

## Speaking of *Celestina*: Soliloquy and Monologue in the *Tragicomedia de Calisto y Melibea*

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The *Tragicomedia de Calisto y Melibea* begins with one of the most famous dialogues in all Spanish literature:

CALISTO.— En esto veo, Melibea, la grandeza de Dios.

MELIBEA.— ¿En qué Calisto? (85)<sup>1</sup>

What structural and stylistic purposes do the work's numerous soliloquies and monologues play in a work that is driven by dialogue? And how shall we distinguish between the true soliloquy and the long pronouncements made by a singular character that form parts of dialogue but in which one character digresses to such an extent that he/she seems momentarily unaware of his/her interlocutor or essentially lapses into a monologue? Soliloquy is defined as «an utterance or discourse by a person who is talking to himself or herself or is disregarding of or oblivious to any hearers present (often used as a device in drama to disclose a character's innermost thoughts).» Monologue is defined as «a prolonged talk or discourse by a single speaker, especially one dominating or monopolizing a conversation» and is also cited as a synonym for soliloquy. For our purposes I will use soliloquy to denote «true» soliloquies, i.e., those in which a character finds himself/herself alone and speaks, revealing desires, fears, or other emotional states. I will reserve monologue for those long passages, dominated by a single speaker who gives voice to his/her opinion in a dialogue or seeks to justify his/her position by a long, philosophical argument, metaphorical analogies, or reliance on folk wisdom. María Rosa Lida de Malkiel refers to these long orations within dialogue settings as «diálogos oratorios» (108).

1.— All quotations are from Dorothy Severin's edition of *La Celestina*.

The soliloquy allows a character to express emotions, evaluate the behaviors of other characters, and explore his/her own psyche. With no narrative voice to guide us, these soliloquies are our only access inside the heads of the people who populate the world of *Celestina*. Andrés-Suárez claims that the soliloquies and many of the monologues in the *Tragicomedia* «No contribuyen a la acción dramática, dado que pueden suprimirse sin afectar al desarrollo argumental; en cambio son fundamentales para caracterizar a los personajes y resaltar su complejidad» (9). While I obviously agree with the second half of this critic's assessment, I believe that the soliloquies, and some of the monologues, are strategically placed within the structure of the work to highlight moments when the plot shifts or characters reach a decision that significantly impacts the plot or other characters' actions.

It is significant to note that Fernando de Rojas opens five of the twenty-one *autos* of the *Tragicomedia* with a soliloquy, not counting the long lament by Pleberio which makes up most of *Auto XXI*. Two of these act-opening soliloquies are pronounced by Celestina and there is one each by Melibea, Calisto, and Elicia. It should not be surprising that the woman with the greatest gift of gab, Celestina, has the largest number of soliloquies. We get to know Celestina in various ways—what others say about her, her interactions and conversations with other characters, and her many, often sarcastic asides—but none of these fully reveals her thoughts and emotions the way her own soliloquies do. But, in all the soliloquies, monologues, and dialogues in which Celestina speaks, a word of warning is necessary: Celestina lies. She lies to others and she may even lie to herself.<sup>2</sup> But she is not alone in this practice since many of the other characters' soliloquies and monologues contain examples of self-delusion and elaborate rationalizations when they examine their motivations, emotions, or own consciences.

When Celestina speaks to others it is often to persuade or manipulate. This is especially true in her interactions with Melibea and Pármeno. Her conversations with Melibea are part of the work for which Calisto has generously paid Celestina—i.e., to arrange a sexual liaison with the lady he desires. When speaking to Pármeno, Celestina wants to persuade the servant to cooperate in her endeavors on Calisto's behalf and to stop speaking ill of her to his master. Their conversations also reveal important information about the previous relationship between Pármeno and Celestina when he had briefly served in the bawd's house. The intimate relationship between Celestina and Pármeno's deceased mother, Claudina, is remembered and retold in the dialogues between Pármeno and

2.—As for example, in *Auto IV* when Celestina tells Melibea that she would not want to return to the days of her youth but, in *Auto IX* she longs for her «glory days», twenty years ago when her house was full of young, desirable prostitutes.

Celestina and are essential to understanding why Pármeneo eventually is complicit in the murder of Celestina.

Even though Celestina is the character who most often expresses herself in soliloquies, the first soliloquy in the work does not belong to the *alcahueta* but to Sempronio. Calisto has returned from his initial rebuff from Melibea and, in a foul humor, shuts himself in his bedroom. Sempronio is understandably concerned to see his master so distraught and thinks out loud, debating whether he should try to enter and console Calisto or leave him to suffer alone —«¡O desventrura, o súbito mal! ¿Cuál fue tan contrario acontecimiento que así tan presto robó el alegría deste hombre, y lo que peor es, junto con ella el seso? ¿Dexarle he solo, o entraré allá?» (89). Sempronio is afraid that, if Calisto in his state of distress kills himself, he will be blamed for his master's demise. But he also fears that, given Calisto's present state or mind, if he tries to speak with his master, Calisto may do him some harm. He finally resolves to try to help Calisto —«Pues en estos extremos en que stoy perplexo, lo más sano es entrar y sofrirle y consolare...» (90-91). Just as he has arrived at this conclusion, Calisto calls out for him and thus takes the decision out of Sempronio's hands. Even in this relatively short soliloquy we see many of the stylistic elements that will characterize both the soliloquies and monologues found throughout the *Tragicomedia* —frequent exclamations, rhetorical questions, and an abundance of refrains and proverbs.

The first example of an extensive monologue or «diálogo oratorio» is also found in *Auto I* when Pármeneo justifies his identification of Celestina as a «puta vieja» and explains to Calisto how he knows the go-between. When Pármeneo identifies Celestina as a «puta vieja alcoholada» (108), Calisto upbraids his servant, fearing that Celestina will take offense at the remark and put in danger his relationship with the woman who he declares «no tiene menor poderío en mi vida que Dios» (108).<sup>3</sup> Pármeneo explains, at length, that Celestina is not only known by this term but that she revels in hearing it: «se glorifica en lo oír, como tú quando dizen: 'Diestro cavallero es Calisto'» (108). In a humorous enumeration of the repetitions of the phrase «puta vieja» throughout the city, he says that people of every stripe refer to her with this term and even dogs, birds, cattle, and frogs chime in as well. The name sounds out when carpenters, armourers, blacksmiths, boilermakers, and chest makers swing their hammers. All workmen and women sing out her name throughout the day and «si una piedra topa con otra, luego suena '¡Puta vieja!'» (109).

3.— Other critics such as Lida de Malkiel, Russell, and Berndt have commented on the blasphemous declarations of Calisto throughout the work including identifying himself as a «Melibeo» instead of a «cristiano» (93), his proclamation that Melibea is a Goddess rather than a mere mortal woman (95), and his contention that Melibea is an angel living among mortals (253). Also see David Burton's article on Calisto's misuse of prayer when he prays for Celestina's success with Melibea at the Church of the Magdalena.

Pármemo then goes on to explain that his mother had sent him as a child to serve in Celestina's home. From his long monologue, in reply to his master's questions about Celestina, we learn the location of Celestina's house —«cerca de las tenerías, en la cuesta del río,» (110),— her six «oficios» —«labrandería, perfumera, maestra de hazer afeytes y de hazer virgos, alcahueta y un poquito hechizera» (110)—, her dealings with all levels of society, from students, to monks, to nuns, to the most noble families, the wonders of her dispensary,<sup>4</sup> and a long list of the ingredients she uses for love positions, aphrodisiacs, casting spells and other magical arts. The servant concludes with the profound and polysemic statement: «Y todo era burla y mentira» (113).<sup>5</sup> The irony of this statement is, of course, that Pármemo has just spoken at great length and with miniscule detail about Celestina, her jobs, her magic arts, and her standing in the society but concludes by saying that everything about her is a farce and a deceit. While we might interpret Pármemo's extended monologue as part of his efforts to warn Calisto about Celestina's shady dealings to dissuade him from enlisting her services, the amount of detail and the intimate knowledge of the *alcahueta's* home and its contents, the identity of those who seek out Celestina's help, and his history of living with her in his youth, also contribute enormously to the reader's understanding of Celestina and her place in the society of the *Tragicomedia*. His monologue, rather than a mere digression or a chance to give a laundry-list of Celestina's «tools of her trades,» serves a structural purpose —giving us ample information about Celestina before we are witness to her initial dealings with Calisto, Pármemo, Melibea and Alisa (her mother), or Areúsa.

