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**GENRE, SOCIETY AND HONOUR IN THE
STORY OF ROMEO AND JULIET IN
BANDELLO, SHAKESPEARE AND LOPE DE
VEGA**

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Fco Javier García Jiménez

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines the different ways in which Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* and Lope de Vega's *Castelvines y Monteses* are close to the medieval substratum of Bandello's original prose story to which both plays are indebted. In order to do so, the main focus of attention would be placed on the role of honour. Not only would it be analysed in the literary realm but also in the context of each author, taking into account both time and place. Hence, the concept of honour will be branched in different typologies and connected to other theories so as to identify its cultural bias on literature.

Once the concept of honour is introduced, its role in each Verona-lovers story version is investigated. As mentioned above, different dimensions are moulded and adapted for the sake of honour. Hence, some evidence of the determination of genre, plot and characters, among others, are studied and exemplified so as to display their faithfulness to the original source and the treatment of honour. Eventually, in the conclusion I seek to show how the concept of honour being similar in the three works, has been gauged and modulated in each of them.

RESUMEN

Este trabajo de final de máster examina las diferentes formas en que *Romeo y Julieta* de Shakespeare y *Castelvines y Monteses* de Lope de Vega se acercan al sustrato medievalizante de la prosa original de Bandello, la cual tiene gran influencia sobre las anteriores. Para ello, el principal foco de atención estaría puesto en el papel del honor. No solo se analizaría en el ámbito literario sino también en el contexto de cada autor, teniendo en cuenta tanto su período y nación. Por lo tanto, el concepto de honor se ramificará en diferentes tipologías y se conectará con otras teorías para identificar su sesgo cultural en la literatura.

Una vez introducido el concepto de honor, se investiga su papel en cada versión de la historia de los amantes de Verona. Como se menciona anteriormente, diferentes aspectos literarios serán modificados y adaptados por el rol del honor. De ahí que se estudien y ejemplifiquen algunas evidencias como la

determinación del género, la trama y los personajes, entre otros, para mostrar su fidelidad a la fuente original y al trato de dicho honor. Finalmente, en la conclusión busco mostrar cómo el concepto del honor, siendo similar en las tres obras, ha sido calibrado modulado en cada una de ellas.

KEY WORDS:

La sfortunata morte di dui infelicissimi amantiche l'uno di veleno e l'altro di dolore morirono, con varii accidenti, Romeo and Juliet, Castelvines y Montes, Matteo Bandello, William Shakespeare, Lope de Vega, honour, honor, honra, comparative literature

1. INTRODUCTION

Honour is something that is everywhere and anywhere: from the fictional realm (via films or books) to our daily and real life (through respect, social equality or even daily and naive arguments). Honour is a concept that has been deeply rooted in human societies throughout history, and has figured prominently in literary works of different eras and cultures. The concept of honour encompasses a set of values, virtues, and codes of conduct that determine the ethical behaviour and social standing of individuals and communities, which may vary by era and nation. It serves as a driving force for characters, whose decisions are guided by a desire to protect, preserve, or restore their honour or family ties, and is often a central theme in literary works, as it is in this research.

Hence, the role of honour is studied in the well-known story of two Veronese lovers. Nevertheless, this international story is not a “brand-new Shakespearean product”, but adaptation of ancient sources. In fact, according to the introduction of the Bloomsbury edition of *Romeo and Juliet*, which is edited by René Weis, this story was rendered into Italian prose by Matteo Bandello, translated into French by Pierre Boaistuau and then rendered into English by Arthur Brooke. Shakespeare, who very likely wrote the play in the latter half of 1597, relied most immediately on Brooke’s poem, which was reprinted in 1582 and 1587, but was

also aware of Bandello's "novella" (Shakespeare, 2012).¹ I could say, then, that the story is of Italian origin but of European scope. The plot of Shakespeare's famous tragedy *Romeo and Juliet* was introduced to Spain in the 16th century thanks to Bandello's novella. Lope de Vega wrote his own version, *Castelvines y Monteses*, which was published in the decade after Shakespeare's play. This heterogeneity of contexts influenced the role of honour in each version, which, in turn, affected its literary features: from genre to characters or the plot per se.

2. OBJECTIVES

Examining and comparing the concept of honour, and its typologies, in different literary sources is the direct aim of this MA dissertation. To this end, I will make a systematic comparison between Shakespeare's tragedy *Romeo and Juliet* and another version of the same story, based on the same Bandellian source written by the Spanish poet and playwright Lope de Vega under the title *Castelvines y Monteses*. Therefore, I propose a comparative analysis of the binary type between the work of Shakespeare and that of Lope, with the subtextual background of Bandello's *La sfortunata morte di dui infelicissimi amantiche l'uno di veleno e l'altro di dolore morirono, con varii accidenti*.

The goal of this project, then, is to determine exactly in what similar or divergent ways the two playwrights approached the medieval substrate of Bandello's text in terms of its treatment of honour. To do this, the concept of honour must be defined and categorized, the genres of the literary sources must be established for the interpretation of the concept itself, and the role of honour in each excerpt will be highlighted. Finally, it will be shown how heterogeneous the concept of honour is depending on the author.

¹ Although Shakespeare's familiarity with any of the Italian and French sources is not firm, Father Andrew Heaton, the rector of the Venerable English College claims that Shakespeare himself spent some years in Italy where he could have been influenced by Bandello's narrative. Another hint of Italian impact on Shakespearean literature was Petrarch, "whose *canzoni* to Laura are among the greatest sonnets ever written, is mentioned in *Romeo and Juliet* [2.4.39]". (Shakespeare, 2012, p.44).

3.DETERMINATION OF GENRE

3.1. PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS

First, the genre of each of the works that form the corpus of the present study must be determined as precisely as possible. It is important to point out that the three texts share a similar literary nature and, in some ways, similar elements. Nevertheless, these elements are presented quite differently throughout the story, resulting in different literary genres.

By way of introduction, it should be noted that Bandello's prose narrative is described as a "storia tragica." Although *Romeo and Juliet* is known worldwide as one of the most popular tragedies, there are some aspects that I will cover that belong to the world of comedy. Finally, I have Lope de Vega's *Castelvines y Monteses*, a particular version of Bandello's tale that has been adapted to the compositional standard of the Spanish new tragicomedy (*comedia nueva*) to the extent that the original story of an unhappy love and a tragic ending has been transformed into an almost obligatory *comedia de enredo* with a happy ending that had developed from / stemming out of the original conflict. (García, 2017).

Tragedy, as described in *The New Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics*, was invented in Greece in the VI -V century BC by Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides. Apart from these dramatists, Aristotle and Plato play a significant role when it comes to this literary genre. Over time, tragedy was "rediscovered" by Italy, France, Spain, and England in the 16th – 17th centuries, with Seneca being the most important influence (2012, p. 1446). According to Robert Watson, tragedy “corresponds to the struggle Nietzsche identified as the essence of this genre: between Apollo (the god of civilization, rationality, and daylight) and Dionysius (the god of frenzy, passion, and midnight)” (2003, p. 299).

I have to focus on the relevance of Plato's and Aristotle's theory of tragedies. While the first rejected tragedy as menacing the city's good order by raising

violent emotions, the second contradicted him, defending tragedy and its benefits (García, 2017). Aristotle stated that tragedy had six basic parts: plot, character, diction (including style and order), thought, spectacle and music (1986). Aristotle's idea of tragedy bases on the idea of *catharsis* taken vaguely as a "purging" of the spectator's emotions of pity and terror. This *catharsis* was enabled by tragedy's structure as a linear plot, leading the spectator from a beginning in media res through a confused middle with at least one "change of fortune", *peripeteia*, to an end that embodied "recognition", what he called *anagnorisis*, of earlier ignorance and new understanding. It must be also underlined that tragedy's main character was a person of high estate, neither wholly good or bad, who suffered this experience because of a "tragic flaw", *hamartia*; which is term interpreted in an ethical sense, as a moral failure for which the protagonist was personally responsible (Princeton Encyclopedia, 2012, p. 1447).

This genre, which Shakespeare uses for *Romeo and Juliet*, is popular because, as Watson argues, it reminds the audience of something they and others have difficulty forgetting: the pursuit of progress to death, from moments promising glory to final surrender. Tragedy, then, allows audiences to confront not only their fears of suffering, but also the half-recognized contradictions in their assumptions about truth and justice (Watson, 1984, pp. 294-99).

According to *the New Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics*, like tragedy, the Western tradition of **comedy** is taken to have begun with the ancient Greeks. The name *comedy* is from Comus, a Greek fertility god. Modern scholars and critics have seen in comedy a universal celebration of life, a joyous outburst of laughter in the face of either an incomprehensible world or a repressive sociopolitical order (2012, p. 281). If tragedy plays a fall from some "sacred irrationality", as I said before, comedy, thus, triumphantly affirms that riotous unreason and humanity's share in the chaotic forces that produce life. Talking about characters, "the comic protagonist's defeat mirrors the tragic protagonist's failure, both ritual cleansings by way of scapegoat, in terms of comedy; one representing life-threatening forces" (p. 281). Aristotle is also an essential figure in comedy. In fact, he draws a parallel between comedy and tragedy. He defends

that *catharsis* also occurs in comedy: “through pleasure and laughter achieving the purgation of like emotions” (282). In that specific genre, there are devices and effects whose aim is making laughter through the use of mockery and satire; the activities of characters who, as to rank, class, or caste, run from low to middle; and plots that begin in uncertainty and confusion and end in the happy reestablishment of calm, which is often symbolized by marriage (p. 282).

