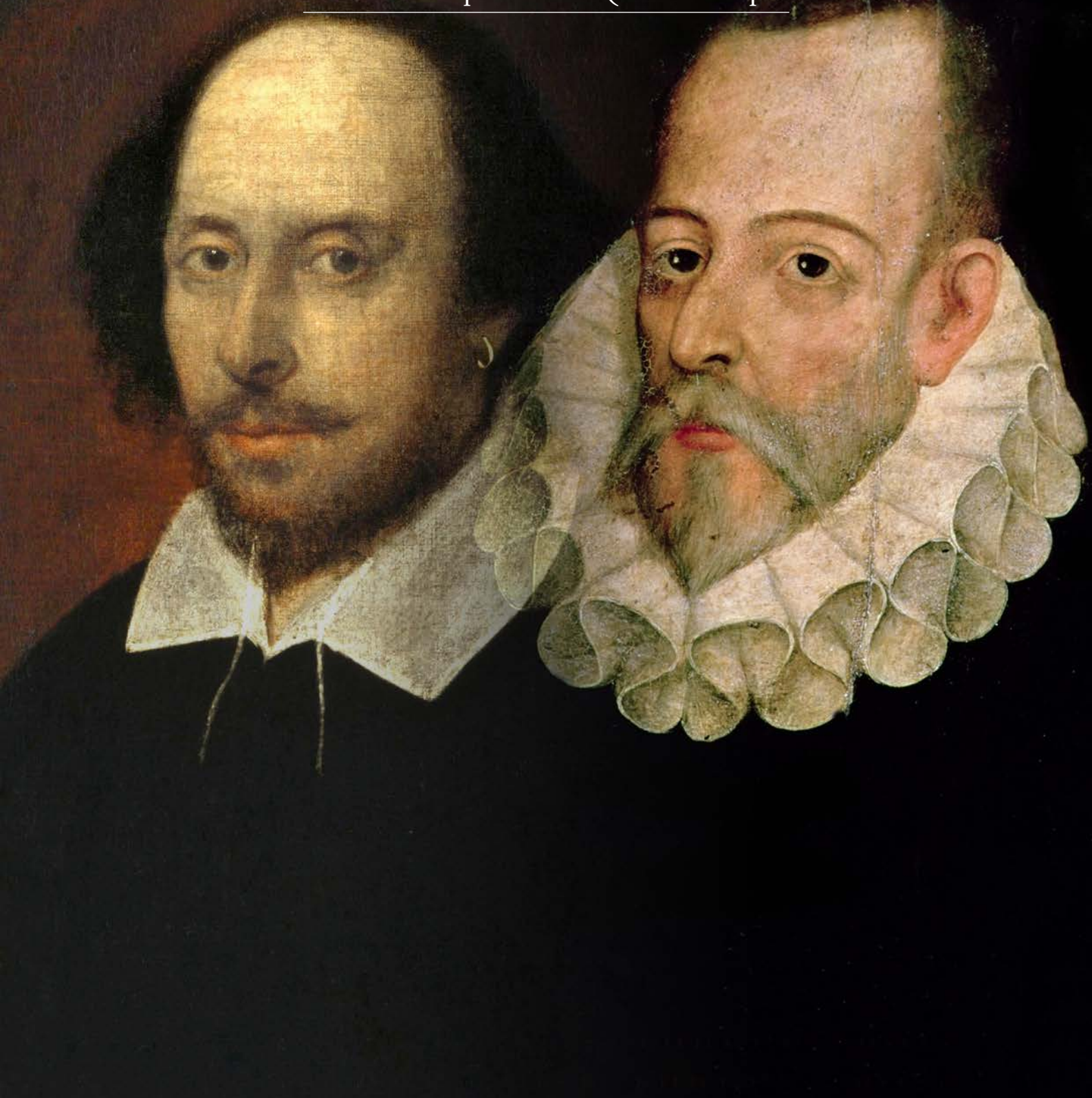


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Literatura  *y Enfermedades Infecciosas*

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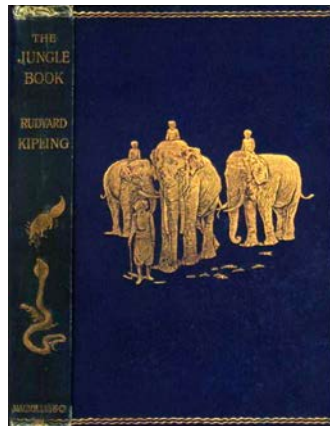
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Uno de los más importantes libros escrito, y más citado, es el libro de Susan Sontag: "La enfermedad y sus metáforas. El sida y sus metáforas". La enfermedad, y las infecciones en particular, han estado presentes por siglos en las obras de la literatura mundial. Las infecciones aparecen en estas obras en el contexto generalmente del tiempo en que fueron escritas, unas veces de forma anecdótica y otras formando parte del corpus del libro y el tema tratado. Este libro quiere ser una aproximación a este tema en la esperanza de que anime a muchas personas a leer estas obras, y además a entender el contexto en que fueron escritas, con las infecciones que fueron predominantes en cada época concreta.

Fernando Vázquez

El mal de Pott en Francisco de Quevedo y Villegas, Alexander Pope y Giacomo Leopardi

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Mal de Pott au musée Testut-Latarjet.

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Resumen

Se analiza la patobiografía de tres de los más importantes escritores y poetas entre los siglos XVI al XIX: Francisco de Quevedo, Alexander Pope y Giacomo Leopardi, que presentaron la característica de padecer probablemente la enfermedad de Pott y como afectó este proceso a su vida y obra.

Introducción

La espondilitis infecciosa u osteomielitis vertebral (enfermedad o mal de Pott) afecta a vértebras y espacios intervertebrales, es una infección con tres formas clínicas: hematógena, postquirúrgica y por contigüidad. La tuberculosa supone actualmente el 15-25% de las mismas y el 3-5% de las formas de tuberculosis, se da en pacientes jóvenes y de



Spinal disease and spinal curvature: their treatment by suspension and the use of the plaster of Paris bandage / by Lewis A. Sayre. Sayre, Lewis A. 1820-1900.

Disponible en: <https://wellcomecollection.org/images?query=pott+disease>

columna torácica, la clínica es de dolor y con un curso crónico e inespecífico y una mayor incidencia de complicaciones supuradas y neurológicas (paraparesia o paraplejia) (25-75%) y deformidad espinal [1, 2].

Entre los siglos XVI- XVIII, las enfermedades similares y que entran en el diagnóstico diferencial de la enfermedad de Pott, eran: el raquitismo, poliomielitis, malnutrición, traumatismos y alteraciones congénitas [3].

El nombre de enfermedad de Pott, fue dado en tiempos de Alexander Pope. En 1744, una década antes de la muerte de Pope, el cirujano inglés H. Park escribió un volumen en el que describe las características y tratamientos dolorosos de la enfermedad: “*An Account of a new method of treating diseases of the joints of the knee and elbow (London: J. Johnson, 1733)*”, con una carta enviada a Sir Percival Pott, cirujano inglés y uno de los fundadores de la ortopedia que publicó el libro: “*Some few general remarks on fractures and dislocations (London: Hawes, Clarke and Collins, 1768)*”, donde hace las primeras descripciones de la tuberculosis extrapulmonar (espondilitis tuberculosa) y que más tarde se denominó con su nombre [4]. En 1799, la describe así: “*That kind of palsy of lower limbs which is frequently found to accompany a curvature of the spine*” [5].

El tratamiento de esta entidad antes de aparecer los fármacos antituberculosos consistía en uso de hierbas medicinales, helioterapia, descanso y adecuado régimen alimentario, correcciones de la deformidad con presión manual, tracción o inmovilización con yesos, férulas o aparatos ortopédicos. La evolución pasaba por un primer estadio de “comienzo” de hasta 1 año de duración siendo localizado con hinchazón y marcada osteoporosis local, el segundo estadio de “destrucción” entre 1-3 años con destrucción vertebral con deformidad, subluxación, contracturas y formación de abscesos que de abrían y drenaban como úlceras y senos, con sobreinfecciones, caquexia, diseminación a meninges o miliar y muriendo el 25% de los pacientes; los que sobrevivían entraban en la tercera fase de “reparación y anquilosis” con la cifosis característica y con reactivaciones frecuentes de la infección y con la deformidad que se gravaba con el tiempo, apareciendo paraplejas. El tratamiento quirúrgico consistía en esa época, en el drenaje de los abscesos que se aspiraban con el peligro de úlceras, infecciones piogénicas y muerte [5].

El objetivo de este estudio es revisar la posible etiología común de enfermedad de Pott, en las enfermedades que aquejaron a tres escritores y poetas importantes como Francisco de Quevedo en España (siglos XVI- XVII), Alexander Pope en Inglaterra (siglos XVII-XVIII) y Giacomo Leopardi en

Italia (siglos XVIII- XIX). Esta enfermedad es menos conocida en relación a la literatura que la tuberculosis clásica.

Francisco de Quevedo y Villegas (1580-1645)

Hijo de hidalgos, nació cojo de ambas piernas y con miopía. Es conocida su disputa con el poeta Luis de Góngora que representaba el estilo culterano frente al estilo conceptista representado por Quevedo y además por su poesía burlesca y los enemigos que se creó y que fueron los inductores de los encarcelamientos de Quevedo. En la obra de Quevedo hay muchas alusiones a los médicos, por ejemplo, en *“Visita y anatomía de la cabeza del cardenal Richelieu”* (1635) habla de médicos conocidos, encabezados por el Vesalio o el autor predilecto de Quevedo como Montaigne, en esta sátira contra el cardenal Richelieu, que ha sido una prueba más contra la extendida creencia en el odio que el autor tenía contra la medicina y los médicos [6-8]. Pero estos insultos por otra parte, para otros tienen el mismo nivel que los dedicados a mesoneros, músicos, poetas, boticarios, genoveses, judíos, letrados, etc. [9].

Enfermedades de Quevedo. En el historial médico de Quevedo es conocida su miopía y cojera de nacimiento como se indica. Sufrió su salud por los repetidos encarcelamientos como en San Marcos en León, el más largo de todos por orden del Conde- Duque de Olivares. Aborrecía el frío y la humedad, padeció de papilomas plantares (*“callos”*) que al cortarlos se le infectaron, fiebres o *“calenturas”* de las que quedó *“tullido”* y con muletas, estas fiebres erróneamente se han relacionado con una posible septicemia [10].

El estudioso americano Crosby JO, enumera los problemas de salud que se detallan en sus últimas cartas hasta su muerte. Las cartas del último año (1644 - 1645), describen, los momentos finales de Quevedo [10, 11]. Las únicas enfermedades graves que Quevedo confiesa haber padecido son dos, una del año 1602 y otra de 1604. La primera por la demanda de pago contra Quevedo, que puso un médico, el Dr. Fernando de Miraval, alegando *“que asistió al enfermo veinticinco días por la mañana, por la tarde y a veces de noche, para administrarle medicinas, hacerle unciones y darle la comida”* [12a]. La segunda enfermedad, de 1604, dice Quevedo en carta al humanista Justo Lipsio del 4 de setiembre que tuvo que dictarla porque le faltaban fuerzas para escribir y después de dos meses estaba peor, y probablemente pudo tratarse, según Pablo Jauralde, de una epidemia de tifus exantemático que asoló Valladolid ese año [11].

A partir de 1638, aparecen una serie de abscesos supurantes y recurrentes que Quevedo iba a padecer en los siete años finales de su vida. El 19 de marzo de ese año: *“con esta herida que se me abrió este invierno y con lo que purga, me siento mucho mejor y sin miedo de otro impedimento”*. En octubre de 1641, tras dos años de prisión, dice: *“enfermo por tres heridas, que con los fríos y la vecindad de un río que tengo a la cabecera, se me han cancerado, y por falta de cirujano, no sin piedad me las han visto cauterizar con mis manos”* [11].

En junio de 1643: *“Hoy cuento ... catorce años y medio de prisiones, en la cárcel nueve heridas, en que cuento el jornal de mi perdición”*. Después de salir de San Marcos, Quevedo no menciona ningún absceso hasta junio de 1645 [11].

El 19 de abril de 1645 confiesa que el médico ha decidido *“abrirle una fuente (purgar o evacuar) en el brazo izquierdo”* para que drene el contenido [11].

La noche del 24 de abril, Quevedo fumó *“tabaco en humo”* regalo con 4 bollos de chocolate del impresor madrileño Pedro Coello. En aquella época se consideraba que el tabaco, por los libros de Cristóbal Hernández y de Nicolás Monardes, era medicinal al igual que el chocolate, con el libro de 1631 de Antonio Colmenero de Ledesma: *“Tratado de la naturaleza y calidad del chocolate”*. El chocolate se bebía con azúcar y especias, debido al monopolio español del mismo y no se importaba puro por la posibilidad de que lo requisasen los corsarios ingleses y holandeses, y por eso se enviaba en forma de bollos con una fórmula secreta [11].

En mayo y junio, Quevedo habla mucho de su mejoría, en la carta del 5 del último mes menciona la aparición de *“dos apostemillas que se me han hecho, una sobre el pecho derecho y otra en el otro lado, que van madurando, la una con mas prisa que la otra”*. En la última carta del 5 de septiembre, a su amigo Oviedo, tiene plena conciencia de que estaba muriéndose: *“Perdóneme v. m. que no discurra en cosa de las guerras ni de las paces, que pareciera ociosidad, ajena del peligro en que me hallo”*. Aparece una disentería finalmente, y muere tres días después, el 8 de septiembre [11].

La mejor aproximación a la posible enfermedad que tuvo Quevedo, es el libro de 1957 del Dr. Jesús Martínez Fernández titulado *“Quevedo y la medicina”* [12b], y que pasó desapercibido durante mucho tiempo para los estudiosos de la vida y enfermedades de Quevedo.

El Dr. Jesús Martínez Fernández (1924-1994), fue un pediatra y cronista de la villa de Navia en Asturias que estudió Medicina en Santiago de Compostela y en 1949 fue a Madrid para hacer la especialidad de Puericultura y Pediatría en la Escuela Nacional de Puericultura, en el Hospital del Niño Jesús

y en el Instituto Nacional de Puericultura. En Navia, fundó un Instituto de Puericultura bajando la mortalidad infantil en esa zona. En 1968, excavó el castro de Mohías, en el concejo de Coaña en Asturias, que data de los siglos I y II en la época romana y que había sido descubierto en 1939 por A. García y Bellido y J. Uría Rúa, pero no fue excavado por primera vez hasta 1968 por el Dr. Martínez y J. Junceda. Su interés también fue en la vertiente histórica con libros importantes sobre Gaspar Casal y sobre Jovellanos.

El Dr. Martínez pensaba que el diagnóstico más probable era una tuberculosis cuyos primeros síntomas aparecen en 1637 con calenturas mal diagnosticadas de tercianas malignas. Descarta una enfermedad hepática y malaria al no observarse ictericia, tampoco una tabes dor-

sal por sífilis al no haber ceguera y ataxia locomotora. El pus no era de origen respiratorio, ni había absceso subcutáneo al no haber una tumefacción notable, y descarta finalmente un posible cáncer [12b].

Entre los años 1622, 1636 y 1637 sitúa “una fase previa bacilemia” con localización en las primeras vertebrae dorsales quedando latente hasta 1638, cuando aparece el primer síntoma, el absceso de tórax [12b].

En 1645, aparecen todas las manifestaciones que están en relación al mal de Pott: alteraciones motoras, parálisis parcial de los brazos, rigidez de la nuca, dolores de la cabeza y de la parte alta de la espalda, abscesos en el pecho que supuran abundantemente y que se purgaron varias veces, vómitos y desnutrición general. En esta fase pudo manifestarse, por los síntomas de cefalalgia y rigidez de nuca, una meningitis tuberculosa. Todo ello, apoyaría finalmente el diagnóstico de mal de Pott [12b].



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Alexander Pope (1688-1744).

El poeta inglés más representativo del siglo XVIII, nació en Londres de padres ya mayores; su padre, comerciante en paños londinense, debió trasladarse con su familia a Blinfield, en Windsord, a los cinco años del nacimiento de Pope, debido a la legislación anticatólica imperante que incluía la prohibición de residir en un radio de diez millas de Londres [13].

En la infancia, a los 12 años, sufrió una grave enfermedad al ser corneado por una vaca y herido en el cuello y pulmón. Poco después empieza a notarse la deformidad de su columna vertebral que es comentada en los escritos de Samuel Johnson [3]. En la biografía de Pope del Dr. Samuel Johnson, hay

pocas pistas de su enfermedad: “Pope tenía una constitución débil y delicada, pero se decía que tenía una disposición gentil y dulce. La debilidad de su cuerpo continuó a lo largo de su vida, pero la apacibilidad de su mente quizás acabó en su niñez” [14].

En su obra, *Imitations of Horace*, Pope escribe [15]:

“Weak tho’I am of limb, and short of sight,
Far from a Lynx, and not a Giant quite,
I’ll do what Mead and Cheselden advise,
To keep these limbs, and to preserve these eyes.”

“Aunque débil soy de miembros y corto de vista,
Lejos de ser un lince, y en absoluto un gigante,
Haré lo que Mead y Cheselden me aconsejen,
Para mantener estas extremidades y preservar estos ojos”

Esta deformidad lo limitó físicamente de por vida a ser un inválido crónico, lo que se añadió además a las grandes limitaciones sociales como consecuencia de su condición de católico, que lo excluían de la Universidad y de cualquier tipo de cargo público. Hasta los 12 años recibió clases de sacerdotes, aunque después fue principalmente autodidacta, lo que le facilitó el acceso a la lectura de la literatura inglesa, además de la francesa, la italiana, la latina y la griega.

En 1717, se traslada a una casa de campo en Twickenham junto al río Támesis, al oeste de Londres (“Winsor Forest”), donde vivirá hasta su muerte y donde recibirá las visitas de los personajes más famosos de la época. Hombre amargado y díscolo atacó ferozmente a los literatos de su tiempo, aunque para otros fuera cordial y afectuoso, manteniendo una estrecha y larga amistad sobre todo con Jonathan Swift y Jolin Gay [16]. A pesar de esta visión amable, atacó a muchas personas y escritores como se indica, entre ellos a Lady Mary Wortley Montagu y su esposo e impulsores de la vacunación antivariólica, por lo que ella le contestó con este poema [17]:

*El objeto de tu mal humor es la humanidad:
Se alimenta de todos los que ceden o resisten:
Para ti es una provocación existir ...
Ni la juventud ni la belleza pueden controlar
El rencor universal de tu alma;
Ese miserable esqueleto que retienes,
La razón no es que el mundo quiera ojos
Pero eres tan mezquino, ellos ven y desprecian: ...
Nunca sea perdonada ni olvidada tu culpa.*

*The object of thy spleen is humankind:
It preys on all who yield, or who resist:
To thee 'tis provocation to exist....
Not even youth and beauty can control,
The universal rancour of thy soul;
That wretched little carcase you retain,
The reason is, not that the world wants eyes,
But thou'rt so mean, they see, and they despise: ...
Ne'er be thy guilt forgiven, or forgot.*

Y en “Verses addressed to the Imitator of Horace. By a Lady” [15]:

*But, as thou hat'st, be hated by mankind,
And with the emblem of thy crooked mind,
Markd on thy back, like Cain, by God's own hand,
Wander like him, accursed through the land'.*

*(Pero, como quieres, ser odiado por la humanidad,
Y con el emblema de tu mente torcida,
Marcado en tu espalda, como Caín, por la propia mano
de Dios,
Vagar como él, maldito por la tierra'.*

Sir Joshua Reynolds, el gran pintor inglés de ese siglo y especializado en retratos, lo describe como de: “Talla de 1,37 m, jorobado y deforme, llevaba un abrigo negro y según la moda de la época una pequeña espada. Tenía un gran y fino ojo, y una nariz agradable, su boca con marcas peculiares de personas encorvadas, y los músculos fuertes y marcados como pequeñas cuerdas” [16].

Enfermedades de Pope. Sharma OP [3], establece un diagnóstico diferencial entre las enfermedades que pudiesen producir la deformidad de su columna vertebral:

a) Una posibilidad, aunque poco probable es que fuese raquitismo, pero hay desacuerdo de si fuese capaz de producirle la escoliosis en Pope, tampoco hay datos de otras manifestaciones de raquitismo como piernas arqueadas, fracturas múltiples, problemas de dentición, etc.

b) Duda también de la tuberculosis, es un proceso hematógeno en el que se forma un absceso frío por migración a través del músculo psoas con dolor como primer síntoma, pero Pope se mantenía con buen apetito y comía alimentos como carne, galletas y conservas caseras, es raro además el fallo respiratorio y cardíaco.

c) La posibilidad de alteraciones congénitas neurológicas, son improbables ya que sus biógrafos no mencionan alteraciones dermatológicas o neuromusculares típicas en la escoliosis causada por la poliomielitis, neurofibromatosis o la ataxia de Frederich.

d) Es posible una escoliosis idiopática ya que su padre también sufrió de una deformidad espinal, en la que hay una asimetría y con convexidad en el caso de Pope del lado derecho del tórax y una característica es que la deformidad se nota en la adolescencia tardía durante o después del segundo periodo de crecimiento. Aparece una joroba redondeada en la espalda, con una curva severa y rígida y la rotación de la columna da una deformidad grotesca. Así la combinación de

una cifosis verdadera y una curva lateral iría más a favor de afectación congénita.

En cualquier caso, el Dr. Victor McKusick [15] dijo que: *“Mi interés en enfermedades hereditarias me ha hecho enfocarme en el comentario de que su padre tuvo deformación de la columna, pero no conozco enfermedad hereditaria que satisfactoriamente explique la afectación en Pope”*. Para él, no fue una enfermedad reumática y la afectación cardíaca fue resultado del mal de Pott, abogando por una teoría unitaria de su enfermedad. Y en el libro de Nicholson y Rousseau [15], se apunta a la tuberculosis como causa y la leche, no pasteurizada en aquella época, como la fuente de su enfermedad.

Pope sufría de migrañas con frecuentes y severas cefaleas que las curaba con inhalaciones de café, así tenía gran privación del sueño y con grandes cambios del carácter. Para ello, como las bases modernas de que la cafeína combinada con fármacos mejora los síntomas, bebía muchas tazas de café de día y noche e inhalaba los vapores del café caliente, esto contribuyó a su insomnio durante su vida. Tenía una afectación ocular, probable miopía severa, que le dificultaba la lectura y escritura. Y además asma. La afectación de su caja torácica pudo contribuir al fallo cardíaco, que se enmascaró con el asma, y fuese el causante de su muerte [15].

No había tratamiento en esa época y con el empeoramiento busco asesoramiento de médicos y de curanderos. Los médicos de Pope fueron: William Cheselden (1688-1752), John Arbuthnot (1667-1735), John Joshua Ward (1652-), John Radcliffe (1652-) que era famoso por sus curas de pacientes con viruela y que estaba en contra de mantener estos pacientes en habitaciones cerradas y calientes y recomendaba aire fresco con un régimen de enfriamiento de Sydenham [18], y Richard Mead (1673-1754) [16].

En los escritos de Pope, este manifiesta un gran interés en la medicina, por ejemplo, sobre la circulación de la sangre aparece en su libro *“The Dunciad”* y además tenía interés en los microscopios, el siglo XVIII es el despegue del microscopio y fue una moda su uso. De hecho, tiene una carta escrita a John Carryl, en febrero 18 de 1718, que menciona a Mr. Hutton, un relojero que *“estaba interesado en los microscopios y mostró a mi madre algunos de los semen masculinum, con animascula en ellos”* y la referencia sobre el microscopio más familiar es en su libro *“Un ensayo sobre el Hombre”* (*“An Essay on Man”*) [19]:

Why has not Man a microscopic eye?

For this plain reason, Man is not a Fly.

¿Por qué no tiene el Hombre un ojo microscópico?

Por la sencilla razón de que el Hombre no es una mosca.

Giacomo Leopardi (1798-1837)

Giacomo Taldegardo Francesco Salesio Saverio Pietro Leopardi es uno de los más grandes poetas del siglo XIX. Nació en Recanati (Las Marcas) 1798 y murió en Nápoles 1837. Fue el abanderado del *‘Risorgimento’* italiano, el movimiento político que abrió la vía a la unificación del país. Su padre, como no llegó a ser el hombre docto que soñaba, se dedicó a comprar en subastas las bibliotecas de las congregaciones y conventos cerrados por Napoleón, y en 1812 contaba con 10.000 volúmenes. A su madre, Giacomo, la describe en el Zibaldone [20] como: *“un ídolo, tenebroso e incomprensible, una máquina atroz y desconocida”*. El Zibaldone nació como *“Pensieri di varia filosofia e de bella letteratura”*, pero al hacer el índice, Leopardi decide llamar *“Zibaldone depensieri”* a su *“mamotreto”* de 4500 páginas. Es un diario que escribió durante 15 años, desde los 19 años, y que mantuvo en secreto hasta su muerte y que fue publicado 61 años después de su muerte. Con dos jesuitas como maestros, estudió en la biblioteca familiar y fue un niño prodigio, gran parte de su formación fue autodidacta, aprendió por su cuenta griego y hebreo, y de 1808 (a los 10 años de edad) datan sus primeras traducciones.

Enfermedades de Leopardi. Hay varias teorías de las enfermedades de Leopardi. A los 15- 16 años hace su aparición una enfermedad que no lo abandonará, él cree que es debida a sus *“estudios enloquecidos y furiosos”* en pésimas condiciones. Los médicos diagnostican raquitismo, pero en realidad se piensa que era el mal de Pott, que además de deformidades, afectó profundamente su cuerpo: ceguera (sufría con la luz del día), impotencia, oftalmía, conjuntivitis, insuficiencia respiratoria, estreñimiento, trastornos digestivos... Medía 1,40 m y le salen dos deformidades, una en la espalda y otra en el pecho [21, 22]. Como Quevedo también sufría con el tiempo frío.

Fue visitado por los mejores médicos italianos de la época en Florencia, Roma, Pisa y Nápoles. Era amigo de dos figuras médicas de la época: Francesco Puccinotti (1794-1872) y Giacomo Tommasini (1768-1846). El trabajo de Puccinotti estuvo influenciado por el interés de Leopardi en Hipócrates y este, como historiador de la medicina, dijo haber escrito una biografía médica de Leopardi que nunca se ha encontrado [23].

En 1925, Crescenzo Pavone, autor napolitano de traba-

■ Tabla 1

RESUMEN DE LAS CARACTERÍSTICAS MAS RESEÑABLES DE LA PATOBIOGRAFÍA DE LOS TRES ESCRITORES			
Características patobiográficas	Quevedo	Pope	Leopardi
Aparición de su enfermedad	Vejez	Adolescencia (12 años)	Adolescencia (15-16 años)
Hipótesis más plausible de la enfermedad	Mal de Pott	Mal de Pott/ Escoliosis ideopática	Mal de Pott/ Espondilitis anquilopoyética juvenil
Deformidad vertebral	No (cojera y piernas arqueadas por probable equinovarus congénito)	Si	Si
Estatura	Normal	1,37 m	1,40 m
Abscesos supurantes y recurrentes en tórax	Si	No	No
Alteraciones psíquicas	Si	Si	Si
Afectación ocular	Miopía	Miopía	Posible Uveitis
Otros síntomas:	Intolerancia al frío, alteraciones motoras, parálisis parcial de los brazos, rigidez de la nuca, dolores de la cabeza y de la parte alta de la espalda, vómitos y desnutrición general	Migrañas, insomnio, asma	Intolerancia al frío, Impotencia, problemas urinarios, Insuficiencia respiratoria, estreñimiento, trastornos digestivos
Causa última de la muerte	Disentería y probable afectación neurológica	Cardíaca	Cardíaca
Interés por la medicina	Si (Críticas a los médicos, numerosas citas a infecciones de la época como el mal francés, etc.)	Si (circulación de la sangre y el microscopio)	Si (sobre Hipócrates)

jos sobre pediatría, rehusó la tesis del origen hereditario de la enfermedad del poeta. En 1938, sobre la autopsia hecha por Zuccarelli en 1900, el fisiólogo Silvestro Baglioni (1876-1957) estableció que la enfermedad era el mal de Pott y que nadie ha contradecido seriamente desde entonces [23].

