

***El príncipe tirano* by Juan de la Cueva as  
the Spanish source of Thomas Lodge's *A Margarite of  
America*: A comparative suggestion**

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ABSTRACT

Lodge claimed *A Margarite of America* (1596) was based on a still unidentified “historie in the Spanish tong.” Although several critics have suggested that the romance’s design outlines the structure of a play, the source “historie” has never been sought in the Spanish theatre. This essay proposes Juan de la Cueva’s *El príncipe tirano* (1583) as the possible Spanish source text of Lodge’s *Margarite*. After an introduction, the plot is outlined to show, firstly, the romance’s intertextual elements already detected by scholarly criticism and, secondly, others Lodge might have borrowed from *El príncipe tirano*. This article will supplement current studies on *Margarite* by shedding new light on the plot and characters.

KEYWORDS: Thomas Lodge; Juan de la Cueva; prose-fiction adaptation of drama; revenge-tragedy; Anglo-Spanish literary relations.

***El príncipe tirano* de Juan de la Cueva  
como fuente española de  
*A Margarite of America* de Thomas  
Lodge: una aproximación comparada**

RESUMEN: Lodge afirmó que *A Margarite of America* (1596) se basaba en una historia en español, que sigue sin ser identificada. Aunque varios críticos han señalado que el diseño del romance se ajusta a la estructura de una obra dramática, el texto fuente nunca ha sido buscado en el teatro español. Este artículo propone que *El príncipe tirano* (1583) de Juan de la Cueva puede ser dicho texto. Tras una introducción, se esboza la trama del romance para mostrar, primero, aquellos elementos intertextuales que la crítica literaria ya ha identificado y, segundo, aquellos otros que Lodge pudo haber tomado de *El príncipe*

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RESUMO: Lodge afirmou que *A Margarite of America* (1596) se baseava numa história em castelhano, que continua por identificar. Embora vários críticos tenham sugerido que o design do romance descreve a estrutura de uma peça dramática, o texto fonte nunca foi procurado no teatro espanhol. Este artigo propõe *El príncipe tirano* (1583), de Juan de la Cueva, como a possível fonte espanhola para *Margarite* de Lodge. Após uma introdução, apresenta-se um esboço do enredo para mostrar, em primeiro lugar, os elementos intertextuais do romance já detetados pela crítica literária e, em segundo lugar, os elementos que Lodge pode ter ido buscar a *El príncipe tirano*.

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\* Translation into Portuguese by Miguel Ramalhete.

*tirano*. Este artículo aportará una nueva perspectiva al estudio de la trama y los personajes de *Margarite*.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Thomas Lodge; Juan de la Cueva; adaptación del drama a romance; tragedia de venganza; relaciones literarias anglo-hispanas.

Este artigo traz uma nova perspectiva a estudos sobre o enredo e as personagens de *Margarite*.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Thomas Lodge; Juan de la Cueva; adaptação de drama para romance; tragédia de vingança; relações literárias anglo-hispânicas.

## 1. Introduction

Thomas Cavendish's five-vessel fleet sailed from Plymouth on the 26<sup>th</sup> of August 1591, to circumnavigate the world for a second time (Edwards 1988, 23). Thomas Lodge (ca. 1588–1625) traveled on the *Leicester*, commanded by Cavendish, who described his crew as “the most abject minded and mutinous company that ever was carried out of England by any man living” ([1591–1592] 1988, 56). On Christmas Day, two of the boats attacked Santos (on São Vicente Island, off the coast of São Paulo), while the local community was at church. The *Leicester* arrived on the following morning. According to Knivet, Cavendish “with many captains and young gentlemen” (Edwards 1988, 84) took residence at the Jesuit College. Lodge must have belonged to this group. During their five-week stay in Santos, he had time to examine the college library books and manuscripts.<sup>1</sup> In the preface to *A Margarite of America* (1596, *Margarite* henceforth), Lodge claims that: “it was my chance in the librarie of the Jesuits in Sanctum to find this historie in the Spanish tong, which as I read delighted me and delighting me, wonne me, and winning me, made me write it” ([1596] 1980, 42).<sup>2</sup> By “historie” he meant fictional history, as he advanced in the dedicatory note to Lady Elizabeth Russell, née Cooke, when he explained that its subject would “seeme historicall” ([1596] 1980, 40). Lodge was more ambiguous about the time of writing. In the dedication, he claims to have composed it in

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<sup>1</sup> In Santos, Lodge also befriended Giuseppe Adorno, a pious settler from a noble Genoese family and educated in France. Adorno must have told Lodge about Brazilian colonial reality and the native culture, about his decisive intervention to overthrow the French from *France Antarctique*, and about the educational and missionary activities of the Jesuits, whose order he had wanted to enter in early 1591 but was refused admittance.

<sup>2</sup> All quotations from *A Margarite of America* are given from James Clyde Addison's old-spelling critical edition (1980).

the Straits of Magellan, which would make it the first English novel written in the New World; in the preface, he indicates that he only began his work onboard ship with scanty food or “disturbed stomach” ([1596] 1980, 42) and in permanent danger to his life. Therefore, in all likelihood, the novel was finished in England. In fact, Lodge could have written the entire book without leaving London, since no hint, either explicit or implicit, suggests his transatlantic voyage or the horrors experienced in the Straits of Magellan that forced the expedition to return to Brazil, where they faced further disasters and massive casualties.<sup>3</sup> The only reference to the New World is “America” in the title, but the character of Margarite is the princess and heiress of Mosco, an empire textually identified with Russia, whereas the villain Prince Arsadachus is the sole heir to the empire of “Cusco,” a name that brings to mind the Incan capital of Peru, but supposedly referred to the Slovakian city of Košice, formerly known as Kaschau or Kassa (Edwards 1988, 48). The romance, however, evokes Greece by opening with the empires of Mosco and Cusco taking arms to fight for the Arcadian city of Mantinea.

