



MEDIEVAL IBERIA IN CONTEMPORARY CULTURE

Versión (no) original: *Isabel y Carlos, Rey Emperador*
frente al multilingüismo y la diversidad cultural

Echoes of Hispanic Conquest Narratives
in James Cameron's *Avatar*

From Scopophilia to Abjection: Vision and Blindness
in the *Monja que se arrancó los ojos*

Editora invitada: Nancy Marino

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PRÓLOGO

Los vestigios de la Edad Media en la Península Ibérica, con su amplitud a lo largo del tiempo y su complejidad, continúan estando presentes en la cultura contemporánea española del Siglo XXI. Esa es una de las ideas centrales que subraya la Dra Nancy Marino en este nuevo monográfico de *Miriada Hispánica* que ella misma introduce en las próximas páginas. La profesora Marino enseña literatura y cultura medieval en Michigan State University, donde recibió el título de “Distinguished Professor” en reconocimiento de su larga trayectoria como investigadora y como docente. Su línea de investigación principal se centra en el *Cancionero* y en la cultura de palacio comprendida entre mediados del siglo XV y mediados del siglo XVI. Es la autora de numerosos artículos y de ocho libros, entre los que se incluye *Jorge Manrique’s “Coplas por la muerte de su padre”: A History of the Poem and its Reception* (2011).

Quisieramos expresar nuestro agradecimiento tanto a ella como a los profesores que han colaborado en esta décima segunda edición de nuestra revista. Tenemos el honor de contar con las contribuciones de Michael Harney de la University of Texas; Núria Silleras-Fernández, de la University of Colorado; Cristina Guardiola-Griffiths, de la University of Delaware; Taiko Haessler, de la University of Colorado; David Arbesú, de la University of South Florida; y por último, con Andrew Beresford, de Durham University. Gracias por aportar nuevos conocimientos a nuestra miriada.

AGUSTÍN REYES TORRES
Director de *Miriada Hispánica*



INTRODUCCIÓN

MEDIEVAL IBERIA IN CONTEMPORARY CULTURE (EVERYTHING OLD IS NEW AGAIN)

Cualquiera tiempo pasado fue mejor
JORGE MANRIQUE

What is it about the Middle Ages that continues to fascinate us? Whether factual or fictional, long-gone people and their historical circumstances keep speaking to us across the centuries: the Catholic Monarchs Isabel and Fernando, King Arthur and his Round Table, the first hero of the Christian Reconquest, Pelayo, or Robin Hood, these stories represent something that remains meaningful today, stories to be not only remembered, but retold or reenacted. Our nostalgia for times of a remote past relies in great part on our idealization of the events and the players, of their society and their beliefs. The medieval past seems somehow better than the contemporary world, a simpler, purer time when a superior morality reigned, when courtly values of chivalric service prevailed, when national identities were formed. Never mind that brutal tactics were often used to attain these ideals: although contemporary uses of medieval histories often do depict bloody warfare, it tends toward the simplified “good guys vs. bad guys” format in which where the ideal ideological outcome takes precedent over the ruthless maneuvers carried out to achieve it. Novels, films, and historical enactments of battles and other significant events generally respond to this

uncomplicated view of the past. Some of these, like the annual 2 January celebration of the *Toma de Granada*, are controversial events for their one-sided glorification of an episode whose historical consequences are far more complex than the parameters of this celebration allow.

In other words, (and as the modern proverb states), “The past is not what it used to be.” It has been subjected to a process of selective memory (or selective amnesia) in which authors, artists, film directors, or even politicians, choose which aspects of the historical past to utilize for the purposes of their creation, and which to set aside as being not relevant to their intentions, or even contrary to their desired objective. These objectives can range from entertainment (such as novels, films, or television programs), to political campaigns, to propaganda. But it is not only creative artists or politicians (perhaps the ultimate creators of revisionist history), who engage in the methods to carry out their aims; over the centuries historians have also used and sometimes abused the historical method in order to produce works intended to favor one side or another of an important event, or to color the biography of a significant person. These acts of revisionism usually intend to sway public opinion from the previous or received notions of history.

Most recreations of the medieval past are products of romantic notions about what those societies were like, especially the lives of monarchs and courtiers. Indeed, the word “romantic” itself derives from the old French *romanz*, the novel of chivalry. It entered the English language by the mid-seventeenth century as a word to describe the characteristics of the chivalric tales (*OED*); nevertheless, it is not documented in Spanish until 1836, in Mariano Larra’s play *Margarita de Borgoña*, in which he refers to “un escritor romántico” (RAE). Before that time in Spain, *romance* was generally used only to refer to chivalric texts and to ballads. In the English-speaking world the word became the denomination of the Romantic movement, itself motivated by the values espoused in those medieval stories of valiant knights and their moral codes, and the ladies who inspired their feats as well as their amorous devotion.

We tend to associate the term “medievalism” with the nineteenth-century Romantics and their continued influence not only in literature, but in the Gothic revival in architecture, the pre-Raphaelite painters, and eventually the arts and crafts movement. Nevertheless the fascination with things medieval existed well before that time, centuries before the word came into the lexicon to describe it. In Spain, a nostalgia for the idealized past seems to have begun as early as the fifteenth century. In his book *The Troubadour Revival*, Roger Boase sees the resurgence of this culture as an aristocratic response to the decline of medieval values. He writes that they intended to counter this loss by archaizing their world, cultivating ideas of an earlier

era about love and court society through poetic expression. Their preferred form of court entertainment was the creation and recitation of poems that often reflected these themes, and which were collected into the *cancionero* anthologies that remain to us a window onto the literary and social tastes of the period (5).

Perhaps the most famous expression of nostalgia for a particular courtly milieu is Jorge Manrique's *Coplas por la muerte de su padre*, whose verse "¿Qué se hizo el rey don Juan?" is the preamble to a series of stanzas that evoke in detail a bygone era of a gente court of dance, music, beauty, love, and scents. This is the best example of what he had written in the first part of the poem, that "cualquiera tiempo pasado/ fue mejor." The *Coplas* still arouse in the contemporary reader a lost, if idealized, world. The poem, which beautifully expresses nostalgia, loss, the inevitability of death and the certainty of a better life beyond this one, is composed with extraordinary sensibility that has affected readers throughout the five centuries since its composition. Swayed by the *Coplas*, the reader extends the poem's emotive qualities to Manrique himself. In our unconscious revisionism, we are either not aware or prefer to forget that he was, first and foremost, a warrior, son of the formidable Master of Santiago Rodrigo Manrique; his father arranged don Jorge's marriage to a woman who, after the poet's death, complained to the Catholic Monarchs of her husband's treatment: "D. Jorge, su marido, a quien no le convenía en cosa contradecir sin que ella recibiera gran peligro de su persona e causa a le dar mala vida continuo," referring also to the "fuerza et miedo" that she suffered with him (Marino 6).

But it was the emperor Carlos V who engaged in a wholesale appropriation of the medieval chivalric model for his reign. Raised in the court of his grandfather, Maximilian I, Carlos was imbued with the chivalric spirit that his grandfather embraced. Maximilian fancied himself and his courtiers as a continuation of King Arthur's court. Some of his preferred reading included *libros de caballerías*. Inspired by what he saw around him and what he read, the young Carlos created a self-image in the same vein, and he carried this myth of self as chivalric hero into his reign as emperor. The battles against the Protestant princes for the preeminence of Catholicism was to Carlos a kind of medieval crusade. Like Amadís de Gaula, the emperor was struggling against infidels; like his grandparents the Catholic Monarchs, Carlos saw himself fighting a reconquest. Authors and artists were commissioned to produce works that depicted him as this kind of hero: many ballads about his exploits in Italy, Africa, and Europe were written and published in *pliegos sueltos*; he was the subject of several epic poems; he was immortalized in armor, mostly famously by Titian on the event of Carlos's victory at the Battle of Mühlberg in 1547. But his self-fashioning on the Burgundian model of knighthood was a fantasy that in the end bore no fruit. His son and successor Felipe II had no interest at all in *libros de caballerías* and even banned their publication. His was not a reign of anachronism.

Even if Carlos V's embracing of medieval ideals failed him, the public's taste for things medieval did not wane with his abdication and death. This is most evident in the ongoing popularity of traditional poetic forms and for romances of chivalry throughout the sixteenth century. It began with the first publication of the *Cancionero General* in 1511, which was reedited and augmented eight more times until 1573. Probably following this model of poetic anthology, and in the wake of the success of the hundreds or even thousands of *pliegos sueltos* that contained ballads both old and newly composed, the *romancero* was born in the mid-1550s and remained a mainstay of erudite and popular reading publics well into the seventeenth century. The best-selling books on the Iberian Peninsula and in the New World in the 1500s were *Celestina*, in prose, and in poetry, Manrique's *Coplas*, followed by the Marqués de Santillana's *Proverbios* and Juan de Mena's *Trescientas*. The works of Garcilaso de la Vega, published for the first time in 1543, were not on the list. In many ways, and for reasons that still need to be completely explored, the sixteenth century was a medieval century both culturally and literarily. As Dámaso Alonso once wrote about poetry in the sixteenth century, "La Edad Media no quería morir" (Alonso 165). I would take that statement further: The Middle Ages not only did not want to die, it went through a series of rebirths well into the 1600s, culminating artistically in the works of the young Lope de Vega and Góngora.

The six articles in this volume demonstrate the various manners in which the Iberian Middle Ages continue to be present in contemporary culture. They illustrate ways in which the medieval past is depicted in or continues to inform novels, television programs, films, the political realm, or how medieval texts can be newly interpreted under the lens of contemporary literary theory. These essays give us insight into how medieval stories have undergone re-definition, reappropriation, or the process of selective memory. In all of them, we are able to understand how recreations of the past, or new ways of reading it, inform our contemporary consumption of the history of the Iberian peninsula in the Middle Ages. Each of them reflects in some way on the ways that Medieval Iberia is understood, misunderstood (either by ignorance or design), how it has been romanticized, idealized, and even sanitized. The overall effect of this collection is the realization of how much and how little has changed since this time, how human emotions, reactions, and desires have informed our engagement with Iberia in the Middle Ages.

In "Echoes of Hispanic Conquest in James Cameron's *Avatar*," Michael Harney takes on an important example of a cinematic appropriation of a historical narrative. Many film re-visionings of medieval stories base their screenplays on facts gleaned from narratives such as chronicles or history books, choosing episodes that best illustrate their intended focus, dramatizing for effect, adding thoughts and emotions not really accessible in the sources, and creating a dialogue that attempts to bring to

life the psychology of the protagonists. But Harney sees that Cameron's purpose was not to re-tell the narrative of the colonization of the New World. *Avatar* is a fantasy film about another, imagined conquest, a conquest with evident parallels to the Spanish domination of the indigenous peoples they encountered. Harney's detailed essay walks us through the many echoes of this historical event and the narrative of the film, where the protagonist Jake is a clear counterpart to Hernán Cortés and Neytiri is Malinche's counterpart. In addition to parsing the parallels of the Spanish colonization that appear throughout the film, Harney takes us back to pre-conquest times, to the world of romances of chivalry, which he sees as having provided the model of knight-errant behaviors for Spaniards in the New World, as well as for its extraterrestrial version in *Avatar*. This essay is a fascinating analysis of the ways in which Bernal Díaz de Castillo's and Bartolomé de las Casa's chronicles informed James Cameron's vision and re-vision of the theme of the "conquest, domination, and exploitation of indigenous people."

From film we pass to the related medium of television depictions of historical personages and events. Núria Silleras-Fernández considers two recent and very popular Spanish television series in her "Versión (no) original: *Isabel y Carlos, Rey Emperador* frente al multilingüismo y la diversidad cultural." Her main focus in this insightful essay is the decision of the series' creators to present a Spain where only Castilian was spoken, despite the fact that this monolingual representation was far from the reality of these time periods. Silleras-Fernández considers this one-language approach a missed opportunity to remind viewers of the many languages spoken on the Iberian peninsula during the fifteenth-century: Castilian, Catalan, and Portuguese chief among them, but also Hebrew and Arabic. She also points out the almost incomprehensible omission of the fact that, when he arrived in Spain in 1517, Carlos V spoke no Spanish at all. The series makes much of his "foreignness" but does not address the language issue, which was one of the important reasons for his lack of acceptance. It was a significant enough factor for the Cortes de Castilla to include his learning Castilian in their demands to him. Instead of presenting Carlos's ability to speak French and Flemish, the character is allowed to express himself in perfect Castilian, even with his grandfather's widow, Germaine de Foix. French was also apparently the language in which he generally communicated with his brother Fernando, as there exists correspondence between them in this language throughout the emperor's lifetime. Silleras-Fernández also discusses an important consequence of the monolingual representation of these historical events depicted in both series: the national and international success of *Isabel* and *Carlos V, Rey y Emperador*, unfortunately reinforces the erroneous notion that Castile and its language were the center stage of the events of the Spanish Middle Ages and Renaissance. As such, these two series, perhaps unwittingly, present an alternative history of Spain in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

Two of the essays in this collection concern the image of medieval queens that are presented in contemporary retelling of their stories. The first, written by Cristina Guardiola-Griffiths, focuses on Urraca I de León y Castilla, who reigned in the first quarter in the twelfth century. In “Urraca: Female Sovereignty Forgotten and Imagined,” she addresses the fact that Urraca’s story has been passed over in recent works of historical fiction because it does not respond to the current social and political image of the characteristics of female sovereignty. The queen seems to continue to suffer from her historical reputation: in contemporary chronicles, early historians placed emphasis on the transgressive nature of her queenship. Urraca did not conform to the virtuous queenly ideal, not only because she fought her husband and son for power over her own domains, but especially because of her sexual transgressions, having had at least one lover and two illegitimate children. Since the beginning of this century only one novel about Urraca has been published, an account whose objective is to present a more historically real account of her life, and to reestablish her reputation. Guardiola-Griffiths leads the reader through a kind of history of the reception of the Urraca story, which also has the ability to help us understand the history of attitudes towards women in power over the centuries.

Urraca was apparently at the mercy of chroniclers who defined her legacy by denigrating her character. In “Saint of the Silver Screen: Queen Isabel of Aragon’s Legacy in the Twentieth Century,” Taiko Haessler demonstrates how Isabel de Aragón, queen consort of Portugal (1282-1336), participated in the creation of her own narrative, a self-fashioning that would have been difficult for a woman to achieve in this era. During her lifetime Queen Isabel, who was considered a saint even before her death and later canonized by the Catholic Church, dedicated herself to pilgrimages, prayer, alms, and the founding of a convent, where she requested her burial instead of alongside the tomb of her husband, Dionisio I. A hagiographic account of her life written in this era became the basis for many of the works about her throughout the centuries. Haessler provides the reader with an account of the numerous ways in which Isabel de Aragón’s story has been recounted over the centuries (through literature, painting, festivals, and film), and how depictions of her have changed since the nineteenth century, when this queen became the object of scholarly inquiry as well. In the twentieth century, Isabel became the protagonist of a Franco-era film (*Reina Santa*, 1947) which, like most of the films produced during the dictatorship, served the propagandistic purpose of glorifying Spain’s past. Haessler concludes with a discussion of recent historical fiction about the queen, which provide more nuanced interpretations of her life that attempt to delve more deeply into what her life might have been like.

The medieval legacy in current Spanish politics is the theme of David Arbesú's "Usos políticos del Éxodo: del rey Pelayo al siglo XXI." In the essay, the reader is made to clearly understand the power of revisionist history, a process in which historians seem to have always indulged. Arbesú takes us back to the late ninth century and the court of Alfonso III, whose chroniclers refashioned the history of Pelayo, identifying him as descended from ancient and noble lineages, and creating parallels between the hero of Covadonga and the biblical story of Moses. This alternative history of Pelayo as divine agent lasted through the fifteenth century as the dominant narrative and defining image of Pelayo. In the centuries that followed this vision of events both changed and remained the same: the Habsburg universal monarchy, for example, found it convenient to perpetuate this mythology in order to legitimize itself. Arbesú presents an intriguing update of the use of the Moses narrative in contemporary Spanish politics, explaining how Artur Mas appropriated the image of the Biblical patriarch in his 2012 campaign. Mas depicted himself on a publicity poster with open arms before a wave of Catalan flags. The media did not hesitate commenting on Mas's fashioning of self as Moses, parting the Red Sea, leading his people to the promised land. Nevertheless, as Arbesú wonders at the end of his essay, it is not clear whether contemporary citizens are able to "read" this kind of Messianic message that was very clear to people who lived centuries ago; whether they know enough about history to understand the parallels that are being drawn.

The final essay of this volume moves in another direction, that of current modes of interpretation of medieval texts. In "From Scopophilia to Abjection: Vision and Blindness in the *Monja que se arrancó los ojos*," Andrew Beresford applies contemporary literary theory that sheds new light on what has been traditionally been seen as a simple *exemplum*, in which the nun blinds herself as a means to avoid the lechery of a king, who has been gazing upon her with lust. Beresford evokes a series of theoretical models — from Freud to Lacan, Kristeva to Homi Bhabha, along with other relevant interpretive frameworks — to arrive at new understanding of the *exemplum*'s broader, more universal meaning. Through careful explanation of the Christian symbolism of sight and blindness, light and dark, Beresford leads the reader to his conclusion about the real nature of the deceptively simple tale. Through her self-mutilation the nun not only rejects the sexual advances of the king, she essentially reaffirms her loyalty to Christ, her heavenly lover, who miraculously restores her sight. Beresford understands the tale as a metaphor for the Church's central image, the healing of the blind, leading the faithful from the darkness to the light, from death to eternal life.

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ARTÍCULOS



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ECHOES OF HISPANIC CONQUEST NARRATIVE IN JAMES CAMERON'S *AVATAR*

ABSTRACT:

One of the more intriguing aspects of James Cameron's 2009 science-fiction adventure film, *Avatar*, is a storyline that strongly resembles certain episodes from the early history of New World exploration and conquest. Cameron seemingly plunders a distinctly Hispanic terrain in his re-confection of a cluster of narrative motifs centered on such themes as going native; the role-reversing White renegade; the native princess; the advocacy of native peoples and indigenous cultures. Inspired by Bernal Díaz del Castillo's *True History* and other Hispanic accounts, *Avatar* shows a protagonist reminiscent of the gone-native Spaniard Guerrero in Díaz's history; the alien tribal princess is a Malinche who resists the outsider; there are secular missionaries who personify a pro-native advocacy similar to that of Bartolomé de las Casas; the ruthless bad guy is a sci-fi version of Cortés; the corporate entity despoiling the pristine pastoral wilderness of Pandora is a latter day version of Habsburg colonialism.

KEY WORDS: *Avatar* film; Hernán Cortés; Bartolomé de las Casas; Conquest narratives; Colonialism.

RESUMEN:

Uno de los aspectos más interesantes de *Avatar*, la película de ciencia ficción y aventuras que James Cameron dirigió en 2009, es un guión que se parece a ciertos episodios de la historia temprana de la exploración y conquista del Nuevo Mundo. Cameron parece basarse en un

¹ Michael Harney is Associate Professor of Spanish at the University of Texas-Austin, where he teaches medieval and renaissance Spanish literature. He is the author numerous articles and four books: the recently published *Race, Caste, and Indigeneity in Medieval Spanish of Travel Literature* (2015); *The Epic of the Cid, Translation and Edition* (2011); *Kinship and Marriage in Medieval Hispanic Chivalric Romance* (2001); and *Kinship and Polity in the "Poema de mio Cid."* Professor Harney holds a Ph.D. from the University of California, Berkeley.

terreno netamente hispánico para su re-imaginación de una serie de motivos narrativos que se centran en los temas como la imitación de los indígenas; el renegado blanco; la princesa indígena; y el apoyo a los indígenas y su cultura. Inspirado en la *Historia verdadera* de Bernal Díaz del Castillo y otras narraciones hispánicas, *Avatar* presenta un protagonista que recuerda al español vuelto indígena, Guerrero, que aparece en la obra de Díaz del Castillo; el malo de la película es una versión ciencia-ficción de Cortés; la empresa que destruye el paisaje puro y bucólico de Pandora es una versión tardía del colonialismo de la Casa de Austria.

PALABRAS CLAVES: Película *Avatar*; Hernán Cortés; Bartolomé de las Casas; narrativas de conquista; colonialismo.

James Cameron's 2009 science-fiction adventure film, *Avatar*, is one of the biggest box office hits in the history of cinema. One of the more intriguing aspects of this megahit is the scope of its reception outside the Anglo-American sphere. The Canadian auteur, in effect, crafted a Hollywood product that entertained and appealed to audiences on every continent where movies are exhibited, with North American ticket sales of \$749,766,139, representing 27.3% of its total sales, and a foreign box performance of \$2,027,457,462, representing 72.7% of its total worldwide box office of \$2,787,965,087 (Box Office Mojo).

Avatar is a typical Hollywood blockbuster, financed by an enormous budget, graced with spectacular special effects, and supported by the usual massive advertising campaign. This Hollywood film's strangely international appeal is especially puzzling in light of its box office success in many countries which repudiate the United States's supposed exertion of hegemonic influence in Latin America and other regions. At the same time, this quintessentially Hollywood product was also extremely popular in the United States, despite the story's clear implication that the narrative's bad guys allegorize all that the United States is perceived to stand for in terms of exploitative, industrialized modernity and interventionist geopolitics. To put it simply: if there is an identifiable present-day polity embodied by the invaders and exploiters of *Avatar*'s futuristic narrative, it is the United States.

While this domestic and international market success may be difficult to explain (as is the similarly broad appeal of the same director's seemingly Anglo-centric *Titanic*), one may nonetheless note certain features of the script that seem particularly calculated to involve a broad range of audiences in the present-day globalized world. These audiences would include the inhabitants of both developed and under-developed countries. Many viewers among such audiences might well perceive analogies between the events and characters of *Avatar*'s tale of invasion and

resistance, and the reality of present-day life in many rural and urban environments variously threatened and intruded upon by globalization in its many guises.

Among the factors suggestive of such parallels is a storyline that strongly resembles certain episodes from the early history of New World exploration and conquest. The essential element of *Avatar*'s plot is a love story between an alien male and an indigenous female. The narrative basis one might expect as the inspiration of such a story, coming from a North American writer-director, is the semi-legendary and often romanticized account of the encounter between the Englishman John Smith and a young indigenous woman named Pocahontas. The young Amerindian girl's timely intervention at the moment of Smith's imminent execution has fueled voluminous speculation as to the veracity of the story; the girl's perspective on events and her motives in interceding for the outsider; the mutual perceptions of natives and colonists; the cultural and political implications of the encounter (Price 67-69).