Finally, **tragicomedy**, according to the *New Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics*, can be seen as a “fusion of the contrasting emotional experiences offered by tragedy and comedy” (Cavanagh et al., 2012, p. 281). Either a tragic play with enough comic elements to lighten the overall mood or a serious play with a happy ending could be described (Fischer, 2000). Consequently, it finds its roots in the duality of human existence, reflecting the complex and often contradictory nature of life. It explores the interplay between the forces of tragedy and comedy, offering a nuanced representation of the human condition. The genre dates back to the classical era, when Aristotle defended that tragicomedy evoked “catharsis by purging emotions through pleasure and laughter” (Cavanagh et al., 2012, p. 282). This perspective highlights the potential of tragicomedy to provide a cathartic experience for the audience, allowing them to confront and reconcile with the complexities of life. In Italy, the playwright Giovanni Battista Guarini, and his *Il Pastor Fido*,² helped elevate tragicomedy to the status of a regular genre with its own strict rules which would have wide repercussions on dramatic practice in Europe, including in Spain with Lope de Vega and his *comedia nueva* (Fischer, 2000) and England with Beaumont and Fletcher, Massinger and Shirley, among others.

² See more in Herrick’s *Tragicomedy. Its Origins and development in Italy, France and England*. Urbana: Univ. of Illinois Press.

3.2. THE GENRE OF EACH LITERARY TEXT

3.2.1 Bandello's *La sfortunata morte di dui infelicissimi amantiche l'uno di veleno e l'altro di dolore morirono, con varii accidenti*

The original Italian source, Bandello's *La sfortunata morte di dui infelicissimi amantiche l'uno di veleno e l'altro di dolore morirono, con varii accidenti*, has a firm and clear genre; it is a tragedy. Bandello fulfills some elements that Aristotle called *tragic*. I am dealing with a *novella* whose opening scene plunges into a decisive situation that is part of an interrelated chain of events that will develop in the later plot. Apart from the *catharsis*, Bandello's narrative describes the sudden descent (*hamartia*) from happiness to unhappiness (*peripeteia*) that befalls a pair of lovers of high social standing, an essential feature that Aristotle emphasizes for the fulfillment of tragedy. The narrative concludes with the report of the death of the titular protagonists. Thus, there is a chaotic conclusion, commonly referred to as an unhappy ending, which is accompanied by the recognition, *anagnorisis*, of the earlier ignorance by the parents of the dead lovers (García, 2017).

3.2.2. Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*

Romeo and Juliet is a tragedy, which is clearly denoted from the very beginning through the Prologue which tells us, the audience, exactly what will happen as the story unfolds. The Prologue refers to an ill-fated couple by using "star-crossed" (p. 6), which literally means "against the stars". The Prologue itself builds this sense of fate by providing the audience with the knowledge that both lovers will die before the play has even begun. The structure of the play itself is the *fatum* from which Romeo and Juliet cannot free themselves. The audience is completely immersed in the story, and their own powerlessness makes it even more tragic. Thus, crucial elements such as *peripeteia* and *hamartia* are reflected in the first sonnet of the play, reinforcing the idea of tragedy since the cathartic beginning.

Aristotle sees the relevance of tragedy in the social position of the characters rather than in the chaotic ending. In Shakespeare's play, there is a tragic hero

(Romeo) and a tragic heroine (Juliet), both of whom belong to a high and wealthy class in the city of Verona. Romeo is the protagonist and faces a difficult conflict that he must overcome: he decides, against the advice of his 'superiors' (especially Friar Lawrence), to maintain his relationship with Juliet, even though he knows that this is socially unfeasible. Moreover, the murder of Tybalt is also a mistake; a *hamartia* that he must endure throughout the story. Besides these previous conflicts, Romeo has to face his misjudgments, along with a host of fatal contingencies, accidents and *contretemps*,³ which lead him to death (García, 2017).

Another important point is that most of Shakespeare's tragic heroes are highborn men. In fact, there are several textual aspects that contribute to the fact that both families, the Capulets and the Montague, are wealthy and noble clans from Verona. In fact, in the passage from classical genres to early modern one, the different degrees of emergence of the bourgeoisie made tragedies more or less prone to the admission of the bourgeois "hero", from wealthy families of the lesser nobility (*Romeo and Juliet*, *La Celestina*) to purely domestic drama with middle-class characters as protagonists (*Arden of Faversham* or *The Witch of Edmonton*).

However, if it was not for that gloomy prologue, *Romeo and Juliet* would seem very much a comedy until the unexpected, almost accidental death of Mercutio. According to H.B. Charlton's perception, the play is not only inadequately tragic, but in some respects is actually comic (1974). Young lovers from the lower nobility, Romeo and Juliet, and irascible old parents who forbid them to marry are, for example, the traditional stuff of comedy from antiquity. Moreover, no real harm is done in the first confrontation (the street brawl) in the play. Furthermore, the world is initially a place of choice and accommodation, not one of tragic inevitability. Romeo seems to embody comic traits several

³Derrida focuses on *contretemps*, a word which in French can mean both "mishap" and "syncopation" while the phrase *à contretemps* suggests both "inopportunistically" and, in a musical sense, "out of time". The story of *Romeo and Juliet* has become a byword for love blighted by mischance and destroyed by unfortunate timing. Derrida examines the contradictory force of naming as a cultural practice: in instituting and enforcing temporal and spatial homogeneity, it brings into being the possibility of the very accidents-including death- as we understand it- which is designed to prevent. (Derrida, 1992, pp. 413-15),

times throughout the play; he changes his undying love for Rosaline with the ease of characters like: Proteus, Demetrius, Phoebe and Olivia, who are the indulgent lovers of the comedy. (Rodriguez-Badendyck, 1991, p. 92).

When the male protagonist of the tragedy learns of his banishment, there follows a scene in which he behaves in a comical manner and gives a childish performance. He throws himself on the floor, lashes out hysterically, and offers to surgically remove the part of his anatomy that contains his name. As Rodriguez-Badendyck argues in her text:

Romeo becomes even more a baby in a tantrum, and the comic potential of the story surfaces irresistibly once more, as if Shakespeare himself could not resist sending up this material, however determined he was to bring it off as a tragedy in the end (1991, p. 96).

The play does not show the usual pattern of tragedy, i.e. that a person of high rank falls from fortune to misfortune. Instead, it shows the death of two young and hasty protagonists who have become entangled in a web that they have only partly created themselves. Several critics such as Simon Palfrey, identify in Shakespeare's play the presence of a basically comic world that disappears only when Mercutio is slain and everything is suddenly doomed. (2012, p. 13). Before that, the plot springs from a comic-romantic cliché: the hero and heroine, figureheads of youth, hope, and health, fall in love and defy the foolish censorship of the authorities.⁴ In fact, the first two acts of the play burst with what David Bevington calls 'the ecstasy of falling in love', young men's 'adolescent camaraderie' and plenty of bawdry, cumulatively suggesting that Shakespeare has no interest in adhering to the strictures of neo-Aristotelian theorists interested in that tragedy should not be adulterated with comedy (Bevington, 2013, p. 54).

Moreover, comedy in *Romeo and Juliet* is also obtained by the secondary characters of Mercutio and the Nurse, together with the constant usage of puns,

⁴ As a matter of fact, in that sense the Shakespearean play *Romeo and Juliet* parallels *La Celestina* (*Tragicomedy of Calisto and Melibea*), the first masterpiece of Spanish prose and the greatest and most influential work of the early Renaissance in Spain.

for which Shakespeare often uses Mercutio as his mouthpiece. According to Harold Bloom, these characters, in their comic roles, serve as foils for Romeo and Juliet by highlighting the couple's youth and innocence as well as the pure and vulnerable quality of their love (2009, p. 89). Mercutio, Romeo's quick-tempered, witty friend, combines the comic dimension with the violent action of the play. He is a malcontent because of his melancholy. He does not believe in love. With his famous Queen Mab speech, in which love is decoded by sexual connotations, he wants to deconstruct the idealization of love. His role parallels that of the wet nurse, who also uses comic and bawdy language. In fact, the language changes radically with his presence: from a Petrarchan language to a highly sexualized one. Finally, Mercutio's death is a turning point in the plot of the play. His death turns him into a tragic figure, shifting the direction of the play from comedy to tragedy (García, 2017).

The usage of puns, the usually humorous use of a word in such a way as to suggest two or more of its meanings, also helps the text to lead into a comedic field, as Northrop Frye highlights in his lecture on *Romeo and Juliet* (1986). It is important, as well as curious, that even the sexual-comic puns are used in tragic moments; Mercutio's death "Ask for me tomorrow and you shall find me a grave man" [3.1.99]. The pun "to die", meaning to have sex or experience orgasm, is constantly used throughout the Shakespearean drama. Hence, those puns are supported by a constant use of double-entendre. Indeed, Robert N. Watson claims that "there seemed to be more double meaning of words and phrases in *Romeo and Juliet* than any other Shakespeare play I could think of" (1984, p. 117). Thus, as Julia Reinhard reflects in her "Introduction" to the Bloomsbury's edition of *Romeo and Juliet, a critical reader*, *Romeo and Juliet* is a romantic tragedy built out of comic materials, whose impulses continue to shape the denouement.