Also, in *Auto I*, the author gives Celestina equal time to that conceded to Pármemo. When Sempronio and Calisto leave to retrieve monies to insure Celestina's aid in the pursuit of Melibea, Celestina talks at length with Pármemo. When she discovers that he is the son of her former partner and best friend, Claudina, she first reminds him that «tan puta vieja era tu madre como yo» (120) —a phrase that will come back to haunt her later, as we shall see. Celestina then launches into a long fabrication about how she had another motive in coming to Calisto's house beyond that of agreeing to help him win Melibea. In an elaborate lie, she tells Pármemo that, on his deathbed, Pármemo's father had entrusted Celestina with an inheritance he had left for his son. Pármemo has had no contact with his father for years and has lived as a servant for almost his entire

4.— For a discussion of Celestina's workshop see, Fuentes de Aynat, J. M., «La botica de la Celestina» in *Medicamenta: Edición para el farmacéutico* 5.44 (1951), 267-68 and, especially, Ardemagni, Enrica J., «Celestina's Laboratory: A Translator's Dilemma» in *Fernando de Rojas and 'Celestina': Approaching the Fifth Centenary*, eds. Ivy A. Corfis and Joseph T. Snow (Madison, WI: Hispanic Seminary of Medieval Studies, 1993): 383-91.

5.— For a summary of various critical interpretations of this phrase see the edition of Severin, p. 113, fn 70.

life, but Celestina reassures Pármeno that she has spent many hours in prayer and searching for him to bring him this news. She adds that, only three days ago, she learned that Pármeno was serving in Calisto's home—certainly a falsehood since she had reacted with such great surprise when Pármeno, just minutes before, revealed his identity to her. Suffice it to say that this inheritance, that Celestina values as «tal copia de oro y plata que basta más que la renta de tu amo Calisto» (121), will never appear and that it is but a ruse to dissuade the young man from trying to warn his master about Celestina's deceits. In other words, a deceit to prevent Pármeno from revealing the truth about her deceits.

Celestina continues her monologue by telling him that blind loyalty to Calisto, in the end, will not benefit him, calling such loyalty «necia» (122) especially given the character of «estos señores deste tiempo» (122)<sup>6</sup> who make vain promises to their servants that they never make good on. She counsels him to make friends amongst those of his own status because it is impossible to have a relationship of true friendship with his master «por la diferencia de los estados o condiciones pocas vezes contezca» (122). She persuades him to become the friend of Sempronio who, she reminds him, has an ongoing relationship with Elicia, Areúsa's cousin. With the mention of Areúsa, a woman Pármeno has lusted after, Celestina ends her long monologue since Pármeno immediately interrupts her when the *alcahueta* mentions this woman's name. Pármeno is obviously interested in what Celestina can do on his behalf to win him Areúsa but he also expresses lingering doubts about any cooperation with Sempronio. At this point, Celestina becomes angry with him and threatens to leave. Pármeno reconsiders his position, asks Celestina for pardon, and the latter rewards him with more fond memories of his father and declares Pármeno, at that moment, to be the spitting image of his father—a fact that brings tears (or a semblance thereof) to the old woman's eyes.

In *Auto III*, Celestina reprises a theme that she had begun in her exchanges with Pármeno in *Auto I*—the foolishness of remaining loyal to one's master at any cost. In dialogue with Sempronio, Celestina alludes to possible danger that they may encounter in helping Calisto to pursue Melibea. Sempronio declares that he will avoid harm at any cost and waxes at some length about the need to take advantage while they can because, when things move quickly, in an instant they can be forgotten. This digression on the fickleness of memory is an excellent example of a monologic discourse wrapped inside what is essentially a dialogic structure in which both Sempronio and Celestina air their views. When Sempronio asks Celestina about her private conversation with Pármeno, the old woman, in her reply, takes ample time to reminisce about her

6.— We will see this same theme of the disdain for the *señorío* of their time in Elicia's and Areúsa's opinions about Melibea and other ladies of her standing in *Auto IX*.

relationship with Pármeno's mother, Claudina. It is significant that Celestina's long recounting of her life with Claudina is enhanced and amplified in the *Tragicomedia* in contrast to this section in the *Comedia*. Beyond the off-quoted section about the two being like «uña y carne» (142), in the *Tragicomedia* Celestina speaks about the great respect all showed towards Claudina, their generosity in rewarding her, especially in giving her good wine. The theme of Celestina's fondness for wine will come up again and the addition here helps establish this attribute as repeating motif in the various instances, throughout the *Tragicomedia*, when the *alcahueta* reminisces about her past.

Celestina also inserts into this conversation with Sempronio long passages about women once their passions are aroused. She reminds Sempronio that she is speaking from long experience of persuading women to act on their desires. Once a woman consents to an affair, she knows no bounds: «Coxquillosicas son todas, mas después que una vez consienten la silla en el envés del lomo, nunca querrían holgar: por ellas queda el campo, muertas sí, cansadas, no» (144). The crudeness of Celestina's metaphor of the mounted woman refers to the carnal relationship Calisto wants with Melibea, despite his clothing of his feelings and intentions in the rhetoric of courtly love.<sup>7</sup> Sempronio warns Celestina about the dangers in pursuing Melibea, especially the ire of her father, but she dismisses his misgivings and asserts that Melibea is as good as already won—«voy más consolada a casa de Melibea que si en la mano la toviessse» (145).

The next instance of monologue occurs at the end of this same *Auto III*—Celestina's famous conjuring of the devil. Lida de Malkiel, rightly, does not label this a soliloquy because Celestina is not without an interlocutor (111). She is speaking directly to the devil whom she addresses as Plutón: «aquí Celestina habla con la intención urgente de imponer su voluntad a otro personaje, muy real para ella» (Lida de Malkiel 111-12). She asks the devil to cast a *philocaptio* spell<sup>8</sup> on the thread she intends to sell to Melibea, thus literally and figuratively binding the young woman's will so that she acts on her desires for Calisto. Celestina even threatens the devil should he not cooperate with her and ends by reiterating the same confidence in her own powers to win Melibea that she had shown in her recent conversation with Sempronio —«confiando en mi mucho poder,

7.— The classic study on Calisto as a parody of the courtly lover is June Hall Martin's *Love's Fools: Aucassin, Troilus, Calisto and The Parody of the Courtly Lover* (London: Tamesis, 1972). On this topic see also my study «The Tragic/Comic Calisto: Obsessed and Insecure.»

8.— For more information on *philocaptio*, see Jaime Leños, «'La Celestina': ¿Philocaptio o apetito carnal?» *Fifteenth-Century Studies* 32 (2007): 68-82 and Dorothy Sherman Severin, «The Relationship between the *Libro de buen amor* and *Celestina*: Does Trotaconventos Perform a Philocaptio Spell on Doña Endrina?» in *A Companion to the Libro de buen amor*, ed. Louise O. Vasvári (Woodbridge, UK: Tamesis, 2004): 123-27.

me parto para allá con mi hilado, donde creo te llevo ya embuelto» (148). However, we should note that Celestina's use of the word *creo* here, as well as the exaggerated assuredness she had expressed to Sempronio, actually hold clues to her own insecurities and fears, as we shall see.

