

# Spain's dramatic conquest of the Dutch Republic

## *Rodenburgh as a literary mediator of Spanish theatre*

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### Abstract

Theodore Rodenburgh was in an exceptional position to become a literary mediator of Spanish poetics. He introduced the *comedia nueva* in the Dutch Republic at the beginning of the seventeenth century. This article investigates specifically how Rodenburgh dealt with Lope de Vega's poetics, transforming them to make them fit the Dutch literary tradition. Through translation, adaptation and acculturation, the Iberian *comedias* became Dutch tragicomedies, plays that would become most popular in the Dutch Republic. Rodenburgh's endeavours mark the initial phase of the transfer of the *comedia nueva* to the Dutch Republic.

*Keywords:* Theodore Rodenburgh, Lope de Vega, *comedia nueva*, The Eglantine/De Eglentier, cultural transfer and exchange, textual strategies, *woelingen*, polymetric verse

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In 1609, the Dutch Republic and the Spanish Empire agreed to a truce of twelve years, suspending the hostilities between the Habsburg rulers of Spain and the Southern Netherlands and the Dutch Republic. At this watershed in the Eighty Years' War, a number of Spanish plays were staged by the Amsterdam chambers of rhetoric, and being published in 1617 and 1618. Carefully concealing their Spanish origin on the title page, these new plays were translated into Dutch and adapted to the local theatre traditions by Theodore Rodenburgh (1574–1644). As an envoy extraordinary to Philip's III court, Rodenburgh had been on mission to Madrid on behalf of the Guinea traders' company from 1611 to 1613, where he had very likely seen the original *comedias* performed.<sup>1</sup> Inspired by the successes of the foremost of the Iberian playwrights, Félix Lope de Vega y Carpio (1562–1635), Rodenburgh was the first to adapt no less than four *comedias* – three by Lope de Vega and one by the Valencian playwright Gaspar de Aguilar.<sup>2</sup> As a 'writer for the eyes', Lope knew how to please the public. His many lively, three-act plays proved that the *comedia nueva* could fascinate a large audience both in Spain and abroad. Lope's *comedias* were performed both at court and in the overcrowded *corrales de comedias* of Madrid, Alcalá, Sevilla, Valencia, Barcelona, and throughout Europe and

**1** For Rodenburgh's most recent biography see W. Abrahamse, *Het Toneel van Theodore Rodenburgh (1574–1644)*, PhD-Thesis, Amsterdam 1997, p. 167–179; Abrahamse also analyses Rodenburgh's 'Spanish' plays in the light of the poetics of his rhetoric chamber 'The Eglantine' (De Eglantier, p. 83–107). Further studies concerning the exchange between Spain and the Netherlands point out the need for further research: H. den Boer, 'La representación de la comedia española en Holanda', in: *Cuadernos de Historia Moderna* 23 (1999), p. 113–127; R. Walthaus, 'La comedia lopesca y el teatro holandés de principios del siglo XVII. Un temprano triunfo para Theodore Rodenburgh', in: H.W. Sullivan et al. (eds.), *La comedia española y el teatro europeo del siglo XVII*, London 1999, p. 152–174; J. Lechner, *Contactos culturales entre España y Holanda durante los siglos XVI y XVII*, Utrecht 2000. For Rodenburgh's vast knowledge of languages, see M.B. Smits-Veldt and W. Abrahamse, 'Een Nederlandse polyglot in het begin van de zeventiende eeuw. Theodore Rodenburgh (1574–1644)', in: *De Zeventiende Eeuw* 8.2 (1992), p. 232–244.

**2** Th. Rodenburgh, *Cassandra Hertoginne van Borgonie, en Karel Baldeus, Treur-bly-eynde-Spel*, Amsterdam 1617 (transl. of Lope's *El perseguido*); *Hertoginne Celia en Grave Prospero, Bly-eynde-Spel*, Amsterdam 1617 (transl. of Lope's *El molino*); *Jalouse studentin, Bly-eynde-spel*, Amsterdam 1617 and *Ialoerse Studenten, Bly-eyndende spel*, Leiden 1617 (transl. of Lope's *La escolástica celosa*); 't *Quaet sijn meester loont, Bly-eynde-Spel*, Amsterdam 1618 (transl. of Gaspar de Aguilar's *La venganza honrosa*).

the American colonies.<sup>3</sup> Before long, the *comedia nueva* made its entry in Paris, Brussels, Antwerp and – the city that is the focus of this article – Amsterdam.<sup>4</sup>

With the four ‘Spanish’ plays, Rodenburgh took on the responsibility of renewing the theatre productions of his chamber of rhetoric, ‘The Eglantine’.<sup>5</sup> The transfer of Lope’s *comedias* through translation and adaptation meant that the Dutch playwrights were challenged by a literary tradition that had already proven to be successful among the masses in Spain.<sup>6</sup> When Rodenburgh was also appointed chairman of ‘The Eglantine’ in 1617, the playwrights Samuel Coster, P.C. Hooft and G.A. Bredero got serious competition. At that time, the three latter poets (aided by others) had already parted ways with their old community because of poetical differences, to establish a new institution: the *Eerste Nederduytsche Academie* (the First Dutch Academy). After their establishment, the Academicians promoted a ‘modern’ approach to playwrighting based on classical principles. Coster’s, Hooft’s and Bredero’s departure of ‘The Eglantine’

3 A key study on Lope’s *comedias* is A. Samson and J. Thacker (eds.), *A companion to Lope de Vega*, Woodbridge 2008. See also F.A. de Armas (ed.), *Writing for the eyes in the Spanish golden age*, Lewisburg 2004. For a modern Spanish edition of Lope’s manifesto, see Lope de Vega, *Arte Nuevo de Hacer Comedias en Este Tiempo*, edition J.M. Rozas, Alicante 2003. A prolific article on the *Arte Nuevo* in the context of Lope’s literary career is A. Sánchez Jiménez, ‘Vulgo, imitación y natural en al *Arte Nuevo de Hacer Comedias* (1609) de Lope de Vega’, in: *Bulletin of Hispanic Studies* 88.7 (2011), p. 727–742.

4 The first two parts of Lope’s collected works were printed in Antwerp in 1607 and 1611 in their original language, making them accessible to Spanish speaking people in Northern Europe, in particular to the Sephardic Jews: Lope de Vega, *Las comedias del famoso poeta Lope de Vega Carpio*, Antwerp, Martinus Nucius, 1607 (first *Parte*) and Lope de Vega, *Segvnda parte de las comedias de Lope de Vega Carpio*, Antwerp, Andreas Bacx, 1611.

5 Some of these plays were performed again in 1631–1632 and from 1638 onwards both by the Amsterdam Public Theatre and by travelling companies throughout the Dutch Republic, well into the eighteenth century; they were even exported to the theatres in Hamburg, Copenhagen and Stockholm. *Cassandra* was also staged as *Cassandra und Karel* in Lüneburg. Frans Blom and Olga van Marion are preparing a monograph on the import and export of Spanish theatre in the Netherlands and beyond. The Amsterdam Public Theatre’s administration has recently been made available in the online data system ONSTAGE (<http://www.vondel.humanities.uva.nl/onstage/>). Later on, Rodenburgh wrote an adaptation of a Spanish novel (Th. Rodenburgh, *Melibéa, Treur-bly-eynde-spel*, 3 vols., Amsterdam 1617–1618, an adaptation of the 1499 prose novel *Tragicomedia de Calisto y Melibea/La Celestina*, attributed to Fernando de Rojas) and two historical plays dealing with local history, following Lope’s example: *Hoecx en Cabeliauws oft Hartoch Karel den Stouten, en Bataviana*, Amsterdam 1628 (original); *Vrou Iacoba, Erf-gravinne van Hollandt, etc.*, *Historiael-Treur-bly-blyvende*, Amsterdam 1638 (original).

