

Autobiography and Intertextuality in *Carajicomedia*

by Juan Goytisolo

Juan Goytisolo's latest novel, *Carajicomedia*¹ has achieved the welcome and unusual reception of both critical acclaim and reader popularity. In addition to its virtual best-seller status, reviewers have noted its continuation of the Goytisolan trend of provocative parody and satire.² The work is seen as an attack on hypocrisy and intolerance, especially of the Church's attitude to sexual matters. Much emphasis, including by Goytisolo himself, has been placed on its use of humour and attention to sex. It is widely seen as a return to a familiar attack on 'la España sagrada' and its cultural tradition. Other features highlighted have been the intertextual dialogue, both sympathetic and parodic, with a series of writers and texts, and the element of autobiography.³ The two latter aspects are in many ways linked in so far as Goytisolo's intertextual dialogue in the novel is with writers such as the poet Jaime Gil de Biedma, in whose own autobiographical writings Goytisolo himself has appeared.⁴

The autobiographical element was clearly present at the novel's inception as Goytisolo has admitted:

En los primeros borradores tenía el propósito de hacer una especie de autobiografía sexual, luego me di cuenta de que esta acumulación de aventuras, de lances o de personajes resultaría cargante y aburrida si no había un distanciamiento...⁵

¹ Juan Goytisolo, *Carajicomedia de Fray Bugeo Montesino y otros pájaros de vario plumaje y pluma*, Barcelona: Seix Barral, 2000.

² Rosa Mora, 'Carajicomedia es la novela más irreverente y provocadora de Juan Goytisolo', 'Babelia', *El País*, 19 February 2000, p.8.

³ Juan A. Masoliver Ródenas calls it a 'novelización de su autobiografía *En los reinos de taifa* ...y una autobiografización de *Las virtudes del pájaro solitario*', 'El hipócrita y el escribidor', *La Vanguardia*, 11 February 2000.

⁴ Jaime Gil de Biedma, *Retrato del artista en 1956*, Barcelona: Lumen, 1991, p.135.

⁵ Mora, p.8.

Hence, to create the distance, Goytisolo decides to make one of the principal narrators and central protagonist a gay Opus Dei priest, and employ ecclesiastical language in order to ‘introducir una nota humorística y al mismo tiempo convertirla en una autobiografía paródica’.⁶

In this way, the autobiographical tendency, as so often with Goytisolo, becomes intimately bound up with the satiric intent. Goytisolo himself plays down the socially critical aspect of the novel, stressing the element of parody and humour:

no hay una voluntad de provocación deliberada. Me interesaba recoger el espíritu del *Cancionero de burlas* y hacer una parodia del lenguaje eclesiástico sobre el sexo.⁷

However, parody and humour can have a socially subversive effect and *Carajicomedia* fits neatly into the overall pattern of Goytisolo’s oeuvre in which the predominant note, almost the defining characteristic, has been a relentless onslaught on all that smacks of hypocrisy, repressiveness and injustice in society.

Comparing *Carajicomedia* with his genuinely autobiographical texts such as *Coto vedado* Goytisolo highlights the humour as a function of social criticism:

Creo que la risa es una respuesta sana a [...] la solemnidad dogmática de los poderes políticos y de las Iglesias [...] La picaresca es la mejor manera de, como dicen en México, chingar a este poder.⁸

⁶ Mora, p.8.

⁷ ‘Desde la atalaya de mi edad veo las cosas con humor’, *Abc*, 25 February 2000.

⁸ ‘La picaresca es la mejor forma de chingar al poder’, *La Jornada*, 22 May 2000.

The relationship between autobiography and social critique is an interesting one. In one sense they appear contradictory; autobiography is inward-looking, self-absorbed, solipsistic even, and seems antithetical to the expression of a social conscience and concern for others.⁹ Goytisolo's social criticism dates from the fifties when his novels were social realist in character, virtually becoming tracts by the late-fifties in works such as *La resaca*, but always suffused with a lyrical subjectivism which betrayed more personal concerns. This evolved in the sixties into a much more personal, experimental writing where aesthetic strategies of social critique led to a subversive novel in which Goytisolo injected a large element of personal detail as a way of giving authenticity to what risked appearing as merely formalistic posturing. In other words, the autobiographical was at the service of the social critique. In the novels of the late eighties the autobiographical element lessened somewhat, as though with the publication, to great success, of twin volumes of memoirs in the mid-eighties¹⁰, Goytisolo had exorcised many of his inner demons, thus leaving the way open to more specifically literary concerns. This can be seen in *Las virtudes del pájaro solitario*, *La saga de los Marx*, *La cuarentena*, *El sitio de los sitios* and the penultimate novel, *Las semanas del jardín*. In these works the autobiographical is never far away but it does not overshadow the literary and social reverberations of the works.

⁹ In a comparison of Goytisolo's memoirs and Pablo Neruda's *Confieso que he vivido*, Jo Labanyi calls autobiography 'the self-centred medium par excellence' (p.220). Her argument is that Marxist tenets would dictate an attack on the bourgeois notion of a stable self in the interests of a more historicized account of the human condition as characterized by 'the contradictions and discontinuities of the self that produce social and sexual change' (ibid.). She sees more evidence of the latter in the ex-Marxist Goytisolo than the Marxist Neruda whose autobiography she sees as giving 'the impression of an unchanging self lacking in discontinuity' (p.212). For Labanyi, ironically, Goytisolo's autobiographical writing is more successful than his novels. Whereas, in novels like *Reivindicación del conde don Julián*, 'the fact that his fictional narrators and characters are projections of an authorial self on the one hand emphasises the split nature of the self, but at the same time creates a monologic discourse in which all the voices are the author's own' (p.219), in the autobiographies 'he abandons the obsessive egocentrism of his later novels, dismantling the self and giving voice to the "other"' (p.220). While not entirely agreeing with Labanyi's overly psychoanalytic approach to the novels, (the development of an 'atemporal discourse' is interpreted as an 'Oedipal regression to the timelessness of the womb' (p.220)), it is interesting that, as this article will contend, *Carajicomedia* with its deployment of the autobiographical motif seems to come closer to the dialogic, anti-dogmatic style she misses in earlier novels. See 'The Construction/Deconstruction of the Self in the Autobiographies of Pablo Neruda and Juan Goytisolo', *Forum for Modern Language Studies*, XXVI, 3 (1990), 212-221.

¹⁰ *Coto vedado*, Barcelona: Seix Barral, 1985 and *En los reinos de taifa*, Barcelona: Seix Barral, 1986.

Carajicomedia , however, is different, in that the reference to Goytisolo himself is that more explicit and includes reference to his actual autobiographical writings.¹¹ Autobiography, unless it is employed, as indicated earlier, for specifically literary purposes, would seem to weaken the social and literary impact of a novel. Autobiography only rarely rates highly as literature, perhaps because it tends towards the individual and the particular, whereas literature lays claim to a more universal scope. Paul de Man has written of ‘the attempt to define and treat autobiography as if it were a literary genre amongst others’ which, he says, ‘does not go without some embarrassment, since compared to tragedy, or epic, or lyric poetry, autobiography always looks slightly disreputable and self-indulgent in a way that may be symptomatic of its incompatibility with the monumental dignity of aesthetic values’.¹²

Now clearly *Carajicomedia* is not an autobiography, but the autobiographical element plays a large part in the novel and the challenge that it poses is deciding its function within the literary process and its impact on the novel’s social critique.