As readers, we may wonder why Shakespeare chose to use comic elements in his tragedy. We must remember that Shakespeare is often seen as a kind of "mercenary of the system" as Andrew Langley claims in his work *Shakespeare's Theater*. He seems to have been primarily concerned with writing scripts for the theater company to make money. Audiences loved puns. Humor helps the

audience relax and keeps them interested in what is happening on stage. As García (2017) hypothesized: “perhaps, the play would be boring and dull without puns and the role of comic parallel characters, Mercutio and the Nurse” (p. 10).

3.2.3. Lope de Vega’s *Castelvines y Monteses*

Castelvines y Monteses, in terms of genre, is a far cry from both Bandello and Shakespeare. Lope designs a story full of tension but with a happy denouement.⁵ He turns what was originally a tragic tale into a comedy, giving birth to a tragicomedy.⁶ Lope implements this type of genre in comic characters such as Marín, Roselo's servant, and Celia, Julia's maid. Although at first glance they resemble Mercutio and the Nurse, they are not as relevant and developed in argument as Shakespeare's literary characters.

Castelvines y Monteses belongs to what Lope labels as *comedia nueva*. Lope composed *Arte Nuevo de Hacer Comedias*,⁷ in 1609, in which he tries to explain his new theatrical conception, far from the classical drama. This type of comedy was a combination of literary quality and the ability to attract the audience. This renewal was based on the break with the rules of classical theater (García, 2017):

- Rejection of the three classical unities. Lope modifies Aristotle's units to attract the audience. Thus, in terms of place, he introduces several settings that bring dynamism to the performance. In terms of time, Lope stretches out the story; he cannot fit such dynamism into a

⁵ In fact, Aristotle, Cinthio, and Guarini distinguished two types of tragicomedy; on the one hand, the tragicomedy of happy ending, also called *tragedia a lieto fine*, or *tragedia mista* according to the terminology referred by Cinthio, whereby “fortune changes from misery to happiness and the characters are saved from death” (Herrick, 1955, p.31). On the other hand, the tragicomedy with a dual ending, which “was made up of two separate and contrary elements, tragedy and comedy” (p.36), was also well-known.

⁶ Gasparetti (1939) reinforces the idea that although Lope was based on three ancient tragic sources (Novela 33 del *Noellino* de Masuccio Salernitano, *Isloria noellamente ritrooata di due nobili amanti, con la pietosa loro morte, interoenuta già nella cilla di Verona nel lempo del Signor Barlolomeo della Scala*, di Luigi da Porto and Novela 9 de la parte II, de Mateo Bandello) for his comedy, the Bandellian substratum was the most influential with regard to the plot.

⁷ I am using the Cátedra edition of *Arte nuevo de hacer comedias* and, heretofore, I will be quoting by line.

single day. Finally, although it is the unit that Lope pays most attention to, he introduces a subplot that contradicts the main action of the story.

- The play is organized in three acts, called *Jornadas*, instead of the five acts characteristic of classical literature. He defends that: “el sujeto elegido escriba en prosa /y en tres actos de tiempo le reparta” (pp. 211-12)
- Mixture of tragedy and comedy, resulting into *tragicomedy*.⁸ “Lo trágico y cómico mezclado” (p. 175). This mixture illustrates such diversity, which also occurs in real life. It thus implies the combination of characters coming from different ranks, such as nobles and plebeians. Language and expression are also affected by this diversity within the play, because each character must use a way of speaking that is characteristic of them. This gives the play verisimilitude and diversity.
- The figure of *el gracioso* (the funny character, roughly equivalent to the fool). This minor character is the servant of *el galán*, whose importance and complexity increases as the plot progresses.
- Focus on honour, being an essential topic in the play:
“Los casos de la honra son mejores,
porque mueven con fuerza a toda gente,
con ellos las acciones virtuosas” (pp. 327-29).

Apart from the characters, as I have already mentioned, comedy is seen in its proper meaning throughout the story, with several love triangles and some scenes reminiscent of this humorous genre. For example, the scene at the Capulet Ball where Roselo meets Julia is quite funny. There is what Gregorio Torres calls a

⁸In *Arte Nuevo*, Lope advocates tragicomedy because variety pleases the public (“aquesta variedad deleita mucho”) which may make his motives pragmatic rather than moral or intellectual (Friedman, 1989, p. 88).

"bidirectional romantic discourse"; the dialog seems to be dedicated to Otavio, but in fact Roselo is the recipient of this message. He holds Julia's hand while he is hidden during the conversation. (2010, p. 364).

García (2017) remarks another ridiculous moment which occurs during the conversation between the young lovers before Roselo's banishment. It is another example of the typical language of Petrarch's love generated by the gallant and his lady. This idolized and high love is contrasted with the ironic and lowly love of the servants Celia and Marín, who also proclaim their love. This dichotomy is an essential characteristic of the so-called *comedia nueva*. The four romantic characters, surrounded by a *locus amoenus* atmosphere in Julia's garden, swear allegiance to each other. The parallel conversations end in different ways: On the one hand, Juliet ends her speech in an idealistic and cheerful manner:

Yo no tengo ya otro padre,
ni otro remedio me queda.
En ti consiste mi amparo:
basta que tú me defiendas.
Tú eres el bando que sigo,
no el que mis padres profesan.
Castelví soy en el cuerpo,
y en alma soy Montesa. [2.1620-27]⁹

On the other hand, Celia's final lines of her devoted speech are intended to make the audience smile:

Matarte yo no es posible
de la suerte que me enseñas.
Aquí tengo a tu servicio
las llaves de la bodega.
Saca de lo tinto sangre,

⁹ I am using the digital edition of *Castelvines y Montes* included in the digital library section that features in "Artelope: Base de datos y argumentos del teatro de Lope de Vega" the academic website of a research group in the Universidad de Valencia and, heretofore, I will be quoting by act and line.

que yo no tengo otra prenda
que me ampare.
Tú eres bando
que sigo, para que creas,
que soy Marina en el alma,
aunque en el cuerpo soy Celia. [2. 1652-61]

Comedy is also spotted in the moment when Roselo and Marín enter Capulet's mausoleum in search of Julia. The humor in that sequence is mainly displayed by Marín and his cowardice. From here on, "Lope enforces a comic tone that is removed from the original tragic source, reaching its highest point at the play's end" (García, 2017, p. 12). It cannot be forgot that "muy pocas son las obras teatrales españolas del tiempo de Lope que tienen un final trágico; generalmente, para conformarse con el gusto del público, era necesario que el autor diera a su obra un fin dichoso" (Gasparetti, 1939, p. 30). Indeed, this same author continues highlighting his astonishment when coping with the far-fetched ending created by the Spaniard in comparison to his predecessors:

Lo cierto es que, pensando en la trágica grandiosidad del final de *Giulietta y Romeo* de Shakespeare, queda uno desagradablemente chocado por el desenlace de la comedia española, desenlace alegre que parece una evidente contaminación, pues nada en absoluto en la primera parte de la pieza hace sospechar semejante golpe de escena (p. 30).

In fact, Lope ends notably the play with a scene that follows the main rule of comedy: a final marriage between the hero and heroine, and avoids tragedy and death. However, to make the play even more comedic, Lope adds a triple-marriage with Roselo-Julia, Anselmo-Dorotea, and Martín-Celia, transforming it into a sex-comedy, or *comedia de enredo* (García, 2017). In fact, regarding *Castelvines y Monteses'* ending, Rodríguez-Badendyck (1991) claims that "Restoration aesthetics gave Shakespeare's play a happy ending and trivialized its plot" (p. 91). Likewise the most striking change Lope made in the story was precisely that one, the substitution of a happy ending for the original tragic conflagration in Shakespeare's play. Thus, it is difficult not to assume that Lope's play will be trivial.

All things considered, determining the genre of each play is nothing but essential for the role of honour. Depending on the genre, the element of honour may be varied and adapted for the sake of its genre's features. I may bind on the idea that honour and frequently the caricature of honour is presented in comedy and farse (some moments in *Romeo and Juliet*), a watered version of honour in tragicomedy (Lope de Vega's *Castelvine y Montes*) and to its full effect in tragedy in the Shakespearean play together with the Bandellian *novella*.

Regarding tragedy, a world is presented in which honour leads to tragic consequences and downfall. Characters in tragedies are typically driven by a strong sense of personal honour or a commitment to upholding societal norms. However, their pursuit of honour often leads to their undoing, resulting in death, destruction, or despair. Hence, both *Romeo and Juliet* and *La sfortunata morte di dui infelicissimi amantiche l'uno di veleno e l'altro di dolore morirono, con varii accidenti* portrays a singular, rigid and destructive understanding of honour, with characters being consumed by a singular pursuit that ultimately leads to their downfall: revenge, which is boosted by the idea of eye for an eye.

