

THE CODE OF HONOR IN SEVENTEENTH CENTURY SPAIN  
AS SEEN IN THE PLAYS OF GUILLÉN DE CASTRO

by

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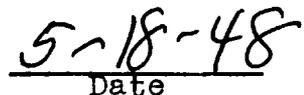
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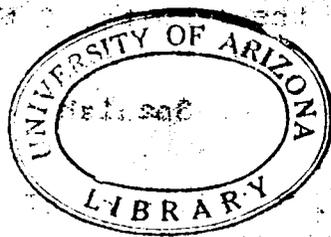
  
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## INTRODUCTION

Guillén de Castro y Bellví was a Spanish dramatist who came from a noble family. This background gave him a thorough training in the code of honor of the noblemen of seventeenth century Spain. His plays show his ideas about the effects of honor on the lives and conduct of men. Therefore I have taken as my problem the examination of the code of honor as seen in his plays.

## CHAPTER I

### LIFE AND WORKS OF CASTRO

Guillén de Castro y Bellvís (1569-1631) is the most famous of the Valencian group of dramatists in the Golden Age of Spain.<sup>1</sup> He was born of noble parents who were related to the first families of Valencia. Not much is known of his early life. In 1592 he was the Captain of the militia which defended the coast against pirates. He married the Marquesa Girón de Rebolledo in 1595. No certain knowledge of his actions is recorded from 1602-1607. It is thought that his wife died during this period and that he left Valencia, but there is no basis for this supposition.<sup>2</sup> The year 1607 saw Castro named Governor of the Scigliano, a fortress in upper Calabria, by the Count of Benavente.<sup>3</sup> By 1609 he had returned to Valencia where he helped found the Academia de las Montañeses del Parnaso in 1619.<sup>4</sup> The Marquis of Peñafiel of the Osuna family became his literary patron and obtained a pension of nearly a thousand crowns for him. He was made a Knight of Santiago in 1623 and also received a royal pension which the Conde Duque of Olivares had secured for him. In 1625 he married his second wife, Angela Salgado of the Osuna family. From this date until his death, July 28, 1631,

he wrote plays in order to support himself and his wife.<sup>5</sup> It is not known if he had any children by either marriage. Reports concerning his death differ. Mérimée says that he was so poor that he was buried by charity,<sup>6</sup> while Hurtado and Palencia maintain that he left a will requesting to be buried from the hospital of the Corona de Aragón.<sup>7</sup> His poverty, if any, was due to mismanagement of his financial affairs rather than to lack of income.

His literary talent was first seen in 1591 when he took the name Secreto as a member of the Nocturnos, a Spanish imitation of the Academias then fashionable in Italy.<sup>8</sup> His contributions number about twenty-five verses and four prose selections. From this time on he must have written a great deal of poetry as he is frequently mentioned by contemporary authors of this time.

Philip III's marriage to Margarita of Austria in 1599 inspired Castro to contribute several sonnets to a volume published to commemorate this event.<sup>9</sup> His verses are also found in Gaspar Mercader's El Prado de Valencia, published in 1601. In the following year some Redondillas of his were included in a volume published by Vicente Gómez. These verses had won the first prize in a competition between the most celebrated Valencian poets. This gives some idea of Castro's fame as a poet in his own day.

In 1603 he is mentioned in the Viage Entretenido by Agustín de Rojas. He is also mentioned by Tarrejo in El Prado de Valencia as one of several Valencian poets who celebrated a marriage between two prominent families. In this same volume published in 1608 are found the first printed plays of Castro of which there is any record, El caballero bobo and El amor constante.

The two greatest Spanish writers of the Golden Age knew Castro and his works. Cervantes mentions him in his Viage del Parnaso, published in 1614, and in 1615 praises him for the "grace and sweetness" of his verse in a volume of Cervantes' plays. Lope de Vega mentions him in La dama boba, which was written in 1613, but not published until 1617.

The first edition of the collected plays of don Guillén de Castro mentioned by any bibliographer appeared at Valencia in 1618, although there is evidence that an unauthorized edition of his works appeared before then. Castro took part in a festival for the canonization of San Isidro in 1620, for which he wrote several pieces.<sup>10</sup> The Primera Parte of Castro's plays was reissued in 1621. His second volume of plays, which he dedicated to his niece, Doña Ana Figuerola de Castro, was published in 1625.<sup>11</sup> Castro is praised by Montalbán in El orfeo de la lengua castellana in 1624 and mentioned by Lope de Vega in El laurel de Apolo in 1630. A portrait of Castro by

Juan de Ribalta can be seen in the academy of San Carlos at Valencia.<sup>12</sup>

Castro wrote between forty and fifty plays. The authorship of some of the plays credited to him is doubted by some scholars, as Barrera points out.<sup>13</sup> For example, there is some question as to whether Las canas en el papel is Castro's or Calderon's. A copy of this play, found in the Duke of Osuna's library with Castro's name on it, is strong evidence for its being his play.

Hurtado and Palencia give a good classification of Castro's plays.<sup>14</sup> According to their ideas they fall into five categories. The first and most important is that group which deals with the historic and heroic drama. The plays in this group include Las mocedades del Cid, Las hazañas del Cid, Pagar en propia moneda, La justicia en la piedad, and La humildad soberbia. The second group is classified as Comedias caballerescas or knightly dramas. This group includes El Conde de Alarcos, El Conde de Irlos, both of which are based on ballads, and Don Quijote de la Mancha, which is based on the Fernando and Dorotea episode from Cervantes' works. The dramatic plays include Engañarse engañando, Pretender con pobreza, and El perfecto caballero. Castro wrote two classical tragedies, Progne y Filomena, which was probably taken from Ovid, and Dido y Eneas, which he rewrote from Virgil. His two best known cape-and-sword plays are El Narciso en su opinión,

and Los mal Casados de Valencia. This classification does not include all Castro's works. One group of Castro's plays, which Hurtado and Palencia do not mention, is his religious dramas. These are El renegado arrepentido, El tao de San Antón, El prodigio de los montes, El mejor esposo, and Las maravillas de Babilonia.

Castro also wrote one play, La manzana de discordia, in collaboration with Mira de Amescua.

Lope de Vega influenced Castro's style of writing.<sup>15</sup> This was probably due to the friendship between the two authors. Lope dedicated his play, Las almenas de Toro, to Castro, while Castro dedicated the second edition of his first volume of plays to Lope's illegitimate daughter, Marcela.<sup>16</sup>

Brutality and a tendency toward extreme situations characterize Castro's plays. Violent emotions and intricate plots are found in many, which show his peculiar bent for dramatic situations.<sup>17</sup> Part of his fondness for such situations may be due to the influence of his audience on his writing. In this regard Castro's dramatic art is based on public taste, so that he is not totally to blame for the melodramatic plots he often uses.

The most noticeable weakness in his plays is his inconsistency of character. A person may change his entire personality suddenly at the end of the play. This may be the fault of the way in which he ends his plays.

Inevitably there is a happy ending, regardless of what tragic situation may have preceded the final action. The sudden change in character is sometimes necessary to bring this happy ending about. The development of the plots of his plays is very weak also. The reader receives the impression that the action is being forced rather than developing naturally. The abundance of details in his plots tends to confuse the reader and makes it difficult to follow the main plot easily. Castro seems to delight in subplots which parallel or contrast with the main plot.

Attempts have been made to trace Castro's own life in his works. One of his best known plays, Los mal casados de Valencia is supposed to show his own unhappy married life. Whether this is correct or not would be difficult to prove, but in the majority of his plays he portrays conjugal love with tenderness and sympathy. One phase of his life which is easily seen in his plays, however, is his poverty or lack of money. Evidently he knew well the trials of a poor nobleman, for in such plays as Pretender en pobreza, El pobre honrado, and El perfecto caballero he deals extensively with the effects of poverty on honor. In all of these plays the hero is poor but noble, and suffers much embarrassment due to his lack of financial resources.

Castro's early poetic writings lay a firm basis for the poetical passages in his later plays. As a poet he is

outstanding in his versification. This poetic ability adds much to the beauty of his plays.

The main theme of all of Castro's plays is the honor of a gentleman and its effects on the lives of the characters involved.<sup>18</sup> Honor forces the action to follow a certain pattern which always leads to catastrophe. This catastrophe and its solution contribute to the dramatic suspense and lead up to the climax, which is immediately followed by the conclusion of the play.

Las Mocedades del Cid is the outstanding work produced by Castro. It is based on the old ballads of the Cid and contains the national spirit of Spain which Castro uses to arouse patriotic feeling in his audience. To the main idea of honor, Castro adds the conflict between love and honor on the part of Ximena. There is a violent clash of emotions, one of his main dramatic devices, which he uses to great advantage in this play. Although it is not considered a masterpiece, it is regarded as the basis of a masterpiece.<sup>19</sup> Corneille used Castro's plots and many of his passages in translation when he wrote Le Cid. Castro's play is thought to have more life and reality than Corneille's play. This is because Castro faithfully represented the popular Spanish beliefs concerning the heroic age, while Corneille's play is an attempt to conform to the strict classical unities. Corneille's play therefore lacks the freedom which is one of the charms of

Castro's work.