6 Transfer studies have been especially developed in the 1980s by Michel Espagne and Michael Werner. See their ground-breaking work on cultural transfer between France and Germany: ‘Deutsch-Französischer Kulturtransfer im 18. und 19. Jahrhundert. Zu Einem Neuen Interdisziplinären Forschungsprogramm des C.N.R.S.’, in: *Francia. Forschungen zur Westeuropäischen Geschichte*, Sigmaringen 1985, p. 502–510; and ‘Deutsch-französischer Kulturtransfer als Forschungsgegenstand. Eine Problemskizze’, in: M. Espagne and M. Werner (eds.), *Transferts. Les relations interculturelles dans l’espace Franco-Allemand (XVIII<sup>e</sup> et XIX<sup>e</sup> Siècle)*, Paris 1988, p. 11–34. For a great overview on the possibilities of transfer studies, see S. Stockhorst (ed.), *Cultural transfer through translation. The circulation of enlightened thought in Europe by means of translation*, Amsterdam 2010. We are also aware of the recent criticism on cultural transfer as a method, which is discussed by M. Werner and B. Zimmermann, ‘Beyond comparison. *Histoire croisée* and the challenge of reflexivity’, in: *History and Theory* 4 (2006), p. 30–50.

had, however, not resolved the differences between both institutions. The result was a 'literary war', in which the playwrights opposed each other in their writings, competing for paying audiences.<sup>7</sup>

The innovations made Rodenburgh the earliest adaptor of the *comedia nueva* in Dutch literary history as well as the first poet who translated the *comedias* directly from the original language. Meanwhile, he was aided by favourable circumstances in Amsterdam during his active years, since there existed a power vacuum within the ranks of 'The Eglantine' and the truce with Spain made it possible for Rodenburgh to experiment with the Iberian poetics. In this respect, De Clippel and Vermeylen have argued that what got transferred depended on a variety of factors, including 'the ingenuity of middlemen, the impediments caused by borders and barriers, obstacles such as transaction and opportunity costs including tariffs, guild regulations, the creativity of artists themselves, the medium – visual, text or verbal – and geo-political factors such as war'.<sup>8</sup> Hence, this article will shed new light on Rodenburgh's pivotal role in the transfer of the *comedia nueva* and how he found a way to reinvent Dutch theatre by combining old and new poetics, during the initial phase of the transfer of Spanish plays around 1617.<sup>9</sup> We will explore the textual strategies employed by Rodenburgh, who chose either to translate or adapt various distinctive aspects of the original Iberian plays, such as the polymetric verse, the variety of locations, and the representation of immoral characters, with their inner conflicts and agitations. Our analysis of Rodenburgh's textual strategies demonstrates how the poetic ideas of Lope de Vega were transferred and transformed in the early 1600s.

### *A world of exemplary persons?*

Rodenburgh's first and most successful translation is his version of one of Lope de Vega's earliest *comedias*, *El perseguido* (The Pursued, 1603), which he transformed into the Dutch tragicomedy *Casandra en Karel Baldeus* (1617).<sup>10</sup> He modified not only the

7 K. Porteman and M.B. Smits-Veldt, *Een nieuw vaderland voor de Muzen. Geschiedenis van de Nederlandse literatuur 1560-1700*, Amsterdam 2013, p. 235, 240-242, 245-247.

8 K. De Clippel and F. Vermeylen, 'In search of Netherlandish art. Cultural transmission and artistic exchanges in the Low Countries, an introduction', in: *De Zeventiende Eeuw* 31.1 (2015), p. 2-17, spec. 7.

9 We will focus on two plays, *Casandra en Karel* and *Hertoginne Celia*, since Walthaus, 'La comedia lopesca' (n. 1) discusses Rodenburgh's third adaptation of Lope, *Jalouse studentin/Ialoersche studenten*.

10 *El perseguido* was published in Lope's *Seis comedias* (Lissabon 1603) and his *Primera parte de Comedias* (Zaragoza 1604, Antwerp 1607). For this paper we have used: *Obras completas*, Madrid 1993, vol. 4, p. 1-111, with a digital edition in the Bibliotheca Digital Artelope (<http://artelope.uv.es/biblioteca/textosAL/AL0546-ElPerseguido>). Recently, a new edition of *Casandra and Karel* was published in the digital text resource Ceneton, edited by Ton Harmsen (<http://www.let.leidenuniv.nl/Dutch/Ceneton/RodenburghCasandra1617.html>). Rodenburgh's *Casandra en Karel Baldeus* was probably performed around 1617, but surely in 1632 (Abrahamse, *Het Toneel van Theodore Rodenburgh* (n. 1), p. 89) and 66 times between 1642 and 1678. Reprints appeared in 1632, 1642, 1646 and 1663.

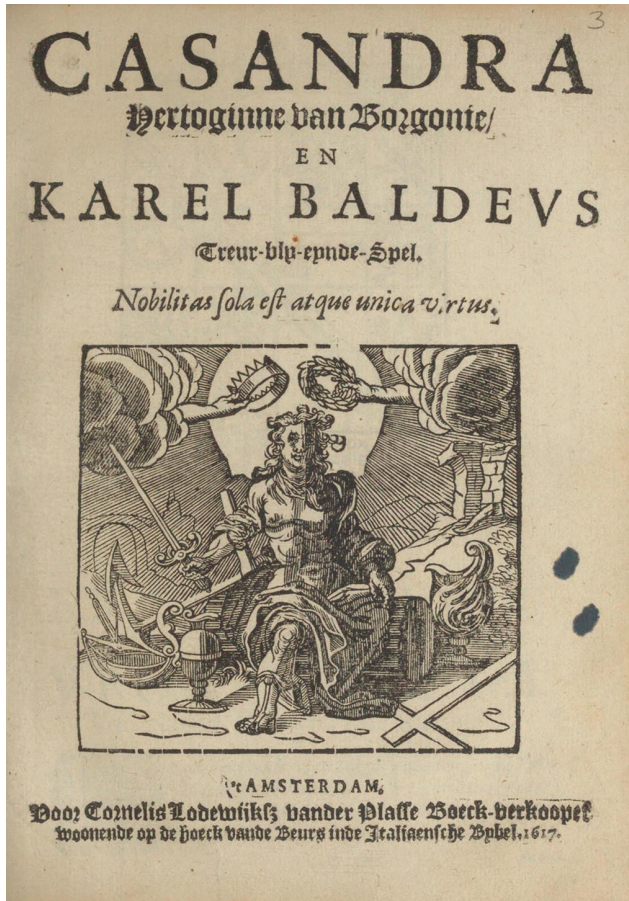


Fig. 1 Title page of *Casandra en Karel*, Amsterdam 1617, Royal Library The Hague.

title, but also the genre, referring to the play as a ‘*Treur-bly-eynde-Spel*’ (tragicomedy), as can be observed from the title page of the first edition, printed in Amsterdam in 1617 (fig. 1).<sup>11</sup> The plot bears a striking resemblance to the biblical story of Potiphar’s wife, who accuses Joseph of attempted rape in Genesis 39. It demonstrates the *topos* in visual art and literature of women’s power over men, and discusses conflicting ideas about gender roles, a very popular concept in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Europe.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Likewise, Lope’s comedia *El Molino* (The Miller) was renamed after Duchess Celia and Count Prospero. This had a reason as well, since the Dutch audience would otherwise have had the idea of spending the afternoon with a simple and burlesque farce instead of attending a serious tragedy or a humorous comedy in the theatre.

<sup>12</sup> See, for instance, N. Salomon, *Shifting priorities. Gender and genre in seventeenth-century Dutch painting*, Stanford University Press 2004, and M.D. McGaha, *The story of Joseph in Spanish golden age drama*, London 1998.

