

Erictho's spell and its use as a paradigm of demoniac conjuration in  
Spanish Literature of the Golden Age

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“Yo te conjuro con la sangre de Lucano” (Spanish traditional spell, ed. Diez Borque 52)

One of the scariest characters in ancient literature is the magician Erictho. She is qualified of *furialis* by Ovid and *effera* by Lucan.<sup>2</sup> Even her name (from Greek Ἐριχθῶ),<sup>3</sup> following the ancient proverb *nomen omen*, could be considered meaningful, because it was usually related to ἐρέχθω “to break.”<sup>4</sup> She is mightier than her fellow sorceresses, Thessalia's women, whose magic rituals and criminal spells she despises: “Hos scelerum ritus, hæc dirae crimina gentis / effera damnarat nimiae pietatis Erictho.”<sup>5</sup> Even the deities are terrified by her, so that she does not deprecate or obsecrate, but imprecate them:

Nec superos orat, nec cantu supplice numen  
auxiliare uocat, nec fibras illa litantis  
nouit: funereas aris imponere flammæ  
gaudet, et accenso rapuit quæ tura sepulcro.  
Omne nefas superi prima iam uoce precantis  
concedunt carmenque timent audire secundum.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Respectively, “furious” or “dreadful” (*Heroids* 15.139) and “savage” (*Pharsalia* 6.508). As for the precedence of Ovid's mention and the polemic about the authenticity of *Heroids* 15, see Thorsen, 101-103.

<sup>3</sup> De Vit II: 751, Escher. This form has epigraphic documentation, but Perin, V: 549, gives it erroneously as Ἐρεχθῶ (see the following note). Ovid uses the form Erictho, closer to the original Greek name.

<sup>4</sup> So De Vit II: 751, and Perin V: 549, but in fact it is a shortened feminine form of Ἐριχθόνιος (Escher, Luce 157). According to Chantraine, “Tous ces mots évoquent par étymologie populaire le verbe ἐρέχθω «briser», mais doivent être d'une façon ou d'une autre reliés à Ἐριχθόνιος,” which “doit être analysé en Ἐρι-χθόνιος,” that is, as a compound of ἔρι-, shortened form of ἔριον “wool,” and χθόνιος, derivative from χθών “ground, earth,” “ce qui correspond à la légende ; mais pourrait à la rigueur être l'arrangement par étymologie populaire d'un nom égéen.” (372, see also Bailly 805). For Ἐριχθόνιος, Frisk proposes an etymon composed of ἐπί “on, upon” and χθόνιος, “vielleicht volksetymologische Umbildung eines vorgriech. Wortes” (I: 561). As for Erictho, it could be interpreted as a similar compound of ἐπί, or perhaps ἐρι as intensive prefix, plus χθών, suggesting a telluric strength.

<sup>5</sup> “These hideous rites, these crimes of dread people / were spurned by savage Erictho as too pious” (*Pharsalia* 6.507-508, cf. Luck 249). Unless otherwise indicated, all translations are mine.

<sup>6</sup> “She never prays to the gods above, nor by a suppliant hymn / invokes a helping divinity, neither the entrails of favorable omens / she knows; casting on altars the funeral flame / she only enjoys, together with incense stolen from the kindled sepulchers [i.e. funeral pyres]. / The gods above grant her any execrable thing at her first requiring utterance, / since they are afraid to hear a second conjuration” (Lucan, *Pharsalia* 6.523-528, cf. Luck 249); the three first lines mean that Erictho rejects the normal and licit ways of

Lucan provides a detailed relation of her power and capabilities, as much as a catalogue of her activities (*Pharsalia* 6.507-830; cf. Day, 103). Due to her look (haggard and pale cheeks, unkempt locks of hair) and some of her practices (burning the seeds when she walks in the fields, poisoning the air, ripping limbs from the hanged corpses, or sacrificing newborn children), Erictho has been very often considered a witch. Moreover, according to Johnson, she is the “first recognizably modern witch in European literature” (19) and “a witch’s witch” (20). In the same mood, García Teijeiro states that “se encuentra en él [sc. Lucan] totalmente desarrollado el personaje de la bruja, [...] fue Lucano quien fijó definitivamente las características del tipo” (“Magia antigua” 148). Luck goes even further:

Lucan tried to surpass his uncle Seneca in the description of horror. He created in this unfinished epic on the civil war between Caesar and Pompey a kind of superwitch, Erictho, who is consulted by the “worthless” son of Pompey on the eve of the decisive battle of Pharsalus (48 B.C.). Since Lucan wished to compete with Virgil as an epic poet, is it safe to say that this necromantic scene in Book 6 of his work was designed to invite comparison with Book 6 of the *Aeneid*, the hero’s visit to the underworld. (246; see also 212)<sup>7</sup>

In more general terms, Pillinger speaks of “literary witches,” not only about Erictho, but also about figures like Circe or Medea (who were primarily *πολυφάρμακοι* or experts in drugs), and many others:

The canon of witches in classical literature stretches from the powerful mythological figures of Circe and Medea, through the more girlish characterisations of the Hellenistic era, down to the hags and procuresses populating Latin comic drama, elegy, satire and the ancient novel, with an epic cameo provided by the spectacular Erictho in Lucan’s *Bellum Civile*. (39)

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relationship between humans and gods (Holgado 273, Gordon 237-238), since she omits the pleading and just order the deities (Ramírez López, 76-77). The political implications of such an attitude are explored by Gordon (240-241).

<sup>7</sup> For Erictho as “anti-Sibyl,” see Hardie 77 and 109, Zissos § 3; cf. also Quint 204-205, and Pillinger 64-65. On the other hand, Hardie 77 (cf. 62), suggests that the character of Erictho is partially modelled on the Fury Allecto in *Aeneid* 7, and is, therefore, a *dira*, but, even if the proposal of influence seems well based, Erictho can be considered as such only in the general sense of “fearful” or “ominous.” According to Zissos, “She is in effect an amplified and geographically-inverted Fury: she dwells in the upper world and terrorizes the forces of the nether realm” (§ 2), what is true, but rather metaphorical. On the other hand, Erictho is clearly related to Horace’s Canidia, another powerful and criminal Thessalian sorceress which appears in *Satires* 1.8, 2.1, and 2.8; and *Epodes* 3, 5 and 17 (on this character, also usually identified with a witch, see Paulin, and, with caution, Pillinger 47-56 and 68). At an intratextual level, it must be noticed that there is an obvious play of similarity and contrast between Erictho and Pheonoe, the Pythian priestess of Book 5 of *Pharsalia* (Hardie 107-109, Rudich, 175 and 318, Pillinger 63-65, Day 102).

Nevertheless, there was no such thing as “ancient witchcraft” (*pace* Stratton *inter plurimos*), because—as opposed to sorcery and necromancy—there were not real practitioners of witchcraft, but just people accused of it, and such accusations are not documented before the 14th century (Robbins 547-548, Kieckhefer 10-20). At that time the witch was no longer considered a kind of bad spirit or mythical figure, but was identified with real people. This incarnated witch was, in the beginning, the embodiment of traditional beliefs, but in the 15th century she was adopted and adapted by the ecclesiastical writers in the form of the theological witch.<sup>8</sup> As for Erictho (no to speak of Circe or Medea), she lacks the main traits of the traditional version of the witch as an archetypal character: she cannot fly nor transform herself into a nocturnal bird, nor is she a bloodsucker, nor casts the evil eye, nor produces nightmares, nor has innate powers exercised without resorting to enchantments. In ancient beliefs, the first two features were typical of the *lamia*, as well as the *strix* or *striga*,<sup>9</sup> like those reported by Petronius in his *Satyricon* 63.3-64.1.<sup>10</sup> Certainly, Gordon argues that

Erictho is in general conception based upon the folkloric figure of the Lamia, who is herself, in different guises, the traditional night-witch figure of the Hellenic world. The Lamia lives in isolation apart from human habitation, in caves, ravines, and ruins. *She feeds by sucking blood from the living and the dead; she murders and eats children; she never sleeps; she constantly changes her shape.* Each of these details involves a reversal of fundamental human norms” (240; italics mine)

However, the specific traits of this mythical creature, emphasized in the quotation,<sup>11</sup> are not at all related to Lucan’s character, as Gordon himself recognizes indirectly,

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<sup>8</sup> For the evolution from *striga* or the like to traditional witch and then to theological witch, see, Kieckhefer, Tausiet, Castell, Montaner, “El paradigma satánico”, and Montaner & Lara, “Magia, hechicería, brujería” 84-118. On the transformation of traditional in theological witch, see also Broedel, and cf. Arnould 152-153.

<sup>9</sup> On the other hand, the inducement of nightmares was not proper of the *lamia* nor the *strix*, but of the *incubus* (see Castell 171-172, Montaner & Tausiet 266 and 304-305).

<sup>10</sup> The importance of Petronius’ passage in the prehistory of the witch’s archetype has been pointed out by Alonso del Real, 23, and Arnould, 44. Lucan himself mentions the “*strix nocturna*” in the list of sounds to which Erictho’s voice resembles (*Pharsalia* 6.689; cf. Schwenn 356 and Graf 201). Notice that *striga* is the etymon of several Romance words for “witch,” like Italian *strega*, Romanian *strigă*, Old French *estrie*, or Old Portuguese and Old Castilian *estria* (Meyer-Lübke n.º 8308). For more details on the *lamiae* and *striges*, see respectively Boehm and Schwenn.

<sup>11</sup> Lamia’s ability to remove her eyes should be added to the list of her typical features (Boehme 545), and one that is also alien to Erictho.

“Erichtho too demonstrates a parallel rejection of rule. In her case, however, her demonic quality, in keeping with Lucan’s theme of necromancy, has centred upon death and corpses almost to the exclusion of other motifs” (240).<sup>12</sup> Even if it could be accepted that a few of Erichtho’s features were inspired but such mythical creatures,<sup>13</sup> she is neither a *lamia*, nor a *strix*, but a *uenefica*, “sorceress” or “enchantress”<sup>14</sup> (*Pharsalia* 6.581). Lucan also calls Erichtho *uates* in its primitive meaning of “foreteller” (6.651),<sup>15</sup> as opposed to the “tripodas uatesque deorum” (“tripods and prophets of the gods,” 6.770) of the official oracles.<sup>16</sup>

Erichtho fit still less the theological archetype of a witch, since she acts completely alone, does not participate in any kind of coven or sabbath and by no means is subdued to the infernal deities. Rather, she is the one who (as is typical of the necromantic

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<sup>12</sup> Gordon adds that “Moreover the theme of cannibalism, which is central to the representation of the lamia as night-witch, is also present in the figure of Erichtho” (240), but the *lamiae* only feed themselves of human blood and entrails, especially those of children (Boehme 544-545, Price & Kearns 312), while Erichtho is an occasional and probably just a ritual cannibal (as can be deduced from *Pharsalia* 6.706-711).

<sup>13</sup> In fact, Erichtho has more analogies with other creatures, like the *gūl* of Arabic tradition, as pointed out by O’Higgins: “Erichtho lives a ghoulish existence outside society, hanging about graveyards, gibbets, and the battlefields copiously supplied by civil war” (217). The primitive pre-Islamic *gūl* was closest to her classical counterparts, since it was a “fabulous being believed by the ancient Arabs to inhabit desert places and, assuming different forms, to lead travellers astray [...], to fall upon them unawares and devour them” (McDonald & Pellat 1079), so that Erichtho is more similar to the later version, found in popular beliefs: “In popular language *ghūl* (*ghūla*, *kuṭrub*, etc.) is frequently used to indicate a cannibal, man or demon, and this ogre is often invoked as a threat to naughty children; it also appears in many stories [...] and indicate in addition a kind of vampire which digs up bodies at night to devour them (cf. Lane, *Modern Egyptians*, ch. x)” (*ibidem*, see also Al-Rawi).

<sup>14</sup> Etymologically, the word is a haplology of *\*uenēni-fica*, applied to the woman expert in *uenena*, that is to say, “strong potions or juices,” be they benefic, “drugs,” or malefic, “poisons”; thus, *uenefica* is analogous to Greek φαρμακίς or φαρμακεύτρια, the she producer of φάρμακα “drugs, whether healing or noxious” (Ernout & Meillet 719). In fact, Erichtho is a true expert in handling these products (*herbas, ueneni et alia*), see *Pharsalia* 6.667-684, and cf. Ramírez López 79.

<sup>15</sup> But previously the *uates* is the corpse itself: “dum Thessala uatem / eligit” (“while the Thessalian chooses the foreteller,” *Pharsalia* 6.628-629, cf. Pillinger 64).

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Pillinger 65, although she does not mention this line, and Day 102. For *uates* in the *Pharsalia*, including the self-references of the poet at 1.63 and 7.553, see Johnson 120-122, and especially O’Higgins, which considers that “The picture that emerges from the *Pharsalia* is of a dazzling and anguished mind, striving to comprehend and express its vulnerability, responsibilities, and powers. Overall, Lucan’s vatic persona appears fragmentary, even contradictory. His vatic voices sing, not harmoniously, but in discordant antiphonies, and to attempt specious synthesis would misrepresent a paradoxical mind” (210). This is an important issue for understanding Lucan’s attitude to magic in both literary and epistemic terms (see below).

tradition) dominates the demonic and infernal powers.<sup>17</sup> So, to call her a witch is a terminological abuse which can produce a completely misunderstanding of her magical attitude and performances. Paraphrasing Luck, she rather must be considered a “supersorceress”, while Lara, paying attention to her physical features and her cruelty, includes Erictho in the group of semi-monstrous sorceresses, like Horace’s Canidia, Ovid’s Dipsas and the Thessalian magicians in toto (*Hechiceras y brujas* 49-55). On the other hand, it is clear that Erictho advanced some traits of the later witches and was used as a model for their characterization in Early Modern demonology, so, she can be reasonably labelled as a “protowitch,” but only from a strictly diachronic point of view (Lara, “Las referencias a la literatura clásica”; cf. *Hechiceras y brujas* 49-50 and 76, Montaner & Lara, “Magia, hechicería y brujería” 90-91). As a matter of fact, Erictho especially exceeds as a necromancer, as pointed out by Gordon (see above), and explained by Luck:

Lucan first enumerates various methods of divination, but adds that for Pompey’s son necromancy is the only reliable way of exploring the future. The rites involved are presented as monstrous and disgusting, but the poet goes on and on. [...] Erictho has enormous power and no scruples whatsoever about using it. The central idea of the whole passage—the revival of a corpse—may have been discussed as a scientific problem at the time. (247)

For this purpose, “Lucan introduces some pseudoscientific [*sic*] speculation on how to revive a corpse,” since Erictho “pours boiling blood into the body of a soldier, who had recently been killed, but she also injects many other substances” (Luck 212, more details

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<sup>17</sup> For that obvious reason, Rudich is wrong in saying that Lucan offers “a pagan equivalent of what the Christian would have understood under ‘devil-worship’” (176). Even the major premise, “here is the claim of the evil forces’ superiority over the celestial powers” (176), must be nuanced, because what is really shown here is the overwhelming power of magic over both heaven and underworld deities, as much as the existence of an occult chthonic divinity, mightier than any other, and prone to help the appropriate magician. I will return on both issues later. On the other hand, Rudich is right in pointing out that Lucan deplores this situation, which he finds “to be ‘ontologically’ (if not politically!) correct” (177). Anyway, a more accurate explanation is that, for Lucan, the undeniable effectiveness of the magical praxis does not make it a legitimate theoretical option. Thus, in terms of ancient ethics, the μαγική τέχνη or magical art can be, at its best, a διανοητική ἀρετή or dianoetic virtue (i.e. the one coming from training and experience), but not an ἠθικὴ ἀρετή or ethical virtue (a *habitus* that inclines towards good).

in Ramírez López 75-76 and 79).<sup>18</sup> Nevertheless, the corpse only revives after a terrifying spell directed to the infernal deities (the dreaded *carmen secundum* mentioned in 6.528),<sup>19</sup> in which the sorceress threatens them to unveil their hideous secrets, to make penetrate the sunlight in the deep hollows of the Tartarus, and even to invoke an unknown deity, mightier than all of them:<sup>20</sup>

Miratur Erictho  
 has fatis licuisse moras, irataque morti  
 uerberat immotum uiuo serpente cadauer,  
 perque cauas terræ, quas egit carmine, rimas  
 manibus illatrat regnique silentia rumpit:  
 “Tisiphone uocisque meæ secura Megæra,  
 non agitis sæuis Erebi per inane flagellis  
 infelicem animam? Iam uos ego nomine uero  
 eliciam Stygiasque canes in luce superna  
 destituam; per busta sequar per funera custos,  
 expellam tumulis, abigam uos omnibus urnis.  
 Teque deis, ad quos alio procedere uultu  
 ficta soles, Hecate pallenti tabida forma,  
 ostendam faciemque Erebi mutare uetabo.  
 Eloquar immenso terræ sub pondere quæ te  
 contineant, Hennæa, dapes, quo foedere mæstum  
 regem noctis ames, quæ te contagia passam  
 noluerit reuocare Ceres. Tibi, pessime mundi  
 arbiter, immittam ruptis Titana cauernis,  
 et subito feriere die. Paretis, an ille  
 compellendus erit, quo numquam terra uocato  
 non concussa tremit, qui Gorgona cernit apertam  
 uerberibusque suis trepidam castigat Erinyn,  
 indespecta tenet uobis qui Tartara, cuius  
 uos estis superi, Stygias qui peierat undas?”<sup>21</sup>

<sup>18</sup> The origin of the corpse is not clear and had given room to speculation about Erictho’s ability to travel to the future. According to O’Higinis, “the corpse clearly is a dead man; but we are also told that he died at Pharsalia, which at the time of his resurrection from the dead has not yet taken place. He is in a sense both alive and dead” (225, see also below).