The significance of this possibly apocryphal episode for the present essay resides not in its historical authenticity or plausibility, but rather in its protean appeal to subsequent generations of storytellers and their audiences. Recent reworkings of the basic story include the 1995 Disney film *Pocahontas*, and the 2005 live-action film *The New World*. Whether, as in the Disney film, a given version of the story portrays Pocahontas as a native girl falling in love with a European outsider, or whether, as in the 2005 film, the two characters' relationship is portrayed in more ambiguous terms, all versions convey, more or less, the same minimal narrative involving a young Amerindian girl who made friends with the Jamestown colonists in the early seventeenth century, and who may or may not have been enamored of one colonist in particular.

Cameron, however, although determined to tell a tale of miscegenetic involvement between a male outsider and an indigenous female, avoids analogizing the obvious Anglophonic precedent. Instead, Cameron plunders a distinctly different terrain in his re-confection of a cluster of narrative motifs centered on such themes as, in addition to miscegenation: the advocacy of native peoples by anti-colonialist dissenters among the colonizers; going native by a heroic outsider; cultural role-reversal in the form of this outsider's transformation into his adopted people's messianic protector.

Hollywood has provided examples that somewhat resemble Cameron's cluster of motifs, such as 1950's *Broken Arrow* and the 1970 adaptation of the novel *Little Big Man*. The first dramatized the possibility of peaceful coexistence of Indians and Whites, while portraying Apache culture in sympathetic terms (and, incidentally, flirting with the notion of miscegenation). The second tells the tale of an orphaned

white boy raised by the Cheyenne who grows up to be an adult torn between the two worlds, but distinctly favoring the indigenous perspective. Cameron, however, retells a narrative of conquest and colonization that distinctly differs from these two examples and from many other North American novels and films on similar themes.

Rather than base his story on examples from North American imperial and colonial history, Cameron creates a protagonist who strongly resembles the gone-native Spaniard Guerrero in Bernal Díaz del Castillo's *Historia verdadera de la conquista de la Nueva España*. Díaz's chronicle depicts two Spaniards captured by Indians. One, Jerónimo de Aguilar, resists assimilation into the indigenous culture and eagerly responds to the news that Spaniards are nearby, looking for him. The other, Gonzalo Guerrero, has fully assimilated into the indigenous community. Thoroughly adapting to their ways, he has married a native woman and founded a family with her; he has become a respected captain in war.

Reminding his fellow Spaniard that he has married into the tribe and now has three children by his native wife, Guerrero declares that among the Indians he is regarded as a "cacique y capitán cuando hay guerras." Moreover, he has "labrada la cara y horadadas las orejas." He demands of Aguilar: "¡Qué dirán de mí desde que me vean esos españoles ir de esta manera," while observing how beautiful his little children are ("mis hijitos cuan bonicos son"). Guerrero's native wife then berates Aguilar: "Mirá con qué viene este esclavo a llamar a mi marido; ¡os vos y no curéis de más pláticas." Ignoring the native woman's rebuke, Aguilar again urges Guerrero to abandon the natives, reminding him that, having been born a Christian, he should not risk losing his immortal soul for the sake of an Indian woman. Despite Aguilar's remonstrations, Guerrero insists on remaining with his adoptive people (Díaz del Castillo 100).

Regarding Díaz del Castillo's account of these personages and events, presumably grounded in a real-life situation, Inga Clendinnen emphasizes the psychological enigma posed by individual motivation and behavior in the context of cultural assimilation. All we can do, as we contemplate the two Spaniards' diametrically opposed reactions to similar circumstances, is to recognize that one man, determined to retain "his Spanish and Christian sense of self," withstands the pressure to assimilate, while the other just as determinedly commits to his "remaking as a Maya" (*Ambivalent Conquests* 18)

We can only speculate, affirms Clendinnen, regarding the character's assimilative predisposition. Contributing factors might have included despondency induced by isolation, followed by recuperation and adaptation to an alien environment; a talent for learning foreign languages; an exceptional receptivity to exotic ways of life. What

is certain, if we take Díaz del Castillo at his word, is the fact of Guerrero's assimilation, and his tenacious resolve in siding with his adoptive people in their conflict with "his erstwhile countrymen." Whatever the underlying causality and motivation of his going-native, Guerrero does more than merely engage in expedient role-playing to get by in a hostile environment. In his conversation with Aguilar, he implies that back among the Spaniards he would be at best an ordinary sailor, and at worst a grotesque freak and a heretic. Among his fellow tribesmen, by contrast, he is a man of importance, respected as a warrior and leader. Utterly committed to his new identity and new way of life, this obstinate assimilator has figuratively burnt his ships. For him, there is no going back. Later, observes Clendinnen, he will warn his own and other tribes of the true nature of the Spaniards and their intentions, and fight alongside the indigenous folk of the region against the outsiders (Clendinnen 18).

Guerrero is an obvious precursor, if not the consciously imitated model, of Cameron's Jake Sully. There are, to be sure, numerous differences between the two characters (e.g., Jake undergoes an epiphanic change of heart with regard to the natives, while Guerrero does not; Jake is a paraplegic, while Guerrero has no physical handicap; Guerrero has children by his native wife, while Jake does not; Jake works for a mega-corporation, while Guerrero is a shipwrecked sailor, etc.). The two story arcs likewise differ in many ways. Díaz del Castillo's minimal and anecdotal account occupies barely two pages, while Cameron's screenplay is much more complex, generating a film over two and a half hours long; Guerrero's experiences occur in a pre-conquest phase, while Jake's story begins *in medias res*, with the invaders' exploitative campaign well under way. Perhaps the chief difference between the two narratives is the reversal of moral perspective. Díaz del Castillo, recounting the episode from the viewpoint of the invaders, portrays Guerrero as a traitor and renegade, while Cameron shows a protagonist who turns against his own kind because it is the right thing to do. The *Historia verdadera*, in other words, is frankly ethnocentric: it is us vs them. *Avatar*, by contrast, narrates from a multi-ethnic perspective that unapologetically conforms to the multicultural liberalism of the present-day: all races and cultures have a right to exist.

Despite these and other differences, the film clearly retells a tale whose essential elements resemble those conveyed by Díaz del Castillo's account of the shipwrecked Spaniard gone native among his former captors. *Avatar*, in other words, builds on a basic minimal story line in the same way that adapters of the Pocahontas legend, working from a primordially anecdotal source, have constructed their own variations. Cameron's elaboration rewrites and expands the core narrative, showing an earthling intruder who starts out as the agent and informant of the invading forces. In furtherance of his covert mission, this interloper undergoes a rite of

passage in order to authenticate his native persona. His mission and his ethical sense of self are, however, undermined by his growing relationship with Neytiri, a female warrior. In the course of the story, he falls in love with this daughter of an alien clan, eventually becoming a fervent advocate and militant defender of the native cause and risking his life in defending them against his fellow terrestrials.

Cameron's depiction of the alien warrior princess confirms his deliberate folkloric revisionism. The daughter of a tribal chieftain, Neytiri can be seen as a Doña Marina who, rather than collaborate with the outsiders, personifies native resistance to their aggression and influence. Examining *Avatar's* plot from the broader perspective of the over-all program of conquest and colonization represented in Díaz del Castillo's history, we may detect other elements borrowed by Cameron from the historical Spanish context, then tweaked to accommodate his reworked version of the invasion scenario. The churchmen of the Spanish epic of overseas conquest become, in Cameron's revised world, the anthropologists, led by Sigourney Weaver's head researcher, who work to acculturate the film's native people, the Na'vis, in order to prevent a war between the natives and the outsiders. These well-meaning ethnographers, implementers of the *Avatar* program that allows earthlings to inhabit native bodies, can be seen as secular missionaries whose pro-native advocacy is pointedly suggestive of Spanish clerical opposition to the materialist intentions and violent methods of the historical conquistadors. At the same time, the film's most ruthless bad guy, the military officer in charge of a band of mercenaries, is a sci-fi version of Hernán Cortés, while the corporate entity pitilessly bent on despoiling the pristine jungle wilderness of Pandora represents an updated version of Habsburg colonialism of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Reworking the basic situation of the gone-native outsider, Cameron's screenplay reverses the assimilative role-playing and gender orientation of ancient and medieval adventure fiction. In that earlier tradition, the native princess, or her analogues (e.g., Ariadne and Medea in the mythic accounts of Theseus and Jason; the *Quijote's* Zoraida in the captive's tale), falls in love with the heroic outsider, collaborates with him against her people, and thoroughly assimilates to her lover's culture. The stereotype implies not merely love between an irresistible male outlander and a high-status native female, but, as F. M. Warren long ago demonstrated (345-347), resourceful collusion and whole-hearted conversion by the indigenous woman—a "willing apostate," as Warren aptly characterizes her (358).

A prominent early-modern example of this motif is the warrior queen Calafia, in *Las sergas de Esplandián*, the continuation of *Amadís de Gaula*. Leading her female horde, a black race similar to the ancient Amazons whose home is an island nation

situated somewhere north of the Indies and close the Earthly Paradise, she joins the pagan forces besieging the Christian metropolis of Constantinople (Rodríguez de Montalvo, *Las sergas* 727-28). Despite her bravery and virtuosic battle skills, observes the narrator of *Las sergas*, this bellicose matriarch falls madly in love with Esplandián, Amadís's son. The confrontation between herself and the Christian heroes leads to Calafia's complicitous subjugation and assimilation into the Christian world, as she eventually converts to Christianity, implicitly betraying her people and their pagan allies (Rodríguez de Montalvo, *Las sergas* 783).

Evoking the same themes and motifs in his reworked version, Cameron portrays a native princess who embodies resistance rather than collaboration, and a hero who, in contrast with his ancient and medieval counterparts, succumbs to the charms of a native female and undergoes a total conversion to her way of life (and, in the film's terms, a biologically complete transformation).

Cameron's handling of these themes does not necessarily confirm his reading of *Amadís* and *Las sergas*, or of any other specific version of the basic story. Rather, he shows himself aware of a literary tradition of which they are paradigmatic and highly influential representatives. The tradition in question may be traced from Montalvo's phenomenally popular novels, through the Romantic era personified by the equally influential Sir Walter Scott—a self-conscious resuscitator of Amadisian knight errantry and a founder of the discourse of Victorian neo-chivalry—down to the enduringly popular and frequently imitated superheroic tales of Edgar Rice Burroughs (Harney, "Amadís" 302-303).

There can be no question, in any event, of tracing out the array of possible influences on Cameron's screenplay. What is intended here is not a study of source texts, but rather a discussion of the peculiar mix of themes and motifs that the cinematic auteur incorporates into his tale. This blend of elements constitutes a specific narrative template that reflects probable decisions made in the course of the cinematic auteur's confection of his tale. This delineation of elements is revealed in the story itself: in its setting and characters, in the way these factors are shepherded along a specific storyline, and in the story's conclusion. All of these factors point to a certain model of conquest, domination, and exploitation of indigenous peoples and environments. Various thematic preferences expressed by this model likewise confirm a certain interpretative bias with regard to possible historical examples informing the screenwriter's perception of personages and events.

Although Cameron is a Canadian working within the Hollywood system of production and distribution, his story's specific mix of personages and thematic

emphases reflects a tacit perception of Hispania rather than Britannia (the chief cultural reference point of his *Titanic*) as a geopolitical and cultural model of invasion, conquest, and colonization. *Avatar* is a parable of hegemonic outcomes, grounded in discernible notions of indigeneity and indigenism. The film's representation of alien invasion and exploitation seems inspired by an axiomatic perception of how invasion and conquest play out. The implicit underlying scenario conveys an image of conquest and conquerors unmistakably grounded in a version of conquest history that corresponds to the so-called *Leyenda Negra*.

The coiner of the term, Julián Juderías, defines the concept, first of all, as a negative image of the Spanish conquest and colonization of the New World. Secondly, the notion lingers as a depreciatory perception of Spain's cultural impact in history, and, in vaguely expanded form, as a profile of Iberian culture in general entertained by other European peoples (Juderías 28). The concept has provoked controversy among historians and cultural critics. The present essay does not attempt to resolve the dispute in terms of verifying an actual consensus among non-Hispanic countries. The focus here is on the existence of the *Leyenda Negra* as an idea of Spanish cultural history and identity propounded by non-Spaniards. To the degree that the legend exists as a cultural stereotype, it must involve, as Alfredo Alvar Ezquerro points out, a distortion of Spanish history originating as a multifarious propagandistic artifact. This construct, conceived and exploited by Spain's enemies and rivals, morally disqualified Hispanic civilization in order to combat its perceived hegemonic supremacy (5).

Some commentators perceive, in the context of present-day cultural politics, the legend's persistence as a Hispano-phobic interpretation of things Hispanic generated above all from within the Anglo-phonic world. According to this model, what began as an expression of hegemonic competition for ideological and economic control of Western civilization continues as a generalized contrast of motives and mentalities, conducing to "una visión un tanto esperpéntica de España, los españoles y los hispanos en general" (Maura 214-15).

None of this is to say that Cameron suffers from Hispanophobia. Rather, what he borrows from the Black Legend, wittingly or unwittingly, is a generically liberal notion of how conquest and hegemony play out as a historical scenario. This vision of conquest and exploitation is characterized by certain story elements, character types, and thematic preferences. This array of axiomatic elements includes what we might call an eco-systemic notion of the primitive. The organic integrity of the native culture is perceived to be supported by a harmonious symbiosis of indigenous culture and the native environment. Indigeneity, in this view, is an authentic autochthony,

an existential condition, a cultural determinant. Going native must thus be seen as a genuinely mutational transformation: he who goes native is thus no merely circumstantial turn-coat; rather, he is a new man, a self reborn and reconfigured.

Corollary to these factors is the notion of indigenism as an ethical and political imperative. Where indigeneity is a cultural fact, indigenism is a political orientation, an advocative response to the plight of indigenous peoples threatened by outside forces. Principal among the latter is any set of circumstances favoring commercial predation as a motive of conquest. The latter factor is axiomatically assumed to be destructive in its intentions and outcomes—a strategy pretextually aimed not at peaceful settlement but rather at utter exploitation of natives and their environment. Hence the prevalence, in pro-native discourse, of a condemnation of opportunistic materialism, especially that abetted by Machiavellian political methodology.

Sanctification of the organically primitive as the cornerstone of indigenism—an orientation and a practice most visibly maintained by pro-native advocates from within the hegemonic matrix—likewise conduces to a demonization of the outsider and to an inveterate notion of the impossibility of peaceful co-habitation. Pursuant to this concept, the native, the indigenist activist, and the right-thinking renegade, are natural allies in the fight against the predatory incursions of capitalized modernity.

The most relevant precursor of a polarized view of evil invaders and virtuous natives is Bartolomé de las Casas, the Apostle of the Indies and the founder of both indigenist discourse and, indirectly, of the *Leyenda Negra*. Casas condemns the conquests perpetrated by secular Spanish invaders and colonizers as actions “hechas contra aquellas indianas gentes, pacíficas, humildes y mansas que a nadie ofenden.” Declaring these so-called conquests to be “inicuas, tiránicas, y por toda ley natural, divina y humana condenadas, detestadas y malditas” (72), Casas characterizes the native victims as “naturales moradores y poseedores” of the conquered lands, and as “gentes inocentes” subjected to a ruthless campaign solely motivated by “la codicia y ambición de los que hacer tan nefarias obras pretenden” (73).

These natives of the New World, aboriginal occupants of an edenic world, are “las más simples, sin maldades ni dobleces, obedientísimas, fidelísimas a sus señores naturales y a los cristianos a quien sirven.” Enlarging upon his profile, Casas pointedly describes them as the “más humildes, más pacientes, más pacíficas y quietas, sin rencillas ni bollicios no rijosos, no querulosos, sin rancores, sin odios, sin desear venganzas” (75–76). Contrasting with the prelapsarian innocence of these “ovejitas mansas,” declares Casas, is the predatory villainy of the Spaniards, who

pitilessly assail the unsuspecting natives, like “lobos y tigres y leones crudelísimos de muchos días hambrientos” (77).

The ruthless and violent predation of the Spaniards is prompted by an unfettered lust for plunder, fueled by an inherent and collective perversity among the invaders. The material motivations for this cruelty are greed and the incongruous social climbing it promises to support: “solamente por tener por su fin último el oro y henchirse de riquezas en muy breves días, y subir a estados muy altos y sin proporción de sus personas, conviene a saber, por la insaciable cudicia y ambición que han tenido” (78–79).

Enunciating a theory of indigeneity, Casas insistently identifies the native peoples with their home environment: “Porque es averiguado y experimentado millares de veces que sacando los indios de sus tierras naturales, luego mueren más fácilmente” (103). This quasi-mystical association of autochthony with territoriality reiterates the opinion of Peter Martyr d’Anghiera regarding both the correlation of native cultural identity with rightful occupancy of lands primordially their own, and the inherent innocence of the peoples in question. In his *De orbe novo*, Anghiera observes how “insulares reguli, qui hactenus suo parvoque contenti tranquille quieteque vitam duxerant, quom nostros in eorum solo natali pedem figere conspicerant, graviter id ferebant” (“the kings of the islanders, who hitherto had led their lives in peace and quiet, content with the little they had, could scarcely tolerate the sight of our people establishing themselves on their native soil” (168).

The indigeno-centrism implicit in such notions has characterized much of adventure fiction over the past two centuries. *Avatar’s* pro-native storytelling may thus be understood as a throwback to late-Victorian and Edwardian popular culture, in which an idealized neo-chivalry animated both imperialist ambition and heroic intervention on behalf of native peoples threatened by that ambition. As Nancy Vagueley observes (179-184), Anglo-American Victorians, exemplified by Longfellow, Hale, and Lowell, exalted cosmopolitan chivalry as a manly furtherance of such worthy causes as militant abolitionism and vigilant advocacy of social justice. Amy Kaplan, noting the persistent appeal of such concepts, observes the effects of a two-fold American imperative propounded during the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. On the one hand, America, officially standing for the liberation of enslaved and oppressed peoples, supported a media-contrived image of American resistance to cynical European imperialism and exploitation. On the other, she argues (92), this image simultaneously legitimated both “the exercise of imperial power” and the ongoing “narrative of liberation.” Jingoist yellow journalism, in particular, “followed

the script of the historical romance,” casting America in the role of “the manly hero rescuing a foreign princess and her land from a tyrannical master” (94).

The influence of chivalric romance is clearly detectable in Edgar Rice Burroughs’s Tarzan of the Apes, the epitome and paradigm of superheroes in twentieth- and twenty-first century popular culture. Motivated by an anti-modernity that at times justifies sadistic violence, the Ape Man commits to a life-long crusade to protect his primeval jungle domain, along with all its inhabitants, human and non-human, from the corruptive influence of the modern world (Harney, “Mythogenesis” 197). In furtherance of this salvific program, Tarzan joyfully goes native among his adopted people, the Waziri, becoming one of them “except for color.” Speaking their language, laughing and joking with them, joining in their tribal dance, he is “A savage among savages,” far closer to them than to European friends “whose ways, apelike, he had successfully mimicked for a few short months” (Burroughs, *Return* 130).

Burroughs’s Tarzan operates within an imaginary domain, “an American wilderness,” in Eric Cheyfitz’s formulation (4), “displaced to a fantasized European colonial Africa.” Burroughs similarly extrapolates in his creation of other exotic or extraterrestrial worlds in which American heroes become self-appointed protectors of alien persons and races. The most notable example of this pattern is Burroughs’s Mars series, the first three volumes of which establish an exiled earthling, the ex-Confederate soldier John Carter, as the planetary watchdog of his adopted world, constantly standing guard over his beloved Martian princess, and all her people, against the numerous evil-doers who populate the author’s space-operatic universe. In other adventure series by Burroughs, and in the contributions of his very numerous imitators over the past century, including many creators of superheroes, we see a multi-media continuation of the general pattern of analogical extrapolation from past narrative worlds—especially those of ancient mythology and medieval chivalry—into newly imagined universes. We could say that Tarzan and John Carter, to name two highly influential characters, are action figures very similar to those sold with toy sets and board games, or deployed as commercial tie-ins with films, TV shows, and video games. Such figures may be re-clothed, re-equipped, and re-contextualized across generic boundaries. In this sense, we could say that Burroughs’s most famous protagonists are essentially knights-errant transferred, *mutatis mutandi*, to their respective imaginary worlds.

Avatar follows the same basic narrative procedure in its portrayal of an honorable hero—a knight-errant in extraterrestrial context—attempting to right the wrongs committed against a native people who suffer under a forceful imposition of modernity. Highly territorial and fanatically protective, Jake comes to the rescue

of both a native people and the ecosystem they symbiotically inhabit. Updating Casas's vision of the native as the personification of the pristine primitive, Cameron correlates the physical purity and ecological complexity of primeval nature with the unblemished character and functional coherence of native culture.

Cameron paradoxically updates, at the same time, the Victorian ideal of the "White Man's Burden," as famously exalted by Kipling. The ideal in question propagandized the notion of the British Empire's divinely ordained mission of civilizing the benighted regions of the Earth, a charge summarized by Walter Bagehot in terms of the West's constructive mission with regard to the East. "In a word," declares Bagehot, writing in the 1870's, "we are attempting to put new wine into old bottles—to pour what we can of a civilization whose spirit is progress into the form of a civilization whose spirit is fixity" (161-162).

Reorchestrating the imperialist polyphony of a century ago, *Avatar* seems to refute the quixotic idealism that marked the Victorian era's understanding of modernity as a constructive set of values and practices which the advanced peoples should share with their less enlightened brethren. Cameron's tale, by contrast, shows that true liberation of a native people consists in saving them from civilization and its discontents. Abetted by the Na'vis' benevolently conscious ecosystem, Jake leads his adopted people's successful campaign to undo the effects of encroaching modernity. However, by making his hero a defender of native autonomy presented in such either-or terms, Cameron implicitly subscribes to a concept of the indigenous that evokes earlier versions, now largely debunked, of social primitivism as a lagging behind, as a deprivation of the advantages of progress and civilization. Adam Kuper (3-6), tracing the nineteenth-century origins of a certain idea of the primitive that came to be considered social-scientific orthodoxy for decades, attributes to E. B. Tylor and James Frazer the establishment of this standard view of the characteristic features of primeval human societies. The latter were defined, according to this model, as kin-based, and as organized into elementary descent groups relating to one other through practices of matrimonial exchange. With the advent of private property, contractual law, and the territorial state, these primitive descent groups, according to this earlier view, waned and finally disappeared, their extinction marking the threshold between primitive and advanced phases of social evolution (Kuper 6-7).

In her discussion of the going-native concept as it manifested in the Victorian literary and intellectual milieu, and in popular culture, Marianna Torgovnick (46) refers to the cultural influence and continued popularity of Edgar Rice Burroughs. She observes that the latter author's equivocal understanding of the primitive "depends on archaic and evolutionist meanings . . . [of the word primitive] as the 'original'

or ‘natural’ state of things.” In such a context, to explore or represent the primitive implies “explorations of origins and the marking of patterns that could reveal the truth about human nature and social organization.” This notion of the primitive as the true picture of the primordial social order “depends on an ethnocentric sense of existing primitive societies as outside of linear time.” This “temporal illusion” assumes the form, in high-cultural circles, of the formal beginnings of professional anthropology in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In popular culture, it becomes a frequent theme in the Tarzan novels and other series by the same author, as well as in their multitudinous imitations.

