

**John CROWNE. 2023. *El galán casado, o el curioso impertinente*. Translated by Gonzalo DÍAZ MIGOYO.  
Luna de Abajo**

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Although the literary fame of *Don Quijote* is widely acknowledged, its early and widespread impact on European theater remains less commonly recognized beyond academic circles. Within the framework of the research project *Recreaciones teatrales del Quijote* (RETEQ) (MCI-20-PID2019-111485GB-I00), the series “*El Quijote y sus interpretaciones*,” directed by Emilio Martínez Mata and María Fernández Ferreiro (Grupo de Estudios Cervantinos, University of Oviedo), seeks to recover and share theatrical works inspired by Cervantes’s masterpiece with a broad, Spanish-speaking audience. One of the most recent additions to the series is *El galán casado, o el curioso impertinente*, a Spanish edition of John Crowne’s Restoration comedy *The Married Beau; or The Curious Impertinent* (1694), translated by Gonzalo Díaz Migoyo, and featuring an insightful introductory study by Jorge Figueroa Dorrego. The edition plays a key role in bringing to light a work that has seen little scholarly engagement and scarce editorial presence to date.

An adaptation of *El curioso impertinente* – one of the interpolated tales in *Don Quijote Part I – The Married Beau* draws on Cervantes’s account of a man whose attempt to test his wife’s fidelity through his best friend leads to betrayal and tragedy. Thanks to its inherent theatricality, the story soon captured the imagination of early modern playwrights, both within Spain and beyond. England proved especially fertile ground, with the narrative inspiring multiple stage versions and helping to shape the early reception of *Don Quijote*. Figueroa Dorrego opens his study by surveying five seventeenth-century English plays, all loosely or directly inspired by Cervantes’s tale and predating Crowne’s adaptation: *The Coxcomb* by Beaumont and Fletcher (1609), *The Second Maiden’s Tragedy* attributed to Thomas Middleton (1611), *Amends for Ladies* by Nathan Field (ca. 1618), *The Amorous Prince* by Aphra Behn (1671), and *The Disappointment* by Thomas Southerne (1684).

This discussion sets the stage for a closer look at *The Married Beau* introduced through a brief but effective contextualization of Restoration

comedy that proves especially helpful to readers less acquainted with the period. The overview traces the genre's transition from the libertine, aristocratic ethos of the 1660s and 70s to the morally exemplary figures of the 1690s, shaped by escalating political and religious tensions and culminating in the ideological realignments of the later Restoration. This context provides a useful backdrop for the subsequent examination of Crowne's plays. It explores how the ideological tension between his fervent Anglican anti-Catholicism and unwavering royalism – especially amid the Popish Plot and the Exclusion Crisis – drove him toward the Tory cause and informed the ideological fabric of his drama. Alongside its political imprint, Crowne's work is studied through the lens of its evolving engagement with libertinism. Initially aligned with the libertine culture of the early Restoration, his plays came to adopt a more critical and ultimately moralizing stance, culminating in the reformist spirit of the 1690s, which finds expression in *The Married Beau*.

The play unfolds in five acts, weaving together a main plot based on *El curioso impertinente* and a secondary storyline of Crowne's invention. Cervantes's tale is brought closer to its Restoration audience through changes that align it with prevailing theatrical conventions and cultural sensibilities. The tragic ending is reshaped into a comic resolution characteristic of the genre, and the action transposed to Covent Garden, with a cast of fops, rakes, coquettes, and coxcombs that would have resonated strongly with contemporary spectators.

The introduction provides an insightful reading of how the adaptation reworks Cervantes's characters into recognizable Restoration figures, including helpful glosses on character names which, in line with the period's conventions, reflect distinctive personality traits. Revealingly named Mr. Lovely, the titular beau is described by Figueroa Dorrego as a narcissistic, foolish, and affected fop, driven not by the complex and much-debated motivations ascribed to Anselmo, but by a compelling desire to be admired by his wife. His reading offers a thoughtful counterpoint to prior interpretations of Lovely as embodying a refined sensibility, whether as indicative of a softening of the fop aligned with evolving masculine ideals, or as a feminized figure whose heightened emotion renders him passive and alienated from conventional male roles. In stark contrast, Figueroa Dorrego sees Lovely as neither refined nor representative of any emerging ideology of masculinity but as a cruel character whose obsession, though distinctly motivated, mirrors Anselmo's in its tragic potential.