*Auto IV* begins with one of the longest and most revealing of Celestina's true soliloquies. At the beginning of this act she is not involved in any dialogue and her discourse is not a digression or exegetic comment intended for another. She is truly alone with her own thoughts, doubts, anxieties, and, eventually, self-confidence. Immediately following the conjuring of the devil which ends *Auto III*, *Auto IV* begins with Celestina ruminating on her way to Pleberio's house where she hopes to be able to time to speak to Melibea alone. She begins by remembering the fears that Sempronio had expressed in the previous scene regarding her role in procuring Melibea for Calisto. In their conversation, we recall that Celestina reacted sharply and directly to Sempronio's trepidations about the consequences that may befall them all if Melibea's parents discover Celestina's true intentions. She had rebuffed his cautions stating, «¡Alahé, en mal hora a ti he yo menester para compañero, aun si quisieses avisar a Celestina en su officio! Pues quando tú naçiste ya comía yo pan con corteza; para adalid eres bueno, cargado de agüeros y recelo» (145). But, at the beginning of *Auto IV*, when she finds herself alone, she admits that she had been dissimulating in her conversation with Sempronio and that she, too, has her doubts and fears.<sup>9</sup> She knows that if she is found out she may, indeed, pay with her life or, at the very least, receive a public flogging. The monies she received from Calisto now do not seem quite so attractive: «Pues amargas cient monedas serían éstas. ¡Ay, cuytada de mí, en qué lazo me he metido! que por me mostrar solícita y esfoçada pongo mi persona al tablero» (149). And she doubts whether the other payments and awards she hopes to receive from Calisto will be worth the risks she is taking. She has a frank debate with herself about the pros and cons of continuing her pursuit of Melibea. She even imagines exactly what Calisto will say if he thinks she has deceived him or not worked diligently on his behalf. She is completely torn by conflicting emotions: «¡Pues triste yo, mal acá, mal acullá, pena en ambas partes! Quando a los extremos falta el medio, arrimarse el hombre al más sano es discreción» (150). Since she perceives danger whether she proceeds or not, she eventually decides that it is best to be brave and forge ahead with her work on Calisto's behalf, declaring that it is more shameful to be a coward than to face danger in completing one's mission.<sup>10</sup> Of course, we are invited to participate in the irony of this debate since the mission that Celestina has

9.— On Celestina's posturing with Sempronio, see Snow, «Celestina and Pleberio...», pp. 386-87.

10.— On this point, Fraker asserts that Celestina puts pride before self-preservation (526).

taken on is the ignominious one of enticing a young virgin to have sexual relations out of wedlock. But, after all, this is Celestina's job. And she takes heart by recognizing that all the omens have been favorable along the way to Melibea's house. This soliloquy contains all the elements already described as common to soliloquies in the *Tragicomedia*—rhetorical questions, imagined dialogue, exclamations, and a generous inclusion of proverbs and folk sayings.

Celestina's soliloquy that opens *Auto IV* has been commented upon by numerous critics including Stephen Gilman, Joseph Snow, María Rosa Lida de Malkiel, Emilio de Miguel Martínez, and María Theresa Miaja. Gilman considers Celestina's speech in this *Auto* as essential to our understanding of her behavior in the rest of the work:

The opening monologue of Act IV stands as a central moment of consciousness between the seemingly vain boasting of Act III and the real accomplishment of the seduction. It displays and emphasizes with fearful candor the new Celestina with whom we are to live for the rest of the act (94).

The manipulation of Pármemo in *Auto III* when Celestina claims to be holding his inheritance in trust and promises to win him the sexual favors of Areúsa, gives way to a more thoughtful Celestina. All the bravado and self-assuredness, not to mention the outright lying, disappear and we see a more vulnerable Celestina, one who has self-doubts and genuine fears about her safety. Miaja points out that, in this soliloquy, Celestina debates with herself about the pros and cons of following through on her mission for Calisto (29) while Lida de Malkiel sees the soliloquy as essentially a vacillation between fear and honor (122).<sup>11</sup> But, what wins out in the debate is Celestina's pride in her profession and concern for her reputation should she fail to follow-through on her commitment (Gilman 152; Miaja 30; Miguel Martínez 175). On this point, Snow affirms that Celestina decides to go through with her visit to Melibea because not to do so would expose her to the wrath of Calisto and do irreparable damage to her chances for work in the future (20). Snow adds that another factor affecting her decision is a long-standing hostility which Celestina holds towards Pleberio, as a representative of the noble class who has prospered while her fortunes have waned (20-21).<sup>12</sup>

11.— According to Andres-Suárez in Celestina's soliloquy in *Auto IV* «La vieja alcahueta, prototipo de la codicia y maldad, deja traslucir aquí sus emociones: la duda, la inseguridad, el ansia generada por los riesgos del oficio que practica. En suma en estos momentos la sentimos más cerca de nosotros y, en cierta forma, más humana» (8).

12.— Russell simply states that this soliloquy «artísticamente, ensancha y humaniza la personalidad de la vieja» (262).

*Auto IV* also contains many long monologic commentaries which form part of the dialogue between Celestina and Melibea after the latter's mother leaves to attend to her sick sister. In the first of these, Celestina bemoans her old age and her poverty. Lida de Malkiel observes that these long speeches are akin to rhetorical *amplificatio* but also maintains that Rojas is not plagiarizing a very similar passage as that found in Petrarch's *De remediis utriusque fortunae*.<sup>13</sup> This critic contends that «a diferencia de Petrarca, Rojas no se propone discurrir sobre estos temas sino mostrar a Celestina en su maniobra para captarse la benevolencia de Melibea» (113).<sup>14</sup> Celestina next waxes at length about the rich who are not without their own problems, especially the avarice of others, even of their own relatives who wish them dead so that they can enjoy a fine inheritance. These comments about the rich are amplified in the *Tragicomedia*, including numerous refrains and, again, rely heavily on Petrarch. Celestina's purpose here is to soften Melibea's defenses, but neither should we miss the irony that she is in conversation with a representative of the monied nobility and that the subject of inheritance will figure prominently in Pleberio's lament after Melibea commits suicide.

While Celestina wants to appear as if she is merely imparting words of wisdom, proposing arguments that the young woman cannot dispute, she is slyly baiting her for when she begins to speak of the real motives for her visit and this conversation. Before she begins to allude to the fact that she has actually come to visit Melibea in service to another, she takes the time to conjure up memories of a happier past, before she was widowed, when wine was plentiful in her home. As we have seen previously the theme of wine, and its abundance as associated with better times, comes up at various stages when Celestina engages in conversation with other characters. She contrasts her present poverty with its paltry supply of wine—she has only «un jarrillo mal pegado...que no cabe dos açumbres»—with her glory days when wine was plentiful—«sobrado estava un cuero en mi casa y uno lleno y otro vazío» (159). This passage, ostensibly about wine, leads the *alcahueta* to the conclusion that life is hard (and wine hard to come by) when one is without a man. And finally she tells Melibea that she has come on behalf of «un enfermo a la muerte» (159). However, before revealing the identity of the one in need of Melibea's ministrations, she offers one more monologue about compassion for others, offering numerous examples from the animal kingdom of acts of self-sacrifice and kindness. She concludes by stating that if brute beasts are so inclined to act mercifully how much greater is humankind's obliga-

13.—For the most complete study on Rojas's use of Petrarch see Alan Deyermond's classic study, *The Petrarchan Sources of «La Celestina»* (London, Oxford UP, 1961; 2nd ed. Westport, CT: Greenwood P, 1975).

14.—For a study of the theme of old age throughout *Celestina*, see my article «*Celestina*: The Power of Old Age.»

tion to help others. Again, part of Celestina's persuasive plan is to offer examples and arguments that Melibea will be hard pressed to dispute. However, when she mentions Calisto by name, Melibea explodes into fits of rage. The conversation that ensues alternates between Melibea's outbursts and Celestina's attempts to extract herself from blame and lead Melibea back to the path of submission.

After calming Melibea and obtaining her *cordón* to cure Calisto's supposed toothache,<sup>15</sup> Celestina once again finds herself alone in the street and she pronounces the second of her soliloquies at the beginning of *Auto V*. During her meeting with Melibea in *Auto IV*, Celestina had suffered the young woman's harsh reproach and she now expresses her anger and frustrations with Melibea but also a sense of satisfaction at having made a good beginning on her job for Calisto.

¡O rigurosos trances, o cuerda osadía, o gran sufrimiento!  
to! Y qué tan cercana estuve de la muerte, si mi mucha  
astucia no rigera con el tiempo las velas de la petición. ¡O  
amenazas de donzella brava, o ayrada donzella! (171).

She praises her own astuteness and rails against the verbal thrashing she had had to endure from Melibea. Despite her pride in her own persuasive skills, she also recognizes the help of the devil to whom she attributes the opportune absence of Melibea's mother that allowed her to speak alone with the young woman. Celestina engages in a kind of dialogue with herself, fondly addressing herself as «vieja» —«O vieja Celestina, ¿vas alegre?... Pues alégrate, vieja, que más sacarás deste pleyto que de quinze virgos que renovarás» (171). Celestina here alludes to one of her chief occupations—that of restoring lost maidenheads—and to the fact that she has taken on this enterprise for Calisto precisely because she expects to be handsomely paid for her services. She also boasts to herself that if any other *alcahueta* had had to contend with Melibea, she would not have succeeded in winning over the offended woman —«¿Qué hizieran en tan fuerte estrecho estas nuevas maestras de mi officio sino responder algo a Melibea por donde se perdiera quanto yo con buen callar he ganado?» (171-72).<sup>16</sup>

While speaking to herself, congratulating herself on her fine work with Melibea, Celestina runs into Sempronio who is shocked to see her murmuring to herself, hurrying through the streets without meeting the gaze of anyone. Celestina refuses to reveal what had happened with Melibea until she is in the presence of Calisto, annoying Sempronio who had been impatiently waiting to know what had transpired during her visit to

15.— On Calisto's toothache see especially Geoffrey West's article, «The Unseemliness of Calisto's Toothache,» *Celestinesca* 3.1 (1979): 3-10.