While the biblical story takes place at Pharaoh's court in Egypt, Duchess Casandra's seduction of her husband's chamberlain Carlo takes place at her court in Burgundy. In both cases, however, there is a highly respected head of the household resisting a Lady's attempt to seduce him, after which the Lady is so furiously embarrassed that she falsely accuses him in front of her husband of attempted rape. Both alleged rapists are put behind bars, from where they are both released – Joseph comes to the notice of Pharaoh through his ability to interpret dreams, and Carlo escapes the web of lies that is spun around him, receiving the duke's permission to rekindle the romance with the woman he married in secret, the duke's sister Leonora, through which the couple is rehabilitated. Duchess Casandra, in turn, is punished for her crimes by her expulsion from Burgundy.

Spinning a web of lies around the virtuous Carlo, the duchess behaves even worse than Potiphar's wife. She will not rest before his life and that of his secret son is severely disrupted. Originally, the story ends rather sad for all the characters involved. In Lope's Italian source, a novella by Mateo Bandello in the fourth part of his *Novelle* (1573), Carlo and Leonora are struck by fate too. The moment Carlo realises that the revealing of his secret marriage has caused the death of his beloved wife out of shame, he commits suicide. The duchess is punished with the harshest penalty and is killed by the duke. Rewriting Bandello's novella, however, Lope added the principle of poetic justice in the last act – a literary device in which ultimately virtue is rewarded and vice punished: the virtuous Carlo and Leonora survive and when the duke recognises their secret marriage, their honour is restored. As we saw above, the duchess is sentenced to a life in exile.

How did Rodenburgh deal with a protagonist so repugnant and disgraceful, according to early modern moral principles? An answer to that question can be found in his manifesto *Eglentiers Poëtens Borst-Weringh* (Defence of the poets of the Eglantine, 1619), in which he advises poets and aspiring poets to moralise, while at the same time delighting the auditor and admonishing him.<sup>13</sup> Admonishment, according to Rodenburgh, should not be achieved through grave and moralising language, which will only bore the audience. In arguing this, Rodenburgh was likely inspired by Lope's manifesto *Arte Nuevo de Hacer Comedias en Este Tiempo* (1609).<sup>14</sup> This manifesto explicated the art – or rather lack of art – of the 'new' Spanish *comedias*. By breaking the traditional unities of place and time, mixing the tragic and the comic, and advocating an alternating meter in verse, the playwright showed that he knew the established rules of poetry, but refused to follow them on the grounds that his audience cared nothing about them. Regarding

<sup>13</sup> Th. Rodenburgh, *Eglentiers Poëtens Borst-Weringh*, Amsterdam 1619, p. 48: 'dat zy [alle Poëten, oft Poësie-lievende-rymers] stichtich d'aenhoorders verheugen moghen, berispende de misbruycken, [...].'

<sup>14</sup> Rodenburgh's *Borst-Weringh* is generally considered to be a free adaptation of Sir Philip Sidney's *The Defence of Poesy* (1595) and Thomas Wilson's *The Arte of Rhetorique* (1553); see S.F. Witstein, *Bronnen en bewerkingswijze van de ontleende gedeelten in Rodenburghs Eglentiers poëtens borst-weringh (1619). Het proza-betoog en de emblemata*, Amsterdam 1964, p. 229–241; Abrahamse, *Het Toneel van Theodore Rodenburgh*, p. 19–29.

admonishment, Lope argued that one should not ‘drag in quotations, nor let your language offend because of exquisite words’, nor should one ‘spend sententious thoughts and witty sayings on family trifles’, but rather, one ought to use plain and simple language, for ‘the wrath of a seated Spaniard is immoderate’.<sup>15</sup> Rodenburgh realises that ‘when we do not see any change [*zonder veranderinge te hooren*], we think it is torment having to listen to the same thing for a long time. Hence, we perceive that the delightful changes are necessary, yes, for without them, we experience that the public will not listen to moralising matters, wherefore it is laudable when a sweet thing is mixed with something bitter.’<sup>16</sup>

These last words about sweetening moral are obviously derived from Horace’s ‘utile dulci’ of which the Roman author speaks in his *Ars Poetica*. This idea of useful literature is arguably an intrinsic part of Dutch early modern plays. By contrast, it seems that Lope de Vega did not articulate a clear moralistic goal for the *comedia nueva*, and an initial reading of the *Arte Nuevo* can make one believe that Lope only wrote crowd-pleasing *comedias*. Understandably, Rodenburgh criticises ‘some’ poets – perhaps even including Lope de Vega – for their never-ending concessions to the audience:

It is true that some give in to strange ways [*vreemde grillen*] regarding their plays, as long as the common auditor cheers and laughs. However, I think it is more laudable when the eyes are filled with tears from sad examples, and when the hearts are moved by moralising acts [*stichtige bedryven*], always shying away from employing a way of speaking, which is better not repeated due to its shameful character.<sup>17</sup>

This begs the question whether Lope de Vega only invented the *comedia nueva* to become nothing more than a crowd-pleaser. Jonathan Thacker, therefore, writes in his discussion of the *Arte Nuevo* that Lope asks his audiences to relax and learn from his *comedias*. It concerns the final statement made by Lope, which he utters after ten lines in Latin in general praise of the theatre.<sup>18</sup> Although Lope does not articulate a specific aim for the *comedia nueva*, he builds on a general understanding of the comedy as a representation of human custom and a living image of the truth. Implicitly, the *comedia nueva* endeavours to teach its audiences by showing the immoralities of the *dramatis personae*.<sup>19</sup>

**15** For these fragments, see Lope de Vega, *The New Art of Writing Plays*, transl. by W.T. Brewster, with an introduction by B. Matthews, Charleston SC 2009, p. 31–33.

**16** Rodenburgh, *Borst-Weringh*, p. 50–51: ‘[...] dies niet tegenstaende de brosheyt des vleeschs overwelmt het verstant, zo dat wy zonder veranderinge te hooren, quellyckheyt vinden te langhe van een zaeck te hooren spreken. Waer door wy bespreuren dat de heughelycke veranderinghen noodzaecklyck zyn, jae zonder zulcks te pleghen, dat na wichtighe zaecken vaecken niet ghehoort werden, dus is het pryslyck, yets zoets met het bitter te menghelen.’

**17** *Ibidem*, p. 189: ‘t Is waer dat zommighen niet ontzien op hun toonelen aen te rechten vreemde grillen, als zy daer door de ghemeene aenhoorders maer kunnen doen juyghen en schat’ren. Doch voor my, ick achtet veel lofbaerder dat de ooghen traenen door droeve voorbeelden, en de herten bewegen door stichtige bedryven, immer schuwende eenige wyze van spreken te gebruycken, diemen zonder beschaemtheyt schaers na derf zeggen.’

**18** J. Thacker, ‘The *Arte Nuevo de Hacer Comedias*. Lope’s dramatic statement’, in: Samson and Thacker, *A Companion to Lope de Vega* (n. 3), p. 118.

**19** See Lope de Vega, *The New Art of Writing Plays*, p. 27–28.

Here, Rodenburgh distances himself from Lope de Vega, and adapts *El Perseguido* by including extra moralising passages and expanding the existing ones. In the first edition of his *Casandra en Karel* (1617) a striking element is the opening sonnet, which was probably also read on stage. It cautions against the vice particularly represented by Casandra: 'Horny lust and raging fury' 'that destroy reputation, virtue and honour' with a 'devilish longing for shameful adultery'. After this rejection of lust in the sonnet's octet, the sextet praises the virtue of true love, represented by Karel (Carlo): 'How true marital love bravely defends itself' and 'How concupiscence is not able to sever marital fidelity'. The sonnet's closing lines are the key words of the play:

How much love [*liefd*] and lust [*min*] differ from each other,  
We learn from Karel's love and the lust of Casandra.<sup>20</sup>

The same words appear at the end of the play. The Burgundian duke associates the adversative cameo of Karel and Casandra with Rodenburgh's preference for a mixture of the comic and the tragic to create a tragicomedy (as long as the tragic and the comic are clearly distinguished and correctly distributed between distinct scenes, according to the *Borst-weringh*<sup>21</sup>):

Duke            Here the comic and the tragic come to an end.  
People         Mixed together,  
Duke            That's Karel's love and the lust of Casandra.<sup>22</sup>

A similar moral contrast can be seen in the dedication included in the first edition, where Rodenburgh seeks protection for his work, since it represents the 'power of pure love' and the 'steadiness of marital commitments', as opposed to the 'destructiveness of horny lust' and 'raging vindictiveness'.<sup>23</sup> This moral framework can also be found in the first scene, where the poet allows the duchess to share her doubts and her despair with her chambermaid – and through her, of course, with the audience. Unlike the Spanish

<sup>20</sup> Rodenburgh, *Casandra en Karel* (n. 2), fol. \*4r: 'Hoe veel de liefd en min verschelen d'een van d'andere/Leert Karels liefde, en de minne van Casandre.' It is not sure if the motto *Acuerdo olvido* (Remembering I forget) with which the sonnet is signed, belongs to Rodenburgh.

