

ROTRON'S "VENCESLAS"
A COMPARISON WITH ROJAS'S
"NO HAY SER PADRE SIENDO REY."

by

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A. B., University of Kansas, 1927.

Submitted to the Department of
Romance Languages and the Faculty
of the Graduate School of the
University of Kansas in partial
fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Arts.

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May, 1928.

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INTRODUCTION

Rotrou like other dramatists of his day did not hesitate to borrow freely from antiquity or from his contemporaries. It is the purpose of this thesis to study the extent of his imitation and originality in his "Venceslas" (1647), by comparing it with the play of Francisco de Rojas y Zorrilla, "No hay ser padre siendo rey" (1640), which furnished Rotrou the material for his masterpiece.

While Italy's influence over French literature had been preponderant since the Renaissance, in the early seventeenth century the fashion for things Spanish was set by the marriage of Louis XIII and Anne of Austria, and became even greater when Marie - Therèse became queen of France, and maintained a troupe of Spanish players in the French capital. (1)

Rotrou, therefore, in going to Spanish sources for inspiration was carried along by the current which was also drawing his contemporaries to that literature where imagination held sway. From Lope de Vega especially he received material for many of his plays, and Jarry suggests that the theme which Rotrou was to use in his "Venceslas" pleased him above all others, although it is only a small matter of plot which the plays named by Jarry have in common. (2)

Although this theme does not seem to be developed in Lope, it is used even before Rojas by Guillén de Castro in his "La piedad en la justicia" (1625), in which the basic action and principal characters are the same as in the Rojas. (3)

A complete biography of Jean Rotrou is yet to be written, and only the barest facts concerning his life may be found in rather fragmentary sources consisting of family papers and letters, some of which have little authenticity. The most reliable of these sources is a notice written by the Abbé Brillion in 1698, taken from certain documents belonging to the Rotrou family.

From these we gather that Rotrou was born on August 19 or 20, 1609, in Dreux, where the poet's grandfather and uncle had held official positions. His father was a merchant of Dreux, and his mother, Elisabeth Facheu, belonged to one of the first families of Chartres. Rotrou's education was begun in his native town, and later continued in Paris. At an early age he began to write verses, and when he was twenty years old, the actors of the Hotel de Bourgogne presented one of his plays: "L' Hypochondriaque ou l'Amoureux mort" (1630).

It is probable that he received no aid from his parents, and for that reason, Rotrou may have placed himself at the service of this troupe of actors agreeing to furnish them with a certain number of plays each year. This is thought to be proved by letters of Chapelain, the first of which was written to Godeau in 1632, in which Chapelain regrets that the young poet should thus take upon himself "une servitude honteuse."⁽⁴⁾ The following year Chapelain wrote to Balzac that he had collaborated with Rotrou upon a certain play which consequently could not be read in the salons, since

the verses were written by Rotrou, from which "il en gaigne son pain."⁽⁵⁾ Rotrou, like Hardy, had the right neither to publish nor to have his plays read without the consent of his employers. This position of Rotrou as a playwright may be further shown in the following satiric verses written by Gaillard in 1634.⁽⁶⁾

"Corneille est excellent, mais il vend ses ouvrages;

Rotrou fait bien les vers, mais il est poète à gages."

Following the success of "Les Occasions perdues" (1633), Rotrou had been called by Richelieu to write certain memoirs in verse, and when the cardinal was assured of Rotrou's docility, he made him one of the famous group of five authors who were to cooperate in working out the great cardinal's literary plans. Rotrou's reputation was thus established, although little is known of what part he had in the work of this group. His extant plays number thirty-five, of which seven are tragedies, twelve comedies, and sixteen tragi-comedies. Rotrou had many patrons, all persons of considerable position, but in 1639, he withdrew to Dreux, where he had purchased a minor office in the magistracy.

Although he continued to write, producing, during the next ten years, ten plays including his three masterpieces, (1645 - "Le Véritable Saint Genest", 1647 - "Venceslas", 1648 - "Cosroès"), he took his duties as a magistrate very seriously, and when the hour of trial came, he exemplified in his own life the heroism with which he had endowed his characters.

In 1650, the little town of Dreux was stricken with a terrible epidemic. Rotrou's brother in Paris begged him to take up his residence there until the scourge had passed over. However, the mayor of Dreux had died of the fever, the lieutenant-general was away, and Rotrou consequently was the only officer of the town left to look after the safety of his fellow citizens. Considering their welfare above his own, simply and without heroics, he answered his brother as follows:

"Ce n'est pas que le péril ne soit fort grand, puisqu'au moment que je vous écris, les cloches sonnent pour la vingt-deuxième personne qui est morte aujourd' hui. Elles sonneront pour moi quand il plaira à Dieu."

This was the last letter which Rotrou wrote, for a short time afterward, he too was stricken and died, June 27, 1650, deserving the epithets of "bon père et bon mari, magistrat consciencieux, excellent chretien, poète modeste."

Rojas and Rotrou were close contemporaries, separated only by two years both in their births and in their deaths. Francisco de Rojas y Zorrilla was born in Toledo, October 4, 1607; the date of his death is uncertain, but is thought to be 1648. Why the poet chose to call himself by this name is not known, as Rojas was not the family name of his father, nor did the name Zorrilla belong to his mother. Few facts are recorded of Rojas's early life, but he probably pursued his studies of literature at the universities of Toledo and of Salamanca.

The plays of Rojas may be classified in two groups:

(1) "dramas heroicas y tragicos, (2) género comico y calleresco, festiva pintura de costumbres y caracteres."⁽⁹⁾ Within these two classes are included approximately eighty plays, fifteen or twenty of which are "autos sacramentales". His first volume of plays appeared in Madrid in 1640, and the second in 1645. At this time Rojas promised a third, which however was never published.

In 1632, Montalbán published a work of literary criticism, entitled "Para todos," in which he speaks of Rojas as a "poeta florido, acertado y galante, como lo dicen los aplausos de las ingeniosas comedias que tiene escritas."⁽¹⁰⁾ Rojas was then only twenty-five years of age, which speaks well for his dramatic ability, living as he did when Lope, Calderon, and Tirso were at the zenith of their power.

Little, other than this, is known of the esteem in which he was held by his contemporaries, but he is known to have been one of the dramatic poets most frequently introduced at the court festivities of Philip IV, and to have been made a knight of the order of Santiago in 1641. Contemporary writers in other countries knew his plays, and frequently borrowed from them. Besides Rotrou, other French writers are thought to have imitated plays of Rojas. Thomas Corneille took his "Don Beltran del Cigarral" from the comedy, "Entre bobos anda el juego". Scarron found the original for "Jodelet maitre et valet" in "Donde hay agravias no hay celos," and Lesage introduced Rojas's play, "Casarse por vengarse" into "Gil Blas",

(11)

in the form of a short story. While Rojas, thus seemed to be the exponent of the literary taste of his time, later criticisms, as noted in Chapter II, will show that the vogue of this type of writing had completely disappeared.

CHAPTER I

Variations in the Story as Presented
by Rojas and by Rotrou.

The argument of the two plays, "No hay ser padre siendo rey", of Rojas, and "Venceslas" by Rotrou, sets forth the love of two princes for the same duchess, the tragic result of this love, and the consequent conflict in the king's mind, who is torn between paternal love and his duty as a sovereign. The elder son is of a violent, erratic nature, and unwittingly slays his own brother, believing him to be the prime minister whom he takes to be his successful rival. The prince is condemned to death by his father who remains adamant against the repeated entreaties of the minister, of the duchess, and of the people, but who finally saves his son by abdicating the throne in his favor, thus making his head sacred because it bears the crown.

The Rojas play is divided into three jornadas, while Rotrou according to the literary custom of his day has constructed his play in five acts. He has used only the material of Rojas's first and third jornadas which correspond to the first, fourth, and fifth acts of "Venceslas". The second jornada of the Rojas is omitted entirely by Rotrou, who deals in the second and third acts with a secondary plot of his own invention. The entire first act of "Venceslas," with the exception of the scene of reconciliation between the Duke and Ladislas, is parallel with the Spanish original. As has been remarked, Rotrou separates entirely from his model in the

second and third acts, but again in the fourth act we find parallel passages dealing with the condemnation of Ladislás. In the fifth act, the last three scenes -- the attempt to save the prince's life and finally his coronation -- are the same as in the Rojas.