Castro as a man was not a great success financially, nor has he acquired fame as a writer since his death. Except for Las mocedades del Cid, his work is neither well known nor outstanding, yet his one great play was an important influence on Corneille, who subsequently influenced French drama. Because of his influence on Corneille he will always be remembered as the author of the inspiration for a masterpiece.

## CHAPTER II

### DEFINITION OF HONOR

Seventeenth Century Spain is a nation of high ideals. These ideals are a part of the life of the individual in theory if not in actual practice. The emphasis placed upon these ideals is seen when the idea of honor is considered. Honor is an idealized abstraction which is so important to them that men lose their lives in order to keep it. Honor and high ideals are not exactly synonymous. It is possible to have one without the other. But they contribute to each other. Thus a man with honor is likely to have high ideals, as a man with high ideals is likely to have honor. Of the two, honor is the more important. An exact definition of honor has to include several things. Honor is reputation or fame, in the sense that a man is considered honorable by his actions; it is a mark of respect paid to those worthy of respect; it is an intrinsic quality in a man, which is seen by his associates, and which causes them to respect him. Usually it comes by birth into a distinguished family and gives a man a tradition to live up to. He is forced into an honorable standard of conduct in imitation of his ancestors.

One of Castro's plays, El caballero bobo, deals with the definition of honor.<sup>1</sup> Anteo, a nobleman's son who

has lived as a rustic, comes to court and sees life as it is lived by the nobles. The question arises as to what honor actually is. Anteo's father tries to define it for his son as reputation which is given to a man by the world. The conclusion of the matter is that a man has honor when he seems to be honorable in the eyes of the world. This somewhat cynical view is enlarged upon in El pobre honrado, where we find that a man is not to be considered honorable merely because he is not dishonorable.<sup>2</sup> On the contrary he is forced to a high standard of conduct in order to show his worth. This will keep him from resting upon his reputation without taking any further action. It is realized that honor is something that demands a great deal from the individual. In fact it is called an invisible thing, nourished by blood, which is so greedy and terrible that it always aspires to the impossible by Castro in Nacimiento de Montesinos.<sup>3</sup> Castro knew when he wrote this that the price of honor is high, yet without it life is impossible for a well born man.

The high ideals that contribute to honor are discussed by Castro in both El perfecto caballero<sup>4</sup> and El Conde Alarcos.<sup>5</sup> In these two plays he shows in detail the training of a man who is honorable. One of the most important factors in these high ideals is a knowledge of Christian doctrine. This requires daily attendance at Mass. Moderation in food and drink is to be learned as early as

possible. The child is sent to school in order to learn how to read and write. He is not to be punished except when he lies. Then he is slapped. This teaches him the necessity of honesty. Training in riding and use of weapons is necessary for the ceremony of knighthood at the age of twenty. When the young man is ready to go out into the world he is advised by his father regarding his future life. This advice gives him a standard of conduct to live by. In regard to his friends he is to stay with men of his own class, be friendly and courteous to all, but intimate with none. He is to avoid women until he decides to marry, and then marry for beauty and worth rather than for money. He is to serve the king in the army and neither seek nor flee from danger. In regard to money, he is to pay his debts and be neither miserly nor overly generous. Gambling is to be avoided due to the possibility of losing and not being able to pay, which will seriously affect his reputation.<sup>6</sup>

The word of a man is important because he bases his honor upon it.<sup>7</sup> If he doesn't keep his word, he stains his honor, since that is an indication that he has given his word treacherously or without any intention of keeping it. At times this insistence upon keeping their word leads nobles into strange situations. For example, in Quien malas manas ha one of the characters prepares to kill himself in order to carry out his promise to his friend.<sup>8</sup>

Fortunately he discovers that he is not the real cause of his friend's insult in time to save his life. Again in Las canas en el papel, one of the characters is forced to defend his enemy because he has previously given his word to help him.<sup>9</sup> This emphasis on the pledged word is so strong that death is considered preferable to breaking one's word.<sup>10</sup>

Certain qualities important to a man of honor are taken for granted. For example, a man is not to show any signs of emotion, since it is unfitting for a man to act like a woman.<sup>11</sup> Nor is a man of good birth supposed to be a coward. Fear of God is a virtue, but fear of man is not.<sup>12</sup> Those in need of help are to be helped even though it means taking the side of the loser in a war in which one's own country is not involved.<sup>13</sup>

Poverty is regarded as a curse. This is seen in several of Castro's plays. The heroes of Pretender con pobreza, El pobre honorado, and El perfecto caballero bewail the sad state of their financial resources and feel embarrassed in the presence of richer men. Their poverty does not affect their honor, which remains their only possession, but it does prevent their marrying, unless they decide to marry for money, which is frowned upon, but done just the same. If the poor man is in a desperate situation, it is permissible for him to borrow from a richer man, providing he expects to be able to repay the

loan.<sup>14</sup> This request is to be made as briefly as possible, possibly to spare the rich man and the poor man much embarrassment.

The intrinsic worth of honor causes it to be placed above either love or life itself. The conflict between love and honor is a very serious one to the Spanish noble of the seventeenth century. In fact Castro's most famous play, Las mocedades del Cid, is based upon this conflict. Castro tells us in Pretender con pobreza that when the question of honor arises, nothing else, including love, is important.<sup>15</sup> Even death with honor is preferable to life without honor, since a man without honor can lead only a life of shame.<sup>16</sup> This is one of the few high ideals contributing to a noble's honor that is actually enforced or practiced.

These high standards or ideals of conduct make up the perfect life. Whether they are ever carried out, except by fictitious characters, is doubtful.

## CHAPTER III

### LOSS OF HONOR

Since the idea of honor is so important and emphasized so much, it can easily be seen how deeply any loss of honor is felt and how seriously the consequences of such a loss are regarded. No matter how diligently a man tries to keep his honor free from any stains, there is always the possibility that the actions of someone else will reflect on him or cause him to be insulted. In this case, although he may not be directly involved in a quarrel with some one, his reputation will be damaged to the extent that it will be necessary for him to take action toward avenging his insult and thus recover his honor.

There are several ways in which a man's honor can be affected by the actions of others. In the first place, if someone gives him a physical blow or slap, he considers himself deeply insulted.<sup>1</sup> The insult is thought of as an attack on his physical courage. It is his duty to prove himself physically strong and brave after such an insult in order to remove the blot on his reputation.

If a man is the victim of a lie told about him, he is again insulted. A lie reflects on his reputation by causing a false impression of the man to be conceived in the mind of the public. The man thus insulted has to show

himself truly honorable and must regain his honor by means of a duel.

A married man can be dishonored by any unfaithfulness on the part of his wife. Even a suspicion of any unfaithfulness is enough to cause a man to feel himself dishonored. This is not limited to the time after the marriage. A man can be dishonored if his wife has been unfaithful to him even before their wedding. Thus in Quien malas mañas ha, Castro has one of the characters feel dishonored because a friend of his cried at the man's wedding.<sup>2</sup> This gives the man the idea that his friend knows his wife too well. In such a case, if the insult is not known publicly, the man avenges himself privately, in order to avoid arousing gossip which will damage his reputation.<sup>3</sup> Since such an insult to the man's honor is considered unbearable, it can only be removed by the blood of the person who has caused his insult. Thus a man may be forced to kill his wife if he merely thinks she has dishonored him.<sup>4</sup>

After a man has lost his reputation because of the actions of others, he is expected to be constantly looking for an opportunity to avenge himself.<sup>5</sup> Any delay in this will only add to his dishonor.<sup>6</sup> When a man has lost his honor and regains it, he adds to his reputation for bravery.<sup>7</sup>

An insult is to be repaid in the same manner in which it is given.<sup>8</sup> If a man is slapped, and blood is drawn, he is to avenge himself by drawing blood. All insults, of whatever type, are regarded as being cleansed only by blood, as blood is thought to be the only agent that will remove stains from one's honor.<sup>9</sup>

The customary way of regaining lost honor is by challenging one's insulter to a duel. This is brought out in El caballero bobo when the means of recovering honor are discussed.<sup>10</sup> Either killing one's opponent or being killed in the duel will supply the lacking honor. But the man who considers himself insulted is to be certain of the identity of his insulter before challenging him to a duel, since to kill the wrong person will not help him.<sup>11</sup> It is also pointed out that to forgive an insult is better than to kill the wrong person. Yet a man who refuses to avenge himself of a known insult is considered ignoble or too weak to take vengeance, and in this respect his reputation is hurt.

A challenge to a duel can be given either orally or in writing. In a written challenge the time, place, and reason for the duel are mentioned, the reason sometimes being spoken of as "a certain matter of your obligation and my honor." The oral challenge is brief and to the point. An agreement of time and place for the duel is all that is necessary since both of the men involved know the reason.

