

**“Aunque perlado...”: Cardinal Luis de Borja,
Dechado de amor and *Qüestión de amor***

Gregory Peter Andrachuk
University of Victoria

The sentimental romance *Qüestión de amor* (Valencia, 1513) is a book full of mysteries, the most important of which is the identity of the anonymous author, and almost as importantly, the reason for his anonymity. Early criticism of this work saw it simplistically as a chronicle of Neapolitan court life, “una especie de crónica de salones y galanterías” (Menéndez y Pelayo, 49). Indeed, the detailed descriptions of clothing, colours and material, the lists of courtiers in attendance at particular functions, the inscriptions and embroidery –all of this of necessity involves a sporadic compilation and the work may well have begun as a sort of chronicle. But recent research suggests that the author’s intentions changed as time went on, and further, that the text was composed in at least two stages, with a fair part of the poetry included in *Qüestión de amor* circulating in manuscript form.¹ By mid-1512 (that is, after the Battle of Ravenna on Easter Day, April 11 between the forces of France and those of the Holy League), when the second part of *Qüestión de amor* was written, the author had come to see his work as something quite different, with a purpose much deeper than that of providing a courtly pastime as a *roman à clé*, although this remained a vital part of the text at least for the superficial reader. The political events in Italy in the early years of the 16th century which culminated in the Battle of Ravenna brought the frivolity of court life in Naples into sharp contrast with the cruel reality of conflict. This battle effectively signaled the end of the Neapolitan court; many of its courtiers, including a number of those mentioned in this work, were killed, injured or captured in a span of hours. The anonymous author, perhaps shocked by the devastating outcome, and especially by the death of his friend and protagonist Jerónimo Fenollet (whose pseudonym is Flamiano), may have restructured his narrative as a result. Flamiano’s death effectively ends the *qüestión* between himself and Vasquirán (the accepted pseudonym of the author), although leaving it unsettled: “la porffa o cuestión de Flamiano y Vasquirán, la qual también queda indeterminada” (157). It is the battle and its effect on society which moves the *Qüestión de amor* from

¹ See Rosario Consuelo Gonzalo García 1996 and also Martín Carrillo 1992: “Sicuramente il libro fu scritto in modo frammentario, seguendo il susseguirsi delle feste, giostre e degli altri spettacoli” (767). The circulation of the poetry independently of the prose part of the text, whether composed earlier and subsequently inserted into the text (as Gonzalo García would have it [311]) or extracted from an early version of it, confirms that the author was adept at the composition of courtly poetry (Andrachuk, 1994a and b). Gonzalo García is also correct in saying that the section of the work dealing with the Battle of Ravenna alters the author’s and the reader’s interpretation of the work as a whole: “Lejos queda ahora aquella idea de haber tomado meras ‘anotaciones a lápiz’ un cronista mundano cualquiera. Y de ahí precisamente el motivo de ser y la necesidad de esta segunda parte de la obra” (318). The completed text would have been revised with the *prólogo* and the *argumento y declaración* composed last.

what might have been an interesting but minor chronicle of fashion and behaviour to something more significant, to what must have been at the time a provocative piece of social criticism, one which required anonymity.

The mystery of authorship

A background presence of historical events is not unknown in the genre of the sentimental romance. There is such a background, for example, in the opening lines of *Cárcel de amor*, and woven throughout *Tratado notable de amor*. But in these works the events of history do not form part of the narrative, nor inform the narrative in any significant way; that is, they do not shape the reader's interpretation of the work as a whole. In *Qüestión de amor*, however, the author deliberately imposes the violent facts of reality upon the fabric of his work in such a way that the contemporary reader's awareness of the contrast between fiction and reality *must* condition his interpretation.² The author guides his reader very clearly as he moves from the first part, in which fiction and pseudonym play a large role, to the second part in which the idealised but empty life of the court gives way to a brutal reality, "mouida la Fortuna de enemigable embidia" (159).³ In making this sudden shift, the author asks his readers to judge what has been presented in the first part –the frivolous and sybaritic life of the court– against what happens in the second part. When the work is considered this way, the *qüestión de amor* between Vasquirán and Flamiano moves from the foreground to the background. The shift in focus is accompanied by an abrupt change in the narrative procedure as the author declares that from this point on he will use the real names of the courtiers instead of pseudonyms. He links this change specifically to the Battle of Ravenna, for it is the outcome of this battle which gives a new meaning to his work:

Agora mudaremos el estilo o forma de la obra. Esto será que agora todos los caualleros y damas...nombraremos por sus propios nombres en las cosas acaescidas después de esta fiesta fasta la dolorosa batalla de Ravena, donde la mayor parte d'estos señores y caualleros fueron muertos o presos.
(158)

The seeds of destruction of the idealised society described in the first part⁴ are found in this society's failure to recognise the fiction it lived and the reality it avoided.

² The failure of early criticism on *Qüestión de amor* to see it as a work with a serious purpose was caused by a failure, inevitable perhaps, to appreciate the effect of the Battle of Ravenna on the contemporary mind. This effect can be judged by the fact that in the 16th century estimates of the number of deaths in this battle ran to 20,000 (see Andrachuk 2011, 552).

³ References to the text are from the edition of Andrachuk 2006.

⁴ "Todos estos mancebos, y damas, y muchos otros príncipes y señores se hallauan en tanta suma y manera de contentamiento y fraternidad, los vnos con los otros, assí los españoles vnos con otros, como los mismos naturales de la tierra con ellos, que dudo que en diuersas tierras ni reynos ni largos tiempos

Given the result of the Battle of Ravenna, the individual principally responsible for this failure in the eyes of the author would be the Viceroy himself, Ramón de Cardona, who both personally and in his official position must be accountable.⁵ If his comportment before and during the military campaign were seen in retrospect to be less than appropriate, some oblique mention or inference might be expected.