In general, it may be said that the changes made by Rotrou in the story are only slight ones, which do not materially alter the action, nor affect the interest in the plot. Rotrou keeps some of the names of Rojas's characters, merely giving them a French form. Thus Alejandro becomes Alexandre, Duke Federico the prime minister becomes Federic, and Casandra becomes Cassandre. In an attempt, perhaps, to add local color to his "Venceslas", Rotrou changes the name of the elder prince from Rugero to Ladislás, and the king of Poland, who has no name in the Spanish version, becomes Venceslas. He has added the character of Princess Théodore, who plays an important rôle in the secondary love-plot which he introduces. For the attendant of the duchess, Clavela, Rotrou has substituted Léonor, confidante of the princess. Roberto is transformed into Octave, governor of Varsovie, and the semi-burlesque character, Coscorrón, disappears with all that he typifies.

The following parallel résumé of the two plays will serve to show the essential differences in the story.

(1) Jornada I.

Rojas's play opens with a scene between the king of Poland and his son, Rugero. The king, old and suffering from the gout, had entered with his retinue, and had dis-

missed everyone, including the younger prince, Alejandro, except Rugero. The king is very much grieved because of the latter's violent disposition, and hopes to be able to touch him with his pleas for a better-ordered life. A long dialogue follows in which the king tells Rugero that he had hoped to find in him a worthy successor. He reproaches Rugero for his unseemly haste for the crown, reminding him of the difficulties which beset the throne. If a sovereign is just, his people call him cruel; if he is merciful, they scorn him; if he is liberal, they call him extravagant, yet if he does not give freely, they consider him avaricious. He asks Rugero how he expects to rule a kingdom when he is unable to govern even himself.

"c Y cómo es posible, como

.....

Que gobierne tanto imperio

Quien á sí no se gobiernia?" (12)

The king then reproaches the prince for his hatred of Duke Federico, who is the king's chief support in affairs of state. He also censures his son for his frequent quarrels with his brother. He regrets that Rugero scorns the poor, for a king, he says, must fear the weeping of the poor more than the power of the nobles. He believes sound education to be necessary for a ruler, and Rugero neglects his studies. All the crimes committed in the kingdom are laid at the young man's door, because of his bad reputation. The king begs his son to mend his ways, promising him the crown if he succeeds in doing so. If, however, he persists in his evil

doings, the king will be forced to do his duty.

"Si soy padre, sere rey."
(13)

The king then willingly permits Rugero to speak in defense of himself, hoping that his son will succeed in convincing him of his harmless intentions.

"Perderé en ser vencedor

Y ganaré en ser vencido.

¡Oh, plegue al cielo, que aquí,

Rugero, me convenzais!"
(14)

Rugero then proceeds to answer in order the charges which his father has brought against him. He frankly admits the first charge, relating what he had said on the occasion of a hunting party in the mountains, when policies of government were being discussed. Rugero complained that although he was perfectly capable of managing the kingdom himself, his father continued to rule.

"Si esto es lo que te dijeron,
(15)
Ni lo niego, ni lo ignoro."

As for the duke, he despises him, because he holds him to be a flatterer, audacious and ambitious, always reporting the prince's misdeeds, but never his commendable actions. Moreover he seeks the hand of the one whom Rugero loves. Rugero, who does not yet suspect that Alejandro loves Casandra, is infuriated with his brother because he has leagued himself with the duke against Rugero, even to the point of drawing his sword against him. Rugero, beside himself with anger, adds threat upon threat against the two, swearing to avenge himself,

"Siendo áspid, veneno, furia,
 Ira, pena, rabia, asombro,
 Prodigio, cometa, rayo,
 Etna, incendio, volcan, monstruo,
 Vivora, ponzoña, fiera,
 Venganza, injurias, enojo." (16)

The poor king, at a loss to know how to manage his violent son, hides his uneasiness, and embraces him, saying

"Hoy en vos mi edad reposa:

 Los dos uno hemos de ser
 Pues tanto amor os abona,
 Vuestra será esta corona
 Como vuestro mi poder." (17)

As the king is promising his kingdom to Rugero, the younger prince enters, insisting that he must speak to the king. The latter, however, refuses to listen to him, and forces a reconciliation between the two brothers. Realizing that this reconciliation lacks in sincerity, the king orders them to remain each in his own room, until they receive a new order from him.

The king departs saying in an aside that he intends to visit Alejandro, and the latter, (also in an aside), says that regardless of the king's order, he will visit his wife.

Up to this point, Rotrou imitates his model closely, many of the Spanish passages being translated literally into the French. To the reconciliation between the brothers,

Rotrou adds a scene of reconciliation between Duke Frédéric and Ladislas, in which the king pledges himself to grant the duke whatever wish he may express. Ladislas, who is in love with Cassandre and who believes that it is her hand which the duke seeks, rudely interrupts him.

The exposition in the Spanish play is completed in a scene between Coscorron and Clavela, servants of Duchess Casandra. They make known the fact that both brothers are in love with the duchess and that she has been secretly married to Alejandro the night before. Casandra enters, dismisses her attendants, and then admits Alejandro by a secret door. He seems troubled and sad, which worries Casandra, who thinks that perhaps he regrets the step that he has taken, or that the king has learned of their marriage, which they have confided only to the duke. Alejandro finally tells her that he has had a terrible dream, in which he saw himself wounded by his brother.

There is a knock at the door, and Duke Federico brings them word that the friends of Rugero and of Alejandro have fought in the vestibule of the palace. The combat ceased only when the king came upon the scene. The partisans were put under arrest by the king, who then sought Alejandro. Not finding him where he had told him to remain, the king has ordered his son imprisoned. The duke offers the prince refuge in his villa Belflor, and Alejandro and his wife take leave of each other in tears.

Jornada II

(18)

Twenty days have passed since the events of the first jornada, and Alejandro has not yet been found. Rugero, speaking to his servant, Roberto, reiterates his reasons for hating the duke so thoroughly. The duke's visits to Casandra's apartment infuriate him, even to the point of wishing to kill the duke, although he rather hesitates, as he fears the possibility of losing Casandra by such an act. Roberto tries to calm his master, advising him to think first of his father's sorrow over the disappearance of Alejandro, and then to talk to the duke concerning their love for Casandra, asking Federico to relinquish his suit for her hand. Roberto is in the midst of these futile attempts, when the duchess's servant Coscorron comes in. Rugero dismisses Roberto, and then bribes Coscorron to admit him that night to Casandra's apartment. Coscorron agrees, saying

"Puesto que soy criado,

.....

Para vender á mi ama

No son menester dineros

Porque esto es officio mio." (19)

and the two depart.

Casandra enters with her maid Clavela, who tries to console the duchess for the prolonged absence of Alejandro. Casandra is anxious for her husband, and at the same time fears Rugero, who pursues her constantly. She has even written a letter to the king, asking for his protection. She hopes the king may come that evening to surprise Rugero in

his base attempts. Casandra dismisses Clavela, and is lost in her own sorrowful thoughts, when she hears someone enter. She sees only Coscorron, asks him if he has delivered her letter to the king, and then sends him away, thus unwittingly remaining alone with Rugero.

The latter, who had at first stayed in hiding, still unseen by Casandra, extinguishes the light. The Duchess frightened escapes to an adjoining room. While Rugero is groping about, Alejandro enters by another door. The two run against each other in the dark. Alejandro calls for help, Casandra rushes in with a light, and the two brothers draw their swords! Rugero, after all three have engaged in lengthy asides, admits that he entered expecting to find the duke there and intending to kill him. Alejandro, to explain his presence, says that the duke and Casandra are married, and that the duke has given him a key to Casandra's house, so that he may hide there until the king's anger is appeased.

At this point, Duke Federico is about to enter to announce the arrival of the king, but before either comes in, Casandra has hidden the two princes in separate rooms. Summoned by her note, the king comes, although ill and weary, to protect her from Rugero. Fearing to betray Alejandro if she makes known Rugero's presence, Casandra assures the king that Rugero has not come to molest her. The king thus convinced is about to leave, but the duke insists that a thorough search be made before their departure. The king enters the room in which Alejandro is hidden, and the latter throws himself at his

father's feet. The king, confused and distracted, orders Alejandro to follow him. Casandra is thus left alone with Rugero, who attempts to force himself upon her. She threatens him, saying that her husband will avenge his wrong-doing. Rugero demands to know who her husband is, and Casandra, still wishing to protect Alejandro, answers that it is the duke. Rugero once more cries out for vengeance, swearing to Casandra that he will kill Federico.