On the other hand, the malleability displayed by tragedies is adapted in the development of the concept of honour in that genre. In fact, not only am I focusing on the tragicomedy per se but also on the brand-new creation by Lope de Vega's tragicomedy or the so-called, *comedia de enredo*. Despite having a milder version of honour, as mentioned above, the Spaniard would take advantage of the notion of honour to turn it into the concept of *honra* which would fit brilliantly for the sake of his audience. Being, hence, a pillar throughout *Castelvines y Montes*. Fundamentally, the format would affect Lope's Spanish tragicomedy. By not treating the matter with the seriousness of honour tragedy or drama (*drama de honor*), which is almost the only form of Spanish tragedy, the question of honour is relativized and does not appear as openly as it could appear in *dramas de honor* such as *El castigo sin venganza*, or even double-ended tragicomedies (in which the evil are punished, the good are rewarded) like *El mejor alcalde el rey*. Furthermore, it is noteworthy to remark the fact that honour is relativized by national culture, England being a cultural

realm in which the subclass of honour, understood as *honra horizontal* (see below Section 4.3), hardly has expression. In the case of Bandello, there is a division between a south closer to the concept of Spanish *honra horizontal* and a north with a greater development of bourgeois ideology with a less distressing version of the concept of honour, which was rooted in Mantecón's concept of *honor mediterráneo* (2012, pp. 435-458).¹⁰ In the end, everything can be measured from the perspective of the penetration of bourgeois ideology that is very operative in England and northern Italy (Genoa, Milan, Florence, Venice) and barely incipient and restricted in Spain and southern Italy (apart from the hypothetical Islamic substratum in Spain together with the one in Sicily and Naples).¹¹

4. THE CONCEPT OF HONOUR

4.1. HONOUR AND 'FACE'

Anthropologically speaking, honour can be seen as a central feature of all societies. It can be defined as a social construct that is shaped by cultural values and norms and play a significant role in shaping social interactions and relationships. It refers to the respect and esteem that an individual or a group is given within a society based on their actions, behaviors, and reputation. It can be diversely expressed according to the idiosyncratic characteristics of each society. But at its bottom, all conceptions honour rely in the more general anthropological concept of 'face'.

¹⁰ Nevertheless, this author does not want to pigeonhole this notion to that specific area but rather as a "tipo ideal" of honour (Mantecón, 2012, p.436). He defends that: "han permitido también observar algunos de los rasgos enfatizados para el 'honor mediterráneo' en sociedades europeas extra-mediterráneas y en entornos coloniales de la América meridional y septentrional. (p. 437)

¹¹ The Christian and Islamic conquest changed this scheme, fragmenting many cultural traditions in which these principles were rooted and, on the other hand, allowing the incorporation of others that changed the relationship between the sexes and implied the introduction of values such as loyalty, respectability and authority, perhaps linked to patronage systems. (Mantecón, 2012).

Face is an image of self-delineated in terms of approved social attributes (Goffman 1967, p. 5). When people interact in public, they are concerned to preserve and present that public image that has two aspects. In this respect, Brown and Levinson (1987) highlighted that the negative face relies on the “want of every competent adult member that his actions be unimpeded by others” (p. 62) whereas the positive one is the “want of every member that his wants be desirable to at least some others” (p. 62).

As has been said a few lines above, it is in the analysis of Goffman and Brown Levinson that the anthropological root of honour lies. Honour could potentially relate to the idea of positive face, as it involves a desire for respect and recognition from others. Maintaining one’s honour often requires behaviours that might be molded to societal expectations and norms in order to maintain that positive face within the community. Conversely, failure to do so may result in negative threats, such as individuals risk damaging their reputation and social standing. Having a positive face is the need to have a positive self-image and the desire to be respected, liked, and valued by others. Negative face, on the other hand, is the desire for independence, unrestricted behaviour, and avoiding others’ intrusion or interference. Thus, it is nothing but obvious that the cultural expression of positive and negative face could be expressed in a wide varieties of “honours”, as has been shown in the work of the forthcoming López-Peláez, among others.

Last but not least, the duality between cultures, Spanish and English, should also be noted. According Brown and Levinson it has been suggested that Spanish politeness places a higher value on the positive face than English politeness does on the negative face. In contrast to Anglo-Saxon societies, Hispanic cultures place a greater emphasis on a person's need to feel like they are a part of a group than on personal autonomy (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Thus the very idiosyncratic feeling of *honra* is no doubt related to this social Hispanic bias.

4.2. FUTHER DEFINITION & ELEMENTS

Despite being one of the most complex and moldable ideological constructions, since as it will be seen throughout the paper, its role changed along with its period and other elements by which it was biased, Jesús López Peláez (2009) broadly defined it as “the recognition (not necessarily material) of the value and integrity of the individual, that is, the value of a subject in his/her own eyes and/or in those of the community in which he/she integrates or intends to integrate” (p. 23). This definition is crucial as two pillars, or ‘codes’ as López Peláez refers to, are blended: the individual (private code) and the community (public code). Hence, honour assumes the right to a defined social space that allows the individual (pride) to be given meaning in the context of specific social, ideological and economic determinants.

The concept of honour is bound to elements which will mark a milestone in the corpus of this research: on the one hand, notions like ‘fame’ and ‘reputation’ could be highlighted, whereas, the negative counterpart of honour might be also related to “dishonour, disgrace and guilt” (Coenen, 2014, p. 25).

In fact, the concept of honour can be analyzed through the lens of semiotics, which deals with signs and symbols and their meanings. In literature, the semiotic elements of honour can include various symbols and images that represent a character's sense of morality or adherence to a particular code of conduct, including the actual language as remarked above. Words such as "valor," "duty," and "integrity" can function as signifiers of honour. This is perfectly represented in Shakespearean literature, as according to OpenSourceShakespeare.org, the term “honour” and its inflections (“honourable”, “dishonour”, etc.) appear 888 times in Shakespeare’s writings.

Overall, the semiotic elements of honour in literature provide a rich palette of symbols and language that can be used to explore the complexity of human morality and how individuals navigate the social hierarchies and expectations of their communities.

Last but not least, the goal of the connection with the sociological theory of Goffman (1967) is to underline the fact that honour is not only a distant cultural element characteristic of scarcely evolved societies, but rather it is the anthropological expression of a motivation that is rooted in human behaviour and expressed in the language. However, each society presents that “drive” or behavioural impulse in a different way, which would be portrayed in the Early Modern period in three distinctive areas as seen in three cultural artifacts.

It is noteworthy to highlight López-Peláez’s (2009) words about honour when connecting that notion to the creation of a society: “es mecanismo clave en la constitución y caracterización de la sociedad moderna precisamente por su carácter contradictorio, conflictivo y complejo” (p.14). In fact, he continues defending that although it was rooted in the same present-day concept of honour, it evolved and got moulded in step with each society and culture, i.e. the English and Spanish one.

The previously-mentioned notion of national identity, given by López-Peláez Casellas (2009) is based, as concerns Early Modern English society, on three key factors throughout the economic, social and religious realm:

la aparición de una sociedad mercantilista o claramente precapitalista, la substitución del catolicismo por el providencialismo anglicano (de origen protestante) y el desarrollo de mecanismos de cohesión social e ideológica que enfatizen, básicamente, la supuesta homogeneidad de la comunidad, lo que se intenta a través de la conformación de una incipiente identidad nacional o, a la inversa, la exclusión de la diferencia, sea ésta étnica religiosa o de ambos tipos (López-Peláez, 2009, p. 30)

Thus, religion, which is embedded within the concept of honour, plays a pivotal role in the development of the story since depending on the religious belief and the context in which each author is writing, the story will unfold in one way or another.

4.3. HONOUR AND *HONRA*

4.3.1. Honour, *onore* and *honra*.

Some of the counterparts of the concept of honour in different languages and cultures must be highlighted taking into account the nature of this paper: comparative studies. Hence, the Italian *onore* and English honour will play a vital role. The concept of honour and its English and Italian counterparts in different languages are complex terms that encompass multiple semantic dimensions and have particular cultural and social connotations. While it is true that the conceptualization of honour can vary between different cultures and historical contexts, there are common semantic components that are often present in these concepts.

As matter of fact, the terms *honor* and *onore* have common roots in the Latin language and share many of the same semantic components, including the idea of personal dignity, respect, and social prestige.¹² However, there are differences in the way these terms are used in different cultures and social contexts. For instance, Lauer (2014) mentions that “in English, *honor* corresponds to the meaning of referring to the property or a seignior of several manors held under a baron or lord paramount in a hereditary fashion and granted by a king” (p. 77). Therefore, honour suggests the idea of a fee, gift or recompense. Moreover, Lauer keeps defending that “it also implies an allegiance of an individual to moral principles” (p. 77).

The concept of honour is becoming complicated when dealing with the Spanish social medium due to the duality of notions: *honra* and *honor*. On the one hand, it is acknowledged that the term *honor* and *honra* are synonymous according to several authors such as Sebastián de Covarrubias, who indicates in his 1611 *Tesoro de la lengua castellana o española*: “(...) honor vale lo mismo que honra” (as cited in Lauer, 2014, p. 78). On the other hand, despite having the same meaning, different uses could be ascertained depending on its destination.