Just as the first, that is, the fictive part of the work, concentrates on the appearance of the courtiers in their entertainments and mock battles, the second (and briefer) part describes the preparations for the Battle of Ravenna with the same attention to outward show, as if this battle were viewed by the Viceroy and the other courtiers as yet another (albeit greater) instance of the *ludus* of that society. There is no mention at all of the Viceroy making any meaningful preparation or planning any strategy for this conflict.⁶ For the reader aware of the outcome (as all the intended readers would be) the passages which follow the rubric “De los atauíos y gastos del visorey” present a nauseating accumulation of details of clothing, paraphernalia and retainers, none of which would alter the outcome of the battle in the slightest degree:

Lleuó su Señoría cien aluaderos vestidos con ropetas de paño verd´escuro y rosado de grana, jubones de raso o tafetán blanco y morado, calças blancas y moradas, gorras de grana...Lleuaua más el visorey cincuenta continos del Rey, todos mancebos, hijos de caualleros, los quales yuan tan bien ataiados que ninguno lleuaua menos de dos cauillos de armas con todo su cumplimento de sus personas. Lleuaua veynte y quatro cauillos de su persona, ocho de armas, ocho estradiotes ocho a la gineta⁷...más veynte moços d´espuelas con ropetas...veynte y quatro pages...vestidos con ropetas de grana...lleuaua su capilla con doze cantores, muy complida; lleuaua sus atabales y trompetas...

The list goes on and on, ending with an indictment of the Viceroy’s poor judgement and a simple but piercing statement of excess: “Baste que se supo por

pasados ni presentes, tanta conformidad ni amor, tan esforçados y bien criados caualleros ni tan galanes se ayan hallado” (158-59).

⁵ The Holy League suffered casualties at Ravenna numbering in modern estimates as high as 12,000 men including a very large number of the nobles at the court of Naples. And while the leader of the French forces, Gaston de Foix, was killed, Ramón de Cardona himself at one point fled the field. Although this is not mentioned in *Qüestión de amor* there might be an echo of it in the way the material is presented.

⁶ This is not to say that such preparations were not made, but they do not form part of the narrative. In the first part of the text, in contrast, the strategy for the mock entertainments is well detailed.

⁷ The mention of the “ocho estradiotes” and “ocho a la gineta” is surely intended to remind the astute reader of the earlier juego de cañas organised by Cardinal Luis de Borja at the instigation of Flamiano. In this mock battle two opposing team of courtiers, one led by the Cardinal and one by Flamiano presented with horse and rider equipped “a la estradiota” (using long stirrups which keep the legs straight) and “a la gineta” (using a more relaxed form) (56). See Noel Fallows 1995.

muchas certeneidades que gastó, sin lo que propio tenía, veynte y dos mil ducados de oro antes que de Nápoles partiese, en solo el aparejo de su persona y casa” (163-65).

The intended reader, that is a reader familiar with the courtly society of Naples and Valencia,⁸ will see quite clearly the author’s implied criticism of the superficial life of the court (when viewed through the lens of reality) and of the Viceroy in particular and will be even more interested in identifying the anonymous author who has hidden his name (“dexando su nombre encubierto,” 2) but the full significance of his anonymity cannot be understood until we unravel the mystery of his identity. The author expects that the astute reader will be able to use the clues presented in both the first and second parts of the story to reveal not only the names of the courtiers, but also of his own.

The entire work, in fact, is based the notion of mystery-solving; at the most immediate level this means determining the identities of the characters hidden behind pseudonyms. At the very outset he lays plain the key needed by a curious reader (one familiar with society of the court of Naples) to solve the mysteries:

El autor [...] muda y finge todos los nombres de los caualleros y damas que en la obra se introduzen, y los títulos, ciudades, y tierras [...]. Mas para quien querrá ser curioso y saber la verdad, las primeras letras de los nombres fengidos son las primeras letras de los verdaderos [...]. Y por las colores de los atauíos [...] y por las primeras letras de las inuenciones se puede también conocer quién son los seruidores y las damas a quien siruen. (2-3)

The greater mystery, however, is that of the identity of the author. The reader is, in fact, alerted to the importance of this anonymity, and is thereby challenged to fully participate in the ludic quality of the work by attempting to solve the issue of authorial anonymity. Before speaking of the other names which have been altered the author declares that his own name is deeply obscured, not simply by a pseudonym based on the true name as in the case of the other courtiers, but by suppressing it almost entirely; “El autor en la obra presente calla y encubre su nombre...porque los detractores mejor puedan saciar las malas lenguas no sabiendo de quién detratán” (2). His name, despite not being mentioned, *is* alluded to within the text but at a level which will make the solving of the mystery far more difficult than solving that of the other courtiers.⁹ Those who will attempt to unravel the mystery of authorship will be

⁸ Not only was *Qüestión de amor* published in Valencia in 1513, many of the courtiers mentioned were of Valencian origin, including Jerónimo de Fenollet (“Flamiano”). Further, of those surviving members of the court of Naples, a significant number were present later in the Valencian court of Germaine de Foix as described in Milán’s *El cortesano*. Among these courtiers was Alonso de Cardona and Francisco de Fenollet, brother of Jerónimo. See Nancy Marino 1992.

