

A CLASSICAL THEME IN LOPE DE VEGA AND
G. B. MARINO

Most of our knowledge about the relations between Lope de Vega and Marino come to us through the works of the Spaniard. To Marino Lope dedicated his play *Virtud, Pobreza y Mujer*.¹ To him he sent his portrait so that it might be used in the *Galleria*. He praises him in the imaginary garden of his *Filomena* with the words:

Juan Bautista Marino que enamora
Las piedras Anfon, es sol del Tasso,
Si bien el Tasso le sirvió de Aurora.²

which were repeated in "Epístola décima octava: Al Licenciado Francisco de Rioja."³ High praise is also found in his piscatory eglogue: "Amaryllida."⁴ In a sonnet he writes:

Dos cosas despertaron mis antojos
Extranjeras no al alma, a los sentidos,
Marino gran pintor de los oídos
Y Rubens gran poeta de los ojos.⁵

¹ *Biblioteca de Autores Españoles*, LII, 212 ff. S. G. Morley and C. Bruerton in their *The Chronology of the Plays of Lope de Vega*, New York, 1940, think this play was written between 1610 and 1618 (p. 160) and very likely about 1615 (p. 366). Since Marino's *Galleria* referred to in the dedication was printed in 1620, it is quite possible that the *comedia* was composed as late as 1620.

² *B. A. E.*, xxviii, 424.

³ *Colección de las Obras Sueltas*, I, Madrid, 1776, p. 486.

⁴ *B. A. E.*, LII, 211.

⁵ *B. A. E.*, xxviii, 392. These and the *Filomena* verses are also quoted by E. Levi in *Lope de Vega e l'Italia*. Florencia, 1935, 29-30.



As early as 1667 F. Meninni, in his *Ritratto del Sonetto e della Canzone*,⁶ listed fourteen sonnet imitations which he declares that Marino drew from Lope. More recently M. Menghini and L. Panarese⁷ admit that the Italian imitated the Spaniard in some instances. But E. Levi (*op. cit.* 30), drawing his conclusions from the lines: *dos cosas despertaron mis antojos, Marino gran pintor de los oídos, y Rubens . . .*, suggests that it is Lope who imitated Marino.

Since all of the Italian poems that are considered as imitations are in the third part of the *Lira* published in 1625, while their indicated Spanish originals appear much earlier in the *Arcadia*, 1598,⁸ and *Angélica*, 1602, it would seem that Meninni, Menghini and Panarese are right in assuming that Marino is the imitator.

To this list it is now possible to add another imitation, a version of the famous "Cupid and Bee" theme⁹ occurring in the sixth canto of the *Adone*, stanzas 188-92. It reads as follows:

Con queste ciancie del suo fallo stolto
Campò la pena il lusinghier crudele.
Ma per altra follia non andò molto
Che a me tornò con gemiti e querele.
Vassene in un querceto ombroso e folto
Ne' giardini di Gnido a coglier mele,
E seco a depredar gli aurei fialoni
Van gli alati fratelli in più squadroni.

E perchè 'l dolce de' licor soavi
Orso o mosca non è, che cotant'ami,
Cerca de' faggi opachi i tronchi cavi,
Spia de' frassini annosi i verdi rami,
E nel pedal d'un elce ecco due favi
Vede coverti di pungenti essami.
Vulgo d'api ingegnere accolto in quella
Sta sussurrando a fabricar la cella.

⁶ Napoli, p. 161. See also B. Croce, *Saggi sulla letteratura italiana del Seicento*, Bari, 1924, 185.

⁷ In *La Vita e le Opere di G. B. Marino*, Roma, 1888, 150, and the pamphlet *Lope de Vega e Giambattista Marino*, Maglie, 1935.

⁸ The sonnet, *Onde dorate, e l'onde eran capelli* (*Lira*, *op. cit.*, 34) comes from *Por las ondas del mar de unos cabellos*, *Arcadia*, *Colección de las Obras Sueltas*, VI, 266.