If a man acts in a dishonorable fashion or behaves unseemly, his reputation will be affected to a greater or lesser extent, depending on what the man does. A man can lose his honor by any base action on his part.<sup>12</sup> Such a thing as leaving the battlefield in time of war is considered base or cowardly.<sup>13</sup> A man is also regarded as a coward if he knows of a situation that may lead to his dishonor without his trying to change the situation.<sup>14</sup> This may lead to a dilemma, such as Castro paints in Donde no está su dueño, when Diego at war receives word that his honor is threatened by his wife's actions.<sup>15</sup> He cannot leave the scene of action without dishonoring himself. Yet if he does not attempt to save his honor by keeping watch over his wife he is also dishonoring himself. Such situations are very painful for the man, as he knows that if he once loses his honor by his own actions, there is no way by which he can regain it.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE KING'S HONOR

The king occupied the highest position of authority and power in Spain during the seventeenth century. He was accountable to no one but God for his actions. He was in such an exalted sphere that he was said to be similar to the Aristotelian idea of the Prime Mover.<sup>1</sup> Because of this he commanded much respect from his subjects. This respect gave him great honor. His honor was not dependent on his actions, although his actions could influence the admiration his subjects felt for him. Since he was above all ordinary laws, he was a law unto himself. There were no limitations on his desires. Whatever he wanted to do he had the right and privilege to do.

Castro gives a very clear idea of the power of the king in Allá van leyes donde quieran reyes.<sup>2</sup> The King in this case is a very selfish person who overrides the rights of others in order to gain his own ends. The situation is briefly this: Lorenzo and Leonor are in love and plan to be married. The King loves Leonor also. He tries to stop her marriage to Lorenzo, but when he fails, he sends Lorenzo off to war as one of his generals, hoping to get rid of him in this way. While Lorenzo is gone, the King has Leonor's marriage to Lorenzo annulled so that he can

marry her. When Lorenzo returns from the war, he is surprised to find that his wife is not at home waiting for him. At Court he learns of her marriage to the King. He does not understand just what happened, but he brings their son, Páez, to Court to work on her feelings for their son. She is upset, but there is nothing she can do to change the situation. Lorenzo is imprisoned by the King and condemned to die as a traitor. Páez finally effects his release from prison and the death sentence by an impassioned plea to the King and Queen. The King exiles Lorenzo and Páez to Portugal, where they can not disturb him.

In this play Castro shows how a king can use his power to ruin the lives of others, if his desires run contrary to theirs. The King has no sympathy whatever for Lorenzo or Páez. He recognizes the fact that they both constitute a threat to his power, since if they gain the sympathy of the people, they can start a revolution against him. He gets rid of this potential danger by exiling them to Portugal.

The supreme right of the king to do as he pleases is seen in a speech by Lorenzo in which he says there is nothing impossible when it pleases the king, nor is there any injury in an insult when the king is the cause of it.<sup>3</sup> Because of this concept of the inviolate right of the king, there is no surprise at any of his actions. Although his

subjects may not approve of what he does, they do not question his right to do it. In another speech, this time by the King, the title of the play is used to show that he realizes his power.<sup>4</sup> He does not consider his reputation, since his honor is due him because of his position. Therefore he is not bound by the same code of conduct that is required of an ordinary man.

The position of the king in regard to marriage is also brought out in this play. The King tries to discover some way in which he can marry Leonor and be justified in doing so. Finally, in speaking to his counselors, he is told that it is the duty of a king to marry, in order to leave an heir to the throne.<sup>5</sup> He can not be forced into marriage except by the supplications of his people. This gives him a good reason for marrying Leonor.

The relationship between king and noble is also explained in this play. The King is thought to have honored Lorenzo by appointing him to serve as general of the army. When Lorenzo tries to take advantage of this honor later on, to regain his wife, the King informs him that no man, no matter how honored he is by the king, is to lose the respect due the king.<sup>6</sup> This is in recognition of the wide gulf that exists between the king and the nobles. It is necessary to keep this separation in order that the king may have the authority to command the nobles to do as he wishes.

La justicia en la piedad gives us another picture of a king who uses his power for his own purposes.<sup>7</sup> The King in this instance is a very strong-minded individual who thinks only of satisfying his own desires. He has no concern for the honor of his subjects, nor does he consider their welfare. His only aim in life is to follow his own inclinations. This reaches such a state of affairs that no one respects him. His son follows his father's example and becomes involved in the murder of a woman's husband. When the King suddenly discovers that not even his wife respects him, he abruptly changes his entire character. From a man of very loose morals he turns into the most strict observer of all the ordinances of the code of honor. There is a very decided contrast between the first part of the play and the last. At first the King goes so far as to say: "What is the use of being king if I can't do as I wish?" In the last act he says that he would rather die a painful death than break any of the laws. After his sudden conversion he makes a public confession of his past evil deeds. He begins to take an interest in the welfare of his country to the extent that he leads it in war against a bothersome neighbor and restores normal conditions in his own land. Thus he gains the respect and admiration of his people. When a revolt starts, he considers his presence sufficient protection for the palace in view of the old law of respect for the presence of

the king.

The King in his changed condition is as anxious to defend his subjects' honor as before he had been to undo it. Because his son is involved in the murder of the husband of a certain noble woman, the King calls off his son's proposed marriage to the princess of Bohemia, so that his son may marry the woman whose husband he has killed and thus restore her honor. The King is more concerned with seeing that justice is done to the woman than he is in helping his own son. After the marriage he sentences his son to be killed for his crime. Only the intervention of the people, who like the King's son, saves him from being put to death. This frees the King from any responsibility in the matter. Even though he has emphasized the importance of justice being done, he is relieved that his son will be free, since he is not without love for him.

Castro makes the King almost unbelievably bad in order to show the qualities of an evil king at first and a good king in the later part of the play. The King becomes so conscious of the needs of his people that he has a bell placed outside of his palace, so that anyone in need has only to ring it to gain the King's immediate attention. His only concern is to carry out the law and make sure that there is no injustice.

One rather humorous incident leading up to the King's transformation of character occurs when one of his counselors, evidently well versed in Roman history, relates the unhappy fates of several Roman tyrants. The King's main interest is in the manner of their deaths. When it becomes evident to him that all tyrants die miserably, he is ready to change. He needs only to face the fact that neither his wife nor his subjects respect him and to see that his son is imitating his own evil deeds, with disastrous results, to alter his whole outlook on life. The lack of respect, traditionally afforded the king, is one of the worst blows he receives. By the end of the play he has gained much respect from his people by his actions. In this way he has increased his reputation for honor.

One of the few kings in Castro's plays who is honorable throughout the entire play is the King in Las mocedades del Cid.<sup>8</sup> He is a personification of all that is best in a king. He thinks always of the well-being of his subjects, even to the exclusion of his concern for the honor of the country as a whole. This is seen toward the end of the play when don Martín, the challenger from Aragon, is introduced. When Arias Gonzalo volunteers, despite his age, to fight don Martín and thus save the honor of Castile, the King restrains him by saying that he is so important that he can not risk losing him.

Instead, the King considers sending an army against Aragon. This is not necessary when Rodrigo, the Cid, appears on the scene in time to answer don Martín's challenge and fight for Castile. This is just one example of the King's concern for his subjects. Other examples occur throughout the play. In the scene of the quarrel between the Count Lozano and Diego Laínez, which causes the main action of the play, the King is anxious to avoid any scandal and tries to keep the matter a secret in order to protect the honor of both of the men involved. When the insult is made public by Rodrigo's action in avenging his father, the King is forced to take action because of the demands of Ximena. If it were not for her insistent pleading for justice, the King would gladly forget the matter, since his sympathy is with Rodrigo. At last he finds a solution to the problem in the marriage of Rodrigo to Ximena. In this way he restores Ximena's honor, which is his duty as king, and he also is able to forgive Rodrigo.

In the King's talk with Sancho, the heir to the throne, Castro gives us the law of inheritance as it applied to kings and kingdoms. In Spain the king can only will the lands he has conquered himself to his various children, since the lands he inherited from his father fall to the heir of the throne. This insures the succession of certain lands from father to son. In this case

Sancho inherits Castile, Extremadura, and Navarra. The King has no right to give any of these lands to his other children.

These three plays, Allá van leyes donde quieran reyes, La justicia en la piedad, and Las mocedades del Cid, give a more complete and extensive picture of the power and the honor of the king than any other of Castro's works. In several plays he mentions qualities that are considered necessary for a king, as well as showing us some of the very few restrictions on the king's liberty. La humildad soberbia contains one speech which gives an idea of the duty of the king in regard to his own subjects as opposed to the dictates of foreign kings. The king here has been asked by a neighboring king to protect the rights of one of his subjects. Because one of the king's men has been insulted and pleads for justice from the king, he cannot obey the wishes of the neighboring king until he has seen to it that his own subject has been taken care of.

In this same play it is seen that a king may be forced to go against his own wishes in regard to keeping his word. The King here had given his word to execute a man. In the meantime the man saves the King's life, so that he is under obligation to him. When the King is reminded that he had sworn to execute this man, he refuses at first because the man had saved his life. But since he has given his word in the matter, he carries it out

even though he does not want to do so.

From this discussion it can be seen that the king's honor was based on his position, which carried with it certain rights and few responsibilities. His honor as a king is not based on his actions and he has almost unlimited power and authority.

## CHAPTER V

### THE HONOR OF A NOBLE AS A SUBJECT OF THE KING

Since the nobles and all other men are under the king, they have certain obligations to the king which are required of them by their sense of honor. These obligations contribute to their reputation in that by fulfilling them a man gains more respect and thereby increases his reputation for honor.