¹²“In Latin, *honor* or *honoris* denotes, when referring to persons, honour, repute, esteem, reputation, praise and distinction; when associated with things, honour, esteem and value” (Lauer, 2014, p. 77)

For instance, Lauer (2014) rejects the specious differentiation “between honor (seen exclusively as blood and rank) and *honra* (perceived primarily as fame and reputation)” and concludes that “*honor* and *honra* are similar expressions that are often used to designate, concurrently, rank (*honra*) and self-dignity (*honor*)” (p. 90).¹³

As native speaker and reader of Golden Age dramatic literature, I would nuance Lauer’s appreciation claiming that the equivalence *honor* as blood and rank and *honra* as fame and reputation is not specious at all, but it was the common perception of the terms prevalent in Early Modern Spain. If anything, I would concede and nuance that these were if not the absolute, they were indeed the main common perception. From my point of view, everything boils down to the fact that honour and *onore* indistinctly mix *honor* and *honra* with little semantic bearing on *honra*. The Spanish coinage *honra*, however, is an explicit kind of honour which has found specific verbalization in Spanish society and has been broadly developed and expanded in language and culture, leading to the literature as well. This is not the case in other languages, where the semantic values of *honra* are indifferently diluted in the general term *onore* or honour.¹⁴

In addition to that, when coping with *honor* and *honra*, the figure of the woman must be highlighted. Both terms partake of the concept of shame, so the dignity of a virtuous woman was highly prized. Moreover, *fidalgas* (a term expressed by Lauer and developed when analyzing Lope de Vega in depth)

¹³ I, on the contrary, as native speaker and reader of Golden Age dramatic literature, would nuance Lauer’s appreciation claiming that if I consider the equivalence *honor* as mainly blood and rank and *honra* as mainly fame and reputation such correspondence is not specious at all, but it was the common perception of the terms prevalent in Early Modern Spain.

¹⁴ This issue could be substantiated from the point of view of the nativeness as Spanish speakers with the following examples: is the same *un hombre / una mujer honorable* or *honroso/a* as *un hombre una mujer honrado/a*? Is the same *una familia honrada* as *una familia honorable* or *honrosa*? While the terms *honrosa* and *honorable* are somewhat confusing and interchangeable and points to honour, nothing of this happens with *honrado/a*. Clearly this last word points to a lower class-conscious kind of honour. I would go as far as to say that the *honra* is the Spanish *honor* of the commoners or, at any rate, of the non-noble people, though the noblemen can also participate in it. It is noteworthy as well that *honrado* and *honra* are forms which are or derive from a passive past participle, which points to the fact of being nuanced as adventitious and afferent to the subject; in contrast, the active or at least neutral forms *honorable* and *honor* suggests permanent and inherent quality.

would play a pivotal role when looking after the familial inheritance and lineage through marriage by rank which turned institutionalized (2014, Lauer).

4.3.2. *Honra Horizontal and vertical*

I will use Gustavo Correa (1958) in order to solve the conundrum *honor - honra*, by referring to the two-sides of the latter term as *honra horizontal* and *honra vertical*.¹⁵ According to Correa both side of Spanish honour are related to the structuring of society and culture.

On the one hand, *honra vertical* is mainly based on a “estratificación de la sociedad”, highly fostered in Lope’s period (Correa, 1958, p. 99). Thus, in this structuring scheme, this type of *honra* is inherent to the position of the individual within the social scale. The higher the status is, the higher the *honra* becomes. In fact, the king/prince, a common figure throughout the literary texts, is the maximum bearer of such *honra*. Hence, Correa points out that “la honra vertical es, pues, honra inmanente, la cual existe en virtud de nacimiento o de méritos extraordinarios o fuera de lo común en persona, y que ocasionalmente puede derivarse de posiciones oficiales y estatales” (1958, pp. 100-101). As mentioned above, this aspect is crucial since most of the characters in the corpora of this research are high-born.

On the other hand, *honra horizontal* relies on “las complejas relaciones entre los miembros de la comunidad, es la fama o reputación, que descansa en la opinión de los demás” (Correa, 1958, pp. 101-102). This side of the *honra* leads to the relevance of familial integrity and lineage which would be fundamental for certain writers like Lope as it would be analyzed below.¹⁶

All things considered, *honra horizontal* refers to a shared set of values and codes of behaviour among members of a group or community where reputation is sought, while *honra vertical* describes the individual's adherence to a set of codes

¹⁵ From now onwards I will refer to these types of honour, except when literally referring to the Spanish words, as vertical and horizontal honours respectively.

¹⁶ Correa (1958) highlights that “la defensa de la integridad de la familia se constituyó, a su vez, en una de las maneras de dar expresión a este valer personal” (p. 102)

and values that define their personal character and reputation in the social ladder. This type of honour is often associated with the ideals of chivalry and knightly behaviour in medieval literature, and emphasizes the importance of personal integrity and moral uprightness (Brown, 2012). Besides the worldwide double standard by which masculine sexual trespasses are looked upon with indulgence, while female one is seen much more severely, the full application of horizontal honour (*honra horizontal*) in the Spanish Golden Age tradition results in the fact that horizontal honour presents a double and contradictory perspective according to the personal situation of its holder: while for young, adventurous and single men a part of his personal integrity manifest itself in their skill to seduce other men's women (wives, daughters, sisters), for the family holders of the *honra horizontal* (father, brother, son) this constitutes an act of aggression which jeopardize their familial and personal integrity (Correa, 1958).

Although further typologies of honour could be distinguished, such as social, familial, marital, personal, military, etc., it is our purpose to focus on this kind of vertical and horizontal honour as the only criteria, independently of how they may find expression in these various typologies. Vertical honour, it must be insisted, is understood as class-conscious honour, whereas horizontal honour is viewed as fame, reputation and acceptance within the community. Since both are the pivotal elements around which dramatic conflict hangs on in Early Modern Europe, we consider both types of honour to be suitable terms of comparison for the sort of analysis we are undertaking here. It must be said, however, that the *honra horizontal* has an enormous degree of prominence and visibility in Spanish literature which has no correspondence at Italian or English ones.

5. HONOUR AND HONRA IN BANDELLO'S LA SFORTUNATA MORTE DI DUI INFELICISSIMI AMANTICHE, SHAKESPEARE'S ROMEO AND JULIET AND LOPE DE VEGA'S CASTELVINES Y MONTESES

5.1. VERTICAL HONOUR

Familial and conjugal honour is the main drive of the plot in the three works. First and foremost, it is crucial to remark the fact that this type of honour is

rooted on familial feud, which tend to be the most typical locus of familial honour, and which is a pivotal pillar throughout the stories, regardless of their author. Indeed, Torres (2010) enumerates a decalogue of the “fundamental ingredients” (p. 363) of the original story in order to analyze how they were processed in the subsequent adaptations. The “ingredient” which leads that decalogue is the appearance of an ancient familiar feud. No matter how crucial this “ingredient” is, each author moulded it for the sake of their interest.

As mentioned below, despite varying in its relevance or purpose, the presence of the feud is nothing but primal. In fact, that feud is soon presented to the audience in each literary version. However, it is significant to note that the way the audience is introduced to the feud between the two houses is different. On the one hand, Bandello uses the figure of the Lord of Verona, Della Scalla. He informs about the enmity of the city between Montecchi and Capelletti. Della Scalla influenced them so that, if he did not establish peace between them, he at least eliminated the constant brawls. In the story of Lope, on the other hand, the audience immediately learn through the words of the funny servant Marín that Castelvines and Montesés are serious enemies. Lope decides to use one of the most comedic characters in *Castelvines y Montesés* to talk about the feud in order to reinforce the value of the *comedia nueva* throughout the plot. Shakespeare, conversely, uses the prologue to inform about that antique feud which is connected to a major topic in his play: fortune.

Regarding Bandello, some aspects of honour appear in the Italian substrate. He links honour to the family dimension and focuses on reputation. This idea is clearly expressed by Giulietta when Romeo seeks shelter in the abandoned house where she hides at night. There, she expresses her concern about enmity and the possible consequences of their union: “Without doubt you would be cruelly slain, which for you would mean a disaster and for me, dishonor” (p. 57). This reputation is even present in the figure of Frate Lorenzo who warns Giulietta that he would not give any poison “because he would lose his repute” (p. 70).

Shakespeare also exploits this theme in *Romeo and Juliet*, basing the feud on family honour. In fact, one of the earliest scenes where lineage is developed is

when Tybalt spotted the protagonist, Romeo, within the party: “Now by the stock and honour of my kin” [1.5.57]. By using *stock*, Shakespeare is making reference to the relevance of ancestors. Nevertheless, Shakespeare’s focus on familial honour is a bit diverted into its destructive nature throughout his play, which is also linked to the central theme of revenge in the story of Verona’s lovers. As a matter of fact, this could be displayed in Romeo’s speech after the death of Mercutio: “My reputation stan’d with Tybalt’s slander” [3.1.113-14]. Romeo was previously blamed by Mercutio for failing to live up to the obligations of honour in fighting Tybalt. When he finally did it, Romeo fulfills his debt to honour. Not only is this familial honour linked to justice but also to masculinity as appealed by Lord Montague when defending Romeo in front of the Prince, an important honourable figure which would be explained below: “His fault concludes but what the law should end. The life of Tybalt” [3.1.186].

This dimension of honour is greatly developed in *Castelvines y Monteses*. In Lope’s new theatrical formula, honour is primarily based on family name. If honour is lost, it has to be recovered through vengeance and death. In fact, that is the situation of Teobaldo when he persuades his son, Otavio, to take revenge and kill Roselo after the trivial incident at the church. Teobaldo is annoyed because “le han tocado el honor” [2.90]. This perseverance of revenge in order to defend honour is representative of the ideological demands of a conservative code. This feudal and chivalrous code differs from the Shakespearean play and England itself, especially, what is related to the social and moral qualms of honour.