<sup>21</sup> In his *Arte Nuevo*, Lope had turned a negative mixture of the tragic and the comic into a positive variety by comparing tragicomedy to nature, where one can find many such mixtures like the Minotaur of Pasiphae, which is delightful in itself; Lope de Vega, *The New Art of Writing Plays*, p. 30. See also Thacker, 'The *Arte Nuevo de Hacer Comedias*. Lope's dramatic statement', p. 113. When discussing the tragicomedy in his *Borst-Weringh*, Rodenburgh argues that just like in nature something can seem beautiful from the outside, while it contains something 'berispelycx' (reproachable) within. Still, it is no problem to mix tragic and comic subjects, as long as the poet distinguishes them by separating sad subjects in different scenes: Rodenburgh, *Borst-Weringh*, p. 26.

<sup>22</sup> Rodenburgh, *Casandra en Karel*, vvs. 2985-2987: 'Hier eyndicht 'tblijd' en droef./Ghemengelt door malkandre,/Dat's Karels liefde en de minne van Casandre.'

<sup>23</sup> Ibidem, fol. \*2v: 't welk afbeeldt de kracht van reyne liefde, 't geweld van gayle minne, de trouwe echters bandens vastheid, der verwoeste wraek, en d'ootmoedige schuld-beken.' The play is dedicated to Countess Emilia van Nassau, William of Orange's daughter, married to Prince Emanuel of Portugal and living at that time in Delft.



original, the chambermaid in this adaptation strongly denounces adultery. Leaving the stage, she voices her disapproval of her Lady's crush:

*Camilla* Ah fickle girl, ah Love, how can you persuade the hearts  
To do whatever you like? She has taken leave of her senses,  
Her honour is lost. – I'll go my Lady –  
*All things caused by Venus always end up in mourning.*<sup>24</sup>

The last line in this quote is one of the many *sententiae*, or brief moral sayings, with which Rodenburgh has enriched his plays in order to gain the assent of his audience with an agreed-upon 'truth' as regards to what the characters are saying. It was common practice to end strophes or scenes in this way in rhetoricians' poetry. Another one of Lope's advices in the *Arte Nuevo*, however, was to employ such grave and witty language, whenever a character persuades, counsels or dissuades; especially where it concerned wise men. Rodenburgh appears to have applied Lope's advice to his work.<sup>25</sup>

Opening scenes prove to be a fitting place for Rodenburgh to offer his audience moral instructions. To this end, a long soliloquy was added to the beginning of his second 1617 play, *Hertoginne Celia en Grave Prospero*, in which Duchess Celia presents herself to the audience as a virtuous woman, that is to say, as an exemplary virgin who carefully contains her passions with restraint (fig. 2):

*Celia* The inclinations of my heart dictate such rigid laws  
Which can keep me from my own free choices:  
My love is deep-rooted, my loyalty is unbreakable,  
In spite of Aristippus, I will be Prospero's wedded wife [...].<sup>26</sup>

The duchess prefers the virtue of her beloved Count Prospero to the power and wealth of Prince Aristippus, who is the antagonist in this play and who forces Celia to become his bride and expels Prospero from court. According to her, however, a simple life with a humble count is more valuable than a life as a princess at court: 'What is a court, which keeps up the appearance of happiness [*schijn-luck-Hof*]? Is it more than slavery? A dressed-up fool, always agitated, seldom happy?'<sup>27</sup> As we have seen before, the protagonist's statements are interspersed with various *sententiae*, from which we learn, among

24 Ibidem, vss. 58–60: 'Ha wispeltuurghe wight, ha liefd hoe kunt ghy leyden/De herten nae uw'wil, zy is van reen ghescheyden,/De eer is heur ontvlucht. Ick gae ghenaed'ge Vrouw, (*binnen*)/Al 't gheen wat Venus werckt ghemeenlick eyndt met rouw.'

25 Lope de Vega, *The New Art of Writing Plays* (n. 15), p. 32–33.

26 Rodenburgh, *Celia en Prospero* (n. 2), fol. A3v: 'De neyging mijnes herts stelt sulcke stricte wetten/Die mijn vry-will'ghe willkeurs-wiss'lingh kan beletten:/Ghegrond-paeld is mijn liefd', onbreeck'lijck is mijn trouw,/In spijt van Aristip so werd' ick Prosp'ros vrouw.' For the Spanish original, see Lope de Vega, *El molino*, in: idem, *Obras completas* (n. 10), vol. 2, p. 263–353, with a digital edition in the Bibliotheca Digital Artelepe ([http://artelope.uv.es/biblioteca/textosAL/AL0752\\_ElMolino](http://artelope.uv.es/biblioteca/textosAL/AL0752_ElMolino)).

27 Rodenburgh, *Celia en Prospero*, fol. A3v: 'Wat is het schijn-luck-Hof? Is't meer als slaverny?/Een prachtige Zottin, steeds woelich, seldom bly?'

Fig. 2 Title page of *Celia en Prospero*, Amsterdam 1617, Leiden University Libraries.



other things, that a virtuous character transcends power and wealth, and – according to an old saying – satisfaction has priority over wealth.<sup>28</sup>

### *Expressing inner agitations (woelingen)*

Our discussion of moralising passages seems to prove that Rodenburgh has created rather simple worlds with exemplary characters in his plays. Yet, the virtuous and the evil characters are more complicated and less straightforward than they were in the

<sup>28</sup> Ibidem, fol. A3r: 'Hier in de oude spreuck recht grondelick bestaet/Dat ons ghenoeghen boven alle rijckdom gaet.'

original Spanish *comedias*. In Rodenburgh's hands, they suffer more from inner conflicts and agonies than in Lope's, and retire to long laments and soul-searching monologues and soliloquies. These inner conflicts and agonies have been characterised as *gewoel*, which was quite common practice in Dutch seventeenth-century plays. The *woelingen* can be found in a biblical play like *Simsons treurspel* (1618) by Abraham de Koning,<sup>29</sup> or in P.C. Hooft's *Baeto* (1617/1626), and also in G.A. Bredero's *Moortje* (1617).<sup>30</sup> Around the same time, Rodenburgh used this native Dutch phenomenon of expressing a character's mood as *gewoel* and he especially connected it with the excitatory dilemmas of the *comedia nueva*. Someone who had noticed this phenomenon as well, was biographer Geeraardt Brandt, who roughly summarized the developments in the Amsterdam theatre scene during the life of Joost van den Vondel, attesting that especially Spanish plays were performed on the Amsterdam stage, which pleased the masses through 'their employment of *gewoel* and the quantity of action (while the audience would marvel about the vain chitchat and activity)'.<sup>31</sup> Brandt's use of *gewoel* is striking. It means as much as the infinite stirring of bodily and mental sensations, especially where it concerns love, lust or baffling emotions. Often the *woelingen* also involve hesitation and apprehension in the characters' moods. Meanwhile, the characters have to deal with an exciting dilemma, which often revolves around the choice between virtue, vice and adultery. Brandt adds that 'although sometimes the plays lacked art and order, the public valued copper over gold and, thus, Vondel's tragedies were stowed behind the counter.'<sup>32</sup> Brandt relates that *woelingen* are omnipresent in the adapted Spanish plays. Rodenburgh also makes extensive use of *woelingen* in his adaptations.