In El perfecto caballero, Castro gives a complete illustration of what a man is supposed to do in order to be considered a perfect subject.<sup>1</sup> Jaime de Centellas and his son Miguel go to Naples where they are welcomed into the Court by the King. Miguel impresses everyone with his manners and extreme courtesy. When the King asks Jaime how he taught Miguel to be such a perfect gentleman, Jaime relates in detail the training with which he brought Miguel up as a gentleman. Their only misfortune is their poverty. The King honors them greatly in preparation for asking them to help him. He is in love with Diana, a woman of the Court, and tries by dishonorable means to get her in his power. He appeals to Miguel to help him. Miguel loves Diana also, but his sense of duty to the King is so great that he agrees to help him in his plot. The Queen meanwhile has planned a meeting with Ludovico, Diana's brother. The

plots are mixed up in such a way that the King is killed by Ludovico, who becomes King in his place. Miguel is then free to marry Diana, and the play ends happily.

In the unfolding of the plot of this play, Castro puts in many touches which give a clear concept of what a man's duty to the king is. He uses the speeches of Miguel, the perfect noble, to express his ideas on the subject. Thus it is seen that a man's first duty is to serve his king by obedience to his wishes. This obedience is taken for granted so much that the King tells Miguel, after asking him to help him, that he will not wait for an answer, since if he doubts Miguel's obedience he insults him.<sup>2</sup> This blind obedience even forces Miguel to help the King in his plot against the woman Miguel loves. Miguel also says that he cannot contradict the king, as it is a sign of honor not to go against the word of the king.

Any form of revolt or rebellion against the king is not to be tolerated, according to Miguel, since the perfect man is only to respect the king and neither give nor take away kingdoms.<sup>3</sup>

The only exception to the rule of obedience to the king is found in the matter of the man's personal honor. If the king commands him to do anything that is dishonorable or unbecoming a man of honor, he can refuse to do it on the basis that it will dishonor him. Miguel tells the King that if he should be asked to do something which is

against his honor he will not do it.<sup>4</sup> Again he exclaims to the Queen that it is impossible for him to commit a traitorous deed, since Heaven will not permit him to do so. As his ancestors did not act in a dishonorable fashion, he cannot either. He realizes that if he loses his honor by his own actions, even if it is in the service of the King, he cannot hope to regain it. In this way he is justified in refusing to do any dishonorable thing even though the king commands him.

Castro presents another side of a man's position in regard to the king in El ayo de su hijo.<sup>5</sup> The Prince is the head of the government in the absence of his father and takes advantage of this to attempt to seduce Elvira, the daughter of the Duke. The Duke finds out about the plot in time to save his daughter and lectures the Prince on his evil conduct. In this lecture he warns him that he has no right to even enter the house of one of his subjects without his permission. Especially if the prince or king has any intention of dishonoring the family, a man has the right to defend his house and family against any intrusion or attack by the ruler.

As a final sign of the respect due to the king, Castro says in Ingratitud por amor that no man is ever to think of killing the king, no matter what reasons he may have for such an act.<sup>6</sup> Because the king is considered to be the defender of his subjects, if one of them kills him,

he is in reality killing or harming himself.

Castro illustrates this high regard for the person of the king in one scene in El amor constante.<sup>7</sup> During a revolt in the country, one of the soldiers is about to kill a man whom he thinks is worthy of death because of his base actions. Suddenly Celauro, the leader of the revolt, comes in and stops the soldier from carrying out his plan by telling him the man he is about to kill is the King. The soldier immediately prostrates himself before the King as a sign of reverence for his presence. From this it is seen that even though a king may be unworthy of respect, he is respected because of his position as king, if for no other reason.

The king's honor forms such an important part of the honor of his subjects that Castro says in Quien malas mañas ha that any blot on the king's honor is a blot on his subjects' honor also.<sup>8</sup> Therefore it is necessary for the subject to be careful of his king's honor in order to assure the purity of his own honor.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE HONOR OF WOMEN

A woman's honor is her most priceless possession. If she has it, she needs nothing else in life. If she doesn't have it, she can never hope to be respected. It is based on the same idea of reputation and respect that governs a man's honor. She is held to a strict code of behavior which is designed to show her honor by her actions.

Many of Castro's plays deal with the question of a woman's honor and her attempts to preserve it in the face of opposition. El curioso impertinente especially deals with this problem.<sup>1</sup> This play is based on the story from Cervantes' Don Quijote de la Mancha, but Castro elaborates on the theme of the heroine's attempts to keep her honor in spite of her husband's tests. The story concerns Camila who loves Lotario but marries Anselmo. When he decides to try her love for him he asks Lotario, his best friend, to tempt her to be unfaithful. Camila is such an honorable woman that she has overcome her love for Lotario and developed a great love for Anselmo. She attributes this to the force of her honor. When she realizes what her husband is trying to do, she is ashamed that he thinks so lightly of her. This makes her all the more determined to keep her honor. Anselmo leaves her alone in the house with

Lotario as part of a prearranged plan. Camila avoids Lotario and makes her maid stay in the same room with her constantly, in order to prevent gossip. When Anselmo returns unexpectedly he is surprised that both Lotario and Camila are so glad to see him. Lotario, as an honorable man, is not in favor of this plot against Camila, but his friendship with Anselmo causes him to agree to it. Anselmo again leaves the two alone. This time the strain is too much for them and Camila yields to the suggestion that she be unfaithful to her husband. Since she feels that it is all his fault, she does not blame herself for her actions. The Duke and Duchess of Florence come to visit Camila just before Anselmo returns again. He accuses Camila before them, and in a fight with Lotario he is killed. Lotario is not blamed for his death since it is agreed that if Anselmo hadn't been so curious he wouldn't have died.

The moral of this play seems to be the idea that husbands should trust their wives but not put temptation in their paths. The weakness of a woman's honor is also pointed out in Camila's surrender to Lotario. Even though she prided herself on her strong sense of honor, she nevertheless fell. She regained her honor by marrying Lotario after Anselmo's death.

In another play, Don Quijote de la Mancha, from Cervantes' work, Castro again mentions the value of honor to women.<sup>2</sup> This time he uses the Fernando and Dorotea

incident as a plot. In one speech he has Dorotea say that her honor to her is as precious as her very blood. Regardless of this she also yields to temptation and thereby loses her honor, only to regain it finally by marrying her tempter.

Not all women fall prey to attempts on their honor so easily. Celia, the heroine of Cuánto se estima el honor, is such a strong woman in regard to her honor that nothing can induce her to abandon her scruples.<sup>3</sup> Even when Alejandro, the man she loves, is sent to Naples to lead the war and leaves her at the mercy of the Prince of Sicily, she keeps her honor clean until Alejandro's return. Her virtue is rewarded finally when attempts made to prove that she is not of noble birth fail and leave the way open for her marriage to Alejandro. Castro here emphasizes the necessity of quiet resistance to insults. He has Celia say that honorable women resist wrongs without letting anyone know what they are going through. In this way a woman keeps her reputation free from any blemish of gossip.

The importance of a good reputation is seen as a vital factor in a woman's honor in La humildad soberbia.<sup>4</sup> When Rodrigo returns from the war in France, he has almost changed his mind about marrying María who has waited for him. She has kept her reputation so well that he can not charge her with any dishonorable conduct and thus be rid of her. Although he would rather marry Margarita, he

marries María for the sake of honor. Women are forced to live up to a code of honorable conduct in order to show their honor.<sup>5</sup> The idea is emphasized in Pretender con pobreza when one of the characters says that it is no use for a woman to be truly honorable if she does not show it in her actions.<sup>6</sup> Since she will be judged by her behavior, if it is frivolous she will not have a good reputation.

In keeping with the idea that a woman can dishonor herself by any frivolous actions on her part, even though she actually does nothing wrong, is the plot of Pagar en propia moneda.<sup>7</sup> Elena, one of Castro's most human women, is in love with Pedro, Prince of Aragon, who has come to Castile to win Elena's hand in a tournament. Count Enrique suspects a plot and has Pedro imprisoned. Elvira, who is in love with Enrique, is jealous of Elena because Enrique loves her. When she sees Elena impulsively embrace Enrique, after he tells her that Pedro will be let out of prison, she tells Elena's father, the King, about it. The King thinks Elena has disgraced herself and him by her impetuous actions. Elena is imprisoned as Pedro is released. Due to misinformation the Kings of Castile and Aragon think their children, Elena and Pedro respectively, are dead and blame each other for the deaths. A war begins and then stops when Elena and Pedro appear on the scene. The fathers are so relieved that they give their permission for the two to marry. The disgrace that Elena is supposed

to have brought upon herself by embracing Enrique is forgotten. Her behavior had been entirely innocent, but her single action has caused her to be considered frivolous because of the emphasis put on serious behavior.

That a woman can be dishonored and still have a good reputation, if her dishonor is not known, is seen in La fuerza de la sangre.<sup>8</sup> Lidora, the heroine, is ruined the night before her proposed marriage. She refuses to marry after such a disgrace, and as her attacker was disguised, she does not know who he is. Several years later she meets Grisanto. His voice sounds familiar to her, and at last she recognizes him as her abductor. She challenges him with a crucifix which she had taken from one of the rooms to which he had taken her. He accepts it as valid evidence and agrees to marry her. Since her disgrace had not been made known outside of her family, her honor was preserved.

