

THE FABRIC OF THE BAROQUE: WILDNESS AND IDEOLOGY IN THE SPANISH

*COMEDIA*

by

HARRISON MEADOWS

B.A., Furman University, 2008

M.A., Auburn University, 2011

A thesis submitted to the

Faculty of the Graduate School of the

University of Colorado in partial fulfillment

of the requirement for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Department of Spanish and Portuguese

2015



This thesis entitled:  
The Fabric of the Baroque: Wildness and Ideology in the Spanish *Comedia*  
written by Harrison Meadows  
has been approved for the Department of Spanish and Portuguese

---

Committee Chair: Professor Julio Baena

---

Professor Núria Silleras-Fernández

---

Professor Andrés Prieto

---

Professor Juan Pablo Dabove

---

Professor John Slater

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

The final copy of this thesis has been examined by the signatories, and we find that both the content and the form meet acceptable presentation standards of scholarly work in the above mentioned discipline.



## ABSTRACT

Meadows, Harrison (Ph.D., Department of Spanish and Portuguese)

The Fabric of the Baroque: Wildness and Ideology in the Spanish *Comedia*

Thesis directed by Professor Julio Baena

Wild figures densely populate the forests of the Baroque imagination. They appear so frequently on the stages of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Spanish theaters that they form a sub-genre with its own conventions. In these works, resolving the traditional conflict of the *comedia* is synonymous with eliminating wildness—however it manifests itself. As a result, this process of restoring disrupted social order sheds light on the ideological framework that guides it. Through an analysis of the plays in which they appear, however, I argue that wild figures increasingly resist the imposition of ideology over the course of the Baroque. Their wildness causes a problem in the text that cannot be resolved through the conventions of the Spanish *comedia*, which exposes the hollowness of the ideological purpose of the genre, and of ideology itself. Through the application of prevailing ideological theories, my argument demonstrates the symbolic range of the wild figure, and its ability to uncover how the culture of the Baroque conceived of its delinquents and its princes, its history and its future, its men and its women, and the value system that supported it. To accomplish this task, I interpret the wild figure through the lens of monster and gender theory, and also early modern political and natural philosophy. This multi-faceted approach exhibits the extent to which the pervasive wild figure becomes an

obsession of the Baroque imagination that reveals the overarching anxieties disavowed within the ideological context of the period.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

While the process of writing a dissertation can be quite a wild thing, the generosity and wisdom of so many people have guided me through the forest as unscathed as one could hope. This thesis would not have been possible without the guidance of my director, Julio Baena. His unbelievable efficiency in providing detailed and helpful feedback, along with his unflappable encouragement has helped me, as he would say, turn an unfinished dissertation into a finished one. Thanks to his unique and always entertaining insights, this project never ceased to be an enjoyable and energizing one. I am also immensely grateful to John Slater, who helped me get this project off the ground, and whose penetrating analysis of my work always pushes me to be a better scholar. I owe much gratitude to the members of my dissertation committee, Núria Silleras-Fernández, Andrés Prieto, and Juan Pablo Dabove, all of whom have been fundamental not only as I completed the dissertation, but also in my intellectual formation as a student in the doctoral program at the University of Colorado. To my fellow graduate students—notably Mark Pleiss, Taiko Haissler, Lau Cesarco Eglin, Caitlin Brady, and Adam Carroll—, I could always depend on your friendship, encouragement, and sense of humor when I needed them most. I can say the same for my family, who have been so positive and such a source of wisdom in times of stress. Finally, I am immeasurably grateful to my wife, Rachel, for her patience in this process, and for giving me the time of day even when I had to spend most of it in a library carrel.

I was also fortunate to receive funding for travel during the summer of 2013 from the Department of Spanish and Portuguese, and also an Eaton Graduate Student Travel Grant from the University of Colorado's Center for the Humanities and Arts to carry out dissertation research in the early stages of this project.



## CONTENTS

<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	1
<b>CHAPTER 1</b> SAVAGE MISDIRECTION: CULTURAL TRANSGRESSION AND MONSTROSITY IN THE WILD FIGURE <i>COMEDIA</i> .....	23
<b>CHAPTER 2</b> BLEEDING OUT: HISTORY, NATURAL MAGIC, AND THE PROBLEM OF SUCCESSION IN THE WILD FIGURE <i>COMEDIA</i> .....	93
<b>CHAPTER 3</b> THE ECHO OF CALLISTO’S LAMENT: GENDERING THE WILD FIGURE OF THE SPANISH <i>COMEDIA</i> .....	149
<b>CONCLUSION</b> .....	195
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b> .....	209



## INTRODUCTION

The 1260 psalter *mappamundi* depicts the world within a circular space. Relying little on a physical representation of the world, the famous psalter map portrays a conceptual geography of God's creation in the cosmos that represented "the meaning of the universe, projected onto a rather schematic physical base" (Edson 17). Christ sits perched atop the earthly orb, within which we find lands near and far from the map's epicenter pinpointed on Jerusalem. Towards the periphery of the map appear the notorious monstrous races whose physical existence would garner credibility into the early modern period, even if always having symbolically stood for the unknown, its dangers, and its deformity. This right hand side of the map (on a modern map, the southerly edge—it is rotated 45° counter-clockwise from magnetic north) demonstrates the tendency to monstrify<sup>1</sup> any entity that falls outside the boundaries of the order of things. As many medieval maps would either provide illustrations of dragons or graphically inscribe "*HIC SVNT DRACONES*" onto its uncharted terrains, the psalter map does not fail to include them as well. Aside from Christ and his angels that flank him, the two dragons that support the earth are the only beings that fall outside the edges of the cartographic space. Suggestively, this map is incapable of imagining a universe without including that which lies outside of it.

---

<sup>1</sup> This neologism seeks to encompass the process by which an entity becomes a monster. While monstrosity is a complex concept defined by its resistance to such definition, "to monstrify" implies the process by which a culture makes something unrecognizable, and as a result, perceived as dangerous. The way that this manifests itself in the Baroque *comedia* is examined in Chapter 1 of the dissertation.

And that is where this dissertation enters the conversation. Wild things in one form or another have always inhabited the human imagination. The locus of their existence is ever shifting, but they always appear towards the edges of any conceptual space, if not completely outside its bounds. When analyzing socio-historical contexts, their wild things guide us to the unspoken, the unknown, and all that is not supposed to exist. The psalter map is an exceptional point of departure because it so aptly provides a graphic representation reflective of the nature of any ideological system. God, truth, the prince all sit atop the created order under its purview as arbiter and meaning-giver. In the psalter map, events depicted such as Moses parting the Red Sea have meaning because God ordained them. Yet, by speaking truth into being (because symbolic value must of course be tied to language) the Law is created, and with it the possibility of transgression. There are always examples of that which betrays creation and its order; they must get pushed towards to corners of the conceptual map of ideology, even beyond its bounds where there be dragons, lions, sirens, and all sorts of monstrous, un-tamed wildness. Like the dragons on the psalter map, they are absent, but conspicuously present as well.

This illustration can be applied to any ideological apparatus, but it seems particularly appropriate as a theoretical approach to the Baroque Spanish *comedia*. Historically understood to be the ideological tool of a notoriously conservative culture, the *comedia* also demonstrates a revealing obsession with wildness. In an opinion piece from October 26, 2014 in *The New York Times*, David Castillo and William Egginton analyze the current popular fascination with vampires and zombies. In response to the recent flood of representations of these monsters on page and screen, the authors posit an explanation for their symbolic efficacy in contemporary capitalist society:

If the modern vampire may have functioned as an apt metaphor for the predatory practices of capital in colonial and post-colonial societies, today's zombie hordes may best express our anxieties about capitalism's apparently inevitable byproducts: the legions of mindless, soulless consumers who sustain its endless production, and the masses of "human debris" who are left to survive the ravages of its poisoned waste. (par. 12)

The wild figure<sup>2</sup> was a similarly ubiquitous monster in the theatrical production of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Spain, and equally revealing of the cultural anxieties of the Baroque. As in the conflicts to the plots of the films, novels, and television programs in which vampires and zombies fall (or ascend, depending on the particular iteration of vampire) into a state of monstrosity from a previous humanity, the Baroque wild figure stresses the correspondingly perilous and symbolic stakes that can cause such a degeneration within its own cultural context. More akin to the zombie, the wild figure emerges as a creation of Baroque society; however, unlike zombies, wildness occurs as the result of transgressing established order rather than following it mindlessly. This character appears throughout the theater of the period; nearly every playwright of note has at least one wild protagonist, if not more. Following Reichenberger's well-known and oft cited (including in this dissertation) systematic assertion that the *comedia*

---

<sup>2</sup> In criticism, this figure is usually labeled the wild man, wildman or *Wilderman*. In the dissertation, when referring to the general manifestation of the type, I give preference to the term "wild figure" for two reasons. First, its gender neutrality does not occlude the significant number of examples of wild women. Also, "figure" more accurately describes what it does. Its representation is always symbolic in nature, always a stand-in for a complex set of meanings. The wild figure is more than a man or a woman, although usually it is gendered in specific iterations; since the purpose of this dissertation is to define what the wild figure means, this nomenclature is more precise than the tendency in criticism towards wild man.

always follows the trajectory of order disturbed to order restored (307), wildness proves to be an apt vehicle to represent the disturbance of order. Living in the forest, a deserted island, or a far-away land, they are conceived to inhabit the peripheries of the map, much like the monstrous races of the psalter *mappamundi*. They exhibit the limits of ideology; they are the point where ideology breaks down in spite of itself. As my analysis of the corpus of wild figure plays shows, resolving whatever cultural obstruction that the wild figure's wildness represents lies at the heart of the restoration of order at the end of each play. The *comedia's* ideological function in these works is to erase the spaces at the edge of the map, but really can only disavow their existence through such elimination. Hayden White provides a concise description of this purpose of the wild figure: "No cultural endowment is totally adequate to the solution of all the problems with which it might be faced; yet the vitality of any culture hinges upon its power [...] to convince its least dedicated member that its fictions are truths" (6). So, the extent to which the wild figure can be killed, domesticated, or re-assimilated in a satisfying manner is crucial to the ideological efficacy of the *comedias* in which it appears.

Yet, the very existence of the wild figure, the fact that it can be conceptualized and represented, suggests a serious problem. By establishing the Law, ideology precipitates the transgression of constructs it considers to be predetermined and self-evident. Ironically, ideology—in spite of its exact purpose—creates the very thing it is supposed to deny. The wild figure emerges on the Spanish stage in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries as a way to depict the consequences of transgressing the law of social order, and therefore serves as an indispensable device to analyze the economy of ideology over the course of the Spanish Baroque. David Castillo indicates the "signifying flexibility" (20) of monsters in general in

representing social transgression, which is a trait shared by the wild figure. The transformation of its representation over time allows us to view the ever-changing landscape of hegemonic discourse throughout the period, and observe the ways that ideology inevitably fails.

As I track this trajectory, it becomes clear that the changes incurred by the wild figure indicate a development that coincides with the decline of the Baroque. If we consider the Baroque as a fabric made up of a complex threadwork of agents and events that make up a garment, then the wild figure (or any transgressor of order) represents a tear in that fabric. These tears and rips are sewn back together in the conclusions of each work, and the garment becomes intact again. However, as more wild figures appear in the Spanish *comedia*, likewise the fabric must be sewn back together over and over again, becoming threadbare and its patches and stitch work more visible. Eventually, it transforms into a worn out, and completely non-functional adornment. The fabric of the Baroque will be an illustration that I return to throughout my analysis that appropriately reflects my purposes in the dissertation for a number of reasons. First, it is a befitting metaphor because it reveals the *comedia*'s preoccupation with representation and reality (*ser/parecer*) on a number of levels. First, the fabric of the Baroque provides language that allows for the complexity of ideology in the many fibers and threads that make up a garment. When ripped, its repair is only complete in appearance; it leaves a weakness where the trauma occurred. Furthermore, a garment is an object that serves to cover up nakedness. It attempts to say something about who we truly are, but is always nothing more than an artificial construct with its designs, patterns, and materials transmitting a message that only makes sense in a particular context, and based on a complex belief system arrived at arbitrarily—however designed or pre-determined it may appear. Dress is a signifier with cultural efficacy, essentially

disavowing the truth of one's nakedness beneath. It is the emblem of original transgression.

Adam's nakedness had to be covered up, so he wove the original garment of fig leaves, and the complex relationship between law, transgression and cultural order was inaugurated. Finally, dress is intrinsically connected to the Spanish *comedia*'s obsession with appearance and its ability (or lack thereof) to transmit meaning. The wild figure constantly fights against this concept; dressed in animal pelts, it is a visual representation of everything that negates the emblematic dress of Baroque high society. In the absence of clothing, the wild figure materializes the aptness of the fabric of the Baroque metaphorical language. If the Baroque is a fine garment, the wild figure's animal skins expose what it disavows.

This reconsiders what scholars of Baroque Spain have historically said about the wild figure. Much of the previous work directly focused on the wild figure catalogues his or her many appearances, drawing connections amongst its many iterations and uncovers allusions to earlier literary traditions, particularly Greco-Roman mythology. This type of work was carried out by Oleh Mazur in his book-length catalogue of the wild figure (who he denotes as the wild man) and José Madrigal in his doctoral dissertation. Both apply the seminal research carried out by Richard Bernheimer on the wild man in the larger context of Medieval Europe. In his study he highlights the religious symbolism of the wild figure as a Christian symbol for the sinful nature of humankind, while also suggesting its ability to represent a return to a more primitive existence as in the tradition of the anchorites. Most related to the dissertation, Bernheimer spends a chapter examining the theatrical nature that so often corresponds with the representation of the wild figure. In Medieval Europe, he notes that this manifested itself at the time of Carnival, when an actor would don the garb of the wild man, and be paraded into the center of town. Symbolically



representing the festive atmosphere of carnival, the wild figure is either beaten with sticks or run out of town, representing the defeat of the sinful self in preparation for Lent.<sup>3</sup> Through this manifestation of the wild figure, we begin to see how it exists at the site of transgression, punishment, and pardon. Bartra amplifies Bernheimer's study in scope and depth, tracking the wild character from its earliest influences through the Enlightenment. Most significantly, Bartra's work brings the equivocal nature of the wild figure to the fore, and how its function can transform significantly from one context to another. His work provides the foundation for the history of the wild character that I outline in the following section of the Introduction. Finally, the scholar who most recently has studied the wild figure in the context of the Spanish Baroque is Fausta Antonucci. As is true of the scope of this dissertation, she focuses on the specific representation of the wild figure in the *comedia*. My work is most in dialogue with Antonucci in the first internal dissertation chapter, where I challenge her view on the transformation that occurs in the wild figure, both in each of its iterations, as well as in its larger trajectory as a conventional character of the Baroque *comedia*.

### **Literary, Mythological, and Iconographic History of the Wild Figure**

Previous to its first appearance on the Spanish stage, the wild figure experienced a long and varied existence that is nearly as lengthy as the graphic representations that have existed to record it. Certain characteristics and their variations define the figure. It is hirsute (although its fur is sometimes replaced by leaves or feathers), lives a solitary existence in the forest

---

<sup>3</sup> We see this portrayed frequently in the Medieval and early modern periods in both visual and literary form. Peter Bruegel depicts this theatrical carnival tradition in a number of woodcuts, and more famously in *The Struggle between Carnival and Lent* (1559). Boccaccio's lascivious friar in the second tale of the fourth day of his *Decameron* tries to escape the city disguised as a wild man, but is thwarted when he becomes part of the spectacle during the carnival celebrations.

(occasionally represented in a singular family unit), carries a club (sometimes as large as an entire tree), and tends to be giant (although sometimes miniature). While these traits can be malleable, this core is essential to identifying them in the tradition. That said, their characteristic behavior is more difficult to categorize. Even though it often appears as dangerous, the lore surrounding the wild figure is not devoid of more positive, helpful types as well. It has always had an equivocal identity in this regard, either cruel and lewd, or noble and peaceful (*Salvaje en el espejo* 17). Along with their more odious manifestations is a violent, sexually aggressive nature. These are known for killing men and livestock, kidnapping children, and raping women. Conversely, their more helpful counterparts aid the lost traveller or simply keep to themselves as hermits. According to Bartra, such characteristics, however contradictory, “en la Edad Media se codificó y se extendió el mito del hombre salvaje peludo, habitante imaginario de los bosques y personaje [...] perfectamente identificable” (*Salvaje en el espejo* 61); however, its predecessors extend back as far as the Old Testament and other writings from ancient Mesopotamia, then to proliferate in Greco-Roman mythology.

In the biblical narrative, we see loose reference to the wild figure in Esau, who was born “all red, his body like a hairy mantle” (*Oxford New Revised Standard Version*, Gen. 25.25). He is distinguished from his “tent-living” brother Jacob as “a skillful hunter, a man of the field” (Gen. 25.27). Esau’s hirsute appearance and skill in the fields and forests suggests an initial dichotomy that will follow the wild figure throughout history: society and culture against nature and solitude. This reappears in the ancient Mesopotamian epic of Gilgamesh when the goddess of creation brings into being the wild figure Ekidu to counter Gilgamesh’s solitary authority over established order. Ekidu represents the opposite, and shares the recurring trope with the wild

figure of being raised by wild animals in the forest. Two other biblical accounts depict wild figures, one in the book of Daniel and the other in the New Testament gospels. In the eponymous Old Testament book, Daniel's prophetic vision goes unheeded by the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar. As a result, the king "was driven away from society, ate grass like oxen, and his body was bathed by the dew of heaven, and his hair grew as long as eagles' feathers, and his nails became like birds' claws (Dan. 4.33). Later, John the baptizer appears in the gospels "clothed in camel hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey" (Mark 1.6). He also lives in the desert, another peripheral space that in some iterations of the wild figure replaces the forest. In these characters, we begin to see the wild figure take shape, pitting nature against culture, the deftness in the hunt, the body covered in animal fur, and the connection between madness and fleeing to the forest.

Greek and Roman mythology abounds with prototypes of the wild figure. Bartra provides a succinct list: satyrs, silenuses, titans, amazons, giants, maenads, cyclops, and centaurs (*Salvaje en el espejo* 17). Of these figures, the equivocal nature of the wild folk emerges. While many of the above list are known for their violence, they are not without noble and peaceful examples as well. For instance, centaurs are most often war-like, but Homer provides two morally upright examples in Quiron and Folo. Many of the mythological creatures are associated with the Arcadian forest and the deities that inhabited it such as Dionysius and Diana. In the former, we view the hyperbolic sexuality of Dionysius and his maenads, while in the mythological narrative of Diana, the rejection of sexuality becomes the impetus for her violence that pervades the otherwise agrestic arcadian landscape. Without mention thus far is the Greco-Roman god of the

forest, Silvanus, whose name, club wielding, and forest habitat are predecessors of many wild characters across Europe in the medieval and early modern periods who share the same traits.

Other characters from late antiquity that would bleed into the medieval and early modern representations of the wild figure are the anchoritic saints such as Onuphrius and John Chrysostom. The anchorite tradition can also be found in ancient Babylonian and Egyptian lore, and the narrative of these members of the Christian pantheon of saints comes out of those earlier narratives (*Salvaje en el espejo* 55). The plot of the Chrysostom myth shares many aspects not only with a previous Egyptian legend, but also with the wider tradition of the wild figure.

According to his legend, the hermit Chrysostom is happened upon by a princess with whom he concedes to carnal temptations. In order to keep from continuing to sin with her, he hurls her from a cliff. Out of guilt for his double crime, the reclusive monk leads the ascetic life to an even greater extent in penitence for his sins by walking on all fours, and eating as an animal does. He eventually grows a coat of fur, and is found by one of the hunters of the royal court who brings him to the king. After his confession to killing the princess, she ultimately reappears miraculously alive, and all sins are forgiven. From Chrysostom's hirsute appearance and sexual appetite, we view traits that would become canonical to the medieval wild figure (*Salvaje en el espejo* 74). He is joined by the narrative of another character whose story would continue to be told into the medieval period as well: Merlin. Merlin, like Chysostom, retreats to the forest to distance himself from society, but his story tracks a different course for a significant reason. He flees to the woods as the result of a trauma. According to Bartra, early versions of the tale describe a Merlin who flees from society to a life of solitude after the death of his brothers in battle (77). His insanity becomes associated with his wildness, which is a characteristic

commonly associated with the trope during the medieval period among lovesick knights and courtesans of the chivalric novels and sentimental romances (Bernheimer 15). While later iterations of Merlin's story do not include him as a wild figure, they do not dismiss the wild character altogether. In Geoffrey de Monmouth's account, Merlin was the offspring of an incubus of some kind—either a satyr or a centaur—which bestows on him supernatural powers. Bartra aptly sees the fundamental comparison between Chrysostom and Merlin as “hombres que viven una existencia salvaje (*Espejo* 80). Unlike the creatures of Greco-Roman mythology who were of an entirely different species than humans, Merlin and the anchorite monks were humans who “descended”, according to Bernheimer, into wildness. Therefore, by the medieval period, “the state of wildness was usually not regarded as irrevocable, but as amenable to change through acculturation (8).

Therefore, in the western Christianization of the wild figure during the medieval period, it could be located in a hierarchy of being somewhere between beasts and humans, just as angels existed between God and man. The wild figure's insanity was geographically paralleled in the wildness of the forest habitat, and the result of lovesickness due to the unrequited love of the knight's damsel. We find this in the story of Ywain in the Arthurian cycle, and Amadís's lovesickness provides fodder for Cervantes's Cardenio in *Don Quijote*, who draws from another literary tradition in his creation of this character as well: the epistolary sentimental romances. In masterful Cervantine fashion, the wild figure, the chivalric novel, and the *novela sentimental* come together in the creation of Cardenio, whose lovesickness leads to his bouts of insanity and characteristic behavior of the wild figure (wreaking havoc on the farmers and shepherds of the sierra). The sentimental romances such as Ariosto's *Orlando furioso* and Diego de San Pedro's

*Carcel de amor* are two representative works of the genre in which lovesickness leads to the insanity of the protagonists and they become wild figures. Other wild folk inhabit the literary forest of medieval Iberian literature as well. In Juan Ruiz's *Libro de buen amor*, the narrator journeys to the sierra where we meet the female *serranas*, who he describes as ugly giants that take advantage of him sexually. This figure can be traced back to the maenads of the Dionysian horde, thus demonstrating a sexual impulse that tends to accompany female figures outside of the boundaries of societal norms throughout history.

Upon arriving to the early modern period in Spanish letters, the characteristics that define the wild figure are well in place. Once Segismundo appears in his dramatic and symbolic tower, numerous wild figures have appeared before him on the Spanish stage. It goes without saying that Segismundo is a wild figure. That much, we know to be true. Yet, upon first glance, it should not make much sense for Calderón to call upon the folkloric and iconographic traditions of hirsute, club-wielding forest dwellers to dress his quintessential protagonist in animal pelts. The solitude of his tower-prison creates a kind of space arguably related to the secluded Arcadian habitat of the wild figure, but the connection remains tenuous. The answer only makes sense when we acknowledge the exceeding popularity of the wild figure on the Baroque stage, and only in this context can animal pelts carry meaning and call on recognizable conventions. However, by acknowledging this background information, Segismundo the wild man is replete with symbolic force. The wild figure had become so popular in the Spanish *comedia* by the composition of *La vida es sueño* that an animal-skin coat meant something even in a space where it should have been non-sensical. But Calderón's play, in 1634-5, would not be the last wild figure to don the seventeenth-century Spanish stage. In fact, *La vida es sueño* is situated near the

middle of a trajectory of plays that roughly spans 1588-1693.<sup>4</sup> This dissertation explains the popularity this character enjoyed from a variety of critical perspectives, which uncovers more general conclusions about dramatic production in Baroque Spain as well. Most importantly, as I stated above, the dissertation analyzes the shifting locus of wildness throughout the seventeenth century in Spain, and how this obsession with wild figures reveals a more nuanced vision of the Baroque.

Lope de Vega inaugurates the wild folk sub-genre, and draws from folk tales to generate the abandoned-child-who-would-be-prince storyline that the wild protagonist most often follows. In fact, whenever the wild figure is one of the principal characters of a *comedia*, it nearly always imitates this model plot.<sup>5</sup> By some turn of (mis)fortune, a child is abandoned or separated at birth from his or her royal parents. Presumed to be dead or possibly taken care of by a loyal servant, these characters are raised in the forest, either by wild animals or that servant entrusted to their care. Once a young adult, they come into contact with the villagers and/or the court, misidentified as a dangerous beast culpable of myriad crimes (usually stealing livestock, killing men, and raping women). However, by some plot twist, they are recognized as the royal heir (or

---

<sup>4</sup> These dates refer to the first representation of the wild figure of the Spanish *comedia*, Orsón of Lope's *El nacimiento de Ursón y Valentín*, and the last, Rocas, in Bances Candamo's *La piedra filosofal*. Of course, there are transitional and related figures that appear before and after Orsón and Rocas, respectively, but with these two I delineate the first and last characters whose identity indisputably appeals to the wild man tradition.

<sup>5</sup> There are, of course a few exceptions to this rule. For example, in Lope's *Las Batuecas del Duque de Alba*, two forbidden lovers escape the court to find a community of wild folk living in the forest near the border with Portugal. They eventually learn that the wild community is made up of direct descendants of the last visigoths, thus providing the play with symbolic implications regarding national myth. Other stock wild figures also appear in the *comedia*, usually briefly, as is the case in *Los tres mayores prodigios* by Calderón. In this drama, which takes up a different mythological narrative in each act, Jason defeats a wild man to retrieve the golden fleece.

progeny of another seat of power), and reunited with their parents. This fundamental sequence comes to be re-worked and shaped to the purposes of each of the playwrights that employ the wild figure in their dramas, sometimes in thrilling fashion, and at other times rather curiously. As a result, the wild character is eminently malleable; it is a remarkably apt vehicle for dramatizing some of the questions that engross Baroque thought.

During the early modern period, the wild figure conceptually overlaps with many other literary types that are not properly wild folk. I include them here to combat the inclination to characterize them as such, and avoid objections to their lack of inclusion in the current study. The most glaring omission is that of the representations of the indigenous peoples of the Americas. At the beginning of my research, I assumed their portrayals in dramatic works would be an indispensable aspect of the overall question of wildness. I quickly realized, as many before me, that the links construed between wild folk and the native peoples of the New World were imposed and projected upon the latter by European settlers and explorers who gathered expectations from commonly held beliefs derivative of medieval maps and the histories of canonical sources such as Herodotus and Pliny.<sup>6</sup> It is due to their expectations that creatures such as the cynocephali, the exaggerated abundance of cannibals, and the connection to the wild man that this confusion initially arose. The similarities between the wild figure and that of the indigenous American exist at the intersection of western notions of civilization and any society that does not coincide with their paradigmatic tenets. Their perceived shared primitivism (or more precisely, archaism, according to Hayden White) correspond, but the other traits of the wild

---

<sup>6</sup> For a detailed view of the politics of projection in the age of exploration and the conquest, see Plasencia-Roth, "Enemigos de Dios: Los monstruos y la teología de la Conquista," *Heterotropías*, Eds. Carlos Jauregui and Juan Pablo Dabove.



folk (hirsute, sexual appetite, violence, solitary lifestyle) cannot be applied wholesale to the indigenous peoples of the Americas. That is, to discuss the inhabitants of the discovered lands is to bring forward the wild figure, but not vice versa. The wild figure effaces any semblance of a faithful textual representation of the indigenous populations; however, albeit a research question of foremost significance, the particular manifestation of the wild figure of the Spanish stage is not a vehicle that sheds light on its resolution. Nevertheless, I answer a question that is not wholly unrelated. The ideological scaffolding my wild figure uncovers provides insight into the culture that would produce such a politics of projection to fit the unknown into their established and traditional ethnographic schemas. In one sense, this politics is yet another example of how the wild figure frustrates expectations. Assuming they would find wild men and other monstrous creatures, their actual discoveries belied those preconceived notions.

Another character found at the edge of Baroque society is the *pícaro*. Like the monstrous races of the medieval *mappaemundi*, there are many types of monsters that inhabit the periphery of the Baroque map. The *pícaro* joins the wild folk in this conceptual space, but most significantly differs by existing “at the other end of the social spectrum; he is the post-civilized savage, the result of society’s mismanagement of human potential” (Dudley 116). Along with the *pícaro* are gypsies, moriscos, and Jews who are forced to the edges of this conceptual map (and literal map in the case of the moriscos and Jews). Dudley’s concise characterization of Cervantes’s Cardenio highlights what all of these figures have in common. They are all “Baroque failures” (129). Like the wild figure, they represent specific aspects that cultural order seeks to erase, but their prescribed absence always leads to a compulsive presence; therefore, representations of these characters abound in the literature of the Spanish Baroque.

## Summary of Chapters

In Chapter 1, I approach the wild figure through the lens of monstrosity, a concept often applied to the character. In this regard, however, the wild figure tends to frustrate expectations about its nature rather than confirm them. When Ursón of Lope's *El nacimiento de Ursón y Valentín* walks onto the stage to inaugurate a sub-genre of wild folk plays, before the audience is a figure that has all the appearances of a wild man. He is hirsute, wields a club, and the villagers lament his violent, dangerous, and sexually aggressive nature. Nevertheless, we learn over the course of the play that the villagers get it wrong. Yes, he lives in the woods, but the villagers form preconceived notions of him based on the folkloric tradition they project upon him. Skillfully, Lope draws attention to monsters in order to be able to identify Uberto, the play's true monster that initiates the conflict of the *comedia*. These become the elements in play over the course of seventeenth-century dramatic production in which wild folk bring the question of monstrosity into focus in order to redirect our attention to the play's true villain, who can now be identified as such. This development coincides with del Río Parra's work on deformity during the early modern period. She posits that as human deformity came to be understood through the more scientific lens of proto-modernity, monstrosity took on a more conceptual nature. That is, as the world became more known, the monstrous races slowly disappeared from the edges of the map and became more attached to superlatives of human action that were either exceedingly prodigious, or more likely, abominable and horrific. In turn, monsters became any entity that exceeded or transgressed a particular system of values.<sup>7</sup> In the Spanish Baroque, the symbolic

---

<sup>7</sup> For a more detailed analysis of the relationship between deformity and monstrosity in the early modern period, see del Río Parra, *Una era de monstruos: Representaciones de lo deforme en el Siglo de Oro español*, pp. 11-24, 42-45.

force of monsters pierced through the fabric of hegemonic order in the form of transgressed social norms. The wild figure is one of those agents, whose existence must be erased so that order can be restored. That erasure, however, changes over the course of the century, and provides useful data regarding the ever changing and diminishing ideological apparatus of the Baroque.

To support my approach in Chapter 1, I turn to post-modern critical theory. Monstrosity fell under the conceptual purview of many of the notable personas of twentieth-century criticism, the most helpful to my study being Derrida, Foucault, Lacan, and Žižek. Egginton's application of these, mainly Lacan and Žižek, centers focus squarely on early modern Spain. He elaborates an analysis on the obsession within the *comedia* of appearance and reality, which itself opens up the problematic space of modernity between signifier and signified, subject and object, self and other.<sup>8</sup> The definitions of monstrosity of these thinkers provide a framework for understanding the wild character's ideological function. Negating the expectation that it serves as the "fundamental blockage" that impedes the fantasy of completion and harmonious order (Žižek 143), it actually serves the purpose of misdirection. Understood within the conceptual schema of monstrosity, the wild figure misdirects audiences for a period of time; they eventually learn the identity of the "true" ideological monster of each work who remains unidentified until he or she is uncovered in the resolution of the plot. The developments in the types of conflicts and resolutions in the corpus treated in this chapter provide fertile terrain for a diachronic approach

---

<sup>8</sup> Egginton proposes that this Baroque preoccupation is best described as theatricality, which he makes a case for being the defining principle of modernity. His argument can be found in *How the World Became a Stage*, 2003. He begins to lay out the ideological implications of this proposition in the book, which he elaborates in a later offering, *The Theater of Truth: The Ideology of (Neo)Baroque Aesthetics*, 2009.

that analyzes the ideological trajectory of the wild figure over the course of the Baroque. In Chapter 1, I analyze the *comedias* that best track this course, although my approach could be applied to many more (which are mentioned and briefly discussed in the chapter). Those plays are the following: Lope de Vega's *El nacimiento de Ursón y Valentín* (1588-1595), *El animal de Hungría* (1608-1612), *El hijo de los leones* (1620-1622); Pedro Calderón de la Barca's *La vida es sueño* (1636), *En la vida todo es verdad y todo mentira* (1659); Juan de Cabeza's *La reina más desdichada* (1661), and Diego de Figueroa y Córdoba's *Leoncio y Montano* (1662).

In Chapter 2, I turn my focus to three wild folk *comedias*, each of which is better understood as a recasting of the previous. Mira de Amescua's *La rueda de la Fortuna* (1603) initiates this sequences by depicting the historical narrative of the imperial succession of Byzantine Constantinople at the turn of the seventh century C.E. The play, both chaotic and entertaining, is a dramatic treatise on political philosophy—more specifically on monarchical succession. The work affirms primogeniture as the most legitimate system, as one would expect from a work from the early seventeenth century in Spain. However, Calderón takes up the pen with the elements of Mira's play in mind to dramatize the same theme of succession in his *En la vida todo es verdad y todo mentira* (1659). His play also takes place in Byzantine Constantinople during the tumultuous reigns of Maurice, Phocas, and Heraclius. Even though the similarities are significant enough to merit their comparison, most noteworthy is how Calderón repurposes the characteristics they share for his own dramatic ends. He replaces the certainty at the conclusion of *La rueda de la Fortuna* with skepticism, which pervades the work. Calderón's *En la vida ...* reconsiders the political philosophy of *La rueda de la Fortuna* by asking a slightly different question. In Mira's play, we are provided knowledge without any doubt of the identity of the

emperor's son, who is Heraclio. In *En la vida...*, the premise of the plot is that, even though the audience is provided two possible options, they do not know which is the son of the legitimate emperor Mauricio, and which the offspring of the villainous usurper Focas. When the conclusion does not resolve this uncertainty, consequently, the political question offered by Calderón in this work is, "who succeeds the king when it is impossible to identify an heir?" The *comedia* utilizes elements of many other wild figure plays that serve to reveal the true royal identity of the wild character, only to convert them into agents that impede that type of knowledge. From this aspect of the play, it would seem that Calderón realized that at the heart of the Baroque dramatic wild figure lies a frustrated expectation. Just as they rarely prove to be the club-wielding monsters of folklore, the equivocal nature of the wild figure fuels Calderón's philosophical purpose in *En la vida*, which is the following: to test the legitimacy of the empirical model for establishing a matter of fact within a dramatic space. I demonstrate how the meta-theatrical structure of *En la vida...* experiments with experiments, and concludes that sometimes certainty is impossible to attain through observation, and there can still be a satisfying resolution in its absence, even if that entails a lack of knowledge pertaining to the identity of the king's son. This message resonates with the political history of 1659 provided the difficulty of Felipe IV to produce an heir, and the uncertainty surrounding the health problems of the young Felipe Próspero that would ultimately bring about his death. Both playwrights use wild figures as the conflict-resolving agents of their works who assume the throne in the end (even though wild figures are absent from the historical accounts of Byzantine emperors Maurice, Phocas, and Heraclius). They are revealing obsessions of the Baroque, pliable to a playwright's ends in a wide variety of contexts. The third play under analysis in the second chapter is Bances Candamo's *La piedra filosofal* (1693). This version

discards the Byzantine setting, but maintains enough of Calderón's *En la vida...* to recognize it as a rewriting. The most subtle of these similarities are linguistic repetitions of verses and plot strategies, but also ones suggesting that the play attempts to dramatize some of the same underlying preoccupations of Calderón's work. These include the use of the wild figure, the theme of royal succession, and the experiment/magical laboratory sequence that dominates the plot. Composed at the end of the century in 1693, the uncertainty of succession remained acute, and in Bances's version, the anxiety of doubt precipitates the protagonist's madness. As he becomes the next in line to the throne at the end of the *comedia*, the playwright provides a less than satisfying ending to a work that overtly generates a national mythology that alludes to the imperial endeavors of Spain over the course of the previous two centuries. What is the result of that national project? Madness. By tracking the arc of these three plays, the national anxieties of Baroque Spain find themselves dramatized, propelled by the vehicle of the wild folk play.

In the third and final internal chapter, I apply a gender studies approach to the wild figure play that concentrates on the prominently featured wild women of the sub-genre. I discuss four of the representative works that include the wild figure-who-becomes-prince(ss) plot sequence: Lope de Vega's *El animal de Hungría* (1608-1612), Pedro Calderón de la Barca's *Hado y divisa de Leonido y Marfisa* (1680), Juan Pérez de Montalbán's *La Lindona de Galicia* (1642), and Diego de Figueroa de Córdoba's *La sirena de Tinacria* (1678). Like their male counterparts, the wild women of the Spanish *comedia* illuminate significant anxieties of Baroque culture, in this case the ones related to gender and its expression. Judith Butler's performativity model guides my approach. On the one hand, the discussion of performativity and gender is inescapable when dealing with theater. On the other, this question is singularly applicable to the Spanish *comedia*

and its obsessive meta-theatrical concern with disguise, performance, and their relationship to one's true nature, self, and identity. Even if ultimately to uphold prescribed gender roles in the end, the wild woman plays incorporate heaping portions of ambiguity in regards to prescribed gender norms, such as gender misrecognition, cross dressing, and the rejection of those norms on the part of the wild woman. The result is a destabilization of gender that is centered on its inherent performativity, which fails to be reconciled in the hasty marriages that resolve the conflicts of their plots. In response to the imposition and policing of social norms, the wild women of the *comedia* tear through the fabric of the Baroque in a way that it is incapable of repairing. The theatrical space creates a fertile terrain for the wild woman to sow the seeds of doubt that diminish the symbolic efficacy of Baroque cultural hegemony. She embodies the term *perla deformada* from which the Baroque gets its name. The irony of the Baroque *comedia* is its simultaneous attempt to call attention to its uniformity, while failing to hide the deformity from which it ultimately receives its name. As I will demonstrate in each of the three chapters, the *comedia* finds it increasingly difficult to disavow that deformity, as it becomes more and more incapable of re-stitching the elaborate garment that conceals the scaffolding of Baroque ideology. Eventually, it will become as tattered and torn as the animal pelts that heralded its demise just over a century beforehand.





## CHAPTER 1

SAVAGE MISDIRECTION: CULTURAL TRANSGRESSION AND MONSTROSITY IN THE  
WILD FIGURE *COMEDIAS* THE SPANISH BAROQUE

Wild characters in early modern Baroque theater rarely stay in the forest. They nearly always begin there, but the unraveling of the plot takes them away from their peripheral habitat, towards the city, and often the court itself.<sup>9</sup> This movement has been understood as a process of centralization, or normalization, for the wild character in which he or she becomes civilized. A particular subset of these plays exists in which the wild figure—the heir to the throne—is lost at birth to grow up in the woods, ultimately to recuperate his or her role as heir in the resolution of the plot. These are not the most well-known theatrical works produced during the period, but plays such as *El animal de Hungría* by Lope and *En la vida todo es verdad y todo mentira* by Calderón are two representative examples. Calderón's *La vida es sueño* also fits into this categorization, but ultimately transcends the sub-genre.<sup>10</sup> While the wild figures of these plays may have the physical appearance of being uncivilized, dressed in animal pelts and

---

<sup>9</sup> On another level, their representation in the *corrales* of Madrid and in some instances within the court itself, also demonstrates their inherent theatricality. Not only do they migrate from the peripheral forest in the narrative world of the works themselves, but have also become symbolically central and theatrically present in the geographic nucleus of early modern Spain as well.

<sup>10</sup> I will address this play's inclusion in the corpus later in the current chapter.

wielding a club, each retains varying degrees of civility. These qualities include speech and proper etiquette due to their upbringing by a hermit character, who, for one reason or another, has retreated to a life in the forest. Themselves “cultured”, these hermits transmit certain aspects of learning—both intellectual and cultural—to their adopted child who will eventually grow up to be the wild protagonists of the plays that follow this plot sequence. As a result, the transformation in the wild men and women of these works from savage to civilized is not the primary conflict in need of resolution. The issue is almost ubiquitously not the civilizing process of the wild character; rather, these plays, as is true of the *comedia* in general, present an initial transgression of Baroque order, which establishes the initial conflict of the plot that must be resolved in the end. This offense, usually dealing with questions of honor, is rarely committed by the wild character; instead, a breach in the honor code serves as the primary catalyst that engenders him or her. The wild characters of these plays, in turn, are central to the restoration of order, as opposed to the cause of *disorder*. As creatures spawned by the honor code, these wild characters become vehicles that dramatize the complexities of cultural transgression, punishment, and rehabilitation.

A primary theme that pervades these plays in regard to the disruption of societal norms and its resolution is monstrosity. Throughout the plays, among the many monikers that the wild figure acquires, one of the most common is “monster”. I will argue throughout my analysis, however, that the negative characteristics projected onto the wild figure in each of the dramatic works are more a result of a lingering folkloric construction of the wild character—often voiced by the villagers—than any confirmed offense or series of crimes committed by the male or female protagonists. That is, the villagers project certain characteristics onto the wild figure,

playing on a folkloric understanding of the dangers that lie in the forest. The “wild man’s” assumed monstrosity is—at least mostly—false, a perception of him or her rather than a true indication of identity. All the while, the series of events around their birth that leads to an isolated childhood is a direct result of an initial offense enacted by another character in the play. Bartra indicates in his analysis of Lope’s *El animal de Hungría* that the play’s “true monster” is not the wild woman, Teodosia, but rather her sister, Faustina (*Artificial* 128).

Therefore, the result of cultural transgression is the creation of monsters, and the model I propose to interpret these works is the following: the *disorder* precipitated by the initial transgression in the plays I analyze monstrifies two characters. One of these, the wild figure, is merely perceived as such but is not the monster he or she is accused of being. The other character, whose crime or offense remains undiscovered, is initially unharmed in the eyes of society. In other words, he or she is the true Baroque monster, guilty of the crimes projected upon the wild figure. The duality of these two characters in each of the works is central to the conflict; in order to restore Baroque order, the space between perception, or representation, and reality must be sealed. Paradoxically, the process by which such enclosure occurs is *anagnorisis*—the revelation of the true identity of the wild figure—thereby requiring one space to open in order to be immediately enclosed to resolve the conflict. Cultural transgression, then, can be understood to cause a wound in the socio-cultural body of the Baroque, which, in order to heal, must be sutured, or artificially enclosed. Sometimes, this process is tidy, and even convincing, in the conventional endings of the *comedias* within this corpus. In other cases, the healing of the wound depicted in the resolution to the conflict is more problematic. Therefore, the wound and the process by which it heals in each of the works under scrutiny reveals indispensable knowledge

regarding the metaphorical diseases and cures that afflicted Baroque cultural sensibilities. Over the course of the chapter, I will demonstrate<sup>11</sup> how the details of that process changes from the end of the sixteenth century throughout the seventeenth. It becomes clear that over the course of this period the wild figure *comedias* dramatize wounds of greater severity, equally precarious cures, and sutures that leave increasingly visible scars. This development suggests a genre struggling to maintain the ideological efficacy it has traditionally been understood to champion. The plays that I will primarily discuss are the following, in chronological order: Lope de Vega's *El nacimiento de Ursón y Valentín* (1588-1595), *El animal de Hungría* (1608-1612), *El hijo de los leones* (1620-1622); Pedro Calderón de la Barca's, *La vida es sueño* (1636), *En la vida todo es verdad y todo mentira* (1659); Juan de Cabeza's *La reina más desdichada* (1661), and Diego de Figueroa y Córdoba's *Leoncio y Montano* (1662). The corpus of dramatic works that draw from the same structural elements and narrative sequences is much larger, and I will include brief descriptions of each of those works throughout the chapter as they relate to the topic.