⁹ I disagree with Eulàlia Duran’s statement that “l’autor no dona pistes sobre el nom real de Vasquirán” (1995-96, 398). He does indeed give clues, but not based on the name of Vasquirán. The clues are

those who see beyond and beneath the obvious, unlike “los que leyeren sin leer” (3) and are content with the superficial game of identifying courtiers.¹⁰ The verbs used in laying out the mystery of authorship (“calla y encubre”) are important because they imply that while his name is *callado*, his identity is *encubierto* and that it therefore can be found within the text itself. For this reason any attribution of authorship must be based primarily on clues found (“discovered” or “uncovered”) within the text of *Questión de amor* itself. Any other procedure is pure speculation.

There have been two serious attributions of authorship which have no firm grounding within the text. The first is to a “Juan Vázquez” (Croce, 1894) and the second to the poet of the *Cancionero General* of 1511 known as the “Comendador Escrivà” (Perugini 1996, Eulàlia Duran 1995-96 and Ivan Parisi 2009). There are plausible reasons for these attributions but they both fail in the crucial matter of proof *internal* to the text.

In the case of “Vázquez”, the declared poet of *Dechado de amor* (c.1510, printed in second edition of the *Cancionero General*, 1514), there are obvious and significant parallels between his work and *Questión de amor*. The fact that the authorial voice of the latter is found in the name of the character Vasquirán (a name with which “Vázquez” is partially homophonic), and that both works speak of the courtly society of early 16th century Naples and of many of the same courtiers, along with more detailed similarities,¹¹ lead to the inevitable conclusion that these two works likely have the same author. I fully agree with this conclusion. But Croce and those who follow him have assumed that “Vázquez” is the real name of the poet of *Dechado*. They then set about trying to find a contemporary Vázquez who might fit the bill –and they have had little success in doing so.¹² If “Vasquirán” is the literary pseudonym of the author-character of *Questión de amor*, and if the poem *Dechado de amor*, which deals with the same characters in the same milieu, is by the same author, why would one assume that the authorial name “Vázquez” is anything different from “Vasquirán” (that is, a pseudonym), particularly given that there is no clearly identifiable contemporary poet by that name?¹³

considerably more sophisticated and aimed at a more astute reader for reasons associated with his identity (Andrachuk 2011, especially 540-44).

¹⁰ See Andrachuk 2006, 3, note 6.

¹¹ One such parallel is found in *Dechado* in the poet’s address to the Queen of Naples: “Pero cuanto del mandar / os ha quitado ventura / tanto os ha dado natura / de virtud y hermosura / cuanto os ha podido dar” (l.16-20). Compare with Ysiana’s statement to Vasquirán in *Questión de amor*: “La Fortuna os pudo quitar lo que pudo, pero no la virtud que en vos queda, que es más” and Vasquirán’s reply: “Señora, plega a Dios que tanta parte de bien os dé de la tierra quanto en vuestra hermosura os a dado de lo del cielo” (122-23).

¹² Eulàlia Duran is correct in saying “Peró no sabem res del tal Vázquez i és insegura tota identificació amb poetes d’aquest cognom més o menys coetanis” (1995-96, 398). Martín Carrillo, who also accepts that the author of *Dechado de amor* and that of *Questión de amor* are one and the same, is more direct: “Vázquez é uno sconosciuto per gli storici della letteratura spagnola” (766).

¹³ Duran comments correctly: “Potser no és el camí adequat intentar identificar el cognom Vázquez amb una persona real. Podria tractar-se també d’un pseudònim, i en aquest cas no invalidaria la hipòtesi que

The second attribution is similar in that much ink has been spilled trying to identify the “Comendador Escrivà” of the *Cancionero General*. The recent investigations by Ivan Parisi show that this person is likely neither Joan Ram Escrivà (as suggested by Perugini) nor Pedro Luis Escrivà (supported by Duran) but Baltasar Escrivà de Romaní. There is little to suggest that any of the candidates for the identity of the “Comendador Escrivà” moved in the social circles of *Dechado* or of *Qüestión de amor*. Given what the author says about his identity and the implication that it will be found deeply embedded, the question remains: is there anything hidden in the text of *Qüestión de amor* (that is, “encubierto”) which might point to any Escrivà as author? The answer is *NO*.

A third claim suggesting that the author of *Qüestión de amor* is Alonso de Cardona, the “Don Alonso de Cardona” of the *Cancionero General* of 1511, was made only after examining the character Vasquirán, the situations in which he is found, and the courtiers with whom he is closely associated.¹⁴ It then became clear that there was an elaborate system of clues embedded within the text, encompassing personal relationships, sounds, colours, and situations, all of which gave emphasis to the name CARDONA. The results of this first stage of investigation were presented in two articles (Andrachuk 1994a and 1994b) and expanded upon in a further study (2006). At that point the most that could be said with reasonable certainty was that the author of *Qüestión de amor* was very likely Don Alonso de Cardona, author of twenty two poems in the *Cancionero General* of 1511 which show distinct thematic and stylistic similarities to those of *Qüestión de amor* (1994b, 427-38 especially). But that was merely to give a name to the author; it did not actually identify him as a specific historical person (in other words, it did not answer the question “who was Alonso de Cardona, the poet?”).¹⁵

Further research (2011) more definitively identified the author and poet as Alonso Folch de Cardona y Fajardo, a member of one of the most prominent families of the kingdom of Valencia, Lord of Guadalest and eventual *Almirante de Aragón* whose principal heirs (beginning with his elder son Sancho de Cardona) would have the title of *Marqués de Guadalest*.¹⁶ This research, based on genealogical and historical

una mateixa persona fos l'autor del *Dechado de amor* i de la *Qüestión de amor*” (1996, 402). She proposes yet another possible candidate for authorship: Rodrigo Hurtado de Mendoza, *Marqués de Cenete* (399-401). But the same objection applies to him as to the Comendador Escrivà - there is no evidence whatever within the *Qüestión de amor* to support such a claim.

