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CLARK COLAHAN

**LINKS BETWEEN THE LEGEND OF “LOS
AMANTES DE TERUEL”, CHALLE’S
“CONTINUATION DE DON QUICHOTTE”,
AND ROUSSEAU’S “JULIE”**

“Toma, toma, esposo mío,
– pues para con Dios lo eres –
esta mano, para que
quien se llamó tuya siempre,
ya que no pudo en la vida,
lo venga a ser en la muerte.”

Pérez de Montalbán, *Los amantes de Teruel*,
1635.

“Puisque vous ne pouvez être á moi, adorable
Dulcinée, puisqu’il faut me résoudre á me
priver pour jamais de la vue de vos charmes, je
vais éteindre en moi les feux dont je suis
vainement consumé’. En disant ces paroles il
prit son casque, le remplit d’eau, & le vida
jusqu’à la dernière goutte.”

Challe, *La continuation de l’histoire de
l’admirable Don Quichotte de la Manche*,
1713.

“Sans toi, quelle félicité goûterais-je? [...] La
vertu qui nous sépara sur la terre nous unira

dans le séjour éternel. Je meurs dans cette douce attente: trop heureuse d'acheter au prix de ma vie le droit de t'aimer toujours sans crime."

Rousseau, *Julie*, 1761.

1. *Introduction*

All three of these stories end in bizarre and similar suicides motivated by frustrated love and described in terms of frigid, killing water. But these descriptions seem less strange when we set about recalling European archetypes related to them. Then we find, lurking in our collective memory, scenes in literature and art where troubled individuals, hoping to put an end to emotional suffering, take their own life by drowning. Ever since antiquity variations of the archetype have been with us, probably due to their shocking juxtaposition of universal experiences normally kept separate in the mind, a juxtaposition that produces overwhelming emotional intensity by depicting the life force turned against itself. Recent studies have focused on portrayals of people who have given up their painful efforts to live and are shown looking for final inner peace while standing on a shoreline, as in paintings by Edvard Munch. One may think of the compelling desire to be dissolved into water present in the self-inflicted drowning of Virginia Woolf in 1941.¹ The literary works studied here are linked by images of lethally cold water in springs, lakes and the sea, places used in desperate efforts to combat the fiery torments of thwarted love. Many phrases shared among the three express the underlying contrast between killing cold and driving heat, but some also

¹ See E. Bruyas, *L'Eau de la mélancholie*, in "Alkemie", I, 19, 2017, pp. 109-114.

articulate very similarly the hope that in the afterlife all worthy loves will at last become possible.

One of the best-known examples of this particular way of taking one's life to escape the pain of love is the climax to *Julie, or the new Heloise*. Because the novel combines all the elements used earlier in the two other works here considered, the clearest approach to seeing the links among the three is to begin with Rousseau and work backward in time. One needs to look at what criticism has suggested – as well as what it has been unaware of – as a source for his symbolic use of an event that, if supposed to be merely a meaningless twist in the plot, would seem highly unlikely, a contrivance short on verisimilitude. This study demonstrates that the likelihood of two unrecognized textual parallels to *Julie*, one Spanish and another French but deriving from *Don Quixote*, increases markedly when one compares the finale to Rousseau's novel with those of the French Jansenist sequel to Cervantes' novel and of Spanish plays of the seventeenth century and eighteenth centuries revolving around a well-known legend of two ill-fated lovers.

2. *Julie happily fetes her own death*

By far the most read of the three works is *Julie, or the New Heloise* (1761), which was the biggest publishing success of the century. Julie is a young woman who becomes the lover of her tutor, Saint-Preux, and as we shall see, both characters are unmistakably, and sometimes explicitly, connected to Don Quixote and Dulcinea. She is described as a saint not only of emotional faithfulness but of kindness to all in need, functioning as a model of self-sacrifice. Julie gives up her desire to marry Saint-Preux when she is unable to persuade her father to give his consent, obeying

instead her obligation to the family, to the older husband chosen for her, and in the end to the children she has with him.

But as her arc bends towards its end, Julie again follows the path of Don Quixote, but now in a tragic version of him given new prominence during the early years of Romanticism. She is unable to bear a life deprived of the supreme happiness of being with her beloved. She quenches the fires of love, and likewise the desire of life that accompanies it, by means of cold water, jumping unthinkingly into Lake Geneva to save one of her children; after a long wait for help to arrive, she emerges chilled to the bone. The doctor who is called predicts that her survival will depend on whether she still wants to live, a diagnosis verified by her soon coming to welcome death. She even gives a farewell dinner for herself with her friends while literally on her death bed.

The defeat of years of extraordinary self-discipline in the service of virtue, and the power of Eros struggling with social and religious obligation, reveal themselves. As has been noted, Julie's death seems easy and inevitable to her since her unwanted marriage has already become an emotional death:

“Julie admits that she has never been ‘cured’ of her passion and that, like Heloise's desire in the convent, it continues to impose itself against her will. In her final moments Julie recognizes not that she is about to die but that, in having renounced passion for virtue, she already has. With this recognition it is easy to embrace the fate she is about to suffer: “it is merely to die one more time.”²

This conflict between energizing warm desire and chilling moral duty echoes the perennial mythic tension, the quixotic dilemma, between heroic striving for a moral ideal and surrender to basic emotional needs. In

² F. Neuhausser, *Rousseau's Julie: Passion, Love, and the Price of Virtue*, in *Understanding Love: Philosophy, Film, and Fiction*, edited by S. R. Wolf and C. Grau, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2014, p. 227.

her final letter to Saint-Preux, written just prior to her death, she exclaims with idealistic fervor that she prefers to wait for him in Heaven, where loving him will not be a crime.