Lope lays stress on *honor* in *Castelvines y Monteses*, which is one of the organizing values of *noble habitus*.¹⁷ It thus reinforces the idea of familial lineage and repute. That is the reason why endogamy plays a pivotal role during the plot, especially at the end of the story which is newly invented by Lope de Vega and differs from the Italian version, becoming more and more comic. Initially, endogamy is present at the beginning of the plot, when Otavio falls in love with Juliet, but it reaches its climax when Lope sets up an arbitrary marriage between Antonio Castelvín and Dorotea, Teobaldo’s daughter. As Henry W.

¹⁷ This motto displays the idea of the loss of honour is a humiliation of a man’s status worse than death, which is personified by the figures of Teobaldo and Otavio throughout the play.

Sullivan notes in his essay, "there are instances in most of the Spanish playwright's works in which the incest motif is dramatically exploited" (1991, p. 180). In his dramatic use of endogamy and incest, Lope is in debt to Tirso de Molina as Henry Sullivan continues in his article, "Where Tirso artfully suggests but does not dramatize the possibility of incest, his plays are comic in tone and result" (p. 181). Hence, Lope de Vega makes usage of such a motif so as to master and boost his literary text and new genre: *comedia de enredo*.

It is significant that it is Lope's play that offers a higher number of occurrences of the term *honor* globally. As readers we may wonder why Lope developed such notion in *Castelvines y Monteses*. As I pointed out in the determination of genre, honour is characteristic of Lope's *comedia nueva*. He argued in *El arte nuevo de hacer comedias* that: "Los casos de la honra son mejores / porque mueven con fuerza a toda gente, / con ellos las acciones virtuosas" (pp. 227-29).

Thus, this new concept of modern honour will be characterized by its increasing dependence on public sanction and by its relative independence from a virtuous commitment, which is replaced by the materialization of such honour and will have a direct relationship with the national construction project that the main bourgeois states from the 16th century as the case of Spain undertake. It is fundamental to remark the fact that the weight of the bourgeoisie in Spain was lighter than in England or the North of Italy. Indeed, some evidence of it was a refeudalization of the state or the prevalence of the so-called *Antiguo Regimen* (Atienza, 1999). In Spain, the presence of honour fosters the formation of national identity. In fact, Fernando Cantalapiedra (1995) affirms that "la honra y el honor son topos constantes del teatro del Siglo de Oro español y estructuran la columna vertebral ideológica de todas las obras que lo configuran" (p. 5).

Furthermore, in these 16th and 17th centuries a new discourse arose that introduced an additional dimension in the nature of honour: its exclusive dependence on blood and lineage (López-Peláez, 2009). It is an undeniable fact that honour was a very relevant issue at Lope's time. It was awarded to those who were of good family or blood. The idea of stock and lineage is highly

elaborated by Lope's *Castelvines y Monteses*. For instance, Antonio tries to marry her niece, Dorotea, in order to protect and save his familial reputation. In addition to that, the idea of marriage as a solution to solve that familial honour is well developed at the end of Lope's play where there is a triple pairing. Antonio, as he wrongly thinks that Julia is dead, considers a new marriage between Dorotea and Roselo. This resolution will immediately unleash the jealousy of Julia and Anselmo, and they unmask themselves in order to prevent that new marriage. The end, as Gregorio Torres expresses, is somewhat "conventional, improvised, and triple-matched" (2010, p. 372).

Regarding marriage and familial honour, a similarity between all the texts must be mentioned: the three stories coincide in the common element that a woman's honour is sanctioned by religious marriage. Juliet only has sexual relations with Romeo, once their union has been legitimized by the religious archetype. This was remarked above when coping with the role of religion as the depositary of the honourable legality of the sexual act if the marriage ceremony occurred before or even after it. Therefore, in this sense, there is no difference between the Italian, Spanish or Anglican religious context, although it must be taken into the fact that the action of *Romeo and Juliet* is conveniently located in the Mediterranean Catholic environment and, on the other hand, the prevalence of Catholic habits was still more or less widespread and assumed in England. This idea of secret marriage was included in the so-called *matrimonio a juras o yuras*. Rodríguez-Arango (1995) claims that this famous European type of marriage was known for "su carácter de contrato juramentado que incluía perpetuidad y engendraba las mismas obligaciones que el matrimonio solemne. Nos encontramos ya, ante el matrimonio secreto o clandestino" (p. 738).

This *matrimonio a juras/yuras* is worth mentioning since it works perfectly as a dramatic resource (it is an element of the action that allows its development) and reflects a commonly accepted tradition in Christianity that is situated in the domain of horizontal honour as the church (or a minor representative as the Friar whose competence to celebrate marriages could be questioned) sanctions the honour or honesty of sexual consummation. Freeing, hence, the woman from any stain of horizontal dishonour.

All things considered, familial honour could be envisaged as vertical honour (*honra vertical*) in the three works. It was rooted although scarcely developed by Bandello. Then, Shakespeare took advantage of such typology to express the obscurity and darkness of the notion biased by the feeling of revenge. Finally, the Spanish playwright mastered the idea of lineage and family reputation due to the genre and its audience at that time in Spain.

As noted above (page 21) religion is a fundamental factor in the configuration of honour in different societies. Kenneth Muir argues that Shakespeare wrote for a secular stage for an audience that held a wide variety of religious beliefs; his plays were not intended to support or illustrate any particular doctrine, "but that has not prevented critics from proving that he shared their own particular beliefs, whether Catholic, Anglican, agnostic, existentialist, or even Freudian" (1991, p. 213). Indeed, Father Andrew Heaton, the rector of Venerable English College, claims that Shakespeare himself was crypto-Catholic and spent several years in Italy, where he may have been influenced by Bandello's narrative.¹⁸ In contrast, Muir contends that the main difference between the two golden ages of Elizabethan and Spanish drama is simply that in Spain, "plays were written by Catholics for Catholics", as is the case with Lope's play (1991, p. 211).

Although in the three literary sources the families' honour is linked to their religion as they believe their actions are justified in the eyes of God, it is the Spanish author the one who especially focused on such realm in order to develop the notion of honour throughout the plot, a standard feature in his new Spanish theatrical formula, *comedia nueva*. In fact, Rodríguez-Badendyck (1991) mentions that although he is far from the religious imagery provided by Bandello and Shakespeare, there is a recurring allegorical dimension to it so as to boost the concept of honour based on the consideration that one deserves of others for their actions. Honour can be lost by one's own or by others' acts and revenge is the

¹⁸ For more about Shakespeare and his crypto-Catholicism see *Secret Shakespeare* where Wilson reveals the extraordinary persistence and closeness of the dramatist's contacts with the harsh realities of religious division in early modern England, and his continual profound reflection upon the subject throughout the extant body of work.

only way to recover such prestige. Lope in his *comedia nueva* endows the nobility and villains with such honourability which is spiritualized and connected to Christianity. *Castelvines y Montes* is a deeply Spanish and Catholic story. Indeed, honour and respect were required by Christians, though they were not knights: “la nobleza del espíritu”.¹⁹ Spanish literature and drama were obsessed with the purity of the name during the 17th century. This topic is also reflected in another Lope’s story from the same genre as the one which we are investigating: *Peribáñez y El Comendador de Ocaña* (1614).²⁰

Another piece of evidence of vertical honour which is connected to the notion of honour and family lineage throughout Lope’s play is the figure of the church itself.

Lope reflects the idea of family as deeply Spanish value which is connected to the church and all its images and terminology in order to represent an idea of the family as a sacramental bond defined by the love and pledge that spreads from the center outward, ultimately embracing all who are willing to enter (Rodriguez-Badendyck, 1991, p. 94).

This religious unity is also present in the central act of the play, where the tragedy is all the more painful and haunting because it is Teobaldo himself who, forgetting his own counsel, revives the feud. And behind the performance of the central moral decisions is the Church. The action takes place in the street in front of a church, and the characters enter and leave as the scene progresses. Now a church was certainly not an unusual element in a Spanish play. What is remarkable about *Castelvines y Montes*, according to Rodriguez-Badendyck (1991), is “how seamlessly and delicately Lope blends the literal and symbolic levels of the plot, keeping the simplest level perfect and distorted” (p. 102). Having a fight on the doorstep of a church works as a moral, from my point of view. To my mind, a higher concept of family was present during that scene where the presence of the image of Christ, who stood silently in the judgment of

¹⁹ This idea is deeply developed within Rob Riemen’s *Nobleza de espíritu: una idea olvidada*

²⁰ This *tragicomedia* deals with a peasant named Peribáñez, and a knight commander (“Comendador”) who falls in love with his wife Casilda. In order to redress such dishonourable act, Peribáñez must kill the Comendador and, this way, protect his name.

this climatic brawl, is witnessing and determining each human choice and their honourability. Rodriguez-Badendyck concludes that “each natural consequence seems not merely justice but part of a voiceless dialogue between the Almighty Father and the characters” (p. 102).