¹⁴ Alonso de Cardona is provably associated with this social circle. See Andrachuk 2011 and 2012.

¹⁵ Martí Grajales (1927, 223) suggested that he might be the same Alonso de Cardona who was *Almirante de Aragón*, and in this he has been proved correct.

¹⁶ Sancho de Cardona was granted this title in 1542. Alonso de Cardona is described by one who knew him, Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo, as if he were indeed a character from *Qüestión de amor*: “Demás de ser gentil hombre e bien proporcionado e de lindo gesto, era muy bien hablado e de graciosa conversación, e tan comedido e bien criado e lindo cortesano...gran danzador...tañía e jugaba bien [...] era un gentil justador e era de vivas e grandes fuerzas; trovaba en verso castellano e escribía bien” (2000, 141-42). His contemporary repute as a courtly lover is made clear in a poem in the *Cancionero General* by the Bachiller Ximénez: he places Don Alonso de Cardona (along with others of his social

sources, led subsequently (2012) to a rather surprising conclusion: that his second son, Juan de Cardona y Ruiz de Lihori¹⁷ was quite possibly the “Juan de Cardona” who was the stated author of *Tratado Notable de amor* (unpublished, but written c.1545-47).

The cumulative weight of evidence for the identification of Alonso de Cardona as author, both within the text of *Qüestión de amor* and outside of it is, I believe, compelling. A recently discovered parallel between Alonso Folch de Cardona y Fajardo and the authorial voice-and-protagonist Vasquirán bridges the gap between reality and fiction: the action of *Qüestión de amor* is stated within the text to begin in 1508, immediately after the death of the spouse of Vasquirán;¹⁸ significantly, 1508 is also the date of the death of the wife of Alonso Folch de Cardona y Fajardo, Isabel Ruiz de Lihori, who, as the daughter of the *Visconte di Gagliano* (or Gayano) had significant land holdings both in Spain and in Sicily.¹⁹ Thus both Vasquirán and Alonso de Cardona are in the year 1508 in a state of mourning. In itself this correspondence might be coincidence; added to other evidence it argues strongly for Alonso de Cardona as author (Andrachuk 2012, 469).

In this paper I return to *Qüestión de amor* and briefly to *Dechado de amor* and in them, to look at one particular courtier who plays a significant role in each: Cardinal Pedro Luis de Borja Lanzol de Romaní, commonly known as “Luis de Borja”, and in

circle) among the courtiers suffering in the *Purgatorio de amor*: “Don Alonso de Cardona / vi en una cama rendido / muy llagada su persona; / con esta canción s’entona / ‘quise do no fuy querido’. / Vi maestros c’allí son / curándole del costado / y él les dize en triste son / ‘no sanará mi pasión si no quien me l’a causado’” (ccxvii). It is significant that one of his companions in the *Purgatorio* is Rodrigo de Borja Lanzol, brother of Cardinal Luis de Borja. The relationship with the Borja Lanzol family was not only social; it was also familial and intergenerational: Rodrigo’s grand-daughter Luisa de Borja Lanzol married Alonso’s son Juan de Cardona.

¹⁷ This surname is spelled variously as Lihory, Liori, and Lihori. For information on this and other matters related to the noble Ruiz de Lihori family see the website of the Sociedad Jurídica Nobiliaria (www.sjnobiliaria.com/liori/htm).

¹⁸ “Acaesció que en este mismo tiempo que a este Flamiano esta pasión enamorada sin libertad dexó, en aquel mesmo la cruel muerte dexó a Vasquirán, su amigo, sin libertad y alegría, dando fin en los días de Violina”(7) and “las cosas en este tratado escritas fueron o se siguieron o se escriuieron ...en el año quinientos y ocho, quinientos y nueue, y diez, y onze, que fue la mayor parte, y quinientos y doze, que fue la fin de todo ello” (158, emphasis mine). In an early stage of investigation into authorship I remarked that “the author speaks through Vasquirán. I do not mean by this that the author has necessarily experienced the death of his beloved” (1994b, 427). In view of the further progress in research this nuancing statement is entirely unnecessary.

¹⁹ Juan Ruiz de Lihori, *Visconte di Gagliano*, and his daughter Isabel Ruiz de Lihori in her own right had extensive holdings in the kingdom of Valencia (among them, Gorga, Bechí, Ribarroja, and the valleys of Ceta and Travadell); on Alonso de Cardona’s marriage to Isabel these holdings passed to the Cardona Lords of Guadalest. The Ruiz de Lihoris were also Lords of Capizzi, Motta, Mistretta, Reitano and other holdings in the north-east of Sicily with the principal seat of the Ruiz de Lihori family being in Palermo. On the death of his wife Isabel in 1508 it would not be unusual for Alonso de Cardona to be drawn to and to make use of those holdings. Thus his possible presence in Sicily (and in near-by Naples) in 1508 during his period of mourning and later (just like that of Vasquirán) would be quite natural.

both works as the “Cardenal de Valencia”. My purpose in doing so is to determine why this character is of such prominence and what connections, if any, he might have with Alonso de Cardona y Fajardo.²⁰

Cardinal Luis de Borja in *Dechado de amor*

In both works Cardinal Luis de Borja, despite his ecclesiastical status, takes full part in the ludic dimension of courtly life. In the *Dechado de amor* he is in addition the very instigator of the work, for the full title is *Dechado de amor hecho por Vázquez a petición del cardenal de Valencia, endereçado a la señora reina de Nápoles*. (Vigier 372).²¹ The poem is addressed to Juana IV, widow of Ferdinand II of Naples, the poetic pretext being a request that she, together with the principal ladies of her court, should embroider “un paño de muestras / do todas las vidas nuestras / sus males puedan mostrar”, that is, a cloth on which the design, suggested by the poet, would exemplify the excellences (and the *engaños*) of the ladies and would be accompanied by a *letra* in the words of the courtiers who suffered for love of them. A similar procedure is used in *Questión de amor* as the courtiers participate in the jousts and tourneys, wearing the colours of their ladies and having a *letra* embroidered on their clothing or on the trappings of their horse, expressing their suffering.²² The poet of *Dechado de amor* states his purpose:

