagem of "hedging one's bets" through friendship is not sufficient. In one of the most dramatically ironical speeches of the whole of Mira's theater, Ruy López de Avalos in Próspera fortuna de Alvaro de Luna says:

¡Con qué furor, con qué extremos
de soberbio y loco error
nos engaña el propio amor
y nunca nos conocemos!
Nadie sus defectos ve,
amor propio es amor ciego;
bien dice el proverbio griego
que la mayor ciencia fue
el conocerse a sí mismo. (p. 1971)

The irony of the words is that he is accusing his squire, Herrera, of the very fault of which he, Ruy López, is guilty. Ruy López is incapable of seeing his own defects because he is blinded by his own virtue, and ignores the need for worldly prudence. Only in the comedies and, to a lesser extent, the tragicomedies does Mira present characters who combine the qualities necessary to overcome Fortune. These will be discussed in detail later (see below, p 295-6), but they consist of an amalgam of the virtues: courage, moral virtue, and reason. These last two, which are those singled out by Patch, are themselves the amalgam of the six Virtues: temperance, justice, faith, hope, charity—or love—and prudence.

The court is a microcosm of the world. Royal favor within the court is closely identified with Fortune in the world. This comparison has a didactic purpose for it makes a sharp contrast between the inadequacies of the monarch, who may be omnipotent but is not omniscient, and the complete integrity of the power that controls the wheel of Fortune. Frequently the monarch is not governed by justice, temperance, and prudence; he is governed by his own passions and consequently acts rashly. Mira's presentation of the microcosm of the court is a warning of the fickleness of the favor of princes and is addressed both to monarchs and courtiers. He is cautioning the former against acting rashly and without just cause, he is cautioning the latter against relying on the favor of monarchs, against the envy of others, and against their own ambitions.

His plays present various ways in which men attempt to overcome Fortune. The first of these is friendship. This is dangerous because if the friendship is between those who are not equal it may destroy the lesser, who approache too closely to the sun and are burned up. If it is between two equals, their identities become fused and indistinguishable and one must be destroyed in order for the other to regain his individuality. This concept is clearly revealed by the declarations of the two friends that they have but one soul (see above, p) thus in a sense there is one body which is superfluous.

There is one way of overcoming Fortune, this is by overcoming one's own passions and overcoming oneself (Vencerse). Men are tested in the world by opportunities (ocasiones) or temptations. These are opportunities either to do evil or to resist temptation and overcome oneself. It is not sufficient to be virtuous in a purely moral sense, but men must also be prudent. They must act in a way which is both consistent with the demands of this world and of the world to come.

The device of the double is central to Mira's portrayal of character. In some plays this is found as a pair or series of characters who balance each other. Frequently these are two friends whose fortunes are diametrically opposed. Examples of

this are to be found in La rueda de la Fortuna (Filipo y Leonicio); the Bernardo de Cabrera plays (Bernardo and Lope) and No hay dicha ni desdicha hasta la muerte (Vela and Porcellos).

Mira uses the device of the double in other ways. There are less stylised contrasts between doubles which may vary from scene to scene. In La rueda de la Fortuna for example, Heraclius, the real Prince, is contrasted to the false Prince, Teodosio, but other contrasts are made in the play. In one sequence Teodosio is contrasted to both Leonicio and Filipo; in others Heraclius is contrasted both to Maurice and to Phocas; while at another point Maurice and Phocas are contrasted to each other. The Prince, Teodosio, and the Princess, Teodolinda, are also contrasted. Throughout the play there is a constant series of contrasts which are polarised around the three emperors: the good Heraclius; the bad Phocas; and the bad but repentant Maurice.

A third use of the double to be found in the plays is the Menaechmi theme: the theme of identical twins. This theme has several different variations in Mira's theater. In El palacio confuso it is a straightforward case of identical twins and a "comedy of errors". In Amor, ingenio y mujer it is a case of a woman pretending to be a twin brother and sister. Another variation is that of Lisarda/Lísida in El esclavo del demonio, a play which also contains two men with the same name—Sancho de Portugal.

A further example of Mira's use of the double—a symbol of the ambiguity of life—is the adoption of two disguises by the protagonists of Los carboneros de Francia, La tercera de sí misma[31] and La fenix de Salamanca.[32] The latter two cases are made even more complex by changes of sex involved in the disguises, Mencía in La fénix de Salamanca for example, disguises herself as Carlos, who, in turn, disguises himself as Mencía.

One characteristic of the great majority of the characters of Mira's secular theater is their inherent nobility. This trait is shared by the protagonists—male and female—and by minor characters—servants, graciosos, and peasants.

There is a small group of characters in Mira's plays in which this basic nobility is most clearly seen. This group

consists of elderly men who are presented as the voices of wisdom, prudence and knowledge. There are two examples in the comedies of a member of this group being of high rank and having the power to put his knowledge and wisdom into effect. The dénouement of La confusión de Hungría[33] is brought about by the arrival of Trebacio, who is the King of Thrace and the father of the Hero. Similarly in La fénix de Salamanca the arrival of the heroine's elderly uncle, don Tello, brings the play to an end. In both cases, the two elderly men are capable of correctly identifying the protagonists and thus re-establishing order. They are both, in a sense, dei ex machina but they are human and the arrival of both is expected throughout a large part of the play.

Although there are a few examples of elderly men of high birth, there are many examples of elderly men who are wise and noble although of humbler origins. In La confusión de Hungría there is a rare example of a mercader de piedras who is able to inform Fenisa, Princess of Hungary, of the true identity of Ausonio, Prince of Thrace, but he is unable to substantiate his assertions as King Trebacio can. More common in Mira's theater are noble, elderly peasants. These peasants tend to be sententious and frequently seem to be the voice of the author. It is quite possible that Mira, the Andalusian, regarded himself as an outsider and may have identified himself with the peasants. It has even been suggested that the name of one of them, Zumaque, is an anagram of Amezqua.[34] The peasants serve two functions. They are either the guardians of princes who have been abandoned in the country as babies—Eracliano in La rueda de la Fortuna is the guardian of Heraclius; Lisardo in El palacio confuso is the guardian of Enrico—or they are the protectors of heroines who are abandoned as young women, and whose virtue is without other protection—Lisardo protects Porcia in La tercera de sí misma; Lauro in Los carboneros de Francia protects Sevilla and is also the guardian of the infant Blancaflor—in each case they take the place of fathers.

The behavior of these elderly men always benefits the protagonists. Each of them has a character of his own, but they are all benevolent father figures and as such they are one of

the most individual types of characters in Mira's theater. Maurice in La rueda de la Fortuna gives Heraclius the following advice:

> Toma siempre el buen consejo
> honra al clérigo y al viejo.
> (2934-5, p. 19)

One figure who is closely related to this group is the Empress Aureliana in La rueda de la Fortuna. She is the only example of an elderly, wise and noble woman. The reason for the scarcity of this type of character is not due to any anti-feminist sentiments on Mira's part, but mainly to the scarcity of elderly mother figures.

Opposed to the benevolent father figures, who are always right, are the evil characters, whose personalities lead them to destruction. There are relatively few of these and it is rare for there to be more than one in a single play. In La rueda de la Fortuna neither Teodosio nor Focas have any redeeming qualities, nor do the Count and the Baron in La adúltera virtuosa,[35] nor do Conrado and Otavio in No hay reinar como vivir[36] (these last two escape death but are exiled instead). Baltasar Gerardo in Lo que le toca al valor is without redeeming qualities and the Prince of Orange has very few. In the majority of the other plays there are single instances of this type of character: García in Próspera fortuna de Alvaro de Luna; Otavio in El galán secreto; Maganza in Los carboneros de Francia; Gerardo in Nardo Antonio; Lope in No hay burlas con las mujeres. All of these men are characterised by an almost total lack of virtues. They are nearly all cowards; they are ungenerous and mean, frequently desiring to deprive others of material goods or of honor; they are all lacking in any form of moral virtue.

There is another group of bad characters in the plays of Mira de Amescua, who are clearly distinguished from the thoroughly evil ones. These are overcome by passion and undertake evil actions, which are excusable and for which there are extenuating circumstances. Vertilo in La confusión de Hungría and Lucrecia and Fisberto in La tercera de sí misma are good examples. They are all led to deception and deceit through their love for another character. Although their plans are thwarted

they are not severely punished at the end of the plays, for their faults are viewed in the same light as those of the tragic heroes.

There is a third group of characters in the plays who have positively evil propensities. This is the most interesting group of the three, for the plays deal with the moral conversion of these characters. In this group there stand out Maurice in La rueda de la Fortuna, Federico in El galán secreto, Carlos in El palacio confuso and Alejandro in La casa del tahur.[37] In each case the development of the plays show the struggles of these characters with their good and evil desires. In each case Mira convincingly portrays the victory of their good nature.

The essence of this struggle is the same as that of the tragic heroes, for all the characters in the plays must undergo a test—which is part of life itself—in order to find their true identity. There are very few characters in Mira's plays who do not have to undergo some form of test. Heraclius in La rueda de la Fortuna is one of the rare examples of a man whose moral identity is never in doubt, but he must prove this identity before he can find his actual identity as heir to the Empire. The theme of the test and the struggle to find identity is at the heart of all of Mira's best plays and this aspect of the plays will be examined in the following chapters.

The women in Mira's theater are frequently remarkable for their individuality and independence. There are two basic types of women to be found in Mira's theater. These can be clearly seen in La tercera de sí misma: Lucrecia is a mujer varonil while Porcia is mujeril. Lucrecia attempts to control events and is willing to don male dress to achieve her ends. The type is fairly common in Mira's theater. Good examples are Sancha in Obligar contra su sangre,[38] Matilde in Amor, ingenio y mujer, Mencía in La Fénix de Salamanca and Leonarda in Nardo Antonio.[39] Lucrecia in Cuatro milagros de amor[40] and Serafina in Galán, valiente y discreto[41] are allied to this type; their rejection of love is their mark of being varonil. All of these characters can be singled out for their ingenuity. Despite the rejection of love by Serafina and Lucrecia, the reason for their stratagems

is love, and all these women can be described by the phrase "Amor, ingenio y mujer."

The contrasting type of woman is one that is more unusual, for she is less conspicuous. This is the woman who is sure of her identity and does not need to resort to ingenuity and disguise, and who can never be described as varonil. What is remarkable about these women is their integrity and the fact that they are all very strong characters. Porcia in La tercera de sí misma is a clear example of this type, but others are Sevilla in Los carboneros de Francia, Blanca in El conde Alarcos, Matilde in El palacio confuso, Isabela in La casa del tahur and Arminda in No hay burlas con las mujeres.

In her book on the mujer varonil[42] Melveena McKendrick includes No hay burlas con las mujeres. At first glance this attitude may seem justified, for Arminda kills her faithless lover. But this is the only time in the play that Arminda acts in a way that could be called varonil, for it is the only way she can defend her virtue (see below, pp 249-51). In general, the women in Mira's plays who are not varonil remain virtuous, while those who resort to male garb and plotting have forfeited —or are willing to forfeit—their virtue.

The last type of character is the gracioso. In general Mira's graciosos are notable for their good qualities. They are generally marked out by their commonsense; they are rarely cowards, but equally they do not risk their lives foolishly; they frequently complain of hunger, but it is also true that their masters are often too poor to feed them. The three distinguishing characteristics of the graciosos are their loyalty for they often share their masters' misfortunes voluntarily—although they may complain; their commonsense and their wisdom in the affairs of others.

There are different types of gracioso in Mira's plays. There are the peasants found in Los carboneros de Francia, La tercera de sí misma and El conde Alarcos. Their function is fulfilled by servants in other plays. Both types serve the same purpose as the chorus in classical drama. They comment on the action, warn the protagonists and introduce a note of morality. Like the chorus they are frequently ineffectual in their own

affairs.

Cardillo in Lo que puede una sospecha and Flores in Galán, valiente y discreto are the two best examples of how the gracioso may control the action of the play. Both become servants of the heroine and thus inform the hero of how to proceed in his affair. When the gracioso insinuates himself into the house of the heroine he assumes a certain ambiguity of sex—for he serves both male and female protagonist. This "hermaphroditism" allows him to control the action in the same way that a woman like Mencía in La Fénix de Salamanca is able to control the action through her assumption of male dress and her consequent "hermaphroditism,"

Cardillo, Flores and Castaño, in Amor, ingenio y mujer, are among the most loyal of servants and it is only through their efforts that the hero wins the heroine. The character of Flores is attested by his master:

> Eres, Flores, un prodigio
> de lealtad. (1383-4)

Similarly Castaño receives the following reference from his master:

> Entre todos mis criados
> por prudente y por leal
> hice de ti más caudal
> para fiar mis cuidados. (p. 375)

The plays of Mira de Amescua are concerned with character and the casts of most of his best plays are small, with the interest focussed on a few individuals. Perhaps the only exception is La rueda de la Fortuna which has a large number of important characters.

The majority of the characters are marked by a basic nobility which may cause them to commit errors. These errors either result in disaster or else the characters must undergo some sort of ordeal to rid themselves of these flaws, most of which are the result of an imperfect knowledge of their own identity and their own capabilities and limitations.

Cotarelo attacked Mira because he:

> Eligió. . . los personajes excepcionales,
> a veces grandes y nobles, pero otras
> crueles, inverosímiles y casi siempre
> exagerados en la pintura que de ellos hace.
> (p. 89)

This may be true of the religious theater, but it is far from true of the secular theater. There are isolated examples of cruel characters—Leonarda in Nardo Antonio drinks Gerardo's blood, but her provocation is extreme and the play is concerned with the tragedy of Nardo and Leonarda, both of whom choose to right wrongs by becoming outlaws and denying their own nature.

Cotarelo's attack is unjustified in so far as it applies to the secular theater of Mira de Amescua. In the analysis of the best of the tragedies, tragicomedies and comedies, it will be seen that the characters are neither inverosímil nor exagerados. On the contrary the behavior of the characters in the best plays is logical and consistent, without ignoring the changes of mood which may cause men to act in a way which may at first seem inconsistent.

Although there are cruel characters in the plays, these either come to an untimely end or are made aware of their failings. This may not be a truthful presentation of life in the world we know, but it is not unrealistic for it is an artist's privilege to show justice being carried out. This may be indicative of a moral purpose in Mira's theater, but the wicked also suffer for their sins in the great Greek, French and English dramas.

Mira de Amescua's characters are also notable for their charity and generosity. It is the villains who attempt to prevent others from enjoying fortune or favor, and indeed the tragic heroes are frequently destroyed because they are unwilling to believe ill of others and some of them because they are ready to allow their friends to win favor and happiness in their places. Mira's characters are notable for their bravery in battle and their fortitude in misfortune. Only the villains are cowards. The characters are notable for their loyalty to friends, mistresses, masters and servants. Only the villains are guilty of treachery. The characters are finally notable for their humanity and their human feelings.

The protagonists of Mira's plays are not perfect, however. They have faults which either cause them to be imprudent or which they must overcome through the use of prudence. All of the plays are concerned with the struggles that these characters

must have in order to temper their desires and passions with reason and virtue. The world that Mira presents is a ruthless one in which a man must either come to terms with these conflicting emotions or he will be destroyed. In the tragedies the heroes are incapable of fully reconciling these two and are consequently incapable of fully knowing themselves.

In the tragicomedies Mira presents similar characters who are able, after much suffering, to find their true identities and come to know themselves. As they come to know themselves (conocerse) they are also able to achieve the true victory over themselves (vencerse) which is the essence of nobility. The tragicomedies are the successful resolution of the tragedies.

In the comedies similar characters are presented in less extreme situations. The world of the comedies is less somber than that of the tragedies and tragicomedies and death is not such a reality. Villains and heroes undergo less extreme suffering in the comedies, but they all have the similar characteristics to the characters of the tragedies and tragicomedies and must undergo similar ordeals.

In general the characters of the secular theater have the same virtues as the ideas of the theater demand. They are brave and liberal, noble and loyal, but they are most memorable because they are individual and human. All the characters in Mira's best plays may be types—gracioso, dama, galán, viejo—but each has his own separate identity and each has his own human failings of which he must become aware or they will lead him inevitably to destruction.

A detailed study of the poetic language of Mira de Amescua would itself provide the material for a thesis. Consequently it is only possible to give a few examples in order to show the type of language which can be found in Mira's plays. In many cases the language of individual plays has a specific purpose within the play, and it is more appropiate to discuss the language within the context of the plays as artistic units. The best example is No hay burlas con las mujeres (see below, pp. 236-53). This section will therefore give a few selected passages in order to point out certain characteristics of Mira's use of

language.

Mira's poetic language was greatly influenced by formal rhetoric, which was one of the Trivium of the Liberal Arts in medieval education.[43] Rhetoric was especially important in the Jesuit system of education, and it is almost certain that Mira was educated by the Jesuits (see above, p 19&35). Rhetoric included both the tropes and the figures.[44] The figures or "Pattern Rhetoric"[45] can be described in various ways.[46]

A speech from La mesonera del Cielo proves beyond a doubt Mira's knowledge of rhetoric:

> No quiero de mi linaje
> con figuras y tropos
> pintar la nobleza suya. (557-9)

The very words are rhetorical, for not only do they form a rhetorical trope, but the speaker goes on to describe the nobility of his family despite these words.

Mira frequently employs rhetorical devices to emphasise the ambiguity of the world. This he does by the use of imagery (which comprises the majority of the tropes), for any comparison—metaphor, simile, or allegory—emphasises that things are at once similar but different. His use of rhetorical figures or repetition has the same purpose: to stress the multiplicity of the facets of the world. The following quotation from El esclavo del demonio shows this quite clearly. Lisarda compares eight things, all of which are similar, but then contrasts the first seven to the eighth, which is herself. The rhetorical language thus sets up a tension between the similarities of the eight and the dissimilarities between the eighth and the first seven. The speech also shows how Mira compares the elements (river,/dolphin/ ship=water, horse=earth, lightning=fire, arrow=air) and also introduces both natural phenomena (dolphin, comet, horse etc.) with man-made phenomena (ship, arrow). The purpose of this is to give universality to the conceit in the speech.

In the speech, letters and numbers have been used to designate the various parts of a repetition. In all examples given in the thesis in which attention is intended to be drawn to repetition, the same system will be used:

(1) Un delfín cortando el mar,
(2) una cometa encendida,
(3) un caballo en la carrera,
(4) en alta mar el navío,
(5) el veloz curso de un río,
(6) rayo que cay de su esfera,
(7) una flecha disparada
del arco, podrán volver
atrás, (8) mas no la mujer
una vez determinada.
Delfín(1), caballo(3), cometa(2),
río(5), flecha(7), rayo(6), nave(4)
es la mujer(8) que no sabe
ser obediente(A) y sujeta(B). . . (1031-44)

He uses repetition in a slightly different way in the following example from La mesonera del Cielo. There is no summary of the various parts of the repetition in this speech, but the fourth and fifth of the metaphors form part of one of the play's central images:

(A) Para que pongas
haldas en cinta,(B) y que partas
(1) más ligera que una onza,
(2) más suelta que un cabritillo,
(3) más veloz que una paloma,
(4) más ágil que un cierco herido,
(5) más que fugitiva corza,
(6) más que liebre entre los perros,
(7) más que la acosada zorra,
(8) más que un ladrón cuando huye
de alguaciles que le acosan,
(9) más que un sacre tras la garza
que a los cielos se remonta,
(10) más que el viento. . . . (303-14)

This image of the wounded deer is amplified:

El ligero y veloz corzo
que huyendo de la saeta
cristal busca en los arroyos. (570-2)

The image can also be found in lines 381, 383, 871, 926, 1532-5, and 1616. It clearly refers to the beginning of the forty-second psalm:

As a hind longs for the running streams,
so do I long for Thee, O God. (Psalms, 42, 1)

This is a fine example of how Mira uses imagery to give unity to the play, for the characters compare themselves frequently to the wounded deer but only towards the end of the play do they realise that the stream for which they are longing is God. This is the second use of rhetoric in Mira's plays. He repeats

images and linguistic forms so that the audience is kept aware that certain apparently vastly different situations are variations on a basic pattern. Thus in La mesonera del Cielo Mira shows that it is possible to find God and salvation through genuine repentence and contrition, whether one is like Abraham, who shuns sexual relations even with his wife; Lucrecia, who desires the sexual consummation of her marriage; Alejandro, who desires and seduces María and then rejects her; or María, who becomes a common prostitute after her seduction. The play stresses through its imagery that all of these types can find salvation.

Mira also uses rhetorical language, as a unifying force through the repetition of catch phrases throughout a play. The clearest examples of this are "No hay dicha ni desdicha hasta la muerte" and "No hay como vivir" from the plays with those titles and "¿Puede haber más confusión?" from La confusión de Hungría (see also below, pp).

Mira's use of rhetorical forms reveals that he was always conscious of the structure both of the language itself and of the plays as a whole. The following examples are taken from Amor, ingenio y mujer and Galán, valiente y discreto. Amor, ingenio y mujer is from the middle part of Mira's career, while Galán, valiente y discreto is from the last years of his creative life and shows both a simplification and a complication of the language. In Galán, valiente y discreto, the rhetorical structures are very complex, but the majority of the repetitions have two parts. Only rarely is this increased to three, and there are almost no examples of structures with five or six parallel parts. This is typical of the development of Mira's language. It never loses its complexity—indeed the complexity increases in the later plays—but the repetitions have less parts in the later plays. Only in a relatively early play would such an example be found as the twelve part repetition quoted from La mesonera del Cielo.

There are two speeches of Enrique's towards the end of the second act of Amor, ingenio y mujer, which are clear examples of Mira's use of rhetoric. The first also reveals Mira's use of

sensual imagery. In this speech Enrique praises the beauty of Matilde and stresses the confusion he feels at seeing so much of it in one person:

Los excelentes objetos
suelen turbar los sentidos
más agudos (A), y más diestros(B)
(1) El sol deslumbra los ojos
con soberanos reflejos
al águila, mariposa
de las regiones del fuego.
(2) El Nilo, que al mar no lleva
como revuelto(A), y soberbio(B)
tributo de sus cristales, (A)
sino batallas de viento, (B)
con el estruendo ensordece
sus vecinos, y en los cielos
tan alta(A), y dulce (B) armonía
ordena sus movimiento.
Y como no son capaces
nuestros sentidos, comiendo
hacen sus círculos de oro
con hermosura (A), y silencio (B).
¿Qué mucho que un sol divino, (1)
un cielo claro(A) (2), y sereno (B),
y un piélago de hermosura, (3)
dé confusión a mi pecho, (1)
dé adoración a mis ojos, (2)
dé a mi voz (A), y lengua (B) miedo (3)
dé ignorancia a mi discurso (4)
y a todos juntos respeto? (5). . . .
(1) Ni el mar en serena calma,
que blandamente batiendo
con trabucos de cristal
los escollos, forma en ellos
montes de nieve (A), y espumas (B),
que deshaciéndole luego,
son tornasoles azules, (A)
son damascos verdinegros (B).
(2) Ni el Sol, cuando en horizonte,
entre celajes diversos
de nubes, muestra a pedazos
sus rayos(A), y sus cabellos (B).
Y escondido entre cortinas
de púrpura (1), entre los fluecos
de nácar(A)(1), y oro (B), se duerme
entre las sombras(A), y velos (B)
. . . de las noches(3) ni aquel ave
que vive siglos eternos,
y en aromas de Arabia
su hermosura entrega al fuego,
no tienen tanta hermosura; (1)
ni en nuestras almas pudieran
causar sus mudas bellezas
tanto amor(A), tanto respeto(B)(2) (p. 395)

The speech is built upon a series of negations. Enrique describes all that is beautiful and then declares that Matilde is even more beautiful. This serves a dramatic function in the play, for Matilde is disguised for most of the time as a man.

Matilde queries the nature of love and its power. Enrique replies using two rhetorical devices—the exempla and the summation schema:

Como se ve en este ejemplo.
(1) Cuando las nubes se rasgan
con el oprimido fuego,
trueno(A), relámpago(B), y rayo (C)
resultan del rompimiento.
(2) Cuando el alma se enamora
nacen también tres efectos,
que son la delectación,(B)
la admiración(A), y el deseo(C)
Al trueno se corresponde
la admiración del sujeto,(A)
al relámpago luciente
la delectación de verlo,(B)
y el deseo al rayo ardiente, (C)
y de la suerte que vemos
que espante(1), deslumbra(2), y mata(3)
con furia el rayo violento,
la admiración nos espanta(A)
la delectación es cierto
que deslumbra(B), y luego mata
el amor con los deseos, (C)
Y así de repente amor,
sin dar dilación al tiempo
nos da la muerte, porque es
rayo(C), relámpago(B), y trueno(A). (pp. 395-6)

The purpose of the speech in the play is to mark Enrique's newly awakened love for Matilde.

Another example is from Galán, valiente y discreto. During the second act Fadrique is torn between two possible interpretations of the behavior of Serafina. The speech exploits the dramatic possibilities of rhetoric for the rhetorical balance shows the conflict within Fadrique's mind:

Corazón, buenos quedamos,
sin saber si es mal(A) o es bien(B) (1)
si fue favor(A) o desdén(B) (2)
ea, ingenio, discurramos.
(1) Ella no ha querido el guante
porque a mi mano llegó;
luego, a mí me despreció(A).
luego, en vano soy su amante(B).
Inversion and Antithesis (2) Ella el guante no ha querido
por dejarme a mí con él;
luego, no ha sido cruel(1)

luego, estoy favorecido(2)
Ambos argumentos son,
que están en balanza igual,
no espero el bien(B), dudo el mal(A),
¡Oh bárbaro confusión!
(1) ¿No dijera, airada(A), y fiera(B),
que allí el guante no quería,
si a mí me favorecía?
No dijera. . . (1). Sí dijera. . . (2).
(2) ¿No dejara(1), antes tomara(2),
el guante enojada allí
si me despreciara a mí?
No dejara. . . (1). Sí dejara. . . (2).
La duda se queda en pie,
confuso está mi albedrío;
ya temo(A), ya desconfío(B)
mujer(1) o monstruo (2) ¿qué haré?
Aquel emblema eminente
del fauno, que convidó
al hombre al manjar le dió,
uno helado(1), otro caliente(2),
bien a propósito estaba;
(1) el fauno considerando
que el manjar que estaba helando(1)
con sus soplos calentaba(2)
el hombre;(2) y también notó,
aunque bárbaro(A) y imprudente(B),
que el manjar que era caliente(2)
con sus soplos enfrió.(1)
"Vete"—le dice al momento—
"que no quiero compañía
con quien calienta(2) y enfría(1)
con sólo su mismo aliento."
Lo mismo diré, aunque amante;
vete, mujer singular,
porque no quiero adorar
a quien da en un mismo guante
(1) calor de bien celestial(2)
(2) hielos de mortal desdén(1)
(3) guante que parece bien,(B)
(4) guante que parece mal. (A) (1072-1123)

Later in the same act, Porcia and Serafina discuss the theme of love. Their words stress the power of love and the two speeches are in themselves examples of Mira's sense of balance:

(1)Porcia ¿Habrá quien pueda parar
un caballo en la carrera,(1)
águila que va ligera,(2)
o delfín que corta el mar?(3)
Pues ¿cómo—di—será bueno
que tú detener pretendas
(1) Caballo que va sin riendas,(A)
y que no sabe de freno;(B)
(2) ni al águila más suprema,
que, volando caudalosa,

hecha del sol mariposa,
las alas en él se quema;
(3) ni el delfín, avé sin plumas,
que en los piélagos del monte
no habrá rayo que así corte
montes de nieve(A) y espumas(B)?
(2) Si es amor águila, en fin,
que alas tiene, y es veloz;
(1) Si es un caballo feroz,
(3) si es un ligero delfín,
que nada en llanto(A) y en fuego(B),
¿porque amar me permitiste,(1)
y en el centro me pusiste,(2)
para detenerme luego?
(2)Serafina(1) Escucha Porcia ¿qué río
en sus principios no es fuente
que se pasa fácilmente?
(2) ¿Qué árbol, pompa de estío(A)
y majestad singular(B)
que en la campaña se ve,
en su principio no fue
vara fácil de arrancar?
(2) Amor, como planta, crece
árbol coposo(A) y sombrío(B);
(1) amor crece como río,(A)
abismo del mar parece;(B)
(1) pero en su principio honesto
es fuente breve(A) y escasa(B)
que fácilmente se pasa,
(2) vara que se arranca presto.
Impedir quise tu mal,(1)
vitorias de amor enseño,(2)
(2) Cuando es un árbol pequeño,
(1) cuando es un breve cristal. (1397-1440)

Another aspect of the language of Mira is his tendency to Gongorism. There is an excellent example from Lo que puede una sospecha. In this speech Carlos describes to his servant, Cardillo, how he had watched Isabel bathing.[47]

Al bañarse parecía
que llegaban a reñir
cristales(1) contra cristales(2)
y a lo que más entendí
fue a que el agua le decía:
nieve engañosa, de mí
te retira, que me abrasas
sin poderte resistir. . . .
¡Ay! dije, si tú te quejas
siendo incapaz de sentir,
¿que hará quién con alma mira
hermosura tan gentil?. . . .
Teniendo piedad del agua,
della comenzó a salir,
sudando para enjugarse,
gota(1) a gota (2), perlas mil

que a su bulto detenidas
se quisieron añadir. . . .
Cuando se mudó camisa,
la que entró en el baño vi,
que, por no ser despojada,
se llegaba a resistir
dando abrazos pegadizos
al animado marfil,
Pero, viéndose arrojada,
como en señas de sentir,
el agua que hurtó al estanque
toda la lloró feliz. . . .
Después que al hermoso adorno
se volvió a resistuir,
la vi más hermosa no,(1)
pero más honesta sí.(2) (folio 13)

There are three other tendencies in Mira's language which should be pointed out. The first is the wealth of allusions in his plays, especially to Greek mythology and to the Bible.[48] A second tendency is his constant use of stories, tales or cuentecillos.[49] A third characteristic is his love of proverbs and sententiae.[50]

The language of Mira's plays reveals that his theater is a development from the theater of Lope de Vega and is a precursor of the theater of Calderón, for the latter develops both devices more fully. Mira replaces the fundamental lyricism of the theater of Lope with a structured language based on formal rhetoric. He also uses images, catch-phrases and linguistic devices to bind together his plays and to give them unity of thought.

Mira de Amescua may not have been the greatest poet among the Golden Age dramatists—although he did produce some very fine poetry—but he was among the first to introduce into the theater the conscious, intellectual use of language. His most marked linguistic trait is his use of parallelism. In this, as in his presentation of character, Mira shows his fascination with the multiplicity of the facets of life. In the later plays he tended to reduce the number to two, a fact which is supported by his fondness for antithesis and comparisons—both positive and negative.

In his comedies Mira was to develop the stylisation of his language into a stylisation of dramatic structure. In this way he is finally able to fuse together the various ingredients

of his plays so that they all reflect the ambiguity of life. This ambiguity can be seen very clearly in the three aspects of his dramatic art which have been considered in this chapter. The theme of Fortune is used both to contrast earthly monarchs with God and to contrast the differing fortunes of men. The device of the double which is one of the major features of his characterisation emphasises the same ambiguity. Finally his rhetorical language with its use of repetition and comparison serves to reinforce the same idea.

The remaining chapters of the thesis will examine a further aspect of the duality present in Mira's dramatic art: that of tragedy and comedy. The chapters will also trace the development of the theme of identity and of the dramatic structure of his plays which culminates in the stylisation of the comedies.

NOTES TO CHAPTER FIVE

[1] All quotations are from Cotarelo's edition of La adversa fortuna de don Bernardo de Cabrera. Comedia famosa de Lope de Vega Carpio. (Huesca, 1634) which appears in Obras de Lope de Vega, 3 (Madrid, 1916), 61-99. Cotarelo in the prologue to the volume maintains that Lope was the author of this play (pp. VIII-XII, see also Cotarelo, p. 82).

[2] All quotations are from No hay dicha ni desdicha hasta la muerte, edited by Vern G. Williamsen (Columbia, Missouri, 1970), which is the published version of his Ph. D. thesis, 'A critical Edition of Mira de Amescua's No hay dicha ni desdicha hasta la muerte. Together with an Introductory Study.' (University of Missouri, 1968). The text of both is based on the 1628 autograph manuscript in the Biblioteca Nacional in Madrid (Cotarelo, pp. 44-6). I also consulted Mesonero Romanos' edition in BAE, 45, 39-56.

[3] I do not wish to suggest that Mira, as a man and priest, doubted the power of God, but rather as a dramatist he became less certain that God would take an active part in the affairs of this world.

[4] Compare the following quotation from Lo que le toca al valor: "Nadie hasta la muerte/puede llamarse dichoso." (p. 396) All quotations are from La gran comedia. / Lo que le toca al/ valor, y el Príncipe de Orange / del doctor Mira de Mescua published in Parte treinta y quatro de / comedias / nuevas, escritas por los mejores / ingenios de España (Madrid, 1670), pp. 351-82. This is the only time that the play appeared attributed to Mira. (Cotarelo, pp. 17-8)

[5] All quotations are from a critical edition I am preparing for publication based on Comedia famosa, / La rueda de la / Fortuna, compuesta / por el doctor Mira de Mesqua published in Flor de las comedias de España de diferentes autores. Quinta parte (Alcala, 1615), folios 1-28. I have compared my copy text with Comedia famosa, / La rueda de la / Fortuna, compuesta por / el doctor Mira de Mesqua, published in Las comedias del famoso poeta Lope de Vega Carpio. Quinta parte. Flor de las comedias de España de diferentes autores (Barcelona, 1616); La rueda de la Fortuna / del doctor Mira de Mesqua (Seville, no date); La rueda de la Fortuna / del doctor Mira de Mesqua (Barcelona, no date); and Mesonero Romanos' edition in BAE, 45, 1-22. For convenience to the reader I have also given page references to the BAE edition. Cotarelo makes no mention of the 1616 Barcelona edition (pp. 58-66), upon which Mesonero's edition is based. Edward Warren Hopper in his unpublished Ph. D. thesis, 'A critical and Annotated Edition of Mira de Amescua's La rueda de la Fortuna.' (University of Missouri, 1971) makes use of all these editions except the first edition. There are small but important differences between the 1615 and 1616 editions, a fact that raises serious questions as to the validity of Hopper's study and the accuracy of his unpublished edition.

[6] Howard Patch, The Goddess Fortuna in Medieval Literature (Cambridge, Mass., 1927), p. 154.

[7] Fortuna in Dichtung und Emblematik des Barock (Stuttgart, 1970).

[8] The similarity of the words rueca/ rueda serves to reinforce the image.

[9] All quotations are from El ejemplo mayor de la desdicha edited by Angel Valbuena Prat in Teatro II, pp. 127-250. Valbuena's edition is based on the autograph manuscript in the Biblioteca Nacional in Madrid (Cotarelo, pp. 646-9).

[10] All quotations are from Amor, ingenio y mujer. / Comedia famosa del doctor Mira de Mescua, (No place, no date). This comedia is 'deglosada' from an unknown collection (Cotarelo, pp. 615-8). The photo copy of the play used appears to be the same as that described by Cotarelo, but the pages are numbered 373-408 (rather than 378-408). The last page, as described by Cotarelo, has no catch-word, but the photocopy contained part of p. 409 which reads GAL / COM / De / Ha / Don Iuan / Don Luis P / Don Diego /. Joanne Irene Limber used this copy as the basis of her unpublished M.A. thesis, 'A Partial Edition of Amor, ingenio y mujer: Comedia famosa del doctor Mira de Amescua,' (Ohio State University, 1946), but she solved none of the mysteries surrounding the unknown collection.

[11] All quotations are from Cotarelo y Mori's edition of La próspera fortuna de don Bernardo de Cabrera. Comedia famosa de Lope de Vega Carpio (Huesca, 1634), which appears in Obras de Lope de Vega, 8 (RAE, Madrid, 1930), 637-73. Cotarelo in his prologue maintains that this play is by Lope. (pp. XLI-XLIV, see also Cotarelo, p. 82). Cotarelo's edition is the most recent one of the play.

[12] All quotations are from La segunda de don Alvaro, edited by Nellie Sánchez Arce (Mexico City, 1960), which is based on the autograph manuscript. I chose this edition in preference to the Adversa fortuna de don Alvaro de Luna, edited by Luigi de Filippo (Florence, 1960), because it presents Mira's original text more clearly. I also consulted the edition of the play edited by Blanca de los Ríos in Tirso de Molina, Obras dramáticas completas (Madrid: Aguilar, 1946), 1, 1997-2039. The introduction and notes to this edition must be used with caution because the editor did not know Mira's autograph manuscript of the play.

No excuse can be made for the totally irresponsible article of Sandra L. Brown: 'A reconsideration of the Authorship of the Don Alvaro de Luna Plays,' (Hispania, 1974, pp. 422-7). She remarks that 'as for the 1624 manuscript. . . it may be only a copy signed by Mira' (pp. 423-4). Under normal circumstances one might conclude that an autograph manuscript may be only a copy signed by someone other than the author, but Ms. Brown's assumption is palpably unfounded because Pedro Vargas Machuca, the censor of the play, states explicitly that 'aunque he detenido otra comedia deste caso y con este título, el D^{or} Amescua ha escrito esta.' (The manuscript is transcribed in Sánchez Arce's edition, p. 152, with a reproduction of the manuscript facing the page) Vargas Machuca's testimony offers further proof that Mira wrote the play, even should Ms. Brown prefer to believe that an autograph manuscript is no proof of authorship.

[13] For a discussion of this subject see D.C. Carr's, Enrique de Villena: El tratado de Consolación: A critical Edition with Introductory Study and Notes' (Ph. D. thesis, University of B.C., 1971), pp. 179-89, and Eduardo Camacho Guizado, La elegía funeral en la poesía española (Biblioteca Románica Hispánica, Madrid, 1969), pp. 63-203 passim. The following lines from Jorge Manrique's Coplas por la muerte de su padre show that Mira was following the same tradition as Manrique:

Nuestras vidas son los ríos
que van a dar en el mar
que es el morir. . . .
Los estados y riqueza,
que nos dexan a deshora
¿quien lo duda?
No les pidamos firmeza,
pues que son de una señora
que se muda;
que bienes son de Fortuna
que rebuelve con su rueda
presurosa,
la cual no pueda ser una,
ni estar estable ni queda
en un cosa.

There is no positive evidence to prove that Mira was directly influenced by Manrique. But since Manrique's poem is in a sense a summing up of the commonplace ideas of his time, it is immaterial whether Mira knew the Coplas or not.

[14] All quotations are from Tirso de Molina, Obras dramáticas completas, 1, edited by Blanca de los Ríos (Madrid, Aguilar, 1946) 1949-95, which is based on Tirso's 1635 Segunda parte. I have also consulted Comedia famosa de Ruy López de Avalos (Primera Parte de don Alvaro de Luna)[Próspera fortuna de don Alvaro de Luna y adversa de Ruy López de Avalos], edited by Nellie Sánchez Arce (Mexico City, 1965), which is based on the manuscript in the Biblioteca Nacional in Madrid (Cotarelo, pp. 85-6). I chose the Aguilar edition partly because there is no proof that the manuscript is a superior version of the play, and partly because Sánchez Arce supplies the scene with Juan de Mena (Jornada II, ll. 305-477) from the 1635 edition because it does not appear in the manuscript.

[15] In reality "Carlos" is Matilde in disguise and she is capable of successfully controlling Fortune to prove the power of "Amor, ingenio y mujer."

[16] All quotations are from Comedia Famosa, / El galán secreto / del doctor Mira de Mescua published in Parte treinta y quatro de / comedias / nuevas, escritas por los mejores ingenios de España (Madrid, 1670), pp. 318-50. I also consulted the edition of Luis Fernández-Guerra y Orbe in BAE, 39, 563-81. This edition attributes the play to Moreto under the title of El secreto entre dos amigos (Cotarelo, pp. 655-6).

[17] All quotations are from Lo que es no casarse a gusto./ Comedia famosa / de el doctor D. Antonio Mira de Mesqua (no place, no date). This is one of the collection of Sueltas housed in the Staatsbibliothek in Munich, and is the only known

extant copy of the play. Despite Cotarelo's comments about John Rutter Chorley (pp. 18-20) there is no copy of the play in the British Museum.

[18] All quotations are from Cotarelo's edition of El palacio confuso. Comedia famosa de Lope de Vega Carpio. (Huesca, 1634), which appears in Obras de Lope de Vega, 8, (RAE, Madrid, 1930), 324-58. Despite publishing it in this collection, Cotarelo concedes in his prologue that Mira was the author of the play (pp. XXIV-XXVI, see also Cotarelo, pp. 49-50). I have also consulted Charles Henry Stevens edition: Lope de Vega's 'El palacio confuso': Together with a Study of the Menaechmi Theme in Spanish Literature (New York, 1939).

[19] All quotations are from La judía de Toledo edited by Ramón de Mesonero Romanos and credited by him to Diamante in BAE, 49 (Madrid, 1951), 1-18. The manuscript in the Ticknor collection in the Boston Public Library has been edited by Donald Murray 'Mira de Amescua's La desgraciada Raquel.' (unpublished Ph. D. thesis, Stanford University, 1951). I used the BAE edition for convenience, and because there are few important differences between the two editions. Barrera in his Catálogo bibliográfico y biográfico del teatro antiguo español (Madrid, 1860) comments that Mira's La desgraciada Raquel 'se publicó, atribuída a Diamante, con el [título] de la Judía de Toledo' (p. 257). The manuscript and Mesonero's edition were studied by Rennert (Révue Hispanique, 1900, pp. 119-143) in his article 'Mira de Amescua et La judía de Toledo.' Despite the testimony of Barrera, Rennert, and Cotarelo (pp. 640-4), the play is still frequently credited to Diamante. A recent example is E. González López in his Historia de la literatura española (New York, 1962) who not only says that Mira's play does not measure up to Lope's on the same subject but that 'no puede tampoco competir con Diamante que trató el mismo asunto.' (p. 448). It is this type of ignorance which has ensured Mira's continuing obscurity.

[20] The theme has been studied by Sister Mary A. Cauvin, The Comedia de privanza in the seventeenth century (Ph. D. thesis, University of Pennsylvania, 1957).

[21] Lázaro is partly modelled on Lazarillo de Tormes. Lázaro says: 'Un escudero y su mozo /. . . / son el ciego y lazarillo' (p. 665).

[22] The expressions "the image of the image" and, even worse, "the image image" are clumsy but are unavoidable. No other word conveys adequately the layers of meaning.

[23] This tendency was a commonplace of Medieval Literature. Its most famous example is the Conde Lucanor of the Infante Juan Manuel, but there are many other examples such as Libro de los doce sabios o de la nobleza y lealtad and Guevara's Reloj de príncipes.