One way of looking at the intended impact of Goytisolo’s *Carajicomedia* is to examine its literary precursor. The novel is a pastiche and homage to an early sixteenth-century work entitled *Carajicomedia* , included in the 1519 version of the

¹¹ In *El sitio de los sitios* (Madrid: Alfaguara, 1995) there is a foreshadowing of this in the reference to 'el autor de *Coto vedado*', p.43.

¹² Paul de Man, ‘Autobiography as De-facement’, *Modern Language Notes*, 94 (1979), 919-930, p.919.

Cancionero de obras de burlas provocantes a risa.¹³ This work lay neglected until the mid-nineteenth century when D. Luis de Usoz y Río, resurrected it and published it in London in the early 1840s. Thus, Goytisolo's novel, in addition to the essay he dedicates to the *Cancionero* in *Cogitus interruptus*, his latest book of essays published in 1999,¹⁴ constitutes an attempt at a third and, Goytisolo hopes, a more lasting lease of life for this forgotten masterpiece. The first appearance of the *Cancionero* was as an example of ribald satire, common to the period and intended as light relief from, and, no doubt, as implicit subversion of, the prevailing literary and social conventions. The author of the *Carajicomedia* is unknown but everything points to his being a cleric, due to his familiarity with the liturgy and the numerous Latin phrases scattered throughout the text. The second outing for the *Cancionero* is no less interesting. D. Luis de Usoz y Río was a dissident Spaniard who sympathized with the Quaker religion and whose interest in resurrecting this set of scurrilous texts appears to have been as part of his protest against the excesses and sins of the Catholic Church. In his introduction to an edition of the *Cancionero*, Frank Domínguez notes:

Pensaba Usoz al darlo a conocer corregir la exagerada impresión que tenían los extranjeros de la devoción española.¹⁵

His endeavour had little success. As Domínguez concludes:

¹³ Goytisolo's novel has several precursor texts to which it refers in one way or another. Riffaterre refers to these kinds of texts as 'intertexts': 'An intertext is one or more texts which the reader must know in order to understand a work of literature in terms of its overall significance (as opposed to the discrete meanings of its successive words, phrases and sentences'. Michael Riffaterre, 'Compulsory reader response: the intertextual drive', in Michael Worton and Judith Still, *Intertextuality: theories and practices*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1990, p.56. Gerard Genette refers to them as 'hypotextes', in *Palimpsestes: la littérature au second degré*, Paris: Seuil, 1982, p.11. In *Carajicomedia* the principal intertext is the sixteenth-century work of the same name, but others are the Opus Dei manual *Camino*, Menéndez Pelayo's *Historia de los heterodoxos españoles*, Gil de Biedma's *Retrato del artista en 1956*, Antonio Enríquez Gómez's *El siglo pitagórico y vida de don Gregorio Guadaña* (1644). Some of these are positive literary precursors and others are the object of satire.

¹⁴ 'Protesta, linajes y loco amor en el *Cancionero de obras de burla*' in *Cogitus interruptus*, Barcelona: Seix Barral, 1999, pp.123-142.

Usoz logró que el *Cancionero de burlas* fuera algo más conocido de lo que lo había sido hasta entonces aunque los doscientos ejemplares impresos en realidad sólo sirvieron para pasar a manos de bibliófilos y biblio-tecarios y no para desacreditar a la Iglesia española.¹⁶

Usoz was punished further by being included in Menéndez Pelayo's enormously influential *Historia de los heterodoxos españoles* where the *Cancionero* was branded a 'libro, más que inmoral y licencioso, cínico, grosero y soez, si bien de alguna curiosidad para la historia de la lengua y de las costumbres'.¹⁷ Menéndez Pelayo's opprobium is significant as his views, particularly the ideology that underpinned the *Heterodoxos*, went on to form the spiritual backbone of Francoist national-catholicism and to inspire the ultra-traditionalist view of Spain against which Goytisolo has spent his life protesting.¹⁸

In his early experimental fiction, after the break with realism, Goytisolo developed a strategy of radical textual subversion which aimed to break with the concept of referentiality in literature and focus the attention of the reader on the text itself, conceived as a self-reflexive and autonomous artifact. Contemporary postmodernist fiction has been characterized by a flaunting of its fictionality and the

¹⁵ *Cancionero de obras de burlas provocantes a risa*, Introducción y edición de Frank Domínguez, Madrid: Ediciones Albatros Hispanófila, 1978, p.10.

¹⁶ Domínguez, p.10.

¹⁷ Marcelino Menéndez Pelayo, *Historia de los heterodoxos españoles*, 2ª edición refundida, Madrid: Librería General de Victoriano Suárez, 1911-1932, 7 vols., con una lámina, vol.VII, p.326.

¹⁸ See *Cogitus interruptus*, p. 84. Goytisolo's recent attitude to Menéndez Pelayo is rightly ambivalent; he tends now to refer to him as 'mi admirado Menéndez Pelayo', *Cogitus*, p.89. Like many others, he shows undoubted admiration for his erudition alongside disapproval of his fanatical ideological stance. Goytisolo admits that the *Heterodoxos* served as a kind of negative guide, pointing him to those figures who, precisely because they deserved Menéndez Pelayo's obloquy, must, according to Goytisolo's sense of reverse logic, have something to recommend them.

laying bare of the narrative device has resulted in the author being a visible protagonist of his own fictions. Goytisolo's 1975 novel, *Juan sin tierra* was a prime example of a novel whose protagonist was its author in the process of creating the novel *Juan sin tierra*. These were interesting and important literary experiments and saved as novels by Goytisolo's inability, or unwillingness, to shed entirely an element of autobiographical detail which kept the novels grounded in a recognisable social and human predicament. Hence, *Juan sin tierra*'s subversion of literary realism was an attack on the moral and social repressiveness of Western society, and the attack was inspired by Goytisolo's guilt over the colonialist, exploitative origins of his family's wealth in the Cuban sugar trade.