Yo he tenido atrevimiento
para osaros suplicar
queráis con las damas vuestras
labrar un paño de muestras
do todas las vidas nuestras
sus males puedan mostrar. (l.25-30)

The poet then addresses each of the ladies in turn, instructing them in what they should embroider, based on their personal qualities and on the suffering they have caused; he then ends with a summation:

²⁰ The presence of Luis de Borja Lanzol in the two texts has been mentioned by a number of critics, beginning with Croce (1894). See also Cortijo Ocaña 2001, 233-234, Duran 2008, 26-27 and Vigier 2006, 25-27. There can be little doubt that both texts were authored by the same person; not only are the characters of the *Dechado* all found in *Questión de amor*, but there are textual similarities which present almost incontrovertible proof. As an example, the *letra* of the lady María Cantelmo in *Dechado* (who is served here by Jerónimo de Fenollet, “Flamiano” of *Questión de amor*) contains a play on her name: “Cante'l mal / qu'én el bien no ay causa tal” (l.105-6. All references to this text are from the version presented in Vigier 2006, 372-89). The very same play on words referring to María Cantelmo is found in *Questión* in the *letra* used by the Count of Sarriano: “Pues que de mi vida poca / su silencio da señal, / call'el bien y cant'el mal” (148).

²¹ Vigier aptly terms Luis de Borja the “inspirateur du poème” (371).

²² There are 129 *letras* in *Questión de amor*. See Ian MacPherson 1998 and Vigier 1998.

Assí que, reina excelente,
 y damas del mundo estremas,
 lo que aquí pide esta gente
 que su mal por bien consiente
 e su passión en sus temas,
 es que labre cada una
 la muestra que le cupiere...(1.289-95)

We must note that the poet “Vázquez” sometimes uses the first person plural, thus quite consciously identifying himself as sharing the concerns of the other courtiers; he can logically be presumed to be one of the courtly circle, yet he is not one of those named in the poem; there is no “Vázquez” here, nor is any “Vázquez” known to be part of this society.

Cardinal Luis de Borja appears in the poem not only as a specific courtier serving a specific lady (Doña María Enríquez). He also conceives the idea of the poem, entrusting its composition to the poet “Vázquez” as one who can and will express accurately the courtly experience. In other words, Luis de Borja commissions a work of courtly entertainment for a readership or audience precisely composed of the social circle mentioned therein. It is in this respect a work parallel to *Qüestión de amor* which also spoke *about* and *to* the members of the court of Naples.

Cardinal Luis de Borja in *Qüestión de amor*

Under the pseudonym “el señor cardenal de Brujas” Luis de Borja has a prominent role also in *Qüestión de amor* although the importance of this role is not at first apparent, and to my knowledge has never been studied in any detail. Yet a close examination of the relationship between the Cardinal and Vasquirán, the character which represents the authorial voice, suggests useful information with respect to the question of authorship.

The first mention of Cardinal Luis de Borja is in the context of a hunting party presided over by the *Duquesa de Meliano* (Isabel de Aragón, Duchess of Milan). He appears here not as a prelate of the Church but as the leader of a number of courtiers who join the festivities: “A cabo de quatro días llegó el señor cardenal de Brujas con muchos caualleros que lo acompañaron” (49). His arrival was a sort of “grand entrance” rather than a minor incident. The author reports that the Cardinal arrived dressed in black (not the expected *escarlata*, *carmesí* or *morado* of a prince of the Church) and accompanied by a large personal retinue: “Lleuó veynte palafreneros y doze pajes vestidos de terciopelo negro y paño morado, con vna letra que dezía: Es la que menos me plaze / la que más me satisfaze” (49).

The explanation for the noteworthy colour of mourning is given only as “vino vestido de negro por cierto respecto que le conuenía”. This first mention of Luis de

Borja within the ludic context of *Questión de amor* can only cause the intuitive reader to question what this “cierto respecto” might be, and possibly to seek a parallel for this event within the text itself. The questioning of symbols, the reading behind the words, the searching for connections and parallels is, after all, what the author has invited the reader to do. This process forms the essence of the interpretation of the work. The astute reader will quickly connect the Cardinal’s unexplained state of mourning at his first appearance with that of the (earlier) first appearance of Vasquirán as he mourns the death of his beloved. The colour and symbols of mourning and suffering figure prominently here also as Vasquirán uses black in every conceivable way and on every conceivable surface of his house (18-21): “vna muerte pintada ...en vna puerta”... “la sala...toda cubierta de vnas sargas negras”... “las puertas estauan teñidas de negro de dentro y de fuera”. The Cardinal’s use of mourning display could be a literary indication of his connection with Vasquirán, a device designed to encourage the reader to follow with particular interest the relationship between the two. In other words, the relationship itself between Luis de Borja and Vasquirán may be another clue to the author’s identity.²³

The second appearance of the Cardinal is related to the *juego de cañas*. Here the author underlines the Cardinal’s central involvement not only in the society of the court of Naples but more specifically in the elements of the narrative. Luis de Borja acts here and elsewhere in the text on the same narrative plane as the central characters Vasquirán and Flamiano:

