

The *Sepultura de Macías* by San Pedro – But Which San Pedro?

DOROTHY SHERMAN SEVERIN

A poem written to the tomb of Macías, *Sepultura de Macías*, long accessible in Caroline B. Bourland's partial edition of PN6 (Paris Esp 228) where it is attributed to Juan de San Pedro, is attributed in SA10b (Salamanca MS 2763, published in Dutton 1990–91) to our old friend and possible plagiarist Diego de San Pedro. I say possible plagiarist because Joseph J. Gwara has recently cast doubt on some of the attributions to this poet, alleging that he expropriated *La Pasión trobada* from a relative, specifically from the Pedro de San Pedro cited as its author in the original *Cancionero de Oñate* version. Gwara believes that his authorship of *Arnalte y Lucenda* may also be suspect because the style of that sentimental romance is so radically inferior to that of *Cárcel de Amor* that it could scarcely be explained by later authorial maturity and expertise. Whether Diego himself wrote those pieces or whether he was the literary heir to a long family tradition which he expropriated, the *Sepultura de Macías* poem is another piece of the puzzle of Diego de San Pedro's apparently boundless versatility.

Although both MS texts of the poem are available in Brian Dutton's transcriptions (1990–91: III, 377–78 and IV, 272–73), these are paleographic, and do not make for easy reading, especially in the understanding of the dialogue. I therefore provide a reading text, giving quotation marks and other punctuation, accents, etcetera. My text is that of SA10b, and it is based on Dutton's transcription; where there is a significant (i.e. not merely orthographic) variant in PN6, it is given in the right margin, and the corresponding words of SA10b are printed in bold.

The poet greets the tomb in the first stanza and is abruptly challenged by the tomb:

1. 'Sepultura de Maçías,
salue os Dios;
ayáes alegres días'
'¿Quién soys vos?'
'Vn onbre desconsolado
que lo **ando a** buscar, vengo
et sope **n**'este logar quen
que vos lo tenéys guardado'. lo teníades

The poet explains that he is seeking Macías. The tomb admits to having the dead poet and is then accused by our poet of swallowing up everyone, the good and the bad:

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| 2. | ‘Verdad es que yo tengo;
¿ qué querés?
‘El dolor con que a él vengo
no podés
saberlo vos que soys tierra
y de gran enemistad;
que tragáys syn piedad
al bueno como al que yerra’. | yo lo
que lo |
|----|--|-----------------|

In the third stanza the tomb responds, irate, to his treatment, but our poet stands his ground: the tomb swallows the good, the bad and the ugly:

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| 3. | ‘¿ Por qué dezís tanto mal?
Que pecáes,
pues quien nunca vido tal
como vsáes’.
‘Que mal vso, ¿ o qué dezís?’
‘Digo bien, porqu ’al valiente,
al fermoso y al prudente
a todos los consumís’. | mas
vso que
que
todos consumys |
|----|--|---|

In the fourth stanza, the tomb claims that he is only doing God’s will and command and furthermore that it is not permitted to have a chat with the deceased poet:

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| 4. | ‘A, ¡qué mal abéis fablado!’
‘Antes bien’.
‘¿No sabes que m’ es mandado?’
‘Y ¿de quién?’
‘Del que lo puede mandar;
por ende ver no podrés
al que buscáys y queréys,
ni menos con él estar’. |
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In the fifth stanza the poet complains that he is desperate and could be cured by just touching one of Macías’ bones:

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| 5. | ‘O, ¡qué pesar me avés dado!’
‘¿ Por qué?’
‘ Sy ’n cuyta vin cuytado,
tal me yré.
Aunque si yo con mi mano
algund su hueso tañera, | y por que
sy con
caun sy con |
|----|---|------------------------------------|

ciertamente **cred yo fuera** çiertamente yo fuera;
de todos mis males sano’.

He explains to the tomb in the sixth stanza that Macías’s story itself has healing properties for the love-lorn:

6. ‘¿**Al** muerto tiene virtud?’ y el
‘Este sí,
ca sus dichos dan salud, que
yo lo oý,
a los que de amor son llagados
y los finados an gloria,
quando leen su estoria
los tristes enamorados’.

He continues complaining about his own terminal condition until the tomb relents in stanza 8, agreeing to let our poet call to Macías:

7. ‘¿**A** tanto mal es el vuestro?’ y
‘Sý, en verdad,
que syenpre me fue syniestro
y syn bondad
el amor que da mal fin
a quien faze su mandado,
como dio a este **finado** cuytado
Maçías, a quien yo vin’.
8. ‘Sy vos **rresponde**, aunque muerto, fabla
folgarés,
sy d’ello me fazéis çierto,
verloés;
yo vos lo traeré; llamadle
y luego rrespondera’; que el vos
‘Sy asý fuere, no será
aquí mi venida en valde’.

