following of a fixed and unvarying social ritual.”

12 Eric Bentley, “The Comedia: Universality or Uniformity?” in R. H. S. 

13 The contradiction inherent in the pursuit of personal ideals and the dictates of Christian virtue is clearly expressed by C. Brown Watson in Shakespeare and the Renaissance Concept of Honor (Princeton, 1920): “To excel in virtue, to aspire after a moral perfection, is easy enough; but to maintain that perfect virtue, that pure and unspotted virtue, in the world of men, is the chief goal of Renaissance pagans-humanists. Nor were the writers of that age unaware that they were trying to reconcile two moral systems fundamentally irreconcilable,” pp. 102-103.


15 Alcibiades colonia and unfitted to be considered as cortesano; because all the affections and disaffections and imbecilities that are done in the court are for the pure cause and curiosity of discussing names and lineage, known as M. Martinez de Burgos (Madrid, 1915), pp. 87-88.

16 The classic study is Herschel Beker’s The Dignity of Man (Cambridge, Mass., 1947), Chapters XI and XIV.


18 Baker warns about this self-imposed limitation: “In an age of shifting and dislocated values like the Renaissance, no man could assess himself solely in religious, philosophical, or economic terms,” p. 215.

19 Baker, pp. 348-349.


21 I am thinking of, for example, Pericles’ and the Compassion de Cordoba in the courtly social ritual of critical importance in the interpretation of the play.

22 This error is seen as a “magic mistake” by J. O. Irwin Watson in “El pastor de don Juan and The Neoplatonic Theory of Tragedy,” in Dance Wadsworth’s Critical Essays, pp. 214-221.

23 Castiglione has a long and varied discussion on love in the fourth book of II Cortegiano. Love in an old person is generally admitted, but under certain limitations: “Ma se amor poi che un vecchio, nel freddo core conservano il foco degli spiriti e sirte punge in ragion pugnace al senso debole, non devono poi dare sue da blasuinar, che, come interesante, meritato con perpetua infima eterna commemorato tra gli animali irrationali, percibi, i pensieri e i modi dell’amor-anni son molto da essere tempesti e necessari che con oscuritai e pietate sono.” 

24 Alberti Tenenti in El senso della morte e notoli della vita nel riurninamento 1857, quotes several texts to document the fact that once arrived at a mature age, man should leave the ambitious of life and enter a period of contemplation and “navevalmen-102-103.

25 “Brace Woodraper in “Poetry and Diana in Calderon’s El médico de su honor,” RTH, 49 (1968), 3-11, suggests that the play is a “complex metaphor.” For a discussion along the same lines, see C. A. Sasso, “El problema de los pocos poéticos en Calderon. El pastor de don Juan,” RF, 76 (1964), 129-162.

26 I have discussed Casteilone’s attempts at a solution to his problem in “Grande and Responsibility in El médico de su honor,” in Homenaje a William L. Fichter, ed. J. D. Keesey and J. A. Murphy (Madrid, 1972), pp. 127-137.


28 It is relevant to recall at this point that what Aristotle called magnanimity is the very essence of the concept of honor, or the recognition of one’s own excellence. Moreover, “magnanimity is the only virtue that cannot lapse into vice through excess,” Maurice B. McNamee, SJ, “The Epic Hero” in Milton and the Epic Hero (New York, 1960), p. 1.

29 In his connection, it is useful to mention that the virtuous Castañar in Del Rey’s, says not only the virtue of his innocence. Castañar is prevented from making a definite decision because of the author’s use of a “deceit or machination device.”

30 La dicrecion de don Lope de Almeda,” Castelletto, 2 (May-June, 1951), 1-26.

31 Wilson’s basic premise is that Calderón derived from the Spanish neo-Aristotelian theorists the concept of tragedy in which “The tragic hero should be neither wholly good, nor wholly evil, but should be as virtuous as the plot permits,” p. 212, automatically removes Juan from the list of possible individuals.

32 Manuel Ruiz Lagos has written several essays on the importance of painting in Calderón’s theater, among which is “Una técnica dramatica: Calderón la pintura y el centro escénico.” Seminario, 2 (1964), 91-104.

VENEREAL DISEASE AND THE GRACIOSO: 
A LOOK AT MORETO’S EL DESDEN CON EL DESDEN

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One of the most intriguing characters in Moreto’s El desden con el desden is the gracioso who goes by the two names Polilla and Caniqui. This comic figure who makes his appearance from the very start in Act 1, Scene 1, as Polilla and then introduces himself under the assumed name of Caniqui in Act 1, Scene 5, has a dominant role in the play. And since the comedy is noted for its meticulous construction and disciplined art, it is reasonable to conjecture that there may be some underlying and unifying significance to the two names of the gracioso. It is the contention of this paper that one concept which relates the various facets of Polilla-Caniqui to each other and to the drama as a whole is the lowly and stigmatic subject of venereal disease, something which stands in perhaps intentional contrast to the very start in Act I, Scene 1, when Carlos, the Count of Barcelona, where he moves from the heart of his master to the very center of the scene of the play Polilla is found jesting with his master in a fashion which points out the meaning of Polilla as “worry” or “care.” The scene Polilla is found jesting with his master in a fashion which points out the meaning of Polilla as “worry” or “care.”

Venereal disease, one of the most common sexual problems of the late 16th and 17th centuries, was a serious health concern in Spain and throughout Europe. The introduction of the gracioso in Moreto’s El desden con el desden is likely to have been inspired by the fear and anxiety surrounding venereal disease, especially during the period of the Spanish Inquisition. The Inquisition was particularly concerned with the spread of venereal disease, which was believed to be a punishment for sin and a scourge of society.