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Graf 192 and Pillinger 72. The *prima uox* or first spell (*Pharsalia* 6.695-718) constitutes an inversion of a common Greco-Roman Prayer (Graf 193-194), but the second one is “una fórmula coercitiva, lo que en los papiros mágicos se llama ἐπανάγκος” (García Teijeiro, “Magia antigua” 149). Indeed, ἐπανάγκος λόγος or simply ἐπανάγκος means “coercive formula,” which is sometimes also expressed by ἐπαναγκαστικοί, plural of ἐπαναγκαστικός “coercive, potent” (Muñoz Delgado s.vv.). See a sample from the *Papyrus Magicus Parisiensis* in which both words appear: “τῇ δὲ τριταίᾳ μετὰ τοῦ ἐπανάγκου καὶ τὸ ἐπίθυμα τὸ ἐπαναγκαστικόν” (“on the third day, together with the coercive formula, also [use] the coercive offering,” ed. Henrichs & Preisendanz P IV.2673-2675; cf. also the following note).

<sup>20</sup> On this supreme divinity, see Holgado 283 and Solomon 40. Cf. this instruction from the *Papyrus Magicus Leidensis*: “ἐπανάγκω δὲ χρήσῃ τῷ μεγάλῳ ὀνόματι, ὃ ἐστὶν Ὀγδοάς, θεὸς ὁ τὰ πάντα διοικῶν τὰ κατὰ τὴν κτίσιν” (“as a coercive formula you will pronounce the big name, which is Ogdoas [i.e. the Eight], the god governing all which was created,” ed. Henrichs & Preisendanz P XIII.752-754).

<sup>21</sup> “Erictho marvels / at this delay granted by the fates, and angry at death, / she whips the motionless corpse with a living snake, / and through the hollow clefts of the ground, which he had gaped with her spell, / she barks at the manes [i.e. the spirits or ghosts of the dead] and breaks the silence of that kingdom: / “Tisiphone and Megara! Are you unafraid of my voice? / Will you not rush with cruel scourges, through the void of Erebus, / the wretched soul? For, by your very name, / I shall make you go out and, Stygian she-

There are different views about the degree of coincidence of Erichtho's necromantic spell and those really done by magicians at Lucan's time. The standard point of view, defended, for example, by Gordon, Luck and Pillinger, is that the conjuration is mainly a literary composition, and "it seems doubtful that either Seneca or Lucan ever saw a real necromancer in action" (Luck 212). However, other trend of scholarship (from Bourgery onwards) argues that it is not a simple literary document, but the most complete document about necromancy in Antiquity (so also Ramírez López). A more balanced position is that of García Teijeiro and Rudich, who recognize the concordances between Erichtho's practice and the magical documents of Late Antiquity, but admit also the literary component of the whole episode.

Rudich underlines that "there are remarkable correspondences between Erichtho's procedures and the so-called 'Great Magical Papyrus in Paris' [...] and similar documents" (178). In fact, necromancy occurs as νεκροαγωγή in *Papyrus Magicus Parisiensis* (ed. Henrichs & Preisendanz P IV.222) and νεκρομαντεία in other papyri (P III.279 and P VII.286). As noticed by García Teijeiro, "Los papiros mágicos griegos muestran muy bien que estas amenazas coercitivas eran el rasgo más característico de los encantamientos paganos: el poder de los grandes magos era tal que excedía al de las divinidades y demonios" ("La magia..." 112-113; more details in "Magia antigua" 143-150). This is very significant, because it reveals that Erichtho, although inscribed in the

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dogs [i.e. the Furies], to this upper light / I shall take you, and chase you –as a custodian– from pyres and burials, / I shall drive you away from the graves, and expel you from all the funeral urns. / And you, Hecate, to the gods [above], whom you often come made-up under another appearance, / I shall show you wasting with your pale aspect, / and I shall prevent you to change the face you have in Erebus. / I shall divulge what banquets under the great weight of the earth hold you, / maiden of Enna [i.e. Persephone], and by what bond / you love the sorrowful king of the night; and what contaminations you have suffered, / for which Ceres did not want to claim you back. / For you, the worst ruler of the universe [i.e. Pluto], I shall send Titan [i.e. the sun-god, as son of the Titan Hyperio] into your broken caverns / and you will be suddenly hurt by the light of day. / Are you all ready? Or that one / must be addressed which was never invoked / without making the earth tremble, who can see Gorgon unveiled, / who punishes the anxious Fury with her own whips, / who possesses the inscrutable part of Tartarus, for whom you are the gods above, and can forswear himself by the Stygian waters?" (*Pharsalia* 6.725-749, cf. Luck 254-255).

genealogy of the Thessalian sorceress, does not behave at this point as a traditional Greco-Roman *uenefica*, but as a magician of a new style, this of a νεκρόμαντις (“necromancer”) or γοητρίς (feminine form of γοής “black magician”) of the syncretic Alexandrian school.<sup>22</sup> Thus, the inclusion of such a developed episode is clearly related to the interest in magic and divination typical of Neronian reign and, in general, of post-classic Rome (Luck 212, Rudich 175-176, cf. Gordon 241).

On the other hand, the episode, serves to reveal in its full extent the low moral condition of Sixtus Pompeius, not only as a fearful and unworthy son of his father, but as someone capable of resorting to the services of a sacrilegious and criminal sorceress like Erictho. So, the necromancy scene, which “occupies, structurally and conceptually, the central place in the epic, like the hero’s journey to the underworld in the *Aeneid*” (Rudich 176), shows the nadir of the traditional Roman values, when even a member of the great family of the Pompeii is willing to act in such a nefarious and impious way. This anticlimax of moral degradation is correlative to the future climax of Caesar’s triumph, which, from Lucan’s point of view, means the final collapse of the true Rome.

Finally, it must be emphasized that Erictho’s scene is full of horror and pathos (cf. Holgado 270 and Luck 212), two fundamental features in Seneca’s tragedy, and consequently in his nephew’s epic, not only because of the influence of the former’s *Medea* (especially 670-842) over the book 6 of *Pharsalia* (Rudich 178), but because both genres share a similar decorum, due to their analogy, already noticed by Aristotle in his *Poetics*: “ἡ μὲν οὖν ἐποποιία τῇ τραγωδίᾳ [...] ἠκολούθησεν” (“Now, epic poetry with tragedy [...] agrees,” *Poetics* 1449b9-11), pathos being a basic feature of both genres.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> This assignation also justifies the importance given to the astrological element (*Pharsalia* 6.428-429, 448, 607-610), which is alien to the proper Roman divinatorial tradition. Lines 607-615 are very important in this regard, because they explain the balance of power between the astral and causal *fatum* and the capabilities of magic (cf. Rudich 178-180, but disregarding his irrelevant literary judgments).

<sup>23</sup> For the Philosopher, the πάθος (“pathetic event” or “violent effect”) is one of the three constituents of μῦθος, that is to say, the narrated story or the plot, the other two being the περιπέτεια (“peripety,”



“ἔτι δὲ τὰ εἶδη ταῦτα δεῖ ἔχειν τὴν ἐποποιίαν τῆ τραγωδία, ἢ γὰρ ἀπλῆν ἢ πεπλεγμένην ἢ ἠθικὴν ἢ παθητικὴν· καὶ τὰ μέρη ἔξω μελοποιίας καὶ ὄψεως ταῦτά· καὶ γὰρ περιπετειῶν δεῖ καὶ ἀναγνώρισεων καὶ παθημάτων” (“Moreover, as for the forms, the epic poetry must be the same as the tragedy, or plain, or twisted; or characteristic, or pathetic.<sup>24</sup> The parts, too, are the same, except for song and spectacle, so it needs turning points, recognitions and pathetic events,” *Poetics* 1459b8-11).

The effect of the pathetic event is to provoke the basic emotions of tragedy, that is, terror and pity: “ἐπεὶ δὲ οὐ μόνον τελείας ἐστὶ πράξεως ἢ μίμησις ἀλλὰ καὶ φοβερῶν καὶ ἐλεεινῶν” (“since the goal [of tragedy] is not only the representation of a single action, but of those [incidents that are] terrible and pitiful,” *Poetics* 1452b1-3). In the episode of *Pharsalia*, the expected reader’s response should be terror of Erictho’s sacrilegious action, but also complementarily pity for the unfortunate victim of the necromantic ritual, who is inflicted with the torture of dying twice: “a miser, extremum cui mortis munus inique / eripitur, non posse mori” (“Alas wretch, to whom the last service of death is iniquitously / snatched away, the inability to die!,” *Pharsalia* 6.724-725, cf. Luck 254). The result has been labelled by Rudich as “an unsurpassed exercise in the poetry of the macabre” (180).

This experience of pathos is linked to the awe that sublimity produces. As noticed by Day, “Lucan presents his subject of civil war as something sublime, beyond imagining,” and “the sublimity claimed by the poem’s narrator in response to his overwhelming subject, [is] metapoetically represented in the figures of the Bacchic *matrona*, the Pythian

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properly “turning point”) and the ἀναγνώρισις (“recognition”): “δύο μὲν οὖν τοῦ μύθου μέρη ταῦτ’ ἐστὶ, περιπέτεια καὶ ἀναγνώρισις· τρίτον δὲ πάθος. [...] πάθος δὲ ἐστὶ πράξις φθαρτικὴ ἢ ὀδυνηρά, οἷον οἱ τε ἐν τῷ φανερωῷ θάνατοι καὶ αἱ περιωδυνίαι καὶ τρώσεις καὶ ὅσα τοιαῦτα” (“There are here two parts of the narrated story, the turning point and the recognition; the third one is the pathetic event. [...] The pathetic event is a destructive or painful action, such as deaths on the stage, and excessive pains, and wounds, and the like,” *Poetics* 1452b9-13).

<sup>24</sup> That is to say, an epic can be or expressive of the moral character of the *dramatis personæ*, or composed of pathetic events. In other words, more centered in characters or in action.

priestess Phemonoe and the witch [*sic*] Erictho” (72). The inherent horror of that representation is the result of several conjoined factors:

The Erictho episode is even darker in mood and implications [than the Pythia’s one]. It occurs in the no-man’s-land of Pharsalia’s battlefield on the night before the battle. Indeed, temporally as well as spatially the consultation is a surreal affair, for the necromantic corpse is a victim of a battle that has not yet occurred. The *vates* operates outside time and place. Gruesome Erictho herself evokes Lucan’s horror at his theme, the death of Roman freedom. The return to Pharsalia is a morbid journey, for all its fascination. (O’Higgins 226)

If “Lucan literalises in the image of the apocalypse the sublimity of the inconceivable” and his “endeavour is to present the unrepresentable” (Day 101), then he found the most proper herald of that apocalypse (the end of republican aristocratic Rome) and the paradigm of the unrepresentable in Erictho herself, which embodies “this dark side of the sublime” (102), the very one that makes sublimity disturbing: “Erictho reminds us that the sublimity of *Bellum civile*, like all experiences of the sublime, cannot be so neatly or comfortably contained” (103).

Due to the dramatic intensity of the episode and the strange fascination produced by its very horror,<sup>25</sup> Erictho, “arguably Lucan’s most successful creation” (Rudich 175), became a point of reference when referring to magic in later centuries.<sup>26</sup> A well known, although indirect appearance of the character is that in the *Divine Comedy* by Dante (see Quint, and Solomon 41-43), an important mention due to the huge influence of the work. When the poet arrives to the lower part of Hell, he asks Vergil whether some non-damned person has previously entered the City of Dis, and he answers positively: he himself has gone in, commissioned by the necromancer Erictho to bring back the spirit from the circle of Judas, where traitors are punished.<sup>27</sup>

“In questo fondo de la trista conca

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<sup>25</sup> Both issues have also conditioned the reaction of many scholars, whose appreciations on Erictho’s episode are often markedly impressionistic, and inevitably misguided by the confusion between sorcery, necromancy and witchcraft.

<sup>26</sup> See, for example, Levenstein, Solomon, and Paleit 5, 88. 134, 163-164, 217-221. Schlayer explores the traces of Lucan in Spanish poetry, with several references to the *Hexen*, *Zauberer* and *Zaubersprüchen* inspired by *Pharsalia*.

<sup>27</sup> Perhaps it is the soul of a suicidal victim too, since in that circle are found, together with Judas, Brutus and Cassius.

discende mai alcun del primo grado,  
che sol per pena ha la speranza cionca?.”

Questa question fec’io; e quei “Di rado  
Incontra,” mi rispuose, “che di noi  
faccia il cammino alcun per qual io vado.

Ver è ch’altra fiata qua giù fui,  
congiurato da quella Eritón cruda  
che richiamava l’ombre a’ corpi sui.