The tribal society in which *Avatar*’s protagonist goes native corresponds to the kin-ordered, pre-capitalist, ahistorical world envisioned by earlier theorists of the primitive, and by their non-specialist acolytes. Jake’s heroic intervention restores his adopted people to a pre-capitalist, pre-modern normalcy very much like the traditional fixity attributed to so-called primitive societies by Victorian ethnography and its fellow travelers. Like those earlier models grounded in notions of the primitive, *Avatar* apparently regards indigeneity as an ethnically specific cultural reality potentially exempted from, or even immune to, the stresses and uncertainties of change. The notion of structural or institutional stability underwrites, furthermore, a possible turning back of the clock in the form of a full recovery of the Na’vis’ ecological independence and cultural autonomy.

Jake, the gone-native everyman, is thus a Moses leading his people back to a promised land of social and biological harmony. In its aggrandizement of the soteric role of the altruistic protagonist, *Avatar* epitomizes what David Brooks deftly characterizes as “The White Messiah fable.” The basic storyline, familiar to moviegoers, concerns “a manly young adventurer who goes into the wilderness in search of thrills and profit.” Encountering the natives, the hero “finds that they are noble and spiritual and pure.” Eventually, he becomes “their Messiah, leading them on a righteous crusade against his own rotten civilization.” Movies that typify this basic story include *A Man Called Horse*, *Dances With Wolves*, and *The Last Samurai*. Children’s versions of the fable include *Pocahontas* and *Fern Gully*. The charm of the formula largely consists of the “socially conscious allure” afforded by its narrative. Additionally, the fable expresses environmental sensitivity and multicultural awareness, while at the same time providing the dramatic satisfaction of seeing “the loincloth-clad good guys sticking it to the military-industrial complex.”

Avatar, in short, is a “racial fantasy” depicting the experience of “a white former Marine,” now handicapped and “adrift in his civilization,” who comes to work for “a giant corporation” intent on plundering “the environment of a pristine planet” and

displacing “its peace-loving natives.” The latter’s culture, meanwhile, is constructed from an ethnographic pastiche of “Native American, African, Vietnamese, Iraqi and other cultural fragments.” The hero soon shows himself “the most awesome member of their tribe”. Becoming the sexual consort of “their hottest babe,” he soon shows himself to be superlatively courageous and athletically gifted. “He flies the big red bird that no one in generations has been able to master.” The protagonist, “his consciousness raised,” comes to see that the peace-loving natives are “at one with nature.”

This plot element reveals yet another component of the Hispanocentric version of conquest: the conqueror’s supposed personification of an indigenist myth. Jake’s mastery of the reptilian-avian predator, in fulfillment of native prophecy, resembles certain readings of the Quetzalcoatl legend, whereby Cortés represents a fulfillment of divinely inspired prophecy, a personification of divinely sanctioned lordship, and the restoration of a primordial order of things. Advocacy of the Native, at the same time, enables mastery of the native from another direction: an insinuation of the outsider into the councils of the native, leading to his infiltration of their way of life and to the subsequent dominance exerted by him as their rightfully efficacious leader.

Summarizing the implications of *Avatar*’s implementation of such story elements, Brooks observes the film’s endorsement of “the stereotype that white people are rationalist and technocratic while colonial victims are spiritual and athletic.” More than that, Cameron’s plot “rests on the assumption that nonwhites need the White Messiah to lead their crusades.” It thus fosters “a sort of two-edged cultural imperialism,” whereby indigenous peoples “can either have their history shaped by cruel imperialists or benevolent ones,” so that, concludes Brooks, “either way, they are going to be supporting actors in our journey to self-admiration.”

The racially informed messianic fantasy outlined by Brooks—a story type, he notes, that may be traced far back in time—platforms the nerdish fantasy of the ordinary man transformed into an extraordinary hero. Through the technology of the avatar system, Jake literally inhabits a native body possessed of superhuman strength, agility, and endurance. Out-nativizing the native, Jake is thus transformed into the quintessence of the Na’vis’ ecosystemic integration into an organically coherent order. This fantasy of the ordinary man, very possibly an outsider or misfit among his people of origin but transformed into a heroic warrior and leader by his adopted people, is an aspect of the go-native theme enhanced, decades before, by Lowell Thomas in his glamorized account of the exploits of T. E. Lawrence.

Thomas, in his own way, is as much a writer of fantasy fiction as Cameron. Exemplifying the yellow-journalistic romance style pointed out by Kaplan, Thomas’s

media campaign in support of the Lawrence legend, a hyperbolic distortion of real-world events and personages, emphasizes the British officer's role as the heroic deliverer of a primitive people from the clutches of a modern but decadent and degenerate empire. Thomas describes Lawrence as a twentieth-century crusader (Thomas 6); a gifted warrior and tactical leader who, combining martial skill with technological sophistication, organizes colorfully primitive Bedouin nomads "against their Turkish oppressors" (8), culminating in "the most brilliant and spectacular military operation in the world's history" (272; see also Harney, "Tarzan" 65-66).

Lawrence himself, a historical personage often mentioned as an example of going native, tells, in the first chapter of his autobiographical *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*, a somewhat different story. The wavering indecision, the transgressive ambivalence, of this kind of role-playing:

If I could not assume their character, I could at least conceal my own, and pass among them without evident friction, neither a discord nor a critic but an unnoticed influence. Since I was their fellow, I will not be their apologist or advocate. (29-30).

"Pray God," Lawrence writes a little later, "that men reading the story will not, for love of the glamour of strangeness, go out to prostitute themselves and their talents in serving another race" (30). Up to now, in his account, he has retrospectively emphasized self-conscious theatricality in service of military, bureaucratic, political, or diplomatic obligation, or variously jumbled hybrids of these motives. Ego-involvement, whether as self-glorification or studied exhibitionism, is not mentioned as an issue. Then, going beyond the pragmatic motivations of by-gone moments, he generalizes:

A man who gives himself to be a possession of aliens leads a Yahoo life, having bartered his soul to a brute-master. He is not of them. He may stand against them, persuade himself of a mission, batter and twist them into something which they, of their own accord, would not have been. Then he is exploiting his old environment to press them out of theirs. Or, after my model, he may imitate them so well that they spuriously imitate him back again. Then he is giving away his own environment: pretending to theirs; and pretences are hollow, worthless things. In neither case does he do a thing of himself, nor a thing so clean as to be his own (without thought of conversion), letting them take what action or reaction they please from the silent example (30).

Here complicity, reciprocal dependency, inadvertent and premeditated duplicity, smoldering guilt—in short, the elements of a deeply conflicted dissimulation—merge into a tortuous vignette. The Lawrence speaking to us in his famous memoir, however, is allegedly the real fellow, the decorated veteran and one-time functionary, not that other Lawrence, the nativized, play-acting effigy of his real self, the Frankensteinian creation of a certain historical moment. Lawrence the autobiographer, speaking with

the assumed wisdom of temporal and spatial distance from recounted events, speaks to his reader with an ostensibly confessional candor. At the same time, this most literate of autobiographers, using the Swiftian coinage “Yahoo,” conjures up the ghost of Gulliver, the most famous of parodic travelers. It is as if Lawrence is determined to reveal all the sordid and equivocal aspects of going native, while debunking the very notion of its authenticity as a human experience.

Having elicited pity for his Faustian bargain with the ethnic Other, Lawrence continues to play up the artificiality of the experience. Referring to it in vaguely depreciatory terms, as if it were a merely theatrical flourish, he emphasizes both its precarious utility and its potentially harmful side-effects. In more recent theatrical terms, we might say that he reminisces like a Method actor describing how he was, once upon a time, “in the moment”:

In my case, the effort for these years to live in the dress of Arabs, and to imitate their mental foundation, quitted me of my English self, and let me look at the West and its conventions with new eyes: they destroyed it all for me. At the same time I could not sincerely take on the Arab skin: it was an affectation only. Easily was a man made an infidel, but hardly might he be converted to another faith. I had dropped one form and not taken on the other, and was become like Mohammed’s coffin in our legend, with a resultant feeling of intense loneliness in life, and a contempt, not for other men, but for all they do (30-31).

Commenting on Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness*, Torgovnick hazards that going native (a syndrome she does not name, but whose prevalence is implied by her approach and by the title of her book) must involve “Profound ambiguities, moral questioning, the complexity of experience, the difficulty of true communion, a mysterious recognition of our opposite as our true self” (142). The most conventional version of this language will depict the native reality as “a veritable treasure house of primitivist tropes,” a “prehistoric place with no proper time of its own” (145).

Conrad’s Kurtz is the classic literary example of the colonial man gone native, in the latter expression’s sense of an individual embracing of indigenous ways, and a search for “true communion” with the exotic Other. Having “allowed himself to be worshipped by his African followers,” Kurtz then transgresses still more flagrantly—by British standards—in his violation of the “code against miscegenation” (146). Clearly the “substitute” and “inversion for” Kurtz’s “high-minded” Belgian fiancé, this story’s version of the native princess is, observes Torgovnick, “all body and inchoate emotion.” Personifying the raw physicality and inherent irrationality emphasized by Victorian models of the primitive, Kurtz’s native mistress likewise embodies, argues Torgovnick, the concept of miscegenation as a challenge to “the boundary of race” (146).

Miscegenation is only one of several emblematically transgressive themes entailed by the concept of going native, all of which violate “boundaries of love and hate, life and death, body and spirit” (147). “Africa and the Africans,” Torgovnick elaborates, are, for Kurtz, a “grand fantasy-theater for playing out his culture’s notions of masculinity and power through the controlled, borrowed rituals attributed to certain groups within Africa, perverted to Western ends” (151). In this context, “the primitive responds to Western needs, becoming the faithful or distorted mirror of the Western self.” The primitive, she concludes, “becomes grist for the Western fantasy-mill” (153).

The indigenism selected by Cameron as a principal theme in his narrative—in effect, the primary grist of his fantasy-mill—reflects a highly positive perception of the primitive, as Cameron imagines it, and a highly negative view of conquest, as he conceives of that enterprise. In aligning himself in this way, Cameron jumps on a politically correct band wagon that was set in motion decades ago. To characterize his position in this way in no way signifies a critique of either his political sincerity or his ethical acumen. Cameron, like most academics, including myself, deplors the injustice to which indigenous peoples have been subjected, and continue to be subjected, in the name of progress and its many benevolent-sounding analogues. What is interesting about *Avatar*, in addition to the sheer magnitude of its box office success and its subsequent “follow-through” in other distribution media, is its apparent affinity with a certain specific real-world invasion scenario. Although Cameron does not exclusively rely on this scenario, as we have seen from his several expressions of themes emphasized in British conquest literature, Cameron’s chief historical model, as this essay has sought to demonstrate, is the narrative surrounding early colonial Spanish history.

“Scenario” here implies an aggregate narrative far vaster than any single novel or film. The scenario in question is the deducible outline of the total sequence of events that amount to the history of New World Spanish conquest. Taken in isolation, any of the themes and motifs emphasized in Cameron’s screenplay could be attributed to any number of sources. However, seen as elements in an array that largely matches up, point by point, with the salient features of that greater but similar account, such common factors evoke the notion of narrative echoes.

These echoes include *Avatar*’s everyman protagonist, in many ways an updated and elaborated version of Díaz del Castillo’s Guerrero; a feisty and intelligent native woman; a miscegenic couple formed by a male outsider and a native female; a presentation of the conqueror’s perspective and that of the missionary (or his modern secular homologues) as coterminous and synergetic on the one hand, rivalrous and

mutually destructive on the other; a contradictory representation of the same basic events, according to the political orientation of the observer/storyteller (as when Díaz del Castillo mostly shows the good intentions and beneficial outcomes of a process summarized by Casas in terms of an endless round of heartless atrocities animated by relentless materialism). *Avatar's* depiction of a primitive people's biological integration into a planetary ecosystem can be seen as an updating of Casas's edenic views of the simplicity and innocence of New World peoples shown to be the rightful inhabitants of their respective homelands. The film's notion of indigeneity, an abstract term used within a greater discourse of racial identity, is informed by an implicit concept of indigenism, referring to political advocacy in favor of native causes (as exemplified by Casas and many other churchmen). Advocacy of the native, finally, is a quixotic, quasi-chivalric aspect of Jake's renegade profile that also characterizes many Spanish-speaking priests in history, from the time of Casas and his fellow pro-native activists, down to the recent era of Latin American Revolutionary Theologians.

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VERSIÓN (NO) ORIGINAL: *ISABEL Y CARLOS, REY EMPERADOR* FRENTE AL MULTILINGÜISMO Y LA DIVERSIDAD CULTURAL

RESUMEN

Este artículo reflexiona sobre como las series históricas, *Isabel* (2012–2015) y *Carlos, Rey Emperador* (2015–2016), producidas por la Radio Televisión Española, representan la diversidad cultural y lingüística de la Península Ibérica y del Imperio de Carlos V. Se analiza como estas series constituyen un proyecto nacional y pedagógico que refuerza la noción de un pasado medieval y renacentista centrado en Castilla, y el castellano, descartando el resto.¹

PALABRAS CLAVE: Reyes Católicos, Carlos V, televisión española, multilingüismo, diversidad cultural.

ABSTRACT

This article reflects on how the historical television series, *Isabel* (2012–2015) and *Carlos, Rey Emperador* (2015–2016), produced by Radio Televisión Española, represent the cultural and linguistic diversity of the Iberian Peninsula and the empire of Carlos V. It analyzes how these series constitute a national and pedagogical project that reinforces the notion of a medieval and renaissance past centered in Castile, and the Castilian language, disregarding the rest.

1. INTRODUCCIÓN

En los últimos años ha habido un resurgir de series televisivas de calidad que han encandilado y continúan encandilando a un público amigo de tramas y argumentos

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complejos, y de historias que se extienden y entretienen durante varias temporadas. Entre estas nuevas programaciones, que parecen gustar al público contemporáneo internacional, también han despertado interés las series históricas, que nos permiten “ver” y “experimentar” lo medieval y lo renacentista, ya sea recreado con cierto anhelo de autenticidad histórica, en series como *The Tudors* (co-producción inglesa-irlandesa-canadiense, *Showtime* 2007–2010) o *Vikings* (irlandesa-canadiense, *History Channel*, desde 2013), o como una recreación fantástica y mágica, en series tan exitosas como *Game of Thrones* (HBO, desde 2011). Sin duda, esta afición a lo medieval no es nueva, quien no recuerda la película mítica de Monty Python, el *Holy Grail*, o las recreaciones fantásticas (literarias primero y luego cinematográficas) de *The Hobbit* y de *Lord of the Rings* de Peter Jackson, o el *Star Wars* futurista de George Lucas. Desde el año 2012 la televisión española también se ha sumado a este tipo de iniciativas, y ha producido una muy exitosa serie dirigida por Jordi Frade, que, en tres temporadas (2012–15), recreaba el reinado de Isabel I de Castilla y el de su consorte, Fernando II de Aragón, conocidos como los Reyes Católicos. La popularidad de *Isabel* ha conllevado una “secuela,” una nueva producción, *Carlos, Rey Emperador*, dirigida por Oriol Ferrer, y centrada en el reinado del nieto de los Reyes Católicos, Carlos I de España y V de Alemania, que se está emitiendo en la televisión española en la actualidad.²

Isabel es una serie dramática que persigue cautivar y entretener a su audiencia; no anhela una imitación o recreación histórica minuciosa y altamente objetiva, y lo mismo puede decirse de *Carlos, Rey Emperador*. Recogen de los libros de historia, de las crónicas y de otras fuentes primarias lo que pueden y quieren, y dramatizan e inventan todo aquello que los historiadores tal vez imaginan, pero que nunca podrá saberse con certeza: lo que pensaban los personajes, como se comportaban en la intimidad, como interactuaban los unos con los otros en el día a día, cómo y por qué se amaban y se odiaban. La televisión y el cine se rigen por sus propias reglas de representación a la hora de explicar el pasado. De este modo, estas series, en un ejercicio de lo que Hayden White definió como *historiofotia* (*historiophoty*), representan el pasado en imágenes visuales, y con ello interpretan, proporcionan una posible explicación, a veces hasta una justificación de lo acaecido y de los personajes que protagonizaron los hechos – y en esto, en que interpretan, se parecen a los libros de historia o a los documentales (White, Le Beau, and Rosenstone 11). Sin embargo, y esta es la magia de la televisión, el espectador tiende a olvidar que lo que ve en una serie de ficción histórica es “ficción,” o “interpretación,” y no “historia”, y acostumbra a identificarse con las cuitas del

² Ambas series pueden visionarse a través de la página web de “Radio Televisión Española, a la carta”: <http://www.rtve.es/alcarta/>. Una de los guionistas de *Carlos, Rey Emperador*, Laura Sarmiento, ha publicado una novela basada en la serie de título homónimo (2015).

protagonista, en estos casos, ya sean las de Isabel I o las de Carlos I/V. La historia se ve y se explica desde la perspectiva del protagonista, y el resto de personajes son auxiliares a sus alegrías, sus abatimientos, sus hechos y hazañas. Como escribió el historiador Edward Carr, en su clásico libro, *¿Qué es la Historia?* antes de estudiar la historia, estudie el historiador que la escribe, sus consideraciones personales y las de su época:

Study the historian before you begin to study the facts... The facts are really not at all like fish on the fishmonger's slab. They are like fish swimming about in a vast and sometimes inaccessible ocean; and what the historian catches will depend, partly on chance, but mainly on what part of the ocean he chooses to fish in and what tackle he chooses to use – these two factors being, of course, determined by the kind of fish he wants to catch. By and large, the historian will get the kind of facts he wants. History means interpretation (Carr 23).

Este mismo principio podría extrapolarse a las series televisivas históricas, que explican el pasado partiendo del deseo de conseguir un elevado índice de audiencia y, obviamente, sin poder escapar de los presupuestos ideológicos de los implicados en el proyecto, ni de los de la sociedad de su época. Y en estos tiempos que corren, ¿qué puede haber más ideológico que la televisión? Ciertamente es un verdadero medio de masas que inventa y nutre la cultural popular y el discurso.

No es de extrañar que la televisión española decidiera crear estas dos series, que, indudablemente, tratan de dos de las personalidades más destacadas de la historia de España: Isabel I (r. 1474–1504) y Carlos V (r. 1516–1556). Ambos reinados, tanto el de la abuela, un “icono cultural,” como el del nieto, fueron muy significativos en el contexto peninsular y tuvieron importantes y duraderas ramificaciones en la historia europea y americana (Marino 186; Weissberger 187–206). En cualquier caso, y pese a su obvia importancia, este artículo no va a versar sobre los logros y fracasos de sus políticas e iniciativas, sino sobre algo mucho más cotidiano, pero también significativo: como se negocia en estas series el tema de la diversidad lingüística, que a su vez está asociada con la diversidad religiosa y cultural que caracterizó este periodo. Desde mi punto de vista hubiera sido interesante mostrar que la península ibérica y la Europa medieval y renacentista, como la de hoy en día, no era solo plurireligiosa, sino plurilingüe. Visionando los capítulos de la serie *Isabel* uno podría pensar algo ciertamente erróneo, que ya entonces el castellano era la única lengua conocida y usada en toda la península y, además, en buena parte de Europa, porque en sus muchos capítulos, independientemente de que los personajes sean portugueses, granadinos, catalanes, o flamencos (de clase alta o baja) siempre aparecen hablando castellano. Lo mismo puede decirse de la secuela, *Carlos, Rey Emperador* que presenta a un rey que, a su llegada a Castilla, parece de lo más castizo, cuando se sabe con certeza que el Carlos histórico no sabía hablar español cuando ascendió al trono, sino que empezó a aprenderlo, por necesidad, a su llegada a Castilla en 1517. En las páginas que siguen analizaré como las

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series *Isabel* y *Carlos, Rey Emperador*, producidas por la televisión española, se transforman en un proyecto nacional y pedagógico que refuerza la noción de un pasado que prima en exceso lo castellano, y la lengua castellana, excluyendo el resto.

2. LA ABUELA Y EL NIETO: ISABEL I Y CARLOS V EN LA HISTORIA

En 1469 cuando Isabel era percibida como la más probable heredera al trono castellano se casó con Fernando, por aquel entonces ya Rey de Sicilia y heredero al trono de la Corona de Aragón. Su matrimonio unió dos ramas de una misma dinastía, la Trastámara, asentada en Castilla desde 1369 y en Aragón desde el Compromiso de Caspe de 1412. Con el ascenso al trono de Castilla de Isabel en 1474 y de Fernando al de Aragón en 1479 unieron dinásticamente sus territorios, y empezó un reinado plagado de políticas controvertidas y de largo alcance. En 1478 crearon el tribunal del Santo Oficio de la Inquisición, que tenía por misión mantener la ortodoxia cristiana, y que hicieron operativo en todos sus territorios. En 1492 se produjeron tres de los eventos más destacados de su reinado, que además tuvieron repercusiones muy duraderas: enviaron a Cristóbal Colón a explorar rutas comerciales y se topó con el Caribe, lo que dio paso a la colonización, explotación y subyugación de la población nativa de las Américas, expulsaron a los judíos y concluyeron la mal llamada “Reconquista,” al tomar el emirato nazarí de Granada que, al igual que las colonias americanas y el Reino de Navarra, quedó adscrito a Castilla (Ladero Quesada). Unos años más tarde, en 1502, obligaron a los musulmanes de la zona a convertirse o emigrar. Los mudéjares de la Corona de Aragón no sufrieron la misma suerte porque las políticas de los Reyes Católicos no fueron siempre las mismas en ambos reinos. Sus territorios se unieron dinásticamente, lo que a efectos prácticos significaba que su sucesor gobernaría ambas coronas, pero a muchos niveles continuaron funcionando como entidades independientes. Todos estos importantes eventos, así como la lucha de los monarcas por controlar a la belicosa nobleza castellana, aparecen reflejados en la serie televisiva *Isabel* que, a mi modo de ver, es quizás demasiado pro-isabelina y poco crítica con su gestión y lo que esta supuso.

Carlos V, el primer Habsburgo que reinó en España, tuvo que lidiar con las consecuencias de las políticas emprendidas por sus abuelos, al mismo tiempo que emprendió nuevos caminos e internacionalizó la política peninsular. Carlos no solo heredó la Corona de Castilla y sus colonias de las Américas, la Corona de Aragón y sus territorios italianos, sino que, además, su herencia paterna, le aportó Flandes, el Condado-francés, Austria, Hungría y el Sacro Imperio Romano Germánico. Estas múltiples herencias tuvieron como resultado que Carlos tuviera que gobernar un imperio de dimensiones colosales. A ello se añadió la continuación de la exploración y la conquista de los territorios americanos (Elliott 131–148). Durante el reinado de Carlos V fue cuando Hernán Cortés

conquistó el imperio azteca (1519–1521) y Francisco Pizarro hizo lo propio con el inca (1531). Fue un reinado marcado por la colonización y explotación de las Américas, las guerras europeas, el avance del protestantismo, el Concilio de Trento (1545–1563) y por la transformación de España en adalid del catolicismo internacional.