Scattered references to a woman's problems in regard to love and honor give some conception of Castro's idea on the subject. In Ingratitud por amor an unequal love affair is spoken of as an eclipse on honor.<sup>9</sup> Two speeches in El perfecto caballero elaborate on this idea. In one Castro says that a woman of honor thinks more of an honorable captivity (marriage) than of an infamous liberty.<sup>10</sup> Thus it is better to be married and respected rather than free and scorned. Again he says that if a woman has a dishonorable love, she gains honor by conquering it, due

to the supposition that she is overcoming a strong adversary.<sup>11</sup>

Although it is not emphasized as much as honor between men, there is quite a bit of honor between women. They have high standards in regard to friendship. Marfira, the heroine of El Conde de Irlos, refuses to marry the Prince because she knows that Eleonora, her best friend, is in love with him. She says that she will not repay Eleonora's friendship with such dishonorable conduct.<sup>12</sup> Thus we see that honor in friendship was valued above any increase in social position which Marfira would have received as a result of marrying the Prince.

Women also base their honor on their given word. The Princess, in Cuánto se estima el honor, says she would rather die than fail to do as she promises.<sup>13</sup> The Queen uses her word as a weapon in La tragedia por los celos.<sup>14</sup> She has threatened Margarita with death if she continues seeing the King secretly. Margarita cannot keep the King from pursuing her. The Queen is about to carry out her word when the King intervenes. He alone has the power to prevent it.

Although women respect the king and obey him even as men do, they have the same privilege to consider their honor above obedience to the king. Thus, when Marfira is commanded to go against her idea of honorable conduct in

El Conde de Irlos she justifies her refusal by saying that she has in her favor her honor.<sup>15</sup>

Men do not take women's honor too seriously. Since women are considered to be weaker and therefore in need of protection, they do not put much confidence in them. Castro has the Count, in Las canas en el papel, go so far as to say that whoever gave women the idea of honor was not in his right mind.<sup>16</sup> Honor in women is also compared to crystal because of its frailty.<sup>17</sup>

Despite their lack of confidence in women, men respect them because of their supposed weakness. Women are classed with old people as demanding respect.<sup>18</sup> This causes men to protect women from anything which may be considered violent. Duels, especially, are to be kept from the knowledge of women, since they are considered too weak to be able to stand any kind of excitement. Rodrigo recognizes this in La humildad soberbia and attempts to keep his wife from knowing that he has been challenged to a duel.<sup>19</sup>

Women are not to know such things, he says, because it may cause them pain. This idea was not adhered to too strictly since in many cases duels were fought right outside the lady's house so that she could not avoid either seeing or hearing the commotion. It is considered proper for a woman to faint at any sign of violence, since this will show her to be quite unused to such occurrences, and thus give her a reputation of quiet living.<sup>20</sup>

The importance of a woman's reputation is seen to good advantage in Las mocedades del Cid.<sup>21</sup> Ximena bases all her actions on her concern for her reputation, since to a woman that is the most valuable part of honor. A woman, therefore, is not to do anything that will damage her reputation, since in this way she will preserve her honor.

## CHAPTER VII

### HONOR IN FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

The question of honor in the family is important because of the influence it exercises on the training of the youth of the family. If the child is not taught to follow the code of honorable conduct in the life of the family, he cannot be expected to follow it in his dealings outside of the family in later life.

One of the most important steps in the development of honor in family life is the training of the child by the parents. It involves careful teaching on the part of the parents to show the child what is expected of him as a man of honor. In such plays as El Conde Alarcos, El perfecto caballero, El ayo de su hijo, and El caballero bobo, Castro gives an idea of the detailed attention paid to the child's rearing. This is very important since it lays the basis for his future life.

El ayo de su hijo presents an interesting situation.<sup>1</sup> The Duke decides that it is time his son learned what his responsibilities will be at the death of his father. In preparation for this time, the Duke turns over his estate to his son to do as he wishes. The Duke stays with him in an advisory capacity, hoping to be able to prevent him from making any serious mistakes. His son has become

involved in a scandalous affair with the daughter of the Duke's best friend. In order to clear up matters it is necessary for his son to marry this girl. Everything works out for the best. The Duke's son proves himself to be a man after all.

This play is of value not so much for the plot as for the rules for living which the Duke gives his son. While they lead to an idealized existence, they also show what is required of a man who wishes to be considered honorable. One of the most important of these rules, and one which is not carried out very well in the plot of the play, is the idea of obedience to one's parents. This is emphasized in other plays much more than it is in El ayo de su hijo. For example, in Las hazañas del Cid, it is said that whoever does not obey his parents offends Heaven.<sup>2</sup> The insistence on this strict obedience is seen in Las canas en el papel.<sup>3</sup> Rodrigo, the father of Elvira and don Juan, thinks Elvira has insulted his honor by her affair with the Count of Belmar. He faces the Count with this charge. The Count in his anger pulls some hairs from Rodrigo's beard and throws them in his face as an insult. Rodrigo sends the hairs from his beard to Juan and asks him to avenge this insult to the family honor. This is a difficult decision for Juan since the Count is his best friend. At last he realizes that he must obey his father and avenge

the insult. He fights a duel with the Count which restores the family honor.

A humorous situation develops in La fuerza de la costumbre as a result of a mix-up in the training of the children of the family.<sup>4</sup> Don Pedro, a soldier, has reared his daughter, Hipólita, as a soldier, so that she wears men's clothing and is quite accustomed to using the sword. Costanza, don Pedro's wife, has brought up their son as a girl. He can knit and sew beautifully, but he knows nothing of the art of warfare. When don Pedro returns from the war, he brings Hipólita, now twenty, with him. His wife is as amazed at the actions of her war-like daughter as he is at the behavior of his timid son. He insists that his son learn how to use a sword properly. Hipólita teaches her brother how to handle it, while he teaches her how to mend and darn. When Felix and Hipólita fall in love, almost overnight they change completely. Felix becomes masterful and sure of himself, while Hipólita loses her domineering attitude and is as submissive as a wife should be. She marries Luis, and Felix marries Leonora. Although this play may be considered a comedy, with no serious moral attached, it does show the importance of the early training of the child as an influence on his later life.

The honor due parents by their children is a result of the respect of the children for the age and authority of their parents. This respect is not only shown to parents

but to older brothers as well. Los enemigos hermanos deals with the effects of the lack of this respect on the relations between two brothers.<sup>5</sup> Otón and Ceslau, supposed brothers, are rivals in every possible way. Otón, as the elder, rebukes Ceslau for his lack of respect. Their father reminds them that Otón as the elder has the authority of the father in his absence. Ceslau, then, is to respect Otón as the representative of their father. This unnatural feeling between Otón and Ceslau is explained later by the confession of their mother that they are not really brothers after all. She has deliberately kept the matter a secret in order to gain power over their father. When her part in the plot is made known, Otón is shown to be the heir to the throne which is gladly given to him because of his reputation for honor.

If any one member of the family behaves in an unseemly way or dishonors himself by his actions, he is thought to have brought shame upon his family. This applies to daughters as well as to sons. Thus in Pretender con pobreza, don Juan, a poor nobleman, considers himself ruined by the disgrace of his sister's dishonor.<sup>6</sup> The fact that she is not entirely to blame for her dishonor is not important to him. She has dishonored the family and therefore must be punished. The same situation exists here as is found in Las canas en el papel, in that Juan's best friend is the cause of his sister's disgrace. Juan regains the family

honor by a duel with the offending friend. His sister finally marries her insulter, so that her honor is restored also.

The punishment of one who dishonors the family is to be done discretely in order to avoid any public knowledge of the affair. If a daughter is the cause of the family disgrace, she can either die or marry her seducer or be sent to a convent. Some women consider any blot on their honor such a shameful thing that they prefer to die rather than face life.<sup>7</sup> The most common solution to the situation is that of marrying one's seducer. This provides a way in which a woman can revive her honor and be respected again. If she dishonors herself by her own actions, she goes to a convent for the rest of her life. In one of Castro's religious plays, El tao de San Antón, Anatile chooses to do this after losing her honor by leaving her father's house.<sup>8</sup> By spending her life in a convent she will be able to redeem her honor.

Any stain on the family honor is so serious that all possible measures are to be taken to prevent such an occurrence. This responsibility extends even to more distant members of the family. Thus Castro has one of the characters in El Conde Alarcos warn that if his cousin is insulted, he will take her revenge upon himself in the absence of her immediate family. In this way family unity is preserved and extended to include other relatives.

All this emphasis on the honor of the family as a whole creates a sense of mutual dependence that deepens the roots of family life. In this respect the idea of family honor brings the family closer together as well as maintains a high moral level of conduct.

## CHAPTER VIII

### HONOR BETWEEN HUSBAND AND WIFE

The matter of honor between husband and wife is a very serious one. Because the actions of one affect the reputation of the other, it is necessary for them to have such respect and affection for each other that they will not do anything dishonorable. Their respect for each other is the only safeguard each has in this matter. If their honor is threatened in any way, it is the duty of the husband to protect it.