En aquella noche todos los caualleros cenaron con el señor cardenal, donde se concertó de yr, venidos de la caça, a vnos baños [...] Flamiano [...] suplicó al señor cardenal que ordenase vn juego de cañas...De lo cual el señor cardenal fue tan contento que le ofreció tener él vn puesto con la meytad de aquellos caualleros [...] e que Flamiano tuuiese el otro puesto...con los otros caualleros que primero se hallaron en la caça. (56-57)

As in the *Dechado de amor*, Luis de Borja is here an instigating force of the courtly *ludus*. His role in the *juego de cañas* as chief opponent of Flamiano is to be noted because in a sense he may be seen to act vicariously for Vasquirán, Flamiano’s opponent in the *questión de amor*. Once again as the preparations for the *juego de cañas* proceed we see the Cardinal placed in the same society as the highest nobility in Naples (and this was not because of an ecclesiastical connection with Naples; he was not Archbishop of Naples,²⁴ but of Valencia); he functions on the same level and with similar effect:

²³ For a detailed description of the use of clues to authorship embedded in the text see Andrachuk, especially 1994a and 1994b, and also further evidence presented in Andrachuk 2006, 2011, and 2012.

²⁴ The Archbishop of Naples at this time was Vincenzo Carafa, mentioned just once in the text, when the Viceroy leaves Naples to begin the military campaign on November 8, 1511 (172).

En este tiempo la señora duquesa, con muchas otras damas y señoras, fue partida para Virgilano, y el señor cardenal con todos los caualleros. En el qual tiempo Flamiano dio orden en lo que para el juego de cañas auía menester, y el señor cardenal asimismo. (79-80)

The *juego de cañas* is a great success; afterwards, the *Duquesa de Meliano* hosts a dinner at which all the participants appear “eceto el cardenal, que no cenó allí. Los otros todos cenaron con mucha alegría” (82). We can only speculate as to the reason for the Cardinal’s absence but perhaps the reader’s attention is meant to be drawn to it and to the possibility that his absence parallels that of Vasquirán, still in mourning, and still in Felernisa. For Luis de Borja, as for Vasquirán, a state of mourning is incompatible with a festive celebration.

As the plot moves forward we see a further indication of the closeness of the main protagonists Flamiano and Vasquirán with Luis de Borja, for Flamiano sends his messenger Felisel to Vasquirán (still in Sicily) with gifts from “el señor cardenal de Brujas” and from his companion in exile, Cardinal Francisco de Remolines (“el señor cardenal de Felernisa”).²⁵

The main narrative connection of Luis de Borja with Vasquirán comes as the latter arrives in Naples and begins his stay with formal visits to members of the highest society, beginning with the *Duquesa de Meliano* and her daughter Belisena (Bona Sforza), the Viceroy, Ramón de Cardona, and Cardinal Luis de Borja, and on the following day, the former Queens of Naples, Juana III and IV. This fact is of central importance because it not only speaks of the social status of Vasquirán, but also of his personal connection with each of them.²⁶ There are certain individuals in the text of *Qüestión de amor* who have been placed repeatedly in close contact with Vasquirán for a specific purpose (that of drawing attention to clues to authorship) either physically, that is, being in his physical presence in certain situations, or mentioned in a pattern with him.²⁷ Both Luis de Borja and the Viceroy Ramón de Cardona are such individuals and the fact that Vasquirán elected to visit both of these men immediately after his arrival, and before greeting the “reyna noblenisa y (a) su madre”, Juana IV and III, is highly significant. This first visit, in which Vasquirán is warmly welcomed (“con much amor le recibieron” [123]) is, of course, a ritual courtesy among members

²⁵ The title “de Felernisa” shows that this part of the work at least, or a rewriting of it, took place in or after 1511 when Francisco de Remolines was appointed Archbishop of Palermo (“Felernisa”); he was previously Archbishop of Sorrento and is mentioned elsewhere in the text by that title. Francisco de Remolines fled from Rome to Naples together with Pedro Luis de Borja Lanzol on the death of Alexander VI and the accession to the papal throne of Julius II.

²⁶ For the importance of these visits in revealing the identity of the author see with respect to the *Duquesa*, Andrachuk 2011 and with respect to the Viceroy Ramón de Cardona, especially 542-43.

²⁷ Among these are the marquises Carliner, Carliano and Carlerín (who may all be the same person), the lady Ysiana, the marquis Villatonda, the *Prior de Albano* and the *Prior de Mariana*. See Andrachuk, 1994a, and 2006, xxii-xxvii.

of the highest social classes but it serves a deeper purpose here for it alerts the reader to the relationships among these characters.

A second gathering reinforces the importance of this group, and emphasises the connections among Vasquirán, Cardinal de Borja and the Viceroy. Flamiano proposes that as a means of distraction from their sorrows he and Vasquirán should organise a formal joust (a *tela de justa real*) which would involve both the Viceroy and Luis de Borja. Together Flamiano and Vasquirán go to the residence of the Cardinal to involve him in their plans: “Y assí llegados a su posada, retraídos todos tres a solas, su pensamiento y a lo que eran ydos le hizieron saber, de lo que holgó (el cardenal) demasiadamente” (136). These three immediately set out for the palace of the Viceroy, where in intimate conversation they formalize their plans:

Pues en la misma hora, todos tres, vestidos de máscara, al palacio del visrey se fueron, el cual con mucho plazer les recibió. Y assí, todos quatro en la cámara de su guardarropa, sentados a vna ventana que sale sobre la mar, hablaron todo el caso por que allí eran venidos, y con mucho contentamiento y plazer fue d'ello contento, y auiendo allí estado vna gran pieça de la tarde, los tres se tornaron a casa del cardenal. (136)

This scene, remarkable for its relaxed intimacy and informality, lends an undeniable realism to the scene of four friends seated in the viceroy's personal chambers, planning a courtly game, a simulacrum of battle. These four, specifically these four, are presented as equals and as friends. The importance of the relationship between the Viceroy and Vasquirán has been explored elsewhere (Andrachuk 2011); that of Vasquirán and Flamiano is obvious as it is the basis of the *qüestión de amor*. But what of the relationship between Luis de Borja and the person behind the pseudonym of “Vasquirán”? What was the author's aim in giving prominence to this person?

