

V col·loqui internacional del projecte *Mimesi*

Auctor(itas) in fabula: Figuracions d'autor en la ficció



CONSTRUCCIÓ D'UN DRAMATURG DE FICCIÓ AL TEATRE

“Will he tell us what this show meant?”:

The fictional playwright in baroque (meta)theatre

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The displaying of the fictional status of the stage play is quite usual in baroque theatre. When this fictional status is showed through the staging of a play as a part of the plot of a play, two dramatic levels arise and a set of resources is required to connect them. Georges Forestier (1981), who has studied thoroughly these resources, argues that the role of the fictional public is the component that elicits the identification of the drama within the drama. The fictional playwright, by contrast, appears on the stage quite occasionally and his identity is not always revealed. This paper will be focused on stage plays in which the fictional playwright is revealed, though sometimes implicitly, and acts as one of the characters of the main play or is named after the real author of the play. A comparative survey of these plays allows to address the identity and the function of the fictional playwright and the notions of author and fiction implied in them. The profiles of the fictional playwright are not homogenous, but they belong to a limited range of types (the intellectual, the philosopher, the magician, the actor...) with steady features, parodied by contemporary burlesque drama. This procedure explicitly states the importance of a particular model of drama and literary writing, it suggests certain techniques for decoding dramatic fiction and for adding prestige to the real author of the play. Despite the ambiguous authority of the fictional playwright,

who is hardly ever acknowledged as the author of the whole stage play, and despite the differences in approach, tone and style between the two dramatic levels at stake, the fictional playwright answers Ophelia's question in *Hamlet* (III, 2: "*Will he tell us what this show meant?*") and provides very significant criteria and codes for understanding both the fictional play and the main play. Five metafictional plays by Shakespeare, Baro, Scudéry, Fontanella and Montfleury, written between 1601 and 1673, form the body of texts addressed by this paper. They account for some of the most representative ways of figuring the fictional playwright in baroque drama.