Donde no está su dueño deals with the question of a wife's honor threatened in her husband's absence.<sup>1</sup> Diego is forced to leave his wife, Aurelia, while he goes to war in Milan. He leaves her in charge of his father, Juan, so that she will have someone to defend her honor in his absence. While Diego is gone, the Count annoys Aurelia with his constant attention. She appeals to Juan for help. He realizes that she is in a dangerous position and writes Diego to come home as soon as possible. Juan also writes Diego's commanding officer about the situation, so that Diego may be released from his military duties without incurring any disgrace. Diego comes home just in time to save his wife's honor. In this way he preserves his own honor as well.

Many of the fine points of honor between husband and wife are brought out in this play. Diego and Aurelia respect each other and govern their actions accordingly. Diego, in asking his father to guard Aurelia's honor while he is gone, shows that he realizes how necessary it is for a husband to be careful of his wife. Juan explains this carefulness not as jealousy but as part of the husband's duty. If a man is not careful of his wife, he loses his reputation for honor.

When Diego discovers that his honor is being threatened by the Count's actions in his absence, he realizes that he must avoid any occasion of insult. He knows that a man who sees that he is going to be insulted in some way and does nothing to prevent that insult is guilty of great shame and dishonor by his own lack of action in warding off the insult.

Aurelia is in a very delicate position. There is nothing in her actions or behavior that can dishonor her, but the mere suggestion of gossip is enough to ruin her reputation. When the Count comes to see her, even though her father-in-law is present, there is a threat of gossip. Just the sight of the Count entering her house is cause for evil talk on the part of her neighbors. Therefore his presence is a menace to her good name.

An interesting side-light on the situation is given by a speech of Aurelia's when she says that in her

husband's absence her honor causes her to live a lonely life. If she does not keep herself apart from all social life she will be thought to be enjoying his absence more than is considered proper. Therefore by living a solitary life she shows her respect and affection for her husband.

When there is a lack of respect between husband and wife, situations arise which cause a great deal of trouble. Quien malas mañas ha develops this idea fully.<sup>2</sup> The trouble in this case is caused by Galalón, a confirmed liar, who tells Rodolfo that Oliveros is in love with Sevilla, Rodolfo's wife. Since Rodolfo is newly married, he does not yet fully trust his wife and thinks she may have some part in the question. In order to avoid any trouble with Oliveros, Rodolfo has the King send Oliveros to Persia to collect tribute money with the idea that he will never come back alive and therefore will not be a threat to the security of his honor. To Rodolfo's surprise, Oliveros does return from Persia. Rodolfo is about to kill him, when he discovers that Galalón has lied to him. Then he kills Galalón instead.

This play demonstrates the importance of trusting one's husband or wife. Because he did not trust Sevilla, Rodolfo suffers agony in suspecting her to be untrue to him. Since he does not tell Sevilla what he thinks, she does not understand his actions. The whole problem could have been avoided if he had respected his wife and

trusted her.

Del vicio en los extremos presents another picture of a husband who does not respect his wife.<sup>3</sup> Antonio is Jacinta's husband, but he is more interested in Ana than he is in Jacinta. Because he does not have any affection for his wife, he treats her very badly. Jacinta is so ashamed of her position that she is afraid to express herself on any subject. This only increases Antonio's interest in Ana, who is very out-spoken. Don Fadrique, Antonio's father, tries to settle the situation by making Antonio realize his responsibilities as Jacinta's husband. Antonio has no interest in the subject. He plans to arrange a secret meeting with Ana and asks his friend, Alvaro, to ask Ana if he may see her. Jacinta, meanwhile, has decided to change. Instead of meekly submitting to Antonio's wishes, she becomes domineering and aggressive. This does not impress Antonio either. He goes through with his plans to meet Ana, not knowing that she and Jacinta have traded places. At last he decides that he really loves his wife and penitently returns to her. Alvaro marries Ana in order to preserve her reputation.

Don Fadrique plays an important role here, since it is through him that most of the advice as to honor between husband and wife is presented. As Antonio's father he is in a position which gives him an advantage, in that he can

see both sides. His advice to Jacinta is interesting. At first he tells her to be less timid and more self-confident. Later, when she seems to have followed his advice too well, he warns her that men are not slaves and should not be subject to their wives. He has as little influence on her as he has on Antonio. He repeats the warning that don Juan gave Diego in Donde no está su dueño concerning a man's responsibility to watch his wife's honor. Don Fadrique explains that a man should not do so out of jealousy, but rather to guard against any gossip. He adds that a man who shows signs of jealousy is thought of as being wronged. He warns Antonio against mistreating his wife, saying that men of honor only punish their wives when their wives have given them occasion or have ruined their honor by their actions.

The change in the character of both Antonio and Jacinta makes this play of interest as a character study as well as a study in the relationships between husband and wife.

Some scholars base their contention that Castro was unhappily married on Los mal casados de Valencia.<sup>4</sup> Perhaps there is some basis for this in that he writes so knowingly of the life of a man who does not love his wife. However, any good playwright is able to write of conditions which he may not have actually experienced, and Castro, being on the whole a good playwright, is no exception.

The plot of this play revolves around the central character of Elvira, who is in love with Alvaro. He takes her into his home disguised as a page. His wife doesn't know that Elvira isn't a boy. The situation is complicated by Eugenia's love for Alvaro. She takes every opportunity to throw herself at him. Elvira causes trouble for every one in the play, and at last decides that she doesn't think much of marriage and doesn't want any part of it. She says she will enter a convent for the rest of her life, since that is the only peaceful place she knows of.

There is no sense of honor whatever in this play. The only person with even a slight sense of respectability is Alvaro's wife, Hipólita. She resists the advances of Valerian, her husband's best friend, because she doesn't consider it proper to entertain him in her husband's absence. Other than this, there is no attempt at honorable action or conduct. Hypocrisy is the main element in the dialogue, with the asides furnishing the real feelings of the personages. If this is Castro's idea of married life, he must have been a very disillusioned man. It is more probable that he merely used this situation to show what marriage is like when neither of the parties respect or admire each other.

A much happier picture of married life is found in El amor constante.<sup>5</sup> There is a great deal of trouble for the main characters, but they keep their respect and affection for each other despite all tribulations. Celauro, the brother of the King, is in love with Nísida. The King loves Nísida also, and forgets his wife and his duties as king. He tries to use his influence to force Celauro to give up Nísida. When Celauro refuses, he is exiled. Years later Celauro meets Nísida as they both are wandering in a forest, but they are soon parted. Their son, Leonido, has met and fallen in love with the Princess. Celauro asks Leonido to help him find out if Nísida is in danger. The King, meanwhile, has cast off his wife and asked Nísida to marry him. She refuses. He threatens her with death, but she gladly drinks poison rather than marry him. Celauro comes to her rescue just as she is dying. She dies in his arms. Leonido discovers that Celauro and Nísida are his parents. Celauro kills himself after Nísida's death. Leonido kills the King, and, as heir to the throne on his father's side, he becomes King.

While this is really a tragic story, the presentation of married life is one of the most favorable that Castro gives. Celauro and Nísida really respect each other as well as admire each other. Their happiness together is based on the mutual respect. Since they honor each other, they are honored by others. There is nothing in their

relationship that is dishonorable or out of accord with the ideals of honorable action. Theirs, except for the tragic ending, is the ideal marriage.

Castro mentions other important details in various other plays. The husband's command over his wife's actions is seen in La justicia en la piedad, when the Prince's wife is leaving him without his permission.<sup>6</sup> He tells her that she can go nowhere without his consent. She owes him that obedience as his wife. This idea is not rigidly carried out in Castro's plays, as most wives do as they please. However, the husband has the right to exercise this privilege if it suits him.

A man is dependent upon his wife for the safety of his honor, but he cannot force her to be faithful to him against her wishes. As the Duke tells Anteo in El caballero bobo, only God can make her true to her husband.<sup>7</sup>

If a woman dishonors her husband by being unfaithful to him, he has the right to kill her. In this way his honor will be cleansed, as is seen in Ingratitud por amor.<sup>8</sup> Even if his wife is really innocent, the slightest suspicion that her behavior is shameful or dishonorable, is enough to give him a reason for killing her. Since any suspicion, however slight, is sufficient to damage his reputation, he can restore his reputation by removing the cause of his disgrace. This gives a man a very powerful weapon with which to guard his honor.

Since the relationships between husbands and wives are of such a serious nature in view of the code of honor, it is necessary that mutual respect be shown to the other's honor in order that the combined honor of the couple be acknowledged by the world. In this way they will both obtain a reputation for honor which will increase their individual honor.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE CODE OF HONOR AS SEEN IN LAS MOCEDADES DEL CID

All of Castro's plays deal with the idea of honor to a greater or lesser extent. The one play that sums up the entire code of honor in all its various phases is Las mocedades del Cid. This is not merely a development of the concept of honor. It is the embodiment of honor. Honor directs the action. It forces the characters to follow a certain pattern of conduct. It provides the final solution. Every character is governed by his idea of honor. This play, therefore, can be taken as a perfect example of the influence of honor.

Although it is based on the old Spanish ballads of the Cid, Castro includes enough of the spirit and life of the Golden-Age Spain to justify its use as a picture of honor in the seventeenth century.