Rotrou has failed to utilize the many dramatic incidents and catastrophes of this second jornada. Instead he separates entirely from his model in the second and third acts of "Venceslas", and deals with the love of Frédéric for Princess Théodore.

Théodore loves the duke and believes that at some time she may expect this love to be reciprocated. In an unconscious effort perhaps to turn Cassandre from the duke, she attempts to persuade the duchess to accept Ladislas as her husband. The latter, however, sees in him only a man who formerly pursued her with base intentions, although Ladislas tries to convince her that his motives have changed. She repeats her refusal, rather intimating that her love has already bestowed itself on another. Ladislas becomes furious, and once more threatens to kill his rival. Cassandre withdraws, and when the brother and sister are left alone, Ladislas makes known his suspicions concerning the love of Frédéric for the duchess. He goes out expressing his determination to forge Cassandre by hastening her marriage with the duke. This plan fills

Théodore with despair, and overcome by the thought that the duke does not love her she refuses to see him. This greatly surprises Alexandre, who had followed the duke to his sister's apartment to beg her to dissuade Cassandre from a marriage with Ladislas. From the manner in which he speaks, Théodore is confirmed in her belief that the duke and Cassandre are in love. Completely overwhelmed, she withdraws, and her brother left alone bemoans his fate which prevents him from openly seeking the duchess's love.

Act III.

In a soliloquy, the duke, who really loves the princess, despairs, as he believes this love hopeless, openly hated as he is by Ladislas, and repulsed by Théodore. Alexandre, believing that the duke loves Cassandre and determined to learn the truth from Frédéric himself, questions him, but the duke is stunned by the fact that Alexandre considers him thus capable of such base betrayal. In order to put an end to his own and Cassandre's worries, Frédéric advises Alexandre to marry Cassandre immediately. She herself enters at this moment, greatly agitated because of her interview with Ladislas, to beg Alexandre to save her from his brother. He makes known to her his plans for their marriage that very night. Ladislas enters, and says that Cassandre's scorn and indifference have succeeded in making him indifferent toward her. He asks Alexandre to take her from the room, ordering the duke, however, to remain. When they are alone, Ladislas demands that Frédéric make known the one whom he loves, but the duke hesitates to

answer, declaring that Ladislas's scorn has destroyed his boldness. Venceslas enters, and once more asks the duke to make his request, which he has promised to grant as a reward for his many services.

The duke thus encouraged is on the point of revealing his love for the princess, when Ladislas, still unable to control his passions, interrupts, threatening to kill Frédéric, if he obtains the object of his love. Thus for a third time the possibility of quieting Ladislas's suspicions concerning the person whom Frédéric loves is lost. Because of these threats against the duke, the king orders his son imprisoned, a sentence from which he is saved only by the intercession of the duke.

At the close of this act, Rotrou then returns to the events which form the third jornada of the Rojas play.

Jornada III

Coscarron and Roberto chance upon Rugero wounded, and with his sword broken. In a lengthy speech, he recounts his actions of the past night. After Casandra had told him that the duke was her husband, he left her apartment, and searched everywhere for Federico, determined to kill him. Being unable to find him he returned late to Casandra's house, entered her room, where he found Casandra and her husband sleeping. He killed a man whom he believed to be the duke, and escaped to the street. There he encountered a peculiar black skeleton-like vision, which upon being questioned by Rugero answered:

(20)
"Rugero, el Principe, soy."

Rugero fell unconscious, where the two servants have found him. Roberto warns him that the king has already arisen, and must not find him in this state. As he enters the palace, Rugero meets the king who questions him concerning his presence there at such an early hour, and in such a condition. The king suspects that Rugero has quarreled again with his brother, but the prince denies having seen Alejandro. Rugero, much to the amazement of his father, has just said that he has killed the person whom the king most loves, when the duke enters, bearing Casandra's request to speak with the king. The confusion is greater than ever when Cassandre enters clad in mourning, and demands justice for the murder of Alejandro. She confesses that they had been secretly married, and that the night before, the prince had returned to see her. In the night, she awakened, suddenly frightened to find her husband slain at her side. She pursued the assassin, who in the darkness escaped by the balcony before she could recognize him. She accuses Rugero, and demands his punishment, laying at the feet of the king, Rugero's dagger covered with the innocent blood of Alejandro. The king orders his son disarmed, and places him in the custody of the duke. He leaves, saying:

¡"Dos hijos me ha dado el cielo:

Ya el uno tengo perdido;

Y para vengar aquel
(21)

He de perder otro hijo!"

The fourth act in Rotrou opens with a scene between the princess and her confidante, Léonor, in which the princess

relates a terrible dream she has had, when she saw her brother, Alexandre, murdered; she is confirmed in her belief that he has met with some misfortune by the fact that he did not spend the night in his apartment. Just as Théodore finishes speaking of her dream, Ladislav enters, weak and scarcely able to stand. He tells his sister that he has tried to conquer his passions, but on hearing of the approaching marriage of Cassandre and Frédéric, he became unable to restrain himself any longer. He hid in the apartment of the duchess, and when the door opened at the name of the duke, he rushed out, and stabbed the incomer three times. Théodore, overcome by this report of Frédéric's death, withdraws fainting, supported by Léonor.

In the remaining scenes of Act IV, Rotrou translates the corresponding scenes of the Rojas. In the French version, in which the marriage between Cassandre and Alexandre has not yet taken place, however, the interest is heightened by the fact that the identity of the victim is not yet established. In the Rojas, the spectator knows that Alejandro is the husband of Casandra; in Rotrou's play, however, the audience does not know whether it is the Duke who, as often before, has come as a messenger for the prince, or Alexandre himself who has been murdered. The dramatic intensity consequently is very great when the duke enters and Ladislav cries out:

"Si le duc est vivant, quelle vie ai-je éteinte?

Et de quel bras le mien a-t-il reçu l'atteinte?" (IV,V)

The third jornada of the Rojas from the point at which

the duke enters asking permission for Casandra to speak with the king, develops in the following manner. The king comes to the tower in which Rugero is imprisoned, and when he embraces his son, Rugero believes that he has come to pardon him. The

(22)

king asks of Rugero:

"¿ Sois mi hijo?" to which Rugero replies:

" Sois Rugero.

¿ Sois firme?

Soy animoso.

¿ Valiente?

Soy valeroso.

¿ Osado tambien?

Soy fiero.

Pues sólo deciros quiero ...", but the father's words are broken off by his weeping. He finally tells his son that he must die; Rugero attempts to defend himself by saying that he did not intend to kill his brother, but the king replies that he is punishing him not because of the person whom he has killed, but because he has committed murder.

"No os castigo á quien la (muerte) disteis,

(23)

Castigoos que la habeis dado."

Rugero implores his pity, asking what father has ever condemned his son to death, merely to be just. The king cites the case of Trajan who, to abide by a law of his own making, ordered his son's eyes removed, because he had committed the forbidden action. Darius had his son killed because he had broken a law, and then the father had covered with his son's

skin a seat in which he sat to administer justice. Rugero bursts into tears at these words, but his father tells him not to weep, since

"Más hago yo en daros muerte,
 Que vos haceis en sufrirla." (24)

The king embraces him and is about to leave when Rugero once more beseeches him to save his life, asking whether, being his father, he can condemn him to death. Once and for all the king replies:

"No hay ser padre siendo rey!"

After the king has withdrawn, the servant Coscarron comes upon the scene, and in a long mock-serious soliloquy pretends to be responsible for the whole affair. He has betrayed his mistress, and has allowed himself to be bribed by Rugero. He imagines what his reward would be, if he should tell the king that he killed Alejandro. He is interrupted in his musings as to the sensations he would probably experience on being hanged, when the king and Duke Federico enter. The latter is trying to persuade the king to be lenient toward Rugero, as he has no other son, and no heir to the throne. Casandra also asks that Rugero's life be spared, arguing that they will gain nothing by his death. The king, however, is unmoved by their pleas, feeling that Rugero's punishment must serve as an example, to prevent further crimes. Cries from without of "Long live Prince Rugero!" are heard. The duke tells the king that Rugero had barely started to the scaffold when the people rebelled at the thought of his death, and he admits

that he allowed the prince to be brought to the palace, in an attempt to change the king's sentence.