Di poco era di me la carne nuda,  
ch’ella mi fece intrar dentr’a quel muro,  
per trarne un spirto del cerchio di Giuda.” (*Inferno* 9.16-27)

With no doubt, one of the main reasons of the literary success of Erictho was her own spell. Especially in the Spanish literature of the 15th to 17th centuries, her *carmen* gave rise to a considerable series of rewritings, some of them recognized long time ago and already summarized by García Teijeiro. Previously, Erictho’s spell have had a relatively minor appearance in a treatise of natural philosophy, the *De configuratione qualitatum et motuum*, written between 1351 and 1362 by the French scholar Nicole Oresme. In the second book of the treatise, the author applies the doctrine of configurations to magic phenomena. In his opinion, the power of sounds and, by extension, that of words, is considered one of the roots of magical efficiency:

Non semper utuntur [sc. magi] uoce significatiua sed murmurant nescio quid quadam extranea et insolita difformitate sonora difformi—ymmo difformi atque dissimili humane uoci communi. Vnde Lucanus de quadam incantatione loquens sic dicebat : “Tunc uox Letheos cunctis potentior herbis [/] excusare (/excantare) deos confundit murmura primum [/] dissona et humane multum discordia lingue. [/] Latratus habet illa canum gemitusque luporum.”<sup>28</sup>

The interest of this elusive mention was pointed out by Delaurenti:

Dans les sources médiévales, cependant, la nécromancie (*necromantia*) est souvent confondue avec la nigromancie (*nigromantia*). Ce terme désigne une divination fondée sur l’invocation des démons au moyen de pratiques magiques. La nécromancie antique, centrée sur les morts, aurait laissé la place à une nigromancie centrée sur les démons. L’évolution du rituel et du vocabulaire est le résultat d’un processus complexe d’influences réciproques. Cependant, dans l’usage, nécromancie et nigromancie sont employés au Moyen Âge comme des synonymes, ils désignent une magie centrée sur le contrôle des esprits. Lorsque Nicole Oresme cite Erictho, il ne fait pas le portrait d’une nécromancienne pratiquant la divination: il décrit une nigromancienne pratiquant la magie. (174-175)

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<sup>28</sup> “[Magicians] not always use a meaningful word, but they whisper I don’t know what sounds deformed with a strange and unusual deformity—nay rather deformed and unlike the common human voice. Thus Lucan, speaking about some incantation, told the following: ‘Then her voice, mightier than any herb / to excuse (i.e. charm) the gods of Lethe, first produces dissonant whispers, [/] very discordant from human language. [/] It contains the barking of dogs and the howl of wolves’ (ed. Clagett 368, quotation from *Pharsalia* 6.685-688).

This attitude will find an echo in later works,<sup>29</sup> but, as we will see, in a way more concerned with the core of Erictho's *carmen*, whose literary success is due, firstly, to the sublime pathos it brings, since Erictho's "hellish powers of speech exceed all imagining" (Day 103) and she "is all too capable of uttering the *nefas* of her *carmina*, of speaking what is unspeakable" (104). On the other hand, the very high degree of performativity of Erictho's *carmen*, underlined by Pillinger (40-41), also plays an important role, since it produces the highest perlocutionary effect, even beyond Austin's description: "Saying something will often, or even normally, produce certain consequential effects upon the feelings, thoughts, or actions of the audience, or of the speaker, or of other persons: and it may be done with the design, intention, or purpose of producing them" (101). This perlocutionary capacity is linked to the difference between the constative or descriptive statements and the performative or realizative ones. The simple prophecy or oracle belongs to the first type, the spell and the curse to the second one, as Pillinger has pointed out: "While prophecy involves quotation of an externally predestined fate, cursing intends to bring about or transform fate" (41). This is the true and almost almighty power of Erictho's spell:

La magia se enfrenta a los dioses, incluso a Júpiter, y toda la naturaleza se rinde a sus conjuros. [...] En la *Farsalia* los personajes no son sumisos a las deidades, sino que responden manifestando sus quejas, se revuelven contra la deidad y contra el destino. Pues bien, mediante la magia el hombre puede rebelarse contra todo lo sobrenatural. (Ramírez López, 71 y 74)

The first and probably the most developed imitation of Erictho's episode in Spanish literature was written by the courtly poet Juan de Mena in his *Laberinto de fortuna* (1444), also known as *Las trescientas* (due to the number of its strophes). Describing the fate of the constable Álvaro de Luna, favorite of King John II of Castile between 1420 and 1453, Mena deals with the so-called episode of the magician of Valladolid (*Laberinto* 237-259),

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<sup>29</sup> As much as the role played by the *anus* or *uetula*: "Il faudrait ajouter un troisième personnage à ce panorama : la *vetula*. Dans les textes médiévaux, la *vetula* est un personnage complexe et ambivalent, parfois bénéfique, souvent maléfique. Elle incarne généralement l'archétype de la vieille femme dotée de pouvoirs occultes et néfastes" (Delaurenti 176).

which is referred, through oral history, by the first commentator of Mena's poem, Hernán Núñez de Toledo:

Estando en la villa del Herena oý dezir a un hombre anciano y digno de creer que los de la valía del condestable se aconsejavan con una maga que estava en Valladolid y que los que seguían el partido de los infantes se aconsejavan con un religioso frayle de la Mejorada, que es monasterio cabe la villa de Olmedo, el qual era grand nigromántico, y asimismo con don Enrrique de Villena, y que la sobredicha maga dixo qu'el condestable avía de ser fecho pieças, lo qual salió después verdad quando le degollaron. (440)

The poet starts in the moment when several followers of don Álvaro go to consult the necromancer in order to know which faction will win the civil war between the Castilians loyal to the king and the supporters of his cousins, the princes of Aragon:

de algunos que mucho quisieron saber,  
por vanas palabras de fembra mostrada  
en cercos e suertes de arte vedada,  
la parte que avía de prevalesçer. (*Laberinto* 238e-h)

The “arte vedada” is the necromancy or, in general, the black magic, and the use of “cercos,” that is to say, magic circles,<sup>30</sup> allows to consider the Valladolid woman not as a traditional sorceress, but as a practitioner of the new ritual magic of Arabic and Hebrew origin, since “el cerco es la protección común del mago medieval en operaciones peligrosas, corresponde al amuleto protector de la magia antigua y, probablemente, al disfraz de Furia en la escena de Lucano, cuya función apotropaica Mena no captó” (García Teijeiro, “Magia antigua” 151; cf. Esteban 309-310). Compare the gloss by Núñez de Toledo to *Laberinto* 238f-g: “De henbra mostrada / en cercos, etc: De muger sabida en el arte de nigromancia, que es vedada” (440). In fact, it was condemned in the previous century by Pope John XXII by means of the bull *Super Illius specula*, issued in 1326 “contra immolantes dæmonibus, aut responsa et auxilia ab eis postulantes, siue tenentes libros de eiusmodi erroribus tractantes.”<sup>31</sup> It was not strange that the adepts to this new

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<sup>30</sup> In fact, the “maga” draws a circle for the necromantic ritual: “pónelo [sc. the corpse] ésta en medio de un cerco / y desde allí dentro conjura en el huerco [i.e. the hell or the devil] / y todas las sombras ultriçes [i.e. the avenging shadows] sin falla” (*Laberinto* 245f-h).

<sup>31</sup> “Against those who offer sacrifices to the demons, and ask from them answers and help, or have books dealing with those [doctrinal] errors” (ed. Tomassetti *et al.* IV: 315). For the new ceremonial magic and its qualification of demonolatry, see Boureau and Boudet. About the use of magic circles as an evidence

magic were churchmen,<sup>32</sup> like the Hieronymite friar of the monastery of Santa María de la Mejorada mentioned by Núñez de Toledo, but some women were also involved in those practices.<sup>33</sup> This does not mean that the historical figure was really a necromancer and not just a sorceress (as suggests *Laberinto* 240f, calling her “una persona muy encantadera”) or, perhaps, some kind of clairvoyant. In any case, Mena’s interpretation allows him to follow the path of Lucan and closely imitate Erictho’s episode, as already noticed by Núñez de Toledo:

Esta fábula y ficción de Lucano imita aquí Juan de Mena siguiendo en todo las pisadas de Lucano, y dize que en las guerras entre el condestable y los infantes algunos, cobdiciando saber cuál parte avría la victoria, 25 consultaron esto con una muger nigromantesa, la qual resuscitó un cuerpo muerto que le dixo cómo el condestable avía de ser vencido y a la fin del todo deshecho; y que oyendo esto algunos que seguían el partido del condestable le desampararon y se despidieron dél. (439)

The comparison between Mena’s imitation (*Laberinto* 240-256) and its Latin model was developed by Núñez de Toledo himself (442-467) and more recently by Lida 79-83 (which accurately points out some debts to Virgil and Ovid), and García Teijeiro, “Magia antigua” 150-153 (cf. also Garrosa 430-434), so that I will focus only in the equivalent of Erictho’s *carmen secundum*. After describing the sorceress’ laboratory (inspired by the ingredients of Erictho’s mixture in *Pharsalia* 6.667-684, and partially also by Ovid’s depiction of Medea’s spell in *Metamorphoses* 7.179-293) and the preparation of the ointment for making a dead to speak, the *maga* starts her conjuration on the unburied corpse of a victim of the civil war. Murmurs and dissonant voices come first, then the

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of the ascription of the “nigromantesa” to this kind of magic, see Morales 539 and 551-552; cf. also Montaner y Lara, “Magia, hechicería y brujería” 119 and 140.

<sup>32</sup> For example, the same pope sent an apostolic letter the bishop of Fréjus and other ecclesiastical dignitaries in 1316 commissioning them to prosecute several clerics and other residents in the papal curia for necromantic and demonic practices (Hansen 2-4). The relation of demonic magic or necromancy to the clerical world is explored in detail by Kieckhefer 151-172.

<sup>33</sup> Compare the case of a certain Galharda Enquede, prosecuted in 1319 because she, the presbyter Petrus Ademarii and the Carmelite friar Petrus Ricardi (or Recordi) “factionibus ymaginum, incantationibus et consultationibus demonum, fascinationibus, maleficiis et aliis diversis adinventionibus superstitiosis intendunt” (“they intend the making of [magic] figures, incantations and queries to the demons, spells, curses, and several other superstitious inventions,” Vidal 53-54). In 1338, Pope Benedict XII sent the apostolic letter *Non absque horrore* to canon Guillaume Lombard, Avignon officer, to proceed against Catherine Andrieu and Simone Guiot, accused of making a pact with the devil, and to investigate other women who could have committed the same offense (Vidal 257-258, Hansen 13-14).

conjunction addressed to Pluto, Proserpine, Cerberus, and Charon. Given the slowness of the infernal deities, the necromancer pronounces the coercive formula:

La maga, veyendo crescer la tardança,  
por una abertura que fizo en la tierra:  
“Écate”, dixo, “¿non te fazen guerra  
más las palabras que mi boca lança?  
Si non obedesces la mi hordenança,  
la cara que muestras a los del infierno  
faré que demuestres al cielo superno<sup>34</sup>  
tábida, lúrida e sin alabança.<sup>35</sup>  
¿E sabes tú, triste Plutón, qué faré?  
Abriré las bocas por do te gobiernas,  
e con mis palabras tus fondas cavernas  
de luz subitánea te las feriré;  
obedesçeme, si non llamaré  
a Demogorgón, el qual invocado  
treme la tierra, ca tiene tal fado  
que a las Estigias non mantiene fe.” (*Laberinto* 250-251)

Although here “el canto segundo” (*Laberinto* 252b) is shorter than Erictho’s one, it keeps its three threats to the netherworld deities: to unveil their hideous secrets (here only those of Hecate), to make penetrate the sunlight in their deep caves, and to invoke against them the mightiest deity, which is not yet an anonymous one, but is called Demogorgon. Undoubtedly, this name comes from Boccaccio’s *Genealogia deorum gentilium*,<sup>36</sup> where “ueterosus ille deorum omnium gentilium proauus, undique stipatus nebulis et caligine, mediis in uisceribus terre perambulanti michi comparuit Demogorgon, nomine ipso

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<sup>34</sup> *Superno* is a Latinism adopted by Mena (Lida 395), meaning “related to the upper or higher part”. Cf *Pharsalia* 6.733-34: “Stygiasque canes in luce superna / destituam” (i.e. “Stygian she-dogs [i.e. the Furies], to this upper light / I shall take you”).

<sup>35</sup> *Tábida* and *lúrida* are also Latinisms (Lida 255 and 450). The latter means “pale, sallow”, the former “wasted, corrupted”, and is taken directly from Lucan: “Hecate pallenti tabida forma” (“Hecate wasting with your pale aspect” *Pharsalia* 6.737).

<sup>36</sup> As noticed by Lida 81, this deity was already known in 13th-century Castile. He is mentioned in the *General estoria* composed under the direction of King Alfonso X (for a detailed exposition, see Saquero & González). There he is not the first god, but the first human being, due to a euhemeristic approach: “Pues departimos assí sobr’el linage de Danao, que segund los gentiles el primero omne que nació de los elementos ovo nombre Demogergón; aquel Demogergón fizo a Orión, Orión a Celio, Celio a Saturno, Saturno a Júpiter.” (I.25.25, 691). Nevertheless, Mena was not aware of this precedent, which, in turn probably derives from the 12th-century commentary on the *Pharsalia* by Arnulfe d’Orléans: “ILLE Demogorgon, qui fuit pater Omagionis, Omagion Celii, Celius Saturni, Saturnus Iouis” (note to 6.744, 350; cf. Quint 203). In other passages on Demogorgon the source of the *General estoria* is a text close to the anonymous 12th-century treatise *De natura deorum* (Saquero & González 97-98; as for the Latin work, see Allen and Brown), here the word-to-word correspondence suggests a direct influence of the *Glosule super Lucanum*, a hypothesis reinforced by the resort of the scholars of Alfonso X to Arnulfe’s *Allegoriae* to Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* (cf. Salvo 149-150).

horribilis” (“that spiritless ancestor of all the pagan gods, on all sides surrounded by mist and fog, while I went through the middle of the earth’s entrails, appeared to me, Demogorgon, horrible in his very name,” 1.P3.1). A name which the Florentine humanist explains in this way: “Sonat igitur, ut reor, Demogorgon Grece, ‘Terre deus’ Latine. Nam demon ‘deus’, ut ait Leontius, gorgon autem ‘terra’ iníerpretatur. Seu potius sapientia terre, cum sepe demon ‘sciens’ uel ‘sapientia’ exponatur” (1.P3.9).<sup>37</sup>

In turn, Boccaccio and his sources took that name from a variant reading, *demogorgon(a)*, of Lactantius Placidus’ commentary on Statius’ *Thebaid*. Here the old blind prophet Tiresias refers to an ineffable deity, “triplicis mundi summum, quem scire nefastum” (“the supreme one of the triple world, whom to know is abominable,” 4.516), and his glosser points out that “dicit [autem] deum δημιουργόν, cuius scire non licet Nomen” (“he speaks of the god Demiurge [= ‘the maker (of the world)’], whose Name is not permitted to know,” *Commentum* I:292).<sup>38</sup> Indeed, the role of Demogorgon, although not his name, is founded on the last part of Erictho’s second spell, “quo numquam terra uocato / non concussa tremit, qui Gorgona cernit apertam” (“which was never invoked / without making the earth tremble, who can see Gorgon unveiled,” *Pharsalia* 6-745-746), a passage also quoted by Boccaccio, *Genealogia deorum gentilium* 1.P3.6.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> The interpretation of Demogorgon as “Earth god” was already provided by the aforementioned *De natura deorum* I: “Primus omnium deorum pater Demogorgon dictus est quia dæmones et Ge, idest Terram, creauit uel quia a dæmonibus et Terra creatus fuit, et in infimis terræ sibi sedem elegit” (“The first father of all the gods was called Demogorgon, because he created spirits and Ge, i.e. the Earth, or because he was created by spirits and the Earth, and he chose the lowse part of the earth as his dwelling,” ed. Brown 4-5, see Solomon 45, and Gabriele 49). The version included as an appendix to Thomas Walsingham’s mythography offers a somehow different wording: “Demogorgon primus omnium pater dictus fuit, quia demones genuit, idest terram genuit, uel a demonibus creatus fuit” (“Demogorgon, the first father of all the gods, was so-called because he produced spirits, i.e. the Earth, or because he was created by spirits,” ed. Allen 364). This pseudo-etymology was also accepted by the scholars of Alfonso X: “E segund ellos, este primero omne fue Demogergón, e nació de los cuatro elementos, segund cuentan los autores de los gentiles. E es este nombre compuesto de *demon*, que dize el griego por sabio, e *geogergon*, por tierra, onde Demogergón tanto quier dezir como sabidor o sabiduría de la tierra” (*General estoria* I.6.20, 156; see Saquero & González 101).