[24] The description of the "rope-dancers" in the Third Chapter of the First Part of Dean Swift's Gulliver Travels expresses admirably this view of favor, for the tight-rope walker's attraction as an entertainment is that he is in perpetual danger of falling.

[25] The image also appears again in the Adversa fortuna de Bernardo de Cabrera: Día claro y tierra fui / sol el rey y su luz una (p. 72); in Próspera fortuna de Alvaro de Luna: Rey y monarca español, / que me deslumbra con ella / y cualquier merced estrella / será delante del sol. (p. 1962); Adversa fortuna de Alvaro de Luna: 'En ésta, ya del sol célebre casa' (111); 'Aquella luna hermosa / que sus rayos le dio el sol.' (2709-10).

[26] The image of the two magnets is similarly used by Filipo in El ejemplo mayor de la desdicha. Filipo is one of the three men (Narses, Leoncio, Filipo) who are jointly Belisarius' doubles and heirs. Filipo is torn between his obligation to his Empress and to his friends:

> Un agravio, una amistad. . . .
> (En dos distintos antojos
> y dos extremos violentos,
> hacen mal los pensamientos
> y bien me han hecho los ojos;
> y ansí entre dos huracanes
> dudando, quiero y no quiero,
> suspendo como el acero
> cuando está entre dos imanes.). . . .
> Por la ofensa estoy corrida
> porque igual en todo soy. (1541-57)

[27] This identification of Fortuna with ocasión is found in Vida y muerte de San Lázaro:

> La ocasión y la Fortuna
> a tus pies se inclina. (p. 151)

[28] There is a line missing here. It must end in -ado, in order to rhyme with line 1727.

[29] All quotations are from Comedia Famosa./ Los carboneros de Francia / del doctor Mira de Mescua which was published in Parte treinta y nueve / de comedias nuevas / de los mejores ingenios de España (Madrid, 1673), pp. 293-329. This was the first edition of the play (Cotarelo, pp. 627-9).

[30] All quotations are from La gran comedia. / No ay burlas con / las mujeres, o casarse / y vengarse. / Del doctor Mira de Mescua published in Quinta / parte de / comedias escogidas / de los mejores ingenios / de España (Madrid, 1654), pp. 274-316. This is the only known extant edition of the play (Cotarelo pp. 41-4), and forms the basis for John Lihani's unpublished M.A. thesis, 'Mira de Amescua's No hay burlas con las mujeres.' (Ohio State University, 1950).

[31] All quotations are from George Ann Huck 'A Critical Edition of Mira de Amescua's La tercera de sí misma' (unpublished Ph. D. thesis, Tulane University, 1968), which is based on the manuscript in the Biblioteca Nacional in Madrid (Cotarelo, p. 64).

[32] All quotations are from La fénix de Salamanca. Comedia famosa del doctor Mira de Méscua edited by Angel Valbuena Prat, Teatro II, pp. 1-126. Valbuena's edition is based on the 1653 Madrid edition (Cotarelo, pp. 654-5). I chose this edition because of its convenience and its critical apparatus, but I also consulted Mesoneros' edition in BAE, 45, 73-94.

[33] All quotations are from La confusión de Hungría./ Comedia famosa / del doctor Mira de Mesqua, which was published in Parte treinta y cinco. / Comedias / nuevas, escritas por los / mejores ingenios de España (Madrid, 1670), pp. 274-316. This is the only known extant edition of the play (Cotarelo, pp. 636-8).

[34] Milton A. Buchanan 'Notes on the Spanish Drama: Lope, Mira de Amescua y Moreto.' Modern Language Notes, 20, 1905, 38-41.

[35] All quotations are from La adultera virtuosa./ Comedia famosa / del doctor Mira de Mesqua (No place, no date), which is one of a collection of sueltas of Mira's plays housed in the Staatsbibliothek in Munich, and is the only known extant edition of the play. See Cotarelo, pp. 612-5.

[36] All quotations are from Comedia famosa./ No ay reynar como vivir / del doctor Mira de Mesqua published in De los mejores / el mejor libro nuevo de / comedias varias, nunca impresas,/ compuestas por los mejores ingenios de España./ Parte treze (Madrid, 1660), pp. 438-69. This is the only known extant edition of the play (Cotarelo, pp. 46-8), and forms the basis for Ralph E. Angelo's unpublished M.A. thesis, 'Mira de Amescua's No hay reinar como vivir' (Ohio State University, 1949).

[37] All quotations are from John C. Famelli, 'La casa del tahur de Antonio Mira de Amescua: Edición palegráfica anotada,' (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Southern California, 1970). I received Vern G. Williamsen's edition of the play La casa del tahur (Madrid, 1973). Both of these editions are based on the partly autograph manuscript in the Biblioteca Nacional in Madrid. (Cotarelo, pp. 629-32).

[38] All quotations are from Comedia famosa titulada Obligar contra su sangre, del doctor Mira de Méscua edited by Mesonero Romanos in BAE, 45, 57-71. This is presumably based on the two known extant suelta editions (Cotarelo, pp. 48-9). I received Al Leroy Cooper's unpublished Ph.D. thesis, 'A Critical Edition of Antonio Mira de Amescua's Obligar contra su sangre.' (University of Arizona, 1973) when my own thesis was well advanced.

[39] All quotations are from Cotarelo y Mori's edition of Nardo Antonio, bandolero. Comedia famosa de Lope de Vega Carpio, which appears in Obras de Lope de Vega, 8 (RAE, Madrid, 1930), 1-31. Despite publishing the play under Lope's name, Cotarelo concedes that Mira was the author in his prologue (pp. V-VII, see also Cotarelo, p. 40.) It is the most recent edition of the play.

[40] All quotations are from Quatro milagros de amor./ Comedia / famosa / del doctor Mirademescua (No place, no date). This is the only known extant copy of the play and is part of the collection of sueltas housed in the Staatsbibliothek in Munich (Cotarelo, pp. 638-40).

[41] All quotations are from Galán, valiente y discreto, edited by F. William Forbes (Madrid, 1973). This edition is based on Forbes' Ph.D. thesis, 'A critical Edition of Mira de Amescua's Galán, valiente y discreto.' (University of Arizona, 1971). I also consulted Mesonero Romanos' edition in BAE, 45, 23-37, and

Edward Nagy's edition in the Clásicos Ebro series (Saragossa, 1969) which is based on the BAE edition. Forbes' edition is the only critical edition of the play. See Cotarelo, pp. 656-8.

[42] Woman and Society in the Spanish Drama of the Golden Age (Cambridge, 1974) pp. 264-5.

[43] E.R. Curtius, European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages, (New York, 1953), p. 37.

[44] The following works, which deal with the subject of rhetoric, and which I have used for information on rhetorical tropes and figures, give bibliography on the history of rhetoric, and on Jesuit education: Peter France, Racine's Rhetoric (Oxford, 1965); Helen Dill Goode, La prosa retórica de Fray Luis de León en "Los nombres de Cristo" (Biblioteca Románica Hispánica, Madrid, 1969); J.V. Bryans, Imagery, Rhetoric and Drama in Some Comedias of Don Pedro Calderón de la Barca (D. Phil. thesis, Oxford University, 1973). I wish to express my thanks to Dr. Bryans for his advice on this subject and for the opportunity to read his thesis.

[45] France, pp. 114-63.

[46] France lists repetition (p. 117), Antithesis and Symmetry (p. 127), Enumeration (p. 135) and Period Construction (p. 143); Goode is much more detailed and lists them in four groups: Among Equilibrio she included Paralelismo (p. 110), Antítesis (p. 113), Isocolon (p. 116), Quiasmo (p. 118), Hipérbaton (p. 121), and Anáfora (p. 124). Among Iteración she includes Polisíndeton (p. 126), Asínteton (p. 127), Pleonasmo (p. 128). Among Combinación de palabras she includes Rima o asonancia (p. 129), and derivación y polipote (p. 131). Her last group she simply calls Otras and includes Distribución (p. 131), Silepsis (p. 132), Conclusión (p. 133), and Paréntesis (p. 134). Bryans (pp. 1-102) lists Anaphora, Antithesis, compar and the summation scheme (p. 78). (See also Curtius p. 289 for this term.

[47] See R.R. MacCurdy, "The Bathing Nude in the Golden Age Drama," Romance Notes, 1959, pp. 1-4. It is probable that Spanish interest in this theme came from two sources—the story of David and Bathsheba and that of Roderick and La Cava.

[48] References to Icarus, Theseus and the Labyrinth; Venus and Cupid are very frequent, as are references to characters such as David and Nimrod, and references to Christ and the crucifixion.

[49] See the article of Vern G. Williamsen, The Dramatic function of Cuentecillos in Some Plays by Mira de Amescua,' Hispania, 54, 1971, 62-7.

[50] This can be seen in such titles as No hay dicha ni desdicha hasta la muerte and No hay reinar como vivir. These are often used to give unity to the play by repeating the proverb from time to time to remind the reader of the "message" of the play.

CHAPTER SIX: THE TRAGEDIES

Mira left no theoretical writings on his dramatic art as a guide to his view of tragedy and comedy, but the following ideas are expressed in La rueda de la Fortuna:

> Si muero desta caída
> será mi vida tragedia
> en desgracia fenecida;
> quiera Dios hacer comedia
> del discurso de mi vida. (3055-9, p. 20)

He also used the word 'tragedy' about three of the eight plays to be discussed in this chapter:

Hero y Leandro

> Y aquí, senado, da fin
> la historia y tragedia insigne
> de Ero y Leandro (2676-8)

Adversa Fortuna de Alvaro de Luna:

> Y acabe aquí la tragedia
> de la embidia y la fortuna. (2950-1)

Adversa fortuna de Bernardo de Cabrera:

> Ya la inocente tragedia
> aquí, senado, se acaba. (p. 99)

Mira's prime conception seems to be that tragedy should end unhappily. In this, he is in agreement with Alonso López Pinciano whose third and fourth points of difference between tragedy and comedy are:

> la tragedia tiene tristes y lamentables fines, la comedia, no. . . ;
>
> en la tragedia, quietos principios y turbados fines; la comedia al contrario. . . ; 2

Oscar Mandel is in agreement with this idea when he describes:

> The medieval school of tragedy in which the narrative exemplifies an orthodoxy concerning the sublunar world, namely that the latter is 'ruled by fortune. . . ' 3

This concept of tragedy is that of Boethius, Chaucer and Dante:

> What else does the cry of tragedy bewail but the overthrow of happy realms by the unexpected blow of fortune. 4
>
> Tragedie is to seyn a certain storie,
> As olden books maken us memorie,
> Of hym that stood in great prosperitee,
> and is yfallen out of heigh degree
> into myserie, and endeth wrecchedly. 5
>
> Tragedy and comedy are distinguished firstly by the course of their action, which, in tragedy, progresses from a noble and quiet beginning to a terrible conclusion. 6

It is this attitude which leads Patch to conclude:

> 'High to low' is the great theme in the middle ages as well as in classical times. Since this change in man's fortune is what really constitutes the medieval idea of tragedy, we may call this the 'tragic theme.' (p. 68)

This 'tragic theme' of 'high to low' was a favorite one of Mira's as can be seen from such titles as La próspera and Adversa fortuna de Bernardo de Cabrera and Alvaro de Luna and Ruy López de Avalos. Indeed it was an essential part of the Comedia de privanza.[7] There are other factors to be taken into consideration. A tragedy can take place only in a world in which there is no certainty of there being a reward in a life to come, for "Where there is compensation, there is justice, not tragedy."[8] Mira de Amescua was a Catholic Priest and:

> Judaism and Christianity take it for granted that God must be just, and that the problem of innocent suffering must have a solution. 9

Karl Jaspers stated uncompromisingly that "No genuinely Christian tragedy can exist."[10] The same point is made by I.A. Richards:

> Tragedy is only possible to a mind which is for the moment agnostic or Manichean. The least touch of any theology which has a compensatory Heaven to offer the tragic hero is fatal. 11

Both of these statements would seem to preclude the possibility of a seventeenth century Spaniard writing tragedies. But both statements contain important qualifications: "genuinely Christian" and "for the moment agnostic or Manichean." Una Ellis-Fermor accepts both statements and puts them in perspective:

> The tragic mood is balanced between the religious and the non-religious interpretations of catastrophe and pain, and the form, content, and mood of the play which we call tragedy depend upon a kind of equilibrium maintained by those opposite readings of life, to neither of which the dramatist can wholly commit himself. 12

The first quality of tragedy must be an unhappy ending which is not rewarded in another world. Such plays as La mesonera del Cielo, El esclavo del demonio and Vida y muerte de San Lázaro end with the deaths of María, Lisarda, Lázaro, and Nabal. But none of them can be regarded as tragic for the four are rewarded according to their deserts. Although Mira's plays never explicitly deny the existence of the world to come, his secular plays never present it as a certainty.

Tragedy has other distinguishing qualities. El Pinciano points out five that seem the most essential to him:

> (1). . . la tragedia ha de tener personas graves, y la comedia comunes. . . ;
> (2). . . La tragedia tiene grandes temores llenos de peligros y la comedia no. . . ;
> (3). . . en la tragedia se enseña la vida que se deve huyr; y en la comedia, la que se deve seguir;. . .
> (4). . . la tragedia se funda en historia, y la comedia es toda fábula. . . ;
> (5). . . la tragedia quiere y demanda alto estilo, y la comedia, baxo. . . 13

The elevated rank of the characters, the historical material and the style give a play a certain seriousness, while the fears and dangers give it a somberness of tone. The moral element stressed by El Pinciano may increase both the seriousness and the somberness of the play. Finally it must be pointed out that what has to be taken into consideration is the overall impression of the play, not certain scenes which may give dramatic relief, and which often increase rather than decrease the seriousness and somberness of the play. It is the overall tone of a tragedy which is serious and somber.

Allardyce Nicoll outlines what he considers to be the four essential elements of tragedy:

> (1) That all tragedy deals, in some way or another, with peculiarly dark events is something we accept as self-evident; thought of death is its constant preoccupation. . . . (p. 98) Dozens of examples could be adduced to show that it was the manner of death and not simply death itself which occupied men's minds when they thought of this term. . . . (p. 99)
> (2) Nearly all the early definitions of tragedy, besides stressing the 'heigh degree' of the principal characters, laid stress upon the use of historical material. . . (p. 100)
> (3) With this element of antique grandeur in the setting goes an accompanying sense of grandeur in the persons represented. . . . In the plays themselves the hero dominates all. . . . (p. 102)
> (4) Beaumarchais speaks of the relationship between man and man; but basically all the great tragedies, directly or by implication, are religious and not social in tone. They are not religious in the sense that they preach any particular creed or exemplify any form of theological argument; they are religious in that, directly or indirectly, they set men, or at least one man, against infinity. . . . (p. 104) 14

These four points emphasise that a tragedy should end unhappily

and that its tone should be serious and somber. They also introduce another distinguishing characteristic of tragedies: they have a dominant hero.

The nature of the tragic hero was described by Aristotle, and his ideas on this subject have been accepted more readily than most of his other ideas on tragedy. Aristotle discusses the possibilities:

> Good men must not be seen suffering a change from prosperity to misfortune; this is not fearful or pitiful but shocking. Nor must the wicked pass from misfortune to prosperity; this, of all things, is the least tragic; nothing happens as it should, it is neither humane nor fearful or pitiful. A thoroughly wicked man must not pass from prosperity to misfortune either; such a plot may satisfy our feeling of humanity, but it does not arouse pity or fear. 15

Aristotle concludes that the tragic hero should be:

> A man who is neither outstanding in virtue or righteousness, nor is it through wickedness and vice that he falls into misfortune, but through some flaw. (p. 24/Chap XIII, 1453a).

The most controversial aspect of this definition is what Grube translates as the "flaw" or hamartia. Grube comments that "I do not believe that Aristotle here makes any distinction between a moral flaw and a flaw in mental judgement." (p. xxv). Both Gerald F. Else and Ingram Bywater make a distinction. Else translates hamartia as 'mistake,'[16] Bywater as 'error of judgment.'[17] Lucas makes a clear distinction but adds that

> It may well be that for the critic of tragedy hamartia in its wider and perfectly normal sense of moral fault would be a more useful term, but it is not compatible with the examples that Aristotle offers. (pp. 306-7) 18

Whatever Aristotle's true meaning may have been the distinction is not a very useful one for two reasons. Aristotle clearly meant that the hero should have some flaw or make some error which would bring upon him a catastrophe which cannot in any way be regarded in the light of a just punishment.[19] Second it is very difficult to distinguish clearly between the two. Even in such a 'model' Aristotelian tragedy as Oedipus Tyrannus, one could argue that, although the tragedy is caused through lack of knowledge, Oedipus is inviting disaster by killing anyone who could possibly be his father. Oedipus' tragedy is in a sense partly caused by a moral flaw—pride and anger when

he meets Laius.

Because the essence of tragedy concerns the faults in a character which cause him to come to an unhappy end, this chapter will concentrate especially on the characters of the tragic heroes. It will be found that in his plays, Mira's presentation of character and events have a certain moral and didactic purpose, but this does not materially affect the tragic quality of the tragedies. López Pinciano had divided tragedies into two types, adapting the ideas of Aristotle:

> El Philósopho haze quatro especies de trágedia: compuesta, patética, morata y la que él dize de los infernales, y otros, simple;. . . . Digo, pues,. . . que ansí la simple como la compuesta tragedia puede ser, o pathética, o morata: pathética es aquella que está llena de miedos y miseria. . . . Morata se dize la que contiene y enseña costumbres. . . . 20

Bradley refers to the moral elements in the tragedies of Shakespeare, which he praises, because

> In their combination of excellences and defects they are good examples of that truth to nature which in dramatic art is the one unfailing source of moral instruction. 21

The majority of Mira's plays are moral in this sense and contain warnings about fortune, royal favor, and the nature of the world. His plays are not simply moral lessons, however, and it will be found that in some cases it may only be the caprice of Fortune which decides whether a play should end tragically or not.[22]

Eight of Mira's plays end in catastrophe for the hero.[23] Six of these deal in some way with royal favor, but the other two are exceptional in the theater of Mira de Amescua. These are Hero y Leandro, which is a mythological and neo-classical tragedy, and Nardo Antonio, bandolero, which is a social tragedy.[24]

The title of the manuscript of Hero y Leandro is Comedia de Ero y Leandro del doctor Mira de Amescua, but the closing lines show clearly that it is intended to be a tragedy:

> ¡Oh qué tragedia tan triste!
> Y aquí, senado, da fin
> la historia y tragedia insigne
> de Ero y Leandro, del modo
> que en griego y latín se escribe. (2675-9)

Hero y Leandro shows quite clearly that Mira was concerned with writing a play that was something more than a mere tragedy.[25]

The long first speech of Leander (Leandro) sets the atmosphere. It expresses his awareness of the power of fate, and part of the conflict in the play is produced by the enmity of the groups to which each of the lovers belongs.[26] The conflict is also partly produced by the fact that the heavens have decreed this enmity. Leander, a native of Abydus (Abido) is in Sestus (Sesto) during a temporary truce:

> Y en medio,
> por esas aguas profundas,
> el estrecho de ese mar,
> que es una línea y es una
> división que el cielo ha hecho
> para que no se confundan
> términos de Europa y Asia
> porque Sesto está sin duda
> en Asia, Abido en Europa.
> Y así no es mucho que infunden
> las soberanas estrellas,
> lámparas que nos alumbran,
> inclinaciones contrarias. . . .
> Ambas por causas ocultas
> se aborrecen. . . . (29-45)

The speech introduces two images which are crucial in the play: the sea and the stars, the latter of which are both lights and fate.

Hero, the heroine, is a priestess of Venus in Sestus, and the reason for the truce between the two cities is a festival in honor of Venus, whom Leander calls:

> La gran diosa, que triunfa
> de la libertad del alma. (72-3)

His speech becomes an open defiance of the goddess when he says:

> No he venido con alguna
> pasión de amor; que jamás
> supe de amor las injurias.
> Curiosidad me ha traído;
> no amor, ni celos; que nunca
> cautivé la libertad
> ni las aras que perfuman
> de Venus he menester. (80-7)

Venus does not let such a defiance pass with impunity. Leander sees Hero and immediately falls in love:

> ¡Con qué prisa, con qué furia,
> porque a Venus desprecié,
> ya a mi pecho el hijo apunta!
> Flechando está el arco de oro:
> ya no hay libertad que sufra
> tal rigor. Venganza ha sido

de la diosa. ¡Ah cruel! ¡Ah injusta!
(140-6)

Leander's friend and companion, the painter Nicanor, asks which of the women Leander loves. Leander's reply again refers to the sea and the stars. He says that Hero is the sun while other women are only pale stars compared to her; then he compares her to the sea and states she will be the cause of his death:

Leandro Si entre humildes fuentecillas,
que apenas de sí murmuran,
ves el mar de la belleza. . . [preguntas]
¿cuál ha de ser la ocasión
de mi muerte?
Nicanor ¿Ya te juzgas
muerto y vencido?
Leandro Sí, amigo. (151-9)

Leandro uses yet another ominous image when he likens himself to a heron, the unfortunate victim of the falcon. He concludes by stating the belief that he has been overpowered by Venus and that Hero will cause his death:

Del mismo modo me anuncia
mi corazón que he de ser
presa y víctima desnuda
de libertad, de la hermosa
sacerdotisa que alumbra
ese templo más que Venus
con ser esas aras suyas. (172-6)
. . . ¿Quién duda
que ésta ha de ser ocasión
de mi muerte y desventura. (192-4)[27]

The first scene ends with Nicanor's promise to paint Hero's portrait on the back of the one he has painted of Leander, after Nicanor has reminded his friend that 'soy/ el fénix de la pintura' (197-8). Leander agrees to his friend's plan, but his words are still gloomy and foreboding, and contain an ominous variation of the sun image:

La vida,
si acaso me queda alguna,
será el premio del retrato.
Entra pues; traslada, hurta
aquellos rayos del sol,
para que en las líneas mudas
de tu pincel, me den luz,
aliento, gloria y ventura.
A espaldas de mi retrato
has de copiar la luz suya,
porque yo pueda imitar
la mendiguez de la luna. (199-210)

As happens frequently in Mira's later plays,[28] the initial situation with one lover is repeated with the second in a parallel sequence.[29] Nicanor is captured while painting Hero's picture, and is threatened with death for desecrating the temple of Venus, whom Hero had earlier described as 'deidad absoluta' (106). But when Hero examines the portrait that Nicanor was painting, she looks at the wrong side and sees the picture of Leander. Venus now takes vengeance on Hero for scorning love and while she is intending to kill Nicanor, he 'kills' her:

> Aunque a Venus soberana
> hoy en su templo servía,
> no sé de amor y otro día
> me pasaré al de Diana.
> A ninguno pienso amar,
> y así a Venus dejaré,
> porque agradarla no sé,
> ni a mí me agrada su altar.
> ¡Ay! ¿Quien es éste que así
> en esta lámina breve
> a estar junto a mí se atreve?. . . .
> Venganza de Venus es,
> harpón que amaga mi pecho. (339-54)

She quickly passes to the same mood of foreboding and despondency that had typified Leander:

> Venus, si enojo te di,
> ten piedad y no rigor,
> No me mates con amor;
> que es vil muerte para mí. (407-10)

Hero goes off to consult with the goddess and then she returns to free the prisoner saying that she herself must avenge Venus:

> Amigos, Venus mandó
> que para placar la furia
> yo misma vengue la injuria
> y que mate a Leandro yo. (431-4)

The play is complicated by the love of Polidoro for Hero, and of Mitilene for Leander. These complications are intended to increase the reasons why the two lovers should not be joined. They are transgressing family, religious, social and political codes, as well as the decrees of fate. Leander sums up the tragic dilemma in which they are trapped:

> Venus a amar me mandó. . . .
> ¿Qué locura es ésta mía,
> que no amando la ofendía;
> amo y la ofendo también. (601-8)

They had both offended her by scorning love, now they offend her

by loving each other.

The play is punctuated with songs, which occur at the following points: 1-8, 99-102, 182-5, 1095-8, 1119-22, 1151-4, 1309-13, 1324-31, 1550-4, 1587-91, 1604-8, 2023-7, 2036-40, 2114-7, 2125-8. Many of these intensify the dark mood of the play:

> La que de amor enloquece
> bien merece
> de Venus algún favor,
> si la locura no crece
> con el amor. (1550-4, 1587-91, 1604-8)
>
> No tiene amor esperanzas;
> no tiene premios amor;
> que por eso le han pintado
> niño ciego, alado dios. (2114-7)

Ero ¿Ha de ser de Leandro Ero?
Cantan No si no fuere en la muerte
porque el celestial rigor
hoy amenaza dos almas
que queriéndose están. (2125-8)

Songs are frequently used by Mira as a means of commenting on the action and introducing the voice of truth.

As the plot follows its natural course, Mira builds up the two sets of images and symbols related to sun/stars/light and the sea. These are connected by Hero at the beginning of Act Two, while she awaits Leander's first visit. In a long speech she stresses the danger of crossing the Hellespont and the need to show Leander a light:

> Madre del sueño. . .
> haz que a Leandro no impida
> el paso ese mar profundo. . . ,
> Silena ¿has puesto en la torre
> una luz?. . . etc. (933-74)

The last scene of the play is theatrically very complex, and is almost operatic. It contains four sections. The first, set in Abydus, shows Leander's decision to brave the storm. The second is a trio: Floro, the gracioso, is in Abydus, Hero is in Sestus, and Leander is in the sea between them. The third section moves to Sestus and presents Hero's discovery of Leander's body and her consequent suicide. The final section brings the rest of the cast on stage for a nineteen line coda.

In the opening section, Leander is attracted to the light which Hero has placed in her tower to guide him. There are three conjoined images: the light is compared to a candle which attracts and destroys a moth; it is compared to the sun which attracts and destroys Icarus; finally it is compared to the sun which will eclipse his moon. These three images are in Leander's mind as he talks of the light:

> Busco un nocturno farol
> y un norte de luz tan bella,
> que con desprecios de estrella
> tiene ambiciones de sol. (2392-5)

He can even pun on the image: 'una llama que me llama' (2434). The images serve as reminders that Hero and Leander are trying to join what should not be joined—here fire and water—thus stressing the cause and nature of the tragedy.

Leander's attempt to reach Hero is prevented by the elements:

> Batalla con gran furor
> se dan las olas y vientos. (2421-2)

These elements are the externalisation of fate which is trying to keep the lovers apart. Wind and water are the enemies of fire—the light in the tower and Leander's love—and will extinguish both. It is Leander who identifies himself with fire:

> En entrando allá mi fuego
> ¿qué ondas habrá que no abrase? (2429-30)

The first section of the scene ends with Leander's decision to defy the elements as he had previously defied Venus. Floro attempts to dissuade him for there are no boats to take him, but Leander decides to swim. His last speech contains an image which explains the tragedy. Leander in loving Hero and in attempting to reach her is breaking his natural bonds: the elements are incensed and they too are breaking their bonds—and will destroy him:

> Alterado está y confuso
> todo el mar, que al parecer
> quiere esta noche romper
> los grillos que Dios le puso,
> Agua y vientos dan temor,
> pero con incendios tales,
> armas tenemos iguales,
> y aun es mi fuego mayor,
> Vestidos de la ribera,

sed despojos, que mi pecho
ha de encender el estrecho.
Ero hermosa, ¡espera, espera! (2473-84)

His attempt will be foiled and the elements will douse Leander's fire, which he believed would ignite them.

The next section of the scene is technically the most ambitious. In it Mira portrays the death of Leander by use of the trio device, which gives three simultaneous points of view. As the fury of the elements increases, Leander uses an ominous image to describe the height of the waves:

Ya me suben los vientos al orbe
de la luna. (2511-2)

The moon is always closely linked with fortune. Then the air extinguishes the lamp, and the sea drowns Leander.

Leandro, enamorado,
de que ya no podrá, señora, verte,
muere más cuidadoso
que de su propia muerte congojoso
(2529-32) [30]

Leandro dies with one consolation, which is another play on words: "'Ero' digo cuando digo'muero'" (2550).

When Hero finds his body, she laments the thoughtless action of putting the light in the tower on such a night:

¡Qué mal hice
en poner las señas hoy!
No lo pensé; no previne
que el que ha de ser desdichado
no tiene discurso libre. (2570-4) [31]

With Leander's death, the elements are appeased and, sated with destruction, have become calm:

Ya los vientos no esgrimen. . .
el mar está sosegado. (2600-4)

The first of these lines contains a most evocative image which reiterates the idea of battle used by Leander before (2421).

Hero had envisaged their tragedy as that of man battling against the unjust elements and against confusion:

Si ya no fueran antojos
de mis esperanzas tristes
todas las formas del mundo. . .
parece que han vuelto al caos
de quien tuvieron origen. (2553-8)

But now she sees that not even the gods are able to withstand the power of fate:

Deidad hermosa de Chipre
ten piedad; mas no la tienen
los hados, no la permiten. (2610-2)

The play seems to have a non-Christian attitude, man is helpless in his struggle with the elements and with fate. The play then rises above this pessimism and asserts an almost romantic belief in the strength of love and life. Hero defies death and declares the magnitude of her love and the impotence of death to contain her love. She scorns amor propio, razón, temor, muerte, ánimo, dicha humana and rejects all values but those of her love. The end of her speech is a quasi-Wagnerian Liebestod and Hero dies triumphantly proclaiming the paradox that the human values of love and life can transcend death:

¡Dueño espera! No camines
a los Eliseos tan presto;
que ya tu dama te sigue.
Iremos juntos los dos,
para que en todo te imite,
y porque junte el amor
los que la muerte divide. . . .
Dueño, mi mano recibe
para que, muertos, seamos
ejemplos los más insignes
de amantes. Entre tus brazos
la voz el cielo me quite. (2638-60)

Hero y Leandro is a tragedy which is fought out by man against the powers of fate and the stars. It is at once both a triumph and a disaster, for though fate destroys Leander, Hero dies voluntarily believing that love will overcome death, thus deciding her own destiny.

Apart from the rather problematical excursus of some 1100 lines in the middle of the play, Hero y Leandro is remarkable for the economy of its construction. All the characters function as relatives, friends, lovers or servants of the two lovers. The play is focussed almost exclusively on the two of them and the others are subordinated. It is the economy of the construction of the tragedy itself which makes the sub-plots seem extravagant and unnecessary. It appears almost as if Mira had introduced this material to lengthen the play.[32]

Hero y Leandro has a small cast, a mythological setting, and a simple construction which contains long unnecessary scenes:

Nardo Antonio has a large cast, a contemporary setting, and a very complex construction in which all the scenes are relevant to the main thread of the story. Were it not for the quasi-Wagnerian ending of Hero y Leandro it would be tempting to view the two plays as examples of classical and romantic tendencies in Mira's theater.[33]

Northrop Frye's description of the tragic hero fits Nardo Antonio:

> The tragic hero leaves his servants to do his 'living' for him, and the center of the tragedy is in the hero's isolation, not in the villain's betrayal, even when the villain is, as he often is, a part of the hero himself. [34]

Nardo allows the members of his gang to act for him, and he seems to be isolated even from Leonarda. He makes his lonely stand against the irrational social laws which threaten him, and though he is able to overcome them they overcome him at the same time. Such a double ending is not unknown in contemporary plays. Hamlet dies tragically but at his death he is finally able to wreak vengeance on his uncle and appease his father's shade. Similarly Lope de Vega's Alcalde de Zalamea is able both to restore his daughters' honor and execute their seducers.

A comparison between Hero y Leandro and Nardo Antonio reveals not only many differences, but many similarities. In both the lonely tragic hero defies and struggles with apparently relentless and irresistible forces for the sake of the woman he loves. Both heroes struggle against social forces. Although Leander appears to be struggling against metaphysical forces—the elements and the stars—and Nardo against physical and social injustice, both are struggling for liberty; both men seek to love whom they choose. Their deaths are both triumph and disaster.

Nardo Antonio is an intense drama based on the themes of trust, honor and integrity. At the heart of the play is a social drama about the conflicting values of birth and deeds, and man's commitment to his word and his promises. Private honor and integrity are contrasted with the hollow sham of public honor.

Miranda, the new viceroy in Naples, assumes the rôle of the monarch in the play. At first he seems to be an impartial

figure, but he helpshasten the tragedy. Miranda is persuaded by the poor but aristocratic Ricardo to use his influence as Viceroy to make Nardo give up his claim to Leonarda:

> Yo prometo, con mayor prudencia
> deshacer este lazo, interponiendo
> mi autoridad y su valor venciendo. (p. 2)

Ricardo is one of a series of tyrannous father figures[35] who want their daughters to marry a wealthy, aristocratic kinsman. The kinsman in this case is Gerardo, who is seen to be both cowardly and treacherous. His obeisance to the hollow shell of external honor is summarised in the lines:

> Tendré en la ciudad mi honor
> y allá en el campo el deseo. (p. 12)

In this speech, the term honor refers to Leonarda, whom he wants to marry, and deseo refers to Celia, a peasant's daughter, who is pregnant by him. His attraction to Leonarda is entirely cerebral: his attraction to Celia is entirely physical. He is incapable of blending the two and feeling affection for either. Gerardo is one of the few examples of completely evil men in Mira's theater.[36]

In the play all the major characters both succeed and fail. Gerardo receives the promise of Leonarda's hand from Miranda and Ricardo, but is prevented from marrying her. He is finally forced by Nardo to marry Celia, and then is killed for his treachery and double-dealing. Ricardo is able to extort from Nardo a promise that he will give up Leonarda's hand, but at the end of the play the two are married with Miranda's blessing. Miranda judges in favor of Gerardo and Ricardo at first, but at the end of the play he is the padrino at the wedding of the two lovers. Leonarda loses Nardo, then gains him outside the laws of society, finally she is married to him only to become a widow and retire to a convent.

The play is very rich thematically and all the themes are related to the central one of honor and nobility. The hero, Nardo, is at once the most noble—through his deeds—and the least noble—through his birth. Like Carlos in El palacio confuso (see below, p 276ff) he puts too much faith in his own powers and his own value, and attempts to deny the demands of

society. The play must NOT be viewed as a proletarian drama, however, for it emphasises that Nardo is ennobled through his deeds. In a similar way, Gerardo is dishonored through his deeds, and his marriage to Celia is appropiate for both are dishonored, and are thus equals.

Nardo is a man "more sinn'd against than sinning" but his tragedy is closely bound up with his decision to abandon the laws of society and become an outlaw. This tragic conflict and his irreparable decision to leave society occurs in the first act. It is at this early stage that he has to choose either to submit to the laws of society and lose Leonarda, or to "take arms against a sea of troubles." Unfortunately by opposing he does not end them but increases them.

Nardo is an unusual tragic hero on three counts. He is a lower class hero: his low birth is genuine and there is no revelation made at the end of the play to show that he is really of royal birth, as in El palacio confuso (see below, p 276). Second he is the only tragic hero who is not drawn from classical mythology or history[37] and his problems are contemporary. Third his tragic decision comes in the first act of the play, rather than in the later acts where it is more usual.[38]

Nardo is a tragic hero who must struggle with himself to decide whether he should accept the pressures of society or whether he should oppose them. Once he has made the decision to use force there is no reason why he should not continue to strive to destroy the corrupt fabric of society. The power that both Nardo and Leonarda obtain causes them to lose their perspective and their human nature: this is symbolised when Leonarda drinks the blood of Gerardo on stage. The methods Nardo uses to obtain justice are self-defeating, for two wrongs do not make a right. Nardo's tragedy is that when human justice accepts all he demands as just, it also condemns him for the crimes he has had to commit in order to prove his point.

Nardo Antonio is an exception to the form of the tragedies of Mira de Amescua. It is a play about justice, for human justice is both ineffectual and corrupt. Because it is corrupt it judges in favor of the rich and aristocratic rather than the poor; because it is ineffectual Nardo's claims are finally seen

to be just, despite the might of Miranda and the law.

Nardo is destroyed because he attempts to adjust the balance of society and, like Leander, takes on impossible odds. Both men seek to rival the power of God: Leander attempts to overcome the elements; Nardo tries to take the law into his own hands and establish Divine or absolute justice. Both men, like Icarus and Nimrod, by attempting to emulate God, approach Him too closely and are destroyed.

The remaining six plays are all concerned with the theme of royal favor. Four of these follow a basic pattern, while two are variations on the pattern. The four plays which follow this basic pattern will be discussed first, and then the two variations.

As the plays begin, the hero may be in one of three positions on the wheel of fortune. He may be at the bottom of the wheel (sum sine regno), a humble man who is seeking his fortune. He may have been already raised by the king's favor to a moderate position (Regnabo). He may be at the very summit of his fortune and be balanced precariously at the top of the wheel (regno). A second factor to be taken into consideration is that the hero may be a single figure, or he may have a double. The double may appear with the hero, or may enter later in the play. The double always appears to be on the opposite side of the wheel of fortune to the hero (see above, p79 and 120ff).[39]

The openings of La próspera fortuna de Bernardo de Cabrera and No hay dicha ni desdicha hasta la muerte are very similar. Both plays have two protagonists who are seeking their fortunes. The fortune seeker is a common figure in Mira's plays and he frequently goes out in the world to seek his fortune for the same reasons as these protagonists:

> Hijo segundo soy.
> (Próspera de Bernardo, p. 637)

> Pues hijos segundos fuimos. . .
> (No hay dicha, 12)

They then swear eternal friendship:

> Si hacemos dos almas una. . .
> (Próspera de Bernardo, p. 638)

Un alma informa en dos pechos
una vida y un valor.
(No hay dicha, 23-4)

and refer to themselves as copies of classical friends:

Que al mundo vuelvan deseo,
Pílades y Orestes.
(Próspera de Bernardo, p. 638)

segundo nombre nos den
de Pílades y Orestes.
(No hay dicha, 16-7)

The two men in each play determine to aid each other, but the way the two pairs go about it is very different. In No hay dicha ni desdicha hasta la muerte each of the two friends, Vela and Porcellos, joins one of two brothers, García and Ordoño, who are fighting a civil war in order to gain the throne; because one brother must win and the other must lose, the two friends know that their fortunes must be different. In Próspera fortuna de Bernardo de Cabrera, Bernardo de Cabrera and Lope de Luna, have an equal chance of gaining favor which is solely dependent on the whim of fortune. In contrast to Vela and Porcellos, there is no reason why they both cannot receive favor.

Two plays open after the hero has gained the king's favor, but before he has reached the pinnacle of his fortune. La adversa fortuna de Alvaro de Luna opens with speculation about the probable elevation of Alvaro to be Constable of Spain:

Falta el de Condestable
que quedó de las ruinas
de Ruy López; y que agora
querrá el Rey que se lo pida
don Alvaro. . . . (57-61)

Similarly Belisarius (Belisario) in El ejemplo mayor de la desdicha has been favored, but has greater honors yet to come. A further similarity between these two plays which distinguishes them from the others is the nature of the double. Alvaro has no double, but the rôle of the double in El ejemplo mayor de la desdicha is shared by Narses, Leoncio and Filipo.

The remaining two plays open to reveal that the hero is at the topmost position on the wheel. In the Próspera fortuna de Alvaro de Luna Ruy López is at the height of his power, but, within fifty lines, a note from the Marquess of Villena is read out which prophesies Ruy's ruina (p. 1961). During the first

scene of Adversa fortuna de Bernardo de Cabrera, the hero hears a song which warns him of his imminent fall from favor:

> Porque el bien y el agua
> no saben parar. (p. 63)

In both plays the hero has a double, but there is great disparity between the doubles. Bernardo and Lope de Luna are friends and one has been raised, while the other has been neglected by Fortune. Ruy López, on the other hand, has no double when the play opens, but Alvaro de Luna soon arrives to replace him in the king's favor. The differences are significant for the fall of Bernardo and the rise of Lope is the result of chance, wheras the fall of Ruy López and the rise of the much younger Alvaro de Luna is seen as the result of the progression of time. (See the speech beginning 'Hablando está el rey don Juan,' Próspera fortuna de Alvaro de Luna, p. 1968.)

The rise of the heroes to the topmost position—which has already been achieved by Ruy López, and Bernardo at the beginning of the Adversa fortuna de Bernardo de Cabrera—is presented in a similar way. The king uses physical terms to denote the rise of Bernardo from his humble position at the beginning of his Próspera fortuna to his elevated position at the beginning of his Adversa fortuna. The higher the hero is raised, the higher are the things he demands:

> Rey — Abrazadme, don Bernardo. . .
> Bernardo — Besar deja
> tus reales pies. (Jornada I, p. 641)
> Bernardo — . . . Tus pies besa.
> Rey — Levanta, y por mis brazos trueca el suelo.
> (Jornada II, p. 651)
>
> Rey — . . . Dadme
> Los brazos, vencedor de mar y tierra.
> Bernardo — Los pies estimo, y pido a Vuestra Alteza
> la mano. (Jornada III, p. 663)

This physical elevation is seen even more clearly in El ejemplo mayor de la desdicha:

> Emperador — Dadme los brazos.
> Belisario — Señor
> a tus pies estoy mejor. (Jornada I, 250-1)
>
> Belisario — Dame la mano.
> Emperador — No quiero
> porque el pecho es tu lugar.
> (Jornada II, 1284-5)

Belisarius's loss of favor is shown by the use of the same ideas:

Belisario Dame la mano, señor. . . .
Señor, ¿qué mudanza es ésta?
¿Vos negándome la mano? (Jornada III, 2262-83)

Bernardo and Belisarius begin at the monarch's feet and progress upward to his hand. They are then raised to his breast—which signifies equality—but the embrace of the monarch proves fatal.

All five heroes—Ruy López, Alvaro de Luna, Bernardo de Cabrera, Belisarius and Porcellos—distinguish themselves fighting for their monarchs: they are all notable for their courage, skill and good fortune in military matters. By the end of the second act of No hay dicha ni desdicha hasta la muerte, El ejemplo mayor de la desdicha and the Adversa fortuna de Alvaro de Luna the respective heroes have reached the top of the wheel of fortune. It is at this point that the hamartia of each of them manifests itself.

Ruy López de Avalos is a man who believes implicitly in the supremacy of moral virtue and in his own ability to be morally virtuous. He is, however, unable to see that an imprudent dependence on moral virtue will lead to his own downfall. Ruy López is one of the most idealised of all of Mira's heroes and this was probably due in part to his source material and partly to thepartisanship of the Amescua family for Ruy López.[40] It is also perhaps significant that Ruy López is the only tragic hero who escapes execution.

The attitude of Ruy López is summed up in the line:

Obrar bien es lo que importa. (p. 1969)

The importance of the attitude is stressed when Alvaro de Luna repeats it, referring to Ruy López:

Mas el mismo condestable
'obrar bien es lo que importa'
dijo una vez (p. 1987)

This moral tag is the key to the character of Ruy López and of other characters in Mira's theater. Its significance is that it emphasises motives rather than deeds.