As a point of departure to discuss the concept of monstrosity in relation to these works is the characteristic that precludes each of the characters from being properly considered wild men,

---

<sup>11</sup> “Demonstrate” here aptly describes my purpose, playing on the etymology of the term as it specifically relates to the current discussion. First, the verb “to demonstrate” and each of its derivatives are deeply rooted in empiricism. Therefore it suitably defines an operation that alludes to medical cultures of the modern episteme, in which experiment, observation, and demonstration lead to further knowledge of the diseases that afflict humanity and their cures. Further, and more germane to the treatment of monstrosity, “demonstration” is etymologically linked to the latin root *monstrare*, “to show”, from which we also receive the term “monster”. In one sense, this chapter analyzes the process by which the monsters of these plays are “demonstrified”, or proven to lack the monstrous qualities initially ascribed to them. In another, more general sense, I explicate the function of monsters within a particular socio-dramatic context as a metaphor for the unknown or unknowable. By analyzing monsters, we make them known—“demonstrated”—thereby divulging the secrets of their nature that fuel their cultural efficacy.

and in turn monsters: their ability to speak. I will return to this facet of their character throughout my analysis, as it is precisely the wild figure's locutionary ability, often even about their own monstrosity, that causes an instant self-contradiction regarding their supposed lack of humanity, be it expressed as monstrosity, wildness, or barbarity. Christian Metz coins the term *instant self-contradiction* in a book chapter with the same title, mostly referring to the comicity of "particular forms of mental wit" in which humor derives from a "contradiction [...] from the utterance and the uttering". Few of the wild figure's utterances in these wild man plays are humorous, but the mere fact that they speak at all is problematic, and demonstrate this instant-self contradiction; no matter what they say, their saying it prohibits them from being properly a wild figure, monster or beast. For each of these terms signify a *lack* in humanity, for which speaking—using language—proves exactly the opposite. On another level, St. Isidore's notion presented in *Etymologies* that the latin term *monstrum* comes from *monstrare*, "to show", is an idea that lingers into the early modern period; however, the wild figure of Baroque theater does more than simply show. This wild monster that is unique to the Spanish *comedia* often creates a problem in the text due to a surplus of meaning. The wild man-who-speaks is an instant self-contradiction that reminds us that he or she is inherently theatrical—a player for whom an audience exists, not simply spectators. This concept is critical to understanding the wild figure plays considered here, and will serve as an interpretive tool throughout this chapter.

### **Establishing the Genre: The Wild Character Comedias of Lope de Vega**

#### *El nacimiento de Ursón y Valentín*

The earliest wild man play of the subset currently under analysis is Lope's *El nacimiento de Ursón y Valentín*, which will serve as a foundation for the other *comedias* that I discuss, as

they re-work the same plot elements that we see in Lope's version of the tale of Ursón and Valentín. The story itself is well-worn,<sup>12</sup> but this particular representation on the Spanish stage provides the basis for all the wild characters that follow. At the opening of the play King Clodoveo is away at war, during which his *gobernador*, Uberto, makes an advance at the queen, Margarita, and she rebuffs him unquestionably. Thirsty for revenge at her scorn, Uberto accuses her of infidelity to the king upon his return. Margarita is subsequently banished from court, pregnant and accompanied by the king's gardener, Luciano. On their journey, she gives birth to twins, the first of which, Ursón, is snatched up by a she-bear,<sup>13</sup> who Luciano chases into the woods. The other child, Valentín, grows up with his mother, without knowing of his noble birth nor of his brother. Between the first and second act, twenty years pass, and Valentín learns of Uberto's hand in his mother's dishonor, and vows to go to court to avenge her, although he remains unaware that his father is the king. After offering his services as a hunter to the court, Valentín is commissioned with Uberto to track down and kill a wild man—who of course happens to be Ursón—that has been terrorizing the villagers in the forest just outside Valentín's hometown. They come across a sleeping Ursón, and Valentín takes the opportunity to avenge his mother's honor and stabs Uberto, who subsequently confesses his crime against the queen to

---

<sup>12</sup> In regards to the particular narrative of Valentine and Orson, Arthur Dickson's *Valentine and Orson. A Study in Late Medieval Romance* provides comprehensive details on the story, originally in the French chivalric novel, *Valentin et Orson*. Antonucci also proposes that Lope draws from the Carolingian romance, *El noble cuento del emperador Carlos Maynes y de la reyna Sevilla, su mujer* for its similar plot elements that include the defamed queen that raises her child amongst shepherds to finally recover her lost honor (66).

<sup>13</sup> The fact that it is a she-bear is significant, and becomes a recurring trope throughout the corpus of wild figure plays of the Spanish Baroque. Generally, many of the figures are raised by wild animals, but the particular reference to the she-bear alludes to the myth of Callisto, which becomes even more significant in the *comedias* that feature a wild woman. I discuss this element at length in Chapter 3 of the dissertation.

both Valentín and to the king before breathing his last. This leads to the anagnorisis of Margarita's identity to the king, along with Valentín as his son. Assuming all has been resolved with Ursón in Valentín's custody, Luciano appears and reveals Ursón's identity as the eldest son and heir to the throne. The play ends with the marriages of both brothers into noble families and Ursón acknowledged as heir.

A small number of scholars have treated this play at length, including Madrigal, Mazur and most recently Antonucci. While they each treat different aspects of the play, criticism generally agrees on one point. Regarding Ursón, they contend that he realizes the following trajectory: "el itinerario exterior de Ursón del estado de salvaje al de príncipe y, también, su itinerario interior de la animalidad a la humanidad" (Antonucci 66).<sup>14</sup> In order to align with this assertion, one has to interpret particular passages that indicate Ursón's wildness at the beginning of the play, both interior and exterior, in a particular manner. For example, she attributes to him aggressive behavior and base instincts to only desire good food, wine and the beauty of the opposite sex, made most clear in the scene in which Ursón happens upon a female villager and states the following:

El león suelo yo ver  
con la leona abrazarse,  
y así deben de juntarse,  
el hombre con la mujer,  
¿Qué dudo? A buscarla voy. (ll. 1587-90)

---

<sup>14</sup> Unless otherwise noted, citations for Antonucci pertain to *El salvaje en el siglo de oro: Historia de un tema de Lope a Calderón*. She has written a number of articles and book chapters on the topic that I will reference, but I primarily cite her monograph.

On one level, it is easy to compare his impulses to those that he observes in the animals around him in his habitat in the forest, which Mazur considers *amor ferina* (200). In another sense, however, Ursón affirms his humanity more than he displays base emotions.<sup>15</sup> While he has not experienced relationships in the same way a child in society may have experienced them, he never doubts the commonality that he shares with the villagers and all humans with whom he comes into contact. Thus, his function in the play is not primarily to display his own external and internal transformation, but rather for his humanity to be revealed to the other characters, and to show he is not the monster they have projected him to be. On a fundamental level, he proves this by simply speaking, while he continues to be understood as a monster by the other characters of the play.

Therefore, there is a tension on a number of levels of the play between representation and reality, or at least the version of “reality” that Lope’s work reveals. In this play, one consequence that results from the conflict is that “reality” has very little bearing whatsoever on its representation, even to the point that in one scene two villagers are unable to recognize Ursón from the sketch of him that they carry with them. The process of translation is a “sketchy” one, in which the further away from the source a representation becomes, the more disparate, deformed even, it is from its referent. The same is true of Ursón. In his encounter with a village girl, he speaks to her in a courteous manner, but she is unable to overcome her preconceived notions of what a wild man should be, in her mind the wild figure of folklore. It is for this reason that Lope’s play more precisely treats the problem of *ser/parecer* than any such transformation

---

<sup>15</sup> Again, he demonstrates his humanity not only by what he says, which I explain here, but also that he says it at all. His speech is an instant contradiction to the claims of monstrosity made against him.



from animality to humanity, as has been contended. Antonucci even concedes, “lo que nosotros vemos en escena del comportamiento de Ursón, no se corresponde en nada con lo que cuentan los villanos” (69), while Mazur asserts the possibility that Ursón “is given [monstrous characteristics] as a result of superstition or fright” (66). This interpretive model fits better into the way the wider corpus of plays that make up the Spanish Baroque are understood, more related to the relationship between truth and its representation, illusion and reality, disguise versus one’s true self. These tend to be the binaries of the Baroque.

When the villagers request the aid of the king to apprehend the monster of the forest that they believe Ursón to be, they provide a written notice and include a list of the harms he has caused them, which includes murder, theft, kidnapping and rape. It is essentially a list of all the behaviors accredited to the wild man of folklore, rather than any actual behavior observed in Ursón. In his encounter with the female villager, he treats her kindly, but she leaves him fearing for her life—which we of course understand given the popular belief maintained about the nature of the wild man she saw before her eyes. Still, he permits her to leave, not entirely understanding her behavior when he says, “Es del cielo tu hermosura / y de la tierra tu miedo” (1669-70), which suggests that she has misunderstood him. Based on the allegations made against him in comparison to the crude but ultimately harmless behavior he exudes in this episode, one can only conceive that misunderstandings such as this one led to the exaggerated claims against him by the villagers. Thus, the essential problem in *El nacimiento of Ursón and Valentín* as it relates to the wild figure is the space between representation and reality—the space between who Ursón is and who he is perceived to be—not his transformation from beast to man. Accordingly, if this

aspect of the play is to be resolved, then that space must be closed, and his true identity made known.

Another facet of the play further proves this to be true. As has been indicated by Antonucci, when Valentín kills Uberto, he is the true Baroque monster from the beginning, not Ursón. His treason initiates the conflict to be resolved in the play—queen Margarita’s loss of honor. During the hunt for Ursón, Valentín stabs Uberto and confirms this characterization: “Yo por el monstruo he venido / mas este monstruo es Uberto / muere traidor” (ll. 2156-58). From the beginning of the play, the characters have an essential quality. Margarita is virtuous, her sons are heirs to the French throne and Uberto is a traitor. Ursón displays few signs of monstrosity, other than his outward appearance of animal skins and the club he wields, which further proves what is at stake in the play is the erasure of the space in which appearance belies reality. Egginton calls this the “major strategy of Baroque”, whereby the problem of appearance and reality is ultimately resolved in order to confirm and uphold the established order.<sup>16</sup> In *El nacimiento de Ursón y Valentín*, that order is put in question by the false accusations against Margarita and her subsequent exile; however, the conflict, this false appearance of her lack of virtue, is resolved beyond a shadow of a doubt precisely through the anagnorisis of her identity, the erasure of that false appearance and the revelation of her true nature. The same is true of Ursón, his monstrosity is all a false projection; his true nature, displayed by his behavior throughout the work, is

---

<sup>16</sup> Egginton expands on the “major” and “minor strategies of the Baroque” throughout his work, *The Theater of Truth: The Ideology of (Neo)Baroque Aesthetics*. In comparison to the brief description of the major strategy I have provided, Egginton defines the minor strategy of the Baroque as the focus “on the concrete reality of mediation itself and hence produces a thought, an art, a literature, or a politics that does not deny the real, but focuses on how the media are themselves real even while they try to make us believe that their reality, the reality in which we live, is always somewhere else” (8).

ultimately resolved and the true monster, Uberto, receives his just punishment. The enclosure of this problematic space is the function of play, and follows a pattern indicated by Richard Glenn of Lope's early dramatic works in which "entire plays are devoted to the interplay of truth and illusion [through] a multitude of disguised characters, each having lost their real identity for one reason or another" (626).

As the earliest of the wild folk *comedias*, I would like to emphasize this ending of *El nacimiento de Ursón y Valentín*. As I previously stated, the resolution to the conflict of the play through the restoration of Margarita's honor and the reestablishment of order through the revelation of the true heir to the throne is convincing; however, Ursón's "true" identity as rightful heir to the French throne and therefore antithesis of monstrosity is inherently problematic as well. The presuppositions upon which the play's conflict and resolution rely assert what must be considered a particularly Baroque reality, in which against all odds honor must be restored, the monarchy is safely intact, and all truth remains self-evident in the conventional endings of the *comedia*. The function, therefore, of this *comedia* is to restore that balance by revealing the lie against Margarita's honor and Ursón's identity as heir. Nevertheless, no matter how compellingly these conflicts are resolved, behind such notions is a *mise-en-abîme* of illusions that is "predicated upon the separation of the dimension of meaning from that of being", according to Egginton's description of the modern experience of space (*How the World* 86). The play depicts the closing of the space between Ursón's apparent monstrosity and his "true" humanity, but the

enclosure of that space can only be a fantasy, albeit a convincing one, firmly rooted in the cultural construction of the Baroque.<sup>17</sup>

The wild character, in this case Ursón, provided his context as a product of the Baroque, is conclusively not a monster, while Uberto absolutely is one. Their perceived and “real” monstrosity is crucial to understanding the culture of the Baroque, as it emerges within the dramatic works of the Spanish stage, uncovering what Michael Uebel calls a “history of unthought”. He describes this term through the following:

To sketch such local histories of unthought, where unthought demarcates or corresponds to some uninhabitable domain of alterity, one must make a strategic assertion: imagining otherness necessarily involves constructing the borderlands, the boundary spaces, that contain—in the double sense, to enclose and to include—what is antithetical to the self. [...] Histories of unthought are thus concerned with the historical reasons for what is socially marginal or liminal becoming symbolically central. (“A History of Unthought”)

---

<sup>17</sup> This raises some complex questions about how these plays work. For instance, what is the relationship between the *poeta* and this aspect of the work? Are the cultural values as they are presented in the works the result of pertaining to a particular milieu or do the playwrights actively attempt to uphold the tenets celebrated by Baroque ideology? As will become clear over the course of the dissertation, I argue that this is precisely the problem that the *comedia* has left modern audiences, which to a certain degree is irresolvable. While there are moments that scholars have persuasively argued for subversive elements within the *comedia*, more often than not when the ideology of the Baroque fails in *comedias*, it does so because such is the nature of ideology. Ideology pervasively guides a culture, but its inherent artificiality will inevitably show one thing, while consequently concealing another. Therefore, no matter how convincingly a playwright upholds social norms in the ending of a play, there will always exist some degree of doubt that insinuates their constructed nature.

Ursón's perceived alterity and Uberto's actual monstrosity, understood in these terms, serve to begin to construct a history of unthought of the Spanish Baroque because a society's deviants are necessary "to discover the complete horizon of a society's symbolic values" ("A History of Unthought"). Uberto's transgression opens up a window into the system of honor that *would* be transgressed through adultery, and the subsequent punishment for that transgression that required the transgressor's blood. At this point in the development Spanish *comedia*, the monster is not just symbolically killed (although his death is not devoid of symbolic meaning), but is literally killed, assuaging any fear that order might be disrupted by a subsequent intervention on his part. To put it another way, the space between representation and reality is overtly and definitively enclosed in the resolution of the play, and is the best example of what could be considered a totalitarian conclusion on the part of Lope. This construction of the conclusion to the narrative—the death of Uberto—strangles any room for doubt, and in turn, this creates ironically fertile ground for mechanisms of resistance which would grow increasingly evident over the course of seventeenth-century dramatic production.

Ursón, conversely, does not incur the same fate as Uberto, being permitted entrance into the established order from which he had previously been excluded. According to Cohen, the "refusal to participate in the 'order of things' is true of monsters generally" ("Thesis III"). To amend Cohen's comment, it is not always that the monster refuses to participate in the "order of things", but rather is incapable of doing so. For example, Frankenstein's monster Adam desires to pertain to cultured society, but is ultimately unable. Ursón cannot be classified as such, due to the fact that he is allowed entrance into the "order of things" as its highest-ranking arbiter—king. As these events transpire, it is clear that within the Baroque there no longer exists a fear of the

presence of a wild man who lives in the forest, and what may at first appear as that very fear has become something entirely different. In its place, a prototypically modern fear emerges regarding the nature of the “self” about which Wes Williams, in his interpretation of Montaigne, posits an inward turn “in the language of monstrosity in the early modern period” (2). This turn implies that “there are [...] no monsters in nature, other than those which lie within the divided and fractured human self” (2). Williams goes on to assert that, at the same time, monsters are not relegated to “mere” metaphor, but rather leave the periphery of the medieval geographic imagination to reappear in the ideological centers of early modern culture such as the “courtroom, the (medical) theater, into religious polemic, women’s imagination, the home, the marriage bed” (2). Within these ideological terrains, new monstrosities are imagined, confirmed and ultimately punished. And it is within the *comedia* that Baroque monsters such as Uberto receive that punishment, a warning for any others who might transgress the established order.

That term, “to warn”, in latin *monere*, is another possible etymology for the romance term for monster. While the connection between the two terms is not difficult to ascertain, it is noteworthy that the common setting for wild figure and other ancient monsters was the periphery (often represented in literature as the forest) and also that signs at the end of Roman roads would warn travelers of the danger that may lie beyond (*Hic sunt leones*, for instance), thus providing a possible etymological link. In the Baroque, theatrical monsters also serve as a warning for crossing cultural boundaries; however, before that warning can be properly understood, one has to navigate multiple signs that fail to signify that which lies beyond them: the sign that initially demarcates the periphery—the wild man Ursón—projects a false warning, while the true Baroque monster—Uberto—occupies a culturally central space within the court. Even though the

play develops in a way so as to resolve those incongruences, these “fractured selves” demonstrate the conflict at the heart of modernity, and their respective sutures epitomize the Baroque. That is, even though the wild-man characters express a profound—and modern—anxiety regarding their identity as either monster or human, the overwhelming Baroque ideology of the *comedia* repairs the “fractured self”. In spite of that, like a suture, the recovery of identity inevitably leaves a scar. In *El nacimiento de Ursón y Valentín*, evidence of a previous rupture in the cultural order is blotted out as exhaustively as possible through the literal death of the monster Uberto, but, as I will demonstrate throughout this chapter, as more serious offenses against the honor code are incurred, their repair becomes increasingly problematic and the “scars” more visible.

Egginton provides another way to understand the anxiety over identity in the play. Rather than denoting the conception of the self as the determining characteristic of modernity, he posits that a more apposite term is “theatricality”. In many ways, Egginton’s terminology succinctly explains the issue of Baroque monstrosity within the wild figure plays in question. Rather than revolving the discussion around subjectivity as something that moderns have and medievals lacked, he “suggest[s] that what occurred was a shift in dominance between two modes of experiencing space, that is between two modes of spatiality: presence and theatricality” (*How the World* 124). He explains that both are terms that describe the “ordering principle of spatiality”, in which the medieval period is marked by presence—the erasure of the space between a signifier and a signified—, and the modern period distinguished by its inability to close that space. “True Presence” now lost, it remains something longed for, remembered. This nostalgia during the modern period manifests itself in what Egginton coins as the “crypt”, a space inhabited by “True

Presence” “which responds to and guides the visual desire to reveal that which remains concealed; it is the promise of *reality* in a world of endless illusion” (*How the World* 7). More specifically within the Baroque, the *comedia* insists on the existence of the “crypt”, purporting to put it on display in the conclusion of each work. In *El nacimiento de Ursón y Valentín*, the audience knows that both Ursón and Uberto are playing roles, not only as actors on a stage, but their characters as well, a farce that must be uncovered in order to reveal their “true” identities. Ursón serves as a literary foil to Uberto; their respective appearances belie their true identities, and the function of the play is to “definitively” close that space between representation and reality. Anagnorisis is the technique by which honor is restored in all levels of the play, not transformation. At the same time, this “definitive” resolution itself belies its own overt theatricality, another instant self-contradiction in which the ideological apparatus of the theater serves to transfer the locus of monstrosity to Uberto, in the end another role that he must play, just as Ursón plays that of king.

#### *El animal de Hungría*

One characteristic of seventeenth-century dramatic production is the recycling of similar plot elements, which for some indicates a lack of originality within the genre. While this may be true, the variations that do occur from one iteration of a common convention to another can cause significant transformations in the overall meaning of the work in relation to previous



“versions”.<sup>18</sup> *El animal de Hungría* draws from the same essential narrative of *El nacimiento de Ursón y Valentín*.<sup>19</sup> Teodosia is this play’s defamed queen, banished from court after being accused by her own sister, Faustina, of infidelity. Faustina then weds the king and becomes pregnant with their daughter. One day, she joins the court for a hunting retreat in the forest, and after becoming separated from the group, she gives birth to Rosaura. Immediately, a wild man, as was one of his attributes in medieval folklore, appears and kidnaps the child. Actually, the wild “man” is Teodosia, who takes the child and raises her in the woods.<sup>20</sup> Towards the end of the first act, a parallel plot development occurs, as three Spanish sailors maroon Felipe on a mountainside in Hungary, the same area inhabited by Teodosia, and near the village where most of the action takes place. Lauro, a villager, rescues him and between the first and second acts, Rosaura and

---

<sup>18</sup> Of course, *El nacimiento de Ursón y Valentín* is not the only source of intertextuality in *El animal de Hungría* draws. Simerka compares Shakespeare’s *Cymbeline* and *Winter’s Tale* to Lope’s *comedia* in her *Knowing Subjects*, while O’Brien notes its influence on later works such as Zayas’s “La perseguida triunfante”. Each of these works depicts a woman falsely accused of infidelity, and the resultant recuperation of their honor, which serves to “present [...] inadequacies in the cultural models for acquiring and assessing knowledge of honor, gender, and human nature” (Simerka 176).

<sup>19</sup> Morley and Bruerton assign this date, and Tubau provides more evidence to confirm, with both of them conjecturing a date of composition between 1611-1612 as most likely. Morley and Bruerton make these claims based on Lope’s use of *décimas*, *romances*, and *tercetos* which are most common during the period of 1610-1614 (280-81), while Tubau argues based on the content of the play and the similarities between Rosaura in this play and Belardo in *La burgalesa de Lerma* (1613)(682-83). However, similar parallels can be made between Rosaura and many other characters—such as those in the dissertation—and thus does not provide as conclusive a method for dating the play, not to mention that many years could pass before playwrights decided to recycle material.

<sup>20</sup> Antonucci points out the similarity of this scene with *El nacimiento de Valentín y Ursón*. In this case, Teodosia acts as the she-bear of the earlier play (79). Bernheimer notes the ambiguous connection between the bear and the wild man in folklore. In some of the medieval Twelfth Night and Carnival festivals, an actor dressed as a wild man would be “hunted” and brought into town to be punished for his misdeeds against the village. Sometimes, the wild figure would be replaced in the farce by a bear. For more information, see Bernheimer’s *Wild Men in the Middle Ages*, specifically chapter three: “His Theatrical Embodiment”, pp. 49-84.

Felipe become young adults. They meet one day in the woods, fall in love and express their intent to marry, but their happiness is quickly disturbed by a group of villagers who happen across them in search of the titular “animal of Hungary”, and subsequently threaten to incarcerate Rosaura. In defense of his recently betrothed, Felipe kills one of the villagers and is sentenced to death. At that point, an ambassador arrives on behalf of the Count of Barcelona, searching for the count’s long lost nephew, who had been banished as a child by the previous count. This child is ultimately identified as Felipe, which resolves one of the two primary conflicts of the work. The false accusation against Teodosia, and the true identity of Rosaura, however, remain unresolved until the arrival of the king of England who comes to restore his daughter’s—Teodosia’s— name. At precisely this moment, Teodosia appears dressed as a villager and reveals herself as the banished queen and uncovers Faustina’s plot to poison the king to keep her secret hidden. Once the food is confirmed to be poisoned, Teodosia is vindicated, Faustina is sent to a convent, and all parties agree on Rosaura’s and Felipe’s now royal engagement (linking the royal families of Hungary, England and Aragon).

From the very first lines of *El animal de Hungría*, a preoccupation similar to that in *El nacimiento de Valentín y Ursón* becomes apparent in which the space between representation and reality must be enclosed. Teodosia, being hunted by Lauro, asks him why he isn’t afraid of her. He responds citing his inner nobility: “Es el natural valor / más que el temor poderoso: / soy noble, aunque humilde miras / mi traje” (ll. 9-11). His hidden nobility is second only to Teodosia’s, at whom Lauro staggers “de ver tu rara belleza” (l. 16). In his case, his ragged clothing belies his inner “nobility”, which is an interesting auto-evaluation given that he does not pertain to the noble class, and demonstrates the play between his nature and his appearance.

Simultaneously, Lauro's worldview is incapable of reconciling Teodosia's "rara belleza" and her supposed and expected monstrosity. Whereas in *El nacimiento de Valentín y Ursón*, the two brothers respectively choose not to kill each other due to *la fuerza de la sangre* that gives them the inclination that things are not as they seem, in the opening scene of *El animal de Hungría*, Lauro's actions and Teodosia's hidden beauty demonstrate from the beginning that appearance is an unreliable tool for acquiring knowledge.

Similar instances abound in *El animal de Hungría*. If the two plays analyzed up to this point can be compared not only in plot elements but also more comprehensively in the overall message in what the plays accomplish, important parallels can be drawn. As in *El nacimiento de Valentín y Ursón*, there are scenes in *El animal de Hungría* that display its concern for the reliability of representation. When the king first arrives to the outskirts of the village on a hunt, members of the town council approach him to rid them of the "animal" that terrorizes their village. Bartolo, one of the villagers, provides the following information about the "fiera": "Ya su retrato anda impreso / y se cantan cada día / las coplas de su traiciones" (ll. 525-528). Here we have two methods by which to identify the wild man (again, actually woman, in this case, although she is presumed to be male until the end of the play). Much like in *El nacimiento de Ursón y Valentín*, neither of these methods prove particularly reliable. If her "retrato impreso" had been disseminated as Bartolo's assertion implies, Lauro would not have been so surprised by

her beauty if it were an accurate depiction,<sup>21</sup> not to mention the fact that it would not have been a portrait of a male figure. Furthermore, poetry had been written and sung about him, increasing a sense that his story has become that of legend, of folklore, rather than any sort of objective reporting. The ultimate proof of this is the villagers' inability to identify her as a woman. Of course, Lope often paints the *villanos* in a negative light, as scholars have extensively noted.<sup>22</sup> *El animal de Hungría* is no exception; however, their misperceptions about the Teodosia illuminate important aspects of Teodosia's function in the work and in the wider corpus of wild figure plays. As the king questions the town council about why they haven't been able to hunt down this animal themselves, Bartolo gives the excuse that they don't have many weapons and that the animal is very intelligent, giving the evidence that, like Ursón, "sabe forzar doncellas" (l. 536), albeit clear that Teodosia at no point is culpable of such a crime.<sup>23</sup> Further proof that the villagers are incorrect about Teodosia is the following description: "él es como una persona, / poco más o menos" (ll. 542-3) except with "el cuerpo como un gigante" (ll. 549). These last two citations suggest that not only are they factually incorrect by being mistaken about her gender, their descriptions of the wild figure pertain to the genre of folklore and are projected upon Teodosia.

---

<sup>21</sup> The great multitude of representations of the wild figure in medieval iconography most often depicts a hirsute figure, usually nude. Furthermore, it remains ambiguous in *El animal de Hungría* whether or not the villagers assume the wild man in their forest to be similarly hirsute, or if they discern that he (again, actually she) is wearing animal pelts. Because their tendency is to project a folkloric understanding of the masculine wild figure onto Teodosia, I would argue that the former is more likely.

<sup>22</sup> For a detailed exposition and analysis of the representation of *villanos* in Lope, see Ryjik's *Lope de Vega en la invención de España*, "¿Nobles o villanos?: el ideal nacional y la conciencia de clase", pp. 130-168.

<sup>23</sup> Ursón is accused of the same crime in *El nacimiento de Ursón y Valentín*. While my analysis displays the unlikelihood of such actions, the clearly inaccurate allegations against Rosaura further dispute those against Ursón in Lope's earlier play.



Again, as this brief conversation shows, Lope's wild figure plays deal more with anagnorisis than transformation.<sup>24</sup> This brief exchange between her and Llorente is one of a number of revelations that take place over the course of the work that changes the perception of Teodosia, and in other situations, Rosaura as well.<sup>25</sup> Due to the fact that Teodosia did not actually grow up in the forest, she differs as a wild character from others that appear on the seventeenth-century Spanish stage, and Lope gives no evidence that she transformed into the "fiera de los montes" that the villagers describe her to be. Nevertheless, they believe her to be such a wild thing, and the audience has every reason to be convinced that the accusations against her are false based on her observed interactions with the villagers, and should additionally lead one to ask the same questions about Ursón.

Rosaura, however, does share the experience of being raised in the forest with other wild characters such as Ursón. Though her character does develop in the sense that she learns from the new experiences with the villagers she encounters, she at no point is the livestock-killing, murdering creature described by them. Within the first scene in which she appears, Rosaura understands the essential nature of the problem between animality and humanity, albeit only in terms she is able to articulate:

Si a mí me llama animal,

---

<sup>24</sup> The wild woman is not the only false appearance that Teodosia takes on. Later in the play, as I mentioned, she disguises herself as a villager after Rosaura has been captured in order to be selected as her tutor. Her ability to play different characters also demonstrates how one should not expect her story to be one of transformation, but rather a series of disguises that keep her identity hidden until the correct moment when she can reveal herself and be who she "really" is, queen Teodosia.

<sup>25</sup> I thank Julio Baena for aptly noting how the term "reveal" is more precise than "unveil", because behind the lifted veil is another one, and in this sense, the previous veil is replaced, or re-veiled, as it were.

¿para qué dice que el cielo

es mi patria natural,

y dice que deste velo

se cubre un alma inmortal?

Si alma tengo y fue criada

para el cielo, no soy fiera.

[...]

Si soy fiera, a toda fiera

veo con su esposo al lado;

las ciervas desta ribera

de su esposo han engendrado,

no, madre, de otra manera.

Si es que yo soy animal,

¿con qué animal te juntaste [...]? (ll. 1136-40, 1196-1202)

Towards the end of this quote, we see very similar logic to that which Ursón displays, again leading one to question any inherent sense of “animality” in either character. Rosaura asks a rhetorical question, one to which the response is that her mother’s partner would have had to have been a human to engender her, confirming her humanity. While this is yet another example of instant self-contradiction (how can an animal verbalize a cogent argument?), Lope develops the idea even more in *El animal de Hungría* than in *El nacimiento de Ursón y Valentín*: she

acknowledges her immortal soul, and accordingly is bound for heaven.<sup>26</sup> This belief, officially having become doctrine of the Catholic Church during the 5th Lateran Council, is relevant to the distinction between animal and human because Rosaura's assertion not only proves her humanity in her own mind, but her natural ability to reason in concordance with official belief would provide a convincing argument of her humanity to a seventeenth-century Spanish Catholic as well. Rosaura's beauty is initially shocking to Felipe because her inner reprobation should have been reflected by an outward ugliness as well. However, in her own words, she provides an argument that has a convincing appearance of cogency within the context it is presented. Outward beauty and the inner rational mind are in harmony, and the epistemology of that which is outward reflecting the inward remains intact. The only difference is, rather than her outward appearance providing an indication of her inner reprobation as the villagers contend, Rosaura's beauty reflects her human nature proven by her natural ability to reason soundly.

Teodosia's response to Rosaura's reasoning reveals exactly how she is an animal: "Eres fiera en ser tratada / como fiera, y donde quiera, / del hombre cruel buscada." (ll. 1143-45). At stake here is the discovery of their "true" nature, and the onus of culpability for their mistaken identities lies on the villagers. According to Rosaura, who they are and how they are perceived are completely disparate. Perception once again belies reality, and when Felipe meets Rosaura, exactly such a discovery takes place:

Desvía bien los cabellos,  
pues no vengo a hacerte daño.

---

<sup>26</sup> By noting the correspondence between the Spanish "alma" and the Greek "psyche", Rosaura's argument also begins to sound unwittingly Cartesian.



(Será el rostro desengaño  
de lo que temo por ellos). (ll. 1631-5)

His *desengaño* closes the space between her initial aspect and what lies behind the veil of her unkempt appearance. Upon asking the question as to whether or not she is a demon or a woman, Felipe understands the answer is the latter. At each turn, the method by which the conflict is resolved is by similar *desengaños* throughout the work. While transformation does occur in Rosaura as she learns more and more about the society to which she will ultimately pertain, the function of the play is to rectify the breach in the honor code initiated by Faustina, which becomes resolved in the anagnorisis of Teodosia and Faustina at the end of the work.

Throughout the rest of the play, Rosaura's reasoning oscillates between the ridiculous and the imperceptibly, and ironically, wise. In one scene, she mistakes a village girl for Felipe's love interest who describes herself as "otra", believing it to be a proper noun when Felipe had previously used it to say that it would be possible for him to love "another", although he would never commit such an offense.<sup>27</sup> Later, her naiveté to the rules of established order causes her to speak ironic truths that remain hidden from other characters. When the king affirms the execution of Felipe for having slain Riselo, he affirms his authority by stating: "Yo firmo lo que es razón, / y el rey, a la imitación / de Dios da premio y castigo." (ll. 2762-4). While his statement remains beyond question, Rosaura's response indicates that in this particular case, he may not have enough information to declare such a sentence of execution on Felipe: "Yo no sé

---

<sup>27</sup> The complexities of this scene are beyond the scope of the current study, but Rosaura's inability to understand Felipe's explanation of the word "other" seems to a modern reader strikingly close to "a transparent interrogation of the construction of otherness". I thank John Slater for concisely describing the scene in those terms.

leyes, mas digo / que es injusta indignación.” (ll. 2765-6). At this point, the king still has very little knowledge as to the complexity of his own relation to Rosaura, along with Felipe’s still undiscovered nobility. Furthermore, Felipe was merely trying to protect Rosaura from Riselo who was going to slaughter her under the false pretense that she was a wild beast. Due to the fact that honor has yet to be restored, all of these aspects remain unbalanced, and thus creates a space for the uncultured Rosaura to naively have a better grasp of justice than the king. As a result, she takes justice into her own hands. Rosaura escapes from her captors offstage to return wielding a “bastón”, which is symbolic on multiple levels. First, the “bastón” is both a common weapon of the wild figure, and could be translated as “club”; however, in this scene, the representation of the king and the wild woman collide, making the image of the “bastón” ambiguously significant. Of course, in Spanish, the same word that is used for the common weapon of the wild man can also signify the king’s scepter, “el bastón de mando”. Here, in the final scenes of the *comedia*, Rosaura with her “bastón” is replete with symbolic force as the agent who works to restore order, a kingly task, halting Felipe’s execution long enough for his identity as the son of the king of Aragon to be revealed. Again, the apparently monstrous in these works constantly challenge the presumed reality of their own representation.

As in *El nacimiento de Ursón y Valentín*, the initial transgression of the honor code creates false monsters in *El animal de Hungría*. These monsters are “false” in the sense that there exists a discrepancy between who they are and what they appear to be. Teodosia, falsely accused and exiled from court, is forced to live the life of a wild woman, but only in appearance. Like Ursón, her behavior throughout the *comedia* begs Felipe’s question (albeit about Rosaura): “¿Este llaman en Hungría / animal?” (ll. 1618-19). On one level, he tacitly suggests that the

signifier “animal” can denote disparate signifieds (and intimates the fallible nature of assigning meaning through language), with his conscious purpose to indicate that she is not what he would describe as an animal. All the while, the hidden monster of the play is Faustina, who falsely accuses her sister and condemns her to a life in the forest where she will be the object of many more false accusations. In this manner, the perceived breach in the honor code creates an imbalance in the social order that brings into existence two distinct monsters: one that is monstrous in appearance (Teodosia), and one whose being (*ser*) epitomizes cultural monstrosity but appears to be the opposite (Faustina). It is precisely this doubling of monstrosity, this savage misdirection, that must be resolved in order for honor to be restored. In other words, in both cases monstrosity is defined symbolically by the taking on of characteristics understood as transgressive to Baroque order. Eradicating the monster, in this case, is also a symbolic process, one by which anagnorisis of the hidden nature of the characters allows for the “death” of the monstrous. If we understand the trajectory of the *comedia* in Reichenberger’s terms as the process of order disturbed/order restored, Lope’s wild (wo)man plays under scrutiny here follow the same trajectory, although it might be more apt to describe the process as monster(s) created/monster(s) erased.

Textual evidence gives credence to this interpretation. In the Act III, Faustina attributes her inability to produce an heir to a self-proclaimed monstrosity:

Mas fiera y cruel, he sido,  
 Y así me castiga el cielo,  
 en no me dar sucesión,  
 porque en malicia, y traición

he sido monstruo en el suelo:  
 maté mi inocente hermana,  
 y también su casto honor. (ll. 2262-68)

Her father, the king of England, identifies her similarly: “Encierra luego esta fiera.” (l. 3255).

Both quotes demonstrate the connection between the terms commonly used to describe the wild man in the seventeenth-century *comedia*, often used interchangeably. Understanding Lope’s plays by identifying and analyzing the “monsters” shows how balanced, at least on one level, the plays are. In each, cultural transgression creates a gap between appearance and supposed reality in two characters, which ultimately must be resolved by closing that space so that appearance and an underlying “truth” can be congruent again. In this case, the signifiers “monster” and “fiera” correspond to the Baroque concept of the signified, for which Faustina fits the description. It therefore seems more apt to interpret these plays through the lens of this widely-understood Baroque anxiety rather than seeing them as works primarily concerned with the transformation of one of the principal characters from animal to human.

Nevertheless, the revealing of the characters’ “true” natures exhibits the Baroque at its height. The technique of anagnorisis claims to lift the veil to glimpse the reality beyond it, a strategy that is as ideological as it is convincing. Both Egginton’s theatricality-based model described above and Žižek’s “fantasy screen” serve to better understand the nature of this revelation through anagnorisis. Žižek defines “fantasy” as “a scenario filling out the empty space of a fundamental impossibility, a screen masking a void” (141), which Egginton succinctly explains as “any ideological edifice that may be manipulating the subject, as the subject can be made to desire any thing, person, or idea that plays the role of the stopgap and thereby helps to

create the illusion of self-identity and completion” (151). At the macro-level of the totalitarian state, “completion” becomes a unified, homogenous society within which every constituent part plays its role effectively (Žižek 142). Inevitably, though, the totalitarian project is stymied by some “fundamental blockage” that “prevents society from achieving its full identity as a closed homogenous reality” (143). The concept of monstrosity in these plays represents the “fundamental blockage” to Baroque order, initially misplaced onto the “real” wild man of the forest—he does not exist in these plays— and transferred onto the deviant that initiates the conflict of the plot—Uberto, Faustina, et al. Perceived as “simple deviations, contingent deformations and degenerations of the ‘normal’ functioning of society, [...] and as such abolishable through the amelioration of the system,” according to Žižek, the “true” monsters “are necessary products of the system itself—the points at which ‘truth’, the immanent antagonistic character of the system, erupts” (144). The death, the “abolition”, of the monster is a product of a system that precipitates its very existence—both the theater and the culture of the Baroque—, which should indicate the impossibility of the system itself; nevertheless, the technique of anagnorisis reveals the characters’ identities and provides the “illusion of completion” and of order restored. As a dramatic literary artifact, Lope’s wild figure plays parrots Egginton and Žižek’s frameworks, but ultimately exposes constructed nature of ideology through the nature of theatrical representation. On one level, dramatic artifice functions mimetically to mirror “real life”, but on another, it inevitably deconstructs any essential qualities of that reality by placing them within the representational space of the stage (as opposed to presentational space). Through the resolution of the plot and the anagnorisis of the true identities of Teodosia, Rosaura and Felipe, Lope attempts to abolish the space of representation by “killing” the monsters

satisfactorily; however, their deaths only confirm the ideological nature of such a resolution to the conflict.<sup>28</sup>

### *El hijo de los leones*

In *El hijo de los leones*, like the other two plays treated up to this point, the initial conflict arises due to the misconduct within the court. In this case Lisardo, the prince of Alexandria, produces a child through an extra-marital relationship with Fenisa. He abandons her due to the disparity in their social classes, and in order to hide the shame that she feels at her loss of honor, Fenisa relinquishes the child, leaving him in the woods to be subsequently raised by lions until found by this play's hermit character, Fileno. As the titular child of lions, Fileno names the boy Leonido. Unlike *El nacimiento de Valentín y Ursón* and *El animal de Hungría*, these events take place before the opening act; the audience learns of the backstory through the recounting of the narrative by Fenisa and Fileno in the opening scenes of the play. When we meet him at twenty years of age, Leonido has garnered a name for himself as a wild man (also at various points called "monstruo", "fiera", and "bárbaro") feared by the villagers. Before Fileno dies, he recounts to Leonido the story of his childhood and gives him the garments he was wearing when he discovered him in case "Dios quisiera algun dia, / que de tus principios sepas." (f. 104v).<sup>29</sup>

---

<sup>28</sup> The only caveat to this assertion is Rosaura, who, although clearly not a wild woman at the play's end, is Faustina's daughter, not Teodosia's. If her mother's claim as rightful queen is nullified, it would seem problematic for her daughter to be heiress to the throne, but such concerns do not preoccupy the characters at the end of the play. However, it is significant that questions of perception win out over problems of blood. Rosaura's political legitimacy is the result of how she is perceived rather than primogeniture, which she lacks.

<sup>29</sup> I cite the original published edition of the play in the *Parte diecinueve y la mayor parte de las comedias de Lope de Vega Carpio . . .* (1624) due to the discrepancies between this edition and those by Cotarelo (1930) and Hartzenbusch (1950, orig. 1855). The latter texts do not provide line numbers, and therefore are not particularly more useful than the original publication for the purpose of citation.

However, his reputation incites a formal request to the king to have him hunted and killed, which the prince Lisardo (also Leonido's father) obliges to accomplish. Lisardo finds Leonido, but is shocked by his courteous behavior and eloquent speech, so much so that he invites him to live at court (As Antonucci has noted, this scene echoes the meeting between Valentín and Ursón when both are compelled by *la fuerza de la sangre* to refrain from killing the other [95]). During this time, Fenisa has made a home in the nearby village, but accompanies Leonido and Lisardo to court upon the prince's request. While at court, Leonido, again compelled by the natural connection he has to Fenisa (his mother), mistakes his feelings for amorous attraction, while Lisardo also falls in love with Fenisa, but fails to recognize her under the pseudonym Laura. Learning of Lisardo's love for her, he decides to return to the woods in order to remain subservient to the wishes of the prince, while remaining resolute in his feelings for Fenisa. Searching for him, Fenisa finds and recognizes Leonido's garments and realizes he is her son, and recounts to him a partial version of Lisardo's transgression (leaving out the fact that she is his mother). Leonido rushes to the defense of her honor, threatening to kill Lisardo, for which he is sentenced to be beheaded. Just before his execution, Fenisa reveals her identity, and proclaims Leonido to be her and Lisardo's son. The play ends conventionally, with the marriages of Fenisa and Lisardo, along with Leonido to the princess who had recently arrived to marry Lisardo.

This play clearly is a re-writing of the other plays by Lope discussed in this chapter, including nearly identical plot developments to resolve the cultural dis-ordering caused by an initial transgression of a similar nature (marital infidelity or sexual indiscretion), and in turn to necessitate analogous resolutions (discovery of the transgression precipitated by the hunt for the wild figure). In the work, Antonucci maintains, as in the other two Lope plays, that we observe a

fundamental change in Leonido in which “el amor obra en él un cambio radical, suavizándolo y transformándolo” (94). Her interpretation leans heavily on the transformation that occurs in Leonido, but we learn of his transformation through his own words, which are wrought with uncertainty, rather than trustworthy self-identification. Although he states that Fenisa’s beauty has changed his “rigor / a lágrimas y blandura” (f. 111r.), we witness his tenderness and emotion previous to his encounter with Fenisa when he mourns Fileno’s death, and also during a soliloquy in which he demonstrates anxiety over his identity as man or beast. In a passage not dissimilar to Segismundo’s famous monologue at the end of Act II of *La vida es sueño*, Leonido laments:

pues quando me contemplo  
 assi rustico, fiero, y espantoso,  
 embidio quantos veo,  
 y de su imitacion tengo deseo.  
 Tal vez aquestas fuentes  
 me muestran que soy hombre,  
 quando en la yerva duermen sus cristales;  
 tal vez los accidentes  
 me quitan este nombre,  
 que imitan los mas fieros animales,  
 viven conmigo iguales,  
 y yo sujeto a un viejo,  
 que me enseña y corrige,



que me gobierna, y rige,  
 si bien yo me resisto a su consejo,  
 y pues me riñe en vano,  
 fiera devo de ser; no soy humano. (f. 103v.)