The general consent among critics is not to disbelieve what Lodge claimed, although the Spanish source of *Margarite*—a tragic tale of love-treason, disloyalty, revenge and violence—has never been identified either as an extant romance or as a work in consonance with any of the sixteenth-century Spanish “great vogues of the picaresque novel, romances of chivalry, and pastoral romance” (Pollack 1976, 1). Claudette Pollack contended that Lodge’s assertion “is almost certainly a fabrication” (1976, 1) by arguing that, among other reasons, he was simply employing a common practice to attract readers and that *Margarite* differs completely from the sixteenth-century Spanish *novelas*. Dale B. J. Randall cautiously declared it “Lodge’s own invention” (1963, 244). For James Addison, Lodge’s last romance represents “a new hybrid genre [...], which contains all his previous experimentation” (1980, 35), “a parody of romance” (1980, 32) and “an inversion” (1980, 30) of the euphuistic conventions that culminates Lodge’s progression in experimentation

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<sup>3</sup> Due to unexplained delay, the expedition reached the Straits of Magellan in harsh winter conditions. Permanent lack of victualing and violent storms, sickness and casualties—many by abandonment on the shore in extremely low temperatures and at the hands of the “monstrous Patagones” ([1596] 1980, 40)—caused immense distress among the crew who refused to sail ahead towards the Pacific.

with the fictional genre. Eliane Cuvelier believes Lodge's assertion to be either a market stratagem or a red herring—as C. S. Lewis also argued (1968, 424)—that masks his true source, stating that the Spanish text that inspired Lodge was not an original Spanish work but the translation of an Italian tale: “si Lodge s’inspira d’un texte espagnol, celui-ci n’était pas lui-même une oeuvre originale, mais la traduction d’un conte italien” (1984, 303). Donald Beecher and Henry D. Janzen have described *Margarite* as “quintessentially Lodge’s own” (2005, 28), affirming that “Lodge needed only consult his former works, in perfect keeping with the humanist cut-and-paste mode for making the old into new” (2005, 32), so that, with respect to the hypothetical Spanish story, they rightly observe that “if one were to subtract from an imagined Spanish original all the many English and Italian components of *Margarite*, that original would be a bare document indeed” (2005, 28). What kind of “bare document” could Lodge possibly have perused at the library in Santos to inspire his romance?

Pollack correctly discarded the existence of fiction books at the library of the Jesuits (1976, 1). Their educational task encompassed both the indoctrination of native Indians and the education of Portuguese colonial children, for whose sake Jesuits expurgated parts of the classical texts and wholly rejected modern romances as potentially pernicious for young readers (Silva 2008, 227–28). However, her assumption that “the library at Santos could not have been extensive and probably consisted mainly of catechisms for the young Indians and books of a more serious theological nature for the priests” (1976, 1) needs reconsideration. Jesuits, finely educated in humanist learning, regarded books as a basic need. Luiz Antonio Gonçalves da Silva’s study of Jesuit libraries in Serafim Leite’s *História da Companhia de Jesus no Brasil* reveals not only the tenacious policy of intensive book acquisition in the second half of the sixteenth-century (through new members of the Order arriving in Brazil, royal donation, exchange of amber, direct orders, etc.), but also that the needs of the Order covered a great variety of subjects. In addition to catechisms and religious treatises, the Jesuits, as learned members of colonial society, required works on pharmacology and medical practice (some of them in the manner of Lodge’s *The Poore Mans Talents*), science, general knowledge and of course literature, both classical and modern. Albeit not comparable with the Jesuit library of Bahia, the college of Santos, located near São Vicente—the

first village founded by the Portuguese in Brazil—must have been relatively well provisioned with books after forty years of Luso-Hispanic presence. Besides, Santos was a flourishing town due to sugar production and trade, which guaranteed permanent maritime commercial traffic with Europe, especially with Lisbon and Seville, from where books were mostly supplied. In this context, it was very unlikely that Lodge would find any Renaissance romance at the Jesuit library of Santos, but he may well have read some other book containing the story classed as “history” in the Renaissance, such as chronicles of America or historical plays.

From the first group, *La crónica del Perú* (1553) by Pedro Cieza de León, and *Historia natural y moral de Indias* (1590) by the Jesuit José de Acosta have been consulted to no avail.<sup>4</sup> Had Lodge read any of them, he would have learned of fresh horrors and unthinkable violence, only comparable to the severe hardships he actually experienced during his voyage with Cavendish. From the second group, the only extant tragedy<sup>5</sup> astoundingly similar to the romance is *El príncipe tirano* (*The Tyrant Prince*) by Juan de la Cueva. It comprises two original plays: *La comedia* and *La tragedia del príncipe tirano*, first printed in Seville in 1583, in *Primera parte de las comedias i tragedias de Ioan de la Cueva. Dirigidas a Momo* (all of them performed between 1571 and 1581), and reedited in the same city in 1588 as the seventh comedy and the fourth tragedy, respectively, in *Primera parte de las comedias y tragedias de Ioan de la Cueva. Dirigidas a Momo*.<sup>6</sup> The probability that a volume of De la Cueva’s collected plays was stored in Santos should not be overlooked. Firstly, Jesuits were great playwrights. As Alfredo Hermenegildo says, in sixteenth-century Spain “Jesuits and their colleges held the monopoly of religious tragedies and Catholic dramas” (1973, 160; my translation). Secondly, the book could have reached Santos straight from Seville, or from nearer ports of call on the route to America in the Canary

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<sup>4</sup> The only word which can be linked with Lodge’s text is a passing reference by José de Acosta to the native nomad tribe “moscas” (1987, 149) or “muiscas” that inhabited the region around present-day Bogotá.