Rugero is brought in from the vestibule where he has been waiting, and the king, who had ordered the crown brought in, approaches his son, and places upon his head this symbol of royal power, saying:

"Tú seas rey, yo seré padre;
Siendo sólo padre, es fuerza
Como padre perdonarte,
Y siendo rey, no pudiera." (26)

The father takes Casandra into his care and Rugero is reconciled with Duke Federico. The play ends with the customary appeal to the audience for applause.

The last act of Rotrou's play opens with an interview between Theodore and the duke, who has been summoned by a letter from the princess. At last Frédéric is able to declare his love, since Ladislas is not present to prevent him from doing so. As a proof of this love, Théodore asks Federic to persuade the king to forgive Ladislas. From scene three until the end of the play, Rotrou follows the story as presented in the original. Ladislas, condemned to death by his father, who remains firm in his decision even in the face of the pleas of Frédéric, of Cassandre, and of the people, is saved when Venceslas decides to abdicate the throne in his son's favor. Ladislas is reconciled with the duke, to whom he gives Théodore in marriage. He places his crown at the feet of Cassandre, who at first refuses to share it. One is left with

the feeling, however, that this refusal will not be final.

CHAPTER II

Differences in Treatment

A. Comparison of Structure

While Rojas makes no attempt to construct his play according to the rules of the three unities, it so happens that, although he does not follow the strict regulations to which Rotrou necessarily adhered, his "No hay ser padre siendo rey" does conform more closely to the unities than is customary in the seventeenth century plays of Spain.

There was at the time in which "Venceslas" was written, much discussion as to what actually constituted unity of place, (27) whether it might be only one room, one house, or even one town. Rotrou conceives as the unity of place the palace, within which the characters move about freely. In the Rojas play, on the other hand, no effort is made to restrict the action to one building, and numerous changes take place in the setting of the play, which are not always made clear to the reader.

In the first jornada, the action begins in the palace, (28) then changes to the nearby house of Casandra. (29) The setting of the second jornada is first Rugero's apartment, (30) and then shifts once more to Casandra's house. (31) The scene of action in the third jornada is even more varied, and consequently more difficult to follow. The opening scene shows a street (32) in front of the royal palace, from which the action is (33) carried to the palace entrance, thence into the palace itself. (34) The next scene occurs in a fourth locality, the tower in which

Rugero is imprisoned. ⁽³⁵⁾ The remaining action has as its
 setting the palace, ⁽³⁶⁾ with the exception of one scene ⁽³⁷⁾ which
 occurs in the vestibule of the room in which the previous
 action has taken place.

This constant change of place is the more difficult to
 follow, in that the author has failed to motivate it suffi-
 ciently. For example in the first jornada, after the king has
 forced the reconciliation between his sons, and the entire
 group has withdrawn, it is only because we learn that Clavela
 and Coscorron, who now occupy the stage, are in the service
 of the duchess, ⁽³⁸⁾ that we are able to deduce that the scene
 has probably shifted to the house of Casandra, where the next
 events must take place. The change in the second jornada
 from Rugero's apartment to Casandra's house seems more rea-
 sonable, as the duchess's servant Coscorron is there to
 conduct Rugero to a hiding place in Casandra's house, thus
 preparing the reader for the new scene.

The place of action at the beginning of the third jornada
 is even more obscure than in the first two. Coscorron and
 Roberto chance upon Rugero, wounded and with his sword broken;
 one does not know, however, why these two servants are to-
 gether, nor how to account for their finding Rugero. After
 the prince has told his long story of how he made his escape,
 one is able to surmise that he is still in the street where
 the servants find him.

After all these inexplicable shifts, it is much easier
 for the reader to follow the "Venceslas", taking place as it
 does in one locality. In some plays of this period the unity

of place so compresses the action that it becomes almost improbable. Rotrou's strict observance of unity of place, however, has also added to the verisimilitude of his play. In the Rojas play the wanderings of the king seem especially out of keeping with his rank, as he may be found outside the royal abode at any hour of the day or night, in Casandra's house, in Rugero's prison, or in the vestibule of the palace. In the Rotrou version of the story, the action takes place where Venceslas would ordinarily be, instead of his having to follow the action from place to place. The setting of the Rotrou play consequently seems more dignified, and more in keeping with the tragic nature of the subject.

If Rotrou has gained by observing more strictly than Rojas the unity of place, he loses this advantage by his too rigid observance of the unity of time. In "Venceslas" the time which the action requires is restricted to the usual twenty-four hours. In reality parts of two days are involved as in "Le Cid" of Corneille, this however not being considered a violation of the unity of time. ⁽³⁹⁾ The first three acts require a part of one day and one night for completion, and at the opening of Act IV, it is again early morning, as Theodore relates her dream of the previous night, and Ladislas comes in after his harrowing experiences of the night before. The events of the last act seem rather numerous to be completed in the few hours which remain of the author's twenty-four, but the play is ended in this one day.

The action of the Rojas play covers, according to the

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author's indications, a period of about one month. The action of the first jornada takes place in one evening, while some time elapses before the beginning of the second. In one speech we are told that eight days ⁽⁴¹⁾ have passed since the completion of the events of the first jornada, but in another, ⁽⁴²⁾ the indication is that it is twenty days. This second act also takes place in one evening. The third jornada covers the time of one morning, on the day set for Rugero's execution, after an indefinite amount of time has elapsed, during which he has been imprisoned.

This use of more time for the development of the action has succeeded in making Rojas's play more convincing in some respects than Rotrou's. In the latter play so many events occur in such a short period of time, that too great a tension is placed on the reader's credulity. In approximately twenty-four hours occur the culminating quarrel between Ladislas and the duke, the marriage of Alexandre and Cassandre, the murder of Alexandre, the trial and condemnation of Ladislas, the abdication of Venceslas, and the coronation of Ladislas. It seems rather improbable that so many important events could have come to pass in the course of one day, or even during parts of two days. Too short a time is allowed by Rotrou to permit a convincing character development in the case of Ladislas, as such a radical change in character as is found in the prince could hardly have occurred so suddenly, unless the author had attributed this "volte-face" to the shock which Ladislas undoubtedly must have experienced upon learning that

he had murdered his brother.

The allowing of more time by Rojas for the development of his play makes it seem more real, and does not impair the unity of action. Rugero's act becomes even more terrible because he has had time to meditate over his course of action before he actually succeeds in killing Casandra's husband, whom he believes to be the duke; whereas in the "Venceslas," the murder must necessarily have been committed on the spur of the moment, in order that it might be brought within the twenty-four hour limit. In the Rojas, Rugero is imprisoned for several days, but in the Rotrou, he could barely have been incarcerated before the hour arrived for his execution, which actually terminated in his coronation. The conflict in the king's mind also becomes greater in the Spanish play as the time draws nearer for his son's execution. Although this conflict does exist in the mind of Venceslas, the decision is necessarily more quickly reached by the king, and his torment consequently does not seem as real as in the Spanish version.

The Rojas play is truer to unity of action, since the secondary plot developed by Rotrou is not essentially connected with the main action. Although in a general way there is more unity in the Rojas, there is also more extraneous matter. Rotrou has made the development of his play depend entirely upon the misunderstanding which exists between Ladislas and Duke Frédéric as to whom the latter really loves. (43)
The duke is given three direct opportunities by the king

to reveal the name of the one whom he loves, and three times he fails to give the answer needed to overcome Ladislas's jealousy. The cause for this failure to answer seems insufficiently justified, and the repetition of this device for prolonging the action becomes rather monotonous.

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Rotrou's addition of a scene of reconciliation between the duke and Ladislas has no connection with the main story, as no further use is made of it in the development of the action. This scene may throw some light, however, upon the peace-loving nature of Venceslas, who forces the reconciliation. On the whole, the entire sub-plot is uninteresting and does not add to Rotrou's version of the story, except perhaps as an attempt to justify Ladislas's suspicions of the duke.