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the new name he is to invent, Caniqui. When Polilla does present himself to Diana, complete with costume as a "love doctor" and with comical attempts at Latin, he prefaces his appearance with the line, "Plege al cielo que de fuego mi entrada" (464), and he establishes himself as one from the New World (Acapulco) who wishes to cure a "mal de amor." When Diana asks about the cure for "polilla," Polilla answers that he can cure "al que es francés" which means both "the French disease" (syphilis) and "generous in payment," with "unguento blanco" which refers to both the mercury based ointment thought to be a cure for syphilis and to the silver coins called "un OUTPUT of Mexico." The thinking continues in the vein of the consequences of physical love when Polilla says:

Amor es quitaz, razon, quita-tierno, quita-bien, quita-pelillos tambien, que haré calvo a un moloton (711-714)

Here Polilla suggests that love may be "quitapelillos" in the sense of "flat-tender" and in the sense of "losing one's hair," and that love might cause even the "moloton" (or lay brother in a convent, who was required to have a circular haircut) to become bald, references to the fact that hair loss is a characteristic of advanced cases of syphilitic suffering. It is only shortly thereafter that Polilla gives himself the new name of Caniqui, and boasts of having acquired "intimacy" with Diana.

In Act II, with Polilla-Caniqui now attempting to work on Diana's side as he attempts to lure Carlos and then leave him, the wordplay again turns to baster elements, as the graciosos mentions, in connection with his master, "empleado de ranas" an ointment of mercuric oxide used for treating syphilis and "polvos de Joves" another pharmaceutical term for mercuric oxide. All the while that Diana and Carlos speak of the fevers, passions, and fires of love, a higher plane, Polilla-Caniqui has in mind the consuming fires of the disease designated in France as the "fuego español." 59

In Act III we do not hear any more of Polilla-Caniqui's wise-cracks about the cures and ointments for love's ailments. The emphasis now is on the conversations between Carlos and Diana and on the restraint that both are attempting to show. Only at the very end, and when he is paired off with Laura, does Polilla-Caniqui revert to a joke about his name, as he suggests that everyone shall have a carefully since "polilla" is present.

Thus far, venereal disease has been seen chiefly as a fixation in the mind of the buffoon, but there are other ways in which it relates to the Polilla-Caniqui figure. The name Polilla itself suggests one who like a moth is drawn irresistibly to the flame, and Polilla as "cure" or "unseason" might suggest the symptoms of one suffering venereal disease. Caniqui comically claiming to come from Acapulco and immediately thereafter speaking of the "mal de amor" might be supposed to have brought a case of syphilis with him from the New World.

Further, Syphilis sine Morbus Gallicus (Syphilis or the French Disease), a work published in 1530 by the Italian physician, Fracastor, may provide the background for seeing in yet more of Moreto's play as an association with venereal disease. It was Fracastor, who in a poem written in Latin hexameters, gave the name Syphilis to a shepherd who was punished with venereal affliction for his insolence to Apollo (the sun god). The disease was named for the shepherd and because of the tremendous success of Fracastor's work, the name came to replace previous appellations for venereal disease. If, following the classical allusions in El desden con el desden, Carlos is seen as Diana's mythological as well as real counterpart, then he can be said to correspond to the Apollo of Fracastor's poem, and Polilla-Caniqui can be imagined as the Blaspheming and afflicted figure. While there is no proof that Moreto ever read Fracastor's work or even that members of his audience did, the great popularity and the number of editions and translations of Syphilis sine Morbus Gallicus, especially in the sixteenth century, make it possible to conjecture that Fracastor's ideas were "in vogue" as late as 1654, the publication date of El desden con el desden, and that Moreto's writings may have been part of the general cultural backdrop of Moreto's work. 7

NOTES
1 Polilla means both "moth" and "unseason" or "cure." Caniqui is the word for a type of that cotton cloth of the type which might be used for women's undergarments.
3 All quotes from El desden con el desden are from the Francisco Rico edition published in Madrid by Clillicos Castalia in 1935. This quote is from page 66, lines 49-44. Subsequent quotes from the play will be indicated in the text by line number.
4 Lines 700-711. Rico's footnote on page 95 expounds on the meaning of the wordsplay.
5 See the correspondance footnote on page 98 of the Rico edition.
6 The lines in quotes come from lines 108 and 1515 respectively. Although the term "empleado de ranas" might sound strange, these were indeed used in producing a new cure thought to heal syphilis. See Theodore Rosengarten, Miyeros and Moral (New York: Viking Press, 1917), p. 47.
8 There has been much debate over whether America was the origin of venereal disease. The important thing to remember here is that the time of Moreto's play many people were likely to associate venereal disease with the New World. Great outbreaks of the disease had ravaged Europe shortly after the return of Columbus and his men, and one of the most popular remedies for syphilis was guaiacum, a wood indigenous to the West Indies. For a proliferation of the importance of guaiacum in the sixteenth century see Brun M. Danielson's Critical Transcription of Francisco de Damiani's "El modo de adoptare e uno de India Occidentale," in RHM, 31 (1970-71), 231-271.
10 For mythological aspects of El desden con el desden see the introduction in the Rico edition. This same introduction also suggests (page 48) that the date of composition for Moreto's play is quite close to the date of publication.

"EL HORTELANO DEL PRADO": TIRSO OR DON ANTONIO SIGLER DE FUERTA?

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Recently, Ruth Lee Kennedy has suggested that the pseudonym "el Hortalano del Prado" refers to Tirso de Molina. She then fills in some gaps in Tirso's biography on the basis of the activities attributed to this "Hortalano" in a urbeam. I would propose an alternate interpretation. There are...