16.— On Celestina's opinion about her rivals, see Lida de Malkiel, especially p. 124.

Melibea's house. The dialogue with Sempronio that follows Celestina's soliloquy sets in motion the conflict that will continue to grow between the *alcahueta* and Calisto's servants as the old woman tries to take all the credit, and all the reward, for helping Calisto.

Joseph Snow has spoken about Celestina as a figure beyond that of the stereotypical *alcahueta*. She becomes a multidimensional figure precisely through what we come to know about her as she engages in dialogues with others and especially in dialogues with herself as found in her soliloquies. Snow asserts that «A Celestina la seguimos conociendo, poco a poco, en la medida que va entablando diálogos con sus varios interlocutores y, entre éstos, hay que incluir los momentos íntimos cuando ese diálogo lo mantiene consigo misma» (15). Her two soliloquies—one pronounced on her way to visit Melibea for the first time and the second immediately following the conversation between the two women—are like bookends to an essential part of the plot development. In the first, Celestina reveals her anxieties and fears about taking on the mission to win Melibea and finally musters her courage to pursue her plan. In the second, Celestina expresses her relief at having made a good beginning and she is anxious to share the news with Calisto. A significant detail that is included in these two soliloquies is Celestina's allusions to her skirts. In the first, when she tries to reassure herself by recognizing that all the omens she has encountered that day are favorable, she cites her skirts among them —«Las pierdas parece que se apartan y me hazen lugar que passe; ni me estorvan las haldas, ni siento cansación en andar; todos me saludan» (150).<sup>17</sup> After her successful interview with Melibea, she curses these same skirts that now slow her down as she hurries through the streets to deliver the good news to Calisto: «¡O malditas haldas, prolixas y largas, cómo me estorváys de allegar adonde han de reposar mis nuevas!» (171). Her long skirts that did not get in her way as she walked to Melibea's house now slow her down when she is eager to report to Calisto and, she assumes, receive yet more rewards from him for her services. At the end of this soliloquy that begins *Auto V*, she attributes her success with Melibea to her long years of experience and she again mentions her skirts —«la experiencia y escarmiento haze los hombres arteros, y la vieja como yo, que alce sus haldas al passer del vado, como maestra» (172). The metaphor of lifting one's skirts before fording a stream is used to illustrate that Celestina has learned from experience how to master difficult situations.

Calisto has a number of digressive monologues in *Auto VI*. Perhaps the best known are his tiresome raptures over the *cordón* that Celestina had procured from Melibea. While these «conversations» with the girdle are

17.— This entire phrase was added to the *Tragicomedia* and did not appear in the original 16-act *Comedia*.

relatively short, they are so over-blown and fetish-like that they quickly bore Celestina and the servants who insist that he leave off his verbal intercourse with the object and concentrate on the true prize —Melibea herself. When stirred back onto the subject of his beloved, Calisto again tries the patience of all those present when he overreacts to Celestina's labeling of Melibea as «gentil.» Considering this adjective to be far too pedestrian to refer to Melibea, Calisto replies that Melibea's beauty surpasses that of all other beauties past and present. He insists that other women try in vain, through cosmetics and any other means available, to match her beauty and, of course, all fail. Celestina, responds to the urgings of the servants, and finally cuts Calisto short, leaving him alone.

Since Calisto sends Pármemo with Celestina to accompany her home, the *alcahueta* has another opportunity to speak, at length, with the young servant who continues to warn his master against her. She reminds him that she considers him her «hijo a lo menos cassi adotivo» (192) due to her past relationship with him and his mother. She attributes his lack of consideration for her to his youth and inexperience and tries to make him feel guilty for not respecting her as his elder and his former benefactor. She tells him that he needs a «vieja» such as herself who is «conoscida, amiga, madre y más que madre» (193) and gives a litany of metaphors, likening herself to an inn where one can rest, a hospital where one is cured, a good purse in time of need, a chest to guard money in times of prosperity, a good fire in the winter, a good shade in the summer, and a good tavern where one may eat and drink (193). She also tells him that she wants he and Sempronio to be like brothers. When Pármemo does not react enthusiastically to the idea of friendship with Sempronio, Celestina takes the opportunity to pronounce a speech (again based on Petrarch) about the nature of friendship. And she reminds him that she still holds in trust Pármemo's inheritance from his father that she will not give him until «bivas más reposado y vengas en edad complida» (195). When Pármemo questions her about what she means by «reposado» she speaks about the vagaries of life in service to the rich who are unlikely to reward him.<sup>18</sup> She returns to her desire that he and Sempronio be best of buddies and again promises to reward them both with «mochachas» (195).

When Pármemo finally is convinced and throws his lot in 100% with Celestina, the *alcahueta* again brings up her past relationship with his mother. This monologue about Claudina is, in the opinion of Severin, purely spiteful. Since Pármemo had spoken ill of her to Calisto, Celestina takes this opportunity to remind him of his mother's skills as a witch and the times she was arrested (Severin 196, fn 10). Several items in the long, reminiscent passage bear mentioning. Although Celestina is ostensibly

18.— As we have seen, the themes of the lower caste's resentment of the rich and their ill treatment of servants arise throughout the *Tragicomedia*.

in dialogue with Pármeno, the purpose of her lengthy recollections is to gain the upper hand with him, using knowledge about his past to assure that he will cooperate fully with her and Sempronio in the «*empresa Melibea*.» But, as we know, she oversteps her bounds with Pármeno who does not want to be reminded of his mother's notorious past and the young man gets in a few jabs of his own regarding Celestina's run-ins with the law.

Celestina begins her recollections by praising Claudina's skills in witchcraft. Her friend never feared going into cemeteries, even at night, to collect items for conjuring and she could summon demons at will —«*los mismos diablos la avían miedo; atemorizados y spandtados los tenía con las crudas bozes que les dava*» (197). When Pármeno tries to one-up the *alcahueta*, saying that he remembers when Celestina was arrested while he was serving in her house, Celestina turns the tables on him and corrects him, saying that both she and his mother were arrested on that occasion. And, she adds that Claudina was arrested four other times as well. She says that once Claudina was openly accused of witchcraft and had to suffer public exhibition in the stocks. Snow has studied how these reminiscences of Claudina are essential to the plot and help to explain at least one of Pármeno's motives for killing Celestina later in the work.<sup>19</sup> These long monologic passages about Pármeno's mother also serve to give the characters (especially Celestina and Pármeno) a history beyond the temporal confines of the plot of the *Tragicomedia*. Just as the soliloquies the characters pronounce give us insight into their thoughts and emotions, Celestina's detailed recalling of her memories of Claudina allow us to know more about Celestina's past before she becomes involved in the affairs of Calisto and Melibea.

During the dinner scene in *Auto IX* with Celestina, Sempronio, Pármeno, Areúsa and Elicia present, various characters, in turn, use this setting to deliver long monologues. Celestina once again waxes poetic about her love of wine and, in the interpolations of the *Tragicomedia*, she includes a litany of the benefits of wine —it gladdens the heart, makes the old strong, gives courage to the coward, makes the slacker diligent, keeps the stomach warm, etc. The conviviality of the dinner is broken when Sempronio asks Celestina how things are progressing with the «*graciosa y gentil Melibea*» (226).<sup>20</sup> This flattery of Melibea provokes a quick and cutting reaction from both Elicia and Areúsa who take this opportunity to express their disdain and resentment of women of Melibea's noble station. After soundly berating Sempronio for using the adjective «gen-

19.— See Joseph T. Snow, «Celestina's Claudina» in *Hispanic Studies in Honour of Alan D. Deyermond: A North American Tribute*, ed. John S. Miletich (Madison: Hispanic Seminary of Medieval Studies, 1986): 257-77.