**29** See e.g. L. van Gemert, 'De krachtpatser en de hoer. Liefde en wraak op het zeventiende-eeuwse toneel', in: H. Bots en L. van Gemert (eds.), *Schelmen en prekers. Genres en de transmissie van cultuur in vroegmodern Europa*, Nijmegen 1999, p. 25–30. See also A. de Koning, *Simsons treurspel*, ed. L. van Gemert and N. Veldhorst. Edition published on the Ceneton website (n. 10), e.g. vss. 974–979: 'Hoe dat ick 't maeck, of hoe ick woel,/Myn dunckt ick in myn borst ghevoel/Een knagingh, en misnoeghen,/Door dien my lust nae deze wraeck,/En d'wyl ick naer de gout-dorst haeck./Comt my 't ghewisse wroeghen.'

**30** P.C. Hooft, *Baeto*, ed. H. Duits, Amsterdam 2005, e.g. vss. 921–924 (Rei van Joffrouwen): 'Wat gedruis, wat drokheid woelt er door het slot?/Ach, ach, wat is mij 't hart bezwaard!/Ach, wat loopt men met al zulk een ijver tot de wapens, die ras zijn aanvaard [...].'<sup>30</sup> See also G.A. Bredero, *Moortje*, ed. E. Grootes, Amsterdam 1999, e.g. vss. 41–42 (Koenraat): 'Vergheefs is al u moeyt, al woeldy noch soo hart,/Ghy vindt noch rust, noch ree, maer eyndeloose smart.'

**31** G. Brandt, 'Het Leven van Joost van den Vondel', in: J. van den Vondel, *Poëzy of Verscheide Gedichten*, vol. 2, Franeker 1682, p. 68: '[...] dat men met der tijdt andere speelen, meest uit het Spaensch vertaelt, invoerde, die door 't gewoel en veelerley verandering, hoewel'er somtydts weinigh kunst en orde in was, den grooten hoop, (zich aan 't ydel gezwets en den poppentooestel vergaapende) zoo behaagden, dat men koper boven goudt schatte, en Vondels treurspeelen achter de bank wierp.'

**32** Ibidem, p. 68. See for the Dutch original the previous note. Still, also the plays of Rodenburgh's fellow playwrights, who followed the poetics of Julius–Caesar Scaliger, can include *woelingen*, which is thoroughly discussed by Sluijter on the relationship between Rembrandt's and Vondel's oeuvres; E.J. Sluijter, 'Rembrandt's portrayal of the passions and Vondel's "staetveranderinghe"', in: S.S. Dickey and H. Rodenburg (eds.), *The passions in the arts of the early modern Netherlands*, Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek dl. 60, Zwolle 2010, p. 294–295.

Such *woelingen* are, for example, a major part of a song Rodenburgh adds to the opening scene of the first act of *Casandra en Karel*. Waiting all alone on stage for her chambermaid to return, the duchess weighs virtue and adultery against each other as conflicting emotions in her heart. With a great deal of *pathos* she tries to arouse the audience's sympathy:

*Casandra* That I bestow my love  
 Upon the duke's chamberlain,  
 And cannot force my own hand,  
 That is, alas, my sad infliction.  
 Speak up, you mournful eyes,  
 So that he [Karel] will understand you  
 Through your expression, without words,  
 And commiserates with you. [...]  
 Ah, shall I in order to silence  
 The agitation [*woelingh*] of my soul [*zinn*],  
 Tell him that I love him?  
 No one will believe me.<sup>33</sup>

All of Rodenburgh's characters define their inner conflicts as 'agitation' (*woelingen*). These *woelingen* are important metaphors through which both male and female figures express their multifarious emotions, such as mercy and wrath, but also faithfulness and unfaithfulness. Feliciano, one of the characters in *Casandra en Karel* whose part was extended with long monologues, the act of disguise and a sonnet, was allowed to take as much time as he wanted to put into words how much he suffered. As a rival of Karel, he has been hiding his secret passion for the virtuous Leonora for too long:

*Feliciano* [...] Now is the time to express my complaints of  
 The agitation [*woeling*] of my senses, the heat of the flame in my chest,  
 The raging (fire) in my heart, [...].<sup>34</sup>

Even the duke himself makes a habit of complaining about the bad behaviour of his subjects: 'How much agitation [*ghewoels*] there is in this life full of distress?/How much envy and hate, causing vigorous vengeance?'<sup>35</sup> But that's nothing compared to Karel, who has spent all his nights in *gewoel*.<sup>36</sup> And when Casandra finds out that Karel is

33 Rodenburgh, *Casandra en Karel* (n. 2), vss. 66-73, 86-89: 'Dat ick mijn Liefde ztelle/Op s'Hertoghs Camerlingh,/En dees borst niet bedwingh/Dats, laes, mijn droeve quelle./Spreeckt ghy betraende ooghen/Op dat hy door't ghelaet/U sonder spraeck verstaet/En met u heeft medooghen. [...] Ja zo ick om te ztillen/De woeling mynes zin/Zweer dat ick hem bemin/Sal't qualick gh'loven willen.' The melody of this song is unknown.

34 Ibidem, vss. 753-755: '[...] tis nu tijdt dat ick klaech/De woeling mijns ghezind, de vlam mijns borsten hetten/De razing mynes hert'.

35 Ibidem, vss. 1373-1374: 'Wat isser al ghewoels in dit bedroefde leven?/Wat isser haet en nijd, die vinn'ghe wraek lust geven?' See also vss. 1399-1400 and vs. 1404.

36 Ibidem, vs. 1684: 'Maer Karel hebt ghy alle nachten dus gewoeld?'

secretly married to her husband's sister Leonora, her 'heart thunders' and her senses *woelen*, while she plots her revenge.<sup>37</sup>

Although *woelingen* are not exclusive to Rodenburgh's adaptations of the *comedia nueva*, the frequent use of this metaphor echoes Lope's ideas as described in his manifesto *Arte Nuevo*. It is likely that Rodenburgh implemented one of Lope's most important recommendations:

Describe lovers with those passions which greatly move whoever listens to them; manage soliloquies in such a manner that the recitant is quite transformed, and in changing himself, changes the listener. Let him ask questions and reply to himself.<sup>38</sup>

Likewise, Rodenburgh discussed in his 1618 tragicomedy *Melibea* that he starts 'al dit woelen' to represent his characters and, thus, his audience, with the choice between virtue and worldly fortunes, between true love and the trap of lecherous lust. Shouldn't we all endeavour to achieve virtue, in order to be immortal by everlasting fame? Theatre offers us this chance, since it is able to moralise through pleasurable entertainment.<sup>39</sup>

### *Polymetric verse*

Fully in line with Lope's recommendation, Rodenburgh described 'lovers with those passions which greatly move whoever listens to them' and he managed 'soliloquies in such a manner that the recitant is quite transformed, and in changing himself, changes the listener', such as we have discussed earlier. How did Rodenburgh go about this in practice? Inspired by Lope, Rodenburgh had endeavoured to excite his audiences in the same way as Lope did and, thus, he mixed the native Dutch traditions and the Spanish in his adaptations. On the one hand, Lope wrote about the possibilities of polymetric verse in his *Arte Nuevo*, saying that '*décimas* are good for complaining',<sup>40</sup> while 'the sonnet is good for those who are waiting in expectation'. When one recites events, one should use *romances* (ballads), 'though they shine brilliantly in *octavas*

<sup>37</sup> Ibidem, vss. 1966–1968: 'Ha, hoe mijn herte raest! hoe dat mijn zinnen woelen!/Ik zal 't op hem en heur, en aen hun kind bestaen,/Tot dat ik in mijn wraek volkomen ben voldaan.'

<sup>38</sup> Lope de Vega, *The New Art of Writing Plays* (n. 15), p. 33.