3. POLIGLOSA EN LA PENÍNSULA IBÉRICA MEDIEVAL Y RENACENTISTA

España como una unidad política no existía en la Edad Media. La Península Ibérica al inicio del reinado de los Reyes Católicos estaba dividida en varios reinos: Castilla, Aragón, Navarra, Granada y Portugal. Al final de su reinado todos estos territorios, excepto Portugal, acabaron unidos dinásticamente. El castellano, como su nombre indica, era la lengua vernácula de Castilla. En la Corona de Aragón las lenguas habladas eran el catalán (en el principado de Cataluña y en los reinos de Valencia y Mallorca) y el aragonés (en Aragón). En Galicia y Portugal se hablaba el gallego-portugués. El euskera se hablaba en algunas zonas del norte, a esta diversidad lingüística había que añadir dos lenguas más asociadas a la pluralidad religiosa del periodo, el hebreo y el árabe. La Península Ibérica era el territorio europeo que contaba con mayor número de judíos y musulmanes. Del mismo modo, el latín era considerado en los reinos cristianos una lengua de alta cultura, importante también a nivel diplomático y administrativo, y que además estaba vinculada a la Iglesia.

Así pues, en la Península Ibérica medieval se vivía una situación de poliglosia, varias lenguas convivían en un mismo territorio y eran empleadas para diversos fines (Dagenais 40–41). A diferencia de lo que sucede en la actualidad, en que los escritores tienden a escribir en un solo idioma, y a buscar traductores que den a conocer sus escritos en otros muchos, en la Edad Media no solo se traducía, sino que no era inusual que un autor escribiera en más de una lengua (por ejemplo, castellano y latín, catalán y latín, catalán y castellano, castellano y portugués, hebreo y castellano, etc.). Un notorio ejemplo de estas dinámicas lo constituye la corte de Alfonso X el Sabio (1252–1284), cuya conexión con Isabel la Católica es doble, no solo por ser un predecesor lejano en el trono castellano, sino porque dejó establecido en el libro de leyes del reino, sus *Siete partidas*, algo que favorecería a Isabel muchos años después: que ante la ausencia de un heredero varón una hija podría suceder en el trono. El rey Alfonso usó el gallego-portugués para componer los versos de sus *Cántigas de Santa María*, porque en su tiempo esa era considerada la lengua de la poesía, mientras que favoreció el castellano para la prosa, por ejemplo, para la redacción de su *Estoria de España o Primera crónica general* (c. 1282), así como buena parte de la documentación de la cancillería real y algunas traducciones. Por su parte el latín continuó teniendo cierto uso cancilleresco, diplomático y científico. En cambio, en la época de los Reyes Católicos, el castellano

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ya se consideraba una lengua “apropiada” tanto para el verso como la prosa, y lo que se observa en su periodo es un resurgir del latín gracias al avance del humanismo.

Un proceso análogo puede observarse en el caso catalano-aragonés. Los poetas catalanes prefirieron componer sus poemas en occitano, por lo que el catalán no fue la lengua poética predominante hasta tiempos de Ausiàs March (c.1397–1459), con anterioridad el catalán se limitó a la prosa y a la administración. El catalán, junto al aragonés y el latín, eran las lenguas prioritarias en la cancillería real de la Corona de Aragón. Por su parte el aragonés también experimentó un particular florecimiento literario en el siglo XIV, con una figura de la talla de Juan Fernández de Heredia (c. 1310–1396). Esta situación poliglósica produjo obras como las del castellano Sem Tob de Carrión, que escribió el *Debate entre el cálamo y las tijeras* (1345) en hebreo, pero que prefirió el castellano para sus *Consejos y documentos al rey don Pedro* o *Proverbios morales* (c. 1350). Por su parte el catalán Pere Torroella (c. 1420–92), que sirvió en las cortes de Juan II de Aragón (el padre de Fernando el Católico) y de Carlos VI de Navarra, escribió en catalán y en castellano, y además adaptó formas de la tradición misógina occitano-catalana en su tan exitoso como denigrado texto, compuesto hacia 1458, *Maldecir de mujeres* (Archer 170–202).

Respecto al árabe y el hebreo, debido a las agresivas políticas religiosas emprendidas por los Reyes Católicos contra judíos y musulmanes, el uso y conocimiento de estas lenguas retrocedió muy seriamente en ambas comunidades. En 1492 se produjo la expulsión de los judíos de las Coronas de Castilla y Aragón, de todos aquellos que no aceptaran una conversión forzosa al cristianismo. Pocos años después, en 1502, les tocó el turno a los musulmanes, nuevamente con la conversión forzosa de los granadinos y castellanos – los que se quedaron pasaron a ser conocidos como moriscos. En la Corona de Aragón los mudéjares no sufrieron la misma suerte hasta el reinado de Carlos V, que les forzó a convertirse en 1525, y ya mucho más tarde, en 1609, en tiempos de Felipe III, los moriscos fueron expulsados de España (García-Arenal y Wieggers). Estas políticas, que rompían con una tradición no caracterizada por la tolerancia religiosa con respecto a judíos y musulmanes, pero sí por un respeto a la utilidad, a la “conveniencia” de la pluralidad religiosa, fueron conducentes a la producción de una serie de peculiares textos clandestinos en aljamiado (Catlos 2014, 2004, 404–8, 2002, Ray). Se trató de textos híbridos, que hacían servir el alfabeto árabe o hebreo, pero que estaban escritos en la lengua vernácula.

Ciertamente los Reyes Católicos privilegiaron sus estancias en Castilla, pese a que su corte, como era habitual en el medievo, tuvo un carácter itinerante. Desde el principio percibieron que el reino castellano, con una nobleza levantisca — no en vano para ascender al trono tuvieron que ganar una guerra civil contra la sobrina de

Isabel, Juana la Beltraneja, y el esposo de esta, Afonso V de Portugal — y también más poblado y con mayor número de recursos, requería de mayor atención. Su corte tuvo como lengua prioritaria el castellano, y vio un resurgir del latín gracias al avance del Humanismo que en Castilla estaba ya muy presente desde tiempos de Juan II (r. 1426–1454). Isabel la Católica obviamente hablaba castellano, y también estudió latín y se lo hizo aprender a sus hijos (Liss 16–20; Silleras-Fernández 2015, 173). No sería de extrañar que Isabel tuviera conocimientos de portugués. Después de la muerte de su padre, Juan II, su madre, Isabel de Portugal, su hermano Alfonso y ella se trasladaron a Arévalo, por lo que vivieron apartados de la nueva corte de su hermanastro, Enrique IV (Azcona 63–65, Val Valdivieso). Allí se les unió su abuela portuguesa, Isabel de Barcelos (1402–1466), sin duda acompañada por algunas de sus servidoras, por lo que Isabel pasó un tiempo rodeada de portuguesas que debían de hablar portugués. Como resultado no sería de extrañar que Isabel no solo entendiera bien el portugués, sino que lo hablara.

Lo mismo puede decirse de su esposo, Fernando, que, sin duda, hablaba catalán. Fernando creció en la Corona de Aragón y pasó sus años formativos en Cataluña, con su madre, Juana Enríquez, que ejercía de lugarteniente del principado en un periodo en el que las relaciones de su padre, Juan II de Aragón, con Cataluña eran tan tensas que fueron ellos dos los que la gobernaban en su nombre (Coll Julià 2: 134–155). El catalán había sido la lengua preferida de los condes-reyes de la dinastía catalana, que reinó en la Corona de Aragón desde su fundación en 1137 hasta 1410, año en que murió Martí I el Humano (r. 1396–1410) sin descendencia legítima. Entonces fue cuando, a partir de 1412, la dinastía Trastámara se asentó en estas tierras. Los compromisarios reunidos en Caspe le otorgaron la corona a Fernando de Antequera, hijo de una infanta catalano-aragonesa, Elionor, hermana del fallecido Martí I. En cualquier caso, el catalán no fue una lengua de uso en la corte de los Reyes Católicos, aunque si que hubo funcionarios, autores y textos catalanes/valencianos/mallorquines que se introdujeron traducidos (Silleras-Fernández, 2015, 162–168).

De hecho, los catalanes no fueron los únicos que vieron a muchos de sus autores pasarse a escribir en castellano, puede observarse un fenómeno similar en Portugal entre finales del siglo XV y el XVII – no en vano España estaba en pleno Siglo de Oro. En este periodo muchos autores catalanes y portugueses prefirieron escribir en castellano en lugar de en sus lenguas nativas (Buescu; Silleras-Fernández 2015, 168–174, 222–225; Vázquez Cuesta). Sin duda, esto estuvo relacionado con el hecho de que el patronazgo en este tiempo era fundamental para muchos escritores, que acostumbraban a dedicar sus obras a los propios monarcas, o a nobles importantes de su entorno, con la esperanza de recibir posiciones o recompensas económicas u otros beneficios.

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En cualquier caso, en la serie *Isabel* lo más sorprendente no es que la reina y el rey hablen solo y únicamente castellano, lo que resulta todavía más llamativo es que el resto de personajes, ya sean de la órbita catalana o portuguesa, también lo hagan, o que los granadinos no digan ni una palabra en árabe, ni los judíos en hebreo, sino que todos, en todo momento, hablen siempre en español. Hoy en día ciertamente los españoles hablan castellano, y muchos además otras lenguas, como el euskera, el gallego, el catalán u otras que aprenden en casa y que son fruto de la inmigración de las últimas décadas. Sin embargo, en los siglos XV y XVI, el castellano no era una lengua hablada y bien conocida por toda la población peninsular. Estas series proyectan el presente sobre el pasado, uniformando y simplificando. En estas series los subtítulos brillan por su ausencia. La situación es todavía más artificiosa e inverosímil en el caso particular de Carlos V. Ningún historiador duda el hecho de que cuando pisó por primera vez la Corona de Castilla, en septiembre de 1517, el joven monarca no hablaba castellano, y debemos de suponer que otro tanto le pasaba a los que llegaron con él. No lo había aprendido porque nació en los Países Bajos y se crió en el entorno de la corte de su padre, Felipe el Hermoso, Duque de Borgoña y Conde de Flandes, entre otros títulos, además de rey consorte de Castilla. Una vez muerto este y con su madre, la reina Juana I de Castilla, La Loca, retirada forzosamente en Tordesillas, él creció muy lejos de la península, en los territorios paternos, en una corte en la que la lengua predominante era el francés y también el neerlandés.

En el primer capítulo de la serie *Carlos* se nos presenta al protagonista, Carlos, y a su hermana, la infanta Leonor, quien, al igual que su hermano, también se crió en la corte flamenco-borgoñona sin aprender castellano. En este capítulo se quiere enfatizar la rivalidad entre Carlos, de quien continuamente se reitera que es un “extranjero”, y su hermano Fernando – nacido en Alcalá de Henares, criado en Castilla y el favorito de buena parte de la nobleza, que no veía con buenos ojos tener a un soberano foráneo que todavía no entendía Castilla. Obviamente el episodio se centra en Castilla, porque lo que pensarán los habitantes de la Corona de Aragón con respecto al nuevo rey no parece importarles lo más mínimo a los guionistas. Verdaderamente, a su llegada a la corte castellana Carlos sí que fue percibido como un rey extranjero, y uno de los motivos que contribuyó a tal consideración fue que no hablaba castellano (obviamente tampoco catalán, ya que había perdido tanto peso en el reinado de sus abuelos como lengua de corte, que ya nunca sintió la necesidad de aprenderlo). Hubiera sido interesante plantear este hecho en la serie y presentar a un Carlos hablando francés o neerlandés con su entorno – esas eran sus lenguas, las que aprendió creciendo – para después mostrarlo hablando español (Kamen 65). Lo mismo puede decirse de Margarita de Austria, tía paterna de Carlos, que sale en la serie *Isabel* porque fue la esposa del príncipe Juan (1478–1497), el malogrado hijo de los Reyes Católicos. En cuanto hace aparición en escena, Margarita lo hace ha-

blando en perfecto castellano, cuando, como su sobrino, ella tampoco sabía español al llegar (lo mismo le pasó a la infanta Juana, pero al revés, en la corte borgoñona de su esposo, Felipe el Hermoso (Aram 34). Esta dificultad para comunicarse al principio y el desconocimiento de la cultura del otro, sin duda complicaban todavía un poquito más este tipo de matrimonios arreglados/alianzas políticas. De hecho, el descontento de los castellanos con Carlos y su entorno flamenco llegó a ser tal que entre las peticiones que las Cortes de Castilla le hicieron, una de ellas fue, precisamente, que aprendiera el español (Kelsey 2). Sin embargo, en la televisión española esto no aparece porque hay una manifiesta alergia a los subtítulos, o a mostrar la diversidad lingüística que caracteriza nuestra historia y la cultura peninsular.

La única excepción a esta dinámica en la serie *Carlos, Rey Emperador* son los encuentros entre Hernán Cortés (1485–1547) y los aztecas. Cuando Cortés aparece interactuando con los aztecas, cada uno habla en su lengua nativa, y si se entienden es gracias a un intérprete. Nuevamente los subtítulos no son una opción, pero al menos se admite el hecho de que los nativos tenían su propia lengua. Lo que se hace con los nativos – supuestamente en un intento de dotar de “realismo” a la serie, porque hubiera resultado ridículo que recibieran a Hernán Cortés y a sus hombres hablándoles en perfecto castellano – parece ser que, para los productores, los guionistas y el director, no tiene sentido hacerlo en el contexto peninsular y europeo. Pudiera parecer que, a diferencia de lo que sucede con los nativos americanos, todos los habitantes de la península de aquellos siglos, si que tenían que saber español, independientemente de su reino de procedencia, y lo mismo puede decirse de los flamencos. Ese no era el caso.

Si algo caracterizó el reinado de Carlos V fue su itinerancia, y su voluntad de recorrer y gobernar sus posesiones europeas y españolas. Se pasó la vida de viaje. El emperador estuvo uno de cada cuatro años, de sus cuarenta años de reinado, viajando. De hecho, acabó pasando un total diecisiete años en España (once en la Corona de Castilla y cinco en la de Aragón), doce en Flandes y nueve en Alemania. Realizó nueve expediciones a Alemania, seis a España, siete a Italia, cuatro a Francia, diez a Flandes, dos a Inglaterra y varias a África (Kamen 67–68). Con tanto viaje no es de extrañar que se le atribuya la socarrona frase, que solo se entiende en el contexto de su vida peripatética y su entorno internacional: “Hablo el español con Dios, el italiano con las mujeres, el francés con los hombres y el alemán con mi caballo.” Otra de las máximas célebres que pronunció, y ésta sí que parece contrastada, la dijo en 1536 en Roma ante el Pontífice Pablo III, su curia e ilustres invitados. Cuando uno de los prelados franceses se quejó porque el emperador se estaba dirigiendo a ellos en español, y no en francés, entonces, ante la protesta, Carlos V señaló: “No importa que no me entendáis. Que yo estoy hablando en mi lengua española, que es tan bella y noble que debería ser conocida por toda la cristiandad” (Kamen 69). El que Carlos hablara español en ese preciso momento, en lugar de su lengua materna,

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tenía un significado puramente político, y denotaba su enfado ante una declaración de guerra de François I. El reinado de Carlos V se caracterizó por una marcada rivalidad con François I de Francia y sus guerras por el control de diversos territorios italianos (Blockmans 64–75). Pero, además, lo dicho por Carlos V tiene algo de premonitorio, porque verdaderamente el uso del español creció enormemente en el siglo XVI, sobre todo de la mano del imperio. Al mismo tiempo, lo que dijo también muestra la evolución personal del propio Carlos V después de veintidós años en el trono español.

Hubiera sido interesante que al inicio de la serie el joven Carlos, que en 1517 tenía tan solo 17 años, hubiera aparecido hablando francés y, a veces, en neerlandés, con subtítulos en castellano. De repente los espectadores hubieran entendido mucho mejor las dificultades de gobernar unos reinos que todavía no se conocen y cuya cultura resulta aliena, unos reinos peninsulares que tan solo eran unos entre los varios de los que debía ocuparse. Hubieran entendido el perfil marcadamente internacional del imperio de Carlos V y de la dinastía Habsburgo, que no tuvo como centro Castilla hasta el reinado de su hijo, Felipe II (r. 1554–1598), hijo de flamenco y de portuguesa, pero él sí, educado en Castilla (Sánchez-Molero 1998 and 2013, 57).

Las cortes bajo medievales y renacentistas estaban pobladas de individuos que, en muchas ocasiones, podían manejarse, o cuando menos entender más de una lengua. Un detalle de la dinámica del uso lingüístico en tiempos de Carlos V nos lo proporciona la corte de Germana de Foix en Valencia. Germana (1488–1538) era hija de Juan de Foix, Vizconde de Narbona, y de la reina Leonor de Navarra, que a su vez era hermana del rey de Francia, Louis XII. Germana fue la segunda esposa de Fernando el Católico, con quien contrajo matrimonio en 1506, dos años después de la muerte de la reina Isabel, cuando se vio obligado a abandonar Castilla que pasó a ser gobernada por su hija Juana (1479–1555) y el esposo de esta, Felipe el Hermoso (1478–1506). Este matrimonio formaba parte del tratado de Blois (1505), firmado entre Fernando el Católico y Louis XII, y, de haberle dado un hijo varón, pudiera haber comportado la ruptura dinástica entre las Coronas de Aragón y Castilla (Rivero Rodríguez 89–101). No fue el caso. Germana solo le dio un hijo, Juan, que nació y murió en 1509. Germana sí que tiene un papel en la serie Carlos, y ya de viuda se rumorea que tuvo una aventura con el nuevo monarca, que era su nieto político (ciertamente los dos hablaban francés, por lo que, indudablemente, se entendieron desde el principio) (López Alemany 47). Tras su viudez Germana volvió a desposarse en dos ocasiones más, primero en 1523 con Johann de Branderburg-Ansbach, y después, en 1526, con Fernando de Aragón, Duque de Calabria. Con su tercer marido compartió el virreinato del Reino de Valencia – un monarca tan viajero como Carlos V gobernó su imperio confiando en una serie de virreyes, algunos de ellos mujeres de su entorno familiar (López Alemany 45–56, Cruilles 156–157, 172–173; Rios Lloret i Vilaplana Sanchis 14 y Silleras-Fernández 2008, 5–7).

Durante los años que pasó en Valencia con su tercer esposo, el Duque de Calabria, uno de sus cortesanos fue el músico y escritor Lluís de Milà (c. 1500–1551) que escribió, a imitación de *El Cortesano* (*Il Cortegiano*) de Baldassare Castiglioni, el suyo propio de título homónimo hacia 1535, si bien no lo publicó hasta 1561. Este texto es interesante a muchos niveles, por ejemplo, describe los juegos, fiestas y entretenimientos cortesanos, pero también proporciona importantes detalles lingüísticos. En las primeras páginas se observa la presencia del bilingüismo catalán/castellano en la corte. Por ejemplo, en este texto el gracioso, Gilot y el canónigo, aparecen dirigiéndose en catalán a la reina Germana, que a su vez, responde a sus gracias y comentarios en castellano (Milán 8–10). Esta dinámica resulta interesante porque muestra la convivencia de ambas lenguas, y que en el funcionamiento diario para comunicarse no hace falta hablar las dos, sino entenderlas. Parece que ni Gilot sabía hablar castellano, ni Germana catalán, pero los podían comunicarse porque se entendían. Respecto al escritor, Lluís de Milà, que, si que podía manejarse y escribir cómodamente en ambas, para él lo más normal era consignar en su libro a cada personaje hablando en su propia lengua.

4. A MODO DE CONCLUSIÓN

Las series *Isabel* y *Carlos, Rey Emperador* han dejado perder una buena oportunidad, la de aventurarse en el multilingüismo y los subtítulos en el formato televisivo. Esta apuesta por el realismo de lo cotidiano hubiera ayudado a la audiencia a “ver” como funciona una sociedad multilingüe. Además, la sociedad española contemporánea lo es, muchos españoles hoy en día, son bilingües castellano/catalán/gallego/euskera, por no mencionar otras lenguas aprendidas en casa o en la escuela que pueden formar parte de su día a día en nuestra sociedad contemporánea globalizada. Hubiera sido interesante ver a Carlos hablando en francés, o cuanto menos, a sus súbditos de las diferentes zonas expresándose, de vez en cuando, en su lengua habitual. O ver al rey Fernando (Ferran) hablando en catalán, o algo todavía más trasgresor, pero no inverosímil, Isabel, al igual que Germana de Foix, lo más probable es que tuviera cierta familiaridad con el catalán. No sería descabellado pensar que Isabel, una mujer de una inteligencia fina, y que sabía latín, y que tenía como poco conocimientos de portugués, aprendiera algo de catalán. Es bien sabido que los Reyes Católicos y sus hijos hicieron varias estancias en Cataluña y en la Corona de Aragón en general, la más larga de todas ellas entre agosto de 1492 y enero de 1494, por lo que podría haberse habituado a la lengua, aunque fuera mínimamente (Romeu de Armas 37–38, 78, 82, 88, 95, 100, 156, 159, 196, 199, 220, 230, 282, 285, 289, 325, 328 y 410). Fue precisamente en Barcelona, en el palacio del rey, donde los Reyes Católicos recibieron a Cristóbal Colón en audiencia después de que este regresara de su primer viaje a las Américas. En definitiva, que en el caso de la Península Ibérica el modelo de la nación-estado que muestra una cultura uniforme y que se asocia a una úni-

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ca lengua, el castellano o español, y a una única geografía (la España de hoy), tal y como se construyó desde el siglo XIX, es anacrónico y no sirve para describir la complejidad que caracterizó la Edad Media, ni el Reinado de los Reyes Católicos, ni el de su nieto, Carlos V (Hamilton and Silleras ix-xiii; Menocal 7–8; Resina). Ambas series resultan marcadamente castellanocentristas y, en el siglo XXI, ya es hora de prestar atención a la diversidad que siempre nos ha caracterizado y enriquecido como sociedad.