With the exception of this secondary plot, as was previously remarked there seems to be less extraneous matter in the Rotrou than in the Rojas, where the reader is lost in the lengthy asides which take place before every important bit of action. (45) For example, in the second jornada when the two brothers find themselves together with Casandra in her house, surprised and angered, they suddenly draw their swords, but instead of the expected duel, all three engage in long speeches, each of the brothers explaining in great detail why he is there, and Casandra wondering how she will account for all this to the king. In the third jornada, Rugero's encounter with the phantom seems entirely extraneous, as the author does not attempt to show what he intends this

black skeleton-like figure to represent. It is probably introduced by Rojas only because of the general fondness for the use of the supernatural during this period. (46)

The rôles of the servants in the Rojas play seem to have no reason for existing, except that at that time, the practice of the Spanish stage was to include these servants in order to reflect the sentiments of the main characters. It is true that the servants Clavela and Coscorrón complete the necessary exposition in the first jornada, but the manner in which the author has them accomplish this is rather primitive, as they are first obliged to introduce themselves to the audience, no preparation for their entrance having been made.

B. Comparison of Characters

Rotrou has not altered to any great extent the characters as he found them in the Spanish play. The one character which departs the most from the original is that of the elder prince, Ladislas, who is of much less violent nature than Rugero. He is the pivot character for the entire action in each play, and his likes and dislikes condition the development of the action. Ladislas, while somewhat softened by Rotrou, retains many of his prototype's fiery qualities as may be seen in the following summary which Person gives of his character: ⁽⁴⁷⁾

"Ce Ladislas farouche et indompté, violent, hautain, contradicteur des autres, et de soi-même; terrible en ses colères comme un comte de Charolois, ou comme un duc de Bourgogne qui n'avait pas eu son Beauvillier ou son Fénelon; donnant la mort lâchement, et s'apprêtant à la recevoir bravement; effrayant et menaçant dans la mort même; dominé enfin par une de ces violentes passions qui peuvent faire d'un homme un héros, quand elles n'en font point un criminel."

As for Rugero, his characteristics are those of Ladislas magnified to a greater degree of violence. Rugero in the past has been guilty of base deeds, and continues openly to pursue Duchess Casandra with the lowest motives, whereas Ladislas is sincere in declaring:

"Ma flamme a consumé ce qu'elle avait d'impur." (II,II)
and in attempting to persuade Cassandre that now his love is inspired by honor and respect. In either case, the prince is overly-confident of his own ability and extremely con-

ceited. He is haughty and insolent, irreverent toward his father, and at times brutally frank in expressing his feelings. In the Rotrou, Ladislas's lack of will-power is constantly stressed as the underlying cause of all his misdeeds. He tells his father that he has made an earnest effort to overcome his hatred for the duke, saying

"Pour souffrir son orgueil, Seigneur, et vous complaire
J'ai fait tous les efforts que la raison peut faire."

(III,VI)

Throughout the entire fourth act this struggle of Ladislas with himself is repeatedly mentioned. Ladislas continues:

"Contre mon jugement, mon esprit se rebelle." (IV, II)

"Mon âme transportée

Contre mon propre effort s'est toujours révoltée." (IV,II)

"De tout raisonnement je deviens incapable." (IV, II)

Rugero, on the other hand, yields entirely to his overwhelming hatred, which drives him to kill the duke.

Again when facing death, Ladislas seems stronger than Rugero. The latter, thinking only of himself, begs for his life, but Ladislas accepts his punishment stoically as his just due, thus winning more sympathy from the spectator. Each is saved by the will of the people, which is accounted for in the Rotrou by the fact that Ladislas is said to possess some unknown hold over the people, in spite of the dread and contempt which they feel for him.

"Par le secret pouvoir d'un charme que j'ignore,

Quoi qu'on vous mésestime, on vous chérit encore." (I,I)

In the *Rojas*, however, Rugero is held in bad repute by all, for his father says that every crime committed in the whole kingdom is laid at his son's door. Hence the only reason which can be ascribed for the sudden change in the people is their realization that his death will leave the kingdom without an heir.

No psychological explanation is given in either play for the radical change which takes place in the character of the elder prince after his coronation. The element of time enters into the case of Rugero, who has perhaps had sufficient opportunity for such a development. In the *Rotrou*, however, this change in Ladislas's character seems rather improbable, unless it be attributed to a "grâce d'état," and to the sacredness of being crowned king which he must have felt when he said in somewhat the words of Louis XII: ⁽⁴⁸⁾

"Roi, je n' hérite point les différends du prince." (V, IX)

The hatred for the duke which in both plays is entertained by the elder prince is the one element in his character the most responsible for his erratic action. The character of the duke is more completely developed in the *Rotrou*, as there he plays a main rôle in the secondary plot, which deals with his love for Princess Théodore. The duke's personality is greatly weakened by the part he is forced to play in this subplot, as his continued reticence in declaring whom he loves, although necessary for the continuation of the play, is rather unexpected from such a man as he is depicted to be. He is placed, however, in a difficult position, loving as he

does a princess of the royal family and believing that such a gulf exists between them as to make the fulfillment of this love impossible. To Théodore herself, he says:

"Mes vœux ont pris, Madame, un vol plus élevé,

Aussi par ma raison n'est-il pas approuvé." (V,II)

This reverence for royal blood carries him to such a point of self-sacrifice that when Théodore asks that he beg the king to spare Ladislav's life, Frédéric requests this as his long-promised reward without any hesitation whatsoever, thus sacrificing the opportunity of fulfilling his own desires by obtaining the hand of Princess Théodore. Federico of the Spanish play, on the other hand, asks that the king spare the prince's life, out of the magnanimity of his own heart. This difference in the impelling motives of their requests cannot be said, however, to weaken one character to the advantage of the other, as they are both inspired by unselfish reasons, and are essentially noble figures. They are both great powers in the kingdom, valiant and courageous in battle, intelligent and capable in affairs of state. The duke in both plays feels a real friendship for the younger prince, and is willing to undergo great hardships for his friend's sake, even when Alexandre in the Rotrou questions the sincerity of his friendship, and when the Alejandro of Rojas subjects him to Rugero's fury.

The elder princes, Rugero and Ladislav, are as violent in their love for the Cassandra as in their hatred of the duke. This passion which they feel for her drives them on

from one drastic action to another more terrible one, and at the thought that she loves another, they are completely beside themselves with jealous anger. The duchess is shown in both plays as a lady of high rank, virtuous and charming, sincerely in love with the younger prince. The Cassandre of Rotrou is the more self-reliant, never giving to such an extent as the Spanish duchess the impression of fearing Ladislas or the consequences of the proposed marriage with Alexandre. She is less dependent on others for help in staving off the advances of Ladislas, being reassured perhaps by the presence of Alexandre, who is not forced to flee as he is in the Rojas. Cassandre is also much quicker to anger than the duchess of the Spanish play. Such an outburst of temper as Cassandre shows, when Ladislas and his sister, Théodore, attempt to persuade her to marry the prince, is not seen in Rojas's Casandra. The latter is very touching in her constant trembling for the safety of her husband, as she fears the consequences of Rugero's pursuit of her not only for herself, but even more for Alejandro.

In each play, the duchess is the first to demand justice from the king for the murder of the younger prince, and in the Spanish play, she is also the first to ask the king to rescind the sentence of death which he has imposed upon his son. Rotrou's Cassandre, however, comes to the king only after he has received the pleas of Théodore and of the people to save the prince from death. This request of the duchess seems more convincing in the Rojas, as Casandra has actually spoken with

Rugero during his imprisonment, and has been moved to pity by his repentance and grief. In the *Rotrou*, however, Cassandre gives no such reason for her sudden change of feeling, which consequently seems rather improbable, taking place so soon after her plea for vengeance.