Pero en años recientes, se ha propuesto otra hipótesis atractiva de su enfermedad, para Sganzerla y Riva [24] podría tratarse de una espondilitis anquilosante juvenil que produjo una deformidad vertebral, uveítis recurrente, problemas urinarios e intestinales, y artritis aguda. La deformidad torácica sería una complicación que derivó en progresivo fallo cardio-respiratorio, empeorado por complicaciones pulmonares y bronquiales recurrentes y muriendo por fallo ventricular derecho [25, 26]. En sus *Cantos*, expresa estas dolencias cardíacas [27]:

*“Solo il mio cor piaceami, e col mio core
In un perenne ragonar sepolto,
Alla guardia seder del mio dolore”.*

“Solo mi corazón ya me agradaba

*y, sometido a un razonar continuo,
vigilaba el dolor que a mí me hería.”*

En contra de la enfermedad de Pott es que no tuvo déficit neurológico, que afectaba al 50-80% de los pacientes, ni dolores dorsales severos que aparecen en el 90% de los casos, en 2 años debería haber tenido paraplejia y Leopardi en realidad caminaba poco antes de su muerte, en esa época era mortal la enfermedad en los 3 primeros años y Leopardi sobrevivió 27 años desde que aparece su cifosis, los problemas visuales no serían tuberculosos porque hubiesen evolucionado a ceguera y tampoco refractivos ya que serían solucionados con unas gafas, y finalmente los médicos que lo vieron y que conocían la enfermedad ninguno hace referencia a ella [24]. La espondilitis anquilosante juvenil presenta una uveítis aguda anterior recurrente, cifosis dorsal temprana, además de problemas de diarrea y estreñimiento y la disuria [24].

En la Tabla 1, se resumen las características mas reseñables de la patobiografía de los tres escritores.

En conclusión, se puede establecer la hipótesis del mal de Pott en la enfermedad que afecto a los tres escritores,

pero sin poder descartar alguna otra enfermedad como la espondilitis anquilosante juvenil en Leopardi y por tanto situarnos en el terreno de las hipótesis, en el caso de Pope y Leopardi con coincidencias en cuanto a la edad de aparición, talla corta y deformidades de la columna que marcaron física y psicológicamente sus vidas.

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The Greatpox in times of Shakespeare & the Spanish Golden Age

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Abstract

The interplay between the greatpox (syphilis) and literature in Shakespeare's times and the Spanish Golden Age is reviewed. We will attempt to sketch Shakespeare's time, the mystery of the greatpox and how this epidemic disease affected society and, lastly, the use of the disease by Shakespeare

and other English Elizabethan authors, and to compare it with the Spanish Golden Age authors, as a metaphor for the moral corruption of these societies. The greatpox is used in a metaphorical sense, but there are similitudes in English and Spanish writers in the use of these symptoms and the treatment in this period, and they are a source of the contemporary medical texts, and the patients and the society view of this disease.

Introduction

Not only have medical writers given us some record of the early history of syphilis (the Greatpox), but also writings on venereal disease can be found in the daily records, court books, and literate works of those times. In this way, William Shakespeare and syphilis present certain parallels that can be summarized in a word: mystery. The enigma in Shakespeare is related to the enigma in Cervantes, both had a physician in their families, the son-in law in Shakespeare and the father in Cervantes, and the possibility of the crypto-catholic condition in Shakespeare and crypto-jew in Cervantes. There is another aspect that these two have in common: For Lope de Vega or Quevedo, Cervantes was an invisible man [1], as a writer he did not exist. Both Cervantes and Shakespeare occasionally wrote poems, which were the accepted literary genre in that period, but Shakespeare wrote mostly for actors and so it is natural that his contemporaries did not admire him. Moving on to the pathobiography of Shakespeare: between 1608 and 1613 was the final period of his plays, and he died in 1616 murdered, or of fevers (perhaps typhoid) or of a cerebrovascular accident.

In Spain women could act on the stage, but in Shakespeare's times, women were forbidden on the English stage, until 1660 they did not come to act on the stage, and the feminine roles were represented by prepuberal boys. This was giving place to a woman - boys subtle exchange disguising of men by what the sex was recited, since the Elizabethan ones were going to hear, not to see, a play. It is estimated more than 10% of the London population was coming regularly to the theatre, more than of those who come nowadays in the big cities [2] and for average, it is probable that more than one third of the London adult population saw a play a month [3]. In Spain, the theatre was also popular and some actors as Juan Rana, a gay actor, and the most famous buffon of his time, was a favourite of the ruling monarchy and the general populace [4].

Shakespeare worked in the district of the theatres that, due to puritan pressure, was confined to the well-known suburbs of Southwark, to the south of London. These surroundings had taverns, prostitutes, thieves or pickpockets. This area belonged to the bishop of Winchester and with the result that the prostitutes with the greatpox (we will use the word syphilis from now on) were colloquially called "the goose of Winchester".

Because the diseases rarely appear in a dramatic context in Shakespeare it is necessary, from the pathological point of view, that they should be inferred from just one or two symp-

toms. This is also due to the fact that the diseases were not clinical entities just as we know them nowadays, for example between pox and clap (gonorrhoea). Shakespeare concentrates a greater number of references on diseases and medicine in the period from 1597 to 1602 and in the plays: *Henry IV Part 2*, *As you like it*, *Hamlet*, and *Troilus and Cressida*. The most frequent diseases mentioned by Shakespeare are the venereal diseases and Hoeniger [5] finds two possible reasons: the tradition of associating to these diseases the consequences of a corrupt or sick society, and the second reason that the syphilis, as previously the Black Death, acquired epidemic proportions.

Another important aspect is the use of Elizabethan English that it is necessary to know to establish the precise nature of these diseases. Most of Shakespeare's plays are full of jokes and double meanings of words (bawdy language), many of them referring to episodes that happened in that time. A knowledge of Elizabethan idiomatic usage is essential to know the nature of the different diseases in the plays. He used his knowledge of the venereal diseases in a serious way and sometimes in a frankly bawdy manner. Bawdiness, in the Elizabethan theatre, reflected the life not merely of the groundling outside the theatre [6a]. In John Marston's *The In-satiate Countess* (1613): "Nay, and they come not in at the fore-door, there will no pleasure in't (2.2.68-70)" the bawdy meaning is clear: two women whose husbands, Claridiana and Rogero, have failed to consummate their marriages and prefers the anal penetration (back-door) to vaginal penetration (fore-door) [6b].

Many books ignore a lot of sexual words and expressions [7]. This aspect is found also in Spain, p.e. the first translator of the complete Works of Shakespeare, Luis Astrana Marin, denominate to the syphilis as the venereal disease [8] but this bawdy language was the link between his theatre and the public since the public understood the jargon used in situations such as the sexual relationships or anatomical terms such as penis, vagina, etc. The inclusion of these words was functional inside the dramatic perspective, and it was good to produce a laugh, to cause nausea or to attract the public's attention [9]. For example, the word *Will* meant sexual desire, penis, vagina and Will's name. The word *cod* meant the masculine sexual organ and as a fish the audience could laugh at the association, another word was *die*, related to the orgasm since in Elizabethan physiology, each sexual act shortened the lover's life one minute like a small death [10]. An example of these double meanings is shown in *Troilus and Cressida* Act 5, scene x:

“Pandarus. My fear is this:
Some gallèd goose of Winchester would hiss.
Till then l’ll sweat and seek about for eases,
And at that time bequeath you my diseases.”
(My fear is this: some sore-encrusted, diseased whore in the audience will want to hiss me and wheeze her pox all over me. Till then l’ll sit in the sweating-tub and seach for remedies to cure me. And then l’ll bequeath you my venereal diseases) [11]. (Si no temiera que algún ganso perverso de Winchester se pusiera a silbar. Hasta entonces, voy a que me hagan sudar y a buscarme los remedios, y llegado el momento, os legaré mis enfermedades) [12].

In Spain there is the same situation and is frequent the double- meaning entrances, so in the Pedro Francisco Lanini y Segredo’s *El parto de Juan Rana* (*Juan Rana’s childbirth*) [4]:

“Escribano: La vara comparais agora al sexo?
(so now you’re comparing the staff to the sex?),
Berrueco: Vos Escribano, no entendéis bien de eso;
Una vara concibe dos mil cosas
Luego puede parirlas prodigiosas.”
(You, scribe, don’t understand it properly; / a staff can conceive two thousands things/ and can later bear them prodigiously.)

Camilo José Cela, the Spanish Nobel writer, indicates that “vara de alcalde” functions as a metaphor for the penis [4a].

In Italy, this double- meaning entrances worked in the same sense, so Francesco Berni, poet of *Cinquecento*, writes:

“L’anguille non son troppo conosciute;
E sarebbon chiamate un nuovo pesce
Da un che noll’avesse più vedute.
Vivace bestia che nell’acqua cresce,
E vive in terra e ´n acqua, e ´n acqua e ´n terra,
Entra a sua posta ov’ella vuole, ed esce”

(The eels are not too well known;/ And we would be calling a new fish/ From one who had more views./ Lively beast that grows in the water./ And he lives on earth and in water, and in water and in earth,/ Enter at it post where it wants, and go out)

Here, the eels are a metaphor for the penis again, and “earth” and “water” are the sodomitic and heterosexual love [4b].

Denomination of the new disease

In this point, we should settle down like the new epidemic appeared and like it affected the life of the patients and the society in general. First of all, we should debate the name of the disease, an aspect not free of controversy, so from our modern perspective we called it “syphilis”, but from a historical point of view this term introduced by Girolamo Fracas-



Hieronymus Fracastorius (Girolamo Fracastoro) shows the shepherd Syphilus and the hunter Ilceus a statue of Venus to warn them against the danger of infection with syphilis. Engraving by Jan Sadeler I, 1588/1595, after Christoph Schwartz. Schwarz, Christoph, approximately 1548-1592.

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toro in 1530 didn't begin to be popular until the end of the 18th century. As Arrizabalaga *et al* [13] insist against calls it syphilis: “each illness is an intellectual construction that is peculiar to some medicine form, and each medicine form is not but a historical variable in any human condition”. For practical reasons we will maintain, in spite of the considerations that we make, the word syphilis and indistinctly the greatpox.

In the poem of Jean Le-maire printed in 1528, there are the different names of the disease: “Lún le voulut Saha-fati nommer/ En Arabic. Láu-tre a pu estimer/ Que lón doit dire en latin, Mentagra. Sha-hafati in Arabic, mentagra in Latin, gorre or pox, French sickness, bubas in Spanish, Naples's disease, clavela the savoyans, scabies major, Egyptian scabies”. In 1527, J. de Bethencourt, French physician who practiced medicine in Rouen (France), writes

the treatise: *Nueva Caréme de Penitencia y Purgatorio de expiación, del uso de enfermos afectados del mal francés o mal venereo (New Caréme of Penance and atonement Purgatory, of the use of affected sick persons by French disease or venereal disease)*, and it is the first one in calling it *morbis venereus*. He believed that since the disease originated from “illicit love” it should be named *Morbis Venereus (Malady of Venus)* or *lues venerea (venereal disease)*. In Mexico it was called *huiçavatl*. And also, another name was Fracastorius's disease.

The names to the pox in French were: “*la grand veróle*”, “*peste de Bordeaux*”, “*mal de Niort*”, “*mal du carrefour de Poitiers*”, “*gorre de Rouen*” and *Neapolitan disease*. The Flemish and Dutch, and North-West Africa: “*Spanish sickness*”. Each country was always blamed on the other neighbour country: in Russia “*Polish sickness*”, in Poland “*German sickness*”, in Germany “*the Spanish itch*”, while the French



GIROLAMO FRACASTORO

Tutto all'originale esistente nella Galleria di Fracastoro in Verona

La sifilide / poema di Girolamo Fracastoro ; tradotto da Gio. Luigi Zaccarelli. Fracastoro, Girolamo, 1478-1553.

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Disponibile en: <https://wellcomecollection.org/images?query=daniel+turner>

and Italians blamed each other. In German, *bösen Blattern* (literally: malignant smallpox). In 1497 the pox appeared in Scotland under the name of *grandgor* (Old French. *grand gore*, grand: great and gore: syphilis) [14]. Maritime Italian traders learned to their sorrow of the “*Turkish disorder*” or the “*Persian fire*”. Each nationality tried enthusiastically to saddle the disease on its nearest neighbour [15].

In Denmark, it was called in 1495 *gallica scabies*. In German, Italy and England as *the French sickness* or *French pox*. The Portuguese called it “*The Castillian sickness*”. The Japanese and the peoples of the East Indies came to call it “*The Portuguese sickness*” [14] and in Japan “*Canton rash*”. The Italians called it *morbo gallico*, the French sickness in England. Quétel [14] finds many other “*blame your neighbour*” sort of names, except in Spain, but although Quétel

asserts the Spanish did not call it anything, that is not true, Rodrigo Ruy Diaz de Isla's 1542 book talk about “*against the serpentine disease which came from the Hispaniola island*”.

In Spain there a set of humorous elaborations and re-workings with the name of *Grillimón*. The first of these texts is the *Chiste de la Cofradía del Grillimón (Joke of the Pox's Brotherhood)*, included in the “*Second part of the Silva de Romances*” and published by Esteban G. de Nájera in Zaragoza in 1552 [16]:

“*Sepan quantos son o han sido
o serán del Grillemon
estafados
como en corte es proveydo
que seán sin dilación
registrados*”

(*Those, which are or have been or they will be defrauded by the Grillimón caught in the court that they will be regis-*

tered without delay) and the second of the “*Capítulos y ordinaciones para los cofrades del muy poderoso Balaguer o Grillimón*” (Chapters and ordinations for the brothers of the very powerful Balaguer or Grillimón) was released in Valencia around the same dates as the first, in the form of a loose sheet and attributed to Joan de Angulo.

In Spain it had several names like it is appreciated in *Los pliegos poéticos del marques de Morbecq* (Marquis Morbecq’s the poetic sheets), printed in Valencia in 1560 [17]:

*En Málaga llaman Grillo,
y en Granada Grillimón,
y en Sevilla Sarampión
indiano;
Melacatufas y Grano
le llaman allá en Toledo,
y otros le llaman Tenquendo
allá en Madril.
Otros nombres más de mil
le llaman, porque se empache,
y en Córdoba Urriache
tiene puesto.*

*En Burgos, porque es dispuesto,
le llaman Galán cortés,
porque hace con los pies
reverencias.
Otros, por sus continencias,
le han llamado Doma potros,
y en Barcelona los otros,
Mal francés.
En Sant Lúcar y en Jerez
le llaman Azul subido,
y en Cádiz es su apellido
Zurrión.*

*En Valencia de Aragón
(visto su grande poder)
le han llamado Balaguer,
porque vale
porque entra y tarde sale,
porque con todos se atreve,
porque no teme ni debe
a ninguno...
(In Málaga they call Cricket, / and in Granada Grillimón, / and
in Seville Indian / Measles; / “Melacatufas” and Pimple / they
call him there in Toledo, / and other they call him “Tenquen-
do” / there in Madril.
Other names more than thousand / they call him, because it*

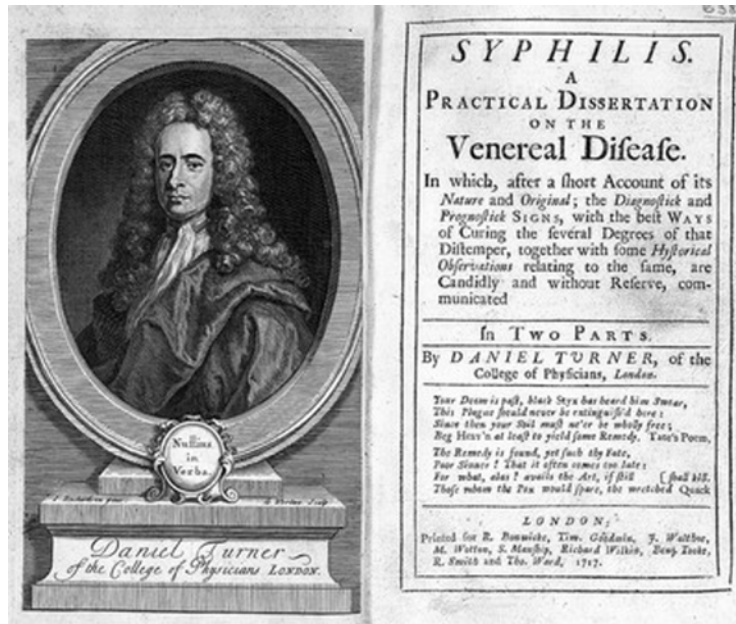
*is satiated, / and in Córdoba “Urriache” / they call it. / In Bur-
gos, because it is willing, / they call him Courteous Gallant, /
because makes reverences / with the feet.*

*Other, for their continences, / they have called him it Tames
Ponies, / and in Barcelona the other ones, / French sickness.
/ In San Lúcar and in Jerez / they call him Intense Blue, / and
in Cádiz it is the last name / “Zurrión”.*

*In Valencia of Aragon / (seen its big power) / “Balaguer” has
called him, / because it is worth / because enters and take it
leaves, / because with all dares, / because doesn’t fear nei-
ther it should / to none...).*

The Valencians, Catalans and Aragonese called it “*el mal de siment*”. In Sebastian Horozco’s *El cancionero* (Song book) (1510-c. 1580) it is spoken about the *La cofradía del Grillimón* (Brotherhood of the pox). In Francisco Delicado’s *La lozana andaluza* novel (1528) (*Lusty Andalusian*) [18], Delicado suffered the illness, it called *griñimón*. In Asturias (in the north of Spain) it was denominated like in other parts *bubas*, word of Greek origin and Covarrubias says that *Boubonas* meant inguinal tumour or pox. Covarrubias in the *Tesoro de la Lengua Castellana* (*Treasure of the Castilian Language*) (1611) defined the *bubas* as: “*el mal que llaman francés, buba es nombre francés y pienso ser nombre griego, porque los griegos llaman boubwnaz a las hinchazones del cuerpo y además pegábase principalmente por la comunicación deshonestá*” (*the French disease, buba is a French name and suggest that must be a Greek name, because the greeks called boubwnaz to the swelling body and besides the contagion was mainly by unchaste contact*) [19]. For Corominas, in his *Etymological Critical Dictionary of the Castilian Language* [20], *Buba* or *búa* is a derived regressive of *bubón*: voluminous “*tumour in particular that of the Black Death*” and he remembers that it comes from the Greek *Boubon* that means *groin*; and that the distinction between *búa* “*pock*” and “*buba*” venereal tumour, is not old: “*and today it continues being said in Asturias and in other parts*” [21].

The French disease was called in English “*the great pox*” to differentiate it of the “*small pox*” or *pock*. The word “*pox*” is derived from Anglo-Saxon “*poc*”, meaning a pustule or pimple, but when the pox was brought England by soldiers returning from France and as in Spain with *bubas*, the meaning was transferred to the nastier disease [5]. *Pock-royal* was the satirical name for a pustule of the great pox (*syphilis*) as opposed to the small pox [22]. The earliest records of the greatpox in England date of 1493-4 in the *Early Chronicles of Shrewsbury*: “*And about thys tyme began the fowle scabbe and horrible syckness called the freanche pocks*”. Joseph Grünpeck mentions in his “*Libellus de mentalugra, alias*



Syphilis : a practical dissertation on the venereal disease. Turner, Daniel, 1667-1741.

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morbo gallico" (1503) that English soldiers fighting in Italy in 1496 had acquired syphilis [23a]. In 1494, a Chronicle of Lynn (Ireland) records, "In this yer begane the ffrenche pockes." Lynn was a seaport, but Shrewsbury had no doubt been infected via Chester or Bristol, where it was imported via the wine trade from Bordeaux in 1497, being called *morbus Burdigalensis* (*Peste de Bordeaux*) [cited by 23b]. In 1503 in the book of the *Privy Purse Expenses* of Elizabeth of York, wife of Henry VII, there is an entry of a sum of forty shillings paid on behalf of John Pertriche "oon of the sonnes of mad Beale"; which sum appears to have been the amount the youth cost her majesty for food, clothing and incidental expenses during the preceding year. Twenty shillings were paid to "a surgeon which heled him of the French pox." [cited by 23b].

Several measures were taken in the year 1506 to close the Winchester stews. These brothels of ancient origin were situated in Southwark under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Winchester. In 1506 there were eighteen of them closed probably connected with early ravages of the French pox. It has been mooted that the young Henry VIII, as Prince of Wales, may have been infected by a Winchester goose, the name at times being used for a prostitute [cited by 23b].

Andrew Boord (1490-1549) wrote, in his *Breviary of*

Helthe (1547), the first printed medical book to be written by a physician in English, he wrote not only of syphilis, but also of gonorrhoea and scabies [cited by 23b]:

"*Morbus Gallicus* or *Variole Miores* be the latyn wordes. And some do name it *Mentagra*....In englyshe *Morbus Gallicus* is named the french pockes, whan that I was yonge they were named the spanshe pockes the which be of many kyn-des of the pockes, some be moyst, some be waterashe, some be drye, and some be skorvie, some be lyke skabbes, some be lyke ring wornes, some be fistuled, some be festered, some be cankarus, some be lyke wennes, some be lyke biles, some be lyke knobbes or burres, and some be ulcerous havyinge a lytle drye skabbe in the middle of the ulcerous skabbe, some hath ache in the ioyntes and no signe of the pockes and yet it may be the pockes.... The cause of these impediments or infyrmytes doth come many wayes it maye come by lyenge in the shetes or bedde there where a pocky person hath the night before lyenin, it may come with lyenge with a pocky person, it maye come by syttenge on a draught or sege [i.e. privy] where as a pocky person did lately syt, it may come by drynkyng oft with a pocky person, but specially it is taken when one pocky person doth synne in lechery the one with another. All the kyndes of the pockes be infectiouse".

In Italy, 1498, a notary of the Orvieto (Umbria) can be considered of the first patient narratives in the history of medicine, with a reference to a small lesion (chancre) and skin lesions and pains in the joints [23c].

In 1530, the Veronese physician Girolamo Fracastoro (c. 1478-1553) published a poem called "*Shyphilis sive morbos gallicus*" and invents the myth of how a leader sailed from Spain to Ophir. The leader (probably Columbus) and his sailors, one day in the regions of the New World, shoot some of the beautiful birds of Ophir which belonged to the Sun-God, one of those which escaped and the Sun-God uttered a prophecy of dire ills [23a]:

"Nor end your sufferings here; an strange Disease,
And most obscene, shall on your Bodies seize."

An accepted explanation is that Fracastoro took the name from the Ovid's tale: *Metamorphoses of Sypilus*, the son of Niobe (so called after a mountain) that was slain by Apollo, the Sun-God, because Niobe had insulted his mother Latona, by boasting that she had 12 children and Latona two. Niobe was in Greek legend, the daughter of Tantalus, supposed to have been changed into stone while weeping for her children [22]. The style of the didactic poem of Fracastoro and the Latin hexametres is probably inspired in Lucrecius's *De Rerum Natura* and Virgil's *Georgica* [23a].

Fracastoro's merit consisted not in the alleged originality of the notion of contagion, but in his ability at systematizing the ideas on contagion contained in Galenic texts and its reformulation. The bacteriologists of the "*heroic era*" took Fracastoro as the beginning of a genealogy and they constructed to legitimate their role in late nineteenth and early twentieth-century medicine [24a].

Fracastoro's description of the mutilations corresponds with those given before him by other physicians. The military surgeon Alessandro Benedetti (1450–1512) was the most important of the chroniclers of Charles VIII of France's expedition to Naples in 1494. Benedetti reported in 1497, in his *Diaria de bello carolino* (*Beautiful carolino's diary*), that he had seen sufferers who had lost hands, feet, eyes, and noses to the disease. Syphilis surpassed leprosy and elephantiasis in its ability to disfigure and decompose bodies, a feature highlighted by observers who themselves were not physicians, such as, the Bolognese chronicler and author of the *Cronica Bianchina* and the noble jurist Francesco Muralti of Como. Muralti wrote that the disease "*ate the nose in the middle of the face or the male member (penis)*". A "*sort of smallpox or leprosy*", wrote the annalist Fileno Dalle Tuade; a disease in which "*the man becomes full of boils and pains so that he*

cannot move from the bed and there are no doctors that can find a treatment" [23c].

Like Arrizabalaga says on the "*early medical discussion in Europe about the nature and proper name of the French Disease centered around the skin condition that Rasis and Avicenna had named sahaphati (sahafati, sahfati, saphati, asafati)*" as an ugliness of the skin of the face and body by dry or humid pustules [24b]. But other names and conditions were proposed by the first medical writers: epidemic leprosy, scabies or *pu-dendagra* following to Pliny the Elder, court disease (*morbus curialis*) or Egyptian scabies to differentiate to scabies [24b].

While in vernacular names they employed terms like "*the French Disease*", "*the foul disease*", "*the venereal disease*" or "*the pox*", in Latin they wrote "*morbus gallico*" or "*lues venereal*" [25]. By 1524, Ulrich von Hutten have identified some 200 names for the pox [26].

The great controversy

The question whether the French disease was introduced in Europe from the island of Hispaniola by Columbus's sailors or was native to Europe continues. The Columbian theory is based on evidence that Columbus returned from his first trip in March of 1493 with some of the sailors and Indians with the disease. This is based, on records of the Spanish surgeon Ruy Díaz de Isla (1462-1542) (*Tractado contra el mal serpentina: que vulgarmente en España es llamado bubas*) (*Treatise against the Serpentine Disease*, c.1510), Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo y Valdés (1478-1557), and Bartolomé de las Casas (1474?– 1566). The certain point is that the disease was endemic in America and probably Vasco da Gama from Portugal disseminated the disease in India in 1500 and later to China and from there it passed to Japan from Canton in 1511-1512 [14]. They have also found pre-Columbian skeletons with evidence of trepanomatosi that support the pre-Columbian theory of the disease. Later, the disease hit the army of Charles VIII of France in Naples during the siege of 1494. He had to withdraw, spreading the disease among the population of Italy, France, Switzerland and Germany. For early modern commentators and modern historians alike this siege became ground zero in the history of this disease: a form of germ warfare by Italians or Jews and the fear for its symptoms [25].

For the opponents of the "*americanist theory*", there was a single disease that was disseminated from Africa through the slaves, and that in the Old Testament and classic medieval literature there are references to syphilis. This theory mentions that none of the Spanish physicians, such as Gaspar Torrella, Francisco López de Villalobos, Pedro Pintor and Juan Almenar

that wrote between 1497 and 1501 make the most minimum reference to the existence of the disease in America. A type of “leprosy”, which existed in Europe before 1500 was considered highly contagious, responded to treatment with mercury, and in fact could have been syphilis. Another disease called *mentagra* (*lichenas* in Greek) was described as being similar to syphilis appeared in Rome coming from Asia.

Lastly Ruy Díaz de Isla (says concluding his work in spite of maintaining the American origin of the illness: “...diez años antes que la enfermedad fuese aparecida no sabían las mujeres echar otras maldiciones a fijos, entenados y criados, sino decirles – de malas bubas mueras” (ten years before the illness was appeared the women didn’t know how to toss other curses to noblemen, stepsons and servants, but telling them “may you die of bad bubas).

The Inquisition saw that the spread of the illness was produced by the Marrani, a term used to cover both Jews and the Arabs who had been expelled from Spain in 1492 [13]. The theatre of Gil Vicente (1465-1536?), a Portuguese playwright and poet, paints a portrait of the Marrani and their lasciviousness that had, according to the legend, contaminated the inhabitants of Naples [27]. Leon the African also corroborates it, and may be that the crypto-jews disseminated the epidemic from Africa. Gruner maintained that it had first appeared among the Marrani. As in the outbreak of AIDS, the question of the source of the disease is partly a cultural one, rising almost to a xenophobic belief that diseases always come from elsewhere. This made the theory of a New World origin of the pox as attractive as that of the Marrani [13].

The last data of paleopathologist studies based on modern techniques of molecular biology and the anthropological discoveries try to put the emphasis in the theory of the New World origin [28] or in Europe [29a] too. But these theories



William Clowes (surgeon)

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and the third theory, the unitary or evolutionary theory, are not conclusive proofs [29b].