We shall see that the first Spanish play on the Teruel tragedy, by the early modern Valencian writer Rey de Artieda, had colored the self-willed death of the female protagonist with the stoic and noble tones it displays in Classical Greek and Roman literature. A study of a parallel but distinct line prominent in the nineteenth-century theatrical revisioning of the legend by Juan Eugenio Hartzenbusch shows how Spanish Romanticism would work to a similar end, imagining a different sort of happy ending in a Christian Heaven.³ It is the same finale minimally sketched by Jean-Jacques Rousseau in *Julie* to resolve a nearly identical life situation. In Spain, it would not be many decades more before even the immoral Don Juan would be placed on the path to Heaven in the next life through the choice made by the virtuous woman who loved him deeply enough to follow him into death.

In relation to Hartzenbusch's Romantic play *Los amantes Teruel*, it has been pointed out in the work the consoling connotations of the following biblical passage about a hopeful end of life: "For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes (*Revelation*, 7, 17)".⁴ This metaphor of nourishing waters stands in opposition to the death-giving frigid water present in the earlier works here studied. We shall see, too, a third perspective on the aquatic archetype in a focus on the individual's opting between these diametrically opposed descriptions of water; that choice is foregrounded at the beginning of the

³ D. Flitter, *The Romantic Theology of "Los Amantes de Teruel"*, in "Crítica hispánica", XVIII, 1, 1996, pp. 25-34.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 32.

eighteenth century in Don Quixote's overwrought and confused final thoughts on love and hate as described by Challe.

3. *Another model previously proposed for Julie's exceptional form of suicide*

I shall argue that the most convincing model followed by Rousseau in imagining Julie's death is Montalbán's play, and that this interpretation is strengthened by a comparative analysis of the classical source that critics have proposed: the Greek poet Sappho's suicide as narrated by Ovid. In letter 26 of Part One of Rousseau's novel, Saint-Preux compares his position as an exile from Julie with the situation of the exiled Sappho. She has been abandoned by her beloved, the ferryman Phaon. After writing a letter containing a final appeal to him, she throws herself to her death from the heights of a rock, Lefkada, into the sea. In legends it is the place which often served as the scenario for lovers who, in the hope of extinguishing the fires of frustrated love, would throw themselves into the chilling waves. Sappho exclaims:

“constitit ante oculos Naias una meos;
constitit et dixit: ‘Quoniam non ignibus aequis
ureris, Ambracia est terra petenda tibi’.

[...] Pete protinus altam
Leucada, nec saxo desilvisse time'. [...]

Cur tamen Actiacas miseram me mittis ad oras,
cum profugum possis ipse referre pedem? [...]

hoc saltem miserae crudelis epistula dicat,
ut mihi Leucadiae fata petantur aquae.”⁵

⁵ Ovidius, *Heroides*, XV, vv. 162-164, 171-172, 185-186, and 219-220.

Bérengrère Baucher argues that from the very beginning of Rousseau's literary career, the linked theme of love and of exile lent support to his identification with Ovid, who then slides on into Saint-Preux, who in letter 26 recalls his condition as cut off in exile, where among the rocks he finds a lonely refuge. It is also pointed out that critics have studied stylistic and thematic links between Ovid's version of Sappho's letter to Phaon and the letters in *Julie* between the lovers.⁶ Going a step further, it would be even possible to propose with a little circular logic that Rousseau's failure to mention Sappho by name is a way for him to avoid giving praise to Sappho, and by extension, to Julie.⁷

Though the basic situation of a suicide brought on by love and carried out by a leap into water is the same, there are, in addition to argument on the basis of an absence, undeniable weaknesses in the hypothesis of Sappho's death as the sole model for Julie's. The Sappho story includes no obstacle between the lovers in the form of a prohibition by the woman's father. The tragic difficulty is only the cooling of amorous passion by one of the lovers.

Secondly, no impulsive heroic rescue from a lake or the sea is undertaken. And that rescue, even if one could have taken place, would of course not have been a preliminary step for Sappho to realize that her plunge into the water, unlike Julie's, has provided a way to satisfy a long-desired wish to die. Thirdly, Julie's fatal dilemma of choosing between, on the one hand, the love of Saint-Preux and, on the other, the love of family and virtue is neatly symbolized by her son being the precipitating cause of

⁶ For the possible link between Saint-Preux's epistolary expression of his feelings and those of Sappho, see B. Baucher, *Le modèle dérobé de Sappho*, in *Sources et postérités de "La nouvelle Héloïse" de Rousseau. Le modèle de Julie*, textes recueillis par G. Goubier et S. Lojkine, Paris, Editions Desjonquères, 2012, pp. 265-273. For the reference to the studies of the letters, see p. 269.

⁷ B. Baucher, *Le modèle dérobé de Sappho*, cit., p. 266.

her fatal leap. No such alternate love complicates Sappho's violent reaction to rejection by Phaon.