<sup>39</sup> Rodenburgh, *Melibea* (n. 5), part I, fol. \*3v: 'Om dan dees eeuwich duurende deughden hun af te beelden, 't welck door stichtende Toonneel-spelen vermaekelyck geschieden ken, en oock geschiet: behoort dan de Rym-kunst niet hoogh gheacht te zyn, waermen voor ooghen stelt de deughdens heylzaeme vruchten, en daer teghen de ondeughdens schadelycke bitt're naesmaek. de loosheyte van de wulpze minne. de lagen van vleesch-lusten-hertens-tochten. de stantvastige eerbaerheyt. de deuch-lievende-reynheyt. de trouwe liefde [...] and 'port dit niet een yder te yveren nae de deuchde, om onsterffelijck te werden, door de eeuwich-durende Deuchdens-fame?'

<sup>40</sup> Stanza of ten lines rhyming ABBA:ACCDDC; the colon marks an obligatory pause.

[octaves]. *Tercets* are for grave affairs and *redondillas*<sup>41</sup> for affairs of love'.<sup>42</sup> On the other hand, Dutch playwrights were conversant with a great variety of typical Dutch verse forms, such as rondeaus (*rondelen*), and refrains (*refreinen*) and songs, all of which they used in their plays. The convergence of Lope's poetics and the native Dutch tradition of using different verse forms (apart from the traditional employment of Alexandrines in Dutch plays) was to Rodenburgh's advantage, and he exploited this advantage by incorporating the typical Dutch rondeaus, refrains and other Dutch verse forms in his adaptations. The playwright's use of polymetric verse was, as such, both new and traditional for the Dutch audience. While Lope had used typical Spanish verse forms, Rodenburgh adapted them by replacing them with equally typical Dutch verse forms.

Rodenburgh includes, for example, a rondeau performed by the miller's employee Molimpo in *Celia en Prospero* at the end of the first act. The playwright makes clever use of the repetition of complete verses – a typical characteristic of rondeaus. This repetition has a naturally penetrating effect on the audience, of which Rodenburgh had written in his *Borst-Weringh* that '[...] the orator should penetrate the ears with such a manner of speaking that he may move the hearts with sweet words and he should speak with such pleasantries that his audience will not get bored from listening.'<sup>43</sup> In order to accomplish this penetrating effect, Quintilian suggests for instance the use of repetition by which the utterance gets both its charm and force.<sup>44</sup> Since Molimpo has lost his one true love (Laura) to another, the audience will feel compassion for him. The penetrating verse form only amplifies these emotions:

*Molimpo*      Only Laura,  
                   I love, I hold dear, and I lament, and I ask:  
                   Why did she say no?  
                   Love is o so powerful, stubborn in its capacity,  
                   As an all-victor, so strong, he steals away the heart through the eyes,  
                   And he leaves me cast off  
                   In an anxious weeping,  
                   I love, I hold dear, and I lament, and I ask,  
                   Why did she say no?<sup>45</sup>

41 'A traditional octosyllabic form made up of quatrains rhyming ABBA'; Thacker, 'The *Arte Nuevo de Hacer Comedias*' (n. 18), p. 117.

42 Lope de Vega, *The New Art of Writing Plays*, p. 34-35. See also K. Jeffs, "'Acomode los versos con prudencia ...' Polymetric verse on stage in translation', in: *The Journal of Romance Studies* 8.3 (2008), p. 3-21.

43 Rodenburgh, *Borst-Weringh* (n. 13), p. 50: '[...] behoort den welsprekert met zodanighen wyze van zeggen 'tgheloor te doorkruypen, dat de herten ghetrefte werden, en beweghen door de zoetdringende woorden de hertens middelpunt, en met zodanige aenghe-naemheyt, dat hun ghehoor 't aenhooren niet verveelt.'

44 Quintilianus, *De Opleiding tot Redenaar*, translated, with an introduction and notes by P. Gerbrandy, Groningen 2001, p. 473-474, 9.3.28-38.

45 Rodenburgh, *Celia en Prospero* (n. 2), fol. C2r: 'Een Laura alleen,/Lief ik, bemin ik, en klaegh' ik, en vraegh' ik./Waerom zeyd zy Neen?/Liefde is zo machtich, trotzich van vermogen,/Al-verwiner,

Rodenburgh's use of polymetric verse was, however, not restricted to rondeaus. In *Cassandra en Karel*, the playwright added a dialogue between Karel's rival, Count Lodewijk, and an Echo who keeps repeating the count's last words, functioning as his conscience.<sup>46</sup> These so-called echo verse poems were a typical rhetoricians' expertise. The recitation of this kind of poetry on stage was not appreciated by all of Rodenburgh's fellow playwrights. During their literary disputes in the years following Samuel Coster's establishment of the First Dutch Academy, Rodenburgh had been criticised by Coster for interrupting or playing with the Alexandrine metre.<sup>47</sup> This criticism likely extended to the inclusion of traditional rhetoricians' verse forms.

On another aspect of polymetric verse both playwrights could, however, agree: songs were excellent devices to move the tempers of the audience. For this reason, songs had always been a major part of plays throughout Europe. In Rodenburgh's plays, we can hear people sing at court, as well as the workers at the mill in the countryside, where the courtiers are seeking refuge. An example is Duchess Celia's plea for the immediate release of her beloved count from captivity. The extensive plea is an addition to the original text, representing Celia's appeal to the king's wise governance and her successful attempt to persuade him with *pathos*:

*Celia*            A woman kneels before you,  
                     Let your royal heart  
                     Invite you to pity [me]  
                     [induced] by the many rains of tears welling from my breast to my eyes, [...].  
                     I'm begging Your Majesty,  
                     Please give an order  
                     To free Prospero from captivity.  
                     If my prayers are powerless,  
                     Be moved by the many tears  
                     Welling up from these eyes.<sup>48</sup>

Lope generally included two to four songs in his plays. Their uses varied from references to contemporary events to the expression of a character's emotions, feelings and desires to setting the mood including fear and suspense.<sup>49</sup> The relation between

krachtich, steelt hy 't hert door d'oogen,/En laet my verschoven/In een benauwt gheween,/Lief ik, bemin ik, en klaegh' ik, en vraegh ik,/Waerom zeyt zy neen?'

**46** Rodenburgh, *Cassandra en Karel* (n. 2), vss. 2370-2375: 'En zal een grave zijn in fortuyns domme dwang? Echo/Neen Karel, Sterven zult ghy eer de zon zal zetten. hetten/Wat hetten? mijnes bloed? zal d'Echo my beletten? letten/Het graefelik voorneem dat reden wel bedenckt. denckt/Wat dencken? kan mijn eer hier in yets zijn gekrenckt? krenckt/Wat krenk ik Echo? niet, 't zal blijven wel verholten. Dolen.'

**47** S. Coster, *Isabella*, Amsterdam 1619, fol. \*2r-\*3r.

**48** Rodenburgh, *Celia en Prospero*, fol. D4r: 'Een Vrou u valt te voet,/Laet u Prinslick ghemoed/Door dese ooghen reghen/Wt mijn benaude borst [...] U tot me-ly beweghen. [...] 'k Bid uwe Majesteyt,/Doch gheve sulck bescheyd/Om Prospro vry te stellen./Vermoghen niet ghebeen,/Beweeght u door 't gheween/Welck uyt dees ooghen wellen.'