<sup>5</sup> The four-act tragedy *Filis*, written by Lupercio de Argensola in the early 1580s, is now lost.

<sup>6</sup> Both editions can be accessed online. The sole copy of the first edition is available at the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek <<http://data.onb.ac.at/rec/AC09795324>>, and the second edition at the Biblioteca Virtual Miguel de Cervantes <<http://www.cervantesvirtual.com/nd/ark:/59851/bmcm87c4>>.

Islands, where Juan de la Cueva lived from 1589 to 1606, accompanying his brother Claudio de la Cueva, who had been appointed inspector general and apostolic inquisitor in this Atlantic archipelago.

Critical analyses of *Margarite* have often suggested that Lodge would have adapted a dramatic story to the genre of the romance. For Addison, it is “similar in many ways to the structure of tragedy” (1980, 28–29) and he adds that “Lodge drew its primary structure from the conventional chivalric romances [... and] added the beginning and ending of Renaissance tragedy” (1980, 29). Cuvelier explicitly describes its structure as a four-act tragedy: “Le récit est celui d’une sanglante tragédie en quatre parties” (1984, 302), and reinforces this idea by introducing her account of the fourth part as the fourth act of the tragedy: “au début du ‘quatrième acte’ de la tragédie” (1984, 302–303). For Beecher and Janzen, “Lodge was clearly in tune with the times in adapting the formulae of revenge tragedy to prose fiction” (2005, 13). These critical appreciations about the dramatic nature of *Margarite* and the manifest analogies with *El príncipe tirano* invite us to explore what elements Lodge may have borrowed from De la Cueva’s plays and adapted in his innovative last romance.

## 2. The intertextual conglomerate of *Margarite*

Described as an “Elizabethan Medley” by Pollack (1976, 1), as a “Renaissance amalgam” by Addison (1980, 35) and as a “patchwork romance” by Beecher and Janzen (2005, 27), *Margarite* begins with the armies of Mosco and Cusco taking up arms to fight for Mantinea, the Arcadian city. Arsinous, an old man, intercedes to avoid the confrontation and to persuade Protomachus of Mosco and Artosogon of Cusco to marry off their respective heirs – Margarite of Mosco and Arsadachus of Cusco – in order to secure long-lasting peace; both emperors agree to Arsinous’ plea. As a sign of gratitude, Protomachus bestows the Dukedom of Volgradia on Arsinous and moves his court to Arsinous’ castle, where Margarite soon befriends his daughter Philenia. The villain Arsadachus arrives at the castle after having been advised by his father Artosogon – who was fully aware of his son’s depraved character – to behave according to his rank; but Artosogon loses hope when the prince chooses the friends

who are to accompany him. The vicious and corrupt nature of the Cuscan prince soon emerges: he does not care much for Margarite, but lusts after Philenia, who is engaged to Minecius. Philenia, staunchly virtuous, rejects Arsadachus and rebukes him sharply, threatening to speak out if he ever disturbs her again. Arsadachus takes revenge by having both Philenia and Minecius ambushed (seeking to gain her by violence) and assassinated on their wedding day. As part of Arsadachus' treacherous plot, his servant Brasidas returns to Cusco pretending to be the perpetrator of the murder. Soon after, Arsinous, Philenia's father, is told the truth by a page who escaped the massacre. Arsadachus further schemes to avoid arousing suspicion and to silence witnesses by killing Thebion – the Moscovian traitor who had helped him murder the couple – under the false accusation of plotting to slay Protomachus. Arsadachus' plan (involving an imaginary dream) succeeds. He gains the emperor's trust and forces Arsinous to be banished "towards the deserts of Ruscia" ([1596] 1980, 113). Protomachus organizes jousts to celebrate the failure of the alleged conspiracy against him. Arsadachus wins. Asaphus, one of the contenders, invites Margarite, Arsadachus, and other young noble men and women to a feast in his walled garden during which they discuss the question of love. As Protomachus' health deteriorates, Margarite is officially betrothed to Arsadachus who only thinks of eschewing wedlock. Artosogon, feeling his age, asks Protomachus to allow his son to return to Cusco. Before departing, Margarite – on Arsinous' counsel – presents him with a box that he must open only when he begins to forget her. Once in Cusco, Arsadachus is entertained by Argias, the duke of Moravia, with feasts and banquets, with an eye on political benefits. Argias' daughter Diana seduces the prince and her father persuades him to break off his engagement to Margarite and to marry Diana, which he secretly does. On learning the news, Artosogon sentences Argias to death, and orders his corpse cut into pieces and sent to Diana. Arsadachus takes revenge by having Artosogon's tongue cut out and by demanding the emperor's presence at meals for his own pleasure until Artosogon and the empress die of "age and sorrow" ([1596] 1980, 175). Meanwhile, Margarite, disguised as a country maid and assisted by Fawnia, furtively leaves Mosco for Cusco. In the desert, they are attacked by a lion, which mauls Fawnia but falls asleep on Margarite's lap. Banished Arsinous, dwelling in a nearby cave, recognizes the princess and, on realizing her purpose, shows