This monologue depicts another example of instant self-contradiction in which the “wild” man’s words preclude his wildness. His ability to use language distinguishes him from all cases of “real” wild children such as Victor of Aveyron to Genie Wiley, but more than this contradiction, it is apparent that Leonido is to be pitied rather than understood as obstinate.<sup>30</sup> Although he initially and purposefully frightens the villagers who have happened across his abode in the forest, once they begin to flee, he allows them to do so instead of loosing his lions after them, bringing into question if he ever meant them any harm at all. During his soliloquy, he eloquently describes the *locus amoenus* within which he was raised by Fileno, his tutor.<sup>31</sup> Rather than reading the last few lines of his monologue as obstinacy against Fileno, as has been understood in criticism up to this point, they should be read as pitiable. He laments society’s scorn for him (or at least the villagers’), regardless of his own and Fileno’s efforts to civilize him. However, we learn throughout the play, that Leonido’s actions are often the most civilized, even if ironically, of any character in the work. As a preliminary example, just after this scene, Fileno dies after a

---

<sup>30</sup> Victor of Aveyron (c.1788-1828) and Genie Wiley (born 1957) are two of the most notable recorded cases of feral children in the history of the West. The parallels between the two cases might be unexpected given the nearly one hundred and fifty years separate them. Both children were embroiled with controversy in the years immediately following their discovery due to the debate over the children’s care and the accusations of exploitation in the name of psychological research and the advancement of knowledge.

<sup>31</sup>Antonucci also notes Leonido’s elevated language in comparison to Ursón and Rosaura, whose ignorance of society leads to comedic situations, a facet absent from the more “educado” Leonido.

heartfelt exchange between him and Leonido, causing the latter to “bañar[se] en lagrimas tiernas.” (f. 104v.) Upon first glance, Leonido lives up to viewers’ expectations of the wild man, threatening those who pass through his forest, and at least giving the appearance of ferocity.<sup>32</sup> As they flee, Leonido orders his lions not to pursue them, and begins his aforementioned soliloquy. His first appearance on the stage is the only one in which we might believe him to be the wild figure he is accused of being; however, even this moment is immediately followed by scenes that arouse pity in the viewer as a loving son who has considerable anxiety over his own identity, and whose actions against the villagers are more the result of his circumstances having lived his entire life as a recluse on the fringes of society. Like Ursón in the opening scenes of *El nacimiento de Ursón y Valentín*, he is never a particularly convincing wild man, never pursuing the villagers once they have decided to leave him alone. When understood in this light, it calls into question the accusations made against him. This type of misrepresentation is a convention of these wild character plays, for which Leonido’s character fits the mold. He never demonstrates that he would be capable of such an offense. More believable would be that Faquín, farmer of the lands of the nobleman Perseo, conveniently uses the wild man as a scapegoat for the lack of provisions that he is able to supply. Even though he swears “que pudiera / embidiar su hazienda el Rey / desde la cabra hasta el buey”, his lengthy description of the destroyed crops and livestock has the air of hyperbole, which extends to his identification of the wild man: “Si un demonio de un salvage, un monstro, o no sé quien sea, no destruyera la aldea.” (f.100r.). Faquín is sure to use all the common monikers for the wild figure, providing such a semantically

---

<sup>32</sup> When the villagers encounter him, Leonido greets them harshly: “Donde vais canalla? / [...] Sin mi licencia passais por el monte?” (f. 102r.)

ambiguous identification of the perpetrator that ultimately has no real bearing on the actual referent.<sup>33</sup>

Even more than the previous two plays analyzed by Lope, *El hijo de los leones* is overtly concerned with the concept of monstrosity as a binary to humanity. The pertinent factors involved in this dynamic, however, remain the same. Cultural transgression creates a breach in the Baroque firmament, from which two monsters unfold. Leonido is the perceived monster, while Lisardo's offense remains unknown, and his inner monstrosity hidden. Again, like the other two plays, the characters in *El hijo de los leones* understand this ironic tension in terms of monstrosity, and the resolution to the plot revolves around this issue specifically as well. After learning of Lisardo's crime against Fenisa, Leonido confronts the prince, leaving no room for doubt about the identity of the monster:

No soy salvaje, ni monstruo,  
y es la consecuencia clara,  
que si tu ofendes un Angel  
ingrato a hermosura tanta:  
Y yo le estimo y defiendo,  
porque he vivido en su casa.  
Tu eres el monstruo [...] (f. 118r.)

---

<sup>33</sup> Faquín's description is not unlike "sightings" of more contemporary iterations of the wild figure such as Bigfoot and Sasquatch, often manifested in the iconic blurred photographs of the creature. Such photos provide enough information to conclusively identify the figure within the collective and popular imagination, but provide little to no substantial evidence of the object within the frame of the photograph. And, like Faquín's accusatory description, they raise the suspicion of fabrication.

His defense of Fenisa is in stark contrast to Lisardo's cowardly behavior throughout the play, and although Lisardo has authority over Leonido as prince, the wild man's actions undermine his legitimacy to reign throughout the work. That is, Leonido's wisdom and deeds frequently outshine Lisardo's cowardice. Leonido wields true authority, figuratively demonstrated in his ability to control the lions of the forest, symbolic representatives of kingship. As his namesake indicates, he is a lion among lions. In this manner, representation and reality are disparate until the end of the play as long as Lisardo is perceived as prince and Leonido as monster. Before learning of his true identity as her son, Fenisa conveys the problem of representation and reality in similar terms, more specifically indicating the problem of language, or in Saussurean terms, signifiers and signifieds:

Era solamente ver  
 esse que monstruo llamaron,  
 donde los cielos cifraron  
 gran parte de su poder. (f.112v.)

Although he is called a monster—a signifier—, some truth—a signified—is hidden ('cifrado'). This truth must be revealed in order to close the space between perception and the truth that lies beneath the surface. Until such a discovery occurs, the breach in the honor code remains open.

Unlike the other two works by Lope analyzed here, the anxiety precipitated by the inability to fulfill one's societal role overflows from the wild figure and his foil to other characters as well. As a result, the question of monstrosity is brought to the fore. Aside from Leonido and Lisardo, others make known what is at stake for them if they are unable to fulfill

their cultural function. Tebandro, Fenisa's father, urges her to marry in spite of her refusal to do so:

No quiero verte ni oírte,  
 pues tan rebelde te veo  
 a la razón y al desseo  
 con que quisiera emplearte.  
 Por remediarme, y casarte  
 con el piadoso Perseo.  
 Dan este nombre al Troyano,  
 porque a su padre sacó  
 del fuego a que le obligó,  
*ser padre, ó ser inhumano.* (f. 106r., my emphasis)

Two options exist for the Baroque individual: fulfill one's societal role or lose one's humanity to become a cultural monstrosity. In Tebandro's exhortation to his daughter, we see that Lisardo's original transgression against Fenisa (her reason for not wanting to marry) not only indicates his own monstrosity while also monstifying his own son, it now threatens greater multiplication in the fallout. This is another example of the dangerous surplus that always threatens while the wild figure exists. On another level, without the father, the Lacanian symbolic order, humanity is impossible, and the anxiety over identity cannot be resolved. Once Leonido's identity is revealed and his role in the cultural and symbolic order restored, this concatenates within the narrative world, triggering Tebandro's ability to resume his function as father.

The satisfactory, even if illusory, restoration of order and the suture of the breach in the honor code in *El hijo de los leones* is less passable than in the previous two wild-character plays by Lope. The conclusion of this *comedia* compares to Cervantes' "La fuerza de la sangre", with the only resolution to the disturbance in the honor code being the marriage between a woman and the man who raped and abandoned her. Furthermore, in *El hijo de los leones*, the resolution reunites a son with that father and his mother, so compelled by Baroque notions of honor, that she left him to die in the woods.<sup>34</sup> The denouement of Lope's play does not ring of irony like Cervantes' *novela ejemplar*, but the symbolic or real death of the true monster—in this case Lisardo—is not as conclusive as the previous two plays. In *El nacimiento de Valentín y Ursón*, Uberto receives punishment for his transgression against the honor code with blood, exacted by Valentín, the recipient of his offense. Less so, Faustina, although having committed a similar crime—fabricating the story of her sister's infidelity—is forced to join a convent. In this third play, Lisardo marries the victim of his offense, only admitting to his fault when there was no denying it. Moreover, Lope never deals with the issue of Lisardo's lack of fitness to rule, highlighted throughout the work in relation to Leonido's inclination to act valiantly and win the affection of those around him. The "real" Baroque monster of the play is not only permitted to live, he is afforded the same role in society as previous to his transgression. Increasingly, the monster lingers. His death more symbolic and ultimately less satisfying; as a result, the enclosure

---

<sup>34</sup> Fenisa's actions here further identifies Leonido's perceived and metaphorical monstrous nature, even though he does not present any outward physiological signs of monstrosity at birth. The seventeenth-century French writer Pierre (Pedro) Bovistau provides a list of the treatments that "hijos monstruosos" received in ancient civilizations in his *Histoires prodigieuses* (translated into Spanish in 1586), stating that the "latinos los hacían echar en los desiertos, a la merced de las fieras" (Bovistau 395).

of the space between representation and reality is more problematic and equally less convincing, although still presented as if it were. As is true in the wild character plays throughout the seventeenth century, the restoration of order at the end of these dramatic works becomes increasingly ambiguous and dubious, indicating a growing anxiety, albeit subtle, of Baroque order itself.

### **Imitation and Change: Other Playwrights in the Generation of Lope de Vega**

The above three plays by Lope de Vega are indicative of the appearance of a wild figure sub-genre during the period of its theatrical production. Examples abound of plays that draw on the same plot elements: *El nacimiento de Montesinos* (1595-1602) and *El nieto de su padre* (1623)<sup>35</sup> by Guillén de Castro, *El Aquiles* (1612) and *Todo es dar una cosa* (1626-30) by Tirso de Molina, *Virtudes vencen señales* by Vélez de Guevara, *El satisfacer callando* (1627)<sup>36</sup> by Moreto, and *La lindona de Galicia* and *Amor es Naturaleza* by Juan Pérez de Montalbán.<sup>37</sup> Each of these works is interesting in its own right in the ways that their differences affect the interpretation of the wild characters in each. Tirso's two wild man plays are also the two that deviate most. *El Aquiles* and *Todo es dar una cosa* clearly draw on certain elements, particularly

---

<sup>35</sup> Antonucci ascribes the composition of the work to Guillén de Castro, along with the date of 1624, both of which were previously doubted. The only print edition of the play appears in 1658 in *Nuevo teatro de comedias de diferentes autores*. The title, however, appears in 1624 in a collection of the director (*autor*) Roque de Figueroa, who states that it was performed at a palace festival in January of 1623. For more on the authorship of the play, see Anonucci's article, "Algunas notas sobre la autoría de *El nieto de su padre*".

<sup>36</sup> Authorship has not been confirmed for *Satisfacer callando*, although it has been attributed to Lope and Moreto (*El salvaje en el siglo de oro* 161).

<sup>37</sup> Due to its debated authorship, the date of some of the works is unknown. If *La lindona de Galicia* was written by Pérez de Montalbán, Restori indicates a date of 1642-1648 (cited in Antonucci 166), while Morley and Bruerton attribute the work to Lope and provide 1631-1635 as possible dates for its composition (494).

in the exposition of the narrative. The protagonists, Aquiles and Francisco de Pizarro respectively, are raised in the forest, nursed by wild animals, and defined by their aggressive behavior. In both works, their aggressiveness is neither feigned nor misunderstood, which tends to be the case in Lope's wild man plays, and also the others listed above. Furthermore, because both of Tirso's works that draw on the elements recounted in myth (*El Aquiles*) or historical events (*Todo es dar una cosa*), they also depart from the common narrative sequence of the wild figure plays in order to remain (marginally) faithful to their original versions. As a result, neither contains the elements that I have highlighted in this chapter regarding the interplay between monsters in appearance and monsters understood as such by their transgressive behavior.<sup>38</sup>

Lope's own *La serrana de la Vera*, along with Velez de Guevara's version also contain a wild woman character, but the narrative sequence of each follows a distinct plot than the one that most often occurs in the wild character play.<sup>39</sup>

In the above list, there are also three plays that include a female protagonist—*Satisfacer callando*, *Amor es naturaleza* and *La lindona de Galicia*. The protagonist for each draws comparisons to Rosaura of *El animal de Hurgria*, although they have varying degrees of wildness. For instance, Alfreda of *Amor es naturaleza* murders the first man she comes across in the forest to ultimately become civilized when she falls in love, while Nereida of *Satisfacer callando* fits the description of the wild men and women characters in Lope's works in which she

---

<sup>38</sup> As I will discuss later, Calderón wrote two plays that also draw from the wild man sub-genre to ultimately depart from its conventions in order to more closely follow the myths to which they allude: *La hija del aire* and *La fiera, el rayo y la piedra*.

<sup>39</sup> Those two works more closely follow the plot structure of the *bandolera* play, as described by McKendrick in her *Woman and Society in the Spanish Drama of the Golden: A Study on the Mujer Varonil*.



is only perceived to be the monster of the forest, when she actually is quite gentle in nature. The common feature of the wild woman plays lies in the resolution of the conflict. For wild men and women alike, their true identity is revealed in the end, which allows them to reincorporate into society and claim their noble status. In order for this to occur, falling in love with a character of the opposite sex sets in motion the circumstances that lead to the resolution in the end. Antonucci understands this as the “motivo tónico del amor como fuerza civilizadora” (*El salvaje en el siglo de oro* 168). This is not unique to the wild woman plays, but the ones with a male protagonist as well, as demonstrated in the works up to this point, and true of later theatrical iterations of wild men and women also.<sup>40</sup>

As a transition from the generation of Lope de Vega to that of Calderón de la Barca, *Virtudes vencen señales*, attributed to Vélez de Guevara, depicts some of the central concerns of Calderón’s wild figure plays. Due to its uncertain date of composition, it is difficult to confirm whether it is a precursor to works such as *La vida es sueño*, but the similarities are unmistakable.<sup>41</sup> Filipo, the protagonist, rather than growing up in the forest like his theatrical predecessors, is banished by his father to a tower due to his “monstrous” appearance, in this case

---

<sup>40</sup> For a more in-depth analysis of the wild woman play, see Chapter 3 of the dissertation. While wild women share many of the fundamental characteristics that define their male counterparts, I contend that the representation of gender distinguishes the interpretation of those works in significant ways, just not in this way, as criticism up to this point has contended.

<sup>41</sup> Sloman’s *The Dramatic Craftsmanship of Calderón* convincingly argues the indebtedness of *La vida es sueño* to a work Calderón co-authored with Coello, *Yerros de naturaleza y aciertos de fortuna*, which he provides the date of composition as 1634. More recent research indicates that *La vida es sueño* may have been written as early as the late 1620’s (see Cruickshank’s biography of the playwright), which undermines Sloman’s thesis that *La vida es sueño* improves upon the major themes developed in *Yerros*. Nevertheless, this chapter demonstrates other influences on Calderón’s masterpiece—primarily the wild figure tradition—and affirms Sloman’s overall assertion that Calderón productively manipulated previous iterations of a story, character or theme to masterful dramatic effect (Sloman 15-17).

his dark skin (which, in the play, serves to replace the animal pelt clothing common to all other wild men and women). This relates to Egido's hypothesis that the wild man's animal pelts should be understood as a replacement for the the hirsute bodies of ancient and medieval iconographic representations of wild figures, for which there may be other substitutes, in this case Filippo's complexion. In *Virtudes vencen señales*, the protagonist's dark skin draws on the wild character tradition and suggests monstrosity, but Filippo is another instance in which appearance belies inner nature.<sup>42</sup> Katritzky identifies a similar phenomenon in the historical account of Pedro González, the "wild man of Tenerife". As he and his family passed through the courts of Europe during the late sixteenth century, it was surprising to find that he and his daughter (who both exhibited the signs of hypertrichosis) were "very refined, modest and polite [...] aside from being shaggy" (Duke Wilhelm V, cited in Katritzky 124). The fascination of Europe's courts during the early modern period with actual examples of "wild" people such as Pedro Gonzalez pinpoints a particularly space of liminality, and reveals the blurred lines between the monstrous and the normal. Just as González frustrated expectations related to his behavior and humanity, so too do the wild characters of the Spanish *comedia* such as Filippo in Vélez de Guevara's work. It is precisely in this play that Antonucci frames her exposition of monstrosity in relation to the wild man in Spanish Baroque theater, for which she notes the discrepancy between his "monstrous" appearance and his inner nature, a facet that eludes her analysis in other works where a similar dynamic between *ser* and *parecer* occurs. Unlike Segismundo, Filippo never struggles to subdue his passions, even though he is ignorant of much of the etiquette of courtly

---

<sup>42</sup> For more information on the function of the animal pelt clothing of wild men, see Aurora Egido's article, "El vestido del salvaje en los autos sacramentales de Pedro de Calderón".

behavior (much like Rosaura in *El animal de Hungría* or Ismenia in *La sirena de Trinacria*). Filipo, adhering to a more common tendency of Baroque theatrical wild character, does not undergo the same transformation observed in the protagonist of *La vida es sueño*; rather, the function of his “monstrosity”, as the title suggests, is to hide the inner truth of both his identity as heir to the throne and benevolent nature. Both of these characteristics eventually become evident through *la fuerza de la sangre*, which leads to the anagnorisis that restores Filipo to his rightful role in the order of things. As I will indicate in the following section, Calderón has a tendency to complicate the question of blood in relation to its power in the wild figure plays during the generation of Lope de Vega. Whereas noble blood always seems to play a significant role in the anagnorisis of the wild men and women in works by other *poetas*, Calderón chooses to subdue the power of blood to faithfully mirror one’s noble status (or any social status). As a result, his wild character plays dramatize the nature of self in a world of illusion. In his framework, even *la fuerza de la sangre* can be a questionable tool for resolving the conflict of identity that is central to the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Spanish wild figure play.

### **The Wild Figure *Comedias* of Pedro Calderón de la Barca**

#### *La vida es sueño*

As has been extensively noted, there is marked evidence of the influence of the wild character play on Calderón de la Barca’s drama;<sup>43</sup> however, the playwright further develops the genre, utilizing the well-worn elements for his own purposes. In the latter half of this chapter,

---

<sup>43</sup> Many of these sources I have already mentioned or cited, and the topic is glossed extensively if not treated explicitly in many publications of the dramaturg. For a brief list, see Antonucci, *El salvaje en el siglo de oro*; Sloman, *The Dramatic Craftsmanship of Calderón*; Deyermond, “Segismundo the Wild Man”; Egido, “El vestido de salvaje en los autos sacramentales de Calderón”; and Mazur, *The Wild Man in the Spanish Renaissance & Golden Age Theater*.

I will continue to analyze the development of the theme of monstrosity in the wild figure plays of the Spanish Baroque as they are reformulated and repurposed primarily by Calderón, but other playwrights of the latter half of the seventeenth century as well. The narrative seen in Lope's generation continues to be utilized, with monstrosity taking on a similar quality, but the increasingly problematic resolutions to these works persist as a trend. I maintain the diachronic approach implemented up to this point through these playwrights by turning now to Calderón. His first play to include a manifestation of the wild man is also his most notable play, *La vida es sueño*. While the play is exceptional, the current analysis displays its place in a lineage of dramatic texts that influenced it, along with those that came afterwards, which I will discuss later in the chapter. Its place in this corpus is indisputable due to the myriad similarities its narrative shares with the other plays in question, even if Calderón takes them to their aesthetic and philosophical apex. Deyermond describes Segismundo as a "standard wild man of the medieval tradition" in his "setting, dwelling, and clothes", but distinguishes Calderón's protagonist in one significant way (85-6). Segismundo does not choose to deny society for a life in the forest, but rather this life is forced upon him, and is even worse than the wild characters raised by wild animals because he still receives a courtly education that makes him conscious of "the restraint on his liberty" (86).<sup>44</sup> According to Deyermond, this ultimately makes him a more dangerous wild man because he develops animosity against those who have kept him chained. Whereas Deyermond compares Segismundo to the iconographic and literary wild figures of the medieval

---

<sup>44</sup> Ismenia of Figueroa y Córdoba's *La sirena de Tinacria* and Marfisa of Calderón's own *Hado y divisa de Leonido y Marfisa* also exhibit resentment against the hermit figure who raises them and keeps them secluded. Since both of plays were written in the latter half of the seventeenth century but absent from earlier plays, this characteristic of the wild figure seems to be a development that takes place during the arc currently under analysis.

period, Antonucci enumerates the characteristics that Segismundo shares with the wild figure of the Baroque Spanish stage, some of which I have questioned previously in the chapter. Her list includes his animal pelts, instinctual aggression, the instigation of new feelings that arise from encountering someone of the opposite sex for the first time, the tutor character, and a rebellion against a father figure that ends in victory for the wild character and his/her ultimate recuperation of their rightful role as successor to a seat of power (171-2). This list also serves as a useful tool to consolidate the common elements of the theatrical wild figure that constitute the sub-genre, as a *materia silvestra*, that each dramatist draws on in the creation of their own works.

Calderón exemplifies the versatility and malleability of these elements in *La vida es sueño*. Segismundo is the character who begs the inclusion of the work in this corpus, but a discussion of monstrosity in the work would be incomplete without treatment of Rosaura. She opens the play falling off her horse, cursing the creature:

Hipogrifo violento  
 que corriste parejas con el viento,  
 ¿dónde, rayo sin llama,  
 pájaro sin matiz, pez sin escama,  
 y bruto sin instinto  
 natural, al confuso laberinto  
 de estas peñas  
 te desbocas, arrastras y despeñas? (ll. 1-8)

De Armas notes the inability to control one's horse as a reflection of an inner nature unable to control one's passions, linking her state to that of Segismundo at the beginning of the play

(“záfiro” 81). A number of scholars have analyzed the relation of the hippogryph imagery of the initial scene with monstrosity. González Echevarría clearly states that the mention of the hippogryph inaugurates Calderón’s “arte monstroso” (cited in de Armas 79). Küpper elaborates this notion, contending that the hippogryph functions as a “projection” of Rosaura’s inner self—a hybrid being who transgresses her place in the great chain of being” (514).<sup>45</sup> Rosaura’s monstrosity, rather than a result of her own wrongdoing, however, is precipitated by her abandonment both by her father, Clotaldo and her betrothed, Astolfo. Clotaldo’s own assessment admits that the question of honor is precarious, and that Rosaura’s arrival to avenge the affront against her is righteous:<sup>46</sup>

Pero si ya ha sucedido  
 un peligro, de quien nadie  
 se libró, porque el honor  
 es de materia tan frágil  
 que con una acción se quiebra  
 o se mancha con un aire  
 ¿qué más puede hacer, qué más

---

<sup>45</sup> Küpper concludes that “Rosaura’s project, although it might win her spontaneous sympathy from a modern standpoint, confers upon her the status of a character steeped in sin from the standpoint of the dominant Golden Age discourse. She transgresses the boundaries of natural order” (517). This interpretation demonizes Rosaura in a way that is inconsistent both with the question of honor in the Spanish Baroque, and also in the corpus of wild character plays under analysis here. Küpper misconceives her role as what I call the perceived monster for being a “true” Baroque monster, worthy of punishment.

<sup>46</sup> At this point in the play, Clotaldo is speaking in general terms, as he is unaware that the figure before him is his daughter Rosaura. In this moment of dramatic irony, he unwittingly approves of his daughter’s behavior and laments her situation, for which he is partially responsible.

el que es noble, de su parte,  
 que a costa de tantos riesgos  
 haber venido a buscarle? (ll. 445-54)

In Clotaldo's words, the loss of honor is a matter for which one does not maintain all of the culpability, but rather can often hang in the balance of the actions of another. If that is the case for the stranger who has just arrived from Moscovia (he has noticed that Rosaura has his sword, and therefore must be his son, as Rosaura is still dressed as a man), then the same reality extends to Rosaura's situation as well. Clotaldo would likely be less inclined to approve of a woman taking such action to regain her own honor; however, the dramatic irony of this scene (Rosaura's disguised sex) displays that double standard in a way that destabilizes it. His speech, albeit conflicted, argues that Rosaura's situation would have invoked pity, not necessarily scorn, regardless of the fact that she is a woman.

Rosaura's monstrosity is better understood when viewed through the lens of the theatrical wild character. She is of the same ilk as the other perceived monsters in Spanish drama, who in other works are often wild men or women. *Her* transgressions do not result in her becoming a monster; rather, the transgressions of others—principally Astolfo and Clotaldo—monstrify her. Abandoned by father and betrothed, Rosaura must take on monstrous characteristics in order to resolve the affront against her honor. Her monstrosity has been well documented, as I noted above with examples, each of which highlighting one (or more) facets of Foucault's definition of monstrosity:

From the Middle Ages to the eighteenth century, [...] the monster is essentially a mixture. It is the mixture of two realms, the animal and the human. [...] It is the

blending, the mixture of two species. [...] It is the mixture of two individuals [...] It is the mixture of two sexes [...] It is a mixture of life and death [...] Finally, it is a mixture of forms. (63)

In Baroque theater, we see these mixtures—of species, of sexes, and of forms—dramatized frequently, and dramatized with particular intensity in *La vida es sueño*, where physiological traits take on the nature of metaphor. Rosaura inaugurates this aspect of the work, as she exudes that “mixture”—and thus her monstrosity. By calling her horse a hippogryph—a creature defined by the combination of horse and griffin (itself a mixture of lion and eagle)—Rosaura projects herself onto the beast in a way that reflects her character throughout the play.<sup>47</sup> Rosaura’s representation oscillates between male and female, a mixture that is not resolved until the end, and for which Rosaura verbalizes its monstrous effect: “siendo / monstruo de una especie y otra, entre galas de mujer/ armas de varón me adornan” (ll. 2724-83).<sup>48</sup> Mixture defines her in other moments as well, the result of which renders her immobile and formless: “Inmóvil bulto soy de fuego y hielo” (l. 74). These words play on the expectation of a poetic conceit that conventionally serves to describe the inaccessibility—and sometimes cruelty—of beauty. In contrast, Rosaura is the opposite of this ideal form, nothing but a formless “mass”. Derrida defines monstrosity slightly differently than Foucault as that which is formless, and therefore unrecognizable. It is precisely the interplay of mixture and amorphism that define Rosaura

---

<sup>47</sup> See de Armas, “Papeles de zafiro: Signos político-mitológicos en *La vida es sueño*” for a discussion of the mythological implications of each of those creatures in Calderón’s play. Also, Küpper outlines the argument that Rosaura’s horse is a projection of her character. While I agree that this is true, our views diverge on the exact nature of her character.

<sup>48</sup> Hermaphrodism was also a commonly held distinctive of monstrosity in the early modern period. See Río Parra’s discussion of this monstrous trait in *Una era de monstruos: Representaciones de lo deform en el Siglo de Oro español*, pp. 86-95.



throughout *La vida es sueño*, and she is therefore beyond recognition both to herself and to the other characters.

When she begins to relate her story to Segismundo in Act I, Clotaldo enters the stage and interrupts her just as she says, “Yo soy . . .” (ll. 277). This ellipsis spans the entirety of the work until she has the opportunity to recount the details of her story to Segismundo in Act III, who appears to disregard everything she has said and rejects her help. He responds in this manner in order to attain the throne, which her story encourages him to accomplish more hastily with the second impetus to arrange her marriage to Astolfo and thus restore her honor. Up to this point, it is her loss of honor that keeps her from being who she is (“ser quien es”), which compounds on itself as she is continually forced to play transgressive roles. As a result, she becomes an unrecognizable mixture whose very life is at stake, implied when she mistakenly places her faith in Clotaldo: “y de Clotaldo fio / su afecto, pues le debo agradecida / aquí de mi honor y vida” (ll. 1553-5). Each of Foucault’s physiological definitions of monstrosity can be applied metaphorically, and ideologically, to Rosaura as her loss of honor that precipitates these mixtures that endanger, in her own words, life itself.

As sixteenth- and seventeenth-century treatises explicitly note, monsters by definition were bereft of humanity. In *La vida es sueño*, it is not a physiological trait that monstrifies Rosaura, that deprives her of human life, but rather the affront to her honor. “Honor y vida” are the axes upon which her monstrosity revolves. In the conventional ending of *La vida es sueño*—if read as such—Rosaura’s honor is restored once acknowledged by her father and betrothed to Astolfo. Ultimately, she fails to exercise agency over her own restoration; that task belongs to Segismundo, and her conclusion is riddled with ambiguity. On the one hand, she petitions

Segismundo to “impedir y deshacer” Astolfo from marrying Estrella, about which a conservative interpretation would assume that she also desire to marry him in order to recuperate her honor.

On the other, the text of the play never explicitly demonstrates that Rosaura is keen to see such an outcome come to pass. In her plea to Segismundo, Rosaura is enjoined to carry out vengeance alongside him with sword drawn. Given that she only appeals for the obstruction of the marriage between Astolfo and Estrella, is it safe to assume that she yearns to marry the man who abandoned her? Both Clotaldo and Astolfo only agree to honor their responsibilities once they no longer have the option to pursue their own personal gain, as evidenced throughout *La vida es sueño*. According to Fox, Clotaldo “is so bent on preserving his reputation that, were circumstances less satisfying, he would probably continue to withhold recognition from his daughter” and Astolfo’s refusal to marry someone beneath his station clearly shows that he “originally gave his word to Rosaura fully intending to break it” (108-9). Furthermore, the final lines of the play fail to provide convincing closure to the conflict, and their meaning can entirely depend on the manner in which they are delivered. After the enthroned Segismundo sends the soldier to the tower, his father responds, “Tu ingenio a todos admira” (ll. 3298). Is this the true admiration of a contrite father, or the lip service resultant from the submitted will of a defeated foe? Neither Astolfo nor Rosaura express a clearly positive reaction to the situation either (Astolfo: “¡Qué condición tan mudada!” [ll. 3299], Rosaura: “¡Qué discreto y qué prudente!” [ll. 3300]), which seems to be equally perplexing to Segismundo when he responds with equivocal questions: “¿Qué os admira? ¿Qué os espanta...?” (ll. 3301). It therefore remains unclear the extent to which Rosaura’s monstrosity is adequately dealt with in *La vida es sueño*. If understood conventionally, her betrothal to Astolfo and the acknowledgement of her father restore her honor

and erase the behaviors and characteristics that monstrify her throughout the play; however, in Calderonian fashion, simply too much ambiguity remains at the end of the playwright's masterpiece to comfortably assume such a tidy and orthodox resolution to the conflict.

Segismundo's character development from monster to prince occurs similarly to that of Rosaura's, which may be expected given their parallels as "victims of paternal injustice" ("(In)convenient marriage" 58). Even though the wild character helps make sense of Rosaura's character, she is not properly a wild woman. When Segismundo first appears in animal pelts, however, there is no mistaking the connection to the wild figure of the Spanish *comedia*. Like Rosaura and the wild characters before him, the monstrification of Segismundo is something enacted upon him—his imprisonment in the tower—rather than an act or behavior that would define him as such. He eventually lives up to his reputation, unlike many of the wild figures before him, but the play puts into question whether his violent behavior and sexual appetite are the result of his nature (if we, like Basilio, believe Clorilene's prophetic dream) or the reliance on the nurturing qualities of shackles and chains. Either way, Deyermond aptly detects that Segismundo does not choose a life secluded from human contact, although he understands it to be a characteristic that distinguishes Segismundo from other wild characters who reject society for a life of isolation in the forest (86).<sup>49</sup> As should be clear by now, this element actually roots him more firmly in the wild figure tradition of children abandoned at birth, which precipitates a heightened sense of anxiety about his identity. Whereas Rosaura's

---

<sup>49</sup> A great many wild characters do choose such a life, particularly in the sources that Deyermond considers. The "hairy anchorite" described in Bernheimer's classic work on the wild man most closely resembles the figure that Deyermond describes, but is just one of many types in the shared lineage of the wild character.

self-knowledge is defined by doubt and apprehension, structurally mirrored in the play by the two-act ellipses of “yo soy . . .”, Segismundo demonstrates certainty about his identity. His anxiety reaches the point of delusion—that is, circumstances lead him to distort his perception of reality—when he declares himself a monster, precisely due to his self-identification as a mixture of forms:

Luego aunque esté en tal estado,  
 obligado no te quedo,  
 y pedirte cuentas puedo  
 del tiempo que me has quitado  
 libertad, vida y honor;  
 [...]  
 y sé quien soy  
 un compuesto de hombre y fiera. (ll. 1512-18, 1546-47)

This is the most assured, yet laden with anxiety, statement of any character about their place in the order of things seen thus far. Segismundo *knows* that his nature, his *ser*, is bifurcated, a monstrous mixture of man and beast. The result strips him of his honor, that in this Baroque context, is equivalent to his humanity, and life itself. His father, the king, and therefore arbiter of meaning, creates the monster in the tower; both monsters must be erased for the conflictive sequence to be resolved. This inner conflict in the protagonist can also be understood as a Foucaultian mixture of life and death, which is evident from Segismundo’s first lines:

[...] que yo aquí  
 tan poco del mundo sé

que cuna y sepulcro fué  
 esta torre para mi  
 [...]
 solo advierto  
 este rústico desierto  
 donde miserable vivo,  
 siendo un esqueleto vivo  
 siendo un animado muerto; (ll. 193-196, 198-201)

This mixture of animal and beast, life and death, has been interpreted in various ways. De Armas makes the comparison of Segismundo to a lion in the opening scene, whose relation to the tale of Hercules situates him within the pantheon of myth. While I do not dispute the mythological aspects of the play uncovered by De Armas, Segismundo's appearance in relation to the lion places him in the wild figure literary tradition as well. Aside from the Leonido of *El hijo de los leones*, Calderón created his own wild Leonido's in *En la vida todo es verdad y todo mentira*, and *Hado y divisa de Leonido y Marfisa*. So, although the connection between Hercules and lions is a valid one, it is infused in the literary genealogy of the plays of this corpus also.

De Armas unpacks this theme even more by identifying the inherent unbalanced nature of the lion: Segismundo “debe ser rey, pero reprimir, como ser humano, los excesos del león” (85). De Armas also gives a lengthy description of Galenic imbalance within the protagonist, noting Segismundo's speech when he describes his bondage in relation to the four elements: *el ave* (l. 133), *el bruto* (l. 133), *la pez* (l. 143) and Mt. Etna (l. 164). His description of the fish and volcano in particular demonstrates imbalance, alluding to the well-worn metaphor of the trickle

that becomes an ocean, along with the explosive nature of the volcano, each indicating an excess of sadness and misfortune (water) and cholera (fire) (82-3). This analysis sheds light on the mythological aspects of Segismundo, but also point to the monstrosity of his character as well. One's mind again jumps to Shelley's *Frankenstein*, along with woodcuts and drawings from publications during medieval and early modern periods in which the question of constituent parts and the whole they comprise lies at the heart of the definition of monstrosity. These portrayals of monsters interpret Segismundo, and point both to Derrida's and Foucault's definitions of the concept that I previously outlined. The protagonist's humoral imbalance creates the image of an entity whose borders and boundaries are not where they should be, which, according to del Río-Parra's research on early modern treatises dedicated to monsters, is considered an ideological perversion of the normal: "Lo monstruo, al final se deja leer como una forma hipostática de la norma, y en él desciframos los enigmas que inquietan el equilibrio siempre precario de la normalidad" (114). Imbalance, mixture, and amorphism firmly root Segismundo within the framework of the early modern conception of monstrosity. Meant to emphasize the liminality of his humanity, these qualities complicate the interpretation of *La vida es sueño* in relation to the wild figure tradition of the Spanish *comedia*.

Unlike his wild counterparts, Segismundo's behavior reflects the inner monstrosity superficially evinced by his animal-skin clothing. While the animal pelts of characters such as Teodosia and Leonido of Lope's wild character plays and Filipe of Vélez's *Virtudes vencen señales* highlight the discrepancy between *ser/parecer*, Segismundo's garb coincides with the wild and passionate nature of his behavior. In *La vida es sueño*, Act I highlights Segismundo's monstrosity, regardless of the injustice that brings it into being. Different from the earlier wild

figure plays, *La vida es sueño* never projects monstrous qualities onto Segismundo in order to misdirect attention from another character guilty of initiating the conflictive sequence of the work. In *La vida es sueño*, the protagonist's monstrosity is clear, and the play depicts his transformation from one binary to another—an aspect I have argued to be absent from other iterations of the wild figure sub-genre. This is the transformation from monstrous amalgamation of human and beast to prince, the pinnacle of cultured order.

That said, it remains true that cultural transgression creates a breach in the Baroque, out of which the monster is born. As a result, the monster must be sufficiently dealt with and the breach closed. In *La vida es sueño*, imbalance monstriefies nearly all of the characters in one way or another. In regards to Segismundo and Basilio, the method by which their monstrous qualities are erased, however, is not through anagnorisis, as is the case in every other wild play during this period, but rather through the transformation that Antonucci assigns to Lope's wild characters. Segismundo must go through the transformation from monster, defined by his imbalanced, deformed character traits (that are associated with physiological conceptions of the humors).<sup>50</sup> This facet of the work is yet another indication of its exceptional nature, that is also significant to the play's complexity, if not equally problematic to its interpretation. As I begin to suggest above, the conclusion of the work poses as many problems as it does provide a satisfactory conventional resolution to the conflict. While I previously treated the characters' responses to Segismundo's edicts to restore order, here I will examine his actions themselves. In particular,

---

<sup>50</sup> This is the transformation that must occur in order to resolve the issue of his monstrosity. On another level, the sublimation of passion for reason remains indispensable to the interpretation of the work, as so many studies have emphasized. See, for instance, Hildner, David, *Reason and the Passions in the Comedias of Calderón*.

the return of the soldier to the tower has always perplexed readers of the play, and has captivated critics since Parker's comments encouraged further attention to the closing scene. It remains true that we "are impelled to ask what it means" ("Segismundo's Tower" 248) more than thirty years later, as critics continue to debate its interpretation. This question lies at the heart of my approach to the wild figure as monster in the Spanish *comedia*. Like the earlier wild figure plays, conflicts are resolved, and Baroque order is restored; however, like in some of the previous works, those "complete" closures are not free from questioning. Here, what do we make of the imprisoned soldier? His return to the tower is more than a scar left in the suture of Baroque order; he is a new monster of culture created before the wound can be stitched, and the play ends where it began, with another prisoner in the tower.<sup>51</sup>

Parker notes this "circular structure" of *La vida es sueño*, contending that the scene dramatizes the breakdown of the allegory of Segismundo as a Christ figure who restores order, and acknowledges the "cosmic guilt incurred by mankind" whose "delito mayor / [...] es haber nacido" ("Segismundo's Tower" 249; *La vida* ll. 109-12). Cascardi more specifically describes the political element of this problematic ending as the "inability of absolute power to conceal its violent origins" (24). Greer develops the theses of both critics compellingly, even if, as she

---

<sup>51</sup> Like in many examples within the horror genre, the monster is killed, or at least thought to be dead, only to return in the sequel. In symbolic terms, overcoming whatever fear for which the monster served as a placeholder inevitably comes back to "haunt" the subject. The monster dies, but he is never really dead. Carroll explains this phenomenon as an indication of the malleability of the horror genre as both a repressive and subversive genre. On the one hand, the death of the monster signifies the triumph over evil (as defined within a particular socio-cultural context), while on the other, dramatizes the inevitable failure to completely blot out the danger of transgression. Other instances, such as the zombie genre, go even further to criticize the cultural and economic milieu of their own production. As will become clear throughout the dissertation, I contend that built into the *comedia* is a similar ambiguity, one that is difficult—sometimes impossible—to resolve.



concedes, Parker “probably would have rejected” the conclusions she reaches in the process (“(In)convenient Marriage” 55). She views the parallel between Rosaura and Segismundo in their concomitant pursuits of justice (Rosaura) and power (Segismundo). Drawing comparisons from Calderón’s contemporary Pascal, Greer contends that the Spanish dramatist constructs a dichotomy between earthly and divine justice, for which the former will inevitably be flawed. Unlike the ending of the eponymous *auto sacramental* in which the presentation of the eucharist “can be figured as a perfectly innocent and voluntary sacrifice in payment of an infinite guilt”, *La vida es sueño* presents “the contingent and impure world of human experience” (68). As a result, the conclusion of Calderón’s *comedia* “consists of a partially justified rebellion paid for [by the soldier] involuntarily, at the mandate of power. In such circumstances, the union of absolute power and perfect justice is an *hipogrifo* whom no one can master” (68). One conflict is resolved, but only for another to remain: the ultimate problem of history, conflict itself. The “resolution” presented within the play’s final lines exemplify the dividing line among scholars to interpret the *comedia* as a purely ideological genre or one capable of subversive ends. Regardless of Calderón’s intent (which Greer suggests but I do not), the conclusion of *La vida es sueño* signals the inability of ideology to satisfy the promise of completion and enclosure that it promulgates. Increasingly, Baroque anxiety remains at the end of these plays, foreshadowing a genre struggling to maintain its ideological efficacy.

Calderón wrote a number of other plays that included a wild man or woman in one form or another. Two mythological plays, *La hija del aire* and *La fiera, el rayo y la piedra* recount the narratives of Semíramis and Irífle, respectively. I will not include the analysis of these plays here, mainly for the reason that the plots of both draw heavily from the narrative of myth, and do

not follow the same sequence as the works in this chapter. One could make an argument for the inclusion of *La fiera, el rayo y la piedra* because it treats many of the same themes, but at the same time does not reveal any new information nor significantly develop the current discussion. Furthermore, Quintero's work on *La hija del aire* is extensive, and compliments my discussion of the wild woman in Chapter 3 of the dissertation. In that chapter, I will also treat another of Calderón's wild figure plays, *Hado y divisa de Leonido y Marfisa* (1680) which features the wild woman of the title, Marfisa. Finally, the wild man of *Los tres mayores prodigios* (1636) is essentially a dramatic representation of the folkloric wild figure type, and his appearance is brief. He is a hirsute, club-wielding giant that protects the Golden Fleece, and the play does not dedicate any attention to him that merits his inclusion here. However, another Calderonian *comedia*, *En la vida todo es verdad y todo mentira* (1658), clearly inserts itself in the arc of the wild figure play of the seventeenth-century Spanish Baroque, drawing heavily both from *La vida es sueño* and the theatrical wild figure tradition.

*En la vida todo es verdad y todo mentira*

As the title would imply, *En la vida...* appears as closely related to *La vida es sueño* both due to its wild protagonists and the narrative elements that echo Calderón's earlier masterpiece. Two wild men, Eraclio and Leonido, are raised in the woods by the hermit character Astolfo. One of them is the heir to the throne of Constantinople, and son of the emperor Focas, while the other is the progeny of the previous emperor Mauricio, whom Focas usurps approximately twenty years before the opening act of the play. Focas returns to his birthplace in search of his lost son to encounter two young savages, one of whom he knows to be his heir. He sets out to determine their identities and confirm the persistence of his imperial line, and enlists the

magician Lisipo to assist him. Constituting the main conflict of the play, the work is primarily concerned with the process by which Focas establishes this “matter of fact” and identifies his son. In contrast to the ontological conflict experienced by Segismundo, neither Eraclio nor Leonido can be understood as monsters in the same sense as the protagonist of *La vida es sueño*. The issue, then, is their lack of perceived monstrosity as the wild figures of earlier works. In *En la vida*, Focas is both the perceived and the “real” Baroque monster, whose death is necessary for the resolution of the conflict: his illegitimate reign as emperor, and the legitimacy of his successor. *En la vida* again resembles the wild figure plays more closely because the question of succession revolves around the anagnorisis of the identity of the true heir to the throne.

Focas usurped the throne from the previous emperor, Mauricio, and rules in tyranny. In the opening scene, his self-description reproduces characteristics of the wild figure that pertain both to medieval folklore and earlier representations in Spanish theater. About his childhood, he recounts:

Aquellas dos altas cimas  
que, en desigual competencia,  
de fuego el Volcán corona,  
corona de nieve el Edna,  
fueron mi primera cuna  
(ya lo dije), sin que en ellas  
tuviese más padre que  
las vívoras que en sí enjendran.  
Leche de lovas, ynfante,

me alimentó allí en mi tierna  
 edad y en mi edad adulta,  
 el veneno de sus yerbas . . .  
 en cuya bruta críanza,  
 dudó la naturaleza  
 si era fiera o si era hombre, (ll.75-89)

During the time of the coup, Mauricio's wife gives birth to a son, whom she places in Astolfo's care. As he takes the child to the forest in order to flee the dangers of Focas' revolt, Astolfo happens across Irífile, Focas' lover, also giving birth. She dies in childbirth, and Astolfo raises both of the boys in the forests of Trinacria. All of these events provide the backstory of the work, each happening before the opening of Act I. When Astolfo refuses to divulge the identities of Eraclio and Leonido, the question of Focas' son and heir becomes the major conflict of the work. Underlying this concern remains the issue of Focas' tyrannical rule, which affects the perception of its development towards resolution as well. Focas ultimately decides that Leonido is his son and heir,<sup>52</sup> and he sends Eraclio and Astolfo out to sea in a leaky boat. Before sinking, Federico, Mauricio's nephew, appears on the horizon with his fleet, and rescues the marooned Eraclio and Astolfo. Sailing to overthrow Focas, they are victorious and install Eraclio as the new emperor, as the play ends with the victorious army chanting his name.