Finally, parallels to Sappho's legend can be seen in Saint-Preux's letters to Julie, not in Julie's letters to him, except in response to what he has written to her. The individual threatening suicide by using references to Sappho is Saint-Preux, but in the end he does not take his life. Sappho's letter to Phaon was very likely an important model for Saint-Preux's letters to Julie written in exile, but not for Julie's death. For these several reasons, it seems likely that Rousseau may have had in mind another literary model revolving around love death by water that guided him in shaping Ovid's story to fit the circumstances in *Julie*.

4. *Explicit references to Don Quixote, including another exceptional suicide by cold water*

Throughout the eighteenth century the standard French translation of Cervantes' novel included a sequel by François Filleau de Saint-Martin and Robert Challe.⁸ The would-be knight, who strove above all else to be worthy of Dulcinea, is alluded to directly and indirectly in Rousseau's novel. Saint-Preux, whose name means 'valiant knight', takes a stereotypically chivalric vow of obedience, faith and loyalty to Julie. Speaking of herself in the third person that lends to her words some of the mock solemnity of speeches in Cervantes' text, she instructs him on what he must do and how she will accept and acknowledge him as her chosen knight:

⁸ For a detailed study of the sequel see my recent study: C. Colahan, *El camino francés al don Quijote romántico: Pascal, la commedia dell'arte y Rousseau*, traducción de E. López Padilla, edición de M. Álvarez Álvarez, Grec (El *Quijote* y sus interpretaciones), Oviedo, Luna de Abajo, 2020.

“Et quand je douterais de ton cœur, je ne puis jamais douter de ta foi. [...] vous lui jurerez foi et loyauté à toute épreuve; non pas à dire amour éternel [...]; mais vérité, sincérité, franchise inviolable [...]. Ce faisant, aurez l’accolade, et serez connu vassal unique et loyal chevalier.”⁹

With a touch of humor, but in the same chivalric vein, Saint-Preux explicitly compares himself to Don Quixote, who behaved with dignity in a well-known scene of the novel that takes place at the country house of the cruel duke and duchess. Rousseau’s hero affirms that while traveling through the Swiss Alps: “Pour moi qui respecte encore plus les usages des pays ou je vis que ceux de la galanterie, je recevais leur service en silence, avec autant de gravité que don Quichotte chez la duchesse”.¹⁰

Critics have pointed out the serious and difficult aspects of the lovers’ commitment to each other, but we can see that again Rousseau visualizes them in typically Cervantine images.¹¹ Just as Don Quixote avoids the corruption of the cities he might visit, especially the notorious Seville, preferring even to sleep outdoors rather than in inns, so, too, Rousseau’s protagonists’ “purity of soul matches Swiss landscape”¹². Also, the observation that “virtue itself is not a gift of nature; it requires will, it is a kind of heroism that overcomes obstacles”,¹³ is an apt characterization of the growing moral stature of the increasingly effective hero of the French sequel to Cervantes’ originally parodic tale.

⁹ J.-J. Rousseau, *Julie: Ou, La Nouvelle Héloïse*, Paris, Barbier, 1845, p. 118; see P. Stewart’s introduction to J.-J. Rousseau, *Julie, or the New Heloise: Letters of Two Lovers Who Live in a Small Town at the Foot of the Alps*, translated by P. Stewart and J. Vaché, Hanover and London, University Press of New England, 1997, pp. 90-91.

¹⁰ J.-J. Rousseau, *Julie*, cit., pp. 84-85.

¹¹ See P. Stewart’s introduction to J.-J. Rousseau, *Julie, or the New Heloise: Letters of Two Lovers Who Live in a Small Town at the Foot of the Alps*, cit., pp. IX-XXI.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. IX.

¹³ *Ibidem.*

Don Quixote has suffered the emotional jolt of being told that Dulcinea, whom he has adored from afar and then met in the person of a young woman playing her role in a staged production, has taken an ironclad vow to become a nun. As he slowly travels homeward, he has been dwelling on how heavy is the yoke of love, and all the sensual pleasures he has lost in not taking possession of Dulcinea. He sounds rather like the self-centered version of Sancho that grows in prominence as the sequel nears its end: “Puisque vous ne pouvez être à moi, adorable Dulcinée, puisqu’il faut me résoudre à me priver pour jamais de la vue de vos charmes, je vais éteindre en moi les feux dont je suis vainement consumé”.¹⁴

Sadly and symbolically, on a very hot summer’s day the two travelers have come across a forest spring that Don Quixote takes to be a fictional one from the tales of chivalry, one which has the power to turn even the strongest love into hatred. This proves to be the most terrible temptation he has ever encountered, and he succumbs. He drinks deep, then soon becomes convinced that it has worked wonderfully, that the woman he had loved now seems to him to be an ugly peasant girl. He is stunned to think that he had chosen her to be the object of his desire.

The experience has plunged him back into the forbidden world of chivalric fiction, and he compares himself to Ariosto’s Renaud de Montauban’s falling out of love with the unfaithful Angelica. Operating instead on the comic and folk-religious plane, Sancho drinks, too, and is thrilled to feel that he now hates his wife even more than before, more than all the demons in hell, and that if she were there at that moment he would smash her teeth with his fists.¹⁵ They both fall ill from drinking so much

¹⁴ F. Filleau de Saint-Martin, *Histoire de l’admirable Don Quichotte de la Manche, Nouvelle édition, revue, corrigé & augmentée*, 6 vols., La Haye, chez Bassompierre et Van Den Berghen, 1773, vol. V, chapter 61.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, vol. VI, chapter 61.

cold water on a stifling day, but travel on and reach their town, where an abulic Don Quixote, after allowing Master Nicholas the barber to bleed him several times, fades away into death. Deprived of his idealized love for Dulcinea, he clearly has lost his will to live. Sancho, by taking alcoholic refreshment steadily for three days, fully recovers and resumes the peasant life he had always led before his neighbor entangled him in dreams of inappropriate and unrealistic adventure, pleasure and social advancement.