As Próspera fortuna de Alvaro de Luna commences, Ruy López is shown to be in a position of great power and favor with John II. The King addresses his favorite as padre (p. 1961). This is a symptom of a reversal of rôles; a second is the fact that

the King has come to ask a favor of his favorite. The fourteen year old John asks Ruy López to persuade the nobles and the reino to declare John of age six months early. Ruy López replies:

> A estar, señor, en mi mano,
> que siempre experiencias hice
> de vuestra capacidad,
> no fuera hacerlo difícil. (p. 1962)

While Ruy López is exhorting the kingdom to declare the King of age, the latter meets Alvaro de Luna and the two youths are attracted to each other. When Ruy López returns with the refusal of the kingdom, he finds Alvaro sitting at the feet of the King.

Far from being jealous, Ruy López is philosophical at seeing this, for it reminds him of how he had sat at the feet of John's father, Enrique III el doliente. Ruy López's speech emphasises the idea of the progression of time: 'sus hechuras / tiene cada rey' (p. 1968). John is less than gracious to his old favorite. When Ruy López tells the King that his request has been refused, John storms:

> ¿Quién duda
> que por mandarlo vos todo
> me ponéis tales excusas?
> Sois Gobernador del reino,
> y haráseos del mal; ya es mucha
> esa ambición, Condestable,
> en una vejez caduca. (p. 1969)

Alvaro intercedes on Ruy López's behalf, but the latter is confident of his own power to resist Fortune with virtue:

> Obrar bien es lo que importa,
> don Alvaro; no me turban
> accidentes, que Dios tiene
> en sus manos la fortuna. (p. 1969)

In the event, the play does not justify this confidence.[41]

The conflict between John and Ruy López is intensified when the Condestable upbraids the King for wandering about alone at night:

> La salud y autoridad
> andando de noche se pierde,
> y es menester que se acuerde
> de las dos Su Majestad. (p. 1981)

This conflict with the King is symptomatic of Ruy López's main error—his inability to judge correctly the motives of other people. If Ruy López's fall depended entirely on his disagree-

ment with the King, the play would be a straightforward morality play about the fickleness of favor and the fallibility of monarchs. This moral element is present but Ruy López is responsible for his own downfall.

Ruy López describes himself in a speech which he intends to apply to one of his favorites:

> ¡Con qué furor, con qué extremos
> de soberbia y loco error
> nos engaña el propio amor,
> y nunca nos conocemos!
> Nadie sus defectos ve;
> amor propio es amor ciego:
> bien dice el proverbio griego
> que la mayor ciencia fue
> el conocerse a sí mismo. (p. 1971)

The intense irony of the speech is made clear in the ensuing scene, and is an example of Mira's use of Peripeteia.[42] Ruy López begins the process of his own downfall when he places his trust in the wrong man, despite two warnings. Because he is so sure of himself he ignores one and misinterprets the other.

The first of his two errors is in the first scene of the play. He receives a prophecy from Enrique de Villena, saying:

> 'Cuando lea vueseñoría este papel, estará con dos criados suyos, los que más quiere; el uno será ejemplo de lealtad, y el otro, de la traición; el uno causará su ruina y el otro será restaurador de su honra.' (p. 1961) [43]

Ruy López's immediate reaction is to say that

> No nos predice cosa cierta
> la docta astrología. (p. 1961)

and then to believe in the prophecy implicitly. The prophecy is in fact brought about because Ruy López believes in it. Unfortunately he puts his faith in the wrong servant. His error is compounded when he receives another letter saying:

> 'Mire bien Vueseñoría
> lo que firma, que conviene
> este recato a quien tiene
> por secretario a García.' (p. 1971)

Instead of heeding the note, he prefers to believe that it is a slander written by his other servant, Herrera. Ruy López then goes on to relate a cuentecillo[44] about Alexander the Great, while signing blank letters for García. The man of power who gives somebody carte blanche is guilty of an abuse of that power,

for the signing can be used for treasonous ends—as is the case here.[45]

When Ruy López confronts Herrera with the note, the latter recognises the handwriting as that of San Vicenç Ferrer. Ruy López is warned by a representative of Good and the Church and of Evil and necromancy. He ignores the warnings that come from Saint and from "Wizard."

García uses the signed letters and "sends" them to Ruy López's sons telling them to surrender Lorca to the Moors. He makes certain that the letters are then "captured" so that the King will have "proof" of Ruy López's treason. Although Ruy López did not intentionally betray the King, he allowed his name to be used in such a way that it could be put to treasonous purposes. When Ruy López gives García his all-powerful signature, he is acting in an imprudent and immoral fashion.

The flaws in the character of Ruy López are an implicit belief in his own ability to judge other people, and an absolute reliance on his own virtue to protect himself. Ruy López's virtue lacks prudence and has become debased into a passion, allowing him to be manipulated and destroyed by the unscrupulous. The downfall of Ruy López is caused by the noblest of errors, since it is based primarily on his complete faith in the honesty of others. He misjudges García because he believesGarcía to be as virtuous as himself. At the end of the play, Ruy López is restored to honor at the court of Alfonso V of Aragon. This restoration is not the result of Providence nor is it brought about by his own virtue, but is effected by the prudence, loyalty and diligence of Herrera, who fuses reason, passion and virtue into a well balanced whole.

Ruy López is succeeded by Alvaro de Luna, who serves John for thirty-two years, according to his own statement in the Adversa fortuna de Alvaro de Luna (2526). Like that of Ruy López, the downfall of Alvaro is partly the result of his inability to judge people correctly. It is also the result of a desire to receive the gratitude of others, which causes him to attempt to reverse the true rôles, and grant favors to his King. It is this characteristic which makes Alvaro a rival of God:

No seáis sólo para vos
Alvaro, en dichas seguras,
porque esto de hacer hechuras
tiene un no sé qué de Dios. (427-30)[46]

The play has been called 'one of the finest tragedies in the Golden Age'[47] for it develops fully the idea of Hamartia[48] and peripeteia. By trying to gain the gratitude of others and thus assuring himself of the favor of Fortune Alvaro destroys himself.

Compared to the fall of Ruy López and most of Mira's other tragic heroes, Alvaro's fall is more justifiable. The immediate cause of his downfall is not his desire for gratitude, but the wish to manipulate people. He rivals God, but, unlike God, he stresses convenience over love.

The crucial scene in the play presents Alvaro's attempt to control the free will of others. John II, having lost his first wife, wants to marry again. He has fallen in love with a picture of Redigunda of France, but Alvaro has decided that the King should marry Isabel of Portugal—and has pledged his word without consulting John's opinion. The King and favorite argue:

Rey — Alvaro, yo me contento
con mi elección. . .
Alvaro — Señor,
Conveniencias de su estado
son las que siempre han casado
a los reyes, no el amor,
no el gusto, no los antojos:
que hacer debe el casamiento
de un gran rey su entendimiento,
no la elección de sus ojos.
Con guerras está Castilla;
Portugal nos dará gente.
Rey — También Francia, y tan valiente.
Redigunda es maravilla
de Europa, y mía ha de ser.
Alvaro — Gran Señor, ¿y si yo he dado, (de rodillas)
en vuestro amor confiado,
mi palabra, qué he de hacer?
Rey — ¿Cómo, don Alvaro? ¡Vos
me casáis a mí sin mí!
Alvaro — Amor suele hacer ansí: (levántase)
una voluntad de dos.
Confié, engañéme, erré;
pero ya me vuelvo a Ayllón
a tomar satisfacción
de mí mismo. Allí estaré

huyendo vuestra presencia;
pues que sin palabra estoy
afrentado y triste voy.
Mi error me ha dado licencia. (Vase)
(1578-1613)

This last speech is emotional blackmail for the King is dependent upon Alvaro. John is forced to capitulate:

Rey — Más amor que tenéis muestro.
Alvaro — Señor, ¿habláis en el caso
de Isabel?
Rey — Sí, que me caso
sin mi gusto y por el vuestro. (Vase)
(1657-1661)

Alvaro regards this as perhaps his greatest victory, for he has conquered both the King and Fortune:

Hoy ve el curso de mi vida,
con esto, fija a mis pies
a la fortuna, si es
Isabel agradecida (1662-5)

The speech is another example of peripeteia (see below, p 194) although it shows a certain ability to read the character of others correctly. Isabel comes to resent and fear Alvaro because of his knowledge that he has bestowed Castille upon her; similarly the King resents the fact that he has had to submit to Alvaro, who is the mainstay of his kingdom. In both cases, Alvaro's attempts to earn gratitude only earn resentment. The action which he believes will guarantee his good fortune is the one that causes his destruction.

The intentions and aims of Alvaro are similar to those of Ruy López but they are not the same. Ruy López is concerned with moral virtue—obrar bien at an ideal level—Alvaro is concerned with political virtue—obrar bien at a worldly level. Alvaro's designs necessitate gaining control of the King and Queen. It is no wonder that the court is afraid of the ambition of the man who holds in thrall the free will of the sovereign. The story of Alvaro de Luna is indeed a tragedy, as MacCurdy has shown, but it is also a study of the way that power corrupts. The two Alvaro de Luna plays thus complement each other. Ruy López falls—though he is saved from death—because of his monomanic dependence on moral virtue and his scorn of the need for prudence in political life. Alvaro falls—and is executed

—because of his dependence on his political abilities and his scorn of moral virtues. Both men are imprudent because they refuse to follow the path of moral and political virtue.

Belisarius, the hero of El ejemplo mayor de la desdicha, is characterised by his moral virtue and his humanity. Like Ruy López he falls because he fails to assess correctly the motives of other people, and also because he fails to trust the woman who loves him.[49] Belisarius is similar to Alvaro, for he believes that the services he has rendered to the Emperor, Justinian and the Empress Teodora will secure their gratitude, and that he will thus be above the power of fortune.[50] Teodora loves Belisarius and when he refuses to dishonor Justinian, she becomes spiteful and bribes in turn Leoncio, Filipo and Narses to kill Belisarius. When these plots fail, she finally resorts to telling the Emperor that Belisarius was trying to seduce her. Teodora's last ruse is successful, but as so often in Mira's plays she must pay for her crimes and she is destroyed with Belisarius.[51]

The tragedy is that by trying to save the Emperor's honor, Belisarius 'proves' the Emperor's suspicions, and the favorite is blinded for the very crime that he was so assiduously trying to avoid. The eyes are an important image and theme in the play, for they are the organs of love in the Golden Age theater, hence the power of portraits.[52] The blinding of Belisarius is a symbolic emasculation so that he will be incapable of love.

There is a series of peripeteia (see below, p 194) in the play. Narses, Filipo and Leoncio set out to kill Belisarius, but end up protecting him. The Emperor wishes to protect him, but destroys him. Antonia, who loves Belisarius and is loved by him, thinks that by not speaking to him she is protecting him, but this silence hastens his doom.

Belisarius commits several errors, all of which are caused by his basic misunderstanding of the Empress's character. When he learns that a woman has sent Leoncio to kill him, Floro says it must be either Teodora or Antonia Patricia. But Belisarius is too noble to believe in anyone's faults:[53]

De esas dos ninguna
al discurso de mi vida

puede mover ofendida
la rueda de mi fortuna. (185-8)

He says that Antonia loves him and the Empress:

Es un ángel soberano,
y si provincias le gano
en los reinos del aurora;
si los reyes del oriente
pongo a sus pies, ¿qué ocasión
puede darle indignación? (198-203)

Despite the fact that Floro warns him about the Empress, Belisarius is blinded by his own virtue and the power of gratitude which he thinks will enable him to control fortune and the Empress. Belisarius believes that:

Yo, Floro, por muchos modos,
tengo de hacer bien a todos,
y esto me habrá de guardar.
Su afrenta lleva consigo
quien mal al bueno desea;
haga yo bien siempre, y sea
quien quisiere mi enemigo. (150-6)

Unfortunately, Belisarius is more concerned with doing good for others than for himself. The only person in whom he does not have confidence is Antonia—who loves him and is the one he could trust. His suspicion of her is a serious defect and when he attempts to win her, his efforts 'prove' to the Emperor that Belisarius is desirous of seducing the Empress. As in most of the tragedies the concrete proof which causes the hero's downfall is a note which goes to the wrong person: this is the hero's fatal error. A note partly causes the downfall of Belisarius, Ruy López, Bernardo and Porcellos.

The tragedies of Belisarius and Porcellos in No hay dicha ni desdicha hasta la muerte are very similar. Porcellos doubts the love of Leonor for him, believing that she loves his friend Vela. When he steps aside in favor of his friend the King thinks Porcellos loves and is loved by the Queen.

The structure of No hay dicha ni desdicha hasta la muerte differs considerably from that of El ejemplo mayor de la desdicha for the former has two heroes, and on the death of Porcellos, Vela assumes his honors, titles, wealth and wife. The character of the tragic heroes of the two plays is similar, for Belisarius and Porcellos are rather naïve and allow themselves

to do things which can be so easily misinterpreted. Belisarius gives a note to Antonia which is intercepted and appropiated by Teodora, and is then seized by the Emperor; this love-letter 'proves' Belisarius' attempt to seduce Teodora. Porcellos gives away a chain, given him by the King, which finds its way to the Queen; Porcellos also rescues a ring given to the Queen by the King and rashly puts it on his own finger. These two 'proofs' cause Porcellos' death.[54]

The downfall of Bernardo de Cabrera is more complex than any of the others, and occupies the three acts of the Adversa fortuna. It is a double fall. The first occurs shortly after the beginning of the play, and seems to be motivated by nothing more than the caprice of Fortune. It is this fall from favor which must cause MacCurdy to say 'the protagonist is in no way responsible for his downfall.'[55] What MacCurdy fails to take into account is the second fall, which is brought about by the actions of the hero.

Bernardo is loath to be restored to the King's favor:

Bernardo — Dando tu majestad licencia, pienso
perseverar aquí.
Rey — Darla no puedo
Vengo por vos, y ansí será imposible
volver solo a palacio. . . .
No puede un rey estar sin un privado,
que Dios también [lo tuvo] en otros tiempos,[56]
dígalo Moisés, Job y Juan y Pedro,
y los reyes humanos, le han tenido;
Trajano, Eneas, Jerges y Darío,
Ambrosio, Efestión, Lucinio, Acates.
En vos puse mi amor y mi privanza;
don Bernardo, no es bien haya mudanza (p. 75)

Bernardo replies in a long speech ('Señor, al mar profundo,' pp. 75-6) to avoid this return to the sea of court and politics. The King rejects Bernardo's pleas:

Rey — Bernardo, la obediencia
se debe preferir al sacrificio;
deja la penitencia
para volver otra vez a mi servicio;
deja esta Regla santa,
por mi vida y por vida de la Infanta.[57]
Bernardo — Con ese juramento
no puedo replicar; iré contigo. (p. 75-6)

Because of this first fall from favor, Bernardo should be even more careful of his actions. But the warning is not sufficient

and he makes three errors which cause his fatal second downfall.

In common with Belisarius and Ruy López, Bernardo is destroyed because he believes in his self-sufficiency. His errors are the result of keeping his own counsel and not telling others the truth about what he has done. There are three charges that condemn him—in each case the charge has some foundation;

> Se le haga cargo de la muerte de Leonido, músico de la cámara. . . . Su grandísima culpa en haberse carteado con el príncipe don Carlos ofreciéndole haría lo que mandase, y en haber salido de la prisión en que estaba a dar muerte al Rey, como de hecho lo hiciera si Su Majestad no estuviera avisado. (p. 94)

There is an element of truth in each of the charges. He was seen carrying the body of Leonido—which he had found and was taking to church for burial as an act of piety and friendship. He wrote to the Prince saying that he would do everything the Prince wanted—if the latter would abandon his rebellion and acknowledge his allegiance to the King. He had left his confinement and waited in ambush, where the King was hunting—in order to kill the King's would-be assassins. Unfortunately these assassins became scared and fled before the King's arrival; the King was warned of the attempt on his life and the only ambushers that could be found were Bernardo and his servant. In each case Bernardo failed to tell the King the true state of affairs, and from circumstantial evidence he appeared to be guilty. After he is charged with these crimes his honor will not let him deny the charges.

The flaw in Bernardo's character is that of presumption. In this he is very similar to all the tragic heroes of the plays about Royal Favor. Bernardo takes too much on himself and presumes that the King will understand. He is presumptuous because he considers he is answerable only to God and himself. Bernardo also presumes that the services he has rendered the King and the King's expressed dependence on him will protect him from the power of Fortune. Presumption and self-sufficiency is the flaw of Ruy López, Alvaro de Luna, Belisarius,and Porcellos, for they all trust in the services they have rendered to their monarchs and the monarchs' expressed dependence on them.

There are other similarities between the five heroes. They are incapable of judging the characters and the motives of others correctly; they are all marked by a lack of prudence and by pride in their own capabilities; and they believe that their virtues are sufficient to protect them from the power of Fortune. Only God is not subject to this power, and monarchs, as God's representatives, are the only mortals who can partially resist Fortune's power. In their attempts to resist the power of Fortune, the favorites are making themselves rivals of the monarchs if not of God himself. Frequently they try to gain some form of control or 'hold' over the monarch, thus reversing the natural order. They also mistakenly believe that virtue will shield them from the envy of the monarch or of others, whereas it is this power which serves to inspire envy.

Love is an important element in many of these plays, but it is subordinated to the theme of favor.[58] The downfall of the favorite in No hay dicha ni desdicha hasta la muerte and El ejemplo mayor de la desdicha is the result of rivalry between monarch and favorite, which is the product of the monarch's imagination and suspicions. Love is also one cause of conflict between monarch and favorite in the fall of Alvaro de Luna. In Bernardo de Cabrera and in No hay dicha ni desdicha hasta la muerte there is rivalry between the hero and his double for the same woman.

In one tragedy the theme of love is fused with that of favor. This is La desgraciada Raquel which deals with the legend of the Jewess of Toledo.[59] The play is a variation on the basic pattern, for the tragic victim is a woman.

The play is made more complicated by the presence of sociological, religious and ethnic values. Mira is caught between his humanity and his moral values on the one hand, and his patriotism and Catholicism on the other. At a political level he appears to condone the murder of Raquel, but it horrifies him at a human level. The tragedy is a result of a given situation, and Mira can support the tragic outcome of that situation, but the play shows his horror at such a situation being allowed to develop.

Raquel is closest to Alvaro de Luna, for both are seen to stray from the path of obrar bien. Both plays are tragedies of character, for they are studies of the way that power corrupts—both are good examples of Lord Acton's statement that "absolute power corrupts absolutely." The tragedy of Raquel and Alvaro is not really to be found in their deaths but in the degeneration of their characters.

Plays presenting the corruption of character more frequently portray women than men. Semiramis is the archetype of the woman who in her quest for power loses her humanity and her femininity. As such she is presented by Virués in La gran Semíramis and Calderón in La hija del aire. The reason for this, perhaps, is that it is easier to portray symbolically a woman's degeneracy than a man's. In the Golden Age theater there is no stigma attached to loss of male sexual virtue, but when a woman loses hers it is usually a symptom of moral corruption, for a woman without virtue is a woman without honor and integrity.

In common with all the tragic heroes, Raquel's major flaw is her confidence in her own powers. An edict had been made banning Jews from Toledo, and Raquel is chosen to plead with the King to rescind this new law. She is like Alvaro in her wishes to manipulate her sovereign:

> Sabré yo rendirle e él
> más él no vencerme a mí. (p. 2)

To prepare for her meeting with the King, she is dressed in mourning, which she calls 'tan triste aguero' (p. 2) and her feeling of confidence is undermined and gives way to that mood of tragic brooding which is found in many tragedies:

> Estoy
> temiendo. . .
> cuando he de rendirle a él
> que yo a ser rendida voy. (p. 2)

As if to reinforce the inevitable comparison her maidens sing about the biblical episode of David and Bathsheba which heightens the tragic tension (p. 2). The scene ends with Raquel's prayer to Venus:

> Que tú ayudando cuando yo venciendo
> daremos fama y sacaremos premio. (p, 2)

The second scene portrays the King as the one member of

the court who is absolutely certain that the Jews must be expelled from Toledo. The King and Raquel both believe in their own power and in the rightness of their own opinions. They are both destined to have this belief shattered when they meet. Like Hero and Leander, they defy Venus or love, but love retaliates by humiliating them:

Raquel — Pensé vencer a Alfonso, y voy vencida,
ni llevo libertad ni vida. (p. 5)

Rey — Con mis sentidos batallo
y ellos me rinden. (p. 5)

This sequence is another example of the device of peripeteia for both set out with one object in view and end by doing the opposite.

The second act presents the inner struggles of both Raquel and the King. They must both reconcile their love for each other with their political obligations. Zara, Raquel's "zionist" confidante, wants her to take full advantage of her power over the King. Alfonso's advisers want him to forsake Raquel because she is a member of the proscribed race, but also because their affair is adulterous. Love wins however, and the act ends with their mutual declarations of love.

The political aspects of the situation are very important. Raquel asks her lover to make her Queen. This attempt to seize power turns the court against her, whereas previously they may have cautioned Alfonso against her, but they had remained neutral. The fall of Raquel is similar to that of Alvaro de Luna, for Queen and courtiers unite to force the King to banish his favorite; in La desgraciada Raquel envy and jealousy combine and both forces cause her destruction.

Two short speeches from a quarrel between the King and his courtiers sum up the Scylla and Charybdis between which a man must attempt to steer:

Alvar González — Es la mocedad lucida
un caballo desbocado.

Rey — Y la vejez un cansado
embarazo de la vida. (p. 9)

The tragedy is that the King is controlled by unthinking passion: the courtiers are controlled by unfeeling reason. Man must

balance reason with passion, and the result of one without the other is a lack of humanity. It is this lack of humanity that destroys Raquel.

Her tragedy is similar to that of Alvaro de Luna for she talks of the reino as ingrato (p. 13). Like Alvaro she has used the wrong means—her love and power over the King—to achieve a good end—the abrogation of the anti-Semitic laws. She uses inhuman means to achieve the removal of an inhúman act, but just as the act was tyrannous and denied human freedom, her methods deny the King's freedom of action.

Her nature is corrupted because of the hostility of the court, and the culmination of her degeneration is marked by the words 'Muera el obrar bien' (p. 14). This degeneration of character is revealed in a test which she undergoes. She is made "Queen" by Alfonso and is called upon to judge two cases in his absence. Both her judgments reveal that she sacrifices reason to passion, and scorns virtue. Both cases are thematically linked to her own situation. In the first she frees a man who has murdered his mistress's husband, although she admits that this is unjust(p. 14). In the second case she refuses to punish a man who has abducted an old man's daughter. The old man curses her:

> El Cielo castigue, amén
> tu soberbia y tu locura. (p. 14)[60]

As a result of these decisions the courtiers are convinced that she is a disturbing influence in the kingdom and that she must die. Raquel's last error is to believe that she will be protected by Alfonso's love, even though he is not at court.

The most moving part of the play is the ending. In the last scene, Raquel is able to find self-knowledge and she curses voluntad and ambición and realises that:

> Aquello que mucho vale
> mucho cuesta; mucho quise
> y así, es bien que mucho pague. (p. 17)

The ultimate tragedy is that in death she finds the self-knowledge that would have saved her.

The last of the "tragedies" Lo que le tóca al Valor, is one of the most baffling plays that Mira wrote. It presents a

paradox that Mira was incapable of solving. The Prince of Orange represents Protestantism in its most grotesque and caricatured form: Baltasar Gerardo represents Catholicism in its most grotesque and caricatured form. Mira's presentation of their characters does not seem consistent, which increases the difficulty of understanding the play.

In the first act, the Prince is presented as a philanderer, but is no worse than Alfonso in La desgraciada Raquel who has a mistress as well as a wife.[61] The character of the Prince is discussed by Juana and Turín and the only time he is presented as being evil is when they describe him as a devil (p. 358) for having outsmarted the archfiend Elizabeth I of England. Later he is seen feasting with the Kings of Denmark and Navarre and expresses his belief that his subjects should be completely free to choose their own religion (pp. 363ff.).

In the second and third acts, the Prince's character changes, and the characterisation is much cruder. Mira takes his liberalism to its logical conclusion and makes him a complete free-thinker and libertine.

The Prince stands for absolute liberty in all things: religious, moral, political. Baltasar Gerardo stands for repression; he is a figure out of the Leyenda negra. He is a 'Jesuitical' Catholic who puts religion before truth, justice, and virtue; his motives are inextricably linked with his personal and sexual desires and designs. Baltasar Gerardo is a pious self-deceiver:

> La muerte nunca es asombro
> cuando la causa es de Dios. (p. 367)
>
> La causa es de Dios. (p. 380)

In both speeches he is referring to himself as the instrument of God. In fact, he is little more than a hired murderer who hopes to gain fame and fortune byassassinating the Prince of Orange. The Prince dies with the same belief in Gerardo's place as the instrument of God:

> O como así
> la fortuna manifiesta
> que quien es rebelde a Dios
> muerte le da su soberbia. (p. 382)

The ending of the play is a very strange one:

> Muerte y pasión de Gerardo
> para otra parte se queda
> que pide pluma más docta
> tan lastimosa tragedia. (p. 382)

These closing lines are unusually modest for any Golden Age dramatist. The phrase *más docta* may also be ironical, for Mira always seemed proud of the fact that he was *doctor*. The play is a difficult one to assess. It is closer to the tragedies than the other groups, but it is not a tragedy because the play has no hero.[62]

It is the hero which is stressed by Oscar Mandel in *A Definition of Tragedy*. After discussing various aspects of tragedy, Mandel defines the genre as follows:

> A work of art is tragic if it substantiates the following situation: *A protagonist who commands our earnest good will is impelled in a given world by a purpose, or undertakes an action, of a certain seriousness and magnitude; and by that very purpose or action, subject to that same given world, necessarily and inevitably meets with grave spiritual or physical suffering.* . . . What is worth stressing once more is that the statement represents the whole definition; that whatever else the tragic work may say, only this is properly tragic, only this exhausts the identity among all tragedies. (p. 20)

This definition successfully combines the three qualities of tragedy which have already been discussed: ending, tone, and the hero.

The definition applies to all but one of the eight plays discussed in this chapter. *Lo que le toca al valor* lacks a "protagonist who commands our earnest good will." The lack of the hero robs the play of any truly tragic qualities. The Prince of Orange suffers a just punishment for being a libertine; Baltasar Gerardo suffers a just punishment for his treachery. Both deaths are more likely to produce a sense of moral satisfaction than any feelings of tragedy.[63]

The other seven plays all satisfy the definition of tragedy made by Mandel, and all have the three essential qualities of tragedies. The tone of all the plays is serious for *Hero y Leandro* concerns a struggle against the decrees of fate; *Nardo Antonio* concerns a struggle against repressive social laws; the other five plays are all concerned with politics. The tone of

the plays is also somber. The somberness of Nardo Antonio and the political plays is due to their subject matter: Nardo is an outlaw who must live in constant fear of capture and execution, the other heroes are royal favorites who are in constant fear of the wheel of Fortune. The play which is apparently less somber in subject matter is Hero y Leandro, but the protagonists are preoccupied with death (see above, p 162-7).

All seven plays have a hero who suffers death through some flaw in his character or some error of judgment. The heroic qualities of Nardo Antonio, Belisarius, Porcellos, Bernardo, and Alvaro are attested by their martial exploits and by their virtue and popularity. Raquel and Leander are not heroic in the same way, but they are both presented so as to gain "our earnest good will" and they are both seen to undertake heroic tasks: Leander struggles against fate; Raquel struggles for the freedom of the Jews. Leander is like Prometheus and is the only hero to suffer directly for the task that he undertakes. The others are all destroyed because in the course of their struggle they commit crimes, or appear to commit crimes, for which they must be punished. Nardo's punishment is justifiable, but he had been forced to commit crime by society, which then punishes him for its faults. The five political heroes all appear to be guilty of trying to control the kingdom, either through treason or through manipulation of the king. Their amount of guilt varies but the punishment of all of them far outweighs their crimes.

Mira's tragedies are based on the failure of the tragic heroes to know themselves and to realise their own limitations (conocerse). They will be seen to be similar to the protagonists of the other secular plays, but the latter are capable of gaining this self-knowledge and using it to overcome themselves (Vencerse), thereby achieving that lasting success which always finally slips from the grasp of the tragic heroes. This failure is the source of their tragedy.

NOTES TO CHAPTER SIX

[1] All quotations are from C.M.M. Borelli, 'A Tentative Edition of Ero y Leandro' (unpublished M.A. thesis, Ohio State University, 1951). This edition is based on the manuscript in the Biblioteca Nacional in Madrid. See Cotarelo, pp. 7-9.

[2] Philosophía antigua poética. . . Madrid, 1596, ed. A Carballo Picazo, 3 vols (Madrid, 1953), 3, 19-20. The ideas of El Pinciano have been studied inter alia by Sanford Shepard, El Pinciano y las teorías literarias del siglo de oro (Biblioteca Románica Hispánica, Madrid, 1962) and Alfredo Hermenegildo, La tragedia en el renacimiento español (Barcelona, 1973), esp. pp. 11-66.

[3] A Definition of Tragedy (New York, 1961), p. 11.

[4] Boethius, The Consolation of Philosophy, book II, prose 2.

[5] Chaucer, The Monk's Tale, Prologue. This quotation is discussed by G. Steiner, Death of Tragedy (New York, 1968), p. 11; and by Allardyce Nicoll in An Introduction to Dramatic Theory (London, 1923), p. 54; The Theory of Drama (NewYork, 1931), p. 104; The Theatre and Dramatic Theory (London, 1962), p. 98.

[6] Letter of Dante to Cangrande, quoted by Erich Auerbach, Mimesis, trans. Willard R. Trask (Princeton, N.J., 1971), p. 186.

[7] For a definition of this term see Sister Mary Austin Cauvin, 'The Comedia de privanza in the Seventeenth Century' (unpublished Ph. D. thesis, University of Pennsylvania, 1957) esp. pp. 1-23 and 456-73. In this work she ascribes the Bernardo de Cabrera plays to Lope de Vega and the Próspera fortuna de Alvaro de Luna to Tirso, since the true identity of the authors is almost completely immaterial to her argument.

[8] Steiner, p. 4.

[9] D.D. Raphael, The Paradox of Tragedy (London, 1960), p. 37.

[10] Tragedy is not Enough (London, 1953), p. 38.

[11] Principles of Literary Criticism (London, 1924), p. 246.

[12] The Frontiers of Drama (London, 1945), pp. 17-8.

[13] Philosophía antigua poética, 3, 19-20. These are El Pinciano's first, second, fifth, and sixth and seventh points. To these he adds the comment ". . . y aun otras muchas más que no me acuerdo. . . ."

[14] The Theatre and Dramatic Theory, pp. 98-104. The apparently controversial nature of point 4 is fully explained by Nicoll's definition of his use of the word "religious", which here has a specialised meaning.

[15] Aristotle, On Poetry and Style, trans. G.M.A. Grube (New York, 1958), p. 24/Chap XIII/1452b-1453a. I would like to express my thanks to Prof. H.G. Edinger of the Department of Classics at the University of B.C., for recommending this translation of Aristotle's Poetics to me, and for his advice about critics and interpreters of the Poetics.

The feelings of pity and fear belong to Aristotle's theory of katharsis, of which D.W. Lucas has said: "Katharsis, though affording a pleasurable relief, seems to be the consequence and justification of tragic pleasure rather than the pleasure itself." (D.W. Lucas, ed., Aristotle, Poetics [Oxford, 1968], p. 275) Lucas discusses the subject very fully (p. 273-90) but concludes that his evidence strengthens the suspicion aroused by failure to mention katharsis, except in the definition of tragedy, that the kathartic theory is not an original part of Aristotle's theory of poetry (p. 282note).

[16] Aristotle, Poetics (Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1967), p. 38.

[17] Aristotle, On the Art of Poetry (Oxford, 1909), p. 35.

[18] He says likewise that hamartia in the sense of 'a flaw or frailty of character. . . may be a more useful critical tool than hamartia in the sense that Aristotle probably intended. (p. 292)

[19] In Sophocles' Oedipus Tyrannus, Oedipus makes an error of judgment, in King Lear, Lear has a moral flaw, in both plays the result is the same.

[20] Philosophía antigua poética, 2, 318-20. These categories of Aristotle depend on the presence of peripeteia (or reversal) and anagnorisis (or recognition). Lucas says: "These categories have not proved a very useful critical tool in either the ancient or the modern world. Few post-classical plays are short enough to be 'simple' in Aristotle's sense" (pp. 297-8).

[21] Shakespearean Tragedy (London, 1961), p. 194.

[22] In the final analysis, El galán secreto and the Ruy López story in Próspera fortuna de Alvaro de Luna are both tragicomedies although the only way they are distinguished from the tragedies is that the proof of the innocence of the heroes is revealed to the monarch before they can be executed.

[23] There are two two-part plays: the Alvaro de Luna and the Bernardo de Cabrera plays. Because it is impossible to discuss the first part of each of these without reference to their respective second parts, they will be regarded as two plays—rather than four. The story of Ruy López de Avalos must strictly be termed a tragicomedy, but it cannot be separated from the story of Alvaro de Luna.

[24] These two are very different from the rest of Mira's tragedies, for one is much more "traditional" and looks back to Greek tragedy, while the other is rather "avant-garde" and looks forward to domestic tragedy (bürgerliches Trauerspiel) and German romantic drama.

[25] There are four sections in the middle of the play, which add nothing to the tragic situation. There is a night balcony scene involving a possible hamartia which is not developed. In the next, Mitilene reveals to Hero a plan, which she pretends to have been arranged by Leander and herself, and the object of which is to blacken Hero's name and reputation. The only function this serves is to allow Hero to first curse and then bless the thoroughly confused Leander in a long speech full of

classical allusions and imagery (1757-1924). A third section presents the reconciliation of the lovers. It is followed by an extraordinary scene in which Floro pretends that Leander is trying to poison Mitilene. These four sections which are irrelevant to the tragedy qua tragedy, occupy well over one third of the play (1291-2386 or about 40%). The material may be interesting and, at times, amusing, but it does not serve to forward the tragic dénouement. Since this chapter deals with tragedy, it is not germane to the argument to analyse the significance of these sections, interesting though they may be.

[26] The speech serves much the same purpose as the famous 'star-crossed lovers' Prologue to Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet.

[27] Nicoll's statement that the 'constant preoccupation' of tragedy is the 'thought of death.' (see above, p 158) applies to this play.

[28] Hero y Leandro is from ca. 1629 and is contemporaneous with Mira's latest and most stylised comedies.

[29] A good example of this is in La confusión de Hungría.

[30] This scene seems to me to be partially corrupt for the last hendecasyllable of each silva is italicised and the first four appear to form a separate phrase, but the remainder do not follow the pattern either in sense or in verse form, as the irregularity of the rhyme ABAABBA shows.

[31] This speech which is not contradicted by the rest of the play, shows that in this play at least, Mira is at the opposite end of the spectrum from his religious theater.

[32] In this, the last of his tragedies, Mira appears to have been developing a neo-classical tragic form. As this is the only example it is difficult to judge whether he was tending to make his tragedies more or less complex. The indications of the comedies and autos is that he was tending to structural neatness and balance, and it makes this play so much more intriguing because its weaknesses are a repetition of those of the earlier, religious plays—too many episodes and two plots which are not satisfactorily fused.

[33] Nardo Antonio can be seen in many ways as a forerunner of the group of German Sturm und Drang and Romantic heroes who struggle against the corruption of society, and finally triumph although they must pay for that triumph with death. The best examples are Goethe's Götz von Berlichingen, Schiller's Karl Moor and Kleist's Michael Kohlhaas.

[34] Anatomy of Criticism (Princeton, 1957), p. 208.

[35] In some plays the girl may lack a father and his place is taken by someone else—frequently the girl's brother.

[36] It is perhaps no coincidence that most of these are cowards; Teodosio in La rueda de la Fortuna (see below, p 213ff) is another example.

[37] Nardo is in the pattern of mythical social bandits, such as Robin Hood.

[38] This is a technical point which in no way detracts from the tragedy.

[39] Because two of the four plays have two parts, it may be necessary to discuss certain aspects of the plays as if there were six plays, while other aspects demand they should be discussed as four plays. Because of the double plot of La próspera fortuna de Alvaro de Luna it may also be necessary to discuss them as five plays. In each case the reason is self explanatory.

[40] For a short study of the sources and for a detailed analysis of the play see Margaret Wilson, 'La Próspera fortuna de Don Alvaro de Luna: An Outstanding Work by Mira de Amescua,' Bulletin of Hispanic Studies 33 (1956), 25-36. Mira's main source was probably Damián Salustrio del Poyo's La adversa fortuna del muy noble caballero Ruy López de Avalos el Bueno (Reprinted in BAE, 43, 465-89). In her thesis, Sister Mary Austin Cauvin explains that del Poyo was also a partisan of Ruy López (p. 28n). Mira's ancestor (see above, p. 9) appears in the play as a supporter of Ruy López called simply Navarrete. Del Poyo's La próspera fortuna del famoso Ruy López de Avalos el Bueno was also reprinted in BAE, 43, 437-63.
A point of interest is that Del Poyo's two plays on Ruy López along with his Privanza y caída de don Alvaro de Luna (which has not been reprinted) were all published in the Parte tercera de las comedias de Lope de Vega y otros autores (Barcelona, 1612; Madrid 1613) which also contained the first edition of El esclavo del demonio (see BAE, 43, xxxv).

[41] This play is a very clear example of the differences to be found between the religious and the secular plays. The narrative structure of the religious plays shows how God takes an active hand in controlling men's destinies, but in the secular plays this confidence is not revealed to be justified.

[42] Aristotle insists on the device of peripeteia as being essential to tragedy. Lucas defines peripeteia as something 'which involves acting or suffering in ignorance of the outcome' (p. 292). In the introduction to his translation, Grube points out that Peripeteia 'is a reversal of direction or intent, not of fortune' (p. xxv). It is very similar to dramatic irony. Two good examples of it are this one and in the Adversa fortuna de Alvaro de Luna. In this example Ruy López is accusing someone of not knowing himself and the very words show that it is in fact Ruy López who is guilty of the fault not the man he accuses. Similarly Alvaro de Luna hopes that he will guarantee his power through his services to the second wife of John II; in fact these services arouse not gratitude but envy and fear of Alvaro's power and lead the new queen to bring about Alvaro's fall (see above, p 178-9). Peripeteia is a device of which Mira is very fond both in tragedy and comedy.

[43] The moral element in the story is clear, for as in the story of Belisarius, Mira uses the word ejemplo to show that it is an exemplary story.

Enrique de Villena or Enrique de Aragón did not cast horoscopes or make prophecies, but during the Golden Age he earned this reputation. He is presented in this way in the plays of Ruy López written by Damián Salustrio del Poyo. I wish to express my gratitude to Dr D.C. Carr for his information on the reputation of Villena.

[44] See Vern G. Williamsen's article, Hispania, 1971, pp. 62-7.

[45] This also occurs in La confusión de Hungría.

[46] This trait is that of pride, which Patch defines: "Pride seems to have been considered the mental attitude of conciously or unconciously measuring oneself with God" (p. 69 note). Patch also says that Fortune "castigates pride" which during the Middle Ages was "considered as the greatest sin of all, as a vice involving every other" (p. 69)

[47] Raymond R. MacCurdy, Francisco Rojas Zorrilla and the Tragedy (Albuquerque, New Mexico, 1958), p. 18.

[48] Raymond R. MacCurdy, 'Tragic Hamartia in La Próspera y Adversa Fortuna de Don Alvaro de Luna,' Hispania, 47 (1964), 82-90.

[49] One very unusual aspect of the story of Ruy López is the total absence of amorous complications. The Adversa fortuna de Alvaro de Luna does have some amorous complications but they do not form a major part of the fall of Alvaro de Luna. The Alvaro de Luna plays are thus contrasted strongly with Hero y Leandro and Nardo Antonio, the plots of both of which are dependent on the love affairs of the heroes. In the other tragedies of Mira de Amescua there are amorous complications which are important to the plot, but the plots do not depend on these complications to the same extent as those of Hero y Leandro and Nardo Antonio.

[50] The Empress Teodora was in reality a prostitute who gained the throne via the Emperor's bed. This story is not mentioned directly by Mira but it is implied in the promiscuous desires of the Empress.

[51] There is a great similarity between this play and Euripides' Hyppolytus. The changes that Mira makes in the character of Belisarius/Hyppolytus prefigure the changes that Racine made to Euripides' drama when he wrote Phedre.

[52] There are many examples in Mira's theater of people falling in love with pictures. Hero in Hero y Leandro and John II in Adversa fortuna de Alvaro de Luna are examples of this in tragedies. Fenisa and Ausonio fall in love with each other's portrait in La confusión de Hungría and Matilde falls in love with Enrique's portrait in Amor, ingenio y mujer.

[53] Belisarius' fault at this stage is not the same as that of Ruy López. The latter chooses to trust the disloyal man and to accuse the trustworthy man of treachery. Belisarius refuses to believe that either woman will betray him. Later in the play, Belisarius acts like Ruy López when he begins to suspect Antonia Patricia.

[54] The King's suspicions had previously been aroused by a note which Leonor was sending to Porcellos, and which had been dictated by the Queen—Leonor having asked the Queen's advice. The King overhears the Queen dictating the letter and believes she loves Porcellos. This device of the King overhearing a dictated letter is also used in the Bernardo de Cabrera plays.

[55] MacCurdy, Rojas Zorrilla and the Tragedy, p. 19.

[56] Cotarelo's emendation.

[57] Bernardo is betrothed to the Infanta; on his first fall he has retired to a monastery.

[58] The only favorite whose fall is not involved with love at all is Ruy López—and he is the only one who does not die.

[59] See James A. Casteñeda, ed., A Critical Edition of Lope de Vega's 'Las paces de los reyes y judía de Toledo' (Chapel Hill, North Carolina, 1962), pp. 5-33.

[60] The old man is another example of what must be regarded as an authorial comment on the action (see above, p 133).

[61] It was far from uncommon for kings to have illegitimate children. A moralist might point out, with some justice, that many wars of succession were the direct result of a king's lapses from virtue.

[62] Given the intellectual, political, and religious climate of the time it is not surprising that Mira should have presented the Prince in such a negative fashion. The intriguing part of the play is the inconsistency between the favorable portrait of Act One and the unfavorable portrait in Acts Two and Three; and the very damning portrayal of Gerardo, the pious Catholic. Mira's excessive Catholic enthusiasm when portraying protestants (here and in the auto Nuestra Señora de los Remedios especially), but his equanimity when portraying other non-Catholics (Jews, Moors, etc.) suggest to me that he "doth protest too much."