---

<sup>52</sup> I discuss the significance of how he arrives at this decision in my analysis of the play in Chapter 2.

The same technique—anagnorisis—is used to resolve the conflict of the work as in earlier wild figure plays. Upon the death of the tyrant Focas, the Baroque monster of the play is dealt with through his literal death, which is precipitated by the anagnorisis of the heir to the throne: Eraclio. He differs from his theatrical predecessors, however, because *En la vida* never presents him as a monster, even a falsely accused one. Whereas Focas' wild upbringing engendered monstrous qualities in him, the education provided by Astolfo seems to have prevented Eraclio and Leonido from such an end.

Focas' death resolves the conflict of the narrative in a similar manner as previous works, particularly *El nacimiento de Ursón y Valentín*. Focas, like Uberto, receives his just punishment through his actual death rather than a metaphorical one in which he repents of his transgression and is either punished or permitted to retain a role within societal order. On one level, this conclusion poses a problem to my diachronic hypothesis that the endings of these plays demonstrate an increasing tension in the integrity of Baroque hegemony. It would seem Focas' death reflects the same definitive conclusion as *El nacimiento de Ursón y Valentín* where Uberto's death brings about total relief of order restored and the recuperation of royal succession through the uncovering of Ursón's identity. Previous criticism interprets *En la vida*... similarly, with articles by Mujica, Hivnor and Hildner that affirm the identification of Eraclio as Mauricio's heir as a plausibly reached matter of fact within the dramatic reality of Calderón's *comedia*. That is, Focas correctly discerns that Leonido as is his son, and the mass of soldiers correctly install Eraclio as emperor at the end of the work. However, these conclusions are precarious inasmuch as they make a number of epistemological presuppositions.

The first premise pertains to the method by which Focas makes the truth claim that identifies Leonido as his son. He assumes that through the observation of his and Eraclio's behavior, that he will know which is son. This model proves to be efficacious both in *El nacimiento de Ursón y Valentín* and *El hijo de los leones* when Valentín and Ursón both decide to spare the other's life because of *la fuerza de la sangre* that compels them. Lisandro is compelled by the same force when he meets Leonido in *El hijo de los leones*, assuming him to be a wild man who had been ravaging the countryside, not realizing his relationship to the son standing before him. Playing on the same theme in *En la vida...*, Calderón stretches the concept to its limit by creating a theatrical space to put it to the test. Similar to the courtly *experiencia* that Basilio imposes on Segismundo, Focas sets up a type of experiment to observe Eraclio and Leonido in Lisipo's illusory castle:

que la natural pasión  
con experiencias dirá  
cual es mi hijo y cual no,  
y entonces podré dar muerte  
al que no halle en mi favor. (ll. 55-59, p. 31)

In this case, the artifice (*parecer*) is the outward behavior of the two potential princes, which Focas is certain will lead him to the knowledge of their identities (*ser*). Of course, his experiment fails and he remains uncertain regarding the identity of his child through both through the illegitimate methodology employed in his experiment and also his incompetence as an observer. As Focas feigns sleep while attempting to eavesdrop Eraclio's and Leonido's conversation, he actually falls asleep. Leonido decides to take advantage of the moment and raises his sword to

murder the sleeping tyrant and usurp the throne for himself. In an attempt to detain his brother and prevent such an outcome, Eraclio too unsheathes his dagger. When Focas wakes up, all he can perceive are the two men with daggers drawn, and Leonido immediately heaps blame onto his adopted brother. In what to me seems more like impatience than conclusive evidence, Focas believes Leonido's untruth, and therefore discerns that he must be his son. Nevertheless, this decision on Focas' part misconstrues *ser/parecer*, given his inability to ascertain any knowledge about their identities through the experiments, either because he cannot see or hear what is going on, or because the evidence is inconclusive.

Furthermore, *la fuerza de la sangre* fails as a legitimate theatrical device to affirm the kinship of two characters in this *comedia*. Focas expects to feel such a connection with one of the young men, but never experiences the inexplicable sensation of consanguinity so clearly presented in other works. Upon his death and Eraclio's ascension to the imperial throne, Baroque order appears to have been restored, but the space between the veil and the "reality" to which it supposedly refers is more tenuous in this work than any up to this point. The soldiers that cheer Eraclio's name at the end function as an internal audience within the work; they observe the unfolding of events and believe that Leonido shares the same tyrannical traits as Focas, and therefore must be his son. By default, Eraclio must then be Mauricio's son, whose more benevolent and honorable demeanor makes this conclusion more desirable, if not credible. At the same time, the soldiers' fervor has no bearing on Eraclio's identity, as no conclusion made is upheld by satisfactory evidence.

Like the *comedias* that I have treated thus far, the conclusion of *En la vida* is persuasively ambiguous. Along with the soldiers, the audience sees Eraclio crowned emperor, and have been

guided throughout the *comedia* to approve this outcome, even though no substantial evidence has been given to affirm his legitimacy. The reality to which the veil (the *comedia*/representation) is ideological to the extent that it persuasively affirms a particular version of reality—Focas is a monster who must be blotted out, and Eraclio should be emperor. As persuasive as that “reality” may be, the problem is that this conclusion is reached by a method whose procedure proves incapable of making such a claim. The defining characteristic put forth by the play (and other *comedias* that I analyze in this chapter) that legitimizes Eraclio’s rule is primogeniture—a result Focas’ observations in Lisipo’s palace fail to observe. Calderón successfully compels his audience to support this conclusion along with the mass of soldiers. On the surface, it would seem that justice has been served and the rightful character has assumed the throne.

Nevertheless, the conclusion is problematic, which is either evidence that it is simply not one of Calderón’s strongest, or something else is going on. As tends to be true of the *comedia*, without more details coming to light, reading a political subtext in *En la vida* is speculative, but the dubious nature of its conclusion requires that other interpretations be explored. By following a reading akin to Greer’s in the *Play of Power*, the fact that Calderón composed *En la vida* for a royal celebration in 1659 is significant. The work dramatizes the problem of succession, naturally drawing less than innocuous parallels to the reign of Philip IV, which later provoked the Mariana of Austria enough to prohibit the theme in plays performed at court when she became queen consort after Philip’s death. I offer here a few comments to encourage further study on possible political implications of the content of *En la vida* with a specific focus on the movements of Juan José de Austria’s around the time of the composition of the play. The difficulty with reading a purely conventional ending to the work is that it assumes the inability of



an imagined audience to perceive the aspects that I describe above, or the playwright's inability to write a coherent ending. Greer notes Calderón's court productions conveyed messages "that were clearly pertinent not only to the dilemma of mankind in general but to that of the court in particular" (122). She goes on to argue convincingly that Calderón's *Apolo y Climene* and *El hijo del sol, Faetón* contain political subtexts that dealt with the contemporaneous situation of Juan José's role in the royal family, while a 1668 play, *Lo que merece un soldado*, tells the story of a "heroic illegitimate child who earns the throne with his sword" (104-5), which clearly referenced Juan José. Since Charles has yet to be born in 1659, and Felipe Próspero's health in question, the problem of succession looms large. In the face of this uncertainty in *En la vida...*, Eraclio's rule is legitimized by his fitness to carry out the duties of the king, rather than a satisfactory "discovery" of his primogeniture to the rightful emperor Mauricio.

Again, the audience has a choice at the end of Calderon's work, which points to a complexity that is evident so often in his plays, and makes the selection of one interpretation over the another a nearly impossible task. This ambiguous conclusion serves as another moment in the history of the *comedia* in which a wild figure play concludes in a manner that at its most ideological reveals its own repressive strategy, or at the other end of the spectrum suggests an alternative order altogether. The conflict precipitated by the monster (Focas) causes a problem that cannot be resolved by his death. The problem of succession initiated by ousting Mauricio necessitates the resolution seen in *En la vida* in which a satisfactory answer is provided, but it also gives the implication of a wound in Baroque order that may never heal (a particular anxiety—the succession of the monarch by primogeniture—that would be justified by Charles II's death without an heir).

### Completing the Cycle: Other Works in the Generation of Calderón

Of course, Calderón is not unique in his inclusion of wild figures in dramatic works during the second half of the seventeenth century, and their persistence on the stage continues to demonstrate the growing tensions in the hegemony of the Baroque. Antonucci notes that the wild man plays towards the end of the century “prueba cómo se ha ‘normalizado’ (ideológica y estructuralmente) la formulación lopesca, y cómo se ha modificado el tema respecto a la que fuera su formulación originaria” (*El salvaje* 175). While I agree in general terms with her assessment, our reading of the works diverges from there. Two other playwrights write *comedias* that utilize the same narrative as the works discussed thus far: Juan de Cabeza and Diego de Figueroa y Córdoba. Cabeza’s *La reina más desdichada* (1662) and Figueroa y Córdoba’s *Leoncio y Montano* (1661) are re-writings of Lope’s *El nacimiento de Ursón y Valentín*, a literary parentage noted by Antonucci.

Regarding the *comedia* by Cabeza, she indicates that the “savage” qualities found in Ursón—the only character to retain his name from Lope’s work—are reduced to zero, and in turn is a more static character whose only indication of wildness are his animal-skin clothing and the club that he wields. Her analysis is based on Ursón’s eloquent and rhetorically complex speech in Act I in which he overtly seeks to prove his humanity through reason:

y con esto soy mal visto,  
 porque se usa en estos tiempos  
 no mirar a la persona,  
 sino al vestido, ¡qué yerro!  
 [...]

Ya que soy hombre he probado,

While Lope's Ursón never reaches this level of eloquence when demonstrating his rational capacity, it would be incorrect to suggest a stark contrast between Cabeza's wild figure with the examples of wild men in Lope and his generation. Both Rosaura (*El animal de Hungría*) and Leonido (*El hijo de los leones*) express themselves similarly, and their "monstrous" deeds are suspect in each the plays. Thus this aspect of the wild figure is thanks to previous developments in the sub-genre, and should not be attributed to Cabeza. I do not argue that the Ursón of *La reina más desdichada* is a more static character than earlier wild men, but rather that his clearly human, noble identity is an accurate "reading" of Lope's wild characters by the later dramatists.

Monstrosity functions similarly in this wild figure play as previous iterations as well. Lidoro, who is Cabeza's Uberto and villain, is the Baroque monster of the work, and his death is required along with the anagnorisis of the identity of Ursón for the play to resolve. Even though it would be clear to the audience that Ursón is not a monster, to the villagers he is perceived as such. In this sense, both the perceived and "real" monsters must be blotted out. This plays out similarly in the re-writing as it does in *El nacimiento de Ursón y Valentín*. Luis, Ursón's brother, openly accuses Lidoro of his lie against their mother, and challenges him to a duel. Therefore, as Antonucci notes, Lidoro's death loses its providential quality, as when Valentín stabs Uberto in the back, and the latter sees it as divine punishment for his transgressions. Resolving the conflict by duel reorients the transgression as more horizontal as an affront of honor directly against

another individual, without the implication of the vertical transgression against God.<sup>53</sup>

Even though there are later iterations of the wild figure in the Spanish *comedia*, the conclusion of *La reina más desdichada* signals the final stages of the arc that I have traced throughout this chapter. Luis is bringing Ursón to the court to pay homage to the king when a group of villagers ambush them, leaving Ursón gravely injured. The play ends with the life of Ursón, the rightful heir, hanging in the balance. Although the problem of honor has been resolved through the death of Lidoro, Cabeza's work complicates the problem of succession that pervades these later *comedias*. Whereas the plot of *La reina más desdichada* seems to be unwinding towards the same resolution as Lope's version, the villagers mistake the wild man for a monster and invoke a tragic end. Similarly to *En la vida...*, contemporary political events and the problem of Habsburg succession should be noted in the interpretation of this ending, even if more historical research is necessary to affirm the validity of such a position. Previous iterations of the wild figure ubiquitously become king at the end of the play, assuming their divinely ordained social function. Much of what is at stake in the final verses of the play are essential to the restoration of Baroque order. Without an heir, the paternal figurehead cannot be replaced and the completeness that defines Baroque ideology has reached a breaking point. Before, the resolutions of the wild man plays were less problematic; that is, the resolution of the conflict occurred, even if questionably. The conclusions were superficially satisfactory, even though elements remained unresolved that indicated an increasingly brittle concept of Baroque order, but

---

<sup>53</sup> Provisionally, this development is significant, as the question of "honor" has become secularized in its decline towards the end of the seventeenth century. It has lost its divinely mandated quality, but lingers as a sociological reality in the minds of Baroque individuals, even if not conceived as explicitly spiritually authoritative as before. More examples and research are required to make such a claim in any definitive manner, however.

one that had not cracked. Anxiety grew, but the artifice retained the appearance of being resolute in its integrity. In *La reina más desdichada*, the work ends without even a sense that order has been restored. Transgressions have been paid for, but the quintessential figure of the Baroque, the monarch, may or may not survive his wounds. In a Nietzschean sense, God is not dead but he may be dying. Of all the wild figure plays, this ending is the most indicative of the growing tension in the culture of the Baroque in which the problems that face Spain in this moment are reflected.

Diego de Figueroa y Córdoba's *Leoncio y Montano* contains a more straightforward narrative sequence in which the order disturbed/order restored paradigm adequately describes the development of the plot. Antonucci again provides a point of departure for understanding the work when she indicates that Figueroa y Córdoba's play draws from multiple sources including *El nacimiento de Ursón y Valentín*, along with *El hijo de los leones*, and *El nieto de su padre*, providing detailed examples of each. She demonstrates how earlier works were formative to later wild figure plays, and provides a framework to suggest that the wild figure, in many ways, loses its efficacy as a metaphor for monstrosity towards the end of the century. Like Cabeza's Ursón, Leoncio's only trait that characterizes him as a wild man is his animal-skin clothing, and at no point can he be understood as a monster, minus the villagers' perception of him. At the same time, the encounters between the villagers and Leoncio are significantly diminished in *Leoncio y Montano*, and therefore less of a concern in the work. Monstrosity fades as a theme in the wild figure play, and in turn the narrative of the protagonist as the perceived monster into virtuous prince disappears as well. Previously an essential element to the macro-sequence of the wild man play, Leoncio, the wild man of *Leoncio y Montano*, is the second born, and therefore reduced to

the status of secondary character, almost inessential. The affront to Leoncio and Montano's mother is avenged, and Montano assumes his rightful role as heir to his father's dukedom.

Anagnorisis is the method by which Leoncio returns to his family and status as noble, but his role is unnecessary to the restoration of the conflict (he does play a role in the death of the villain Ricardo, but so do the duke and Montano). The defining characteristics of the wild figure in the theater of Lope de Vega, and even later in that of Calderón, has lost its essential quality in relation to monstrosity. He is no longer a hybrid, a mixture, but rather a static, emptier character, ready to be filled again by a subsequent cultural generation.

## CHAPTER 2

### BLEEDING OUT: HISTORY, NATURAL MAGIC, AND THE PROBLEM OF SUCCESSION IN THE SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY WILD FIGURE *COMEDIA*

In Chapter 1, I discussed the wild figure's ability to frustrate expectations, a trait that lends itself to the type. Questioning the border of humanity, his or her existence emphasizes the evil deeds of another character as the two figures are juxtaposed. In this chapter, I will analyze a different aspect of the liminal space that they inhabit to further illuminate the nature, function, and failure of ideology. The plays that I examine—Antonio Mira de Amescua's *La rueda de la Fortuna* (1603), Calderón's *En la vida todo es verdad y todo mentira* (1659), and Francisco Bances Candamo's *La piedra filosofal* (1693)—maintain some of the same themes treated in the previous chapter (i.e. monstrosity, succession), but their structural similarities merit their treatment as a mini-corpus of plays. Each a re-writing of the previous, they roughly span the entirety of the seventeenth century (c. 1603-1693), thus making a diachronic approach to their content apposite. Initiating this sequence of theatrical works, Mira de Amescua dramatizes a political philosophy of kingship that celebrates primogeniture. As a historical backdrop to his play, the playwright depicts the chaotic succession of Byzantine emperors Mauricio, Phocas and Heraclius, which occurred during the turn of the seventh century C.E. Calderón mirrors the historical context of Mira's play; however, he takes the elements of the previous version and

repurposes them for his own dramatic ends. Political philosophy and reason of state remain elements of the Calderonian version, but he incorporates a further complexity to his work that is epistemological in nature. In *En la vida . . .*, Calderón essentially dramatizes skepticism, exploring its implications and even leaving some problems unresolved. That is, Calderón “plays” on uncertainty, which he maintains in the conclusion of the work. In response, Bances Candamo’s *La piedra filosofal* stages the same skeptical problem of certainty displayed in *En la vida . . .*, but takes the philosophical problem of doubt one step further in its problematic conclusion. In one sense, Bances’s play is a transmutation of Calderón’s previous work, while in another medical-alchemical sense, it provides a tonic to the disease of skepticism that lingers at the end of *En la vida . . .*, only the medicine does not have the desired affect. This last play abandons the historical narrative of the seventh-century Byzantine empire, electing to set the play in the mythical past, in Cádiz, thus evoking the discussion of limits at the edge of the known world. *La piedra filosofal* bears little resemblance to *La rueda de la Fortuna*; the wild figure becomes nothing more than a vague palimpsest of its dramatic lineage indebted to the earlier work. But as I will show, that figure remains crucially important to display the intertextual links between the three plays, and the manner in which the changes incurred by the wild figure of the Spanish stage reflect the developments in political and natural philosophy taking place on the Iberian peninsula during the seventeenth-century. Furthermore, I continue to interpret the efficacy of the *comedia* as a transmitter of ideology, and how theatricality exists precisely at the limit where ideology fails.

**Antonio Mira de Amescua, *La rueda de la Fortuna* (1604?)**



In *La rueda de la Fortuna*, Mira de Amescua sets in motion the major elements—primarily murder, revolution, and tyranny—that will come to be re-worked in Calderón's *En la vida todo es verdad y todo mentira*. Their historical settings coincide, both loosely following the bloody transition of power of Byzantine Constantinople from the emperor Maurice (582-602 C.E.) to Phocas (602-610 C.E.), and then ultimately to the subsequent emperor, Heraclius (610-641 C.E.). The historical events that inspire the plot of both *comedias* take place at the beginning of the seventh century C.E., and even though *La rueda de la Fortuna* gives reference to the year 1303, it clearly alludes to the turbulent lives of the Byzantine emperors six centuries previous.<sup>54</sup>

The play commences with an inconstant and violent Mauricio worried over the question of succession; he banishes one of his generals, Leoncio, for having been vanquished in battle by the Persians. He returns with only one trophy: a singularly beautiful woman named Mitilene with whom another of Mauricio's generals, Filipo, and Mauricio's supposed son, Teodosio, fall in love at first sight.<sup>55</sup> Heracliano, an old hermit, brings a young man named Heraclio to court, who he has raised in seclusion until this moment. The empress Aureliana receives them, and from her conversation with the old man, the audience learns that Heraclio is in fact her son and also Mauricio's heir. Unbeknownst to the emperor, Aureliana had feared for her son's safety due to a nightmare, so she gives him to Heracliano at birth to be replaced by two slave children to be

---

<sup>54</sup> For more details on the events that serve as the historical background of these *comedias*, see Vasliev, pp. 169-199 and *The Cambridge History of the Byzantine Empire c. 500-1492*, pp. 221-230.

<sup>55</sup> The audience soon learns that Mitilene is the half-sister of Cosróes, the general and heir to the Persian throne. Taking place before the opening of the play, Mitilene, due to her illegitimacy had been raised in the forest as a wild woman, eventually to be reunited with her brother upon joining the army where they learn of each others' identities.

raised together at court. Over the course of the first act, Mauricio's wickedness grows, and he rejects the Pope's petition for help against invading armies, and lowers the salary of his own army. The emperor ultimately repents, but not before his military revolts, bringing to fruition Aureliana's dream. Due to a fortuitous turn of events, the lowly-born Focas is installed as standing emperor by the revolting army. As his army draws near the imperial palace, Aureliana and Mauricio reconcile, and she divulges the information regarding Heraclio's identity. She flees with the general Filipo, Mitilene, and her presumed daughter Teodolinda. Heraclio, who had conscripted in the revolting army, finds Mauricio in the throne room run through with a sword by Focas. In this moment Heraclio is overcome with pity for the expiring monarch. Mauricio then notices Aureliana's ring on Heraclio's finger, to which he realizes the true identity of the soldier standing before him. With this knowledge, Heraclio avenges his father by assassinating the usurper Focas, and then flees to the mountains pursued by members of Focas' and Leoncio's army. Atop a hillock, he proclaims himself rightful heir to the throne, confirmed by Aureliana and Heracliano (who coincidentally appear from their mountain hideaway). In yet another serendipitous occurrence, the Persian ruler Cosróes appears on horseback to rescue his sister Mitilene. Leoncio surrenders to both Cosróes and Heraclio, and the latter is wed to Mitilene, thus consolidating Byzantine rule and creating a political alliance with the Persians.

While Mira is clearly conscious of the historical details relating to Byzantine Constantinople, they are subservient to the *comedia's* main theme: one's fortune may rise and fall, but, however contradictory, ultimately fate rewards the righteous and punishes the evil. Mira intertwines fictionalized episodes of his play with events taken from historical accounts, as Calderón would later do the same. *La rueda de la Fortuna* depicts the historical figures

Mauricio, Focas, and Heraclio, three emperors of the Byzantine empire over the period 582-641 C.E. As in the play, one of Mauricio's generals was in fact Philipicus, and there was a constant struggle in the region against the Slavs and the Persians. Maurice, although well-remembered for reorganizing the Byzantine army and contracting peace with the Persians, did deny Pope Gregory V's petition for troops, and was ultimately overthrown by Phocas's army for lowering the salaries of the Byzantine military. Mira's narrative departs from the historical record with many details, however. Heraclio was not Maurice's son, although Maurice did have a son named Teodosius, who was beheaded along with his father. Phocas was known for lasciviousness and war-mongering, but his reign lasted eight years, not one day. In the end, Mira dramatizes his own laws of history by telling a melodrama in which *certain* truths determine the inevitable outcome of the narrative. That is, the play does not treat the details of historical events, but rather is a meta-historical representation of the deterministic nature of history, as if history itself were guided by essential forces in a Hegelian sense.

Cotarelo and Valbuena Prat do not hold the play in high esteem due to its chaotic emplotments.<sup>56</sup> Others such as Hopper concede that the consequence of the concurrent plots is that each subplot is less developed, but that the culmination of all of them together stresses the main theme of the play: the spin of the wheel of fortune (Hopper 50-61). Both opinions have their merit depending on expectations of what a *comedia* should do. On the one hand the play does not demonstrate a well-architected and meticulous structure, but on the other it successfully dramatizes a complex idea—the relationship between fortune and free will—in decidedly

---

<sup>56</sup> See Cotarelo y Mori, "Mira de Amescua y su teatro"; Valbuena Prat, "Prólogo", *Mira de Amescua: Teatro*.

entertaining fashion. However, there is another facet that becomes apparent in the chaotic development of the plot and the succession of the emperors in *La rueda de la Fortuna*. Each of Mauricio's three successors—Leoncio, Focas, and Heraclio—are installed as emperor by distinct methods. In other words, the response to the question of the legitimacy of each successor is answered in three different ways for each subsequent ruler. In the end, only Heraclio's ascent to the imperial throne is legitimized in the play due to his primogeniture, made evident in the play's conclusion. This model—primogeniture—is the “story” of history that the play tells, mirrored in the inherent qualities ascribed to Heraclio as the good that triumphs over evil.

To necessitate this actuality, Amescua goes to lengths to demonstrate the justification for the revolt against Mauricio. Although he does repent, his actions require recompense, carried out by Focas, agent of the turn of fortune. Mauricio's overthrow is made more palatable to a culture with a high sense of regal authority by making him a tyrant. They would not have readily supported the overthrow of a monarch for simply having dissented against papal authority (i.e. the sack of Rome in 1527 by the troops of the Holy Roman Emperor and king of Spain Carlos V) or by lowering military salaries; however, his physical mistreatment of the empress Aureliana—he drags her by her hair across the stage in one scene—vilifies him enough to make the revolt against him more amenable. We have evidence of one notable audience member's reaction to this scene, which Lope de Vega mentions in a letter after seeing the play in 1604<sup>57</sup>: “[...] hizo *La rueda de la Fortuna*, comedia en que un rey aporrea a su mujer y acuden muchos a llorar este paso, como si fuera posible” (letter reproduced in Amezúa 3). Although Lope appears to find

---

<sup>57</sup> This letter is also the earliest date we have of a performance, and is the best information for the 1604 date of composition, although it is possible that it was written even earlier, but no previous performances show up in the extant historical records.

Mira's dramatic purpose for this scene transparent, we learn that the scene was moving to the audience.<sup>58</sup>

As the soldiers rise in revolt against him, Leoncio appears, dressed in animal skins having been banished for his defeat at the hands of the Persians. He gives a moving speech that laments the deeds of Mauricio, decrying his choleric tendencies and injustice against his loyal vassals. Calling for the election of a new emperor, he entreats the mass of present soldiers: "Elegid, elegid otro pacífico/ justiciero, clemente, afable, y próspero" (ll. 2315-16). The captain and his men immediately call for Leoncio as their new emperor. Even though the play rarely leaves space for the development of a plot sequence, this election is capricious even for *La rueda de la Fortuna*. They are easily moved by his speech against Mauricio, and soon their true motivation becomes apparent. Leoncio, previously a military man, is someone they trust to keep their interests in mind. The leader of the troops, a nameless captain, states: "Mauricio es avariento y no nos paga; / un soldado queremos que gobierne el Imperio del Oriente" (ll. 2327-29). From this moment forward in *La rueda de la Fortuna*, the play conveys a political message regarding the

---

<sup>58</sup> Although not entirely relevant to my current argument, the final four words of the citation I have provided from Lope are significant to understanding his theater and the socio-cultural context in which he produced it. It is unclear exactly to what he refers when he states, "como si fuera posible". One interpretation would be that it was unbelievable for a figure as noble as the emperor to carry out such deeds. His criticism of the scene, then, would be that Mira created an implausible character in Mauricio. The resulting interpretation would confirm the notion that Lope not only held the *vulgo* in low regard, but that he ascribed to a personal ideology in which nobility—for which a prince is the highest form—must necessarily mirror a virtuous essential nature. Another interpretation would be that Lope suggests the audience appeared to believe the actor playing Mauricio to actually drag his female counterpart across the stage, when in reality they used an acting technique that averted any bodily harm or physical pain to the actress playing Aureliana. In either case, Lope is keenly aware of the *comedia* audiences' penchant for being deceived by the artifice of the theater, which should encourage vigilance in modern readers not to overlook the potential of his sleight of hand.

legitimacy of a monarch's reign and the method by which they ascend to the throne. In the end, the dramatic work upholds the concept of primogeniture through the selection of Heraclio as rightful heir, and depicts the deficiencies in other options for the installation of a monarch.<sup>59</sup>

All of the characters that are crowned emperor are also heirs in the line of the dramatic wild figure. Of the three, Leoncio, Focas, and Heraclio each attain characteristics of the wild man at some point in the development of their character. Leoncio, as I mentioned, retreats to the mountainside after his banishment by Mauricio for his defeat at the hands of the Persians. He later reappears in animal skins and carrying the spinning wheel Mauricio forcibly exchanges for his sword (“que hombre por mujeres trueca, / hile ya con una rueca / pues no riñe con una espada” [ll. 350-52]) Leoncio describes himself in the following manner: “Mirenme todos ya compadeciéndose, / vestido de unos pieles como sátiro,<sup>60</sup> / huyendo de las gentes, más que un bárbaro” (ll. 2319-21). While he becomes a wild man in adulthood due to circumstances outside his control (like Teodosia in *El animal de Hungría*), Heraclio and Focas follow the more common path to becoming a wild man, having been raised in the forest. Focas initially is reared by a fisherman who found him abandoned and “con palmas y ovas / y leche de mansas lobas” (ll. 2163-65).<sup>61</sup> Eventually, he leaves the fisherman to raise himself “entre estos montes” (l. 2172).

Heraclio too is raised in the forest, but he receives the tutelage of Heracliano, to whom the

---

<sup>59</sup> Spain's great enemy England would experiment with more elective institutions culminating in the civil war that did away with the monarchy altogether—for a time—and established the Commonwealth of England under Oliver Cromwell in 1649.

<sup>60</sup> Satyrs pertain to the literary and folklore tradition of the wild figure and these mythical forest dwellers may also be precursors to the wild character, and the reason it obtains a sexually aggressive character. See Bernheimer, pp. 93-102.

<sup>61</sup> Calderón recycles these lines in his character development of Focas in *En la vida todo es verdad y todo mentira*. Focas: “Leche de lobas, ynfante, / me alimentó allí en mi tierna / hedad” (ll. 83-85).

empress has entrusted him. Finally, Mitilene, the eventual wife of Heraclio and empress of Constantinople, due to her illegitimate status as daughter to the Persian king, is cast out at birth to grow up in the forest and eventually join the ranks of her half-brother Cósroes in the Persian military. Therefore, there are four wild characters, each given the opportunity to assume the Byzantine throne at some point in the play. The methods by which they are selected and the rationale behind them suggest a political subtext to the work, and indicate the Baroque valorization of primogeniture over any other right to rule. Mira uses the wheel of fortune as the vehicle by which to convey this ultimately paradoxical political message. On the one hand, within the playwright's framework, primogeniture is an apposite example of the nature of fortune; one's status as heir is completely serendipitous and based on characteristics wholly out of their control—being the first born child of a prince. However, on the other, the playwright complicates this scheme by assigning essential qualities (good, evil, right, wrong) to elements within a system that should be devoid of value judgment. According to fortune, “the order of things” just is, but in *La rueda de la Fortuna*, Heraclio's inherent goodness and fitness to rule providentially goes hand in hand with his firstborn status.

In order to demonstrate the inherent tension between the machinations of fortune and a model of kingship that ascribes legitimacy to virtue, I will discuss each character's assumption to the throne, highlighting the methods by which they obtain the crown and the inherent critique of each method and the rationale behind it. Each of the characters who assume the throne, at one point or another, are wild characters. Therefore, wildness serves as the backdrop for the political message that I have begun to describe. By choosing to include four wild figures in Leoncio, Focas, Heraclio, and Mitilene, Mira employs wildness as a type of contrast agent by which to

compare each character, and evaluate their ability to rule. He strips each character of the trappings of culture so as to put their “true” nature on display, which ultimately manifests itself in each character and confirms or proscribes their fitness to rule. As I mentioned above, Leoncio is the first to be selected emperor: “El ejército / da voces, eligiéndote” (ll. 2335-2336). His right to the throne does not come from God, but rather from the consent of the masses, “pues que ya de común consentimiento / el Imperio me dais” (ll. 2340-1). He initially gets wrapped up in the excitement, but soon takes the crown from his head and refuses their selection. The language of these lines predates even proto-enlightenment ideals of a democratically elected leader, but this episode does at least foresee such a method by using verbs such as “elegir” and articulating ideas like “común consentimiento”; however, this structure is merely presented as a faulty mechanism, and is quickly thwarted through the internal logic of the plot.<sup>62</sup> That is, Leoncio’s refusal, and the ultimate celebration of primogeniture in the play’s resolution suggests the criticism that I propose. In Leoncio’s own words, he cares more for the good of the empire than his own personal gain: “la púrpura renuncio, / porque el mundo entienda que pretendo / riqueza ni interés, sino el bien público” (ll. 2353-55). Even though he acknowledges the virtuous qualities that reflect the Spanish conception of a reason of state that values the well-being of the state over the preservation of power by the ruler, these are not the reasons for which he is selected by the “consentimiento común” of the army. They choose him because (1) he is a soldier and (2)

---

<sup>62</sup> Cervantes dedicates more attention to this political system in his *Persiles* when describing the proto-democracy on the island of the King Policarpo, where “no se hereda ni viene por sucesión de padre a hijo: sus moradores le eligen a su beneplácito, procurando siempre que sea el más virtuoso y mejor hombre que en él se hallara” (ch. 22). In the *Persiles*, we even find the same language used in *La rueda de la Fortuna* to describe this model: “de común consentimiento de todos sale el rey y toma el cetro absoluto del mando” (ch. 22).



because they assume he will restore their salaries (“Mauricio es avariento y no nos paga; / un soldado queremos que gobierne / el Imperio de Oriente” [ll. 2327-29]). The conflict of the play is the succession of the emperor Mauricio with a legitimate heir, for which Leoncio is not a suitable option, and the audience is left to interpret the reason why. It is clear, regardless of his fitness to rule, that the method by which he is selected is inadmissible due to the ulterior motives of the soldiers who select him that could later be leveraged against his absolute power.<sup>63</sup> Appointing a commonly elected ruler inevitably leads to the desires of a particular group to take precedence over those of another, and the version of democracy illustrated by the soldiers in electing Leoncio provides a quintessential criticism of democracy—that everyone’s “vote” is bound up in self-interest rather than the greater good. Hobbes notably contends that the reason “men advise less successfully in a great convent is, because that thence arise *factions* in a commonwealth” and each faction “hopes to see the glory taken from [their adversary], and restored unto himself” (138). *La rueda de la Fortuna* depicts the reasoning behind this method equally illegitimate, and therefore must give way to another.<sup>64</sup>

Leoncio’s refusal of the crown leads to a laundry list of pretenders within the military that are considered by the soldiers present in the scene. Each is precluded for one reason or another such as advanced age, cowardliness, lack of desire, and lunacy, among others. Although this list

---

<sup>63</sup> In *La cultura del barroco* and *Teatro y literatura de la sociedad barroca*, Maravall posits that the “absolute” nature of the Spanish monarchy was an illusion fortified through media such as the *comedia*, which is what is taking place in this passage. A monarch who justly wields his absolute power is the ideal to which *La rueda de la Fortuna* alludes, functioning within the ideological framework identified by Maravall.

<sup>64</sup> I pause here to reflect on the word “must”. If it were solely up to fortune, then there is no reason that anything *must* happen; however, Mira’s concept of fortune ironically is replete with “must”, as will continue to be clear throughout my analysis of the play.

seems innocuous enough, it points to the overarching ideological perspective conveyed throughout the play to identify the inherent qualities that define a monarch. Egginton's major/minor strategy framework productively describes this phenomena. In *La rueda de la Fortuna*, the major strategy of the Baroque predominates by suggesting prescribed characteristics of a legitimate monarch that coincide with ideals of the Catholic monarchy. For a contrasting example of the minor strategy, one must look no further than Sancho Panza during his governance of the island. Even though his reign is a farce commissioned by the Duke and Duchess, Sancho proves to be one of the best stewards of governance in the novel (certainly better than the dukes), even though he is precisely the character who should be precluded from such a position as an ignoramus of lowly birth.<sup>65</sup> Cervantes subverts the prescribed characteristics of the major strategy, which frustrates what plays such as *La rueda de la Fortuna* attempt in dramatizing prescribed ideals of authority.

As the soldiers continue to list possible emperors, the sound of drums interrupts their conversation and an eagle soars across the stage, carrying a sword. Before exiting, the bird releases its grip from the sheath for it to fall to the stage. Inscribed on the scabbard the soldiers find the following engraving: "Tenla y reina sólo un día" (l. 2372). Leoncio interprets the "prodigio", stating that whoever can unsheathe the sword is "a quien el cielo / esas letras escribe, y quien conviene que el Imperio gobierne" (ll. 2382-84). Without considering what might

---

<sup>65</sup> As Julio Baena has perceptively noted, the most recent two presidents of the United States reflect these two characteristics that define Sancho. On the one hand, George W. Bush was always popularly identified as unintelligent (but of high social origins), while on the other Barack Obama—although highly intelligent—comes from a lower middle-class family. Together, they make manifest precisely the qualities that should preclude Sancho from being an effective governor. At the same time, they also demonstrate the other two quadrants of this schema—high social birth and intelligence.

become of them after their twenty-four hour reign comes to an end, each soldier makes an unsuccessful attempt to loose the brand. Focas happens upon the spectacle, lamenting his lowly station and incessant visions of murdering the emperor. He approaches the same tree to which the sword has been tied, and slings his corded belt over a branch in order to hang himself. Leoncio, who has also been dealt the wrong end of the whims of fortune, encourages Focas to give the sword a pull. He successfully draws the blade, and leads the revolt that ousts Mauricio as emperor. However, he proves to be prideful and self-interested in contrast to Leoncio, which can be interpreted as vice provided his subsequent death at the hands of Heraclio whose installation as emperor is celebrated in the conclusion of the play. This hubris is apparent as Focas enters the palace to assassinate Mauricio, and proclaims:

Si un Alejandro esculpido  
el mundo en el pie ha tenido,  
a ser más eterno vengo;  
que el mundo en las manos tengo  
y a los pies quien le ha regido. (ll. 2727-51)

Hopper cites Patch's work on the Christianized version of fortune in medieval European literature as it applies to this early modern example:

Here, [Fortune] does not really put down the meritorious; she castigates pride [...]. The goddess may unreasonably exalt a man, but it is his own business to avoid self-satisfaction. The remedy, of course, is to seek God and virtue, and not to prize the gifts of Fortune. (cited in Hopper 59)

This peculiar definition of Fortune aptly describes its operation within Mira's work. Focas' rise to emperor is indeed fortuitous (having literally fallen out of the sky), but his demise, and the ultimate ascension of Heraclio suggest that the wheel of fortune—as depicted in this play—considers one's merits and faults as she spins. Within this framework, fortune briefly, if “unreasonably”, shows favor on Focas, but punishes his pride through Heraclio's revenge of his father's death.

Focas' lowly station, along with his mental instability—the soldiers notice him tying a noose to a tree branch—are two indicators (one nature, one nurture) that suggest that he is unfit to rule. Nevertheless, the interpretation of this sword-in-the-stone scene implies that in spite of those qualities, Fortune—or its Christian sibling Providence—chooses indiscriminately. The medieval notion that the order of things is strictly the result as God's will is complicated by the Calvinistic theology of the Reformation, which caused great debate among theologians during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In post-Tridentine Europe, Catholicism combatted the theology of predestination by affirming human agency as a factor in soteriology. Thus, Fortune's selection of the clearly unfit Focas satirizes the theology of predestination by dramatizing the fallacy of such a notion and reducing it to absurdity. Essentially, *La rueda de la Fortuna* mocks the idea that free will and human agency play no part in one's legitimacy to rule. Focas intimates his lack of fitness in his doleful attitude prior to becoming emperor, and confirms it through his prideful behavior after ascending to the throne. Mauricio, partially lamenting his own actions, and partially forewarning Focas, enjoins his usurper to avoid arrogance at all costs:

Un soberbio emperador

tenga la pena y molestia

de Nabucodonosor  
 que es bien que padezca bestia  
 el hombre que es pecador. (ll. 2742-46)

Focas goes on to disregard these words of advice, and forgetting the portent written on the sword that he would only rule for a single day. In response to Mauricio's words above, Focas sees in himself a new Alexander, only "a ser más eterno vengo" (l. 2749). Like Nebuchadnezzar,<sup>66</sup> he suffers the consequences of his arrogance, and indeed only reigns for one interval of the sun.

Significantly, his selection as emperor differs from that of Leoncio's, even though it occurs only moments after. Rather than selecting another emperor within their ranks, Focas ascends to power solely through divine dispensation that selects him to rule. By placing the eagle and sword episode of *La rueda de la Fortuna* in the present of the enunciated, rather than in the mythical past, it goes beyond the scope of any verisimilitude, and provides a contrast to the events that follow. Juxtaposed with the evidence of Heraclio's identity as son and heir to Mauricio through the corroboration of Aureliana and Heracliano, the work emphasizes primogeniture as the legitimate model for right to rule, which must also be accompanied by virtue and right action exhibited in Heraclio's behavior. Leoncio, although he possesses virtue, does not have the royal blood required for him to take the throne. Focas lacks the bloodline *and*

---

<sup>66</sup> The biblical account of Nebuchadnezzar in the book of Daniel describes that the Assyrian king experiences a psychotic break and is driven to the forest to live amongst the beasts. He takes on certain attributes that are maintained in many iconographic representations of the wild figure: "He was driven away from human society, ate grass like oxen, and his body was bathed with the dew of heaven, until his hair grew as long as eagles' feathers and his nails became like birds' claws" (*Oxford NRSV*, Dan. 4.33). The growth of fur or feathers is also a common transformation for wild figures who have retreated from society to live a life of solitude in the forest. For specific examples, see Bernheimer's *Wild Men in the Middle Ages*, pp. 12-17 and Bartra's *The Artificial Savage*, pp. 123-126.

his behavior does not mirror the model of kingship required of the monarch. In contrast, Heraclio's fitness to rule is evidence of his royal blood, and vice versa; his actions and behavior flow forth from his royal blood. Unlike Focas' immediate arrogance and desire for more power, the "rightful" emperor approaches the throne with caution. Heraclio, after avenging his father's assassination, states: "Vida quiero, no el Imperio / que es miserable teatro" (ll. 3392-93). The maxim proves true; he that does not wish for power is precisely the one who should wield it. So, by the end of the play, we view an unusual dramatization of the definition of fortune. In one sense, Heraclio's status as firstborn of Mauricio is completely fortuitous, yet his virtue and fitness to rule flow out of his royal blood. However, the evidence of his virtue—his noble actions—paradoxically suggest the role that free will plays in his legitimacy in contrast to Focas' pride. It is this third way that affirms divine providence while providing space for free will, which coincides with post-Tridentine Catholic doctrine and that comprises this felicitous ending to *La rueda de la Fortuna*.

In *La rueda de la Fortuna*, like in Lope's wild figure plays that treat the topic of royal succession, the blood always outs. In Mira's play, various scenes clearly demonstrate *la fuerza de la sangre* and foreshadow Heraclio's ascension in the denouement of the plot. This initially occurs in the first act when he falls asleep on the throne, and dreams of being emperor. Although he does not know it at the time, this dream is an inner reality, a shadow that eventually is made

external and real upon learning of his identity, and results in him becoming emperor.<sup>67</sup> His capacity as a soldier and enjoyment of the imperial court negates his “formative” years living in seclusion as a shepherd; it is his nature, not nurture, that forms who he is and manifests itself in this manner throughout the work. Finally, even though on a mission to oust the emperor, he wells up with compassion upon encountering him, mortally wounded, in the palace. Seeing his blood spilt, Heraclio expresses his ineffable sympathy for whom he would soon learn to be his dying father:

Viendo su sangre vertida,  
y con lastimosas penas,  
la que a mi cuerpo da vida  
siento alteradas las venas,  
aunque no soy su homicida. (ll. 2812-16)

This inner feeling results from the “true” connection that bonds the two characters: their blood. Blood legitimizes Heraclio’s ascension to the imperial throne, which is confirmed by his behavior and affinity for all things related to the duties of a king.

---

<sup>67</sup> The nature of dreams begins to reach a turning point during early modernity. Their capacity to predict the future remained a popular belief, and dream interpreters were prevalent throughout the period. However, as de Armas Wilson demonstrates in her analysis of Don Quixote’s vision in the Cave of Montesinos, Cervantes “introduces the desire to *give* meaning to dreams rather than to *find* it there” (79, emphasis original). Heraclio’s dream exemplifies the understanding that meaning is found in dreams, and that they predict the future, whereas Cervantes problematizes the notion of dream-as-sign by encouraging multiple interpretations. As would be expected, Cervantes is more innovative in this regard, but that is not to meant imply that Mira’s work is devoid of pleasure and entertainment; what it lacks in innovation, it makes up for in winsome and extravagant plot twists. However unbelievable they may be, they do not fail to entertain.