In canto XLII of Ariosto's famous chivalric poem *Orlando Furioso*, which Cervantes beyond a doubt knew well and his sequel writer almost certainly, Rinaldo drinks from a fountain which finally cures him his love for Angelica. Ariosto narrates and then comments on the moral significance of the later event:

“Trovarò, andando insieme, un'acqua fresca
che col suo mormorio faceva talora
pastori e viandanti al chiaro rio
venire, e berne l'amoroso oblio.

Signor, queste eran quelle gelide acque,
quelle, che spengon l'amoroso caldo [...].

Corse Rinaldo al liquido cristallo
spinto da caldo e da sete molesta,
e cacciò, a un sorso del freddo liquore,
dal petto ardente e la sete e l'amore.

Quando lo vide l'altro cavaliere
La bocca sollevò de l'acqua molle,
e ritrarne pentito ogni pensiero
di quel desir ch'ebbe d'amor sì folle;
si levò ritto, e con sembiante altiero
gli disse quel che dianzi dir non volle:
– Sappi, Rinaldo, il nome mio è lo Sdegno,
venuto sol per sciorti il giogo indegno. – [...]

[Rinaldo] s'aggirò intorno, e disse: – Ove è costui? –
Stimar non sa se sian magiche larve,
che Malagigi un de' ministri sui
gli abbia mandato a romper la catena
che lungamente l'ha tenuto in pena:

o pur che Dio da l'alta ierarchia
 gli abbia per ineffabil sua bontade
 mandato, come già mandò a Tobia,
 un angelo a levar di cecitade.
 Ma buono o rio demonio, o quel che sia,
 che gli ha renduta la sua libertade,
 ringrazia e loda; e da lui sol conosce
 che sano ha il cor da l'amorose angosce.”¹⁶

Ariosto's take on immersing oneself, inside or out, in icy water to end some kinds of love is not what we have encountered so far, and it is clearly affirmative. Amorous fascination persevered over long periods of time is not the noble self-control presented in Artieda nor the triumph of pure love found in dramatizations of the legend and in Rousseau's novel. How, one asks, at the turn of the eighteenth century did Challe hope readers would interpret this medieval / Renaissance conclusion as applied to the finale of his Quixote sequel?

At best, as weakness of character, at worst as reprehensible cynicism and disillusionment with the best and most Christian virtue in the world. The Jansenist view would have been that Don Quixote's love and faith in Dulcinea, who for them was a symbol of the goodness possible in others, had kept him on the straight and narrow path to true happiness. His desertion of those values to look for salvation from emotional suffering through hatred – immediately producing a desire in Sancho to injure his wife and the conviction in Don Quixote that his beloved is repulsive – is in Jansenist eyes further sad evidence of the fallen human condition that so few of us are able to rise above.

The ancient connotations of death by cold water in the context of desperate love were clearly known to Challe through Arthurian romance

¹⁶ L. Ariosto, *Orlando furioso*, introduzione e commento di E. Bigi, a cura di C. Zampese, indici di P. Floriani, Milano, Rizzoli, 2012, XLII, 60-66.

and ancient authors; he saw them as a vehicle to voice his pessimistic theological perspective. But those negative connotations had attached themselves also to the tragic legend that arose in sea-faring Aragon, where mercantile fortunes and sailors' lives rode on the success or failure of navigation on the Mediterranean. They would persist in the imagery of Spanish literary treatments of the Teruel legend, but later writers would instead emphasize that drowning in coldness is a kind of death that some loves can transcend. Both the French Quijote tradition and the Aragonese one from Teruel filtered through to Rousseau.

5. Origin of the Aragonese legend

Much has been guessed, concluded from the analysis of early documentary evidence, and written about how much of a medieval legend entered Spanish literature via one of Boccaccio's tales in the *Decameron*. A great deal, without question, even though our knowledge of what his source was is speculative. But all that happened at the beginning of the story's artistic evolution, and what Rousseau encountered and drew on several hundred years later, had already added new elements and new interpretations to the legend. What the historical roots were of that literary tradition, and how it shifted shape in drawing on patterns in folk tales, as well as in response to the personal and political aims of the literary writers who made use of them, has in very recent years become clearer.

In the second half of the fifteenth century the Marcilla clan of Teruel, based on legend and family oral tradition, had arranged for somebody, plausibly one of them, to write up and include the story in a codex containing regional history. The aim was to draw attention to the family through the story's extraordinary pathos and the heroic efforts affirmed to have been made by the Marcilla protagonist and his beloved. All this was

clearly done in an effort to glorify their heritage at a time of growing aristocratic ambition, when prominent families were doing everything possible to establish their right to be included in the upper echelons of the nobility.¹⁷ The family apparently claimed also, to judge by events included in the play, to have rendered a distinguished personal service to Charles V at the time of his early sixteenth-century campaign to recapture a section of the North African coast that had been taken by Barbarosa. Other records document that the two lovers' families were prominent in Teruel in the early thirteenth century.¹⁸

The chronological gap of three centuries between the time of the historical events and that of the emperor was eliminated, apparently out of considerations of literary artistry and family claims. But the personal service rendered, involving a highly dangerous leap into sea water motivated by frustrated love, became part of the legend. The naval episode's emotional connotations, though the heroic event was seemingly remote in time, space, and plot from the central action that takes place in Teruel, were incorporated by playwrights into the gathering momentum of tragedy foreshadowed.