<sup>38</sup> Both passages were quoted by Boccaccio, *Genealogia deorum gentilium* 1.P3.7-8.

<sup>39</sup> About Demogorgon in detail, see Quint 202-203, Solomon and Gabriele; for Mena’s poem, see Lida 81 (cf. 451 and 468), and García Teijeiro, “Magia antigua” 152.



Although the transformation of Lactantius Placidus' δημιουργόν in *demoirgon*, *demogeron*, *demogorgon*, and other variants was probably casual,<sup>40</sup> Lucan lines could have suggested a pseudo-etymological interpretation as a compound of δαίμων “deity” or “spirit” and Γοργόνων, plural genitive of Γοργόνη, feminized version of Γοργώ “the Gorgon”, due to “the Demogorgon’s ability to withstand the gorgon’s glance, from which one half of his composite name” (Quint 203). However, the common opinion was that “Interprétasse Demogorgón ‘dios de la tierra’ o ‘dios espantoso’” (Núñez de Toledo 465), as if it was composed of δαίμων plus γῆς or γεῶν, respectively singular and plural genitive of γῆ “earth” (see note 37), or plus γοργός “fierce, terrible” (γοργόν in the neuter gender), an adjective derived from Γοργόνη (cf. Chantraine 233).

Critics have not explained this long episode, which has been implicitly considered an ornamental exercise, except that García Teijeiro has underlined the importance of the intertextual connection:

En el pasaje del *Laberinto* que acabamos de considerar, Mena trataba un suceso contemporáneo, cuya fama se había extendido, sin duda, por Castilla. Él era un poeta culto del Renacimiento y no se preocupó por cómo hubiera podido actuar una oscura hechicera de su época. Vio en la operación de necromancia una ocasión para imitar la magnífica escena de Lucano, y así lo hizo. Los actos mágicos, las invocaciones a los dioses infernales, son los de la *Farsalia*, con la intrusión del temible Demogorgón. Esperaba, ciertamente, que el lector instruido apreciara todo esto y no se le ocurriría pensar en que alguien pudiera preguntarse si el poeta creía o no en la magia. (153)

Without denying the relevance of such a “nexus of echoes within the poetry”, already postulated by Pillinger for the *carmina* of the classic literary sorceresses (48), this seems to be a limited approach. Unless resorting to intentional fallacy, Mena’s attitude toward the possible interpretation of his readers on the topic of magic is unattainable. On the other hand, we lack information enough for determine whether Mena was aware of the real practices of sorcery in his own age or not, provided that the “maga de Valladolid” was really a traditional sorceress. Be that as it may, Mena chose, as told above, to

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<sup>40</sup> See Solomon 44-45, and Gabriele 46. These refractive dispersion of variants is very common when proper names are concerned.

represent her as a new style necromancer. However, even if he had known contemporary grimoires (such as *Picatrix*, *Liber iuratus Honorii* or *Clavicula Salomonis*), he would have not found an appropriate spell, because they were mainly addressed to astral spirits or to angels (see, respectively, Boudet and Fanger), and the orthodox view on black magic attributed its possible efficiency only to diabolical intervention:

Malefici sunt qui demonum auxilio propter pactum cum eis initum maleficiales reales effectus, permittente Deo, procurare possunt, non excludendo quin et prestigiosos effectus et fantasticos etiam per media prestigiosa producere ualeant, sed quia presens speculatio super maleficiales effectus uersatur, qui plurimum ab aliis differunt, ideo per hoc nihil ad propositum, cum tales potius sortilegi uel incantatores dicuntur quam malefici.<sup>41</sup>

If the magician of Valladolid had been a mere sorceress (*incantatrix*), he would have produced only delusions (*præstigi*), but as a necromancer who conjures the demon (*malefica*), she was theoretically able to perform hexes endowed with real effects (*reales effectus*). Anyway, even when a conjuration of spirits (*excitatio spirituum*) documented in the grimoires appeal to demons, the spell starts with a trinitarian invocation and identifies those figures with aerial spirits or geniuses:

“Vt ille uel illi N spiritus, quis ego inuocauero, ad me constricti ueniant, sub tali forma N letantes apparent, de omnibus questis ueritatem respondeant et omnia mea pecepta ueraciter adimpleant et adimpleta diligenter et sine corrupcione custodiant per illum, qui diuisit lumen a tenebris, qui diabolis potestatem suam abstulit, sub cuius potestate sunt celestia, terrestria et infernalialia, qui uiuit et regnat Deus in deitate sua trinitas, Pater et Filius et Spiritus Sancti [*sic*]. Amen.” [...] Et tunc magister tenens baculum lauri uel coruli illius anni in manu dextra et thuribulum in sinistra incipiens in oriente nouies circuiens suffumiget circulum dicens: [...] “Exeat hic acerbissimus

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<sup>41</sup> “Black magicians [or wizards] are those who, with the help of the demons on account of an undertaken pact, can obtain real effects from black magic, with the permission of God. It cannot be excluded that they are able to produce delusory and illusory effects through delusory means, but, so long as this investigation deals with the effects of black magic, which differ a lot from those other ones, therefore these are out of question here, such persons being called foretellers or enchanters, rather than black magicians [or wizards]” (Krämer & Sprenger, *Malleus Maleficarum* I.1.10B, ed. I: 223). Mackay translates *maleficus* by “sorcerer”, but in 15th century Latin its meaning was linked to demonic magic: “*maleficos*, idest utentes artibus magicis per quasdam demonum occultas pactiones et quibusdam mendaciis; habent autem ista maleficia valde multas species” (“*maleficos*, i.e. those who use magical arts on account of many occult pacts with the demons, and some trickeries; on the other hand, those magic evil deeds exceedingly have many kinds” Alonso de Madrigal, *Commentaria in Primam Partem Exodi* q. 4 in Ex 7, 41v). According to Krämer & Sprenger, the concurrence of both magicians and demons was necessary for the effectivity of black magic: “concludamus quod ad maleficiales effectus, de quibus ad præsens loquimur, malefici cum demonibus semper concurrere et unum sine altero nihil posse efficere” (“we must conclude that, regarding the black magical effects with which we are now dealing, black magicians [or wizards] and demons always get together and one cannot produce anything without the other,” *Malleus Maleficarum* I.2.18D, ed. I: 229, see also 16D, I: 235; cf. Russell 249).

rex Maymon<sup>42</sup> cum omnium suorum aerorum spirituum exercitu uirtute obediencie Belzebut<sup>43</sup> ab eis debite meam facere uoluntatem.”<sup>44</sup>

Lacking a suitable veridical demonic conjuration, Mena had at least the chance of offering an authentic one,<sup>45</sup> that is to say, a version that can be trusted as *uerisimile* or “similar (*similis*) to the truth (*uerum*)”,<sup>46</sup> what does not mean realistic, but able to take the place of the truth in a given context, regardless of its real possibility, since, as Aristotle already warned, in literary works “προαιρεῖσθαί τε δεῖ ἀδύνατα εἰκότα μᾶλλον ἢ δυνατὰ ἀπίθανα” (“one has to choose the impossible credible before the possible incredible,” *Poetics* 1460a26-27). This situation justifies Mena’s recourse to the episode that García Teijeiro has called the *locus classicus* of later descriptions of a necromantic ritual (“La magia...” 112). It is almost impossible that a real necromancer of 15th century Castile used such an invocation, but it could be thought as its acceptable literary representation under the rules of homology. In addition to that epistemic value, the poet’s choice had an

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<sup>42</sup> Maymon is the (Judeo-)Arabic name Maymūn, properly “fortunate”, but as a common name also a euphemistic designation of the monkey, an animal of bad omen in the Arab tradition (see Corriente, Pereira & Vicente 1374). As for the epithet, “the very bitter king”, cf. Erichtho’s elusive invocation to Pluto: “pessime mundi / arbiter” (“the worst ruler of the universe,” *Pharsalia* 6.742-743).

<sup>43</sup> Belsebut, taken from the Bible (2 Kings 1:2,3,6,16; Matthew 10:25, 12:24,27, etc.), corresponds to Latin Beelzebub, Greek Βααλ μυῖαν (OT) or Βεελζεβούλ (NT) and Hebrew בַּעַל זְבוּב = *baʿal zəbūb* “Lord of the flies”, which is a derogatory deformation of Ugaritic *bʿl zbwl* “the Lord Prince” or *zbl bʿl ʾarš* “the Prince Lord of the Earth”, a particular avocation of the Canaanite god Baal worshipped in the Philistine city of Ekron (Herrmann, Rubio 7103, Pope 10; Koehler & Baumgartner I: 248 accept the Biblical form as the original one, while Hillers, Rabinowitz, & Scholem 572 suggest that “Possibly there were two different original forms, Beelzebul meaning ‘Baal is prince’ or ‘Lord of the shrine,’ and Beelzebub ‘Lord of flies’ (cf. Ugaritic *il ḏbb*)”). His name was later attributed to the prince of demons in some Old Testament pseudoepigraphical writings, the Gospels and Kabbalistic writings (Hillers, Rabinowitz, & Scholem 572 and 576, Ryan).

<sup>44</sup> “That that or those [Name(s)] spirits whom I shall invoke come compelled to me, that under such form [Name(s)] appear joyful, that answer the truth about any question, and that they truly fill up all my orders, and once filled, keep them unaltered, by He who separated the light from the darkness, who took up his power from the devils, under whose power are the celestial, terrestrial, and infernal things, who lives and reigns God in his trinitarian deity, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.’ [...] And then, the master [i.e. the chief magician], holding in the right hand a staff made with laurel or hazel tree of that year, and the censor in the left hand, beginning from the East, going around the circle nine times, suffumigates saying: [...] ‘Let the most bitter king Maymon come forth together with the host of all his aerial spirits by virtue of the obedience they due to Beelzebub, in order to do my will,’” (*Liber iuratus Honorii* 131.3-5, 132.2 and 8, cf. also 128.18 and 133.30).

<sup>45</sup> For this conceptualization, inspired by Sartre, see Montaner, “Historicidad”.

<sup>46</sup> Cf. Greek τὸ εἰκός, which, according to Aristotle, is “τὸ ὅμοιον τῷ ἀληθεῖ” (“the similar to the true,” *Rhetoric* 1355a15). The intratextual authenticity is founded in its construction “κατὰ τὸ εἰκός ἢ τὸ ἀναγκαῖον” (“in accordance with what is credible or necessary,” *Poetics* 1450a12-13 and 38, 1415b9).

undeniable esthetic role, beyond that of *imitatio*, since the adaptation of Erichtho's episode furnished the Castilian poem with the same feelings of sublimity and pathos (via phobos) instilled by his model.<sup>47</sup>

About half a century after Mena's *Laberinto*, Fernando de Rojas wrote the *Comedia* (later *Tragicomedia*) *de Calisto y Melibea*, better known as *La Celestina*, since the work is centered on this character, a combination (already present in Medieval literature) of three classical types, the old woman, commonly a former prostitute (*anus* or *uetula*), the procuress (*lena*), and the sorceress (*saga*). As such, she will do a spell for Melibea to fall in love with Calisto. As pointed out by García Teijeira, "Lo que Celestina realiza es un encantamiento de magia amorosa, lo que en griego se llama φίλτροκατάδεσμος, que es un término técnico, y, a veces en latín medieval *philocaptio*, vocablo híbrido de sentido menos especializado" ("Magia antigua" 153),<sup>48</sup> in the tradition of Horace's Canidia: "exsua uti medulla et aridum iecur / amoris esset poculum" ("so that she sucked out marrow and the dry liver / became a love potion." *Epodes* 5.37-38). Nevertheless, Celestina does not prepare a magic potion (such as the ancient φάρμακον, *poculus*, or *uenenum*) nor a traditional love-spell made with wax or clay hearts; copper, lead, or wax

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<sup>47</sup> Perhaps even an elegiac mood: "La fantasía de Juan de Mena, ardiente y algo tétrica, como la de Lucano, se enamoró de este episodio, y lo transplantó audazmente a la historia de su tiempo" (Menéndez y Pelayo II: 173).

<sup>48</sup> The same author states that "aquí no se trate de ninguna operación nigromántica, sino de un hechizo amoroso, que suele llamarse, con poca razón, *philocaptio*" ("La magia..." 113), but both assertions are wrong. As we have already seen, Medieval *nigromantia* had a broader meaning than classical *necromantia*, so that it designed black magic as a whole; that is why its name changed, "De nigris proprie Nigromantia dicitur esse" ("from black things is properly called Nigromancy," Ebrardus apud Du Cange V: 582). As for *philocaptio*, it was a close equivalent of φίλτροκατάδεσμος, a compound of φίλτρον or "love-spell" (derived from φίλος "beloved," Chantraine 1205) and κατάδεσμος "a tie or band", and especially "a magic knot" (cf. Muñoz Delgado s.vv.). The accuracy of both terms is attested by this passage by Johannes Nider: "De philocaptione igitur, seu amore inordinato unius sexus ad alterum, scire debes quod triplici de causa oriri potest: aliquando ex sola incautela oculorum; aliquando ex temptatione demonum tantum; aliquando vero ex maleficio nigromanticorum similiter et demonum" ("Thus, about *philocaptio* or disorderly love from one sex to the other, you must know that it can arise from a triple cause: sometimes from the own eyes' want of foresight; sometimes from the mere temptation of the demons, and sometimes certainly from a spell of necromancers together with demons." *Formicarius* 5.5, [251]).

figurines, or sachets of powders and herbs (Cirac Estopañán 155-156, cf. Covarrubias, *Emblemas morales* 3.63, 263v), instead she resorts to a demonic conjuration:

CELESTINA. Conjúrote, triste Plutón, señor de la profundidad infernal, emperador de la corte dañada, capitán soberbio de los condenados ángeles, señor de los sulfúreos fuegos que los hervientes étnicos montes manan, gobernador y veedor de los tormentos y atormentadores de las pecadoras ánimas, regidor de las tres furias, Tesífone, Megera y Aletto, administrador de todas las cosas negras del regno de Éstige y Dite, con todas sus lagunas y sombras infernales y litigioso caos, mantenedor de las volantes harpías, con toda la otra compañía de espantables y pavorosas hidras. Yo, Celestina, tu más conocida cliéntula, te conjuro por la virtud y fuerza destas bermejas letras, por la sangre de aquella noturna ave con que están escritas, por la gravedad de aquestos nombres y signos que en este papel se contienen, por la áspera ponzoña de las víboras de que este aceite fue hecho, con el cual unto este hilado, vengas sin tardanza a obedecer mi voluntad y en ello te envuelvas, y con ello estés sin un momento te partir, hasta que Melibea con aparejada oportunidad que haya lo compre, y con ello de tal manera quede enredada, que cuanto más lo mirare, tanto más su corazón se ablande a conceder mi petición. Y se le abras y lastimes del crudo y fuerte amor de Calisto, tanto, que, despedida toda honestidad, se descubra a mí y me galardone mis pasos y mensaje; y esto hecho pide y demanda de mí a tu voluntad. Si no lo haces con presto movimiento, ternásme por capital enemiga; heriré con luz tus cárceres tristes y oscuras; acusaré cruelmente tus continuas mentiras; apremiaré con mis ásperas palabras tu horrible nombre, y otra y otra vez te conjuro, y así confiando en mi mucho poder, me parto para allá con mi hilado, donde creo te llevo ya envuelto. (*La Celestina* auto III, 108-110)

Here, the clearest echoes of *Pharsalia* are concentrated in the last lines, from “Si no lo haces” until “horrible nombre”, which form the coercive formula. In this case, they are not a *carmen secundum*, but were already included in the main conjuration as a precautionary measure. The most literal correspondence with Erictho’s ἐπάναγκος is the thread of making the sun arrive to the dark caves of the netherworld: “heriré con luz tus cárceres tristes y oscuras” recalls “immittam ruptis Titana cauernis, / et subito feriere die” (*Pharsalia* 6.743-44), perhaps through Mena’s version “e con mis palabras tus fondas cavernas / de luz subitánea te las feriré” (*Laberinto* 251c-d), to whom Rojas owes also the invocation to “triste Plutón” (see *Laberinto* 247b and 251a). On the other hand, the threat of discovering the secrets of the underworld deities is transformed here in the menace of reveal the lies of the infernal gods, what seems inspired by the threat of making Hecate show herself with her true appearance and not under her usual feigned one

(*Pharsalia* 6.736-738),<sup>49</sup> filtered through the Christian conception of the devil as “a liar, and the father of it” (John 8:44).