**49** See the prolific study by G. Umpierre, *Songs in the plays of Lope de Vega. A study of their dramatic function*, London 1975, p. 2.

melancholy and music is considered especially important in Lope's plays, according to Gustavo Umpierre.<sup>50</sup> Lope used music to influence the four bodily humours, tuning the harmonious or inharmonious of the four humours determining a person's health and temperament, generally called *La Musique Humaine (musica humana)*. In this case, Lope based his musical theories on the work of Pythagoras, Plato and Plotinus, Boethius and Polydor Virgil, authors who were read and studied throughout Europe. According to Umpierre, Lope could remove the melancholy for a short period of time by including songs in his plays. However, Veldhorst has argued that singing more often meant an aggravation of the emotions, effectively affecting the audience and moving them to love, hate, dance, rejoice or something else entirely, which was better kept behind closed doors.<sup>51</sup>

Rodenburgh's approach towards Lope's polymetric verse is inventive and traditional at the same time. The playwright accustomed the *comedias* to Dutch tastes. *Celia en Prospero* is, in this regard, exemplary. The play unites Spanish and Dutch poetics, while the Iberian plotline has been supplemented with a rondeau and a new song.<sup>52</sup>

### *Unity of time and place*

While Rodenburgh accustomed the typical Iberian verses to Dutch rhetoricians' traditions, he was more docile towards his example, when it came to the unities of time and place. Famous lines in the *Arte Nuevo* disclose that there is no reason for a play to take place in one day, or to restrict the stage to represent one place at all times:

There is no use in advising that it [the play] should take place in the period of one sun, though this is the view of Aristotle; [...] Let it take place in as little time as possible, except when the poet is writing history in which some years have to pass; these he can relegate to the space between the acts, wherein, if necessary, he can have a character go on some journey; a thing that greatly offends whoever perceives it. But let not him who is offended go to see them.<sup>53</sup>

Lope continues by saying that the common Spaniard attending a two-hour performance will only be satisfied if he sees history unfold from Genesis to the Last Judgement on stage. Furthermore, Lope gladly adjusts everything in his plays so its success as a 'blockbuster' is guaranteed.<sup>54</sup> In his adaptation of the *Defence of Poesy*, Rodenburgh translates

<sup>50</sup> Regarding his philosophy on the healing powers of music, Lope derived his poetic ideas from Pythagoras, Plato and Plotinus, in addition to Boethius and Polydor Virgil; Umpierre, *Songs in the plays of Lope de Vega*, p. 25-26.

<sup>51</sup> Umpierre, *Songs in the plays of Lope de Vega*, p. 25-26. See especially for the Dutch practice N. Veldhorst, *De perfecte verleiding. Muzikale scènes op het Amsterdams toneel in de zeventiende eeuw*, PhD-Thesis, Amsterdam 2004, p. 24.

<sup>52</sup> See also Abrahamse, *Het Toneel van Theodore Rodenburgh* (n. 1), p. 97; Abrahamse had originally argued that music, song and stichomythia seem to be Rodenburgh's alternatives to Lope's polymetric verses.

<sup>53</sup> Lope de Vega, *The New Art of Writing Plays* (n. 15), p. 30-31.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 31.



Philip Sidney's views on the custom of poets to ignore the classical rules of the unities. Especially the variety of locations in plays aggrieved Sidney:

One can behold on the one side of the stage *Asia*, while the other side represents *Africa*; yes, totally different kingdoms, so the actor himself has to explain where he is, otherwise the auditors become confused by the outcome.<sup>55</sup>

Likewise, Rodenburgh's literary competitor Samuel Coster, who had been following the classical poetics, had said in his 1619 play *Isabella* that 'he, who follows the ancients, understands that a play is good, when it represents one place, and when it plays out at one time, for he who does not abide by these rules, blunders greatly.'<sup>56</sup> Rodenburgh did not agree completely with either poet and explicitly referenced 'den treffelijcken poët Lope de Vega Carpio' [the excellent poet Lope de Vega Carpio]. He paraphrases Lope regarding the unities of time, place and action, presenting two opposing views on the subject:

the excellent poet Lope de Vega Carpio (in his booklet named *Arte Nuevo de hazar comedias en este tiempo*) said that he puts Terence and Plautus away from his thoughts when he plans to write a play, [...]'<sup>57</sup>

Rodenburgh approached Lope's *comedias* similarly, keeping the variety of locations in his translations. This becomes clear, for example, in *Celia en Prospero*. At the end of the list of dramatis personae, it says that the stage is on the one hand Florence, and on the other, Arcadia: 'The stage is Florence and Arcadia.'<sup>58</sup> At the end of the first act, Prospero had been expelled from court and had sought refuge with Laura (the miller's daughter) and Molimpo (the miller's employee) near a mill in the country side. Rodenburgh chose not to adhere to the unity of place by situating Laura's mill in the country side. On the one hand, a mill in the palace gardens would have been rather unlikely, although Duchess Celia had been the owner of the mill. On the other hand, the intrigue required for Prospero to flee Florence, after which he tries to find his way back to court by the means of disguising himself as one of the miller's employees. Rodenburgh also kept the variety of locations intact in his third Lope-adaptation *Jalouse Studentin (La Escolástica Celosa)* in which he let the stage represent both the world-famous student city of Leiden and The Hague, instead of the equally world-famous student city Alcalá

<sup>55</sup> Rodenburgh, *Borst-Weringh* (n. 13), p. 47: 'Men ziet dat het toonneels eene zyde afbeelt *Asia*, en d'ander zyde *Africa*, jae ander Coninghrijcken, zo dat de Toonneel-speelder zelven moet zeggen waer hy is, of d'aenzienders verwerren in d'uytkomste.'

<sup>56</sup> Coster, *Isabella* (n. 47), fol. \*2r.: '(...) hy, de ouden volgende, verstaat dat het wel is, dat is, dat het speelt op een Toneel, en op een tijdt, want die dat niet en doet, begaet [een] grooten misslach [...].'

<sup>57</sup> Rodenburgh, *Borst-Weringh*, p. 47: 'Den treffelijcken Poët Lope de Vega Carpio, (in zijn boeckken, ghenaemt: *Arte nueuo de hazer comedias en este tiempo*) zeyt: dat hy Terens en Plaut uyt zijn ghedachten stelt, als hy zijn voorgenomen wercken wil rijmen: daer by voegende, dat hy zich aen geen tijdt bindt, maer voorzichtigelijck zijn bedrijven verdeeldt, en meest handelende yets 't geen Historiael is, oordelende dat het bevallycker voor de aenschouwers is, het begin en 't eyndt van alle de ghevalen af te beelden.' See also Abrahamse, *Het Toneel van Theodore Rodenburgh*, p. 26.

<sup>58</sup> Rodenburgh, *Celia en Prospero* (n. 2), fol. A2v: 'Het Toonneel is Florenca en Arcadie.'

and Madrid. In this case, Rodenburgh accustomed the play through the so-called local-colouring of the play.

### *Endings*

Rodenburgh enriched his translations of the 1617 plays not only with new opening lines, but with new endings as well. Here, too, Rodenburgh was rethinking Lope's recommendations through the lens of rhetoricians' traditions. A good example of this is the last scene of *Celia en Prospero*. It regards a choir-like song with the incipit 'Nu ghy molenaers maelt ghelijc' (Now you millers, grind in unison).<sup>59</sup> On the one hand, this song conforms to Dutch tradition. It is a *contrafactum*, and as such a new poem set to an existing tune, 'Phoebus who is over sea' (*Phoebus die is over Zee, &c.*). On the other hand, the passage is an intriguing combination of music and action, which is exemplary for Lope's drama. Many songs in his plays were a direct part of the dramatic action, influenced it, or emphasised the meaning of an action.<sup>60</sup> According to Umpierre, Lope's songs were meant to 'regulate the development of the action by quickening its pace, slowing it, or helping bring it to an end.'<sup>61</sup> This latter function can also be identified in the closing song of Lope's *The Miller*. In this case, Rodenburgh remained true to the original and kept the use of bringing the action to an end intact in the dialogical song in *Celia en Prospero*. The Dutch auditors had never before witnessed a tragedy or comedy concluded this way and, thus, the contents of the text are emphasised: during the 'song' the plot will be revealed to the auditors, anxious to know the outcome. Lope had specifically propagated an obscuration of the plot until the very last moment. The intrigue and the plot twists in both *The Miller* and *Celia en Prospero* had, therefore, heavily relied on the act of disguise. Lope writes on this matter that ladies should not disregard their character, 'and if they change costumes, let it be in such wise that it may be excused; for male disguise usually is very pleasing.'<sup>62</sup> Lope's plot twists had always been intricate, but appealing for any audience to watch. It comes as no surprise, then, that the plot ending of *Celia en Prospero* was complex as well, but was, furthermore, presented to the auditors by means of a 'song'. Until the very last moment, Laura does not want to believe that Martijn (Count Prospero's alias as one of the miller's employees) does not exist, even when Prospero changes back to his own costume during the 'song'. Additionally, it will come as a surprise that Duchess Celia is allowed to marry,<sup>63</sup> that Celia gives her mill

<sup>59</sup> After seven lines of singing, the characters continue in polymetric verses, which were either sung or declaimed.