As I outlined above, *La rueda de la Fortuna* dramatizes an atypical understanding of fortune. Mira incorporates the merits and faults of each of the pretenders to the imperial throne into the fabric of his wheel of fortune. The chaotic plot developments of the play feel as if the wheel spins serendipitously, yet by the end it becomes clear that fortune favors the virtuous, which appears more clearly when manifested upon the blank slate of the wild figure. By including merit into the nature of fortune, Mira's *comedia* begins to look like a dramatic representation of a treatise on political philosophy. Not dissimilar to Mariana's *Del rey y de la institución de la dignidad real*,<sup>68</sup> or the tenth chapter of Hobbes's *Philosophical Rudiments*, Mira pragmatically evaluates the merits and faults of multiple frameworks of royal legitimacy. Of course, the conclusion of the work upholds the dominant political philosophy prevalent in Spain, by celebrating primogeniture *and* a king's duty to the common good of his subjects over more Machiavellian notions of self-preservation of the prince. Heraclio is the only character to fit this characterization, as I have demonstrated. However conventional this may seem on the surface, my analysis reveals two crucial elements of Mira's play that serve to better understand the playwright and the dramaturgy of the period. First, what has been described as chaotic in the development of the plot, is actually a complex and multivalent process that focuses on developing ideas, rather than a realistic or structurally unified plot sequence. As Hopper established, the breakneck pace of scene transitions compound on one another to develop the theme of fortune, but this is just one level of the work. Alongside the treatment of this theme, as I

---

<sup>68</sup> To be certain, Juan de Mariana would not have appreciated this comparison. His vitriol against the theater in the penultimate chapter of the above mentioned treatise is clear: "no es otra cosa más que una oficina de escándalo y de inmoralidad" (424). Nevertheless, I find the predominate political philosophy celebrated in *La rueda de la Fortuna* as congruent to Mariana's in *Del rey, y de la institución de la dignidad real*.



have just contended, is a fairly extensive treatment of various methods for installing a monarch. When critics such as Valbuena Prat diminish the quality of playwrights like Mira de Amescua for lacking the masterful structural precision of Calderón, they are missing the value of the overarching function of the work. Simply put, Mira made no attempt at creating the type of work Valbuena Prat would give praise, which should not necessarily detract from its complexity. Furthermore, Mira's emphasis on the development of an idea at the expense of a realistic plot suggests an influence on later playwrights beyond providing stock characters and plot sequences. In this play, he explicitly dramatizes an idea; he explains abstract concepts by reifying them on the stage. It is still true that Calderón perfects this art, but critics estimation of earlier, "lesser" playwrights has obfuscated this tendency of the *comedia* incubated in the works of *poetas* such as Mira de Amescua. Second, Mira puts on display what a play can do in turn-of-the-seventeenth century Baroque Spain. Almost as a contestation to the many detractors of theater (one of whom was Juan de Mariana), Mira goes beyond lip service to the conventional *comedia* ending arbitrated by the king figure; he dedicates an entire play to the exposition of political models, as if to advocate for the philosophical function and importance of the genre, which he accomplishes in remarkably entertaining fashion.

**Pedro Calderón de la Barca, *En la vida todo es verdad y todo mentira* (1659)**

If Mira's *La rueda de la Fortuna* emphatically affirms the model of the legitimacy of right to rule through primogeniture, Calderón subtly problematizes it in *En la vida todo es verdad y todo mentira*. As I displayed in the first chapter, the wild figure trope is one that was recycled throughout the century for the dramatic purposes of each playwright that utilized the character. Calderón's *En la vida . . .* follows that tradition, and places itself directly in dialogue

with *La rueda de la Fortuna* by dramatizing the same historical context of the succession of Byzantine emperors Mauricio, Phocas, and Heraclius. The congruencies between the two plays were noted as early as 1858 by Mesonero Romanos, and discussed most recently by Gallego Roca. Others such as Menéndez y Pelayo and Cotarelo have weighed in on the similarities as well, mostly to diminish the dramatic quality of Mira's early work, with Cotarelo bluntly stating in his well-cited opinion of the play: "En resumen: esta comedia, como orgánica, en cuanto al arte no tiene defensa [...]. De esta obra tan extraña arranca la mala fama que tuvo Mira de Amescua entre los críticos que leyeron pocas obras suyas" (cited in Gallego Roca 316).<sup>69</sup> While there has also been discussion regarding the relationship between Calderón's Heraclius play and Corneille's, textual similarities between Mira's *comedia* and *En la vida . . .* are also convincing.<sup>70</sup> In Focas' extended monologue in the opening act of the play, he proclaims, just like Mira's Focas, "leche de lovas, ynfante,/ me alimentó allí en mi tierna edad" (ll. 83-4). This similarity was originally noted in Hartzenbusch's nineteenth-century edition, and later catalogued by Gallego Roca and Hopper. Calderón drops the character of Teodosio and the narrative of Mauricio's wife exchanging the children, but transfers Teodosio's villainy onto the Focas of his *En la vida . . .* During the same monologue, Focas describes his "ydrópica sed de sangre" (l. 61), which is expressed by Teodosio in *La rueda de la Fortuna* in the following

---

<sup>69</sup> My analysis of *La rueda de la Fortuna* questions this critique of the play. I suggest that criticism has historically valued certain characteristics, and consequently underestimated others. As a result, the function of works such as Mira's have been misinterpreted, and ultimately, underestimated.

<sup>70</sup> For an extensive summary of this debate, see Cruickshank's introduction to his edition of *En la vida . . .*, pp. lxxii-xcvii. It is also noteworthy that Amescua and Calderón collaborated on *Polifemo y Circe*, emphasizing the likelihood that the similarities are "more than random chance" (Hopper 63).

verses: “Hidrópico soy. Mi sed / es beber la sangre humana” (ll. 1178-79). Mira, as is true of many of his characters, does not develop Focas' villainous traits in his version of the historical narrative, whereas Calderón makes him the primary conflictive agent of disorder and evil in *En la vida* . . . . It seems that Mira's textual referent and inspiration was the version of the historical narrative available to him, while *La rueda de la Fortuna* was Calderón's. However, by placing Mauricio's rule in the past, it allows the playwright to highlight and develop Focas' villainy, rather than create a chaotic and artificial sequence of successive rulers within the space of three acts.<sup>71</sup> The congruence of Calderón's Focas to the war mongering and lascivious Byzantine emperor may also be evidence of the playwright's knowledge of the historical account, or possibly may provide evidence in support of the theory that he was familiar with Corneille's *Héraclius*. In the end, in the respective plays of Mira, Corneille, and Calderón, there exist three representations that maintain elements of a common narrative that itself is yet another reproduction of what could be considered historical “fact”. The playwrights' use of the historical narrative as a *materia prima* to fashion their own works necessitates the concession that historical “facts”, however faithfully represented and reproduced, ultimately become versions of the original events in and of themselves.

Out of a discussion of the similarities between Mira's and Calderón's version of the historical narrative leads to an analysis of the manner in which Calderón appropriates many of the same elements for his own dramatic purposes. I will argue that *En la vida todo es verdad y*

---

<sup>71</sup> Even though Mira's plot may seem messy in a structural sense, *La rueda de la Fortuna* may ironically better represent the nature of history in the sense that it, like history, does not follow the rules of “story”. That is, certain aspects of its implausibility (the eagle and sheathed sword episode notwithstanding) are the result of its divergence from recognizable juxtapositions of plot elements.

*todo mentira* maintains the discussion of primogeniture and right to rule, while creating another layer of complexity by problematizing the process that establishes a matter of fact. In other words, *En la vida . . .* is a play that not only treats political philosophy, but also dramatizes epistemological models as well. The playwright achieves this complexity by adding a second possible heir. During the revolt to usurp the throne from Mauricio (again, which takes place years before the first act of the play), the Empress Teodocia<sup>72</sup> gives birth to a child, as does Focas' lover, Irífile. Both die in childbirth in the forest of Trinacria, and their children end up in the custody of Astolfo, Mauricio's ambassador entrusted with the care of Teodosia as they flee the court during Focas' uprising. He raises them, and is the only character who knows their true identities, which he refuses to divulge to Focas. From the outset, Focas' goal is to find his heir and assassinate Mauricio's:

[...] coronar

[...]

a quien con mis señas halle,

y dar muerte a quien sin ellas

halle tanvién; (I, ll. 321, 323-25)

However, in the face of this uncertainty, Focas needs a method by which to confirm the identity of each so that he can kill one and crown the other.

---

<sup>72</sup> In later printed versions, her name is changed to Audocia. On the one hand, the name Teodosia has textual precedent from Mira's earlier version as a mixture of the names of Mauricio's and Aureliana's children, while also being the name of the defamed queen in *El animal de Hungría*, an earlier work in the wild man tradition by Lope de Vega. However, Audocia, Mauricio's wife's name in later editions of *En la vida . . .*, also echoes Aureliana.

On the one hand, Calderón's purpose is the same as Mira's. He uses the chaotic narrative of Byzantine imperial history to explore the very question of succession, kingship and right to rule. On the other, he introduces an epistemological facet to the drama, highlighting the method by which a matter of fact can be established. *La rueda de la Fortuna* answers the following question: Who should succeed a monarch? In the conclusion of the work, the response is resoundingly that the firstborn child of the king is the legitimate heir to the throne. *En la vida . . .* posits a subsequent question: Who is the firstborn child of the king, and how can that knowledge be attained with certainty? The answer is less clear and more difficult to ascertain, which I will demonstrate, proposing that Calderón never actually resolves this doubt, which is the main conflict of the narrative of *En la vida . . .* The conflictive sequence of the plot frustrates the ability to establish a matter of fact, dramatizing an epistemological debate taking place in Spain centered on this theme during early modernity. The period is marked by a shift away from Aristotelean scholastic philosophy, or even a reaction against it. Many pages have been dedicated to describing the systems of thought that replaced scholasticism, from those who champion the narrative of the Scientific Revolution and the rise of empiricism, modern cosmology and mathematics, while others understand the systems of thought during the period as a rediscovery of the ancient philosophies of Stoicism and skepticism.<sup>73</sup> Much work remains to be carried out to

---

<sup>73</sup> The understanding of the notion of revolution in the systems of thought during the early modern period in Europe continue to be developed and reconsidered. Listing the studies on the topic would be a book in and of itself, but to view the parameters of the discussion see Butterfield, Herbert, *The Origins of Modern Science, 1300-1800*, and Shapin, Steven, *The Scientific Revolution*. Regarding the influence of skepticism and Stoicism on early modern thought, see Robbins, Jeremy, *Arts of Perception: The Epistemological Mentality of the Spanish Baroque, 1580-1720* and Popkin, Richard, *The History of Scepticism from Erasmus to Spinoza*.

better understand Spain's role in the developments that took place in Europe and the Americas, although the level of interest in that field of study has steadily increased in recent years.

Research on transitional figures such as Francisco Suárez and Francisco Sánchez in metaphysics, Juan de Mariana and Francisco de Vitoria in political philosophy, José de Acosta in ethnology and natural history, and Luis de Molina in theology continue to increase, while the scope of study has also been amplified to focus on developments taking place in the fields of medicine, botany, and the hermetic sciences as they relate to the epistemological trends taking shape on the Iberian peninsula during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Due to the wealth of recent information on these developments, it is necessary to pause here to provide a brief description of the current discussion on Spanish scientific activity during this period relevant to the principal conflict of *En la vida todo es verdad y todo mentira*.

Current research on the history and philosophy of science of the Spanish empire can be considered *post-polémica*. There has been a recent effort to move beyond the binaries that define that debate between those who disregard Spanish contributions to the development of early modern science and those who responded to such criticism by overestimating it. López Piñero summarizes the “polémica” as a “controversia desenfocada, [...] un debate en torno a una

cuestión sin sentido” (27).<sup>74</sup> The latest research—that is, over the past forty years and particularly in the last fifteen—has provided a more nuanced understanding of the period that is more than a reaction to the narrative of the Black Legend, and goes beyond the “polémica”. By questioning traditional modes of discourse in the fields of the history and philosophy of science, scholars have therefore been able to more accurately describe the developments that took place under Habsburg rule, both in relation to the rest of Europe, but possibly more importantly, in relation to Spain in the context of empire. One such mode utilizes the concept of revolution to describe the intellectual history of early modernity. Eamon provides criticism of the canonical narrative of the scientific revolution, defining it as just that:

The history of science has traditionally been written in the heroic mode: as an epic struggle of truth to free itself from the bondage of ignorance and superstition. [...]

The epic history of science also has its villains, supreme amongst which were those scheming Aristoteleans who hid behind priestly robes, secretly plotting to bring Galileo to his knees (“*Nuestros males no son constitucionales*” 21).

---

<sup>74</sup> One of the foci of the Black Legend (that resulted in the spurning of Spain in the narrative of the Scientific Revolution) was of course the treatment and death of Felipe II’s firstborn Carlos. His imprisonment and subsequent death provided no lack of fodder for Spain’s detractors who ultimately succeeded in weaving this episode into the narrative of the Black Legend. Friedrich Schiller’s *Don Carlos* (1787) is one particularly effective manifestation of this phenomena, which was adapted and translated numerous times over centuries. The content of the popular narrative demonizes Felipe II for his treatment of the prince. Carlos, according to the official history within Spain at the time, was an aggressive, lascivious, and mentally unstable figure who conspired against his father the king. Like many of the characters in the dissertation corpus, Carlos fit the description of the wild prince, which may have been a factor that fueled the popularity of the wild heir as a character type in Baroque Spanish theater. Even if only tangentially related, it is clear that the image of the wild prince was charged with cultural efficacy during the period.

This “melodrama”, as Eamon puts it, is of little help in the efforts to reach any accurate conclusions regarding the actual developments in science that took place in the early modern Spanish empire. As an example, Spain’s imperial interests led to developments in anthropology and ethnology rather than the emphasis placed on cosmology and mathematics that tend to dominate the narrative of the scientific revolution. As a result, we should ask “which of the two concerns, in the long run, was the most important: the nature of the heavens or the nature of humanity? A strong argument could be made for the latter.” (Navarro Brotóns and Eamon 36).<sup>75</sup>

This broad description serves as a point of departure in order to suggest that the canonical narrative of the scientific revolution does not accurately describe Spain. At the same time, the exclusion of Spain from any and all conversations regarding the epistemological developments taking place in Europe and in the Americas is equally problematic, given the significance of its influence at the locus of the world’s largest empire. Even if a particular case, Spain contributed to and was influenced by the scientific developments of the early modern period, in which “the tremendous expansion of Spanish influence did little to consolidate ideologies and practices; on the contrary, it multiplied the spaces and venues for cultural interplay” (*Medical Cultures* 6).

With the omission of Spain in this discussion a thing of the past, I will now move on to describe one aspect of European scientific culture,—natural magic—and its particular manifestation as it developed on the Iberian peninsula, which I will then apply in my analysis of *En la vida todo es verdad y todo mentira*.

---

<sup>75</sup> The collection of essays edited by Eamon and Navarro Brotóns, *Beyond the Black Legend*, serves as a foundation for the developments along this vein that have taken place over the past decade to provide a more thorough and nuanced understanding of the nature of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century scientific activity within the Spanish empire, which is beyond the scope of my current analysis.



Natural magic was a hermetic discipline that valued experimentation over theory in order to reveal the secrets of nature by experience through the manipulation of natural materials. Practiced by “professors of secrets”, alchemy was its most widely attested application, which included skills such as distillation and metallurgy. Examples of its practitioners like Leonardo Fioravanti and Giambattista della Porta acquired fame throughout Europe, including Spain.<sup>76</sup> Fioravanti, a renowned alchemist, spent a period in the court of Philip II during 1575-1576, and both he and della Porta carried out the majority of their work in Spanish Naples. Philip’s interest in alchemy, contrary the notion that his religious fanaticism stifled intellectual curiosity, is well documented. Mar Rey Bueno’s extensive research on the topic concludes that Philip II was “a forward thinking monarch who promoted the development of new medicines elaborated by alchemical practices and the search for the Llulian essence” (27).<sup>77</sup> His nephew, Rudolph II, whose court has been described as “a metropolis of alchemy” (Nicholl, cited in “The Scientific Education”), spent time during his youth at Philip’s court where “it seems reasonable to conjecture that [his] scientific education began not in Vienna or Prague, but during his eight-year sojourn in Spain” (“Scientific Education” 10). Natural magic tended to be carried out in the royal courts of Europe and among secret societies of nobles interested in discovering “the occult secrets locked up in the bosom of nature” (della Porta, cited in *Science and the Secrets* 270). The professors of secrets, even though essential to the development of empiricism, tend to be

---

<sup>76</sup> William Eamon has dedicated significant scholarly attention to natural magic and the professors of secrets. For more information, see his *Science and the Secrets of Nature*, and *Professor of Secrets*, pp. 266-282.

<sup>77</sup> The extent to which this is true is clearly laid out in her article in *Medical History*, “La Mayson pour Distiller des Eaües at El Escorial: Alchemy and Medicine at the Court of Philip II, 1556—1598”. In the article, Rey Bueno outlines Philip II’s extensive alchemical enterprise, which up until recently has been largely disregarded.

remembered more for their status as magicians than precursors of the scientific method. In their day, they were criticized on the one hand for withholding secrets amongst themselves and amongst societies' elite, and therefore concealing useful information from the masses, while they would be disparaged as quacks on the other for their recipes and remedies published and proliferated in books of secrets. For my purposes here, their work most importantly demarcates a definitive shift away from Aristotelean and Galenic systems of thought towards a more empirical model for obtaining new knowledge.<sup>78</sup>

One of the most common metaphors for the task of the professor of secrets—a metaphor that would be useful for empirical natural philosophers in the pantheon of the canonical narrative of the scientific revolution—is that of the hunt. Eamon gives reference to this idea throughout his work on early modern Spanish science, describing it as:

a particularly suitable metaphor for courtly science. For just as hunting demonstrated in a spectacular fashion that the goods of the earth existed first and foremost for the prince, so science carried out as a hunt—that is, as a capturing of rare secrets—demonstrated that nature's occult forces existed for the use and delight of the prince. (*Science and the Secrets* 271)

As I will demonstrate, this metaphor pervades Calderón's *En la vida todo es verdad y todo mentira*, and is a useful interpretative tool to understanding the work.

---

<sup>78</sup> For a preliminary description of the current discussion of the hermetic tradition in Spain, see Miguel López-Pérez, "Ciencia y pensamiento hermético", *Beyond the Black Legend*, pp. 57-72.

The play opens with Focas, preoccupied over his lack of an heir and in search of his lost son, who he believes to be in the forest of his birthplace, the island of Trinacria.<sup>79</sup> His men happen upon two wild men, dressed in animal skins—Eraclio and Leonido. Astolfo, this play's hermit character and adoptive father of Eraclio and Leonido, refuses to provide any information to Focas other than that one of the young men is his son, while the other the offspring of his enemy. Lamenting his inability to obtain the information he desires, Focas asks,

¿No me dirás, pensamiento,  
cuál experiencia con los dos  
hiciera, que fuera medio  
de dar luz al desengaño? (II, ll. 372-75)

These lines lay the foundation for the pseudo-empirical nature of Focas' approach to acquiring new knowledge and establishing a matter of fact. As a response to the emperor's entreaty to learn the identity of his son, Lisipo, his court magus, offers his services. Lisipo conjures an illusory palace within which Focas can observe of the two wild men under the assumption that their behavior will clearly indicate their blood relation to him, and in turn, the deposed Mauricio. Focas concocts the ruse of a hunt to separate Leonido and Eraclio from his entourage, and therefore reduce the variables that could affect his ability to observe them effectively in an isolated environment. His goal, in a sense, is to view beneath the surface of his two subjects, and peer into their inner nature. Within the palace "experiencia", Lisipo creates false versions of

---

<sup>79</sup> Trinacria, of course, refers to modern-day Sicily and is the setting of many historical and mythological literary works of the period. The island receives its name for its triangular shape, and the symbol that appears on its flag. The island has always served as a Mediterranean crossroads with a strong connection to mythology, which is evidenced by the head of Medusa at the center of the Trinacria symbol.

other characters who have appeared up to this point in the plot, including Astolfo, Libia, Cintia, and her servant, Ismenia. At one moment during the magical experiment, the false Ismenia describes Focas' approach as the intent to discover what lies beneath the artifice of appearances: “para describir / lo ynterior, la que Lisipo traçando está” (III, ll. 15-17). His intention echoes the purpose of the Accademia dei Lincei, a group in Italy during the seventeenth century dedicated to the study of natural magic, and of which the aforementioned della Porta was a member. They chose the lynx, their namesake and emblem because of their objective to “penetrate into the inside of things in order to know their causes and the operations of nature that work internally, just as it is said of the lynx that it sees not just what is in front of it, but what is hidden inside” (Stelluti, cited in *Science and the Secrets* 229). Therefore, through the artifice of the magical palace conjured by Lisipo, Focas is on the hunt for invisible knowledge hidden in the nature of Leonido and Eraclio, which reflects the very nature of proto-scientific inquiry during the early modern period, and mirrored in the words of the characters of the play.

Lisipo's craft makes this “experiencia” possible. Described as a “mago”, he should be understood in relation to the natural magic that I described above.<sup>80</sup> Nevertheless, he remains a hybrid figure even to an early modern audience. While he would have been seen as one of these *virtuosi* in the employ of the courts of Europe, the boundary between natural magic and sorcery was a fine one. Lisipo potentially crosses this line when he controls the weather and causes an earthquake, an activity nearly always ascribed to demonic forces and magicians in league with

---

<sup>80</sup> Depending on one's familiarity with early modern natural philosophy and its connection to magic, understanding Lisipo as a magician may be misleading to the modern reader or audience. One must avoid imagining the spectacle of the modern magician, which is a phenomenon that shares little comparison to its early modern referent.

the devil (*Puritan Conquistadors* 123-125). The nature of his creation of the illusory castle is ambiguous, as it appears more as the result of a incantation than the alchemical transformation of natural elements, and earlier in the play he refers to the “esplicito pacto de mi ciencia” (II, l. 156), which evokes the language of dark magic.<sup>81</sup> In Cervantes’s “El retablo de las maravillas”, Chanfalla and Chirinos purport that their tableau was created by the great “sabio Tontonelo”, who we can imagine to evoke a similar character to that of Lisipo here. Cervantes reminds readers of the inevitable meta-theatricality of the magus’s illusory laboratory, and the incredulity with which one should approach the information provided by its machinations. Nevertheless, the function of Lisipo’s experiment reflects the purpose of the early modern court magician whose “essential characteristics—his passionate quest for secrets, his craving for rarities, his cultivation of wonder, and his tendency to view science as a theatrical performance designed to delight and astonish spectators—perfectly fit the courtly manner” (*Science and the Secrets* 225). Calderón taps into this method of demonstration in Lisipo’s magical palace, created exactly for this purpose—to demonstrate one of nature’s secrets in a theatrical display of wonderment. Focas, although speaking metaphorically, describes the function of Lisipo’s experiment in alchemical terms:

Siendo así, que en mí no habrá  
 minuto, instante, momento  
 que no sea siglo, hasta que  
 aquilatados los pechos

---

<sup>81</sup> Rocas, the magus character in *La piedra filosofal*, echoes this phrase, but explicitly refers to dark magic: “también las no naturales / aprendí, porque forzadas / al pacto de mis conjuros” (l. 907).

en la forja de las horas,  
 que son cristales del tiempo,  
 muestren el oro y la liga,  
 amor y aborrecimiento. (II, ll. 398-405)

By observing them in Lisipo's palace, he essentially hopes to purify gold (his son), from the alloy (Mauricio's heir). Regalado notes the proto-scientific nature of the palace scene as well, while also suggesting, although not explicitly, the relevance of the hunt: "El experimento o la representación dentro de la representación se inicia cuando Focas finge ir de caza y se pierde en el bosque donde surge un palacio maravilloso al que llegarán también los sujetos de la prueba, Heraclio y Leonido" (641). Built for the same purpose of other early modern instruments such as the telescope, microscope, or air-pump, the instrument of the palace functions in its "capacity to enhance perception, and to constitute new perceptual objects" (*Leviathan and the Air Pump* 36). Moreover, as a court performance,<sup>82</sup> not only is there an overlap in the inherently demonstrative space of the laboratory and theater, but also in the physical space where those performances and demonstrations of "secrets" would have been on display. This overlap is easily overlooked in the dissemination of the theatrical text, and can be attributed to the gap between the laboratories and theaters of the modern world, about which Shannahan posits: "Because we have now rather coherent, autonomous domains for drama, science, magic, the laboratory, and the like, we find it hard to recapture the overlap these assumed in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century minds" (15). It must be considered, however, that a demonstration by a professor of secrets and the wonder of

---

<sup>82</sup> *En la vida . . .* was likely first performed at court on February 23, 1659 by Diego de Osorio's theater company, according to Cruickshank (xxxiii).

Lisipo's magical palace served the similar purpose of *delectare enseñare*. Slater elaborates this notion in regard to Calderonian *autos sacramentales*: "Both the plays and laboratory appurtenances have a didactic utility, and both contrive to create or isolate conditions to make very particular aspects of the world available as spectacle" ("Sacramental Instrumentality" 483). While in the *autos* Calderón reveals a religious message by making present the invisible divine Logos (Wardropper, cited in "Sacramental Instrumentality" 482), in *En la vida . . .*, he appears to be tackling an empirical epistemological method directly through the pseudo-laboratory demonstration of Lisipo's castle to prove the identity of Focas' son and heir.

Seen as such, the palace scene that takes place in Act II is an example of Calderon's penchant for meta-theater, and is a type of play within a play. Akin to the spectators of a laboratory demonstration, the spectators of the palace experiment, both internally and externally to the frame of the *comedia*, observe the outcome of the performance.<sup>83</sup> This multi-layered theatrical structure that I have just labeled a play-within-a-play might better be described as an experiment-within-an-experiment. Internally, Lisipo plays the role of *virtuoso* whose skill is required in order for the dramatic experiment to be carried out, a demonstration for which the observers do not know the outcome. This demonstration is marked by dissimulation and theatricality, with Eraclio's and Leonido's performance on display for an internal audience within

---

<sup>83</sup> This meta-theatrical technique became increasingly popular over the course of the century as set productions became more elaborate along with the *comedia de magia*. The entertainment value of this sub-genre of plays, however, has been understood to have occurred at the expense of the complexity of the plot of earlier *comedias*, and identified as a characteristic of the overall decline of the *comedia* in Baroque Spain that became more and more artificial towards the end of the seventeenth century, in every sense of the word. However, whereas the "quality" of dramatic art has tended to be a primary concern throughout the history of criticism, I argue that creative production of "lesser" quality can be one of the greatest sources of cultural information from earlier periods.

an enclosed, artificial space. At one point, Lisipo even provides lines for the characters he has conjured within his internal drama, to which each responds to their director: “Sí diré, pues que te asisto / para ovedeçerte” (III, ll. 140-41). Externally, Calderón mirrors as a *virtuoso*, the creator of a different type of experiment. With the internal empirical logic of the palace scene, the external logic of the play functions in a similar way. The playwright sets up *En la vida . . .* as a dramatic experiment to test the limits of an empirical epistemological method, and in this sense he is a *virtuoso*, whose skill pertains to the dramatic art, “testing” contemporary philosophy within the bounds of theatrical representation. I will return to this notion throughout my analysis, which will demonstrate how these two layers of the representation parallel each other in the interpretation of the work.

Lisipo's castle provides a space for Focas to observe the behavior of Eraclio and Leonido in order to discern which is his son. This is a complex endeavor that relies upon certain premises for it to be successful. The first is that behavior will be a reliable indicator to determine which of the two is his son. Astolfo problematizes this notion, echoing the debate between nature and nurture: “No te creas de experiencias / de hijo a quien otro crió” (I, ll. 1197-98). Second, the criterion by which Focas assumes he will determine his decision is the following: “que la natural pasión / con experiencias dirá / cuál es mi hijo y cuál no” (I, ll. 1192-94). This is essentially Focas' entire premise, that the blood will out and his heir will be self-evident once given the opportunity to see his behavior on display. However, the problem with his approach is that he is uncertain of the types of behaviors he might be looking for. For instance, when he greets the two young men in the magical palace (who have now discarded their animal pelts in exchange for more regal attire befitting a prince), they respond to the emperor in markedly distinct ways.



Eraclio kisses his feet and expresses his gratitude—even though we learn he does so begrudgingly in an aside—while Leonido scoffs at Focas (“¿De qué te e de dar yo gracias?” [II, ll. 1039]). While their behaviors clearly distinguish the one from the other, Focas cannot decisively interpret this data. To Eraclio’s courtesy, he states in an aside: “¡Qué bien suena el rendimiento!” (II, ll. 1036). Alternatively, Leonido’s impudence does not bother him either: “No suena mal la arrogancia” (II, ll. 1049). This confusion is repeated in each of the subsequent “pruebas”—their *donaire* with women and their treatment of the ambassador Federico. Leonido acts brashly in each of these episodes, while Eraclio displays prudence and courtesy—the proper qualities of a prince. As another example, when Leonido offers to throw Federico out of the window,<sup>84</sup> Eraclio interjects that ambassadors are to be treated according to the courtesy befitting their station (II, ll. 1176-83). Focas seems to be seeing himself in Leonido, while observing what he knows to be right behavior in Eraclio, but is unable to differentiate between the two. By the end of Act II, Lisipo’s false Cintia asks him what he has learned from the “experiencias”, to which he responds,

Mucho, y nada.

Pues que quedo con mis dudas

al ver que iguales me agradan en el uno la soberbia

y en el otro la templanza. (II, ll. 1307-11)

Focas never resolves this confusion over the course of the experiment, and he ultimately discards

---

<sup>84</sup> By this point in the trajectory of the *comedia* in the seventeenth century, defenestration undoubtedly had become a trope that indicated an overly passionate response to a situation that calls for prudence. The most notable example, of course, is Segismundo in *La vida es sueño*, but other examples exist as well, including Linda in Montalbán’s *La lindona de Galicia*. See Chapter 3 of the dissertation for my analysis of that play.

this approach altogether once his impatience gets the best of him. Nevertheless, even if *la fuerza de la sangre* were to manifest itself, Focas would be incapable of discerning it because he identifies with two distinct sets of characteristics.

Finally, Focas is a poor observer. According to early empiricists, it was “only by experiment and disciplined observation was it possible to arrive at a knowledge of causes” (*Science and the Secrets* 298). At one point, while Focas looks on, he actually falls asleep, which leads to one of the most important moments in the development of the narrative. Leonido decides to take fate into his own hands and slay the sleeping emperor. Eraclio succeeds in detaining him, but in the skirmish their shouts of “Muera” (Leonido) and “No muera” (Eraclio) awaken Focas, who then finds them standing over him with swords drawn. He is mistaken in believing Leonido’s version of the story who contends that he was in fact trying to stop Eraclio from committing the act, from which Focas believes he has uncovered the truth of their natures through Leonido’s lie. Ironically, Leonido’s behavior in this particular moment reflects the villainy that the audience has come to expect from Focas, and adds to the suspicion that Leonido may in fact be Focas’ progeny. Nevertheless, in the precise moment he is least capable of observing their behavior, Focas finds the “decisive” evidence for which he set up the experiment, even though it contradicts the body of data he has collected up to that point. From this moment forward, Leonido is presumed to be Focas’ heir, and towards the end of Act III, Astolfo and Eraclio are sent off in a leaky boat to carry out Focas’ initial aim to kill whichever pretender was not his son. At this moment, a fleet of ships appears on the the horizon captained by Federico, the Duke of Calabria. He rescues the two marooned characters, and takes them back

to shore to overthrow the tyrannous Focas.<sup>85</sup> Eraclio assassinates Focas, spares a contrite Leonido, and the victorious army, “de consintimiento común”, shouts “¡Viva Eraclio! ¡Viva el emperador!”, and install him as emperor.

Scholarship has tended to agree in their interpretation of this play. As I have emphasized in my laboratory model, Mujica and Regalado understand the play as a dramatic representation of the fallibility of the senses, which one must acknowledge in order to act prudently in the face of uncertainty. Both spend article and chapter length publications highlighting the work’s skeptical premises about which Mujica states that “the recognition for the impossibility of knowledge is not cause for despair, but a basis for the formation of a healthy moral outlook based on prudence” (122). She posits that Focas and Leonido abandon this premise, allowing their own desires to cloud their judgment and act irrationally, ultimately causing their own misfortune. In the case of Focas, this causes him to accept Leonido as his son based on a falsehood, which for Leonido stems out of his increasing desire to be emperor. When Eraclio remains incredulous to Lisipo's castle, Leonido chooses to believe the apparition of Astolfo who

---

<sup>85</sup> It must be mentioned however, that the tyranny of Focas' reign is more ambiguous in its historical context, whose legitimacy was even celebrated by Pope Gregory V. At the same time, as a representation of this historical narrative within the context of Baroque Spain, it is unsurprising that his legitimacy is presented as questionable, given the developing debate on tyrannicide among the Jesuits during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Out of the discussion of when a ruler can be assassinated come two definitions for tyrant. The first defines the term as a ruler who usurps a legitimately installed monarch, while the second is more akin to our current definition of the word—a ruler who abuses power. In certain circumstances, either type of tyrant could be ousted, it was just a matter of who could perform the action. Although there was some disagreement, since a usurper was illegitimately installed, anyone could assassinate him or her, while in the case of a legitimate ruler acting tyrannically, it must be carried out by lesser magistrates rather than private persons (Höpfl 315-19). Calderón's Focas fits both criteria, and therefore his murder at the end of the play is merited, regardless of Eraclio's claim to the throne (for he is either the son of Mauricio and legitimate heir or the son of the tyrant Focas).

informs him that he is Mauricio's son.<sup>86</sup> Regalado agrees, and provides a nuanced analysis of the play, arguing that *En la vida . . .* “plantea el problema de la duda y la certidumbre” in which “el tirano se abismará en el laberinto de lo meramente probable, incapaz de obtener pruebas objetivas y de alcanzar una certidumbre sin lugar a duda” (638, 640). In response to that doubt, Focas puts his trust in Lisipo's palace and “confía en que al fin la fuerza de la sangre dirá quien es su hijo” (641). It is clear that the search for objective truth through the maze of faulty information, the passions, and human fallibility is frustrated at every turn in *En la vida . . .*. The title of the play itself directly asserts this premise, in which in this life the pursuit of knowledge is always suspect, and furthermore, that the conclusion of the play does nothing to alleviate that doubt. Even if Calderón convinces us that Eraclio's virtue and his “razón de estado” make him the preferable successor to the imperial throne, no evidence in the text provides confirmation of the identity of his father. Strikingly, criticism has interpreted the ending differently, asserting that Calderón's skepticism is resolved in the resolution of the plot and the revelation of Eraclio as Mauricio's son. According to Mujica, “although Calderón proceeds from skeptical premises, he is not a true skeptic in the sense that he does assume the existence of an objective reality which is revealed to his characters at the end of the play” (125). Regalado agrees:

---

<sup>86</sup> One of Lisipo's experiments within the castle is the apparition of Astolfo, who appears to both Eraclio and Leonido individually, telling them both that they are Mauricio's son, thus allowing Focas to observe their reaction.

Leonido (que es el hijo de Focas, identidad desconocida por él, Heraclio<sup>87</sup> y Focas hasta bien entrada la última jornada) odia al tirano, empeñándose en matarlo, mientras que Heraclio (hijo de Mauricio y cuya identidad se desvelará también al final) se ampara en la duda y protege al homicida de su padre. (647-48)

Neither critic provides textual evidence to indicate exactly when it becomes clear that Eraclio is Mauricio's son, and therefore heir to the imperial throne. Astolfo, the only character with knowledge of their identities, never reveals this information, and therefore the audience can never be certain of it. Eraclio emphatically claims to be Mauricio's son (III, ll. 625-34) because he could never imagine himself to be the progeny of such evil. Immediately following this declaration, however, Focas states: "Aunque ya para saberlo / me bastaba el ynferirlo, / de qué lo sabes?" (III, ll.635-37). The uncertainty in his voice is palpable even in the printed text, and Eraclio goes on to say that Cintia told him that Astolfo had told her this "truth". Both present, neither Cintia nor Astolfo have any recollection of revealing such information to him because it was actually the apparition of Cintia in the illusory palace that shared this knowledge with Eraclio, and therefore nothing but an artificial construct of Lisipo's design in his experiment. Furthermore, Focas will only go as far as to say that his knowledge of this "fact" is inferred

---

<sup>87</sup> The spelling of Heraclius's name is somewhat complicated. When discussing Calderón's character, I have maintained the spelling of Eraclio as per the autograph and first published edition of *En la vida . . .*, although later editions change the spelling to Heraclio. Also, other works from the period tend to prefer the Heraclio spelling, which more closely coincides with the latinization of the historical figure's name, Heraclius. This spelling also appears from coinage during the Byzantine emperor's reign ("HERACL"). Nevertheless, the Greek letter "H" was pronounced /ε/, rather than the voiceless fricative /h/, unless denoted by a diacritic, which does not appear in contemporary orthographic representations of the emperor's name (Ηράκλειος). It is most likely that Calderón chose to drop the written "H" because it is silent in Spanish; however, the playwright's spelling also more closely aligns with its original Greek pronunciation as well.

(“ynferido”), as seen in the above quote (III, l. 636); he is possibly suggesting that *la fuerza de la sangre* has made itself evident, but one must heed the words of Astolfo about the reliability of this notion. Although I discussed this statements above, I will reproduce them here:

No te creas de esperiencias  
de hijo a quien otro crió;  
que apartadas crianzas tienen  
muy sin cariño el calor  
de los padres; y quizá  
llebado de algún error  
darás la muerte a tu hijo. (I, ll. 1197-1203)

As this quote aptly reminds the external observers of this Calderonian theatrical experiment, one cannot ascertain the identity of the two boys from their behavior, which is shaped by a much more complex set of variables than just their royal blood. While this is clearly a perfectly legitimate means for ascertaining such knowledge in other plays of the seventeenth century such as *La rueda de la Fortuna*, Calderón frustrates the possibility of such a tidy conclusion throughout *En la vida . . .*

With the experiment completed, Focas has chosen Leonido, but he continues to prod Astolfo for the information he desires. In one final exchange before sending Astolfo and Eraclio off to sea, Focas asks one final time:

Astolfo, yo, por saver  
tu secreto, me e valido  
de medios que ser Eraclio

me an dicho hijo de Mauricio; (III, ll. 699-702)

Astolfo then reveals, in an aside: “Será la primer [sic] verdad / que la mentira aya dicho” (III, ll. 703-4). Focas continues: “...pero para que no quede escrupuloso en Leonido / el crédito, dilo claro” (III, ll. 705-7). Astolfo then denies Focas this information one final time: “Yo señor, o e de decirlo; / sábelo tú, pero no / de mí” (III, ll. 708-10). I cite this discussion because presumably this is the evidence that critics have used to verify Eraclio’s identity as Mauricio’s son, although direct citation of this portion of their dialogue remains absent from any extant study. However, Astolfo’s aside itself is impossible to interpret with certainty. Using the titular elements in this critical verse, he states that Focas’ knowledge of Eraclio’s identity would be the first truth arrived at by a lie. If read as a sincere remark, then the truth would be that Eraclio is Mauricio’s son, and this truth is arrived at through the metaphorical “lie” of Lisipo’s palace. However, it is just as reasonable to read Astolfo’s enunciation as ironic—actually meaning the opposite—which could imply either that Leonido is actually Mauricio’s son, or even that Astolfo sarcastically implies that Focas’ previous comment is ridiculous and he has no idea who is who based on the information he has acquired up to that point. I contend that this last option is the case, for if the purpose of the play was to reveal Eraclio’s identity in its resolution, then Astolfo would have divulged this information in his following line. His aside does not provide any privileged information to the audience, and all spectators, both external and internal remain in doubt of Mauricio’s son, which becomes irrelevant in the final scenes of the play anyway. By arriving at this skeptical conclusion, that “todo es verdad y todo mentira” remains true even in the conclusion of the play, and like Segismundo, Eraclio understands that in the midst of this doubt,

one must always “obrar bien”. It is precisely this reason that he is installed as emperor in the end over Leonido, not because Mauricio is (maybe) his father.

To provide a final example of this notion, I will return to the first act of the play. Focas has sequestered Astolfo, Eraclio and Leonido, and has begun to interrogate Astolfo for the knowledge he desires. Out of paternal love for the two boys he has raised, he refuses to provide this information because he knows that it will result in the certain death of the other, who Focas wishes to execute to prohibit any possible claims against the throne he usurped. Just before he decides to kill them both in order to be certain the threat is nullified, Astolfo produces a document. This document was provided by Focas to his lover Irífile to verify the identity of their child. Now all of Astolfo's cards are on the table, and Focas knows that one of the boys is his son, but the document (“lámina”) does not give any information to identify which it might be. Other wild man plays insert similar objects into the narrative that serve as the objective proof of the identity of the character in question. For instance, in *La rueda de la Fortuna*, Aureliana gives Mauricio's ring to Heraclio, which confirms his identity to the wounded king. In *El hijo de los leones*, Fenisa confirms that Leonido is her son when Fileno, who had raised him in the forest, produces the clothes he was wearing when she left him at the base of a tree as an infant. Whereas these objects serve as a tool to verify the identity of the lost heir and establish a matter of fact, Calderón subverts this convention in *En la vida . . .* He inserts a similar object, the “lámina”, which confirms that one of the wild men is Focas' son, but does not give any indication as to which one it is. The skeleton key that in other plays serves to remove doubt Calderón uses to leave the other characters, and the audience, in a state of uncertainty, which is never completely resolved in *En la vida todo es verdad y todo mentira*.



**Francisco Antonio de Bances Candamo, *La piedra filosofal* (1693)**

Bances Candamo's *La piedra filosofal* is a re-writing of *En la vida . . .*, although not in the same way that Calderón's play re-writes *La rueda de la Fortuna*. Calderón maintains the historical context of the Byzantine empire, which is absent from Bances's work. The basis of later playwright's utilization of Calderón's earlier work manifests itself through the character types and some of the narrative elements found in *La piedra filosofal*. As a result, Bances's drama, although still dealing with the problem of succession that appears in both Calderón's *En la vida . . .* and Mira's *La rueda de la Fortuna*, Bances adds a historical dilemma more openly linked to Spain by setting the play geographically within the Iberian peninsula, more specifically, Cádiz. Taking place in the mythical past—just shortly after the days of Hercules—the characters names—Hispan (the king), Iberia (his daughter), and Híspalo (Iberia's suitor and eventual betrothed)—indicate from the onset their allegorical nature. This element takes Bances's rewriting in a new direction that addresses national myth and identity, while maintaining the epistemological bent of Calderón's *En la vida . . .*. This is evident from the opening of *La piedra filosofal*, and inaugurated by stage directions that reintroduce the epistemological metaphor of the hunt, along with this play's magus and wild figure, Rocas: "A un lado suena como a lo lejos la música, a otro las voces, cajas y trompetas y se descubre medio en una gruta Rocas, filósofo anciano, en traje montaraz, entre libres, esferas, cuadrantes y otros instrumentos matemáticos". So, in Act I of both plays there is a hunt, although in *La piedra filosofal* it occurs simultaneously with Iberia and Hispan's search for Rocas. Therefore the sequence of events that begins the work display a symbolically powerful image that suggests the epistemological message conveyed within it. From the onset, *La piedra filosofal* unites the metaphor of the hunt with the search for

secrets metaphorically bound up in the figure of Rocas, whose knowledge Hispán and Iberia wish to obtain. In other words, the secrets for which they search exist in the magus's hidden wooded nook—his “gruta”<sup>88</sup>—and more precisely through the knowledge contained within Rocas himself. With his books, beakers and mathematical instruments, Rocas is presented even more clearly as a practitioner of hermetic science than Lisipo in *En la vida . . .*<sup>89</sup> In his grotto, Rocas is literally hidden in the natural world—a secret of nature; thus, where he carries out his experiments and the object of his study emphasize the comprehensively hermetic aspect of this scene.