Celestina’s coercive formula lacks the mention of the powerful god later called Demogorgon, but the appeal to the magic power of proper names, “apremiaré con mis ásperas palabras tu horrible nombre” is surely an echo of “Iam uos ego nomine uero / eliciam” (“For, by your very name, / I shall make you go out,” 6.732-733). Another details derive also from Lucan: the invocation to “las tres furias, Tesífone, Megeira y Aleto” is taken from 6.730; the description of Pluto as “administrador de todas las cosas negras del regno de Éstige y Dite, con todas sus lagunas y sombras infernales y litigioso caos” combines *Pharsalia* 6.742-743, “pessime mundi / arbiter” (“the worst ruler of the universe”) and 697, “rector terrae” (“ruler of the Earth”), with the mention of Styx, Dis and Chaos in several lines of Erichtho’s episode.<sup>50</sup> Finally, the use of the skein of thread has a clear antecedent in Lucan’s description of the love-spells made by the Thessalian sorceresses: “quos non concordia mixti / alligat ulla tori blandæque potentia formæ / traxerunt torti magica uertigine fili.” (“Those whom nor the harmony of a shared bed neither the power of a beautiful form unites / they attract with the magical whirling of the twisted yarn.” *Pharsalia* 6.458-460). There is thus evidence enough that Rojas was inspired not only by Mena’s poem (as usually assumed from Foulché-Delbosc 196-198 onwards), but also directly by Lucan’s (cf. Cejador I: 148).<sup>51</sup>

Nevertheless, the mention of Dis as a place name equivalent to Styx and not as an alternative name of the netherworld god is due to the influence of Dante’s City of Dis in

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<sup>49</sup> Although the mention of Hecate also appears in Mena’s *Laberinto* 250e-h, it lacks the keyword *ficta* “feigned”.

<sup>50</sup> Styx and Dis are mentioned together in 6.514: “domos Stygias arcanæque Ditis;” Styx and Chaos in 6.695-696: “Eumenides Stygiumque nefas Pœnæque nocentum / et Chaos innumeros audidum confundere mundos;” Styx alone in 6.517, 569: “Stygias mandauit ad umbras,” 634, 653: “aspiciat Stygias [...] umbras,” 662: “Stygiosque lacus,” 698, 733, 749: “Stygias [...] undas,” 766; Dis alone in 6.433: “umbrarum Ditisque fidem,” 642: “haud procul a Ditis cæcis depressa cauernis,” 793: “carcere Ditis;” Chaos alone in 6.616-617: “patebunt / ad uerum: tellus nobis ætherque chaosque.”

<sup>51</sup> A discussion of the different views on Rojas’ sources can be found in Lobera *et alii* 816-817.

*Inferno* 9 (see above). The presence of harpies in the hell is also taken from Dante, where these mythical monsters are the custodians of the seven circle: “Quivi le brutte Arpie lor nidi fanno” (*Inferno* 13.10). However, the mention of the hydras suggests that Dante’s influence is indirect and Roja’s real source is Boccaccio’s *Fiammetta*, where the protagonist curses her rival in love in the following way:

“O Tesifone, infernale furia, o Megera, o Aletto, stimolatrici delle dolenti anime, dirizzate li feroci crini, e le paurose idre con ira accendete a nuovi spaventamenti, e veloci nell’iniqua camera entrate della malvagia donna, [...] in segno di funesto agurio a’ pessimi amanti! O qualunque altro popolo delle nere case di Dite, o iddii degl’immortali regni di Stige, siate presenti qui, e co’ vostri tristi ramarichii porgete paura ad essi infedeli. [...] E voi, o Arpie, date segno di futuro danno; o ombre infernali, o eterno Caos, o tenebre d’ogni luce nemiche, occupate l’adultere case, sì che gl’iniqui occhi non godano d’alcuna luce.”<sup>52</sup>

Anyway, what matters here is that Rojas places himself in a tradition of Christianizing the mythological representation of hell. This adaptation is especially clear at the beginning of the spell, with the unmistakable references to fallen angels, the souls of the damned, and the infernal sulfur (Russell 261, Lobera *et alii* 108). This combination of Christian and pagan elements has somewhat disconcerted the critics, which have usually taken it as an evidence of the mere rhetoric and contrived character of the spell, and, consequently, of their lack of magical effectiveness, even if both factors are not interdependent.<sup>53</sup> Nevertheless, this is neither a confusion between the pagan god and the devil, as Cejador I: 149 have thought, nor a strange fantasy of Rojas, but a common *interpretatio Christiana*, usual since the assimilation between paganism, idolatry and demonolatry made by Tertullian in *De idololatria*. In fact, Pluto, as different from Satan, was the custodian of the fourth circle of hell already in Dante, *Inferno* 6.115: “Pluto, il

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<sup>52</sup> *Fiammetta* 6, 119-120. The similarities between this passage and the beginning of Celestina’s spell were noticed by Castro Guisasaola 143 and 151, who proposed it as a source complementary to Mena’s *Laberinto*. It must be underlined, however, that the combination of Mena and Boccaccio does not explain Rojas’ phrasing without resorting to Lucan.

<sup>53</sup> A detailed *status quaestiones* on this topic is drawn by Montaner & Lara, “La hechicería en *La Celestina*” 433-439. Add to the authors there referred Garrosa 547-574, and Pérez Priego, who erroneously consider Mena as the only source of Rojas and think that the spell has a purely literary character; and García Teijeiro “Magia antigua” 153-155, and “La magia...” 113, who underlines “lo artificial de la invocación”, but does not take a stand on its effectivity.

gran nemico”, and 7.1-2: “«*Pape Satàn, pape Satàn aleppe!*», / cominciò Pluto con la voce chioccia.” This identification of pagan infernal deities with several types of demons was widely accepted by Early Modern demonology:

Reliquum est nunc, ut uideamus, quam diuersimode uocetur diabolus a magis, necromanticis, sortilegis, et facinorosis huiusmodi hominibus. Dæmones igitur ab Hebreis uocantur Malachim Raaim, idest Angeli mali [...].<sup>54</sup> Latini appellant eos manes, lares, genii, laruæ, lemures. Sed præter hæc nomina diabolus uocatur etiam Hecate [...] et cum mutat speciem, Empusam uocant, quæ idem est cum Proserpina Plutonis uxore. Vocatur Pluto, eo quod mortem in orbem induxerit. Vocatur Charon, idest iracundus et furore plenus. Dicitur Cerberus, idest canis terræ. [...] Item Syrenes, quas Theodoretus uult fuisse dæmones ad uoluptatem incitantes. Sunt Erimnyes siue Eumenides, infernales Furiæ apud poetas, quas latini Pœanas uocauerunt.<sup>55</sup> [...] Vt autem regrediamur ad propositum Magiæ præstigiatoricæ et dæmoniacæ, sciendum est huic pessimæ arti adherere semper siue expressam siue tacitam inuocationem.<sup>56</sup>

In emphasizing this assimilation, Rojas made clear that Celestina was really doing a demonic conjuration, the only one considered effective (as we have seen). This is also probably the reason for omitting any reference to Demogorgon, which could be potentially problematic in this context. On the contrary, the threat of illuminating the darkness of hell was compatible with the Biblical description of the afterlife. According to the Old Testament, Sheol<sup>57</sup> is an underground space situated under the primordial ocean or abyss (*təhôm*) on which the earth floats (Job 26:5). “It is figured as an under-world (Isaiah 44:23 Ezekiel 26:20, etc.), and is described by other terms, as [...] ‘the land of darkness and the shadow of death’ (Job 10:21 f). [...] In its darkness, stillness, powerlessness, lack of knowledge and inactivity, it is a true abode of death” (Orr s.v. §2).

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<sup>54</sup> That is to say, מַלְאָכִים רְעִים = *malʔāḳîm rāʔîm*, “evil angels”.

<sup>55</sup> In fact, Pœnæ, properly the goddesses of vengeance, as personifications of expiation or punishment (*pœna*), cf. *Pharsalia* 6.695 (quoted above in note 50).

<sup>56</sup> “We have yet to see in which various ways demons are called by magicians, necromancers, fortune tellers and this kind of wicked persons. Then demons are called by the Hebrews *malakhim raim*, i.e. evil angels [...] Latins call them *manes, lares, genii, laruæ, lemures*. But, in addition to these names, devil is also called Hecate [...] and, when she changes her form, they call her Empusa, who is the same as Proserpine, Pluto’s wife. He is called Pluto, because he brought death into the world. He is called Charon, i.e. angry and plenty of fury. He is also told Cerberus, i.e. dog of the Earth. [...] Also [there are] mermaids, which Theodoretus thinks they were demons inciting voluptuousness. There are Erinyes or Eumenides, infernal Furies according to the poets, to whom Latins called Pœnæ [i.e. Avengers]. [...] Thus, to return to the topic of the demonic and ritual magic, it must be known that the explicit or implicit invocation [sc. of the devil] is always attached to this awful art” (Guazzo 1.2, 12-13).

<sup>57</sup> In Hebrew שְׁאוֹל = Šəʔôl is a feminine proper name, which the Septuagint translate by Ἅιδης or Hades and the Vulgate by *inferus* and *infernus*, in their etymological sense of “inferior place” (Koehler & Baumgartner I: 935, cf. Ernout & Meillet 317).



However, from Sheol the shadows of the dead may occasionally return, because “Sheol is a power from which Yahweh can ransom; [...] Yahweh brings men down to Sheol and raises them up (1 S[amuel] 2: 6)” (Mckenzie 801, cf. also Isaiah 7:11, Amos 9:2 and Psalms 30:3). This believing provided the basis for the evocation of Samuel by the pythoness of En-Dor on behalf of King Saul (1 Samuel 28:7-24),<sup>58</sup> an episode that also had a noteworthy influence, usually in combination with Erictho’s one.

All the previous features are linked to some details that show Celestina acting, not as a standard sorceress, but as a black magician, like Mena’s one, but with a very different purpose, since the latter is a proper necromancer, as Erictho herself, but the former is a nigromantic in its medieval broader sense, as explained by Delaurentis (quoted above), and one who works for love and not for divination. Instead of tracing a magic circle, Celestina resorts to another typical method of ritual magic, and draws a pentacle with bat blood which contains demonic names and magical characters of high dignity. The procedure was characteristic of the new necromancy: “Magi, secundum glossam ordinariam, uocantur malefici qui Dēmones inuocant cum sanguine.”<sup>59</sup> Also, “in observationibus huius artis [i.e. magicæ] utuntur quibusdam characteribus et figuris determinatis. [...] Character enim signum est. In quo datur intelligi quod figuris huiusmodi non utuntur nisi ut signis exhibitis alicui intellectuali naturæ.”<sup>60</sup> Sure enough,

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<sup>58</sup> It must be remembered that necromancy or spirit invocation was strictly forbidden (see Leviticus 19:31, Deuteronomy 18:11, Isaiah 8:19, Isaiah 19:3), but not declared impossible (although this point has been very much disputed by later theologians, both Jewish and Christian), According to Hendel, “The world of the dead was the subterranean Sheol, not in heaven where Yahweh and his divine entourage dwelled, but somehow their shadowy existence was in some respects divine and included godlike foresight into the future” (4748).

<sup>59</sup> “Magicians, according to the ordinary gloss [to Canon Law], are called the enchanters who invoke Demons with blood.” (Alonso de Madrigal, *Commentaria in Secundam Partem I Regum* q. 25 in I Re [= Sam] 28, 166r).

<sup>60</sup> “In the rites of this art [i.e. the magic one] certain characters and given figures are used. [...] A character is in fact a sign. By which it is implied that they do not use this kind of figures unless of signs destined to a being endowed with intellect.” (Thomas Aquinas, *Contra Gentiles* 3.105.7 and 11).

“nombres y signos” served together to invoke the ineffable *intelligentiæ secundæ* “quæ aliter exprimi non possunt quam per notas numerorum et characterum.”<sup>61</sup>

The mixture of conditioned and unconditional orders also resembles the technique of contemporary black magic: “magi necromantici in suis operationibus inuocant e[os] quorum auxilio utuntur suppliciter quasi superiores. Cum autem uenerint, imperant eis quasi inferioribus, [...] quare manifestum est quod homini effectus artis magice per bonos spiritus non efficiuntur”.<sup>62</sup> This twofold attitude was almost the same of both *carmina* of Erictho:

Erictho se dirige a las diosas infernales griegas diciéndoles: “*Escuchad mis súplicas.*” Pero no se trata de una súplica, pues a continuación les recuerda todas las deudas que tienen contraídas con ella por sus méritos y por las ofrendas que les tiene hechas, como el ofrecimiento de vísceras, los pechos llenos y aun calientes, las cabezas y vísceras de niños que aun deberían estar viviendo..., etc. Y les exige ahora que ellas cumplan. Todo a fin de que le den al cadáver la suficiencia para que profetice. Y les ordena: ¡*Obedeced a mis ruegos!* (Ramírez López, 76)

Nevertheless, as explained above, the imprecation was the hallmark of both ancient and new necromancers, while the **supplication** was related to the submission of the witch:

el mago [i.e. nigromante] se presenta como amo y dominador de los demonios invocados. Los demonios pierden, incluso, su libertad de movimiento, pues terminan encerrados en cristales o redomas. Es precisamente en este último punto en el que la nigromancia se aparta y diferencia del estereotipo brujeril del sabbat. En éste, la bruja se halla al servicio del demonio, completamente sometida a sus designios: la relación de fuerzas que se presentaba en la magia nigromántica se ha invertido por completo. (Campagne xxxii, cf. Del Río II q. 3, II: 88)

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<sup>61</sup> “Which cannot be expressed otherwise than by a notation of numbers and [magical] characters” (Agrippa von Nettesheim, *De occulta philosophia* 2.22, 310). The *intelligentiæ secundæ* are intelligences (or pure intellects) of the second degree, that is, created by the first intelligence. In Christian theology the latter is identified with God and the former with the angels (including the fallen ones).