⁹ See J. Hutton, "Cupid and the Bee," *PMLA.*, LVI, 1941, 1036-59, and J. G. Fucilla, "Cupid and the Bee: Addenda," *PMLA.*, LVIII, 1943, 575-79.

Chiama i compagni e lor la cova addita,
 Che la ruvida scorza in sè ricetta.
 Corre dentro a ficcar la destra ardita,
 Ma la ritira poi con maggior fretta.
 Folle chi cani attizza o vespe irrita,
 Che non si sdegnan mai senza vendetta.
 Pecchia d'acuta spina armata il morse,
 Ond'ei forte gridando a me ricorse.

E de la guancia impallidito l'ostro,
 Di timor di dolor palpita e langue.
 —Madre, madre, mi dice, un picciol mostro,
 E mi scopre la man tinta di sangue,
 Un, che quasi non ha dente nè rostro,
 E sembra d'oro e punge a guisa d'angue,
 Minuto animaletto, alata serpe,
 Hammi il dito trafitto in quella sterpe.—

Io, che 'l conosco, e so di che fier aghi
 S'armi sovente, ancorchè vada ignudo,
 Mentre che i lumi rugiadosi e vaghi
 Gli asciugo e la ferita aspra gli chiudo,
 —Che d'animal sì picciolo t'impiaghi,
 Rispondo, il pungiglion rigido e crudo,
 Da pianger, figlio, o da stupir non hai:
 E tu fanciullo ancor che piaghe fai?—

E. Canevari¹⁰ states that these stanzas derive from Anacreon. Certain details are, indeed, anacreontic but other details derive from an earlier treatment of the theme by Theocritus. Furthermore, these verses are very similar to a *romance* printed as anonymous by Durán in *Biblioteca de Autores Españoles*, XVI, 436, which we now reproduce for comparison.

Por los jardines de Chipre
 Andaba el niño Cupido,
 Entre las rosas y flores,
 Jugando con otros niños;
 Cuál trepa con algún sauce,
 Presumiendo buscar nidos;
 Cuál cogiendo el fresco viento
 Por coger los pajarillos;
 Cuál hace jaulas de juncos;
 Cuál hace palacios ricos
 En los huecos de los fresnos
 Y troncos de los olivos.

¹⁰ *Lo Stile del Marino nell'Adone*, Pavia, 1901, 37.

Cuando cubiertas de abejas
 Halló el travieso Cupido
 Dos colmenas en un roble
 Con mil panales nativos,
 Metió la mano el primero
 Llamando a los otros niños;
 Picóle en ella una abeja,
 Y sacóla dando gritos.
 Huyen los niños medrosos,
 El rapaz pierde el sentido;
 Vase corriendo a su madre,
 A quien lastimado dijo:
 —Madre mía, una abejita,
 Que casi no tiene pico,
 Me ha dado mayor dolor
 Que pudiera un basilisco.—
 La madre que lo conoce,
 Vengada de verle herido
 De cuando la hirió de amores
 De Adonis, que tanto quiso,
 Medio riendo le dice:
 —De poco te admiras, hijo,
 Siendo tú y esa avecica
 Semejantes en el pico.—

This *romance* re-appears with slight changes in Lope de Vega's *Adonis y Venus*, Act II, Scene x. The play was probably written between 1597 and 1603.¹¹ Reference to Adonis in the Durán version makes it fairly certain that the passage in the *comedia* is its source. For this reason, we agree with Menéndez y Pelayo¹² that the *romance*, too, is a product of Lope's pen. It is not certain whether the three canto *Adone* (c. 1605) or the twelve canto poem (1612) contained the "Cupid and Bee" selection. In any case, Marino's use of the theme in this connection is definitely later than Lope's and must be considered as a borrowing.

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¹¹ See Morley and Bruerton, *op. cit.*, 363.

¹² In *Obras de Lope de Vega*, VII, cclv.