Spread of the disease

Galen concluded that the cardiovascular system carried blood and not air, and also managed to cast some doubt on the theories of Aristotle who thought that maybe blood arose in the liver. Galen’s basic assumptions persisted widely, and Shakespeare makes frequent use of traditional Galenic notions and utilizes his audience’s familiarity with them [30]. The greatest physician of Elizabethan times was William Harvey (1578-1657), and the hierarchy of medical professions were physicians, surgeons and barbers (they were not allowed to practice much besides blood-letting and tooth-pulling), and the

last level were the apothecaries. The physician’s fee appears to have been one angel (value about ten shillings) a visit [31]. William Clowes (1544-1604), perhaps the greatest surgeon of Shakespeare’s day in London wrote a treatise on syphilis [5]. Religious orders had likewise founded London’s three original hospitals, all of which exist to this day: St. Bartholomew’s Hospital, St. Thomas’s Hospital and Bedlam for the insane. Between 24-75% of the patients of St. Bartholomew’s Hospital in London had the French pox [23]. There was a distinction between hospital, more respectable, and spital-house or spital associated with low persons and those afflicted with horrible diseases like syphilis (*Henry V*, Act V, scene 1: 85-6):

*Pistol- News have I
that my Nell is dead
i’ the spital of malady
of France*

(tengo noticias de que mi Nell ha muerto en el hospital de mal francés)

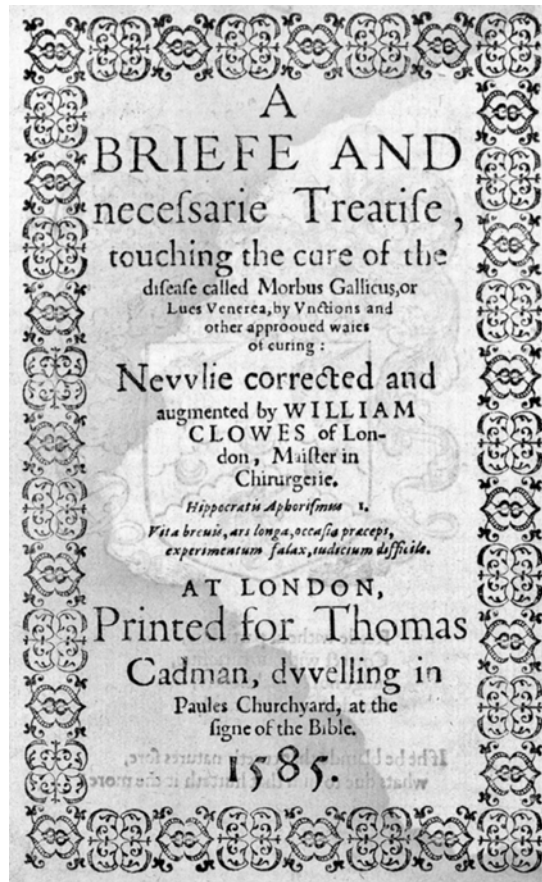
The astrological conjunctions of the planets were also believed to cause threats or benefits to health. The conjunction of Mars and Saturn were believed to have caused the Black Death that hit England, and Mars was believed to cause tertian fever [32]. Albrecht Dürer reproduces in his engraving that adorns a broadsheet entitled *Vaticinium* or *prophetic poem* written by the physician of Nuremberg, Dietrich Uelzen, describing the new plague in what is probably the first printed article on the greatpox, the astrological theory of the appearance of the disease: the Zodiac is observed in the superior part with the great conjunction between Saturn and Jupiter in the sign of Scorpio and the house of Mars that it meant the inauguration of the new plague [23]. Also, the Grünpeck's idea of astrological causation was the theory of great conjunction, which had been developed most fully by the Arab astrologers Albumasar and Messahalla [33]. The old belief in planetary influence on diseases is expressed in *Troilus and Cressida* (Act i, Scene 3) [34]:

But when the planets,

In evil mixture, to disorder wander,

What plagues, and what portents!

Ruy Díaz de Isla says: “*Yo la llamo el mal serpentino de la isla de la Española por compararla con una serpiente...Una enfermedad grave que separa y corrompe la carne y que rompe y corroe los huesos y altera y contrae los nervios*” (*I call it the serpentine sickness of the island of Hispaniola to compare it with a snake... A serious illness that separates and corrupts the meat and that breaks and eats away the bones and alters and contracts the nerves*). Francisco de Villalobos, on the other hand, has the theory that a just God, in punishment of the multiple sins, sends the disease [35]. For the Italian physician Giovanni of Vigo is: “... *a contagious illness, and in particular through the coitus: the sexual intercourse of a man with an impure woman, or vice versa.*”



A briefe and necessary treatise by William Clowes.

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Soon it is discovered other fantastic transmission routes. In the Erasmus's colloquy (1496?-1536): “*A marriage in Name Only*” (1523) [36] said that: “*it was disseminated by a kiss, by conversation, by touch, and by having a little drink together*”. Another theory was that it was transmitted to breathe and this was used in the trial against the Cardinal Wolsey to which was accused of trying to kill the king Henry VIII to infect him through the air or the kiss in the hand. The biggest fantastic theory was proposed by Sir Francis Bacon (1561-1626) in his *Sylva Sylvarum* (1627) that establishes the cannibalism in the Western Indies as the origin of the disease [23a]. This is a fantastic antecedent of the prions or mad cow disease.

Although the French disease was not considered venereal until after 1520, Arrizabalaga [37] shows that the thirteen works from 1496 to 1502, mainly written by Spanish and Italians medical writers, admitted several modes of contagion by contact, and all of them agreed

that coitus was the easiest and most frequent way to contract this condition. The doctor and anatomist Niccolò Massa of Padua, in his essay written in 1507 and published in 1527, gives his views on the role of coitus in spreading the infection although he affirmed the disease could be transmitted by other forms of contact [23c].

It is interesting to see how the light-hearted attitude that the society of the day at first had towards the disease, as illustrated by Delicado's humorous treatment of pox in the *The lusty Andalusian* (*La lozana andaluza*) and changes to the vision of deep pessimism that is seen in *Buscón's life* (*La vida del Buscón*) written by Quevedo [27]. The relaxed morals of the Renaissance would change due to the disease, in this way in the 15th century in the public bathrooms women and men bathed together in a society of high promiscuity. The spread of the disease and the puritan atmosphere combined to put an end to the liberal climate and the first to feel the effects were the brothels. But the disease af-

fectured all the social classes, so Popes like Alexander VI Borgia or Pope Julius II suffered from it and the insult “*born in the bathhouse (nato alla stufa)*” directed at the hated Pope Adrian VI [38]. Furthermore, the association of the pox with papist nations underscores an English Protestant agenda to decry these countries (France, Spain and Italy) by association them with lascivious diseases. Philip Massinger’s *Emperor of the East* make the association clear: “*The pox sir/ Though falsey nam’d the Sciatica, or Goute,/ Is the more Catholick sickness*” (IV, iii: 88-90) [39].

The approach adopted against of the illness in the 16th century is moralize view, emphasizing the necessity of pre-marital chastity, the monogamy and the fidelity. Also, the prevailing treatment in a certain moment with the appearance of the guaiac differed to the nobility that used this tree of American origin versus the low classes to which was given the torture of the treatment with mercury “*for the atonement of its sins*” [40]. The new plague will affect the relationship of the sexes and in this way, women that usually married to the 14 years and that they had a life expectancy around 40 years old, adopted a defensive and anxious attitude against the danger of the infection like it shows in the conflict of Antipholus and Adriana in Shakespeare’s *The Comedy of Errors* (2,2: 142-6) [23]:

Adriana- “*For if we two be one, and thou play false,
I do digest the poison of thy flesh,
Bieng strumpet by thy contagion.
Keep then fair league and truce with thy true bed;
I live dis-stain’d, thou undishonoured”.*
(*Pues si lo dos no formamos sino una sola carne y tú eres infiel,/ el veneno de tu carne se comunica a la mía/ y quando prostituida por tu contagio./ Guarda, pues, noble alianza y fidelidad a tu lecho legitimo,/ y yo viviré sin mancha y tú sin deshonor*)

The rise of the pox could be a factor influencing the increased asceticism of the sixteenth century [25]. As Theodor Rosebury writes in *Microbes and Morals* [41]: “*Venereal disease are considered dirty, perhaps the dirtiest subject of them all*”. And Stanislaw Andreski thinks, although other scholarships doubt about it, that the onset of syphilis explains both Puritanism and the Witch Hunts [25]. But when they are writing about the disease, Italian physicians tended to omit the moralism element so prevalent in English treatises of the time [42].

The measures that began to take were to close the brothels in London but this supported even more the spread of the disease and in this way, one proclaims of Henry VIII prohibit-

ed to the prostitutes to have contact with his troops before the war with France [23a]. Most historians attribute the sudden criminalization of prostitution to the advent of syphilis, but the bordello closings occurred thirty years after the worst syphilis epidemics of the 1490s. In Seville faced with a serious outbreak of venereal disease in 1568, city authorities were led to increase the number of official prostitutes rather abolish the municipal bordello, Europeans did not consider syphilis the most dangerous thread by prostitutes, and the changes were due to the changes in the prostitution itself, the prostitutes worked independently, and ignored municipal regulations [43].

The main cause for disease in that period was probably the lack of sanitation with rats, lice, fleas, virus and other microorganisms: The Black Death, agues (fevers, malaria), tuberculosis, typhoid, smallpox, greatpox, and other like gout, malnourished, scurvy, toothaches [32], and the mortality of children in that period was very high. Several factors contributed to the increase of this and other contagious diseases in that period in England: The War of the Roses, the breakup of the monasteries for Henry VIII, changes in the agriculture for the Black Death that made that increases the poverty and the number of unoccupied people besides the increase of the prostitution together with an increase of the inflation that bent the prices between 1500 and 1540 and that it also drove to an increase of the prostitution. London increased the population of approximately 60,000 inhabitants in 1500, 124 000 in 1585 and 375,000 in 1650 with a highest exposure to illnesses like tuberculosis, smallpox, the Black Death and the Greatpox. There is not data but syphilis was evident very prevalent and widespread, maybe more than 20% of the population suffered greatpox [42]. The captain John Graunt (1620-74), finds in a study on statistic and demography of 229,250 deaths between 1629-36 and 1647-60 that 392 had only died from syphilis, in another study near London among 1583 at 1585 were 12 deaths of 4235 in the parish of St Bolton. However, these figures are difficult to contrast [23a]. Usually no more than two or three days passed between the death of a person and the burial of a corpse, infectious bodies were buried as soon as possible, p.e. women succumbed to puerperal fever were commonly buried within twenty-four hours [44].

Symptoms and treatment in the English and Spanish literature

In the first stage, the disease was highly virulent. Some years after the initial epidemic, the severity began to abate.

The pustules and necrotic lesions became less serious and less feared; the bone pains and the pruritus lost their severity. The bad smell become rare and after some decades, new manifestations of the disease appeared: hair loss (alopecia) and tinnitus, and syphilis began to exhibit polymorphic phenotypes that could mimic the effects of many other diseases such as Sir William Osler proposed its being described as the “Great Imitator” [23c]. Jean Astruc (1684–1766), a professor of medicine at Montpellier in the “*De morbis venereis libri sex*”, divided the mutations of the syphilis into six periods: 1494–1516, 1516–1526, 1526–1540, 1540–1550, 1550–1562 and 1562–1675 [23c].

In the 16th century, the French disease supposed the appearance of numerous medical treaties describing the symptoms minutely. Among these treaties it is necessary to highlight the due ones to Spanish authors as Gaspar Torella, Pedro Pintor or the good known by Francisco López de Villalobos in 1498 [14]. The treaty of Villalobos on the “*pestíferas bubas*” is one of the oldest [34] and starting point of the venereology in Spain [45]. There are other court medical witnesses: Gaspar Torrella (c.1452-c.1520); Nicolò Scillacio (fl. 1482-96) who was a Sicilian physician from Messina who spent his early years in the settings of the Spanish royal court before settling at the ducal court of Milan, his letter “*De morbo qui nuper e Gallia defluxit in alias nationes*” that he wrote from Barcelona in mid-1495 and published a year later, is the earliest of our accounts of the French Disease; the Neapolitan Giovanni Elisio (fl.1487-1519) was another court medical witness who writes the “*Apollineus nature clipeus in horribile flagellum morbi gallici*”; Juan de Fogeda wrote “*Tractatus de pustulis que sahapathi nominantur*” and it seems to have been the earliest printed medical systematic study about the new disease from the Crown of Castile. Fogeda’s views about the French Disease were refuted by Francisco Núñez de la Yerva (c. 1460-post 1504) with his “*Tractatus de saphati*” and Francisco López de Villalobos [24b].

The treatise on *bubas* (*Sobre las contagiosas y malditas bubas pestilentes: Estoria y medicina*) by Francisco López de Villalobos (Salamanca, 1498) [35] was discovered in 19th century. It is a 2,550-line medical poem, Villalobos 10 years later was doctor to Ferdinand the Catholic and in 1516 he became doctor to Charles V [14]. He was a doctor Jewish convert that preferred to exhibited in a dangerous game for the time instead of to escape or to hide [46a]. Villalobos is the first physician to talk the word *bubas* which, although used former in other senses, was to become popular. Villalobos also calls “*the Egyptian scab*” (*sarna egipciaca*) because: “*it is as awful as the scab which God sent to punish us and make*

us repent”. The *bubas* appears on the male member, and especially it is painless, hard and blackish, and accompanied by headaches and a feeling of heaviness in the shoulders, and the sufferer cannot sleep, but experiences instead senseless and fleeting dreams [35].

*“Fue una pestilencia no vista jamás
En metro ni en prosa ni en ciencia ni estoria
Muy mala y perversa y cruel sin compás
Muy contagiosa y muy suzia en demás
Muy brava y con quien no se alcanca vitoria
La qual haze al hombre indispuesto y gibado
La qual en mancar y doler tiene estremos
La cual oscurece el color aclarado
Es muy bellaca y así a començado
Por el más vellaco lugar que tenemos”*
(It was a hitherto unheard-of pestilente/ In blank verse neither in prose neither in science neither history/
Very bad and perverse and cruel without compass/ Very contagious and very dirty also/ Very brave and with its is not possible to get victory/ Which makes to the man, indisposed and counterfeit, /Which has ends in to maim and to hurt/
Which darkens the clarified colour/ It is very knavish and this way had begun/ For the more vile place that we have)

*“Mas quando en tal miembro esta buba o llagita
Mayormente si es sin dolor y esta dura
Dolor de cabeza y color negrezita
Espaldas cargadas y el sueño se quita
Y aquello que sueña es en loco y no tura (dura)
En labios y en parpados de ojos negrura
Y en su trabajar perezoso y aflicto
Y tiene la vista turbada y oscura
A tal como a este si tienes cordura
Diras que le viene la sarna de Egipto”*
(But when in such a member this buba or little wound/ Mostly if it is painless and this hard one /Headache and blackish colour/ Heaviness shoulders and the dream takes off /And that dreams are senseless and fleeting dreams/ In lips and in lids of eyes blackness/ And in their heart-stricken and lazy work/ And with the upset and dark view/ To this if you have good sense/ You will say that it comes him the Egyptian scab)

Sciallio, Elisio and Villalobos (less secure) suggest the contagious through coitus, and Fogeda and Núñez de la Yerva the astrological theory, similar to leprosy and hereditary.

It is not only due to the possibility of venereal transmission of French disease, but is also part of the symbolic baggage inherited from leprosy: in a work on sexuality in medieval



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times, the historians Danielle Jacquart and Claude Thomasset show that the belief in its contagion by sexual means it was very widespread at that time. In fact, it was thought to be the main mode of transmission of leprosy, along with contact and breath. Jacquart and Thomasset also warn of the intimate connection of this belief with the conception of leprosy as a sign of heaven, God's punishment on the reprobate, extended in turn to those who do not depart from them [46b]. In this way, the Tuscan physician Andrea Cesalpino (1519–1603), for example, claims that the origin of the French disease is in the Greek wine mixed with the blood of lepers that the Spaniards gave the French to drink during the siege of Naples, and other authors repeat with the only variant of holding the Italians responsible for the preparation of the deadly potion (and Delicado also does it in Mamotreto LIV). Paracelsus (1493–1541) established that the epidemic arose from the relationships of a leper with a French man who suffered from scabies [46b]. Another aspect was the involvement in its dissemination of the prostitutes, the Jews and later, the American Indians due to the use of the guaiac and that coming from America where were related to the epidemic, on the other hand they did not stop being the “other” (“the stranger”), and finally the legend of their cannibalism in line with what was expressed by the



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The earliest printed literature on syphilis : being ten tractates from the years 1495-1498, in complete facsimile / with an introduction and other accessory material by Karl Sudhoff ; adapted by Charles Singer. Sudhoff, Karl, 1853-1938. Free to use with attribution Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY 4.0)

Venetian physician Leonardo Fioravanti who claimed to have treated French disease's sick infected by being forced to eat human flesh during the siege of Naples [46b].

There are also no mentions of the sexual origin of the epidemic in Pantaleón de Ribera's “*Cancionerillo de la sífilis*” (syphilis song), neither in the satires against doctors nor in the long poem in which the Duke of Lerma describes his penalties. Neither too, in Castillejo's “*En alabanza del palo de las Indias*” (*In praise of the Indias pockwood*), the only indication that French disease is transmitted sexually:

“*Mira que estoy encerrado,
en una estufa metido,
de amores arrepentido,
de los tuyos confiado*”
(*Look that I am locked up, / in a stove, / of repentant loves, / of yours trusting*) [46b].

So as other pestilences ravaged the humblest people, the Greatpox was spreading in the court [24b]. As Arrizabalaga writes: “*Luis Lobera de Ávila, Emperor Charles V's personal physician, in his «Book of the Four Court Diseases» (1544), chose to include the French Disease or bubas among his actually five «court diseases», the others being «catarrh*

or *rheuma*» (*catarro o rheuma*), «*gout or joint pains*» (*gota o dolor de junturas*), «*kidney and bladder stone*» (*pedra de riñones e bexiga*), and, finally, «*colic*» and «*flank pains*» (*cólica and dolor de hijada*)” [24b].

The first literary reference in Europe is *The ship of fools* (*Das Narrenschiff*) (1494) by Sebastian Brant (c1547- 1521). Although he doesn't speak of any specific disease “*Of disordered love and veneryous*”, he refers to venereal illnesses and this served as an antecedent of the first work written on the topic: *A treatise of the Pestilencial Scorra pr Frencha Evil* by Josef Grünpeck (1496). Joseph Grünpeck described the disease: “*Some are covered from the head to the knee with a rough scabies dotted with black and hideous lums, which spares no part of the face (except the eyes), the neck, the chest, or the pubis. They had become so filthy and repugnant that... they hoped to die...Others by contrast, moaned and wept and uttered heartrending cries because of the ulceration of their male organ*” [14]. This quotation described the disease as horribly debilitating and intensely painful. Its victims suffered; they all too often died [25].

Francisco Delicado, published in Venice in 1529, a little treatise on *El Modo de adoperare el legno from India*, the main remedy for the cure of buboes. The licentious life that he led was reflected in *La lozana andaluza*, the origin of their own illness and the literary interest that it aroused in him (apparently, he also composed another small treatise, *De consolatione infirmorum*, for the use of those affected by the greatpox). *The Lusty Andalusian* (*La lozana andaluza*) (1528) is the first novel in the Spanish literature about the French disease. It is a real disease in his time and a metaphor of that society. Susan Sontag (1933-2004) refers in her work: *Illness as Metaphor* to the cancer, tuberculosis and syphilis like metaphors, but on the contrary to the romantic vision of the tuberculosis, syphilis is born of the fornication and its becomes a cruel and grotesque satire of the corruption in Rome where the novel is located [47].

“Mamotreto VI

Sevillana. - ¡Mostrad, por mi vida! ¡Quitad los guantes!...

Lozana. - “¿No veis que tiene grañimón?...”

(Sevillana. Show, for my life! Remove the gloves!

Lozana. Don't you see that she has the pox?)

“Mamotreto VII

Beatriz. —Hermana, ¿vistes tal hermosura de cara y tez? ¡Si tuviese

asiento para los antojos! Mas creo que si se cura que sanará.

Teresa Hernández.- ¡Anda ya, por vuestra vida, no digáis! Súbele más de

mitad de la frente; quedará señalada para cuanto viviere.

Beatriz. “Sister, do you wear such beauty of face and complexion?” If I had seat for the cravings! But I believe that if it is cured it will heal.”

(Teresa Hernández.- Come on, for your life, don't say! Upload more than

half of the forehead; she will be appointed for as long as she lives.)

(syphilitic damage to nasal bone)

“Mamotreto XII

Lozana —... Decíme, ¿cuánto ha que estáis en Roma?

Lavandera. —Cuando vino el mal de Francia, y ésta fue la causa que yo quedase burlada.

(Lozana —... Tell me, how long have you been in Rome?

Washerwoman. —When the sick came from France, and this was the cause that I be mocked.)

“Mamotreto LIII

LOZANA. —¡Mira si son sesenta años estos!

DIVICIA. —Por cierto que paso que cuando vino el rey Carlo a Nápoles, que

comenzó el mal incurable el año de mil y cuatrocientos y ochenta y ocho, vine yo a Italia.”

(LOZANA. “See if these are sixty years!”

DIVICE. “By the way, it happened that when King Carlo came to Naples, that

the incurable disease began in the year 1,448, I came to Italy. (in reality Charles VIII reached Naples on 22 February 1495)

There are several writers in Shakespeare's times talking about the pox:

Robert Wilson's *The three Ladies of London* (1584) explores how the spots was employed as a marker indicating physical sickness and invisible spiritual flaws (48). Robert Wilson (?- 1600) was actor and dramatist, member of Leicester's company and after he joined the Queen's Men [49]. John Webster (1580?- 1625?) in *Cure for a Cuckold* (IV, 1):

Had belike some private dealings with her, and there got a goose.... And there deposes that she gave him true Winchester measure.

Ben Johnson (1527- 1637) in *Every Man out of his humour* (IV, 3):

Carlo. The French poxe! Our poxe. S'bloud we have 'hem in as good forem as they, man: what?

Francis Beaumont (1584- 1616) and John Fletcher (1579- 1625) in *Humourous Lieutenant* (I, 1):

Leontius. *Why, sure, thou hast the best pox.*

In Spain: Francisco de Quevedo y Villegas (1580- 1645) in *A la venida del Duque de Humena* (*To the coming of the Duke of Humena*) (Burlesque poetries) [50]:

*“y hasta las trongas de Madrid peores
los llenaron a todos de caballos
y mal francés al buen francés volvieron”*
(*and the worst gallant women of Madrid/ infected everyone
with syphilis/ and French disease to good French returned*)
(Caballos= horses is an euphemism of syphilis)

Félix Lope de Vega Carpio (1582- 1635) in *El ganso de oro* (*The Gold Goose*) (act II) [51]:

*..una sierpe encantada y venenosa
cuya cerviz degollarás primero
que la región del aire contagiosa
que agora sobre Nápoles se extiende
temple el rigor furioso que la ofende.*
(*.. a charmed and poisonous serpent/ whose neck will be-
head first/ that the region of the contagious air/ that it pre-
dicts on Naples extends/ temper the furious rigor that of-
fends her*)

and in the comedy *Juan de Dios and Antón Martín* (act III):

*para los enfermos
del mal de Francia tocados
va fundando un hospital*
(*for the sick persons/ with the French disease/ it was found-
ing a hospital/...What there is not man with pox that doesn't
say/ that his disease came from a cold!*)

Tirso de Molina (nickname of fraier Gabriel Téllez) (1579- 1648) in *El castigo del penseque* (*The punishment of the I-thank-what*) [52]:

*¡Válgame Dios! ¡Que haya santos
abogados de los dientes,
de las tripas, de la ijada,
de las bubas y la peste,
y no haya santo abogado
del miedo que un hombre tiene!
Pero no hay santo cobarde;
que quien se salva es valiente.*
(*My God! That there are saints/ lawyers of the teeth, / of the
bowels, of the loin, / of the bubas and the plague, / and don't
have saint lawyer / of the fear that a man has!/ But there is
not cowardly saint; / that who survives it is valiant*)

Pedro Calderón de la Barca (1600-1681) in *Romance a*

una dama que deseaba saber su estado, persona y vida (*Romance to a Lady who wanted to know her state, person and life*):

*Pálido tengo el color,
la tez macilenta y mustia
desde que me aconteció
el espanto de unas bubas.
En su lugar la nariz
ni bien es necia ni aguda,
mas tan callada que ya
ni con tabaco estornuda.*
(*I have a pale color,/ the haggard and withered complexion/
since it happened me/ the fright of some bubas./In their
place the nose/ neither well it is fatuous neither sharp,/ but
so quiet that already/ neither with tobacco sneezes*)

There are several symptoms described by the writers in that period.

Edmund Spencer (1552- 1599) in *The Fairie Queen* writes that it “eats away the marrow and it consumes the brain”,

Fracastoro in *De contagione* speaks about the bald: “some patients lose their hair, of their beard, brows or of the head...”.

In *El casamiento engañoso* (*The Deceitful Marriage*) by Miguel de Cervantes (1547-1616), Campuzano that he was leaving Hospital where:

*“debía de haber sudado en veinte días todo el humor que
quizá granjeó en una hora...salgo de aquel hospital de sudar
catorce cargas de bubas que me echó a cuestras una mujer...
Mudé posada y mudé el pelo dentro de pocos días, porque
comenzaron a pelárseme las cejas y las pestañas, y poco a
poco me dejaron los cabellos, y antes de edad me hice cal-
vo, dándome una enfermedad que llaman lupicia, y por otro
nombre más claro, la pelarela. Halléme verdaderamente
hecho pelón, porque ni tenía barbas que peinar ni dineros
que gastar. Fue la enfermedad caminando al paso de mi
necesidad, y, como la pobreza atropella a la honra, y a un-
os lleva a la horca y a otros al hospital ...llegado el tiempo en
que se dan los sudores en el Hospital de la Resurrección, me
entré en él, donde he tomado cuarenta sudores”*

(*“he must have sweated out in twenty days all the fluid he
most probably acquired in a single hour.... I am leaving that
hospital after sweating out fourteen sores which I was sad-
dled with by a woman.. Within a few days I had changed my
inn and my hair on my head gradually began to fall out too.
I went bald my time, because I had contracted a disease
known as alopecia, or more commonly, “hair loss”. My head*

was well and truly as bare as my pockets, because I had neither hair to comb nor money to spend. My illness kept pace with my needy condition, and since poverty knocks honour to the ground and leads some people to the scaffold and some to the hospital...I entered the Hospital of the Resurrection when they were offering sweat cures and there I have endured forty sweats..." [53].

In the *Entremés, La Cueva de Salamanca (Interlude, The Salamanca Cave)* by Miguel de Cervantes:

“Estudiante

¿Cómo si sé pelar? No entiendo eso de saber pelar, si no es que quiere vuesa merced motejarme de pelón; que no hay para qué, pues yo me confieso por el mayor pelón del mundo.”

(How if I know how to peel? I do not understand that to know how to peel, if it is not that you want your mercy nickname me as a bald man; there is no reason, because I confess for the biggest hair in the world.)

Picaresque novels usually concern the life of a boy or youth (*the pícaro*) who goes from master to master, from adventure to adventure and often from disaster to disaster [54a]. The earliest specimen of the kind is *La Vida de Lazarillo de Tormes y de sus fortunas y adversidades (The life of Lazarillo de Tormes, his fortunes and adversities)*, an anonymous tale long attributed, on insufficient grounds, to Diego Hurtado de Mendoza (1503/1504-1575). The authorship of this book and the circumstances of its publication are obscure; however, it was certainly issued not later than 1554, and was thrice reprinted before 1559, when it was placed on the Index.

The same author has a sonnet in which physical sufferings are opposed caused by the disease with which it causes lovesickness [46b]:

*“Más querría un incordio en cada lado
y en la parte contraria un escupido,
que verme viejo, loco, entretenido
del viento y en el aire enamorado”*

(I would prefer a pustule on each side/ and on the other hand a spit, /than looking old, crazy, entertained/ of the wind and in the air in love) [46b].

In 1599, Mateo Alemán (1547-1614) published the *Primera parte de Guzman de Alfarache (First part of Guzman de Alfarache)*. It is modelled upon *Lazarillo de Tormes*, being the autobiography of the son of a ruined Genoese money-lender; but the writer indulges in a tedious series of moralizings.

Alemán was a friend of Vicente Espinel (1550- 1624). Vicente Espinel wrote a poem entitled “*De un ébano sutil, dos*

bellas piernas” (Of a subtle ebony, two beautiful legs) who narrates in first person the misfortunes of a lover with bubas to whom Alemán responds, as a literary toy and humorous answer, using rhymes identical to those of the original sonnet in a poem entitled “*Si ese tu inútil cuerpo, brazos, piernas” (If that is your useless body, arms, legs)* [54b].