However, it is with the 1982 novel *Paisajes después de la batalla* that the emphasis moves to a greater play with fictional levels and the difference between the 'real' Goytisolo (e.g. the Juan Goytisolo who writes articles in the press) and the 'Goytisolo-implicit-author-of-the-text'. Subsequent novels returned to the use of implicit biographical detail as raw material or a backdrop for the fictional process. In *La cuarentena* (1991), Goytisolo's real relationship with a student who dies¹⁹ and the loss of his mother in the Spanish Civil War were interwoven with a reflection on death and a critique of Western society. The novels of this period tended increasingly to feature a narrator who is recognisably Goytisolo, but not in order to simply add authenticity to the literary project, as the novels of the sixties and seventies had done, but to explore and play with the relationship between the real-author and the text-author/narrator in a deliberately subversive way in order to question the concept of a

stable reality or the unity of the self. There is increasing evidence of the influence of Borges, either implicit or explicit, in these later novels.²⁰

In *El sitio de los sitios* the first chapter is entitled ‘Hipótesis en torno a “J.G.”’ and the real Goytisolo’s experiences as a war reporter in Bosnia are used as part of a highly elaborate play on the complex relation between fiction and fact, and the extent of the former’s capacity for influencing events in the real world. In the following novel, *Las semanas del jardín*, while autobiography is not absent, it is less to the fore and instead we have a more concerted subversion of the notion of authorship and its links with authority. The novel is supposedly the product of a group of readers - ‘readers’ or ‘colectores’ not writers, the implication being the importance of the activity of reading for a creation of the book. The ‘rapporteur’ figure, who narrates the opening section, comments of the project: ‘El proyecto común se basaba en la demolición sistemática de la entidad prescindible del novelista, en su alegre y liberadora suplantación’, doing away with the ‘noción opresiva y omnímoda del Autor’ (p.12), ‘desautorizándolo’(p.13). Ironically, and importantly, this libertarian project is apparently undermined at the end when the group ‘antes de dispersarse, inventó un autor’ (p.175). That author turns out to resemble the real Goytisolo we all know. In a typically ambiguous turn, Goytisolo manages on the one hand to subvert the notion of the author while admitting its inescapability. In this way Goytisolo promotes the death of the author while still admitting that the urge to construct an author is overwhelming

¹⁹ Michel Dalmau in *Los Goytisolo*, Barcelona: Anagrama, 1999, p.545-50, gives the background to this and reveals the person concerned as Joelle Auerbach.

²⁰ Borges' influence is directly detectable in the image of the library in *Las virtudes* and explicitly in *Las semanas del jardín*. In *La cuarentena* there is one typically Borgesian allusion to the problematic split between the ‘I’ that writes and the ‘I’ that is written when Goytisolo’s narrator notes, on p.108, ‘¿quién escribía de verdad aquella página?’, almost a

and also that the real author does, naturally, exist. Hence Goytisolo has moved from the Barthesian attempt to remove the author in *Juan sin tierra* to a more Bakhtinian stance. Bakhtin rejects the traditional notion of the author as monologic source of meaning in the text and replaces it with the concept of the polyphonic novel.²¹ *Semanas* goes further by introducing the notion that an author is the product of the text, the text creating him not vice-versa.²² Something similar is suggested by De Man with regard to autobiography:

We assume that life produces the autobiography as an act *produces* its consequences, but can we not suggest, with equal justice, that the autobiographical project may itself produce and determine the life and that whatever the writer *does* is in fact governed by the technical demands of self-portraiture and thus determined, in all its aspects, by the resources of his medium.²³

This has interesting implications for autobiography, pseudo or real, and in *Carajicomedia*, as I have commented, autobiography is more to the fore than in other novels. Autobiography in the traditional sense seems radically un-

direct echo of Borges' 'No sé cuál de los dos escribe esta página' from 'Borges y yo' in *El hacedor*, (original 1960) Madrid: Alianza, 1998, p.62.

²¹ Roland Barthes in the influential essay 'The Death of the Author', published originally in 1968, celebrated the 'removal of the Author' as a liberation of the text, for the reader, from any fixed meaning. For 'when the Author has been found, the text is "explained" - victory to the critic'. Roland Barthes, *Image-Music-Text* London: Flamingo, 1977, p.147. This is the theory that underpins *Juan sin tierra*, especially section VII, where an attempt is made to dissolve the author-figure into pure text. In Bakhtinian theory, the subversive text is a polyphonic text where the author-narrator figure co-exists democratically among the other voices of the narrative. See Sean Burke, *The Death and Return of the Author*, Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 1992, p.48.

²² 'Do we dream or are we dreamt? Might we dream and be dreamt? When an author writes or thinks to be writing, is that author simultaneously being written [...] Is the author the producer of the text or its product?' Sean Burke, *Authorship: from Plato to the Postmodern: A Reader*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1994, p.xv. This notion has similarities with Barry Ife's approach to the picaresque novel, *Lazarillo de Tormes*: 'Lazarillo presents himself problematically. He is there not to create an illusion but to provoke a response, forcing us to judge and assess him as he acts and speaks. Inasmuch as he is, or has a character, he acquires that character from his reader's assessment of him as he narrates. The presentation of character has less to do with the unveiling in the book of a being who, we might imagine, pre-exists the book, than with the creation during the reading of the book of a being who exists solely by virtue of the responses he provokes.' *Reading and Fiction in Golden-Age Spain: A Platonist critique and some picaresque replies*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985, p.118.

²³ De Man, 'Autobiography as De-facement', p.920.

postmodernist. It privileges the non-fictional over the fictional, the real person over the fictional hero, the source over the text. It seems overwhelmingly logocentric. However, there is an opposite view which can sit more easily with contemporary, post-modern thinking. Alfred Hornung even goes so far as to say that autobiography can be seen as 'postmodernism's most adequate form of art' in that its 'characteristic narrative technique aimed at bridging the gap between life and art' fits in with postmodernism's blurring of those boundaries.²⁴ Angel G. Loureiro is close to De Man when he notes how, 'in their attempts to define the genre, theorists of autobiography have been forced to abandon an epistemological model - autobiography as reproduction of a life - in favour of the idea of autobiography as a performative act - autobiography as the creation or recreation of the self at the time of writing.'²⁵ Goytisolo has said of his memoirs that their purpose is less to recover an identity than to forge one, a distinction which, in *Coto vedado*, he likens to that between an archeologist and an engineer:

vana tentativa de tender un puente sobre tu discontinuidad biográfica, otorgar posterior coherencia a la simple acumulación de ruinas : buscar el canal subterráneo que alimenta de algún modo la sucesión cronológica de los hechos sin saber con certeza si se trata de una exhumación de un arqueólogo u obra flamante de ingeniería.²⁶

Autobiography in its traditional form puts the individual writing

²⁴ Alfred Hornung, 'Autobiography', in *International Postmodernism: Theory and Practice*, ed. Hans Bertens and Douwe Fokkema, Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Co., 1997, pp.222-3.

²⁵ Angel Loureiro, 'Intertextual Lives: Blanco White and Juan Goytisolo', in *Intertextual Pursuits: Literary Mediations in Modern Spanish Narrative*, ed. by Jeanne P. Brownlow and John Kronik, Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 1998, p.42.

²⁶ *Coto vedado*, Barcelona: Seix Barral, 1985, p.193. See Randolph Pope, 'El autorretrato posmoderno de Juan Goytisolo', p.326, in *L'autoportrait en Espagne: littérature et peinture*, ed. Guy Mercadier, Aix-en-Provence, 1992.

consciousness, the authorial persona, firmly at the centre, and as such stands against much contemporary theory which has tried to do away with the author in the process of advocating a more objective linguistic subversion of prevailing values. Interestingly, it was the rise of intertextuality as a critical concept and a textual strategy which seemed to sound the death knell on the figure of the author. Most of Goytisolo's mature fiction and his particular brand of social critique has been built on a development of an intertextual approach to literature.