When dealing with the social realm of vertical honour/*honra*, the role of men and women were pivotal. In fact, Lopez-Pelaez (2009) refers to them as *fidalgos* and *fidalgas*. These gentlemen, whose outstanding qualities like strength, shame, fortitude, temperance and justice, set them apart from others, were aimed to pass these virtues to their descendants. In order to reach so, women were nothing but of utmost significance, the so-called *fidalgas*: “women of their own rank, in order not to diminish or impair their lineage” (p. 80). An idea extremely evolved by Lope de Vega in his tragicomedy where endogamy and familial marriages are recurring elements throughout the story, as remarked in the previous section.

These notions mentioned above could be extrapolated to the main protagonists of the story from the three literary sources, although it is the Spanish version in which the qualities of *fidalgas* and *fidalgos* are deeply boosted. In terms of characters, it is noteworthy to mention the fact that Shakespeare and Lope remain faithful to Bandello’s source. Shakespeare’s version, together with Lope’s, has more characters because the English playwright makes his play more dynamic but this section, as pointed out above, will be especially centred on the roles of the lovers.

Regarding the figure of the *fidalgo*, unlike Shakespeare’s Romeo, Lope’s Roselo grows stronger with each obstacle he encounters, becoming from the very beginning the prototypical figure of the gallant, which is a pivotal character in Lope’s *comedia nueva*. Readers see him evolve over the course of the play from a sympathetic, mischievous person to a man whom others can turn to and respect, a man who, according to Rodriguez-Badendyck, is “worthy to be the head of the house” (1991, p. 97). Roselo’s passionate feelings for Juliet are not just passion, but love, while Romeo hardly commits an act throughout the play that is not marked by passion. Rodriguez-Badendyck asserts that “passion isolates, while love unites”. This is the reason why Shakespeare sets the estranged Romeo

outside of Verona; he suffers from the passion embodied by the character of Rosaline.

In terms of the figure of the *fidalg*a, in the course of the play, Shakespeare approximates Juliet to Bandello's Giulietta, who is wiser, more open and uninhibited. She also corresponds to the Bandellian heroine in the sense that she is more responsible and threatening to the patriarchal system than Romeo. However, this authority and dependence reaches its climax in Lope's portrayal of Julia, who takes the initiative from the beginning and dominates the situation. According to Rodriguez-Badendyck (1991), by giving her such abilities the Spanish playwright is recapitulating the clever maid of comedy, acting as the “hero” and leader of all the actions. This “unusual” control from a female character reinforces comedy throughout the plot of the play. She even attributes herself a masculine honourability when she claims: “pienso que galán fui” [1.482]. In fact, Torres (2010) believes Julia is the most determined member of the couple. Thus, in some way, Lope is making Julia play the role of the *fidalg*o, boosting his well-known *comedia de enredo*.

Vertical honour is, hence, personified by several characters within the stories, especially for those who lead in the social scale: first and foremost, the prince, and then the head of the clans/families. The first embodies the representation of structure and organization. This noble leader holds the most authority in politics and is focused on upholding tranquility in Verona while avoiding any aggressive actions between the two feuding households. Indeed, Correa (1958) points out that:

La honra vertical implica una estratificación de la sociedad que en tiempos de Lope de Vega continuaba básicamente la establecida en el suelo español desde tiempos medievales. En el pináculo de la organización social se hallaba el rey con dominio consagrado sobre los demás grupos (p. 99)

Despite being a pivotal figure in Lope's times, this “máximo portador de honra” (Correa, 1958, p. 100) is not as developed in *Castelvines y Monteses* as his predecessors' texts. This relevance could be justified by the amount of

appearances throughout the play. In *Romeo and Juliet*, influenced by Bandello's narrative, the Prince's manifestations are symmetrical (he appears at the beginning, climax and end).²¹ Not only this "order" is embodied by the figure himself but also through the structure of the plot. Conversely, Lope's *Señor de Verona* is missing throughout the first act. In fact, he firstly appears when he sentences the young Montesco after the climatic fight against Otavio.

To my mind, both Bandello and Shakespeare give more prominence to that figure so as to highlight the symbol of order which is fundamental in tragedies.²² In fact, this same role could be commonly found in others Shakespearean plays such as Duke Senior in *The Merchant of Venice*, The Duke of Venice from *As You Like It* and Theseus (Duke of Athens) in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Not only do Prince Escalus and Della Scala embody peace negotiators, who are strict and merciless leaders, but these character also personify compassion when dealing with the feeling of sorrow and loss. These characters are fundamental, too, as the moral of the story is conveyed through their words and actions.

From my point of view, this significance is not so developed in Lope's story since the *Señor de Verona* is left on the background and the focus is placed on a different authority which suits better to his *comedia de enredo*, where familial honour marks a milestone. Hence, characters like Antonio Castelvín, who will be analyzed below, would eclipse the power and relevance of the Prince.

Regarding the previously-mentioned pillar in this vertical honour, the head of the clans, it must be remarked that the leaders of the ancient households do not receive much attention in Bandello's narrative. In the Italian text, Antonio Capelletti, who is Giulietta's father, is the most frequently mentioned character. This focus on his character is also found in Shakespeare's and Lope's adaptations of the story, where he plays an essential part throughout the respective plots. The

²¹ In the opening scene, he warns both households about their ongoing animosity after their initial fight. Later, during the peak of the play, he declares Romeo's exile. Lastly, he appears again towards the end when both families convene to address the devastating demise of Romeo and Juliet.

²² In fact, according to Frye, in his *Fools of Time Studies in Shakespearean Tragedy* (1967), the prince is a pivotal role in Shakespearean "tragedies of order".

importance of the female heads of the clans is minimal, appearing in a few occasions throughout the plot, or even non-existent as the case of Lope's *Castelvines and Monteses* where there are no maternal figures at all, a feature of *comedia de enredo*.²³ Therefore, the attention is drawn on the masculine head of the clan, Antonio Castelvín, a name lifted from Bandello's story, and Fabricio Montesco. This lack of *fidalgas* is a brilliant opportunity for Lope to boost his idea of endogamy and incest by making up a new marriage with a member of his own family, thus, conserving the Castelvines' lineage.

In spite of being a clear personification of honour, the Spanish version of the heroine's father is the one which promotes the most the idea of *linaje*. This vertical honour is carried out by Antonio Castelvín, who is willing to risk his life to defend his family's reputation and interests. His concept of honour is presented as a rigid code, adhered to even when things go wrong and it leads to ruin. He is even participant of a love triangle, which ultimately leads to tragic consequences for all characters involved, for the sake of his vertical honour and family name.

5.2. HORIZONTAL HONOUR

With this type of honour, the focus is placed on a broader sense: community. As Correa (1958) points out: "honra horizontal se refiere a las complejas relaciones entre los miembros de la comunidad en el sentido horizontal de grupo" (p. 101). Thus, it is a sense of equalization as a symbol of social cohesion.

Honra horizontal, which, as I have repeatedly said, has no English counterpart semantically speaking, is a feeling that in Spanish society does not only concern the nobleman. It is a sentiment that has endured in the collective consciousness of Spaniards and that drew the attention of nineteenth-century travelers through Spain, manifesting itself in the dignity and pride with which

²³ Friedman claims that "as it is typical in the *comedia*, the figure of the mother, who would presumably supply a dose of sympathy, is absent" (1989, p. 86).

beggars requested alms, for instance.²⁴ Therefore, it is nothing but obvious to highlight the fact that the Spanish version of the two lovers is the one which develops the most this sort of *honra*. As a matter of fact, there are six allusions to such word (*honra* and *deshonra*) throughout Lope's play which will be analyzed below.

Naturally, this feeling of honour had its highest expression in the field of female sexuality, which at all levels had to be refined by women themselves and controlled by men. This idea is recurrent as it could be portrayed in several moments throughout the story. For instance, when Lidio, Fabricio's servant, claims talking about the unfaithful husband:

Vendrá acostarse al alba, y la familia
estará desvelada y afligida.
Todo será pendencias y deshonras,
y más si pone alguna vez las manos
en su mujer celosa, que es muy cierto,
pues tenlo tú que es un infierno en vida,
galera donde vive el alma asida [1.678-684]

Lidio is discussing with Fabricio the dishonourable course of action that Roselo might take if he allows himself to devote to philandering once he has married. This quote is interesting because it strengthens the previously-mentioned point of the worldwide double standard (cf. page 25) by which sexual trespasses are looked depending on the gender. The aforementioned words reveal the common perception at the time that an honourable man, once married and endowed with respectability, should be concerned with defending his personal integrity by being faithful to his wife.

This perception of honourability in men is also sought and actually worded by Juliet in the Shakespearean play throughout the iconic balcony scene. There, the young Capulet addresses the relevant issue of the true union: marriage.

²⁴ See the several passages in which the narrator of the *Tales of the Alhambra* comes into contact with beggars, for example.

Indeed, she refers to Romeo's honour: "If that thy bent of love be honorable, Thy purpose marriage, send me word tomorrow" [2.2.144-5]. Despite defending their personal integrity, Juliet sharing the love with Romeo is a menace to the patriarchal system of family and state. Therefore, she supports the idea of companionate marriage, which was prevalent in the Elizabethan age, closely linked to the aforementioned *matrimonio de juras/yuras*. In fact, this idea is also found in Lope in a very similar way, but his treatment of marriage, unlike Bandello's and Shakespeare's, is linked to ideas of endogamy to boost his genre, as seen in the previous section of honour.