In both plays, the attitude of the elder prince toward his father is one of indifference, although he is somewhat jealous of his father's power. The principal reason for this jealousy, however, is that the king uses his power to elevate the duke to a high position in the kingdom. In both plays, the king shows practically the same characteristics, although Venceslas is more dignified and kingly in his bearing than the Rey de Polonia, who possesses less identity since Rojas has failed to give him a name. They are both proud of their political intelligence, both extremely conscientious in the discharge of their kingly office. They are rather pathetic figures, however, as they feel themselves torn between this duty and their paternal love. In the first interview between the king and his son, the king in the Rojas play seems more touching than Venceslas. The latter is always master of the situation, but in the Spanish play, the king is greatly confused as to how to manage his disreputable son. He cries

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out to heaven:

" ¡ Válgame Dios! ¿ qué he de hacer?,"

and again after Alejandro has disappeared his sadness is commented upon by one of the servants:

(50)

"La vida pasa llorando,

Tan lastimoso, y tan viejo,
 Que hace del llanto congoja
 Y hace del gozo sosiego."

Vencedas, on the other hand, is more tolerant toward his elder son than is the Rey de Polonia, who admits that he is partial to Alejandro:
 (51)

"Que abrazo al que no me inclino,
 Por conservar al que quiero."

While the younger prince is the opposite of his brother and possesses the virtues of courtesy and mildness which the elder prince lacks, still he is unattractive, for his character is undermined by his lack of moral courage, which is shown when he continues to seek the hand of Casandra under the name of the duke, although he has no reason to fear the king's anger upon learning of their marriage. The latter respects the line of Cunisberg, Casandra's father was his friend, and even now he is acting as Casandra's guardian. In the Rojas, in order to shield himself, Alejandro goes so far as to subject the duke to his brother's blind anger by telling Rugero that Casandra and the duke are married. Were it that in thus sacrificing Federico, Alejandro's purpose was to save Casandra's fair name, his action would be excusable. However it seems unpardonable when, after the king has found him Casandra's house and has ordered him to leave, Alejandro does so thus leaving Casandra alone with Rugero whose base motives he well knows. It is this same lack of courage on the part of Alejandro which proves his undoing, and we are more touched

by the grief of the father and by the great confusion of the elder prince than by the murder of the younger.

The character of Princess Theodore is entirely an invention of Rotrou's, added perhaps to elevate the character of the duke, whose love for the princess casts a luster over his personality for the spectator. The character of Théodore, however, is not fully developed and her rôle in the secondary love-plot awakens little interest. Her love for the duke is expressed only to her confidante, after her brothers have told her of their own sentiments, and it is not until the end of the play that this love is openly declared. This reticence comes from the fear which she has of displeasing her father by loving one not of royal birth, and does not detract so noticeably from her character as the duke's continued silence does from his personality. Théodore is a graceful and amiable figure, although she adds nothing of material value to the Rotrou version of the story.

The rôles of the servants in the two plays are relatively unimportant, the most fully developed one being that of the cynical Coscorron in the Rojas. Here as was wont in the seventeenth century drama of Spain there are the two servants who with their mock-serious attitude toward the tragic events taking place around them, may serve in some measure to lighten the atmosphere of tragedy which exists in the play, but this attempt is comparatively insignificant. The creation of a new character, Princess Théodore, occasions a change in the roles of the servants in the French play, where Léonor is the

confidante of the princess, while Duchess Casandra has no attendant. Consequently the rôle of Clavela, the maid of the Spanish duchess, as well as that of Coscorron, her other attendant, has disappeared entirely.

C. Comparison of Style.

Between the years 1580 and 1650, the literature of Europe tends toward a great sameness, one of its principal characteristics being an exaggerated, affected style. Because of the universality of this literary phenomenon, a common source would seem the most logical explanation for its widespread occurrence. This, however, Hauvette denies when he says:

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"Cette recherche éperdue du rare, du fin et du brillant est-elle une maladie dont on puisse retrouver l'origine et le mode de propagation d'un pays à l'autre? Il convient de renoncer à cette idée si flatteuse pour l'amour-propre national de chacun: car si les Français aiment à voir dans le chevalier Marin l'importateur du virus qui avait contaminé l'hôtel du Rambouillet, les Italiens aimaient à penser que les modes espagnoles, introduites en Italie et particulièrement à Naples avec la tyrannie des vice-rois, avaient corrompu le goût du public et des poètes."

In Italy this movement owes its inception to the work of Giovan Battista Marino (1569-1625), who later was heartily welcomed in France by the frequenters of the Hotel de Rambouillet, according to Maspes who says:

(54)

"Avec quel enthousiasme les Français accueillirent Marino, le chef de l'Arcadia, qui fut, je dirais, le plus cher de leurs précepteurs."

This same manner of writing reached its culmination in France, then, in the "préciosité" of the salons, whose influence on

Rotrou will be noted presently. John Lyly, with his "Euphues" (1579), introduced into England this ornate style which soon became fashionable at the court of Elizabeth. In Spain this super-elegance was brought into literature by Góngora (1561-1627), who in his poems, "El Polifemo", and "Las Soledades", set forth the principles of the new style. Since the two plays under consideration appear within this period of time, we may well expect to find in their style the characteristic traits of this literary fashion.

Rotrou had undergone the great influence of the Hôtel de Rambouillet, which introduced that refinement into seventeenth century French literature, culminating in the "précieux" movement. During this century, French drama very naturally, reproduced the polite speech of the salons, and the result was a conventional mode of expression which at times detracted even from the masterpieces of that period. Of Rotrou and his contemporaries other than Corneille, who typify in their style this conventionality, Brunetière says:

"Vous les trouverez toujours au-dessous, ou au-dessus, ou à côté, dans les parages ou dans les environs de ce qu'ils auraient voulu dire. Leur langue est celle de Corneille, leur vocabulaire, et aussi leur syntaxe-, mais un don leur a été refusé, qui est celui d'égaliser leur pensée par l'expression, et quoi qu'ils disent, et qui n'est pas toujours plus mal pensé ni moins vivement senti que du Corneille, ce qui leur fait défaut, c'est le don de nous procurer, à nous spectateurs ou lecteurs, la sensation du définitif et de

l'achevé."

Especially in his vocabulary does Rotrou make frequent use of words of "précieux" origin. He uses such words as "flammes" and "fers" as synonyms for "amour", and "braise" and "brasier" in the same sense. The fashionable theory of love might easily be reconstructed from passages in "Venceslas." The following quotations will further illustrate his "préciosité":

"Vos yeux, ces beaux charmeurs, avec tous leurs appas,
Ne sont point accusés de tant." (III, IV)

"Qu'importe qui me tue, ou sa bouche ou ses yeux?"

(IV, VI)

"Cette offense est un mal que je veux toujours faire,
Et je consens plutôt à mourir qu'à vous plaire."

The most frequent figure of speech found in "Venceslas" is antithesis, which is sometimes used to good advantage, but at others is somewhat exaggerated. Numerous examples of it may be found which the following will illustrate:

"Vicieux on vous craint, mais vous plaisez heureux."

(I, I)

"Quel des deux voulez-vous, ou mon cœur ou ma cendre?
Quelle des deux aurai-je, ou la mort ou Cassandre?"

(II, II)

"Privé de son amour, je chérirai sa haine." (II, III)

"Ce que j'ôte à mes nuits, je l'ajoute à mes jours."

Rotrou's use of contrasting words has added a great deal in most cases to the color of his images, as he is able with a

few words to portray vividly a situation or a character. His work is full of sententious expressions, the most interesting of which are those dealing with the privileges and responsibilities of a sovereign, and of the difficulties which beset his path. In his political ideas, Rotrou is reminiscent of Richelieu, ⁽⁵⁶⁾ and praises especially Mazarin ⁽⁵⁷⁾ for the great services rendered to France. Rotrou, being a representative of the royal power through his position as lieutenant of the king, practiced the maxim, "Time Deum et honorificate Regem," ⁽⁵⁸⁾ but he was not blindly obedient, his desire being that a king should be above reproach, both in his personal conduct and as a monarch.