[63] Cf. Aristotle's comments, above, p 159 .

CHAPTER SEVEN: THE TRAGICOMEDIES

The term tragicomedy has been used loosely from the time of Plautus[1] to indicate plays which could not be classified as either comedies or tragidies. . . . As recently as 1923, Allardyce Nicoll in his influential Introduction to Dramatic Theory could discuss tragicomedy very briefly as a variant of comedy (pp. 198-202). When he revised the book and republished it, he expanded the 'section on tragicomedy.'[2] In the revised edition, Nicoll gives the following account of the history of the genre:

> Giraldo Cinthio, Scaliger and Castelvetro are all agreed as to the permissibility of the form; and they are followed by many of the early French theorists, such as La Taille and Vauquelin. The distinction commonly made was that the happy ending to the serious play consisted simply in the avoidance of impending disaster, whereas in comedy no such disaster ever really threatened. (p. 231)

The history of the genre has been studied in greater detail by Herrick,[3] Styan,[4] Hoy,[5] and Guthke.[6] The latter stresses that the majority of Baroque and Renaissance theorists regarded tragicomedy as plays that mixed the four essential elements which distinguished tragedy from comedy: social class of characters, style of diction, subject matter, and ending. (pp. 6-7).

Nicoll and Guthke describe the excesses to which the genre is susceptible:

> The familiar technique exemplified in so many of the Beaumont and Fletcher plays, wherein an apparently tragic story is suddenly brought to a happy conclusion through the discovery of some secret titillated the interest of contemporary audiences, but took from the works the possibility of enduring popularity. 7

> Their most characteristic and conspicuous feature is the manipulation of the happy ending. . . . Once this type of tragicomedy. . . is established, it is hard to see how an audience, trained to know what to expect, can take seriously everything potentially tragic that precedes the conclusion of the play. The audience knows that all complications will be resolved in the end, and it is, therefore, primarily interested in the precise manner in which the avoidance of imminent disaster is contrived. In other words, the audience tends to develop the mentality of the reader of the cheaper detective stories of a later day. 8

The dangers of tragicomedy are twofold: either the audience will refuse to take the plays seriously; or it will concentrate on the contrivance of the author and the plot.

The ending of the play is only one aspect of the genre, and in order to find some workable definition of tragicomedy the genre must be examined in the light of the three essentials of tragedy.

(1) Tragedies end with death, or other form of grave suffering, of the hero. Tragicomedies, like comedies, have happy endings and this is usually denoted by the marriage of at least one pair of the protagonists.

(2) The subject of tragicomedies is not always of the magnitude of the subject matter of tragedies, but it shares its seriousness. The ending of tragicomedies may frequently be a marriage, but the fate of kingdoms often depends on that marriage. The overall tone of tragicomedies is not as somber as that of the tragedies.

(3) Because the ending of tragicomedies is usually marriage—and marriage requires more than one partner—the interest in a tragicomedy is not centered upon one person, but upon at least two of the protagonists.[9] In the tragedies the hero is predominant and the sufferings of his (or her) lover—even if the latter suffers death—is of lesser interest. The sufferings of Hero, Leonarda, and Alfonso are secondary to those of Leander, Nardo Antonio, and Raquel.[10] A further lessening of the prominence of the hero in tragicomedy comes about with the increased significance of marriage, for the marriage of other characters may be as important as that of the hero and heroine. It is more accurate to talk of the protagonists of tragicomedy rather than the heroes, although in many cases there is one pair of protagonists who are the most important. It may also be the case, however, that tragicomedy may be close to comedy in form and may have four "good" protagonists and one evil protagonist.

El Conde Alarcos[11] and Los carboneros de Francia deal with almost the same subject matter, and it is possible that Los carboneros de Francia is a reworking of El Conde Alarcos, which is one of the least successful of Mira's plays, and is one of a very few that are not competently written. Both plays are set

in the Carolingian court and in both a girl called Blancaflor is married to the son of Charlemagne (in Los carboneros de Francia he is given the correct name of Luis, i.e. Louis I; in El Conde Alarcos he is merely called El rey). The marriage of Luis and Blancaflor is prophesied in the first act of both plays, and part of the ingenuity of the plot is the way the marriage is brought about. In both plays there are two separate sections: the first concerns the break-up of a marriage through treachery and deceit, and the over-hasty judgment of the king. Between the two sections, the wife and child are lost and are presumed to be dead. The second section occurs after a sufficient period of time for the child to reach marriageable age. Wife and child are discovered, having spent the intervening years with peasants, the 'divorced' spouses are reunited, and the marriage of the child is arranged.

El conde Alarcos is based on the romance of the same name. One of its principal weaknesses is the excesses of the first act in which Blanca is given what is believed to be her infant daughter's heart to eat and blood to drink.[12] The second weakness is the inconsistency of tone. The first act is horrific, the second lyrical,[13] the third provides a forced happy ending. The third weakness is the ending. This is an example of how problems in the plot may be resolved simply by saying that they are:

> El Cielo os da favor,
> no pretendo haceros daño,
> Rey, yo fingí aquel engaño,
> no me debe el conde honor. (Last page)

The ending is forced and difficult to accept for it ignores the fourteen or fifteen years of suffering endured by Blanca, Alarcos, and Blancaflor. The confusion of the play is manifest in the curious last lines:

> Demos fin a una tragedia,
> que resulta en mayor gloria,
> y si os agrada la historia,
> dad perdón a la comedia. (Last page)

Los carboneros de Francia is a much better constructed play than El Conde Alarcos, although it does not contain any poetry as good as the parting of Blanca and Alarcos. The rôle of the

traitor in this play is assigned to Maganza 'hijo de Galalón' (p. 295). The play re-enacts the treachery of Ganélon in the Chanson de Roland.

The play is most remarkable for the presence of the carboneros[14] of the title who provide the strongest moral voice in the play. Indeed Milton Buchanan has suggested that the name of one of them, Zumaque, is an anagram of Amezqua.[15] It is these peasants who tell Charlemagne that Maganza has 'pergeño de traidor' (p. 298), and introduce the theme of the dangers of courts and courtiers:

> No hay respeto ni ley
> jamás en los cortesanos. (p. 300)

The play is competently written but it is not outstanding. Its main weakness is that Blancaflor is of marriageable age in the first act, and marries Luis in the third, the latter is not born until after the end of Act One. This factor may be less objectionable if Sevilla did not attack disparity in age between husband and wife:

> Viejo que busca hermosura
> priesa da a su sepultura. (p. 312)

La adúltera virtuosa is a much better play than Los carboneros de Francia, but it suffers from an overabundance of material. Mira is at his best when handling one or, more frequently, two major plots.[16] In La adúltera virtuosa he handles three inter-related major plots. One of these is very unsatisfactory, especially as it is the plot which involves the main protagonist. The play has two major weaknesses. The first is this major plot which is neither necessary nor resolved satisfactorily. The second is that the other two major plots are resolved more satisfactorily from a mechanical point of view, but they leave many unresolved problems and "loose ends."

The loose ends are by no means minor ones. The King had done all in his power to seduce Juana, even attempting to murder her husband, Mauricio. At the end of the play Mauricio and Juana seem too ready to forget the King's attempts on life and virtue. It is also assumed that the King will now give up his adulterous and homicidal plans. The Queen is also very willing to forget her husband's attempted adultery and murder, and his public accusation of her as an adulteress. In the third

of the major plots, Felipe loses the desire to avenge his honor which had motivated all his previous actions, and Juana does not seem to have had very much difficulty in transferring her affections from Felipe to Mauricio. Another major weakness is that Felipe is the main protagonist but at the end of the play he marries neither of the heroines and accepts an unseen sister of another protagonist; he also fails to avenge his brother. If he is the hero of the play he is a failure.

These loose ends point to the major difficulty of writing successful tragicomedies. A great deal of attention is focussed on the plot and the happy ending is frequently forced onto the story. This may be achieved by a trick of the plot or by a linguistic sleight-of-hand. El Conde Alarcos had one major plotresolved with words; Los carboneros de Francia retains the single major plot and resolves it in a much more satisfactory manner, although the ending is not perfect. La adúltera virtuosa triples the number of major plots, and resolves some of them in a reasonable fashion. Because there are three plots, however, there remain too many loose ends to be tied up and the final impression is unsatisfactory.

Lo que es no casarse a gusto is even less satisfactory for it is very difficult to decide whether it is a tragicomedy or a tragedy. Its principal weakness is that in order for the two protagonists to be married, two others must be murdered in cold blood. The play is successful in its attempt to show that loss of honor is "el mal que causa no casarse a gusto" (p. 196), but the end result is rather disturbing.

Lo que es no casarse a gusto is one of the most unsatisfactory of all of Mira's plays and like Lo que le toca al valor it is a fascinating play for speculation about Mira's true intentions, about which one can never be certain. The play is artistically confused and aesthetically frustrating since the deaths of Bimarano and Elvira, the most sympathetic characters in the play, are tragic except that, unlike in Mira's other tragedies, the end of the play contains no lamentations over their deaths.

The resolution leaves many unanswered questions. The marriage of Enrique and Elvira, which is the mainspring of the

problems of the play, was contracted on the King's orders. Enrique seems to be a sexual opportunist who was not strong enough to resist the opportunity of enjoying the favors of the beautiful Elvira. The King may possibly have ordered the marriage to spite his brother, Bimarano, who says:

> Que cruel siempre conmigo,
> no mi hermano, mi enemigo,
> mejor llamarle pudiera. (p. 185)

The play is partly concerned with royal favor and the nature of kings. This theme is to be found in many of the tragicomedies and the kings in El conde Alarcos, Los carboneros de Francia, and La adúltera virtuosa are similar to Fruela in this play: all act rashly and imprudently.[17] The following lines addressed to Fruela are a supreme example of Mira's use of dramatic irony:

> El rey es lince
> que penetra corazones. (p. 182)

The lynx was reputed to have X-ray vision, but Fruela is notable for his inability to judge other people, and is totally unable to 'penetrar corazones.'

Lo que puede una sospecha[18] is another play with an unsatisfactory resolution. The basic problem in the play is that there are too many men. During the course of the complicated maneuvers on stage everybody suspects everybody else. As a result of these suspicions, Iñigo and Carlos arrange to have a duel, but Cardillo, the gracioso who controls the action , uses a trick and causes Iñigo to fight—and kill—Alonso. While it is believed that Iñigo has killed Carlos there is much lamenting and swearing of vengeance, but when the corpse's true identity is revealed everybody is happy. Having removed the extra and unloved suitor, the two couples can now be happily married.

A similar situation is to be found in Obligar contra su sangre: Nuño marries Elvira, while Nuño's sister, Sancha, marries Elvira's brother, García. The difficulty is that Nuño, fights and kills the father of García and Elvira at the same time as García is seducing Sancha, under the promise of marriage. The happy ending is brought about by the ingenuity of Sancha who uses a gun to force García to keep his promise of marriage; she then sides with her new bridegroom against her brother. Her ingenuity causes García to say:

A mujer que tanto sabe
dificultades venciendo,
obligar contra su sangre,
fuera villano y grosero
quien no la diera y rindiera
nobles agradecimientos—
Nuño, por Sancha te estimo
por ella reñir no puedo
contigo; tu hermano soy. (p. 71)

The six plays have certain qualities in common. They all lay great emphasis on the twists of the plot, and as a result the weaknesses in the plot construction stand out very clearly. All of the plays are unsatisfactory because they have too many loose ends and unanswered questions. The tendency is for the closing speeches to gloss over the inconsistencies of the dénouements.

In four tragicomedies, Mira successfully avoided these faults. In the first of these, however, the faults are replaced by others. No hay reinar como vivir cannot be called inconsistent, illogical, unsatisfying nor unbelievable, but it suffers from a lack of vitality. No hay reinar como vivir is a very carefully structured play which leaves no loose ends, but the characters are black-and-white and never come alive. The struggles and conflicts of the play are all external not internal.

No hay reinar como vivir is worth discussing in some detail because of the carefully controlled structure, which is very similar to some of Mira's comedies; and because of its ideas, which are important in the development of Mira's thought.

The basic situation is that Margarita is Queen of Sicily. She has just come of age, and during her minority the kingdom has been ruled by her uncle, Conrado. The latter has grown accustomed to power and wants to retain it at any cost. He has two sons, Carlos and Otavio, and he has two plans. The first is to marry one of his sons to Margarita; if this fails he will murder her: in either case he, or one of his sons, will inherit the kingdom. His greatest fear is that Margarita will marry someone else.

As the play begins, Conrado is alone, and in his opening monologue he explains the situation and then goes on to contrast his two sons:

Sé que Otavio es más cruel,
tiene altivo natural,
más que al bien se inclina al mal,
pero no hay valor en él. (p. 439)

Following this monologue each of the main Sicilian characters is presented. This is effected by a series of scenes in each of which there are two characters on stage.

Conrado begins by testing his two sons. He does this by showing to them in turn a paper containing the following words:

Ninguno cruel ha sido
por vivir, y por reinar. (p. 440)

The first son is Carlos, who reacts negatively. He argues that if 'son Dioses los reyes' then to be disloyal 'no es traición es sacrilegio' (p. 440). He concludes:

Si el bien más singular
es reinar, el que se abona
quitar al rey la corona
será infame por reinar. (p. 440)

The idea that the man who does not desire to reign is fittest to be king is central to this play, and is important in La rueda de la Fortuna (see below, p 225).

Carlos' reaction does not surprise Conrado. Consequently he approaches Otavio who reacts favorably to the words shown him by his father. Otavio argues that nature urges us to 'amar nuestra propia vida' and to seek to rise:

Y a seguir el propio aumento,
que el humano pensamiento
no vivirá sosegado
hasta hallar y conseguir
el bien último y mayor
que es ser rey, y ser señor
y el segundo es el vivir. (p. 440)

He argues that any methods are justified to gain power and:

La observancia de la ley
al que es rey no comprehende
que bajeza o mancha ofende
la pura sangre de un rey. (p. 440)

Having received a favorable answer from his son, Conrado now plots with him how to effect the transference of power. They decide to enlist the aid of Serafina, Margarita's confidante and lady-in-waiting. Conrado leaves so that Otavio can approach Serafina in private, for Otavio believes Serafina to be in love with him and to be willing to do anything for him. Otavio is a

man who does not know himself at all and is easily convinced that every woman must be madly in love with him.

Otavio outlines the plan of murder to Serafina. He offers her his hand and half the kingdom if they succeed, for 'es dulce cosa reinar' (p. 443). Serafina reveals in a series of asides that she does not love Otavio, that she is faithful to Margarita, and that she will agree to aid the plans of Otavio and Conrado in order to thwart them:

> Si me niego a su traición,
> han de buscar otro medio,
> no se me ofrece remedio. (p. 443)

In the next scene Serafina is left on stage to discuss the affair with Carlos. Carlos does not realise that Serafina loves him, but, although he is ignorant of this one fact, he prides himself on "el conocerme a mí mismo" (p. 439). His consequent behavior reveals the truth of this assertion, for he is the opposite of his brother, whose presumption and arrogance contrast strongly with Carlos' humility. The construction of these scenes is based on the contrast between opposites or doubles.

When Carlos outlines his order of values, he is raised even higher in the estimation of Serafina:

> Quien se llama
> honrado ha de hacerlo ansí,
> mi religión es primero,
> después della mi rey es,
> mi dama viene después,
> yo mismo soy el postrero. . . .
> Si a mi dama y reina viera
> en peligro, cosa es clara
> que yo a mi reina amparara
> aunque mi dama muriera. (pp. 443-4)
>
> En tocando mi reina
> no tengo padre, ni dama. (p. 447)

These two speeches establish a certain hierarchy and help to establish the five basic relationships which a man can have. The two highest are his love of God or religion, then his love for his king or fealty. At a lower level are a man's love for his parents and his love for a member of the opposite sex. The fifth level, which is not of such thematic importance in this play, is that of a man for his equals, which is exhibited both

as friendship and as charity or love of humanity. The relative importance of these last three may vary in different situations.

By this point in the play Mira has introduced four characters, who can be divided into the good—Serafina and Carlos —and the bad—Conrado and Otavio. He must now advance the plot and introduce the last pair of characters—Margarita and Federico. Margarita is introduced in the next scene which is the last one to have only two characters.

Serafina remains on stage and reveals to Margarita the plots of Conrado and Otavio. Margarita's reaction is strong. She and Serafina discuss the characters of Otavio and, especially, Conrado:

> Necios son y son tiranos. (p. 443)
> Un monstruo de engaños lleno. . .
> sin ley, sin piedad, sin fe. (p. 444)
> Sin prudencia y sin consejo
> se ha entregado a su traición. (p. 445)

These lines are revealing for they link together the characteristics of the evil characters. They lack reason (necios), and prudence (sin prudencia) and wisdom (sin consejo); they are inhuman (monstruo) and tyrannous (tiranos); they are given to deceit (engaño) and treason (traición); finally they contravene the three great sets of laws: the law of God (sin fe); the law of nature and humanity (sin piedad); and the law of man and of kings (sin ley). The speeches state very clearly the causes of evil in the world, which are brought about by passion, which makes men forget reason, and by the devil, who makes men forget God.

The following scene brings all the Sicilian characters together onto the stage and advances the action. Conrado and Otavio attempt to poison the Queen, but, through the connivance of Serafina, Margarita only drinks water. She then feigns madness, justifying herself with the words "dulce cosa es el vivir" (p. 447). Her attitude is the opposite of Otavio's who thought that the dulce cosa was reinar. Carlos is unaware of the real actions of Serafina and believes that she is in league with his father. He expresses the horror he feels at the guilt of Serafina, but he is unable to forget that he loves her. His words reveal his struggle with these conflicting feelings:

"Monstruo, fiera, ángel, mujer" (p. 447).

The second purpose of this scene is the introduction of the name of Federico, who has just become King of Naples. Before Federico appears, Margarita asks Carlos and Otavio their opinions of him. Their replies reflect their own characters and could be applied to the speakers:

Carlos — Es un príncipe valiente,
bizarro y jóven, y ansí
Adonis Marte se llama. . . ,

Otavio — Es príncipe fanfarrón,
sin piedad, sin religión,
pusilánime y cruel. . . . (p. 445)

Otavio's words add to the catalogue of negative qualities expressed earlier by Margarita and Serafina. The evil characters' lack of humanity (sin piedad) makes them cruel (cruel)[19] and they are frequently cowards (pusilánime). At the end of the first act, Federico appears, disguised as his own ambassador, the Marquess of Pescara, to seek the hand of Margarita.

The structure of the play is typical of Mira's dramatic technique. The first act presents a theme and a situation and the rest of the play develops the ideas and the plot to its logical conclusion. In this case, the dramatist sets himself the task of marrying Margarita to Federico, and Carlos to Serafina, while Conrado and Otavio are to be punished. This is effected through the strength of Federico's Neapolitan army. The thematic purpose of the play is to show that "No hay reinar como el vivir" (p. 454) which is explained by Federico to mean:

Que debemos estimar
el vivir más que el reinar. (p. 454)

At the levels of plot, theme, and dramatic structure, No hay reinar como vivir is a very successful play. But the impression that the play leaves is not a very good one. The reason is that the characters are stereotyped and wooden; consequently they do not involve the audience's sympathies at all. The conflict is external, between good and bad characters and there is little inner conflict. There are moments when Carlos almost comes to life when he doubts Serafina's loyalty; but the only character in the play with life of his own is the gracioso, Camilo.

In sharp contrast to the economical structure of No hay reinar como vivir is the exuberance of the early tragicomedy La rueda de la Fortuna. In his doctoral thesis Vern G. Williamsen attempted to describe the plot of the play commenting that:

> Mira adds sub-plots in such profusion, in this case, that they distract from the total value of the work. (p. 78) [20]

> The true simplicity of the basic plot is hard to discern beneath this crawling mass of episodic material and sub-plots, but it is there as can be seen from a careful study of the final few verses of the denouement. (p. 79) [21]

Williamsen's error is to look for simplicity in a very complex play. La rueda de la Fortuna has two interlinked plots, which are complementary and which are only joined with the marriage of Mitilene and Heraclius in the last scene of the play. The unity of the play must be sought in its theme and the image of the wheel of Fortune. It is this thematic and imagistic unity which binds together the two plots of the play, which are the stories of Heraclius and Mitilene, the new Emperor and Empress. The fortunes of this couple are the poles around which are clustered all the other characters.

One of the two plots, which, for convenience, I shall call the primary plot, deals with the succession of Maurice, Phocas, and Heraclius. The primary plot is concerned with religion and the Church, with monarchs and politics, and with family love. The secondary plot is concerned with the lovers of Mitilene and deals with sexual love, with fealty, and with charity and friendship. The two plots are complementary for they present a man's five possible relationships: with God, with monarchs, with family, with the opposite sex, and with his fellow men.

The dominant image in the play is that of the wheel of Fortune. All of the characters are seen to be affected by the wheel, for all of them are shown to be at the bottom of the wheel at one moment, and at the top at another moment in the play. There are also several examples of doubles in the play: Leonicio and Filipo; Heraclius and Teodosio; Mitilene and Teodolinda.

The play opens with the secondary plot. It contrasts the victory of Filipo to the defeat of Leonicio. Filipo narrates

how he was favored by Fortuna and thus achieved his great victory (1-112, p. 3). The Emperor, Maurice, receives him with smiles and favors:

> Hoy, capitán vencedor,
> corona en tus sienes vea,
> el sol de su resplandor;
> tu misma victoria sea
> el premio de tu valor.
> Hacerte inmortal procuro
> y harán tu nombre seguro
> desde el Betis hasta Hidaspes,
> colunas de varios jaspes
> y estatuas de bronce duro.
> (113-22, p. 3)

The scene of the victory and general rejoicing is shattered by Leonicio, who enters on a discordant note:

> Tocan cajas destempladas, y trompa ronca. . .
>
> Leonicio — Ronca la trompa bastarda,
> destemplado el atambor. . . .
> (148-9, p. 4)

He goes on to lament the changeableness of Fortuna, complaining that death spared him:

> Pero quiso mi desdicha
> librarme en esta ocasión
> de la pena de la muerte. (172-5, p. 4)

At first he was winning the battle, but the arrival of Khosru, the Persian Prince,[22] turned the tide:

> Y vimos más confusión
> en el ejército nuestro
> que en la torre de Nembrot. (261-3, p. 4)

In the resultant confusion, the Persians are victorious:

> Cogiendo los enemigos
> de copete la ocasión. (274-5, p. 4)

In the defeat, Leonicio manages to capture one prisoner, Mitilene—the sister of Khosru. Despite his desire for her, he does not touch her, and narrates his only victory:

> Vencido vengo del persa
> pero de mí mismo no,
> pues no he llegado a su mano
> aunque la tengo afición. (304-7, p. 4)

Mitilene becomes the object of the desire of all the male characters in the play, and they are tested by their reactions to the opportunities they have to possess her.

The Emperor, who is controlled by his passions, reacts negatively to Leonicio's moral victory and reviles him:

Sentimiento natural
cuando de otro está vencido,
tiene, cualqûier animal;
mas tú, que no lo has tenido,
no eres hombre natural. (327-331, p. 4)

The speech is a subtle piece of characterisation, for the Emperor expects man to show animal nature but Leonicio has conquered his passions. Leonicio is dishonored and disarmed at the Emperor's command and then he is ordered to dress as a woman. This symbolic emasculation is completed by the command 'hile ya con rueca' (350, p. 4). This is an ominous reminder of the wheel of Fortune, and the comparison of rueca/ rueda is made by the Emperor when he calls Leonicio 'Parca de la patria' (334, p. 4). Filipo then pleads for his friend, revealing for the first time his friendship and his love for his fellow men. This long, rather static, opening sequence stresses the inconstancy of Fortune, and the way a man's luck may change, not just from good to bad, but from bad to good.

As he leaves, Leonicio addresses Mitilene:

¡Ay, famosa Mitilene!
no te estima como yo
el que en tan poco le tiene
al hombre que te venció. (442-5, p. 5)

She then addresses Maurice on Leonicio's behalf and stresses that Leonicio has won two notable victories. She also emphasises the need of a ruler to be brave and daring, but also, and more importantly, he should be prudent:

No es ley ni bien que deshonres
lo que honrado debe ser;
vencedor es, no te asombres
porque hay en Persia mujer
de más valor que mil hombres. . . .
Tu capitán es valiente,
atrevido con valor,
y reportado prudente,
que ésta es la mayor virtud
para quien gobierna gente.
Si vencedor no se escapó,
la fortuna lo ordenó,
dudosa, adversa, esquiva. (447-74, p. 5)

Maurice ignores her words and instead puts her virtue to the test by offering her gifts. He attempts to buy her love, because for Maurice love has become a marketable comodity. She rejects him in no uncertain terms:

Esa nueva alteración
que tú vieja edad pretende,
merece mi corrección,
pues si mi rostro la enciende,
la templa mi condición:
persiana soy. . . .
Si tu sacra majestad,
porque su cautiva vivo,
muestra en mí su potestad,
el cuerpo tengo cautivo,
no la voluntad;
nunca lascivos amores
me enseñaron mis mayores;
de una pica me enamoro
no de perlas, plata y oro,
guirnaldas, bálsamo y flores.
(533-72, p. 5-6)

Her language leaves no doubt that she is more attracted to virile manliness than to the limp and effeminate gifts offered by the Emperor.

Filipo, who is betrothed to the Princess Teodolinda, is also attracted to Mitilene. The Princess is naturally jealous and tries to hide Mitilene from Filipo's sight:

(No la tiene de mirar,
luna soy, que he de eclipsar
este sol para sus ojos.) (613-5, p. 6)

The Prince, Teodosio, is the fourth man to be attracted to Mitilene. His words reveal that he is given up to his passions, and scorns love for his family:

Si [el emperador] empidiere mi mal fuerte,
aunque más mi padre sea,
le tengo de dar la muerte,
aunque no la deba ser,
ni me parió su mujer,
que según los aborrezco,
hijo de tigre parezco,
o fui trocado al nacer. (650-7, p. 6)

The speech both reveals Teodosio's character and prepares the audience for the subsequent revelation that Teodosio is not the real Prince.

The secondary plot occupies one long scene in each act. The second scene in Act Two, is the continuation of the secondary plot. It takes place in the mountains where Heraclius has taken Mitilene. He has done so on the instructions of Aureliana, so that Mitilene will not be a temptation to Maurice and the other members of the court. The opening of this scene is pastoral and

idyllic. Heraclius and some singers serenade Mitilene. She is surprised at his courtly language:

Mitilene ¿Cómo estás tan cortesano?
Eraclio Con amor teme el tirano
oye el sordo, y habla el mudo,
calla el loco, entiende el rudo,
y es político el villano. (1478-82, p. 11)

Heraclius is ennobled by love, for he can control his passions, while others are made worse by love.

This scene is pivotal; it occurs about halfway through the play and shows the reaction of the main characters to Mitilene. The latter is attracted only to Heraclius:

Yo en el grado que te quiero,
a ninguno quise bien. (1483-4, p. 11)

In the context grado does not mean quantity of love, but type of love: she has loved her father and her brother before, but has never experienced sexual love.

Heraclius leaves her to sleep, while he goes to find a stag she had been hunting and had wounded. In his absence three of the other characters are tested. Leonicio is the first. He enters bewailing his misfortune, but now he has the opportunity to avenge himself on fortune for Mitilene is alone, asleep and defenceless. His first instinct is to take advantage of her:

¡Oh dulcísima ocasión
del estado en que me veo!
Ella es, yo la despierto—
mas no querrá un hombre muerto,
que tal es un afrentado—
despierta no me ha querido
¿y ansí he de abrazarla yo
ahora que se ha dormido?—
Tente apetito, eso no,
que es amor descomedido.
Entre estos lentiscos quiero
mirarla con afición,
y será el hombre primero
que se venció en la ocasión
teniendo amor verdadero, (1558-77, p. 11)

This speech reveals fully Leonicio's conflicting emotions. As he decides to hide, Prince Teodosio appears with two men. They find Mitilene and tie her to a tree. Teodosio wants to possess her through force. Teodosio is like Maurice, for they both want love but do not offer love in return. Maurice wants to buy it;

Teodosio wants to steal it:

Teodosio — Y ahora me has de querer,
y por fuerza te he de vencer
tu rebelde voluntad.
Mitilene — ¿Cómo has de poder forzarla
pues aun no la fuerza Dios? (1617-21, p. 12)
Teodosio — Lo que hay de la flecha al pecho
hay de la vida a la muerte.
Mitilene — Y lo que hay del suelo al cielo
habrá de mis pensamientos
a tus cobardes intentos. (1674-8, p. 12)

Mitilene reminds the Prince that he lacks reason, honor, and courage. His designs are thwarted by Leonicio through the device of the Voces del cielo.[23]

Teodosio leaves and his place is taken by Filipo who is able to resist the temptation offered to him, and he frees Mitilene. Leonicio watches the struggle that Filipo has to make. He rejoices at his friend's victory: "Esta victoria / hemos ganado los dos" (1762-3, p. 12). In this scene Leonicio reaffirms and Mitilene and Filipo establish their moral integrity.

Filipo's trial is not over yet, for Leonicio has decided to test him on another level:

Sólo queda el amistad
que me ha tenido. (1768-9, p. 12)

Filipo is not aware of the identity of Leonicio who approaches him and narrates his misfortune and begs alms, Leonicio tells how:

Rico pensaba morir,
y ya vivo pobremente,
si no soy como la fuente
que baja para subir.
Otro es ya lo que fui
lo que fueron otros soy. (1796-1801, p. 12-3)[24]

This speech introduces the important concept of identity and stresses that as the world changes and the wheel of Fortune revolves, man must struggle constantly to find and keep his identity. Man must establish this through what he does, not what he is. In Mira's plays nobility is based on worth not birth.

Filipo is moved by the petition of Leonicio (1824-67, p. 13) and gives him esos pobres despojos. The sequence is in contrast to an earlier scene in the play, in which a beggar relates to

the Empress Aureliana that Maurice has forbidden the giving of alms to beggars:

> Nos manda el emperador
> no darles, y me recelo.
> Aureliana Si es la limosna en el cielo
> como en el suelo el favor,
> ¿la niega? (717-21, p. 6)

Refusing to give alms is a denial of charity and of Christian love.

After Filipo leaves, Mitilene reappears and questions Leonicio, whom she does not recognise:

> Mitilene ¿Quién eres?
> Leonicio Dos fui y soy uno.
> Mitilene ¡Extraña naturaleza!
> Dos hombres asido en uno.
> Leonicio Dos fuimos yo y mi riqueza;
> ya soy pobre y no soy ninguno.
> Mitilene ¿Tanto has sentido el perder
> que pierdes también el ser?
> Leonicio Sí, que en haberla perdido
> tan otro soy dél que he sido
> que no me has de conocer.
> Mitilene ¿Qué es tu riqueza perdida?
> Leonicio Vida y honra.
> Mitilene ¡Gran deshonra!
> ¿Quién fue causa?
> Leonicio Tu venida;
> por ella perdí mi honra,
> quizá mi hacienda y vida. (1887-1091, p. 13)

This interchange stresses the concept of identity, and the idea that each man has more than one possible identity. Leonicio's words are true in a literal as well as a symbolic sense, for Mitilene does <u>not</u> recognise him.

The end of the scene restores the pastoral idyll of the opening, but the idyll is destroyed by Mitilene, who narrates her birth as the natural child of the King of Persia, and her position of power in the Persian court. The speech introduces the court into the country and completely destroys the idyllic setting. Heraclius exclaims:

> ¡Esperanzas mal logradas!
> ¡Ay, imaginaciones muertas! (2047-8, p. 14)

He then wishes she had never been born, in a speech which has eight parallel clauses containing <u>nunca</u> and the subjunctive. He goes back through all the effective causes to lament the inequality of their births. (2015-48, p. 14)

The final scene of the play links the two plots, and brings them both to a joint conclusion. It repeats two key plot sequences: the asking of alms; and the test. It also introduces two important images which are subsidiary to that of the wheel of Fortune.

Since the last episode in the secondary plot in the second scene of Act Two, the wheel has revolved and now it is Leonicio who is in power, and Filipo must beg alms from his friend. When Filipo sees Leonicio in a position of power, he determines to see if his erstwhile friend has been changed by his good fortune:

> (Leonicio, mi amigo, viene. . .
> pero mil vueltas ha dado
> en su estado, y no sé
> si el amistad y la fe
> se mudan con el estado.) (3019-28, p. 20)

This sequence is parallel to the earlier one and Filipo who is disguised, approaches his friend in order to beg alms. The parallel between the sequences is very close for both men are ashamed to beg. Filipo describes his misfortunes, using the image of the wheel and the two subsidiary images of the World as a Stage, and as a Game:

> ¡Ah, rueda de la Fortuna!
> Caballero, mi esperanza
> es teatro en quien le fundo
> represente su mudanza,
> y yo el personaje segundo
> de la comedia <u>privanza</u>;
> yo representé un leal
> luego un capitán triunfando,
> y después un general,
> y ya estoy representando
> un pobre a lo natural;. . .
> representé un vencedor
> en la jornada primera,
> y, aquesta, que es la postrera,
> representé lo peor
> . . . . . -or[25]
> si muero desta caída
> será mi vida tragedia
> en desgracia fenecida;
> quiera Dios hacer comedia
> del discurso de mi vida. . . .
> Como el mundo es un tablero
> en que no hay persona alguna
> que no juegue y sea tercero,
> el naipe, que es la Fortuna,
> me dijo muy bien primero. . . etc. (3034-79, p.20)

In Leonicio's reply he refers to both images, making mention of 'el teatro violento/ deste mundo' (3086ff., p. 20); and 'el naipe de la Fortuna' (3095ff., p. 20). Filipo's words, like Leonicio's earlier (see above, p. 214), have both a symbolic and literal meaning, for they describe their parts in the play.

Leonicio now returns to Filipo those pobres despojos which Filipo had originally given him (they have 'come full circle'). As he hands them over he refers to them as his 'winnings', and moralises on the nature of riches:

> Yo recibí buena obra,
> y Dios me la dio en empeño,
> pagar quiero, tú la cobra,
> porque el hombre pobre es dueño
> de lo que al rico le sobra;
> aunque nos parecen dadas,
> las limosnas son prestadas,
> como arcaduces vivimos,
> que damos y recibimos,
> y andan las suertes trocadas. (3105-14, p. 20)

This 'conduit' image is an important statement on the nature of riches and of charity (see above, p 83).

Leonicio, having tested Filipo's virtue and charity, now tests his loyalty to his Empress and his mistress. Leonicio informs Filipo that the Emperor has pardoned him and one out of the three women he is escorting. Filipo must choose between his 'obligación natural' (3181) to Aureliana, his Empress; his 'amor' (3184) for Mitilene; and his 'humano agradecimiento' (3185, p. 21) to Teodolinda, the woman who loves him and is betrothed to him:

> Que la una es mi señora,
> otra me estima y adora,
> y yo adoro a Mitilene.
> (3169-71, p. 21)

The three women are also tested, for they can influence his decision. Teodolinda, with Mitilene's tacit agreement, urges him to choose the Empress. He realises that she is right 'Dices, señora, la verdad' (3209, p. 21). He now offers his own life for one of the younger women. His offer is accepted, but his dilemma remains. He decides:

> Filipo — Viva la infanta y perdona
> que contigo he de morir.
> Mitilene — Has acertado a elegir
> como noble. (3245-8, p. 21)

Leonicio announces they are all free and passes judgment on the behavior of all of them:

> Una corona
> merecerá tu lealtad,
> y la vida que yo tengo
> es de todas. (3248-51, p. 21)

It is at this point that the two plots are linked. During the second act, when Leonicio hadrescued Mitilene from Teodosio, Mitilene had given him her ring and pledged herself to him. As the play is about to come to its predictable conclusion and Heraclius says:

> Y a Mitilene la mano
> de esposo [tengo de dar]. (3451-2, p. 22)

Leonicio stops the new Emperor. This sequence suggests an unconventional tendency in Mira's theater, which can be seen elsewhere. Leonicio says:

> No puede ser
> porque la suya me ha dado. (3453-4, p. 22)

He then relates the facts. This tests Mitilene, who proves her nobility by accepting her obligation and giving Leonicio her hand. Leonicio reaffirms once again his nobility and lays stress on the idea of overcoming oneself by giving Mitilene's hand to Heraclius.[26] This final action confirms Leonicio's victory over himself and over Mitilene, whose destiny he is able to control. He has established his identity as a noble and loyal subject as Aureliana says:

Leonicio
> Pues ahora
> serás esposa de Eraclio:
> vencerme quiero a mí mismo,
> él es señor y yo criado,
> y él merece solamente
> ser tu esposa.

Aureliana
> Leal vasallo. (3465-70, p. 22)

The function of the secondary plot is to stress the apparent capriciousness of Fortune which is in fact a symptom of the inexorability of the revolutions of Fortune's wheel. Mira uses three images to develop this concept: the first is the wheel of Fortune, which makes life appear like a huge lottery, the second is the game of cards, the third is the World as a Stage-play. In all three the element of "play" is emphasised, for all man can hope to do is keep control of his passions and "play" the game."

In all three scenes of the secondary plot there is a triangle whose apex is Mitilene, for the struggles and reversals of Filipo and Leonicio depend on Mitilene. She is the pole and core of the secondary plot, and in the last scene she is united to Heraclius, thus uniting both plots.

The primary plot is concerned with similar ideas and situations, and completes the picture presented by the secondary plot, stressing the other relationships open to a man. This plot deals with the historical material of the play. Mira alters history by telescoping the reign of Phocas into one day, and making Heraclius the son of Maurice. Despite the apparent anachronisms,[27] the historical material has been adapted by Mira to give greater cohesion to his ideas. There is a historical basis for the revenge taken by Heraclius on the usurper Phocas, and it is also true that Khosru II was desirous of avenging the death of Maurice.

The primary plot begins in the second scene of the first act, when Heraclius and his foster-father Eracliano arrive at court. The young man admits that:

> Los campos con su quietud
> mis espíritus levantan. (701-2, p. 6)

and goes on to describe the countryside at length but he is attracted to the glamor and the glory of the court and of arms:[28] this trait hints at his royal birth:

> Mas la trompa, el atambor,
> la gente, la urbanidad,
> la corte, la majestad
> de un rey, de un emperador
> más me inclina, más me alegra. (705-9, p. 6)

Eracliano has brought Heraclius to meet the Empress, Aureliana, to whom the young man is inexplicably attracted:

> No sé qué deidad me inclina
> a respetar su presencia,
> como a una cosa divina;
> inquietos están mis brazos
> para llegar a abrazalla.—
> Eraclio, bárbaro, calla,
> ¿tú, a emperatriz, abrazos? (757-64, p. 7)

The innate filial affection and respect of Heraclius is in contrast to the hatred shown by Teodosio (see above, p 211 , and below, p 219). The image cosa divina is the first of many

comparisons between the Empress and the Church.

Heraclius conveniently falls asleep and misses the narration of Aureliana. She tells Eracliano about her marriage to Maurice, the birth of Heraclius, and the premonitory dreams which caused her to exchange her own child for Teodosio, the son of a slave. Her narrative is punctuated by the refrain:

> ¡Ay cielo, ay rigor, ay cruel castigo!
> Cumpla estos sueños Dios sólo conmigo.
> (793-4, 819-20, 833-4, 847-8, 861-2, p. 7)

While she is narrating these dreams, Heraclius has a prophetic dream which he believes to be:

> Niñerías,
> imposibles confusiones,
> que causan las ilusiones
> del sueño y sus fantasías. (899-902, p. 7)

He describes the dream to Eracliano and Aureliana:

> Emperador del oriente
> y del occidente soy,
> vengando la muerte estoy
> de una cordera inocente. (886-9, p. 7)

Having established the true parentage of Heraclius he can be contrasted more vividly with Teodosio. The latter enters, his dagger drawn, hot in pursuit of Mitilene, whom he desires to possess by force. His attitude is both callous and cynical:

> ¿Qué mujer tuvo jamás
> verdadera resistencia? (953-4, p. 8)

This rhetorical question is answered by the conduct of Mitilene.

The Empress, in her dual rôle as mother and sovereign, attempts to restrain Teodosio:

> ¿En mi presencia
> solicitándola estás
> sin recato y con violencia? (950-2, p. 8)

The Empress's words have an immediate effect on Teodosio, but not the one that her age and position warrant:

> Toma, pues, un bofetón.
> Dejaré en tu rostro escrito
> que mi voluntad confirmes
> y no impidas me apetito. (974-7, p. 8)

Heraclius is horrified and expresses his feelings in a speech beginning:

> ¡Ejes del cielo, estad firmes
> a tan bárbaro delito. . . ! (978-9, p. 8)

This is the first test of the character of Heraclius. The speech, and the behavior of Heraclius reveals his virtuous qualities. He attacks the Prince, who flees ignominiously and Heraclius's actions reveal his bravery, while his words identify him with the forces of God:

> Ira soy de Dios sangrienta,
> porque el castigo no tarda
> a quien sus padres afrenta; (1022-4, p. 8)

The scene and the act end with the reaffirmation of the attraction and respect that Heraclius feels for Aureliana:

> Esta emperatriz me arranca
> el alma cuando la miro. (1083-4, p. 8)

The second act begins with the repetition of the same ideas, and reaffirms the lack of moral feelings which characterise Teodosio and Maurice.[29] The Prince is angry at his mother because she has caused Mitilene to be hidden in the mountains. Aureliana pleads with her (adopted) son, and she goes down on her knees to him to beg him to restrain himself on account of all she has suffered for him. Aureliana is again identified with the Church and with religion by Teodolinda:

> Tu majestad ¿para qué
> arrodillada se ha visto
> a mi hermano? Sólo Cristo
> mejor que su madre fue;
> sólo la virgen podía
> arrondillarse a sus pies,
> y tú, Teodosio, ¿no ves
> que esta es nueva tiranía?
> ¿No has visto que no conoce
> la paternal reverencia? (1157-66, p. 9)

Teodosio is unmoved by this appeal. His scornful reply to his sister identifies him specifically with the devil. The speech also reveals Teodosio's lack of fraternal as well as filial affection:

> Algún demonio me ha hecho
> que os aborrezca y me incita. . . .
> Hidrópico soy, mi sed
> es beber sangre humana;
> la tuya derramaré
> si aconsejas desa suerte. (1169-86, p. 10)

At this point, Maurice arrives. He has already been presented as callous, lascivious and uncharitable. He also lacks the love of mercy and the concern for his subjects that should

inspire the Christian monarch. He is a tyrant in his personal life, for he has no respect for his wife and is driven by an adulterous passion. In sexual matters his passions are uncontrolled by reason. He maltreats Aureliana:

> Hipócrita ¿donde tienes
> el ídolo de mi amor? (Arrástrala de los cabellos)
> (1225-6, p. 9)

The imagery is again religious, and Maurice spurns his wife, who is identified with the Church, for an idol (ídolo).

