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Carlo Gozzi's La Principessa filosofa, o sia Il controveleno and his Comic Actors

After the success of the *Fiabe teatrali*, Carlo Gozzi found not only a new source of inspiration in the Spanish theatre of the *Siglo de Oro*, but also a way to renew and revitalise the practice of the Italian theatre. Between 1767 and 1801, Gozzi wrote more than twenty comedies based on the Spanish plays by Pedro Calderón, Tirso de Molina, Juan De Matos Fragoso, Francisco De Rojas Zorrilla, José De Cañizares and Augustín Moreto. The playwright considered this part of his dramatic production no less important than his theatrical fairy tales and even claimed in the preface to one of his Spanish comedies that “who would decide to write the true history of our theatres, should make a mention of my new genre based on Spanish arguments”.

However, Gozzi's *teatro spagnolesco* has so far attracted only a scant critical attention. The theoretical conceptualisation of the metaphor of culture as a net that enables the multi-directional circulation of conceptual forms and cultural artefacts, can thus be particularly productive for the re-evaluation of Gozzi's Spanish adaptations and, in a broader sense, for the investigation of the extent of the wide-ranging Spanish cultural influences on the late eighteenth-century Italian theatre.

Taking as a case study Gozzi's *La principessa filosofa, o sia Il controveleno* (The Princess Philosopher, 1772) and its source text, *Desdén con el desdén* (Disdain with Disdain, 1654) by Augustín Moreto y Cabaña, I will explore the following questions: how the diffusion of the material within the cultural net was enabled? What is transferred with the dramatic text and what becomes different in the process of circulation and why? Another issue that is to be considered is whether the concepts of intellectual property for dramatic literature developed in a different way than they did for non-dramatic forms. Ultimately, I will investigate the impact of the authorial agency on the circulation of the cultural artefacts.