Espinel:

*De un ébano sutil, dos bellas piernas
—bellas del vello que las tapa y cubre—,
una arrugada y descarnada ubre,
dos secas nalgas y húmedas cavernas,
un pecho de tablón y dos mal tiernas
castraduras de macho, que descubre
dos brazos de nogal que, al mes de octubre,
pronostican las cosas más internas,
un pálido color de quintangustia
a puro azogue conservado y hecho
y un listón en la frente atado al justo,
una severidad marchita y mustia
me abrasa el alma y me consume el pecho.
¡Tal es la fuerza de un bellaco gusto!*

(Of a subtle ebony, two beautiful legs/ —Beauties of the hair that covers and coats them—,/ a wrinkled and emaciated udder,/ two dry buttocks and wet caverns,/ a plane chest and two tender evil / male castrations, which discovers / two walnut arms that, in the month of October, forecast the most internal things,/ a pale color of torments / pure quicksilver preserved and made/ and a ribbon on the forehead tied to the righteous, / a black and withered severity/ it burns my soul and consumes my chest./ Such is the strength of a wicked taste!)

(“Pronostican las cosas más internas”: the lady has syphilis; azogue: quicksilver for the disease, smear with quicksilver ointment the shoulders and knots from the neck behind the ears, until the mouth begins to sore; listón: ribbon with which to hide the hair loss caused for syphilis).

Alemán:

*Si ese tu inútil cuerpo, brazos, piernas,
con las más partes que el vestido cubre,
tienes ya más flautadas que una ubre
con fístolas, botanas y cavernas,
si estás lleno de gomas, y tan tiernas
que cada cual revienta y nos descubre
que, aunque te cures más de octubre a octubre,
no aprovecha por ser bubas internas,
¿de qué te sirve ansiosa quintangustia
desear ni intentar tan alto hecho?*

*Deja esta impresa y síguelo a tu gusto,
que yo sé que la traes cansada y mustia,
viendo la cuitadilla que en tu pecho
cabe que el suyo tenga tan vil gusto.*

*(If that is your useless body, arms, legs,/ with the most parts
that the dress covers,/ you already have more flutes than
an udder/ with sores, patches and caverns,/ if you are full of
gummas, and so tender / that each one bursts and discovers
us/ that, although you heal more from October to October,/ does
not take advantage of being internal bubas,/ What good is
anxious torment/ wish nor try so high done?/ Leave this
printed and follow it to your liking,/ that I know that you
bring her tired and withered,/ seeing the little cuitadilla that
in your chest/ his may have such vile taste.)*

The next in chronological order, after *La Vida de Lazarillo de Tormes*, of the Spanish picaresque tales is *La Picara Justina* (The picaroon Justine) (1605), the history of a woman picaroon, which it has long been customary to ascribe to Andres Perez de León, a Dominican monk; there is, however, no good reason to suppose that the name of Francisco Lopez de Ubeda, a physician from Toledo, on the title-page is a pseudonym. The writer frankly admits that he has taken material from the *Celestina*, from *Lazarillo de Tormes*, from Guevara, Timoneda and Alemán. Justine exposes at the beginning of the play, with a double meanings and metaphors, her current health state [47]:

*“Concedo que soy pelona doscientas docenas de
veces ¿Seré yo la primera que anocheció sana
en España y amaneció enferma en Francia?”*

*(I admit that I am hairless two hundred dozens of/ Times.
Will I the first one that healthy got dark/ in Spain and sick
dawn in France?)*

(hair loss)

In the *Calvo que no quiere encabellarse* (Bald that doesn't want to have hair) (Burlesque poetries) by Francisco de Quevedo (1580-1645) [50]:

Pelo fue aquí, en donde calavero

.....mi comezón resbale en calvatrueno

*(Hair was here where skull.../ my itch slides in scatterbrained
man)*

and in *Una figura de guedejas se motila en ocasión de una prematica* (A figure of long hair is shaved with occasion of a pragmatic law) [43]:

*“Sacárame de pelón,
cosa que no ha sido fácil,
y a España daré la vuelta,
luego que el gesto desfrancie.*

*Haga en mí lo que las bubas
en otros cabellos hacen...”*

*(Take me of hairless, /matter that it has not been easy, /and
to Spain I will give the turn, /then that the French face re-
moves./ Make in me that that the ulcers (bubas)/ in other
hair they make...)*

In *Cura una moza en Antón Martín la tela que mantuvo* (Heals a woman in Antón Martín the affair that she had) (Burlesque poetries) [50]:

*“Tomando estaba sudores
Marica en el hospital:
que el tomar era costumbre,
y el remedio es el sudar.*

*Sus desventuras confiesa
y los hermanos la dan
a culpas Escarramanes
penitencias de ¡Ay! ¡ay! ¡ay!*

*Lo español de la muchacha
traduce en francés el mal:
cata a Francia Montesinos,
si te pretendes pelar.*

*Por todas sus coyunturas
anda encantado Roldán:
los Doce Pares y nones
no la dejan reposar.*

*Por no estar a la malicia
labrada su voluntad,
fue su güésped de aposento
Antón Martín el galán.*

*Sus ojos son dos monsiures
en limpieza y claridad,
que están llorando, gabachos
hilo a hilo sin cesar.*

*Por la garganta y el pecho
se ve, cuando quiere hablar,
muchos siglos de capacha
en pocos años de edad.*

*Las perlas almorzadoras
y el embeleco oriental
que atarazaban las bolsas,
con respeto muerden pan*

Su cabello es un cabello
que no le ha quedado más;
y en postillas, y no en .
postas, se partió de su lugar.

Los labios de coral niegan
secos de púrpura ya:
ni de coral tienen gota,
mucho sí gota coral.

Las gangas que antes cazaba
las vuelve ahora engarlar,
y en su nariz y su boca
trocaron oficios ya.

En cada canilla suya
un matemático está
y anda el pronóstico nuevo
por sus güesos sin parar.

Desde que salió de Virgo,
Venus entró en su lugar;
en el Cáncer sus narices,
y en Géminis lo demás.

Entre humores maganceses
de maldita calidad,
y dos viejas galalonas,
fue puesta en cautividad.

La grana se volvió en granos,
en flor de lis el rosal,
su clavel, zarzaparrilla,
unciones, el solimán.

Tienen baldados sus güesos
muchachos de poca edad,
hombres malvados de vida,
mucho din y poco dan.

Éstas, pues, son de esta niña
las partes de calidad,
archivo de todo achaque
y albergue de todo mal.

Las que priváis en el mundo
con el pecado mortal,
si no perdéis coyuntura,

las vuestras se perderán.”

(Sweats was taking / Marica in the hospital:/ that fuck was
custom,/ and the remedy is sweating.

Her misadventures confesses/ and her friars give by/ to
blame Escarramanes, / penances of Oh! Oh! Oh!

The Spanish of the girl/ translates the evil into French:/ tast-
ing to Francia Montesinos,/ if you intend to peel.

For all your joints/ Roldan is delighted:/ the Twelve Even and
Odd/ they don't let it rest.

For not being to malice/ wrought her will,/ it was her room
guest/ Antón Martín the gallant.

His eyes are two “messieurs”/ in cleanliness and clarity, /
who are crying, “gabachos” / thread by
thread without ceasing.

Down the throat and chest/ its looks when she wants to talk,
/ many centuries of prison/ in a few years of age.

The lunch pearls (teeth)/ and the oriental charm /that tied
up the bags, /with respect they bite bread

Her hair is a single hair/ that she has no more left:/ and in
scab, and not in /posts, it broke from her place.

The coral lips deny/ dried purple already:/ nor do they have a
drop of coral,/but lots of coral convulsions.

The birds that she used to hunt/ she turns them on now,/and
in her nose and her mouth/ changes already trades.

In each of her calfs/ There is a mathematician /and the new
forecast goes /for her bones without stopping.

Since she came out of Virgo,/ Venus entered her place; /in
Cancer her nose, /and in Gemini the rest.

Among the majestic humours /of damn quality,/and two old
“galalonas”, / she was put into captivity.

The cochineal turned into pimples, /in “fleur de lis” the rose-
bush,/her carnation, sarsaparilla,/inunctions , the suleiman.

Her bones have broken /young boys, /wicked men of life./
much fortune and little give.

These, then, are from this girl /the quality parts, /file of all
ailments /and shelter from all evil.

The ones you deprive in the world /with mortal sin, /if you
don't lose your joints,/yours will be lost).

(Antón Martín: Hospital for the greatpox treatment, Escar-
ramán= dance, “gabacho”= French – despective. Treatment
with sweating, sarsaparilla and inunction of mercury- agua
de solimán- (mercuric chloride water); pearls= teeth and the
affectation in relationship with the mercury treatment, syph-
ilitic alopecia and hair loss; scab= crusty syphilis; gota coral=
convulsions or epilepsy; ganga= bird -*Pterocles alchata*- and
here sniffing voice due to palate destruction in syphilis,
nose loss due to gummas and nasal septum and palate de-
struction; bones and calfs= joint pains in syphilis; Galalonas=

Galalón de Magancia betrayed Roldan; pimples= popular syphilids; flor de lis= national French flower)

In Púrgase una moza de los defectos que otra enfermaba
 (“A girl purges from the defects that another made ill”) [50]:

“La escarapela me llamas,
 y débeslo de fundar
 en que en mí pela la cara,
 como en ti la enfermedad.

*Tan mal francés como gastas
 no le ha gustado jamás
 Rocheli ni, en sus herejes,
 La Rochela o Montalbán...”*

(The cockcade calls me, / and due it/ on the fact that my face peels/ like in you the disease,
 As bad French as you have...)
 (This is a symptom of scaly syphilids)

In Segunda parte de “Marica en el hospital” y primera en lo ingenioso
 (Second part of Marica in the hospital and first part in the ingenious) [50]:

“más gomas que en las valonas
 en sola su frente gasta;
 y dice que son chichones
 cayendo siempre de espaldas”
 (“more gummas than in the long necks/ alone her forehead spends;/ and she says they are bumps/ always falling backwards”)

(syphilitic gummas in the forehead)

“Su casco es terció pelado,
 pues tercera vez la rapa
 tonsura de Antón Martín
 Monsiuríssima navaja”
 (His helmet is velvety,/ Well, the shave third time/ tonsure of Antón Martín/ Monsieur razor)
 (syphilitic alopecia in the Anton Martín Hospital)

“es moza, mas de caballos
 Ingleses de mala casta”
 (She is of an Englishmen horse/ of bad breed)
 (Caballos= horses, it is an euphemism of syphilis)

In Letrilla satírica Santo silencio profeso...
 (Satirical letrilla Holy silence professed) [50]:

“Mujer hay en el lugar
 que a mil coches por gozillos,
 echará cuatro caballos
 que los sabe bien echar”

(There is a woman in the place/ than a thousand cars to enjoy them,/ she will throw four horses/ that she knows how to throw them)

(Caballos= horses, it is an euphemism of syphilis)

In Lindo gusto tiene el tiempo
 (Nice taste has the time) [50]:

“el mancebo a quien corona
 el primer bozo la habla
 sin poder andar le hace
 pasar caballos a Francia”
 (the young man whom he crowns/ the first hair speaks it/ without being able to walk it makes him/ pass horses to France)

(Bozo= hair in young people before the mustache; Caballos= horses, it is an euphemism of syphilis)

In Echando verbos y nombres...
 (Casting verbs and nouns) [50]:

“Vio en el estrado su hembra
 con guarda infante plenario
 de los que llaman las ingles
 guarda infantes y caballos”
 (He saw his female on the stand/ with full infant guard/ of those who call the groins/ guarda infantes and horses)

(Guardainfantes: Piece of wire with ribbons that women wore around the waist, under the skirt, to hollow it out. In some of Velázquez’s paintings, infantas and meninas are seen dressed with guardainfantes; Caballos= horses, it is an euphemism of syphilis).

In Celebra a una Roma como todas lo merecen
 (Celebrate a Rome as everyone deserves it) (Redondillas) [50]:

“si no veráste comido
 de tías, madres y suegras
 sin narices y con parches,
 con unciones y sin cejas”
 (“if you don’t see yourself eaten/ by aunts, mothers and mothers-in-law/ without noses and with patches,/ with inunctions and without eyebrows “)

(nose loss due to gummas, without eyebrows, unciones: mercury inunctions)

In A la perla de la mancebía de las Soleras
 (To the pearl of the Soleras brothel) (Romance) [50]:

“Envíala a Antón Martín
 donde yace y donde creo
 que purga la humana escoria
 en una fragua de lienzo”
 (Send it to Antón Martín/ where it lies and where I believe/ that purges the human scum/ in a canvas forge)

(Antón Martín: Hospital for the greatpox treatment, canvas: wrapped in sheets to sweating treatment)

“Entró saludando a todos:
Mas sus saludes no entiendo,
que sólo ella en un verano
pobló el hospital de enfermos”
(He entered greeting everyone:/ but I do not understand her
greetings,/ only her in a summer/ she populated the hospital
with sick people)
(syphilis filled the hospitals)

In *Respuesta de la Méndez a Escarramán: Con un menino del padre...* (Méndez’s response to Escarramán: *With a father’s menino...*) [50]:

“Fecha en Toledo la rica,
dentro de un pobre hospital,
donde trabajos de entrambos,
empiezo agora a sudar”
(Date in Toledo the rich,/ inside a poor hospital,/ where both
work,/ I’m starting to sweat)
(Menino: Child or adolescent of a noble family who from
childhood entered the court to serve the queen or princes
and infantas. Like in the Velazquez’s paintings; sudar: sweat-
ing treatment)

In *A un sacristán. Amante ridículo o En la simulada figura de unas prendas ridículas, burla de la vana estimación que hacen los amantes de semejantes favores: Cubriendo con cuatro cuernos...* (To a Parish Clerk. Ridiculous lover or *In the simulated figure of ridiculous garments, a mockery of the vain estimation made by lovers of such favors: Covering with four horns...*) (Romance) [50]:

“Halló al cabo un escarpín
que, sin estar resfriado,
tomando estuvo sudores
seis meses en tus zancajos”
(At last he found a boot/ that, without having a cold,/ treat-
ing with sweating/ six months in your stilts)
(sudores: sweating treatment)

“una boca de infierno,
con sendos bordos por labios,
donde hace santa vida
un solo diente ermitaño”
(a mouth of hell,/ with two edges for lips,/ where does holy
life/ a single hermit tooth)
(stomatitis and teeth loss)

In *Refiere un suceso suyo, donde se contiene algo del mundo por dentro*: *Érase una tarde...* (Refers to its event, where something of the world is contained inside: *It was an afternoon*) (Romance) [50]:

“celda sin salida
de escondida alcoba:
entré con sudores
adonde los toman”
(dead-end cell/ from hidden bedroom:/ I entered with
sweat/ where they are taken)
(sudores: sweating treatment)

In *Vida y milagros de Montilla: En casa de las sardinas...* (Jácara) (Life and miracles of Montilla: *At the sardine house*) [50]:

“Curaba el mal de madre
con emplastos de cerote, ...”
(Mother’s illness was cured/ with “cerote” plasters)
(plasters of mercury)

In *Censura costumbres y las propiedades de algunas naciones* (Censorship customs and properties of some nations) (Romance) [50]:

“Franceses son por la vida
mis huesos de Antón Martín
más mi flor es la del berro,
antes que la flor de lis...”
(French are, for life, / my bones from Antón Martín/ but my
flower is the watercress,/ before the fleur de lis...)
(French disease= French... the fleur de lis, bones= bone in-
volvement by the greatpox)

In *Cartel que pone una moza contra resistencias del dar: Aquí ha llegado una niña...* (Poster that puts a girl against the resistance of giving: *Here a girl has arrived ...*) (Romance) [50]:

“...con un emplasto de tías,
de amigas con una unción,
de los propios güesos saca
la moneda sin sudor...”
(with a plaster of aunts,/ of friends with an inunction, /from
the bones themselves he draws/ the coin without sweat...)
(triple therapy with plasters, inunctions and sweat)

In *Segunda parte de “Marica en el hospital” y primera en lo ingenioso* (Second part of *Marica in the hospital and first part in the ingenious*) [50]:

“Condenados tiene a dos
a circuncisión cristiana

*con lamparones de abajo
de Caramanchel de Francia”
(Condemned has two/ a christian
circumcision/ with skin spots
below/ of Caramanchel from
France)*

(Marica: name of a prostitute,
Treatment with circumcision in the
first stages of the syphilis)

In *Sentimiento de un jaque por
hallar cerrada la mancebía*: *Añasco
el de Talavera... (Jacara)* (Feeling
of a pimp for finding closed the
brothel) (*Añasco from Talavera*)
[50]:

*“.. La Chaves, Dios la dé gloria,
me parece que la miro
pasar parches por lunares
y gomas por sarpullido”
(God keep Chaves in her glory,/ I
seem to look at her/ change
patches for moles/ and gummas
for rash)
(they used skin patches to hide the
disease)*

In *Pinta el suceso de haber es-
tado una noche con una fregona*:
Ya que al hospital de amor... (Romance)
(Looks the event of
having been one night with a scullery
woman: Since to the
love hospital ...)

*“...unos parches que tenía
le pregunté si eran parches
y respondió zahareña
que no eran sino lunares “
(some patches she had/ I asked him
if they were patches/
and surly she answered/ that they
were nothing but moles)
(skin patches to hide the disease)*

In *Averíguelo, Vargas (Discover it,
Vargas)* by Tirso de Molina:

*“CABELLO: Quedo, con todos los
diablos;
que eres de casta de bubas,
que me vas pelando todo.
Barrabás te aguarde”*

(HAIR: I am, with all the devils;
/that you are of bubas breed,
/that you go me peeling everything.
/ Barabbas awaits you)
(hair loss)

Syphilitic baldness, popularly known
as the “French



Ulceration of the nose, the result of congenital syphilis
Godart, Thomas
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“crown” was a literary double en-
tendre due to noses and hair are
prominent features (15).

Beaumont and Fletcher in
Knight of the Burning Pestle (III, 1):
2 Knight. *I am a knight, Sir Pock-
hole is my name,*

...
*Did cut the gristle of my nose
away*

...
John Chester also describes
the gummas, and John Donne
(1572-1631) wonders in its *Para-
doxes and Problems: Why does
the syphilis affect the nose?*.

And Quevedo in *Celebra a una
Roma, como todas lo merecen*
(Celebrate to a Rome, as all they
deserve it) (*Burlesque poetries*)
[50]:

*“Roma, hablando con perdón,
entre Gomorra y Sodoma;
que los perdones en Roma
ordinaria cosa son:*

...
pues que no pueden hallar

las bubas de qué comer.

...
*y, aunque más fueres gangosa
no hablarás por las narices.*

...
*y otro, que roe tus zancajos,
me certificó ese día,
que tu nariz se escondía
del mal olor de tus bajos.*

...
*que a Roma se va por todo,
pero por narices, no...”
(Rome, speaking with pardon,/ between
Gomorra and Sodoma; /that the
pardons in Rome/ ordinary thing
is:.... /because that they cannot
find/ the ulcers (bubas) of what
to eat. .../and although you had
rasping and nasal voice/ you
won't speak for the noses.... /and
other that murmurs you,/ it
certified me that day, /that your
nose hid/ of the bad scent of your
hell.... /that to Rome one leaves
for everything,/ but for noses,
no....)*

The ancient idea that gout arose from venereal indiscretion early in life was carried into the seventeenth century. About 300 B.C., the poet Hedylus wrote: *The daughter of limb-loosening Bacchus and limb-loosening Venus is limb-loosening gout. And Sydenham agreed with it* [15]. Another affectation like the dorsal tabes with painful paralysis of the legs described by the satirical English Barnabe Rich (1540? - 1617): “sometimes hee calls them the Gout, sometimes the Sciatica... “. Venereal ulceration of the larynx is referred to- crack the lawyer’s voice [42]. Among the upper classes, syphilis was euphemistically called gout, rheumatism, or even sciatica [55].

In *Jacara* of Quevedo [55]:

“Allí estaba la Garulla,
La Gangosa y la Peral,
La Plaga y otras señoras
De hedionda honestidad...”

(There Urchin was,/ Crack Voice and Pear tree,/ Plague and other ladies/ Of stinking honesty..)

George Chapman (1559?-1634) in “*The Widow’s Tears*” does an allusion to syphilitic rash [31]:

*Given to Surgeons’ Hall to be stamped
To salve for the French Measles*

(measles comes from the Dutch “Maselin”, from Old Dutch “mase”, a spot)

And in Shakespeare (*Troilus & Cressida* Act ii, Scene 3) [35]:
Now the dry

serpigo on the subject! And war and lechery confound all!

(*Ahora la sífilis caiga sobre el campamento, y que la guerra y la lujuria los confunda*)

the term *serpigo* was frequently applied to herpes, impetigo and psoriasis [56].

In *Don Quixote* (Part II, chapter XLVII, *Donde se prosigue cómo se portaba Sancho Panza en su gobierno*) [57] (*Wherein is continued the account of how Sancho Panza conducted himself in his government*) [58]:

“-¡Medrados estamos! – replicó Sancho-. Adelante, hermano, que es hora de dormir más que de negociar.

-Digo, pues –dijo el labrador-, que este mi hijo que ha de ser bachiller se enamoró en el mismo pueblo de una doncella llamada Clara Perlerina, hija de Andrés Perlerino, labrador riquísimo; y este nombre de Perlerines no les viene de abo-lengo ni otra alcurnia, sino porque todos los deste linaje son perláticos, y por mejorar el nombre los llaman Perlerines.

Aunque, si va a decir la verdad, la doncella es como una perla oriental, y mirada por el lado derecho parece una flor del campo: por el izquierdo no tanto, porque le falta aquel

ojo, que le saltó de viruelas; y aunque los hoyos del rostro son muchos y grandes, dicen los que la quieren bien que aquellos no son hoyos, sino sepulturas donde se sepultan las almas de sus amantes. Es tan limpia, que por no ensuciar la cara trae las narices, como dicen, arremangadas, que no parece sino que va huyendo de la boca; y, con todo esto, parece bien por extremo, porque tiene la boca grande, y, a no faltarle diez o doce dientes y muelas, pudiera pasar y echar raya la más bien formada)”

(“We’ve got that much settled,” said Sancho; “get on, brother, for it’s more bed-time than business-time.”

“Well then,” said the farmer, “this son of mine who is going to be a bachelor, fell in love in the said town with a damsel called Clara Perlerina, daughter of Andres Perlerino, a very rich farmer; and this name of Perlerines does not come to them by ancestry or descent, but because all the family are paralytics, and for a better name they call them Perlerines; though to tell the truth the damsel is as fair as an Oriental pearl, and like a flower of the field, if you look at her on the right side; on the left not so much, for on that side she wants an eye that she lost by small-pox; and though her face is thickly and deeply pitted, those who love her say they are not pits that are there, but the graves where the hearts of her lovers are buried. She is so cleanly that not to soil her face she carries her nose turned up, as they say, so that one would fancy it was running away from her mouth; and with all this she looks extremely well, for she has a wide mouth; and but for wanting ten or a dozen teeth and grinders she might compare and compete with the comeliest.)

In this part, Cervantes talk about the congenital French disease because the quicksilver was used as a treatment and the secondary effect was the tremors and paralysis. Cervantes used the description of the physician Andres de Laguna [59a].

Other syphilitic terms in Shakespeare are bone ache or “hollow bones” (syphilitic periostitis) (*Measure for Measure* 1,2,55), baldness or “French crown” (syphilitic alopecia) (*All’s wells* 2,2,21), the cracking voice or “prostitute’s whisper”, “whelks” or pimples, “bubukles” is a comic compound of “bubo” and “carbuncle”, “brooches, pearls and ouches” refer to carbuncles (syphilitic of late benign syphilis) [5]. Another term is “the good-year” from French “goujere” (gouge meaning prostitute).

In *La boda de Juan Rana* (*The Juan Rana’s wedding*) (an Entremés or theatrical interlude) by Gerónimo de Cáncer y Velasco, Juan Rana’s friend comments on a woman’s sing-

ing ability and Juan Rana replies: “¿Achaquitos *padece de garganta?* (Mustn't she have a terrible voice?). Juan Rana (Cosme Pérez) was an actor star of the Spanish baroque *entremés* and protected by the noble class and the monarchy and with homosexuality, in a period of the punishment for this “*pecado nefando*” (homosexuality) [4].

In second part of *Marica en el hospital* (*Marica in the Hospital*) (*Romances*) by Quevedo is described another symptom in relationship with the teeth [50]:

“... *tiene la nariz escarolada; por falta de ternillas, hechas balcón las ventanas. Sobre quién las pegó a quién, ahí de podridos andan; él con humores gabachos, y ella Lázaro con llagas.*

...
Ayer se descalabró las muelas en unas pasas, y en un bizcocho sus dientes como en pantano se atascan.”
 (...*Has/ the curly nose; /for lack of cartilages, /made balcony the windows./ On who hit them to who, /so of rotten are; /him with French appearance, /and her Lazar with wounds.../ Yesterday it was hurt / the molars in some raisins, / and in a cake their teeth /as in swamp they get jammed*).

(*Marica*: name of a prostitute, Symptoms: without nose, stomatitis and tooth loss)

Quevedo, in the “*Pregmática que han de guardar las hermanas comunes o Premáticas contra las cotorreras, dirigida a «las busconas, damas de alquiler, niñas comunes, sufridoras del trabajo, mujeres al trote, hembras mortales, recatonas del sexo, ninfas de daca y toma vinculadas en la lujuria*” (*Pregmática that the common sisters or Pregmática that must guard against the parrots, directed at «the hustlers, rented ladies, common girls, women suffering from work, women at a trot, mortal females, demure of sex, nymphs of give and take linked in the lust*) alludes to its ability to cure venereal buboes (*Prosa festiva completa*, pp. 333-334) [59b]:

“*Y demás desto, os mandamos que no seáis atrevidas las pecadoras chabacanas y badeas a vestir leonado, rosa seca, ni calzar media naranjada, traer monos de pata ni de revelación, y ellos airones de pedrería, ni alumbrar[r] con vela, sino como cotorreras capuchinas vistáis remendado y durmáis en el suelo [y vos alumbréis con candil], pues por vuestras*

llagas y bubas entendéis más de mechas que de pabilos (en: la cursiva es mía)”.

(*And in addition to this, we command you not to be the darling vulgar sinners and gay to wear tawny, dry rose, or wear a half orangeade, bring leggings or revelation jumpsuits, and tuft of feathers and jewels, or light with candles, but rather like Nasturtium parakeets you dress patched and sleep on the ground, and you light up with a lamp, because, by your sores and bubas .you understand more of wicks than of candlewicks.*)

The treatments were the letting of blood, bath in various substances as olive oil, heat and fire as cauterisation, and unguents containing mercury [13].

In the Chapter xxii (*Wherin is related the grand adventure of the cave of Montesinos in the heart of La Mancha, which the valiant Don Quixote brought to a happy termination*) (58):

“*Otro libro tengo, que le llamo Suplemento a Virgilio Polidoro, que trata de la invención de las cosas, que es de grande erudición y estudio, a causa que las cosas que se dejó de decir Polidoro de gran sustancia las averiguo yo y las declaro por gentil estilo. Olvidósele a Virgilio de declararnos quién fue el primero que tuvo catarro en el mundo, y el primero que tomó las unciones para curarse del morbo gálico*”. [49].

(*Another book I have which I call ‘The Supplement to Polydore Vergil,’ which treats of the invention of things, and is a work of great erudition and research, for I establish and elucidate elegantly some things of great importance which Polydore omitted to mention. He forgot to tell us who was the first man in the world that had a cold in his head, and who was the first to try the unguents for the French disease*).

The surgical incisions made to relieve syphilitic chancres were known as carbonadoes [5]. Cures were basically concoctions of several different herbs that were thought to be of medicinal value. These concoctions were usually home remedies or ones prescribed by “*old wise women*” and soothsayers. Those who could afford a physician’s care would fill their prescriptions at an apothecary p.e using afflictions such as pneumonia and bronchitis were treated by liquorice and comfrey [32]. So, Nicholas Culpeper’s formula was guaiacum, sassafras, sarsaparilla, juniper berries, coriander-seeds, cinnamon, and liquorice. An “*antivenereal wine*” licensed in Milan contained guaiac (both bark and oil) and sarsaparilla, as well as anise-seed, china root (chinchona, from which quinine was later derived and also use as a sudorific treatment for syphilis and intermittent fevers), and senna [38]. Turpen-

tine was another favourite remedy [15].