<sup>62</sup> “The necromantic magicians in their operations invoke suppliantly them [i.e. the demons] whose help they use, like to superiors. But once they come, command them like to inferiors, [...] so that it is clear that the effects of magic arts are not produced for the man by good spirits” (Basín 6, a7v, emendation between square brackets are mine). The passage is an adaptation of another by Thomas Aquinas, which explains better how the theologians understood this apparent contradiction: “Non uidetur esse habentis intellectum bene dispositum ut, si sit superior, imperanti sibi subdatur sicut inferior: aut si sit inferior, ut sibi ab eo quasi superiori supplicari patiat. Magi autem inuocant eos quorum auxilio utuntur suppliciter, quasi superiores: cum autem aduenerint, imperant eis quasi inferioribus. Nullo igitur modo uidentur bene dispositi secundum intellectum” (“It does not seem proper to someone whose intellect is well disposed to submit himself to whoever orders him as an inferior, if he is superior, or to endure to be begged by him as a superior, if he is inferior. Magicians, however, invoke suppliantly them whose help they use, like to superiors; but once they arrive, command them like to inferiors. Thus, by no means they seem well disposed regarding the intellect.” *Contra Gentiles*, 3.106. 9).

As we have seen, these orders were addressed to the invoked spirits by means of their proper names, usually as *nomina barbara*, that is, exotic, strange or deformed names of gods, angels, demons or other spirits, already invoked in Late Antiquity (Tardieu, Van der Kerchove & Zago), and very usual in Medieval magic formulas (Hedegård 41-42, 48). The resort to those names seems to be the true reason for Rojas not to include direct mention of devils, but perhaps there is also a problem of decorum, as Russell held: “Rojas no se atreve a poner en boca de la vieja un conjuro de Satanás que reprodujera los recomendados en los manuales” (261, see also 268). It must be noticed, however, that Medieval grimoires did not include proper demonic conjurations (see above), nor contain such names as Satan, Lucifer or Belial (see Hedegård 219-291). When they appear in Early Modern grimoires, like the several versions of the *Clavicula Salomonis*, it is still in the context of ritual and not properly demonic magic (as explained above). Other than that, Late Medieval and Early Modern magic sources generally lack the names of pagan gods, unless they coincide with the planet names, as happens in *Picatrix*.<sup>63</sup>

On the other hand, the use of the skein of thread is a traditional device, documented in love-spells since the most ancient texts,<sup>64</sup> and is based on the principle of analogy proper to sympathetic magic: the yarn will serve to symbolically bind and entangle Melibea’s desire: “the thread is unnaturally strong (‘recio como cuerdas de vihuela,’ 89 [= *La Celestina* auto IV, 117])— strong enough to make a net to trap Melibea” (Deyermond 7). Nevertheless, the magic power of the skein of thread does not come directly from this

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<sup>63</sup> Compare this Spanish spell: “Estrella Diana (*tres veces*), / tú eres mi vida, / y tú eres mi alma. / Conjúrote con nueve estrellas [etc.]” (Cirac Estopañán 110), where Diana’s name is probably a mere synonym of Moon. It is just another apparent exception a 16th-century spell against the locust plague: “continúa el conjuro imprecando al espíritu gobernador de la langosta: ‘Apolión en griego, y Abadón en abrayco, y Esterminas en latín’” (Cirac Estopañán 60), because *Apolión* is not a deformation of *Apollo*, – *inis*, but the Greek active participle ἀπολλύων “destroyer”, used as a proper name in the Bible verse here translated: “et habebant super se regem angelum abyssi cui nomen Hebraice Abaddon Græce autem Apollyon et Latine habet nomen Exterminans” (Revelation 9:11).

<sup>64</sup> In addition to *Pharsalia* 6.458-460 (already quoted), see Montaner & Lara, “Magia, hechicería, brujería” 62, and Pradilla, who points out several ancient parallels (but surely not sources) of the magic use of the thread and yarn in love spells, specially Petronius, *Satyricon* 131.

analogy nor from the magic formulas of the sorceress, but from the instillation of devil. This was the standard necromantic method forbidden by the bulla *Super Illius speculum*: “cum morte foedus ineunt, et pactum faciunt cum inferno: [...] fabricant ac fabricari procurant imagines, annulum uel speculum uel phialam uel rem quamcumque aliam magice ad daemones inibi alligandos.”<sup>65</sup>

Faced with the solemnity provided by Erictho’s model, the few strictly demonic spells actually documented in Early Modern sorcery trials were so elemental and crude that readers of a certain level, like the inquisitors who judged them, would have considered them inoperative, “invocaciones ya necias, ya ridículas.”<sup>66</sup> On the contrary, Rojas had to compose not only an unmistakably demonic conjuration, but one acceptable as such (including the use of *nomina barbara* or the like). For this, it was necessary that the spell had the decorum, dignity and pathos convenient to the scene and, above all, to the transcendence of the demonic magic within the whole argument.<sup>67</sup> In this context, it is understandable that Rojas resorted to literary sources that, in addition to fulfilling these requirements, added the prestige of the old and modern classics. In short, in doing literature, Rojas, like Mena, chose the “authentic” instead of the “veridical”.

The high prestige and enduring influence of both Mena’s *Laberinto* and Rojas’ *Celestina* caused that Erictho’s spell became the canonical form of demonic conjuration in Early Modern Spanish literature.<sup>68</sup> Moreover, her powers were taken sometimes as

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<sup>65</sup> “They enter into a feudal grant with death and made a pact with hell: [...] they make or try to make magically some figures, a ring, or a mirror, or a phial, or any other thing for binding the demons there” (Tomassetti *et alii* IV: 316).

<sup>66</sup> Lawsuit for sorcery against Alfonsa Ortiz (1625), quoted by Cirac Estopañán 216; for several of such spells see 52, 60-61, 64, 69, 79, 94, 111, 119-124, 150, 155, 159, 183, 199, 206; Díez Borque; Montaner & Lara, “La hechicería en *La Celestina*” 473-474. This documentation completely denies Garrosa’s proposal that “la vieja utiliza fórmulas corrientes en tales actividades, fórmulas rituales que sabe de memoria y que seguramente no comprende del todo” (567).

<sup>67</sup> Duly emphasized and held by Russell. In my opinion, the internal and external evidence collected by Montaner & Lara, “La hechicería en *La Celestina*”, lets the effectivity of magic in Roja’s work out of discussion.

<sup>68</sup> This preference was favored by the translation of *Pharsalia* by Lasso de Oropesa. It was published in 1540, reprinted in 1541, revised in 1578, and reprinted in 1585. Erictho’s scene can be respectively found in pp. 117-127, ff. 89r-87v, pp. 142-155, and pp. 206-225.

model for the description of this kind of characters, and also the ingredients of her necromantic ointment have heavily influenced the composition of magical “laboratories” or workshops (Montaner & Lara, “Magia, hechicería y brujería” 66 and 182-183). This is quite obvious in *Celestina*’s literary descent, known as *literatura celestinesca* (Lara, “Hechiceras celestinescas y nigromantes” 374-404, cf. *Hechiceras y brujas*, 96-146), but also in other genres, like drama (Lara, “Hechiceras celestinescas y nigromantes” 404-424, cf. Hernández) and specially epics, where a prophetic scene—often based upon Erichtho’s—was a typical feature (Vilà, Peredo, Lara “Del *Orlando furioso* a *Las lágrimas de Angélica*”). Even Cervantes, whose poetics are very connected with the concept of plausible wonder proper to late Renaissance epics (Vilà 488-489), included several episodes related to Erichtho’s scene in both dramas and novels.<sup>69</sup> There is not place enough here for a detailed review of all those texts and aspects, so I shall restrain to comment the most noticeable features on the basis of a sample of performances of the spell proper.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> The closest example is the necromantic conjuration made by Marquino in the second act of *Numancia* (Cejador I: 480, De Armas “The Necromancy of Imitation,” and Cervantes, *Raphael and the Classics* 136-153, García Teijeiro, “Magia antigua” 154 and “La magia...” 113-114, Rigaux; Baras 621-624 provides more specific bibliography and a detailed comparison between Cervantes’ text and Lasso de Oropesa’s translation of *Pharsalia*, together with other possible but isolated influences from Seneca, Mena, De la Cueva, and Ercilla). Previously, the Sacerdote Segundo had pronounced an invocation to Pluto which also has some elements coincident with Erichtho’s spell (*Numancia* 2.861-884). In the second act of *El trato de Argel* there is a love-spell made by the Algerian sorceress Fátima, but it only has a few details similar to Erichtho’s (García Teijeiro, “Magia antigua” 154; Lara, *Hechiceras y brujas* 150-151), while in other features it echoes Medea’s magic rituals in Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* 7.182-183, or in Seneca’s tragedy *Medea* 4.752-753 and 804-805. On the other hand, the high powers of the Moorish magician Cenotia, which appears in *Persiles* 2.9, are very like those of the ancient Thessalian sorceresses, although she is neither a traditional sorceress, nor a necromancer, but an expert in the new natural magic (Lara, *Hechiceras y brujas* 159-160; cf. also Andrés 169-170 and 173-174). Another character of the same novel is the Jewish sorceress Julia, but she is not related to Erichtho’s archetype (*Persiles* 4.10; cf. Andrés 170-171, Cruz Casado, and for the whole novel Díez Fernández & Aguirre de Cárcer). In *Persiles* 3.18 there is also an Arab astrologer and magician, called Soldino, which is quite similar to Ercilla’s Fitón (see below). For other aspects of astrology in *Persiles*, see Corcés and Llored, and for a general review of the presence of magic in Cervantes see Lara, “Hechiceras y brujas: algunos encantos cervantinos,” and, centered on the novels, García Soormally.

<sup>70</sup> The corpus, in chronological order, is the following: Fernández, *Tragedia Policiana* (1547); Villegas, *Comedia Selvagia* (1554); Zapata, *Carlo famoso* (1566); De Rueda, *Comedia Armelina* (1567); Ercilla, *La Araucana* (1569-1589); De la Cueva, *Los siete infantes de Lara* (1579), *La constancia de Arcelina* (1579), *Comedia del viejo enamorado* (1580, publ. 1588), and *Comedia del príncipe tirano* (1580, publ. 1588); Cervantes, *El trato de Argel* (ca. 1583-1584), and *Tragedia de Numancia* (ca. 1584-1585); Rufo, *La Austriada* (1584); Barahona de Soto, *Las lágrimas de Angélica* (1586); Lasso de la Vega, *Mexicana* (1588, rev. ed. 1594); Pedro de Oña, *Arauco domado* (1596); De Saavedra Guzmán, *El peregrino indiano* (1599); Yagüe de Salas, *Los amantes de Teruel* (1616); Cervantes, *Persiles* (1616, publ. 1617).

A remarkable novelty is the presence of male conjurors in addition to the traditional female ones. The first example, in order of appearance, is the Moorish necromancer Mulién Bucar in the *Comedia Armelina*,<sup>71</sup> although the type only consolidates in *La Araucana* with “Fitón, mágico grande y hechicero” (17.72.6).<sup>72</sup> Nevertheless, gender difference is not the principal issue at stake. More important is the dichotomy between black and white magic or, in contemporary terms, between goety and theurgy, which is “A system of magic, originally practised by the Egyptian Platonists, to procure communication with beneficent spirits, and by their aid produce miraculous effects; in later times distinguished as ‘white magic’ from goety”, properly the “magic performed by the invocation and employment of evil spirits” (*Oxford English Dictionary* s.vv.). Since the Late Middle Ages they made a triad with the natural magic:

Esta voz [sc. magia] entre los antiguos era indiferente para significar tres especies diversísimas de magia, la natural, la teúrgica y la goética. La natural, a quien también hoy damos ese nombre, y viene a ser lo mismo que llamamos secretos de Naturaleza, es la que por la penetración de las virtudes de varias cosas naturales, produce efectos admirables al común de los hombres, que ignora aquellas virtudes. La teúrgica, como imaginaban los gentiles, era una magia santa, que por el íntimo comercio con las deidades celestes y benéficas, ejecutaba cosas prodigiosas, y pedía una grande pureza de espíritu; así como la intención de los que la practicaban siempre era pura y ordenada al beneficio de los hombres. En fin, daban nombre de goética a la que nosotros apellidamos negra o diabólica. (Feijoo VII.7.11.4-6: 177-178)

Although the doctrine of the Church considered both theurgy and goety as demonolatry,<sup>73</sup> since the spirits involved in the magic only could be evil (see note 73, and cf. 41), from a looser point of view, theurgy and natural magic, due to their common

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<sup>71</sup> See Lara, “Hechiceras celestinescas y nigromantes” 415-147. There is a precedent in the unnamed necromancer of Alonso de la Vega’s *Comedia Tholomea*, but he is not built upon Erictho’s model, even if his short conjuration echoes the start of Celestina’s spell: “Infernal y diabólico principe Plutón, por la virtud de mi nigromancia, te mando que un criado de los tuyos luego embíes en mi presencia” (8, 35).

<sup>72</sup> On this important character, see Nicolopulos, “Ercilla’s Fitón”; García Teijeiro, “Magia antigua” 155; Montaner y Lara, “Magia, hechicería, brujería” 65-67 (cf. 182); Vilà 482-484.

<sup>73</sup> “Cum nulla sit *Theurgia* neque *alba Magia*, sequitur, omnem hanc prodigiosam Magiam non aliam esse quam *Goetiam* et *nigram*: hanc solemus uocare *Magiam specialem*” (“Since any [magic] is *theurgy* nor *white*, it must be concluded that all this prodigious magic isn’t other than *goety* and *black*, to whom we usually call *special magic*.” Del Río II q. 3, I: 88), while “*Thaumaturgica*, ut et *Magia naturalis*, per se bona est, et licita”, although “Per accidens utraque sit illicita, primo quando in malum finem referuntur; secundo quando schandalum oritur, eo quod putentur hæc fieri dæmonum opera (“*Thaumaturgy*, like natural magic, is in itself good and licit. Accidentally both can be illicit, firstly, when they are referred to an evil goal, and secondly, when they create scandal, because it could be thought that these works are done by demons,” I.4, I: 27-28).

beneficial purposes, were equated as white magic, against the malefic goety or black magic.<sup>74</sup>

Bearing this in mind, it is possible to suggest a typology based upon a correlation between the ethology of conjurors and the etiology of their magic powers. The basic type is the Celestina-like character, a Christian Spanish old woman who practices as a procuress and a sorceress. In principle, her magic is a traditional one, but, following her model, she can resort to goety. A paradigmatic example is “la diabólica vieja Claudina, madre de Pármeno y maestra de Celestina” in the *Tragedia Policiana*, who combines traditional spells like a heart of wax pierced by needles, with a demonic conjuration in which she calls directly Satan (9.173-191, 155; see below). Very similar to her is Dolosina in the *Comedia Selvagia*, except that she is a well-formed magician, “enseñada en las artes del mago Simón” (*Comedia Selvagia* 3.2, 151, cf. Acts 8:9-24), who studied in Paris with a famous necromancer (2.3, 114).

On the other hand, the “ethnic sorceress” is neither Spanish nor Christian.<sup>75</sup> She is usually a Moor or a Jewish, sometimes issued from a family recently converted to Christianity, like Cenotia in Cervantes’ *Persiles* (see note 70). She could have been also a Gypsy (see Lara, *Hechiceras y brujas* 155-156 and 162-163), but they are not found between the imitators of Erictho, whereas they can be native Americans, such as the Tlantepuzylama of Saavedra Guzmán’s *El peregrino indiano* 9.95 ff., who bears the name of a Mexican goddess<sup>76</sup> and even “tomó el peyote muy molido, / desatado [i.e. ‘diluted’]

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<sup>74</sup> Cf. again Del Río: “*A finali causa*, recte disparti[t]as; primo *in bonam*, si bona intentione et licitis mediis utatur (quod tantum competit artificiosæ ac naturali) et *in malam*, cuius nempe finis uel media, quibus utitur, praua sunt; hæc peculiaris est Magiæ prohibitæ” (“*According to the final cause*, they are right divided, firstly, *in the good* [magic], if it is done with good intention and licit means (what only is convenient to artificial and natural [magic]), and [secondly,] *in the evil one*, whose goals and used means are assuredly vicious, and that is proper to the forbidden magic,” I.2, I: 3).