Ciertamente, y para ser justos, la dinámica monolingüe característica de *Isabel* y de *Carlos, Rey Emperador* no es exclusiva de estos programas, sino habitual. No hace falta ser un espectador avisado de la televisión española para observar que, a diferencia de lo que sucede en otros países, como, por ejemplo, y para no ir más lejos, en el vecino Portugal, en España hay una obsesión por el doblaje. Se dobla prácticamente todo en la televisión y casi todo en el cine. Este menosprecio a los subtítulos, y a la interpretación original de los actores, dificulta no solo el aprendizaje de otras lenguas, sino el apreciar que estas existen. Durante los años del franquismo el doblaje se impuso porque facilitó la censura, al mismo tiempo que favorecía el fortalecimiento del castellano como lengua nacional. La “Ley de defensa del idioma,” promulgada en España en 1941, a imitación de una normativa similar aprobada por Benito Mussolini en Italia, obligó a que todas las películas se tradujeran al castellano (Campillo; Galán). Las traducciones del periodo hacían halago del moto “traduttore traditore,” e iban más allá de lo que el crítico de la traducción Lawrence Venuti, denomina “domesticación,” del original para ajustarlo a la cultura receptora; lo que se hacía era simplemente censurar lo que se pensaba que iba en contra de la ideología y la moral del régimen de Franco (1996).³ Y lo que empezó de manera tan sombría, se ha transformado con el tiempo en una costumbre tan arraigada que parece “natural,” pero que no ayuda a los españoles a entender la diversidad lingüística peninsular, ni a acostumbrar su oído a otros idiomas, sobre todo a uno que es bien práctico conocer hoy en día, el inglés.

La programación de la televisión española debería de ser más receptiva al multilingüismo y a los subtítulos. Los espectadores de hoy en día saben leer, y disfrutarían más si no solo pudieran ver, sino también escuchar a los actores en versión original. Este nuevo público está preparado para entender la diversidad cultural y lingüística del mundo que le rodea, para aceptar retos intelectuales y una programación más inteligente. Si películas tan taquilleras como la trilogía de Peter Jackson, *Lord of the Rings* (2001–2003), que fueron pensadas para atraer al gran público internacional,

³ Según Lawrence Venuti una traducción es una “reconstruction of the foreign text in accordance with values, beliefs and representation that pre-exist in the target language... [and] serves as an appropriation of foreign cultures for domestic agendas, cultural, economic, political” (196).

no dudan en mostrar en pantalla alguna de las lenguas inventadas por la imaginación desbordante de Tolkien, como la de los elfos, que aparece traducida en subtítulos; no veo por qué no *Isabel y Carlos, Rey Emperador* podrían haber hecho lo propio. En la actualidad en los Estados Unidos, donde se estima una población latina de 54 millones, un gran porcentaje de los cuales son bilingües (español-inglés), a los que hay que sumar todos aquellos que saben o están estudiando español, se está desarrollando una programación televisiva que evidencia este bilingüismo/conocimiento del español, con personajes que cambian de un idioma al otro, con subtítulos en inglés para las intervenciones en español. Este es el caso de programas nuevos y de series muy populares como *Narcos* de Netflix (desde 2014). Esta serie tiene como premisa la persecución del narcotraficante Pablo Escobar (1949–1993) y de sus socios del Cartel de Medellín, por parte de dos estadounidenses agentes de la DEA (*Drug Enforcement Agency*) en colaboración con las fuerzas militares colombianas. En esta afamada serie, cuya primera temporada se produjo en 2014, y cuya segunda está en periodo de rodaje, los americanos (de la DEA, la CIA, la embajada...) tienden a hablar en inglés con sus compatriotas, y con buena parte de los colombianos, pero los colombianos, Pablo Escobar y el cartel de Medellín, el presidente de Colombia y su entorno, obviamente, hablan en español con subtítulos en inglés.⁴ Sería absurdo hacerlo de otro modo. Este debería de ser el modelo a seguir.

En conclusión, y regresando al inicio de este artículo, a la cita inicial de Edward Carr, y a su noción del trabajo de historiador, que pesca lo que quiere y puede, no es menos útil lo señalado por el sociólogo Pierre Sorlin: “films tell us all we need to know about the policies and opinions of their makers, and no more” (33). Y pese a todo, si que es cierto que, a título personal, debo señalar que, a mí, y a otros niveles, los capítulos que he visionado de las series de *Isabel y Carlos* me han parecido de lo más entretenidos, y me han hecho pasar un buen rato y reflexionar sobre su tiempo y el nuestro. Porque, como escribió el historiador Robert Rosenstone: “no matter how serious or honest the filmmakers, and no matter how deeply committed they are to rendering the subject faithfully, the history that finally appears on the screen can never fully satisfy the historians as historians (though it may satisfy the historian as film-goer)” (20). As a film-goer, I was rather satisfied.

⁴ La recepción de esta serie por parte del público colombiano no ha sido tan cálida, y no solo por la visión que ofrece de su país, sino por los acentos de los actores. Por ejemplo, a los colombianos los acentos de algunos de los actores que hablan en español y pretenden ser colombianos, no les “suenan” locales. Así, el actor que interpreta a Pablo Escobar, el brasileño, Warner Moura, imita el acento de un paisa colombiano, pero se le escapa el suyo propio (Brodzinsky).

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URRACA: FEMALE SOVEREIGNTY FORGOTTEN AND IMAGINED

ABSTRACT:

Queen Urraca has been ignored in recent works of historical fiction because her story does not respond to the political and social climates that begin to appreciate women in power. This relative absence is mirrored in the historiography of historical fiction. This essay provides a summary of history and historical fiction about Queen Urraca that elaborates the changes in the way readers have thought, think, and continue to think about women.

KEY WORDS: Urraca, metafiction, historical fiction, women.

RESUMEN:

El abandono de la reina Urraca I en la historia ficción se podría atribuir al hecho que su historia no conforma a los ideales socio-políticos que informan la mujer hoy día. La ausencia relativa de la mujer se refleja en los estudios históricos que se han hecho sobre este género. Este ensayo provee un resumen de la historia e historia ficción de la reina Urraca en la que se apunta la evaluación de nuestro pensamiento sobre la reina y de cómo sus lectores han pensado, piensan, y siguen pensando sobre la mujer.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Urraca, metaficción, ficción histórica, mujeres.

Tengo por importante [...] el concepto de que la novela ha dejado de ser obra de mero entretenimiento, modo de engañar gratamente unas cuantas horas, ascendiendo a estudio social, psicológico, histórico, pero al cabo estudio.

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I hold as important [...] the idea that the novel has stopped being a work made for leisure, a way of whiling away the time for some hours, entertainment, and has risen to the level of social, psychological, and historical analysis, but in the end an analysis.

Emilia Pardo Bazán, *Preface to Un viaje de novios*

Urraca I was queen of León and Castile from 1109 until 1126, yet the biases imposed upon the vicissitudes of Urraca's life have wholly overshadowed the accomplishments of her sovereignty. In history and literature, Urraca has been condemned for behaviors scandalous only because of her sex. In fact, her sexual behavior has been the underlying reason behind most of the negative assessments of her rule. In 1982, she was partially rehabilitated in the eponymous novel by Lourdes Ortiz, whose interest in this queen prefigured today's current inclination for history and fiction.² Historical novels, those written by and about women in particular, have been read as recuperations of a presumptive past. In the creative recuperation of time gone by, these novels address past and current ways of thinking about women. Lourdes Ortiz, a Spanish novelist, dramatist, and professor, recreates the twelfth century monarch by introducing a complex understanding of Urraca's politics within a contemporary understanding of her psyche. Historical events determine most of the narrative of the novel. Ortiz integrates reality and imagination to present a character grounded in the understanding of Urraca's lifetime. Ortiz inscribes into the twelfth century plot concerns about women in twentieth century Spain. The recognized importance of Ortiz's novel is, however, at odds with Urraca's relative absence within contemporary historical fiction. As current associations between the genre and female readership suggest that these novels provide a way for contemporary women to reinterpret patriarchal practices (Cooper, Short 2-4, 10), this review of the queen's history and literature suggests the difficulties and possibilities of effecting a shift in understanding within patriarchal master narratives.

1. THE SHADOWS OF HISTORY AND FICTION

Reading historical fictions emphasizes the inventive nature of the written medium: a representation of the past is always a fictive creation mediated through a person's

² In 2001, Espasa (Grupo Planeta) set up a 30.000 € prize for the best novel in Historical Fiction. It is a date, the publishing house claims, that coincides with the peak of Spanish historical fiction writing. Henseler reports data from a survey from 1998, which states that the historical novel accounted then for 35.1% of preferred reading material in the category of contemporary narrative (adventure novels claimed first place with 37.3%) (42).

understanding of both past and present (Wallace 2012 211). Characters read within this construct are evaluated according to the actions found within the historical narrative, as seen through the author's and our own intents and inherent biases. In Ortiz's *Urraca*, the author provides partial glimpses into Urraca's time, seen through the eyes of the author composing it, and read through the time of reader's reading it. Historical narratives depend upon authors who may reduce but can never escape the influence of ideologies of their time. Historical fiction responds to our need for truth despite our understanding of its impossibility.³ In a sense, it is a genre reflective of Plato's cave allegory. Readers of historical fiction, as prisoners in Plato's cave, understand the shadows they see as reflections on one among many walls of representation. Readers of today's fictions understand that the representations of narrative past and of author's present reflect imperfectly the forms of what is and was and may have been real.

This multiple and imperfect representation of reality inevitably leads one to questions of authenticity. To what degree can *Urraca*, or for that matter, any work of historical literature, be judged wholly or in part as an authentic and aesthetic recuperation of history? It is a question that resonates still today. Before history was taught professionally, the historical narrative provided for the reading public the primary means of understanding past events (Hamnett 5). The recent appeal of historical fiction in literature, cinema, and television series has done much to reestablish the importance of historical fictions. However, historians, and literary and cultural critics have tended to neglect the genre as a model of scholarly inquiry, believing it a matter unworthy of comment because of institutional pressures or value-laden biases. Historically, the rise in popularity of the historical novel coincided both with the rise of the nation state and the advent of history as an academic discipline (Rehberger 61-62). History came to be understood as man formed bonds not with a region or village of origin, but with "a national sensibility," growing out of a sense of imperial goals or a fear of conquest (Wallace 2005 10-11). The Hegelian concept of history believed human life as part of a historical process, and any progress experienced by human life achieved by a dialectic between social forces (Wallace 2005 11).⁴ For modern historians like Hamnett, the nineteenth century historical novel often voiced unresolved historical issues through their character's experiences. Or, alternately, it illuminated national or social identities through their thoughts and deeds (2). Academic institution, national ideology, and literary imagination pushed against each other with conflicting ideas. In America,

³ This is the essential framework that allows for the later expression of postmodern historiographic metafiction, as described by Linda Hutcheon, and will be addressed in a subsequent section of this article.

⁴ Much the same thing is discussed later by Lukács, who notes that, "[h]istory itself... is the bearer and realiser of human progress" (27; qtd. in Wallace 2005 11).

the justification of American history as a worthwhile academic discipline conflicted with the identification of American historical fictions as fanciful, fictive or imprecise representations of that same past. The insecurities of history as a worthwhile object of study possibly were due to America's brief existence as a country. These insecurities may not have been felt as strongly by people who could claim a longer, unified existence. In England, Oxford's development as a modern university grew out of the idea that new subjects such as History furnished "a discipline, in both the widest and narrowest sense, for transforming immature young men into responsible and capable leaders, at home and within the empire" (Soffer 933). Implicit in this idea was the belief that a study of one's past exposed one's personal patriotism. History in Oxford thus became a rigorous academic discipline providing the student with the knowledge of political institutions that had led to England's rise, and the means to make informed decisions for one's fellow man and for the future of one's country (Soffer 933-936). Yet, the friction between history and historical fiction ironically underlies their mutual interdependence. History could teach the British student to be a better citizen, but the stories gleaned from primary sources – be they a charter, a treatise, or a castle – were necessary inspirations to get the student to university. Herbert Butterfield noted this universal response to the primary sources of history, and the desire for story engendered by these primary sources: "All of us have this feeling when the glimpse of some historic town, or the impressive sternness of an old castle, or the sight of a Roman wall, awakens a world in our minds, and sets us thinking on all the tales that stone could tell if only it could speak the history it stores" (9). The sight of these historical artifacts fosters the storyteller in us. This sight projects a linear transfer between the object beheld and the subject beholder. The stories contained in objects like the Roman wall are projected onto the consciousness of the subject to foment a type of *translatio imperii*, or rather a *translatio sapientiae*, whereby the knowledge of the past promotes the wisdom necessary for continued conquest and empire. History and historical fiction develop, not coincidentally, at a time when the self-identified community grows to the national level. Historical fiction appeals to the more popular demand for literature in which the community's origins may be understood or questioned, their essence examined and expressed. At the same time, history as an emerging academic institution legitimated its discipline by offering the means to nurture and promote citizens with the country's best national interests at heart.

This model for the birth of historical fiction fit well for countries with expanding borders, but needed slight modification to admit the Spanish nation.⁵ After all,

⁵ The topic has been studied very little for Spain. The primary institutions for encouraging historical study in the nineteenth century were not universities, but royal academies. According to Cuesta

the majority of Spanish imperial holdings had all but disappeared by 1826. The 1810 Cortes in Cadiz had proclaimed sovereignty for the people it represented, yet decades of war, internal conflict, and imperial decline prolonged the self-definition of Spain and the Spanish people as a nation (Hamnett 218-19). Spain's identity gained a certain literary cohesiveness in Benito Pérez Galdós's *Episodios nacionales*, an impressive series of forty-six novels that paints Spanish history from the Battle of Trafalgar (1805) through the Bourbon Restoration (1874). Written between 1872 and 1912, the five series that comprise the *Episodios* were written in the belief that an understanding of Spain's past would enable the nation to move past its difficult present (Coffey, Troncoso, García Castañeda, Luna).

Given the rise in female authorship in the nineteenth century, one of the main problems with this summary of the growth of history and historical fiction is the lack of female authorities. The absence of these figures, one might presume, does not stem from their lack of existence, but rather from a narrowed and masculinist approach to the concept of historical fiction. Critics like Diana Wallace have restored many of the women who wrote at the same time as their groundbreaking male counterparts by reevaluating the genre's definition.⁶ While most early twentieth century critics (Lukács, Butterfield, Alonso) scarcely if ever mention women, Wallace has recognized that works by Maria Edgeworth (*Castle Rackrent*, 1800), Charlotte Brontë (*Shirley*, 1849), George Elliot (*Romola*, 1863; *Felix Holt*, 1866), Elizabeth Gaskell (*Sylvia's Lovers*, 1863) and Virginia Woolf (*Orlando*, 1928; *Between the Acts*, 1941) clearly evidence a tradition of women historical writings (2005 8-9).

Within the Iberian peninsula, the existence of women's historical fiction might also be presumed. A 2011 exhibition at Madrid's Biblioteca Nacional displayed the writings of Carolina Coronado. Although she is known primarily for her poetry, the Sala de las Musas exhibited three of Coronado's fifteen novels; the museum's pamphlet confirmed these novels' historical nature (*Paquita. Adoración* [1850], *Jarilla* [1850], *La Sigea* [1954]).⁷ Emilia Pardo Bazán's *La tribuna* (1883) refers to concrete historical

Fernández, some initial reforms were made for the study of history in the 1830s. In 1845, the *Plan Pidal* provided the means to establish basic requirements for students earning university degrees. By 1857, the *Ley Moyano* finally ratified the inclusion of history into the Spanish university curriculum (22).

⁶ Simply speaking, the genre of historical fiction has been defined as one which is set in a historical past. It is thought to begin with the early nineteenth century writings of Sir Walter Scott. *Waverly* (1814) is credited as the first historical novel, and its appended title "[t]is sixty years since" marks a time period sufficiently "past" to be considered of historical value. Wallace has noted, as may be seen above, at least one female author of historical fiction who wrote before the advent of *Waverly*.

⁷ A fourth historical novel, *Harnina*, was unfinished at the time of her death in 1911 (Torres Nebrera 405).

events that affect the lives of the author's urban working class characters (González Arias 135). Pardo Bazán's ability to faithfully portray this class in *La tribuna* is one of the reasons it has been classified as part of the Naturalism movement. Other authors such as Fernán Caballero wrote various works classified as *costumbrista*. In the prologue to Caballero's *La familia de Alvarado* (1856), for example, the Duque de Rivas praises her exact reproduction of Spanish locales and characters, claiming that they are portrayed with the precision of a Velázquez painting. Much of the work written by these nineteenth century novelists has been categorized by other genres subsumed by the umbrella of historical fiction. Many of these women's stories interpret local life; they do so by suggesting that particular social and biological forces shape human events or by grasping the essence of a people through a narrative that reproduces their mannerisms and customs. It is clear that these movements may be understood as variations on the historical novel, and that these movements represent to different degrees subnational communities within an emerging nation state (Iarocci 387-88; Channon-Deutsch 122-37). It is clear that authors like Pardo Bazán and Fernán Caballero address political and social groups that shape part of the Spanish nation; it is abundantly clear that both these authors desired a voice in the construction of the Spanish nation. Their works may not express, strictly speaking, a means of completely synthesizing the essence of a time, yet the lives of its characters represent the ways a region, group, or sex would want to inform national interests. In this, these female authors extended beyond the purview of male authors, and like their English counterparts, these female authors have been largely and until recently ignored.

The historical novel, imagined by a male author and written primarily for a male audience, presupposed for the genre its own *raison d'être*. Because these reasons did not coincide with the presumed rationale of female writers of historical novels, their works were misunderstood, discounted and discredited by future readers, scholars, and critics. The tensions already in existence between history (as an academic institution) and fiction (set in a historical past) fueled greater conflicts invalidating the genre as a worthwhile object of study. Moreover, the aphoristic description of historical fiction as "vulgar fiction, impure history" is one that subtly undermined female authorship. The gender specific negative qualifiers "vulgar" and "impure" were particularly damaging to women authors of historical fictions, as many of these authors inscribed amorous plots, which were understood by male authors as plots of lesser literary quality, into their fictions. While male, nineteenth century novelists drew upon readers' yearning for patriotic plots woven into the texture of history, women novelists were criticized for writing escapist, frivolous novels. This is not the place to argue, as Wallace convincingly does, that the escapist nature of a romantic tale can be set against a historical and political backdrop; nor is it the place to argue that escapist literature and politics may be more closely connected than at first

they seem to be (Wallace 2005 2-3). Women's historical fiction – especially in the twentieth century – elaborated a form of sexual politics to bring women out of the shadows of history (Ciplijauskaitė 29). Over the past fifty years, the re-inscribing of women into histories (both academic and literary) has empowered the female author to explore previously taboo issues. In particular, the study of historical fictions has allowed one to explore the changing nature of gender, and the social and cultural construction of the roles that genders play (Wallace 2005 8). The importance of sex and gender within the historical fiction genre became abundantly clear after the sexual liberation movement in the 1960s. Yet, for works such as *Urraca*, the more explicit sexual freedoms of the Castilian and Leonese queen could be told more plainly after the death in 1975 of the Spanish dictator, Francisco Franco. The *destape* that followed Franco's demise “unclothed” persons suffering from sexual, social, and political repression, and in *Urraca* one senses a similar uncovering. Queen Urraca I has been dispossessed in the narrative of her sovereignty, isolated from others in what amounts to a monastic prison, and denied the trappings of wealth typically afforded medieval queens. Yet despite the paucity of material goods, and her social and political disenfranchisement, Urraca wields a power to seduce the chronicle's interlocutor and her reader. Ortiz has suggested that her work be read interpretatively, and draws parallels between reading and living under the Francoist dictatorship. This interpretation presents reading as an investigative act, one in which an official story may be seen to cover up a crime. The story officially told will tell one thing; questioning the narrative for its motivations, for the presentation of its events, for its omissions, reveals something other than what officially has been told (Flesler 317). In *Urraca*, Ortiz writes the queen's story, but Ortiz's narrative subverts the accepted truth of the queen's life. Ortiz does not reject the sexual encounters that have been used to demean the queen. Instead, she writes them in ways that empower the queen. The reader reads that the queen is a prisoner and is seemingly powerless. Yet, the queen's narrative reshapes our understanding of the events that have taken place, and through Ortiz's narrative Urraca voices an authority heretofore denied. Ortiz's novel has been carefully and painstakingly researched so that the reader should focus on the historical detail. Nevertheless, the expression of the psychological and erotic elements of Urraca's story privileges these elements rather than the eleventh and twelfth century historical content (Spires 205). Urraca grounds her narrative in the authority of the written word, but her topics are scarcely imaginable for a medieval chronicle. Urraca's unusual sexual proclivities, her unrepentant lack of maternal feeling, and her relentless quest for power are retold in a way that marks a new shape for the independent woman. Her autonomous identity is very different from the idealized, subservient feminine behaviors found in medieval narrative, or recommended by the Falangist Sección Femenina. There are differences between

the expected, official image of queen and woman, and the image revealed through Ortiz's narrative. These differences offer the plausibility of a queen very different from that found in historical record.

Ortiz also exposes in *Urraca* differences in the social roles that men and women have and imagine of one another (Ciplijauskaitė 33). Urraca, as written by Ortiz, never conforms to an idealized female role. She transforms repeatedly in the work, strategically assuming any number of transgressive, gender-specific roles to maintain the sovereign power she desires. The transformative nature of Urraca's gender resonates in the structural circularity of the novel. In the first section of the novel, the collapse of Alfonso VI's kingdom is transformed into her own collapsed reign. The first section starts with a king and queen united, and ends with the death of her father, and the failure of her own marriage. The collapse of Urraca's marriage is told and retold throughout the three parts of her tale, as she grapples for a sovereign power afforded only to men. Each of the three sections recounts parts of Urraca's life, which chronicle events from her childhood to those of her aspirations as queen, from becoming a queen to achieving sovereignty, and from achieving sovereignty to becoming a prisoner. Urraca chronicles her story by focusing on salient historical events, and by mediating her part in the story through the desires of both mind and body. These desires are explained partly through the metaphor of the chess game, and played out on Urraca's physical and political body.⁸ Gutierrez's ability to anticipate an attack and set forth in battle makes him a knight championing her cause. He is sacrificed later, like a pawn, to her greater objectives. As the second knight, Lara demonstrates his maneuverability and craft in the ever-changing patterns of creative lovemaking; a backward motion reserved for his cravenly retreat in Candespina. Gelmírez's grasp for power (through her son Alfonso VII) is indicative in the sidelong moves of the bishop, yet the monotony of the lateral moves represents his lackluster bedroom manner. Alfonso I is ably represented with his own set of enemy players that collectively attack Urraca. As the opposing king, he demands her sexual and political defeat. Each of these players, Gonçalvez intuitively interacts with Urraca as pieces on a chessboard. With an appropriate quote from Alfonso VI's cabalistic doctor, Cidellus, Gonçalvez notes the similarities between the chessboard and parchment, and identifies Urraca's various roles as queen, wife, and mother (25-26). But, it is important to remember that Urraca manipulates each of her pieces to foment her sovereign, masculine power. Because of this, one sees how

⁸ The movements of the characters in *Urraca* reflect modern movements of pieces on the chessboard. Urraca's desired freedom of movement was not possible until the latter half of the fifteenth century, when the game of chess began to be played differently. A greater freedom of movement is attributed to the bishop and the queen; the latter's increase in power has been attributed to Isabel I of Castile.

the same sexual politics of the chessboard that allow Urraca to maneuver her pieces across the chessboard also destabilize that chessboard. The instability of the political chessboard, representative of Urraca and Ortiz's social and political realities, arises from the other players, for whom the rules of chess cannot accommodate one player as both king and queen. Cidellus's comparison between chess and writing extends this metaphor onto the chronicle she writes (and presumably the chronicle that the reader reads). Urraca has appropriated for herself another male-coded behavior: the documentation of her rule. Urraca is a queen with a kingly prerogative. She becomes her own chronicler, and the monk Roberto the narratee to whom she tells her story. The seduction of her story, her convincing self-expression, is impressed upon skin as well as paper, as may be symbolically interpreted by her intimacies with the monk (Ciplijauskaitė 37; Henseler 42-57). Urraca's story imposes itself upon the reader, bending the reader's reading of her to her will. As sovereign, she wants to be listened to as she would tell her tale, just as she wants to play by her own rules. Urraca's story is one of resistance to a social order bent on challenging her independent sovereignty. It is a story still of valid import for the twenty-first century. This is why the open ended conclusion to the story both appeals to and is rejected by the reader. The primacy of Urraca's written word, and the very medieval sentiment found with the composed chronicle (that her reign – as she has narrated it – will allow her to live well past her natural life) tragically diminishes with the implied moment of her suicide.