The play begins as Rodrigo, later known as the Cid, is completing the ceremony of knighthood. He receives the King's sword. The Queen presents him with a horse, and the Princess, Urraca, buckles his spurs on for him. These signs of honor are very gratifying to Rodrigo, and especially to his father, Diego Laínez. After Rodrigo has left, the King calls his four counselors, Diego Laínez, Arias Gonzalo, Peransules, and the Count Lozano together to tell

them he must choose a new tutor for the young Prince Sancho. He asks Diego Laínez to be the Prince's tutor. This causes the Count to become angry. He has thought he will be chosen because he is the most outstanding warrior as well as the most influential member of the Court. In his anger he strikes Diego Laínez on the cheek, thus insulting him. Diego immediately goes in search of his sons. He tries each one of them by squeezing their hands and finds the younger sons to be weak. Rodrigo is the last one he tries. He bites Rodrigo's fingers which causes Rodrigo to say that if he were not his father, he would not tolerate such actions from him. Now Diego knows that Rodrigo is the one to avenge his insult. He tells Rodrigo of the affair and asks him to remove this stain from his honor. Rodrigo realizes his duty in the matter, but he hesitates because he loves Ximena, the Count's daughter. However, his sense of family honor overcomes all other feelings, and he goes out to fight the Count. He challenges him, but the Count ridicules his youth. Rodrigo shows his valor and strength in the duel by killing the Count. Just as he is about to be arrested, Urraca protects him and gives him an opportunity to leave quickly.

Ximena and Diego appear before the King and appeal to him, Ximena for justice in avenging the death of her father, and Diego for mercy in that the deed was justifiable.

The King is about to have Diego imprisoned when Sancho comes forth and defends him. He uses his power as the heir to the throne to protect Diego. The King puts him in Sancho's care. Ximena continues to bewail the loss of her father. Rodrigo enters her private apartments to surrender himself to her as the slayer of her father. He gives her the opportunity to kill him, but she refuses to take advantage of it. She is torn between her love for him and her sense of honor in avenging the death of her father. For a brief period her love for Rodrigo overcomes her sense of honor. Diego, meanwhile, has been gathering five hundred nobles who are willing to follow Rodrigo into exile and fight with him against the Moors. Rodrigo leaves his father and goes out to serve the King and thus gain favor with him.

Urraca is at her mother's country seat. She watches Rodrigo approach with his men. She is in love with him, but he only respects her. He leaves to continue on his way to fight the Moors. As a shepherd is running from the Moorish army, Rodrigo and his men appear in the distance. In the battle that follows, one Moorish king is captured. Rodrigo says that he must capture five kings in one day in order to keep his vow to the King.

Sancho has a lesson in the use of weapons with Diego. Sancho remembers an old saying that he would be killed treacherously by a weapon. He suspects his brothers and

sisters. Urraca appears on the scene with a javelin in her hand. This immediately reminds Sancho of the saying. Diego tells Urraca about it, in order to explain Sancho's sudden change of disposition. She thinks he is being rather silly and laughs at him. Just as the situation becomes unpleasant, the King appears to receive a Moorish king whom Rodrigo has sent to him. The Moor tells the King about Rodrigo's wonderful deeds. Then Rodrigo comes in. Everyone welcomes him as a great hero. The entrance of Ximena in mourning changes the atmosphere from that of joy to that of suspense. She pleads for justice. The King is not moved by her petitions and says that perhaps some day her sadness will turn to joy. Rodrigo offers his trophies to the King, who accepts them gladly.

Some time later Urraca tells Arias Gonzalo of her fear that when her father dies, she will be left helpless. Arias tries to console her by saying that she can marry a neighboring king. She objects to this and tells Arias that she loves only Rodrigo and won't marry anyone else.

Ximena again pleads with the King. He is tired of her constant crying and tries to quiet her. Because she is thought to be in love with Rodrigo, a plot is arranged in which a servant comes in with the message that Rodrigo has been killed. She nearly faints. The King sees that she really loves Rodrigo. In order to prove that she is thinking only of her honor, she asks the King if she may

have a proclamation by the town crier to the effect that she will give her fortune and her hand in marriage to the one who brings her the head of Rodrigo. If the person who answers her proclamation is not equal to her own rank, she will give him half of her fortune, since she cannot marry anyone below her own station.

At this point Castro inserts the legend of Rodrigo and San Lázaro. At first the saint seems to be a leper. Rodrigo shares his food with him and tries to help him. He is overcome with sleep. As he sleeps the leper becomes the saint. He blesses Rodrigo and disappears.

Meanwhile the King is troubled by a messenger from Aragon who has challenged Castile to send out a warrior to battle with don Martín or else lose Calahorra to Aragon. Don Martín enters to taunt the King about Castile's weakness. Just then Rodrigo enters and challenges him. Don Martín determines to win the hand of Ximena by offering her Rodrigo's head. When Ximena hears this, she says nothing can console her now.

Sancho has been causing a great deal of annoyance for his father. The King decides to divide his kingdom and give a part to each of his children. Sancho, as the heir to the throne, receives the lands that the King inherited from his father, but the lands which the King has conquered are to be divided among his children. Arias

Gonzalo is not in favor of this plan, as he says it will cause trouble. Sancho enters to hear the King's decision. He wants the King to give him all of the kingdom instead of dividing it, and threatens to go to war after his father's death to gain what his father will not give him.

Ximena enters dressed in festive clothing instead of mourning in preparation for her coming marriage. She thinks Rodrigo has been killed and expects to marry don Martín. When a messenger comes in to say that a knight has arrived from Aragon, she is very much surprised to see Rodrigo. He says that since she didn't specify whether his head was to be on his shoulders or not, he comes to offer it to her. The King says Rodrigo is right and should be her husband. When she decides it is ordained by Heaven, she accepts him to his great joy.

From the King down, each person acts in accordance with his idea of the actions of an honorable person. The King, first of all, is an example of the ruler who puts his people and his country above his own personal desires. He has no personal ambitions for himself. His unusual concern for his subjects is seen in the incident of Arias Gonzalo volunteering to fight don Martín. The King is conscious of the respect due him as King, however, and shows this in the scene of the insult to Diego. In this violent clash of wills he recognizes the lack of respect shown to his presence. In consultation with Arias Gonzalo

and Peransules he decides to keep the insult to Diego a secret and avenge it secretly, to spare any possibility of disgrace. When an open scandal can not be avoided, after Rodrigo has killed the Count, the King is forced to punish Diego. He intends to imprison him, but Sancho prevents him from carrying out his plan. Rodrigo is really the one to be punished. However, since he leaves to fight the Moors, the King does not seriously plan any punishment for him. He has to provide some means of justice for Ximena, especially since she pleads so earnestly for it. When he discovers that she loves Rodrigo, he thinks he sees a solution in their marriage. In that way the demands of honor will be fulfilled, and their personal happiness will be insured also.

In all his actions the King is motivated by his concern for his subjects which is a part of his sense of honor.

Sancho, on the other hand, is a Prince who follows his own inclinations. Castro bases these two characters on historical facts, so there is no invention on his part of the roles actually played by the two Kings. The contrast between the two types is interesting, since it shows both the good and the bad that can be expected of a king. Sancho is not without honor. He has a very high regard for himself and for his reputation, which is a sign of a man of honor. But he knows what he wants and does not

hesitate to go to any length to get it. He admires Rodrigo and cannot see him go out as a knight without wanting to do likewise, even though he is too young. His defense of Diego is admirable in a young prince, from the point of view that he is defending his aged tutor. He is also defying his father's power by exerting his own strength as heir to the throne. His later defiance of his father's plans to divide the kingdom is a sign of a lack of obedience. Since obedience to one's parents is an important factor in the honor of a man, it can be seen how this affects him. He does nothing dishonorable, though, so that he does not lose any honor. It is the assurance that he will not dishonor himself by his actions that gives him the freedom to act as he does.

Diego Laínez is the perfect example of an honorable man. Nothing in his life is contrary to the standard of honor. He can say with pride that his life can serve as a model for Sancho to follow. Because of the purity of his honor, the insult he receives from the Count seems all the more awful to him. He bewails the loss of his honor in terms which show how deeply he values it. Immediately he seeks to avenge himself. Although he does not want to ask Rodrigo to take charge of his vengeance, he sees that his younger sons are incapable of the deed that must be done to restore his honor. After Rodrigo has killed the

Count, Diego considers his honor to be regained so that he is again an honorable man. In him we have a picture of a man who loses and regains his honor with the resulting emotions, first of shame and then of pride.

Rodrigo is the most perfect knight that can be imagined. He does nothing that is wrong or dishonorable in any way. He shows his respect for the King in the ceremony of knighthood and proves his loyalty as a subject in his battles against the Moors. His Christian character is seen in his dealings with San Lázaro. Obedience is one of his strong qualities. He shows this by his quick action in avenging his father's insult. In this scene his physical strength is shown as he overcomes the Count in the duel. This is a great honor for him, since he has triumphed over a stronger adversary.

Respect for women, another important quality in a man, is seen in Rodrigo's actions in regard to Urraca and Ximena. He respects Urraca as the daughter of the King and feels honored when she pays special attention to him. Ximena, however, is the one he loves. His love for her is matched by his sense of duty toward his father so that it is a great effort for him to kill her father. But he realizes the important consequences of such a deed and carries it out in order to restore his father's honor. He still loves her and shows his repentance when he offers himself to her to be killed. When she refuses to do so,

he sees that she loves him. This knowledge leads him to offer himself as her husband in the end. By so doing he not only gives her back her lost honor but considers his own wishes in the matter.