20.— We recall that Calisto reacted very negatively when Celestina labeled Melibea «gentil» saying that the adjective was not sufficient to describe his beloved.

til» to refer to Melibea, Elicia tells him in no uncertain terms what she thinks of Melibea —«Aquella hermosura por una moneda se compra de la tienda.... si algo tiene de hermosura es por buenos atavíos que trae» (226). Y Areúsa chimes in with even more bile and bitterness referring to all women of Melibea's station:

Las riquezas las hazen a éstas hermosas y ser alabadas, que no las gracias de su cuerpo; que, assí goze de mí, unas tetas tiene para ser donzella como si tres vezes oviesse parido; no parecen sino dos grandes calabças. El vientre no se le he visto, pero juzgando por lo otro creo que le tiene tan floxo como vieja de cinquenta años (226, 228).

Areúsa paints a grotesque picture, indeed, of Melibea, supplying the others at table with a mental image that erases Sempronio's flattering description of her.

Once some calm returns to the dinner table, Celestina asks the servants about Calisto's state of mind. When Pármeno describes him as «desesperado, perdido, medio loco» (230), Celestina takes the opportunity to describe at length the symptoms of those suffering from «love sickness» and the power of love in general. From her experience Celestina states that people in love «ni comen, ni beven, ni ríen, ni lloran, ni duermen ni velan, ni hablan ni callan, ni penan ni descansan, ni están contentos ni se quexan, según la perplexidad de aquella dulce y fiera llaga de sus corazones.» (230).

A knock at the door by Melibea's servant, Lucrecia, is all it takes to provoke a monologue from Areúsa about the plight of those who serve in the homes of the wealthy. She speaks about the confinement and the lack of friends with whom to share news and events when one is a servant. And she is especially hard on the *señoras* of today who are stingy and accuse their servants of all sorts of mischief just so they can dismiss them. She even mimics the cross remarks and nasty insinuations wealthy women make by playing the role of one in mock conversation with a serving girl. This type of internal dialogue within what is essentially a monologue literally brings Areúsa's criticisms to life as she plays the role of bad-tempered mistress:

A dó vas, tiñosa? ¿Qué heziste, vellaca? ¿Por qué comiste esto, golosa? ¿Cómo fregaste la sartén, puerca? ¿Por qué no limpiaste el manto, çuzia, ¿Cómo dixiste esto, necia? ¿Quién perdió el plato, desaliñada? ¿Cómo faltó el paño de manos, ladrona?... (233)

Not only do the *señoras* verbally abuse their servants but they also beat them and turn them out into the streets. Areúsa ends her diatribe against wealthy women and the hardships of a life of service with the oft-quoted

assertion about her own independent life choice —«he querido más bivar en mi pequeña casa esenta y señora, que no en sus ricos palacios sojuzgada y cativa» (233).

Stephen Gilman points out that although this entire speech is directed to Celestina «in reality and despite the abundant use of questions directed to the second person, it is addressed to no one. Rather it expresses Areúsa's almost frantic sentiment of herself, the need for freedom not as an abstraction but as a living alternative to slavery» (25).

Lucrecia is barely inside the door when her formulaic greeting —«Dios bendiga tanta gente y tan honorada» (234)— sends Celestina off into a flight of memory about the glory days of her house, no doubt, aided by the quantity of wine she has been consuming during the meal. This is another example of how Celestina's monologic digressions actually serve to give her more historical depth, in the sense that, through her recollections (whether totally accurate or not), we learn of different aspects of her life before she becomes embroiled with Calisto. Celestina specifically paints a picture of her life twenty years ago when she tells Lucrecia «Yo vi... a esta mesa donde agora están tus primas assentadas, nueve moças de tus días, que la mayor no passava de deziocho años, y ninguna avía menor de quatorze» (234). She laments how her fortunes have changed in contrast to her former grandeur. She is flooded with memories and verbally recreates the splendor of her past:

En entrando por la yglesia vía derrocar bonetes en mi honor como si yo fuera una duquesa. El que menos avía que negociar conmigo, por más ruyn se tenía.... Allí se me offrescían dineros, allí promessas, allí otras dádivas, besando el cabo de mi manto, y aun algunos en la cara por me tener más contenta. (235)

She then gives a litany of the foods and good wines that her clients heaped upon her in return for her work for them. Once again the theme of wine figures prominently in Celestina's musings. After naming the provenance of some of the wines she had received, she says that they came from so many regions that «aunque tengo la diferencia de los gustos y sabor en la boca, no tengo la diversidad de sus tierras en la memoria, que harto es que una vieja como yo en oliendo qualquiera vino diga de dónde es» (236). Such is the spell that Celestina weaves with her fond recollections of the past that Lucrecia almost forgets why she has come, so absorbed is she in Celestina's story —«que me parece y semeja que estó yo agora en ella» (237).

The next soliloquy in the text is pronounced by Melibea at the beginning of *Auto x*. Melibea recriminates herself for not immediately conceding to Celestina's entreaties on Calisto's behalf. She has sent her maid, Lucrecia, to fetch Celestina and fears that Calisto may have fallen in

love with another because of her delay. She, like Celestina in her soliloquies, enters into mock dialogues, imagining what others will think or say when they discover that she has decided to meet Calisto alone. She wonders, for example, how her maid will react to her decision:

¡O mi fiel criada, Lucrecia! ¿qué dirás de mí; qué pensarás de mi seso quando me veas publicar lo que a ti jamás he querido descubrir?<sup>21</sup> Cómo te spantarás del rompimiento de mi honestidad y vergüença, que siempre como encerrada donzella acostumbré tener (238).

Her anguished speech includes a prayer to God to help her to dissimulate her passions and feign another cause for her suffering. In other words, she prays for the ability to be a good liar and a good actress. But she doubts that her prayer will be answered since she is finding it impossible to hide her true feelings. She ends her soliloquy raging against the inequalities of a social system that does not allow women to openly express their passions —«¡O género femíneo, encogido y frágile! ¿por qué no fue también a las hembras concedido poder descubrir su congoxoso y ardiente amor, como a los varones Que ni Calisto biviera quexoso ni yo penada» (239).<sup>22</sup> Melibea's soliloquy is an example of what Lida de Malkiel identifies as the most characteristic and most repeated kind of soliloquy in the *Tragicomedia* —one that is predominantly affective. In referring to these affective soliloquies, this critic states that «las breves indicaciones para el argumento que casi siempre contienen no son más que accesorios en la pintura de una crisis de emociones» (127-28).<sup>23</sup> Melibea is obviously experiencing an emotional crisis and this impassioned outburst is indicative of the young woman's willingness to violate societal dictates for the behavior of a noble «encerrada donzella.» Consecutively, she will invite Celestina back into her home, allow Calisto to scale the walls of her father's garden, give herself physically to him, reject her parents' plan for her to marry, and ultimately, commit suicide. All willful acts set in motion when she unleashes her desire for Calisto.

Following this soliloquy in *Auto x*, Celestina arrives at Melibea's house and, slowly and deliberately, makes the young woman confess her passion and agree to act on it. Celestina plays the physician to the ailing Melibea who finally concedes to take the only medicine that will cure her, i.e., a secret meeting with Calisto. The meeting, a conversation at mid-

21.— Lida de Malkiel sees in Melibea's use of the adverb «jamás» as indicator of the inexactitude of time when the reader is not witness to the events —an example of «el tiempo implícito en varios momentos de la acción, pero no transcurrido ante el espectador» (175).

22.— According to Andres-Suárez, Melibea, alone in her bedroom, rebels against the norms imposed on her by a society that «aherroja y embota sus afectos» (8).