2. THE SHADOWS OF URRACA'S HISTORY

The negative portrayal of Queen Urraca I of León and Castile in chronicles contemporary to her life has marked her for centuries as a subject of inquiry and ignominy. Urraca I is a controversial figure in history and literature, in part because her queenly image in no way represents the Virgin's *mediatrix* role, upon which queenship was later informed.⁹ Urraca does not emulate Mary, having fought with her second husband and her only legitimate son for the power to rule over her lands. Historical records note that the Castilian-Leonese queen took at least one lover, gave birth to at least two illegitimate children, and possibly died in childbirth

⁹ The symbolic merit of *Maria regina* has been studied by Mary Stroll, who identifies the Virgin mother as a symbol first used by popes and later appropriated by queens. Stroll identifies within this image complementary characteristics, such as that of advocate for her people. She mentions specifically the sermons of Bernard of Clairvaux, whose dual interpretation of Mary as queen of the heavens and advocate of the world provided the idealized behaviors informing not only the state of the Church, but also of medieval queenship (173-78). Despite the negative portraits depicted in chronicles contemporary to her life, Urraca effectively used religious propaganda to associate her with the Church (Martin 1132-71).

with a third. This hurried description informs the content of most early accounts of her life; it is a summary that focuses on the queen's sex and her illicit sexual relationships, and presumes a gender-specific bias that predisposes the reader to dismiss her. The *Historia Compostelana* criticizes Urraca specifically as regards to her relationship with Diego Gelmírez, bishop of Santiago de Compostela (d. ca. 1149). She is described in this chronicle as having a weak, female, perverse character, which makes her a ruler incapable of governing justly or peaceably. Neither Lucas of Tuy (d. 1249) in the *Chronicon Mundi* nor Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada (d. 1247) in *De rebus Hispaniae* gives Urraca much credit. The former denies her sovereignty by stating that her son, Alfonso VII, succeeded his grandfather, Alfonso VI. The latter chronicler suggests that Alfonso VI, prior to his death and against his noblemen's wishes, married Urraca to Alfonso I of Aragón. After this, the Aragonese monarch whisked his new wife away to foreign lands. Alfonso VI, in the meantime, died leaving his land in a golden age of peace in which men and women, no matter how weak, could walk alone in safety. Afterwards, Urraca ruled for four years (262-63).

Urraca's illicit love affairs with the counts Gómez Gutierrez (commonly known as the count of Candespina) and Pedro de Lara (count of Lara) come out in the *Historia Compostelana*: "Comes iste P., ut rumor ajebat, firmissima amoris catena U. Reginæ obsequi solitus erat (...) ob hoc ejus captio mærorem atque tristitiam Réginæ generaverat" (*España Sagrada* 270). Jiménez de Rada's *De rebus Hispaniae* expanded upon Urraca's misdeeds by adding:

Pero la reina Urraca se entregó en secreto al conde Gómez, sin mediar las bodas, por lo que el conde, dando por seguro el matrimonio, comenzó a dirigir las guerras del reino y a presionar a los aragoneses en la medida de sus fuerzas; y tuvo de la reina un hijo en secreto, que fue llamado Fernando Hurtado. Entretanto, otro conde, Pedro de Lara, intentaba ganarse discretamente el favor de la reina, y consiguió lo que quería... Por su parte el conde Pedro de Lara, que había dado pábulo de manera impropcedente a sus relaciones íntimas con la reina en el convencimiento de que concluirían en matrimonio, hacía valer su hegemonía sobre los demás, y comenzó a actuar como rey... (267-69)

Later, the *Estoria de España* takes up the account, repeating how

...la reyna consintiosse al Conde en poridad, mas non por casamiento. Et ouo en la reyna donna Vrraca un fijo a furto, a que pusieron nombre por ende Fernan Furtado. Et el Conde don Pedro de Lara otrossi gano estonces en poridad el amor de la Reyna, e fizo en ella lo que quiso. (647)

According to Menéndez Pelayo, Father Mariana (1536-1624) embellished the account noting how "andaban el nombre del Conde y el de la Reina puestos afrentosamente en cantares y coplas," songs whose existence Menéndez Pelayo denied (398).

This is not to say that all accounts from the past unanimously vilified the first female Leonese and Castilian sovereign. Religious chroniclers and historians of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries tried to rehabilitate the queen, yet to what extent their works may be considered faithful or judicious interpretation of archival records is a matter of much doubt. In the nineteenth century, the presumed counselor to Fernando VII and archivist of the Seville's General Archive of the Indies, José Clemente Carnicero (b. 1770), wrote *El liberalismo convencido por sus mismos escritos*. In it, he noted the many apologists who had denied the queen's exploits as narrated in past accounts. In particular, Clemente Carnicero refuted claims made by Francisco Marina (1754–1833) that condemned Urraca's moral and political acts. Clemente Carnicero equally denied that the Spanish nation had defied Urraca's sovereign right to rule, and instead proclaimed her son Alfonso king (119). Clemente Carnicero's anachronistic description of a twelfth century Spanish nation and its courts would have certainly appealed to a nineteenth century public. Clemente Carnicero avowed the defamation by other authors to be spurious, since neither the "nación de consuno" nor the "cortes generales y legítimas" deposed Urraca. Clemente Carnicero cited historians of previous centuries to vindicate Urraca. He claimed, but did not name, that documents used by these historians proved her to be honest, pious, a lover of the people, and a benefactress of churches and monasteries. He concluded that Urraca died "egemplarmente, y que hasta el día de su muerte fue reconocida siempre por Reina" (126).

Even in the twentieth century, Urraca has continued to be snubbed. The most surprising of these omissions is found in the series *Historia de España de Menéndez Pidal*, published throughout the twentieth century by Espasa Calpe. While entire chapters are given over to the reigns of Alfonso VI and Alfonso VII, Urraca I's years as sovereign are subsumed within the chapter rubric "from Alfonso VI to Alfonso VII". Urraca's historical rehabilitation came late in a monographic study by Bernard Reilly, *The Kingdom of León-Castile under Queen Urraca*. Coincidentally, it was published the same year as Ortiz's *Urraca*. Reilly offers the following opinion of Urraca, which directly rejects any fanciful descriptions of the queen: "Urraca was a widow about twenty-seven years old and a mother of two children. She was no impressionable or romantic girl but a mature woman, approaching middle age by modern reckoning but more likely having achieved it on any twelfth-century scale" (45). Reilly introduces his object of historical study by offering a relatively objective evaluation of the sources written in the centuries immediately following her death. His descriptions take into account the politics in the various chronicles that discuss Urraca, noting her possible resistance to what would become a disastrous marriage to Alfonso I of Aragon (46-47, 57), and pointing out discrepancies in the Archbishop Gelmírez's descriptions of the queen's character (47). Reilly's historical account measures the queen's documentary records against the chronicles contemporary to her reign. From these sources, he

intuits that her liaisons must be understood as part of a “political stratagem,” which perhaps was a cause in the failure of her marriage. Alfonso the Battler “could not be other than master” (48). The prejudices against Urraca based on her sex, which inform almost all of the previous historical accounts, are much less apparent in Reilly. His representation of Urraca is more impartial; his description of her as monarch is based on the effectiveness of her goals. Reilly’s history concludes with the lament that “the study of the reign of Urraca, for all her prominence, remains a study of her public acts and public institutions of the realm itself” (353). Yet, it is because the twentieth century historian must focus on her public acts that he appraises her reign positively. It may even be claimed that his impartiality has led recent scholars to further study the queen’s historical record. Cristina Monterde Albiac’s *Diplomatario de la reina Urraca de Castilla y León* (1109-1127) has been touted as the means to refocus the study of her reign (Martínez Sopena 266). A recent reevaluation of archival documentation found within Pallares Méndez and Portela’s *La reina Urraca* has begun to do just that. Their reading of certain official documents suggests that Urraca, from a very young age, was conscious of the masculine biases that opposed her sovereignty.¹⁰ These historians also question a legend perpetuated in Jiménez de Rada’s *De rebus Historiae* and repeated in the *Primera Crónica General*, which maligned the queen’s character, and thus questioned her ability to effectively rule.¹¹ Turning to archival documents, Pallares Méndez and Portela debunked the claims made in the thirteenth century legend, and thus refuted the ascribed negative traits that defame Urraca’s sovereign reign. Pallares Méndez and Portela’s review of royal documents leads inexorably to a reassessment of Urraca’s reign. Their biography leads as well to a questioning of the values upon which sexist presumptions were initially made, and a frank assessment of the progress made to disabuse Urraca’s historical record from gender-laden biases.

¹⁰ Pallares Méndez and Portela put forward that the unnecessary mention of both sexes in official records signed early on by the queen may be read as her awareness of the difficulties imposed by her sex on her rule (24, 33).

¹¹ The legend condemns Urraca for ingratitude expressed toward Pedro Ansúrez, by claiming she wrongly confiscated his lands after her father’s death in 1109. The legend raises questions for these historians, since Urraca’s ingratitude is presumed because of the paternal relationship presumed between them. He was thought to be her *ayo*. Ansúrez’s position as *ayo* is never mentioned; it appears neither in Alfonso nor Urraca’s royal diplomas. This is decidedly strange, since other noblemen such as Pedro Fróilaz were recognized in this capacity and rewarded for it. In fact, Ansúrez signs the very same diploma that compensates Fróilaz for the care he has provided Urraca’s son. In this document, he is named by his title and territorial possessions, but his role as *ayo* is not mentioned. On 15 December 1110, Urraca confirmed a donation that Ansúrez and his wife made to the church of Santa María in Valladolid. It was a church with strong ties to the family, and Urraca herself adds a donation to the church in the same document. It is unlikely that in either of these documents the queen would have failed to mention his role as *ayo*, were he to have acted in this capacity. Ansúrez also appears in royal documents dating from the start of Urraca’s reign in 1109 until 1117, when he is thought to have died (Pallares Méndez, Portela 25-26).

3. THE SHADOWS OF URRACA'S FICTION

Given Urraca's slow rehabilitation within history, it is no surprise that her portrayal in Spanish literature also has been underrepresented and unflattering. The sovereign was sidelined in *La varona castellana* (1604), a scarcely read and even more scarcely staged Lope de Vega play whose eponymous title refers not to the queen but to Sorian legend María Pérez de Villañane. While Menéndez Pelayo points out that the first act of this play reflects favorably upon the "princess," her lack of agency is less than praiseworthy (397). The play revolves around the positively coded masculine acts of María Pérez, who manages to fight and best a nefarious King of Aragon. This female act of bravery is never transposed upon the queen, despite the fact that Urraca fought her husband for years over control for her lands. Urraca is somewhat improved as the protagonist of the historical dramas by Eusebio Asquerino (*Doña Urraca*, 1838) and Antonio García Gutierrez (*Doña Urraca de Castilla*, 1872). She appears within the nineteenth century novel, *El conde de Candespina* (1832), by Patricio de la Escosura, and again in the eponymous *Doña Urraca de Castilla* (1849) by Francisco Navarro Villoslada. This last novel bears a more detailed mention, if only for the encomiastic comparisons made by others. For example, Gabino Tejado, editor for the Badajoz liberal paper, *El Extremeño*, wrote "[d]e la fábula tejida por el Sr. Navarro Villoslada, cabe repetir lo que se ha dicho de las novelas de Walter Scott, que son más verdaderas que la historia" (Mata Induráin 63). The historical novels by this author display a certain amount of psychological depth (Sebold 39). This depth provides the reader with a fleshed out literary persona. But, it is at the expense of her morals, since Urraca is conflicted by her desire for a married man, Bermudo del Moscoso. His rejection of her becomes a plot point used to dovetail with the chronicles upon which the author relies. To summarize: Urraca is unable to marry the man she loves, and so her "pure" passion turns to licentious behavior. Navarro Villoslada notes in his prologue his historical dependence on the *Historia Compostelana*, and observes the queen's continued, negative historical portrayal.

Duramente ha sido tratada esta Princesa por los escritores contemporáneos, y no se diga si a ellos han seguido los aragoneses y navarros, bizarramente defendida por autores del pasado siglo, paladines que esgrimían armas a favor de una mala causa sólo porque en ella se interesaba una señora. Nosotros, a fuer de imparciales, no podemos cerrar los ojos a la luz de la verdad, por más que nos ofenda; pero creemos que ni por unos ni por otros se ha tenido en cuenta el negro cuadro de las costumbres y carácter del siglo XII para apreciar esa gran figura, por aquéllos tan ultrajada, por éstos tan acaloradamente defendida, sólo por Reina y Reina castellana. Si preguntamos a la historia, si buscamos sepulcros, si registramos escrituras de donaciones o privilegios, en los cuales la gratitud aspira a perpetuar con la

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donación la imagen del donador, todas las investigaciones nos darán unánime testimonio de la sin par hermosura de Doña Urraca. (25)

The defense made here is confusing at best. If *Gelmírez's* attacks on Urraca are remembered (she is weak, volatile, perverse in an essentially female way), one cannot understand easily the logic behind *Villoslada's* defense. Urraca has been maligned by some; she has been defended by others, whose defense was borne out of a misguided attempt at chivalry. But in the end, all that matters is Urraca's beauty. Her beauty is relevant not merely because it is unsurpassed, but because of what it represents. Her attributes are painted by the author to imply a connection with both the divine and the damned, and so suggest a soul in turmoil. That is to say, her external beauty reflects her original virtuous state, from which she has departed because of her misfortunes in love.

The unrequited love story between Queen Urraca and Bermudo del Moscoso is told as a result of Urraca's encounter with Bermudo's son, Ramiro. This encounter prompts a positive change in Urraca's psyche, for upon encountering the youth, she begins to show remorse for her dissolute behavior. Urraca's personality changes as the remembrance of her true love prompts a moral rebirth. Urraca's change comes from the slow recognition that Ramiro is Bermudo's son. The impossibility of love with the father or the son is manifested through a thought process that ends in the subordination of Urraca's desires to those of Bermudo's family. To effectively portray Urraca's character as one capable of moving from virtue to dissolution and back, Navarro Villoslada gives his female a domineering, contrary nature.

Tenía Doña Urraca un genio dominante y tiránico, que en un hombre sería el origen de grandes empresas, y en una mujer el manantial de intrigas y disturbios. Alfonso el Batallador, muy más tiránico y dominante todavía, lleno de cualidades eminentes, tan propias de un Monarca que aspira a brillar por la conquista, carecía de algunas otras que sobran a su mujer. La primera sabía ser rastrera como la serpiente, para elevarse como el águila; el segundo hubiera creído que descender a tomar aliento era abdicar su título de rey de las aves. La una apelaba tan presto a la fuerza como a las lágrimas; el otro no conocía más armas que su razón y su espada. (25)

Urraca has been morally redeemed, but in doing so, Navarro Villoslada condemns her politically. Her thoughts and actions, as Encinar describes, become exceedingly volatile and lack all political vision (22). Urraca's description, which Navarro Villoslada suggests is indicative of ideal royal temperament, codes idealized qualities in a sovereign according to gendered, animal behaviors. This allows the ideal monarchic temperament to be interpreted positively in men but negatively in women. Simply put, both Urraca and Alfonso are tyrannical and domineering, but only Urraca knows how to slither like a snake. For Navarro Villoslada, the

manifestation of behaviors ideal in a male sovereign produce an ineffective queen. In Ortiz's *Urraca* the case is different. It is Urraca's androgynous power that allows her to wield power (McGovern 201).¹²

The construction of Urraca's character has been discussed by McGovern and others through the critical framework provided by Linda Hutcheon.¹³ Historiographic metafiction provides a superb means to discuss the evolution of the nineteenth century historical novel into its twentieth century incarnation, and McGovern applies with care the characteristics that inform Hutcheon's twentieth century subgenre. Hutcheon conforms to Lukács's idea that the protagonist in the historical novel should synthesize the general and the particular of the time. McGovern recognizes that this is a thing a sovereign queen cannot accomplish, as she is underrepresented within the time frame of the Middle Ages. My concern for this critical framework, however, is informed by the concerns already expressed by Diana Wallace. Forgoing, for the moment, that the many centuries comprising the Middle Ages will produce only most banal of general/particular syntheses, the idea that women were not agents of action during that time brings to bear the political, "nation-building" character implicit in the masculinist study of historical fiction. Only matters of great import, and therefore only those produced with the cultural tools necessary for their recording into history, may be included. Equating Urraca simply as woman, as opposed to sovereign queen, deprives her of the voice being found in the re-examination of an eighteen-year historical record. Likewise, it denies her the sovereignty of a voice produced within Ortiz's fictive chronicle. Urraca was a sovereign ruler in León and Castile; she was intent on maintaining the power afforded her as ruler of these lands. These goals for controlling and maintaining empire are repeatedly made throughout the narratives of historical record and fictive chronicle.

Urraca's claims over her own history are gender coded in the chronicle she writes; medieval accounts of sovereign kings, after all, are rather more prevalent than those of their queens. As McGovern notes, Urraca's story aligns with those of three male leaders; in Urraca's story, she places their tales on the periphery of her own (198). Through Urraca's careful manipulation of details, she exposes the subjectivity of narrative. The example McGovern gives is that of the Cid, whose life as a mercenary also subverts the Francoist dictatorship's official, idealized portrait of Rodrigo

¹² Between Navarro Villoslada's novel from 1849 and Ortiz's 1982 *Urraca*, Ramón Gómez de la Serna published *Doña Urraca de Castilla* (1944). Unfortunately, I have not had access to this novel.

¹³ Encinar, Gurski, Janzon, Mazquiarán de Rodríguez are a few of the critics whose discussions of Urraca's character have been subsumed within discussions of historiographic metafiction.

Díaz de Vivar (198).¹⁴ The subjectivity implicit in the Cid's narrative exposes the relativity of Urraca's writing. If Urraca's account cannot guarantee the reader of the truth of an event – because no account can do so – it can at least hint toward the motivations informing that event. Urraca, writing while imprisoned in the phallic monastic tower, is defying the official story. McGovern states that

[a]s Urraca's consciousness and chronicle evolve, it becomes apparent that it is not truth that she seeks nor is it revenge for her imprisonment, but rather a power achieved only through writing. To this end she wants to be heard on her own terms, desiring to be remembered by future generations. (199)

Urraca's writing is a process, one that has allowed her the reflection of self-discovery (Gurksi 177; Rivera Villegas 307). Urraca writes her history to mark her presence in the world. In doing so, she inserts herself into a written form of history that writes against a master narrative prejudiced against women. Yet as Urraca writes, her story does not directly contradict other narratives, but dialogues with them (Higginbotham 177-78). The fictive Urraca doesn't deny events within the master narrative. Instead, she shifts their interpretation so as to cast herself, Ortiz's fictive Urraca, as she would like to be remembered. Higginbotham's idea of a text in communication with others is suggestive, especially in light of the importance the protagonist places on empire. The fictive Urraca has persuaded the reader of the plausibility of her narrative, so that the reader can accept the plausibility of her motives. Urraca claims that she has done all that she has done for her empire. Her desire for empire has been desire for a territory. Control for this space has played out on a chessboard, on a body, and in a chronicle. Urraca has played, acted, and written as a measure of self-expression. Through Urraca, Ortiz reaffirms that a woman's control over her representation was possible.

4. THE SHADOWS OF LITERATURE AND HISTORY

The shadows of literature and history have been intertwined and critically studied in the twentieth century. An identification of both as human constructions of past and possible realities, mediated through different orders of narrative, has been the starting point from which many feminist critics have interpreted and reformulated the actions, representations, and thoughts of and about women. Queen Urraca I gained visibility early in the discussion on women, in part because it fit nicely into an emerging trend

¹⁴ The importance of the Cid Campeador for Franco cannot be overstated. The understanding of the ways in which Rodrigo Díaz de Vivar was manipulated ideologically and propagandistically in the Francoist regime has been thoroughly researched by María Eugenia Lacarra and Francisco López Estrada.

of historical fiction that catered to a feminist crowd. It was a crowd that arguably saw a way to recuperate women's history through hypothetical and inventive stories of the past. But despite Ortiz's vindication of the Leonese and Castilian queen, Urraca has achieved far less acclaim than Spain's last medieval queen, Isabel I of Castile. Since the start of the twenty-first century, only one new novel has been written and distributed about Queen Urraca.¹⁵ Summarily reviewed in *El País* on 17 February 2000, *La reina Urraca* by Ángeles Irisarri attempts to rewrite a history that rejects "the brutal nonsense" that has been written about her. The judgment that Irisarri makes of the queen's historical record resists the historical reimagining of women marked by a "general shift toward cultural and epistemological relativism" (qtd. in Cooper, Short 4-5). That is to say, Irisarri aims to write a novel that presents itself as history, as opposed to an obvious fiction that requires the reader to consciously suspend disbelief. The author's note at the end of the novel references the irritation felt by Irisarri and historian María Luisa Ledesma Rubio. Both lament that no chronicle with better PR for Urraca has survived. The lament presupposes the existence of such a chronicle. It also affords Irisarri the opportunity to present her own work as a legitimate, historical defense of the queen. By setting her chronicle against a list of historical quotes (found in the last pages of the novel), Irisarri gives the novel the semblance of verisimilitude. Bolstered by the implied authority a historian confers upon the novel, Irisarri's work asserts the credibility of her fiction.