In stanza 9 Macías responds:

9. ‘**Fablad, ya que véyslo** aquí llamadlo que helo
comigo’.
‘Maçías, ¿estáys aý?’
‘Sý, amigo’.
‘¿**Querés algo, al qué venís?**’ que queres o a que venis
‘A ver vuestro **movimiento**, monumento
y a contarvos el tormento
en que vibo, sy me oýs.’

The poet asks for Macías’s advice, which he gives in stanza 11: love is not only dangerous but downright fatal.

10. 'Ya **vos** oý, avnque pensastes los
que no oýa.'
'Pues mis **cuytas** scuchastes, males
dadme vía;
por vuestra merçed, señor,
como sea **rrevelado**, rreleuado
algund tanto de cuydado,
de **penar** y de dolor'. pena.
11. 'Ya vos dezís qu'el amor
trae dapño
a quienquier que es amador al ques
con engaño;
antes digo que trae muerte;
pues, ¿qué más queréys saber
para **d'él vos** defender de uos
de qualquier concoxa fuerte?'

The poet seems rather ungrateful in stanza 12. Although the rhetoric is rather obscure at this point, he appears to complain that he already knew that love was fatal from Macías' own example:

12. '¿**Vos** me dáys tal consuelo?' y vos
'¿Por qué no?
'Porque no he parte de un pelo
en mí, yo,
desque **por suyo** me dy, a amor
y vos por **esto** moristes, eso
avnque non como quesystes,
segund **yo lo** aprendý'. lo yo

In stanza 13 Macías admits that he was given enough free will by God to escape from the clutches of love but that he willfully chose to die for love:

13. 'Verdad **que por serbirle** es que por seruirlo
me perdý;
comoquier que **de seguirle** deseruirlo
fue en mí;
ca Dios me dio albedrío y
para poderlo escusar,
mas [que es] quise morir por amar
gentil doña de grand brío'.

In stanza 14 the poet decides that he must either suffer in silence or abandon love, although the latter option implies going against the tenets of courtly love:

14. '**Así**, ¿qué debo fazer, Agora
segund esto:

callarme y padescer
 con buen gesto,
o los amores dexar, del todo amor
 lo qual es feo y graveza,
 y pecar en gentileza
 do se baña el bien fablar?’

In the first two lines of the next stanza Macías gives more advice. The poet, however, decides to continue suffering:

15. ‘Agora de oy más ved
 lo mejor.’
 ‘Más quiero morir, sabed,
 syn fabor,
 y seguir vuestras pisadas,
 que no topar en vileça,
 pues bien amar es [pereza] **nobleza** proeza
 syquier con cuytas dobladas’.

Macías bids farewell to the poet in stanza 16, and the poet replies that he has gained some consolation from the encounter, and offers his service to Macías:

16. ‘**Pues ydvos ya, que tardáes.**’ Y vos ya que vos tardays
 ‘**Ya** lo vy, yo
 mas tanto me consoláys,
 que d’aquí
 no me querría partir;
 pero **sy** vos enojáys pues
 quiérome yr, ved qué mandáes lo que
 en qué vos pueda serbir’.

In the *fin* Macías gives the poet his blessing and hopes that he will escape his pain by forgetting his love;

‘Dios vos dexe alegre yr
 por doquier que deseáes
 ya vos sy’n pena andáes,
 en brebe d’ella salir’.

This poem is surprisingly dramatic in comparison with the rest of Diego de San Pedro’s amatory verse, which is usually very cerebral and abstract, even when it is written to celebrate a special occasion, as, for example, ‘Otra suya el Día de Ramos a la misma señora’ (San Pedro 1979: 249), when he sees his lady in church on a feast day. Nevertheless, two of his compositions have dialogue: a *serranilla* with the title ‘[Villancico] de Diego de San Pedro a una serrana muy hermosa’ (264), as well as the poem which begins ‘De venir, buen cavallero’ (265). However, dialogue is the essence of the *serranilla* genre, and Diego de

San Pedro was simply imitating this tradition. In both cases dialogue is spoken in alternate lines by the gentleman and the lady. In addition to these, *La Pasión trobada* alternates the spoken dialogue of various characters with the voice of the author; it is so close to being a dramatic work that Alonso del Campo included a part of it in his *Auto de la Pasión* (see Torroja Menéndez and Rivas Palá).

To return to the *Sepultura* and the problem of its authorship: there is an understandable tendency to attribute a poem to a better-known writer rather than to a more obscure author of the same surname, especially since the Salamanca version with the attribution to Diego is later than that of Paris (with its attribution to Juan), and of a date which coincides with Diego's period of authorial fame. My guess is that the author of this poem is not our Diego de San Pedro, but the more mysterious 'bachiller Juan de San Pedro' of the earliest manuscript witness. It is also worth noting that SA10b regularizes the syllable count and at times hypercorrects readings; there is even an occasional obvious scribal error.