her a momentary vision of Arsadachus by means of magic. Margarite, “striving to embrace him, caught his shadow” ([1596] 1980, 190) to her greatest despair, but carries on with the support of Arsinous, who reveals his identity. Cusco prepares the coronation festivities. At the banquet, Arsadachus mockingly recalls Margarite and opens the box she had left him. A sudden flame and a hideous smell deprive him of his senses, sending him completely mad and driving him to commit a horrendous series of executions. Brasidas is his first victim, his brain “pashed out” ([1596] 1980, 197) from a mighty blow to the head. Arsadachus stabs Diana in the name of Nemesis, “spreading her entrails about the palace floore, and seizing on her heart, hee tare it in peeces with his tyrannous teeth” ([1596] 1980, 198), and on seeing their one-year old son he “tooke it by the legges, battering out the braines thereof against the walles” ([1596] 1980, 198). When Margarite arrives, he pierces her with a rapier. As his rage is revived, “with bedlam madness fled out of the presence to his privy chamber” ([1596] 1980, 198). Margarite pursues him in agony and falls down dead. On recovering, Arsadachus takes his life with the rapier that killed Margarite. Promotachus invades Cusco and appoints Arsinous as governor.

For Addison, *Margarite* comprises three parts. The “*questioni d’amore*” episode—indebted to Castiglione’s *Il Cortegiano*—functions as a “romantic interlude” and therefore constitutes “the second phase of the three-part movement” of the story (1980, 18). In the four-act-tragedy division proposed by Cuvelier, the second part begins just after the deaths of Philenia and Minecius, covers Arsadachus’ scheme to avoid suspicion and concludes with the murder of Thebion and the banishment of Arsinous. The last section begins when Margarite sets out for Cusco (1984, 302). The courtly atmosphere and Greek-named characters in a setting where medieval jousts are conducted and magic exercised are parodied by Lodge in his innovative revenge-tragedy romance. Addison has remarked upon the “metaphysical” (1980, 31) quality of Lodge’s design and has contended that “by attempting to contain all within one structure, he fused disparate forms and yoked diverse structures, themes, styles, and symbols together—often violently” (1980, 35). In this respect, we can also suggest that the nature of Lodge’s experimentation responds to the prevalent “spirit of the Baroque” (mannerist esthetics included), which subtly—albeit effectively—challenged classical or conventional forms and

proportions.<sup>7</sup> Excess, another Baroque characteristic, studs the romance not only with numerous deaths, either narrated or merely mentioned, but also with abundant similes from, and textual references to, classical authors, characters, and culture.

In *Margarite*, Lodge intensifies his intertextual techniques through polyphonic collage. He incorporated five direct translations of Giglio's *Seconda selva nuova* (Walker 1932, 276), and explicitly declared having imitated the French poet Desportes: "Philip du Portes" ([1596] 1980, 182), and the Italian poets "Dolce" ([1596] 1980, 177)—though he actually plagiarized Ludovico Pasquali or Paschale—and "Martelli" ([1596] 1980, 181). Moreover, he borrowed elements from several other works, encompassing: Sidney's revised *Arcadia*, as Katharine Wilson has suggested, due to the similarity between Kalander's house and Arsinous' (2006, 160); Machiavelli's *Il Principe* and *I Discorsi sopra la prima Deca di Tito Livio* (Pollack 1976, 3); the medieval allegory, as shown by Anne Falke (1986) in her analysis of Margarite's nature and role in the light of the literary meanings of *margarita* ("pearl") and the Old French *marguerite* ("daisy"), and of Marguerite de Navarre's *Heptameron*; and the story of Phyllis—especially the coffer she gave Demophon (or Acamas), referred to by Apollodorus and Hyginus—to which Beecher and Janzen allude as "the prototype for all subsequent tales in which probative boxes exercised the magic property of reading the intentions of secretive minds and inaugurating appropriate destinies" (2005, 30).

The episode of the lion in the desert resembles Spenser's description of Una (associated with Queen Elizabeth or the Protestant church) wandering alone through the forest in Book I of *The Faerie Queene*, as the verbal parallels shown by Pollack demonstrate (1976, 8). Expanding this intertextual relationship, Wilson reads Arsadachus as "the equivalent of Archimago," associated with the threats of Catholic heresies, and suggests that "Lodge imagines what would have happened if Una had fallen in love with a persona as duplicitous as Archimago" (2006, 159); while Joan Pong Linton argues that "the ironic portrayal of Margarite constitutes a parody of Una" by exploring the "misogynist

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<sup>7</sup> See Severo Sarduy (1987) for a detailed discussion of the "spirit of the Baroque" as a major paradigmatic force of experimentation in literature (and the arts), both in the historical Baroque and in more recent periods.

dichotomy which idealizes female spirituality and debases female sexuality" (1998, 54). There seems to be general agreement that Arsadachus' plot to abuse Philenia derives from the unsuccessful attempt of vicious "abbate Gesualdo" (abbot Gonsaldo in Fenton's translation) to rape a nameless maid in Bandello's seventh novella of the second part, although the brave Neapolitan girl not only injures the abbot but escapes unharmed by jumping from a bridge into a river. The violent deaths of the concluding bloodbath are mostly based on Bandello's novellas, as pointed out by Pollack, who has argued that Lodge did not search for specific executions but imitated them out of familiarity (1976, 7). In particular, a certain Pandora of Milan, in Bandello's fifty-second novella of volume III, killed her illegitimate son by beating him against the floor (Arsadachus throws his against the wall), took out his heart and tore at it with her teeth (what Arsadachus does to Diana's), and still not satisfied brought in her mastiff to feed it her son, piece by piece.