La reina Urraca offers an intimate portrait of the queen, and discusses a lifetime of problems confronted by a queen who sacrificed herself for the good of her children, her people, and her kingdom. Irisarri denies the transgressive nature of Urraca's known history, because she cannot rely on masculinist narratives that have betrayed the queen. The author tells the Urraca's tale through her daughter, Sancha Raimúndez. Through Sancha, Irisarri challenges the negative historical record of Urraca's reign. As Sancha chronicles her mother's life, she includes letters written to the Archbishop Gelmírez. These letters condemn the lies being written in a book [the *Historia Compostelana*] about the cathedral and its archbishop. As might be found in the evidently partial biography that a loving daughter would write about her mother, the novel fails to approach the complexity of Urraca's character when it is compared to Ortiz's queen. Irisarri's novel resorts to a stereotypical image of womanhood that is idealized through maternal instinct and moral behavior. Irisarri potentially rejects the sexual freedoms achieved by women in the twentieth century by denying the birth of Urraca's illegitimate children. Nevertheless, Irisarri's work attempts to reconfigure the

¹⁵ Another work, *Sota de copas, reina de espadas*, was written by Carolina Dafne Alonso Cortés and originally printed in 1986. It has been distributed electronically by the Biblioteca Virtual Miguel de Cervantes in 2006.

traditional, masculinist interpretation of this medieval sovereign queen, and, in this, reflects the steps made of late to reevaluate the queen's reign.

While Urraca's years in power remain in the shadows of literature and history, each new work contributes – however imperfectly – to an evolving understanding of her rule. By rejecting the possibility that Urraca lived an imperfect life, Irisarri reverts to a queenly image that conforms to a pious, maternal, and feminine ideal. This reasoning complicates our understanding of Urraca, but allows us to conclude with a final comparison between Urraca and her late medieval counterpart, Isabel I of Castile. This fifteenth century monarch has been the subject of many twenty-first century works in history, literature, art, film and television.¹⁶ One may imagine that attention to the latter queen and neglect of the former is due to current political and social climates that begin to appreciate women in power. Given the success Isabel shared with Fernando in uniting the realms of Castile and Aragon, in the territorial expansion and dominion over Granada and the New World, it is to be expected that Isabel's story would be preferred over Urraca's. Many of the works of historical fiction written about Isabel have been produced within ten years of the 500 year anniversary of her death. Yet, Isabel is not without faults, many of which are abhorrent to twenty-first century sensibilities, some of which are elided or ignored in contemporary narratives. The present, careful constructions of each queen suggest a desire to favorably represent the past and a drive to question prior, unfavorable narratives. A demand for novel narratives may be seen in the works of contemporary authors writing about the sovereign queen, Urraca I of León and Castile. The works by these authors reflect the very long shadows from biases of a medieval and masculinist past, but they also reveal new attitudes towards women and power. The narratives written about these women represent the past in order to confront it; in doing so, these narratives speak about the past as well as to the future.

¹⁶ Neither works on Isabel la Católica nor Urraca have won nor received honorable mention in the fifteen years of this prize's lifetime. 2004 prizewinner, Almudena de Arteaga, however, went on to write two novels set in and around Isabel's lifetime (*La Beltraneja: El pecado oculto de Isabel la Católica*, 2004; *Catalina de Aragón, reina de Inglaterra*, 2005). 2005 prizewinner, Ángeles de Irisarri, has written about both queens, but expanded her work on the Catholic queen into a trilogy (*Las hijas de la luna roja. Isabel, la Reina*. Vol. I (2001); *El tiempo de la siembra. Isabel, la Reina*. Vol. II (2001); *El sabor de las cerezas. Isabel, la Reina*. Vol. III (2001). Other authors include César Vidal, *Yo, Isabel la Católica* (2008) and Cristina Hernando Polo, *Isabel la Católica. Grandeza, carácter, y poder* (2011). A compendium of novels in English about Isabel I must include Jean Plaidy's *Isabella and Ferdinand* trilogy (1960-1961). More contemporary authors include Lawrence Schoonover [*Queen's Cross* (2008)], C. W. Gortner [*The Queen's Vow. A novel of Isabella of Castile* (2013); *The Last Queen* (2015, about Joan the Mad)]. Directed by Jordi Frades and produced for RTVE, *Isabel* enjoyed three seasons (2012-2014). This series spun off a new production, now in its first season. *Carlos, Rey Emperador*, is based on Isabel's grandson. Lastly, Michelle Jenner and Eusebio Ponce, characters from the *Isabel* television series, reprise their roles in *El ministerio del tiempo* (a science fiction series that uses literature and history as the backdrop for its episodes).

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SAINT OF THE SILVER SCREEN: QUEEN ISABEL OF ARAGON'S LEGACY IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

ABSTRACT:

This article investigates the medieval and modern narratives of Portugal's only Saint-Queen, Isabel of Aragon (1271-1336). The hagiographical text composed after her death in the fourteenth century relates tales of Isabel's model queenship and miracles. This narrative had an enduring effect on Isabel's legacy, which was sustained through the creative and religious engagement of her cult up to the late nineteenth century. During the twentieth century, an influx of scholarly interest and the fictional retellings of her life by Vitorino Nemésio and Rafael Gil mark a shift in her narrative and usher in new types of engagement with this fascinating medieval figure.

KEY WORDS: Isabel of Aragon, Vitorino Nemésio, Rafael Gil, sainthood, queenship.

RESUMEN:

Este artículo investiga las narrativas medievales y modernas sobre la única Reina-Santa de Portugal, Isabel de Aragón (1271-1336). El texto hagiográfico compuesto después de su muerte en el siglo XIV relata su reginalidad modelo y milagros. Esta narrativa tuvo un efecto duradero en su legado, que se sostuvo con manifestaciones creativas y religiosas elaboradas por su culto hasta fines del siglo XIX. Durante el siglo XX, hubo un crecimiento notable de interés académica en su vida, junto con representaciones ficticias de su vida por Vitorino Nemésio y Rafael Gil. Estas representaciones modernas marcan un giro en la narrativa de esta figura medieval fascinante.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Isabel de Aragón, Vitorino Nemésio, Rafael Gil, santidad, reginalidad.

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1. INTRODUCTION

To reach the pinnacle of secular power in medieval monarchical Iberia, one was primarily dependent upon the accident of one's birth. Isabel of Aragon (1271-1336) had the fortune of high birth; she was born a princess in an influential kingdom, daughter to King Pere III of the Crown of Aragon. But beyond the elevated social status her family adventitiously bestowed upon her, the story of her actual birth was itself imbued with a strong sense of providence. Delivered in her translucent caul, Isabel began her life literally encased in a glistening image of the miraculous. Over the course of her life, her miraculous birth story was folded into a collection of other tales of her innate saintliness that traveled throughout the Iberian Peninsula, radiating outwards from Portugal. The social standing into which Isabel was born positioned her so that, early in her adolescence, she became queen-consort of Portugal through her marriage to Dinis I.

After arriving as a foreign princess at the Portuguese court, Isabel promptly proved that her royal birth had also provided her with the practical education necessary to adroitly navigate the complex machinations of members of that court, even as a very young woman, by circumventing gossip with her quiet, prayerful life. Moreover, she engaged in a series of self-fashioning projects that enhanced public perception of her as holy and supernatural, and further bolstered what would later become her claim to sainthood. The secular power she derived from her marriage was limited yet dynamic, as was the case with most medieval queen-consorts, but it was the holiness cultivated both by her public works and by the cult of her followers that extended to her a special power that endured during her life and after it, ultimately resulting in her canonization by Pope Urban VIII in May of 1625.

This article seeks to draw into relief the salient elements of the saint-queen's legend as imagined through textual and material representations created by Isabel herself and by her early modern cult, so that they can then be contrasted with a selection of modern representations of her story produced in the twentieth century. The dominant features of Isabel's life story, as emphasized in early modern renderings of her narrative, will be compared with the shifting emphasis of her story and the mediums used to tell it in the twentieth century. A keen academic interest, as well as several creative reinterpretations of her life story, contributed to a resurgence in Isabel's popularity and cultural relevance that was sustained throughout the twentieth century. The academic community began reediting and publishing medieval documents concerning the saint-queen early in the century and, by the century's close, a historical novel of Azorean origin, *Isabel de Aragão rainha santa* (1936) by Vitorino Nemésio, and a Spanish film, "Reina Santa" (1947) by auteur Rafael Gil, had both been added to the list of

freshly reimagined Isabel narratives. The continued cultural need to tell Isabel's story designates it as an ideal case study with which to explore the modern fascination with medieval subjects. This is especially true since, while certain key elements of her story have remained consistent, a shift in narrative emphasis can be observed in the twentieth century academic, novelistic, and cinematic renditions.

2. THE MEDIEVAL (SELF) FASHIONING OF A SAINT-QUEEN

Isabel was considered a saint even before her death on July 4, 1336. Her cult formed and began to expand almost immediately after Isabel's burial in the Santa Clara convent she founded in Coimbra. The spread of her postmortem popularity is due, in large part, to the dissemination of her hagiographical *vita*, commonly referred to as the *Lenda da Rainha Santa*. Historian Iona McCleery discusses the circumstances under which the *vita* was likely originally composed in her article "Isabel of Aragon: Model Saint or Model Queen?" She attributes the authorship of the *vita* to one of two possible authors, both executors involved in Isabel's canonization inquiry: the bishop of Lamego, Salvado Martins OFM; or Isabel of Cardona, Isabel's niece and abbess of the Santa Clara convent. Though the definitive authorship of the *vita* – along with the original copy of the text – were lost, the *vita's* importance for Isabel's enduring fame cannot be understated. It serves as one of the foundational narratives upon which all subsequent iterations of her biography were based. As Hayden White has asserted in his essay "The question of narrative in contemporary historical theory", any historical narrative "figurates the body of events that serves as its primary referent and transforms these 'events' into intimations of patterns of meaning that any *literal* representation of them as 'facts' could never produce" (122). The *vita* is inculcated with medieval ideals that reveal not simply 'facts' about Isabel's life but, more interestingly, the cultural milieu in which her story originated. As the first biographical text written on Isabel, the *vita* serves a direct historical purpose in compiling a narrative that details the circumstances of her birth, death, and posthumous miracles. As the text that helped galvanize her cult and canonization, it is also imbued with a deeply allegorical function; as White has suggested, "it is more correct to regard [historical narrative] as allegorical, which is to say: it says one thing and means another" (122). Isabel's *vita* thus allegorically reveals the importance of three primary topics for the medieval audience: Isabel's relationship with religious institution and the divine, her genealogical lineage, and the practice of her queenship.

Isabel's *vita* is replete with examples of her inherent role as conduit of God's grace, describing several miracles completed by the saint-queen during her life. The miracles related in the *vita* account for some of the most iconic moments of the

queen's life, owing to their dramatic and magical qualities. These miracles include an episode in which Isabel enters into a year of intense prayer after a mysterious messenger informs her that her recently deceased daughter was suffering in Purgatory. At the close of that year, Isabel sees a vision of her daughter ascending to heaven, freed from purgatorial fires. On another occasion, Isabel was publically intercepted and reprimanded by Dinis for spending funds from the royal coffers on almsgiving projects. In response, Isabel unbundles her skirts before her, revealing that she carried not bread or coins but roses, blooming in spite of the fact that they were not in season. On yet another occasion, Isabel rides out, plainly dressed and on the back of a donkey, between the poised armies of Dinis on one side and her son Afonso on the other. Miraculously unharmed during this daring intervention between husband and son, Isabel successfully circumvented the looming civil war and assisted in brokering peace. The action of this last miracle directly coincides with the types of peacekeeping efforts that helped to define Isabel's queenship, which represents another of the *vita's* crucial narrative threads. As queen, the *vita* depicts Isabel as simultaneously contending with her husband's chronic infidelity and illegitimate offspring, protecting against the potential threat these other offspring posed to her own son's inheritance of the throne, all while appearing to comport herself with stoic Christian obedience. Her ability to successfully carry out all of these exemplary queenly duties is attributed implicitly in her *vita* to the family from which she descended.

The third core topic of the *vita* is elaborated through persistent references to Isabel's (and her children's) place in a powerful genealogical network. These references appear at the beginning, middle, and end of the text and continually link the Portuguese queen to her extended royal family in other parts of Iberia and beyond. Continual references to lineage are common among the hagiographical texts of medieval Europe but, as Angela Muñoz Fernández has pointed out in her analysis of Isabel's *vita* in *Mujer y experiencia religiosa en el marco de la santidad*, the emphasis on lineage carries out a specific function in these hagiographies: "el prestigio de la aristocracia no reposa solamente en el poder político o en la riqueza que detenta, sino sobre la consideración de una cualidad mágica ligada al hecho de su alto nacimiento" (27). This is particularly true in the case of Isabel, grandniece to another saint-queen, Elizabeth of Thuringia (d. 1231). The prestige of her lineage not only links her to royal families across Christendom, but it also links her directly to a saint who reconciled the same disparate ideals Isabel needed to reconcile as queen and saint: great wealth with great humility and charitable acts, motherhood with a chaste demeanor, power with obedience. The structure of Isabel's *vita* draws from the medieval master narrative for holy queens: the story of the Virgin Mary. Thematically, it closely resembles Elizabeth of Thuringia's hagiographical narrative in the *Leyenda Dorada*. Elizabeth's narrative, and indeed St.

Clare of Assisi's, served as important models for Isabel during her life and were equally important textual models for her *vita* in death. Their narrative links create a kind of aesthetic lineage, adding to the authority derived from blood relatives.

These model hagiographies informed not only the writing of Isabel's *vita*, but also several of the more public, lasting projects Isabel completed during her life. Isabel engaged in public prayer and almsgiving projects, religious pilgrimage, and founded a Poor Clares convent in Coimbra. She stipulated in her will, composed several years before the King's death, that she would not be buried alongside her husband, as was typical for a queen-consort. She chose instead to be buried in her convent in Coimbra, dressed in the Poor Clares robes in a tomb of her own design. Isabel thus helped to control and mold her postmortem fame by defining specific geographic and aesthetic parameters that set her apart, rather than associated her with, the very different fame garnered by her husband. In defining these aesthetic parameters, Isabel went farther than most other monarchs of her time by commissioning Pèro of Aragon, an artist from her native Crown of Aragon, to elaborate a tomb that she co-designed.

Isabel's tomb featured a near life-sized effigy of the queen wearing Poor Clares robes, carrying a pilgrim's staff, and donning a coin pouch emblazoned with the shell symbolic of the Camino de Santiago. Atop her head was a replica of the crown she wore as Queen of Portugal and which she turned over to the Archbishop at the Cathedral of Santiago upon completing the Camino as a pilgrim in a public display of obedience to the Church. Surrounding the queen's effigy on all sides of the tomb were miniature effigies of figures with which she closely allied her image, including St. Francis, St. Clare, the Virgin Mary, and the Poor Clares nuns. This tomb, and the convent in which it was housed, ensured that visitors to her resting place would experience her physical remains in a heightened and spiritual manner. Her body, eventually found to be incorruptible, maintained vibrancy through the highly stylized, premeditated aesthetic that augmented the saintly features of her legacy. The effigy of Isabel on top of the tomb, though in repose, has her eyes open and looking towards heaven, as though even in death Isabel remained attentive to the prayers of her subjects.

Isabel's self-fashioning projects visually and experientially promoted not only her successful service as queen but also underscored her saintly activities. These projects resulted in a physical space on earth where her cult could maintain a connection to a woman perceived to be far off in heaven. These two representations of Isabel's legacy in the medieval period – the physical space created by her tomb and the textual experience created by her *vita* – depict an eternal Queen, a woman who devoted her

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life to service and charity, and who continued after death to bestow special favors upon her cult through miracles.

3. THE SAINT-QUEEN IN THE MODERN ACADEMY

From the fourteenth through the eighteenth century, Isabel's memory was preserved through various mediums, including paintings, poetry, theatre, religious festivals, and even a sermon by the preeminent Portuguese Jesuit preacher, Antonio Vieira. These textual and performative renderings of her narrative were constructed in such a way as to shape the saint-queen's story into a distinctly vertical orientation, one that emphasized her life's heavenward trajectory. She began with a high birth, ascended to a high position of secular power, and was then assimilated into the hierarchy of heaven as one of God's elect.

The image of the saint-queen generated by her *vita* makes use of this verticality on several key occasions. The majority of painterly representations of Isabel from the early modern era, for instance, depict a woman of royal, maternal bearing who gazes with eyes cast gently downwards, presumably in the direction of her subjects and her cult below. Eliseo Serrano summarizes, in his text "Entre devoción y política: La canonización de Isabel de Aragón, Reina de Portugal" the eyewitness accounts of the very first official celebrations of Isabel's feast day in Rome, Madrid, and Coimbra. These accounts describe processions featuring effigies and paintings of Isabel borne aloft, soaring above the heads of the many revelers. Religious festivals in Isabel's honor continued annually and were often marked by special sermons in her honor. In 1674, Antonio Vieira delivered a sermon on the saint-queen at the Igreja de Santo António dos Portugueses. Vieira's sermon was centered on the image of a doubly crowned queen – crowned on earth and crowned in heaven. His sermon repeatedly drew attention to Isabel's crown – the highest point of the queen's physical presence – and used it as a synecdoche for the queen herself, orienting the veneration of Isabel vertically upwards in a symbolic association with the eternal divine.

A shift in this vertical construction of Isabel's image begins to appear in the modern period. In the late nineteenth century, amid quests for cohesive national histories, Isabel became the subject of scholarly research and analysis. The most significant contribution to this intellectual inquiry came from António Garcia Ribeiro de Vasconcellos who, in 1894, published the two-volume collection of documents and literature concerning the saint-queen, *A evolução do culto de Dona Isabel de Aragão*. The two volumes contained documents composed by the queen herself, such as her final Will and Testament, reports used in the canonization

process, and other texts that played a paramount role in the development of her cult before and after canonization. These volumes provided, at the turn of the century, a single source in which one could discover much about Isabel's life and legacy.

Beyond textual study, several visual narrative projects marked the culmination of Isabel's popularity in the 1990s. Early in the decade, archeologists began work in earnest on a long overdue renovation project. The monastery Isabel founded and in which she had originally been buried, now referred to as Santa Clara-a-Velha, had been flooded since the mid-seventeenth century when the Mondego River outgrew its banks. Rather than divert the water and clear out the monastery, a new one was built in 1648. Isabel's remains were moved to Santa Clara-a-Nova, where they remain today, encased in a silver tomb very different from the one the saint-queen had originally designed for herself. While her incorruptible body was rescued, the old building was left to languish for centuries. River water and silt covered the lower part of the building and the cloister well into the 1990s after a failed renovation effort in the 1930s. It was not until 1991 that a definitive restoration project got underway by a team of archaeologists, led by Artur Côrte-Real. The project was completed in 2009 and the doors were reopened for the first time in four centuries. Visitors were able to retrace the saint-queen's footsteps down the halls of the monastery, and then venture next door to a newly built museum containing the uncovered artifacts of the Poor Clares nuns who lived there in the fourteenth century as well as a very modern coffee shop from which to contemplate the past and view Isabel's legacy eye-to-eye.

This momentous archaeological contribution to the study of Isabel's environment in Portugal seemed to reverberate through her broader Iberian cult. By the end of the 1990s, a large-scale art exhibit was curated by the Igreja de Santa Isabel de Portugal in Zaragoza, displaying artifacts such as Isabel's jewelry alongside paintings ranging in date from the Baroque to the present. From May 13 to July 4, 1999 (Isabel's feast day), visitors were treated to self-guided interactions with the saint-queen's semblance, which included modern abstract depictions of her in bright and pastel hues. While a detailed analysis of the art exhibit lies outside the scope of this essay, a thorough analysis is possible elsewhere, as the Diputación de Zaragoza published a two-volume exhibit catalogue, complete with high quality reproductions of the art and photographs of the artifacts.

The intellectual milieu of the twentieth century in which scholars, archaeologists, and artists were producing revised histories of the saint-queen naturally also gave rise to a resurgence of Isabel's medieval *vita*. The Portuguese scholar Joaquim J. Nunes published the first modern edition of Isabel's *vita* in 1921. The Nunes edition, titled *Vida e milagres de Dona Isabel, Rainha de Portugal*, suddenly made the legend of

the saint-queen readily available to a wider, non-academic audience, inspiring the return of her widespread popularity. By the end of the twentieth century another Portuguese scholar, Maria Isabel de Cruz Montes, again reedited the *vita* as part of her 1999 Masters thesis at the University of Lisbon. This edition, however, was never published and is not available to the general public. Nevertheless, the availability of Isabel's *vita* in modern, standardized Portuguese made her story – replete with court intrigue, battles, and miracles – ripe for creative reinterpretation and fictionalization by twentieth century imaginations.

Isabel's *vita* was adapted for modern popular culture, transformed into a historical novel by the Azorean author, Vitorino Nemésio, and later into a film by Spanish director, Rafael Gil. These fictional representations of Isabel shift the previously established vertical, eternal elements in her narrative by bending her story's focus back to earth, remaking Isabel into a historical woman with a defined historical context rather than a place in an eternal (divine) narrative continuum. While the medieval *vita* and Isabel's own self-fashioning projects peer far into a distant future, the twentieth century renditions of her story are nostalgic, backward-gazing narrations of a distant historical time. The medieval project of creating an enduring story and launching it forward through future generations was inverted by the twentieth century, as the search for a national identity, required a solid, completed past, and psychologically rich characters through which to understand that past.

4. THE SAINT-QUEEN IN THE MODERN NOVEL

Vitorino Nemésio's novel constructs a main character that fits with Isabel's "historic" narrative framework while at the same time altering the overall effect that narrative has on the reader. This is accomplished through the application of two main narrative strategies. The novel's structure mimics the original medieval *vita*'s three thematic tenants, as described above, and uses a barebones narration style to underscore key psychological additions to the story. The text's omniscient narrator peers into Isabel's interior, providing an emotional and intellectual context for the historical action. The observations on the saint-queen's interior are delivered subtly, tucked into paragraphs that rapidly move through the events of Isabel's life. As Maria de Fátima Marinho has pointed out, this is a common technique applied to many historical novels of the twentieth century. "[N]ão interessa a repetição de grandes acontecimentos históricos, mas uma espécie de ressurreição poética dos seres humanos que deles fizeram parte" (22). The description of the miracles and peacemaking campaigns are given the same level of attention as the blush that appears on Isabel's cheeks when she first sees her future husband because that blush

confirms that, apart from a saint-queen, she was also once a shy young girl. With its choppy paragraphs, the slim novel's pacing reads more like a short story, moving resolutely through the historical events of Isabel's life, rarely hovering over any one event in particular, except to add those touches of poetic license that transform Isabel from legend into woman.