Once Hispán and Iberia find him, they entreat the wild figure to gather information on Iberia's suitors who include Hispalo, Tersandro and Numidio, each hailing from different parts of the known world. He sets out to accomplish this task by creating a magical space within which he can observe Hispalo's behavior in certain situations, particularly to see how he would react in a courtly setting, much like Lisipo's palace. Hispán clearly instructs Rocas regarding his ultimate purpose in selecting a suitor for his daughter:

Con príncipes extranjeros

---

<sup>88</sup> Although the definition of “gruta” is clear, and even though there are certainly more reliable online dictionaries than Google, the online search engine defines the term as such: “Cavidad abierta de forma natural o excavada por un animal o por el hombre en las *rocas*” (emphasis mine). Other sources such as *La real academia española* define the term similarly, but the Google definition strikingly juxtaposes the animal and human imagery as do the wild character *comedias*. Furthermore, it echoes the name of the magus character, Rocas, hidden in the grotto at the opening of *La piedra filosofal*. Also, Google, as an online and ever morphing entity, ostensibly transmits a more popular definition of the term, arguably more situated within the “folk” spheres of influence to which the wild man pertains.

<sup>89</sup> By making the connection between this play and *En la vida todo es verdad y todo mentira*, Lisipo's identity as a “professor of secrets” becomes more clear. That is, understanding the influence of Calderón's work on *La piedra filosofal*, Lisipo's identity as magus, or professor of secrets, is more evident.

quiero escusar alianzas  
 que al límite de mi imperio  
 término mayor añadan;  
 que tienen monarquías  
 cierto coto y cierta raya,  
 hasta donde a mantenerlas  
 de un rey la prudencia basta  
 y de un poder el dominio;  
 pero si esta línea pasan,  
 luego a declinar empiezan, (ll. 931-41)

In this quote, Hispán provides the parameters for the outcome he desires, and the consequences of choosing poorly. By selecting a foreign prince, he hopes to increase the size of the kingdom, but realizes the danger of going too far in such an endeavor. From these instructions, we have a framework by which to judge the outcome of this experiment.

With that in mind, in the space of the magical sequence created by Rocas, the three suitors are required to resolve one of the great problems that hinders the island's prosperity. Hispalo is to build a bridge from the island to the mainland, Tersandro must concoct a way to filter salt water to make it potable, and Numidio is to fortify Cádiz by constructing a wall to circumscribe the island. The first to finish their prescribed task wins the hand of Iberia. With the help of Rocas, Hispalo succeeds in building the bridge. Rocas, again, still within the illusory space of the magical experiment, commits an act of treason when he colludes with Tersandro to abscond with Iberia, for which Hispalo justly punishes him in his first act of governance.

Indignant that new king would turn against him after he had been such a decisive influence in Hispalo's success in the competition to marry Iberia and take the throne, Rocas abruptly concludes the magical sequence and condemns the suitor to the king as being unfit to rule the kingdom (this time in the plane of "reality" within the work). We thus learn of Rocas's ulterior motives from the beginning; he uses the experiment to ensure that he remains unscathed through his involvement in this scheme, and then surreptitiously reports to Hispán that his subject failed the test.

As a result of Rocas's trick, Hispalo no longer knows what is real, and experiences a perceptual crisis that precipitates the mental instability he displays for the rest of the work. This scene subverts the episode in *El conde Lucanor* between the Deán de Santiago and the necromancer Don Illán, in which the Illán creates a magical space in order to observe how the Deán will respond to his rising star, and if he will be true to his word and recompense Don Illán for assisting him in his quest for ecclesiastical supremacy. When the Deán never makes good on his promise—even if one considers the pragmatism of Don Illán harsh—the Deán's ingratitude is the cause for his just deserts. This scene in *La piedra filosofal* plays out differently in nuanced, but significant ways. The functions of the roles of the magician and his subject are reversed. In *La piedra filosofal*, Rocas desires his own personal gain, and uses the space of his magical sequence to ensure it. While he does assist Hispalo's cause, Hispalo does not request this assistance, but rather only shows gratitude when it is offered. Furthermore, Hispalo's decision within the illusory sequence to punish Rocas is for just reasons. Rocas commits treason, and Hispalo demonstrates the fortitude required of a king to punish enemies of the throne—characteristics valued in kings throughout the period. That is, it is presented within the work as a

just punishment, one that even the king would have endorsed, the same king that contracted Rocas to investigate Hispalo's candidacy as heir. Therefore Rocas commits treason internally to his magical "experiencia" by absconding with Iberia, while betraying his responsibility to the king exterior to it by caring more for his own personal gain than his assignment of national importance.

Another source text for Bances is Alfonso X's *La primera crónica general de España*, from which he reproduces the legend of the three feats to be accomplished by Iberia's suitors in order to marry her (D'Angostino 15-19). The tasks in both versions are the same, although the characters are either repurposed or have different names. Just as Alfonso's text has been understood as a national origin myth, this borrowing reaffirms the mythical and allegorical qualities of the play. Although taking place in the mythical past, *La piedra filosofal* maintains many aspects of the context in which it was produced as well. One such facet is the role that proto-scientific discourse plays in the work. The blending of these characteristics of the play—that is, between myth and science—creates a fertile ground for what we would now consider science fiction, even if it is anachronistic to apply the term to a work from the seventeenth century.<sup>90</sup> Professors of secrets, at least in the way that they view themselves as on the hunt for the secrets of nature, carry out their work at the limit of what is known, what is not, and what can be discovered. The interplay between extrapolation and speculation is inherent in their experiments, which becomes fictionalized in Rocas's illusory journey inside the frame of

---

<sup>90</sup> It is not not unprecedented, however, as other earlier works have been considered precursors to the genre as early as Lucian's *True History*. Even Borges, who of course is more directly related to science fiction, takes directly from *El conde Lucanor* in his short story, "El brujo postergado", demonstrating just how interrelated fiction, science, and magic tend to be.

Bances's play. These two terms—speculation and extrapolation—are at the heart of defining science fiction. According to Landon, “both are understood as means to a crucial end: science fiction, in whatever fashion, must somehow go beyond what is currently known and must represent the unknown through some rhetoric of ‘plausibility’” (23). The tasks presented by Bances Candamo within Rocas's illusion are a fantasy of technological advancement, playing precisely within the limits of what is possible through the knowledge gained by proto-scientists. Hispalo's task, the building of the bridge from Cádiz to the mainland, cannot be accomplished without the help of the magus, demonstrating the need for at least some type of specialist knowledge to carry it out.<sup>91</sup> Up to this point I have demonstrated that this type of expertise is at least pseudo-scientific in nature given the role of figures such as Rocas and Lisipo in the development of the history of empiricism. Furthermore, these tasks take place within the experimental space of the work—Rocas's human experiment on Hispalo's behavior within his illusory reality. While there is an entire field that has weighed in on the definition of science fiction and the boundaries that demarcate the genre, Merrill's description of the nature of speculation as a characteristic science fiction resembles this scene of *La piedra filosofal*:

I use the term “speculative fiction” here specifically to describe the mode which makes use of the traditional “scientific method” (observation, hypothesis, experimentation) to examine some postulated approximation of reality, by introducing a given set of changes—imaginary or inventive—into the common

---

<sup>91</sup> It is unclear in the play whether this bridge alludes to the fifteenth-century Zuazo bridge which would not have been built at the time of composition of Alfonso X's *Crónica general*, or a larger endeavor that would ultimately be carried out in the José de Carrión de Carranza Bridge in the twentieth century. In either case, within the narrative, the tasks are presented as feats of technological innovation.

background of ‘known facts’, creating an environment in which the responses and perceptions of the characters will reveal something about the inventions, the characters, or both. (60)

Written in 1966, terms such as “traditional scientific method” must be reconsidered and carefully applied to a play written in the 1690’s, but the premise of her argument bears a striking resemblance to Rocas’s illusion. He calls upon his knowledge of natural magic for the purpose of observation in order that some new knowledge of his subject Hispalo will be revealed. Proto-science demarcates this fictive terrain, where the imaginary projects invent a hypothetical future of technological capability (even if such a future exists in relation to the mythical past). The bridge, the wall around the island, and the filtration of salt water are each, to varying degrees, within the realm of plausibility, although still would produce wonder given time constraints and large-scale production imposed upon their challenge.<sup>92</sup> Beyond his treatment of a particular epistemological method, Bances introduces a highly unique aspect to his dramatic art that employs the conventions of a genre that arguably would not exist until much later.

Each of these feats are of particular importance to Hispán’s kingdom. The wall fortifies, the infrastructure provided by a bridge increases commerce, and the water resolves a concern of public health to the future inhabitants of the city of Cádiz. All of these endeavors are of national importance, similar to the play in general as the result of Hispán and Iberia’s search for her husband and future king of Spain. The setting of the play is suggestive to this theme as well. In his peripheral habitat the wild man Rocas symbolizes the border between civilization and

---

<sup>92</sup> Of the three tasks, water filtration on a large scale remains a civic dilemma to this day.

barbarity.<sup>93</sup> Furthermore, taking place in the mythological past at the Pillars of Hercules, *La piedra filosofal* summons the connection between the developing scientific episteme and the image of sailing through the pillars of Hercules. This image, which appeared on the frontispiece of notable works such as García de Céspedes's *Regimiento de navegación* (1606) and Bacon's *Instauratio magna* (1620),<sup>94</sup> carried immense symbolic weight during the early modern period as a representation of transcending "the traditional limits of knowledge" (Brotóns and Eamon 34). Remember that Hispán's national project is to grow his kingdom through the correct choice of marriage for his daughter, for which he relies on Rocas's pseudo-scientific expertise. In other words, Hispán's aims are both imperial and empirical. The vehicle for his enterprise of *plus ultra*—the illusory space of Rocas's magical experiment—, however, ends in failure. Sailing through the pillars is a failed exercise, and the promise offered by the illusion is a compelling one, so much so that it precipitates madness. Unable to discern between illusion and reality after Rocas's experiment, Hispalo comes unhinged. Rocas, like Focas of *En la vida . . .*, is an unreliable empiricist who manipulates the variables of his experiment to achieve particular results. The consequence of his surreptitiousness is national in scope; Hispalo never recovers from his psychotic episode, even once discovered Rocas's deception and his restoration as betrothed to Iberia and heir to the throne. So, the play ends with a mentally incapacitated heir and Hispán's imperial project in a precarious position.

---

<sup>93</sup> Rocas's wildness is not a developed aspect of *La piedra filosofal*. However, his status as wild man at the beginning of the work inaugurates the obsession with limits that pervade the play, and is therefore significant, both in the literary history of the figure and within Bances's drama.

<sup>94</sup> Cañizares-Esguerra notes likelihood that "Bacon purposefully sought to imitate García de Céspedes" in copying the frontispiece of Spanish cosmographer's *Regimiento de navegación* (*Nature, Empire . . .* 18).



In sense, Hispalo is like Segismundo and Eraclio at the end of *La piedra filosofal* in that he continues to distrust the reality around him; however, his uncertainty about that reality results in mental instability unlike his Calderonian dramatic predecessors. As I mention above, he never regains his wits, and again unlike Segismundo and Eraclio, he does not arrive at a satisfactory moral philosophy to supersede the anxiety of doubt. At one moment towards the end of the work, though, he seems to have recuperated some sense of stability:

pues yo tengo acá en mí mismo  
 la piedra filosofal;  
 contento estaré conmigo,  
 puesto que el entendimiento  
 del hombre bien instruido  
 convierte en bienes los males  
 y lo trágico en festivo. (ll. 3912-17).

Segismundo's response to a similar situation encourages prudence in the face of perceptual doubt, to "obrar bien", whereas Hispalo resolves to perceive good as bad, and, in theatrical terms, tragedy for comedy. That is, his solution is to actively misunderstand ("convierte") the reality around him. Moreover, we can interpret Hispalo through the lens of the other characters. For instance, Iberia's concerns for his mental state remain resolute, whose final verdict on the topic is clear in her final lines:

Pues ha sido  
 fingir Rocas, conjurando  
 negras sombras del abismo,

que yo a Hispalo (¡qué pena!)  
 cariñosa (¡qué martirio!)  
 favorecí; a cuya causa,  
 viendo en efectos distintos  
 confundido su dictamen,  
 entre lo cierto y fingido  
 a todos pareció loco. (ll. 3860-70)

Thus, the play ends with the future of the monarchy in the hands of a mad king whose betrothed suggests she wishes him dead (“que des a Hispalo la muerte, / o sea él el elegido / por tu sucesor” ll. 3884-86). In one sense, the marriage of Hispalo and Iberia by mandate of the king, along with the discovery of the misdeeds of the deceitful Rocas maintain the appearance of a conventional *comedia* ending. However, echoing the grotto of Rocas’s habitat, the presentation of this particular conclusion takes on qualities that can only be understood as grotesque.<sup>95</sup> The constituent parts of the conventional ending are all there, but each is deformed—akin to the monsters I described in Chapter 1. For instance, even though there is a royal marriage, it consists of a future monarch whose ability to rule remains in question and an heiress who makes clear her aversion to the match. The resolution seems unsatisfactory precisely because it presents recognizable conventions that simultaneously diverge from the norm. This distortion of the conventional *comedia* ending foreshadowed by Rocas’s grotto in the initial scene of the play, I contend, is grotesque. Moreover, its interpretation criticizes the factors that lead to its

---

<sup>95</sup> The two words, “grotto” and “grotesque” of course, are etymologically linked. Moreover, to repeat the theme that I developed in Chapter 1, caves are often the habitat of the monsters of myth and folktale.

denouement, all of which point to the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century obsession with the search for new knowledge, symbolized by the inclusion of the professor of secrets Rocas, the title of the play, and its emblematic setting at the pillars of Hercules. By the staging of the play in 1693, the confidence in the hermetic science of professors of secrets had lost steam, and the failure of the colonial enterprise represented in the passage of the pillars of Hercules was clear. Therefore, *La piedra filosofal* is just as easily interpreted as an implicit critique of empire, and a recasting of the origin myth of Spain to warn of its pitfalls, as it is to view Hispalo's *desengaño* and marriage to Iberia as conventional and believable.<sup>96</sup>

## Conclusion

Epistemology and political philosophy find themselves intertwined in the works of Calderón and Bances, as the limits of perception, to use Robbins's term, provide an apt vehicle

---

<sup>96</sup> Although it may appear as an omission, I have purposefully made no direct reference to Carlos II in my analysis of the play. Of course, the conclusion of the play lends itself to draw the connection between Hispalo's mental state—along with his ability to rule—and the figure of Carlos II. In order to be compelling, however, this association must take into account the complexity of the structure of the court spectacle. As the official playwright of the court, any critique made by Bances as direct as comparing Carlos to Hispalo would supremely overstep the playwright's pedagogical model for his dramaturgy found in *Theatro de los theatros* of “decir sin decir”. Such a blatant critique would be more akin to “decir diciendo”, and seems unlikely given Bances's role and function within the court, along with Isabel's direct and overt decree that theater not discuss the topic of royal succession. However, based on his own words, Bances does acknowledge a pedagogical obligation of theater, one that Arellano describes as moderate, “con posibles alusiones a circunstancias de actualidad” (34). This perspective falls more closely in line with paradigms of political philosophy of the day to discuss the limits of monarchical power in general terms. As I have cited in various occasions in the dissertation, political philosophers such as Saavedra Fajardo and Juan de Mariana fit this mold, and as a member of the social and political elite, it would have been in the best interest of the playwright that the monarchy succeed. Despite that, I concede that much work remains to be done on the last quarter of the seventeenth century, which is evidenced by the relative lack of criticism on Bances Candamo. I also acknowledge that most recently, scholars dedicating time to these types of questions tend to find politically charged criticisms launched directly at the king, but more evidence will have to come to light for those interpretations to be persuasive.

by which to dramatize the role of the monarch, and reproduce models for kingship on the stage. Regarding the epistemological aspects, these works are openly skeptical, but embrace such a perspective to maintain and promote an overtly moral lesson in their conclusions. Particularly in the case of Calderón, the playwright skillfully demonstrates a profound knowledge of early modern scientific discourse, which he commands in dramatic form in *En la vida . . .* The work does not provide textual evidence to demonstrate whether the playwright views the epistemological models he treats in a critical light or not; that is, the play does not give any indication of a conservative or progressive Calderón before “new philosophies” in question during the seventeenth century. In fact, this is really not even the right question to be asking of Calderón’s theater. If one maintains that the identities of the protagonists remains uncertain in the play’s conclusion, the limits of Baroque dramatic art expand. Again, this is not to contend that the last hundred lines affirm or subvert ideology, but rather that playwrights such as Calderón wrote plays that problematize the premise of such a question. Rather, my analysis of *En la vida . . .* suggests that playwrights, or at least Calderón, were engaged with the nature of truth in any form accessible to theater. Even the fairly strict conventions of the three act *comedia* provided a terrain to explore the theatrical worldview that Egginton proposes as the modern conception of space, the space between meaning and being. The stage was a space to engage in this type of ontology, the result of which can only acknowledge the existence of that space, even when actively attempting to deny it. For Calderón, at times at least, his were works in progress, and loose ends, if they can even be understood as such, were inevitable. Substantiation of this notion seems self evident just in the fact that Calderón continues to revisit *La vida es sueño* throughout his career, as if in another light, in a different context, the complex reality suggested

in his works might be captured on the stage. Plays like *En la vida . . .* demonstrate this notion, and the existence of works such as *La piedra filosofal* suggests that the same questions merit replication; some issue, some problem, remains to be resolved. As in Bances's play, the philosopher's stone is always an idea, a tangential solution to an irresolvable problem. In response to uncertainty, the philosopher's stone alters perception, disavowing doubt rather than eradicating it. It is the means by which one deals with the problem of everything in life being true, and everything also being false. The philosopher's stone is the blank page of history.

The *comedias* of this chapter also dramatize contemporary political philosophy. The affirmation and celebration of royal succession by primogeniture originally found in *La rueda de la Fortuna* is questioned in *En la vida todo es verdad y todo mentira*, ultimately to remain absent in Bances's play. In *La piedra filosofal*, too many factors impede the competent execution and perpetuation of monarchical rule. Mira's *comedia* affirms the tenets of conservative Baroque ideology, Calderón's demonstrates what happens when that ideology is tested to its breaking point, and by the time Bances composes *La piedra filosofal*, the ideological fabric of the Baroque had become so tattered and torn that the implicit critique of the conclusion diagnoses an unresolvable problem that the genre had concealed—less and less successfully—for over a century. Again, the dramatic art of playwrights such as Mira, Calderón, and Bances Candamo does not serve merely to uphold or subvert ideology, but rather demonstrates the impossibility of ideology to fulfill its promises. Even if Heraclio of *La rueda de la Fortuna* convincingly stages the notion that his royal blood and actions necessarily coincide, *En la vida . . .* separates blood from action in a way that exposes the ideological notion of primogeniture as arbitrary. Finally, *La piedra filosofal* is a play whose representations of conventions are so distorted that any quality

valued earlier in the century as inherently Baroque—primogeniture, marriage, royal decree—loses nearly all of its ideological efficacy. We are left with a mad king treating a funeral as if it were a wedding (“convierte [...] lo trágico en festivo”).

## CHAPTER 3

THE ECHO OF CALLISTO'S LAMENT: GENDERING THE WILD CHARACTER OF THE  
SPANISH *COMEDIA*

Wildness is a particular vehicle used by *comediantes* to dramatize behaviors outside prescribed rules for social normativity of many kinds. The complications caused by the wild figure precipitate the interpretive trouble<sup>97</sup> that I outline in this chapter as it uniquely manifests itself in the wild woman. When the wildness problem is dealt with in the female characters viewed in this chapter, the theatricality of their domestication scratches at the surface of the arbitrary nature of the ideological scaffolding that supports its mechanisms. The very fact that breaches exist in the ideological firmament of the Baroque questions the efficacy of their repair. That firmament, which I have metaphorically described in previous chapters as a woven fabric, continues to aptly capture the relationship between wild figures, ideology, and gender performance. Wild women pose a textual problem by transgressing gender norms; in lieu of the elaborate garments of Baroque fashion, they wear animal skins. Their appearance is emblematically lacking in textile, just as their existence on the Baroque stage exemplifies the locus of the “lack”, the point where ideology breaks down.

---

<sup>97</sup> I echo Butler's sense of the term “trouble”, for I argue that social transgression in these plays destabilizes ideology in a manner similar to her theory on the performative nature of gender roles.

Yet, just as there is no escape from the realm of the symbolic—to continue with Lacanian terminology—nor is there any escape from ideology. Furthermore, language has the appearance of carrying, and achieving meaning, yet it breaks down in the execution of its sole purpose. Ideology falls victim to the same phenomenon; the precise scaffolds upon which hegemonic discourse evinces itself are the same sites where it breaks down. Representations of that which exists outside the proscriptive bounds of its purview inevitably creep in because of the intrinsic artifice that comprises ideology. For a genre seemingly obsessed with normativity on all fronts, the vast majority of each and every *comedia* stages more order disturbed, in Reichenberger's framework, than order restored. Of course, this too points to the ubiquity of ideology. In order for there to be transgression (i.e. Sin), there must also be something to transgress (i.e. Law). Sites of representation, whether purposefully or not, are ambiguous in their interpretation as the normative and subversive inhabit the same space, sometimes intertwined beyond the point of extrication in conventional *comedia* endings. Pratt views an equally precarious tendency as inherent in the function of the *autos sacramentales*. He conceptualizes the nature of allegory in Calderón's *autos* in the following way:

*Culpa* seems very enchanting onstage, and the wages sin seem to be theatrical life (at least for the duration of the *auto*) rather than oblivion. [...] These doctrinally suspect images threaten the cohesion and message of the allegorical victory at the end of each *auto*, yet paradoxically sustain the action which makes possible said victory. (39)

Likewise, the wild woman inhabits significantly more space than the ultimately domesticated version of herself in the resolution of the play; however, unlike Pratt's assertion that Calderón



succeeds in providing a persuasive alternative to the allure of sin, the wild woman proves a more slippery foe for the playwright to convincingly inscribe within the conventions of the *comedia* ending.

If the marriage contract is the ultimate cure of social ills in those endings, the disease in turn must be sexual in nature, and therefore a discussion of gender and sexuality lies at the heart of what the Baroque Spanish *comedia* does. The question, then, is what does it do? Should the resolutions to the conflicts of the *comedia* point to closure and the tenets of society upheld, or does the very nature of theater create a more complex interpretive problem? A revealing moment that occurs in Pérez de Montalbán's *La lindona de Galicia* directs us to the answer. In deciding whom García should marry, his moralist advisers steer him towards the marriage that is more politically expedient, and away from wedding his mistress and the mother of his child—the eponymous Lindona. In a description that epitomizes the ideological problem of the wild figure, one of the advisers says, “borrón es la Lindona”. As García's mistress, Lindona transgresses prescriptive norms of Baroque sexuality. For that reason, she is a stain, a blot on the page. This disparaging remark consolidates the merging elements of text, textile, and ideology concisely in one word. Her transgression must be erased (in this case, consigning her to oblivion through the marriage of García to the queen of Portugal); to express it distinctly, the scission in the fabric of the Baroque caused by the wild figure is darned in the conclusion of the play.<sup>98</sup> Of course, any garment that undergoes darning is added to, the signs of which being more or less visible.

---

<sup>98</sup> This language reminds of Act 5 of *Macbeth*, when lady Macbeth, whilst sleepwalking, yells, “Out, damn spot!” Referring to her blood-stained clothes, she is incapable of covering up her transgression—the murder of her husband—which is the very thing she most wants keep silent. I thank John Slater for pointing out that in the case of the wild figure of the Spanish *comedia*, it is more appropriately, “Out, darned spot!”

Perceptible or not, however, the integrity of the garment has been compromised. Any assertion to the contrary, which is an inevitability, is a disavowal. The wild woman, whose garments are defined by their lack, embodies this disavowal. Like Lindona who is the odd (wo)man out in every sense of the term,<sup>99</sup> the wild woman's existence is supplementary, and must be concealed within one of Deleuze's Baroque folds. Deleuze's conceptual geography of the Baroque assists here in the inherent supplementary nature of a fold; it implies what is more than necessary to create a surface. The wild figure emerges from one of those folds, and is swallowed up by them, disavowed inasmuch as they are occluded from view. But they do not fall into a limitless abyss, but rather returns to the fold; they "slink away in defeat, only to be resurrected" in a later *comedia* (Pratt 50-51). Moreover, Deleuze's Baroque cartography imagines the texture of the fold as an important characteristic to understand the distinctions between western and eastern philosophy. The fold "which seems to predominate in the Occident" is made of cloth (246). This metaphorical Baroque cloth is intrinsic to the ideological function of the wild character in the Spanish *comedia*, the explanation of which will be a common thread weaved throughout my analysis in this chapter.

My examination of the wild woman is less diachronic than the previous two chapters. Rather than survey the trajectory of the type at the end of the sixteenth century and over the course seventeenth, my purpose is to display the array of manifestations that the wild woman assumes, and how gender affects the interpretation of her character in ways that are absent from

---

<sup>99</sup> She is both the third member of a pair (n+1), and "odd" in the ideological sense in that every aspect of her character exists at the periphery of some culturally charged center (she is physically robust, linguistically distinct in speaking *gallego-portugués*, geographically peripheral in being Galician, and sexually transgressive).

the plays that include their male counterparts. In this chapter, I primarily treat four works: Juan Pérez de Montalbán's *La Lindona de Galicia* (ā.1642), Diego de Figueroa y Córdoba's *La sirena de Tinacria* (1678), Lope de Vega's *El animal de Hungría* (c.1608-12), and Pedro Calderón de la Barca's *Hado y divisa de Leonido y Marfisa* (1680). Other works, of course, could be added to this list, and the examples of both Lope's and Vélez de Guevarra's *La serrana de la Vera*,<sup>100</sup> along with Tirso's *Aquiles* at the top of that list. The chapter is divided into two sections. In the first section, I primarily treat the function of cross-dressing in *El animal de Hungría* and *Hado y divisa de Leonido y Marfisa*. Cross-dressing serves as one means by which the wild protagonists of these two plays relate to the cultural order as its exiles, and unexpectedly, as a method by which they are permitted reentry. Cross-dressing exemplifies my text/textile framework to describe the politics of wildness, gender, and ideology in the *comedia*, which will then serve as a backdrop for the lengthier analyses I provide in the second part of the chapter that deploys this approach. In part two, I examine *La lindona de Galicia* and *La sirena de Tinacria* in order to explain the ideological problem posed by the existence of the wild woman that the question of gender uniquely exposes, and is rendered unavoidable in this subset of wild figure plays.

### **Cross-Dressing Wild Women of the Spanish *Comedia***

While the cross-dressing phenomenon is not unique to the corpus of wild woman plays, it is uniquely represented within them. That is, cross-dressing manifests itself in a particular way in

---

<sup>100</sup> Of the many studies of the work, see McKendrick's chapter dedicated to the *bandolera* type in her *Woman and Society in the Spanish Drama of the Golden Age: A Study of the Mujer Varonil*, particularly pp. 110-118. Margaret Boyle also dedicates a chapter to Vélez's version of the play in her *Unruly Women: Performance, Penitence and Punishment in Early Modern Spain*, pp. 77-95, and in her article "Women's Exemplary Violence in Vélez de Guevara's *La serrana de la Vera*". *Bulletin of the Comediantes*. 66.1 (2014): 159-175.

the representation of the wild woman, precisely because of her wildness, distinct from other examples on the seventeenth-century stage. Even within the two plays that follow, cross-dressing is distinctly depicted in each, yet still intrinsically connected with the character's status as a wild figure in both. Examples of cross-dressing, passing, and other heterodox presentations of gender roles dominate dramatic production on the seventeenth-century stage in spite of the binaries that define gender difference in the final lines of a given play. This multiplication, when viewed over the course of the century, creates a complex web of observed behaviors that, interpreted one way, destabilizes any notion of essential binaries of gender. In a similar sense, each of the female wild characters of the Spanish stage tear through the fabric of the Baroque in their own way, seemingly anticipating Cixious's exhortation to "take a look around, then cut through!" (1958). Still, the conservative closure of the plays that I will be treating in this chapter, which is true of most *comedias*, appear to remain ideologically conservative, and therefore perplexing. Boyle's *Unruly Women* offers a balanced perspective that will serve as an interpretive compass rose of sorts in order to calibrate my approach to the wild women of the seventeenth-century theater. She contends:

... women stood at a complex intersection of pressing social preoccupations: the moral and pragmatic debates concerning the proper place and exemplary status of women; the regulation and staging of women's speech and bodies; and lastly, the economic and social interdependence between custodial institutions and public theatre as dramatic sites of rehabilitation. (12)

By making sense of the wild women in the plays that I treat, I make no intention of binding them or diminishing their "unruly" status, to take from the title of Boyle's work. I offer to illuminate

their complexity, and allow them to exist in their particularity, while at the same time suggesting that there are common threads that run throughout the corpus here discussed. In spite of her lack of woven dress, these threads weave a garment that allows us to recognize and give her a name: the wild woman. No longer subsumed under the blanket masculine term wild *man*, these characters gain a unique voice of their own, one that illuminates the study of gender performance in the *comedia*, and offers a more precise understanding of the ideological function the genre.

The gender trouble that I describe above manifests itself in numerous and complex ways in the Spanish *comedia*. One of the most common, as is true of disguise in the *comedia* in general, is cross-dressing, which includes the performance of characteristics that go beyond a simple change in wardrobe. The *comedia* dictates that the character's true and right nature lies at an essential level that is depicted in the resolution of each work; however, theater is a medium incapable of conveying such a notion because the character's "true" identity is merely another role being played by an actor or actress, and defined by "what he or she does, says, or wears" (Stroud 120) and not by who they "are". Therefore, theater models Butler's assertion that at the fundamental level,

gender is an identity tenuously constituted in time, instituted in an exterior space through a stylized repetition of acts. ... These acts, gestures, enactments, generally construed, are performative in the sense that the essence or identity that they otherwise purport to express are fabrications manufactured and sustained through corporeal signs and other discursive means... acts and gestures articulated and enacted desires create the illusion of an interior and organizing gender core, an illusion discursively maintained . . ." (cited in Stoll and Smith 13)

The interplay of appearance and reality so crucial to the Spanish Baroque causes the natural consequence of ambiguous forms that remain in flux as characters pass from one disguise to another, and they build upon layers of performed behaviors that problematize the notion of a predetermined set of characteristics that define gender or social class, even in the attempt to uphold that system of values in the conventional *comedia* endings. This reflection extends through the fourth wall of the stage to unsettle the construction of identity itself, for our own garments and behaviors become performative, as Butler contends.<sup>101</sup>

But “passing” describes more than just a series of changes in wardrobe. The term “passing”, which indicates one’s success in presenting as a particular gender, characteristic or trait, also describes one aspect of the nature of gender ambiguity in the Spanish *comedia* as characters, usually females, have the ability to hide their identities dressed in male garb; however, I extend the application of the term here to describe the complex relationship between multiple characters as they simultaneously “pass” each other throughout a particular work. That is, I use the term “passing” more comprehensively to describe how the concept can be productively broadened to describe the nature of cross-dressing in the *comedia*. To “pass” implies the assumption of another role and success in that endeavor, while it can also be a relational term that describes two objects in motion that experience a brief encounter. This is an

---

<sup>101</sup> This extension beyond the fourth wall addresses gender performativity in ways that England’s national theater does not. In Spanish theater, by casting female actresses to perform onstage meant that cross-dressing could effectively precipitate perceptible doubt not only for the other characters within the drama, but also for the audience. The English stage created an artificial gender stability behind the veil of one’s dress that produced a certainty to a reality behind the stage. Somewhat ironically, cross-dressing on the English stage constructed a false Eggintonian crypt in which the audience could rely on the essential gender of the human actor onstage; this certainty was necessarily absent from the Spanish stage that was conditioned upon the existence of male and female actors *and* the relative frequency of cross-dressing.

apposite framework to understand the *comedia* as these three elements define the interaction among the cast of characters within a work, along with the *comedia*'s obsession with appearance and reality. There is an aggregate affect on the meaning of the work due to the many "passes" that occur within it. One character may pass by means of a change in wardrobe, which allows him or her to pass by other characters without being exposed, while she or he may be simultaneously passed by another character in disguise, to later affect the interpretation of a later scene, so on and so forth. As these passes accrue, the result is a work so steeped in performance that the conventional ending of the work can fail to peel back all of the performative layers to find the essential crypt where reality is assumed to exist, to use Egginton's term.

In *El animal de Hungría*, both Teodosia and Rosaura cross-dress, but not in the sense that most early modern characters do, nor in the way that the term is commonly understood.<sup>102</sup> When Teodosia is banished from court due to her sister Faustina's false accusation, she secludes herself in the forest. In the opening lines of the play, Lauro happens across her and initially prepares for a fight due to the stories that have been told about her. As I noted in the first chapter of the dissertation, however, the horror tales of the animal of Hungary tell of a wild man that lurks in the forest who ravishes livestock, kills men and rapes women. Lauro quickly realizes that there is a discrepancy between his expectations and the person before him in the forest ("Es posible que ha criado / la varia naturaleza, / [...] tal rostro en tanta fiereza?" [f. 130v]). Not only do the folk stories err about the general appearance of the wild man—who evidently is a giant—they

---

<sup>102</sup> Teodosia does disguise herself as a male villager in the closing scenes of the play, but I am more concerned here with the portions of the story in which she is playing the wild figure, dressed in animal-pelts. Her cross-dressing at the end of the play maintains symbolic import, however. She cannot be who she "truly" is—Teodosia, queen of Hungary—as a result of her monstrification and not until the circumstances permit her to reveal herself to Primislao, the king.

mistake the sex of the beast as well. The female figure before him tears down all of the preconceived notions that he had previously understood to be factually true.

This is not exactly cross-dressing because Teodosia has no intentions of hiding or changing the presentation of her gender as the wild figure. Her appearance is the result of years living in the forest, which is not to say that it is merely the result of circumstance and devoid of meaning. As a consequence of her perceived transgression against cultural norms, she ceases to be recognizable within the dominant cultural system. All aspects of her character become misrepresented, including her gender. I discussed this point in the first chapter, but its significance bears elaborating here. To the order that exiled her, Teodosia is a monster in the Derridean sense—she is an unrecognizable form; wild, violent, sexual, and male are terms projected upon her for no longer fitting within the prescribed boundaries of social order. Even though it quickly becomes clear that those qualities do not accurately describe Teodosia, her perceived monstrosity exposes the nature of the claims made against her. Although she is no longer the queen, it becomes evident that she is not the “animal of Hungary” either. She inhabits an intermediate space, performing a new role for which she is cast. Even though she is restored to her “rightful” role as queen in the end of the play, her representation as a wild woman demonstrates that there are other roles that she can effectively perform that are neither queen nor monster. Her animal pelts signify this lack of gender essentialism—their existence a present absence—until it is disavowed in the conclusion when she casts off her wild skin to don regal garments once again.

Regarding gender performance, she never intends to present characteristics traditionally considered masculine, nor are her animal pelts supposed to have any effect on her perceived



gender. The expectation that beneath her appearance is a male figure, and the subsequent frustration of that expectation embodied by Teodosia, suggests an artificiality to gender performance, even if prescription (and the conventional ending of *El animal de Hungría*) dictates otherwise. Furthermore, the fact that Teodosia is innocent of the offense for which she is accused—that she sheds the “essential” characteristics ascribed to her gender—makes this interpretation inevitable, even in spite of the supposed conservative message that Lope may have meant to convey. Everything about Teodosia’s wildness is artificial, which leads to the subsequent question of the artificiality of the role to which she is restored—queen. Therefore, this poses a conceptual problem to the monolithic fabric of the Baroque. If she is so easily mistaken for the hyper-masculine beast that is the wild man of folklore, by what criteria is Teodosia’s queenship so readily accepted? One answer, of course, is clear. Her queenship is self-evident and needs no explanation within the cultural framework that the play was performed; however, the same is not true of Rosaura, the daughter of Faustina and the king after Teodosia’s expulsion. Once Faustina’s ruse is brought to light, her progeny should lose claim to succession as well, yet she remains in line as if she were Teodosia’s daughter by birth. Viewed through the lens of the wild woman tradition, this misshapen ending makes more sense. Antonucci notes that Teodosia is a personified version of the she-bear that steals away with Ursón in Lope’s previous wild figure play, *El nacimiento de Ursón y Valentín*. The implications of that observation are paramount to understanding the wild figure, which the allusion to the mythological Callisto illuminates. Transformed unjustly into a she-bear, Callisto loses her opportunity to have any connection whatsoever with her child. Honor lost, exiled from court and childless, Teodosia is also unfairly excluded from every aspect that epitomizes her femininity within the boundaries of prescribed

gender normativity in Baroque Spain. Standing in for the she-bear Callisto, Teodosia kidnaps Rosaura, which precipitates the unraveling of the plot, and the happy endings for both characters. Callisto's metamorphoses is the story of her loss of humanity and separation from all that she holds dear, while the wild women of the *comedia* take advantage of their own symbolic metamorphoses into social rejection in order to restore those same qualities that they have lost. The wild woman of the *comedia*, as I will continue to demonstrate throughout the chapter, creates a space for this clinamen, subtly recuperating the voice of the voiceless of Greco-Roman myth.

The *comedia*'s obsession with appearance and reality attempts to expose the artificial for what truly lies beneath, but upon viewing the underlying layer of essential qualities, the genre does not always successfully deflect blows to its integrity. This is also true for *Hado y divisa de Leonido y Marfisa*, an elaborate court play staged in March of 1680 that has clear political undertones that address the young Carlos II, and also features the wild woman Marfisa.<sup>103</sup> In many ways replicating the plot of *En la vida todo es verdad y todo mentira*, Calderón omits the character that could be considered a villain to the same magnitude of Focas, and he replaces one of the boy children with a girl, both the progeny of the king Casimiro. Casimiro leaves them in the forest to protect them from harm during a revolt, where the son Leonido is nursed by a lion

---

<sup>103</sup> See Greer, Margaret, "Art and Power in the Spectacle Plays of Calderón de la Barca", pp. 329-339. In the article, she focuses on a number of plays, but in her discussion of *Hado y divisa de Leonido y Marfisa*, the critic primarily analyzes the *loa* that accompanied the play upon its first performance, and that directly addressed Carlos II and Marie Louise d'Orléans. She contends that the shorter theatrical performances that took place before and between the acts of *comedias* "foreground the critical content of the Calderonian court spectacle", and influence the way that the play should be interpreted, however delicate the balance between "royal pomp" and "a reasonable degree of credibility" (334-35).

until the Duke of Cantabria finds him and adopts him. His sister, Marfisa, is found by the wild man Argante, and raised in a cave in the forest of Trinacria. They are ultimately identified in the resolution of the play by a *lámina* that was on their person when found as infants in the forest.<sup>104</sup> When the two siblings meet each other in the forest by chance, they form an immediate bond thanks to *la fuerza de la sangre*. She presents the same lack of knowledge of decorum as do her wild predecessors, which serves as the background for her unique performance of gender.

Unlike Teodosia, whose animal pelts become accidental drag, Marfisa's conventional wild woman appearance never causes any other character to mistake her gender. Her cross-dressing is intentional, not to mention successful in the sense that she passes for her brother at the end of the play. Conversely, Teodosia of *El animal de Hungría* does not intend to cross-dress in her animal skins, but finds herself inadvertently caught in that role, and is quick to reveal her sex when she interacts with other characters who initially mistake it. Furthermore, Teodosia does not seem to fit the description projected upon her when mistaken for a man, whereas Marfisa's success in presenting as a man occurs because her behavior before donning Leonido's armor is more congruent with gender performance typically ascribed to traditional masculinity. Due to the fact that this cross-dressing episode takes place in the final scene of the play, the audience never sees any other behavior from Marfisa than those typical of the wild character at the beginning of other plays within this corpus. She goes through no process of acculturation, and the only clothes we see her wear are androgynous animal pelts and the masculine armor belonging to her brother. At no point is she chastised for behaving in a way that is dissonant to her gender, nor provided a

---

<sup>104</sup> This inverts the function of the *lámina* in *En la vida todo es verdad y todo mentira*, which is supposed to determine the identity of Focas' child, but in the context of the play is incapable of doing so.

cultural education like Linda of *La lindona de Galicia* or Ismenia of *La sirena de Tinacria*.

Rather, it is her decision to fight for the honor of her brother by pretending to be him through which she restores both herself and Leonido to their royal lineage. At different moments being either timid or brash, Leonido fails to accomplish his two main goals: to repair his name and to win the hand of the Arminda. Thought to be a coward for running from conflict with the same Arminda, Leonido contrives a plan that ultimately leads to the death of his servant. Incapable of achieving his own desires, Marfisa stands in as his substitute, ready to duel for honor, and as a result liberates herself as well. From her first appearance in Act I, she expresses her desire to escape the cave (labeled by Quintero as a feminine space) where her surrogate father has kept her sequestered her entire life. *Hado y divisa de Leonido y Marfisa* leaves little to no space for prescribed gender norms, and an abundance of liberty for Marfisa to perform gender traits traditionally understood to be masculine not only without correction, but in order to restore her brother's honor and that of herself, which includes the resolution to the conflict of the plot. In this particular play, it is not that her wildness requires erasure, but is in fact the agent of restoring cultural order. By the late composition of *Hado y divisa de Leonido y Marfisa*, wildness has been integrated into the very tissue of the fabric of the Baroque.

### **Gender and Genre in the Spanish Wild Woman Play**

The well-worn historical narrative of the chaotic succession of Fernando I of León (c. 1015-65) serves as the backdrop to Montalbán's *La lindona de Galicia*. Upon the death of their father, Sancho declares himself king of Galicia, León, and Castilla. His younger brother, García, wants Galicia for himself, and a heated argument ensues between the two that ends in García heading back Galicia to reign, and Sancho readying his troops to take it by force. Before the first

appearance of a wild character, the theme of wildness is introduced during this discussion when Sancho calls his brother “fiero” for his unbridled ambition, rather than approaching the situation calmly and with reason. Upon García’s arrival to La Coruña, the audience learns that he is betrothed to Lindona, a Galician woman with whom he already has a young child. From this point forward, the majority of the work takes place in the northwestern region, geographically peripheral from its staging in Madrid, much like many of the wild folk *comedias*; however, unlike any other play in the corpus, Lindona speaks gallego-portugués, thus emphasizing the peripheral aspect of the play linguistically as well as with its setting. While she is not, at least initially, a wild woman, it will become clear that there is a more emphasized linguistic element to wildness in Montalbán’s *comedia* (when wildness is represented by the very absence of language). Even though the play has not received much critical attention, this aspect gives it a unique quality—one that affects the reception of the female protagonist Lindona. From her first utterance, she is identified as a marginalized figure due to her linguistic difference from each of the other characters in the play. Furthermore, she has mothered a child out of wedlock, and García’s subsequent actions amplify her marginalization as a woman when she becomes powerless to restore her lost honor. Her and García’s cultural transgression is sexual in nature, but could be repaired through their proposed marriage. However, in the scene following García’s return to Galicia, two ambassadors from Portugal arrive to his court to contract marriage to their princess, Leonor, and unite the two regions under one crown. García finds himself in a conundrum, and although he laments the fact that he loves Lindona, due to reason of state, he must marry Leonor. This decision only affects the honor of Lindona, whereas he remains

unblemished within the cultural order, even maintaining his place as its highest potentate——king.

On the one hand, this does not differentiate the play from any other work in which sexual infidelity precipitates cultural exile for the woman while the man remains essentially unscathed. Even within this dissertation corpus there exists a veritable selection of such plays: Margarita and Uberto in *El nacimiento de Ursón y Valentín*, Teodosia in *El animal de Hungría* (although her foil is Faustina, not a male character), Fenisa and Lisardo in *El hijo de los leones*, and Rosaura and Astolfo in *La vida es sueño*. A list of other notable examples would be extensive, although Cervantes's "La fuerza de la sangre" and Calderón's *El médico de su honra* may be two of the most renowned. On the other hand, García's scorn of Lindona uniquely demonstrates the complexity of the obsession with honor as it appears in the Baroque *comedia*, and stages the problem of gender inequality in a surprisingly direct manner.