The Empress is identified even more closely with the Church, whose representative she becomes when she brings in a letter from St. Gregory the Great, who is seeking the Emperor's aid to relieve the Holy City from the siege of the Lombards.[30] Maurice reacts strongly to the letter and declares 'El mucho desamor que al Papa tengo' (1284, p. 10).

Maurice's refusal to aid the Pope is interpreted by Aureliana:

> Señor, mira tu grandeza
> que un cuerpo son los cristianos,
> y no es bien que estén las manos
> contrarias de la cabeza.
> Cuerpo es la iglesia, señor,
> y sufrirá muchos males
> si los miembros principales
> no le prestan el favor;
> cuerpo el Papa, y el rey es
> brazos deste cuerpo mixto:
> la cabeza sólo es Cristo
> y los demás somos pies. (1285-96, p. 10)

Maurice reacts adversely to these sermones, but this moment is the turning point in his life. He denies both wife and Church:

> Pues no me tiene afición
> la que niega mi opinión
> y contradice mi gusto. (1322-4, p. 10)

He rejects the Christian virtues of prudence and temperance. Immediately following this speech, he hears an ominous noise which he describes as 'Extraño temblor de tierra' (1326, p. 10). This idea repeats that expressed by Heraclius at the behavior of Teodosio in striking the Empress:

> ¿Como tú, tierra pesada. . .
> no tiembles ni te estremeces
> viendo una madre agraviada? (990-4, p. 8)

The very earth appears to react to Maurice's rejection of wife and Church: all three are mothers. This supernatural intervention

could be an hallucination however, for it now changes to:

> Batallas de hombre armados
> en el aire congelados. (1338-9, p. 10)

All of these phenomena could be accounted for psychologically, as the workings of Maurice's conscience. Whatever the effective cause, the phenomena make Maurice afraid. He fears that there might be life beyond death, that death is near, and he is unprepared to face it:

> Nadie se puede esconder
> del castigo de los cielos.
> Viva el hombre con recelos
> de la justicia divina
> que a los soberbios derriba,
> sólo al humilde levanta;. . .
> Volver quiero al pensamiento
> a Dios que es el pensamiento
> donde el alma he de estribar. (1359-74, p. 10)

The Emperor's repentance is sudden, but lasting. His whole attitude to life changes with the realisation that he is mortal and may be doomed to eternal damnation:

> Dios me quiere castigar
> y mi pecho lo desea;
> como en esta vida sea,
> favor al Papa he de dar.
> La emperatriz es muy santa,
> ella será intecesora
> con el justo juez que ahora
> con su sentencia me espanta. (1418-25, p. 10-1)

The last scene of the act reaffirms the Emperor's repentance. Maurice asks his wife to intercede for him and his language and attitude to her have changed drastically:

> Devota, santa, piadosa,
> pacífica, religiosa,
> discreta, humilde, obediente,
> mártir que sufre paciente
> mi condición rigurosa,
> ruega a Dios, pues es tu amigo,
> que en la muerte que me imbía,
> se resuelva mi castigo;
> ampárame, santa mía. . . . (2094-102, p. 14)

Aureliana, as a virtuous woman, is now identified not only with the Church but also with the Blessed Virgin Mary, who intercedes for sinners.[31]

The Emperor's conversion must be tested, He is forewarned that he will be killed by Phocas. Filipo brings the latter to the Emperor, who must choose between self-preservation on the

one hand, and justice, mercy and humanity on the other. Maurice talks of the future murder:

> ¿Cómo podré yo impedillo
> si Dios lo ha determinado?. . . .
> Y a mi Dios tendré contento
> regalando el instrumento
> con que me ha de castigar. . . .
> Mira que es mala crianza
> quitarle a Dios el azote. . . .
> Darle un abrazo quisiera
> por abrazarme a la cruz
> donde Dios quiere que muera. (2147-220, p. 14-5)

Even Filipo advises the Emperor to kill Phocas, but Maurice is merciful, and lets Phocas go.

The repentance of Maurice is private and personal, but it is his previous public actions which will have the most effect in the world. The wheel of Fortune has kept on turning and not even the Emperor can turn it back. His soldiers rise in arms because of his denial of the Pope and the Church. There is a rebellion because:

> El ejército quiere que elijamos
> emperador qué ampare nuestra Iglesia.
> (2256-7, p. 15)

Leonicio urges them on because of his own disgrace and because he wants justice:

> Elegid, elegid otro, pacífico,
> justiciero, clemente, afable y próspero.
> Mauricio en el gobierno está decrépito.
> (2315-7, p. 15)

The soldiers choose Leonicio as Emperor. He clears his own name and regains his honor. He stresses that he does this to be just, not for personal desires:

> No es bien que emperador y alto monarca
> satisfaga el agravio de Leonicio. . . .
> (2350-1, p. 15)

Then he abdicates. His abdication is followed by a semi-supernatural scene in which Phocas is saved from suicide and made Emperor. He will prove to be a worse Emperor than Maurice, and will not defend the Church, despite the pious desires of the army.

In the ensuing scene, there is a sequence which hovers between the comic and the pathetic. Maurice attempts to escape from his palace, while Filipo protects him from his rebellious

soldiers. The Emperor's desire to save his own skin is rather pathetic and shows his utter lack of fortitude.[32] The appearance of his wife and daughter returns him to reason. At the sight of Teodolinda, the first expression of tenderness and regard for others escapes him: 'Ay hija amada' (2640, p. 18). He orders Filipo to take care of his womenfolk:

> Llévalas, Filipo, apriesa
> y vivan por tu valor
> la emperatriz y princesa. (2647-9, p. 18)

The parting of mother and daughter from the father is one of love and repentance. It is one of the tenderest moments in the play. During this sequence Aureliana reveals to Maurice the true identity of Heraclius and Teodosio.

After Filipo and the two women have left, Phocas arrives 'en la rueda. . . / de la Fortuna subido' (2690-1, p. 18). He proceeds to act in a barbarous way. He dishonors the Emperor:

> Mi tapete has de ser hoy
> porque quiero pisar blando. (2730-1, p. 18)

He then orders that Teodosio be torn apart by being tied to four horses. The condemned Prince draws the moral about his own lack of filial affection:

> Los cielos pretenden
> que mueran despedazados
> hijos que la madre ofenden,
> soberbios mal criados. (2713-6, p. 18)

Phocas' reasons for executing the Prince are not such moral ones for he wants to remove a possible rival for his crown, and 'quitar la ocasión' (2707, p. 18). He can recognise the dangers of opportunism.

Phocas repays the Emperor's previous mercy to him with murder. Maurice is left to die:

> Muera solo porque sea
> hasta en morir desgraciado,
> y solo su muerte vea
> ese villano o soldado. (2793-6, p. 18)

The irony is that Maurice does not die unhappy, but finds worldly and spiritual happiness in his son, Heraclius—who is the villano o soldado. The ensuing scene is another tender moment in the play.

The pleasure of his discovery overwhelms Maurice:

> El alma me ha desmayado
> este gusto demasiado. (2864-5, p. 19)

He finds eternal peace, dying with the words:

> En vuestras manos señor,
> este espíritu encomiendo. (2955-6, p. 19)

In his last long speech, before he dies, he advises Heraclius how to behave and do his duty. It is one of the clearest statements in Mira's theater of how man should act (2897-946, p. 19), as the following extracts show:

> Toma siempre el buen consejo,
> honra al clérigo y al viejo,
> reparte a pobres tus bienes,
> y por si soberbia tienes,
> pobre y humilde te dejo;
> castiga al que lo merece,
> no pongas mucho tributo;
> que más en Dios resplandece. . . 33
> . . . . . .
> . . . . . .

Heraclius feels the same innate attraction to Maurice that he had felt for Aureliana. This attraction is reinforced when he discovers his real parentage. It also proves the innate worth of the future Emperor, who never shirks or denies the holiness of the heart's affections. Heraclius always follows, and is guided by, his feelings, which are a mixture of passion and reason. He is the nearly perfect man who reacts in the right way in every situation. Mira has almost solved in this play the problem of presenting goodness on the stage.

The humanity of Heraclius is evident in the last scene. He kills Phocas out of a sense of Justice, at Phocas' murder of Maurice who was both an old man and Emperor. Phocas he describes as:

> Un hombre desesperado,
> un bárbaro en las costumbres,
> monstruo en las obras y trato,
> enemigo riguroso
> de nuestro linaje humano. . . .
> (3384-8, p. 22)

Heraclius scorns the empty vanities of the world. His attitude is that which was the moral center of No hay reinar como vivir (see above, p 204-7):

> Vida quiero, no el imperio
> que es miserable teatro. (3399-400, p. 22)

Ironically it is his scorn for the Imperial crown that makes him fit to wear it. He is proclaimed Emperor, marries Mitilene,

and his faithful general, Filipo, marries his new-found sister, Teodolinda.

La rueda de la Fortuna is one of the clearest expositions of Mira's view of the world. It is an important play because of this, but it is also a great play in its own right. It develops the idea of the inexorable revolutions of the wheel of Fortune. All of the characters in the play, except the saintly Aureliana, are tested during the course of the action in five different relationships. They all receive the measures of happiness consistent with their success in overcoming their passions. The play is far from simplistic in its moralising, for Maurice achieves spiritual happiness in death, and Leonicio achieves moral happiness by giving up the woman he loves. Mira's presentation of the world is realistic—for it is not possible for everyone to receive a reward in the world.

The play is concerned with the way people seek their identity in the world. Those who resist their passions—Heraclius, Leonicio, Filipo, Mitilene, Teodolinda—find happiness: those who give in to them—Phocas and Teodosio—are destroyed. Maurice repents and finds happiness although he is destroyed for his previous errors. All the characters have to find their own identity, nobility, and honor. For many it is a spiritual search, but Heraclius and Teodosio must search for their physical identity. During the course of the play Heraclius, Leonicio, Filipo, Teodosio, Mitilene, and Khosru are all disguised and either do not know their own identities or other people do not know their true identities. In this search for moral identity they must prove their worth through actions without the aid of their names and their physical identity.

In La rueda de la Fortuna, Mira manages to fuse the two plots by his use of imagery. By the constant reminder of the image of the wheel of Fortune and the subsidiary images of the World as a stage, as a game, and as a play, the theme of the play is kept before the audience. Mira also uses religious imagery which is applied to the Empress, who is identified both with the mother Church and mother Nature, as well as with the Virgin Mary, in order to reinforce this theme, Hercalius is attracted to the Empress and this is symptomatic of the rightness of his feelings.

The language of the play is competent and functional, and provides few examples of a developed "poetical" style. The language is consistent with the character of the speakers and the mood of the scene, which can change from the horror at the callous murder of Maurice by Phocas to the tender, almost lyrical, scene between the dying Emperor and his newly found son.

The language of El galán secreto is similar to that of La rueda de la Fortuna. It is functional and highly competent without being "poetical." Throughout the play, however, there are repeated phrases which give the play its unity. This is a common trait in Mira's theater, it has already been observed in No hay reinar como vivir (see above, p 203-7), and many examples of it can be found in Chapter Five (see above, p 142).

Many of the tragicomedies deal with intrigue, but they never manage to create a mood of mystery, which is the prevailing mood of El galán secreto. The characters remain in a perpetual state of ignorance and mystification, especially about the identity of other characters, until the very last scene. The play contains many examples of Mira's use of dramatic irony, which is similar to peripeteia (see above, p 194).

The opening of the play is one of the most arresting and one of the best not only in the theater of Mira de Amescua, but in that of the whole of Spain's Golden Age. It begins in medias res and it is possible that this influenced Calderón, many of whose plays begin in this way.[34] As the play begins, the loquacious and cautious gracioso, Guarín, is awaiting his master. He is attacked and driven off by an irrestistible masked assailant. Guarín defends himself with his sword and his master with his tongue:

> Un amo que competir
> pueda al espárrago y Fénix,
> . . . tan gentil
> que es Narciso de sí mismo. (p. 318)

The humor of the speech should not be allowed to obscure the fact that Guarín is full of his master's praises and is able to make complex, classical allusions. He is typical of the loyal and learned gracioso in Mira's theater. After Guarín has been

forced to leave his post, the masked assailant reveals himself to the audience as César, Guarín's master.

The second scene accomplishes three things. It provides an exposition of the events leading up to the opening of the play; it portrays the main traits of the principal characters; and it carries the action forward, maintaining the air of mystery and adventure. César is a newcomer in Ferrara, who had arrived at an opportune moment and saved the Duke's life, as a result he is now high in the Duke's favor. He is the only character in the play who is sure of his own identity, who is humble in his estimation of his own worth, and who views honor as something more than mere appearance:

> Si nací
> noble, y de su modo infiero
> el fin de alguna acción vil,
> si no estorbo su traición
> dirán que la consentí,
> que aunque nadie lo vea, basta
> que un noble le culpe así. (p. 319)

This rationalisation is the result of observing various masked men who are waiting to ambush the Duke; the leader of the ambushers is Federico, the Duke's cousin. He is envious of the favor which has been shown to César by the Duke, and is consequently full of hatred for the Duke's partiality. He is also annoyed that the Duke's sister, Porcia, has rejected him in favor of an unknown rival. This rival is in fact César, although neither César nor Federico are yet aware of her choice. Federico states his own motives for killing the Duke:

> Estoy resuelto,
> que amor y ambición
> así me disculpa. (p. 319)

Otavio, another member of the Duke's court is also envious of César. Otavio is a much pettier character and his indignation is aroused not against the Duke, but against César himself:

> Siempre serví
> con mala estrella, pues veo
> que un mes César no ha servido
> y a todos es preferido. (p. 320)

The last of the four principal male characters is the Duke. He is a noble and brave man, but is imprudent, rash, and over-

confident in his own powers. This is symbolised by his traversing the streets alone at night. His words show his rashness:

> Siempre un noble acompañado
> va de su mismo valor,. . .
> a los nobles corazones
> su mismo ser los ampara. (p. 319)

He is immediately attacked and is only saved from death by the timely assistance of César. The attack stresses the Duke's lack of prudence. As he isattacked he uses a phrase which becomes a catch-phrase in the play and is the linguistic reminder of the theme of identity:

> Traidores
> soy quien soy. (p. 320)

The word ser and its cognates are of great importance in the play.

César rescues the Duke and in the struggle drives off one of the assailants, whom he forces to unmask. The assailant turns out to be Federico. In the ensuing dialogue the major themes of treachery, nobility, and honor, disguise and identity are developed. Key words are underlined in the following passage:

Federico — Soy quien con infelices
pruebas de cobarde acero,
traidor, atrevido, fiero,
matar al Duque intenté. . . .
Que me mates, César, pido
que si la honra al vivir
debe un noble preferir
antes en trance tan fiero
morir para vivir quiero
que no vivir para morir. . . .

César — ¿Un hombre noble traidor?
Federico, tu nobleza
desmentida en tal bajeza
mas de tú engaño he pensado
que como el rostro, has mudado
también la naturaleza. . . .

Federico — Estoy arrepentido
tanto, que a ser en mi ser
posible, quisiera ser
un ser que no hubiera sido. . . .

César — Dios te ha criado
con un rostro, con mayores
perfecciones y mejores,
cuando tú te pones dos
enmendar quieres de Dios
las obras con tus errores. . . .
La vida del noble es cierta

vela de esplandor vestida,
con fama es vela encendida,
sin fama es vela muerta.
Tu misma traición despierta
hoy el aire que apagó
tu vida, mas llegué yo,
vi la enmienda que te inflama,
hallé pavesa en tu llama,
sopléla y resucitó. (p. 321)

The very striking image of honor being like a candle is to be referred to later in the play.

After this interchange, César persuades Federico to pretend that he was the Duke's unknown defender and thus 'vendrás a privar con él' (p. 322). César's magnanimity is caused by his belief that the Duke had been unfair to Federico. When Federico finds the Duke and reveals that he was his mysterious defender, the Duke indeed takes him into his confidence. This episode underlines the pettiness and envy of Otavio:

No ha de ser César siempre venturoso. . . .
César no prive, y prive quien quisiere.
(p. 325)

Unbeknownst to Federico and César, their discussion had been witnessed by Porcia, whose love for César is fanned into flame by his nobility:

Hoy cual César decir puede
amor; Vine, vi y vencí. (p. 320)

After this long opening sequence, the tone changes from stirring adventure to near farce, but the air of mystery is maintained. César is approached by the maid, Flora, and agrees to a secret rendezvous with an unknown lady. Flora blindfolds him and then leads him off. The lady is Porcia and when César is brought to her, she allows him to take off the blindfold after ordering Flora to:

Mata las bugías. (p. 327)

This is symbolic. The candle represents honor. By interviewing César she is compromising her honor, for it is a 'dishonorable' tête-à-tête.

Although the scene is reminiscent of the story of Psyche and Cupid, César makes a negative comparison of the situation to a much more ominous myth:

Sol debéis ser sin duda
pues me abrasáis de manera

sin ser de Icaro mis alas
que vuestros rayos me ciegan. . . .
(p. 328)

Porcia's reply is that she fears that her honor will be extinguished:

Estoy puesta
con vos en tan alto grado
que mi amor teme. . .
. . . que me bajéis
de ser Sol a ser tinieblas. (p. 328)

Her words are a reminder that the images of Icarus and the Sun and that of the moth who is attracted to a candle and burnt by it are frequently compared (see below, p238-50). Despite these factors, she encourages him to persevere and have faith. It is an example of "Amar sin saber a quien."[35]

Con la fe se alcanzan, César
los milagros que pedís,
perseverad con firmeza,
que quien cree como vos
alcanzara cuanto quiere. (p. 328)

The speech introduces religious imagery. The theme of "Amar sin saber a quien" has explicitly religious implications and the beloved woman is frequently compared to God or to glory (see above, p 96).

After the interview is over, the blindfolded César is left in the street, where he is discovered by Guarín. The latter determines 'así me podré vengar' (p. 330) and plays a trick on César which is similar to the last trick played by Lazarillo de Tormes on the blind beggar. Guarín is unable to be as callous as Lazarillo, however, and César only gets wet. Mira emphasises Guarín's humanity:

Hoy me vengara por Dios
si de lástima no fuera. (p. 330)

The very fact that Guarín has returned to look for his master is a symptom of his loyalty:

¿Quien sino yo
aquesta lealtad tuviera,
pues, teniendo tanto miedo,
vuelvo a buscar con firmeza
a mi amo? (p. 330)

Guarín's words repeat those of Porcia—<u>con firmeza</u>—and indeed master and servant are both marked out by their loyalty and faith.

The motives of Guarín's desire for vengeance are to be found in the following interchange:

César — Si aqueso hicieras
te matara.
Guarín — ¿De hambre o de golpe?
¿Susténtome yo del aire?
¿ No he de saber quién raciones
me ha de dar? (p. 335)

Although Guarín is ready to avenge himself on César for starving him, his loyalty and his common sense come to the fore when the Duke questions him about his master:

Soy hombre
que sé solamente aquello
que me importa. . . .
Sólo me toca a mí
saber si come o no come. . . .
Aunque le da V. Excelencia
con privanzas superiores,
tanta renta él es en todo,
tan Alejandro sin orden,
que la gasta antes con antes. . .
. . . dice
que las cenas y los soles
le hacen mal y así no cena. (p. 336)

Guarín may starve, but César starves with him. Guarín is sure of his identity and his position in life, for he knows only what he needs to know.

Although Federico is now in the Duke's favor, he is torn between gratitude and his sense of obligation to César. Even while saying that he is the Duke's esclavo he curses César under his breath:

Mientras tú vivieres
muero entre tantos favores. (p. 337)

As a result of his crushing sense of obligation, he hires assassins to kill César. This is a crucial decision for Otavio has also decided to kill César out of envy and cruelty (inhumanity):

Hoy su homicida he de ser. . .
matarêle, aunque infiel
y traidor sea. . . .
. . . Mi ventura
estriba en ser hoy cruel. (p. 344)

As Otavio lies in wait for César he is discovered by Federico's hired assassins. They ask him if he is César and he replies in the affirmative. This is the clearest example of peripeteia:

Otavio is murdered because he pretends to be César, hoping to gain some advantage thereby:

> Aquí
> vine a matar, y así muero.
> ¡Ah traidores! (p. 344) 36

The character of Otavio is relatively simplistic up to this point, but with a masterly stroke, Mira breathes subtlety and ambiguity into the character. Otavio dies saying "César, el Cie . . . " (p. 344). This could be a lamentation, a curse, an expression of spite, or a sign of repentance: we will never know which. The impossibilty of fathoming Otavio's true intention adds to the mystery of the play.

The Duke is warned by César of the possibility of there being a traitor about, but he is still self-confident. His words show that the favorite has to fear both the envy of other courtiers and the power of the ruler, who is like the sun:

> César — La enbidia villana
> de algún traidor ser podrá
> por pensar que a su privanza
> estorbo. . . .
> Duque — Si sabéis volar alto
> os sabré cortar las alas. (p. 343)

Despite the warning, the Duke is incapable of seeing the truth.

Before the death of Otavio, César has another interview with Porcia. She acts in as high-handed a way with him as her brother, and she stresses her ducal birth:

> Yo soy quien soy. (p. 341)
>
> O yo no seré quien soy. (p. 342)

Her haughtiness offends César, and he decides to leave. Fear of losing him makes her forget her pride and admit her love. In doing so she goes back on her words, becoming what she had not been. They are in bed together while Otavio is being murdered.

After the Duke learns of the death of Otavio, he decides to leave no stone unturned to discover the murderer and to execute him as an example. The irony of the situation is that there are three people responsible for the death of Otavio. The Duke is the first cause because he was so unwise in the way he favored his subjects. Federico is the second cause because

he sent assassins to kill César. Otavio is the immediate cause because he pretended to be César in order to facilitate his treachery. When the Duke appoints Federico to be police, judge and jury, his words are full of unintentional irony:

> Examina prudente
> delito tan atroz, ya al delincuente
> cualquiera que se hallara,
> castiga sin que en nada se repare.
> (p. 345)

The irony is even clearer when the Duke says he wants to set this example because 'en el alma aborrezco los traidores' (p. 345). Otavio was murdered because both he and Federico were acting the part of traitors. The harshmess of the Duke's commission to Federico is symptomatic of his lack of moderation and mercy.

Federico soon discovers that circumstantial evidence points to the guilt of César. As the latter had slipped away from Porcia's bedroom at dawn, he had found the body of Otavio and as an act of Christian charity he was taking it to Church for burial. Otavio's dying words confirm César's"guilt." The situation is similar to that of Bernardo de Cabrera (see above, p 183), but the irony is much greater: César risks death to do a deed of charity for the man who wanted to kill him. It appears that Otavio's murderous wish will now be successful.

César contends that vengeance is morally wrong:

> No ha de haber venganzas en la muerte.
> (p. 345)

Federico may agree with him, but he is overjoyed when he discovers that justice will wreak vengeance for him:

> Aquí camino
> ha de hallar mi venganza
> contra César. . . .
> Logróse mi venganza. (pp. 345-6)

He argues with himself and with César that he is duty bound to have César executed:

> Sin que pueda nadie
> decir que te libré, ciego
> de pasión por ser tu amigo. (p. 346)

The play has the structure of a tragedy up to this point. César's moral flaw is presumption: he has made two errors. He allowed Federico to go free, and he spent the night with the Duke's sister. It is at this tense point that the play becomes a

tragicomedy. In the political tragedies, the proof of the hero's innocence is found immediately after his execution, but Fortune is kinder in El galán secreto and César's innocence is proved before he can be hurried off to his death.

César had maintained his innocence, but had refused to reveal his alibi in order to protect Porcia's honor. She now disguises herself and vouches for César's innocence. Federico will only accept her evidence if she reveals her identity. When she learns of César's adamant refusal to betray her, she describes him as:

> Tan leal,
> tan callado, noble y cuerdo. (p. 348)

When she sees no other way out, she admits both her identity and her dishonor. With this proof of the innocence and nobility of César, Federico lets him go free.

The Duke learns of the release of César and demands to know the reason for it. Federico has at last found his true nobility and will only say:

> Hice
> lo que debo al ser quien soy. (p. 349)

His words stress that nobility is a question of doing one's duty (debo), not of simply being (soy). The Duke is not convinced and repeats the empty phrase:

> O no he de ser lo que soy
> o sabré dónde estuviste. (p. 350)

Neither man reveals the truth of the matter, but the Duke's words come true. He does learn the truth about the whereabouts of César at the time of the murder, but through his sister. Since the honor of Porcia is closely connected with that of her brother, the truth means that the Duke ceases to be what he was.

César confirms his nobility; Federico and Porcia must both struggle, but eventually they find and establish theirs. The Duke, it is to be hoped, has become a wiser man. During the course of the play, all the characters, including the murdered Otavio learn to know themselves better. They must all realise that identity and nobility are not based on what one is, but on what one does and what one ought to be (see above, p 128).

The last of the tragicomedies to be discussed is No hay burlas con las mujeres. Thematically it is very close to both

La rueda de la Fortuna and El galán secreto. It is a very remarkable play, however, because of its highly developed use of rhetoric. In the discussions of the other plays of Mira de Amescua, frequent reference has been made to images and symbols. The most outstanding examples are the images of the wheel of Fortune—with its related concepts of turning, rising and falling, and progressions—and the comparison of life and the world to a game and to a stage-play. These are images that are to be found throughout his whole theater, but there are also examples from single plays. Aureliana is identified with the Church in La rueda de la Fortuna; honor is compared to a candle in El galán secreto.

No hay burlas con las mujeres is the best example of the exuberance of Mira's language in some plays. Because of this, particular attention has been paid to the rhetoric and the imagery (see above, Chapter Five, pp. 139-147). Because of this the play will be examined for both its thematic and its rhetoric content.

No hay burlas con las mujeres is a complex play which deals with honor not as an isolated part of behavior, but as one aspect of man's total character.[37] In Mira's theater it will be observed that each part of a man's character must be consistent with all the others. If a man behaves well in one portion of his life, he will behave well in the others; if he behaves tyrannously or treacherously in one, then his whole behavior will be tyrannous or treacherous.

The play opens with a discussion between Jacinto and his friend Lope.[38] Jacinto is troubled and Lope wants to know why:

> Ni a mi amor(1)ni a mi lealtad(2)
> debes tan cauto retiro. . .
> que no es amigo perfecto
> (hyperbaton) quien de su amigo recela,
> con ardid(1) y con cautela (2)
> el alma de un secreto. (p. 472)

Jacinto would prefer to remain silent, for it is an affair of honor. The speech introduces the image of the storm:

> (Storm) Un tormento
> que me toca en el honor:
> por eso de mi cuidado
> no te doy parte: que ha
> (Antithesis) sido malo para referirlo(1)
> y bueno para callarlo,(2) (p. 473)

The image of the storm, which is usually linked to the sea, is one of the key images in the play; for the play deals with the storm through which the honor of Jacinto, and his sister, Arminda, must pass. The sea is a common image for the trials of the world and of life.[39]

Lope is more concerned with his friend's secret than with his honor. He urges their friendship as the safeguard of Jacinto's honor. The speech introduces the image of one soul in two bodies:

(One soul) Pues si un alma habemos sido. . .
me parece más suave
(Antithesis) una pena que se sabe(1)
que una pena que se espera(2) (p. 473)

Lope is consistent in the way he gains people's confidence and then betrays them. Both Jacinto and, later, his sister, Arminda, use the image of two souls in one body about themselves and Lope:

Jacinto Un alma nos regía. (p. 473)

Arminda Si un alma a los dos rige. (p. 475)

Jacinto tells Lope he suspects that his sister has a lover. His suspicions are true, for Lope has used his friendship with Jacinto to woo Arminda. Jacinto does not know this and believes the lover to be García. Lope is guilty of betraying his trust to his friend by not admitting that he himself is Arminda's lover. He also betrays his trust to Arminda by suspecting her of infidelity, for he judges her by his own standards and believes she loves García. Jacinto goes on to threaten García and his speech stresses two aspects of the code of honor: its tyrannical demands, and the frailty of women. In his speech he uses several of the stock images of the play. One group of images relates to the frailty of women—a glass which can be easily broken by air (one of the elements). A second group relates to the image of the storm at sea, which is explicitly related to honor. A third group concerns a destroying fire—moth/candle or Icarus/sun. A fourth group relates to the idea of poison. The last group introduces a series of images related to justice—in this case Jacinto describes himself as the guardian of his honor:

Que es gran desdicha
que a un buen nacido no baste

guardar el honor en sí,
siendo malo de guardarse,
(Tyranny of code) sino que leyes injustas
le obliguen a conservarle
(Frailty of women) en una hermosura libre(1)
en una depósito frágil,(2)
(Glass) en una hermana(3) cristal(4)
(Elements) que se empaña al primer aire. . . .
Cuando en la serenidad
(Sea/Storm) se levantan huracanes(A)
de recelos a mi honor,
borrascas(B) que me combaten,
peligros(C) que me amenazan
con furiosas tempestades, (D)
que en los golfos de la honra
zozobra toda la nave. . .
. . . don García. . .
(Fire) como loca mariposa
[Moth/candle]) la llama ronda agradable,(1)
la luz festeja apacible,(2)
la antorcha mira suave,(3)
dando tornos al peligro
en que llegará a quemarse.
Si mis recelos apuro, (A)
y si a luz mi verdad sale, (B)
porque a uno(1) y otro(2) alevosos,
a uno(A) y otro loco amante(B)
(Destroying fire) seré rayo que se consuma,(1)
(Poison) seré veneno que acabe,(2)
seré relámpago ardiente,(3)
seré furia(4), seré áspid, (5)
seré flecha que derribe, (6)
y seré incendio que abrase. . . . (7)
Yo quiero vigilante
en la fuerza de mi honor
(Justice) asastir atento alcaide. (pp. 473-4)

Lope believes the worst. His whole attitude is one of disloyalty, suspicion and distrust. Not only does he betray Jacinto and Arminda, but he betrays García, whose life is threatened by Jacinto.

After Jacinto leaves, Lope muses on the frailty of Arminda, and he uses the image of the elements to symbolise the fickleness and inconstancy of women. The speech uses repetition and the <u>summation schema</u>:

(1) Y mal haya la hermosura
que nació para ser fácil,
(2) mal haya quien su amor pone
en bellezas tan mudables,
(Elements) que, más que el fuego ligeras,(A)
que, más que el aire inconstantes, (B)
que, más que el agua engañosas, (C)
(summation schema) vencen agua(C) fuego(A) y aire.(B) (p. 475)

The speech becomes a curse and a threat, contrasting the constancy of men to the fickleness of women. The speech is a good example of Mira's dramatic irony, for Lope accuses Arminda of lack of faith, and in so doing reveals that he lacks faith and trust in her. It is also an example of a further technique of Mira's: a character puts a rhetorical question or makes a rhetorical curse, and then the play goes on to prove the falseness of the speaker's attitude. The speech uses repetition in a varied form, for it has six parallel parts, but the last two are contrasted to the first four. It thus combines straightforward repetition and antithesis. The speech is also an example of the exemplary nature of Mira's theater (although it is an ironical example in this case):

Pero yo haré, bella ingrata
que tantas ofensas pagues,(1)
que tantos engaños sientes,(2)
que tus mentiras se aclaren,(3)
que tus memorias se borren,(4)
(Antithesis) que se admiren mis verdades,(5)(A)
que se sosieguen mis penas,(6)(B)(1)
si es que pueden sosegarse. . . .(2)
(Exempla) Para que los hombres todos
en mi amor se desengañen,
(Antithesis) que no hay fe correspondida,(A)
y que no hay lealtad constante,(B) (p. 475)

Having established the character of the two men in the first scene, the second concentrates on the character of Arminda. She is concerned with honor, just as they are, but she sees honor as something that belongs to herself and states that it is as firm and constant as 'diamante' and that 'venciera las durezas de la roca.' (p. 476). The play has two contrasted sets of images, both of which refer to honor. One set consists of images of rock, diamond, stone, bronze, etc., which are hard and durable; the other consists of glass, water, air, fire, which are soft, fickle and inconstant. Arminda believes that it is men who endanger honor, not women:

Bien infiero
que no es amante fino(1)y verdadero(2)
el que por alivio que desea
pone a riesgo el honor que galantea. (p. 476)

These words are primarily directed at the importunities of the unloved García, but they also apply to the later behavior of Lope, and help to explain the play.

Having completed the exposition and presentation of character, Mira now puts the two opposing views into conflict. Jacinto discovers Arminda with an unsolicited note from García. His violent outburst reveals a lack of prudence and discretion, and his words give the impression that he confuses honor with wealth:

> ¿Tú, papeles,(1)infame(A), tú, papeles?(2)
> Que son testigos fieles
> de mi deshonra (1)de mi pena(2): ingrata,(B)
> tú borras cuanto honor en blanca plata,(1)
> cuanto en cristal nevado(2)
> tienes de tus mayores heredado. (p. 477)

This speech again links honor with glass. Jacinto concludes with the decision to kill her:

> Vive Dios, inhumana, mi homicida,
> que has de pagar la culpa con la vida.
> (p. 477)

The lines are another example of Mira's use of irony: Jacinto accuses Arminda of inhumanity and homicide while making the inhuman decision to murder her—although he does not carry out his threat. The speech also repeats the idea of destroying someone to protect honor. This concept is central to the theme of the play.

Arminda protests her innocence in an inpassioned speech which convinces Jacinto and makes him change his mind. She stresses the value she places on honor, using three sets of images: those of firmness—diamond, bronze, etc.; the rose and the bee, which is a counterpart to that of the moth and the flame, although the rose does not destroy; the third set is those of poison which are developed to show the evil power of passion. She begins by referring to García's letter:

> Viendo la firma
> (Poison) reconocí la ponzoña. . . .
> Al desmán menos atento
> (Firmness) fui bronce(1)fui dura roca,(2)
> fui peñasco,(3)y fui diamante(4)
> a toda amante lisonja. . . .
> (Bee/rose) Si el galantear la abeja
> la majestad de la rosa. . .
> es ofensa a su pureza,
> esa espada cortadora. . .
> rasga(A), hiere(B), rompe,(C), corta(D)
> mi corazón atrevido. . .
> (Antithesis) que estimo más que la vida(1)
> los decoros de la honra,(2) (pp. 477-8)

The structure of the play is like that of No hay reinar como vivir for Mira presents the main themes of the play in the opening scenes with a series of duets. Now he introduces the rest of the cast and increases the complexity of the plot and the themes. The elderly Pedro is bringing his daughter, Laura, to Madrid, where she will be married to Diego, who is accompanying them. Upon their arrival in Madrid, Pedro and Laura will stay with their relatives, Jacinto and Arminda. This apparently simple situation is made complex by two factors. First Diego had been betrothed originally to Arminda, but at the death of her father the betrothal was terminated. Second, Laura is in love with a man whose identity she does not know, and her lack of affection for Diego is apparent to him.

Both the female protagonists believe that love is divinely inspired, that marriage should be for love, and that girls should not be made to marry against their will:

Arminda — Si la estrella nò inclina
es violentar la parte más divina
que en nuestros pechos generosos mora (p. 475)

Laura — Oh influjo celestial de amor aleve,
que puedes tanto en término tan breve. . . .
Mi estrella, que es porción divina
a lo que vi una vez, siempre me inclina.
(p. 483)

Diego is the most prudent of all the characters and is the one who is best able to fuse love (passion) with honor (reason):

Aunque la adoro tanto(1)aunque la quiero,(2)
velar sobre el honor es lo primero. (p. 483)

Diego is rational and in no way tyrannical. He realises that if a man marries a woman who loves someone else she is far more likely to be unfaithful; this is 'el mal que causa el no casarse a gusto' (see above, p 201).

A close reading of these first scenes reveal that the seeds of the dénouement are all there. The dramatist must solve three problems. Arminda and Diego, and Laura and Jacinto must be united; and García and Lope must be removed.

The first of these to be achieved is the simplest. García has received no encouragement from Arminda, but Jacinto challenges him to a duel. In the duel scene, García withdraws honorably from the field and is seen no more.

The duel sequence has three parts. In the first part, Arminda meets Lope and begs him to take her with him to Segovia. She offers him her jewels as a dowry. Lope refuses and the refusal becomes a complex offence: he takes her jewels, and leaves her alone and defenceless; he refuses to marry her, and slaps her face, calling her 'ingrata y cruel' (p. 484). His treatment of her is less in degree but it is the same kind as that received by the daughters of the Cid at the hands of the Infantes de Carrión. Lope rides off 'sin oír mis llantos' (p. 485) The phrase will be repeated later in the play.

In the second part of the sequence, the defenceless Arminda is discovered by García, who promises to protect her. He then fights with Jacinto and in the duel García's sword is symbolically broken. The symbolism is complex: the breaking of the sword emasculates García, who surrenders Arminda to her brother (although Jacinto does not know her identity); the breaking of his sword means that García can no longer protect her and he keeps his word by giving her into the protection of the man who can. The actions of both these men contrast with that of Lope. Both offer to protect her, without needing to, whereas Lope, who should protect her, abandons her. García may suspect the dishonor of Arminda, but he withdraws honorably from his suit and from the play.[40]

In the third part of the sequence, Jacinto accepts the obligations of honor by protecting the defenceless tapada, whose virtue he may suspect, and he promises to place her in the protection of his sister. The presence of the tapada is important in the later intrigue, as all the women in the play—including the maid—assume the disguise of the tapada at some point. The arrival of Pedro, Laura and Diego is reported at the end of the scene, which closes the first act.

At the beginning of the second act, Diego explains to Jacinto the delicacy of the situation; he suspects Laura of being in love with someone else. As is common in Mira's plays, this sequence is an almost exact parallel of the opening scene of Act One (see above, p 236-8). The prudent attitude of Diego is contrasted to the passionate one of Jacinto in the earlier scene.

The parallel is increased because Jacinto, like Lope, is the cause of his interlocutor's potential dishonor. In both cases the confidant and the potential dishonorer are the same person. While describing his prudence, Diego uses several important images. These include the glass image of fragility, but he introduces several new ones. The first of these is spring water which symbolises his dilemma. The second is the myth of Theseus and the labyrinth. Linked to this is the image of honor being like the Sun; the image is used to point out that men should examine their honor carefully. He also refers indirectly to the image of the storm:

(Spring water) Si bebo pierdo el honor(1)
(Antithesis) y la vida si no bebo(2). . . .
(Antithesis) Tengo de mirar mi honor(A)
antes que de mi apetito;(B)
los vanos antojos quiebren
(Glass) tan fácil,(1)hermoso vidrio(2). . . .
Así entretendré las bodas
(Labyrinth) mientras no encuentre el hilo
con que salir de las dudas
de tan ciego laberinto,
mientras no viene el honor
más puro(A), más cristalino(B),
más sin mancha(C), más sin nota(D)
(Sun) que el sol en cuyos registros
el átomo más menudo(1),
el polvo más escondido(2),
la mota más retirada(3),
descubren sus rayos limpios. . .
que quien no hace examen cuerdo
de su honor inadvertido
antes de arrojarse al lance
(Danger[Storm]) él mismo busca el peligro. (pp. 488-90)

This concept that one should 'look before one leaps' would have saved many of Mira's tragic heroes from destruction.

Jacinto's reply to Diego introduces the theme of jealousy and the image of the fire of passion:

Celos con amor
es dolor(1) sobre dolor(2)
y es añadir fuego(A)a fuego(B). (p. 490)

The situation is ironical for Jacinto, to whom Diego admits his misgivings, is himself the cause of these misgivings.

The play contains a gracioso plot which serves two purposes. It parallels the main plots—Moscón and Lucía agree to marry each other at the end of the play—and serves to advance the Diego-

Arminda plot. In an important scene in the second act, Lucía admits to Moscón that she loves him.[41] He, in turn, tells what he knows of his master—Lope—and his master's friend—Jacinto. He is full of praise for the honorable character of Jacinto, but he despises the philandering and untrustworthy nature of Lope.[42] The information is relayed to Arminda, summarised by Lucía:

> Cuantas picaruelas encontraba
> con todas se embolvía. (p. 495)

As Arminda starts to become disenchanted with Lope, she begins to doubt her own identity:

> Yo misma de mí misma el ser ignoro. (p. 496)

Moscón, in turn, informs Lope of Arminda's growing disenchantment, and her decision to finish with him:

> Lope ¿Está Arminda cruel?
> Moscón Como cruel tigre hircana,
> la fiera leona albana
> es a su vista un lebrel. (p. 496-7)

These words form part of a series of images which includes the labyrinth. The labyrinth (confusion) was created because of the minotaur, who is a beast or a monster: both are characterised by their cruelty and lack of humanity. These images had been linked to the sea and applied to Madrid by Lope:

> No más Madrid(1)no más fiero
> golfo de engaños,(2)incierto
> vil laberinto encubierto.(3) (p. 480)

Lope had repeated this image, linking it to that of poison:

> Oh nunca pluguiera a Dios
> hubiera visto sus calles,(1)
> hubiera mirado yo(2)
> en tu belleza(A), en tus ojos(B),
> en tu engañoso favor(C),
> hechizo tan apacible(1),
> veneno de tal sazón(2)
> que apeteciéndole el alma(A)
> toda el alma me robó(B)
> entrando por los sentidos
> a asaltarme el corazón. (p. 484)

Diego had referred to Laura as 'basilisco' (p. 489), which is another of this series of monster images. It is now repeated by Lope:

> Antes mirarla(1)y morir(2)(A)
> que morir(2) y no mirar(1)(B) (p. 497)

The basilisk is a monster that "poisons" people through the eyes. This image is also linked to that of the confusion of the senses caused by love, an idea found in Diego's words about Laura:

La más gustosa ponzoña(1)
y el más agradable hechizo(2)
que en los dos ojos de Laura
(Periphrasis/ paradox) el ciego vendado ha visto. (p. 489)

The image of poison which is linked to this series of monster images and to the idea of the sea, is picked up by Laura later and linked to the image of Justice. In each case the images are used to denote the power of love. Another image used for this purpose is that of the prisoner of war. This belongs to a series of images relating to justice, the first of which was that of the guardian (alcaide) of honor. The following sonnet uses the images of poison, of fire, and of the prisoner, to suggest the strength and power of love; the words relating to the image of the prisoner have been underlined:

(Poison) Blando hechizo de amor(1)dulce veneno(2)(A)
que en la viveza de mi pecho ardiente
introduciste artificiosamente
tanta ponzoña en vaso tan ameno(B).
(Fire) Si ya en las llamas de tu fuego peno,(1)
(Prisoner) Si el duro yugo el corazón no siente,(2)
y a la ley de tu imperio está obediente,(3)
aunque es imperio de violencias lleno,
porque con tiranías me condenas,
después de hallar el bien que he deseado,
a que arrastra en triunfos mis cadenas
y creciendo cuidado(1)a mi cuidado,(2)
cuando el alivio ofreces de mis penas(A)
me haces penar en un amor callado(B)
(pp. 497-8)

The sonnet expresses the great power of love which has made Laura love an unknown, "Amar sin saber a quién" (see above, p 231). The unknown lover is Jacinto, who defends the idea of loving an unknown person:

Juzgues locura
amar lo que no se ve. (p. 492)

Amar lo que no se ve,
hablando en todo rigor,
(Antithesis) no puede llamarse amor(1)
y puede llamarse fe,(2) (p. 498)

The trust and confidence that this attitude stands for are at the opposite extreme to Lope's lack of faith.