Yet, a more conspicuous strategy of carnivalisation than intertextuality, and more purely Baroque, is dissimulation, such as disguising true identity or deceiving the senses. In *Margarite*, Lodge exploits dissimulation with compelling skill. Characters in disguise—like Margarite dressed up as a country-maid in order to leave Mosco unnoticed, or Arsadachus as a shepherd to recite poems—abound in Renaissance romances. One of Lodge's astonishing advancements beyond the generic constraints—and the main source of his parodic innovation—concerns the accomplished delineation of the hypocritical and Machiavellian Arsadachus, originating the "extended metaphor of blindness and sight [that] runs through the text" (Wilson 2006, 159). His comely external appearance masks a lustful, morally weak character with a perverse, machinating mind that both feeds and conceals his depraved and vicious nature, whereby the typical happy-ending marriage is turned into a horrendous slaughter. Therefore, for most critics, it is the anti-courtier and the mirror-of-dishonor character embodied by Arsadachus, rather than the ever-pure and virtuous princess, which emerges as the main protagonist of the romance story, as Lodge's teasing pun on "Margarite"—pearl (and daisy) and female protagonist—announces in the title. Lodge purposefully seems to create an ambiguity, to deceive the reader's perception, by pretending that the pearl—the valuable prize of his own looting—refers to his female character rather than to the literary text itself. If

not, how else can “of America” in the title be understood, since Margarite does not even come from Cusco, and America is not even slightly insinuated in the text?

Scholarly inquiry into the question of “America” in the title has focused on Lodge’s personal disenchantment during his privateering voyage in search of prizes and fame. Daniel Vitkus revises the context and circumstances of Cavendish’s expedition to propose that Lodge’s romance is embedded with his “profound questioning of imperial covetousness and the tyranny of individual ambition over those who naively follow such ambitious masters” (2011, 106). For the absence of references to the American experience, he argues that Lodge rendered instead “a corresponding structure of feeling” (2011, 108), hinting that “perhaps the ferocious ambition, the sordid violence, and the abject failure of that voyage helped to inspire Lodge to create the anti-hero of his *Margarite, Arsadachus*” (2011, 108), whose monstrous nature and temperament partly exhibits, in Vitkus’s view, Cavendish’s inner conflicts, contradictions and destiny. Josephine Roberts explicates the romance as a dystopian tale, “a nightmare vision of the New World,” and thus as Lodge’s answer to the contemporary debate on whether America was or was not tainted with evil by revealing “the overwhelming corruption of humanity and undercut[ting] the hopeful vision of America as Paradise” (1980, 408). Exploring similar concerns, Linton articulates a perceptive interpretation of “Margarita” as “a veiled critique of the values and motives that informed the English enterprise in America” (1998, 54).<sup>8</sup> Linton and Vitkus coincide in stating that it was the

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<sup>8</sup> Although these three discussions of *Margarite* in relation to the ethics of English enterprise and political agenda in the context of the colonial expansion of the age offer illuminating approaches, none of them consider historical Brazilian reality and the American textual sources that Lodge knew through first-hand experience. Vitkus, for example, relies on Pollack’s view that the manuscript *Doutrina christãa na lingua Brasilica*, which Lodge took from Santos and presented to Oxford University, is a sample of the texts and books stored at the Jesuit library. However, Lodge’s donation of this manuscript, on which he scribbled “Ex dono Thomas Lodge D. M. oxoniensis qui sua manu e Brasilia deduxit” (cover verso), poses a problem—never to be solved—in connection with his intentions and faith. Did he merely wish the document to be perused and preserved at Oxford for its great philological value, or for a model for future colonial expeditions? *Doutrina christãa*, written in Tupi language and perfected by his contemporary St Joseph de Anchieta—whose grammar of Tupi-Guarani (that Jesuits wishing to leave for Brazil were required to learn) had been published in 1595—epitomizes to a large extent the Portuguese contrivance of colonial co-habitation with the natives, who still maintained a certain social autonomy. While

“story itself” (1998, 61), the “book itself” (2011, 100) that Lodge is referring to with the “pearl”/“margarite” in the title. However, it will be argued in the next section that Margarite (together with Arsinous) is Lodge’s inventive addition to the original plot of De la Cueva, and that both the text and the character were conceived in America.

This survey of Lodge’s intertextual conglomerate in *Margarite* surely attests to Beecher and Janzen’s conviction that the Spanish original, if it ever existed, must be, as quoted above, “a bare document indeed” (2005, 28). Although we cannot claim with absolute certainty that Lodge was inspired by reading *El príncipe tirano* (since no explicit borrowing of names or exact copying of plot would demonstrate it forthwith), the similarities between *Margarite* and De la Cueva’s plays invite careful examination, always taking into consideration Lodge’s inventiveness in adapting political dramas to the romance form and the pervasive Italianate influence of Giraldi, Bandello and Machiavelli in English and Spanish Renaissance literature.

### 3. *Margarite* mirroring *El príncipe tirano*

*El príncipe tirano* is the general title commonly given to two original plays by Juan de la Cueva (Seville, 1543–Granada, 1612): *La comedia del príncipe tirano* and its sequel *La tragedia del príncipe tirano*, as they truly are two parts of the same story. They were first performed in

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in Brazil, Lodge certainly learned from Guiseppe Adorno at least about his profound (Jesuit) spirituality, the history of the *France Antarctique*, the controversy of slavery, the tribal rivalries, the natives’ unrestricted sexual freedom and cannibalistic rituals, and their role in the colonial production system. With respect to Cavendish, it is clear that he was not always responsible for the high number of casualties and that the English sources do not explain every fact. Of special interest to understand his utmost despair during his last incursion in the Island of San Sebastian (from where they finally departed for St Helena Island), is an episode narrated in Martín del Barco Centenera’s epic poem *La Argentina* (1602). It concerns the casualty of an English earl’s son for whose release Cavendish heartily implored, because he knew he would surely die should he return without the boy, who was much beloved by his father: “y que a Candish volver no convenía | sin él, porque el morir le estaba cierto, | según el padre, conde, le quería” (ll. 10523–24). This young man was killed with twenty-two more in a raid (which only Knivet and Henry Barrawell survived), and must have been the one whose finger, bearing a gold ring with a jewel, was cut off by a native who happily returned to Santos with the trophy (ll. 10510–12).

