



STOCKCERO TEACHING KIT (093)

TITLE: *Los engaños de un engaño y confusión de un papel*

AUTHOR: Agustín Moreto

EDITOR: Tania de Miguel Magro

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I. OVERVIEW & SIGNIFICANCE

Agustín Moreto (1618-1669) stands as one of the most polished and successful dramatists of the Spanish Golden Age, often compared in his time to Calderón de la Barca. While his masterpieces *El lindo don Diego* and *El desdén, con el desdén* are widely known, much of his extensive output remains unedited. This volume presents the first modern critical edition of *Los engaños de un engaño y confusión de un papel* (1641), a quintessential *comedia de capa y espada*.

This work is of significant interest to scholars because it perfectly exemplifies the theatrical "norm" of the 17th century. By analyzing this play, students can understand the standard archetypes, tropes, and structures that delighted contemporary audiences, moving beyond the "exceptions" of the canon. Moreto's theater is characterized by a "harmonic" style: a dominance of logical reasoning over the unbridled passions found in Lope de Vega. The play explores typical Baroque themes—deception of the senses, honor, and mistaken identity—but resolves them through the clarifying power of the intellect. Edited by Tania de Miguel Magro, this edition provides the critical tools to re-evaluate the *Comedia Nueva* and Moreto's unique contribution to the genre.

II. CONTEXT & CRITICAL APPROACHES

This volume offers a clear framework for studying the structural mechanics and social values of Golden Age theater.

Archetypes and the Comedia Nueva:

Identify and analyze the character-types present: the *Damas* (Blanca, Elvira), *Galanes* (Diego, Juan), *Graciosos* (Galón, Pasamano), and the *Padre* (Pedro Osorio). How do these characters satisfy the "horizon of expectations" of a 17th-century audience?

Discuss the lack of individualization as a generic convention rather than a creative flaw. How do these archetypes function to reinforce a specific social order?

Reason vs. Passion in Moreto:

Analyze how the "deception of the senses" (*engaño a los sentidos*), a primary Baroque motif, is addressed in this play. How does the "logical reasoning" of the characters prevent a tragic outcome?

Compare Moreto's "harmonic" and "decorous" style with the more impulsive narrative drive seen in earlier dramatists like Lope de Vega.



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The Capa y Espada Genre:

Examine the play as an "urban narrative" set in the literary heart of 17th-century Madrid (Barrio de Huertas). How do the specific geographical references contribute to the play's sense of "coetaneity" or immediate reality for the original audience?

Discuss the role of the "recapitulation" technique as a way to handle the compression of time and space while maintaining intrigue.

Social Values: Honor and Marriage:

Explore the concept of "Honor" as both individual dignity and social respect (*honra*). How do the "jealousies" triggered by mistaken names threaten the institutional stability of the families involved?

Analyze the resolution of the conflict through marriage. Why is marriage portrayed as the ultimate "ordered state" that restores social harmony?

The Role of the Gracioso:

Analyze the characters of Galón and Pasamano. How do they provide a "carnavalesque" or pragmatic counterpoint to the idealism of the *Galanes*?

Discuss the "burlesque duel" and other comedic devices (lists, puns, *germanía* slang) used by the servants to satirize the noble code of conduct.

III. ADVANCED DISCUSSION & RESEARCH PROMPTS

These prompts encourage deep engagement with the text, critical thinking, and comparative literary analysis.

The "Tribuno del Pueblo" of Reason: Analyze the character of doña Elvira. Does she exhibit a higher capacity for logical reasoning than her male counterparts? Discuss whether the female characters in this play possess a subtle agency that challenges patriarchal structures, even within the framework of a conventional marriage ending.

Moreto and the Pre-Neoclassical Debate: Given the play's logic, simplicity of language, and adherence to the unity of time, evaluate the critical claim that Moreto is a precursor to Neoclassicism in Spain. Is this a conscious choice or a natural evolution of the *Comedia*?

The "Science of well-forgetting": Reflect on the protagonist's ability to move past deceptions. How does the play use "confesión" and dialogue to clear the "archive of memories" and focus on the present?

Staging the Invisible: Analyze the importance of curtains, doors, and darkness in the third act. How do these physical constraints on the *corral* stage facilitate the "confusion" and "deception" that drive the plot?

Philology and the Forgotten Text: Using the "Criterios de edición," discuss the challenges of editing a Golden Age *suelta*. Why is it important for modern scholarship to rescue these "conventional" works alongside the recognized masterpieces?

Comparing Moreto and Calderón: Compare the portrayal of fatherhood and authority in *Los engaños de un engaño* with more rigid examples like *La vida es sueño* or *El alcalde de Zalamea*. Why does Moreto allow for a more "pusillanimous" or flexible father figure?



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IV. SUGGESTED FURTHER READINGS & BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Text:

- Moreto, Agustín. *Los engaños de un engaño y confusión de un papel*. Edited by Tania de Miguel Magro. Stockcero. (TK ORDER: 093)

Key Secondary Scholarship:

- Arellano, Ignacio. *Historia del teatro español del siglo XVII*. Cátedra, 1996.
- Díez Borque, José María. *Sociedad y teatro en la España de Lope de Vega*. 1978.
- Fernández-Guerra y Orbe, Luis. Introduction to Moreto's *Comedias escogidas*. (BAE 39).
- Kennedy, Ruth Lee. *The Dramatic Art of Moreto*. Smith College, 1932.
- Prades, Juana de José. *Teoría sobre los personajes de la comedia nueva*. 1963.
- Wardropper, Bruce W. "La comedia española del Siglo de Oro." *Teoría de la comedia*.

V. RELATED STOCKCERO RESOURCES

- [Classic Spanish Drama & Beyond: 5-Book Bundle](#).
- **Other titles by Moreto:** *El lindo don Diego*, *El desdén*, *con el desdén* (if available).
- **Related Golden Age authors:** Pedro Calderón de la Barca, Luis Vélez de Guevara.

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