As a recent study has pointed out, the term 'intertextuality' ranks with 'postmodernism' as a word with so many definitions that it 'is in danger of meaning nothing more than whatever each particular critic wishes it to mean'.²⁷ Definitions range from the doctrinaire, usually associated with critics like Julia Kristeva, which 'insists that a text...cannot exist as a hermetic or self-sufficient whole, and so does not function as a closed system',²⁸ to less extreme definitions in terms of a text's relations (either through citation, parody, imitation, etc.) with one or more other texts. It is important, too, to realise that intertextuality can be interpreted in radically different ways. There are those like Kristeva and Barthes, who see intertextuality as sustaining their attack on the author figure. In this scheme of things, texts are not expressions of an individual consciousness but a 'tissue of past citations'. For Barthes, 'intertextuality, the condition of any text whatsoever, cannot, of course, be reduced to a problem of sources or influences: the intertext is a general field of anonymous formulae whose

²⁷ Graham Allen, *Intertextuality*, London: Routledge, 2000, p.2.

²⁸ Michael Worton and Judith Still, 'Introduction', *Intertextuality: theories and practices*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1990, p.1.

origin can scarcely ever be located'.²⁹ On the other hand, there are theorists like Michael Riffaterre for whom the intertext (i.e. the text alluded to by the text we are reading) is necessary to 'fill out the text's gaps', making the text intelligible or 'grammatical', as Riffaterre puts it.³⁰ In other words, where for one set of critics, intertextuality liberates the meaning of a text by cutting out the author as the founder of meaning, the other sees intertextuality as fundamental to the stabilization of the text's meaning. We must bear this in mind when we consider Goytisolo's use of the technique.

Carajicomedia is, like its predecessors, an explicitly intertextual novel. Most of the intertexts are revealed both in the text, in a final list of authors and even in an anthological appendix 'Invitación a la lectura'.³¹

One of the functions of such intertextuality is to encourage us to examine the connections between the texts. Some connections are immediately interesting. Gil de Biedma's *Retrato*, published posthumously, was an autobiographical text which charted his homosexual lifestyle.³² Its often startling candour explains his wish that it be published after his death, which occurred in 1990 as a consequence of AIDS.³³ In that diary, the poet mentions a common acquaintance of his circle, whom they dub

²⁹ Roland Barthes, 'Theory of the Text' in Robert Young, ed. *Untying the Text: a Post-Structuralist Reader*, London: Routledge (31-47), p.39.

³⁰ Michael Riffaterre, 'Compulsory reader response: the intertextual drive', in Worton and Still, *Intertextuality*, p.57.

³¹ The word 'invitation' tells us something straightaway about the intertextuality of *Carajicomedia* which is the element of promotion of a marginalized tradition. Goytisolo wants to revive interest in works that he feels have been unjustly neglected, often the culprit being Menéndez Pelayo whose tendentious readings relegated them to a cultural wilderness. Cf. *Cogitus interruptus*, p.126. In the case of the earlier *Carajicomedia* Goytisolo sees the cause in the Counter-Reformation mood in Spain which acted as a block to all such irreverent works (p.124).

³² Though, as Richard Richmond Ellis makes clear, it is 'neither a coming-out narrative nor a defense of gay sexuality', *The Hispanic Homograph: Gay Self-Representation in Contemporary Spanish Autobiography*, Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1997, p.59.

³³ An earlier version of the third section of *Retrato*, thus excluding the more candid revelations of part 1, was published in 1974 as *Diario del artista seriamente enfermo*.

'le père de Trennes', actually a priest called Padre Pacho Aguirre, referred to as a 'personaje extraordinario' and who serves occasionally as the butt of their jokes.³⁴ In *Carajicomedia* Goytisolo sometimes sympathetically pastiches the *Retrato*, at others his narrator is père de Trennes, this time a gay member of Opus Dei, and also a reincarnation of Fray Bugeo, the author of the original *Carajicomedia*. Both the Gil de Biedma narrator and père de Trennes make references to a 'Juan Goytisolo' recognisable as the real author:

En cuanto a su relación con la Rue Poissonière sufría los altibajos de humor de Juan, "cada vez más encerrado en sí mismo y en su escritura laberíntica". (p.20)

The narrator, here in the guise of Gil de Biedma, goes on to repeat père de Trennes's gossip about Goytisolo that 'preparaba -o perpetraba- al parecer una novela...cuya realización le exigía muchas lecturas y años de trabajo. Una historia de la sexualidad a la luz de la doctrina católica'(p.20). This section, it would seem, is a typical piece of metatextual commentary³⁵ by Goytisolo (at two removes, via Gil de Biedma via père de Trennes) of the novel we have in our hands:

Quería transcribir sus experiencias de ligón en el lenguaje eclesiástico, incluido el del autor del *Kempis* moderno, a fin de parodiarlo desde dentro y poner su hipocresía al desnudo (p.20)

This accurately describes what Goytisolo does in *Carajicomedia* but relaying it through two voices, one of which (Trennes) is mildly unsympathetic and dubiously

³⁴ Gil de Biedma, *Retrato del artista en 1956*, p.8, n.2.

³⁵ Here I borrow Genette's sense of 'metatextuality' in the sense of one text's commentary on another text. *Palimpsestes: la littérature au second degré*, Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1982, p.10. As we see here, metatextual commentary can occur within a novel if a section comments on the text as a whole. This is common in all of Goytisolo's novels.

reliable, weakens our reading of the section at face value. This is followed by the two, Gil de Biedma and Trennes, gently mocking Goytisolo's post-structuralist pretensions:

lo que, contagiado tal vez por sus lecturas telquelianas, llamaba 'libido textual'.
(Reímos los dos.) (p.20)

This element of metatextual commentary is deliberately problematized by a multiple filtering through voices. Do the quotation marks mean that the real Goytisolo wishes us to think in terms of 'libido textual' or is the person mocked here a pseudo-Goytisolo, a pretentious *alter ego*, being mocked by the real author or, yet again, the real author allowing himself to be the vehicle for a debunking of a certain class of criticism à la *Tel Quel*? (It is common to find acerbic asides concerning Lacan in Goytisolo's fiction). All of these are technically possible. But in addition, we could take into account a further intertext, an essay by Goytisolo, published in the newspaper *El País* in which he carries out an ironic analysis of the ambiguous language of *Camino*, highlighting its possible homoerotic interpretation as part of a critique of its homophobic ethos.³⁶ Hence, we have a situation similar to that seen in *Paisajes después de la batalla* in which Goytisolo, the real author, is incorporated into the fiction in such a way as to both take account of his views and undermine their authority. In *Carajicomedia* Goytisolo uses the characters to comment on and debunk the status of the author. This contributes to a Bakhtinian anti-authoritarian, multi-voicedness of the text.