Seville in 1580, and published by Andrea Pescioni in that same city in 1583, followed by a second edition, printed by Juan de León in the same city in 1588. It was noticeably improved by the addition of prose summaries to each play and individual act, or *jornada*, which undoubtedly helped readers to learn about the plot without necessarily reading the whole text.

Juan de la Cueva belonged to the late-sixteenth-century generation of dramatists, variously named “‘novelistic tragedians,’ ‘*fin-de-siècle* tragedians,’ ‘generation of the tragedians,’ [... and] ‘tragedy of horror’” (Hermenegildo 1973, 69; my translation). He undermined the classical models of theatre in several ways. The reduction of dramatic structure from five to four acts is attributed to him. Hermenegildo has remarked on his incoherent distinction between comedy and tragedy, contingent on whether or not the main character dies at the end. Although he advocated decorum of speech, *La comedia* and *La tragedia* share style and language, differing only in the development of the dramatic conflict (Reyes 2008, 52). De la Cueva contravened the principles of introducing kings as main characters in *La comedia* and of presenting the same characters in *La tragedia*, despite insisting on the strict observance that a comic playwright might not use any element—not even mentioning characters—already used in a tragedy. Moreover, he drew on invented matter (which is characteristic of comedies) rather than on history, whereas the dramatic action takes place in remote antiquity, as in a tragedy, unfolding a “novelistic plot” with a “fanciful story detached from reality” (Cebrián 1992, 41; my translation).

De la Cueva’s pseudo-historical plays, set in Colcos (Colchis) during the classical Greek era, suit Lodge’s description of his romance as seemingly “historical.” In the event that Lodge intended to have his story adapted for the English stage (as its revenge-tragedy structure may hint), by only revealing the Spanish origin of the source text and concealing on which side of the Atlantic it had been produced, he may have tried to ensure that it would appeal more to playwrights and audiences alike than if it carried the name of a contemporary Spanish dramatist unknown in England.

Apart from pseudo-historical plots evocative of ancient Greece, *Margarite* and *El príncipe tirano* revolve around malevolent Machiavellian princes—Arsadachus and Licímaco, respectively—who become kings following abdication and who face untimely

violent deaths in retaliation for their atrocities, concluding with the restoration of justice and with a veiled political uncertainty about dynastic succession or legitimate continuity of power. Both works pose an initial state affair involving the unquestionable agency of the prince who is never consulted on the matter, but is expected willingly to accept and comply with the terms imposed upon them by a state agreement or law for the sake of the nation. In Lodge's romance, Arsadachus must marry Margarite, whom he obviously dislikes, and, in *La comedia del príncipe tirano*, primogeniture determines dynastic succession in the kingdom of Colcos, dictating thereby that Princess Eliodora, not her younger brother Licímaco, inherits the crown. Although the romance narrates a love conflict inherent to the genre and the plays develop a political affair, Arsadachus' corruption broadens from lust to cruel authority, as much as Licímaco's depravity broadens from political ambition to lust in the closing part of *La tragedia*, vices that exhibit the private and public sides of the tyrant's moral degradation (see Reyes 2008, 58).

*La comedia* opens with Agelao, king of Colcos, informing Prince Licímaco that Eliodora is betrothed to Lido, king of Lidia (who never appears on stage), which will bring peace to both countries by uniting them under one "scepter" (1588, fol. 188r).<sup>9</sup> Although Licímaco expresses his contentment to abide by the rules, he feels humiliated and secretly yearns for the throne. The Fury Alecto avidly intervenes to make "the thalamus become grave" (1588, fol. 189r).<sup>10</sup> Licímaco's mentor Trasildoro spurs the prince's indignation and persuades him to murder his sister when she crosses the garden to her bedroom. The Fury Alecto disguised as Mérope, Eliodora's nurse, encourages him to do the same. Juan de la Cueva presents the Parcae on stage cutting Eliodora's life-thread as she, accompanied by Alecto as Mérope, enters the garden and meets her brother. Fully aware of his intentions, Eliodora offers him the crown in exchange for her life, but to no avail. Licímaco murders both his sister and Trasildoro (to silence him), and buries them on the premises (later, in *La tragedia*, he will also kill Mérope—and the baby she was

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<sup>9</sup> Spanish original: "cetro."

<sup>10</sup> All quotations from *La comedia del príncipe tirano* and *La tragedia del príncipe tirano* are my translations (with Spanish original text in footnotes) and taken from the 1588 edition. Spanish original: "El talamo convierta en sepultura."

holding—falsely believing she witnessed his fratricide).<sup>11</sup> While the search for the princess takes place, Licímaco decides not to flee but to dissemble; in fact, the king accuses Mérope and her husband Gracildo of negligence, and orders Licímaco to torture them until they confess. In the second act of *La comedia*, King Agelao is “chased” (1588, fol. 195r)<sup>12</sup> by the ghosts of Eliodora and Trasildoro. They disclose the truth about their deaths and the wickedness of Licímaco, who is imprisoned and sentenced to death. However, the king resolves to release him after much debate on the question whether justice or legal transmission of power should prevail. Meanwhile, helped by the nobleman Beraldo, Licímaco escapes from jail. *La comedia*, though dire, ends here.