<sup>60</sup> See Umpierre, *Songs in the plays of Lope de Vega* (n. 49), p. 54–58.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 55. These uses have not yet been categorised by Veldhorst in the chief study on music in the seventeenth-century Dutch Republic, *De Perfecte Verleiding* (n. 51).

<sup>62</sup> De Vega, *The New Art of Writing Plays* (n. 15), p. 34.

<sup>63</sup> Rodenburgh, *Celia en Prospero*, fol. F4r: 'Dat zy nu te zamen paeren,/Die zo langh verscheyden waeren.'

as a wedding present to Laura, who is marrying Molimpo,<sup>64</sup> and that Prince Aristippus says he will marry the French princess,<sup>65</sup> to whom he was promised in marriage by his father, the king.<sup>66</sup> As such, the ‘song’ is an excellent way to reveal the festive outcome of the play. The function of the ‘song’ stretches beyond the general practices to express a character’s emotions, feelings and desires or to create a mood and atmosphere. The festive events are stressed by the use of a ‘song’, indicating that the audience may rejoice.

Another strategy employed by Rodenburgh included expanding the original texts with soliloquies wherever he thought the original play needed a moral or emotional digression. This is seen at the ending of *Casandra en Karel*. In Lope’s *The Pursued*, the story ends rapidly: the rival lover Lodewijk has quickly abandoned all efforts to win Leonora’s heart, while the vindictive Casandra bids farewell to Burgundy as fast as she can. Both parts of these bad characters are enlarged by Rodenburgh. In addition to the original *comedia*, two courtiers are witnessing how first Lodewijk appears on stage while he seems to have lost his mind. He is being followed by ‘a silent ghost dressed up as the devil, who has “distrust” written on his habit.’<sup>67</sup> By introducing this allegorical character, the playwright, even more so than Lope, makes explicit how Lodewijk has changed from a proud and jealous count with a crush on a secretly married duchess, into a mentally ill man, driven insane by grief and distrust. This transformation seems to have been so important in Rodenburgh’s eyes that he uses a feature which was common in mediaeval and rhetoricians’ poetry in order to deviate from the original plot: the allegorical character.

Even more impressive is the appearance of Casandra on stage. The two courtiers have not yet recovered from the shock when their duchess enters to prepare herself to leave the country, only assisted by ‘a silent ghost, being a woman, dressed in white clothes displaying the words “humble” confession.’<sup>68</sup> Casandra utters an extensive soliloquy in which she, too, makes radical changes, talking sense into herself. Before the eyes of the audience, the vindictive duchess first transforms into a pathetic creature, regretting her own loss of honour – not her evil deeds:

*Casandra*    Your name which once was flaunting in your glory,  
                   Will now forever be etched in shameful memory.  
                   Your name which once was shining as the North Star,  
                   Will now, alas, drown in the horny pool of lust.<sup>69</sup>

64 Ibidem, fol. F4v: ‘En ik schenk heur dese molen.’

65 Ibidem, fol. F4r: ‘Want men ziet ’s Hemels besluyt, /Yeder heeft zyn echte-Bruyt.’

66 Ibidem, fol. F4v: ‘Hier ghy nu uw Vrouwe hebt.’

67 Rodenburgh, *Casandra en Karel* (n. 2), lines between vss. 2742 and 2743: ‘Graef Lodewijk rasende vervolgt zijnde van een stomme geest in duyvels habijt, hebbende op zyn kleeding, Wantrou, gheschreven.’

68 Ibidem, lines between vss. 2792 and 2793: ‘Casandra Zeer bedroeft, Vervolgt zijnde door een stomme gheest, wesende een vrou, hebbende op heur witte kledren gheschreven, Ootmoedighe schuld beken, die heur stadich verzelschapt.’

69 Ibidem, vss. 2803–2806: ‘Uw name die wel eer hier bralde in uw glory, /Zal blyven nu ghegrift in schandighe memory. /Uw name die wel eer g’lijk pole-sterren blonk, /Helacy, nu in lustens gayle poel verdronck.’

Suddenly, Casandra realises that the loss of her honour on earth does not imply that she has lost the mercy of God. She knows that she will be forgiven as soon as she confesses her sins. The most interesting aspect is the conclusion of her soliloquy through a prayer. Begging for mercy, the duchess compares herself to the famous martyr Mary Magdalene, often depicted by painters and sculptors as a former prostitute atoning for her sins in the desert, using her long flowing hair to cover her nakedness, with her eyes lowered and hands folded:

*Casandra* [...] Convert her, like the sad Magdalene.  
 Have I used these eyes, alas, lecherous,  
 See how remorse makes me, in tears, look down,  
 And how these hands that seized the lust  
 Are now clasped together in humbleness,  
 And how this tongue that spoke of female lust  
 Now prays for your mercy contritely.  
 These hairs that once confused my gallants eyes,  
 Will now serve to dry my tears.  
 My voice that uttered lust voluptuously,  
 Will now express my faults, my grief, my prayers.<sup>70</sup>

A confession scene such as this one, most likely staged as a tableau vivant, will have elicited emotional responses from the audience, just before the play came to a happy dénouement by the reconciliation of the characters, re-establishing harmony and the exchange of wedding vows among the remaining characters.

## Conclusion

Our analysis of the two Spanish plays *Casandra en Karel* and *Celia en Prospero* shows the many different ways in which Rodenburgh's adaptations of the Iberian originals were constructed, focussing on the moral contrasts between the protagonists and antagonists, and their inner feelings through soliloquies in which they experience *woelingen* and undergo substantial changes. The moral instruction was more evident than in Lope's plays, but at the same time the 1617 plays were animated with songs, rhetorician poems, rondeaus, refrains, lamentations, duets, tableaux vivants and many other elements. All these Dutch aspects changed the very nature of Lope's plays. *The Pursued* changed from a *drama de honor* into a Dutch tragicomedy about an adulterous duchess gaining self-knowledge in the end, whereas *Celia en Prospero* kept more of its original features

<sup>70</sup> Ibidem, vss. 2874-2884: '[...] bekeert heur g'lijk de droeve Maeghdaleen./Heb ik dees oogen, laes, ontuchtelik gebuykt,/Ziet hoe berou die nu betraent ter aerde duykt./En deze handen die de minne drucking namen,/Nu met oodmoedicheid ghevouwen zijn te zamen./En deze tong die was de minnens-tael-vrou-s-lit/Nu penententelik om uw genade bid./Dees haeren die wel een verwarden minnaers oogen,/Die zullen dienen nu om traenen af te drooghen./Mijn stemme die zo gayl voort broght lusts graegt alleen,/Zal uyten nu mijn schuld, mijn rouwe, mijn gebeen.'

of Lope's play *The Miller*, a *comedia de capa y espada*, which is set in a variety of places, revolves around the disguises of many of the characters, and like in Lope's *The Miller* concludes through a similar 'song'. Yet, *Celia en Prospero* includes a rondeau that accustomed the play to Dutch tastes. Our discussion of Rodenburgh's textual strategies demonstrates how the poetic ideas of Lope de Vega were transferred and transformed in the early 1600s. Because of this, Lope's poetics got a foothold in the Dutch literary circles.