Hence, Trennes goes on, in this same section, to recount how their mutual friend, Juan Goytisolo, espouses an intertextual, Bakhtinian approach to literature according to which literary originality arises from an active engagement with the already written, an

openness and adaptation to the voices of the past. The reader familiar with Goytisolo can readily recognise these as Goytisolo's own views, similar to comments made in numerous interviews and non-fictional essays. Indeed Trennes goes on to make a distinction between a Forsterian and a Bakhtinian approach to the novel, making Goytisolo side with the latter. He himself, along with the Gil de Biedma persona, sides with Forster. This distinction itself is an intertextual allusion, no doubt, to a series of two articles written by Carlos Fuentes on the Bakhtinian characteristics of Goytisolo's narrative strategy.³⁷

As a result, in this short section, we have the novel we are reading commented upon in a dual way, metatextual and intertextual, and each is double-voiced: on the one hand, there is seemingly reliable metatextual commentary (Trennes reporting on a book which might be this one and an author who might be Goytisolo) but put in doubt by its dubious narrator; on the other hand, intertextual allusions to dependable sources (Goytisolo's non-fictional works, Fuentes' articles) but ones which are concealed,³⁸ thus leaving open the possibility of the reader missing them and reading them on face value as products of the unreliable narrator.

It is usually a characteristic of autobiographical literature that it is externally validatable. Randolph Pope refers to this as 'autobiography as

³⁶ Juan Goytisolo, 'La libido textual de *Camino*', *El País*, 26 February 2000.

³⁷ Carlos Fuentes, 'Juan Goytisolo y el honor de la novela', *El País*, 3 January 1989, p.28 and 'Entre Forster y Bakhtin', *El País*, 4 January 1989, p.28. For Fuentes, Bakhtin 'amplía el canon [de la novela] para incluir, dentro de su concepto de novela dialógica (o polifónica, como la llamaría Broch), una pluralidad de diálogos ya no sólo entre personajes psicológicos dentro de un marco realista, sino también entre lenguajes contradictorios, épocas históricas distantes, clases sociales o visiones históricas opuestas que de otra manera no tendrían oportunidad de dialogar entre sí'. All of which could easily apply to *Carajicomedia*.

³⁸ Gérard Genette speaks of cases where the reader is 'en présence d'hypertextes à hypotexte inconnu', *Palimpsestes*, p.433.

claim' and 'reading for verification', i.e. the potential for verifying the truth claims of writing by appeal to an outside truth. Citing Philippe Lejeune's classic study, Pope calls this an aspect of the 'pacte autobiographique', the 'pathway between the text and possible successful enquiries' to check the trustworthiness or not of an account.³⁹ Goytisolo's intertextual relationships can be, in a Genettian sense, known or concealed. Here the intertextual links with Fuentes and his own article are concealed and suppose a knowledge of Goytisolo criticism (or regular readership of *El País*). The concealment opens the way for a different, but surely equally legitimate, reading of the reference, one that privileges the fictional text and enhances the subversion of the authority of the real text author. Similarly, the choice of a gay Opus Dei priest as an *alter ego* for Goytisolo, to anyone familiar with the real author, should ensure its interpretation as an anti-ego, an antithetical Goytisolan narrator-protagonist.⁴⁰ Yet he invests the père de Trennes figure with enough characteristics (homosexuality, shared sexual experiences, the Castro phase, etc.) to

³⁹ Randolph D. Pope, 'Theories and Models for the History of Spanish Autobiography: General Problems of Autobiography', *Siglo XX/20th Century*, 12, 1-2 (1994), pp.207-217, p.211. The reference is to Philippe Lejeune, *Le pacte autobiographique*, Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1975.

⁴⁰ Ironically, Pope, writing six years earlier, chooses this as a possible example of a verifiable falsehood in relation to Goytisolo: 'Simply put, if Waldheim or DeMan would have claimed they had been active in the resistance against Fascism, if Virginia Woolf assured us she was a man, or if Goytisolo revealed he was a long-standing member of the Opus Dei, they would not simply be exerting the privilege of fiction: they would be claiming a social response due to them'. op.cit. p.212.

make the reader see more identity than alterity between Goytisolo and Trennes; at one point, the Goytisolo-narrator speaks of Trennes as ‘la parodia y caricatura de mí mismo’ (*Carajicomedia* pp.195-6).

When asked by Gil de Biedma if Goytisolo was preparing an ‘autobiografía o novela’, Trennes does not dismiss the former, but instead rules out the possibility of a Forsterian novel (with plot, stories, real characters) in favour of a Bakhtinian polyphonic novel. The reader, however, is further thrown into confusion in the following chapter, which purports to be an autobiographical account by père de Trennes, seen as a reincarnation of Fray Bugeo Montesinos, of his homosexual affairs, but which he also claims has been used by Juan Goytisolo ‘para la elaboración de novelas y autobiografías ficticias’. So again, in a Bakhtinian fashion, reality is turned on its head and the character (Trennes) claims the role of author in a carnivalesque subversion of the reality. Here and elsewhere, Trennes calls Goytisolo his ‘discípulo’, and accuses him of being a plagiarist, guilty of ‘fiscgoneo literario’, a ‘copista’(p.26). To make the point absolutely clear, the text has Trennes/Bugeo cite the sections from Goytisolo’s true memoirs where similar characters, lovers, are referred to:

Mohamed...Le conocí en Barbés en abril de 1963: es el personaje descrito en el capítulo V de *En los reinos de taifa*, obra de mi amigo y discípulo barcelonés, padrastro y no padre de su autobiografía novelada, compuesta con retazos de mis diarios y glosas al pie de página (*Carajicomedia* p.27)

This treatment of autobiography in *Carajicomedia* foregrounds the question of authorship only to problematize it. Goytisolo’s novels were always considered as having an element of fictional autobiography and the memoirs, of autobiographical

fiction. In some cases, a novel such as *Las virtudes del pájaro solitario* (1988), though not ostensibly autobiographical, seems to invite such a reading.⁴¹ The sheer ambiguity of the text, its elusiveness and allusiveness, its fondness for the undecidable and the enigmatic, leads the reader to seek epistemological footholds in terms of Goytisolo's biography or intertextual links.⁴² Autobiography is used therefore as an instrument of disambiguation, running contrary to the spirit of the text, but understandable in the sense of the Riffaterrean urge to fill in the hermeneutical gaps. It is possible to see it as contributing one of the meanings to a polysemic text, but the danger is that it is used to produce closure in an open text.⁴³ The reference, in the section cited above, to 'padrastro y no padre' is a clear Cervantine allusion which introduces as a further intertext the Prologue to *Don Quijote* with its problematization of the relation between the author and the narrator and its obligation on the reader to play an active part in the interpretative process.⁴⁴ The importance of autobiography to the project of *Carajicomedia* can be deduced from other features. In addition to the Gil de Biedma-Trennes exchange quoted, it is evident from the intertextual dialogue of the novel. Almost all the intertexts are either true or fictional autobiographies. We have already

⁴¹ Robert Richmond Ellis in his book, *The Hispanic Homograph*, devotes a chapter to *Las virtudes* seeing it as 'homobiography' or autobiographical fiction.

⁴² An example is Manuel Ruiz Lagos' detailed article 'Pájaros en vuelo a Simorg' where enigmatic figures like the Archimandrita and the 'fámulo', are identified as Blanco White and as Blanco's friend Eduardo Adrián Vacquer, in a process Ruiz Lagos calls 'el juego estético de apoyar lo inverosímil-real literario en los propios textos autobiográficos' as a means to 'clarifica[r] y explica[r] la verdad del narrador'. Manuel Ruiz Lagos, 'Pájaros en vuelo a Simorg. Transferencias y metamorfosis textual en un relato de Juan Goytisolo: *Las virtudes del pájaro solitario*,' in *Escritos sobre Juan Goytisolo*, Almería, Instituto de Estudios Almerienses, 1988. pp.190.