Just before learning of the ambassadors' arrival, two of García's advisors, Basco and Mendo, enter the stage and discuss García's marriage prospects without him present. In their conversation, we view two sides of the prominent political debate taking place in Spain during the seventeenth century regarding reason of state. This debate rarely liberated itself from a dialogue with Machiavelli, even if attempting to propose the opposite. According to Fernández-Santamaría, the political thinkers involved in this debate to varying degrees fell in to two categories: the moralists and the realists. As Robbins recognizes, the nature of this debate centered on the definition of prudence, which the moralists viewed as a cardinal virtue of Christianity, and the realists "sever the view that prudence is itself a virtue and move the term towards a more secular meaning, often akin to 'political dexterity'" (Robbins 106, citing Bierely

81). García's advisers come down on either side of the debate, both implying that the consequence of handling the situation imprudently would affect the legitimacy of García's right to rule (according to their contrasting definitions of prudence). Basco contends that it would not be prudent for the king to marry his lover: "No ha de ser Reyna la que fue manceba del Rey" (f. 6). This would seem to indicate that he is a moralist, given that it becomes clear that he is more concerned about the moral problem of a king marrying his mistress (for love, no less) than he is with the political benefits of a marriage to the Portuguese princess. In fact, during his conversation behind closed doors with Mendo, he makes no mention of why García *should* marry Leonor, only why he should *not* marry Lindona, as seen in the above quote. However, what he is actually asking García to do is more related to the realist position, and the permissibility of deception. For reason of state, García should deny his relationship to Lindona, and in so doing he both deceives her by going against his word, and also his subjects by concealing the relationship as if it never happened so that he can marry Leonor. Mendo embodies the other side of the debate, and is slow to join Basco's logic. He goes as far as lamenting the fact that the king would not marry Lindona: "¡O fiera embidia! ¡O máscara engañosa!" (f. 6). According to Mendo (and later to Lindona), prudence is intrinsically linked to virtue, and virtue would guide García to wed the mother of his daughter. Basco's definition of reason of state becomes the rationale on which García bases his decision, and also what initiates the conflict of *La lindona de Galicia*. Therefore, the conflict itself consists of the very tissue of ideology. It will become clear that Basco's attempt to erase the "borrón" (f. 6) that is Lindona cannot be carried out so easily, which exemplifies the function of the wild woman in the *comedia*. In this play, Lindona, like the wild woman, is a problem in the text that needs to be erased, but resists erasure.

She has already been added in; she is woven into the fabric of the play—in more general terms, ideology itself—in ways that prevent her disappearance.

García initially resists—and vehemently—Basco's advice parroted through Mendo: “Dice, señor, que la que fue tu amiga, / su Reyna no ha de ser” (f.6). The king provides a compelling discourse, at least emotionally, that he neither desires to abandon Lindona, nor would it be right to commit such an act that nullifies everything he holds dear. Without Lindona, he states, “no es ser Rey, es ser tirano” and that marrying the Portuguese Leonor would be “homicida” for Lindona, thus implying the gravity of losing one's honor, but more importantly the legitimacy of his reign. During his passionate plea against the plan to marry Leonor, Basco debates García with empty, although convincing platitudes such as “Mira, señor, que la pasión te ciega” (f. 7), further suggesting his surreptitious manipulation of the situation. García eventually agrees, reluctantly:

razon de estado son  
 las paces con Reyno tal,  
 mintamos lo desleal  
 con las razones de estado,  
 y ocupe el puesto el traslado  
 que pierde el original.  
 Leonor, y el Reyno han podido  
 dexarte, Linda, burlada. (f. 8)

At this point, the development of the plot suggests that García's and Lindona's situation should be pitied and it depicts Basco as shrewd and cold. This sequence emphasizes the emotive charge



of young love and the pain of love lost significantly more than the political benefits of arranged royal marriages, almost as if to respond to Mendo's "Dice, señor, que la que fue tu amiga, / su Reyna no ha de ser" (f.6), with, "says who?" In the end, García's lament is emotionally compelling, and has precedent in the view of the moralists, while Basco's perspective is presented as manipulative and shrewd in comparison.

It could be argued, however, that Basco's logic would not need to be presented comprehensively since it would have been axiomatic that García should not marry his mistress, particularly when more politically beneficial options existed. He essentially follows Saavedra Fajardo's warning to those heads of state who would show preference to their own affairs over matters of state:

Peligran también los reinos... cuando el [Rey], olvidado de los institutos de sus mayores, tiene por natural la servidumbre de los vasallos; y no reconociendo dellos su grandeza, los desama y gobierna como á esclavos, atendiendo mas a sus fines propios y al cumplimiento de sus apetitos que al beneficio público, *convertida en tiranía la dominación*; de donde concibe el pueblo una desestimación del príncipe y un odio y aborrecimiento á su persona y acciones, con que se deshace aquella unión recíproca que hay entre el rey y el reino donde este obedece y aquel manda, por el beneficio que reciben, el uno en el esplendor y superioridad de gobernar, y el otro en la felicidad de ser bien gobernado. (*Idea de un príncipe*)

It is possible to apply Saavedra Fajardo's political philosophy seen here to both sides of the debate, depending on García's motive. For Mendo's moralist position, García dishonors his

subjects by lacking the virtue to keep to his word and marry Lindona, while Basco's pragmatism—however tinged with moral conservatism—insists that marrying Leonor would consolidate the power of the two kingdoms, and in this case deception is necessary and permissible. Basco's position wins out, but Lindona's reaction to the news of García's proposed marriage to Leonor helps us better understand what the play is saying about this debate, and continues to diminish the force of Basco's argument as she heaps grievances on her previously betrothed. Even though she reacts emotionally, her emotion is, at least initially, controlled. In fact, from the convincing nature of her diatribe against García and his royal court, her emotion seems legitimate and adds to the force of her argument.<sup>105</sup> Lindona shares in Antigone's plight; she provides a convincing argument, but tragically cannot persuade García nor his advisors. It is also suggestive that by Lindona's side stands her and García's daughter. Provided the relative scarcity of children on the early modern Spanish stage, this presence would have been conspicuous, maximizing the impact of the verbal blows meted out by Lindona. After Basco insensitively informs her that "Está su silla ocupada" as she enters what she believes to be her coronation, her initial incredulity toward the situation also reinforces García's affront against her as nearly inconceivable. She says, "Eu so la vosa muller, / dexay essas zumberías" (f. 8). Once the reality of the situation sets in, her discourse shifts as she issues a litany of arguments against García. When he asserts that he must marry Leonor for reason of state, Lindona posits that such a rationale does not nullify all other obligations:

Y la palabra, y la mao?

---

<sup>105</sup> The emotional charge of this scene is not dissimilar to Laurencia's passionate plea to the men of town to stand up to the Comendador in Lope's *Fuenteovejuna*.

[...] Y el meu honor, y esta filla?  
 [...] Castellao,  
 que es peor que ser Gallego  
 [...] En mi, escarmentad, mulleres;  
 catay quein los homes son:  
 para esto venir me has feyto  
 á ò Coruña? (f. 9)

From her perspective, aside from love, a person's word, a betrothal, her honor, and their offspring win out over reason of state. Again, she makes this argument as her daughter stands by her side on the stage, nearly rendering García's selection of Leonor ridiculous, particularly given that her presence only exists in the representative form of her ambassadors and the portrait that they bring with them. In the physical staging of this scene, it becomes clear that García has chosen what he identified earlier as a "sombra"—the portrait of Leonor—over emotions he has felt, pledges he has made, and children he has fathered. Lindona then exposes the ideological scaffolding of García's decision-making apparatus by attacking his proto-national identity in the above citation, suggesting that behavior "reasonable" to a Castilian is reprehensible in Galicia. Difference, in this case cultural difference, provides a productive space to diminish the essential qualities that ideology presupposes. This portion of her speech creates a pause that questions the self-evident nature of García's decision.

She pinpoints a cultural anxiety within the patriarchal, male-dominated power structure of Baroque Spain as well when she calls into question García's masculinity. In a scene that highlights her vulnerability to that order as a scorned and abandoned mother, she appears strong

and, at moments, even subversive. Her entreaty (“escarmentad, mulleres”[f.9]) to the women that accompany her (who would have been her ladies-in-waiting) goes beyond the fourth wall as she continues to condemn García, calling him a “falso cavaleyro” who

engaña,  
sin cara segura;  
si promete á Deus,  
y home después burla. (f. 9)

She develops this characterization of the *hombre engañoso* when she describes García as a wolf in sheep’s clothing:

ó astucia  
de amante raposo,  
que á cordeyra busca,  
para facer de ela,  
risa con dentes, é uñas! (f. 10).

There can be no objection to the veracity of her commentary. García did, indeed, fail to fulfill his promises, and Lindona’s reproach at no point seems unfounded. As a result, she pinpoints a serious conflict within the political realm of ideology: is prudence defined by pragmatism even if it requires deception, or is it defined by uncompromising virtue through keeping one’s word? So far, the play provides more compelling evidence of the latter. Staged in Madrid at the geographical and symbolic center of Spain in the seventeenth-century, the fact that Lindona has thus far convincingly reprimanded her transgressor is crucial to the interpretation of the play. Announcing her double vulnerability to the dominant culture as Galician—highlighted by her

speaking *gallego portugués*—and as a woman, she then successfully reveals the ideological scaffolding that illuminates a system of values within a particular context, in which García’s decision to abandon the mother of his child would be considered upright and necessary.

This final scene of Act I then ends chaotically, which is a fact that has been downplayed in criticism. Antonucci states that the scene ends with the arrival of Sancho to overthrow García, and “la despechada Lindona ha abandonado a la hija recién nacida” (166). The stage directions are clear, however, that all of a sudden Lindona grabs her daughter and throws her out a castle window that overlooks the craggy bay of La Coruña. A clear allusion to *La vida es sueño*, this moment is even more intense than its parallel in Calderón’s play due to the fact that it is her own child. This results in an equally more difficult interpretation of the plot development. Whereas in Calderón’s play the death of the servant at the hands of Segismundo demonstrates the protagonist’s monstrous characteristics that he has yet to overcome, in *La lindona de Galicia*, her violent response to García’s news requires the remainder of the play to interpret. Due to its relatively early occurrence in Act I, a comprehensive display of Lindona’s character has yet to be achieved. The audience is left to ask, “is she a monster?”, or possibly, “has she suffered a psychotic break?” (to put it in anachronistically modern terms). Neither are immediately clear, but her warm relationship both with García and to her child previous to this moment enhance the shock of the incident, and clearly display that something has abruptly changed in Lindona, particularly after encountering nearly one hundred lines of well-reasoned arguments for why García should not renege on his word. As the act comes to a close, Lindona obtains her revenge as Sancho successfully overthrows García, and leaves him to be imprisoned by Lindona.

As the title would suggest, the play is not really about political tyranny nor the dynastic transition from one ruler to the next. That conflict is conventional. One interpretation of the action at the close of the first act would condemn García not for favoring reason of state over his love for his mistress and child, but rather for having a lover in the first place. His actions before the opening of the play force him into a situation that could have been avoided. This interpretation has literary precedent in the medieval sentimental romances in which clandestine lovers allow their *amor sentimental* to go too far, usually with catastrophic consequences. Courtly love must end where the marriage contract begins, a reality with which García refuses to comply. While the consequences of his courtly escapade are indeed catastrophic, his misfortune occurs towards the beginning of the play at the end of Act I, thus implying that the nature of this dramatic narrative is distinct from the proscriptive closures of the sentimental romances where the lovers' exemplary demise occurs swiftly towards the conclusion of the narratives. Furthermore, a conservative reading of this play would amplify Lindona's emotional response to her scorn at the expense of the complexities of her philippic. The rest of the play provides the key to interpreting the first act, and opens up alternative readings to the one just provided.

At the beginning of the Act II, years have passed. Sancho has died, and his brother Fernando reigns over the kingdoms of Castile, León, and Galicia.<sup>106</sup> García remains in Lindona's custody, and we also meet Sancho's son Ramiro, who, having grown tired of life at his uncle's court, sets off with his hunting party to the forests of Galicia. They happen across a young woman, dressed in animal pelts, who appears to delight in their presence, although she only

---

<sup>106</sup> Pérez de Montalbán reverses the names of Alfonso and Fernando of the historical narrative. Alfonso, along with Sancho and García, were actually the sons of Fernando, whereas in *La lindona de Galicia*, Alfonso is the father and Fernando the son and brother to Sancho and García.

speaks the last word of everything they say. She flees into the woods, but her beauty and the enigma of her echo fascinates them, so they decide to follow her. In so doing, the young men find Lindona's castle, where García remains imprisoned. When they hear of his plight, they pledge to return to save him. Eventually, Ramiro's hunting party finds the forest woman, and take her back to Alfonso's court, where she receives a tutor. They come to learn that she mimicked their speech because she had never been in contact with humans, and therefore never learned language. Antonucci notes that her character, named Linda—not to be confused with her mother Lindona—is the only wild character to appear on the Baroque stage without language and is therefore “una salvaje muy verosímil” (*El salvaje en la comedia* 169).<sup>107</sup> Upon hearing of the castle from Ramiro, Fernando decides to go to Galicia and liberate its prisoner as the second act concludes.

The elements of the plot replicate some of those seen previously in the dissertation corpus such as the she-bear that snatches Ursón in *El nacimiento de Ursón y Valentín* along with the Arcadian landscape where nearly all of the wild character plays take place. By bringing classical myth to the fore in a greater capacity than any the other play that I have thus far treated, Pérez de Montálban attempts to swerve from both his literary forebear, Lope, and also the myth fables that he intertwines into his *comedia* in order to improve upon their methods and premises. With wildness as his vehicle, he attempts to utilize the conventions of the genre to bring happy

---

<sup>107</sup> While Antonucci points out a true characteristic of feral children who have never come into contact with other humans, verisimilitude never really seems to be the function of the wild figure throughout the trajectory of the sub-genre in sixteenth- and seventeenth Spain. Even here, as I will show, the nature of the wild figure is so intertwined with its mythological and folkloric forebears that the fact that Linda cannot speak has less to do with the veracity of her portrayal than a commitment to a mythological precedent.

endings where they had previously been absent. However, in this venture to blot out the “borrón” of wildness depicted in gender transgression, and invert tragedy through the conventions of the *comedia*, the absurdity of this process becomes exceedingly clear in how unnatural it appears in his play. Montalbán’s implementation of myth to prescribe gender normativity upon his wild characters within the conventions of the Spanish *comedia* resists his effort at every turn; the wild woman cuts through the fabric of the Baroque, ultimately exposing the hollowness of the ideological scaffolding that lies beneath its surface.

Two mythological fables come into focus in this work: the tales of Echo and Callisto, both of which end tragically for their protagonists. The resonance to Echo is clear when Linda appears in the forest and is only capable of mimicking the noises uttered by Ramiro and his servant Mormojon. She spies the two hunters just as Echo does when she observes Narcissus in the Ovidian myth, but is unable to communicate with them. According to Ovid, Echo’s voice has been taken away by Juno, while in the play, she never learns language due to her childhood in the forest, completely secluded from other humans. While the cause of their inability to use language may be distinct, there are notable comparisons to be made between the two characters from this point in the plot forward. Unable to communicate with Narcissus, Echo resorts to showing her affection by any means necessary. She throws her arms around him, and immediately he flees in response. Adding insult to injury, he exclaims, “I would die before I give you a chance at me” (Ovid 68). Scorned, she retreats to the woods, wasting away until nothing is left but her voice (68). Linda inverts Echo’s narrative. Under the tutelage of Doña Elvira at Fernando’s court, Linda begins to produce language, and makes some developments in her manners, but never completely transforms into a cultured elite. Unlike later works such as *La sirena de Tinacria*,



very few lines are dedicated to Elvira's instruction, except one important moment that parallels Narcissus's rejection of Echo in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. After spending time apart from Ramiro, he enters and the stage directions indicate that Linda quickly goes to Ramiro and hugs him. Elvira reproaches her for this behavior, imploring, "No llegues / á abrazar los hombres / [...] que no es amar decente" (f. 21). Unfazed by her advance, Ramiro, aside from being attracted to her physically, finds her uncultured behavior and lack of language endearing, if not enthralling. Even though Elvira tells her that it is improper to offer an embrace in such a manner, the object of her desire never rejects her—in fact, rather the opposite. Unlike Narcissus, Ramiro responds to her love in kind. Unrequited love kills Echo, tragically reducing her to the paradox of the present absence that defines an echo, whose existence manifests the impossibility of completion idealized in shared love. *La lindona de Galicia* attempts to give Echo a happy ending in which she recuperates her voice by means of acquiring the culture of her "rescuers". Ironically, Pérez de Montalbán's clinamen fails to achieve this purpose. In order to invert the details of the Ovidian narrative and provide comedic closure, Linda's misbehavior must go unpunished. Her embrace is permitted, even if to Elvira's displeasure. As a result, the premise of Elvira's instruction seems hollow. Montalbán parrots his literary forebears to produce a new result; however, those elements resist such an endeavor and expose the ideology that supports it as also being hollow.

The other mythological narrative significant to the development of the plot of *La lindona de Galicia* is the story of Callisto, who belonged to Diana's band of nymphs. In one form or another, Callisto is frequently present in the wild woman *comedias* as I began to highlight above in *El animal de Hungría*. Represented as a she-bear, she appears in this work to rescue Linda from the crags beneath the castle after having been thrown from the window. While the thought

of a bear absconding with an infant may incite horror at first glance, Callisto's story offers an alternative interpretation of this scene, and also may explain her frequency in the wider corpus of wild woman plays. Ovid is again the most concise source for the particulars of Callisto's story, which begins one day in the forest, when Jupiter catches glimpse of her reposing in the Arcadian landscape. As one of Diana's nymphs, the king of the gods knows her to be chaste, so he disguises himself as Diana to trick the unsuspecting Callisto, whom he proceeds to rape. Her ensuing pregnancy is soon discovered, and they banish her from their party. To avenge her husband's infidelity, Juno turns Callisto into a she-bear, who, like Echo, loses her voice and ability to communicate not only with the world around her, but more importantly with Arcas, her son who will never recognize her. The longing that she expresses to know her child is clear from Ovid's telling of the story, and her human drive to connect with her child supersedes any aggressive traits assumed upon becoming a bear. A truly tragic figure, Callisto is the victim of both the patriarchal system symbolically represented by Jupiter's sexual assault, while she is also expelled from her micro-society of Diana's nymphs for failing to comply with a strict social code for reasons beyond her control. The she-bears of the wild woman *comedias*, channeling Callisto, nurture those whom cultural order has unjustly expelled. García's rejection of Lindona, like that of Callisto, is portrayed as unjust, and as a result initiates the major conflict of the work. The she-bear appears to fulfill her crucial role in this play in order to facilitate the cultural recuperation for those who society has punished for others' transgressions. Callisto mothers these wild characters in a way that empowers them to be the agents of their own restoration. Due to her ursine upbringing, Linda lacks all of the trappings of culture, which leads her to successfully call for pause at every culturally charged moment of the play. In spite of Montalbán's attempt

through Elvira to domesticate Linda, as a daughter of Callisto, she exposes the boundaries that define cultural norms, and questions their essential nature. Surprisingly, she is not punished; rather, she transforms those boundaries to achieve her own desires, resolve the conflict between her parents, and win a small victory for all those who identify with Callisto's plight. Callisto is the wild woman play's ghost of Tom Joad; she makes many an appearance just when she is needed, only to fade into the background, almost unnoticed.

The resolution to the play still dramatizes an obsession with completion, the healing of all social ills and righting of all wrongs represented by hasty marriages, but it does not entirely reflect the prescriptive boundaries expected from the ideological framework of the Baroque. As the complete cast of characters arrives at Lindona's castle to rescue the imprisoned García, the aged prisoner identifies Linda as his daughter from her pendant she was also wearing on the day Lindona flung her from the window.<sup>108</sup> Although her survival is initially difficult to believe for those present in this scene, Ordoñez—one of Sancho's advisors—appears and recounts the tale of her survival. On the day he arrived with Sancho to overthrow García, Ordoñez witnesses the child's fall, and attempts to save her, but cannot reach her before a she-bear snatches her up and carries her off into the forest, where she grew up to become the Linda currently in their presence. With Fernando pleased to see his long-lost brother again and Lindona acquitted of wrongdoing at

---

<sup>108</sup> This and other talismen commonly serve to identify the wild characters in the works within the dissertation corpus. It is a ring that reveals Heraclio's identity in *La rueda de la Fortuna* and a garment worn by Leonido when he is found in the forest in *El hijo de los leones*. Ismenia's gemstone reveals her identity to Alberto in *La sirena de Tinacria*. A *lámina* identifies Leonido and Marfisa in the Calderón play that bears their name, while the playwright frustrates the reliability of this type of object in *En la vida todo es verdad y todo mentira* when Astolfo produces the *lámina*, which does not provide enough information to distinguish the young Eraclio and Leonido.



Linda obtains a literal and figurative voice to exert agency within that system. The raw materials Montalbán put into play seem to have gotten away from him as his wild woman Linda maintains elements of her wildness even in the conclusion. She remains a darned spot on the fabric of the Baroque, refusing to get “out”, or more precisely, fully incorporated in.

Fernando’s response to Linda’s rejection is initially perplexing. One might expect that he, the king, take offense at the affront. This moment of closure contrasts García’s decision that precipitates the conflict of the work. Unlike García, he chooses not to fight what so clearly appears to be the right course of action at the conclusion of *La lindona de Galicia*. García’s abandonment of Lindona due to faulty ideological imperatives in Act I precipitates his downfall, while Fernando permits love for its own sake as an ideal, choosing to ignore any affront to his honor caused by Linda’s rejection. His honor does not seem to be at stake when he chooses not to obsess over it. This situation is not a perfect parallel to García’s reason of state dilemma; however, García suffers for his compulsion to adhere strictly to ideological truisms, ultimately depicting a *reductio ad absurdum* to select Leonor over Lindona, the mother of his daughter whom he clearly loves. Conversely, Fernando’s decision to permit Ramiro and Linda to marry ignores a potential threat to his honor, a choice problematically celebrated and confirmed by the conventional closure of the *comedia*. The final applause commends his gracious and liberal spirit, not his ability to uphold, dictate, and govern social norms.

In another play, the link to classical mythology is made manifest even in the title: *La sirena de Tinacria*. In the opening lines of the play, Ismenia actually mentions echo:

daré afligida, y triste,

a estos montes mis penas,

que ayraado las admite,  
solo para que el eco me las buelva. (f. 369)

Like in *La lindona de Galicia*, the overall prevalence of the Arcadian myths informs the interpretations of the wild woman *comedias*. Figueroa y Córdoba's work draws from the same plot elements seen throughout the dissertation corpus, in which the long-lost heir to a seat of power emerges from the forest in animal pelts to ultimately ascend to his or her respective throne. The wild woman of this *comedia*, Ismenia, is also the titular protagonist, which becomes clear from the opening lines of the play. Like the sirens of classical mythology, she lives in the forest on an island, and she has a beautiful voice along with a penchant for singing (for which she will later be scolded by her tutor). When Federico arrives shipwrecked on her island, he is enchanted by her physical beauty and euphonic singing, about which he confesses to be "ciego y loco" (f. 383). However, as Linda inverts the tragic sequences of the Eco and Callisto myths, so too does Ismenia with regard to the sirens. Rather than destroying all men that have the misfortune of sailing near her island (much like Diana or Medusa), she is the agent that initiates the resolution to the conflict of the plot.

Ismenia has always desired to be liberated from the seclusion of her island, but finds that not all of the customs of civilization are to her liking when her wish comes true. Almost simultaneous to Federico's shipwreck on Ismenia's island is the arrival of members of the Duchess of Tinacria's entourage, who snatch her up and bring her to Matilde's court. Like Linda, Ismenia is assigned a tutor—Flora—to teach her "la etiqueta de Palacio" (f. 389), and she thus trades her animal pelts, bow and arrow for a farthingale and chopines. The audience learns that the process is not going particularly smoothly when her complaints offstage interrupt Federico's

conversation with the gracioso Talego: “Conmigo os burlais villanos / quitadme aquestos vestidos” (f. 389). Ismenia enters the stage with Flora as Talego and Federico hide off to the side to view the episode. Intended to provoke laughter, underneath the surface of the scene exists a tacit—unintended even—criticism of the social norms in play, as is nearly always true with humor. The chopines cause her particular strife, about which she chides Flora’s nonchalance about the ease in which “que desta manera / andan todas en Palacio” (f. 389). When Flora elaborates regarding why women wear them, she remarks that they make them taller, to which Ismenia aptly quips,

Aqueso es falso

[...] porque si se cae

una muger de su estado

con ellos, estando en tierra

harán los cuerpos mas baxos (f. 389)

Her reasoning here is a perfect example of the manner in which the wild women of the Spanish *comedia*, due to their lack of exposure to cultured society, are able to innocently expose certain behaviors and expose their artificiality through lighthearted criticism. The significance of chopines in the early modern world has not gone unnoticed, which is exhibited in the issue dedicated to women’s footwear in the *Journal of Hispanic Studies* in 2014. In the Introduction, Cirnigliaro posits that “sartorial practices impacted and ultimately molded constructions of female subjectivities”, and that chopines in particular “reveal societal negotiations with elevation, transgression and movement” (107,109). This is evident in the quote cited above, because even though Ismenia’s comments here ultimately cause laughter, her immediate

response to Flora's rationale behind wearing chopines "reveals societal negotiations" when she succinctly states, "Aqueso es falso". This utterance concisely exposes the façade of ideology that so often coincides with images of clothing in the wild woman play. This scene demonstrates how society is imposed onto the subject, literally molding and re-shaping Ismenia's body through shoes that make her taller, along with bodices and farthingales that both constrict and expand her body, literally pulling and compressing her in every direction—a feeling she befittingly describes as a "tormento mas extraño" (f. 389). The attire highlighted in this scene so appropriately dramatizes the process of acculturation to which Ismenia is subjected. The constricting nature of the bodice demonstrates the restricting facets of culture—the narrow path of prescribed norms that one must follow. The English term farthingale, however, loses its symbolic force called a *verdugado* in the play, is also known as a *guardainfante*. Any characteristic, desire, or behavior to which anyone is naturally inclined but transgresses cultural norms—i.e. does not fit within the constraints of the bodice—must be occluded. There must be a space for that which lies beneath the surface, which the farthingale provides. For Ismenia, the prescriptions of courtly culture are initially oppressive, as much as her corset is constricting, and she refuses to conceal any facet of her nature, outwardly represented by her frequent petition to have her animal pelts, bow and arrow returned to her. Matilde's response to her request reflects the performative nature of culture, here so closely tied to gender performance: "con el tiempo, y la experiencia / te vayas haziendo a el uso" (f. 139). This reflects Butler's assertion that gender is a construction based upon the repetition of performed behaviors, which the subject comes to understand, or misconstrue, as essential characteristics of gender. Ismenia compellingly questions these



behaviors at every chance she gets, which challenges the essentiality of gender norms, even if her transgressive tendencies are ultimately suppressed.

Thanks to Flora's instruction, Matilde's prediction comes to pass, about which Flora boasts to Talego:

Ismenia, que activa, y vana,  
se ha buelto ya Cortesana:  
y olvidando los extremos  
rusticos, vive sujeta  
a la razon. (f. 399)

Clearly meant as a compliment, Flora's words escape their intended meaning. She says "razon", but modern critics might interpret this line orthographically as "Razón". They have successfully corralled her wildness, and tamed the aspects of her character that do not fit underneath her metaphorical corset. This renders her past *averdugado*—symbolized by the discarded animal pelts, bow, and arrow—, a disavowal represented in her wearing of the *guardainfante*. The invisible hand of ideology succeeds in creating the subject by providing assurance to what is Right, while all else that exists is repudiated as if it didn't, gilded by fine linens that hide their wire mesh support. From this point forward, the outward signs of Ismenia's wild upbringing disappear; nevertheless, the interpretation of her behavior as a reflection of her past is less clear. She may gracefully don the clothes that Flora has instructed her to wear, but Ismenia remains openly incredulous the culturally constructed performance of her gender that is expected of her over the course of the play.

One such instance where this becomes clear occurs when Enrique's ambassador arrives to Matilde's court to propose her marriage to Enrique, the Duke of Calabria. Enrique has felt an affront to his honor due to Matilde's refusal to give audience to his ambassador, who indicates the duke's response to such a slight: "su opinion agraviada, / siendo un hombre que no sufre / escrupulos en la fama" (f. 395). The ambassador goes on to disclose that if she doesn't contract a marriage with Enrique, they will go to war. Ismenia interrupts the ambassador and rebukes him for speaking to a duchess in such a disrespectful manner:

Que esto sufra!

Ya la paciencia me falta!

Atrevido Embaxador,

que con sobervia arrogancia

mañosamente reduces

las obras á las palabras!

[...]

Agradece que se halla

presente su Alteza aqui; (f. 397)

Matilde apologizes for Ismenia's outburst, which the ambassador has disregarded because "es muger"—a slight as much a trivialization of Ismenia as it is an insult to the duchess's sex as well. Matilde shows restraint and maintains her patience—much to Ismenia's chagrin—, and even Federico, still under the alias Lisardo, is moved to action as he draws his sword and admonishes Enrique's representative that

Qualquiera de los que miras

castigará tu arrogancia,  
 á no valerte los fueros  
 de Embaxador. (f. 397)

Sufficiently exasperated by the reception he has received at the Tinacrian court, the ambassador requests Matilde's final decision, to which she, equally ready to terminate the audience, firmly replies, "Ya Ismenia ha respondido" (f. 397). A subtle foreshadowing to when Ismenia will have this authority once she has assumed her still hidden role as duchess, this scene also adds to the play's ambiguous stance on prescribed gender norms. When the Calabrian ambassador leaves enraged, and enjoining Matilde to prepare for war, she quickly responds, "Linda traza / de obligarme es la violencia: / la voluntad a las armas / no se rinde" (f. 397). The unified front of Ismenia, Matilde, and Federico to the ambassador's threat suggests that Enrique's obsession with honor to the point of going to war in order to maintain it is misguided, and their offense at his remarks would have surely been shared by the audience given that they have become firmly established protagonists at this point in the play.

Ismenia's behavior continues to follow this tack, and is quick to challenge cultural norms that she fails to understand. Ismenia tires of Federico's transparent inability to see past her presumed lowly birth, for which she admonishes him to embrace their shared love for one another rather than worry about concerns she considers insubstantial. She insightfully remarks:

que en vuestros labios he visto  
 tantas vezes, pues no siendo  
 yo vuestro igual, fuera indigno  
 blason de vuestra grandeza

ofenderos á vos mismo,  
 engañando á una muger. (f. 401)

Even after having joined the ranks of society, Ismenia remains incapable of understanding the importance of caste, which is another instance in which the play is incapable of completely erasing such a doubt. This is palatable, however, because beneath all of her layers, she is indeed of noble stock, the “true” Duchess of Tinacria. At this point in the development in the plot, the audience is aware that she is the duchess, and therefore that their love is not taboo, but it is significant that Ismenia and Federico are yet to attain this knowledge. *La fuerza de la sangre* has been insinuated over the course of the work, when various characters seem to note that there is something about Ismenia that belies her wild upbringing, but as far as they both know, her humble beginnings reflect her social station. That her plea rings emotionally compelling, along with Federico’s constant inner turmoil at the situation, implies that the strictures of cultural prescription weigh heavily on them both. Just before she admonishes him in the above quote, Federico bemoans his unquenchable attraction for Ismenia:

si mi fee no ha de poder  
 conseguir, ni merecer,  
 engañar á quien adoro.  
 salga del pecho, y mi amor,  
 busque en Matilde su igual” (f. 400).

Deep down, Federico knows that he loves Ismenia, but that he must spurn her for Matilde because he cannot marry a woman beneath his class. If their situation were as they believe it to be at this moment, the impossibility of their love would still incite grief and pity for their plight,

even though in this case the point is rendered moot at the revelation of her identity as rightful heir to the dukedom of Tinacria. In *La sirena de Tinacria*, the dramatic irony of their true identities makes the impossibility of their love easily overlooked up until the very last moment of the work. The audience always knows they actually *can* fall in love, which causes their emotional struggle to appear innocuous; however, the ideological efficacy of the play is undermined by the emotive effect incited by their prohibited relationship when they are unaware of each others' true identity. This subtly implicates any society in which such a tragic outcome could occur —i.e. Baroque Spain—regardless of the actual or perceived conservative closure of the plot.

But just how conservative is the conventional ending to *La sirena de Tinacria*? Alberto, a count who had been loyal to Ismenia's father (who was usurped by his brother, Matilde's father), realizes Ismenia's identity at the end of Act II upon seeing the ruby given to her by Arnesto, and vows to help reveal her real identity (about which she still does not know). Simultaneously, he is the only character aside from Talego aware of Federico's identity, and has thus far been hiding under the alias of Lisardo, ambassador of Federico, Duke of Barcelona. Federico divulges to Arnesto his love for Ismenia, but ultimate desire to marry the Duchess of Tinarcia. Alberto promises to help him bring that marriage to pass, but of course the audience knows he actually refers to Ismenia, the rightful heiress to the dukedom. With these pieces in place, Enrique's army arrives to invade Tinacria as recompense for Matilde's affront in rejecting his proposal.<sup>109</sup> In

---

<sup>109</sup> This is a possible reaction that Fernando, the king who proposes to Linda at the end of *La lindona de Galicia*, could have had. Enrique's response, juxtaposed with Fernando's, further demonstrates the posture that these two *comedias* take regarding the obsession with honor. Fernando's gracious attitude resolves conflict, whereas Enrique's defeat at least implies that his actions were brash, and possibly unwarranted.

response, Matilde leads her own forces into battle from the front line. One of Enrique's soldiers apprises him of this situation:

pon en orden tus esquadras,  
 si no quieres que el descuido  
 ocasione una desgracia  
 á tu gente; porque viene  
 la Duquesa de Tinacria  
 delante de sus hileras,  
 con su Exercito en batalla  
 ázia tu campo [...] (f. 410)

The interpretation of the outcome of this scene is ambiguous, but the decision to lead her troops into battle occupies a decidedly masculine space. Enrique's forces declare victory over Matilde's army until Federico enters the scene and defeats Enrique one-on-one. Even though she suffers defeat, and moreover, requires masculine intervention to save the cause of the dukedom of Tinacria, this is a complex scene that requires further scrutiny. To that end, it is clear that in the melodramatic logic of the play, Matilde is on the side of the victors. That is, in the battle between Matilde and Enrique, Enrique's forces are the antagonists. The fact that an audience would be cheering in support of Matilde's efforts at this point in the play is suggestive. If the purpose of the play were to uphold the gender norms of a patriarchal society, not only would Matilde's defeat be deserved, it would be encouraged, which is clearly not the case when Enrique's invading forces arrive in Tinacria. Her failure can be interpreted as judgment against gender-transgressive conduct, but the scene toes a precarious line between celebrating subversive

behavior and punishing it. Ultimately, Enrique's victory and Federico's restitution of the situation sustains social norms, but in a way that destabilizes their essentiality before the final outcome becomes a foregone conclusion.

Once the battle ends, the resolution to the conflict is hasty. Immediately after Enrique is vanquished by the hand of Federico, and Alberto fulfills his promise by revealing Ismenia as the rightful heir to the dukedom of Tinacria, Federico can now marry both the duchess of Tinacria and his true love. Matilde, who would have been an infant when the *coup d'état* took place, peacefully concedes her power to her cousin:

Y yo Ismenia,  
pues no tuve en tu desgracia  
culpa alguna, con los brazos  
te vuelvo el cetro. (f. 412)

Enrique offers his hand to Matilde, who dutifully accepts it. The play then comes to a close as Ismenia conventionally requests that the audience “perdoneis sus muchas faltas” (f. 412).

The abrupt nature of this ending, which is not at all uncommon to the *comedia*, reduces its overall effect to celebrate dominant cultural ideologies. This required convention contrasts, incredulously, the events that lead up to the denouement, driven by two female characters whose behavior is incongruent with prescribed gender performance. Ismenia and Matilde speak up and out as champions of their own desires and in their own best interest, while Federico is the inconstant lover who is incapable of making up his mind. They are not punished for their actions, but neither do they resolve the conflict in the way that one should expect given their character development over the course of the narrative. I have demonstrated those developments

throughout my analysis of this work, but the conclusion at first glance seems to prescriptively undo any encouragement of the transgression of gender norms advanced up to this point. Even though Matilde gives her hand to Enrique in the final lines of the play, she does so after rejecting the premise under which it was initially contracted—her father's will.<sup>110</sup> This symbolic, and subtle, rejection of the divine Logos is celebrated when it occurs, and is symbolically validated when Federico raises his sword against Enrique's ambassador. The compulsory ending of Matilde's contracted marriage to Enrique therefore remains unsatisfying provided the development of her character throughout the play, not just to a modern reader, but because Figueroa y Córdoba's work seems to renege on the system of values that it sets up in the first three thousand verses of the play. This resolution seems like a coda to the events that transpire, and the types of reactions the two female protagonists exhibit throughout; the tears in the fabric of the Baroque caused by the conflict are not darned particularly well. Connor elaborates this assertion in regard to the conventional *comedia* ending in general:

To say that such conflicts are merely structures of the comic genre is to deny comedy's essential ambiguity, its paradoxical ability to explore the most intense subversions of the very society that constructs it and to then undo, in an order-restoring conclusion its own deconstruction of the dominant system, as if to say, 'just kidding'. (27)

In the end however, a decision must be made regarding the extent to which a work *could* transgress in Baroque Spain, and whether or not the *comedia* can be subversive, if it is as prescriptively ideological as Maravall contends, or most likely, that the artifice of ideology is

---

<sup>110</sup> Matilde's father had contracted her marriage to Enrique before his death.



inevitably exposed the longer it is tested for integrity. This is the puzzle that the *comedia* has left the modern critic. Another Arcadian myth from Ovid's *Metamorphoses* sheds light on this ambiguity so inherent in the *comedia*, and observed in *La sirena de Tinacria*. After Diana transforms Actaeon into a deer to be ripped apart by his own hounds,<sup>111</sup> the narrative concludes with the following closure (or lack thereof):

And gossip argued  
 All up and down the land, and every which way;  
 Some thought the goddess was too merciless  
 And others praised her; maidenhood, they claimed,  
 Deserved just such stern acts of reckoning,  
 And both sides found good reasoning for their judgment. (Ovid 64)

That ambiguity can be applied to the title of this *comedia* as well, which, by the end causes one to ask, who is the titular protagonist, Ismenia or Matilde? Although Ismenia claims her role as duchess of Tinacria, she features less prominently than her cousin in the final act of the play. It is fairly clear in the opening scenes, from Ismenia's singing, her island habitat, to the amorous enchantment she affects on the men who cross her path, that she embodies the mythological characteristics ascribed to the sirens; however, in the sense that sirens are the deadly feminine

---

<sup>111</sup> There is a marked linguistic element to his death. Actaeon's most prevalent urge is identify himself by calling to his hounds. Unable to speak, his dogs rip him apart. Similarly, Callisto is unable to identify herself to her son when they meet in the forest. Echo's demise occurs due to her inability to communicate with Narcissus, not unrelated from the previous two instances. One's human death and passage into wildness nearly always seems to be associated with the use of language. This element is most clearly dramatized in *La lindona de Galicia*, but in a more metaphorical sense, these plays treat the wild women recuperating the voice lost by their mythological forebears.

creatures who entrance wayward sailors, and the tendency of the wild woman play to invert mythological narratives, a case can be made for Matilde as well. Both characters are decisive and eloquent, essentially two sides of the same coin. Raised in diametrically disparate locations—the court and the forest—, neither inhibits them from rejecting the boundaries of traditional gender roles and procuring agency in the male-dominated society they inhabit. Through their performance of gender, the wild woman and the duchess of *La sirena de Tinacria* both tear at the fabric of the cultural order to which they pertain, a garment that by the composition of the work in the 1670's had been patched and repaired so many times it was becoming threadbare.

## Conclusion

The ramifications of Reichenberger's pithy and accurate description of this dramatic genre laid the foundation for a debate when he proposed that the theater of Baroque Spain essentially follows the trajectory of "order disturbed to order restored" (307). It is through these presuppositions—of a prevailing hegemonic order, its transgression, and ultimate repair—that Maravall supplies his foundational systematic view of the *comedia*: "Los españoles emplearon el teatro para, sirviéndose de instrumento popularmente tan eficaz, contribuir a socializar un sistema de convenciones, sobre las cuales en ese momento se estimó había de verse apoyado el orden social concreto vigente en el país, orden que había que conservar" (*Teatro y literatura* 20). This framework dominated *comedia* studies during the last quarter of the twentieth century, until the ideas of scholars such as Melveena McKendrick and Margaret Greer began to gain momentum and eventually formed a new camp of scholarship that observe Spanish theater as a medium as likely to be employed for subversive ends as ideologically repressive ones. This perspective against Maravall culminated in a roundtable at the 2011 annual MLA conference,

and a special issue of the *Bulletin of the Comediantes* in 2013. In that publication, Laura Bass summarizes recent estimations of Maravall: “[His] most categorical statements [...] do not hold up against the complexities of theatrical practice in seventeenth-century Spain uncovered by scholars in the past decades. The propagandistic theory with which he is often identified cannot be sustained in light of the multiplicity of agents, and agencies, that constituted the *comedia*” (10). So, we are left with an interpretive problem to resolve this debate, which would seemingly require the critic to fall on one side of the issue. Consequently, one’s understanding of the nature of the *comedia* as prescriptive hegemonic discourse or as subversive can lead to contradictory readings of characters, images, plot developments, or even the overarching meaning of particular work. This mutual exclusivity calls for a pause to reflect on a possible middle ground. In this chapter, I have offered a third view that looks past these dichotomies. I have contended through my analyses of the wild woman plays that transgression of order (i.e. “order disturbed”)—what I have been calling tears in the fabric of the Baroque—occurs in the *comedia* as the result of the inability of ideology to hold together the hermetic system for which it exists to circumscribe.

The genre itself seems to exude a tacit anxiety about this reality in the conventional request for pardon at the end of each play. Wild women themselves are conventions ironically created by the genre whose sole purpose is to erase them. Moreover, they became emblematic problems in the text(ile)—*borrones*—that resist ideological elimination, and question its very integrity. These suggestive examples of the errors of the *comedia* for which the cast requests pardon. The *comedia*, like ideology, will always be imperfect at executing its very purpose, which is demonstrated by the gender trouble that I have highlighted in this chapter. For

characters like Teodosia, wildness never especially suits her, and her return to queen at least appears befitting to her essential nature on the surface; however, the other side of this coin is Marfisa, who only knows wildness, and the play never provides any evidence of a reform in her behavior to better reflect the “essential” qualities that “should” be ascribed to her gender. These are the boundaries within which plenty of ambiguity appears in the *comedia*. The wild woman play is one in which the female characters obtain a voice, often through their own actions rather than relying on men. It would be inaccurate to argue that the female protagonists usurp control from men’s stranglehold on power within a male dominated order in the sense that Cixious would have them laugh; however, these early modern Callistos exert agency within a cultural order that marginalizes them, even when they ultimately re-assume the role they have been assigned by that very order. She is more subtle than Medusa over her prey; rather, at the end of these plays we can imagine her on her throne after the final lines of the *comedia* have been uttered, as the hint of a smile begins to slide upward towards her cheek, just as the final curtain falls.

## CONCLUSION

My goal has been to provide a nuanced application of prevailing ideological theory in interpreting the wild figure's function within the *comedia* of the Spanish Baroque. Ideology is not something that one has or rejects, but rather forms a body of subjects. Creative production within a particular context reflects that ideology, and is both incapable of escaping it while also inevitably leaving clues of its constructed nature. In regards to the Baroque, the wild figure tears at its seams over the course of the seventeenth century, which ultimately exposes its artificial scaffolding. In my analysis, I move past the Maravall/anti-Maravall debate, using the advantages of each approach to transcend both. I contend that there is an elusive interpretive model in which the *comedia* characters and plots expose the artifice of ideology, whether consciously or unconsciously. Not necessarily repressive or subversive (although they may be either) the wild protagonists are creatures of ideology whose existence cannot help but destabilize the completeness ideology supposedly establishes and maintains. They are creatures disavowed by their creator, but can only stay locked up in a tower or hidden in the forest for so long.