"Il n'eut pas été le sujet tolérant de ce Ladislas féroce dont il fut le poète inspiré; mais il aurait adoré son vieux Venceslas!" ⁽⁵⁹⁾

In general, of Rotrou's style it may be said that he lacks neither delicacy nor grace, nor is he common-place. He has been compared to Shakespeare in that his work presents a curious mixture of refinement and of brutality. The most salient of his defects may be summarized by saying that he lacks good taste. One phase of this "mauvais goût" is found in the rather coarse expressions of Ladislas in his angry moments, and even in words given to Cassandre when she says that Ladislas's only purpose in seeking her hand is the fulfillment of his "sales plaisirs." These expressions are brutally candid, and will cease to be found in the sublimated French tragedy later in this period, as Jarry recognizes when

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he says:

"Le style de Rotrou nous paraît offrir plus d'une analogie avec celui du grand poète latin Lucrèce, plein d'images éblouissantes ou agréables, luxuriant, touffu, ne craignant pas les répétitions de mots et de tournures, dur encore, et que les oreilles susceptibles voudraient plus poli, les esprits délicats plus châtié; mais malgré tout, entraînant et poétique."

When we turn to Rojas we find that he, too, is a disciple of super-refinement, an ardent follower of Góngora, which brings down upon him the condemnation of Martínez de la Rosa, writing in 1825, who speaks of the "inmoral y desatinado plan de 'No hay ser padre siendo rey'". He continues as follows:

"... otras composiciones de ese laya, las cuales, lejos de descubrir ni aun visos de un poeta ingenioso y ameno, parecen únicamente sueños de un delirante. Hállanse en ellas, en vez de pensamientos oportunos, conceptos falsos y alambicados; en lugar de dignidad, hinchazon; juguetes pueriles en cambio de agudeza, y metáforas ridículas y frases huecas, y estilo escabroso, y todos los defectos juntos que pueden afear las composiciones dramáticas."

This criticism, however, presents only one phase of Rojas's style, which undoubtedly does possess these defects, but it fails to take into account his powerful imagination and his ability to express himself vigorously. Schack commenting on his style says:

"No se comprende que agradase á Rojas esta fraseología

culta, porque en diversos dramas suyos, y hasta en escenas de otros, llenas de las faltas indicadas, se presenta como modelo de la expresión más natural, del lenguaje más sencillo y comprensible, y lanza además sus sátiras y burlas contra los gongoristas. Así, en la comedia 'Sin honra no hay amistad', para pintar las tinieblas de la noche, dice

Está hecho un Góngora el cielo

Más obscuro que su verso,

leyéndose también dos sonetas en el primer acto de 'El desden vengado', escritos indudablemente para parodiar el estilo culterano." It seems true that in "No hay ser padre siendo rey", Rojas, however, does allow his imagination free rein, and the result is an exaggerated style, full of trifles and obscurities, which are not compensated by harmonious verses. Of this particular play, Ochoa in his "Tesoro del teatro espanol" writes:

"Seria menester ser un verdadero insensato, á ménos de ser rematadamente tonto, para ver un modelo de locucion ni de nada en la monstruosa comedia titulada, "No hay ser padre siendo rey", por ejemplo, que sólo puede compararse en lo absurda y necia a la de los 'Áspides de Cleopatra'".

It is especially in descriptions introduced as examples of fine writing rather than to further the action that Rojas has used absurd gongorisms and affected metaphors. The first speech of Rugero, in answer to his father's accusations, is full of inexact figures of speech and obscurities. For example, in order to describe the autumnal setting of their

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hunting party, the prince says:

"Cuando al despedirse triste
 El estío rigoroso
 Con voces de llamos muertes
 Iba llamando al otoño:
 Cuando a cástigar los flores,
 Examinando los sotos,
 Salió juiz de residencia
 Severamente el Agosto:
 Cuando el doreado Setiembre
 De los esquilmos dichosos,
 Puntales pone á los cielos
 De granos de fruto en oro:
 Entónces con mis monteros
 Medí al monte los contornos,
 Ya conquistando los sauces,
 Ya averiguando los poyos,
 Cuando viendo que no hallamos,
 Ni aquel animal cerdoso
 Que hace alfanjes los colmillos
 Para destroncar los chopos;
 Ni hallando entre tanto monte
 Al venado, que ganchozo,
 Coronista de su vida,
 Se la escribe en sus dos troncos.
 Nos apeamos los tres."

Even a more exaggerated description is given by Rugero

at the beginning of the second jornada in which he is attempting to explain to Roberto the reason for his hatred of the duke. He says that on the occasion of a hunting party, which he stops to describe minutely, he came near a river, which is also commented upon. In the sand he noticed the prints of women's feet, (description of the sand and of the prints), and followed the tracks, finally hiding behind a bush, which he describes. On another bush he saw hanging five robes, which to him are like five roses, and comparable only to the stars. Suddenly he saw one woman leave the water, and he gives a detailed description of this one who happens to be Casandra. Rugero followed her to her house to make love to her, but once more she refused to listen to him. Rugero, however, learned that the duke had been coming to Casandra's house and had been received by the duchess. This, the real cause of his anger, is brought to light only after a laborious account of an entirely extraneous event. Examples of his gongorisms are the following:

"El que nos cuenta los vidas
 (65)
 Daba los mayores horas."

In other words, the clock pointed to midnight.

"Estaba en un candelero
 Muriendo una luz, deseosa
 De hacer sepulcro de plata
 (66)
 El cóncavo de su boca."

in which we learn that Rugero's candle went out!

In the dialogue, Rojas is more natural and his expression

is in general well-suited to the persons involved and to the particular situation. The farewell between Casandra and Alejandro, when the latter is forced to flee, seems especially sincere and free from affectation.

In general comparison of the style of Rotrou with that of Rojas, it may be said that Rotrou has succeeded in avoiding these obvious defects of Rojas. He has cut down the lengthy asides, thus omitting most of the useless and uninteresting comparison which Rojas employs. In the "Venceslas" are found very few metaphors in which the Spanish play abounds. It is true that Rotrou's use of exaggerated antithesis gives a somewhat studied effect to his play, but in general his epigrammatic style is interesting in itself.

No attempt will be made to compare the versification of the two plays, as the systems are too different to be paralleled except in a study devoted solely to that subject. Each poet follows the regular forms of his country, Rojas using the redondilla and Rotrou the alexandrine meter.

CONCLUSION

A close study of the two plays, "No hay ser padre siendo rey" of Rojas and "Venceslas" of Rotrou, confirms the accepted belief that the material of the latter is taken from the Rojas, and proves that while Guillén de Castro's, "La piedad en la justicia", may have influenced Rojas, no account need be taken of it in a study of the French play.

Rotrou follows his model very closely, but has entirely disregarded the second jornada of the Spanish, and has introduced a secondary love-plot. Instead of the three jornadas, Rotrou, according to the accepted tradition of French tragedy, has divided his play into five acts. He adheres to the original in his first, fourth, and fifth acts, which are practically identical with the Spanish, save for certain scenes pertaining to the new situations created by the sub-plot.

While the sub-plot encumbers the action with the superfluous character of Princess Théodore, it helps, however, to give verisimilitude to the main plot, by apparently accounting for the jealousy felt by Prince Ladislas. The duke's reticence in declaring his love allows the play to have the same development as the Rojas. The only other significant change made by Rotrou in the original characters is in that of Ladislas, who is much less violent than Rugero, and who thus becomes more a human being than a mere embodiment of fierce passions.

The Rotrou play, then, is a remodeling of the Spanish

rather than a mere translation, although many parallel passages are to be found in the two plays. ⁽⁶⁷⁾ Rotrou has chosen these lines wisely, as they represent the best in the Spanish play, and has carefully avoided the long descriptions and tiresome asides of the original.

The style employed by the two authors is in both cases typical of the fashionable literary ornateness of the period in which they wrote. Rotrou's style seems the more artistic, as he has not cultivated this super-elegance to such an extreme, and has thus succeeded in avoiding the obvious defects of the Spanish play. The construction of "Venceslas" is clearer and more regular, and the characters come nearer to being true to life, especially that of the elder prince. On the whole Rotrou's play is more spontaneous and dramatic than the Rojas.

NOTES

1. Despois, E., Le Théâtre sous Louis XIV, p. 72.
2. Jarry, J., Essai sur les oeuvres dramatiques de Jean Rotrou, p. 80, p. 210.
3. Schack, Historia de la literatura y del arte dramático en España, Vol. 5, p. 70. See appendix.
4. Crane, Venceslas, p. 23.
5. Person, L., Histoire du Venceslas de Jean Rotrou, Appendix VII, p. 134.
6. Ibid., p. 136, note 1.
7. Petit de Julleville, Histoire de la langue et de la littérature française, volume 4, p. 370.
8. Ibid., p. 373.
9. Diccionario enciclopédico hispano-americano, volume 17, p. 841.
10. Ibid.
11. Person, op. c., p. 10.
12. Biblioteca de Autores Españoles, volume 54, p. 389.
13. Ibid., p. 390.
14. Ibid.
15. Ibid.
16. Ibid.
17. Ibid., p. 391.
18. Ibid., p. 396. Clavela says:
"Un mes no es tan larga ausencia."
19. Ibid.
20. Ibid., p. 401.

