



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

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

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

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

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

¹ See Andrew Q. Morton, *Literary Detection: How to Prove Authorship and Fraud in Literature and Documents* (Epping: Bowker, 1978).

² My thanks to D. C. Lloyd of the University of Liverpool and François Crompton-Roberts of Westfield College, University of London, who helped me with this project.

- 4) *señor, señora: señor que* (11), *mi señor* (9), *mi señora* (22), *señora que* (16). Of only two *señora*'s in Act 1, one is *señora mía*.
- 5) *con Dios* (7), *de grado* (6), *de manera* (6):
- 6) *había de* (8). There is only one *había* in Act 1.
- 7) *es: si es* (10), *es esto* (18).
- 8) *me: me que* (16), *se me* (before verb--15), *tú me* (13), *ya me* (7). See also *ya*, below.
- 9) *tú, te: con tu* (23), *donde te* (6), also *tú me*, above (13).
- 10) *del que* (7), *por quien* (10), *con su* (11), also see *con tu*, above (23) and *con Dios* (7).
- 11) *todo: toda la* (19: there is only one *toda* in Act 1), [no] *todo el* (21). Act 1 uses *todo lo* 15 times.
- 12) *cierto que* (7), *poco de* (8).
- 13) *que al* (11), *que aunque* (24).
- 14) *de aquí* (9), *daquí* (6).
- 15) *ya: pues ya* (7), *ya no* (8), also see *ya me* above (7). *Ya* occurs singly in Act 1 six times.
- 16) *no* and *pues: como no* (9), cf. 67 occurrences of *como* in Act 1; *pues no* (13), also *ya no* above (8) and *pues ya* (7).

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