In *La Picara Justina* (*The picaroon Justine*):

*No nos faltará cómo echarlo por la
venta de la zarzaparrilla*

(We won't lack how to toss it for the/ sale of the sarsaparilla)

Delicado, suffered the illness during 23 years, and he wrote a book (*El modo de ad operare el legno de india occidental*) (1529) on the pockwood. This was the wood of a tree of the genus *Guaiaecum*, in use for the cure of syphilis in the 16th century, but the cost was very high even after 1525, when the Fugger banking family lost its monopoly, and was the equivalent to twenty-five days' work for a journeyman tailor [38].

Tirso de Molina in *El pretendiente al revés* (*The up-side-down claimant*) says:

*las bubas y los amores
se sanan tomando el palo*

(bubas and loves,/ they are healed taking the pockwood)

Hutten specified that the guaiacum be reduced to very small parts or sawdust and soaked in eight times its weight of water. The water was then to be boiled until only half was left; the foam produced during boiling was removed and dried to provide a powder for the sores, and the decoction was used as a primary medicine. A second boiling provided a weaker potion. The patient, after drinking his twice-daily half pound of the decoction, was made to sweat copiously in a heated room and with blankets [13].

John Banister's book on the "*General and particular curation of ulcers*" (1575), a medical writer, mentions lues venerea. Malignant ulcer is treated with guaiacum; mouth ulcers are treated by diet, purgation, decoctions of guaiacum and touching the ulcer with sublimated rosewater [23b].

Paracelsus in a treatise on syphilis attacked the then-common treatment with guaiac wood and liquid mercury, recommending instead a compound of mercury procured by chemical distillation in a small, carefully defined dosage [5]. Cornelius Agrippa, the sixteenth century alchemist and physician, was vulgarly credited with the invention of the sweating treatment [15]. In the *Entremés, El rufian viudo llamado Trampagos* (*Interlude, The widowed pimp*), Cervantes talked about the sweating tub [60a]:

“CHQUIZNAQUE (RUFÍAN): ¡Oh, hembra benemérita
de griegas y romanas alabanzas!

¿De qué murió?

TRAMPAGOS: ¿De qué? Casi de nada:

los médicos dijeron que tenía

malos los hipocondrios y los hígados,

*y que con agua de taray pudiera
vivir, si la bebiera, setenta años.*

RUFÍAN: ¿No la bebió?

TRAMPAGOS: Murióse.

RUFÍAN: Fue una necia.

*¡Bebírala hasta el día del juicio,
que hasta entonces viviera! El yerro estuvo
en no hacerla sudar.*

TRAMPAGOS: Sudó once veces.”

*(Chiquiznaque: A woman equal of those worthy matrons/ In
Greece and Rome who won the praise of all!/ What caused
her death?*

*Trampagos: What caused it? Almost nothing./ The doctors
said she suffered with her liver, / And ailments in the hypo-
chondriac region./ With tamarisk infusions, they maintained,
/She'd reach the ripe old age of seventy.*

Chiquiznaque: She never took them?

Trampagos: No, she died.

*Chiquiznaque: She might have lived if she had kept on drink-
ing/ Until the Judgement Day! They didn't make /Her sweat
enough.*

Trampagos: Eleven times she sweated.

Chiquiznaque: Did any help?

*Trampagos: Well, almost every one./ They left her feeling
lively as a sapling,/ As ruddy as an apple or wild pear.*

*Chiquiznaque: It's said that suppurating ulcers sprang/ Out
of her arms and legs.*

*Trampagos: Unhappy wretch,/They spouted like Aranjuez;
none the less,/ Today our Mother Earth is feasting on/ The
fines, whitest flesh that ever lay/ Enfolded in her deep ma-
ternal belly./ Two years ago her breath began to sour;/ Until
that time each fond embrace was like/ A whiff of wild carnations
or sweet basil.*

*Chiquiznaque: It must have been a case of rotting gums, /Or
flux, that spoiled those pearls behind her smile:/ I mean, of
course, her teeth and molars too.*

Trampagos: One fine morning she arose without them.

*Chiquiznaque: That's true enough, though I can tell you /
Why:/ She went to bed without them, for real teeth/ Num-
bered only five, you see. Twelve false ones/ Were hidden in
the cavern of her mouth)*

The treatment with mercury is known as soon as the illness appears. It was used in oral form, in topical application or fumigation because its use was known by the Arabs in the treatment of the scabies, psoriasis, leprosy and other skin diseases. In the engraving of a Dutch medical book of the time (*Venus Belegert en Onset*), it shows the treatment for fumigation and inunction, a man in the bed presents the



Antidotarius contra furiosam Veneris frenesim ... de vulgari in latinum translatus / [Wolff Cyclops]. Cyclops, Wolff, -1526.

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Historie de la syphilis, son origine, son expansion : progrès réalisés dans l'étude de cette maladie depuis la fin du XVe siècle jusqu'à l'époque contemporaine / par E. Jeanselme. Jeanselme, Édouard, 1858-1935.

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secondary effect of the mercury in form of salivating after 4-5 days. Paracelsus recommended the treatment that almost produced 4 pints of salivating but this was too toxic and for this reason he was descending the dose. Another patient appears in the barrel (the powdering tub of infamy in *Henry V*), the patient was exposed to the fumes of powder of cinnabar (mercuric sulphide). An emaciated woman also appears with deep scars on her legs, they are gummas of a tertiary or late syphilis produced by destruction of the mucous, skin and bones [23a]. Another allusion to sweating tub was the name "Cornelius's tub". How the name came about is unknown and one of the earliest references to it is in Nashe's *The Unfortunate Traveller or, the Life of Jack Wilton* (1594), a picaresque novel [23b]:

"Mother Cornelius's tub why it was like hell, he that came into it never came out of it."

The intoxication for mercury produced insomnia and tremors like in the exemplary novel of Cervantes, *El casamiento engañoso* (*The deceitful marriage*), when referring to the dialogue of the dogs:

"...una noche, que fue la penúltima que acabé de sudar, echados detrás de mi cama en unas esteras viejas, y a la mitad de aquella noche, estando a oscuras y desvelado...y a poco rato vine a conocer, por lo que hablaban, que eran los dos perros Cipión y Berganza ..."

(the night before my final sweat treatment, I heard and as good as saw the two dogs...I was lying awake in the darkness, thinking about my past affairs and present misfortunes, I heard voices talking close by and I listened very carefully to see whether I could discover who as talking and what they were talking about. I soon realized from the nature of their conversation that it was the two dogs, Scipio and Berganza...) [53].

Further, the mercury corroded the membranes of the mouth, loosened teeth in their sockets, and even ate away jawbones, often turning the mouth and throat into one large stinking ulcer, and bloody diarrhea.

Syphilis in other Spanish Golden Age writers (“second-best”)

Next, it is necessary to review the appearance of the Greatpox in a series of lesser-known Spanish writers (“second-best”) in the Spanish Golden Age. Before, a series of antecedent works that could talk about the Greatpox in the first moments of its appearance.

1. Antecedent works [60b]

Earlier Spanish texts may refer to venereal diseases, but none are recognisable as syphilis and some could be the treatment of other diseases in those times such as the plague.

A. There are two references in the *Libro de buen amor* (1330 and 1343)

- “...del mal de la cruzada yo non me reguardava...” (from the sick of the crusade I did not regret) (*Libro de buen amor*, stanza 121, MS S). Maybe Levantine plague, or a venereal disease

- “...duermes con tu amiga, afógate postema...” (you sleep with your friend, drown yourself in abscess) (*Libro de buen amor*, stanza 293, MS S). Maybe a venereal abscess.

B. In the *Dança de la muerte* (*La Danza General de la muerte*) (*The Dance of Death*)

- “Non eres çierto, sy en punto verná sobre ty a dessora alguna corrupçión de landre o carbonco, o tal ynplisyón, porque el tu vil cuerpo se dessatará”. (*Dança general de la muerte*, ll.1, 5-8, Escorial MS)

(You are not right, if on point it will come/ about you at a bad time some corruption/ of abscess,/ because your vile body will be unleashed)

Maybe, bubonic plague and other diseases

C. Alfonso Martínez de Toledo (1398-1468?), Archpriest of the Queen’s Talavera. His book, *El Corbacho o Reprobación del amor mundano o Arcipreste de Talavera* (*El Corbacho or Reprobation of worldly love or Archpriest of Talavera*) (1438), is an invective against worldly love and lust ended. There are two references could refer to bubonic or syphilitic swellings:

-one to solimad (‘solimán’, caustic lotion of sublimate of

mercury), often used by women to remove skin blemishes, and to an *azogado* (restless and also silvering)

D. In “*La Celestina* (*Tragicomedia de Calisto y Melibea*)” (*The Celestina*) (It was attributed to Fernando de Rojas) (1499):

Melibea, in saying she had brought some “solimán”, were both lying, but Alisa’s words do reveal that “solimán” was a shameful substance for a beautiful young noblewoman to have needed to purchase. Likewise, in Act VI, 337, when Pármeno comments in an aside that Calisto is shaking like an “azogado”, he is perhaps revealing his knowledge of how someone who has undergone treatment with mercuric compounds ends up. Vermilion (*bermellón*) mentioned in Act I, 247, with which Celestina used to paint people’s hands, was classed as an antisyphilitic substance (cinnabar) by Andrés Laguna in 1570:

“Ni se da jamás por la boca, dado que, a las veces contra algunos dolores viejos, y llagas incurables del mal Francés, que a ningún remedio obedecen, suele administrarse en perfume o unguento, y esto con gran escrupulo ... a causa del azogue que tiene en sí, engendra lentamente otras muchas malas disposiciones, que después, poco a poco, se descubren y manifiestan”.

(Nor is it ever given by mouth, since sometimes against some old pains and incurable sores of French disease, which obey no remedy, it is usually administered in fragrance or ointment, and this with great scruples ... because of the quicksilver that it has in itself, it slowly engenders many other bad dispositions, which later, little by little, are discovered and manifested).

The formulae for “solimán” went back to Rhasis and Avicenna, and Andrés Laguna’s Dioscorides, printed in Salamanca in 1570, says the following:

“aplicado al rostro, extirpa las señales o manchas dél; empero juntamente deseca y consume la carne subito” (...applied to the face, remove the marks or spots from it; however together it dries and consume the meat suddenly...)

There are several quotes in *La Celestina*:

I, 235 Elic. a Sem.: “¡Ay! ¡Maldito seas, traydor! Postema y landre te mate” (*Out, thou accursed traitor! impostumes, pox, plagues and botches consume and kill thee!*). Maybe Bubonic swelling and syphilitic chancre

I, 243 Pár. a Cal. (*Celestina*): “Hazía solimán, afeyte cozido, argentadas... y otras aguas de rostro” (*She made sublimated mercury, boiled confections for to clarify the skin, waters to make the face glisten*). Caustic sublimate, lotion of mercuric oxide.

I, 255 Cel. a Pár.: “¡Mala landre te mate!” (A pox on you for a rogue!). Maybe *buba* or *chancro*

X, 431-32 Cel. a Mel.: “Señora, no tengas por nuevo ser más fuerte de sufrir al herido la ardiente trementina y los ásperos puntos que lastiman lo llagado y doblan la pasión, que no la primera lisión, que dio sobre sano. (Madam, do not consider yourself stronger to suffer the wounded with the burning turpentine and the rough spots that hurt the wound and double the passion, that not the first injury, which gave on healthy). Maybe cauterization of a secondary syphilitic lesion with hot turpentine (*ardiente trementina*)

E. Bartolomé Torres Naharro (1485-1520?) in *Comedia Serafina* (*Serafina Comedy*), *jornada I, lines 129–31*

“Lenicio.

...disimuladas serpientes,
sacos llenos de plazeres,
saluación de las mugeres,
mal francés entre las gente”

(...sneaky snakes,/ sacks full of pleasures,/ salutation of the women,/ French disease among the people)

2. “Second-best” writers

A. Cristóbal de Castillejo (1490–1550). The first poem of the Spanish Golden Age to introduce the French disease as more than a humorous mention is “*En alabanza del palo de las Indias, estando en la cura de él*” (*In praise of the Indias pockwood, being in the cure of it*) [46b]:

“...Pero ruégote y suplico
que alargues en mí tu mano,
porque pueda verme sano,
pues no puedo verme rico.
¡Oh guayaco!

Enemigo del dios Baco
y de Venus y Cupido,
tu esperanza me ha traído
a estar contento, de flaco.
Mira que estoy encerrado,
en una estufa metido,
de amores arrepentido,
de los tuyos confiado.

Pan y pasas
seis o siete onzas escasas
es la tasa la más larga,
agua caliente y amarga,
y una cama en que me asas”

(But I beg you and I pray/ that you extend your hand to me,/ so I can see myself healthy,/ that I can't see me rich./ Oh guaiac!/ Enemy of the god Bacchus/ and of Venus and Cu-

pid,/ your hope has brought me/ to be happy, and skinny./ Look that I'm locked up/ in a stove,/ of repentant loves,/ of yours trusted./ Bread and raisins/ just a few six or seven ounces/ is the rate the longest,/ hot and bitter water,/ and a bed in which you roast me..)

B. Cristóbal Mosquera de Figueroa (1547-1610). “*Paradoxa en loa de las bubas*” (*Paradox in praise of the bubas*), in this book the virtues of the guaiac or pockwood are praised [46b].

C. Gaspar Lucas Hidalgo (1560-1619). “*Diálogos de apacible entretenimiento*” (*Peaceful entertainment dialogues*) [60c]. His praise of syphilis, despite his apocalyptic vision of the disease, it is treated in a comical way:

“Y no me traigan por inconveniente que suelen las bubas pelar a sus cofrades y devotos ... Nunca los cobardes y tímidos tienen bubas, sólo el valiente y atrevido es admitido en esta cofradía (Diálogos, III, 2, pp. 502-503).

(And do not bring me because of the inconvenience that buboes tend to peel their brothers and devotees ... Cowards and timid ones never have bubas, only the brave and daring are admitted to this brotherhood)

“No se halla cosa en toda la redondez de las boticas que tenga enemistad ni fuerzas para destruir ni desasosegar las finas bubas” (Diálogos, III, 2, p. 501).

(There is not one thing in all the roundness of the pharmacies that has enmity or the strength to destroy or disturb the fine buboes.)

“Y pues no es pequeño beneficio de la naturaleza el acudir a mudar en los árboles la hoja y en las aves la pluma, no será pequeña la merced que las generosas bubas le hacen al hombre en mudalle cabello y pelo, que la naturaleza no le quiere mudar por dejalle en esto (como en otras cosas) en manos de su misma industria y providencia” (Diálogos, III, 2, p. 503).

(And since it is not a small benefit of nature to go to change the leaves in the trees and the feathers in the birds, the mercy that the generous buboes do to the man in change hair will not be small, that nature does not want him change to leave him in this (as in other things) in the hands of his own industry and providence)

“Dadme un hombre buboso, que yo le doy por agradecido, que dulce cosa es el agradecimiento (Diálogos, III, 2, p. 504).

(Give me a man with pox., that I give him for grateful, what a sweet thing gratitude is)

“Las narices del buboso suelen padecer alguna lisión y pesadumbre por las bubas, y los que las tienen son tan agradecidos que siempre hablan por las narices” (Diálogos, III, 2, p. 505).

(The noses of the people with pox usually suffer some injury and sorrow from the buboes, and those who have them are so grateful that they always speak through their noses)

D. Fernando Mejía de Gúzman (1580). The sarsaparilla, like the guaiac, was also praised, in this case by Mejía de Guzmán through a poem in triplets written around 1590 of which an extensive fragment has been preserved in manuscript B 2521 of the Hispanic Society of America.

E. Cristóbal Mosquera de Figueroa (1547-1610), wrote two paradoxes that are conserved unpublished in the Biblioteca Capitular Colombina de Sevilla: “Paradoja en loor de la nariz muy grande” (*Paradox in praise of the very large nose*) and “Paradoja en loor de las bubas y que es razón que todos las procuren y estimen” (*Paradox in praise of the bubas and that is reason that all seek and esteem them*).

F. Sebastián de Horozco (1510–1579). The third and last of the “*Jokes of the Brotherhood of the Grillimón*” is the work of Horozco, who re-elaborated the topic in “*Los privilegios de la Cofradía del Grillimón*” (*The privileges of the Brotherhood of the Grillimón*), the poem that opens his long *Cancionero* (*Song book*), probably composed in the middle of the 16th century and the content is a count of symptoms and treatments. The poem expresses, something not very common among poets who speak of syphilis, the American connection of the French disease [46b]:

*“Decisme que me avie escrito
de las Indias el Marqués,
pues ha ya tiempo infinito
que dende qu’andáis marchito
os escribió Hernán Cortés.
Y vuestro gesto abubado
de color de calenturas
de continuo lo ha mostrado”*

(You tell me that the Marquis/ had written to me from the Indies,/ long time ago,/ that you are droopy./ since Hernán Cortes wrote you/ And your French gesture/ and with color of fever/ shows it continuously) [46b].

In another poem he explains to some supposed friends what illness he had suffered, describes the greatpox and his pains throughout his body:

*“...Quedando más seguro estaba
de hospedar viejos humores,
y al tiempo que no pensaba,
me llaman dando a la aldaba
unos malditos dolores.
Lo primero en las rodillas
que estaban sin armaduras,*

*y luego en las espinillas
los hombros y las isilllas
y todas las coyunturas
A los pies me echaron grillos
y aún esposas a las manos;
los brazos y los morcillos,
tienen unos dolorcillos
aunque eran algo livianos.
... Hartas veces me he purgado,
y al fin Dios sabe los fines;
y tanto me he xaropado
que una botica he vaciado
y henchido mil bacines.
Y viéndome así tan malo,
determiné muy ayna,
no con vicio ni regalo
tomar el agua del palo,
qu’es muy buena medicina.
Comiendo de almendra y pasa
no todo lo necesario,
una ración bien escasa
con toda medida y tasa,
y así pasé el treintanario.”*

(...Being more sure I was/ to host old moods,/ and while I was not thinking,/ they call me giving the knocker/ some damn pains./ First thing on the knees/ who were without armor,/ and then on the bobbin/ shoulders and clavicles/ and all the joints. /They put shackles on my feet/ and still handcuffs on my hands;/ the arms and biceps,/ they have little pain/ although they were somewhat light.

...I have purged myself many times,/ and at last God knows the ends;/ and I have wrapped myself so much/ that a pharmacy I have emptied/ and filled a thousand pots./ And seeing me so bad/ I determined very soon,/ not with vice or gift/ take the water from the pockwood,/ which is very good medicine./ Eating almond and passing/ not everything you need,/ a very meager ration/ with every measure and flush,/ and so I spent my thirtieth birthday).

G. Baltasar del Alcázar (1530–1606) describes the effects of disease on the body and its possible cures. Alcázar ridicules a woman who has lost an eye due to an illness and she has no reason to complain [46b]:

*“Los ojos de Inés
Del mal que Inés ha escapado
escapó con solo un ojo,
y maldito sea el enojo
que de perdello ha tomado.
Hace su cuenta que Dios*

*no le hizo agravio alguno:
si de los dos perdió el uno
de los tres le quedan dos”.*
(Inés's eyes From the illness that
Inés has escaped/ she escaped
with only one eye,/ and damn the
anger/ that she for losing she has
taken./ She makes up her mind
that God/ did not do him any
wrong:/ if of the two she lost one,
of the three he has two left”.)

The pains, swellings and ulcers caused by French disease are mentioned, but only to contrast them with the benefits expected from treatment at the hands of a doctor with a nickname: “The French”.

H. Juan de Salinas (1562–1643). Describes in the same way the effects of disease on the body and its possible cures in a poem dedicated to “A una mujer de buen pelo, que vino vestida con un faldellín francés y en una silla de manos, en que la traían dos franceses, a tomar sudores al hospital” (To a woman with good hair, who came dressed in a French skirt and in a sedan chair, in which two Frenchmen brought her to take sweat at the bubas hospital where he was a minister) and in which he uses the sickness again to make jokes between “good French and French disease” [46b]:

“¿Qué ninfa es esta, Martin,
Tan achacosa y bubatil.
Que en rica silla portátil
Brilla francés faldellín?”

*Cosa del gran Paladín
De Francia parece, Andrés,
De los francos pares es
El par que la lleva en peso,
Y ella rompe demás de eso
Buen francés y mal francés.”*

*(What nymph is this, Martin, /So ailing and with bubas./
That in rich portable chair/ Does French skirt shine?/ Great
Paladin Thing/ That from France it seems, Andrés,/ Of the
even francs is/ The pair that carries her by weight,/ And*



Ueber die Heilkraft des Guaiacum und die Franzosenseuche / [Ulrich von Hutten] ; übers. von Heinrich Oppenheimer.
Hutten, Ulrich von, 1488-1523.

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*she breaks other than that/ Good
French and French Disease.)*

In the Poem “Burlesco” (Burlesque):

“Tomando estaba la zarza
En la corte un andaluz,

*Por si á vueltas del francés,
Verdugo de su salud,
Sudase un negro martelo,
Que le tiene puesto en cruz.*

*Y viéndose en su obrador
Nadando como un atún,
A donde el ingenio cobra
Sutileza y prontitud,*

«Lleguen, dice, mis querellas,
Por su ordinario arcaduz,
A vos el ciego flechero,
Dulce enemigo común.

«Que ponéis en acabarme
Tal fuerza y solicitud,
Como si mi tierno pecho
Fuese á prueba de arcabuz.

«De solos hierros de jaras
Tengo en él mas de un almud,
Que no puedo dijerrillos.
Como no soy avestruz.

«A Satanás las ofrezco,
Y la yerba á Belcebú,
Con que tanto fiel cristiano...”
(Taking was the bush/ In the court an Andalusian,
In case around the French, / Executioner of his health,
Sweat a black pain,/ That he has put you on the cross./ And
seeing himself in his workshop/ Swimming like a tuna,/ Where the wit charges/ Subtlety and promptness./ «Come,
says, my complaints,/ By the ordinary spout of him,/ To you
the blind arrowhead,/ Sweet common enemy./ «What do
you put in finishing me/ Such strength and solicitude./ As if
my tender chest/ Endure an arquebus./ «Of single irons of
rockrose/ I have more than one bushel in it,/ That I can't tell
you./ As I am not an ostrich./ «I offer them to Satan,/ And
the grass to Beelzebub,/ With how much faithful Christian ...)

Juan de Salinas, beside a poet, served as administrator

of the Hospital de San Cosme y San Damián, the hospital institution dedicated to treating patients with French disease in Seville, from 1603 until the date of his death.

In *Metáfora de un buboso* (*Metaphor of a syphilitic*) talks about ulcers and joint pains (*French arms and volcanoes*):

“¿Qué son confuso, qué rumor tremenda
De armas francesas oigo, en coyuntura
Tan de dolor, y en la tiniebla oscura
Templados Parches militar estruendo?”

¿Qué cóncavos volcanes escupiendo
Flamantes globos miro? ¿qué espesura
De negros humos infernal figura?
¡Formidable espectáculo y horrendo!

Por más que afectas, Musa, entronizarte.
Metiendo en arma el universo todo
Con estilo grandíloco y valiente,

Más de Mercurio y Venus que de Marte
Hallo en tu descripción, y la acomodo
A cierto joven gálico doliente.”

(What are confusing, what a tremendous rumor/ Of French arms I hear, in conjuncture/ So in pain, and in the dark darkness/ Temperate Patches Military Rumble?/ What concave spitting volcanoes/ Brand new balloons look? What thickness/ Of black smoke infernal figure?/ Formidable and horrendous spectacle!

As much as you affect, Musa, enthrone you./ Weaponizing the whole universe/ With grandiose and brave style,/ More of Mercury and Venus than of Mars/ I find it in your description, and I arrange it/ A certain grieving Gallic youth.)

I. Anastasio Pantaleón de Ribera (1600–1629). He died at the age of 29 due to the French disease and it was the one that made him compose the so-called “*cancionerillo de la sífilis*” (*Syphilis little song*), a collection of four burlesque romances in which he satirizes the doctors and makes a detailed description of the “*grillimón*” [46b]:

“Aquí, tras tanto jarrillo
como te he sufrido y tras
tanto sudor apajado
de estufa canicular,
más babas estoy vertiendo
que enfrenado un alazán,
procurando en mis salivas
escupir mi enfermedad.
Como los dos babeamos

en la cama y el zaguán,
las unciones que a tu muía
dicen todos que me das”.

(Here, after so much glass/ how I have suffered and after/ so much sweltering heat/ of stove sweat straw,/ more spittle I'm pouring/ that faced a sorrel,/ trying in my saliva/ spit out my disease./ How we both drool/ in bed and hallway,/ the inunctions that to your mule/ they all say that you give me.)

“...Desde la zarza, señor,
(pero sin aquel prodigio
de Horeb) os hablo, que quedo
tomando zarzajarrillos.

(From the bush, sir,/ (but without that prodigy/ of Horeb) I speak to you, that I remain/ taking brambles.)

...Érame yo ejecutoria,
pero ya soy sambenito,
que en la zarza me revuelvo
y en cada trago me pincho.”

(I was enforceable,/ but I'm already sanbenito (scapular),/ that in the bush I stir/ and in every drink I prick)
(zarza, zarzajarrillos: treatment with sarsaparilla)

“Una mazorca de bubas
tengo en este cuerpecito,
plegue a Dios me la devanen
los sudores hilo a hilo.
Culpa tiene el cocinero
que, creyéndome chorizo,
me espetó, de mis humores
alterado el equilibrio.”

(An cob of buboes/ I have in this little body, /beg to God to remove me/ the sweats thread by thread./ Fault is the cook/ that, believing me a sausage,/ he snapped at me, from my moods/ disturbed balance.)

(bubas, sudores: treatment with sweats)

“Gálico estoy confirmado,
¡qué bofetón tan impío
me sacudió la manaza
de Turpín el arzobispo!
Las unciones temo y tanto 25
con esperarlas me aflijo
que, sin llegar al unguento,
brujo de azogue me miro.

...

*Nao podo jantar, los dientes
se me quejan de baldíos,
mano sobre mano tengo
las muelas y los colmillos...*

*(Gallic I am confirmed,/ What a wicked slap/ shook the
hand/ of Turpin the archbishop!/ The anointings I fear and so
much/ with waiting for them I grieve/ that, without reaching
the ointment,/ Quicksilver witch looked at me...*

*I can eat nothing, my teeth/ they complain to me of vacant
land,/ hand over hand I have/ the molars and fangs.)*

...

*Purgado estoy siete veces
y sangrado diez; los libros
solamente y las ventosas
me buscan algún alivio.*

*Hechas árbol de linaje
las espaldas he tenido,
mordiéndomelas aquellas
sacabocados de vidrio.*

*Hánme dado catapocias,
cataplasmas, cataclismos
y aun sospecho que han de darme
"Cata Francia Montesinos".*

*(I'm purged seven times/ and bleeding ten; the books/
only and the suction cups/ they seek me some relief./ Made
tree of lineage/ the backs I have had,/ biting those/ glass
punch./ They have given me pills,/ poultices, cataclysms/
and I still suspect that they have to give me/ "France Mon-
tesinos Tasting".)*

(treatment with purges, bleeding and cups)

Later, on the death of Pantaleón, Francisco Benegasí y Luján (1656-1742), in *Obras lyricas joco-serias (que dexó escritas el Sr. D. Francisco Benegasí y Luxán)* writes:

*"Murió el gran Pantaleón,
pero no murió su fama,
que el cuerpo de tales obras
no será cuerpo sin alma.
Murió pobre (fue poeta)
y de bubas: ¡qué desgracia!
¡dar a entender que tenía
poca lana y esa en zarzas!
Influyó Apolo en su numen,
Venus, señor, le guiaba,
y Mercurio hizo a su vena
que, aun sin discurrir, sudara."*

*(The great Pantaleon died,/ but not his fame,/ that the body
of such works/ It will not be a body without a soul./ He died*

*poor (he was a poet)/ and of buboes: what a disgrace!/ To
imply that he had/ little money and that in brambles!/ Apollo
influenced in his muse,/ Venus, sir, guided him,/ and Mercury
made his vein/ that, even without thinking, would sweat.)*

J. Miguel Colodredo de Villalobos (1608/11–after 1672). Like Pantaleón de Ribera, was a *gongorism (culterano)* poet and the author of epigrams in which the French disease is mentioned between puns in short poems where he gently mocks the symptoms of the disease, and of romances that alternate one mythological reading with another more focused on the epidemic [46b]:

*"...en Málaga todo el mal
es de ingles y de inglés"
(in Malaga all the bad / it's of groins and English)*

In Romance VIII from *Alfeo*:

*"Tienta, Laïs, enemiga,
las heridas que me das,
que mujeres y diablos
bien sé que saben tentar.
Tres meses ha que me sigue,
a vuelta de otros, un mal
que pretende por cansado
que yo le vea sudar.
¡Ay!, que una pierna me duele;
los brazos me quiebran, ¡ay!
Teneos, males verdugos,
que yo diré la verdad.
Confieso que ya sin cuenta
preñada una ingle está
y en el dolor impaciente
revienta por reventar..."*

*(Tempts, Laïs, enemy,/ the wounds that you give me./ what
women and devils/ I know well how they tempt./ He has fol-
lowed me for three months,/ on the return of others, a sick /
what does he pretend to be tired/ that I see him sweat./ Oh,
my leg hurts;/ my arms break me, oh!/ Behold, evil execu-
tioners,/ that I will tell the truth/ I confess that without an
account/ a groin is pregnant/ and in impatient pain/ busts
for bursting ...).*

In *Golosinas del ingenio (Candies of the wit)*:

*"Ayer me dijo en la vega
Juana que un mozo alentado
una pupa le ha pegado
y es cierto que se la pega.
Lamentábase sin pausa
y mil veces repetía
que efecto francés sentía*

siendo española la causa”.