<sup>75</sup> On this type see Lara, *Hechiceras y brujas* 146 and 163-164.

<sup>76</sup> Romero explains the name in this way: “El nombre de Tlantepucilama está compuesto por tres raíces nahuas: *tlan*, del sustantivo *tlantli*, que quiere decir diente; *tepuz*, de *tepuztli* o *tepoztlí*, que significa cobre en primer lugar y, por extensión, en segundo, metal en general, e *illama* que es tanto como decir mujer vieja, de donde, etimológicamente, Tlantepucilama puede traducirse como ‘la vieja de los dientes de

en una agua delicada” (9.112.1-2, see Romero, Vilà 481, Paredo 33-38, Marrero-Fente). This ethnic sorceress is a necromancer, but the Algerian Fátima in Cervantes’ *El trato de Argel* (see note 70) is just a traditional sorceress which employs herbal enchantment and wax figurines, and whose conjuration, with the grotesque enumeration of demons “¡Rápida, Ronca, Run, Raspe, Riforme, / Gandulandín, Clifet, Pantasilonte!” (1468-1469), is nearer to the actual Early Modern spells (cf. note 66). There is a significant case of the degree of otherness involving the ethnic sorceress in De la Cueva’s *Los siete infantes de Lara*. There the love-spell is not cast by a proper sorceress, but by a duet formed by the Andalusian princess Zaida, sister of King Almanzor of Cordova, and her assistant Haxa (3.765-813). Thus, a pair of ladies of rank is supposed to indeed know magic procedures, being both women and Moorish.

The obvious otherness of the ethnic sorceress can be still reinforced resorting to the Erictho-like type, that is, a misanthrope gaunt old woman acting not just as a necromancer, but as a true criminal and often as a cannibal too. Related to Erictho, the Thessalian style sorceresses are those provided with very mighty magic powers, so that they are capable of suspending or reversing natural processes, like the movement of the planets or the flow of the rivers. In classical literature, “the depiction of the Thessalian sorceress had crystallised into an abhorrent image” (Clark 1), but in Early Modern Spanish texts the Thessalian style magicians are depicted in both ways: awful, in the pure style of Erictho, or awesome, when only their marvelous capabilities are retained. For example, the unnamed Tunisian sorceress in Zapata’s *Carlo famoso* 37.44-73, 201r-202v, which is one of the “hechiceras [...] de que hay copia en Berberia” (37.44.5-6, 201r), is a cannibal Erictho-like sorceress endowed with Thessalian style powers, which makes a

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cobre’.” (118-119). The same author thinks that this name corresponds to the Mesoamerican feminine deity par excellence, a sort of mother goddess, but the evidence alleged is insufficient. Her characterization in *El peregrino indiano* combines features from the contemporary Mesoamerican shaman and the European sorceress, both historical and literary (Marrero-Fente).



true necromantic ritual (Vilà 479, Pereda 11-17). Even more criminal is the Moorish sorceress Malafa in *Los amantes de Teruel*, who “hace cosas / que exceden a la bel naturaleza” (13, 341), with high power over the infernal deities: “Y que sepan las gentes que tu imperio / se estiende al de Plutón y Proserpina” (13, 348).<sup>77</sup> On the contrary, the Moorish magician Cenotia of *Persiles* 2.9 is also a Thessalian style sorceress, but her powers come only from natural magic (Lara, *Hechiceras y brujas* 159-160). Nevertheless, other magicians, even if they know the secrets of Nature, are properly goetians or necromancers, as the Erichtho-like Canida of *Las lágrimas de Angélica*,<sup>78</sup> whose mighty enchantments need the demonic intervention:

Y sé que pues las piedras y metales,  
 las tierras, y las yerbas, y las plantas,  
 las partes de los vivos animales,  
 pudieron conservar virtudes tantas,  
 figuras so los astros celestiales,  
 y caracteres, y palabras santas,  
 podrán tener tal fuerza al mundo oculta  
 cual es la que en efecto tal resulta.  
 Si no que entre esto debe allí mezclarse  
 algún oculto engaño o pacto hecho  
 dañoso, con que viene a adulterarse  
 lo que por fuerza natural se ha hecho,  
 por do uno y otro debe abominarse,  
 y no las obras solas, mas el pecho  
 do cabe el vano amor y detestable,  
 del arte adulterada y miserable. (6.5-6)

As for the male practitioners, they are ethnic magicians from their very beginning with Mulién Bucar, although not properly sorcerers, but necromancers (see above), except that their purposes are beneficial. As for the most influential of them, the Araucanian sorcerer or shaman Fitón, he has some of the features of Erichtho (exotic laboratory, high power over the underworld, a similar spell, see García Teijeiro, “Magia antigua” 155-156, and “La magia...” 113), but is modelled also on the magicians of chivalric romance, like Merlin as represented by Ariosto in his *Orlando furioso* (Nicolopulos, “Ercilla’s Fitón”

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<sup>77</sup> Her portrait in 13.353 follows almost literally the murders and infanticides of Erichtho, as well as her cannibalism.

<sup>78</sup> On this character, whose behavior, although not her love-spell, is clearly based on her model, see Lara “Del *Orlando furioso* a *Las lágrimas de Angélica*” and “Canidia, esposa del Orco”.

105, Vilà 483). In fact, he has “una gran poma milagrosa” (*La Araucana* 23.67.3), which can be related to the automata of the contemporary Spanish *libros de caballerías* (cf. Aguilar Perdomo), but also to the classical Archimedes’ sphere (Montaner, “Sobre el alcance del «ocultismo» renacentista” 668, cf. 805-806 and 843-844), and that of the sea nymph Thetis in Camões *Os Lusíadas* 10.79 (Vilà 483-484).

On the other hand, he resorts to demonic conjuration for activate the divinatory capabilities of his sphere (*La Araucana* 23.79-82), despite which he is not properly a necromancer, since he has a “magica ciencia y saber puro” (23.49.1), based upon a deep knowledge of the secrets of Nature. In fact, Fitón “alcanza por su ciencia y arte cuanto / pueden todas las causas naturales” (23.40.3-4) and is able to “penetrar de los cielos los secretos” (23.58.2). Thus, Fitón practices a kind of theurgy, recovered by the Renaissance Neoplatonism as a set of magical practices performed to evoke beneficent spirits in order to influence them, for instance by making them to animate a statue or other device, to inhabit a human being, or to disclose mysteries (Riffard 340). However, Fitón does not invoke angels or geniuses, but demons, following the orthodox doctrine about the relationship between magic and evil spirits (see above), even if he calls them only with beneficial purposes. Thus, he practices theurgy as a paradoxical sort of white magical goety. As pointed out by Nicolopulos,

Ercilla is an apt pupil of Garcilaso when it comes to imitation [of Severo in *Égloga* II], and it is typical of his approach that he should blend [with natural magic] other elements into his representation of Fitón, particularly reminiscences of the gruesome scenes of necromancy from the Roman Spanish poet Lucan’s *Pharsalia*. But these are also employed in such a way as to reinforce the initial, Garcilasesque image of Fitón as Neoplatonist, Renaissance mage, as well as to imbue the entire prophecy with the most forceful, hyperbolic imagery of necromancy available in the tradition. (“Ercilla’s Fitón” 105; more details in *The Poetics of Empire*)

Most male magicians of the subsequent literature were constructed upon Fitón (Nicolopulos 106 ff., Vilà 486, Zulaica 220), as Orbante in *La constancia de Armelina* (Montaner & Lara, “Magia, hechicería, brujería” 66, Lara, “Hechiceras celestinescas y

nigromantes” 418), a positive character who is explicit in his appellation to natural forces against Pluto:

Aprémiate, oh infernal, por la influencia  
de los celestes signos, y planetas,  
por la revolución, por la potencia  
del cielo, y por sus causas más secretas. (2, 148r)

Another similar character is the beneficial necromancer Rogelio of the *Comedia del viejo enamorado*, who is described as a Thessalian style magician, “Quien haze escurecer el claro día, / volver atrás el bello sol de oriente,” and so on (2, 260r-260v), and has theurgic powers: “la potencia mía, / con quien jamás el cielo en dar fue avaro, / ni del saber negó la oculta vía,” but also resorts to natural magic: “por virtud del febeo amparo, / qu’el cielo influye en mí” (2, 262r). Purely natural **seems** to be Cratilo’s power in the *Comedia del príncipe tirano*:

D’él puede el caso oculto declararse,  
porque de aquí adonde nace el Nilo  
no hay cual él quien entienda las secretas,  
inspiraciones d’astros, y planetas. (2, 199r.)

The Turkish magician and astrologer Xíloes is also a natural magician,<sup>79</sup> who “del alto firmamento / penetras los influjos naturales” (*La Austriada* 22.62.2-3), but also a necromancer, since “hazes espantar el reino oscuro / con la fuerça eficaz de tu conjuro” (22.63.7-8). Nevertheless, there are also Erichtho-like sorcerers, like Goro in the *Mexicana*, who is qualified of “estrellero” (22, 253r), but is actually a cruel and bloodthirsty necromancer. Although less cruel, the Araucan sorcerer Pillalonco, “un viejo descarnado formidable, / de cuerpo retorcido como un cable”, also incarnates this type in the *Arauco domado* (2.63.2-3), where he practices necromancy adapting the Erichtho’s tradition to the Mapuche religious believes. In both cases, the references to anthropophagy inherited from the classical model have further connotations, “by reference to the most delicate issue in the debate over the nature of the New World

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<sup>79</sup> On this character, see Vilá 479-480, Peredo 22-26, and Montaner, “Rufo astrólogo”.

peoples: human sacrifice and cannibalism” (Nicolopoulos, “Ercilla’s Fitón” 109). Finally, as far as I know, there is a single exception to the characterization of a male magician as an ethnic one. He is Longomiro, who prophesies for King James I the future of Aragonese kings up to Felipe II (III of Castile) in *Los amantes de Teruel* 20, 563 ff. Nevertheless, the exception is only partial, because Longomiro is not an Aragonese magician, neither a true contemporary of the king, but a magically long-lived Goth, “flaco, seco, amarillo y con alforzas / y surcos en la cara, y el cabello / de barba y de cabeza cual de nieve” (20, 563).

The conjurations of all these magic characters follow the general structure of Erichtho’s *carmina*, but, according to the model of Celestina’s, both parts are usually united into a single spell, composed of the invocation to one or several netherworld deities, the petition to the addressee(s) and the coercive formula. A notable exception is Marquino’s necromantic scene, which is composed of four conjurations, with an increasingly violent tone, until the revived corpse starts to speak (*Numancia* 2.961-1004, 1005-1024, 1025-1032 and 1033-1052). Although the coercive formula is the distinguishing feature of Erichtho-like conjurations, there are several spells which only retain the invocation, usually modelled upon Celestina’s. That happens in the spells of the Nigromante in the *Comedia Tholomea* (see note 71) and Mulién Bucar in the *Comedia Armelina* 4, 149. A particular case is that of Claudina’s spell in the *Tragedia Policiana*, where she invokes directly Satan and not Pluto, but her phrasing is clearly that of her fellow procuress:

A ti, tenebroso y astuto Satán, príncipe de la monarquía de los espíritus condenados, eterno sustentador de las tinieblas continuas que en las caliginosas y sombrías chaos infernales abundan, señor de las tartáreas y dañadas cavernas, morador en las horribles grutas donde los sulfúreos vapores incesablemente manan, regidor y gobernador de las lagunas y edificios mortales, asistente de la profundidad y oscura región de la muerte. Yo, tu más familiar y compañera Claudina, te conjuro, por la gravedad de la palabra que de ti tengo recibida. (9.173-180, 155)

In more complex rewritings of the spell, the invocation is usually longer than Erichtho’s one. Following Mena, it can include Pluto, Proserpine, Cerberus and Charon, but, if this

model is combined with Celestina's conjuration, also the three Furies, Tisiphone, Megaera, and Alecto, are mentioned, as well as Styx, Dis, or other infernal beings, even as addressees. So, Dolosina invokes only Pluto, but she names also the three judges of the dead, Minos, Æacus and Rhadamanthus, in addition to Charon and the three Furies, as his subordinates, and Erebus and Cocytus as his realm (*Comedia Selvagia* 3.2, 151). All of them, except Charon, are also mentioned by Cratilo in his conjuration to the lost souls (*Comedia del principe tirano* 2, 200r). Xíloes invokes Pluto, the three judges of the dead, the Furies and Charon, as well as the damned founders of magical arts: Zoroaster, Circe, Medea, and Erictho herself (*La Austriada* 22.68-69). Demogorogon, if mentioned, is included in the invocation and not in the coercive formula.<sup>80</sup> The most complex formulation is found in *La Araucana*:

Y luego con airado y fiero gesto,  
hiriendo el ancho globo con la caña,  
una vez al través, otra al derecho,  
sacó una horrible voz del ronco pecho,  
diciendo: “¡Orco amarillo, Cancerbero!  
¡Oh gran Plutón, retor del bajo infierno!  
¡Oh cansado Carón, viejo barquero,  
y vos, laguna Estigia y lago Averno!  
¡Oh Demogorgon, tú, que lo postrero  
habitas del tartáreo reino eterno,  
y las hervientes aguas de Aqueronte,  
de Leteo, Cocito y Flegetonte!  
”¡Y vos, Furias, que así con crueldades  
atormentáis las ánimas dañadas,  
que aún temen ver las íferas deidades  
vuestras frentes de víboras crinadas;  
y vosotras, gorgóneas potestades  
por mis fuertes palabras apremiadas,  
haced que claramente aquí se vea,  
aunque futura, esta naval pelea!  
”¡Y tú, Hécate ahumada y mal compuesta,  
nos muestra lo que pido aquí visible!” (23.77.5-82.2)

Very like this conjuration (even with literal correspondences) is the spell of Tlantepuzylama, who invokes Pluto, Tisiphone, Megaera, Alecto, Cocytus, Styx, Dis, the

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<sup>80</sup> To the best of my knowledge, the only exception is Malafa's spell, whose coercive formula translates almost literally that of Erictho, but gives to the mightiest deity the name of Demogorgon, following Mena: “¿O tengo de valerme del imperio / de aquel Demogorgón que tiene el reino / en las partes más hondas del Tartáreo?” (*Los amantes de Teruel* 13, 354).

hydras, the harpies, Demogorgon, the Furies (as different from Tisiphone and her sisters), Hecate, Charon, and the Gorgons (*El peregrino indiano* 9.113-114).

The petitions are related to the function of the spell, so I will deal on them later. The coercive formula in Lucan's and Mena's versions was composed of three threats: to unveil the hideous secrets of the netherworld deities (here only those of Hecate), to make penetrate the sunlight in their dark caverns, and to invoke against them the mightiest deity. The full set only is very preserved in Malafa's conjuration (*Los amantes de Teruel* 3, 354), who is a very close version of Erictho's. A quite complete version is that of Orbante, who, in addition to the last menace, "con luz heriré el centro que te encierra", threatens to expose Hecate to the daylight, to dethrone the three judges of the dead, to imprison Charon in the Caucasus (like Prometheus), and to send Hercules against Cerberus again (*La constancia de Arcelina* 2, 148r-148v).