23.— Lida de Malkiel finds precedents for this type of soliloquy in the works of Plautus, Terence, and Seneca.

night through the barred doors of Melibea's home, provides Calisto with various moments for monologues, even though Lucrecia, Sempronio and Pármene are all within hearing distance. When Melibea initially says that she has only agreed to the meeting with Calisto in order to dissuade him from pursuing her, Calisto is crushed and curses Celestina *in absentia* for having deceived him:

¡O engañosa mujer, Celestina, dexárame acabar de morir, y no tornarás a bificar mi esperanza para que tuviesse más que gastar el fuego que ya me aqueja! ¿Por qué falsaste la palabra desta mi señora? ¿Por qué as así dado con tu lengua causa a mi desesperación? ¿A qué me mandaste aquí venir para que me fuesse mostrado el disfavor, el entredicho, la desconfianza, el odio por la mesma boca desta que tiene las llaves de mi perdición y gloria? (260)

And he is just getting warmed up as he continues to spill out anguished rhetorical questions to the point of doubting if there even exists such a thing as truth. When Melibea responds that she was only testing his resolve, Calisto flies into another fit of rhetorical verbiage, now rejoicing in his good fortune. He thanks God for having worked the miracle of bringing Melibea to him, but then subsequently doubts that any of this meeting is real —«me estoy remirando si soy yo Calisto a quien tanto bien se [le] haze») (261).<sup>24</sup>

Later, in *Auto XII*, Sempronio and Pármene go to Celestina's house to demand that she share part of her gifts from Calisto with them. Celestina replies with long verbal excursions by which she tries to convince the servants that she owes them nothing. In her first lengthy rebuttal to Sempronio's demand she first says that he should not have taken seriously her offer to share all she had with them. Then she invents a blatant lie saying, first, that Elicia lost the golden chain that Calisto had given her and, then, implying that friends and family who came to visit may have stolen it. She insists that any payments made to her are exclusively hers because she took the greatest risks in this endeavor, and this is her main source of income —«Esto tengo yo por officio y trabajo, vosotros por recreación y deleyte» (271). And she uses this occasion to, once again, remind Pármene that his mother was privy to how much it cost her to carry out these deeds. As we have noted, this constant reference to Pármene's mother is one of the arms Celestina uses in her arguments to remind the servant not only of her previous association with Claudina but that Claudina was, in fact, just as much a «puta vieja» as Celestina her-

24.— For Calisto's doubts about the reality of his situation and his need for constant reassurance from others, see my article «The Tragic/Comic Calisto: Obsessed and Insecure.»

self. When this ploy seems to have no effect, Celestina promises the two young men that she can procure many more women for them besides Elicia and Areúsa. When Sempronio wants no part of any further bargaining with the *alcahueta*, he gives her the ultimatum to hand over two-thirds of all she had received from Calisto. Celestina rages against Sempronio for insulting her and then turns to Pármemo reminding him that, just because he knows the secrets of her past and that of the «desdichada de tu madre» (273), he holds no power over her. She calls them cowards for attacking an old woman, alone, in her own home and gives a litany of how the strong always prey on the weak. Even when threatened with death, the *alcahueta* does not lose her gift for digression, metaphor, and examples. But her rhetorical skills, whether boasting of her pride in her work and its just rewards or playing the role of the victim, in the end, fail her when Sempronio and Pármemo ultimately stab her to death.

The exit of Celestina does not slow either the pace of the plot or Rojas's fondness for extensive monologues and soliloquies. The next soliloquy is pronounced by Calisto at the beginning of *Auto XIII*, immediately following Celestina's murder and after he and Melibea have had their first conversation through the barred doors of her home. Upon awakening the morning after his visit with Melibea and before learning of the deaths of his servants, Calisto remembers the pleasures of the previous night. He comments that after having spent sleepless nights pining away for Melibea and unsure if he would ever win her affections he has, at last, slept soundly and woken up happy in the knowledge that he will meet her that evening in her garden. Like Celestina and Melibea who, in their soliloquies, enter into imagined conversations with others, Calisto speaks directly to Melibea as if she were present —«O señora y amor mío Melibea, ¿qué piensas agora? ¿Si duermes o estás despierta? ¿Si piensas en mí o en otro? ¿Si estás levantada o acostada?» (276). He then begins to doubt, wondering if the events of the previous night had been nothing more than a dream—«¿Soñélo o no? ¿Fue fantaseado o pasó en verdad?» (276). This is not the first time that Calisto questions the reality of his circumstances. Previously, when he learned that Melibea had agreed to meet with him, he relied on Sempronio and Pármemo to reassure him of the validity of the situation. When he doubts whether he is dreaming or not in his soliloquy in *Auto XIII*, he again calls out for Sempronio and Pármemo who had accompanied him to Melibea's house so that the servants can corroborate that the meeting had indeed taken place. Of course, Sempronio and Pármemo will not be able to reassure Calisto of the reality of the events of the previous evening because they have already been executed for killing Celestina.

This *auto* also ends with a soliloquy from Calisto. After learning of the deaths of Sempronio, Pármemo, and Celestina, he expresses great concern for his honor since he will be implicated in the affair. But he quickly

rationalizes that they all deserved to die —the servants, who he had previously praised for their loyalty and bravery (although in reality they were neither), he now calls «sobrados y esforçados» (281) and Celestina, who he had previously called «reyna y señora mía» (178), he now labels «mala y falsa» (281). He even passes moral judgment on Celestina in spite of the fact that she had been helping him to fulfill his own illicit sexual desires. He now claims that «Permisión fue divina que así acabasse<sup>25</sup> en pago de muchos adulterios que por su intercesión o causa son cometidos» (282). Andres-Suárez sees Calisto's soliloquy as essentially a rhetorical exercise but also maintains that it helps to cement our vision of him as one obsessed with his own amorous passions and whose only aspiration is to satisfy them (8). I agree that this monologue clearly reveals Calisto to be an exaggerated egotist with a complete lack of compassion for others. The fact that the short *Auto XIII* opens and ends with soliloquies from Calisto in which he justifies his continued pursuit of the affair with Melibea, even though three people have now died in this enterprise, signals the dire consequences that will befall all concerned. The persuasive arts of Celestina, her intrigues, and those of the servants, the jostling for rewards from Calisto have all come to an end with the *alcahueta's* death. Calisto, in this *auto*, re-examines his situation, delighted in the prospect of a sexual relationship with Melibea and determined not to let the death of Celestina or the public execution of his servants impede the pursuit of his own pleasure.<sup>26</sup>

In *Auto XIV*, the lovers finally consummate their passion in Melibea's garden. After returning home from this encounter, Calisto dismisses his servants, Sosia and Tristán, insisting that he wants to be alone. He pronounces another soliloquy in which he now bemoans the loss of honor occasioned by the executions of Sempronio and Pármeno and his implication in their dealings with Celestina. He states that now that his passions for Melibea have cooled, he sees the magnitude of his public disgrace. He asks himself a number of questions, wondering how he can reclaim his good name. He curses the judge for sentencing Sempronio and Pármeno to death when he thought that the favors he had received from his family would be sufficient to have him always rule in their favor. Calisto eventually realizes that he is addressing no one but himself —«Pero, ¿qué digo; con quién hablo; estoy en mi seso?... ¿no ves que el ofendedor no está presente?» (290). He enters into a long rationalization

25.— Although the edition of Severin has «acabassen» in plural, I believe it is obvious that this statement refers only to Celestina. «Acabasse» (singular) is the reading preferred in the editions of Russell (495), Marciales (225), and Fitch (172). I concur with Marciales who affirms that «Naturalmente debe ser singular por referirse exclusivamente a la Vieja» (II, 225, n. 30).

26.— Fraker sees in Calisto's remarks indicators that his love (or lust) is out of harmony with both justice and the workings of the universe (521) and a manifestation of one of the work's central themes —love as disorder (520).

about how the judge had no other alternative than to sentence his servants to death since they were caught in the act of murdering Celestina. And, furthermore, he had them executed before dawn so as to spare any further damage to Calisto's honor. Although this is pure speculation on Calisto's part it nevertheless seems to calm his fears and he begins to remember, fondly, the night he has just spent with Melibea. He reminds himself, «Acuérdate, Calisto, al gran gozo pasado; acuérdate a tu señora y tu bien todo, y pues tu vida no tienes en nada por su servicio, no as de tener las muertes de otros, pues ningún dolor ygualará con el recebido plazer» (291). Just as he had previously talked to himself in rhetorical questions, he now addresses himself in order to cheer himself up and focus all his energies on his love affair. He dismisses all his other worries:

...no quiero otra honrra, otra gloria, no otras riquezas,  
no otro padre ni madre, no otros debdos ni parientes;  
de día estaré en mi cámara, de noche en aquel paraíso  
dulce, en aquel alegre vergel entre aquellas suaves plan-  
tas y fresca verdura (291-92).

He ends his speech wishing for time to speed up so that it will again be night and he can return to Melibea's embraces. He reasons with himself and, at last, concludes that even his impatient pleas cannot alter the ways of nature and that he must, for the moment, content himself with memories of the previous night's encounter.