⁴³ Ann Jefferson has examined similar issues in the work of writers such as Alain Robbe-Grillet, Natalie Sarraute and Roland Barthes after they produced autobiographical texts. Robbe-Grillet's 'revelations' of biographical or referential significances for narrative features which were hitherto interpreted on a purely textual level seem to undermine such textual readings but he then retrieved them by 'defining the entire project as fiction' and making 'the fairly standard point that autobiography inevitably adopts the forms and conventions of the novel'. Ann Jefferson, 'Autobiography as Intertext: Barthes, Sarraute, Robbe-Grillet', in Worton and Still, *Intertextuality: theories and practices*, p.121.

⁴⁴ See Charles Presberg, ' "This is Not a Prologue": Paradoxes of Historical and Poetic Discourse in the Prologue of *Don Quijote*, Part 1', *Modern Language Notes*, 110, 2 (1995), 215-239, pp.235-6.

mentioned Gil de Biedma's *Retrato*,⁴⁵ but others are Antonio Enríquez Gómez's *El siglo pitagórico*, Mateo Alemán's *Guzman de Alfarache*, Delicado's *La lozana andaluza*. Even the original *Carajicomedia* was an erotic biography of the central protagonist, don Diego Fajardo, interspersed with other biographical episodes. In other sections, the novel allows figures like the José Marchena⁴⁶ and Blanco White to engage directly or indirectly with the accounts of them given by Menéndez Pelayo and to set the biographical record straight. To Menéndez Pelayo's accusation that Blanco had numerous offspring from sexual liaisons, Goytisolo allows Blanco to respond:

BLANCO: mi hijo, nacido en el período madrileño que evoco en las Cartas. Conseguí que mis próximos lo enviaran a Inglaterra y se alistase años después en la Compañía de Indias. Los otros -el plural es de usted- son pura y simple invención suya...
(*Carajicomedia* p.203)

Similarly Marchena, referred to by Menéndez Pelayo as 'horriblemente feo', is allowed to send a photo of himself to the great nineteenth-century polymath, adding a note: '¡Mírese usted en el espejo, don Marcelino!' (p.159).

These are humorous details but they extend the theme of inaccurate or ideologically distorted (auto)biography. Goytisolo's fictional 'corrections' are not necessarily any more accurate. Marchena's boast within the text that 'mi amiga M.P. ...proclama bien alto a quien quiera oírla que siempre la serví y colmé hasta el punto de situarme a la cabeza de los beneméritos en un censo amatorio de más de quinientos

⁴⁵ Gil de Biedma's *Retrato del artista* in 1956 was published in 1991. As Richmond Ellis notes 'Though all of Gil de Biedma's writing contains autobiographical elements, *Retrato* is significant within his corpus insofar as it is the only text in which he employs the formal paradigms of autobiographical discourse' *The Hispanic Homograph*, p.57.

⁴⁶ José Marchena Ruiz de Cueto (1768-1821), also known as 'el abate Marchena', Spanish poet and journalist, francophile and supporter of the French Revolution. He spent most of his life in exile in France.

galanes' (p.159) is denied by M.P. herself on p.184: '¡Ese Marchena...no servía ni para picatoste!'

How does this emphasis on autobiography and intertextuality fit in with the overall purpose of the novel? We have noted how in reviews and interviews, Goytisolo himself and others, have emphasised the sexual content and the humorous parody of ecclesiastical language. It would seem that the novel intends to be transgressive and provocative. However, while the novel is entertaining, there is no real critical engagement with the principles of the Catholic Church. Similarly the use of religious terminology to refer to homosexual activity is a rather one-dimensional pun which palls after a while. Indeed, the attack on Opus Dei could be classed as a rather weak target if by it is meant some kind of satire against the Catholic Church.⁴⁷

We have noted that Goytisolo's narrative technique is characterized by intertextuality. In *Carajicomedia* he does not satirize the organization, Opus Dei, so much as its foundational discourse, *Camino*. Commentators on *Camino* and its ethos note its dogmatic and authoritarian character. Jesús Ynfante in his book, cited also in the novel, includes an analysis of the language of Escrivá's text and classes it as 'el manual del perfecto clerical-autoritario'. Referring to a linguistic study of the work's style, he says:

Así pudo advertirse cómo, por una parte, su valor retórico o impresivo reside justamente en su vaguedad o inmovilidad semántica, su ambigüedad o capacidad para no decir nada preciso; pero cómo, por otro lado, consiste también en el

⁴⁷ Goytisolo could almost be said to fall prey to the trap he criticises in others, i.e. attacking a religion through its most fundamentalist wing, although it can be justified given the current alliance between the Vatican and Opus Dei against homosexuality. Gordon Urquhart has spoken of 'an elaborate anti-gay ideology, which the Vatican is formulating, with the help of allies such as Opus Dei', 'Return of the Gay Plague: the Vatican has a new scapegoat', *The Guardian*, Saturday, 31 July 1999.

hecho de que esa vaguedad o ambigüedad está oculta, en la apariencia de decir algo preciso, sumamente definido.⁴⁸

Hence we are dealing with a discourse not of spirituality and polysemy ('estamos a mil años luz de San Juan de la Cruz y de Santa Teresa')⁴⁹ but of a linguistic vacuity which is closer to propaganda. Of course, it is precisely this vagueness that Goytisolo exploits to suggest a scandalously homosexual connotation to the Monsignor's maxims. *Camino* as a text is a product of its period, the Spanish Civil war and its militarism and machismo reflect the ideology of the regime.⁵⁰ Maxim 833 reads: 'Caudillos! ... viriliza tu voluntad para que Dios te haga caudillo.' Hence, on one level, Trennes' scandalous biography is set in opposition to a Church, and in particular, its most militantly conservative branch, which condemns homosexuality.⁵¹ On another level, *Camino's* impoverished, vacuous discourse is countered by the exuberant variety and humour of the prose of *Carajicomedia*. However, such an intertextual parody would still leave Goytisolo open to the criticism that he is simply opposing one discourse with its opposite.⁵² However, in my view, Goytisolo avoids this accusation by having the satire filtered through the ambiguously autobiographical Trennes figure.

In the early sixties, Goytisolo wrote an article for the French magazine *L'Express* in which he recognised that the economic revolution of the Opus Dei technocrats in

⁴⁸ 'Notas sobre *Camino*, el manual del perfecto clerical-autoritario', Jesús Ynfante, *La prodigiosa aventura del Opus Dei: Génesis y desarrollo de la Santa Mafía*, p.383.

⁴⁹ Juan Goytisolo, 'La libido textual de Camino', *El País*, 26 February 2000.