Anyway, the most common adaptation is to threaten the netherworld only with the entrance of daylight, as Celestina already did (Lida 505-507). Fiton does do the same: "Mirad que romperé la tierra opuesta / y os heriré con luz aborrecible" (*La Araucana* 23.72.3-4). Xíloes includes the menace against Cerberus and this other: "que de Febo la lumbré esclarecida / vuestras tinieblas avergüence y hiera" (*La Austriada* 22.72.3-4). In Haxa's spell, this threaten is only indirectly alluded in the invocation: "Ministros del Averno, / a quien la luz hermosa / del claro y rutilante Febo ofende" (*Los siete infantes de Lara* 3.775-777), which also echoes Erictho's invocation to the Furies in *Pharsalia* 6.733.<sup>81</sup> An exception to this tendency is Rogerio's conjuration, who threatens to invoke the mightiest underworld deity, which is Orcus, and not Demogorgon: "que si os tardáis, de convocar con mando / el Huerco, que de oírme está temblando" (*Comedia del viejo*

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<sup>81</sup> In contrast, when Goro prays the idol and the demons came to fill it, "tembló el templo y la estatua reciamente, / llenos de aquel furor endemoniado, / dando muestra al entrar de que venía, / el sol cegando y enturbiando el día" (*Mexicana* 22, 255v).

*enamorado* 2, 262r). In a different way, Marquino, not only threatens, but finally pours black water from Stygian lake on the grave where lies the corpse which he wishes to revive (*Numancia* 2.1014-1024). Nevertheless, as already noticed by Nicolopulos, “Ercilla’s Fitón” 109, the most original variation is that of Pedro de Oña, whose Pillalongo goes further, explicitly dismissing the usual menace and threatening to deprive the hell of new dwellers, encouraging his followers to accept Christianity:

No heriré tu sótano con lumbre,  
ni las apolinales áureas hebras  
ofenderán tus sapos y culebras,  
ni esotra serpentina muchedumbre;  
mayor te pienso dar la pesadumbre,  
aunque ésta por tan grande la celebras;  
mas otra es la que más te muerde y come,  
y tus dañados hígados carcome.  
Haré que ya los cuellos no se aprieten  
con el desesperado ñudo y sogá,  
que el cuerpo y no las ánimas ahoga,  
mas que por otro medio se quiéten;  
haré que tus discípulos respeten  
a la sacerdotal y sacra toga,  
tomando sus consejos y doctrina,  
que es para ti la más pungente espina. (*Arauco domado* 2.72-73)<sup>82</sup>

Another important aspect is the angry and imperative tone of the magician, as used by Fitón: “¡Hola! ¿A quién digo? ¿Qué tardanza es ésta, / que no os hace temblar mi voz terrible?” (*La Araucana* 23.72.1-2). This tone can act even as a substitute for the coercive formula, since the core of the spell was the imprecation, considered a typical feature of necromancy or goety, as seen above.<sup>83</sup> After the footsteps of *Celestina*, the expression of

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<sup>82</sup> The passage shocks even more if one takes into account that, later on, in the passage on the hellish council, the Devil itself threatens in this way the other infernal beings: “Por toda la infernal potencia juro, / canalla infame, lóbrega y horrenda, / si no ponéis silencio en mi cuidado, / de abrir a Febo el cóncavo cerrado” (*Arauco domado* 4.88.5-8). According to Nicolopulos, “Although this would seem a stock Counter-Reformation ploy, it also echoes Lucan. Erictho closes the final phase of her conjuration by threatening to invoke a nameless, yet far more powerful deity who holds the gods of the Underworld in scant regard (*Pharsalia* 6.744-749)” (“Ercilla’s Fitón” 109).

<sup>83</sup> On the contrary, sometimes the magician murmurs (as Erictho in *Pharsalia* 6.686), so Fátima: “si acaso tiene fuerza el ronco canto / o mormurio de versos detestables” (*El trato de Argel* 2.1465), and the conjured demon answers: “La fuerza incontrastable de tus versos / y mormurios perversos me han traído / del reino del olvido a obedecerte” (2.1476-1478). The Araucan sorcerers also murmur “con un zuzuro bajo y escabroso,” when they start “su pérfido conjuro tenebroso” (*Arauco domado* 2.62.2 and 6). When Goro prays to the Aztec idols, “Un mormurio en su pecho resonaba”, even if finally, pressed by the demons, “sonó en el templo un áspero bramido / y de Goro, tras esto, un fiero aullido” (*Mexicana* 22, 256r). The magic sphere of Longomiro is activated too with a murmured spell: “Dichas ciertas palabras con mormurio” (*Los amantes de Teruel* 20, 569).

the magician anger is linked to a pair of keywords, the verbs *tardar* and *apremiar*, or the corresponding action nouns *tardanza* and *apremio*. Thus, in her answer to Mulién Bucar, the spirit of Medea asks: “¿Qué es lo que quieres, Mulién Bucar, que tan apremiados tienes a los que en las profundas tinieblas y oscuros sitios moramos?” (*Comedia Armelina* 4, 149). Compare also Zaida’s spell: “Y entiendo, cuando oyeren / lo que mi apremio mágico procura, / que acudirán al punto / con el remedio junto” (*Los siete infantes de Lara* 3.768-770, see *Primera parte* 47v for *apremio*, instead of Presotto’s edition *premio*). In turn, Orbante says: “y torno a conjuraros con la fuerça / de todo aquello, que os apremia, y fuerça” (*La constancia de Arcelina* 2, 148v; see also above). Rogerio orders “¡No tardéis más!” and Lissa, an infernal fury, answers “No nos apremiéis, ¡oh, Rogerio!, tanto” (*Comedia del viejo enamorado* 2, 262r). Marquino uses also synonyms of *tardar* and *apremiar*: “no te tardes / ni a ser más oprimido de mí aguardes / [...] / Decid, ministros falsos, ¿qué os detiene?”, and later, with more anger, “¿Qué es esto? ¿Qué tardáis? ¿A dó sois idos? / ¿Cómo mi mando al punto no se hace?”, and finally “conjuro, apremio, pido y mando / que venga a obedecerme aquí volando” (*Numancia* 2.967-968, 986, 1011-1012, and 1023-1024). Pillalongo cry out in the same way against Eponamón:<sup>84</sup> “¿Qué es esto? ¿Cómo agora te detienes? / Espíritu infernal, ¿porqué te tardas?” (*Arauco domado* 2.71.1-2).

The petition of the spell depends on its function, which can be divinatory, as in Lucan’s original text or Mena’s adaptation, or amatory, as in *Celestina*’s version, or an *adiuratio* or near exorcist conjuration. If it is a love-spell, there are two options: the devil is instilled

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<sup>84</sup> According to Ercilla, “*Eponamón* es nombre que dan al demonio, por el cual juran cuando quieren obligarse infaliblemente a cumplir lo que prometen” (*Araucana*, “Declaración” 976, cf. 1.40-41). In fact, Eponamón (*Epuñamün* in Mapuche) is a kind of numen or spirit of an ancestor (*pillán*) consecrated to war: “Le *pillán* hiérarchiquement supérieur se confonde alors avec un ancêtre mythique considéré comme le plus grand des *ulmen*, le *gentoqui* possesseur du *taquicura* noir (couleur de la guerre) que l’on peut mettre en relation avec l’Epunamon cité par Ercilla. A partir de là on peut avancer que les *pillán* des caciques et guerriers jouent le rôle de médiateurs entre les vivants et le *pillán* supérieure” (Boccaro 84).



into an object which the victim of the *philocaptio* will later touch,<sup>85</sup> or the demon is asked to make the victim to fall in love or to remain faithful to the beloved.<sup>86</sup> If it is a divination, it can be proper necromancy (revival of a corpse, in the pure Erictho style),<sup>87</sup> the evocation of the spirit, soul or ghost of a dead (in the line of the Biblical pythoness of En-Dor),<sup>88</sup> or the convocation of a demon (or an equivalent hellish creature, as the Furies) in order to answer the magician's questions,<sup>89</sup> sometimes through a magical device.<sup>90</sup> On the other hand, the divinatory content can be intra or extratextual. If the former, the divination scene has a direct influence on the plot, even if he can transcend it. If the latter, it is usually a

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<sup>85</sup> A ring is charmed in the *Tragedia Policiana*: "te occultes debajo de los áureos acidentos deste anillo" (9.184, 155); a letter in the *Comedia Selvagia*: "mi fiel familiar Escarcafierro me envía, el cual en esta carta que presente tengo se encierre" (3.2, 152). On the other hand, Canidia's love-spell is neither celestinesque nor demonic, but is based purely on sorcery, through a love-potion, "conficionó un gentil hechizo, / con vino y azafrán muy oloroso," and an amulet charm, "un amuleto qu'es de amor maestro, / de cantáridas hecho y varias hieles" (*Las lágrimas de Angélica* 6.66.6-7 and 67.3-4).

<sup>86</sup> Thus, Fátima orders the Devil to appear before her "para poder domar el no domado / pecho, que domará la ciencia mía" (*El trato de Argel* 2.1422-1423). In a vaguer way, Zaida asks the demons "que mi Gonzalo Bustos / no me dé los desgustos / de ausencia, porque triste yo no quede" (*Los siete infantes de Lara* 3.796-798).

<sup>87</sup> The Tunisian sorceress gets the hell to free the soul of a deceased, "salió por ella [i.e. the earth] un golpe de gran fuego / y a vueltas dél, el alma del traído / allí, para que hable aunque no quiera" (*Carlo famoso* 37.65.8-66.2, 202r). Marquino asks Pluto "que al cuerpo que aquí está encerrado / vuelvas el alma que le daba vida" (*Numancia* 2.969-970). The Erictho-like Canidia is a usual practitioner of necromancy: "Y para adivinar lo que pensaba, / mil veces de la tumba y pompa honrosa, / los cuerpos infelices trasladaba / a su funesta cueva y tenebrosa" (*Las lágrimas de Angélica* 6.9.1-4). The Araucans have a special corpse devoted to this oracular practice, called *ibunché*, "sin cosa de intestinos en el vientre, / porque su dios en él más fácil entre", so that "allí por el idólatra invocado, / el abismal diabólico trasunto / se mete en el cadáver del difunto, / por do responde, siendo preguntado" (*Arauco domado* 2.54.7-8 and 56.1-4), which is the ritual practiced by Pillalongo (2.63 ff.)

<sup>88</sup> Medea is called up in the *Comedia Armelina*: "ox apremio que, vixta aquexa mi petixon, m'enviar logo logo a l'antigua mágica Medea, naxida en ixla liamada Colcox" (4, 149); an unnamed soul in *La constancia de Arcelina*: "que embíes con priessa diligente / un alma, de tu Estigio señorío, / a ver la luz del Mundo que aborrece, / y a declarar un caso que se ofrece" (2.148r); Suleiman the Magnificent in *La Austriada*: "Al mismo punto / del padre de Selín se me aparece / la verdadera imagen y trasumpto" (22.74.2-4).

<sup>89</sup> Tlantepuzylama invokes the infernal deities in that way: "Mostradme aquí muy claro y conocido / lo por venir, pasado, y el intento / d'esta gente de España y su venida, / para que sea patente y entendida" (*El peregrino indiano* 9.115.4-8). As a result of the spell, "Luego en el propio instante parecieron / cien mil legiones del abismo horrendo" (116.1-2), who make that the sorceress "Vio que estaba dispuesto y ordenado / que México también se sujetase" (120.1-2). After Malafa's conjuration, Pluto, scared, send carriage driven by the Furies, so that "parecen / ante la Maga cuatro sombras negras," which produce a phantasmagorical vision of the future (*Los amantes de Teruel* 13, 354-356).

<sup>90</sup> As told above, the first conjuration of this kind is Fiton's one: "por mis fuertes palabras apremiadas, / haced que claramente aquí se vea, / aunque futura, esta naval pelea" (*La Araucana*, 23.81.6-8). The goetic version is Goro's conjuration for an idol to be possessed by demons: "¿Quién del tartáreo, horrible ayuntamiento / en esta hueca estatua está metido?" (*Mexicana* 22, 255v). Longomiro, although modelled upon Fitón and owner of a marvelous sphere (see above note 83), does not make any conjuration, and his prophecy is based on "lo que dice que alcanza por estudio" (*Los amantes de Teruel* 20, 571).

patriotic affirmation, following the model of the prophecy of Thetis in Camões' *Os Lusíadas* 10, where the nymph predicts to Vasco da Gama that Portugal will dominate the world (Vilà 483, more details in Nicolopoulos, *The Poetics of Empire*). Finally, if it is an *adiuratio*, it serves to identify lost souls or infiltrated demons.<sup>91</sup>

A final issue to be noticed is the role of rhetorical *aptum* or decorum. Caro Baroja already pointed out that “en la literatura aparece la figura del nigromante no una vez, sino varias veces, como la de un hombre que tiene extraños poderes (si la acción es muy antigua) o que es un farsante, un impostor (si la acción es moderna)” (219; see also Lara, “Hechiceras celestinescas y nigromantes” 423). The same factor can be applied when the distance is not temporal, but spatial: “La recurrencia a la magia negra en suelo americano tiene para los poetas una ventaja añadida: la verosimilitud que entraña el prodigio en un contexto geográfico tan lejano” (Vilà 480).<sup>92</sup> This also explains the usual resort to the ethnic magician, with his or her doubled otherness, tripled in the case of old women, as seen above.

It can be appreciated that the rewritings of Erichtho's *carmina* are based on themselves and on some of the reworkings prior to each new text. This, compared to a mere direct imitation, constitutes a network of influences (some more intense than others) that generates a complex intertext, a network of intertextual, or, better to say, transtextual compositions. So, to what extent in these texts is magic operative by a belief in its efficacy

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<sup>91</sup> Rogerio orders some unknown shadows which are around Liboso to reveal themselves. “que sin porfía / os despojéis del hábito fingido, / y quedéis en el vuestro conocido,” and they turn out to be the Furies (*Comedia del viejo enamorado* 2, 262r). Cratilo tries to find out who are the three lost souls that haunt King Agelaus: “almas apartaos allí / y mándoos que estéis aquí, / prestas a mi voluntad” (*Comedia del principe tirano* 2, 200r).

<sup>92</sup> The same author points out that “El recurso a la magia negra no incumple, en definitiva, el principio de la verosimilitud: los versos de Saavedra Guzman [*El peregrino indiano* 9.126-127] certifican la idea de que la distancia, geográfica y cultural, de America es el puntal que salvaguarda la supuesta veracidad de lo narrado” (Vilà 481). This assessment is much better founded, from a contemporary point of view, than that of García Teijeira: “Los ingredientes que emplea la hechicera de Lucano en sus ritos y el conjuro a las divinidades clásicas de los infiernos se hallan también, por inverosímil que resulte, en la ceremonia mántica que realiza el mago indígena Fitón al final del canto XXIII, Segunda Parte, de *La Araucana* de Alonso de Ercilla” (“La magia...” 113).

or by a specific literary convention whose validity is only intratextual? The question, which is impossible to answer here, is whether the use of the magic really reflects a worldview or merely constitutes the acceptance of a certain narrative habits. In fact, as time goes by, it seems that the acceptance of magic no longer responds to an epistemic factor, but only to the Epoché (ἐποχή) or suspension of the judgment of veracity proper to the aesthetic reading.<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>93</sup> On the aesthetic Epoché, see Villanueva 157-162.

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