(Yesterday Juana told me in the meadow/ that an encouraged young man/ an ulcer has hit him/ and it is true that he beats it./ She lamented without pause/ and a thousand times she repeated/ that the French effect she felt/ being the Spanish cause.)

In A Lesbia (To Lesbia):

*“De bubas estás perdida
y estuprada de Fineo,
de dos achaques te veo,
empezada y empecida.
Sobre tu frente se asoma,
material, un puparrón,
que a la vista es almidón
pero a la certeza goma.”*

(You are lost in bubas/ and raped of Phineus,/ of two ailments I see you,/ started and damaged./ On your forehead it peeks out,/ A component, a skin lesion,/ that in sight is starch/ but to the certainty syphilis.)

In A Agustín Francés (To Agustín French):

*“Si os hubiera hecho Dios,
mal francés, por mi regalo,
vertiera el agua del palo
para no sanar de vos.
¿Quién vido tan nuevo medio
de tener salud cual es
desear el mal francés
y aborrecer el remedio?
Dolores en las rodillas,
con gran hinchazón de pies,
y remanecer después
bocas en las espinillas,
suelen decir mal francés.*

*Mas vos, Francés, en quien fundo
la vida y salud que espero,
siendo el regalo del mundo,
no sois el francés primero,
porque sois este segundo.”*

“If God had made you,/ French disease, for my gift,/ pour the water from the pockwood/ so as not to heal from you./ Who loved such a new medium/ to have health what is it/ wish French disease/ and hate the remedy?/ Pains in the knees,/ with great swelling of the feet,/ and stay after/ mouths on shinbones,/ They tend to speak French disease./ But you, French, on whom I found/ the life and health that I hope,/ being the gift of the world,/ you are not French first,/ because you are this second.”

K. Jerónimo de Camargo y Zárate (?- ?). Autor of “Romance refiriendo el autor el estado en que le tenía una enfermedad, a una dama que se lo envió a preguntar” (Romance that the author tells a lady who was sent to ask him about the state of his illness). He tells his sufferings, treatment, and, a rarity in Golden Age poetry, that he has been infected in a homosexual relationship [46b]:

*“Tan desnudo estoy de gala,
tan postrado y tan rendido”
(I am so naked without garnish, / so prostrate and so exhausted)*

*“y revolcado en la zarza
estoy sin ser San Francisco”
(and wallowed in the bush/ I am without being Saint Francisco)*

*“He estado en Fuenterrabía.
... mi mal el francés ha sido”.
(I have been in Fuenterrabía./... French was my bad).*

L. José Navarro (1629–1691). Poet from Molinos (Teruel), and author of a couple of pieces where he describes, between puns and other jokes, the havoc that the “grillimón” has caused on his body.

In Poesías varias (Various poems):

*“Dícenme que quien porfía
en atormentarme es,
Julia mía, un mal francés,
venido de Picardía.
Paciencia tendré y constancia
en sufrir este castigo
con valor, aunque yo digo
que esos son pueblos en Francia.
Porque aunque la pena dura
me aflige con tal rigor,
no tengo, Julia, dolor
que no venga en coyuntura.”*

(Tell me who persists/ in tormenting me is,/ Julia of mine, a French diase,/ come from Picardy./ I will have patience and perseverance/ to suffer this punishment/ with courage, although I say/ that those are towns in France. Because although the pain lasts/ it afflicts me with such rigor,/ I have no pain, Julia/ that does not come in conjuncture.)

He was plagiarized, by Mariana de Carvajal y Saavedra from Jaén (1600 –1663), who included it in her “Navidades de Madrid” (Christmas in Madrid), without mentioning some of his authorship [46b].

M. Friar L. Damián Cornejo (1629–1707). A sonnet: “A una pobre que salió muy estropeada de un Mal Francés habido en buena guerra” (To a poor girl who came out very spoiled from a French disease in good war) is a description of the ravages that disease has caused on the body of a prostitute [46b]:

“Un Mal Francés, Marica, tan grosero contigo anduvo y te paró tan flaca que a tu boca, sin dientes, dejó vaca y a tu cuerpo, sin carne, hizo carnero.

Era el humor sutil, y tan ligero que en dos carneras solas las sonsacas.

De tus muelas obró y, por más matraca,

los huesos te dejó en el cutis mero.

Por tu flaqueza y mucha travesura a tal estado la fortuna loca

te ha traído, y es tal tu desventura que, en los líquidos huesos, suerte poca

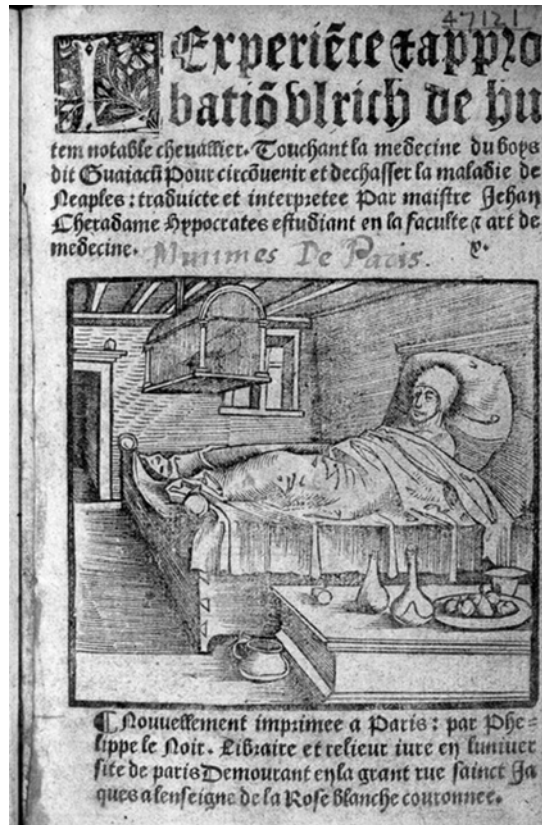
de tu cuerpo ha quedado la figura, y en carnes vivas tu desierta boca.”

(A French disease, Marica, behaved/ so rude to you and made you so skinny/ that left your mouth, without teeth, empty/ and to your body, without meat, a ram./ It was subtle humor, and so light/ that in two rams alone you elicit them./ It pulled out your teeth and, for heavier, /left in your bones./ For your weakness and a lot of mischief/ to such a state the crazy fortune/ it has brought you, and your misfortune is such/ that, in the liquid bones, little luck/ the figure has remained of your body,/ and in raw your desert mouth.)

N. Antonio de Zamora (1665–1727). Author of a humorous romance dedicated to his own French disease in the that it pays homage the aforementioned Anastasio Pantaleón de Ribera [46b].

Syphilis in Italian writers [46c].

A. The antecedent of this burlesque poetry in the Spanish Golden Age must be sought in “Lamento di quel tributa-



L'experience et approbation Vlrich de Hutem... Touchant la medecine du boys dit guaiacum pour circonuenir et dechasser la maladie de Neaples / traduite et interpretée par maistre Jehan Cheradame ... Nouvellement imprimée à Paris. Hutten, Ulrich von, 1488-1523.

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Disponible en: <https://wellcomecollection.org/images?query=L%27experience+et+approbation+Vlrich+de+Hutem+>

to di Strascino Campana Senese sopra el male incognito, el quale tratta de la patientia et impatentia in ottava rima, opera molto piacevole (Venecia, Nicolò Zoppino, 1521)”, a long poem by the Italian Niccolò Campani (called the Strascino da Siena) (1478–1523), which recounts the sufferings of its author to cause of French disease, and which had an enormous influence on Spanish poetry on the Greatpox. The first writers, in Spain, were Hurtado de Mendoza, Baltasar del Alcázar or Juan de Salinas.

B. Agnolo Firenzuola (1493–1543), has two important texts: first, the “capitolo In lode del legno santo” (1528), next to him must place the long and painful poem entitled “Intorno alla sua malattia” (1533), where reports on how he contracted syphilis at the age of thirty-three and also specifies the way in which his ailments were temporarily alleviated by the pockwood or guaiac bark:

“Sia’ l mal francioso a modo vostro strano,
sia brutto e schifo, e siesi nato il

giorno

ch’e’ Franciosi albergar nel Garigliano;
sia ripieno un di piaghe e suoni il corno,
non dorma mai la notte per le doglie,
e sia ripien di gomme d’ogni intorno;
subito che del legno l’acqua toglì,
ogni suo membro in modo gli dispone
che può tornare a dormir con la moglie”.

(Que sea el Mal francés a vuestra extraña manera,/ feo y repugnante, y si empezado el día/ que los franceses se quedaron en el Garellano;/ que se llene de llagas y toque el cuerpo,/ nunca duermas por la noche por el dolor,/ y estés lleno de llagas por todos lados;/ de repente se quite el agua del leño santo,/ cada uno de sus miembros así los dispone/ que puede volver a dormir con su esposa.)

(Let it be the French disease in your strange way,/ ugly and disgusting, and if the day started/ that the Frenchs stayed in



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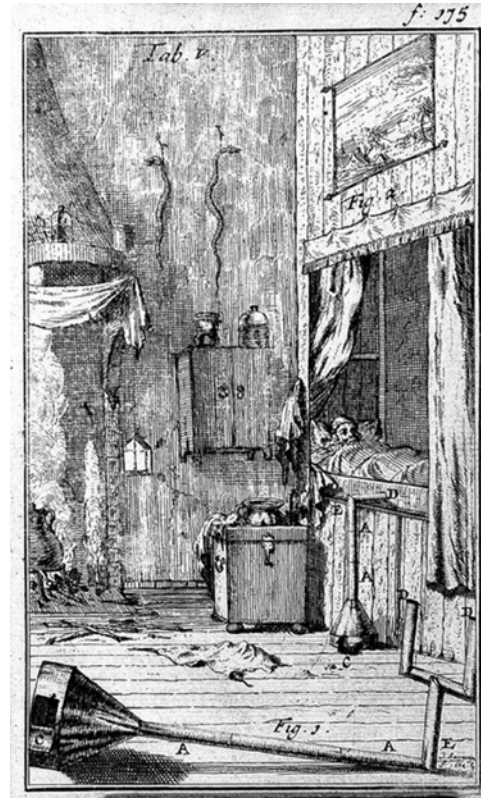
*the Garigliano;/ let it be filled with sores and blow the horn,
never sleep at night from the pain,/ and you are full of sores
everywhere;/ suddenly the water is removed from the pock-
wood,/ each of its members so arranges them/ that he can
sleep with his wife again)*

(Garellano river: In 1503, it was a warlike confrontation between French and Spanish troops during the Second Naples War, with the victory of the latter, between the banks of the Garigliano River and Gaeta in the Latina province, Lazio, Italy)

*"...quanti danari ho speso per guarire
...ho logorato una spezieria intera".*

(...cuanto dinero he gastado por la cura.../ He gastado toda una botica)

(how much money have I spent for the cure ... / I have spent



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Venus belegert en ontset. Oft verhandeling van de pokken, en des selfs toevallen, met een grondige en zekere genesinge. Steunende meest op de gronden van Cartesius. ... Item, een nauwkeurige beschryvinge der pokken door ... F. Sylvius, T. Sydenham, en J. Wierus / [Steven Blankaart].
Blankaart, Steven, 1650-1702.

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a whole pharmacy)
(The treatment was very expensive)

*"S'io dico troppo, Signor mio pietoso,
perdona, e danne la colpa al dolore
del freddo, ch'or comincia, e siam di maggio,
al mezzo giorno, e non posso la penna
menar pe'l freddo, e cosi corro al fuoco:
e lascio a questa carta e questo inchiostro
che ti chieggian per me misericordia".*

(Si digo demasiado, misericordioso Señor,/ perdona y échale la culpa al dolor/ del frio, que empieza, y estamos en mayo,/ al mediodía, y no puedo sostener / la pluma por el frio, y así corro hacia el fuego:/ y dejo a este papel y esta tinta/ que te pidan piedad por mí.)



The preparation of the medicine guaiacum from a tree (right), and a man in bed suffering from syphilis, drinking a decoction of the medicine (left). Line engraving by P. Galle after J. van der Straet.
Straet, Jan van der, 1523-1605.

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Disponibile en: <https://wellcomecollection.org/images?query=The+preparation+of+the+medicine+guaiacum+from+a+tree+>

(If I say too much, merciful Lord, / forgive and blame the pain / the cold, which begins, and we are in May, / at noon, and I cannot hold / the pen because of the cold, and so I run towards the fire: / and I leave this paper and this ink / they ask you mercy for me)

(symptoms: chills and pains)

*“E di nuovo mi metto a ripregarti
vivamente, Signor, che sia contento
senza guardare a’ miei commessi falli,
levar dal corpo mio tanto travaglio;
dal corpo no, ma da l’animo afflitto;
che tu sai ben che’l corpo afflitto rende
afflitta l’alma. Iddio Verace e Santo,
Tu puoi pur, se Tu vuoi, con un sol ciglio
sanar l’alma, e sanar il corpo afflitto,
e far ch’i prieghi miei non sieno indarno,
e che la speme ancor ritorni viva;
ch’è morta, com’io dissi, fra la febre,
tra gli stomachi, e feбри, e tanti mali
che non ardisce a scrivergli la penna”*

*(Y de nuevo empiezo a rezarte / de todo corazón, señor, que
estés contento / sin mirar mis faltas cometidas, / quita de mi*

cuerpo tanto trabajo; / del cuerpo no, sino de mi alma afligida; / que sabes muy bien que lo que el cuerpo afligido / hace afligir el alma. Dios verdadero y santo, / Puedes, si quieres, con un solo pestañeo / sanar el alma y sanar el cuerpo afligido, / y hacer que mis oraciones no sean en vano, / y que mi semen se vuelva vivo de nuevo; / que esta muerto, como dije, en la fiebre, / entre dolores de estómagos y fiebres y muchos males / que la pluma no osa escribirlos).

(And again, I begin to pray / with all my heart, Lord, that you are happy / without looking at my faults committed, / take so much work out of my body; / not from the body, but from my afflicted soul; / that you know very well what the body afflicted / afflicts the soul. True and holy God, / You can, if you want, with a single blink / heal the soul and heal the afflicted body, / and make my prayers not in vain, / and that my semen come alive again; / that it is dead, as I said, in fever, / between stomach pains and fevers and many ills / that the pen does not dare to write them)

(symptoms: fever, stomach pains)

C. Giambattista Lalli (1572-1637), writes in six songs “*La Franceide overo Del Mal Francese*” (1629) in line with the humorous works of Francesco Bracciolini or Alessandro Tas-

soni: “Lo scherno degli dèi” (*The mockery of the Gods*) y “La secchia rapita” (*The hijacked bucket*). Lalli tells, following Fracastoro, of the mythical origin of syphilis and that it is due to the jealousy of the goddess Juno, who seeks revenge on Venus by spreading a terrible plague. The contagion by sexual means will begin, by designs of the wife of Jupiter, in the city of Naples, where the French soldiers of Carlos VIII had been left to license and debauchery.

*1 Ma benché il mal sia sì noioso e strano,
udite ora i rimedi ch'io vi apporto:
perch'è pietoso il gran Motor sovrano,
che porge a l'altrui piaghe almo conforto.*

*Al suo favor non si rifugge invano,
ne fra dure tempeste asconde il porto.*

*Dona ei virtù meravigliose e sante
ai sassi, a le parole ed a le piante.*

*(1 Pero, aunque el mal sea tan aburrido y extraño,/ ahora es-
cucha los remedios que te traigo:...)*

*(But even though the sick is so boring and strange,/ now lis-
ten to the remedies that I bring you: ...)*

*2 Prima, chi di tal mal sospira e languè,
purgar dee tosto i suoi più grossi umori
e l'arida cagion che'l rende essangue
e'n pallidezza cangia i bei colori;
dee per fisica man traggersi il sangue,
ch'affrena ciò gli spiritosi ardori;
nè gli dia indugio alcun, ch'a l'infelice
non stabilisca il mal salde radice.*

*3 Or sì com'egli ha maledetto ardire,
non vuol già medicine benedette,
ma l'elleboro e l'iera hai da imbandire,
e pillole che fetide son dette.*

*A le fistole poi, s'ei vuoi guarire,
usi per onzi'on queste ricette:*

*piombi, precipitati ed acque forti,
argenti vivi e ai medici quei morti.*

*(...el eléboro y la colmena tienes que preparar,/ y pastillas
fétidas que se dicen./ para las fístulas, si quieres sanar,/ Usa
once días estas recetas:/ plomos, precipitados y aguas
fuertes,/ plata viva y a los médicos aquellos muertos).*

*(... the hellebore and the hive you have to prepare, / and
fetid pills that are said. / For fistulas, if you want to heal, /
Use these recipes for eleven days: / leads, precipitates and
strong waters, / live silver and those doctors dead).*

4 Umide e fredde in qualità perfette

*le medicine sian ch'egli usar deve,
ma'l cibo asciutto, le bevande elette;
e fugga il vin troppo gagliardo e greve.
Quando uscir può di casa, il tempo aspette
ch'i vapor bassi il sole erga e solleva:
e tanto in camminar mova le piante,
che sia di sudor molle e scintillante.*

*(4 Humedecidas y frías de perfectas calidades/ los medica-
mentos que debe usar,/ la comida seca, bebidas escogidas;/
y que huya del vino demasiado fuerte y pesado./ Cuando se
pueda salir de casa, el tiempo espera/ que los vapores bajos
el sol se eleven:/ y mientras camina mueve las plantas,/ que
sea de sudor suave y chispeante...)*

*(4 Moist and cold of perfect qualities / the medicines to use,
/ dry food, chosen drinks; / and to avoid wine that is too
strong and heavy. / When you can leave home, wait time /
low vapors to the sun rise: / and while walking moves the
plants, / let it be of soft and sparkling sweat...)*

*5 Meraviglia è pensar quanto sian buoni,
quanto a tal mal giovevoli i sudori.*

*Onde altri a caccia nobile si doni,
altri a la zappa ed a cavar tesori;
altri s'impieghi a guadagnar bocconi
con faticosi simili lavori:
tagliar legni, erger archi e cavar tane;
o sudi almeno col sonar campane.*

*6 Ma sovra ogni rimedio ha'l pregio e'l vanto
e suol produr meraviglioso effetto,*

*un legno in India nato, un legno santo,
ch'in lingua lor legno guaiaco è detto.*

*Questo è quel legno prezioso tanto
ch'a scacciar questa peste ha il cielo eletto:*

*legno d'infranciosati almo ristoro,
che merta esser comprato a peso d'oro.*

*(6 Pero sobre todos los remedios, tiene mérito y orgullo/ y
produce un efecto maravilloso,/ un bosque nacido en la In-
dia, un bosque sagrado,/ que en su idioma se dice madera
de guayaco./ Esta es esa madera preciosa/ que el cielo ha
elegido para ahuyentar esta plaga:/ madera de los destrozados
para refrescarse,/ que merece ser comprada por su peso en oro.)*

*(But above all the remedies, it has merit and pride / and pro-
duces a wonderful effect, / a forest born in India, a sacred
forest, / which in their language is called guaiac wood./ This
is that precious wood / that heaven has chosen to chase
away this plague: / wood of the shattered to cool off, / which*

deserves to be bought for its weight in gold.)

*7 A questo legno accompagnata e mista
l'erba detta in commun salsa pariglia,
fa che'l rimedio maggior forza acquista
e riesce a ciascun di meraviglia.
Ma convien ch'a' disordini resista
chi vuol curarsi, e tenga i sensi a briglia;
e viva sobriamente e s'allontani
dagli appetiti effeminati e vani.*

*(7 A esta madera acompañada y mezclada/ la hierba común
llamada zarzaparrilla./ hacer que el remedio tenga mayor
fuerza/ y triunfe en cada uno de maravilla...)*

*(7 To this wood accompanied and mixed / the common herb
called sarsaparilla, / make the remedy have greater strength
/ and it triumphs in each one wonderfully ...)*

*8 Bollito il legno, non gli sembri strano
sorbirne ogni mattina un bicchier pieno:
e giaccia in letto assai morbido e piano
quaranta giorni, o per un mese almeno;
quivi con senso paziente umano,
stringa in bocca il lenzuol quasi per freno:
non si mova, non calcitri e stia saldo,
e cerchi il corpo mantener ben caldo.*

*(8 Cocida la leña, no le parezca extraño/ sorber un vaso lleno
todas las mañanas:/ y acuéstate en una cama comfortable
y plana/ cuarenta días, o al menos un mes:/ allí con un sen-
tido paciente humano,/ aprieta la sábana con tu boca casi
como un freno:/ no se mueva, no se resista y esté quieto,/ e
intente mantener el cuerpo muy caliente.)*

*(8 Cooked the firewood, don't seem strange / sip a full glass
every morning: / and lie down in a comfortable flat bed / for-
ty days, or at least a month; / there with a human patient
sense, / tighten the sheet with your mouth almost like a
brake: / don't move, don't resist and be still, / and try to keep
your body very warm.)*

*9 Di lavorato legno a sua misura
lungo edificio dentro il letto adatti,
ove coperto, quasi in tomba oscura,
il miserel s'accomodi e s'appiatti.
Quivi poi di sudar ponga ogni cura:
nulla intanto discorra e nulla tratti,
e al caldo suo sian mantici frequenti
li replicati suoi sospiri ardenti.*

10 D'assai lanute coltre intorno intorno

*si cinga e copra ben tutta la vita;
e pensi pur di star quasi in un forno,
ch'il caldo è del sudor la calamita.
I pravi umor, che dentro fan soggiorno,
solo per questa strada hanno l'uscita;
e se l'uom per tal via non gli distoglie,
griderà sempre sempre: – «Ohimè, che doglie!»*

*(10 De muchas mantas de lana por todas partes/ se cubra
bien; que piense que/ está casi en un horno,/ que el calor es
el imán del sudor...)*

*(10 From many woolen blankets everywhere / you cover
yourself well; let him think that / he is almost in an oven, /
that heat is the magnet of sweat ...)*

*11 Prenda intanto per cibo il pan biscotto,
con qualche poca d'uva passa schietta;
e gli concedo ancor qualche merlotto,
magro ed arrosto, over qualche civetta.*

*Rieda dopo'l mangiar col capo sotto,
che così'l sonno e poi'l sudor s'alletta;
che l'uno il morbo rio ne tragge fuora,
l'altro le forze languide ristora.*

*(11 Tome pan duro como alimento,/ con unas pasas secas;/
y le concedo algún joven mirlo,/ asado a la parrilla, también
algún búho./ Después de comer se ponga boca abajo,/ que
el sueño y luego el sudor encamado:/ trae beneficio a la en-
fermedad,/ y restaura las fuerzas lánguidas.)*

*(11 Take stale bread as food, / with some dried raisins; / And
I grant you some young blackbird, / grilled, also some owl.
/ After eating, turn upside down, / let sleep and then sweat
lodged; / brings benefit to illness, / and restores languid forc-
es .)*

*12 Nei suffumigi tralasciar conviene
in questo tempo de la purga istessa,
ch'entrando ne' meati, apron le vene,
e risolvon l'umor ch'entro s'è messo.
Mirra e storace il primo loco ottiene,
e scordio e spinacardo e'l mosco appresso;
dittamo, calamento e benzoino,
cinamomo, ambra e incenso eletto e fino.*

*(12 En las fumigaciones le conviene dejar/ en este momento
de la purga,/ que entre en el meato, abran las venas,/ y elim-
ine el humor que se ha metido dentro./ Mirra y estorax en
el primer lugar,/ escordio, espinacardo y musgo después;/
díctamo, calamina y benzoico,/ cinamomo, ámbar e incien-
so fino...)*

(12 In the fumigations it is convenient to leave / at this time

of the purge, / that it enters in the meatus, opens the veins, / and eliminate the humor that has gotten inside. / Myrrh and storax in the first place, / scord, spinacard and moss later; / dittany, calamine and benzoic, / cinnamon, amber and fine incense ...)

13 *Ciascuno varcar cerchi il gran torrente
di questo mal con animo giocondo;
nè si dimostri schivo e impaziente
a sostener di tante cure il pondo.
Nulla tormenta più l'uomo languente,
che di malinconia l'Egeo profondo.
Non ha contro di sè maggior guerrieri
ch'ì suoi noiosi e torbidi pensieri.*

14 *Ma resta ornai ch'io per usar v'additi
questi istessi rimedi il tempo ancora;
e fia qual'ora il sol verdi e fioriti
ne rende i prati e le campagne indora;
mentre su'l Tauro assiso ai suoi muggiti
le piante non che gli uomini innamora,
e l'augellin sul rinverdito faggio
con dolce melodia saluta il maggio."*

(Treatment: bleeding; medicines with hellebore and stink pills; inunctions with lead precipitate, nitric acid and mercury; diet with wine withdrawal, eat dry food- toast, raisins and roast beef-; sweats, cooking of the bark of the guaiac mixed with sarsaparilla; sexual abstinence and rest quarantine)

Syphilis in the Shakespeare's plays: the paradigm of *Troilus and Cressida*

The earliest reference in British literature to syphilis appears to be in the poem of William Dunbar (1465-1520) addressed to Queen Margaret, wife of James IV of Scotland and sister of Henry VIII., in which the risk of contracting the disease from harlots is mentioned [60d]:

*"I saw coclinkis (harlots) me besyd
The young men to their howses gyd,
Had bettir liggit in the stockis;
Sum fra the bordell wald nocht byd,
Quhill that thai get the Spanye pockis.
Thairfor, all young men, I you pray,
Keip you fra harlottis night and day,
Thay sall repent quhai (who) with them yockis (embrace);*

*And be war with that perellous play,
That men callis libbin (gelding) of the pockis."*

In the *General Satire of Scotland* (1504?), attributed to J. Y. Simpson, the writer deplores the extent to which the disease had spread in Scotland.

Sir David Lindsay, another Scottish poet of the same period (1490-1557), alludes to the occurrence of syphilis in the royal jester at the Court of James IV [60d].

In 1524, Simon Fyshe, in his "*Supplication of Beggars*", said of certain priests: "*These be they that corrupte the hole generation of mankynde in your realme, that catch the pockis of one woman and bear it to another, ye some one of them will boaste among his felowes that he hath medled with an hundredth wymen.*" [60d].

Shakespeare's plays contain 440 "major medical references" without those used metaphorically- of which seventy-nine are clinical descriptions. Most of these allusions are brief. How did Shakespeare gain his medical knowledge?. One can assume that Shakespeare learned orally part of what he knew about physiology, illness, salves, recipes, and other therapeutic means [5] and probably consulted some books in that period, just as Cervantes consulted Nicolás Monardes's book: *Historia Medicinal de las cosas que se traen de nuestras Indias Occidentales* (1574) (*Joyfull newes out of the new-found worlde*). To no other kind of illness does Shakespeare allude as often as to venereal diseases, and maybe there are two reasons for this: The first reason is the age-old literary tradition of dwelling on sexual looseness and the ravages of venereal disease when depicting a corrupt or "sick" society. The other reason is that the pox was so widespread in Shakespeare's England as often to assume epidemic proportions [5]. However, on analysing his work, it is clear that Shakespeare has more sources of sexually transmitted diseases than other writers of his day, such as Christopher Marlowe.