The conflict between love and honor on the part of Ximena is the main plot of the play. Her love for Rodrigo is opposed to her sense of duty in avenging her father's death, so that she is torn between the two. When Rodrigo offers himself to her to be killed in revenge for her father's death, she can not bring herself to the point of actually killing him. Yet she can not forget what she must do to keep her reputation. Her actions are guided by her concept of honor and the idea of what she is expected to do as an honorable woman. The uppermost thought in her mind is to keep her reputation clean. In order to accomplish this she appeals to the King for justice repeatedly. She shows by her actions in asking for justice that her main concern is her honor. By this means she covers her love for Rodrigo so that no one really knows how she feels about him until his imaginary death is announced. Her sudden lack of composure reveals her love and proves to the King that the one solution to this problem is the marriage of Ximena to Rodrigo. She cannot let this happen without one final effort to show her honor. When she offers to marry the man who brings her Rodrigo's head, she thinks she is sacrificing all for her honor. As it turns

out she gains by such an action, since Rodrigo's victory over don Martín opens the way for him to offer himself as her husband. Still she thinks of her reputation and is reluctant to accept him until she decides it is God's will. Then she knows she has made every possible effort to gain an honorable reputation. She can now marry Rodrigo with a free conscience. By insisting on justice and pleading with the King, she regains her lost honor and proves herself to be a truly honorable woman.

Urraca is an unhappy woman whose life has no hope of happiness in it. Her love for Rodrigo is not returned, since he loves Ximena. Any hopes she has of living a peaceful life are threatened by Sancho's defiant attitude. She realizes her position and tries to make the best of it. She is bound by her honor to live a very limited life. Her honor is the only consolation that is left to her.

Arias Gonzalo and Peransules are not major personages in this play, but they also illustrate the effects of honor. Arias is related to Diego Lainez, and therefore takes his side in the quarrel. Peransules, as a relative of the Count, stands with Ximena in demanding vengeance. The strength of family ties in affairs of honor is seen by their actions.

In the life of each character that has been discussed the influence of the idea of honor can be seen. The King

shows his honor by his concern for his subjects. Sancho shows his honor by his ideas on his own reputation and power as a future king. Diego reveals the value of his honor by his actions when he loses it. Rodrigo is forced by honor to kill the father of the woman he loves. Ximena is forced by her sense of honor to plead for vengeance on the man who killed her father, and Urraca is bound by honor to live a lonely life. The importance of honor can be seen in the effect it has on the lives of the people involved. It can easily be understood why it is said that honor is worth much, but it costs a great deal.<sup>1</sup>

## CONCLUSION

From the study of Castro's plays it is seen that the code of honor is a vital force in the life of the time. It is based on one's reputation and actions. Honor can be lost if one is insulted and can be regained by the death of the insulter. The need for secrecy in avenging an insult is necessary to the maintenance of a good reputation. This code of honor is not restricted to men but extends to women also. It even penetrates the life of the family. Honor forces one to follow a certain pattern of behavior, which may not be in agreement with one's own personal desires. This is especially seen in Las mocedades del Cid. Honor is considered so important that death is preferable to life without honor.

## Chapter I. Notes.

1. Romera-Navarro, Historia de la literatura española, 361.
2. Hurtado-Palencia, Historia de la literatura española, 671.
3. Mérimée and Morley, History of Spanish Literature, 332.
4. Hurtado-Palencia, op. cit., 671.
5. Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. II, 352.
6. Mérimée and Morley, op. cit., 332.
7. Hurtado-Palencia, op. cit., 671.
8. Ticknor, History of Spanish Literature, Vol. II, 352.
9. Rennert, Ingratitud por amor, 7.
10. Ticknor, op. cit., 353.
11. Rennert, op. cit., 19.
12. Ticknor, op. cit., 357.
13. Barrera, Catálogo del teatro antiguo español, 80-81.
14. Hurtado-Palencia, op. cit., 671-672.
15. Ticknor, op. cit., 354.
16. Rennert, op. cit., 18.
17. Mérimée and Morley, op. cit., 333.
18. Romera-Navarro, op. cit., 364.
19. Fitzmaurice-Kelly, Historia de la literatura española, 259.

## Chapter II. Notes.

1. El caballero bobo, Obras, I, 50.
2. El pobre honrado, Obras, II, 302.
3. Nacimiento de Montesinos, Obras, II, 428.
4. El perfecto caballero, Obras, I, 138.
5. El Conde Alarcos, Obras, II, 26.
6. El ayo de su hijo, Obras, III, 455.
7. Don Quijote de la Mancha, Obras, II, 344.
8. Quien malas mañas ha, Obras, II, 360.
9. Las canas en el papel, Obras, II, 399.
10. Donde no está su dueño, Obras, II, 49.
11. Las hazañas del Cid, B.A.E., Vol. 43, 274c.
12. La fuerza de la costumbre, B.A.E., Vol. 43, 349c.
13. La humildad soberbia, Obras, I, 464.
14. El pobre honrado, Obras, II, 314.
15. Pretender con pobreza, Obras, II, 445.
16. Ingratitud por amor, Rennert, 118.

## Chapter III. Notes.

1. El caballero bobo, Obras, I, 50.
2. Quien malas mañas ha, Obras, II, 363.
3. Los mal casados de Valencia, B.A.E., Vol. 43, 384c.
4. El curioso impertinente, Obras, III, 470.
5. Las hazañas del Cid, B.A.E., Vol. 43, 272c.
6. Nacimiento de Montesinos, Obras, II, 413.
7. El pobre honrado, Obras, II, 311.
8. Las mocedades del Cid, B.A.E., Vol. 43, 243c.
9. Ibid., 242c.
10. El caballero bobo, Obras, I, 50.
11. Del vicio en los extremos, Obras, III, 339.
12. Las canas en el papel, Obras, II, 410.
13. Pretender con pobreza, Obras, II, 445.
14. El caballero bobo, Obras, I, 50.
15. Donde no está su dueño, Obras, II, 71.

## Chapter IV. Notes.

1. La tragedia por los celos, Libros raros, Vol. XII, 218.
2. Allá van leyes donde quieren reyes, Obras, I, 245.
3. Ibid., 279.
4. Ibid., 272.
5. Ibid., 249.
6. Ibid., 257.
7. La justicia en la piedad, B.A.E., Vol. 43, 303.
8. Las mocedades del Cid, B.A.E., Vol. 43, 239.
9. La humildad soberbia, Obras, I, 498.

## Chapter V. Notes.

1. El perfecto caballero, Obras, II, 155.
2. Ibid., 161.
3. Ibid., 160.
4. Ibid., 161.
5. El ayo de su hijo, Obras, III, 460.
6. Ingratitud por amor, Rennert, 94.
7. El amor constante, B.A.E., Vol. 43, 292.
8. Quien malas mañas ha, Obras, II, 370.

## Chapter VI. Notes.

1. El curioso impertinente, Obras, II, 250.
2. Don Quijote de la Mancha, Obras, II, 336.
3. Cuánto se estima el honor, Obras, II, 110.
4. La humildad soberbia, Obras, I, 496.
5. Ibid., 474.
6. Pretender con pobreza, Obras, II, 440.
7. Pagar en propia moneda, Obras, I, 150.
8. La fuerza de la sangre, Obras, III, 242.
9. Ingratitud por amor, Rennert, 77.
10. El perfecto caballero, Obras, II, 133.
11. Ibid., 136.
12. El Conde de Irlos, Obras, I, 385.
13. Cuánto se estima el honor, Obras, II, 118.
14. La tragedia por los celos, Libros raros, Vol. XII, 210.
15. El Conde de Irlos, Obras, I, 386.
16. Las canas en el papel, Obras, II, 400.
17. Cuánto se estima el honor, Obras, II, 114.
18. La verdad averiguada, Obras, II, 295.
19. La humildad soberbia, Obras, I, 494.
20. Allá van leyes donde quieren reyes, Obras, I, 253.
21. Las mocedades del Cid, B.A.E., Vol. 43, 239.

## Chapter VII. Notes.

1. El ayo de su hijo, Obras, III, 460.
2. Las hazañas del Cid, B.A.E., Vol. 43, 259.
3. Las canas en el papel, Obras, II, 382.
4. La fuerza de la costumbre, B.A.E., Vol. 43, 347.
5. Los enemigos hermanos, Obras, II, 10.
6. Pretender con pobreza, Obras, II, 420.
7. La fuerza de la sangre, Obras, III, 243.
8. El tao de San Antón, Comedias Desconocidas, Vol. I, 12.

## Chapter VIII. Notes.

1. Donde no está su dueño, Obras, II, 40.
2. Quien malas mañas ha, Obras, II, 365.
3. Del vicio en los extremos, Obras, III, 325.
4. Los mal casados de Valencia, B.A.E., Vol. 43, 367.
5. El amor constante, B.A.E., Vol. 43, 281.
6. La justicia en la piedad, B.A.E., Vol. 43, 303.
7. El caballero bobo, Obras, I, 51.
8. Ingratitud por amor, Rennert, 90.

## Chapter IX. Notes.

1. El amor constante, B.A.E., Vol. 43, 288.

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