⁵⁰ In the introduction to the 69th edition we are told that 'fruto de una labor sacerdotal que su Autor había iniciado en 1925, el libro aparece por primera vez en 1934 con el título de *Consideraciones espirituales*, y recibe luego -en 1939- su título definitivo.' *Camino*, Madrid, Ediciones Rialp, 2000, p.xxviii. The date of 1939 for the revised and definitive text is important as it explains the influence of the Franco victory and the spirit of National Catholicism that imbues the text. See Michael Walsh, *The Secret World of Opus Dei*, London: Grafton Books, 1990, pp.42-3 and Jesús Ynfante, *La prodigiosa aventura del Opus Dei*, Paris: Ruedo Ibérico, 1970, p.387.

⁵¹ The references to the scandalous best-seller, *Via col vento in Vaticano*, Milan: Kaos Edizioni, 1999, in the text (p.225) are clearly intended to imply that such homophobia is hypocritical. The book was written under the pseudonym of I Millenari', thought to be a cover for Mgr Luigi Marinelli, and exposed alleged homosexual activity in the Vatican.

⁵² See the reference to Labanyi in n.9 above.

Spain had transformed the country and opened the way, possibly, to democratic change. In this thinking he was joined by his brother, Luis, hitherto a staunch supporter of the Communist Party, and Jaime Gil de Biedma. Goytisolo's article⁵³ incurred the wrath of the official Communist party and other anti-Francoist intellectuals. One of the few who sympathized with him afterwards was Gil de Biedma.⁵⁴ Goytisolo still recognises Opus Dei's positive role in the change in Spain in the sixties.⁵⁵ This goes some way to explaining the ambivalence of the Trennes character, on the one hand, a figure of fun or an annoying presence, but on the other, a strangely sympathetic rebel against Opus's norm. In addition to this autobiographical connection, which renders him close to Goytisolo, Trennes is obviously also the contemporary Fray Bugeo, writing the modern *Carajicomedia* which should endear him even more to Goytisolo, even though they argue about who copies from whom.

In this way, Goytisolo makes the parody of *Camino* much more confusingly

⁵³ The article was 'On ne meurt pas à Madrid' and was subsequently incorporated into *El furgón de cola*, Barcelona, Seix Barral, 1976, as 'Examen de conciencia'. Miguel Dalmau gives an account of this episode in *Los Goytisolo*, Barcelona: Anagrama, 1999, pp.404-10.

⁵⁴ 'la primera carta de apoyo, en medio de una avalancha de críticas, me vino de Jaime', *Cogitus interruptus*, p.223.

⁵⁵ Asked in 1992 what his opinion of Opus Dei was he answered: 'Representa la rama más conservadora e integrista dentro de la Iglesia, y el actual Pontífice les ha dotado de una gran fuerza, como se ha mostrado con la beatificación de monseñor Escrivá de Balaguer. Junto a esto, España ha estado en deuda con ellos. Han desempeñado un papel histórico importante en la modernidad de este país...dentro de una perspectiva que es más propia de la reforma protestante que del viejo catolicismo español', *Tribuna*, 6 July 1992, p.83. Cf. 'Incluso el San Juan de Barbès lo admite en uno de sus ensayos!', *Carajicomedia*, p.173.

nuanced. Does this weaken the satire? Not really if we remember that one of the aspects satirised in the discourse of Opus, and of National Catholicism, was its dogmatically monologic quality.⁵⁶ Hence an important part of Goytisolo's contestation of this ethos is the creation of a polyphonic discourse.

To conclude, we could say that the autobiographical element of *Carajicomedia* is central to its narrative strategy, and it is so in a way which, while growing out of the by now characteristic autobiographical seam in all Goytisolo's writing, is markedly different from its previous manifestations. It would seem that Goytisolo has focused on the autobiographical as a method of extending and deepening his development of the subversive effect of his novels. Speaking of the novel and its voices, Goytisolo highlighted the anti-authoritarian intent, alluding to its Cervantine connections:

Esta autoría múltiple y dudosa nos lleva, claro, al terreno de Cervantes...Al ser dudosa la autoría no hay autoridad, es decir, de mi libro no puede sacarse tesis ni conclusión alguna. Es todo lo contrario de una tesis, son voces distintas que permiten al lector la libertad total de escoger lo que le convenga.⁵⁷

This Cervantine play with authorship is taken up by Goytisolo and subjected to a

⁵⁶ A critique of *Camino* from an orthodox Christian view spoke of how its expressions 'son la afirmación de quien se considera en posesión de la verdad indiscutible, que no admite dudas ni fisuras'. J.M. Castillo, 'La anulación del discernimiento', in *Escrivá de Balaguer: ¿mito o santo?*, Madrid: Libertarias/Prodhofi, 1992, (134-141), p.138. Castillo cites an ex-Opus member describing the sense of certainty that was inculcated: 'no hay nada que dialogar con nadie' (p.137)

⁵⁷ Mora, 'Babelia', *El País*, 19 February 2000, p.8. Goytisolo has himself referred to by Trennes as the 'padre no, padrastro' of his autobiographies, similar to Cervantes saying of himself in the Prologue of *Don Quijote* 'Pero yo, que, aunque parezco padre, soy padrastro de don Quijote,...'. Miguel de Cervantes, *Don Quijote de la Mancha*, edited by Martín de Riquer, Barcelona: Editorial Juventud, 1971, p.19.

Bakhtinian 're-accentuation',⁵⁸ so that it becomes a literary contestation of authority in a recognisably postmodernist sense.⁵⁹ *Carajicomedia*'s contesting of authorship is a liberating attack on the traditional humanist notion of the author as truth-source, as grounding transcendental signifier, but its use of autobiography manages to avoid veering into the realms of post-structuralist textuality (à la *Tel Quel*).⁶⁰

Goytisolo's play with autobiography and intertextuality serves to both historicize and a-historicize the novel. The links with the real (auto)biography of Goytisolo, with socio-political discourse (religious dogma, Opus Dei, National Catholicism, homophobia) and with a literary tradition (*Carajicomedia*, the Picaresque tradition, Cervantes, Gil de Biedma, Roland Barthes, etc.) firmly locate it in a web of extra-textual relationships in a way that appears to give it some claim to engagement with the world, some ideological purchase. On the other hand its blatant self-consciousness and textual rug-pulling seem to condemn it, or show it as retreating to a self-sufficient world of textual autonomy. In *Carajicomedia* Goytisolo achieves to great effect a balance which has characterized all his novels, avoiding on the one hand the extremes of a repressive foundationalism and on the other a disabling relativism. Instead he uses the tension between the two as a weapon of subversion. The reader torn constantly

⁵⁸ 'Every age re-accentuates in its own way the works of its most immediate past... Thanks to the intentional potential embedded in them, such works have proved capable of uncovering in each era and against ever new dialogizing backgrounds ever newer aspects of meaning, their semantic content literally continues to grow, to further create out of itself.' M.M. Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*, Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981, p.421. For Bakhtin, '*Don Quixote* [...] realizes in itself, in extraordinary depth and breadth, all the artistic possibilities of heteroglot and internally dialogized novelistic discourse'. *The Dialogic Imagination*, p.324.