6. *Rey de Artieda's paradigm-setting play (1581)*

Los amantes, the pioneering version written by the Valencian playwright Andrés Rey de Artieda, provided the starting-point for most of

¹⁷ For a clear and well-documented summary of new research that has been done on the intricate relationship existing among historical events, legend, folk-motifs, literary influences and authorial innovations see Teresa Ferrer Valls' prologue to her edition of the play by Montalbán: *Obras de Juan Pérez de Montalbán*, vol. I, 3, dirección general y editor general del volumen C. Demattè, editores del volumen M. Trambaioli, R. Alviti y T. Ferrer, Kassel, Reichenberger, 2017, pp. 295-322.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 303.

the later Spanish versions, and parodies, of the hugely popular story, including Montalbán's, which appeared fifty years later.¹⁹ Being born Valencia in 1549 to a father from neighboring Aragon and a Valencian mother, Rey de Artieda was almost certainly familiar with the legend of the lovers from Teruel.²⁰ In 1555 two mummies, claimed to be the couple, were found during the building of a chapel in the church of St. Peter there, though recent scientific analyses show that they do not go back to the early thirteenth century, when the historic events were supposed to have taken place.

Critics have highlighted the reason for its persistent success, and especially the evident reason why its finale was adapted by Rousseau in his novel:

"The legend of the lovers of Teruel has survived because, in a world where circumstances conspire to make the course of true love run less than smoothly, it assures us that true love triumphs, even over death. Or, to put it slightly differently, the Teruel story has been successful because its motifs have struck a familiar chord with generation after generation of those who have come across it; to such an extent that more motifs of the same kind have been added to it."²¹

Artieda centers the play on that theme, with the secondary story line serving as no more than a background.²² The hero, Marcilla (called by his family name, like his beloved), returns to Teruel after seven years of absence dedicated to making himself rich, as required by Sigura's father,

¹⁹ A. C. Bueno Serrano, *Motivos folclóricos y caballerescos en los libros de caballerías castellanos*, in "Revista de Poética Medieval", XXVI, 2012, pp. 83-108, and C. Iranzo de Ebersole, *Andrés Rey de Artieda y "Los Amantes de Teruel"*, in "Hispanófila", XLI, 1971, pp. 13-21.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

²¹ D. W. Cruikshank, *The Lovers of Teruel: A 'Romantic' Story*, in "The Modern Language Review", LXXXVIII, 4, 1993, p. 892.

²² C. Iranzo de Ebersole, *Andrés Rey de Artieda y "Los Amantes de Teruel"*, pp. 18-20, outlines all the action of the four acts.

but he arrives two hours late and his lifelong sweetheart has already been married off that same day to a wealthy suitor. Both lovers die of grief.

In this version of the legend and nearly all subsequent ones, there is recurring symbolic imagery taken from nature and revolving around the flaming heat of life and love as contrasted with biting cold water and death, the latter two representing the lovers' temporary or permanent separation. Marcilla captures the contradictory essence of his love affair with Sigura as follows:

“Donde, tratando de la edad pasada,
lo que alcanzamos siendo niña y niño,
lo que vine a perder, cuando la espada
me ceñí (esta propia que me ciño),
un fuego que arde, siendo nieve helada;
soledad, que Aragón llama cariño,
en brasas me dejara, a no ser fría
cuando me helaba junto y encendía.”²³

Images of fire and ice reappear when Marcilla discovers that Sigura has married in his absence: “callar será cordura / pues de ira y desdén ardo, / y de envidia me hielo y acobardo”.²⁴

Still, this story's roots in legends of family wealth and brave adventure have not disappeared in the play. Marcilla's several-year exile in far-flung travels at the command of his beloved's father recalls the same banishment for some years imposed on Saint-Preux by Julie's father at the time when he commands her to marry a wealthier suitor. The hero is delayed by storms at sea, arriving near Teruel in a great hurry to get home to meet the deadline and claim his bride, but space is made in the plot for accounts of his fame and profitable mercantile business along the North

²³ A. Rey de Artieda, *Los amantes, tragedia compuesta por Micer Andrés Rey de Artieda* [1581], Madrid, La Arcadia, 1947, I, 1, p. 18.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 49.

African coast. His bravely jumping into the ocean to save the emperor is not mentioned, but in the account given of those years in North Africa a king with a fleet of galleys has richly rewarded Marcilla for his military valor and skill. But the rejoicing which that reward calls forth soon turns to despair, as it will in Montalbán's tragedy. Within a growing mood of fatality, another fall into the sea is recounted, this one of the goods bestowed by the king, notably an elegant sash and feathers, and the play ends in tragedy. As we have seen, a fall into water similar to these two determines the outcome in *Julie*.