The author sets out one purpose of his work as that of providing a pastime of identifying characters and their relationships to each other by their initials and the colours worn. In doing so the author challenges the reader to search more deeply for his, that is the author's, identity. The clues to the identity of Vasquirán, the authorial voice, while hidden on a deeper level, would have been more easily discernible to contemporary readers than to us, for they lived in a society in which the interpretation of symbols, the examination of act and appearance was the currency of everyday interaction. When, for example, Vasquirán appears at the gala banquet after the joust wearing not his expected black of mourning, but the colours of the Cardona family, and far more significantly, not simply those colours, but the *very clothes* the Viceroy had worn earlier at the joust itself, he is declaring to the reader that he IS a Cardona: “Sacó Vasquirán la ropa de carmesí qu'el visrey auía sacado aquel día con las alleluyas, porque era conocida que no era suya” (154). This noteworthy sartorial act and other clues embedded in the text, would clearly identify Vasquirán as a Cardona to

the alert contemporary reader.²⁸ But the author has been careful to weave the clues into a pattern that is at once subtle and apparent. It is among the more subtle clues we find the connection with Cardinal Luis de Borja. He alone among the courtiers is singled out with a description that reveals a particular affection and admiration: “el cardenal de Brujas, que era vn notable cauallero y mancebo y tan inclinado a las cosas de cauallería, *aunque perlado*, quanto en el mundo lo ouiesse” (135-36).²⁹

In the second part of the work, as the frivolity of courtly life gives way to the shocking and decimating brutality of war in the Battle of Ravenna, the author sees the death of Cardinal Luis de Borja as a portent of what is to come. His death, on October 5, 1511 was the result of a fall from his horse, described significantly together with that of the Condesa de Avellino, the wife of Juan de Cardona as the beginning of Fortune’s turn:³⁰ “Pues ya su fuego començado,...con vna enfermedad asaz breve, puso fin la muerte en la vida del reuerendíssimo don Luis de Borja, Cardenal de Valencia, que d’esta corte, *aunque perlado*, en las cosas de cauallero mancebo, era vno de los quiciales sobre quien las puertas de las fiestas y gentilezas se rodeauan” (160). The worldliness of this prelate (underlined with the repeated phrase “aunque perlado”) is clear in his presence in both *Questión de amor* and in *Dechado de amor*.

Is there any evidence outside the text that might establish a connection between the Cardinal and the likely author Alonso de Cardona?

The Borja Connection

Despite rather modest beginnings, by the late 15th century the Borjas figured among the great noble families of Aragon, their most important title being that of *Duques de Gandía*.³¹ It was their link to the Borgia popes, however, that guaranteed their prominence. Alexander VI (1492-1503) was born Rodrigo Lanzol de Borja³² in 1431 to Jofré Lanzol y Escrivà and Isabel de Borja y Cavanilles. He had adopted as his principal surname Borja (and its Italian equivalent, Borgia) only in 1455 to capitalize on the connection to his maternal uncle, Alonso de Borja, who that year had ascended the papal throne as Calixtus III. Among the many causes of scandal during the pontificate of Alexander VI was the blatant and literal nepotism which included the granting of many benefices and appointments made to members of his family. He named in succession his grand-nephews, the brothers Juan (1470-1500) and Pedro

²⁸ For a more complete analysis of this see Andrachuk 2011, 543-44.

²⁹ Emphasis mine. Described as a “mancebo”, Luis de Borja at his death in 1511 was 39 years of age. The author’s very positive assessment of the Cardinal is not matched at any point in the text in references to the Viceroy, Ramón de Cardona, a kinsman of Alonso de Cardona. A lack of praise for the Viceroy may be connected to the fact that he was responsible in some measure for the disaster at Ravenna. See Andrachuk 1997, especially 70-72.

³⁰ Significantly because this mention of the death of Juana Villamarín de Cardona, whatever its societal impact, serves to focus attention on the name of CARDONA. See Andrachuk 2011, 544-45.

³¹ See La Parra López 1994.

³² I use the Castilian rather than Catalán version of these and other names throughout this paper.

Luis de Borja Lanzol de Romaní (1472-1511), to the see of Valencia.³³ On the death of his brother, Luis was named 4th Archbishop of Valencia and Cardinal-deacon of Santa María in Via Lata in 1500, two years *before* he was ordained to the priesthood. In 1503 he was made Cardinal-priest of San Marcello. It must be said that the history of the Borja family shows that ecclesiastical preferment and the benefits thereby attained, rather than a true vocation, were often the motivating factors in the reception of Holy Orders. Luis's second cousin, Cesare Borgia, son of Alexander VI, was also made Cardinal but renounced Holy Orders in 1498, taking the title of Duke of Valentis, and eventually marrying. The comments of the author of *Qüestión de amor* show that Luis, "although a prelate" was of a similar bent, being among the foremost in every aspect of hedonistic court life.³⁴

Let us look more closely at his genealogy. His father was Jofré de Borja Lanzol de Romaní; his mother is generally identified only as Juana de Moncada.³⁵ There are two possible identities for his mother. First, she may have been Juana de Moncada y Villaragut, daughter of Juan de Moncada y Luna, son of Ot de Moncada, 9th Baron of Aitona, and of Marquesa de Villaragut ("Marquesa" being her name, not a title). Alternatively, she may have been Juana de Moncada y Cardona, daughter of Pedro Ramón de Moncada y Villaragut and Beatriz Folch de Cardona. In either case, it is certain that Juana married Jofré de Borja Lanzol de Romaní, nephew of Rodrigo de Borja (Alexander VI).³⁶ Let us look at the two possibilities separately:

I: If Pedro Luis de Borja's mother was Juana de Moncada y Villaragut, then her father was Juan de Moncada y Luna, brother of Pedro Ramón de Moncada who was married to Beatriz Folch de Cardona, aunt of Alonso de Cardona y Fajardo. Juana de Moncada was then the *niece* of Beatriz Folch de Cardona and her son Luis was then a cousin of Alonso de Cardona y Fajardo (Chart I).