⁵⁹ *Don Quijote* has been subjected to numerous 're-accentuations' and is particularly open to a postmodernist reading. See Myriam Yvonne Jehenson, 'The Dorotea-Fernando/Luscinda-Cardenio Episode in *Don Quijote*: a Postmodernist Play', *Modern Language Notes*, 107, 2 (1992), 205-219. For an interesting, alternative reading of Goytisolo's intertextual dialogue with Cervantes, see Alison Ribeiro de Menezes, ' "En el principio de la literatura está el mito": Reading Cervantes through Juan Goytisolo's *Reivindicación del conde don Julián* and *Juan sin tierra*', forthcoming *Bulletin of Hispanic Studies* (Liverpool), LXXVII, 2000, pp.587-603.

⁶⁰ 'The politics of *Tel Quel* may ...be defined as a militant atheism which struggles against the notion, on all levels, of a transcendental signifier or ultimate substantialized dimension of meaning or absolute presence' Fredric Jameson, *The*

between the two is both stimulated into an active reading but prevented from resolving his or her reading. Thus, whereas autobiography and intertextuality have usually been viewed, as we have seen, as twin poles on the same spectrum,⁶¹ Goytisolo treats them as complementary strategies with their own twin poles. Autobiography is introduced both to ground the novel in reality but simultaneously to undermine it. Similarly intertextuality both serves to fill in gaps in the text's meaning but also creates further ambiguity. As an example we saw the *El País* article which was written in a stabilizing double-voiced irony which allowed us to identify the author's 'real' meaning quite easily. However, the incorporation of this same notion of 'libidinal reading' in the novel, filtered through a further 'voice', that of Trennes, and, what is more, with the journalistic intertext hidden, rendered the irony much less stable. Put in Bakhtinian terms the *El País* article was 'monologic', whereas the *Carajicomedia* version was 'dialogic'. Simon Dentith sums Bakhtin up neatly on this point:

Thus parody and some kinds of irony can in fact be the local forms of discourse in which monologism is secured. By contrast, other forms of double-voiced discourse provoke a much more radical insecurity in the reader, when one can certainly recognize that the character's word is dialogized and enjoys no ultimate authority, but one cannot locate the angle from which the dialogization is coming. In this situation, no position of secure knowledge can be inferred, and no secure resting place can be found from which the word, the attitude or the idea can be judged.⁶²

Another example of this can be seen if we contrast an episode in the second chapter of the novel with its autobiographical counterpart or intertext. The section on

Prison-House of Language: a critical account of Structuralism and Russian Formalism, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972, p.182.

⁶¹ Ann Jefferson speaks of 'the spawning of terms like *intertextuality* whose counterpart has been a dismantling of the notion of a "founding subject" and goes on to say that 'autobiography more than any other genre has been linked with this idea of a founding subject' in 'Autobiography as intertext: Barthes, Sarraute, Robbe-Grillet', in Worton and Still, *Intertextuality*, p.127.

Buselham in *Carajicomedia* (pp.30-4) corresponds with, and directly points us to, the account of their relationship that appears in *En los reinos de taifa* (pp.300-305). In the autobiography Goytisolo writes of himself sometimes in the third-person ('el expatriado...nuestro hombre') and other times in the *tú*-form. Hence the split between narrator and narrated, the writing Goytisolo and his autobiographized self, is emphasized. But this double-voicedness is stable. The reader easily follows the writer's effort to piece together a picture of himself and of his motivation for his changed approach to life and writing. In *Carajicomedia* the narrator speaks in the first-person and comments on the distanced approach of the autobiography:

BUSELHAM

Me amigué con él, ¡loado sea el Señor!, durante mi primera misión en Tánger en otoño de 1965, descrita con voluntario distanciamiento por mi colega y discípulo barcelonés, el futuro San Juan de Barbès-Rochechouart, en el último capítulo de su biografía novelada, directamente inspirada en mis escritos. (p.30)

While the first-person seems to decrease the distance, in fact this is Trennes speaking and the narration is double-voiced in a more radical sense. The intertextual reference to the autobiography would seem to ground the text more in the real and yet it serves only to widen the distance, multiply the voices and destabilize and problematize interpretation.⁶³

This radical play with the two extremes of literary theory, the traditional author-centred and the more radically postmodernist undermining of the author, forms the basis of the subversive process of *Carajicomedia*. Such play might seem separate from

⁶² Simon Dentith, *Bakhtinian Thought: An Introductory Reader*, London: Routledge, 1995, p.48

⁶³ In addition, of course, it alters, in the way outlined by Eliot, the way the literary precursor, this case, *En los reinos de taifa*, will be read. 'Whoever has approved this idea of order, of the form of European, of English literature will not find it preposterous that the past should be altered by the present as much as the present is directed by the past.' T.S. Eliot, 'Tradition and the Individual Talent' in *Selected Essays*, London: Faber, 1932, p.15.

the more obvious thematics of the novel picked up by initial readers and reviewers but, in fact, it is crucial to the critical edge of Goytisolo's attack on ideological dogma, social prejudice and our own, often unwitting, sense of certainty. It is but one more example of a constant in Goytisolo's work stretching back to his first 'mature' novel, as he calls it, *Señas de identidad* in 1966, however, it is an exciting, and perhaps the most entertaining, manifestation of it to date.

I would like to thank friends and colleagues, Graham Gargett, Richard York and John Kinsella for reading and commenting on drafts of this article; Angela Sáenz Herrero for providing me with essential books; and the University of Ulster for funding a trip to Oxford in September 2000 during which much of the preparation for this article was carried out.

NUI Maynooth Papers in Spanish, Portuguese and Latin American Studies

No. 1. *The American Dream in Spanish Poetry: Some Early Twentieth-Century Visions of the United States*, Dr Terence McMullan, The Queen's University of Belfast, February 2000.

No. 2. *Autobiography and Intertextuality in Carajicomedia by Juan Goytisolo*, Dr Stanley Black, University of Ulster, November 2000.

No. 3. *Radical Propensities and Juxtapositions: Defamiliarization and Difficulty in Borges and Beckett*, Dr Ciaran Cosgrove, Trinity College Dublin, February 2002.

No. 4. *Voices From Lusophone Borderlands: The Angolan Identities Of António Agostinho Neto, Jorge Arrimar And José Eduardo Agualusa*, Dr David Brookshaw, University of Bristol, March 2002.

No. 5. *National Identity – a Revisitation of the Portuguese Debate*, Professor Onésimo Teotónio Almeida, Brown University, Rhode Island, USA. October 2002.

No. 6. *Translation for the Stage: Product and Process*, Professor David Johnston, The Queen's University of Belfast, November 2002.

No. 7. *Sujeto femenino en contextos de modernidad tardía*, Professor Francisca López Bates College, USA, March 2003.

No. 8. *Antonio Machado And The Royal Art: Fact And Fiction*, Dr Philip Johnston University College Dublin, October 2003.

No. 9. *The Censors' Confusion: (Mis)Interpretations of the Works of Alfonso Sastre*, Dr Catherine O' Leary, National University of Ireland, Maynooth, February 2004.

No. 10. *East Timor Revisited Once More (through the poetry of Francisco Borja da Costa and Celso Oliveira)*, Mr Anthony Soares, The Queen's University of Belfast, March 2004.