Within the greater context of *comedia* studies, and early modern Iberian literary studies as well, certain approaches to cultural production that pull out ideologically repressive and subversive messages from the works of Baroque Spain are often useful to understand the presiding hegemonic ideological structures of the time, or to view the ways that oppression could be acknowledged, and responded to. At the same time, my approach reflects a more accurate

definition of the real manifestations and effects of ideology than these binaries provide, which leads to an equally subtle perspective on early modern cultural production and the society that incubated it. The result is a more comprehensive and precise view of the matrix of meaning-making within the Spanish Baroque enhanced by the analytical tools we have to interpret the period and its cultural production. While I am not the first to chart this interpretative terrain, the fact that the debate between the *maravalistas* and their detractors still exists suggests the need for a study such as mine to continue to push the limits of this discussion to more productive territories. In a sense, my approach remains something of a wild thing, breaking free from two entrenched ideological encampments. The content of the study is only befitting of the peripheral space the argument inhabits.

While there exists a relatively extensive body of work on the wild figure in early modern Spain that succeeds in cataloguing the literary phenomenon well, these studies do not unpack its symbolic depth. Really, they just scratch the surface. In a number of cases, the misdirections enacted by the wild figures have led to misinterpretations of the *comedias* in my dissertation corpus. As I demonstrate in Chapter 1, from the first wild figure to appear on the stage in *El nacimiento de Ursón y Valentín*, the wild figure belies its own tradition, simultaneously calling our attention to it yet not meeting the expectations of what a wild man or woman “should” be. Previous studies also tend to rely on a traditional interpretative framework of the *comedia* endings that maintains focus on the least interesting aspects of the wild figure. They see it as a monster who must either be killed or domesticated. If one views these characters as a monsters all along, when they no longer wears animal skins at the end of each play, they can be interpreted as having incurred this transformation. An analysis of this type fits nicely into the traditional

view of the *comedia*, but it forces the wild figures into a box from which they will always escape. And crawling out of that box is where I find them, and listen to what they have to say. My analysis lets them speak for themselves, and in so doing I have found that the wild figure has much more to say (and do) than previous studies have realized.

In fact, its symbolic range one of its defining characteristics. That is, in these plays the wild figure is rarely represented for its own sake; rather, the nature of the figure is to stand in for the myriad cultural anxieties for which it is a vehicle. The acknowledgement of this factor guides the critic to some of the most pressing tensions of the period. My dissertation carves out a space in which these types of interpretations can be uncovered and proliferate. As a vehicle for meaning, the wild figure does more than lurk in the woods; it protagonizes thought and ways of thinking about a society's delinquents and its princes, its history and its future, its men and its women, and the value system that underpins it all. By reading the wild figure the way that I have done in this dissertation—and against previous interpretations—new doors open to peer into the nature of the Baroque. This is what I have found the wild figure to do.

Therefore, I look past previous scholarship on the wild figure, past Maravall, and past his detractors. Just as the scholars working so diligently on early modern Hispanic natural philosophy interrogate beyond the faulty logic of both sides of the *polémica de la ciencia española* in order to more precisely describe the development of scientific ideas in the Spain and its empire, this dissertation analyzes the way ideology manifests itself in the *comedia* without coming to the text with *a priori* assumptions about what it should do (affirm and prescribe social norms) or could do (subvert those norms). Rather, with the complex relationship of those two poles in mind, the dissertation reveals what the wild figure actually does. As a result, monsters

compel us to look elsewhere for villainy, empiricism encounters the limits of its reach (centuries before the rise and fall of positivism), gender performs, and the audience is left to ponder whether or not everything really is going to be alright. By giving the wild figure more space to mean (in the above ways), it quickly becomes clear that it is a significantly more complex component of the *comedia* than has previously been described. The fact that it amply illuminates the varied themes of the three chapters of the dissertation and holds them in place as an integrated whole demonstrates the extent to which the wild figure pervasively inhabits the Baroque. The wild figure allows us to view the period from a variety of disciplinary perspectives, and within its makeup come together the major ingredients of the Baroque. Existing at the very point where ideology breaks down, the wild figure exposes the underlying structure that supports the ideological apparatus of the Baroque.<sup>112</sup> Appropriately, it takes a monster to guide the critic through the web of monstrosities that have always defined the Baroque. It takes one, it would seem, to know one.

The dissertation, when considered as a whole, succeeds in unpacking that analytical framework. It views social order as that which tries to keep monsters out (or at least at bay), but also the creator of monsters, and a monster itself. Understanding the complex relationship between those realities of culture is useful because it prepares the critic to look for structure and unifying principles but also simultaneously to anticipate aspects of the system under scrutiny to be deformed and with its constituent parts out of place. Hobbes's *Leviathan* imagines the

---

<sup>112</sup> Although I have not mentioned Althusser in the dissertation, I draw from his theory of ideological apparatuses found in *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays* throughout. In future manifestations of the project, I acknowledge that this should be brought more explicitly to the fore.



monster as a model illustration for an ideological apparatus, but my application conceives this image in a different way. Generally speaking, my approach defines the monster, in a modified Derridian sense, as anything that has both a commitment and rejection to a recognizable form. In other words, the monster is not entirely formless, but rather calls upon a particular form that it ultimately defies. That definition can also be applied to Baroque society at large. The corpus of works that I work with put the Baroque on display in a manner that it maintains enough of its form (as understood by traditional scholarship) to be recognizable, while allowing for the existence of aspects slightly larger than they should be (gender fluidity, for instance), in the wrong place ([ideological] monsters at court), or missing altogether (a royal heir). As a result, one can comfortably acknowledge and affirm sweeping generalizations traditionally made by scholars of the period, but also examine around the edges of the ideological system for the monstrous bits that have been disavowed. These monstrous entities riddle the exterior of the Baroque—at least from what is observable in the *comedia*—while its purportedly authentic form remains conspicuously hidden from view. The dissertation corpus is a perfect example. Even though monsters are always dealt with in the resolutions of the *comedias* that I analyze, for the lion's share of each and every play, all we see is monsters. They disappear from view in the end, and we are to understand that their absence is the way things truly are (or ought to be). We are left to infer what something is by what it is not.

In conceiving of the Baroque as a Monster-that-is-culture, on the surface monstrosity is always on display in order to tell us that it—culture—is actually something else. And it is. This monster that I currently describe misdirects our attention from the true monster that has been occluded from view—the monster within. Baroque monsters such as the wild figure, are

*borrones*, washed away by the conventional *comedia* endings, but the curtain closes before we are able to see much of the order that has actually been restored. That, we must imagine in all its Hegelian “blank pages of history” glory. However, this dissertation has met this Monster as it lumbers forth, analyzing how the monsters we see that appear on the surface (that is, those that materialize on the *comedia* stage) point us to the monster within—the repressive realities and anxieties the *comedia* constantly disavows. The culture of the Baroque is a *mise en abîme* of wild things. My approach reveals the Monster-that-is-culture, and the sacrificial monsters it creates to maintain the illusion of its identity.<sup>113</sup> Explicating the relationship between the two, as I have done in the dissertation, provides a more accurate picture of cultural production (monsters) and the society that manufactures it (Monster). Both are multi-faceted, deformed, yet not completely formless; they maintain enough of their shape for us to give them names: the wild figures of the Baroque.

Consequently, my approach also lends itself to better analyze the subtleties of our own cultural context, in which I follow scholars such as Egginton and Castillo whose article I cited in the Introduction. Some of the questions posited by Calderón in *En la vida todo es verdad y todo mentira*, for instance, continue to be explored today. The relevance of Egginton’s *The Theater of Truth: The Ideology of (Neo) Baroque Aesthetics* is a testament to this fact. In the Introduction to this work, Egginton states:

---

<sup>113</sup> This idea, of course, comes from Girard’s scapegoat mechanism. The wild things in the plays of the dissertation corpus point to the pervasiveness of its application. The villagers, for instance, are happy to blame their problems on the wild figure, until they learn that the culpable party is actually someone else. Blame for social ills is immediately redirected, and dealt with in the death, punishment, or domestication of the ideological monster of the work. Once sacrificed, society may proceed.

modernity's fundamental problem of thought is that the subject of knowledge can only approach the world through a veil of appearances; truth is defined as the adequation of our knowledge to the world thus veiled; hence, inquiry of any kind must be guided by the reduction of whatever difference exists between the appearances and the world as it is. The problem, or why the problem remains a problem, is that the subject of knowledge only ever obtains knowledge via his or her senses, via how things appear, and hence the truth thus sought will itself always be corrupted by appearances. (2)

Like both the internal and external audiences of *En la vida...*, we tend towards the disavowal of Egginton's assertion, particularly regarding wholesale trust in truth claims arrived at by purportedly scientific methods similar to the ones dramatized in prototype form in his *comedia*. It is relevant to ask how Calderón might respond to today's scientific fetish in popular culture. We seem to live in the Calderonian now in this regard; his play "debunks" the premise that the blood will out, whereas now we have different premises but the same essential problem. As a core principle, scientific knowledge has the hypothetical ability to tell us everything that is important about a particular object of inquiry. The result is a disavowal of problems with truth claims arrived at by the most dubious of pseudo-scientific approaches, and the utility of other possible approaches to understanding an idea. Lisipo's experiment-spectacle is mimicked in recent shows like *MythBusters* that propose to debunk "myths" of the past through the abilities of current technology and the scientific method. This methodology assumes that the folktales under their scrutiny occurred in a time devoid of knowledge, and now the tools of technology and empiricism have the historiographical capacity to determine whether or not an event was likely

to have occurred. It seems, however, the hosts of the show confound the modes of entertainment and scientific inquiry in a manner that is more complex than is immediately perceptible. Their experiments claim that a past event is impossible or plausible through a current experiment in a different time and place, and therefore can judge if it likely happened or did not. If observation and reproducibility are the key factors to the scientific method, really only reproducibility exists—and tenuously—on *MythBusters*, since knowledge of the original event can only be known in the form that it has been reproduced and disseminated over the course of its textual history. Furthermore, if the early experiments using the air pump are any example, reproducibility is not an accurate measure of whether or not an event took place. For example, natural philosophers with detailed descriptions of seventeenth-century Dutch empiricist Christian Huygens's pump were unable to make it function as well as Huygens contended in his own experiments (Shapin and Shaffer, ch. 5). Recently, a similar concern has arisen out of a study completed by social psychologists who were unable to reproduce the findings of 61 (out of 98) studies from three well-respected psychology journals (Baker, "Over Half...").<sup>114</sup> From the dawn of empiricism until now, the question of reproducibility has always been a problematic one within the realm of scientific inquiry. All of that to say, before we are ready to emphatically join the hosts in affirming a myth has been busted, a reflection on Calderón's *En la vida ...* should cause us to pause and ask if we are asking the right questions in the first place.

If, in the case of *MythBusters*, the question, "Did it really happen?" is misguided, then we must ask what would be a more adequate inquiry. First and foremost, myths do not exist to be busted. The title of the show defines the term as if historical veracity was the implied motive of

---

<sup>114</sup> I thank John Slater for directing me to this article found at *Nature.com*.

stories considered to be myth. Furthermore, the case studies depicted on the show are not properly myths, but rather folk stories that have endured and transformed over time to reach the producers of the show. In establishing a truth claim about whether or not one of these stories occurred, they put myth in opposition with truth, even though this relationship is imprecise in the same way that “fiction” has formed a popularly held, yet false dichotomy with “fact”. Within these conceptual frameworks, science produces facts and truths, and leaves myth and fiction merely as signifiers that mean “not true”; however, as I have displayed throughout this study (and which of course goes without saying for literary scholars), fiction and myth are profound generators of meaning. Yet for viewers of the show, the only seemingly important knowledge of any object is what science can tell us about it, even when all its method can do is provide the suggestion of a tangential concern to the actual nature of myth.<sup>115</sup> Busting myths is like milking a steer and concluding, “that steer doesn’t produce milk”. More specifically related to the dissertation, the same can be said for the perseverance of the search for Sasquatch and Bigfoot. The overarching question is, “Do they exist? Science tells us what we need to know about these creatures, even if only to suggest the improbability of their existence. This is manifested in the popular obsession with Sasquatch, which can currently be viewed in three documentaries available on Netflix that investigate the topic, the titles of which are revealing: *The Truth Behind: Bigfoot*, *Bigfoot’s Reflection*, and *Monster Quest*. In the opening sequence of *Bigfoot’s Reflection*, the documentary cites Nietzsche’s famous quote, “If you stare for long in the abyss, the abyss also gazes into you.” Both the title and the epigraph unavoidably elicit the Lacanian

---

<sup>115</sup> Admittedly, the hosts of the show have the talent—not profoundly different from Mira de Amescua—of encasing a somewhat hollow conclusion in an exceptionally entertaining package.

mirror; we are defined by our separation from the Other who gazes at us, a meaning maker with whom we can never be unified. Bigfoot's reflection is exactly that, what Baroque playwrights would call a shadow, an image, a dream. Bigfoot's function, along with the wild figure and other mythological creatures of the forest, is to tell us something about ourselves precisely by the stories we tell about him. Yet, as is the case of all three documentaries, they ask the question, "Do these monsters really exist?" Turning to science for technologies that can help them get to the bottom of the question, they always seem to come up short with inconclusive results, which of course is inevitable. Perhaps these monster hunters and documentarians should be asking a different question more akin to, "How do these monsters exist?" The sheer fact that the words Bigfoot, the wild figure, or Santa Claus conjure up any meaning at all, means they must exist in some capacity, and it is their ideological function that merits our attention, not the physical reality of their co-inhabiting this world within its forests or at the North Pole. By studying the wild things of the *comedia* as I have in this dissertation, I uncover that Calderón posited the inadequacy of prevailing epistemological and political questions in certain instances for ones more relevant to the actual problems at hand.<sup>116</sup> Consequently, and most importantly, the application of my research has the potential to reach a vast audience. I have explored questions as varied as pop culture, the history of ideas, gender, political philosophy and history, and more directly literary and performance studies. Furthermore, while addressing these types of issues and answering questions that linger about the *comedia* and the culture of the Baroque, my

---

<sup>116</sup> I by no means intend to diminish the function and purpose of scientific research, only to highlight examples where its application is less useful than other modes of inquiry.

research reaches beyond the academy to shed light on the modes of cultural production, and their ideological foundations, that dominate contemporary society.

In the final stages of this project, certain aspects have come into view that could be used to expand the current project or inspire further research on the themes that appear within it. First and foremost, a small number of works have emerged towards the end of the writing process that could be used to expand the width and depth of my analysis. One play that will feature in a subsequent iteration of Chapter 3 is Rojas Zorilla's *Progne y Filomena*, which adds another example of the complex relationship between the wild woman, Greco-Roman mythology, performing gender, and the trope of recuperating one's voice. These aspects come to the fore explicitly in Rojas Zorilla's play in ways that complement my analysis of *La lindona de Galicia* and *La sirena de Tinacria*. Like the tales of Callisto and Echo, the wild woman Filomena's tragic loss of her tongue at the hands of Tereseus—and in turn her voice—provides material for the playwright to explore myth and gender, which forms a trilogy of wild woman plays that serve this purpose. Another play that most adequately fits in the argument of Chapter 2 is Lope's *Las Batuecas del Duque de Alba* as another example towards the beginning of the seventeenth century that uses the wild figure as a vehicle to promote a conservative view of national origins. This aspect of the play is emphasized in the conclusion of the *comedia* more so than it is in *La rueda de la Fortuna*, and would serve as a more direct contrast to *La piedra filosofal*'s setting in the mythical past. It was originally excluded because it does not follow the wild figure-who-would-become-princ(ess) plot convention, although *La piedra filosofal*'s adherence to this story arc is partial as well.

Another avenue for which future studies could use my research and approach would be to shift the locus of centrality to a new position in order to uncover a different set of wild things, and the obsessions they reveal. Since my approach takes up the issue at the bureaucratic center of the Spanish empire, there are few instances of cultural exchange that appear in conjunction with the wild figure on the stages of the corrals and courts of Madrid. This could be accomplished by moving the site of cultural production to the New World, the Low Countries, or the Spanish holdings in the Mediterranean and Italian peninsula. I do not refer here to the indigenous peoples of the Americas, but rather the representations of wildness as they appear in the literature and iconography in the farthest reaching locales of the empire. If applied to theater as I do in the dissertation, a productive research strategy would first identify the existence of wild figures, and then analyze their function. What would make this type of study of exceptional importance would be the added aspect of cultural exchange that is less present in the plays of the dissertation corpus. For example, the wild figure garnered a popularity in the Low Countries and the rest of Northern Europe that lingers to this day.<sup>117</sup> During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the rise of Protestantism made northern Europe a chaotic site of intersecting ideologies. An analysis of the function of the wild figure on either side of the Catholic/Protestant ideological divide would provide revealing insights into the anxieties of both. Melchior Lorch's *The Pope as*

---

<sup>117</sup> See for instance, Charles Fréger's photography collection titled "Wilder Mann" that took him to eighteen European countries to find the lingering masquerade tradition of the wild figure. This collection has enjoyed numerous exhibitions in galleries throughout France, and is currently at the Pôle International de la Préhistoire to initiate a conversation about the possible connection between the dramatic history of the wild figure and early sapien representations of Cro-magnon. The photographer aptly notes the complexity of making such a claim and its consequences, even if he is unable to resist the temptation to "stay dry and objective and leave these discussions to scientists."



*Antichrist* (1545), for example, depicts the pope as covered in fur and wielding a club, amongst other monstrous characteristics, and was dedicated to Martin Luther. If this elaborate woodcut is any indication of a wider use of the figure in the battle for religious primacy in Northern Europe, investigation on the topic would be productive to understand more comprehensively the complex sites of exchange at the edges of Habsburg domains. One notable Iberian literary work suggests the utility of such a study, and to a certain extent predicts its premise. Cervantes's *Los trabajos de Persiles y Segismunda, historia septentrional* (1617), literally a story or history about the north, envisions spaces, at this point not surprisingly, inhabited by no dearth of wild figures. Along with Góngora, Cervantes's writing exemplifies Egginton's "minor strategy" framework—in contrast to the prevailing "major strategy" of the *comedia*—and his posthumously published work would be a productive point of departure for an analysis of wild things within a text that engages with ideology differently than the *comedia*.

In the end, this dissertation has explored the depths of what the *comedia* does. Agents of the Baroque machine churned out these ideological Model T's at a rate that would make Henry Ford blush. Lope's dramatic production *en masse* is emblematic of the prevailing aesthetic of excess and surplus, and out of this sheer abundance of plays arise repetitions—the assembly line metaphor remains relevant—, and the genome of a genre evolves into its own recognizable species of cultural artifact. As a factory of meaning-making, theater provided a space to alleviate cultural anxieties by portraying the satisfactory demise of believable monsters. But then, Lope decides to draw on the wild figure as one such monster, which throws a monkey wrench in the whole enterprise. He unleashed an ideological scavenger that would be difficult—if not impossible—to impede. As other stock characters were replicated time and time again without

significant permutation, the wild figure seems to always get away from its author, causing excesses and deformity that would come to be known as a defining characteristic of the Baroque. For instance, in Lope's second wild figure play, *El animal de Hungría*, the tidy ending is thwarted by Rosaura, who remains in line to become queen of Hungary despite the fact that she is the offspring of the defamed traitor Faustina and her illegitimate relationship with the king. Within the play, ideological anxieties (marital fidelity) that falsely monstrify Teodosia and converted her into a wild woman set in motion the events that would give rise to another wild thing—Rosaura. The resolution is incapable of tying up this loose end; the replication of the wild figure creates a surplus that cannot be tidily reconstituted into the boundaries of Baroque ideological cartography. This microcosm of replication is mirrored in the trajectory of the wild figure over the course of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Every time it appears, it is more problematic, uncovering a greater cultural anxiety that becomes increasingly more difficult to disavow. As a result, the dramatic genre *shows* more—in more lavish sets and extravagant plots—but *does* less, at least as a vehicle for hegemonic ideology. By the end, the Ismenia's and Marfisa's replace the Gila's and Faustina's of nearly a century previous. Not only do they escape their respective stories unpunished, their domestication is suggestively absent as well. The ideological efficacy of the Baroque to persuade its subjects through the vehicle of the *comedia* lessens. Wildness ultimately goes untamed to be rebranded in the following century.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

Althusser, Louis. *Lenin and Philosophy, and Other Essays*. Trans. Ben Brewster. New York:

Monthly Review, 1972. Print.

Amezúa, Agustín de. *Epistolario de Lope de Vega*. Vol. III. Madrid: Real Academia Española,

1941. pp. 3-5. Print.

Antonucci, Fausta. "Algunas notas sobre *El nieto de su padre*". *Criticón* 51 (1991) 7-21. Print.

- - -. *El salvaje en la comedia del siglo de oro: Historia de un tema de Lope a Calderón*.

Universidad de Navarra, 1995. Print.

Arellano, Ignacio. "La imagen de poder en el teatro de Bances Candamo, poeta áulico de Carlos

II". *RILCE* 26.1 (2010): 23-36. Print.

Armas, Frederick de. "Papeles de zafiro: Signos político-mitológicos en *La vida es sueño*".

*Anuario calderoniano* 2 (2009): 75-96. Print.

Armas Wilson, Diana de. "Cervantes and the Night Visitors: Dream Work in the Cave of

Montesinos". *Quixotic Desire: Psychoanalytic Perspectives on Cervantes*. Eds. Ruth

Anthony El Saffar and Diana de Armas Wilson. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1993. Print.

Baker, Monja. "Over half of psychology studies fail reproducibility test". *Nature News*. Nature

Publishing Group, 27 Aug. 2015. Web. 24 Oct. 2015.

Bances Candamo, Francisco Antonio de. *La piedra filosofal*. Ed. Alfonso D'Agostino. Rome:

Bulzoni, 1988. Print.

Bartra, Roger. *El salvaje en el espejo*. Mexico City: Ediciones Era, 1992. Print.

- - -. *The Artificial Savage: Modern Myths of the Wild Man*. Ann Arbor: U of Michigan P, 1997. Print.

Bass, Laura. "The *Comedia* and Cultural Control: The Legacy of José Antonio Maravall".

*Bulletin of the Comediantes* 65.1 (2013): 1-13. Print.

Boyle, Margaret E. *Unruly Women: Performance, Penitence, and Punishment in Early Modern Spain*. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 2014. Print.

- - -. "Women's Exemplary Violence in Vélez de Guevara's *La serrana de la Vera*". *Bulletin of the Comediantes* 66.1 (2014): 159-175. Print.

Baudrillard, Jean. *The Transparency of Evil: Essays on Extreme Phenomena*. London: Verso, 1993. Print.

Bernheimer, Richard. *Wild Men in the Middle Ages*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1952. Print.

Bouistau, Pedro, Claudio Tesserant and Francisco Beleforest. *Historias Prodigiosas y maravillosas de diversos sucesos acaescidos en el Mundo*. Trans. Andrea Pescioni. 1586. Ed. Enrique Suárez Figaredo. *Lemir* 17 (2013): 125-448. Web. 1 Oct. 2014.

Butterfield, Herbert. *The Origins of Modern Science, 1300-1800*. New York: The Free Press, 1965. Print.

Calderón de la Barca, Pedro. *El médico de su honra*. 1629. Ed. Don William Cruickshank. Madrid: Castalia, 1986. Print.

- - -. *En la vida todo es verdad y todo mentira*. 1659. Ed. Don William Cruickshank. London:

Tamesis, 1971. Print.

- - -. *En la vida todo es verdad y todo mentira*. 1659. Ed. John D. Slater and Harrison Meadows.

Newark: LinguaText, Forthcoming 2016. Print.

- - -. *Hado y divisa de Leonido y Marfisa*. Ed. Luis Iglesias Feijoo. *Comedias*. Vol. 5. Madrid:

Fundación José Antonio de Castro, 2010. Print. Biblioteca Castro.

- - -. *La fiera, el rayo y la piedra*. Ed. Aurora Egido. Madrid: Cátedra, 1989. Print. Letras

hispanicas 299.

- - -. *La hija del Aire: Tragedia en dos partes*. Ed. Ramón F. Luis. Madrid: Cátedra, 1987. Print.

Letras hispanicas 270.

- - -. *La vida es sueño*. Ed. Ciríaco Morón Arroyo. Madrid: Cátedra, 1991. Print. Letras

Hispanicas 57.

- - -. *Los tres mayores prodigios. Parte segunda de comedias del celebre poeta español don*

*Pedro Calderon de la Barca*. Madrid, Francisco Sanz, 1683. Print.

Cañizares-Esguerra, Jorge. *Puritan Conquistadors: Iberianizing the Atlantic, 1550-1700*.

Stanford: Stanford UP, 2006. Print.

- - -. "The Colonial Iberian Roots of the Scientific Revolution". *Nature, Empire, and Nation:*

*Explorations of the History of Science in the Iberian World*. Stanford: Stanford UP, 2006.

14-45. Print.

Castillo, David. *Baroque Horrors: Roots of the Fantastic in the Age of Curiosities*. Ann Arbor: U

of Michigan P, 2010. Print.

- Castillo, David and William Egginton. "Dreamboat Vampires and Zombie Capitalists". *The New York Times* 24 October 2014. Web. 10 November 2014.
- Carroll, Noel. "The Ideology of Horror". *The Philosophy of Horror, or the Paradoxes of the Heart*. New York: Routledge, 1990. Print.
- Cascardi, Anthony. "Allegories of Power". *The Prince in the Tower: Perceptions of the La vida es sueño*. Ed. Frederick A. de Armas. Lewisberg: Bucknell, 1993. Print.
- Castro y Bellvís, Guillén de. (attributed to) *El nieto de su padre. Obras de Don Guillen de Castro y Bellvis*. Ed. Eduardo Juliá Martínez. Madrid: n.p., 1927. Print.
- Cervantes, Miguel de. *El ingenioso hidalgo don Quijote de la Mancha*. 1605, 1615. Tom Lathrop, ed. Newark: European Masterpieces, 2005. Print. Cervantes & Co. Spanish Classics 1.
- - -. "El retablo de las maravillas". *Entremeses*. Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1945. Print.
- - -. "La fuerza de la sangre". *Novelas ejemplares II*. Ed. Harry Sieber. Madrid: Cátedra, 2006. Print.
- - -. *Los trabajos de Persiles y Segismunda*. Madrid: Juan de la Cuesta, 1617. Kindle file.
- Cirnigliaro, Noelia S. "Touching the Ground: Women's Footwear in the Early Modern Hispanic World. An Introduction". *Journal of Spanish Cultural Studies* 14.2 (2013): 107-119. Print.
- Cixious, Helene. "The Laugh of the Medusa". *The Norton Anthology to Theory and Criticism*. Ed. Vincent B. Leitch, et al. New York: Norton, 2010. Print. 1942-1959.
- Cohen, Jeffery Jerome. "Monster Culture (Seven Theses)". *Monster Theory: A Reader*. Ed. Jeffrey Jerome Cohen. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1996. Kindle file.

- Connor (Swietlicki), Catherine. "Marriage and Subversion in *Comedia* Endings: Problems in Art and Society". *Gender, Identity, and Representation in Spain's Golden Age*. Eds. Anita K. Stoll and Dawn L. Smith. Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2000. Print.
- Cotarelo y Mori, Emilio. "Mira de Amescua y su teatro." *Boletín de la Real Academia Española* 17.84 (1930): 467-505. Print.
- - -. "Mira de Amescua y su teatro (Continuación)." *Boletín de la Real Academia Española* 17.85 (1930): 611-658. Print.
- Cruikshank, William. "Introduction". *En la vida todo es verdad y todo mentira*. 1658. By Pedro Calderón de la Barca. London: Tamesis, 1971. Print.
- Deleuze, Gilles. "The Fold." Trans. Jonathan Strauss. *Yale French Studies* 80 (1991): 227-47. *JSTOR*. Web. 22 Oct. 2015.
- Derrida, Jacques. "Structure, Sign and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences". *Critical Theory since Plato*. Eds. Hazard Adams and Leroy Searle. New York: Harcourt Brace, 1992. 83-93. Print.
- Deyermond, Alan. "Segismundo the Wild Man". *Golden Age Spanish Literature: Studies in Honor of John Varey by his Colleagues and Pupils*. London: Westfield College, 1991. 83-91. Print.
- Dickson, Arthur. *Valentine and Orson*. Trans. Henry Watson. London: Oxford UP, 1937. Early English Text Society 204.
- Donnell, Sidney. *Feminizing the Enemy: Imperial Spain, Transvestite Drama, and the Crisis of Masculinity*. Cranbury: Rosemont, 2003. Print.

- Dudley, Edward. "The Wild Man Goes Baroque". *The Wild Man Within: An Image of Western Thought from the Renaissance to Romanticism*. Eds. Edward Dudley and Maximillian E. Novak. Pittsburgh: U of Pittsburgh P, 1972. Print.
- Eamon, William. "'Nuestros males no son constitucionales, sino circunstanciales': The Black Legend and the History of Early Modern Spanish Science. *The Colorado Review of Hispanic Studies* 7. (Fall 2009): 13-30. Print.
- - -. *Science and the Secrets of Nature. Books of Secrets in Medieval and Early Modern Culture*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1994. Print.
- - -. "The Scientific Education of a Renaissance Prince: Archduke Rudolph in the Spanish Court". *Academia.edu*. N.p., n.d. Web. 3 Mar. 2015.
- Edson, Evelyn. "Mapping the Middle Ages: The Imaginary and the Real Universe of the *Mappaemundi*". *Monsters Marvels and Miracles: Imaginary Journeys and Landscapes in the Middle Ages*.
- Egginton, William. *How the World Became a Stage: Presence, Theatricality, and the Question of Modernity*. Albany: SUNY P, 2003.
- - -. *The Theater of Truth: The Ideology of (Neo)Baroque Aesthetics*. Stanford: Stanford UP, 2010. Print.
- Egido, Aurora. "El vestido del salvaje en los autos sacramentales de Pedro de Calderón." *Serta philologica F. Lázaro Carreter : natalem diem sexagesimum celebranti dicata*. Vol. 2. Ed. Emilio Alarcos Llorach. Spain: Cátedra, 1983. Print.



Figuerola y Córdoba, Diego de. *Leoncio y Montano. Pensil de Apolo, en doze comedias nuevas de los mejores ingenios de España: Parte catorze*. Madrid, 1661. Cervantes Virtual. Web. 17 July 2014.

- - -. *La sirena de Tinacria. Parte quarenta y quatro de Comedias nuevas, nunca impressas, escogidas de los mejores ingenios de España*. Madrid, 1678. 369-412. Cervantes virtual. Web. 17 July 2014.

Foucault, Michel. *Abnormal: Lectures at the Collège de France 1974-1975*. Trans. Graham Burchell. Ed. Arnold I. Davidson. London: Verso, 2003. Print.

Fox, Dian. *Refiguring the Hero: From Peasant to Noble in Lope de Vega and Calderón*. University Park: Pennsylvania State UP, 1991. Print.

Gallego Roca, Miguel. "La rueda de la fortuna de Mira de Amescua y la polémica sobre el Heraclio español." *RILCE* 7.2 (1991): 311-24. Print.

Glenn, Richard F. "The Loss of Identity: Towards a Definition of the Dialectic in Lope's Early Drama". *Hispanic Review* 41.4 (1973): 609-626. Print.

Gracián, Baltazar. *Oráculo manual y arte de prudencia*. Ed. Camilo Pino. 2010. Kindle Version.

Greer, Margaret. "An (In)convenient Marriage? Justice and Power in *La vida es sueño, comedia and auto sacramental*". *Bulletin of Spanish Studies*. 85.6 (2008): 55-68. Print.

- - -. "Art and Power in the Spectacle Plays of Calderón de la Barca". *PMLA* 104.3 (1989): 329-339. Print.

- - -. "The Problem of Don Juan José". *The Play of Power: Mythological Court Dramas of Calderón*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1991. Print.

- Hildner, David. *Reason and the Passions in the Comedias of Calderón*. Purdue Monographs in Romance Languages. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1982. Print.
- Hivnor, Mary. "En la vida todo es verdad y todo mentira: Calderón's Prince Defined by Faith". *Bulletin of the Comediantes* 37.2 (1985): 249-261. Print.
- Hobbes, Thomas, and William Molesworth. *Philosophical Rudiments Concerning Government and Society*. 1651. London: Bohn, 1842. *Intelext Past Masters*. Web. 27 July 2015.
- Höpfel, Harro. *Jesuit Political Thought: The Society of Jesus and the State, c. 1540-1630*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2004. Print.
- Hopper, Edward William. "A Critical and Annotated Edition of Mira de Amescua's *La rueda de la fortuna*." Diss. U of Missouri, 1972. Print.
- Isidore of Seville. *The Etymologies*. Trans. Stephen A. Barney, W.J. Lewis, J.A. Beach, and Oliver Berghof. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2006. Print.
- Katritzky, M.A. Literary Anthropologies and Pedro González, the 'Wild Man' of Tenerife". *Medical Cultures of the Early Modern Spanish Empire*. Eds. John Slater, Maríaluz López-Terrada, and José Pardo-Tomás. Surrey: Ashgate, 2014. Print. New Hispanisms: Cultural & Literary Studies.
- Küpper, Joachim. "The Case of Rosaura's Honor, and the Problem of Modernity (*La vida es sueño*). *Modern Language Notes* 124.2 (2009): 509-517. Print.
- Landon, Brooks. "Extrapolation and Speculation". *The Oxford Handbook of Science Fiction*. Ed. Rob Latham. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2014. Print.

López-Pérez, Miguel. "Ciencia y pensamiento hermético". *Más Allá de la Leyenda Negra:*

*España y la revolución científica = Beyond the Black Legend : Spain and the Scientific*

*Revolution*. Valencia: Instituto de Historia de la Ciencia y Documentación López Piñero,

2007. Print.

López Piñero, José María. *Ciencia y técnica en la sociedad española de los siglos XVI y XVII*.

Barcelona: Editorial Labor, 1979. Print.

Louth, Andrew. "Byzantium Transforming (600-700)". *The Cambridge History of the Byzantine*

*Empire*. Ed. Jonathan Shepard. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2008. 221-230. Print.

Madrigal, José Antonio. "La función del hombre salvaje en el teatro de Lope de Vega, Tirso de

Molina y Calderon de la Barca." Diss. U of Kentucky, 1974. Print.

Manuel, Don Juan. "Cuento XI". *El conde Lucanor*. Ed. Antonio I. Sotelo. Madrid: Cátedra,

2006. Print. Letras Hispánicas.

Maravall, José Antonio. *La cultura del barroco: Análisis de una estructura histórica*. Madrid:

Ariel, 1975. Print.

- - -. *Teatro y literatura de la sociedad barroca*. Barcelona: Crítica, 1980. Print.

Mariana, Juan de. *Del rey, y de la institución de la dignidad real*. 1640. N. trans. Madrid:

Sociedad literaria y tipográfica, 1845. Web. 29 July 2015. <<http://fama2.us.es/fde/delRey.pdf>>

Mazur, Oleh. *The Wild in the Spanish Renaissance & Golden Age Theater: A Comparative Study*

*Including the Indio, the Bárbaro and their Counterparts in European Lores*. Univ.

Microfilms Internat. for Villanova U, 1980. Print.

- McKendrick, Melveena. *Woman and Society in the Spanish Drama of the Golden Age: A Study of the Mujer Varonil*. Cambridge UP, 1974. Print.
- Menéndez y Pelayo, Marcelino. *Estudios y discursos de crítica histórica y literaria. Teatro: Lope, Tirso, Calderón*. Vol. VIII. Alicante: Biblioteca Virtual de Cervantes, 2008. Web.
- Merril, Judith. "What Do You Mean: Science? Fiction?" *SF: The Other Side of Realism*. Ed. Thomas D. Clareson. Bowling Green: Bowling Green U Popular P, 1971. 53-95. Print.
- Metz, Christian. "Instant Self Contradiction". *On Signs*. Ed. Marshall Blonsky. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1985. 259-266. Print.
- Mira de Amescua, Antonio. *La rueda de la Fortuna*. Ed. Edward Hopper. Diss. U of Missouri, 1972. Print.
- Molina, Tirso de. *El Aquiles. Obras dramáticas completas de Tirso de Molina, 1584-1648*. Ed. Blanca de los Ríos. Madrid: Aguilar, 1946. Print.
- Morley, S. Griswold and Courtney Bruerton. *Cronología de las comedias de Lope de Vega*. Madrid: Editorial Gredos, 1968. Print.
- Mujica, Bárbara. "The Skeptical Premises of Calderón's *En esta vida todo es verdad y todo mentira*". *Texto y espectáculo: Selected Proceedings of the Symposium on Spanish Golden Age Theater*. Lanham: UP of America, 1989. Print. 117-126.
- Navarro Brotóns, Victor, and William Eamon. *Más Allá de la Leyenda Negra: España y la revolución científica = Beyond the Black Legend : Spain and the Scientific Revolution*. Valencia: Instituto de Historia de la Ciencia y Documentación López Piñero, 2007. Print.
- The New Oxford Annotated Bible. New Revised Standard Version with the Apocrypha*. 3rd ed. Eds. Michael D. Coogan, et al. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2001. Print.

- Ovid. *Metamorphoses*. Trans. Rolfe Humphries. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1983. Print.
- O'Brien, Eavan. "Locating the Diary of Persecuted Innocence: María de Zayas' Adaptation of Hagiographic Histories". *Bulletin of Spanish Studies* 87.3 (2010): 295-314. Print.
- Parker, A.A. "Segismundo's Tower: a Calderonian Myth". *Bulletin of Hispanic Studies* 59.3 (1982): 247-256. Print.
- Pérez de Montalbán, Juan. *Comedia famosa, La lindona de Galicia. 3a. parte de las comedias del doctor J. de Montalván*. Valencia, 1762. *Cervantes virtual*. Web. 20 May 2012.
- - -. *Comedia famosa, intitulada Amor, es naturaleza*. Valladolid, 1700. *U de Sevilla Fondos digitalizados*. Web. Aug. 2014.
- Plasencia-Roth, Michael. "Enemigos de Dios: Los monstruos y la teología de la Conquista." *Heterotropías*. Eds. Carlos Jauregui and Juan Pablo Dabove. 2003. Print.
- Popkin, Richard. *The History of Scepticism from Erasmus to Spinoza*. Berkeley: U of California Press, 1979. Print.
- Pratt, Dale. "Felix Culpa: Allegory and Play in Calderón's *Autos*." *Bulletin of the Comediantes* 55 (1999): 37-53. Print.
- Quintero, María Cristina. *Gendering the Crown in the Spanish Baroque Comedia*. Surrey: Ashgate, 2012, Print. *New Hispanisms: Literary and Cultural Studies* 2.
- Regalado, Antonio. *Calderón: Los orígenes de la modernidad en la España del Siglo de Oro*. Vol. I. Barcelona: Ediciones Destino, 1995. Print.
- Reichenberger, Arnold G. "The Uniqueness of the *comedia*". *Hispanic Review* 27.3 (1959): 303-316. Print.

Rey Bueno, Mar. “La Mayson pour Distiller des Eaües at El Escorial: Alchemy and Medicine at the Court of Philip II, 1556—1598”. *Medical History* 52.S29 (2009): 26-39. Print.

Río Parra, Elena del. *Una era de monstruos: Representaciones de lo deforme en el Siglo de Oro español*. Vervuert: Iberoamericana, 2003. Print. Biblioteca Áurea Hispánica 27.

Robbins, Jeremy. *Arts of Perception: The Epistemological Mentality of the Spanish Baroque, 1580-1720*. Abingdon: Routledge, 2007. Kindle Version.

Ryjik, Veronika. “¿Nobles o villanos?: El ideal nacional y la conciencia de clase en Lope”. *Lope de Vega en la invención de España. El drama histórico y la formación de la conciencia nacional*. Woodbridge: Tamesis, 2011. 130-168. Print.

Saavedra Fajardo, Diego. *Idea de un príncipe político cristiano*. Vol. I - II. Madrid: Editora Nacional, 1976. Cervantes Virtual. Web. 17 June 2015.

Sánchez Ibañez, José Ángel. “Estudio y edición de una comedia de Juan Cabeza ‘La reina más desdichada’”. Diss. U of Zaragoza, 1995. Microfiche.

Shakespeare, William. *Macbeth*. Eds. Barbara A. Mowat and Paul Werstine. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1992. Print. Folger Shakespeare Library.

Shapin, Steven. *The Scientific Revolution*. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1996. Print.

Shapin, Steven, and Simon Schaffer. *Leviathan and the Air Pump: Hobbes, Boyle, and the Experimental Life*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 2011. Kindle Version.

Shannahan III, John Henry. “Stages of Knowledge: Theater and Laboratory in Seventeenth- and Early Eighteenth-Century England”. Diss. Rutgers U, 2002. Print.

- Simerka, Barbara. *Knowing Subjects. Cognitive Cultural Studies and Early Modern Spanish Literature*. West Lafayette: Purdue UP, 2013. Print. Purdue Studies in Romance Literatures 57.
- Slater, John. "Sacramental Instrumentality: Representation, Demonstration, and the Calderonian *Auto*." *Bulletin of the Comediantes* 58.2 (2006): 479-500. Print.
- Slater, John, Marialuz López-Terrada, and José Pardo-Tomás. "Introduction". *Medical Cultures of the Early Modern Spanish Empire*. Surrey: Ashgate, 2014. Print. New Hispanisms: Cultural & Literary Studies.
- Sloman, Albert E. *The Dramatic Craftsmanship of Calderón: His Use of Earlier Plays*. Oxford: Dolphin, 1958. Print.
- Stoll, Anita K., and Dawn L. Smith. "Introduction". *Gender, Identity, and Representation in Spain's Golden Age*. Eds. Anita K. Stoll and Dawn L. Smith. Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2000. Print.
- Stroud, Matthew D. "Performativity and Sexual Identity in Calderón's *Las manos blancas no ofenden* (White Hands Don't Offend)." *Gender, Identity, and Representation in Spain's Golden Age*. Eds. Anita K. Stoll and Dawn L. Smith. Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2000. Print.
- Tubau, Xavier. "Prólogo". *El animal de Hungría. Comedias de Lope de Vega. Parte IX*. Ed. Alberto Blecua, Guillermo Serés and Marco Presotto. Lleida: Editorial Mileno, 2007. Print.
- Uebel, Michael. "Unthinking the Monster: Twelfth Century Responses to Saracen Alterity". *Monster Theory: A Reader*. Ed. Jeffrey Jerome Cohen. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P,

1996. Kindle version.

Valbuena Prat, Angel. "Prólogo". *Mira de Amescua: Teatro*. Madrid: Clásicos Castellanos, 1961.

Print.

Vasilev, A.A. *History of the Byzantine Empire*. Madison: U of Wisconsin P, 1961. pp. 169-199.

Print.

Vega Carpio, Lope de. *El animal de Hungría*. 1608-1612. Ed. Xavier Tubau. *Comedias de Lope*

*de Vega. Parte IX*. Eds. Alberto Blecua, Guillermo Serés and Marco Presotto. Lleida:

Editorial Mileno, 2007. Print.

- - -. *El hijo de los leones. Parte decinueve y la mejor parte de las comedias de Lope de Vega*

*Carpio*. Madrid, 1624. Print.

- - -. *El nacimiento de Ursón y Valentín*. 1588-1595. Eds. Patrizia Campana and Juan-Ramón

Mayol Ferrer. *Comedias de Lope de Vega*. Part I. Vol. 2 Ed. Alberto Blecua, Guillermo

Serés, and Marco Presotto. Lleida: Editorial Mileno, 1997. Print.

Vélez de Guevara. *Virtudes vencen señales*. Ed. William R. Manson, C. George Peale, and José

M. Ruano de la Haza. Newark: Juan de la Cuesta, 2010. Print. Ediciones críticas 58.

White, Hayden. "The Forms of Wildness: Archaeology of an Idea". *The Wild Man Within: An*

*Image of Western Thought from the Renaissance to Romanticism*. Eds. Edward Dudley

and Maximillian E. Novak. Pittsburgh: U of Pittsburgh P, 1972. Print.

Williams, Wes. "Introduction: Mighty Magic". *Monsters & their Meanings in Early Modern*

*Culture*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2011. Print.

Žižek, Slavoj. *The Sublime Object of Ideology*. London: Verso, 1989. Print.