21. Ibid., p. 403
22. Ibid., p. 404
23. Ibid.
24. Ibid., p. 405
25. Ibid.
26. Ibid., p. 406
27. See Corneille, Discours sur les trois unités, OEuvres, volume I, p. 98- p. 112.
28. The king is evidently in his royal abode when he calls his son before him, although no definite indication of place is given.
29. Bibl. Aut. Esp., op. c., p. 391.
30. Ibid., p. 395
31. Ibid.
32. Ibid., p. 401, Rugero says
"Caigo al suelo."
33. Ibid., "Vase á entrar, y sale el Rey al encuentro."
34. The king re-enters the palace with Rugero.
35. Ibid., p. 403, "Sale Rugero en la torre con prisines."
36. Ibid., Casandra enters the palace to speak to king.
37. Ibid., p. 403.
38. Ibid., p. 394.
39. See note 27.
40. See note 18.
41. Bibl. Aut. Esp., op. c., p. 396, Casandra says:
"Veinte dias se han pasado
Despues que á mis brazos falta."

42. Ibid., p. 395. Roberto, however, says:

"Ocho días han pasado
 Despues que airado y soberbio
 Ocasionaste la riña
 Dentro en Palacio."

43. "Venceslas", Act I, Scene IV; Act III, Scene 5;
 Act III, Scene VI.

The duke is also given an indirect opportunity
 in his interview with Alexandre, Act III, Scene I.

44. Ibid., Act I, Scene IV.

45. There are in all 576 lines of asides out of a total of
 3316 lines.

46. See Whitmore, *The Supernatural in Tragedy*.

47. Person, op. c., p. 64.

48. Louis XII (1498-1515): "Le roi de France a oublié
 les injures du duc d'Orléans."

49. *Bibl. Aut. Esp.*, op. c., p. 391.

50. Ibid., p. 395.

51. Ibid., p. 391.

52. Ibid., p. 405

53. Hauvette, Henri, *Littérature italienne*, p. 300.

54. Maspey, Umberto, *Ce que la France doit à l'Italie*, p. 13.

55. Brunetière, F., *Corneille et le théâtre espagnol*, *Revue
 des deux mondes*, Jan. 1, 1903, p. 195.

56. See Appendix II.

57. See Appendix III.

58. Person, op. c., p. 97.

59. Ibid.
60. Jarry, op. c., p. 290.
61. Bibl. Aut. Esp., op. c., Introduction, p. XII.
62. Schack, op. c., volume 5, 48.
63. Bibl. Aut. Esp., op. c. p. XV.
64. Ibid., p. 390.
65. Ibid., p. 400.
66. Ibid., p. 401.
67. 711 lines of "Venceslas" are parallel with the Spanish.
See Crane, op. c., Appendix IV.
68. Bibl. Aut. Esp., op. c., volume 43, p. 322.

APPENDIX I.

The following résumé will show the similarity which exists between the Rojas play and Guillén de Castro's "La piedad en la justicia" (1625). It is interesting especially to note the gradual toning-down of the story, first in the Rojas and then in the Rotrou.

Act I. The queen of Hungary has arranged a marriage between Celaura and Atislao, much against the wishes of her son, Prince Carlos. The latter is of an extremely violent temperament, encouraged in his misdeeds, according to the queen, by the bad examples set for him by the king, who is also of a dissolute nature. Prince Carlos threatens to kill Atislao unless he gives up Celaura, for whom Carlos has conceived a violent passion. Celaura in order to save Atislao promises Carlos not to go on with the marriage.

In the meantime, the king has been persuaded by various of his ministers to give up his evil ways. The queen comes to the king, weeping and troubled because the prince has threatened to kill her if she persists in her plans for the marriage of Celaura and Atislao. When the king calls Carlos before him and reproaches him bitterly for his libertine actions, the prince replies that he has merely followed in the footsteps of his father. The king tells his son that he has changed his ways, and that the prince must continue to follow his example.

Act II. The king then arranges a marriage between Carlos and the princess of Bohemia, whose father has heard of the miraculous change in the king of Hungary to the point of doing public penance. Prince Carlos is still determined to have Celaura, even though she is now married to Atislao and he himself has agreed to the marriage with the Bohemian princess. He goes to the country home of Celaura and Atislao, where Carlos has Atislao held by his guards, threatening Celaura to kill her husband, unless she yields to his base desires. There follows a terrible struggle in the mind of Celaura, torn between her great love for her husband and her own honor. She finally sacrifices the latter, but this does not prevent Carlos from killing Atislao.

Act III. Final arrangements are being made for the prince's wedding, when Celaura comes to demand justice from the king, who condemns his son to death. The last scenes depict the conflict in the king's mind between his paternal love and his duty as king to mete out justice. The prince's friends ask that his life be spared and even Celaura begs the king to change the sentence of death. The king refuses, until finally a revolution breaks out, and the prince is proclaimed king. Carlos after his experience with misfortune repents and places the crown at his father's feet, who forgives his son, saying

"No han de ser padres los reyes." (68)

APPENDIX II.

Venceslas, Act I, scene I

Ladislas says:

"Et n'ai-je pas appris, sous son gouvernement,
Assez de politique et de raisonnement
Pour savoir à quels soins oblige un diadème,
Ce qu'un roi doit aux siens, à l'État, à soi-même,
A ses confédérés, à la foi des traités;
Dedans quels intérêts ses droits sont limités,
Quelle guerre est nuisible et quelle d'importance,
A qui, quand et comment il doit son assistance;
Et pour garder, enfin, ses États d'accidents,
Quel ordre il doit tenir et dehors et dedans?
Ne sais-je pas qu'un roi qui veut qu'on le révère
Doit meler à propos l'affable et le sévère,
Et, selon l'exigence et des temps et des lieux,
Savoir faire parler et son front et ses yeux,
Mettre bien la franchise et la feinte en usage,
Porter tantôt un masque et tantôt un visage;
Quelque avis qu'on lui donne, être toujours pareil,
Et se croire souvent plus que tout son conseil?
Mais surtout, et de là dépend l'heur des couronnes,
Savoir bien appliquer les emplois aux personnes,
Et faire, par des choix judicieux et sains,
Tomber le ministère en de fidèles mains;
Élever peu de gens si haut qu'ils puissent nuire,

Être lent à former aussi bien qu'à détruire,
Des bonnes actions garder le souvenir,
Être prompt à payer et tardif à punir?
N'est-ce pas sur cet art, leur dis-je, et ces maximes,
Que se maintient le cours des règnes légitimes?"

APPENDIX III.

Of the following passage, Person in his "Histoire du Venceslas", p. 63, says:

"C'est alors que Venceslas couronne son fils. Ladislas se reconcilie avec Frédéric et il fait aussitôt, par un brusque revirement qui paraîtrait bien invraisemblable, si l'on ne voyait tout de suite que le poète est là derrière pour louer Mazarin, un brillant éloge du ministre dont il était tout à l'heure encore l'ennemi mortel."

Venceslas, Act V, scene IX.

"Qui trouve ou dignement reposer sa couronne,
 Qui rencontre à son trône une ferme colonne,
 Qui possède un sujet digne de cet emploi,
 Peut vanter son bonheur, et peut dire être roi.
 Le Ciel nous l' a donné, cet État le possède;
 Par ses soins tout nous rit, tout fleurit, tout succède;
 Par son art nos voisins, nos propres ennemis,
 N'aspirent qu'à nous être alliés ou nous aime,
 Il fait briller partout notre pouvoir suprême;
 Par lui tout l'Europe ou nous craint ou nous aime,
 Il est de tout l'État la force et l'ornement,
 Et vous me l'ôteriez par votre éloignement.
 L'heur le plus précieux que régnaient, je respire
 Est que vous demeuriez l'âme de cet empire."

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