Marcilla describes the mishap as an omen, similar to a dream he has had of a ring being pulled from his finger, a ring commented on by a comrade as representing Sigura. Regarding the loss of the elegant attire he is bringing, he confesses:

“A no ser presunción ligera y floja,
y que con sueños tiene parentesco,
de nuevo acrecentaran mi congoja
la banda y plumas.”²⁵

A comrade scoffs: “Digo que estás fresco si los sueños y agüeros te dan prisa”.²⁶

But omens are not to be taken lightly, and this introduction of them into the legend would become one of its standard features. A few pages later Sigura hears a pilgrim utter what she takes to be an ominous echo of the legend of Hero and Leander. The latter, while swimming the Hellespont nightly to be with his beloved, was drowned in a winter storm when his guiding light is extinguished by the wind: “Si es la voz de este clarín, la luz que vio faltar Hero, / hoy el mesmo trance espero, pues pronostica mi fin, /

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 23.

²⁶ *Ibidem.*

según nos dijo el romero”. When her companion, like Marcilla’s, denies the significance of what has been called a sign, she insists: “Hablábanos por figuras”.²⁷

The familiar story brings forward the image of death for love by drowning in the sea, similar to Sappho’s suicide yet more touching by its context of a shared love frustrated not by infidelity but only by circumstances, as found in Julie. In other versions of the legend Sigura’s death happens instantaneously when she throws herself upon Marcilla’s dead body, very much in the tradition of heroines who throw themselves into the sea. In Boccaccio’s *Decameron* (IV, 8) the tale of Salvestra and Girolamo, by many critics considered the primary source for the legend (or at least for its literary treatments), describes the woman’s death as follows:

“Quel cuore, il quale la lieta fortuna di Girolamo non aveva potuto aprire, la miseria l’aperse, e l’antiche fiamme risuscitatevi tutte subitamente mutò in tanta pietà, come ella il viso morto vide, che sotto il mantel chiusa, tra donna e donna mettendosi, non ristette prima che al corpo fu pervenuta; e quivi, mandato fuori uno altissimo strido, sopra il morto giovane si gittò col suo viso, il quale non bagnò di molte lagrime, per ciò che prima nol toccò che, come al giovane il dolore la vita aveva tolta, così a costei tolse.”²⁸

Artieda, in obedience to classical decorum, considers such a death to be something that must be left to be imagined off stage. Instead of Boccaccio’s death scene, his avatar of Sigura, believing she sees her lover’s ghost, speaks to him, confessing that she has done him a great injustice by denying him one final kiss. Moved by a sense of moral responsibility she declares her will to die, demonstrating classical Greco-Roman courage. The implied leap into death is evident once again in a long poem written not

²⁷ *Ibid.*, II, 1, p. 27.

²⁸ G. Boccaccio, *Decameron*, introduzione, note e repertorio di Cose (e parole) del mondo di A. Quondam, testo critico e nota al testo di M. Fiorilla, schede introduttive e notizia biografica di G. Alfano, edizione rivista e aggiornata, Milano, Rizzoli, 2019, p. 776.

long after. In 1588 Jerónimo de la Huerta published *Florando de Castilla, lauro de caballeros*; in which canto IX is dedicated to the Aragonese lovers.²⁹ The description there of the manner in which the heroine ends her life suggests another resolute throwing of one's body down to destruction. The veiled Isabel moves toward where Juan's body lies shrouded, then falls dead on it. Montalbán would stress his male protagonist's parallel disregard for his own life on plunging into the sea to rescue Charles V and so facilitate his return to Sigura.

7. *Pérez de Montalbán's successe*

In the second half of the sixteenth century there was a sharp upturn in the number of literary works devoted to the legend, including several treatments in poetry. In 1635 two similar plays, both entitled *Los amantes de Teruel*, were published in Madrid, one by Pérez de Montalbán and the other under the name of the celebrated playwright Tirso de Molina. Which was written earlier, and how the close parallels between them came about, is not clear, though a strong case can be made that Tirso's might have been based on a manuscript of Montalbán's.³⁰

Montalbán's enjoyed great success, and scholars have found the record of many productions of his play in the eighteenth century, over thirty in Madrid and fourteen in Valencia alone, so many that numerous parodies of it were also written and performed. Among the editions in the years leading up to the writing of *Julie* were the ones issued by publishers who identified themselves as follows, with or without specific dates: La

²⁹ B. Serrano, *Motivos folclóricos y caballerescos en los libros de caballerías castellanos*, cit., p. 133.

³⁰ See T. Ferrer Valls' prologue to *Obras de Juan Pérez de Montalbán*, cit., p. 295. The scholar has given a detailed account of the differences between the two plays.

Imprenta Real, Antonio Vázquez (impresor de la Universidad), Salamanca (Imprenta de Santa Cruz, 1700 and 1750), Madrid (La calle de la Paz, 1748). All of this activity continued throughout the second half of the eighteenth century and into the nineteenth.³¹

It is this version of the legend by Montalbán that Rousseau would have read in Spanish; there is no record of a translation. At sixteen, he fled Geneva and spent time living in Sardinia. Castilian was commonly used there, for example in Sardinian documents from 1600 until the early eighteenth century, and most Sardinian authors wrote in both Spanish and Sardinian until the nineteenth century. During this period the majority of material published in Cagliari, the capital, was printed in Spanish. In addition, Rousseau, though a *philosophe*, was not generally scornful of Spanish intellectuals, with friends among the Jesuits on that side of the Pyrenees. Three, in the Basque country, were active supporters of his educational reforms:

“Father Isla [a famous and conservative Jesuit] engaged in a bitter controversy with three Rousseauists, the ‘triumvirate’ which was directing the Biscayan Educational Association. One of these men, Altuna, was a close personal friend of the Genevan, and all three were endeavoring to carry out his educational principles as far as possible in a seminary which their association had founded and maintained.”³²

Another circumstance that lends credibility to Rousseau’s having read Pérez de Montalbán’s play is his living in Geneva for many years:

“Interest for Spanish literature in Geneva was so great that there were even proposals to publish a *Diario de libros espanoles*. The idea enjoyed the support of Mayans but nothing came of it. During all these comings and goings involving books and ideas, a bookseller from Valencia named Juan Antonio Mallén became the intermediary between his home city and Switzerland for Mayans. [...] Switzerland was

³¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 318-320.