As we have explained above, Lodge could have easily understood the dramatic plot set down in the prose summaries in the second edition of the plays; but if he had been fascinated by the story and wished to render the tale in romance form, some changes would have been needed because the events involve just a few members of the royal family of Colcos. Firstly, the fraternal bond between Eliodora and Licímico would need to be broken, so that the latter would assume the role of her betrothed. Consequently, the figure of King Agelao would be duplicated to provide the new Licímico-character, Arsadachus, with a judicious father, given his son’s depraved nature. Secondly, the female protagonist would require a young friend, not a guardian nurse; but, since the heroine’s performance must last until the final resolution, it is Philenia who would meet Eliodora’s tragic end—a greater resemblance to De la Cueva’s invention than to Bandello’s tale of the villainous abbot. Therefore, Lodge’s new character is precisely the female protagonist: the pure and (Phyllis-like) courtly Margarite. In addition, Thebion portrays the role of the traitor Trasildoro, and Brasidas fits the part played by Alecto/Mérope.

In Lodge’s set of characters, Philenia’s father Arsinous stands out as his boldest creation, to the extent of embodying a hypostasis of the author himself. Not only is Arsinous the orchestrator of the plot

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<sup>11</sup> “My soul is torn asunder when I recall|How he ruthlessly hewed [Mérope] to pieces,|along with a tender grandchild she was holding.” Spanish original: “Quel alma se me arranca cuando pienso|Como la [Mérope] hizo sin piedad pedaços,|Y a un tierno nieto que tenia en los braços” (1588, fol. 234r).

<sup>12</sup> Spanish original: “perseguido.”

and deviser of the narrative scenarios – in the first part by proposing the marriage of the heirs to ensure peace, in the middle *questioni-d'amore* episode by his banishment, and in the last part by bestowing on Margarite the probative box for Arsadachus—but he is also a writer and artificer of visual illusions through his magic. Apart from veiling the political conflict to focus on love, Lodge removed the Furies, Parcae and ghosts from the story, and had Arsinous informed of the details of his daughter's death by an eye-witness page. Furthermore, Lodge parodies the typical ghastly dreams, like Agelao's, by Arsadachus' contrivance to get rid of Thebion while definitely winning Protomachus' trust. Lodge thus grants his narrative Senecan-tragedy atmosphere a more realist, human agency.

Unlike Licímaco, Arsadachus is not jailed. Following the interpolation of the *questioni d'amore* (based on *Il Cortegiano*), when his marriage to Margarite seems inevitable, he feels helpless; but Lodge devises a providential coincidence external to the character that he plausibly explicates. As a result, like Licímaco at the beginning of *La tragedia*, Arsadachus returns to his father and, also following abdication, is crowned amidst ostentatious festivities. Afterwards, the moral corruption of both protagonists is intensified: Licímaco's, by declaring in a soliloquy his determination to exercise power through cruelty and tyranny, and Arsadachus', by his attachment to the flatterer Argias and by his infatuation with his alluring daughter Diana, and subsequent breaking off of his betrothal to Margarite—a thoroughly unacceptable action for one of his status. Before transferring the crown to Licímaco, Agelao issues an “admirable judgment” (1588, fol. 220r)<sup>13</sup> when three men and a woman come before him in relation to a marriage, as the summary to the first act announces. The matter of the case, however, is only disclosed in the dramatic text. Curiously enough, it resembles Arsadachus' rejection of Margarite and secret marriage to Diana. It concerns an angry father whose daughter married, not her betrothed, but another man secretly, and now both are claiming their respective right over her. Agelao orders that the woman be blindfolded and grab the one who will be her legitimate husband – eventually the other man.

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<sup>13</sup> Spanish original: “sentencia admirable.”

If Lodge were inspired by Juan de la Cueva's plays, his duplication of the king figure represents one of his major improvements. In *La tragedia*, Agelao, somewhat implausibly, grieves impotently over his son's atrocities<sup>14</sup> and survives him to reinstate justice.<sup>15</sup> In *Margarite*, however, Artosogon not only censures his son's secret marriage and has Argias executed, but also, more realistically, suffers his ruthless revenge till death, while political order in Cusco is violently restored by Protomachus' invasion.

Artosogon's death sentence against Argias, though less brutal, resembles Agelao's unaccomplished verdict against his son in *La comedia*, as the italicized words (my emphasis) evince:

[Artosogon] presently caused him to *be torn in pieces* at the tails of *four horses*. Then, casting his mangled members into a *litter*, he sent them to Diana in a present, [...] ([1596] 1980, 168)

[...] and let [Licímaco] be put in a *pannier*, tied to two *horses* that pull it swiftly, carried through the streets [...] up to the square where, alive [...], his feet and hands publicly cut off, that everybody there may see it. Afterwards, let his head be fiercely severed from his neck by a sharp edge, and his infamous, daring *body divided* into *four parts*. (1588, fol. 209r)<sup>16</sup>

Similarly, Arsadachus' method of revenge upon his father – cutting out his tongue, a symbol of justice and political stability – combines three elements of *La tragedia* that announce and finally reveal Licímaco's tyranny: the allegorical Dumb-character who commits suicide in the first act, the subsequent allegorical Kingdom-character yoked and breast-pierced in the second act (thus rendering the Dumb-character meaningful), and Licímaco's order to burn the Law books kept in the temple of Mars and the temple itself. In *Margarite*, Arsadachus would order his tongueless father brought to his table merely to laugh at his utter humiliation. In *La tragedia*, Licímaco, at

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<sup>14</sup> Agelao still saves two noblemen that Licímaco commanded to duel with their left arms tied to each other and with swords in their right hands.