In the ensuing dialogue between Jacinto and Laura, they both realise the identity of the person that they love, and Laura expresses her love for Jacinto. Her speech uses a variation of the image of the glass. She links it to the image of fire to emphasise, once again, the power of love. She also uses the image of wax which is one of the group of images referring to fragility. The speech uses antithesis to contrast these fragile things to hard things. The speech is also a good example of two parallel extended images: the image of the glass is linked to the image of the storm at sea. Laura comes through the storm safely:

Sin imaginar que amor
de mi libertad triunfara,(1)
que a un yugo me rindiera(2)
(Glass) (1) ¿No has visto quebrado vaso
donde está escondida el agua
(Fragility[wax]) con la cera que el cristal
bien asegurado guarda,
(Antithesis) que al yelo dura constante,(A)
pero en llegando la brasa(B)
que la derrite(1)y deshace,(2)(A)
que la despone(1)y ablanda,(2)(B)
arroja el agua(1)y despide
toda la líquida plata(2)(A)
sin que puedan detenerla
las diligencias humanas(B)?
(Antithesis) Así yo que al yelo duro
de mi honor(1), de mi constancia(2)
era insensible peñasco(A),
era de mármol estatua(B),
era bronce(C), era diamante(D),(1)
en cera me vi trocada(2)(A)
y a tu calor reventó
toda la fuerza del agua(B)
(Antithesis) (2) Como el diestro marinero
que en la ya rota borrasca,
quebrado el timón del viento,(1)
burlado el leño en las aguas,(2)
rotos los árboles todos(3)
del trinquete(A)o de la mesana,(B)
los linos recoge triste(1)
y deja la nave incauta(2)
al gobierno de las ondas(A)
y del aire que la ultraja,(B)
pero cuando ya la muerte
en la tempestad aguarda,
halla que la tempestad
puso su nave en la playa(1)

halló el puerto deseado(2)
metiéndole por la barra
Así yo de mi tormenta
vi la fortuna trocada,
(Antithesis) Convertido en gusto(1)el llanto,(2)(A)
en ventura(1)la desgracia,(2)(B)
la muerte(2)en vida(1)dichosa,(C)
la congoja(2)en piedad(1)blanda(D)
y en dulce serenidad(1)
la injuria(2)de la borrasca,(E) (p. 501)

The speech is contrasted to a later one in the play.

The last scene of the second act is an intricate piece of stage business involving the tapada. During the course of the scene, Arminda, Laura and Lucía all assume the identity of the tapada in order to fool the men. The intrigue causes jealousy among the men, and only Diego, the prudent man, is able to keep his head 'when all about him were losing theirs.' He maintains his equanimity:

Velar importa a mi honor,
que nunca se ha de decir
que se pudo preferir
(Antithesis) a mi crédito,(1)mi amor.(2) (p. 504)

In contrast to Diego, is Laura, who believes that Fortuna has now forsaken her. She uses the image of the sun in a similar sense to that used by Diego earlier, but referring now to happiness not to honor. The speech is also remarkable for its development of the image of Fortune's wheel, which Laura views as being smashed to pieces—a rare use of the image:

La mujer que tapada
escondiste cauteloso
para quitarme la vida
con aquel cruel rebozo,
nube a mi serenidad,(1)
vapor que al cubrir su rostro(2)
a los rayos de mis luces
hizo un eclipse forzoso.(3)
Mal a mi estrella resisto(A)
y vanamente me opongo
a mi violenta fortuna,(B)
si cuando más la soborno,
al descubrir los hálagos,
Mayores violencias toco
y en los azares desecha,
su rueda se parte en trozos. (p. 505)

Jacinto is able to assure Laura of his love and the pair are united. This resolves the second of the problems facing the

dramatist: García has disappeared and Jacinto and Laura are united. There remain two more difficult problems to be resolved; Lope must be disposed of and Arminda and Diego must be united.

These problems will be solved simultaneously: the first step is the deepening of the rift between Lope and Arminda. This is done through the aid of Moscón, who tells how Lope's keenest delight is to destroy women's honor:

Arminda — ¿Y a todas las gozaba?
Moscón — Ese es el caso
(Antithesis) — que aun las que no gozaba(1)
que las había gozado blasonaba.(2) (p. 509)

This is further proof of the insincerity of the character of Lope. It is at this point in the play that Arminda decides to avenge herself on him. Her idea of vengeance is to break off their relationship. In her first vengeance speech, she uses various images and themes. The fire of passion is this time that of vengeance—the labyrinth and the sea are now related to Lope:

Tengo de brotar un mongibelo
de llamas, en venganza de mi ofensa. . . .
Cuando más se entregue a sus placeres
que no hay burlas sabrá con las mujeres. . . .
Porque venzan mis iras
tanto golfo de engaño(1)y mentiras(2)
(p. 408-9)

Just as she is contemplating vengeance, Lope arrives to plead his own cause. His speech to her links many of the images and themes of the play. He begins by complaining that she does not listen to him—thus she is answering him in kind. The first part of the speech contains references to the power of passion —Justice, Fire, Poison. The second part refers to Fortune and the images of the moth and candle and of destroying fire:

(Inhumanity) — ¿Dónde te escondes, ingrata,
sin escuchar mis voces(1)
y mis desdichas la causa;(2)
sin que mi llanto te ablande,(A)
sin que te muevan mis ansias,(B)
(Justice) — sin que mis penas te rinden?(C)
(Fire) — Si el incendio que me abrasa,(1)
el fuego que me consume,(2)
(Poison) — el veneno que me acaba, (3)
la ponzoña que me apura,(4)
el pecho que te idolatra,(5)
si tu mismo hermano informa(6)
contra ti. . . .

Yo me vi un tiempo en tus ojos
(Moth. . . and candle) mariposa regalada
que galanteando su luz,
no tenía mi esperanza
(Fortune) ni el favor de la fortuna(1)
ni sus volubles mudanzas;(2)
(Destroying fire) y hoy rayos son para mí
esas luces que me abrasan,(A)
ese fuego que me quema(B)
esa mentirosa llama(C)
(Antithesis) que en breves cenizas trueca(1)
lo esparcido de mis alas.(2) (p. 510)

The speech is ironic in two ways. Earlier, Lope had abandoned Arminda without listening to her pleas, now he must come begging her to listen to him. Similarly Jacinto had sworn to burn up García, because Arminda was incapable of protecting herself, but now it is Lope who regards himself as being burnt up by Arminda: a woman is not necessarily the fragile receptacle of honor that Jacinto had suggested.

In the following scene a contrast is made between the prudence of Diego and the impulsiveness of Pedro, the father of Laura. Pedro is very like Diego, the father of Isabel in Lo que puede una sospecha (see below, p 258 [illegible]). Diego's prudence is a theme in No hay burlas con las mujeres, and he again uses the word átomo which links to his earlier image of the sun:

Diego En puntos del honor
en quien se intenta casar
es advertencia mirar
en el átomo menor. (p. 513)

Although he is concerned and careful about his honor, he is rational, but Pedro is a willing slave of the honor code:

Mi honor pueda, sí
profanarle una mujer. . . .
¿Qué intento? Quitar la vida
a una hija tan civil
que profana los decoros
de la sangre que la di.
Vamos a vengar mi agravio. (p. 521)[43]

In the event neither Jacinto nor Diego is able to avenge his own honor, and they seem to be all bluster and hot air—fortunately perhaps. The only one who does finally wreak vengeance is Arminda.

After Arminda has rejected Lope and dismissed him, he returns and forces his way into her bedroom. She shoots him in self-defense. Lope's action is virtually attempted rape. When

Arminda says she has taken:

> De mi honor la venganza. . . .
> En puntos de grosería
> no hay burlas con las mujeres. (pp. 526-7)

Arminda is referring to the whole of Lope's behavior, including this last attempt on her honor. She explains the situation to all those who are present. Her speech links together the major images of the play and acts as a summary of them. The speech uses the images of the storm at sea; Fortune; the Fire of passion; Justice and the eclipse of the sun—which has obvious links with the myth of Icarus in this context. The speech also contrasts with that of Laura (see above, p 246-7) because whereas Jacinto caused Laura to melt, Diego sets fire to Arminda. The speech is unusually free of rhetorical figures:

(Sea and Storm) / (Fortune)
> No hay tormenta alguna
> que ofenda a quien ampara la fortuna. . . .
> El agrado en amor se trocó luego

(Fire of passion)
> creciendo fuego(1)a fuego(2)
> y la centella que tan breve era
> a pocos lances se miraba hoguera,
> con que, por más que yo la resistía
> toda la selva en mi pecho ardía. . . .
> ¿Viste el breve vapor que desde el suelo
> el aire exhala con ligero vuelo
> y con otros que encuentra bien tejido
> formó en la nube pabellón lucido

(Sun) / (Moth/Icarus)
> que los rayos del sol cándida bebe
> y siendo rayos a su luz atreve?
> ¿Que aquel breve calor que el aire sube
> para formarla, blandamente, nube
> llega después con trazas tan extrañas
> a hacer rayos de fuego en sus entrañas?
> Pues más ardientes rayos ha labrado

(Justice)
> el vapor de un cuidado
> en el pecho inocente, que se inflama
> trocándose la nieve en voraz llama. (p. 524)

No hay burlas con las mujeres is one of Mira's most impressive plays. The hero is the prudent Diego, who is capable of emotion, but is able to temper passion with reason, and thus control himself, like Heraclius in La rueda de la Fortuna. Jacinto is at first incapable of doing this, for he is controlled by pure reason without emotion, which is inhuman, but he gains self-knowledge through his love for Laura. Arminda and Laura must discover their own identities through that of their lovers. In the case of Laura she must discover the name of her unknown lover; in the case of Arminda she must discover the real nature

of Lope and of Diego. The play deals with the nature and the search for identity and honor.

The play develops very carefully the grosería of Lope's behavior, which reaches a crescendo with his attempt to possess Arminda by force. He reveals many of the characteristics which are despised by Mira: he lacks faith and trust; he lacks loyalty and honor; he is suspicious; he is cowardly (as his abandonment and striking of Arminda reveal); and he is a philanderer whose greatest pleasure is to destroy honor. He also commits two specific offences: he strikes Arminda; takes her money, and leaves her defenceless; finally he tries to take her by force. In Melveena McKendrick's book on the mujer varonil, the following account of the play is to be found:

> But it as well to point out that Mira is not advocating equality at the cost of sanity. By making the disparity between the revenge and the motive for revenge so ludicrously great, he is surely condemning the concept of revenge itself. He shows, in fact, how the honor code taken to its logical and just conclusion must degenerate into a senseless and bloody free-for-all. (p. 265)

Unfortunately, in her desire to reveal Mira's intentions, she has, to quote her own words about Cotarelo y Mori, 'Obviously. . . missed the significance of the play' (p. 264n) as can be seen from her distorted view of the character of Arminda:

> Her lover's offense is a comparatively light one—his suspicions about her fidelity have driven him to slap her face. But Arminda reacts to the blow like a typical pundonoroso male, demanding satisfaction. . . . For Arminda does not rest until she has killed her former lover. . . . Obviously Mira cannot seriously be recommending that a woman slapped by her lover should resort to an inversion of the wife-murder method of revenge. (p. 264n)

McKendrick's analysis of the play is based on three errors of fact probably caused by a hasty reading of the text: (1) Lope's offense is not 'comparatively light'; (2) Arminda does not act like a pundonoroso male, for she is eager to have him back until she learns that this act was consistent with his character; (3) only late in the play does she swear to have vengeance, and her desire for vengeance does not include Lope's death which is not a premeditated act but is self-defense.

No hay burlas con las mujeres is a play with a very carefully

controlled structure. It has few characters and the two plots are inextricably intertwined. The gracioso sub-plot is used mainly to advance the main plot, although it does have its own subordinate interest. This is used for comic relief, but without the love affair of Moscón and Lucía the main plot could not develop as it does.

The play is also unified by a series of images and themes. The principal ones are that of examining and guarding one's honor; the idea of the storm at sea; the power of passion; and the idea of destruction. The four are all closely interlinked. All of the main characters are concerned with watching over their honor. The two women are concerned with themselves, whereas Jacinto, Diego, Pedro, and, to a lesser extent, Lope, are concerned with the honor of the women, whose honor is closely identified with their own—either as their wards or as their prospective wives. This theme uses the image of justice as a constable or guardian (alcaide). There are also two sets of images which contrast the women's view of themselves and the men's view of them. The men see the women as fragile and fickle and compare then to glass (fragile) and to the elements of fire, air, and water (fickle, formless, inconstant). The two women, on the other hand, view themselves as being capable of preserving their honor. To express this they compare themselves to diamond, rock, bronze, stone, all of which attest to their firmness and constancy. The play bears out the women's view of themselves.

The second series of images are those of the storm at sea and while sailing on that sea men must undergo the test of storms. The image is applied especially to the concept of honor. It thus links with the idea of guarding one's honor, for the storm is the danger against which men must guard themselves.

The third series of images are those of passion. There are three parts to this idea. Passion, and especially love, may be a poison or an enchantment which works on men subtly but inexorably. Love is also seen as a captor which holds men in thrall. This is the second use of the justice images, this time varied to that of the prisoner of war. Love is the enemy power which holds man captive and exhibits him in his triumphs. The

third part of the series are images of fire. When love is not just a passion but is accompanied by reason, then love has the power to melt or set fire to both Laura and Arminda. These last two ideas are complex because they stress that the two girls surrender their honor honorably to the men who love them; their honor is melted or burned but it never breaks like glass, nor is it fickle and inconstant like the elements.

The final series of images are those of a fire that destroys. The two images used to express this idea are the moth which is attracted to the candle and Icarus who is attracted to the sun. A variant on this is that of the bee and the rose, used of García and herself by Arminda; although Arminda does not love García, he is not destroyed by her. Later in the play, Lope uses the more ominous version—the moth and the candle—and this is prophetic for he will be destroyed by her. This series of images is used by Jacinto and Arminda and they help to unify the play because this is the subject of the play: a man who acts in a faithless and dishonorable way is killed by the woman to whom he is disloyal.

No hay burlas con las mujeres is the best example of Mira's use of rhetoric, but it is typical of the language of his other plays. His use of rhetoric in the play reveals two important tendencies. The first is a tendency to stylisation, balance, and symmetry. The second is a desire to use language as a unifying device in the plays. This unity may be achieved through the use of recurrent images and/or themes as in the three tragicomedies discussed in detail, or by the use of catch-phrases. The best example of this is La confusión de Hungría, a comedy in which the catch-phrase "¿Puede haber más confusión?" is used twenty times by eight characters, including all the protagonists.

In La rueda de la Fortuna, El galán secreto and No hay burlas con las mujeres Mira successfully used plot and language to combine his view of the world, his themes and ideas, and his characters into fully accomplished tragicomedies. Tragicomedy is probably the most difficult of the three secular dramatic forms to write successfully because of the fine balance that must be maintained between the moods of tragedy and comedy. It is

easy for a "trick" of the plot to change a tragicomedy into a melodrama, as happens in the case of El Conde Alarcos; it is also easy for the excessive use of linguistic devices to turn a tragicomedy into a sermon, as happens in the case of No hay reinar como vivir, or to gloss over the problems, as happens in Obligar contra su sangre. Tragicomedies are also difficult to write because they lack the natural unity of both tragedy and comedy: tragedies are unified by the tragic situation and the character of the hero, both of which lead inevitably to disaster; comedies are unified by the dramatic structure which is designed to resolve an apparently unresolvable problem, and comedies are frequently remarkable for their economy and neatness of construction. The form of the tragicomedies is very complex, for they must combine the tragic situation with the comic ingenuity, and it is very easy for the ingenuity to rob the situation of its seriousness or for the situation to rob the ingenuity of its credibility. The characters of tragicomedy must be consistent; the ingenuity which resolves the problem must be credible; and the structure must be able to contain the ambiguity of the form. This unifying force is usually to be found in the language.

The comedies and the tragedies, are more equal in quality than the tragicomedies, in which Mira trod the precarious path between the two forms and the two moods. Because of the problems of the form, the three successful tragicomedies are the most debatable of Mira's best plays, and the ones which can be most easily misinterpreted. They are less "perfect" and "finished" than the best of the tragedies and the comedies, because of the tension that must be maintained by the language between the plot, the characters, the themes and the structure. When Mira fails to maintain this tension, the results are grotesque, macabre or incredible; but when he succeeds in achieving the right balance between the elements, this very tension, produces tragicomedies which are the most exciting and the most stimulating of all of Mira's plays.

NOTES TO CHAPTER SEVEN

[1] Plautus in the Prologue to his Amphitryo (ca. 200 B.C.) has Mercury facetiously suggest that the play is a tragicomoedia because it is a comedy containing Gods and other noble characters who were normally only found in tragedy.

[2] The theory of Drama, p. 5.

[3] Marvin T. Herrick, Tragicomedy: Its Origin and Development in Italy, France and England (Urbana, Illinois, 1955)

[4] J.L. Styan, The Dark Comedy: The Development of Modern Tragic Comedy (Cambridge, 1962)

[5] Cyrus Hoy, The Hyacinth Room: An Investigation into the Nature of Comedy, Tragedy and Tragicomedy (New York, 1964)

[6] Karl S. Guthke, Modern Tragicomedy (New York, 1966).

[7] Nicoll, The Theatre and Dramatic Theory, p. 93.

[8] Guthke, pp. 17-8.

[9] It is this consideration which makes the story of Ruy López tragic rather than tragicomic, although it may not be a tragedy.

[10] It will be noticed that tragedies tend to stress the hero's name in the title.

[11] All quotations are from Comedia famosa, / el Conde / Alarcos / del doctor Mira de Mesqua (No place, no date). This is the earliest known edition of the play (Cotarelo, pp. 635-6) it has no page numbers. It was very kindly loaned to me by Prof. H.V. Livermore. I also consulted Comedia famosa / el Conde / Alarcos / del doctor Mira de Mesqua (Barcelona, 1757) and the unpublished Ph. D. thesis of Adrian Timothy Pickering, 'El Conde Alarcos: A Critical Edition with Notes' (Ohio State University, 1951), which is an edition and study of the play.

[12] This may have been written under the influence of sixteenth century 'Senecan' tragedies of blood. A good example of these is Lupercio Leonardo de Argensola's Alejandra in which the eponymous heroine bites off her tongue and spits it at the king; later the king decapitates several children onstage and hurls their heads at his revolting subjects who are besieging his palace.

[13] The scene of parting between Alarcos and Blanca in the second act contains some of Mira's finest poetry.

[14] They are charcoal-burners and there is no other connection with the carboneros, carbonarios or carbonari of nineteenth century Italy.

[15] 'Notes on the Spanish Drama', Modern Language Notes, 1905, pp. 38-41.

[16] By major plots I mean plots involving the protagonists, for in nearly all his plays there are gracioso—servant or peasant—plots, which are subordinated to the major plots.

[17] See Chapter Five of the thesis above, pp. 109ff.

[18] All quotations are from Lo que puede una sospecha./ Comedia famosa / del doctor Mirademescua published in Laurel / de Comedias./ Quarta parte / de diferentes autores (Madrid, 1653), folios 211-31. This is the only known edition of the play. See Cotarelo, pp. 25-6.

[19] This quality is revealed by many words, frequently found together. The principal ones are monstruo, fiero, tirano, cruel, riguroso.

[20] A Critical Edition of Mira de Amescua's "No hay dicha ni desdicha hasta la muerte together with an Introductory Study" (University of Missouri, 1968), p. 78.

[21] It is Williamsen's version of the plot that creates his own difficulties: "Heraclio was, according to the plot, the true heir whose mother, the Empress Aureliana, had given to Heracliano, a shepherd, to be raised because she feared for his safety at court. These fears had been aroused by repeated dreams of disaster. She then replaced the true son with a baby bourn[sic] to a Scithian slave and her Phoenician lover. This changling[sic] child was Teodosio." (p. 78.) "A third sub-plot deals with the revolt of the army under Leoncio in an attempt to replace Mauricio on the throne, which he had dishonored by his personal behavior and by refusing to come to the aid of the Pope, with a leader of their own choosing. There is, too, the love problem—Mitilene is loved by Leoncio her captor, the Emperor Mauricio, and Teodosio from whom she must be protected, and by Filipo and Heraclio as well" (p. 79). "The Emperor Mauricio is murdered by the traitor Focas who is placed on the throne which as was foretold to Mauricio in a dream he was to hold for one day" (p. 79).

[22] Khosru II is better known in literature under variants of his name: Cosrões, Cosdroas being the most common.

[23] See Claude E. Anfbal, 'Voces del cielo. A Note on Mira de Amescua,' Romanic Review, 16, 1925, 57-70 and "Another Note on the Voces del Cielo,' Romanic Review, 18, 1927, 246-52.

[24] This theme is also to be found in the religious plays. In Los prodigios de la vara there is an episode concerning the Egyptian Eliacer, the Jew Datán, and his wife, Solomi. Eliacer pretends to be Datán and seduces Solomi. When her husband returns, she greets him with the words: "Soy quien soy, / pero no soy la que fui." (pp. 167-8). The incident is symbolic of the exploitation of the Jews by the Egyptians and provokes Moses to symbolically murder Eliacer. This is Mira's presentation of the murder narrated in Exodus 2.12.

[25] There is a line missing which completes the quintilla; it must rime with vencedor and peor, but it may occur between primera and postrera or, more probably, in the position indicated.

[26] This is a perfectly valid action in human terms, since Leonicio knows that Mitilene loves Heraclius. For Leonicio to marry her would endanger his honor, 'el mal que causa no casarse a gusto.' The ending of the play is thus far more satisfactory than the marriages at the end of La vida es sueño, for example.

[27] There is a letter from St. Gregory the Great in the play,

dated 1303. I do not believe that this was a deliberate change of setting (Cf. Cotarelo, pp. 58-60), but a simple error. Mira perhaps wrote 603, which at some stage was altered to 1603 (the approximate date of the play's composition). The attraction of the last 3, or the desire of an editor (?compositor?) to correct this error may have led to the apocryphal date 1303. Prof. H.V. Livermore has suggested to me that the Spaniards of the period were greatly interested in celebrating millenia, which would tend to confirm the idea of 603/1603. The eighteenth century editions of the play omit the date completely.

[28] He shares this trait with other royal children brought up as peasant children in the countryside, for example, Luis in Los carboneros de Francia and Carlos and Enrico in El palacio confuso.

[29] It can be seen that Lope's comment on La rueda de la Fortuna quoted above, p 21 , is not quite accurate. Lope says: 'un rey aporrea a su mujer.' In reality the Prince hits his mother; also the Emperor drags his wife by the hair.

[30] If the date on this letter (1303) was originally 603 (see above, note 27) Mira has changed history slightly, for this siege took place in 591-2. It is another example of how Mira adapts history to suit his artistic purposes.

[31] She thus assumes the two female religious rôles: that of wife and mother. As the Church she is the bride of Christ; as the Blessed Virgin Mary she is the mother of Christ.

[32] It should be remarked that this play has an almost perfect unity of tone. It seems to me that because of the complexity of the material Mira—rightly—decided that any attempt to provide dramatic relief would confuse the audience. The play does not have any gracioso characters at all, which is in itself unusual. That Mira did use dramatic relief for a serious purpose can be seen from the following interchange from the Adversa fortuna de don Alvaro de Luna:

Alvaro ¿Y moriré?
Linterna En cadahalso.
Alvaro ¿Un lugar junto a Toledo?
¡Vive Dios, que no he de entrar
jamás en este lugar,
pues vivir sin verle puedo! (298-302)

The humor is rather macabre for Alvaro does indeed die on the scaffold (cadalso). The episode has a serious intent, however, for it reveals Alvaro's rather presumptuous belief that he can control his own destiny.

[33] There are two lines missing here. They should complete the quintilla, riming in -uto and -ece.

[34] A good example of this is La vida es sueño.

[35] Carmen Bravo-Villasante, La mujer vestida de hombre en el teatro español: siglos XVI-XVII (Madrid, 1955), pp. 130-40 This section of the book deals with Mira and also the 'tema de "amar sin saber a quien"' (p. 130)

[36] Cf. 'Hacer traición a un traidor / bien puede cualquier

justo' (La confusión de Hungría, p. 311). The idea expressed by Otavio is also that of Rojas Zorrilla's Morir pensando matar.

37 The theme of sexual and family honor is developed in La fénix de Salamanca (see below, p 261-5) but it is also the subject of Lo que puede una sospecha. In this play Isabel emphasises the fragile nature of honor:

Hay muchas honras perdidas
por pensar que nadie vio. (folio 12)

When her father, Diego, suspects that his daughter is jeopardising his honor he decides:

Como eso fuera verdad,
yo mismo con este estoque
le quitara cien mil vidas. (folio 29)

Diego outlines clearly the tyranny of a code of behavior which puts honor before natural affection:

Soy más hijo de mi padre
que no padre de mi hija. (folio 29)

38 It is very possible that the philanderer Lope is based on Lope de Vega, and that the play is a friendly moral lesson and warning to Mira's friend and colleague.

39 Patch in his Goddess Fortuna says it was usual to compare "life to a sea and one's career to a vessel of which Fortuna is in charge" (p. 101). In the same context he talks of "the winds of Fortune" (p. 103).

40 The speech describing the cause of the duel is an interesting comment on the conventions of the contemporary stage, if not of society. It also reveals how dishonorably Lope has been acting in not revealing his love for Arminda to his friend, Jacinto:

Las bodas se han de tratar
conmigo, no con mi hermana. (p. 486).

41 This is an unusual event, for graciosos are more likely to insist on their desire for freedom, as in Lo que puede una sospecha:

Cardillo' Ven, Fenisa, serás mía.
Fenisa No, que me quiero gozar
sin llegarme a cautivar. (folio 231)

42 It is one of the details of Lope's exploits which suggests that Mira may have had Lope de Vega in mind:'Las pueda hacer salir de su cartuja' (p. 493).

43 The apparent length of the scene is caused by an error in the pagination of this gathering. Pages 517-20 do not exist. Page 521 follows p. 516.

CHAPTER EIGHT: THE COMEDIES

Most modern critics who have discussed comedy, from Meredith[1] and Bergson[2] to Potts[3] and McCollom[4] have been concerned with the 'Comic Spirit' rather than with the dramatic form. Allardyce Nicoll[5] and Northrop Frye[6] have been at greater pains to define the dramatic form of comedy, which is the opposite pole to that of tragedy.

The form of comedy is difficult to define, because, by its very nature, it lacks the dominant hero, which is one of the characteristics of tragedy. Frye describes the archetypal situation of comedy:

> What normally happens is that a young man wants a young woman, that his desire is resisted by some opposition, usually paternal, and that near the end of the play some twist in the plot enables the hero to have his will (p. 163)

This is a reasonable definition of the 'Obstacle' play, but half of the comedies of Mira de Amescua do not appear to conform to this definition, which means that it is either incomplete or must be adapted.

Due to the difficulties I examined the three aspects of a play which have been examined in relation to tragedy and tragicomedy, in order to see how comedy differs from the other forms:

(1) Comedies end happily, Potts has objected to the word 'happily,'[7] but his objection is not valid, for the happiness of the ending can be judged only from the context of the play. Any speculations concerning the success of the marriage of the protagonists does not come within the scope of any critics but those who wish to examine the previous or subsequent life of the characters.[8] The happiness of the ending is usually signified by a marriage, or the reconciliation of two spouses. It is usual for there to be more than one marriage, or for there to be a marriage as well as a reconciliation.

(2) The tone of the comedies is basically light-hearted. A comedy may have serious implications—such as the fate of a dynasty—but its tone is never somber. The protagonists never undergo grave suffering, actual or potential, physical or spiritual. It is rare for the villain of a comedy to be seriously

punished for his faults. Indeed, it would be more accurate to talk of his discomfiture, for he normally suffers the frustration of his schemes, exposure and possibly ridicule.

(3) 'Most comedy differs from tragedy in being often heroless.'[9] 'The fundamental assumption of comedy is that it does not deal with isolated individualities,'[10] 'Comedy stresses men and women in society.'[11] Although it is not always true that the heroes of comedy are mediocrities—what Frye would call eirons[12] and McCollom 'the divine average'[13]—the hero of comedy is much less prominent than the hero of tragedy, because the former shares the center of attention with his heroine, whereas the tragic hero usually stands and dies alone.[14] It may also be true that there is no evil protagonist in a comedy.

Potts has commented that:

> It is not the business of comedy to inculcate moral doctrine. Its business is to satisfy a healthy desire; the desire to understand the behavior of men and women towards one another in social life, and to judge according to their own pretensions and standards. (p. 51)

This is not a distinguishing trait of comedy, for much the same could be said of tragedy.[15] Both forms of drama do have a moral aim, which is that expressed by Potts himself, and, much more clearly, by Bradley, who talks of 'that truth to nature which in dramatic art is the one unfailing source of moral instruction.' (see above, p 160)

The moral lesson of comedy is frequently that taught by an act rather than a word, for 'an act can be as symbolic as a word.'[16] As a consequence of this, comedies must be examined from the point of view of their dramatic structure.

In the comedies of Mira de Amescua there are two basic structures: Obstacle plays and Test plays.[17] The first type follows Frye's definition fairly closely (see above, p 259). The second type involves one of two situations. In the first a wife puts her husband through an ordeal because of his shortcomings, and during the course of this ordeal, the husband comes to realise these shortcomings and is thus enabled to overcome them so that he will measure up to certain standards. In the second type one, or more, women decide to examine their suitors

in order to see which measures up best to similar standards.[18]

La fénix de Salamanca is probably the earliest of Mira's comedies: (ca. 1607, see above, p. 52). The play has a double structure: one plot involving Juan, Alejandra, Horacio, and Beltrán, is a conventional obstacle plot; the other, involving Mencía and Garcerán, and their servants, Solano and Leonor, appears to be an obstacle plot but is in reality a test plot.

Both plots are of approximately equal importance, but Mencía is a figure of importance in both and helps to bring about the marriage of Horacio and Alejandra; consequently the play is named after her. Because of her great beauty and merits she is known as 'La fénix de Salamanca' (967)[19]

The secondary plot is archetypal,[20] The character of its hero, Count Horacio, is not very fully developed. He is noble but poor, and is in love with Alejandra. Juan, her brother, is the malevolent father figure. He opposes the union of Alejandra and Horacio, and wants his sister to marry her elderly uncle, Beltrán. The latter could have been portrayed as a clown, but Mira never presents stupid or undignified characters, and consequently there are only three objections to a marriage between Alejandra and her uncle: she objects both that he is too old and that she does not love him; the third objection is that of the Pope who refuses to grant dispensation for their consanguinity. Alejandra is the most individualised character in the secondary plot—she and Mencía are the most memorable in the play, for they both have that sparkle and vivacity for which the heroines of comedy are noted.

In the crucial scene of Act Two there is a confrontation between Juan and Alejandra. It is one of the fullest and most important developments of the honor code in Mira's theater.

In a brilliant speech, Juan puts forward his views and those of all honor-conscious brothers, fathers and husbands. He begins with a string of insults, all of which repeat the same basic ideas:

> Dime, mujer más ligera
> que tu vano y ciego amor,
> ¿Quién sino tú, con su honor
> tan pródiga y loca fuera? (1525-8)

He accuses her of having an affair with Horacio, and then launches into a tirade which consists of a single extended image. The various words which are part of the image have been underlined:

Vuelve en ti; con más cuidado
tu vida traza(A)y ordena(B)
que la mujer, cuando es buena,
es un reloj concertado;
(1) que el móvil(A)y el fundamento(B)
de esta admirable invención
es la medida razón(A)
y asentado entendimiento(B).
(2) Son las ruedas los sentidos
que con tardos movimientos
detienen los pensamientos
cuando pasan de atrevidos
(3) Las pesas son el nivel
con que el bien(A)o el mal(B) obrar
se ha de medir(A)y pesar(B),
como en un peso fiel.
(4) El índice que señala
la hora, los ojos son,
que dicen del corazón
si la tuvo buena(A)o mala(B).
(5) Es el volante el temor,
y aquel continuo pensar
que ha de correr sin parar
hasta la muerte el honor.
(6) Despertador, la memoria
de quién(A)es y a quién(B)ofende
cuando deslustrar pretende
de sus mayores la gloria.
(7) Es la campana su fama,
que si no la tiene buena,
por más que la cubran, suena(A)
y entre todos se derrama(B),
(8) Es relojero el cuidado,
que a no tenerle, ha de estar
alborotado el lugar,
y el reloj desconcertado.
Y si de ti no le tienes,
siendo a tu honor importante,
del reloj un semejante,
a ser propiamente vienes.
Y así, instrumentos pesados
por fuerzas vendréis a ser;
que el reloj(A)y la mujer(B)
suenan mal desconcertados (1545-88)

Juan builds himself up to a towering rage of self-righteous indignation. Alejandra's reply pricks the bubble and shows that in reality it was little more than bombast and rhodomontade:

(1) ¡Jesús, y qué gracia, hermano

tienes para predicar!
(2) ¡Qué lenguaje para orar!
(3) ¡Qué acción!(4)¡Qué sacar de mano!
Que según has ponderado
mis liviandades(A)y errores(B),
son mis delitos mayores
que el más horrendo pecado. (1589-96)

Alejandra does not vainly try to deny the facts, but merely shows how much Juan is making out of them.

She develops her defense in three quatrains, each of which attacks Juan's attitude. Firstly she takes him to task for making judgments on insufficient evidence:

Si tan leve ocasión
pudiera descomponer
la honra de una mujer
¡buena andaba la opinión! (1605-8)

She accuses him of being quick to believe the first tittle of gossip. Her next line of defense is a satirical one. She points out that honor is frequently a question of not being found out and that:

Si han de andar tan concertades
como el reloj, a fe mía,
que en la corte cada día
oyeras mil badajadas. (1609-12)

Finally she attacks him for his disloyalty to her:

Y así tu lengua infama
su sangre, ¿qué hará la ajena?
Mujer ninguna habrá buena
ni honesta, ni limpia fama. (1613-6)

Honor, she urges, should depend on what one does, mot on what people think about one. She suggests the importance of not making rash judgments and not believing all the gossip one hears.

Despite the fact that she has as yet only been on the defensive, Juan is somewhat abashed and can only feebly ask:

¿Es agravio con rigor
reprender tu liviandad? (1617-8)

Even Juan recognises that his actions are <u>rigurosas</u>, and he is unsure about his own conduct. This provokes Alejandra's anger rather than her scorn, and she accuses him not only of wishing to promote an unequal marriage, but of the far more serious crime of tyranny:

Fuérzasme la voluntad
que es el agravio mayor. (1619-20)

She then applies this generalisation to her own particular case—an unequal, loveless marriage:

> Cásasme, y al yugo pones
> dos novillos desiguales;
> mal las partes principales
> del matrimonio compones.
> Y tan desigual partido,
> ¿cómo quieres que me cuadren
> si a quien puede ser mi padre
> ése me das por marido? (1621-8)

Alejandra objects principally to two things: being forced to marry, and the marriage between partmers of unequal ages (see above, p 200).

It is now Juan who is on the defensive. He describes the characters of Horacio and Beltrán, and after comparing them, he demands to know why she prefers Horacio:

> Juan ¿No es tu tío un hombre
> rico, principal y hónrado,
> que por noble y por soldado
> es respetado su nombre. . . ?
> Pues, ¿qué te cansa, liviana?
> Alejandra Ser a mi disgusto y viejo.
> Juan . . . El cuidado y ojos pon
> en la persona de Horacio.
> Verás mil imperfecciones
> desde la planta a la frente,
> que ni es galán, ni es valiente,
> ni lùce el las ocasiones;
> ni tiene más calidad
> que tu tío, ni es mejor,
> ni es de más fuerza o valor
> en su boca la verdad. . . .
> Si esto es ansí, ¿qué te agrada?
> Alejandra Ser mozo y ser de mi gusto. (1633-56)

Having exhausted his arguments and his patience, Juan resorts to force and draws his dagger. Alejandra is unable to take this threat seriously, for her words express mockery not fear:

> Envaina, que el resplandor
> me matará de repente. (1659-60)

The scene and the possible danger are brought to a sudden end by the entrance of Leonardo and Olivera, who hurry Juan off. Alejandra is left alone on stage to meditate. She recites a bitter-sweet sonnet which begins as a lament on the trials of love:

> ¡Qué de espinas, amor, entre las flores
> de tus deleites tienes escondidas. . . !

But it develops into an analysis of the man who allows himself to be deceived by his senses:

> Mas, ¡ay de mí! que, conociemdo el daño,
> juzgamos por tan cuerdos los sentidos,
> que tenemos por loco el desengaño. (185-98)

Leonardo re-enters immediately after this sonnet and announces that he had been unable to catch Juan:

> No le he podido alcanzar;
> que con los pies parecía
> que volaba y no carría. (1699-1701)

The mythological reference is there for more than just comic effect. Alejandra has just been addressing Amor and Leonardo's description could be that of Cupid. This prepares the audience for the fact that at the next appearance of Juan he will fall in love.

The impasse of the secondary plot is resolved through two means. First, the Pope refuses to permit the marriage of Beltrám and Alejandra, because of their consanguinity; this means that the first of Alejandra's desires has been achieved. Second, Juan's love for Mencía makes him less punctilious about his honor, and makes him more amenable to permitting a love match between Alejandra and Horacio. Juan is an example of the man who is governed by reason, but who is humanised by love.

The primary plot does not conform to the pattern of the secondary plot, and has many unusual aspects. Not the least of these is the fact that Mencía is no maiden but is a widow. As a counterbalance, the hero Garcerán, is also a widower.

The primary plot is based on the concept of the mujer vestida de hombre.[21] The evils of this are pointed out in Las lises de Francia:

> ¿En todo ser hombre quieres?. . .
> que en la mujer muere la honra
> cuando enferma la vergüenza. (1865-70)

The assumption of male dress is less serious in the case of Mencía since she is a widow and has no virginity to lose. Mencía, like many of Mira's heroines, assumes male garb because it is the lesser of two evils.

One of the main interests in the play is in the confusion which is brought about by disguise. The heroine has three

identities, one of which is male, and the other two are female.[22] Mencía disguises herself as Carlos and then, in order to protect Alejandra's honor, she disguises herself as a woman. To complicate the issue, she adopts her own name. At this stage there are thus three identities—Mencía, Carlos, and the pseudo-Mencía—and three levels of knowledge.

1. Juan and Beltrán believe that she is the pseudo-Mencía, the friend of Carlos. Juan falls in love with her.
2. Alejandra and Horacio think she is Carlos disguised as the pseudo-Mencía, and are highly amused at the fact that Juan has fallen in love with a "man."

2a Garcerán and Solano also believe she is Carlos, disguised as the pseudo-Mencía, but they have difficulty in remembering this because she looks like the real Mencía.

3. Mencía and Leonor know the whole truth, as do the audience.

3a. Don Tello knows that Mencía is Mencía, although he is unaware of the other two stages. He brings the disguise to an end.

The primary plot is also concerned with honor, and the discussion of this occurs in the part of the play that joins the two plots. Garcerán narrates to Horacio the antecedents of the primary plot. He had fallen in love with the widowed Mencía, but had then abandoned her because he was married. Unusually the man has forsaken the woman for completely honorable reasons. The death of Garcerán's wife had freed him from this constraint, but he was ashamed of his previous behavior and was too diffident and unsure of Mencía's possible reception of him to pursue her. The audience also learn that the rôles have been reversed and Mencía has donned male garb to pursue him. She finds him in the first act but determines to use her disguise as a way of testing his qualities. Through the intricacies of the plot, they end up sharing the same room and the same bed, although Garcerán does not realise the opportunities that this offers him.

During Garcerán's narration, Mencía makes a series of asides which show that honor is based as much on what people say as on what one does:

Mencía(Aparte) ¡Ay de mí! si este villano
se atreve a mi fama honesta;
que si de lo que no hizo
se alaba, esta daga fiera
le sacará el corazón,
y haré que rabiando muera!
Garcerán Mas pongo al cielo testigo
que fue con tanta limpieza,
que no la toqué una mano.
Mencía(Aparte) ¡Ay, Garcerán! bien pudieras. . . .
Hoy mi vida te consagro,
y mil, si tantas tuviera;
y ¿qué mujer no da el alma
a un hombre de buena lengua? (979-92)

The anacoluthon bien pudieras. . . ., which forms part of the text, is most intriguing.

Honor does not only have sexual connotations. Horacio is able to view honor only from the male perspective, but Mencía is able to see both sides of the question, because of her "hermaphroditism"—she is a woman in man's clothes:

Más cuerda resolución
se puede tomar, señores;
que si reñís, es la dama
la que aquí viene a perder,
si no tiene la mujer
más que perder que su fama;
que dirá, sin resistencia,
el fiero vulgo atrevido
que por Alejandra ha sido
esta celosa pendencia;
y el olor si bien se advierte,
de una mocedad sabida
se imprime tanto en la vida,
que aun no le borra la muerte. (1375-88)

Although Horacio can appreciate this point of view, he is only capable of seeing his own dilemma:

Estimo a Alejandra, y quiero
su honor tanto como el mío;
mas rehusar el desafío
es mengua de un caballero. (1393-6)

Mencía is able to apply her female ingenuity to the problem:

A los dos ha de guardar
el capitán [Beltrán]; si es pasada
la hora determinada
llegar tarde no es llegar;
y si el papel con cuidado
leístes, no os desafía,
antes se queja, y sería
el responderle acertado;

mas ha de ser de tal suerte,
que de lo que está sentido
no os deis por entendido. (1405-15)

Mencía is one of the most well-balanced characters in the play because she unites male pugnaciousness with female mercy. In Mencía we can see an early example of the "ideal person" who has all the virtues.