The poem is very interesting, since it combines a number of themes which were very popular in the later Middle Ages, among them Death the Leveller, death from love, and violent death caused by a jealous husband. The tomb plays a role similar to that played by Death in the traditional Dance of Death. After a debate in which the *Sepultura* tries to deny the poet his wish to see Macías, the poet summons the voice of the dead man who provides advice. The poem is therefore a development of medieval debate poetry, which introduces three voices, that of the Poet, the tomb, and Macías.

The poem consists of sixteen stanzas of eight octosyllables with a 'pie quebrado' in lines 2 and 4, plus one stanza as a *finida*, which here is a *redondilla* without a *quebrado*. This is a rare case of 'coplas castellanas' with *quebrados* in the first *redondilla*, *abab; cddc*. The speaking voices alternate, especially in the first *redondilla*, but there is no clear pattern. Sometimes one voice speaks in one stanza and another answers in the following stanzas. At times the voices alternate in a single stanza, and at times there are other combinations. Certainly it is not always easy to decide which voice is speaking when both are heard in the same stanza. I propose the following scheme, realizing that there may be other possibilities:

1. Poet (1–3). Tomb (4) // Poet (5–8).
2. Tomb (1–2). Poet (3–4 // 5–8).
3. Tomb (1). Poet (2–4) // Tomb (5). Poet (6–8).
4. Tomb (1). Poet (2). Tomb (3). Poet (4) // Tomb (5–8).
5. Poet (1). Tomb (2). Poet (3–4 // 5–8).
6. Tomb (1). Poet (2–4) // 5–8).
7. Tomb (1). Poet (2–4 // 5–8).
8. Tomb (1–4 // 5–6). Poet (7–8).
9. Tomb (1–2). Poet (3). Macías (4 // 5). Poet (6–8).
10. Macías (1–2). Poet (3–4 // 5–8).
11. Macías (1–8).

12. Poet (1). Macías (2). Poet (3–4 // 5–8).
13. Macías (1–8).
14. Poet (1–8).
15. Macías (1–2). Poet (3–4 // 5–8).
16. Macías (1). Poet (2–4 // 5–8).
- Fin. Macías (1–4).

This alternation of voices helps construct a lively dialogue whose dramatic qualities are similar to the style of comedies and *autos* of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. There is a thematic similarity to, for example, the *Burlador de Sevilla*, in which the tomb statue challenges the protagonist, a statue which can speak, invite Don Juan, taunt him, and drag him to his death. On the other hand, this poem has less in common with some of its contemporaries with similar titles, for example the *Sepultura de Amor* by Guevara, which is a debate between Love and a Judge.¹ In Guevara's poem, the tomb does not take part in the dialogue, but is extensively described at the end. This description takes up 120 lines (ll. 841–960), so may be fruitfully compared with one of the most famous examples of ekphrasis in medieval Spanish literature, the description of Darius's tomb in the *Libro de Alexandre* (st. 1272–1804).

This tomb description is particularly interesting when compared with the description of the tomb of Fiometa in Juan de Flores's sentimental romance *Grimalte y Gradissa*. It is obvious that some of the colour symbolism is similar to that found in Fiometa's tomb. This sepulchre is half white marble, for chastity, half yellow, for a feeling which is probably despair (Goldberg). The tomb statue itself is red, for anger and pride (and cruelty, Goldberg). Two slabs (*losas*) are under the sepulchre to support it, and around the tomb are six *padrones*, posts or columns, in the following colours; *pardo* or earth-coloured for 'trabajo', *morado turbio* or mottled purple for 'lástima', *leonado* or tawny yellow for 'congoja', dark blue for 'firmeza', green for (lost) 'esperanza', and an ugly multicolour for many 'maldades'. Over the *padrones* there is a black slate canopy, 'una cumbre de pizarra', which signifies sadness and holds the names of all dead lovers. The blazon of the tomb displays the verse 'aquí yace'.

Looking at the debate between Love and the Judge in Guevara's poem makes one appreciate the much livelier exchanges between the poet, the tomb, and the dead Macías in the San Pedro poem. *Sepultura de Macías* represents an advance over the two-person debate, and another step towards the early theatre. Both of these poems could have been given a court recitation. Such a recitation of San Pedro's (probably Juan de San Pedro's) poem invites either a multiplicity of actors or a multiplicity of voices spoken by one person (as recommended by Alonso de Proaza in his prefatory verses to *Celestina*).

¹ The poem survives in two witnesses, LB1 and MN19, and has recently been edited by María Isabel Toro Pascua (663–65) and María d'Agostino (38–47), who describe the witnesses. Their editions differ substantially; I have used Toro Pascua's.

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