Teobaldo also remarks the significance of the *honra* towards the risk of damaging the family lineage due to the feminine figure of Julia:

La honra y la autoridad
dejas, Otavio, perder,
por andar tras los antojos
de un imposible. [2.71-74]

The concept of horizontal honour (*honra horizontal*) is directly linked to some of manliness' principles: individual dignity, self-love and pride (Correa, 1958). That is the reason why this concern and allusion of the word *honra/deshonra* is only verbalized by male characters (especially Lidio, Teobaldo and Roselo) throughout the play.

Therefore, the dishonour (*deshonra*) expressed during the 16th century is not comprehensible, then, without a wide and detailed reference to the problem of female chastity (*castidad femenina*), what López-Peláez refers (2009) to "*honor- o dishonor- conyugal*" (p. 88). In fact, he goes beyond that:

Lo que la sociedad le pide a la mujer, por tanto, es básicamente que no deshonre a su marido (o a su familia o linaje) con un comportamiento "impuro", con su falta de castidad. La pureza femenina, lejos de tratarse de un problema exclusiva o principalmente moral o religioso, implica la deshonra del marido, deshonra ésta

que se puede definir como absoluta y cuya única solución es la muerte de los culpables (p. 89)

Despite not having a direct counterpart of the notion of horizontal *honra* in the English language, there are some traces of something comparable to such type of honour in the Shakespearean and Bandellian realm. For instance, dignity is a pillar in all the stories.²⁵ As a matter of fact, Shakespeare's audience is faced with that notion in the very first line of the chorus: "Two households, both alike in dignity". This *dignity* could be comparable to the *honra* displayed by Lope de Vega. To my mind, the English playwright is being ironic with this initial line when referring to the feuding families since it is the false "dignity" of warfare, which of the adult Lord Capulet running out to a street brawl in ridiculous flying robes. This kind of honour, Shakespeare shows, leads to the waste of young lives full of hope and possibility. Their true and real dignity is regained at the end of the play when they reconcile with generosity of the spirit.

The previously idea of *castidad femenina* is also portrayed in Bandello and Shakespeare's text via the age of the female protagonist, which is not mentioned in *Castelvines y Monteses*. Bandello's Giulietta is eighteen; "She turns eighteen years of age this coming St. Euphemia's day" (p. 65) whereas Shakespeare's heroine is thirteen years-old; "she hath not seen the change of fourteen years" [1.2.9]. For us, readers, is quite shocking to see a girl of such an age being so mature and unafraid of passion, regardless of its catastrophic consequences. This earliness reaches its highest point with the sexual emancipation, which is directly linked to *castidad femenina* and, hence, losing that honour and family name. In fact, Palfrey (2012) defends that "she is given an ecstatic sexual anticipation with an awful end, being buried alive in a tomb or even thinking about her suicide" (p. 93). To my mind, exposing the age is a feature to boost the tragedy and reinforce its dramatization, a characteristic which is missing in Lope's play as he is focused on a completely different genre.

The manliness principles are especially embodied by several characters which are paralleled in all the excerpts, as it is the case of Lope's and Bandello's

²⁵ Bandello refers to it in his novella as *reputazione*

Teobaldo and Shakespeare's Tybalt. In the Italian and English source the presence of this character is rather rare, although his role marks a milestone. Conversely, Lope takes advantage of that character, who personifies the notion of honour, in order to develop his *comedia de enredo* in which *honra* is extremely relevant, especially when this concept is biased by revenge:

Teobaldo:

La deshonra me incita,
me premia y me solicita,
tanto esta gente desamo.
Yo, que siempre a mis parientes
la paz les aconsejaba,
porque entonces no pasaba
por estos inconvenientes,
agora a la guerra incito [2.50-57]

All things considered, manliness in men and virtue in women are thus essential components of the concept of honour. The latter is equated with the value, pride, and social security of the person, but at the same time contains elements that cause uneasiness and fear among the members of the group. Correa (1958) distinguishes two types of individual beings when losing such *honra*:

La pérdida de la honra implica el aniquilamiento del ser individual en cuanto el hombre se halla desposeído de su valer y de su hombría, pero también el de su ser social en cuanto deja de pertenecer ideal y prácticamente a la comunidad social en que vive. (p. 104)

Last but not least, in spite of witnessing some instances of horizontal honour in all the parallel texts, it is in the Spanish substratum where it is developed the most due to the context of its author: Lope de Vega, who was excelling his new genre, *comedia de enredo*, in a century and country where *la honra* played a pivotal role. All things considered, horizontal honour finds a clear and widespread concretization in the Spanish theatre in the term *honra*, while this concretization is lacking in the Italian and Spanish cultural contexts.

6. CONCLUSION

First of all, once several dimensions have been analysed throughout the dissertation, I may wonder which adaptation is the most similar to the original source as it is one of the objectives established in this research paper. Although many aspects are shared with the Italian substratum, I believe that Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* is the most faithful to Bandello's novella due to their genre. Both of them rely on the characteristics of tragedies, whereas Lope is based on a tragicomedy whose features are moulded and adapted to develop a brand-new genre which was pivotal for Spanish literature: *comedia de enredo*.

Highlighting the genre is nothing but of utmost relevance because all the elements would be created for the sake of its development. Consequently, Lope digressed from Bandello's narrative because he was influenced by his new theatrical formula, *la comedia nueva*, which is portrayed in *Castelvines y Montes*. Therefore, Lope took the ingredients of the *novella* so as to fit in his new *comedia*. Thus, some modifications and new creations were carried out. Significantly, unlike Bandello and Shakespeare, Lope invents a happy and comic ending that is a dramatic convention; he follows the resistance of Spanish Golden Age drama to tragedy by breaking with the resolution of the narratives from which he derives. Moreover, along the way of this new theatrical formula, Lope develops the theme of honour, specifically *honra*, in a broader sense than his counterparts.

The role of honour is the next complex objective which was set out at the beginning of this document. All the stories are primarily based on what Tomás Mantecón labeled as *honor mediterráneo* which seems to be the ideal prototype. In fact, that is the reason why I believe Shakespeare maintains the Mediterranean setting in his English adaptation, Verona (Italy). Nevertheless, Lope expands the notion of vertical and horizontal honour, so as to develop his *comedia de enredo*. In fact, Lope in his *Arte nuevo de hacer comedias* claims that:

Los casos de la honra son mejores,
porque mueven con fuerza a toda gente,

con ellos las acciones virtuosas (pp. 327-29)

Thus, to my mind, horizontal honour (*honra horizontal*) is especially emerged in *Castelvines y Monteses* since all the audience could feel identified through the play as “la honra abarca todo el conjunto de la sociedad española de la época” (Correa, 1958, p. 104). It was not necessary to belong to the noble and refined classes to feel the imperative of manliness and personal dignity, which tended to equalize the members of the entire community across class barriers. For this reason, the empire of honour is exalted in different characters throughout Lope’s *comedia de enredo*, regardless of their genre (Roselo and Julia) or role (hero, villain, etc.).

I can therefore appreciate that, unlike vertical honour (*honra vertical*), which was also present, but concerned more with the aristocratic classes, horizontal honour (*honra horizontal*) had a dense presence in Spanish society in the 16th and 17th since the Spanish playwrights of that time placed it as the central theme of their plays; they merely gave artistic form to a system of individual and social values, attitudes and ideals that were widespread in society as part of a national theater that was addressed to all the estates.

Although the concept of *honra* has no English or Italian lexical counterpart since its distinctive sentiment is closely connected to this inherent cultural inclination found in Hispanic society, there is no doubt that it existed if only under the species of horizontal honour, as I have referred to it throughout. It could be expected that in *Castelvines y Monteses*, Lope de Vega made an extensive use of it. However this has not proved so, according to my mind for the influential weight of genre and source setting (the mesocratic area of the Northern Italy).

Nevertheless, everything that glitters is not gold and the difficulty I have faced throughout the investigation relies on the lack of studies when coping with North and Central European honour and the Mediterranean honour that until now nobody has carried out. Indeed, Mantecón reasserts this intricacy by claiming the following:

a lo largo de las páginas precedentes se han acumulado suficientes argumentos como para asentar que hay demasiadas piezas que no encajan bien en el “puzzle” del honor mediterráneo. Creo que aún hoy sigue siendo un reto reconstruir las auténticas dimensiones de este fenómeno- el de las concepciones y cambios en torno a la cultura del honor. (p. 458)

All in all, the modulation introduced by the different generic conception in each of the works clearly affects the representation of the concept of honour, especially in *Castelvines y Monteses*. On the one hand, the tragicomic feature with a notable tendency towards comic resolution of this work dilutes the power and representation of the concept of horizontal honour and makes it assimilable to the non-explicit forms of horizontal honour as *honra* in the tragic treatment of *La sfortunata morte* and *Romeo and Juliet*.²⁶ On the other hand, I can appreciate that, indeed, horizontal honour does not play a determining role in any of the works: in the Spanish play due to the interference of the genre; in the Italian and English works due to the lack of crystallization of the horizontal honor in something similar to the Spanish *honra*.

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²⁶ It is striking that the treatment of horizontal honor in the comedy genre of the Golden Age comedy appears, as expected, much more relativized and “unproblematic” than in the so-called *dramas de honor*.

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