Polidor is a cynical Restoration rake devoid of the genuine bond of

affection that ties Lotario to Anselmo; his feelings for Lovely never rise above mild condescension, often veering into outright scorn. He exhibits none of the moral qualms that trouble Lotario and resolves to seduce Mrs. Lovely as a way to punish her husband's foolishness. Following the late-Restoration trend shaped by nascent ideals of sensibility and moral reform, Polidor undergoes a seemingly redemptive transformation and marries Camilla, an original character conceived by Crowne as the embodiment of chastity and moral steadfastness. Still, Camilla's fleeting deviations from moral and emotional self-discipline destabilize the normative expectations attached to the ideal of the virtuous woman.

These cultural imperatives surrounding female virtue also inform the character of Mrs. Lovely, a coquette who indulges in flattery and seduction but remains deeply invested in preserving her honor and reputation. Like Cervantes's Camila, she resists Polidor's advances with resolve, but her efforts to secure support – both marital and from her circle of female allies – are brushed off or met with self-interest. When Mrs. Lovely eventually yields, her maid Lionell seizes the chance for personal gain, while Camilla reacts with censure and the threat of exposure, revealing the strain that patriarchal constraints impose on female solidarity. Her sole act of yielding – read by Figueroa Dorrego as veering on rape – leads to an immediate confession of remorse, which, greeted with Camilla's renewed sympathy and Lionell's indulgence, reveals a renewed sense of female solidarity. In sharp contrast to Cervantes's Anselmo, whose downfall is driven by guilt, Lovely evades genuine self-reproach. His return to marital harmony requires no admission of fault – only his wife's unreserved praise of his attractiveness.

Alongside the central drama, a farcical subplot provides comic relief through a set of eccentric characters. Thorneback, an aging libertine ridiculed by the women he courts, is outwitted into marrying Lionell, who secures the status and fortune she craves. Shittlecock, a dim-witted fop whose affections shift by the minute, ultimately finds a match in Cecilia, Mrs. Lovely's vain sister. Together, both plotlines weave a portrait of Restoration society that blends social satire with a moralizing impulse, holding folly and vice up to ridicule while also affirming the value of personal reform.

This vivid Restoration world of libertines, coquettes, and beaus is rendered accessible to contemporary Spanish-speaking readers through a clear and well-balanced translation. Most original English names are preserved, with only minor adaptations to spelling and titles. This choice helps retain the comedic and character-revealing function of

names so typical of the Restoration stage. Although Crowne's original blends blank verse with occasional prose passages, Díaz Migoyo aptly renders the play entirely in prose, prioritizing clarity and readability for the intended audience. The edition also includes a prologue, an epilogue, and two songs – originally set to music by John Eccles and Henry Purcell – all written in rhymed verse and translated into Spanish free verse, but with attention paid to tone and expressive rhythm.

A noteworthy feature of the original is its alternation between *you* and *thou*, applied inconsistently but with clear pragmatic function: it marks emotional shifts, social asymmetries, and varying degrees of intimacy or disdain. In translation, this distinction is neutralized through the uniform use of *usted*, a decision that favors readability and coherence, but inevitably flattens the social and emotional nuances encoded in Crowne's play. Readability is further supported by the absence of notes, a choice well suited to the volume's non-specialist audience. Still, occasional annotations might have clarified moments where culturally charged terms – such as “coxcomb,” “fruit bawds,” or the allusion to Ursula from Ben Jonson's *Bartholomew Fair* – might have preserved some of the play's Restoration flavor without compromising clarity.

Altogether, these translational and editorial decisions result in a rendering that balances clarity with a sense of the original's period character. By combining an accessible translation with a rigorous and compelling critical introduction, this volume opens up a lesser-known Restoration reimagining of *Don Quijote* to a Spanish-speaking readership. It stands as a meaningful contribution to the cultural dissemination of Cervantes's theatrical legacy beyond Spain, in line with the broader aims of the “*El Quijote y sus interpretaciones*” series.

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