In the following *auto* Elicia and Areúsa plot to revenge the deaths of Sempronio and Pármemo by hiring a henchman to kill Calisto, thus, in turn, destroying the happiness of Melibea. As we know, these two women hold Melibea and all her kind in disdain and relish the opportunity to see the young noble lovers brought low. They will enlist the aid of Centurio who owes Areúsa many favors and who wants to get back in her good graces. At the beginning of *Auto xvii*, Elicia voices a soliloquy. After the deaths of Celestina, Sempronio and Pármemo, Elicia, the only prostitute still working in Celestina's home, goes into mourning. But, after speaking with Areúsa who tells her that it is better to seek revenge for her losses than waste away from suffering, Elicia has a long talk with herself. She vows to leave off her mourning since, in her present state, no men or other companions come to visit her. She questions why she is grieving for Sempronio and asks herself —«¿por qué, loca, me peno yo por él, degollado?» (307). She even wonders if she might have eventually become another victim of Sempronio since he had shown himself to be so violent towards Celestina —«¿Y qué sé si me matara a mí, como era acelerado y loco, como hizo a aquella vieja que tenía por madre?» (307). She resolves to exchange her mourning garb for her best finery, dye her hair, and clean the house «por que los que passaren vean que es ya desterrado el dolor» (308).

When Elicia and Areúsa visit Centurio and hire him to kill Calisto in *Auto xviii*, Centurio also gives a short soliloquy after the two women leave. Although he had pretended to be a bloodthirsty killer in the presence of Elicia and Areúsa, he is, in fact, a coward who does not want to be implicated in the murder of a nobleman. At the end of *Auto xviii*, when he finds himself alone, he calls the women «putas» and begins to plan how to get out of his promise to them —«quiero pensar cómo me excusaré de lo prometido, de manera que piensen que puse diligencia con ánimo de executar lo dicho, y no negligencia; por no me poner en peligro quíerome hazer doliente» (317). He finally decides to hire a ruffian to make some noise in the night, causing Calisto and his servants to run away, thus hoping to have an excuse for not being able to intercept his prey. With this soliloquy, Rojas gives even a comparably minor character a moment of introspection and internal reasoning. Not only does Centurio reveal himself to be a coward, we also learn that the trust that Elicia and Areúsa placed in him to do their bidding was unfounded. Miguel Martínez sees parallels between this soliloquy of Centurio and that pronounced by Sempronio in *Auto 1* when the servant debates with himself the pros and cons of helping his master or leaving him to suffer alone. According to this critic, «Nuevamente el dilema se produce entre acción y abstención y nuevamente cada una de las vías intransitables por el sujeto es presentada con aquellas circunstancias negativas que aconsejan desecharlas» (179). Centurio engineers a way to not follow through on his task to kill Calisto but, ironically, Calisto will die falling from the ladder after hearing a disturbance aroused in the street. Centurio actually has no direct connection to either Calisto's death or the women's revenge (if that term actually applies) since Calisto dies purely by accident.

*Auto xvi*, in which Melibea overhears her parents discussing their plans to marry her, is interspersed among the *autos* dealing with Elicia's and Areúsa's plan to murder Calisto. In this *auto*, Melibea, lapses into monologues that express her distress at hearing her parents' conversation and her distaste for the institution of marriage. Since Lucrecia is privy to her mistress's laments, and intervenes to try to calm her, this is not a true soliloquy but it does provide a good deal of information about Melibea's emotional state and makes it clear that she is more interested in sexual pleasure, outside of the bonds of matrimony, than in securing a husband. In other words, she affirms that marriage is not her objective with Calisto who she prizes as a lover, not as a potential husband. Snow claims that «By allowing this declaration of her sexual freedom to take place sandwiched between ingenuous comments and affirmations by her parents, Rojas makes Melibea's value-betrayal all the more daring» («Celestina and Pleberio» 390). Melibea gives a litany of women from history and goddesses from antiquity who carried on sexual relationships outside the bonds of marriage and justifies her relationship with Calisto since she

had been «Requerida y rogada, cativada de su merecimiento, aquexada por tan astuta maestra como Celestina...» (305). And, just as Calisto in *Auto XIV* had renounced his family, riches and fame to concentrate all his energies on his passion for Melibea, in her monologue in *Auto XVI*, Melibea similarly renounces all other concerns but her affair with Calisto —«con tan verdadero amador, que ni quiero marido, ni quiero padre, ni parientes. Faltándome Calisto, me falte la vida, la qual, por que él de mí goze, me aplaze» (305). In this monologue we see many of the same characteristics identified in the soliloquies, i.e., elaborate rationalizations, litanies of examples of women with whom to compare or contrast her situation, rhetorical questions, and emotional outbursts.

In *Auto XX* after the death of Calisto, when Melibea finds herself alone atop the tower of her home, she speaks at length about her decision to commit suicide. This soliloquy is characterized, according to Lida de Malkiel, by «el delicado buceo introspectivo, la vacilación prolongada, la complacencia en hurgar la propia pena» (130) and shows marked similarities with soliloquies included in sentimental romance. Melibea follows her own desires and instincts throughout the *Tragicomedia*, even to the point of choosing her own time and way to die when she asserts «Todo se ha hecho a mi voluntad» (331). She knows the pain that her death will cause her father but thoughts of his suffering do not dissuade her. She cites numerous examples from history and myth of those who killed their parents and asserts that her action is different from such outright patricides. She further excuses her choice of suicide by contrasting her decision with examples of those who cruelly killed their own children or brothers and sisters. With these lengthy and somewhat pedantic digressions, Melibea delays taking any action, reasoning with herself to justify her choice of suicide and, finally, waiting for her father's return so that she can explain her decision to end her life. She ends her soliloquy by simply stating that she has no other alternative, that her will in this instance is not her own —«no es más en mi mano» (332). She then speaks directly to God as a final way to exculpate herself even though she is about to commit a mortal sin—«ves mi poco poder, ves cuán cativa tengo mi libertad, cuán presos mis sentidos de tan poderoso amor del muerto cavallero, que priva al que tengo con los bivos padres» (332).

When Melibea's father spies his daughter atop the tower, she addresses him directly and recounts to him all the details of her affair. This is not a soliloquy, per se, since she is speaking directly to her father but she begs him not to interrupt her if he wants to know why she has chosen to take her life —«Ninguna cosa me preguntes ni respondas más de lo que de mi grado dezirte quisiere, porque quando el corazón está embargado de pasión, están cerrados los oídos al consejo» (332). Even near the moment of death, Melibea peppers her monologue with refrains. Melibea tells her father that Calisto's death invites her own and she has no other

choice but to join him in the grave. She even directly addresses the deceased Calisto, begging him to forgive her for the delay in joining him in death so that she might have time to tell her father the truth. She asks her father to bury her next to Calisto and then bids him farewell before throwing herself to her death.

Pleberio's lengthy lament after Melibea's suicide comprises almost all of *Auto XXI* and has received much critical attention.<sup>27</sup> Although often referred to as a *planctus* Wardropper points out that this lament has little in common with the Latin *planctus* since it is not a public entreaty to remember the dead but rather an entirely personal expression of grief. In Wardropper's words, it is «much too anguished in its search for consolation to be equated with the *planctus*» (143). Pleberio's lament is not, in fact, a soliloquy since he is addressing his wife and recounting what has happened with Melibea, but Alisa does not intervene as he expresses his pain and curses his fate. Gilman sees this dialogue as «absorbed structurally into a transcendental monologue» (104).<sup>28</sup> This monologue includes many themes —the unnatural state of his child dying before her parents, the loss of his only child and inheritor, the hand that fate has dealt him, and the cruelty of the world. Deyermond points out the preponderance of Pleberio's remarks that stress the loss of Melibea in economic rather than spiritual terms.<sup>29</sup> Since his only inheritor, the person for whom he had worked and built up his fortunes, has chosen to end her own life, these efforts now appear futile to him. Deyermond sees Pleberio's concern with the material impact of the loss of his daughter, over any expression of worry about the fate of her soul, as a negative example: «Rojas holds him [Pleberio] up for our censure; probably for our understanding and sympathy, but certainly for our condemnation» (176). Frank Casa takes a decidedly different view of Pleberio's lament seeing it as a sincere and valid reaction of a grieving father who had founded his happiness not so much on his riches as on the future of his daughter (24). We sympathize with Pleberio's loss but I also detect a note of self-centeredness in the father's remarks. Pleberio contrasts his loss with those of other famous fathers whose children died and claims that his loss is greater than any of theirs since his daughter chose to take her own life —«Ninguno perdió lo que yo el día de hoy...» (340).<sup>30</sup> He directly addresses Melibea, saying that nothing can make up for his loss of her. Wardropper sees Pleberio's interrogation of his deceased daughter as, really, an interrogation

27.— See, as examples, the studies by Wardropper, Ripoll, Fraker, Casa, Deyermond, and Ramajo Caño.