Although Mira is far from being a mysogonist[23] his feminism is tempered by his awareness of the demands of society. His attitude to Mencía is ambivalent, for he realises the dangers which may arise from women dressing up as men, especially if the men are unable to control events. As a result, La fénix de Salamanca ends with the arrival of the father-figure, don Tello, who can be seen as the representative of truth and order, and of God. His arrival ends the charade in which Mencía is able to control all the other characters through her refusal to reveal her true identity. Don Tello's arrival returns society to order —the new order in which Alejandra and Horacio, Mencía and Garcerán are united. It is significant that Tello establishes this order by giving the characters their names:

Tello Abraza
doña Mencía a don Tello
Mencía Tío de muy buena gana. (3262-4)

La fénix de Salamanca has a gracioso plot, which is a reflection of the primary plot. Its function is to focus the audience's possible disbelief concerning the events of the primary plot on the graciosos. Solano shares a bed with Leonor, who is disguised as Jaramillo, and makes 'smutty' comments about the situation. Solano comments that Jaramillo will only go to bed in the dark; this is to conceal her sex, of course, but Solano suggests that she must have 'sarna' (1225)—the mange— or be 'hermafrodito o memo' (2697) or 'potroso' (2721)—all three of which suggest a malfunctioning of the genitals, with the implication that Jaramillo is a 'pansy.' At the end of the play, Solano demands that restitution of his honor be made, as it has been besmirched by his having slept with a woman for a month without having possessed her sexually. He asks for Leonor's hand, but she refuses. The inversion of rôles is maintained when the dishonored male says the only recourse left to him is

the cloister:

Mencía — Quisiera darte a Leonor,
Solano, mas no le agrada
a Leonor tu casamiento.
Solano — ¿No? Pues fraile soy sin falta. (3326-9)

La fénix de Salamanca is one of the earliest, if not the earliest, of Mira's comedies. Consequently it has only the basic structural pattern common to Mira's plays: the world begins in order but something occurs to destroy this order and produce confusion in the first act. The second act increases the state of confusion, usually with the aid of complicated stage business. In the third act the confusion is resolved into either order or dis-order. In the comedies and the tragicomedies men are seen to be capable of re-establishing order. In the tragedies they are not capable of doing so, but they do establish some form of order which is, in reality, dis-order, for it depends on the destruction of the hero.[24] One could say that the final note of the tragedies is dissonant.

The theme of confusion, which reflects the confusion of the world, was both crucial to the structure of Mira's plays and was a medieval commonplace, frequently in the guise of the world upside down.[25] Some of Mira's titles suggest the theme, either as confusion itself, or by reference to stratagems, ingenuity, deceit or disguise:

La confusión de Hungría
El palacio confuso
Amor, ingenio y mujer
La tercera de sí misma
El galán secreto

The plays contain many references to the subject of confusion.[26]

The way confusion was produced can be seen in La confusión de Hungría. Floriseo has decided that the Princess Fenisa loves him, she disillusions him:

Alguien te tiene engañado,
o el juicio te ha faltado,
o te ciega la afición,
o esta es alguna traición
que en mi daño has ordenado. (p. 284)

She lists the four effective causes of confusion in the world, which are themselves the result of the passions (or of the devil).

Confusion may occur at any one of three places. First the phenomena a man witnesses may be deceptive ("alguien te tiene engañado"); second a man's perception of these phenomena may be defective ("te ciega la afición"); or the conclusion he comes to may be erroneous ("el juicio te ha faltado"). The fourth possibility is that he may know the truth, but may be trying to deceive someone ("alguna traición"). The application of these four is straightforward in this case.

(1) Someone may have told Floriseo that Fenisa loves him.

(2) He may have seen encouragement in Fenisa's behavior which may not exist.

(3) He may have lost his reason and be unable to correctly interpret phenomena. It is common for characters to <u>appear</u> to other characters to have lost their reason in Mira's plays; the word <u>loco</u> is frequent, but the madness is never real.

(4) Floriseo may be merely telling Fenisa he thinks she loves him for his own ends. The fourth stage is in reality a return to the first since in (1) Floriseo is deceived by a third party; in (4) he is doing the deceiving. This is the danger of confusion—it spreads, for one deceit gives rise to another.

In <u>La confusión de Hungría</u>, Ausonio, Prince of Thrace, loves Fenisa, Princess of Hungary. Ausonio sends his favorite, Vertilo, as his ambassador to ask for Fenisa's hand. But Vertilo is also in love with Fenisa and he consequently pretends to be Ausonio, while sending Ausonio news of Fenisa's "death." The action is made more complicated because Fenisa falls in love with a portrait of Ausonio, while her friend, Leonora, falls in love with Vertilo, Ausonio's representative. The arrival of Ausonio in Hungary further complicates the action, and Vertilo is forced to pretend that Ausonio is Vertilo, who has fallen in love with Fenisa and has gone crazy, pretending to be Ausonio and pretending that Fenisa is dead. The play exploits the possibilities of the plot very skilfully, and the final act becomes a race between Vertilo, who seeks to speed up his marriage to Fenisa, and Ausonio's servant and friend, Licio, who writes to Ausonio's father, Trebacio. The latter, an old and wise man, arrives at the last minute and restores order to the confused state of Hungary.

Two other obstacle plays which deal with the theme of mistaken identity also deal with the theme of La mujer vestida de hombre.[27] The two plays are complementary and present the negative and positive sides of the theme. The negative side is symbolised in the title of the one play—La tercera de sí misma the positive side in the title of the other—Amor, ingenio y mujer. The similarity of the plays is clearly revealed by the fact that La tercera de sí misma has two catch-phrases: the title and "Amor, ingenio y mujer."[28]

Mira's interest in dual plots and dual structure is revealed by these two plays, which are different presentations of a similar theme. The structure of La tercera de sí misma is itself double. Using a similar form of construction to that found in La rueda de la Fortuna (see above, p 208-20), Mira develops two separate but interlinked plots. These are centered on the two lovers—the Duke of Mantua and Porcia, Duchess of Flor. The conclusion happily unites them.

The unity of the play is much more apparent than in the case of La rueda de la Fortuna, because the names of the Duke and Porcia are linked at the beginning of the play, and because each of the two plots has three characters: the Duke-Porcia-Lucrecia in one; the Duke-Porcia-Fisberto in the other. One plot concerns the attempts of Fisberto to win Porcia, the other concerns the attempts of Lucrecia to win the Duke. The two plots misfire because of each other. Lucrecia blackens Porcia's character in order to prevent her marriage to the Duke. In the third act, the Duke offers Porcia to Fisberto, but the latter refuses having heard the slander about her. Thus the trickery of Lucrecia thwarts Fisberto's plans. Similarly Fisberto thwarts Lucrecia's plans. When the Duke had heard Lucrecia's report of the misconduct of Porcia, he had repudiated his betrothed and ordered Fisberto to take her back to Flor, but he had left her with the peasants in the hope of seducing her. The duke falls in love with the "peasant girl."

The Fisberto plot is a development of a situation that Mira had also used in Los carboneros de Francia and Las lises de Francia. The Lucrecia plot is the one which uses the mujer vestida

de hombre theme. One interesting aspect of this plot is the series of disguises used by Lucrecia. She appears first as César, a man, who had been the unwilling lover of the reputedly lascivious Porcia. When César is no longer needed, he "falls from a cliff" and is "killed." Lucrecia then assumes peasant dress and appears as Laura with the words "amor segunda vez me transforma" (p. 154). Despite her ingenuity, the Duke marries Porcia, whom Lucrecia addresses:

> César soy y Laura fui;
> ingenio, amor y mujer
> han tenido tal poder
> que soy tercera por ti
> de mí misma. (p. 249)

The play has a gracioso plot which functions within the structure of the Fisberto plot, but which is a comment on the Lucrecia plot. The gracioso plot uses the peasants with whom Porcia stays. The girl, Gila, is in love with one of the men, Cosme. At one point Cosme is moved to cry out '¡Qué me fuerza Gila, tío!' (1371). It is Cosme who makes the moral comment:

> Siempre ha de pedir el macho
> a la hembra. (878-9)

The end of the play unites the Duke and Porcia, while Lucrecia, who is Duchess of Amalfi, marries the Count, who is the brother of the Duke. Fisberto, however, remains unmarried at the end of the play. A prominent feature of Mira's plays is that they usually have two heroines. There are exceptions to this, but there are few examples where the number exceeds two.[29] It is this aspect of the structure which determines the plot of many of the plays. The superfluous males may be married to sisters or cousins[30] or they may be killed off.[31]

In Amor, ingenio y mujer Mira has compressed the exuberance of La tercera de sí misma into a single main plot. The play is one of the best of Mira's comedies and exploits fully the device of the double. In this case it is a variation on the Menaechmi Theme of Plautus; in this case the "twins" are in reality one person—Matilde, who pretends to be a man—Carlos.

Northrop Frye has said "We notice how often the action of a Shakespearean comedy begins with some absurd, cruel, or irrational law. . . ."[32] In Amor, ingenio y mujer, the action springs from

the Salic law, which is repeatedly attacked. The king calls it 'aquella ley tan tirana' (p. 374) and says:

> Dura ley, pluguiera al cielo
> que de sus duras palabras
> salieran llamas veloces,
> que a su inventor abrasaran.
> El bárbaro no advertía
> que varias historias hablan
> de mujeres valerosas
> por las letras, y las armas,
> para no agraviar así
> cuantas en valor igualan
> a las pasadas ilustres
> mujeres; si fue venganza,
> bien lo ha mostrado su efecto
> que tanto su ser agravia. (p. 374)

It is attacked later in the play, and called 'aquella dura ley' (p. 403):

> La tiranía
> de los leyes, que prohiben
> que ni en los tálamos reales
> ni en las herencias se admiten. (p. 402)

The king then urges his nobles to persuade:

> Las mujeres de Sicilia,
> las nobles y las humildes,
> para que todas conozcan
> que sufren agravios viles. (p. 402)

The Salic law is finally repealed, and the words of the Duchess show how tyrannical had been its power, for women had even been prohibited from entering the palace:

> No te parezca, señor,
> novedad, desta manera
> haber venido a palacio
> a traer tan buenas nuevas. (p. 407)

A fact which is verified by the Marquess who says, referring to the presence of the Duchess: 'En palacio, cosa es nueva.' (p. 408).

In order to circumvent the tyrannous demands of this law, Matilde assumes male dress and the name of Carlos. She is justified in doing this for three reasons: first she has been brought up as a boy by her father, the king, and she is only voluntarily confirming his decision; second the evils of her disguising herself as a man are less than the evils of the Salic law; third her reasons are not personal and amorous, but public and political. In this she is contrasted to Lucrecia in <u>La tercera de sí misma</u>. The relative success of her assumption of

disguise is indicative of its licitness.

Although Matilde and her father are ultimately successful, they are humbled during the course of the play. In the first act, the king asks Matilde if she is ready to 'confirm' her maleness, or if she is in love:

> Que a las plantas,
> a las aves, y animales
> rinde a su púrpura y nácar. (p. 374)

She tells her father that she is free from love, and is ready to be sworn in as prince. The king is proud of her and of his wisdom:

> Tan varonil te he criado
> que en tus acciones se engaña
> la propia naturaleza. (p. 374)

Their attitude is a defiance of love, and can be compared to that of Hero and Leander (see above, p 161-3). Soon after, she falls in love with Enrique de Arágón, discovering that she cannot resist nature.

The Duchess is also in love with Enrique, who believes that he loves her. The Marquess is in love with the Duchess, but knows he has a rival. He believes it to be Carlos, who uses this device to "prove" her maleness. Enrique is taken into Carlos' favor, because s/he is in love with him. Enrique is also taken into the Marquess's favor, and the latter reveals to Enrique his suspicions about Carlos, and asks Enrique to verify them. Enrique becomes completely confused, for he too becomes jealous of Carlos:

> ¿Hay más grande confusión?. . .
> Y que haya tan ciego abismo
> que el más lince no lo entiende. . . . (p. 381)

Matilde has to use all her ingenuity to unravel 'el intricado enredo / de amor' (p. 394). She trusts the power of Amor, ingenio y mujer, seeing her own dilemma as a choice between her love for Enrique and

> La vana ambición de un reino,
> la vergüenza de las gentes,
> y de mi padre el respeto. (p. 394)

She chooses love. Her decision is similar to the choice of Margarita in No hay reinar como vivir (see above, p206ff) and of Heraclius in La rueda de la Fortuna (see above, p 225).

The play is the best of the obstacle plays. The language is in the main functional, but exploits the rhetorical figures and some of Mira's finest poetry can be found in the love scene between Matilde and Enrique (see above, p 143-4). The play is most remarkable for the way it uses the theme of the double as the basis of the character, theme and structure. It uses many of the aspects of plays such as La fénix de Salamanca, La confusión de Hungría and La tercera de sí misma and fuses them into a unity by using the central figure of Carlos/Matilde.

In Amor, ingenio y mujer Mira has used the complications of the Mencía plot in La fénix de Salamanca in order to express some of his ideas concerning the theme of identity. The central figure of the play is Matilde and the thematic crux of the play is her dilemma: she must choose her real identity. Matilde must decide whether she wants to be king or to be herself. The implications of this play, as of so many of Mira's plays, are that it is only when a man can find his own identity and be capable of moral and correct actions at that level, is he worthy to be king. These ideas can be found in La tercera de sí misma, for Lucrecia is unworthy to become Duchess of Mantua, whereas Porcia is fully worthy of the honor. The same ideas are to be found in La confusión de Hungría. It is in the best of Mira's comedies that the theme is most developed, however—in Amor, ingenio y mujer, El palacio confuso, Galán, valiente y discreto, and Cuatro milagros de amor, which is the supreme example and the culmination of Mira's dramatic technique.

El palacio confuso is the most successful of the two plays dealing with conjugal reconciliation that Mira wrote.[33] It varies the situation that formed the basis of Amor, ingenio y mujer, for it is another version of the Menaechmi theme.[34] The twin sons of the King of Sicily were both believed to have died shortly after birth. The King himself has now died and the heiress, Matilde, must marry in order to keep the throne. The unjustness of this law emphasises the similarity between the two plays. As with the Salic law in Amor, ingenio y mujer, one of the characters attacks the harshness of the law:

¡Qué costumbre inoficiosa,
qué bárbara ley! ¿Así

las reinas deben tomar
estado que ha de durar
una vida? (p. 325) 35

Matilde chooses the brave soldier, Carlos, who turns out to be a tyrant. With the aid of Enrico, Carlos' double, the Queen manages to give Carlos a series of lessons, which bring about his determination to overcome his passions. Once Carlos' conversion is effected and he has found his moral identity, it is revealed that he is the true heir to the throne and that Enrico is his twin brother, neither having in fact died.

The two most important parts of the play are the interpretation of nobility which is made by Carlos in the first act of the play, and the process of his conversion. The play illustrates very clearly that only when man overcomes himself and finds nobility does he find his true identity.

In the first act, Carlos boasts of the fact that he is ennobled by his deeds (although ironically, he is the son of the King.) He has been brought up among soldiers and his education leads him to place too much stress on deeds of valor and courage rather than on prudence, and his over-confidence will lead him to tyranny:

No soy necio ni porfío;
el lugar, que es noble es mío;
si éste es noble, aquí he de estar.
Cualquier soldado adquirío
nobleza y blasón honrado;
¿pues qué ha de hacer un soldado
tan valiente como yo?
Hijo de sus obras son
los hombres más principales,
y con ser mis obras tales
hoy no quiero ese blasón.
Hijo de mis pensamientos
soy agora, y noble tanto,
que hasta los cielos levanto
máquinas sobre los vientos.
El valor los nobles hace,
y así, por examen, sobra
mirar cómo el hombre obra
y no mirar cómo nace. (p. 326)

He goes on to state that all men are equal if they look to their honor. The irony is that Carlos will later reveal his own lack of honor in the tyrannous way he acts:

Todas las cosas criadas
si se dan se disminuyen,

tienen fin y se concluyen
perdidas, muertas o dadas.
Solamente la honra está
entera y contenta vive,
no sólo en quien la recibe
sino en aquél que le da. (p. 327)

Carlos follows this with a long, epic narration of his life and upbringing. As with other royal children 'a la guerra me inclíné' (p. 327)(see above, p. 218). He tells of his own great deeds culminating in a rhetorical introduction of his identity.

El mundo me llama Carlos,
los soldados el prodigio,
el cuerdo los cortesanos,
éstos me llaman plebeyo,
y yo tu hechura me llamo. (p. 328)

The situation is made more complex by the rivalry of the Duke for the hand of the Queen. Although the Duke and Porcia are in love, they are willing to make vivir give precedence to reinar (see above, p 274) a sure indication of the unfittingness of the Duke to be King:

Perdone, Porcia, perdone;
ame de veras u olvide;
que no es amor el que impide
que el amante se corone. . . .
Hombre adoraba su nombre;
mas diademas inmortales
de puntas piramidales
mudan la especie del hombre. (p. 325)

Carlos will be an example of this last idea, for he will be changed by power into a tyrant. The play stresses that the ideal man will act consistently as both man and king.

Matilde is attracted to Carlos, but Porcia urges her to overcome her desires and marry the Duke. The speech reveals not the nobility of Porcia, but rather that she is controlled by pure reason or calculation, which ignores human feelings. Porcia believes that she is urging Matilde to be more than a beast and follow her reason, but in fact she is urging her to forsake her feelings and thus be less than human. She is also urging her to put her honor in danger by marrying a man who loves another woman. In the final analysis, Matilde's instinct is right and Porcia's reason wrong, for Carlos is the legitimate King of Sicily:

Porcia — Mira tu fama y tu nombre,
sujeta esa inclinación.
Matilde — Me arrebatan las estrellas
el alma.
Porcia — No fuerzan ellas
las almas, que libres son. (p. 327)
Matilde — Mis pensamientos. . .
. . . sueltos caminan
sin freno. Porcia, ¿Qué haré?
Porcia — Vencerte y considerar
que eres reina y has de dar
a Sicilia rey que esté
de todos bien admitido. . . .
No manches y no desdores
tu opinión. . . . (p. 329)
Matilde — Ya, Porcia, estoy envidiando
tu valor; no eres mujer
pues que te sabes vencer. (p. 330)

The apparent mysogony of the last comment must be interpreted in the perspective of the play. Porcia is not only conquering her womanliness but her humanity, for to be able to overcome oneself one must be "super-human." In the play it is a man (Carlos) who is least capable of overcoming himself.

As soon as Carlos becomes King his passions take over:

Duque — Mas viendo que un hombre humilde
ya soberbio, ya vano,
por fuerza ha de ser tirano,
y viendo errar a Matilde
como una loca. . . .
Porcia — Decilde,
Duque, vos esa pasión,
que deja la posesión,
del alma. . . .
Duque — Estos son, Porcia, vaivenes
de la Fortuna. (p. 333)

His tyranny is manifest in two ways: his treatment of his subjects and his lust for Porcia, neglecting his wife.

The counterpoise to Carlos is Enrico. The twin brothers represent the good and bad sides of man's nature, rather like Epimetheus and Prometheus. Enrico is also attracted to deeds of arms, but his most noticeable characteristics are his quiet but assured nobility and his genuine humility:

Aunque villano, soy rico,
de pensamientos honrados
y entre silvestres cuidados
a guerras y armas me aplico. (p. 334)

Enrico's humility, which is appropiate and sincere, is strongly

contrasted to the hollow flattery of Carlos:

Enrico — Soy tu vasallo. (p. 335)
Carlos — Como es tu deidad sagrada
imagen de Dios, también
le imitas haciendo bien
y en hacer algo de nada. (p. 329)

The difference is very important. Enrico is sure of his identity and quite reasonably states that he is Matilde's vassal. Carlos is not sure of his identity and pretends he is by overstating the case. One minute he abases himself to his superior—the Queen—and compares her to God; the next he proves that he thinks that he is more than her equal by chasing other women as soon as they are married. Carlos lacks moderation and prudence and goes to extremes, whereas Enrico is the model of the prudent, moderate, self-assured man.

The conversion of Carlos is achieved through three lessons, each of which point to the precariousness of power and the goods of the world. His full conversion is achieved not through a trick, but when he discovers that a trick has been played on him, and is then ready to accept voluntarily that men must always strive to be worthy of what they are. It is again a question not of 'soy quien soy' but of 'soy quien debo ser' (see above, p 235).

The first lesson is when he discovers that all his orders have been countermanded and that the courtiers have failed to take him seriously. Matilde has told them that the king has 'fits' of misanthropy, and this is 'proved' by the magnanimity of Enrico, who pretends to be King on the instructions of Matilde. This prevents Carlos committing any real harm. Carlos is shaken and realises that he has been rash, like Icarus:

Subí, como venturoso,
al más supremo lugar
que yo pude imaginar
y despojado me veo
del valor y del trofeo
que mereció mi valor. (p. 348)

This is only a temporary setback and he soon determines to be even more wicked, supplementing his folly with crimes of murder, lust and ingratitude:

Vengaréme del aleve [the Duke]
y gozaré la que quiero [Porcia]. . . .

Rey seré si estoy casado
con Porcia. ¡La reina muera! (pp. 348-9)

This is the nadir of the development of Carlos' character. He is controlled by his worst passions: lust, ambition, arrogance, ingratitude, and tyrannous power. As he meditates his grossest crimes he sees a ghost—it is of course his twin brother:

Carlos ¿Quién eres, hombre? Responde.
Enrico Yo soy tu misma figura.
Carlos ¿Qué buscas?
Enrico La sepultura.
Carlos Luego, ¿ya estás muerto?
Enrico Sí.
Carlos ¿Por qué?
Enrico Porque ingrato fui.
Carlos ¿A quién?
Enrico A la reina. (p. 349)

The effect of the appearance of the 'ghost' is a determination to do what is right. The fact that the 'ghost' was only a trick means that, when Carlos discovers the truth he doubts the validity of the lesson he had learned and begins to act tyrannously once more.

During the second stage of his conversion, Carlos learns one permanent thing. He begins to fear that Matilde is lost to him, and he realises that she is far more important to him than Porcia.

The arrival of Lisardo, Enrico's foster-father, in the palace seeking Enrico reveals to Carlos the existence of his double, and the fact that there was no ghost. As a result he returns to his old self and behaves atrociously to Lisardo. When he sees Enrico a fight ensues. Not only does Enrico emerge victorious from the fight, but Matilde, Enrico and Lisardo deny Carlos' identity. Having lost his nobility he loses his identity as well. He earns the curses of Lisardo:

Nunca te goces ni llegues
a mis años, que hartos son.
Cáigate mi maldición
porque a tu padre no niegues. (p. 356)

Carlos has lost everything, and Varlovento, his faithful servant, calls him 'rey descartado' (p. 357).

Varlovento, whose very name presages an ill-wind, is a reflection of his master's fortunes. He is favored by Carlos and beaten by Enrico. In the final stages of the play, he

assumes the rôle of mentor, for, like so many graciosos, he is very wise in everything but his own life. Varlovento has two functions: he assures Carlos that he is still Carlos; and he becomes Carlos' conscience, urging him to do right:

> Pídele perdón, adora
> en la reina tu fortuna,
> deja la ambición porciuna,
> llama la reina señora. (p. 357)

This time Carlos accepts the lesson voluntarily, and when he says to Matilde:

> Tu hechura soy, no soy más
> que un átomo de tu gusto. . . .
> Tú eres reina, tú eres sola
> la que tiene el absoluto
> poder en aqueste reino,
> Carlos soy, esclavo tuyo. (p. 357)

he means it; it is no longer servile flattery.

Once Carlos has discovered his true character, the revelation of his birth can be made. The implication is quite clear that those who are worthy to rule are those who think that they are not worthy to rule and value vivir over reinar (see above, p 274) —vivir always implies a virtuous and honorable life.

El palacio confuso is an original and unusual development of the Menaechmi theme. It is also a profound play on the meaning of identity and nobility, two of the major themes of Mira's theater. El palacio confuso makes the important assumption that human conduct must be consistent and that to be a good ruler one must first behave well in a private capacity

The remaining two plays were among the last of Mira's plays to be written, and Cuatro milagros de amor was probably the last completed play. Both of these plays take the stylisation of the structure to its high point, for in both symmetry is of the greatest importance.

Galán, valiente y discreto begins with another example of the unjust "law" (see above, pp. 272ff); for Serafina, Duchess of Mantua, must choose a husband:

> Serafina — El no inclinarme a casar
> y haberlo de hacer por fuerza.
> Porcia — Mudable es la inclinación.
> Serafina — Hombres y bodas me ofenden.
> Son muchos los que pretenden
> y temo errar la elección. (11-6)

Although Serafina's apparent repugnance is to men and to the idea of marriage itself, it is really to the difficulty of choosing the right partner, because she is aware of the great responsibility of marriage. She is also aware that it is more difficult for her to make a choice than for other women because she believes men seek her not as Serafina but as the Duchess of Mantua:

> Digo, Porcia, que me ofende
> ver que mis estados sean
> lo que esos hombres desean,
> pues ninguno me pretende
> a mí por mí solamente. (117-21)

Because of this feeling she wants to examine them, to become 'humano lince' (146) and 'penetrar la intención' (141). The irony of the situation is that it will be Serafina whose intentions will be discovered by Fadrique. Irony is one of the key devices in Mira's plays, and Serafina, who sets out to test her suitors, is the one who will be tested.

Serafina suggests to Porcia that they change rôles:

> El papel de Serafina
> has de hacer cuando nos vean
> ésos que a Mantua desean,
> y si alguno me inclina,
> como a Porcia y como a pobre,
> será amante verdadero
> y tendrá el lugar primero
> aunque hacienda no le sobre
> en aquesta pretensión. (161-9)

The last lines already suggest that she may favor Fadrique, since she herself described him as:

> Pobre, pero celebrado,
> noble, pero desgraciado. (94-5)

In contrast, the other three suitors are never distinguished from each other and are called 'tres potentados' (90). They are the Dukes of Ferrara, Parma, and Urbino.

The situation is parallel in Cuatro milagros de amor. The beautiful Lucrecia (her beauty is praised at length by Sancho, p. 42) and the ugly Ana ('Yo, Lucrecia, he de casarme / pues rica, aunque fea nací, p. 39) have two suitors each. The four men are clearly distinguished, for each lacks a certain quality. The two girls decide to change rôles in order to test their suitors. In both plays the two girls have different qualities:

Lucrecia and Serafina are both well-born, rich and beautiful; Porcia is beautiful but lacks birth and wealth, Ana has both of these but lacks beauty.

Serafina and Lucrecia present their idea of the ideal man. Their speeches are good examples of Mira's rhetoric, containing many examples of repetition:

Serafina

El que inclinarme quisiere
será sólo él que tuviere
gala(1), ingenio(2) y valentía.(3)
(1) Con eminencia galán
quiero que el amante sea,
que en él la virtud se vea
(A) que en los diamantes que están
cuando brutas(1), deslucidas(2)
como piedras ordinarias,
(B) y visos de luces varias
exhalan cuando pulidos.
(2) También le quiero valiente
que el ánimo(A) y corazón(B)
muestran quién es el varón
que debe ser eminente.
Con estas dos calidades
satisfechos(A) y advertidos(B)
quedan los ojos(A) y oídos;(B)
(3) pero si el ingenio añades
cesará el conocimiento
de mi noble imaginación,
pues será la discreción
la luz del entendimiento. (194-216)

Lucrecia

Tan generoso(1)y gallardo(2)
mi dueño ha de ser, que sea
un César(1)y un Alejandro;(2)
sin ánimo(1)y sin valor,(2)
mal será el marido amparo(1)
de la mujer, honra(2), dueño(3),
guarda(4), defensa(5), regalo(6),
vida(7), consejo(8), cabeza(9),
mitad(10), unión(11), pompa(12), fausto(13),
gala(14), estimación(15), lisonja(16),
alma(17), bien(18), gusto(19), y descanso(20).
(p. 38)

The three qualities which are sought by Serafina are consonant with the Christian virtues, but are all drawn from the tradition of the cortesano.[36] Margherita Morreale draws attention to the qualities of the caballero who should be consistent in all aspects of 'I costumi, gli abiti, i riti e i modi.'[37] In her edition of the Galateo español she describes 'el hombre galateo.' She draws attention to the fact that the ideal man should be

'gallardo' and 'discreto' (p. 44). The concept of gallardía includes dress (gala) and courage (valor).

The ideal man presented by Lucrecia has one extra quality, he should be generoso or liberal. This quality does not stem from the courtier tradition, but is part of the Christian tradition. It will be seen that this quality, which is not expected by Serafina, is the quality that she herself lacks.

The two plays develop the situation in very different ways, although the conclusion of the two plays is very similar. The test in Cuatro milagros de amor is secret, whereas the test in Galán, valiente y discreto is a public affair and all the contestants are aware that it is taking place.

The formality of the contest is reflected in the structure of Galán, valiente y discreto. In each act one of the three qualities is tested, and each time Fadrique de Aragón is declared the winner. He is able to do this with the aid of his faithful servant, Flores, who calls himself Roque and becomes 'a spy in the house of love.' His power is great because he is 'hermaphrodite', i.e. he knows the motives of both the hero and heroine. Through Flores, Fadrique learns that Serafina and Porcia have changed rôles. This may give him an unfair advantage —allowing him to pay court to the real Serafina—but it is a clear indication of his prudence and discretion. He is unlike the three Dukes, who are content to presume they will win through their own worth.

The first test is the least developed: it is that of gala. Flores, by a trick, persuades Serafina to concede victory to Fadrique. The latter then announces that he is withdrawing his suit, although he still takes part in the contest, because he loves the pseudo-Porcia (i.e. Serafina). This is a favorable move and increases Serafina's partiality for him.

In the second act the quality to be tested is discreción. This involves a battle of wits between the suitors. They are asked a series of questions to test their discernment. The first is an enquiry into the nature of women, and Porcia asks which is a woman's most essential virtue: nobleza, hermosura, or discreción. Each of the Dukes supports one of the three,

but Fadrique wins with the statement that:

> Con tener una buena opinión
> es noble, hermosa y discreta. (1518-9)

The second question is put by Serafina. She asks which is man's most important virtue: 'galán o valiente/ o discreto' (1526-7). There is not quite such a perfect balance in this answer, for Parma and Urbino choose valentía while Ferrara chooses gala. It is left to Fadrique to give the balanced view; he chooses discreción which is 'unión/ de las virtudes.' (1556-7). Fadrique is the only one who is concerned with consistency; the Dukes all stress one quality over another but Fadrique shows that all are equally important.

The subject of the third act is at first valentía. Despite Urbino's assurance that Fadrique 'en torneos/ ha de quedar deslucido' (353-4), Fadrique emerges victorious from the tourney. After the jousting is over, Serafina decides to test their bravery again by throwing down a favor with the words:

> Del que ese lienzo nos traiga,
> la duquesa o yo seremos. (2209-10)

She is reprimanded immediately by Porcia:

> Eso es beber sangre humana,
> entrañas tienes de tigre. (2211-2)

Fadrique wins the favor through bravery and intelligence but he too reprimands Serafina:

> Si hay piedad en estos ojos,
> ¿cómo hay tigres en el pecho?
> Cuatro vidas arriesgáis;
> mal señora me queréis;
> costosa experiencia hacéis,
> pues así me aventuráis,
> Tomad el favor que dais;
> llamarle favor no es bien,
> desdén sí, y rigor también;
> y ansí, aunque el lienzo he ganado,
> vengo a ser el desdichado,
> pues gozo vuestro desdén. (2281-92)

It is this episode which makes Galán, valiente y discreto a much more complex play. Serafina is tested as well as the men, and she is found wanting. Like Carlos, in El palacio confuso she is put through an ordeal and is able to overcome herself through this ordeal. Her attitude at the beginning of Act Two is the over-rational position that had been adopted by Porcia

in El palacio confuso (see above, p 278). Serafina scorns feeling—and by implication—humanity:

> Mas soy tan dueño de mí
> que he de vencerme y no amar;
> del amor he de triunfar.
> No quiero amor. (911-4)

This is the quality that she had omitted from her list of the qualities of the perfect man: love is charity, and charity is demonstrated by generosity. She omitted it because she was unaware of its importance.

Unbeknownst to Serafina she had always favored Fadrique. Her partiality had increased when he started to pay attention to her rather than to the pseudo-Duchess. It becomes much stronger when Porcia tells her that she is falling in love with Fadrique; Serafina's reaction to this announcement makes Porcia say 'paréceme que te pesa.' (940).

Serafina's conversion occurs in the last act. After being reprimanded by Fadrique, she is repudiated by him, even though he admits he loves her. He is able to overcome his love because she is not worthy of it. This is the last stage in 'the taming of the shrew' and she admits her love when she fears she will lose him:

> Vide que el perderte
> era más perderme a mí. (2331-2)

With her acceptance and admission of her love, they are equal and are finally united. The implications of the play are clearly that only when men and women are capable of virtue and of knowing themselves and overcoming themselves in private life will they be fit to rule. Fadrique is the perfect man, but the complexity of the play stems from the fact that his judge—Serafina—is not perfect herself and that it is only when she realises that she is unworthy of him do they become worthy of each other.

Cuatro milagros de amor is very different. There are also four suitors, but each of them lack one of the four essential qualities. In the course of the play love performs four miracles and the four become ideal husbands. Each of these characters, their faults, and their conversions will be examined in turn.

First the characters of the two women are contrasted. The beautiful Lucrecia is very demanding, whereas Ana is more inclined to be charitable. This is seen early in the play:

Ana — Quizá el necio es encogido,
el cobarde cuerdo ha sido,
sin arte el desaliñado,
el avariento guardoso.

Lucrecia — Eso piensan los que llaman
decidor al mentiroso,
secretario al escribano,
al ciego corto de vista,
y moreno al negro. (p. 39)

After this discussion the two women agree to change rôles in order to test the four suitors.

The first two suitors to be dealt with are those of Ana. One of these is Juan, who is described as 'desaliñado' (p. 39). Juan lacks the quality of gala. It is the easiest of the faults to portray on stage, for his very appearance reveals his fault. His conversion is the first to take place, for it is the one which can be most easily seen by the audience, since it is a purely visual characteristic. It may appear a very minor fault but the play stresses that men must be consistent, and that untidiness is only a symptom of disregard for the other virtues. The man who is careless in his dress is careless in all other aspects of life; a man's dress is the outward sign of the degree of order in his life.

Juan is converted through the agency of the servant Gómez, who acts with his mistress Lucrecia, and is one of the strongest moral voices in the play. First he tells Juan a cuentecillo[38]

Cierto prelado tenía,
señor don Juan, dos criados
sucios y desaliñados,
y aunque santo, les decía:
enamoraos puercos. (p. 41)

Juan, offended, demands to know the relevance of the tale:

Gómez — Que no estáis enamorado.
Juan — un prodigio mi amor es. (p. 41)

The implication is that Juan, like the servants, does not think of others.

Gómez later gives him good advice:

Busque un sastre de buen gusto
que le vista bien. . .
. . . aprenda a danzar
para andar con aire. (p. 48)

Juan takes the advice to heart. In Act Three, Alberto tells Lucrecia and Ana that Juan won the prize as the 'más galán' at the celebrations held in honor of the investiture of Baltasar Carlos (p. 50). Shortly after, he appears dressed as muy galán and Ana calls him 'galán y valiente' (p. 52).

The second of Ana's suitors is Fernando de Moncada, whom she describes as:

> Necio y presumido. . .
> habla siempre jugando
> del vocablo, y por rodeos
> y metáfores. (p. 39)

A great deal is made of Fernando's fault because it concerns words; it is the most amusing of the faults for this reason. Like Juan's untidiness it appeals to the senses, (sound and sight) but it is symptomatic of Fernando's lack of discreción. It also allows Mira to satirise the extremes to which poetry can go, for, although Mira's language was culto, he always insisted on the importance of clarity.

Fernando sends the following note to Ana:

> Con el descrédito de la confianza,
> y valimiento de mi amor, es fuerza
> que esté minotada la monarquía de
> mi libertad, supeditada la razón
> con deseos intrínsicos, y superio-
> res al infausto semblante de mi osa-
> día, en fúnebres desaciertos, pero los
> alientos de la esperanza, dan vigor
> al lucimiento de mis pretensiones,
> si esa luminosa faz me vaporiza al-
> gún favor atractivo. De Vm. y tan
> suyo, que no es suyo: porque a ser su-
> yo sin ese cuyo, no supiera con tal
> cuyo si era mío, o si era suyo. (p. 39)

Lucrecia reads the note and calls him 'mentecato/ de cuatro costados' (p. 39). Then Fernando appears and bears out the impression made by his note:

> El imán
> de esa voz atraerme pudo,
> rendida a doña Ana dejo,
> obrando va el perplejo,
> pero tal es el de agudo. . . .
> El portatil aposento
> que los cuadrúpedos tiran
> infaustos, seguí, y no giran
> relámpagos en el viento;
> como esos ojos radiantes

> con quien intervalos tuve
> por el manto, opaca nube,
> que gusanos sibilantes
> labraron, nocturnos velos
> del manto, ausentando vaya
> la luz abscondita, y haya
> manifestación de cielos
> Ana, que puede ser Ana
> del tapiz más celestial;
> Anajarte, Ana inmortal:
> ¿Eres Diana? Di Ana. (p. 39)

Fernando's language is then satirised by Gómez, who also makes fun of legal language—Mira it will be remembered was a lawyer:

> Esto está hecho, En la villa de Madrid, a treinta y cuatro del mes de Febrero, ante mí el presente escribano y el infrascrito testigo, a quien doy fe que conozco, pareció la señora doña Lucrecia de Castro, que es ésta, y obligando su persona y bienes, habidos, y por haber, dijo que vendía y vendío una uña de la gran bestia, como el señor don Fernando es testigo, a la señora doña Ana de Meneses, que es ésta, y porque la dicha bestia, no quitando la presente, no parece de contado, renunció las leyes de mancomunidad, y dando su poder la solidura a cualesquier justicias, dijo, que cedía, y cedío la dicha bestia, como esta escritura nota; y por no saber firmar rogo a un testigo que firmase por ella: firme V.M. y váyase; que ya no hay que hacer. (p. 40)

Fernando knows that he and Juan are rivals, and in the second act Fernando arrives dressed ridiculously de gala: the two are thus contrasted in dress, but both reveal their lack of prudence. Fernando's over-ornate dress reflects his over-ornate language.

In a later scene he serenades Lucrecia, declaring his passion for her with the following conceit:

> Ya me llamo don Lucrecio. (p. 48)

which is a clear reference to Calixto in La Celestina:

> Sempronio ¿Tú no eres cristiano?
> Calixto ¿Yo? Melibeo soy, y a Melibea adoro, y en Melibea creo y a Melibea amo. (Acto I)

Gómez's reaction to Fernando's verbal extravagance is to advise him to go into the country to learn Castilian and:

> Dése a la lección de versos
> de los poetas que escriben
> alto, claro y con ingenio. (p. 48)

Fernando takes this advice. When he returns he is so ashamed of his previous foolishness that he pretends to be his own brother; this is a clear indication that character and identity are very closely linked. When he returns he declares his love in a sonnet which is still very culto, but whose meaning is very clear:

> ¿Viste de un monte las espaldas llenas
> de rizos anchos de la intacta nieve?
> ¿Viste una fuente donde el alba bebe
> escondida en celajes de azucenas?
> ¿Viste en espumas? ¿Viste en las arenas
> reflejos del rubí que el cielo mueve?
> ¿O al cisne en su candor, cuando se atreve
> a competir la voz de las sirenas?
> Más cándido, más puro, más brillante
> es el amor que anima el alma mía
> si honesto da otras formas al amante
> y otras especias en la mente cría,
> sombras son de mi amor, puro y constante,
> la nieve, el sol, la fuente, el cisne, el día.
> (p. 52)

The two suitors are linked together by Lucrecia:

> El otro es desaliñado
> en lo que habla, como vos
> en lo que vestís. (p. 40)

It is appropiate, in a sense, that they should be Ana's suitors for:

> Tiene una fea
> desaliño en las facciones. (p. 40)

The implication of the play is that this is no excuse, for Ana cannot change her ugliness, whereas Juan and Fernando can—and do—both change. Although Juan defends his earlier attitude—and his rival's:

> Donde vivé amor, no hay arte. (p. 40)

The play rejects this idea for their love inspires them to seek art not eschew it.

The other two suitors are much more complex. They are Lucrecia's two suitors, El Capitán Alvarado and Sancho de Mendoza. The former is a rich indiano. The two words capitán and indiano reveal the character of Alvarado, for he belongs to the Miles gloriosus and to the miser tradition: 'es esclavo / de su plata'

(p. 38). Alvarado, like Juan and Fernando, appears to be a Golden Age figurón. Mira is too aware of the complexity of human nature, however, to leave them as mere caricatures. He is also too convinced of man's basic dignity to portray a Lindo don Diego. Although these three suitors may appear to be figurones, they are alien to the tradition, because a figurón is neither capable of gaining self-knowledge nor of profiting from it.

Alvarado's avarice is presented in very candid terms by Gómez:

> Un hermano que tenías
> una noche agonizaba,
> y ardiendo una vela estaba,
> pero tanto lo sentías,
> que le dijiste con duras
> entrañas, y airado gesto;
> Hermano, muérase presto
> o sino muérase a escuras
> y la apagaste. ¿Qué novia
> te querrá con lo que digo. . .? (p. 51)

Alvarado's fault is a moral one and is difficult to get rid of. As a consequence, Alvarado has to struggle with himself:

> Peleo
> con mi amor y mi tesoro,
> que dos riquezas adoro,
> dos hermosuras deseo.
> Ser avariento es locura,
> venza, venza ya mi amor,
> que la riqueza mayor
> para el gusto, es la hermosura.
> Si a ser de Lucrecia vengo,
> amando sus ojos bellos,
> oro tendré en sus cabellos,
> rubíes en sus labios tengo,
> Cuando en dos partes adoro,
> una dellas se desprecia,
> alma amemos a Lucrecia,
> aborrezcamos el oro.
> Aunque aborrecer no fue
> el gozarla, entonces sí,
> la riqueza aborrecí
> cuando nunca la gozé.
> Vea el mundo que es amar. . .
> vean todos, que quien ama
> no consiente imperfección. (p. 51)

The conversion is fully credible, for the miser transfers his desire from wealth to a woman, but there is also a much more subtle change. Previously he had wanted to possess her, but now

he says 'si a ser de Lucrecia vengo'—he can imagine himself being possessed, but his mentality still clings to the idea of possession.