Caroline F. E. Spurgeon in her work of 1935 entitled "*Shakespeare's Imagery and What It Tells Us*" [61] discovers Shakespeare's unconscious mind, and finds that the two groups of images related to "food, drink and cooking" and "sickness, disease and medicine" reach a peak in the period of the plays: *Henry IV Part 2* (1597-8), *As you like it* (1599-1600), *Hamlet* (1600-1) and *Troilus and Cressida* (1601-2) (11i, 25). In the book of the ornithologist and psychologist Edward A. Armstrong "*Shakespeare's Imagination*" of 1946 [62] demonstrates that the image of the "goose" this always accompanied by a

system satellite of associations centering on “lechery”, “lust”, “punishment” and “disease”. “The Winchester goose” appears in *1 Henry IV* (1, 3:53) and in *Troilus and Cressida* (5, 10: 55). The brothels of the Southwark were low the control of the Bishop of Winchester since the prostitutes paid a canon to the same one. These images point to a symbolic pattern that reveals the poet’s concern with the libidinous appetite related to the illness and the medicine [23].

To F. Kermode, *Troilus and Cressida* maybe be the most strenuous of Shakespeare’s quasi-ethical fantasies. Shakespeare changes Cressida from the leper of medieval versions of the story to a syphilitic woman, more appropriate to the audience of his time [63]. As many have suggested, Cressida is yet another version of the Dark Lady [65].

To Bloom: “critics who have suggested that *Troilus and Cressida* share the concerns and sufferings of the *Sonnets* seem to me correct” [1].

Thersites represents the choir of the Greek tragedy and it develops repeated syphilitic images suggesting the social and moral illness, that is corrupting and destroying the system [64]:

- *boils* (Act II, i, 2-9) as syphilitic carbuncles

- *A red murrain o’ thy jade’s tricks!* (II, i, 16-20). Murrain was an illness that commonly afflicted cattle, however, since its symptoms - red skin eruptions - were similar to those of the syphilis

- *The Neapolitan bone-ache* (II, iii, 18-21), here Thersites refers directly to syphilis

- *lime-kilns i’ the palm* (V, i, 18-24). Although “*lime-kilns i’ the palm*” may refer to psoriasis it may also refer to another symptom of syphilis (the papulosquamous, palmar rash of secondary syphilis).

In the epilogue (Act V, x, 35-55), Pandarus speaks, as “external chorus”, to the audience of having contracted the illness and summarizes the central topic of the play:

“Good medicine for my aching bones! O world, world! Thus is the poor agent despised. O traders and bawds, how earnestly are you set a work, and how ill requited! Why should our endeavor be so loved, and the performance so loathed? What verse for it? What instance for it? Let me see:

*Full merrily the humble-bee doth sing,
Till he hath lost his honey and his sting;
And being once subdued in armed tail,*

Sweet honey and sweet notes together fail.

*Good traders in the flesh, set this in your painted cloths:
‘As many as be here of Pandar’s hall, your eyes, half out, weep out at Pandar’s fall; or if you cannot weep, yet give some groans, though not for me, yet for your aching bones.’ Bethren and sisters of the hold-door trade, some two months hence my will shall here be made, It should be now, but that my fear is this, some galled goose of Winchester would hiss. Till then I’ll sweat and seek for eases, And at that time bequeath you my diseases.”*

The goose of Winchester is an epithet for syphilitic prostitute. And he ends with the cure by sweating and with the idea that a lot of people in the audience are infected.

Did Shakespeare have syphilis?

Finally, the question is whether Shakespeare suffered the illness. Certainly, this is a speculation but it is related to the reading of the *Sonnets*. The first sonnets are dedicated to a young Mr. W.H. as a model of beauty. It is believed that he was William Herbert, third Earl of Pembroke (1580-1630). Sonnets CXXVII to CLII are dedicated to an unknown and married Dark Lady and here he introduces the images of syphilis and sin. The mysterious WH was speculated to be his boss Henry Wriothsley, but according to others “W. H” is the poet himself the initials being a misprint for W. SH. In the “*Portrait of Mr. W. H.*”, Oscar Wilde makes him the boy actor Willie Hughes or the same William Herbert. The latter maintained a scandalous relationship with a lady of the court, Mary Fitton, who had a stillborn child, probably with congenital syphilis. The Dark Lady was, for some Mary Fitton (maid of Honour to the Queen), as in the Oscar Wilde’s “*The Portrait of Mr. W.H.*”, however in the secret diaries of the medical astrologer Simon Forman (1552-1611) [65], he refers to Emilia Lainer, the mistress of Lord Hunsdon, the boss of Shakespeare’s first company and later she married Captain Alfonso Lanier, musician of the court. Other possible candidates were Lucy Morgan (ex-Lady in Waiting to the Queen) and Penelope Rich (lord Essex’s sister). The sonnet CXLIV says:

*“Two loves, I have, of comfort and despair,
Which like two spirits do suggest me still;
The better angel is a man right fair,
The worser spirit a woman colour’d ill.
To win me soon to hell, my female evil
Tempteth my better angel from my side,
And would corrupt my saint to be a devil,*

*Wooing his purity with her foul pride.
And whether that my angel be turn'd fiend,
Suspect I may, yet not directly tell;
But being both from me, both to each friend,
I guess one angel in another's hell.
Yet this shall I ne'er know, but live in doubt,
Till my bad angel fire my good one out."*

(Tengo dos amores; uno, que me consuela; otro, que me desespera. Los dos, como dos espíritus, me tientan incesantemente; el ángel bueno es un hombre muy lindo; el espíritu malo, una mujer mal pintada.

Para introducirme más pronto en el infierno, mi demonio femenino procura alejar de mí a mi buen ángel, y quisiera hacer de mi santo un demonio, seduciendo su pureza con su orgullo infernal.

En cuanto a saber si mi buen ángel se ha cambiado en demonio, puedo sospecharlo, pero no decirlo positivamente; mas como los dos están ausentes de mí, y ambos se han hecho amigos, mucho temo que uno de los ángeles se haya metido en el infierno del otro.

Pero esto no lo sabré nunca, sino que viviré en duda, hasta que mi demonio haya expulsado del fuego a mi buen ángel).

He tells us that the poet and the youth are playing with fire descending to the "hell" of their common loving object. In the jargon of his time "hell" meant vagina and "fire out" meant to infect with syphilis or clap. In the last two sonnets it includes the term "bath", bathroom or maybe Bath, the English city very well-known for its Roman bathrooms that were used for the cure of this type of ailments in that time. And the Sonnet CLIII:

*"And grew a seething bath, which yet men prove
Against strange maladies a sovereign cure*

...

I, sick withal, the help of bath desired"

(y transformose en baño hirviente, que todavía prueban los hombres como un remedio soberano contra determinadas dolencias...yo, enfermo ya, deseo la ayuda del baño...)

Sonnet CLIV

*"Growing a bath and healthful remedy
For man diseases'd..."*

(convirtiéndose en baño y remedio salúfero para las gentes enfermas...)

As always, "we know nothing about Shakespeare's inner life, and so we cannot know if the wound was his own" [1]. To Borges: "Sonnets are secrets that we are never able to decipher but that we feel immediate and necessary" [66]. In the atmosphere that Shakespeare moved it is not impossi-



Graphische and typographische Erstlinge der Syphilisliteratur aus den Jahren 1495 und 1496 : zusammengetragen und ins Licht gestellt / von Karl Sudhoff. (Mit 24 Tafeln). Sudhoff, Karl, 1853-1938.

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ble that he had had the disease but this pure speculation. So, the best way to conclude therefore is with the last words of Hamlet before dying: "... The rest is silence".

In Tables 1 to 3, we included the different books, plays and authors in relationship with the syphilis.

■ Table 1a.

BOOKS AND THE GREATPOX IN CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER		
Book	Author	Comments/ Theme
Chronicle of Lynn (Ireland) (1494)	-	Syphilis in Ireland
The Early Chronicles of Shrewsbury (1493-4)	-	Earliest records of the greatpox in England
“De morbo qui nuper e Gallia defluxit in alias nationes” (1495)	Nicolò Scillacio (1482-96)	Letter. The earliest account of the disease in Spain
Apollineus nature clipeus in horribile flagellum morbi gallici	Giovanni Elisio (1487-1519)	The earliest account of the disease in Spain Role of coitus in the transmission
Tractatus de pustulis que Sahaphati nominantur (1496?)	Juan de Fogeda	The earliest printed medical systematic study in Spain. Astrological theory
Tractatus de saphati	Francisco Núñez de la Yerva (c. 1460-post 1504)	Núñez de la Yerva and Villalobos refuted to Juan de Fogeda Astrological theory
Diaria de bello carolino (Beatiful carolino’s diary) (1497)	Alessandro Benedetti (1450–1512)	Military surgeon. Patients who had lost hands, feet, eyes, and noses to the disease
Cronica Bianchina	Francesco Muralti	Noble jurist of Como. Nasal and penis affectation
A treatise of the Pestilencial Scorra pr Frencha Evil. Vaticinium Libellus de mentalugra, alias morbo gallico (1503)	Joseph Grünpeck (1473-1530) and Albrecht Dürer	Poem. Probably the first printed article on the greatpox English soldiers fighting in Italy in 1496 had acquired syphilis
Tractatus cum consiliis contra pudendagram seu morbum gallicum, Roma (1497)	Gaspar Torella (1452-1520)	Treatise
Tractatus cum consiliis contra pudendagram seu morbum gallicum, (Roma, 1497)	Pedro Pintor (1423-15903)	Treatise
The treatise on bubas (Sobre las contagiosas y malditas bubas pestilentes: Estoria y medicina) (1498)	Francisco López de Villalobos (1473-1549)	Treatise
Libellus ad evitandum et expellendum morbum gallicum ut nunquam revertatur, noviter inventus ac impressus. Cum gratia et privilegio» (1502)	Joan Almenar (1497-1502)	Treatise
Tractado contra el mal serpentino: que vulgarmente en España es llamado bubas) (Treatise against the Serpentine Disease) c.1510)	Ruy Díaz de Isla (1462-1542)	Treatise
A marriage in Name Only (1523)	Erasmus (1496?-1536)	Colloquy. Beliefs: “it was disseminated by a kiss, by conversation, by touch, and by having a little drink together”.
Liber morbo gallico (1524)	Niccolò Massa of Padua (1485-1569)	Role of coitus in the transmission
On the Healing of Syphilis, Mainz (1524)	Ulrich von Hutten (1488-1523)	He died of syphilis Names of the disease

■ Table 1b.

BOOKS AND THE GREATPOX IN CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER		
Book	Author	Comments/ Theme
Nueva Caréme de Penitencia y Purgatorio de expiación, del uso de enfermos afectados del mal francés o mal venereo (New Caréme of Penance and atonement Purgatory, of the use of affected sick persons by French disease or venereal disease) (1527)	Jacques de Béthencourt (early 16th century)	Treatise Name: Morbus venereus In this treatise he creates an argument as to whether guaiacum or mercury is the best cure
The short stories of Cupido and Atropos (Contes de Cupido et d'Atropos) (1512) Poem (1528)	Jean Lemaire (1473-1548)	Poem. The Greatpox was caused in Naples by French troops Poem. Names of the disease
Privy Purse Expenses (1529)	Elizabeth of York	About of Treatment and the price
Shyphilis sive morbus gallicus (1530)	Girolamo Fracastoro (c. 1478-1553)	Poem Name of syphilis
De contagione et contagiosis morbis (1546)		
Book of the Four Court Diseases (1544)	Luis Lobera de Ávila (1480-1551)	He includes the French Disease among his actually five «court diseases»
Breviary of Helthe (1547)	Andrew Boord (1490-1549)	The first printed medical book to be written by a physician in English
The poetic sheets (Los pliegos poéticos del marques de Morbecq) (1560)	Marquis Morbecq (16th century)	Poem Spanish local names of the disease
General and particular curation of ulcers (1575)	John Banister (1532/3-1610?)	Treatise
De Morbo Gallico (1579)	William Clowes (1544-1604)	Treatise
Chiste de la Cofradía del Grillemón* (Joke on the Brotherhood of the pox) (1602) El cancionero (Song book)	Sebastian Horozco (1510-1579)	Jokes and grillemon name Song book. Grillemon name
Tesoro de la Lengua Castellana (Treasure of the Castilian Language) (1611)	Sebastián de Covarrubias y Orozco (1539-1613)	Definition of the word “bubas”
-	Andrea Cesalpino (1519–1603)	Beliefs: origin of the French disease, the Greek wine mixed with the blood of lepers that the Spaniards gave the French to drink during the siege of Naples
-	Leonardo Fioravanti	Beliefs: Cannibalism, he claimed to have treated French disease's sick infected by being forced to eat human flesh during the siege of Naples
Sylva Sylvarum (1627)	Sir Francis Bacon (1561-1626)	Beliefs: the cannibalism in the Western Indies as the origin of the disease

■ Table 2

BRITISH, ITALIAN, AND OTHER COUNTRIES, FICTION LITERATURE AND THE GREATPOX		
Book	Author	Comments/ Theme
The ship of fools (Das Narrenschiff) (1494)	Sebastian Brant (c1547- 1521)	The first literary reference in Europe
Theatre	Gil Vicente (1465-1536?) (Portuguese playwright and poet)	Beliefs: Marrani and their lasciviousness that had, according to the legend, contaminated the inhabitants of Naples
Capitolo In lode del legno santo (1528)	Agnolo Firenzuola (1493- 1543)	
Intorno alla sua malattia (1533)		
Six songs “La Franceide overo Del Mal Francese” (1629)	Giambattista Lalli (1572-1637)	
Poem to Queen Margaret, wife of James IV of Scotland and sister of Henry VIII	William Dunbar (1465-1520)	The earliest reference in British literature to syphilis
General Satire of Scotland (1504?)	J. Y. Simpson	
-	Sir David Lindsay (1490-1557)	
Supplication of Beggars (1524)	Simon Fyshe	
Poem: “Shyphilis sive morbos gallicus” (1530)	Girolamo Fracastoro (c. 1478-1553)	Name: Syphilis
Emperor of the East (1632)	Philip Massinger (1583-1640)	Symptoms as sciatica and goute Catholic sickness
The three Ladies of London (1584)	Robert Wilson (1572-1600)	Stage play. Spots of secondary syphilis
Cure for a Cuckold (1661)	John Webster (1580?- 1625?)	Stage play.
The Unfortunate Traveller or, the Life of Jack Wilton (1594)	Thomas Nashe (1567-1601)	A picaresque novel Cornelius’s tube
Every Man out of his humour (1599)	Ben Johnson (1527- 1637)	Stage play
Humourous Lieutenant	Francis Beaumont (1584- 1616) and John Fletcher (1579- 1625)	Stage play
Knight of the Burning Pestle (1613)		Satire play
The Fairie Queen (1590-1596)	Edmund Spenser (1552- 1599)	Epic poem. “eats away the marrow and it consumes the brain”,
Paradoxes and Problems (1652)	John Donne (1572-1631)	Poems Nose loss
-	Barnabe Rich (1540? - 1617)	Dorsal tabes with painful paralysis of the legs
The Widow’s Tears does an allusion to syphilitic rash [31]	George Chapman (1559?- 1634)	Syphilitic rash
Troilus & Cressida Measure for Measure All’s wells Henry V Sonnets	William Shakespeare (1564-1616)	Several symptoms and treatment

■ Table 3a.

SPANISH FICTION LITERATURE AND THE GREATPOX		
Book	Author	Comments/ Theme
Chiste de la Cofradía del Grillimón (Joke of the Pox's Brotherhood), included in the "Second part of the Silva de Romances"(1522)	Esteban G. de Nájera	Jokes
"Capítulos y ordinaciones para los cofrades del muy poderoso Balaguer o Grillimón" (Chapters and ordinations for the brothers of the very powerful Balaguer or Grillimón)	Joan de Angulo	Jokes
El cancionero (Song book)	Sebastian Horozco (1510-c. 1580)	La cofradía del Grillimón (Brotherhood of the pox)
En alabanza del palo de las Indias" (In praise of the Indias pockwood	Cristóbal de Castillejo (1490–1550).	The first poem in the Spanish Golden Age French disease is transmitted sexually
La Celestina (Tragicomedia de Calisto y Melibea) (The Celestina) (1499)	Fernando de Rojas (1465-1541 ¿?)	Symptoms
Comedia Serafina (Serafina Comedy)	Bartolomé Torres Naharro (1485-1520?)	Symptoms
Paradoxa en loa de las bubas (Paradox in praise of the bubas)	Gaspar Lucas Hidalgo (1560-1619)	Symptoms
Poem in triplets written around (1590)	Fernando Mejía de Gúzman (1580)	Symptoms
Paradoja en loor de la nariz muy grande (Paradox in praise of the very large nose) Paradoja en loor de las bubas y que es razón que todos las procuren y estimen (Paradox in praise of the bubas and that is reason that all seek and esteem them).	Cristóbal Mosquera de Figueroa (1547-1610)	Symptoms
"Los privilegios de la Cofradía del Grillimón" (The privileges of the Brotherhood of the Grillimón), the poem that opens his long Cancionero (Song book), the middle of the 16th century	Sebastián de Horozco (1510–1579).	Jokes
Poem	Baltasar del Alcázar (1530–1606)	
A una mujer de buen pelo, que vino vestida con un faldellín francés y en una silla de manos, en que la traían dos franceses, a tomar sudores al hospital" (To a woman with good hair, who came dressed in a French skirt and in a sedan chair, in which two Frenchmen brought her to take sweat at the bubas hospital where he was a minister)	Juan de Salinas (1562–1643).	Poetry Symptoms
Burlesco" (Burlesque)		
Metáfora de un buboso (Metaphor of a syphilitic)		
Cancionerillo de la sífilis" (Syphilis little song)	Anastasio Pantaleón de Ribera (1600–1629)	Poetry Symptoms
Epigrams	Miguel Colodredo de Villalobos (1608/11–after 1672)	Poetry Symptoms
Romance VIII from Alfeo		
Golosinas del ingenio (Candies of the wit)		
A Lesbia (To Lesbia)		
A Agustín Francés (To Agustín French)		
"Romance refiriendo el autor el estado en que le tenía una enfermedad, a una dama que se lo envió a preguntar" (Romance that the author tells a lady who was sent to ask him about the state of his illness)	Jerónimo de Camargo y Zárate (?- ?).	Poetry Symptoms

■ Table 3a. Cont.

SPANISH FICTION LITERATURE AND THE GREATPOX		
Book	Author	Comments/ Theme
Poesías varias (Various poems)	José Navarro (1629–1691).	Symptoms
A una pobre que salió muy estropeada de un Mal Francés habido en buena guerra” (To a poor girl who came out very spoiled from a French disease in good war)	Friar L. Damián Cornejo (1629–1707)	Sonnet Symptoms
Humorous romance	Antonio de Zamora (1665–1727)	Symptoms
La lozana andaluza novel (1528) (Lusty Andalusian)	Francisco Delicado (1475-1535)	First Spanish novel on French disease
El Modo de adoperare el legno from India (1529)		Pockwood for treatment
De consolatione infirmorum		Treatise for patients
La Vida de Lazarillo de Tormes y de sus fortunas y adversidades (The life of Larazillo de Tormes, his fortunes and adversities) (before 1554)	Diego Hurtado de Mendoza ¿? (1503/1504-1575)	
Sonnet		Disease for lovesickness
Los pliegos poéticos del marques de Morbecq (Marquis Morbecq’s the poetic sheets) (1560)	¿?	Poetry Local Spanish names

■ Table 3b.

SPANISH FICTION LITERATURE AND THE GREATPOX		
Book	Author	Comments/ Theme
De un ébano sutil, dos bellas piernas” (Of a subtle ebony, two beautiful legs)	Vicente Espinel (1550-1624)	Humorous poems, the second poem reply to the first. About bubas
“Si ese tu inútil cuerpo, brazos, piernas” (If that is your useless body, arms, legs)	Mateo Alemán (1547-1614)	
La Picara Justina (The picaroon Justine) (1605)	Andrés Pérez de León/ or Francisco López de Úbeda (1560-1605??)	Picaresque novel Hair loss French disease
Buscón’s life (La vida del Buscón)	Francisco de Quevedo (1580- 1645)	Novel. vision of deep pessimism
A la venida del Duque de Humena (To the coming of the Duke of Humena)(1612)		Poetry
Calvo que no quiere encabellarse (Bald that doesn’t want to have hair)		
Una figura de guedejas se motila en ocasión de una prematia (A figure of long hair is shaved with occasion of a pragmatic law)		
Cura una moza en Antón Martín la tela que mantuvo (Heals a woman in Antón Martín the affair that she had)		
Púrgase una moza de los defectos que otra enfermaba (“A girl purges from the defects that another made ill”)		
In second part of Marica en el hospital (Marica in the Hospital)		
Letrilla satírica Santo silencio profesado... (Satirical letrilla Holy silence professed)		
Lindo gusto tiene el tiempo (Nice taste has the time)		
Echando verbos y nombres (Casting verbs and nouns)		
Celebra a una Roma, como todas lo merecen (Celebrate to a Rome, as all they deserve it)		
A la perla de la mancebía de las Soleras (To the pearl of the Soleras brothel)		
Respuesta de la Méndez a Escarramán: Con un menino del padre... (Méndez’s response to Escarramán: With a father’s menino..”)		
A un sacristán. Amante ridículo o En la simulada figura de unas prendas ridículas, burla de la vana estimación que hacen los amantes de semejantes favores: Cubriendo con cuatro cuernos... (To a Parsish Clerk. Ridiculous lover or In the simulated figure of ridiculous garments, a mockery of the vain estimation made by lovers of such favors: Covering with four horns..)		
Refiere un suceso suyo, donde se contiene algo del mundo por dentro”: Érase una tarde... (Refers to its event, where something of the world is contained inside: It was an afternoon)		
Vida y milagros de Montilla: En casa de las sardinas... (Jácara) (Life and miracles of Montilla: At the sardine house)		
Cubriendo con cuatro cuernos		
Censura costumbres y las propiedades de algunas naciones (Censorship customs and properties of some nations)		

■ Table 3b. Cont.

SPANISH FICTION LITERATURE AND THE GREATPOX		
Book	Author	Comments/ Theme
Cartel que pone una moza contra resistencias del dar: Aquí ha llegado una niña... (Poster that puts a girl against the resistance of giving: Here a girl has arrived ...)	Francisco de Quevedo (1580- 1645)	Novel. vision of deep pessimism Poetry
Sentimiento de un jaque por hallar cerrada la mancebía": Añasco el de Talavera... (Jacara) (Feeling of a pimp for finding closed the brothel) (Añasco from Talavera)		
Pinta el suceso de haber estado una noche con una fregona: Ya que al hospital de amor... (Romance) (Looks the event of having been one night with a scullery woman: Since to the love hospital ...)		
Pregmática que han de guardar las hermanas comunes o Premáticas contra las cotorreras, dirigida a «las busconas, damas de alquiler, niñas comunes, sufridoras del trabajo, mujeres al trote, hembras mortales, recatonas del sexo, ninfas de daga y toma vinculadas en la lujuria” (Pregmática that the common sisters or Pregmática that must guard against the parrots, directed at «the hustlers, rented ladies, common girls, women suffering from work, women at a trot, mortal females, demure of sex, nymphs of give and take linked in the lust)		
Con mondadientes en ristre (With thoothpicks wielded)		
Si el tiempo que contigo gasté lloro (If I cry the time I spent with you)		
Jácara		

■ Table 3c.

SPANISH FICTION LITERATURE AND THE GREATPOX		
Book	Author	Comments/ Theme
El ganso de oro (The Gold Goose)(1588-1595)	Félix Lope de Vega Carpio (1582-1635)	Comedy. Serpent
Juan de Dios and Antón Martín (1618)		Comedy. French disease
El pretendiente al revés (The upside-down claimant) (1608-1612)	Tirso de Molina (nickname of fraier Gabriel Téllez) (1579- 1648)	Comedies
El castigo del penseque (The punishment of the I-thank-what) (1614)		
Averigüelo, Vargas (Discover it, Vargas) (1621)		
Romance a una dama que deseaba saber su estado, persona y vida (Romance to a Lady who wanted to know her state, person and life)	Pedro Calderón de la Barca (1600-1681)	Romance. "Bubas" Nose loss
El casamiento engañoso (The Deceitful Marriage) (1613)	Miguel de Cervantes (1547-1616),	Sweating tube Hair loss
In Don Quixote (Part II, chapter XLVII, Donde se prosigue cómo se portaba Sancho Panza en su gobierno) [57] (Wherein is continued the account of how Sancho Panza conducted himself in his government) (1615)		Novel. Nose loss Tooth loss in the treatment Cervantes talk about the congenital French disease because the quicksilver was used as a treatment and the secondary effect was the tremors and paralysis. Cervantes used the description of the physician Andres de Laguna
Don Quixote (Part II, chapter xxii (Wherin is related the grand adventure of the cave of Montesinos in the heart of La Mancha, which the valiant Don Quixote brought to a happy termination) (1615)		Ointments for the French disease
El rufian viudo llamado Trampagos (The widowed pimp) (1615)		Interlude sweating tub
La Cueva de Salamanca (The Salamanca Cave) (1615)		Interlude, hair loss
La boda de Juan Rana (The Juan Rana's wedding) (1664)	Gerónimo de Cáncer y Velasco (1599?- 1655) or Francisco de Avellaneda (1625-1684)	Interlude

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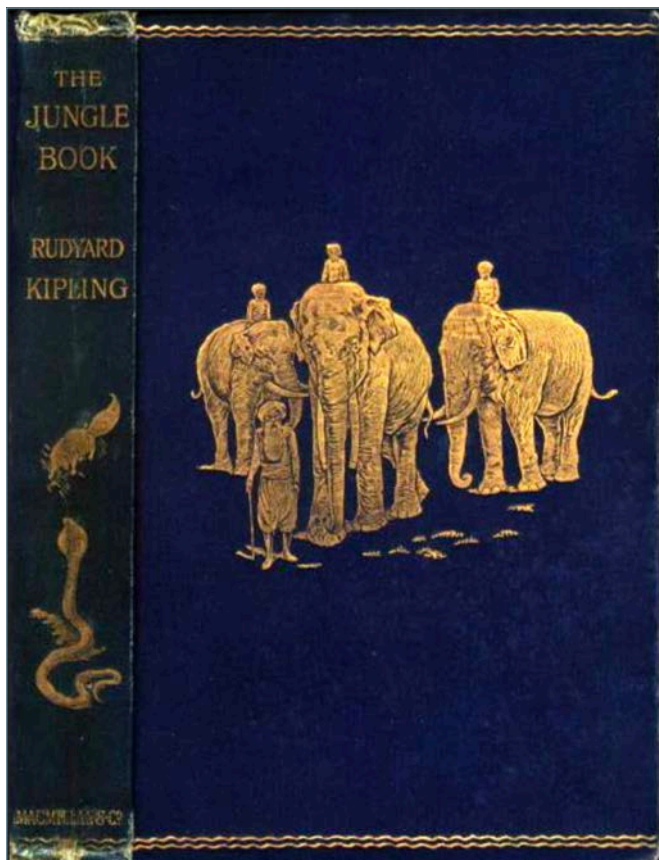
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Ruyard Kipling y las infecciones en el colonialismo

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Cover of the first edition of The Jungle Book by Rudyard Kipling (1865-18th January 1936), illustrated by John Lockwood Kipling (1837-1911)

De Illustrated by John Lockwood Kipling - Low-resolution scanned image, Dominio público, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=1709838>

Resumen

Ruyard Kipling es el escritor por excelencia del colonialismo británico y que acercó la India a Occidente dejando en su obra numerosas citas de infecciones en general y tropicales, además de dar la única descripción del test de Romberg en la literatura.

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Introducción

Rudyard Kipling (Bombay, 1865-Londres, 1936) es considerado tanto un buen escritor como a la vez el representante

del colonialismo que le toco vivir. George Orwell, dijo de él que era “*moralmente insensible y repugnante estéticamente*”. En esta controversia no aceptó el título de poeta laureado, la Orden al Mérito y el título de “*Sir*” debido a que le desagradaba todo tipo de reconocimiento, pero en cambio aceptó el Nobel de Literatura en 1907, siendo el primer autor británico en ganarlo. Dentro de sus méritos permitió acercar la cultura de la India a Europa en la época Victoriana. Esta visión pro imperialista se manifiesta en uno de sus poemas “*La carga del hombre blanco*” (1899), donde trata de civilizar a los nativos, y lo escribió tras la pérdida española de Cuba, Puerto Rico, Filipinas y otras colonias, debida a la intervención norteamericana y en el que insta a los americanos del Norte a enseñar a los filipinos las maneras del hombre blanco [1].