II: If Pedro Luis de Borja's mother was Juana de Moncada y Cardona, she was the *daughter* of Beatriz Folch de Cardona (married to Pedro Ramón de Moncada, son of Juan de Moncada y Luna and Marquesa de Villaragut). Beatriz, aunt of Alonso de Cardona y Fajardo (sister of Alonso's father Juan Folch de Cardona) in this case would be the grandmother of Cardinal Pedro Luis de Borja Lanzol, and again he would be a cousin of Alonso de Cardona (Chart II).

³³ Alexander VI was the uncle of their father Jofré de Borja Lanzol de Romaní.

³⁴ It must be noted however, that Gonzalo de Oviedo considered him an admirable and sober churchman. But his relationship with the Cardinal was a more distant one.

³⁵ The relationship between the Cardona and Moncada families and its bearing on the issue of authorship of *Tratado notable de amor* has been discussed elsewhere (Andrachuk, 2012).

³⁶ See the genealogy given in Eulàlia Duran 2006-07 at 137. See also the website of the Institut Internacional d'Estudis Borgians (www.elsborja.org) for the genealogy of the Borja Lanzol family and the under "Quadre IV, els Borja-Llançols" where Juana is again shown as the wife of Jofré de Borja Lanzol. The genealogies are inconsistent in identifying the parentage of Juana de Moncada. Geneall.net lists Juana as the daughter of Pedro Ramón de Moncada and Beatriz Folch de Cardona. The difference in these two genealogies rests on whether Juan de Moncada was the *brother* or the *father* of Pedro Ramón de Moncada (see the charts *infra*).

In the following charts the relationship between Alonso de Cardona y Fajardo and Pedro Luis de Borja Lanzol through Beatriz de Cardona is marked in **bold**. Their relationship through Pedro Ramón de Moncada, husband of Beatriz de Cardona, is shown in **bold italic**.

CHART I (< > indicates siblings)

Hugo Folch de Cardona=Blanca de Navarra	
*	*
Maria Fajardo= Juan Folch de Cardona < > Beatriz de Cardona = <i>Pedro Ramón de Moncada</i> < > <i>Juan de Moncada</i> = Marquesa de Villaragut	
*	*
Alonso de Cardona y Fajardo	<i>Juana de Moncada y Villaragut</i> =Jofré de Borja Lanzol de Romaní
	*
	<i>Pedro Luis de Borja Lanzol de Romaní</i>

CHART II (< > indicates siblings)

Hugo Folch de Cardona=Blanca de Navarra	*	Juan de Moncada y Luna =Marquesa de Villaragut	*
Maria Fajardo= Juan Folch de Cardona	< >	Beatriz de Cardona = <i>Pedro Ramón de Moncada y Villaragut</i>	*
Alonso de Cardona y Fajardo		<i>Juana de Moncada y Cardona</i> =Jofré de Borja Lanzol de Romaní	*
			<i>Pedro Luis de Borja Lanzol de Romaní</i>

This family relationship between Cardinal Luis de Borja Lanzol and Alonso de Cardona y Fajardo would lead to a natural affinity between them³⁷ and would explain quite logically why the Cardinal would figure prominently within the plot of *Questión de amor*. Further ties of kinship are found in subsequent generations and one in particular is of interest: Juan de Cardona y Ruiz de Lihori, second son of Alonso de Cardona y Fajardo (and possible author of *Tratado Notable de amor* [Andrachuk

³⁷ As would their similar ages. While we do not know Alonso de Cardona's date of birth, he was likely in his early 20's when he married Isabel Ruiz de Lihori in 1492. He died by 1535 at which time his first son, Sancho, *Marqués de Guadalest*, took over his legal responsibilities (Pastor Zapata, 756).

2012]), married Luisa de Borja Lanzol, grand-daughter of Rodrigo de Borja Lanzol, eldest brother of the Cardinal.

If we now return with an awareness of this kinship to that scene in *Questión de amor* where Flamiano (Jerónimo de Fenollet), Cardinal Luis de Borja and the Viceroy Ramón de Cardona spend several pleasant hours in intimate conversation in the Viceroy's private chambers with Vasquirán, the scene takes on a new significance. The first of the companions, Jerónimo de Fenollet (in the character of Flamiano) is the acknowledged close friend of Vasquirán; his family in fact had ties of friendship and kinship with the Cardonas. For his part, the Viceroy has been shown elsewhere to be a cousin-once-removed of Alonso de Cardona y Fajardo (Andrachuk 2011, 554-55). The third companion, Cardinal Pedro Luis de Borja Lanzol de Romaní, like the others, is a major figure in *Questión de amor*, and like the Viceroy, has been shown to be related to our authorial candidate Alonso de Cardona y Fajardo. It is now apparent that the author has grouped around him (in the character of Vasquirán) figures that in real life were related by both kinship and friendship. This fact, added to all the other clues, makes a very good case for Alonso de Cardona's authorship of *Questión de amor*.

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