28.— Lida de Malkiel labels Pleberio's lament a «diálogo de hipertrofiado parlamento» (127).

29.— On this point, see also Sánchez y Sánchez, «Death Gets Personal: Inventing Early Modern Grief in 15<sup>th</sup> Century Spain,» especially pp. 150-57.

30.— On this point, see Casa, especially p. 26.

of death itself (144), a statement of existential angst.<sup>31</sup> Finally Pleberio rails against love as the powerful force that caused his daughter to commit suicide —«¡O amor, amor, que no pensé que tenías fuerça ni poder de matar a tus sujetos!» (341). He directs a number of rhetorical questions to love as a way to express his own self-pity (Wardropper 148).<sup>32</sup>

He ends this anguished speech, cursing the world and existence itself— «Del mundo me quexo porque en sí me crió, porque no me dando vida no engendrara en él a Melibea; no nascida, no amara; no amando, cessara mi quexosa y desconsolada postremería» (343).<sup>33</sup> Gilman asserts that Pleberio «surpasses his own grief and its rational consolation and harmonizes the voices of the dead in the traditional measures of *fortuna*, *mundo*, and *amor*» (104). Wardropper expresses this same idea when he asserts that «Fortune, the World, and Love are responsible, in Pleberio's eyes, for Melibea's suicide. He therefore weeps not for Melibea, but the *cause* of her death» (149). Casa sees Pleberio's speech as reflecting the father's misjudgments about the «natural order» of both love and fortune: «He misjudged in naively thinking that one could walk away from Love with impunity, and again when he thought that one could base his happiness on intellectual and economic stability» (29).<sup>34</sup> I agree with Fraker that «Pleberio's diatribe on love and the world is fully justified by events in the play» and, as such, we must consider it within the larger context, especially declarations by other characters about the power of love and the force of fortune. Pleberio's expression of grief morphs into a harangue about the nature of life and death itself, but this fact does not diminish either the sincerity or the effect of the pain of a father mourning the loss of his only child. As Sánchez y Sánchez reminds us Pleberio has the last word in the *Tragicomedia* and his grief as a lonely survivor takes center stage at end of the drama (158).

To return to our initial questions about the purposes for the soliloquies and monologues in the *Tragicomedia*, these instances of extensive speech on the part of an individual character serve several purposes. First, they give the reader valuable insights into the motivations and emotional state of a character at key points in the narrative —Celestina's doubts and fears about her enterprise with Melibea, the *alcahueta's* relief and delight after her first fruitful meeting with Melibea, Melibea's revelation of the

31.— See Sánchez y Sánchez, p. 173.

32.— For an analysis of the use of rhetorical questions and other stylistic and rhetorical devices in Pleberio's monologue, see Ripoll, pp. 67-87. I do not agree, however, with Ripoll's assertion that Pleberio's lament represents Rojas's own ideas or ideology —«la palabra de Rojas, a través de Pleberio... nos fue dando el perfil espiritual de su particular vision de la vida» (86-87).

33.— On this point, see Wardropper, p. 148.

34.— Fraker asserts that Pleberio's lament enforces one of Rojas's major themes—«love sows chaos in the world... love is a great force for ill» (526).

nature and depth of her passion for Calisto, Calisto's rapturous delights and disbelief at his good fortune after making love to Melibea, Elicia's decision to leave off her mourning and seek revenge. All these soliloquies occur at the beginning of *autos* and set the tone for the actions and interactions to follow. Sprinkled among all the *autos* are other soliloquies such as those pronounced by a worried Sempronio in *Auto 1*, Calisto's reactions to the news of the deaths of Sempronio, Pármeno, and Celestina, Centurio's concern on how to extricate himself from the job of killing Calisto, and Melibea's debate with herself about her decision to commit suicide. The soliloquy is certainly not an invention of Fernando de Rojas and they are common in the humanistic comedies as well as the prose sentimental novels of the period (Russell 138-39). But the soliloquies in *Celestina* are more subtle and nuanced and, according to Russell, «dan la impresión de exponer a la vista la interioridad espiritual de un personaje...» (139). Without recourse to a third-person omniscient narrator, the soliloquy provides Rojas with a vehicle perfectly designed to convey levels of introspection and internal debate for his characters.

Throughout the *Tragicomedia*, long monologues are more common than soliloquies. These occur as parts of dialogue or in direct address to another character but, in fact, they allow a single character to hold court for an extended period. To a certain extent, they serve some of the same purposes as the soliloquies in that they reveal emotions and give insights into a character's reasoning or thought processes. For Andres-Suárez the monologues in *Celestina* «cristalizan mucho mejor que los diálogos... los sutiles y complejos caracteres de los personajes, los repliegues de sus almas» (7). But the monologues are also the repository for memories and give form to the history of the characters before the time frame of the events of the *Tragicomedia*, especially in the cases of Celestina and Pármeno. The shared memories of Pármeno's mother and best friend of Celestina, Claudina, inform much of the relationship between these two characters. These memories also add significantly to our knowledge about Celestina and make her into a well-developed personality beyond that of the stereotypic *alcahueta*.

Both soliloquies and monologues are characterized by emotional outbursts, rhetorical questions, comparisons and contrasts with the plights of historical and mythological characters, popular refrains, and philosophical pronouncements. Rather than adding directly to plot development, they punctuate the plot as characters step up to take center stage and give voice to their opinions, reactions, and states of mind. The more the characters say, the more we sense them as individuals with their own predispositions, prejudices, world experience, and, for lack of a better term, temperament. Gilman speaks of dialogue in the *Tragicomedia* as a «vital trajectory between the *yo* and the *tú*» (52) and admits that in the long monologic passages, «the *tú* is almost a fiction of grammar» (52). In

the monologues, the *yo* is in almost complete control. Rojas's characters speak to one another but they also converse with themselves and give the reader a privileged, front-row view into the working of their psyches.

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#### RESUMEN

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Los soliloquios y los monólogos son frecuentes en la *Tragicomedia* y desempeñan varias funciones importantes. Le permiten al lector comprender mejor las motivaciones y el estado afectivo de un personaje en momentos claves de la narrativa. Sin recurso a un narrador en tercera persona omnisciente, el soliloquio sirve de vehículo perfecto para que los personajes se examinen y entre sí debatan. Los monólogos son también depósitos de memorias y les proporcionan a los personajes una historia fuera de la duración de los eventos de la *Tragicomedia*, especialmente en el caso de *Celestina* y Pármeno. Tanto los soliloquios como los monólogos se caracterizan por arrebatos emocionales, preguntas retóricas, comparaciones y contrastes con las dificultades experimentadas por personajes históricos y mitológicos, refranes populares y declaraciones filosóficas. En vez de contribuir directamente al desarrollo de la trama, salpican la historia cada vez que un personaje sale al escenario y expresa sus opiniones, reacciones y estados de ánimo.

PALABRAS CLAVE: *Celestina*, soliloquio, monólogo, retórica, caracterización, estado emocional.

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#### ABSTRACT

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Soliloquies and monologues are frequent in the *Tragicomedia* and have several important functions. They give the reader valuable insights into the motivations and emotional state of a character at key points in the narrative, especially when a soliloquy opens an *auto*. Without recourse to a third-person omniscient narrator, the soliloquy provides Rojas with a vehicle perfectly designed to convey levels of introspection and internal debate for his characters.

Monologues are also the repository for memories and give form to the history of the characters before the time frame of the events of the *Tragicomedia*, especially in the cases of *Celestina* and Pármeno. Both soliloquies and monologues are characterized by emotional outbursts, rhetorical questions, comparisons and contrasts with the plights of historical and mythological characters, popular refrains, and philosophical pronouncements. Rather than adding directly to plot development, they punctuate the plot as characters step up to take center stage and give voice to their opinions, reactions, and states of mind.

KEY WORDS: *Celestina*, soliloquy, monologue, rhetoric, characterization, emotional state.