³² *Woodstock letters*, LXXIV, 4, 1945 (<https://jesuitonlinelibrary.bc.edu>, accessed March 7, 2022).

one of the main publishing centers for Spain and other European countries. Relations between the Iberian Peninsula and Switzerland regarding Spanish books were virtually monopolized by [Gregorio] Mayans. He first established relations with the book sellers and publishers of Geneva in 1747, and these continued until his death. [During the Enlightenment] almost ninety works by Spanish authors [were] published in Geneva.”³³

Mayans was a Valencian, an Enlightenment writer and editor who founded the Valencian Academy. He is famous for his biography of Cervantes and publishing it along with the Spanish Academy’s edition of *Don Quixote* in London in 1737. As explained below, the legend of the lovers from Teruel was very well known in Valencia, due to the proximity of the two cities and their related cultures. It seems highly probable that Mayans would have had his Valencian agent ship copies of Montalbán’s *Los amantes de Teruel* to booksellers in Geneva.

Two unusual elements of the concluding section of his novel seem to echo with striking features of Montalbán’s play. The plot of the second act has been summarized as follows:

“Se inicia con el desembarco en La Goleta, durante el cual Carlos V cae de la galera Real, siendo rescatado valerosamente por don Diego. Su arrojo es elogiado por el marqués de Mondéjar, el duque de Alba y el propio Carlos V, pero don Diego no recibe recompensa por su hazaña, algo que comenta con pesar con su criado Camacho. Don Diego expresa su preocupación, pues las cartas escritas a su amada nunca han recibido respuesta.”³⁴

In both the play and the novel, the rescue from drowning at first appears heroic and successful, but the resulting feelings by the heroes soon take on an air of defeat. Though Julie saves her child at the moment, the outcome is tragic. Not recovering from her immersion in the Alpine lake, she dies, leaving the child motherless. Don Diego’s risk of his own life is

³³ N. Bas Martin, *Spanish Books in the Europe of the Enlightenment: A View from Abroad*, Leiden, Brill, 2018, p. 112.

³⁴ T. Ferrer Valls’ prologue to *Obras de Juan Pérez de Montalbán*, *Obras de Juan Pérez de Montalbán*, cit., p. 300.

not rewarded, at least for a long period of time, and so it delays his return to Teruel, thereby finally defeating his goal of marriage to Isabel.

The stage directions highlight the danger of getting soaked and chilled, which is central to Julie's death. Similarly, Montalbán specifies that Carlos V as well as Marcilla enter the scene dripping wet. One of the nobles who attends on the king cries out that this is no time to charge ahead in cold wet clothes, though the monarch gallantry replies that his rescuer needs attention more than he. In both the play and the novel the mood then suddenly lurches from triumph to despair. The king gives don Diego only vague promises of support, but nothing tangible. In this way Montalbán both retains in the plot the rich gifts the king later gives to the protagonist, and at the same time provides a window for a major emotional crisis.

Just as Julie suffers new disillusionment after her act of heroism, Marcilla, too, is driven to thoughts of suicide:

“Don Diego: Quien sabe lo que es amor,
dirá que el morir es fuerza [...].

Muerto soy, si ella me falta.”³⁵

When Don Diego stealthily enters Isabel's new house in Teruel shortly after the wedding, he is spotted by the servant Luisa, who had believed a report of his death. She exclaims with a cold, practical evaluation of Isabel's situation: “Sombra fría suéltame / que el tiempo, el amor y el trato / brasa volverán su hielo”. Isabel's husband discovers his bride with Marcilla, who has just died. She addresses him with further images linking the sea with throwing oneself into death: “Y así, sin repetir

³⁵ The quotes from Montalban's play are taken from *Obras de Juan Pérez de Montalbán*, cited above (vv. 1319-1320 and 1331).

aquesta historia, / pues yo tengo dolor y tú memoria, / las velas al
paréntesis recojo, / el caso cuento y a morir me arrojó"³⁶.

Her account of his death is in the same vein, and recalls Julie's
hovering between warmth and cold, life and death:

"Cuando padece el corazón, es cierto
que a socorrerle acuden de concierto
los vitales espíritus, cuidando
de suplir el calor que va faltando. [...]

De suerte le apretaron y oprimieron,
que sin poderlo remediar le ahogaron. [...]