<sup>15</sup> In act four of *La tragedia*, Licímaco attempts to kill him, but fails.

<sup>16</sup> Spanish original: "Y en un seron metido, vaya atado | A dos cavallos, que lo tiren presto | Por las publicas calles sea llevado | [...] Que a la plaça lo lleven donde sea | Vivo, assi como va, públicamente | Cortados, pies y manos, que lo vea | El pueblo todo qu'estara presente. | Tras desto el filo agudo despossea | La cabeça del cuello con ardiente | Furor, y el cuerpo infame, y atrevido, | En quatro partes sea dividido."

the dramatic climax of his tyrannical derangement, falsely accuses and imprisons his first cousin Calcedio and the nobleman Ericipo. The former's wife Teodosia<sup>17</sup> and the latter's daughter Doriclea are commanded to attend a banquet, during which the convicts are brought in and buried up to the waist (to be mauled by dogs in the morning).

After the banquet, the ladies are escorted to Licímaco's chambers for him "to lie in bed with them" (1588, fol. 219v).<sup>18</sup> But they fatally stab him and, on calling for the death penalty for themselves, are forgiven by Agelao, who discerns an act of divine justice in the regicide, as his speech in the closing lines of *La tragedia* elucidates: "on our way we'll enter the temple to thank Love who has so truly helped us and beseech him for grace from this event" (1588, fol. 242v).<sup>19</sup>

Although the tyrant punished by justice was also the theme of Giraldi's *Orbecche* and many of his *Hecatommithi* (Froldi 1999, 26), the women's stabbing hands merely enact a providential divine action over Licímaco. According to Reyes, De la Cueva follows Giraldi's and Dolce's "christianized" (2008, 68) model of Senecan revenge tragedy, and defends the idea of a Christian against a Machiavellian prince, since his legitimacy to the crown "resides in his commitment to his people, having God as witness. Therefore, if the prince rules against his vassals or divine law, his power will be questionable, and his subjects may resist him and ultimately get rid of him" (2008, 66; my translation). Trial by ordeal results in a major constituent of *El príncipe tirano*'s significance in the context of Phillip II's reign.<sup>20</sup> As Hermenegildo states, "as soon as Philip II died, the character of the abhorrent tyrant disappeared from Spanish drama" (1973, 308; my translation). Trial by divine ordeal is more conspicuous in *Margarite*, where no human agent, but rather the probative box, suffices to trigger the fall of Arsadachus, even though, unlike in *El príncipe*

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<sup>17</sup> In *La comedia*, Licímaco had already disclosed his lustful desire for Teodosia in an aside.

<sup>18</sup> Spanish original: "para dormir con ellas."

<sup>19</sup> Spanish original: "Al templo vamos luego de camino | A dar gracias a Love, pues tan cierto | A sido en ayudarnos, y a el pidamos | Que gracia de lo hecho consigamos."

<sup>20</sup> See Reyes (2008, 67) for a summary of the critical debate on whether De la Cueva's plays explore the past to convey his contemporary times.

*tirano*, both guilty and innocent characters are exterminated in the process, with the notable exception of Arsinous, the ultimate artificer of the providential divine punishment on Arsadachus.

#### 4. Conclusion

It is not improbable that a volume of Juan de la Cueva's 1588 edition of plays reached Santos from Seville or the Canary Islands, where the author resided from 1589 to 1602. This second edition was conveniently improved by the addition of prose summaries of each play and individual act. These plot summaries would be particularly helpful for foreign readers to follow the story.

This study does not conclusively demonstrate that De la Cueva's *El príncipe tirano* was the Spanish "history" that Lodge read at the Jesuit library at Santos or that it inspired his *Margarite*. However, the similarities between them point to a perplexing coincidence, if not to Lodge's alleged appropriation: the two-part romance structure parallel to *La comedia* and *La tragedia* (separated by the *questioni-d'amore* episode); the series of analogies to the dramatic plot from Eliodora's state-marriage for peace to Licímaco's trial by divine ordeal; and Licímaco's nature and role. The numerous affinities between the romance and the plays strongly hint at the English writer's indebtedness to the Spanish playwright, even though both are informed by the Italianate influence of Machiavelli, Bandello's and Giraldi's tales, and the neo-Senecan revenge tragedy, which Lodge perfects by infusing more realism.

If the structure, plot—political plot adapted to romance—and male protagonist of *Margarite* emanate from De la Cueva's *El príncipe tirano*, Arsinous and the heroine seem to be Lodge's additions. As we have suggested above, Arsinous functions as a hypostasis of the author, whereas after this analysis *Margarite* grows into a much more complex, mysterious, allegorical character, even though she may derive from Phyllis' progeny or from Marguerite of Navarre's *Heptameron*. The purity she embodies is ultimately annihilated by the conjoint demands of politics, intrigues and ill-behavior. *El príncipe tirano* revolves around the ways in which power is legitimated or eroded by the rightful application of magnanimity and justice, whereas Lodge clearly avoids exploring these qualities. The probative box that indirectly fulfills Arsinous' revenge,

simultaneously makes Margarite an innocent victim, whose hyperbolic virginity, matched with anti-courtier Arsadachus' psychic monstrosity, may be explicated in terms of Lodge's refusal to write any more romances in the context of his life and times, producing instead the Marian pamphlet *Prosopopeia*.

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