El escritor Henry James decía que no podía “*tragarse su verso patriótico descarado*” [2], y el crítico y teórico literario Edward Said dijo que “*era uno de los primeros novelistas en retratar la alianza entre la ciencia occidental y el poder político en las colonias*” [3].

En esta revisión, analizamos las infecciones que aparecen en sus obras y que dan una visión de las enfermedades tropicales en esa época y en la India en particular, además de darnos la única cita literaria sobre el test de Romberg.

Ruyard Kipling y sus obras

Escribió cuatro novelas, más de 800 poemas, relatos, cartas y unas memorias tituladas: “*Something of Myself*” (*Algo de mí mismo*), publicadas póstumamente en 1937. En estas memorias cuenta que a los cinco años sufrió el maltrato de una cuidadora: “*Recibía una paliza cada día... Empecé a leer todo lo que caía en mis manos, pero cuando supo que eso me gustaba a los demás castigos sumó la privación de la lectura. Fue entonces cuando empecé a leer a escondidas y a conciencia...*” [4].

Uno de sus poemas, titulado ‘*Si...*’ (*If...*) en «*Brother Square Toes*», capítulo de su libro “*Hadas y recompensas (Rewards and Fairies)*” en la colección de poemas y relatos de Kipling de 1910, fue escogido por los lectores británicos en los años 50 como el favorito, como el más popular, y es una evocación del estoicismo en la era victoriana. Este poema fue inspirado por el Dr. Leander Starr Jameson, quien en 1895 lideró una incursión de las fuerzas británicas contra los Boers en Sudáfrica, que por ello fue llamada la «*Incursión de Jameson*». Este evento incrementó las tensiones que finalmente desembocaron en la Segunda Guerra Anglo-Bóer. La prensa británica, sin embargo, retrató a Jameson como un héroe en medio del desastre.

Sus obras más famosas son: *Kim*, *El libro de la selva* o *El hombre que pudo reinar*.

Las enfermedades que tuvo Kipling a lo largo de su vida fueron miopía, una faringoamigdalitis severa en su juventud y una neumonía ya de adulto. En la India padeció malaria y disentería. En los Estados Unidos, cuando desembarcó en Nueva York, él y sus hijos padecieron un cuadro de gripe, a consecuencia de la misma, Kipling tuvo una grave neumonía y su hija Josephine murió. The British Medical Journal se hizo eco de su recuperación y le dio las congratulaciones al autor [5]. Kipling murió de una úlcera gástrica perforada que le perseguía desde los 40 años en la madrugada del 17 al 18 de enero de 1936. Sus cenizas están en el Rincón de los Poetas de la abadía de Wetminster, junto a Dickens y a Thomas Hardy.

Kipling y la medicina

Kipling pensaba estudiar medicina en su juventud y compró varios libros que en su época estaban escritos en latín (que podía leerlo) y en la otra página se traducían al inglés. Aunque no se hizo médico, mantuvo su interés por la medicina como periodista y fue amigo de varios médicos de la época:

a) Su médico de cabecera, Sir John Bland- Sutton, que trabajaba en el *Middlesex Hospital Medical School*. En octubre de 1908, se cree que por los buenos oficios de Bland- Sutton, Kipling dio una conferencia introductoria a los estudiantes preclínicos en este hospital, y la fotografía de los dos con sombreros de copa en este acto fue la portada de la autobiografía de Bland- Sutton “*The Story of a Surgeon*”, dedicándole el libro a Kipling “*To my old friend Rud. Critic and adviser*”. En esta primera conferencia médica, como Susan Sontag que dividía la humanidad entre el reino del bienestar y de la enfermedad, Kipling divide la población entre los pacientes y doctores [5].

En su segunda conferencia médica en la reunión anual del *Royal College of Surgeons* durante 1923, Sir John Bland-Sutton dio la conferencia “*the Hunterian Oration*” sobre: “*John Hunter, his affairs, habits and opinions*”, y Kipling la conferencia del banquete titulada “*Surgeons and the Soul*”. La “*Hunterian Oration*” fue fundada en 1813 por los cirujanos pioneros John Hunter, su sobrino el Dr. Matthew Baillie y su cuñado Sir Everard Home, que donaron una cantidad anual al *Royal College* para la conferencia y la cena de sus miembros. Kipling se introduce él mismo como “*un tratante de palabras y estas son la más poderosa droga usada por la humanidad*” [5].

La tercera conferencia médica, en 1928, la titula “*Hea-*

ling by the Stars”, donde se describe como un “cuentista (storyteller)” y cuenta la historia de Culpeper, que obtenía su saber de las estrellas de donde es capaz de deducir que la peste negra era transmitida por ratas y también los astros le informaron que de uno de sus pacientes se recobró debido que padecía la viruela y no peste negra [5].

b) Sir William Osler, se piensa que le ayudó con los detalles médicos en su historia “Love-O’Women” [6].

c) Su médico personal en Nueva Inglaterra, James Conland, que le ayudo a crear un verdadero entorno americano para su historia “Captains Courageous” (Capitanes intrépidos).

Tenía interés en los avances médicos de la época, dio las conferencias reseñadas en las asociaciones médicas y los médicos fueron los personajes centrales de sus historias, además mantuvo correspondencia con científicos como Ronald Ross. En su biblioteca tenía libros que eran algunos, primeras ediciones sobre [7-9]:

a) un tomo de la historia de la medicina,

b) una copia del libro “Herbals” de Nicolás Culpeper (famoso médico- astrólogo inglés del siglo XVII), en 1909 escribió un cuento denominado “A doctor of Medicine” que está basado en la vida de Culpeper. En 1910, envía a su amigo Sir William Osler una copia de “Rewards and Fairies” con una carta agradeciéndole haberle inspirado el cuento.

c) un tomo de anatomía,

d) una monografía de 1903 sobre la mosca tse-tse por E. E. Austen y publicada por *The British Museum of Natural History*,

e) y un libro de médicos de 1934.



The story of a surgeon / by Sir John Bland-Sutton, bt.; with a preamble by Rudyard Kipling.

Bland-Sutton, John, Sir, 1855-1936.

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<https://wellcomecollection.org/images?query=ruyard+kipling>

Otro cuento, “Marklake Witches”, con rasgos de Rene Laennec, el inventor del estetoscopio, también se basó en la vida de William Osler.

Su biblioteca médica, esta hoy depositada en el *Royal Australasian College of Surgeons* [10].

Infecciones en sus obras

Sus obras están llenas de referencias a las infecciones de su época y en zonas como la India: Cólera, peste, lepra, difteria, tuberculosis, malaria, etc. En las Tablas 1A-1C se detallan los temas infecciosos por orden alfabético y las obras donde aparecen.

Destacamos cuatro obras y otras diversas por su interés en las infecciones.

1. *The Song of The Sufferer*. Por su curiosidad incluimos este poema escrito después de tener fiebre y faringoamigdalitis a la edad de 13 años [7, 11].

“*The Song of the Sufferer (Follicular Tonsillitis)*”

(written when ill with fever and sore throat)

*His drink it is Saline Pyretic,
He longs, but he shall not eat,
His soul is convulsed with emetic,
His stomach is empty of meat.*

*His bowels are stirred by blind motions,
His form in the flannel is bound,
He has gargles, and powders, and potions,
And walks as not feeling the ground.*



Chaulmoogra oil factory of Prasana Kumar Sen, Chittagong. Photograph by J.F. Rock, 1921. Public Domain Mark <https://wellcomecollection.org/imagenes?query=chaulmoogra>

*For the doctor has harrowed his being,
And of medicine wondrous the might is;
He suffers in agony, seeing
He is prey to acute tonsillitis”.*

(La canción del sufridor- faringoamigdalitis folicular)

*Su bebida es un antipirético, / Suspira, pero no comerá, /
Su alma se convulsiona por el emético, / Su estómago está
vacío de carne.*

*Sus intestinos se agitan con movimientos falsos, / Su
figura esta atada a la franela, / Toma gárgaras, polvos y po-
ciones, / Y camina como si no sintiera el suelo.*

*Porque el doctor tiene angustiado su ser, / Y maravilloso
es el poder de la medicina, / sufre en agonía, viendo que / Es
presa de una amigdalitis aguda)*

2. *La marca de la bestia*. Es un cuento, publicado en el periódico *The Pioneer*, sobre el licántropo más célebre de las letras inglesas, su origen es un episodio que vio el propio Kipling en 1888 al ver morir a un hombre con rabia que hasta 1885 tenía connotaciones malditas. En la historia, un médico diagnosticará ese mal en el protagonista Fleete. También aparece la lepra que se trataba con el aceite de chalmogra, un tónico destilado a base del árbol del mismo nombre. El aceite de chaulmoogra era obtenido de las semillas del *Taraktognos kurzii*, planta indígena en la India. El aceite se administraba

dos veces por semana 1 a 3 cc en inyección intramuscular; pero por los dolores y la persistencia de las induraciones, cada centímetro cúbico debía inyectarse en un lugar diferente. Además, para completar el tratamiento, también se administraba una parte por vía oral con importantes reacciones gastrointestinales. A principios del siglo XX, se profundiza en la mejora de la administración especialmente en la formulación oral. Se tolera mejor iniciando con una dosis de 5 gotas en café o mejor en cápsulas de gelatina para ir aumentando hasta 30 gotas diarias. Pero el mayor avance se logró con el “antileprol” de Bayer-Meister-Lucius, que se toleraba relativamente bien. Consistía en un extracto con éter de diferentes ácidos grasos del aceite de Chaulmoogra presentándose en cápsulas de 0,5 y 1 gr. Requerían la ingestión progresiva de 1 cápsula diaria aumentando hasta 10 diarias con las comidas. Rápidamente aparecieron el chausmestrol (americano), moogran y leprosan (ingleses) y el alepol (aléman). En 1918, se comprobó que el aceite de chaulmoogra inhibía in vitro el crecimiento del bacilo tuberculoso y animó a buscar fármacos que a su vez beneficiaran a los enfermos de lepra [12].

3. *Kim*. Esta novela escrita en 1901, narra como un chico anglo-indio al servicio del lama tibetano es también espía del Raj británico, y en sus viajes por la India hay episodios de infecciones, pero sobre todo enfocado en la adaptación a la malaria. Su habilidad para tratar la malaria, que *Kim* había padecido en el pasado, es central en la trama del libro [10]. Y uti-

liza como tratamiento en el libro, quinina y pastillas de caldo de carne para la desnutrición.

La malaria afectaba al 75% de los habitantes de los pueblos en el oeste de Bengala durante los años 1870 y con una mortalidad del 25%. Esto fue debido a la transformación agrícola iniciada por los ingleses causando más inundaciones y haciendo estas zonas las condiciones perfectas de cría del mosquito, por lo que la malaria fue la principal enfermedad en la India durante la dominación británica [13]. Kipling, en sus primeros escritos y antes del descubrimiento de la transmisión de la malaria por Ross, emplea el discurso establecido por la medicina de su época del saneamiento como un método de manejar a los “nativos” y hace descripciones de los “miasmas” para apoyar tanto el triunfalismo imperialista como la separación racial necesaria, esto se observa en su ensayo publicado en 1885 y de nuevo publicado en 1891 acortado: “*The City of Dreadful Night*”, donde se demoniza a los indios acusándoles de producir una enfermedad hedionda [10].

Pero este era el discurso de la medicina tropical de aquella época y así Ross, el 20 de agosto de 1897, siendo un oficial del Servicio Médico de la India, observa los parásitos en los estómagos de los mosquitos y un año más tarde prueba que es la mordedura del mosquito el transmisor de la malaria. Commemoró su descubrimiento con un poema, dentro de un grupo de poemas titulados “*In Exile*” (*En el exilio*) [14, 15]:

*“This day relenting God
Hath placed within my hand
A wondrous thing...
With tears and toiling breath
I find thy cunning seeds,
O million-murdering Death.
Thou sentest me a light
Wherewith to mend the world”* (Howell29)

(Este día, apiadándose Dios,/ Ha puesto en mi mano/
Algo maravilloso.../ Con lágrimas y aliento fatigado,/ Encuentro los gérmenes astutos/ ¡Oh muerte asesina de millones!/
Me enviaste una luz/ Con lo que reparar el mundo)

Para limitar las zonas de cría de los mosquitos en su panfleto de 1902: “*Mosquito Brigades and How to Organise Them*”, Ross sugiere cubrir las zonas de agua con petróleo y el agua de beber cubrirla con queroseno o aceite de eucalipto. Lo puso en marcha en Sierra Leona, pero sin éxito. Ross menciona a las poblaciones locales y su afán de cavar hoyos y abogaba por dejar a los porteadores africanos dormir debajo de

mosquiteras rotas para medir las poblaciones de mosquitos. De esta manera resume, que las medidas debían enfocarse en áreas de alta densidad de población blanca, claramente abogaba por la segregación racial pero también, en este escrito, describe varios tratamientos como la autoinoculación del parásito y el consumo de grandes cantidades de zumo de lima y suero de rana condensado [10].

La experiencia de Kipling con la malaria, se remonta a 1885 donde en un artículo titulado “*De Profundis (A Study in a Sick Room)*” para la *Civil and Military Gazette* cuenta en segunda persona un episodio de malaria [10]. Esta visión del estigma racial de los que volvían de las colonias se observa en novelas como *Jane Eyre*, donde Richard, el hermano de Bertha Mason, vuelve cetrino y demasiado relajado de un clima cálido en el extranjero. También en las historias de Sherlock Holmes, de Arthur Conan Doyle, se describen personajes europeos degenerados racialmente que regresan con alguna tara física [16]. Para Kipling, esta visión estaba influenciada por la evolución Lamarckiana y la transmisión de rasgos a una nueva generación [10].

Los síntomas descritos en *Kim* incluyen dolores severos articulares (descritos como dolores del dengue) y musculares, debilidad, dolor de cuello, y un gusto amargo en la boca.

4. “*Love-o’-women*”. Este cuento se publicó en 1893, a la edad de 27 años y un año después de su boda con Caroline Balestier, dentro del libro “*Many Inventions*” y en él da una descripción precisa de la tabes dorsal (llamada ataxia locomotora en aquella época) y la probablemente única descripción en la literatura del test de Romberg, maniobra clínica simple para buscar ataxia sensitiva como la causa sindrómica de desequilibrio o dificultad para la marcha [17].

“He walked with his hands on Mulvaney’s shoulder “all slued sideways, an’ his right leg swingin’ like a lame camel.” His hands went all ways at once, and he could not button his tunic. Later, Mulvaney asks the doctor what ails his friend. ““They call ut Locomotus attacks us,” he sez, ‘bekaze,’ sez he, ‘ut attacks us like a locomotive, if ye know fwhat that manes. An’ ut comes,’ sez he, lookin’ at me, ‘ut comes from bein’ called Love-o’-Women.”

(Caminaba con las manos sobre el hombro de Mulvaney como flotando hacia los lados, y su pierna derecha balanceándose como un camello cojo. Sus manos recorrieron todos los caminos a la vez, y no podía abrocharse la túnica. Más tarde, Mulvaney le pregunta al médico lo que aflige a su amigo. “Lo llaman ataxia locomotora”... lo que viene a ser llamado “Amor de mujeres”).



The English physician: or an astrologo-physical discourse of the vulgar herbs of this nation. Being a compleat method of physick ... / By Nich. Culpeper.

Culpeper, Nicholas, 1616-1654. Public Domain Mark
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Larry Tighe afectado por la enfermedad, trata de ocultarla a pesar de su dolor lacerante y Kipling establece su estigma y vergüenza de la transmisión sexual. Esta enfermedad producía en estos pacientes culpa, depresión e intentos de suicidio y se trataba con alcohol para hacer el dolor más tolerable. El protagonista se da cuenta de su problema cuando pisa el suelo y no lo siente y, es el Dr. Lowndes, que lo sorprende en este momento, quien hace el diagnóstico al instante. A continuación, describe perfectamente el test de Romberg, al notar por la ataxia un aumento de la torpeza y alteraciones de la marcha cuando se le pide que cierre los ojos. Kipling asocia en la historia la promiscuidad sexual, la sífilis y la ataxia locomotora. Finalmente, la historia acaba con la muerte de Tighe en un burdel en brazos de su esposa, a la que ha arruinado, y suicidándose ella en ese momento con una pistola y finalmente son enterrados los dos juntos.

En 1836, el medico inglés Marshall Hall describe un paciente con perdida de control postural en la oscuridad por



Semeiotica uranica / [Nicholas Culpeper].

Culpeper, Nicholas, 1616-1654.

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tener severamente comprometida la sensibilidad propioceptiva. Es Moritz Heinrich Romberg, el que primero describe la tabes dorsalis en 1840, estableciendo como causas el alcohol excesivo y la actividad sexual, e inspirado por Hall le da el nombre de *test al lado de la cama*. En 1858, Guillaume Duchenne escribió una descripción muy completa de la tabes y la denominó ataxia locomotora progresiva y que la posible causa era la sífilis, establecida posteriormente en 1875 por Jean-Alfred Fournier. En 1881, el neurólogo inglés Sir William R. Gowers publica en *The Lancet* la relación entre la sífilis y la tabes. Gowers escribe en 1888, su texto clásico “*A Manual of Diseases of the Nervous System*” donde detalla el test de Romberg [18]. Osler también dio una detallada descripción del test de Romberg en su texto de 1892 “*The Principles and Practice of Medicine*”, un año antes de publicarse el cuento de Kipling por lo que este pudo tener conocimiento a través de Gowers, 12 años antes, y de Osler, un año antes. Puede ser, por tanto, el más temprano ejemplo de la descripción de una alteración médica llevada a la ficción [17].

5. Otras obras

a) En las obras relacionadas a la difteria, detalla algunos de los tratamientos de la misma. En “*A second rate*” (1888) se usa el “*Condy’s fluid*” que eran lavados de ácido carbólico y

■ Tabla 1a.

INFECCIONES POR ORDEN ALFABÉTICO EN LAS OBRAS DE RUYARD KIPLING	
Enfermedades infecciosas, patógenos y tratamientos	Obra
Aceite Seneca	<i>Brother Square-Toes</i> (cuento en <i>Rewards and fairies</i>) (1906)
Artrópodos:	
-Chinches	<i>El hombre que pudo reinar</i> (<i>The man who would be king</i>) (en <i>The phantom 'Ricksaw and other tales</i>)
-Mosquitos	<i>My Lord The Elephant</i>
-Mosquitos	<i>On Greenhow Hill</i>
-Mosquitos	<i>Brazilian Sketches</i>
-piojos, pulgas, garrapatas	<i>Canadians In Camp</i> (en <i>The New Army In Training</i>)
Cólera	<i>El Rickshaw fantasma</i> (<i>The phantom 'Rickshaw</i>) (cuento en <i>The phantom 'Ricksaw and other tales</i>) (1885)
-tratamiento con Cloridinia (pastillas potabilizadoras de cloro)	<i>La extraña galopada de Morrowbie Jukes</i> (<i>The strange ride of morrowbie jukes</i>) (cuento en <i>The phantom 'Ricksaw and other tales</i>)
	<i>Sin pasar por la vicaría</i> (<i>Without Benefit of Clergy</i>) (cuento)
	<i>Al final del viaje</i> (<i>At The End Of The Passage</i>) (cuento en <i>Puck of Pook's Hill</i>)
	<i>Los constructores del puente</i> (<i>The bridge-builders</i>) (cuento)
	<i>The World Without</i> (en <i>Soldiers three- The story of the Gadsbys</i>)
	<i>Only A Subaltern</i>
	<i>My Lord The Elephant</i>
	<i>The Daughter Of The Regiment</i> (en <i>Plain Tales from the hills</i>)
	<i>Cholera Camp</i> (en <i>Poema The seven seas</i>)
	<i>A Germ Destroyer</i> (en <i>Plain Tales from the hills</i>)
	<i>William The Conqueror</i> (cuento en <i>The day's work</i>)
	<i>Al final del viaje</i> (cuento)
Croup (laringotraqueitis)	<i>Muchas invenciones</i> (<i>El registro de Badalia Herodsfoot</i>) (en <i>The Record of Badalia Herodsfoot', Many Inventions</i>)
Dengue (dolores tratados con masajes)	<i>Kim</i>
Desinfección	<i>La colmena madre</i> (cuento)
Difteria	<i>Ellos</i> (cuento)
	<i>A Second Rate Woman</i> (<i>Under the deodars</i>)
	<i>The record of Badalia</i> (1890)
	<i>A little Prep</i> (1899) (publicado en <i>Stalky & Co.</i>)
	<i>An habitation enforced</i> (1905)
Disentería:	
-shigelosis	<i>The Drums Of The Fore And Aft</i> (1888)
-amebiana	<i>The Taking Of Lungtungpen</i> (<i>Plain Tales from the hills</i>) (1887)
Destrucción aletas de la nariz	<i>Una guerra de Sahibs</i> (cuento)
Fiebre amarilla	<i>Brother Square-Toes</i> (cuento en <i>Rewards and fairies</i>) (1906)
Faringitis	<i>The Song of The Sufferer</i>
Fiebres reumáticas	<i>El Rickshaw fantasma</i> (<i>The phantom 'Rickshaw</i>) (cuento en <i>The phantom 'Ricksaw and other tales</i>) (1885)
Fiebre tifoidea	<i>The Moon Of Other Days</i> (1884)
	<i>Nursery Rhymes For Little Anglo-Indians</i> (1884)
	<i>The Parting Of The Columns</i> (1903)
	<i>By Word Of Mouth</i> (1887)
	<i>William The Conqueror</i> (cuento en <i>The day's work</i>)
	<i>The Parting Of The Columns</i> (1903)
	<i>The New Army In Training</i> (1915)
	<i>The Pit That They Dugged</i> (1889) (cuento en <i>St. James's Gazette</i> , es un eco del <i>Ecelsiastes</i> 10,8: "He that diggeth a pit shall fall into it")
Fiebre de las trincheras	<i>A Friend Of The Family</i> (1924)
Gangrena	<i>Los zorritos</i> (cuento)
Gripe	<i>La radio</i> (cuento)
	<i>Una diversidad de criaturas</i> (<i>Swept and garnished</i>) (en <i>A Diversity Of Creatures</i>)
Infección	<i>La colmena madre</i> (cuento)
Lepra	<i>La marca de la bestia</i> (cuento)
-Leprosería	<i>En el mismo barco</i> (cuento)

■ Tabla 1b.

INFECCIONES POR ORDEN ALFABÉTICO EN LAS OBRAS DE RUYARD KIPLING	
Enfermedades infecciosas patógenos y tratamientos	Obra
Malaria	Kim
-fever and chills	The Taking Of Lungtungpen (Plain Tales from the hills) (1887)
-fever	The world without (1888)
-el barro (mud) como fuente	Judson And The Empire
-el barro (mud) como fuente	Los caballeros de la alegre aventura (The Knights Of The Joyous Venture) (en Puck de la colina de Pook) (1906)
-Canal fever	In The Rukh (1896)
-forest tree y prevención de fever	The Church That Was At Antioch
-registro temperatura (fever chart)	With The Night Mail (en Actions and reactions)
-Intermittent Fever	The Other Man (1886)
-Jungle Fever	In Error (en Plain Tales from the hills) (1887)
-Seasonal Fever	The Return Of Imray (1891)
-Regular Autumn Fever	His Private Honour) (1891)
-Regular Autumn Fever	My Lord The Elephant (1892)
-Marsh Fever	Dymchurch Flit (1906)
-Peshawur Fever	A Deal In Cotton (1907)
-Salonika Fever	Fairy Kist (1927)
	The Ballad Of Boh da Thone
	The Tomb Of His Ancestors (cuento en The day's work)
-opio malaria	Los constructores del puente (The bridge-builders) (cuento)
-quinina	The Story Of A King (The Smith Administration)
-quinina	William The Conqueror Part 2 (cuento en The day's work)
-quinina	La radio (cuento)
-puerta mosquitera	A Conference Of The Powers
-puerta mosquitera	My Own True Ghost Story
-puerta mosquitera	His Majesty The King
-Mosquitera	Bee, Bee, ovejita negra (cuento)
-mosquito	On Greenhow Hill (1890)
Meningitis	Ellos (cuento en Cuentos de la venganza y de la memoria (Stories of the revenge and the memory)
-Spotted fever	The Eye Of Allah (1924)
Neumonía	Deudas y créditos (Sea constables: A Tale of 15)
Nicholas Culpeper	La radio (cuento)
	A doctor of Medicine (1909) (cuento)
Parásito	La colmena madre (cuento)
Peste	La extraña galopada de Morrowbie Jukes (The strange ride of morrowbie jukes) (cuento en The phantom 'Ricksaw and other tales)
	Sin pasar por la vicaría (Without Benefit of Clergy) (cuento)
	A Doctor Of Medicine (en Rewards and Fairies) (1909)
	The Spies March (poema)
	The treasure and the law (1906)
Rabia (hidrofobia)	La marca de la bestia (cuento)
Resfriado	El Rickshaw fantasma (The phantom 'Rickshaw) (cuento en The phantom 'Ricksaw and other tales) (1885)
Sarna	Los zorritos (cuento)

■ Tabla 1c.

INFECCIONES POR ORDEN ALFABÉTICO EN LAS OBRAS DE RUYARD KIPLING	
Enfermedades infecciosas patógenos y tratamientos	Obra
Sífilis:	
-Tabes	Love-o'Women
-Sífilis terciaria	An Error In The Fourth Dimension (cuento en The day's work)
Tifus	Brother Square-Toes (cuento en Rewards and fairies)
-más bien parece tifoidea	The Trouble Of Curtis Who Lodged In The Basement (poema) (1882) New Brooms (1888)
Tripanosomiasis africana	Los caballeros de la alegre aventura (The Knights Of The Joyous Venture) (en Puck de la colina de Pook) (1906)
-Aceite de Seneca: aceite de la superficie del lago Seneca y que se usó para el reumatismo, tos, quemaduras, esguinces, etc.	
Tuberculosis, tisis, pleuresía	En casa de Suddhoo (cuento) La radio (cuento) With The Night Mail A Childs Garden Judson and the Empire (Judson y el Imperio) (en Muchas invenciones - Many inventions) A Bank Fraud", in Plain Tales From The Hills On Greenhow Hill" in Life's Handicap Recuerdos y cuentos (Marklake witches) (en Rewards And Fairies) Wireless (en Traffics And Discoveries) Deudas y créditos (Debits And Credits) (en On the gate: A Tale of 16) Beauty Spots (en Limits And Renewals)
Verruga	Una guerra de Sahibs (cuento)
Viruela	Los constructores del puente (The bridge-builders) (cuento)
Vacunación viruela	The Tomb Of His Ancestors (1897)
Vacunación viruela	Their Lawful Occasions (1903)
Vacunación viruela	A Second-Rate Woman
Vacunación viruela	The Light That Failed (1890)
Vacunación viruela	New Brooms (1888)
Vacunación viruela	Los constructores del puente (The bridge-builders) (cuento)
Vacunación viruela	The Miracle of Purun Bhagat (1894)
Vacunación viruela	A Trooper Of Horse (en The Eyes Of Asia)
Vacunación viruela	Little Tobrah
	Cartas de Kipling sobre la vacuna: a Mrs. Hill julio 1888 y 21 febrero 1889, a Margaret Mackail 11-14 febrero 1889, y Anna Smith Balestier 26 noviembre 1908

agua clorada en forma de vapores inhalados, una botella con cáustico para quemar las membranas, pero era una práctica muy peligrosa. En “*A Little Prep*” (1899), se describe el uso de un tubo que se pasaba a través de la membrana y se succionaban las secreciones mucosas, método descrito 4 años antes de escribirse este cuento, ya que antes se hacía una traqueotomía.

b) En sus obras donde aparece la viruela, “*The bridge*” y “*The miracle of Purun Bhagat*”, está presente Sitala, la deidad de la viruela.

c) Culpeper aparece como se indica en “*A doctor of medicine*” (1909), que se sitúa en 1643 y donde es capturado después de buscar víctimas de la peste y recolectando hierbas que recomienda en su “*Complete Herbal*”.

d) En “*The treasure and the law*” (1906) y situada en el año 1215 de la Carta Magna, donde los judíos son sospechosos de envenenar los pozos de agua.

En conclusión, Ruyard Kipling, representa el autor por excelencia de la medicina colonial donde estas infecciones cobran especial relevancia y además por dar una descripción literaria única del test de Romberg.

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