Llamó por señas a su muerte, y luego
aquel de tierra y fuego
edificio viviente [...]

en si cae o no cae, estuvo un rato."³⁷

8. *The beloved's final words*

Perhaps an even more remarkable link between the two works than
the heroic rescue at sea, leading nevertheless to suicidal thoughts and
images of deadly cold, is the wording of Isabel's final expression of love
before joining her lover's corpse in death. That passage is echoed in a close
paraphrase that Rousseau puts into Julie's final letter to Saint-Preux,
written on her deathbed. In Montalbán's play she cries out, "Toma, toma,
esposo mío / – pues para con Dios lo eres – / esta mano, para que / quien se
llamó tuya siempre, / ya que no pudo en la vida, / lo venga a ser en la
muerte"³⁸. This appeal to her personal feelings over legal and social
conventions must have forcefully struck the pre-Romantic French writer.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, vv. 2587-2589 and 2632-2635.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, vv. 2678-2681, 2693-2694, 2702-2704 and 2707.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, vv. 2863-2865.

And audiences and readers as well. That unorthodox appeal to the heart as the highest authority authenticating a true marriage was retained in most later adaptations of the play, even though substantial changes were often made for stage productions. In spite of that practice, these two especially bold lines survived such changes not only in Spain, but in France, as well, and throughout Europe, due to the immense diffusion of *Julie*. What a perfect fit for the finale of the dramatic and Romantic life of Rousseau's heroine Julie! Her tragedy, too, revolves around having done her social and religious duty by accepting a forced marriage, only to end with a leap into death. Both women have sacrificed themselves, enduring the frustration of their true love since childhood for a man who is too poor to be acceptable to her father. Julie claims the legitimacy of her extramarital devotion to Saint-Preux in words that, like those of Montalbán's heroine, deny any misdoing in the eyes of a higher moral authority. Like Isabel giving the dead Don Diego her hand as a final sign of her unending devotion, she writes that she will wait for him on the Other Side, where she will at last be able "without crime" to love and be united with him:

"Sans toi, quelle félicité goûterais-je? Non, je ne te quitte pas, je vais t'attendre. La vertu qui nous sépara sur la terre nous unira dans le séjour éternel. Je meurs dans cette douce attente: trop heureuse d'acheter au prix de ma vie le droit de t'aimer toujours sans crime, et de te le dire encore une fois."³⁹

9. Conclusion

All three of the deaths we have considered are strange enough to be called bizarre, even within the wide field of mental disorders brought on by thwarted love. They would seem to violate Aristotle's dictum that narratives must be believable to be moving. The conclusion to which one is led is that they were not conceived of as something realistically ordinary, but as primarily metaphorical statements of deep-rooted emotions, symbols that participate in ancient legends and make use of phrases and images consecrated by long use.

³⁹ J.-J. Rousseau, *Julie: Ou, La Nouvelle Héloïse*, cit., p. 856.

Julie's unthinking leap into frigid waters awakens her to the depth and power of her inner dilemma between choosing social approval, reason, and duty, or a personal desire for emotional fulfillment. Her choice of emotional suicide is presented, in line with Romantic priorities, as the better outcome, as the truest to her greatest needs. Rey de Artieda, the Valencian playwright whose tragedy called *Los amantes* establishes the pattern for later plays, presents this same dilemma but ennoble the heroine's adherence to social and religious duty over her emotions. Her will to die is portrayed as classical Greco-Roman self-mastery in a situation that offers no other viable solution.

Critics have proposed the Greek poet Sappho, who kills herself when her lover tires of her, as a model for Julie. But it is not an exaltation fused with a transcendence of social duty that gives Sappho's story its power, but rather its emotional intensity. Recipients of that narrative identify with Sappho's self-centered grief, and so find catharsis. But the situation is different. Sappho, unlike Marcilla, Don Diego, and Don Quixote, rescues no one by self-sacrificing acts, and though she is in political exile, there is no separation from her lover: she is distanced from him by his rejection alone. Sappho matches much better Saint-Preux, both victims of parental power and wandering in exile. Yet he rises above her morally, sacrificing his desires not pointlessly but to respect Julie's choice to marry as duty commands.

In Challe's sequel to *Don Quixote*, it is again icy cold water that kills love, but in a very different way. The failed country gentleman's surrender to hatred over love does nothing to ennoble him, though it still brings about a fundamental loss, loss of love for life. Challe sees in this the tragic weakness of human nature, the opposite of what Ariosto presents in his medieval legend, which is far from idealizing some sort of love.

The origins of the legend in Aragon, rooted in commerce and maritime conquest, develop the male protagonist's heroic qualities, fighting and amassing wealth overseas. In plays and poems heroes perform astonishing rescues, but luck is against them. An equation seems to be established between the dangerous cold of the sea and the lack of love's warmth that separation from the beloved inflicts on seafarers. These men make no conscious choice to die, as their beloved does. They fight nearly to the end in spite of being the victims of others' greed. Their story is about being socially crushed and emotionally overwhelmed by the circumstances.

The poets and playwrights, particularly Rey de Artieda and Pérez de Montalbán, enrich the legend's legacy by bringing out effectively the pathos of the woman's situation and how they confront it. Taking the story to a new level of popularity and meaning, they shift the emphasis to claiming real happiness in the only way open to them. Not making some desperate compromise with their fate by trying to substitute the husbands imposed on them, these more heroic women throw themselves into the arms of their dead lovers and welcome death. Rousseau places his heroine among these Spanish images of women's tragic circumstances, and there she follows their path searching for a way out. The Romantic promise of transcending the world's cheats and deceptions, then ascending into glory in Heaven, fuses with the Classical exaltation of choosing one's own destiny.

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