Alvarado's character undergoes no further change but his final position in the play needs comment. After the dénouement, Sancho says he will give 'al capitán una hermana' but Alvarado replies churlishly 'No quiero casarme yo' (p. 56). The comment does not suit the tone of the play's ending, for it would indicate that the miracle of the captain's conversion had been reversed. It is also inconsistent with the previous uxoriousness of his character. The explanation for this inconsistency lies, I believe, in the fact that the only extant version of the text is probably from the eighteenth century. I think that the text is corrupt at this point and that Alvarado's words really belong to the gracioso plot, which is fairly complex but which has no conclusion (see below, p 295).

The most complex character of all is Sancho. He eventually wins Lucrecia's hand, and he is the most sympathetic character in the play. He is also the one who is studied in the greatest detail. Lucrecia is attracted to him from the first:

> Viendo, pues, que mis antojos,
> o ya ciegas, o ya vanos,
> me despeñaban, no quise
> que amor creciese, triunfando
> de mi albedrío. (p. 38)

She strives to overcome the power of her attraction to him:

> Le aborrecí y olvidé
> venciendo la inclinación
> con la luz de la razón. (p. 38)

She was able to do this because one day, during the running of the bulls, she was in danger and he had forsaken her; this is a sign of lack of courage:

> Aunque es rico, y es hidalgo
> muy principal, quiere más
> su vida que su honra. (p. 38)

She does not want a man to be a valentón, but merely valiente:

> El guardar
> el honor es ser valiente. (p. 38)

Sancho, far from living up to this standard, falls short and she offers further proof that 'siendo Mendoza/ sea cobarde' (p. 38).

There is an important scene in which the two rivals, Sancho and Alvarado, are contrasted. As the play develops, Sancho's cowardice will be seen to be apparent rather than real. The captain is ready to fight at all times, but Sancho is cuerdo and loath to fight unnecessarily. The scene stresses that the one is liberal with his sword and careful with his money, while the other is liberal with his money but careful with his sword:

Alvarado — El capitán Alvarado
soy, y de la Indias vine,
a que el duelo determine
nuestro amoroso cuidado. . . .
Sancho — Necedad se ha de decir
que vengamos a reñir
por cosa que no tenemos. (p. 41)

Both quickly see each other's flaws and decide to expose their rivals. The captain takes the initiative as is appropiate:

Este es cobarde, y hacelle
algún donaire podré
que descrédito le dé. (p. 41)

Sancho also muses on Alvarado's character:

Este es mísero, ponelle
en ocasión de gastar
será descubrir su falta. (p. 41)

These differences are again stressed when they quarrel over the beautiful 'dueña Mari Ramírez'—actually Lucrecia in disguise:

Alvarado — Con dádivas no obligamos
a mujeres principales.
Sancho — Fineza es ser liberales.
Alvarado — Mejor será que riñamos.
Sancho — ¿Qué provecho, qué valor
se le sigue del reñir?
Alvarado — Verá el acero lucir.
Sancho — Dotémosle y es mejor. . . . (p. 42)

The argument continues for another eighteen lines, when Alvarado draws his sword and Sancho retires.

In the later part of the play, Sancho's character is developed separately from that of Alvarado. Sancho's cowardice is made an issue when he is attacked by Gómez:

Sancho — ¡Que matan a un caballero!
Gómez — No mataran si él lo fuera. (p. 47)

Lucrecia then gives Sancho hope:

Si en el fuego eficaz
dese amor, mi pecho se arde,
también seré yo cobarde
pues que me vence un rapaz. (p. 47)

She urges him to be brave with the tale of a gallina that protects its young from a gavilán, proclaiming

> Símbolo del miedo fui
> pero amor me hizo valiente. (p. 47)

Sancho exits saying 'milagros hace el amor' (p. 47)

Alberto, Lucrecia's uncle, and the comendador, Sancho's father, who want Sancho and Lucrecia to marry, discuss Sancho. He is 'galán' and 'discreto', but because he was brought up by his mother he lacks 'valor' (p. 47). It is an unusual example of the case history of a hero being discussed on the stage. When Sancho meets his father he is again rebuked for his cowardice. He muses:

> Padre y dama, de una suerte
> mi honra dejan ofendida.
> ¿Para qué es buena la vida?
> Estoy por darme la muerte,
> pero el darse muerte impía
> de pusilánimos es,
> no incurramos alma pues
> en la mayor cobardía. (p. 47)

Sancho returns dressed in an hábito como el de su padre. He resorts to disguise, and, by forgetting his identity, he finds his true self. His first action is to drive away from Lucrecia's window Juan and Fernando, and then the three men who have accused him of cowardice—Gómez, Alvarado, and his father. Lucrecia falls in love with her unknown nocturnal lover, who gives her half a ring.

The following morning, Sancho, as himself, proves that he has now lost his cowardice, which was really the result of prudence and diffidence, not lack of courage. With his conversion, the four miracles are complete and are listed by Lucrecia:

> Don Juan está muy galán,
> pero ese transformación
> no es milagrosa. . . .
> El capitán Alvarado. . .
> milagro digo que ha sido,
> no milagro superior. . . .
> En don Fernando parece
> que fue el milagro mayor
> porque es dar alma de nuevo
> dar el necio discreción. . . .
> Resta agora la victoria
> por don Sancho, que el temor

es una pasión opuesta
al amor mismo. (pp. 54-5)

This speech performs the same function as the last line of a summation schema. It stresses that the play has a rhetorical or symmetrical structure, and that Mira has expanded his ideas of balance in language to balance in the play as a whole.

The final stage of the play is the winning of Lucrecia's hand. She refuses all four suitors in favor of her nocturnal gallant. In a sense it is an example of Mira's dramatic irony, for she is attempting to avoid marriage still, by declaring her love for someone else. But once she has admitted her love, Sancho produces the other half of the ring and proves that he is the unknown gallant. Lucrecia and Sancho are united for he has proved that he is not a coward and she has proved that she is capable of love. Ana marries Fernando; she offers Juan her cousin Clara. Sancho offers Alvarado his sister.

The figure of Gómez is a very interesting one. He is the means by which the faults of each of the four suitors are brought home to them. His actions in the main plot are moral, but his behavior with the two maids, Aldonza and Iñes, is much more questionable. Because he takes no part in the last scene, the exact function of the gracioso plot is hard to determine.

When the four suitors claim the hand of Lucrecia they each stress their conversion. The words of Juan and Alvarado are the most revealing. Juan calls himself 'galán. . . valiente. . . discreto' (p. 54); Alvarado calls himself 'galán. . . valiente . . . liberal.' (p. 54). These words focus attention on the four basic qualities of the ideal man.

Most of Mira's plays deal with the quest for identity and nobility, and Cuatro milagros de amor is the play which states most clearly what qualities are important in determining nobility. The idea that nobility is to be found in the phrase 'soy quien debo ser' rather than 'soy quien soy' has been expressed before (see above, p 235), but it is in Cuatro milagros de amor that Mira states explicitly the virtues that make up nobility.

Galán is a quality that can only be traced to the Cortesano tradition (see above,pp 283-4).[39] Valiente belongs to this

tradition but is also one of the Christian virtues: Courage or Fortitude. These two qualities are sometimes joined in the expressions gallardo and bizarro.

Liberal is closely linked to the Christian Virtue of charity. The act of 'charity' i.e. giving money is a symbol of Charity, i.e. Christian love. The other Christian virtues of Faith and Hope are closely linked to that of Love or Charity.

Discreto is the most far-reaching of the virtues for it implies all the others. It is linked particularly to Prudence and the other moral and intellectual virtues of Temperance and Justice, Knowledge, Intelligence and Wisdom.

Mira's comedies all end happily with the marriage of the principal characters or the reconciliation of spouses. They all show how man acts in the world, and it is noticeable that Mira's vision of the world seemed to have become brighter in his last productive years, for among his last works are two of his most optimistic comedies. They portray men who are fully capable of finding their own identity and their nobility, by getting to know themselves and overcome themselves. They portray men who are able to resolve the problems of the world through their own efforts, and are able to overcome their passions and the confusion of the world.

Cuatro milagros de amor is the thematic culmination of Mira's theater. It is also the artistic culmination. The development of Mira's dramatic structure can be clearly seen from the following scematic patterns of his comedies. In these scematic patterns the following symbols are used.

means that two characters are brothers or brother and sister.

means that they are married.

means that someone is in love and seeks the other person.

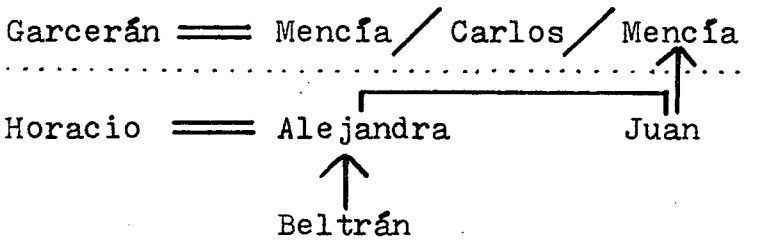
means that someone is a favorite (privado) of the character above.

means that someone is the servant of the previous character.

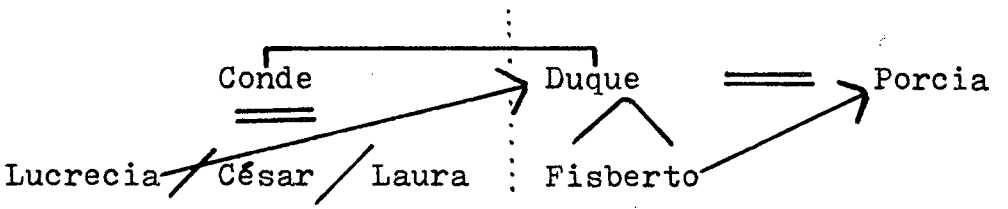
means the use of disguise.

means identical twins who are mistaken for each other.

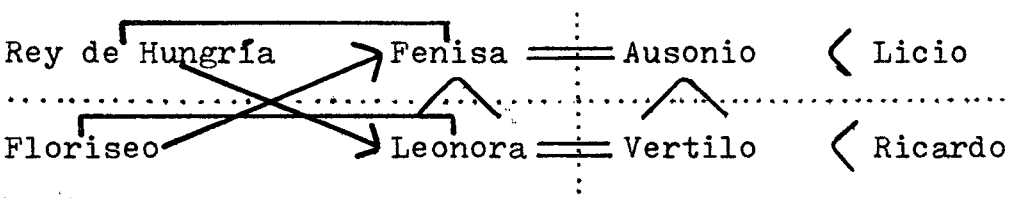
In La fénix de Salamanca, the schematic is rather clumsy and lacks balance. There is no real link between the two plots.



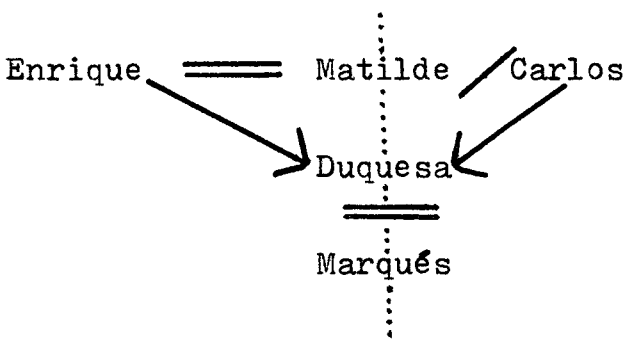
In La confusión de Hungría and La tercera de sí misma there is a much greater degree of cohesion. Both plays also depend on the fact of the privado taking the place of his/her master/mistress. La tercera de sí misma lacks balance and leaves Fisberto out of the solution.



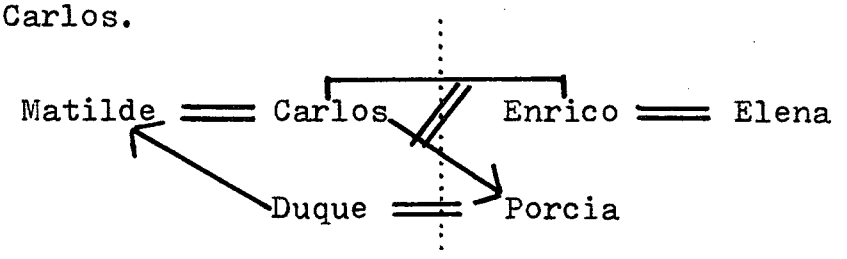
The balance is much better in La confusión de Hungría, which leaves two men unattached. The two servants provide a sense of balance.



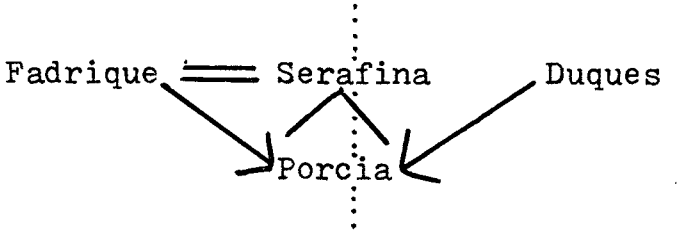
In Amor, ingenio y mujer, the characters are balanced in number, and the disguise of Matilde as Carlos balances Enrique as the Marquess' rival for the Duchess.



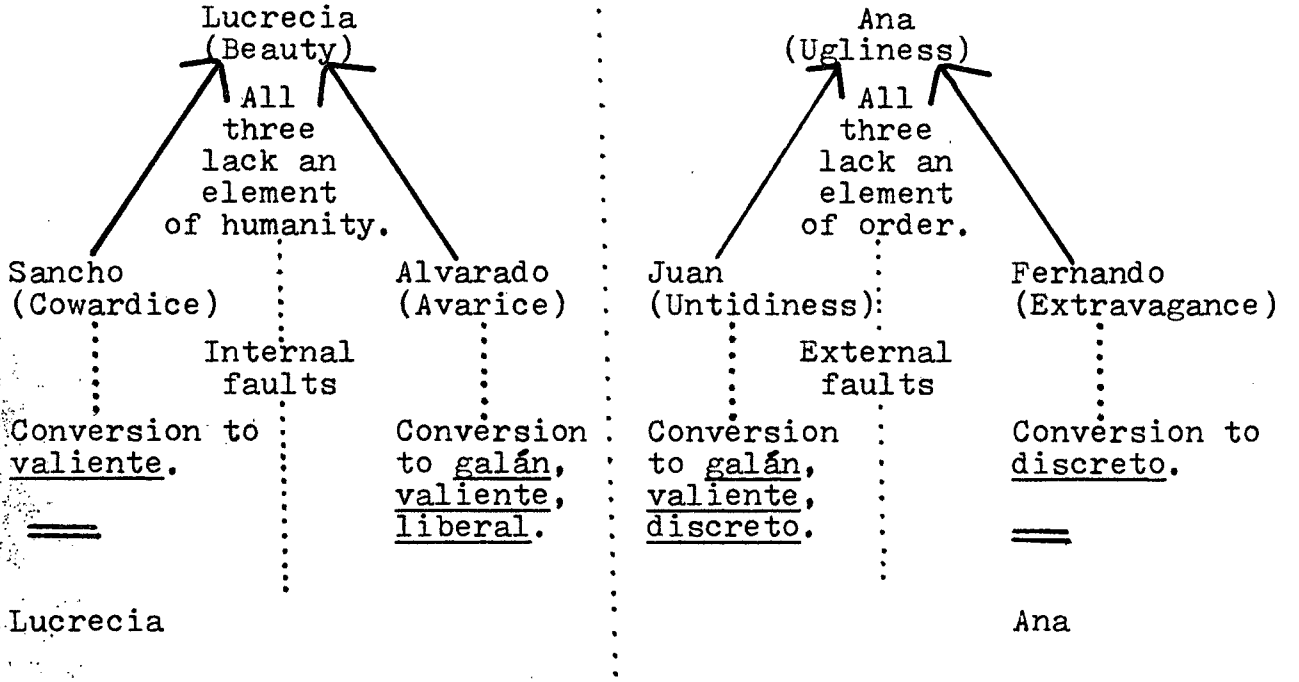
A similar balance is to be found in El palacio confuso. At the center of this schematic are the identical twins Enrico and Carlos.



In Galán, valiente y discreto, the schematic is very simple.



In Cuatro milagros de amor, Mira has developed this balance and symmetry into a very careful pattern of duplications and symmetrical pairs.



Mira de Amescua wrote two works which mention the investiture of Prince Baltasar Carlos on March 7, 1632. These are Cuatro milagros de amor and the auto, La jura del Príncipe. Both are outstanding as being the most developed examples of their respective forms. In La Jura del Príncipe,[40] Mira fused for

the first time action and symbolism into a perfectly integrated form which prefigures and rivals the structure of Calderón's most accomplished sacramental dramas. In the same year, Mira also wrote the comedy, which fuses together themes, character, language and structure into the most perfectly finished of his plays. Cuatro milagros de amor can rival any of Calderón's secular dramas for its perfect fusion of dramatic parts into a balanced and symmetrical unit.

The play itself succeeds in imposing the harmony on the world which Mira so desired. The harmony can be seen in the themes and ideas, in the characters and the language, in the dénouement and in the total structure. With this play Mira achieved a perfection that is only rarely found and which was perhaps the natural culmination of his creative urge. It may be that with this play Mira had achieved everything he possibly could in his dramatic technique and that it is a fallacy to say that he ceased writing after he sought the sanctuary of the Church of Guadix. It may be closer to the truth to conclude that Mira sought the bosom of the Church because his dramatic production had reached its logical conclusion and that after Cuatro milagros de amor he had nothing further to say.

NOTES TO CHAPTER EIGHT

[1] George Meredith, An Essay on Comedy and the Uses of the Comic Spirit (1897)

[2] Henri Bergson, Le Rire (1900).

[3] L.J. Potts, Comedy (London, 1949).

[4] William G. McCollom, The Divine Average: A View of Comedy (Cleveland, Ohio, 1971)

[5] Dramatic Theory esp. pp. 131-203; The Theory of Drama esp. pp. 175-245; Theatre, esp. pp. 116-44.

[6] Anatomy of Criticism, esp. pp. 163-86.

[7] Comedy, p. 19.

[8] The only time when this sort of criticism is fully acceptable is when the author writes a sequel, e.g. the Bernardo de Cabrera plays. In other cases these speculations are as invalid as some ofBradley's on Shakespeare's tragic heroes (Shakespearean Tragedy, pp. 339-426), such as "Where was Hamlet at the time of his father's death" (pp. 341-4) or "When was the murder of Duncan first plotted" (pp. 413-7). This type of criticism reached its high point with L.C. Knight's famous How many children Had Lady Macbeth? (Cambridge, 1933).

[9] Nicoll, Theory of Drama, p. 175.

[10] Ibid., p. 178.

[11] McCollom, The Divine Average, p. 53.

[12] Anatomy of Criticism, p. 173.

[13] Divine Average, passim, but defined on p. 7.

[14] This definition of the heroes of comedy, shows that the men who are finally successful in many of Mira's tragedies are really 'comic heroes', for they are much less individuated than the tragic heroes they replace. They are ultimately successful because they are better balanced and have no dominant characteristics which could become tragic flaws. In other words they are more mediocre. There are three clear examples: Vela (No hay dicha ni desdicha hasta la muerte); Lope de Luna(Bernardo de Cabrera); and Leoncio/Filipo/Narses (El ejemplo mayor de la desdicha). The last is the clearest example of this for Belisarius is replaced by three men, none of whom stands out as an individual.

[15] At least with the suppression of the words 'in social life.'

[16] McCollom, Divine Average, p. 54.

[17] The majority of Mira's plays contain a test of some description, but this refers to a formal test, which is part of the structure of the play.

[18] In Northrop Frye's terms both of these types do conform to his definition. In the first situation the obstacle figure is the heroine. In the second situation the obstacle is the character of the hero himself.

[19] Cf. Lope de Vega, who was known as El fénix de los ingenios.

[20] For the description of the archetypes of comedy, see Frye, pp. 172-6.

[21] See the studies of Carmen Bravo-Villasante and Melveena McKendrick.

[22] This also occurs in La tercera de sí misma, and in Los carboneros de Francia. In the last of these, the heroine has three female identities; but it and La fénix de Salamanca are very similar because in each the heroine is disguised and then pretends to be herself.

[23] This is one of the contentions of José María Bella in his introduction to Teatro III (pp. XXV-XXVIII). He completely fails to prove his case, however. La mesonera del Cielo is ambiguous about the state of marriage, but is very positive in its presentation of women. Bella does, however, seem to believe that an attack on marriage is exactly the same as an attack on women. Bella's case is weakened even more by his supporting evidence. He quotes speeches from four plays, each of which is questionable because of the dramatic context. From Las lises de Francia he quotes a speech of Clovis (Clodobeo). This is from the first act, in which Mira presents the Frankish king as a heathen barbarian and a tyrannical boor. The play portrays the gradual civilising of Clovis through St Clothilde (Crotilda); the king is converted to Christianity and to love. Bella's second piece of evidence is from El amparo de los hombres. In this case it is a humorous gracioso speech; one could use similar speeches to show that Mira advocated cowardice or gluttony. The third quotation that Bella gives is that of the tyrannical Marcelo in El esclavo del demonio, who is quoting an ecclesiastical truism. The last example that Bella quotes is part of a sonnet by the king in El santo sin nacer. The purpose of the scene is to show the tyrannical nature of the king, who is discredited. Bella's contention that "El antifeminismo, rasgo típicamente medieval, es en pocos autores tan rotundo y sincero como en Mira." (pp. XXVI-XXVII) is not proved by the evidence he gives nor does he prove Mira's "hostil actitud hacia la mujer y el matrimonio" (p. XXVII). Neither La mesonera del Cielo nor any of Mira's other plays attack women or marriage, but they do present marriage as being very difficult, since the two partners must struggle to make it work. In this case, as in all others, the words of certain characters can only be regarded as revealing Mira's thoughts if the ideas are supported by the plays themselves.

[24] The religious plays show the same trends. The religious plays which end happily (i.e. the chronicle plays and two of the salvation plays) re-establish order; those which end unhappily in human terms establish dis-order, but God then re-establishes divine harmony and order.

[25] Curtius, pp. 94ff.

[26] The following is a list of references to confusion, deceit and ingenuity from some of Mira's plays. The list is by no

means exhaustive:
No hay burlas, pp. 377, 380, 385, 390, 402, 403, 404, 405, 413, 426.
La Tercera, pp. 64, 66, 88, 109, 112, 143, 144, 160, 195, 238, 239, 146, 154, 189,
No hay reinar, there is an important reference to the theme of the world upside down on p. 450. Other references: pp. 443, 446, 448, 449, 452, 453, 455, 463, 465.
La fénix de Salamanca, pp. 19, 48, 60, 65, 67, 70, 76, 120.
Amor, ingenio y mujer, pp. 81, 82, 83, 94, 95, 98.
La confusión de Hungría, pp. 279, 294, 297, 286, 292, 296, 298, 300, 303, 307, 304, 308, 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 315, 316.
El palacio confuso, pp. 331, 332, 333, 335, 340, 339, 346, 349, 354, 355, 356, 358.
Lo que es no casarse a gusto, pp. 185, 188, 193, 194.
La desgraciada Raquel, pp. 3, 8.
La próspera de Bernardo, pp. 643, 649, 651, 652, 656, 663, 665,
La adversa de Bernardo, pp. 72, 76, 80, 81, 82, 84, 96.
El ejemplo mayor de la desdicha, 413-4, 675-6, 2521-2.
No hay dicha ni desdicha hasta la muerte, 271, 356, 1675-6, 1944-5, 1952.
Nardo Antonio, pp. 5, 7, 8, 13.

[27] See the study of Carmen Bravo-Villasante.

[28] It must have been this fact which caused Barrera and Mesonero to assume falsely that they were one play with two different titles. See above, pp. 39 and 44.

[29] This does occur in El palacio confuso, which has three heroines; on the other hand, El galán secreto has only one.

[30] This is the case in the comedies, but it also occurs in La adúltera virtuosa. See above, pp. 201

[31] This happens in Lo que puede una sospecha and No hay burlas con las mujeres. See above, pp. 202 and 248-51.

[32] Anatomy of Criticism, p. 166.

[33] The other is La casa del tahur which is the weakest of the comedies. The play deals with the difficulty of navigating safely the "sea of marriage" (p. 126). It also deals with the idea that "En la casa del tahur poco dura el alegría," for the protagonist, Alejandro, is a gambler and womaniser. He is conscience-stricken from time to time:

> Tres máquinas dio, infernales,
> contra el hombre el cruel infierno
> en este tiempo moderno.
> Duelo dio contra el honor,
> contra la vida el furor
> de su pólvora estupenda,
> y naipes contra la hacienda,
> que fue la furia mayor. (1105-12)

His beautiful and virtuous wife talks of "las dos pasiones/ que abren camino a la muerte" (1017-8), which are lack of health (1013) and lack of honor (1014). The play has a rather moralistic ending, but is made interesting because both the faithful servant, Roque, and the wise father, Marcelo, are discomfited. The

structure of the play shows that women are to be trusted more than men, and thus refutes the opinion of Alejandro that "Mal haya el hombre que fía / en la mujer." (2259-60). The play reveals that Mira was far from being a mysogonist (see above, note 23).

[34] See Charles Henry Stevens, Lope de Vega's "El palacio confuso" Together with a Study of the Menaechmi Theme in Spanish Literature (New York, 1939). Stevens' evidence to prove Lope's authorship has been invalidated by Morley and Bruerton (see above, p. 46).

[35] Another similarity is that the names of the three protagonists of Amor, ingenio y mujer are Enrique and the "twins" Matilde and Carlos; those of El palacio confuso are Matilde and the twins Carlos and Enrico. Mira presumably chose the variation Enrico to increase its similarity with Carlos—they both have six letters.

[36] See Margherita Morreale, Castiglione y Boscán: El ideal cortesano en el renacimiento español, 2 vols. (Madrid, 1959); M. Morreale, ed., Lucas Gracián Dantisco, Galateo español (Madrid, 1968). I am grateful to Prof. Arsenio Pacheco for drawing my attention to these works on the subject.

[37] M. Morreale, 'Una obra de Cortesanía en tono menor', BRAE (1962), p. 62.

[38] See Williamsen's article in Hispania.

[39] It is also possible to link this concept to the Christian tradition, which stresses that virtue is synonymous with order. It must be remembered that in Wesley's words "cleanliness is next to Godliness."

[40] Edited by J.M. Bella in Teatro III.

CHAPTER NINE: CONCLUSIONS

In 1624 Mira stated explicitly that "el fin de la comedia" is"enseñar virtudes morales y polĺticas."[1] All of his plays are designed to exemplify certain moral lessons. Because these moral lessons are consistent, they form the strongest unifying element in his theater.

Mira is always concerned with men's relations with each other. In his early religious plays he also deals with men's relationship with God; but in his later theater he tended to restrict this subject to the autos. This development parallels that of the Spanish theater as a whole, and prefigures that of Calderón, who in his last years wrote mythological plays on secular subjects and limited his theological writing to his autos.

Mira's development neither indicates a loss of religious belief nor a contradiction of the Christian moral and ethical values. Indeed this development does not necessarily indicate any basic change in Mira's conception of the world, but it means a fundamental change in his presentation of it. In Mira's early theater, God's existence and the immortality of the soul are indisputable facts which are proved by His intervention in the affairs of men; in Mira's later theater, the existence of God and the immortality of the soul are desirable and probable, but are articles of individual belief rather than undeniable facts.

This development caused many changes to be made in the structure of the plays, but not in the moral lessons which the plays exemplify. The most fundamental development is that, without the intervention of God, men become fully responsible for their actions in this world, and there is no guarantee that they will find a reward—or a punishment—in any other world. This opened the way for Mira de Amescua to write tragedy.

Mira's moral stand, on the other hand, is fundamentally the same in all the plays he wrote. In the religious plays he supports a certain line of moral conduct, but shows that sinners may be able to find salvation through repentance and the mercy of God. In his secular plays his moral stand is, if anything, more

rigorous, since without the intervention of God, there is no possibility that a repentant sinner will find salvation in this world.

Each play concerns a situation in which a man is tested in the world. In the religious plays he is either supported by God's favor and is thus capable of overcoming himself and being successful in the world, or else he is destroyed in the world, but is saved and finds his reward in the world to come. In the secular theater, however, there is no supernatural power to aid men, nor are men rewarded in another life.

There are three basic results of these tests in the secular theater. In the tragedies, the heroes are incapable of measuring up to certain standards—both moral and political—and are consequently destroyed.

The tragicomedies present men who are able to measure up to certain standards; men who are totally incapable of measuring up to them; and men who are at first incapable of measuring up to those standards but undergo some ordeal which causes them finally to overcome themselves and the power of Fortune. It is in the tragicomedies that the twin theme of identity and nobility is most fully developed. Nobility is based on deeds and worth and on a dynamic principle, not on birth and a static principle. The twin themes are expressed in the two words "conocerse" and "vencerse", for a man must first know himself and his true identity before he can overcome his passions and act in a moral, rational, and noble fashion.

The best of Mira's comedies are very similar to the tragicomedies. In them Mira states clearly his view of the virtues which are essential. These can be seen to be a fusion of the Renaissance values of the Cortigiano and of the Christian virtues. A man should be first galán: this entails smartness, for lack of order in a man's dress is symptomatic of a lack of order in the rest of his life. He should be valiente: this entails being able to defend one's honor and withstanding the trials of the world. He should be liberal: this is the Christian virtue of Charity, and consists of being able to think of others and show feeling for them and help them. Finally a man should be

discreto: this is the chief quality for it implies all the others. A man should be prudent and follow reason at both a moral and a political level. Mira's presentation of discreción reveals that it is basically common sense.

Mira uses his moral beliefs as a basic philosophy on which to build his plays, which are examples that demonstrate the truth of his moral ideas. The dramatic craftmanship and the achievement of Mira de Amescua can be gauged only by an examination of how he uses dramatic and literary devices to create plays which are at the same time credible at a human and emotional level and edifying at a moral and intellectual level.

Mira had stated his literary viewpoint in 1609 when he had praised Balbuena's El Bernardo for its "variedad de los sucessos y episodios" and for "la unidad de la acción, y contextura de la fábula."[2] This statement is a key one, not only because it shows Mira's belief in the importance of dramatic unity and coherence, but also because it reveals how much he stressed tension and apparent ambiguity. The desire for the same work to contain at once variety and unity is in strict accordance with the prominence he gave to the idea that all aspects of this world have at least two faces.

Mira began to exploit dualism in the religious plays. When the Devil appears he is frequently disguised, indeed in El esclavo del demonio he bears the name Angelio. The idea of disguise is one symptom of duality, which is made more apparent when the Devil has a name that suggests an Angel. The figure of the Devil is also important for it is a sign that in this world men are offered two choices—good and evil—and that they must choose between them.

The idea of the world having more than one face is reflected in Mira's use of rhetorical language. Rhetorical tropes and figures, most of which are based on repetition, stress the fact that various things are very similar, although they are different.

The device of the double is central to Mira's portrayal of character. In some plays this can be seen in a series of characters who balance each other. These may be presented as two friends whose fortunes are diametrically opposed. Mira

also uses double characters in different ways. Another use of the double is less stylised than the previous one, for different characters are contrasted at different moments. Mira's third use of the double is that of twins, either real or apparent. Another aspect of the device is disguise. Indeed in three plays a character assumes three different identities; in two of which the different identities include a change of sex.

Among Mira's tragicomedies and comedies, there are several examples of the action being controlled by either a woman or by a gracioso—or occasionally by both. In every instance the controlling figure or figures have elements of the two sexes: the woman disguises herself as a man or assumes male prerogatives; while the gracioso is male and is the servant of the hero but insinuates himself into the house of the heroine—"the spy in the house of love"—and then the heroine uses the gracioso as her instrument. In each case the happy solution of the play is achieved through the "hermaphroditism" of the controlling figure.

Mira's use of the double thus has two basic qualities; both of them serving to reinforce his moral ideas. Where there are two characters, they must strive to establish their true identity. In the other case, the double stresses that only when a character is complete and has both male and female attributes can s/he attain success.

Mira's characters are marked out by their nobility and by their credibility. They are tested in the world by their reactions to the opportunitues that are offered to them. If a man is to be successful he must be able to resist the temptation of these ocasiones and he must be consistent in all his relationships with his fellow men; with his women; with his family; with his monarch; and with God. Mira presents characters at all levels as being capable of a basic nobility, whether they be galanes, damas, viejos, criados, or villanos. He also reveals that in order to find his true nobility, a man must have the basic virtues.

The five types of characters in Mira's theater are all clearly distinguished but they do have certain features in common. The villanos tend to be wise, even sententious, and

they are frequently the voice of Mira de Amescua. The criados are very often wise in the affairs of others, but imprudent in their own behavior. Servants often provide the most moral views in the play yet rarely do they live up to their own precepts. Most of Mira's servants have a tendency to like food and drink and to be careful of their own skins, but rarely do they become caricatures without redeeming qualities. The viejos in Mira's theater are among his most distinctive characters. Although there are examples of evil old men, the majority of the old men in Mira's plays are wise and good. In most cases the old men assume the position of the benevolent father figure.

There are markedly fewer females than males in the theater of Mira de Amescua. Among the damas certain characteristics stand out. What is perhaps remarkable in a dramatist who is reputed to be a mysonogist (see above, p 301) is that there are no examples of truly evil women. There are few examples of women who under certain circumstances commit crimes or sins but in every case there are extenuating circumstances and they are never made to suffer greatly for their faults.

The damas can be divided into two groups. The varoniles who assume male dress or prerogatives in order to achieve their desires. These are all strong-willed and firm of purpose. They are usually forced to act as they do because of the weakness —or absence— of their menfolk. As the studies of McKendrick and Bravo-Villasante show, these characters are not peculiar to Mira and belong to a long literary tradition.

It is the second group of Mira's damas which are peculiar to him and are most remarkable. These are women who are entirely feminine but who have immense strength of character. These women have to assert themselves because of the failure of the men, but they are able to do so without compromising either their honor or their identity.

The galanes can be divided into various groups, which correspond to the various types of plays. There are a few evil characters who are destroyed, but the fate of the majority of Mira's protagonists depends on their ability to establish their own moral identity and their adoption of the four essential virtues.

Mira's portrayal of character is on the whole optimistic and reveals that he viewed mankind in a favorable way, for the vast majority of his characters have a basic nobility—even the tragic heroes are destroyed for noble faults. His presentation of character is also realistic, for most of the characters have to struggle with their less noble qualities before they can achieve success.

This element of realism is a strong feature of Mira's theater. The qualities that he stresses are not heroic but are very down-to-earth ones. His theater leads up to the final comedies in which many of the problems of the earlier plays are resolved, but the heroes of his comedies are not supermen. Indeed the comic heroes, in common with the friends who succeed the heroes of the tragedies, are in many ways mediocrities. They correspond to the "divine average" (see above, p 260) and are as a result less remarkable.

There is thus a strong tension in Mira's presentation of mankind. It is at once very optimistic, for he sees men as being basically noble and honorable; yet at the same time it is rather pessimistic for if everyone achieves the golden mean and successfully fuses all the virtues, then men become less individual and less remarkable.

Mira also liked the double plot, which often centers around two of the principal characters of his plays. In the religious plays this often seems a rather crude device, but in a few of them, however, the use of the double plot is justified by his use of symbolism and imagery. In many ways the symmetry of the structure of the most successful ones prefigures the structure of Mira's tragedies and comedies.

The double plot becomes much more closely integrated in the tragedies, the comedies and the two most successful late tragi-comedies. In his most successful late plays Mira fuses the two plots so closely that it is difficult to divide the plots from each other. Mira began writing plays with plots that were loosely connected and he gradually joined them together by means of parallelism of situation, characters and dramatic structure so that the end result is a play which has "variedad de sucessos

y episodios" but complete "unidad de acción, y contextura de fábula."

Mira achieved this complete fusion through various stylistic devices that he developed throughout his career. These include dramatic relief, dramatic irony, dramatic structuring and the use of the genres of comedy and tragedy.

Dramatic relief is achieved mainly through the gracioso plot, which he uses a great deal to lower the dramatic tension momentarily. His use of this device either provides a comment on the main plot or else darkens the tone of the play.

The device of dramatic irony is very common in Mira's theater, and it stresses the ambiguity of the world and life. The device is the Aristotelian one of peripeteia for men believe they will achieve one thing by an action and in reality achieve the opposite. It is the frequent and skilful use of the device which makes Mira's plays—especially the tragedies—so moving.

Dramatic irony pervades Mira's theater at all levels and he was fascinated by the theme of rising and falling, and was similarly intrigued by the wheel of Fortune, for only when a man is down can he rise and only by rising can he fall. This literary device thus helps to reinforce Mira's ideas about the nature and ambiguity of the world.

An examination of La rueda de la Fortuna helps to reveal Mira's development of the concept of comedy and tragedy. La rueda de la Fortuna is the only one of Mira's successful plays which is episodic. It has elements of tragedy and of comedy but it was the only work Mira produced that is basically not connected to either of the two literary genres, even though it ends happily and contains violent deaths. La rueda de la Fortuna is the single example in Mira's theater of the successful, secular "epic" play. It is the only play among his best which almost totally ignores the demands of tragedy and comedy, but it stands out for the complex construction which is unified by the image of the wheel. It is this image which gives the play its strong inner tension.

Mira's later plays can be clearly divided into tragedies or comedies, for El galán secreto is very close to the tragedies,

except that the proof of the hero's innocence arrives in time to save him. On the other hand, No hay burlas con las mujeres is very close to the comedies, but, because of the treacherous and passionate character of Lope, a happy resolution can be achieved only through his annihilation.

The remaining device that Mira used was that of dramatic structuring. This leads finally to the symmetry of construction of Cuatro milagros de amor, but it is present throughout the whole of his theater.

A reading of any of Mira's plays quickly reveals his complete competence in matters of stage business. He can present the most complex scenes and is perfectly capable of equalling any master of the theater in his ability to extract everything possible from any situation. This ability is attested by the praise of Lope and others for Mira's handling of plots, scenes and situations.

It is this theatricality which is the genius of Mira de Amescua, for it allowed him to put his ideas on the stage. It was his ability to write complex, amusing and interesting scenes which brought alive his moral philosophy and enabled him to use character, language, the dramatic genres and literary devices to supplement his philosophical ideas.

Mira's theater developed from a dramatisation of a story —Los prodigios de la vara or Los carboneros de Francia—or the dramatisation of a parable—Vida y muerte de San Lázaro—or of a theological debate—El esclavo del Demonio—to the fusing of these possibilities into a single unit. The most successful of Mira's plays—the early tragicomedy La rueda de la Fortuna, the tragedies of Alvaro de Luna and Bernardo de Cabrera, the late tragicomedies El galán secreto and No hay burlas con las mujeres, and the comedies El palacio confuso, Amor, ingenio y mujer and Cuatro milagros de amor—are carefully constructed works of art which are successful at all levels. Their ideas are consistent and set forth a powerful and rigorous code of moral ethics. The characters are human, credible and likeable; they have human failings for which they must either suffer or which they must strive to overcome by following the virtues of order, courage,

awareness of others and plain common sense. The plays are remarkable at a purely literary level for their skilful use of the figures and images of rhetoric and for the use of other linguistic devices, such as dramatic irony. They are also highly successful from the point of view of construction; mechanically they are cleverly and skilfully constructed. Their plots and the contrasts that are made between situations reinforce their moral ideas, while the development of plot and character produces situations which are either comic or tragic, and which produce the resulting emotions in the audience.

Mira de Amescua holds an unique position in the Spanish theater of the Golden Age. His development is a microcosm of that of the theater as a whole. It is not possible to state categorically that he was the writer who bridged the gap between the early theater of Lope and the later theater of Calderón, for in the decades 1615-35 Lope, Calderón, Tirso, Ruiz de Alarcón, Vélez de Guevara, Guillén de Castro and Mira were all writing for the stage and it is difficult to say who influenced whom.

All that one can say with certainty is that in his early years Mira wrote plays which followed the formula that Lope gives in his Arte nuevo de hacer comedias. Mira's only real success in this early period is La rueda de la Fortuna, a play which prefigures much of his later development because of the unifying imagery of the wheel, its studied use of rhetorical devices, its use of double and of symbolic characters and the tension between the two contrasted but complementary plots. In his later theater Mira was to develop these devices and divest himself of the numerous episodes in order to write plays in which the unity was more easily discernible.

The development of Mira's theater leads the way to the theater of Calderón. It has a sound moral framework and uses language and dramatic structure in a way which becomes almost operatic in its form. Indeed Mira's Hero y Leandro, which Calderón admired, clearly prefigures Calderón's mythological plays, just as Mira's auto La jura del Príncipe prefigures Calderón's autos. If this were Mira's only historical value it would be important, but Mira's theater also points the way to

Moreto and Rojas Zorrilla.

Galán, valiente y discreto and Cuatro milagros de amor may have been—and probably were—influenced by Alarcón, but they are not as didactic as Alarcón—the moral pill is more carefully disguised. Their form is urbane, witty and sophisticated and a comparison of the two shows how Mira advanced from Alarconian comedy in Galán, valiente y discreto—with its rather priggish hero—to Moretonian comedy in Cuatro milagros de amor. Juan, Fernando and Alvarado are almost figurones in the style of El lindo don Diego, but Mira was incapable of debasing human nature so much. Unlike Moreto, he may portray rogues, but never fools.

Mira's less stylised comedies, such as La fénix de Salamanca and La confusión de Hungría may possibly have influenced Rojas Zorrilla, but it would seem almost certain that Rojas was influenced by Mira's penchant for tragedy. There are too many similarities between the theater of Mira and Rojas[3] for it to be coincidental that they are the only two Golden Age dramatists whose theater is evenly divided into tragedy and comedy.

The theater of Mira de Amescua is unique and of vast importance historically because it is a microcosm and reflection of the development of the Golden Age theater as a whole. This microcosmic aspect can be seen in the developing stress Mira gives to tragedy and comedy, his curtailing of the exuberance of the early theater into a more unified whole, his use of rhetoric and of "Gongorisms", his interest in character, his desire to teach by means of examples rather than direct statement, his development of literary devices, and his development of dramatic structure. It is not possible to measure this influence, but he is the only dramatist whose theater clearly undergoes this full development, beginning in the rudimentary theater of the end of the sixteenth century and ending with the sophistication of the theater of Rojas Zorrilla, Moreto and Calderón. But Mira is not just of academic interest as one of the bridges which link Lope and Calderón, for he produced two tragedies, three comedies and three tragicomedies which rank with the finest productions of the Spanish stage.

NOTES TO CHAPTER NINE

[1] Simón Díaz, pp. 179-80. See above, p. 29.

[2] Simón Díaz, pp. 179-80. See above, p. 22.

[3] Both men had a scatalogical delight in purges and loose bowels—especially at moments of high drama. Valbuena Prat believes *No hay burlas con las mujeres* to be the "probable precendente de *Cada cual lo que le toca* de Rojas" (*Teatro I*, p. XLVIII).

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