A MINIMAL WORD-PAIR STUDY OF CELESTINA: MORE EVIDENCE
ABOUT THE
AUTHORSHIP OF ACT 1

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In order to make a minimal word-pair study of Celestina, I asked a computer to print out all the two-word combinations in the text, and to give the context for pairs of words which occurred more than five times in the text (excluding proper names). I then analyzed word-pairs in Celestina which failed to appear in Act 1.¹ Since Act 1 is roughly one-fifth of the work, one might expect one occurrence of a word-pair in Act 1 for every five occurrences in the entire text (a 1:5 ratio). More pessimistically, the failure of a word-pair to appear in Act 1, if it appears ten times in the remainder of the text, is suspicious. In fact my results show a surprising consistency of the type of variations between Act 1 and the rest of the work, even when there are fewer than ten occurrences of a word-pair in the work. In the following information, the figure in parentheses indicates the number of occurrences of the word-pair (which is absent in Act 1) for Acts 2-21.

1) amor: mi amor (11), por amor (9).

2) casa: a casa (7), en casa (18), casa de (19), mi casa (16). This despite two en casa de's in the argumento to Act 1, not by Rojas according to his own account.²

3) día: cada día (8), día de (7), el día (8). The word día appears but once in Act 1 (un día).


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4) señor, señora: señor que (11), mi señor (9), mi señora (22), señora que (16). Of only two señora's in Act 1, one is señora mia.

5) con Dios (7), de grado (6), de manera (6).

6) había de (8). There is only one había in Act 1.

7) es: si es (10), es esto (18).

8) me: me que (16), se me (before verb--15), tú me (13), ya me (7). See also ya, below.

9) tú, te: con tu (23), donde te (6), also tú me, above (13).

10) del que (7), por quien (10), con su (11), also see con tu, above (23) and con Dios (7).

11) todo: toda la (19: there is only one toda in Act 1), [no] todo el (21). Act 1 uses todo lo 15 times.

12) cierto que (7), poco de (8).

13) que al (11), que aunque (24).

14) de aquí (9), daqui (6).

15) ya: pues ya (7), ya no (8), also see ya me above (7). Ya occurs singly in Act 1 six times.

16) no and pues: como no (9), cf. 67 occurrences of como in Act 1; pues no (13), also ya no above (8) and pues ya (7).

Although the statistical sampling afforded is small (Rojas uses surprisingly few word-pairs repeatedly), the results seem to tabulate with those of linguistic studies of Act 1. These 39 minimal word-pairs are nearly 6% of approximately 700 word-pairs which appear five or more times in Celestina (excluding proper names from the count). There are a number of anomalous non-appearances of common word-pairs, and these frequently form constellations of related pairs which are missing from Act 1. Although in no way conclusive, this evidence may provide more grist for the mill of those like myself who wish to uphold the separate authorship of Act 1.