The novel's sparse language contributes to the weight of these poetic observations. Nemésio's economic use of words further enhances the effect of his descriptions of Isabel as precocious, self-conscious, an inhabitant of a strange and confusing world. The concise yet dense style is immediately apparent as Nemésio's narrator begins describing the family into which Isabel was born: "Pela mãe de seu pai, Pedro III o Grande, descendia das casas de Hungria e de Este. Por Constança de Navarra, sua mãe, era neta de Manfredo de Nápoles e Sicília e de D. Brites de Saboia ..." (2). At first glance, this passage would appear to be replicating the medieval emphasis on Isabel's grandiose and saintly lineage. But instead of generating a long list of illustrious names and associations, the narrator immediately points out how the saint-queen is related by blood, and separated by only a few generations, to Lucrecia Borgia. "Corria-lhe assim nas veias parte de um sangue que, com a ajuda do tempo e de outras linhas reais, aqueceria Lucrecia Bórgia" (2). Isabel's indirect association with Lucrecia Borgia, a woman whose legacy is never associated with saint-queens, destabilizes the authority and prestige traditionally acquired through the exercise in tracing lineage. The blood in Isabel's veins did no more to make her a saint than did the presence of the same blood in Lucrecia's veins make her one of history's infamous women. Indeed, Nemésio explicitly states as much in the very next sentence: "Com suprema indiferença a história extrai da mesma matéria humana os destinos mais opostos" (2). For Nemésio's narrator, history selected Isabel of Aragon and Lucrecia Borgia from the same bloodline for their respective destinies with cold indifference.

By initiating Isabel's story in this way, the concept of a saintly life preordained by God is replaced with the very real notion that one must be responsible for creating one's own destiny, inventing one's own mythology: "Naqueles tempos obscuros, de conflitos rudes e violentos," the narrator continues, "... o mistério desempenhava um papel decisivo na interpretação do futuro, que as imaginações antecipavam sob formas poéticas e simples" (2). The future was so uncertain, amidst an environment that the narrator disparagingly refers to as "dark" and "violent", that the imagination became an essential component in the construction of one's life. Any bright moment in this troubled environment could be designated as a sign or symbol from on high, and the signs in turn were infinitely malleable in their interpretation.

Isabel's birth story, for example, was historically portrayed as the moment in which Isabel's favor with God is first revealed. In Nemésio's novel, the narrator explains that Isabel was delivered in the caul, and that this was indeed worthy of amazement, although this only takes up the space of three short sentences:

No parto de D. Constança, viu-se sair um serzinho completamente embrulhado numa película húmida, uma espécie de sub-placenta que lhe encobria os membros. A mãe, quando cortaram aquilo, mandou buscar alvoroçadamente um <<causela>> de prata e guardou o estranho envolvente no segrêdo das suas arcas. Era um grande prenúncio" (3).

Isabel's birth was traditionally the moment when her saintly character is revealed to the reader. But in this passage, the perspective has been changed: the reader indirectly witnesses Isabel's birth through the eyes of her mother, Constança. Isabel is born not as an icon of who she will become, but rather as her mother's daughter. Constança sees her small child emerge completely covered with a strange film that she does not recognize immediately as saintly but more as a strange anomaly she must guard in secret. The narrator declares flatly that the caul represents a "grande prenúncio," but instead of drawing a connection between it and its implications for Isabel's saintly destiny, the narrator hastens back to a description of Constança, who has just experienced the realities of childbirth, its physical and mental effects:

Ainda pálida de um acto carnal que àquela hora, mesmo em cama dourada, a nivelava com a mais pobre mulher que fosse mãe no reino, Constança recobrou a sua consciência régia e pensou de-certo que o céu não esquecia os grandes da terra. Havia uma tutela celeste para os que tinham o ofício de reinar (3).

Here, childbirth has equalized all women, connecting them to a physical human experience that is both singular and universal. At the time of Isabel's birth, then, while it's true that her mother experienced something completely unique, it is also what all other mothers experience, regardless of their social position. Constança is a mother like all mothers; a queen did not deliver Isabel in the caul, a woman did. After the moment of birth however, Constança is brought back to her queenly bearing through her interpretation of the "sign" of Isabel's special birth. Thus the meaning of Isabel's birth in the caul is filtered through the perspective of the child's mother and is not understood as a direct intervention from God but as a human interpretation of a "mysterious" world.

The human experience of childbirth emerges again later in the novel, when Isabel gives birth to her first child coincidentally called Constança. There are several parallels between the scenes of Isabel's birth and the scene in which she gives birth. The most

apparent parallel between the two scenes is the emphasis placed on the response to childbirth:

Em Janeiro de 1290 veio o primeiro filho. O ano tinha entrado na ante-véspera, o frio parecia querer descascar os sobreiros e Isabel estava um pouco pálida, de costas, com as mãos deitando uma estriga de luz no lençol côr de cal. El-Rei suspendera tôdas as correições à espera do herdeiro – mais ainda não. Era uma menina, um palmo de pessoa de que saía uma nota muito tempo, como das gaitas galegas antes de esvaziarem. A imaginação do rei estava poética, mas havia considerações de fazenda e de estado que pediam licença para entrar. Foi ao berço tocar naquela carne, reconhecer o seu sangue. Depois ficou de pé a ver Isabel como um horizonte todo branco ...” (26).

This passage’s short sentences appeal to several senses at once in their description of the quiet moments of rest and recovery after Isabel’s initiation into motherhood. There is a sense of calm after a storm: the outside weather is cold and windy, but only a sliver of light enters the scene, crossing Isabel’s supine, resting body. Her poet-husband is in the room, imagining her body as a white horizon, revealing the way in which he privately turned his poetic mind towards his wife. Dinis’ fatherly instincts override his kingly agenda, as he touches his crying baby with reverence, unconcerned in this moment with the fact that the child’s sex means he does not yet have an heir to his throne.

These scenes of childbirth, both her own birth story and the story of her daughter’s birth, provide a corporal context in which to understand Isabel’s character. Her body moved through the thoroughly elaborated historical context that Nemésio includes in the narration. Isabel’s body was affected by physical interaction with its environment: it grew, aged, reproduced, suffered, and changed over time. Isabel’s body was also a sexual body, one that her husband looked at with desire. Though she chose to dress as a nun during the final years of her life, she never took the Clarissan vows and remained very much engaged with the political and personal dramas of her son and grandchildren, all reminders of her marriage bed.

The novel begins with Isabel’s birth and ends with her death, using her physical body as a frame for her story. There is no epilogue in which her corpse is found to be incorruptible, there is no mention of the miracles that occurred at her tomb. Isabel’s body acts as the vessel of her story; there is simply no more life in the story once vessel dies. The final sentence of the novel resonates with the finality her death brings: “Embrulharam-na num pano de lã alinhavado, pasaram-lhe uma corda à cintura, e, metendo o esquife num coiro de boi com o pêlo para for a, prepararam-se para a levar debaixo do calor a Coimbra” (64). Isabel is wrapped in cloth and

taken away for burial without any description of emotion, without any hint at a continued presence through sainthood.

The modern Isabel that *Isabel de Aragão Rainha Santa* brings to life is a tangible, flesh and blood woman bound to her moment in time through the rigors of mortality. While the novel includes the most famous events of her life – her miracles – these events share equal narrative space with descriptions of childbirth, to the way her body reacted to fasting, to the physical relief she felt when taking off her queenly jewelry, to her aging body chaffing in Clarissan robes, to her swift, quiet death. Nemésio's Isabel character is first and foremost a real woman, one who did her best to interpret her world within a medieval context and shape her experience in it by using her intellect.

4. SAINT OF THE SILVER SCREEN

Rafael Gil, in his film *Reina Santa* (1947), appropriates the isabeline narrative to claim her as a hero of a more golden, medieval “Spain,” in keeping with an overwhelming majority of Spanish films produced during Francisco Franco's military dictatorship. In Gil's film, Isabel becomes a token of popular culture, representing an imagined, heroic past, resurrected to serve his present political climate. Franco “used film as a visual language to impose the mythology of his regime,” writes Virginia Higginbotham in her preface to *Spanish Film Under Franco*. As cinema's popularity exploded, so did its potential as a tool for establishing and disseminating this mythology. Under Franco, film became subordinate to the quest for controlling the dominant narrative of the regime. But while film may have been a medium of the future, with the cinematic industry rapidly growing and advancing technologically, in Spain it was used to express a nostalgic past. The only permissible subjects of the State-controlled film industry in Spain were “war epics and historical extravaganzas celebrating the glories of Spain's colonial past in images of patriotism, militarism, and religious heroism” (x). In this context, the dynamic and mysterious medieval character of Nemésio's novel and even of Isabel's medieval *vita* becomes an untenable model for a film with a propagandistic agenda. Instead, Isabel's story is manipulated to serve as an aggrandizement of historical persons emerging from “Spain.” “[H]istory transformed into myth becomes distorted and duplicitous in order to serve not fact, or authenticity, or even the demands of the box office, but an intention” (x). Isabel's story is manipulated in Gil's film in order to fit into the mold of 1940s Spanish film. As a result, Isabel becomes marginalized in her own story.

Rafael Gil's black and white film opens in the courts of medieval Portugal during the early days of King Dinis' reign, immediately following the successful defense of his inheritance of the throne, which had been contested by his brother, Afonso. The film begins *in media res* in a lush room filled with men in close conversation with the King. These advisors entreat the king to shore up the safety of Portuguese borders through an alliance with the Crown of Aragon. This alliance is to be brokered through marriage to King Pere III's young daughter, Isabel. Upon hearing that the girl is rumored to be very beautiful, Dinis agrees to send an emissary to the court in Barcelona to make the marriage proposal. Although presumably the film is about the "Reina Santa," the opening scene belongs to the Portuguese king and the way in which the events of history, rather than a predestined sainthood, shaped Isabel's life.

Isabel is also absent from the second scene of the film, during which the audience again views a huddle of powerful men in a luxurious room. This time, Pere and his advisors weigh their strategic position in the Peninsula, discussing their current vulnerability to neighbor, Castile and Leon, and their desire to secure the much sought-after region of Naples for the Crown of Aragon. The ambassador from Portugal already awaits an audience with the King, whose advisors urge him to consider marriage between Isabel and Dinis as a way of strengthening the Crown of Aragon's position. Pere agrees, but on the condition that Dinis proves a suitable companion for his daughter, reinforcing the special favor with which he looked after Isabel, present in the medieval *vita* version of events.

Yet the titular character of the film has yet to appear onscreen. When she does finally appear in the third scene, she is infantilized – not because of the age at which the film introduces her – but because of her inability to interpret signs from God, which is something she is born able to do in the *vita's* version of her story. The medieval depiction of an autonomous saint-queen, guided through her holy journey primarily by prayer, is replaced here with an invisible girl who, though her name has a presence in the royal halls of Iberia, she herself does not.

In the film's first glimpse of a very young Isabel in the third scene, she is asleep and dreaming. Lying utterly prone, Isabel is a passive recipient of the images in her dream, which are soon revealed to be scenes of a great battle in progress. She awakens from the dream frightened and calling out for her mother, who comes and comforts her by reassuring her that it was all just a dream. Her mother's calm attitude regarding her daughter's dream persists, in spite of the fact that young Isabel repeats "No. No es un sueño...es una visión horrible." This vision has been framed by the preceding two scenes of political negotiation and therefore contextualizes Isabel as a kind of conduit through which God joins in with kings' advisors to advance certain

strategies and plans. The dream becomes prophetically related to shifting political powers and Isabel's unconscious participation in those events when she describes the battle scene to her father. He reacts as if God, his ultimate advisor, has just weighed in on Isabel's marriage to Dinis by revealing the potential political fallout should he fail to strengthen his kingdom with a Portuguese ally. "Nada tenemos ya que decidir, porque fue Dios quien decidió," says her father. God's intervention becomes more about its effect on politics than it does on the reputation of the girl through whom He intervenes.

Rather than a true introduction to the titular character, the dream scene acts more like a rhetorical device used to demonstrate how the child-Isabel experienced her path to maturity and adulthood, to social and political awareness. Isabel is literally awakening to the real political dangers surrounding her, although she still relies on her father to interpret them for her. It is suggestive, however, that this awakening takes place in her bed; the audience is aware that a marriage proposal from the King of Portugal is already being considered by her father and that soon she will have to abandon her childhood bed for her conjugal bed. In place of a saintly young girl, given to fasting and prayer, the audience first meets Isabel on the eve of her betrothal and thus her entrance into the world of adulthood, queenship, and public affairs.

Yet the topic of Isabel's sexuality is never dealt with in the film, even her marriage takes place off-screen. The next time the audience sees Isabel, she is a fully-grown woman and queen, confidently commanding the attention of her ladies-in-waiting. The film avoids at all costs alluding to the saint-queen's sexuality, skipping both of Isabel's childbearing experiences. Depicting a pregnant saint onscreen in late 1940s Spain would have "tarnished" the virginal aura with which film imbued its Isabel character.

Sexuality is not the only suppressed element of Isabel's story in this film, however, as the film ends before she dies. After serving as a kind of divinely inspired political advisor alongside her husband, the denouement of the film is the moment of Dinis' death. He lies in a sumptuous bed, reconciling himself with all of his children and with Isabel, and proffering kingly advice upon them one final time, until his eyes gently close. The violins swell and a narrator's voice intones the remainder of the story in montage form: Isabel journeys the Camino de Santiago in her "homeland," a heroic Spaniard returning to her rightful place after making Portugal's king into a great man. This ending ignores the fact that Isabel died and was buried in her adopted home of Portugal. In lieu of situating Isabel's story in her physical body like Vitorino Nemésio did, Rafael Gil opts to make her into a symbolic emblem of Spanish heroism. Gil uses the medieval context as the structure within which he

contains Isabel's story, rooting her to her time and thereby glorifying the past by reimagining her life.

5. CONCLUSIONS

The revisions of Isabel's narrative have continued in both academic and creative spheres in the twenty-first century, most notably with the publication of Maria Filomena Andrade's comprehensive monograph *Rainha Santa, mãe exemplar: Isabel de Aragão* (2012) and António Cândido Franco's novel *Os pecados da Rainha Santa Isabel* (2010). These works reflect a continuation of the desire to deeply know the historical Isabel, as if she were separate from the myth she herself consciously helped to construct during her life. Filomena Andrade's incredibly detailed and researched volume plainly states in its introduction "Isabel não é, pois, uma mulher extraordinária; é simplesmente uma Mulher" (13). The Isabel narratives of the twentieth century seek to place Isabel in a specific time and place, to contain her story within the boundaries of the past, and the twenty-first century is carrying on this project, though with new nuances. The medieval narratives, on the other hand, purposefully wove narrative qualities in Isabel's story that were considered transcendent, timeless. As the medieval isabeline narrative reaches towards the future, the contemporary one reaches back to a remote, bygone past.

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USOS POLÍTICOS DEL *ÉXODO*: DEL REY PELAYO AL SIGLO XXI

RESUMEN:

En este artículo se propone una lectura del mito fundacional del Reino de Asturias según la cual el *scriptorium* del rey Alfonso III habría reelaborado la historia de Pelayo para igualar a este monarca con el patriarca bíblico Moisés. A pesar de que este paralelismo es la espina dorsal sobre la que se construye y reelabora el mito de Pelayo hasta bien entrado el siglo XV, en la actualidad han ganado terreno otras interpretaciones de la historia, hasta el punto de haber dejado de lado el modelo original. Por otra parte, al igual que los primeros monarcas del Reino de Asturias utilizaron la historia de Moisés para legitimar su reinado, en la actualidad la historia sigue utilizándose, consciente o inconscientemente, para dar legitimidad a otras corrientes ideológicas que buscan en la figura de Moisés un modelo sobre el que justificar sus pretensiones políticas.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Pelayo, Cataluña, Texas, Moisés, Ficciones fundacionales.

ABSTRACT:

This article proposes that the *scriptorium* of King Alfonso III rewrote and transformed the foundational fiction of the Kingdom of Asturias in order to establish a parallelism between the story of Pelayo and that of Moses. Even though this parallelism can be considered the distinctive feature of the story until the end of the fifteenth century, the original model has now been discarded in favor of other interpretations. Furthermore, just as the first monarchs of the Kingdom of Asturias resorted to the story of Moses in order to give legitimacy to

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their rule, nowadays the story is still being used, deliberately or not, by different ideological factions that look back to Moses as a model on which to validate their political aspirations.

KEY WORDS: Pelayo, Catalonia, Texas, Moses, Foundational Fictions.

A finales de 2014 el Consejo de Educación del Estado de Texas tomaba una decisión tan peculiar como controvertida, la de exigir que los libros de texto utilizados en los institutos consideraran al patriarca bíblico Moisés uno de los personajes que influyeron en la redacción de los documentos fundacionales de Estados Unidos. La decisión fue resultado de un acalorado debate en el que los quince miembros del consejo no pudieron alcanzar ningún acuerdo, obligando a las editoriales a incluir en sus libros cambios de última hora para satisfacer los requisitos estipulados cuatro años antes, en 2010. En el capítulo 113 del *Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for Social Studies* se especificaba claramente que los alumnos de Historia debían de ser capaces de identificar a aquellos individuos cuyos preceptos sobre leyes e instituciones gubernamentales hubieran influido en los documentos fundacionales de los Estados Unidos de América, incluyendo a Moisés, William Blackstone, John Locke y Charles de Montesquieu (Texas Board §133.44. c.1.c). La polémica medida fue recogida por un sinnúmero de periódicos estatales y nacionales, y –como era de esperar– las críticas por parte de periodistas, políticos y académicos no se hicieron esperar. En su declaración ante el Consejo de Educación, K. Wellman señaló que la importancia que los nuevos libros de texto otorgaban al patriarca bíblico podía llevar a los estudiantes a pensar que “Moisés fue el primer [norte]americano” (“Rewriting”, s.p.), y en el informe redactado por E. Lester para el *Texas Freedom Network Education Fund*, en el que se detallan una por una las inexactitudes históricas introducidas en el temario de Historia, se denuncia categóricamente la manipulación ideológica de la figura de Moisés. Según este autor,

even more problematic perhaps is the “Biography of Moses” the [Pearson] text provides students, which states [that] “Moses was a lawgiver and a great leader. Like the founders of the United States, he helped establish a legal system to govern his people. The Ten Commandments have been a guide and basis for many legal and moral systems throughout the world” ... The passage gives an exaggerated impression to students about the influence of and relationship between Moses and the Founders [of the United States]. (8)

La inclusión de Moisés como el *primer norteamericano* en los libros de texto del Estado de Texas no es ni gratuita ni inusitada. Texas fue república independiente durante la década de 1836 a 1846 y, en fecha tan reciente como enero de 2013, tras la victoria de Barack Obama en las presidenciales de 2012, el gobierno de Estados Unidos se vio forzado a rechazar una nueva petición de independencia firmada por más de 125.000 texanos. Así, mientras que los independentistas alegaban que el estado contaba con una economía saneada que hacía posible su separación, el gobierno federal argumentó

que la independencia de Texas no era posible porque “the founding fathers established the United States as a ‘perpetual union’” (Fernández A11). Como se puede observar, lo interesante de esta contienda es que ambas partes remiten a figuras fundacionales que nada tienen que ver con el asunto para justificar sus presupuestos teóricos, ya que tan absurdo es otorgarle a Moisés una influencia directa en la Constitución de Estados Unidos como oponerse a la independencia de un determinado territorio basándose en la opinión de los “padres fundadores”.

Si el caso de Texas es sorprendente no lo es menos el de las elecciones autonómicas de Cataluña en 2012, cuando la Comunidad Autónoma se jugaba su “derecho a decidir” acerca de una posible independencia de España. Los medios de comunicación no tardaron en percatarse del mesiánico cartel en el que, bajo el lema *La voluntat d’un poble* (la voluntad de un pueblo), Artur Mas, el candidato por *Convergència i Unió*, se presentaba, brazos abiertos, como un nuevo Moisés, con una ola de banderas de Cataluña en lugar del Mar Rojo. De nuevo, las reacciones no se hicieron esperar, y mientras algunos utilizaron la equiparación de Mas con Moisés para apoyar la causa independentista, la mayoría criticó no sólo el mesianismo del cartel, sino también el hecho de que éste pareciera inspirado en la escena de la película *Los diez mandamientos* en la que Moisés –protagonizado por Charlton Heston– levantaba los brazos hacia el cielo para que Dios abriera las aguas del Mar Rojo al paso de los israelitas. Baste recordar aquí, de entre los muchos medios de comunicación que recogieron la noticia, el texto del periódico *La voz de Barcelona*, según el cual el cartel pretendía mostrar “al líder, al guía, al hacedor de ilusiones como un Charlton Heston cualquiera abriendo las aguas del Mar Rojo” (“Moisés Artur Mas” s. p.) o las palabras de J. C. Rius, quien, escribiendo para *El diario* dos años más tarde, se hacía eco del estrepitoso fracaso de dicha estrategia electoral:

Artur Mas se presentó hace dos años [en 2012] a las elecciones como un Moisés que pretendía conducir a su pueblo hasta la tierra prometida, que era entonces el “derecho a decidir”. ¿Recuerdan aquel póster electoral con los brazos abiertos sobre un fondo de *senyeres* y *estelades* que debía garantizar una “mayoría excepcional” y que, al final, se saldó con la pérdida de doce diputados [unos 100.000 votos] por parte de *CiU*? (s. p.)

Efectivamente, en los recientes casos de Cataluña y Texas la apropiación del patriarca bíblico por parte de los líderes políticos no parece haber surtido mucho efecto, aunque es cierto que el éxito o fracaso de estas tentativas legitimistas responde también a otros factores que quedan fuera de este ámbito. Sin embargo, lo interesante es advertir que las élites políticas –sin importar su ideología o el período histórico en cuestión– siguen echando mano de modelos legitimistas que (olvidados o no) llevan utilizándose más de dos milenios y que, en última instancia, remiten siempre a héroes fundacionales de marcado carácter religioso. En el caso de Artur Mas y

Moisés, el diario *La voz libre* recordaba que, en su obra *Nabucco* (1841), Giuseppe Verdi ya había llevado a cabo una apropiación similar del patriarca bíblico para reivindicar la nación italiana frente al Imperio Austro-Húngaro (“Artur Mas” s. p.). De nuevo encontramos aquí la equiparación de un líder político con Moisés –o de una “nación” con los israelitas– para legitimar la independencia de un territorio frente a otro, o de un pueblo frente a un opresor, aunque para el caso que nos ocupa no es necesario salir de la Península Ibérica.²

En el caso de España, la equiparación simbólica de un gobernante con Moisés se remonta nada menos que al siglo IX, cuando el *scriptorium* de Alfonso III el Magno (r. 866-910) perfiló en su versión definitiva la leyenda del rey Pelayo. Lo interesante de esta historia es que, a pesar de su evidente peso en la construcción de la identidad nacional del país, lo cierto es que pocas personas fuera de los círculos académicos recuerdan ya al vencedor de la batalla de Covadonga, y sólo en el norte se sabe más o menos quién fue –pero no muy bien lo que hizo– el primer rey de los ástures. La visita del entonces príncipe Felipe al Santuario de Covadonga en 2001 dio buena muestra del desinterés generalizado de la población por estos mitos fundacionales. En palabras de C. Boyd, “equally disappointing was the lack of interest in the commemoration outside Asturias, [but] most vexing to Asturian regionalists, however, was the apparent indifference of Asturians themselves to Covadonga as a symbol of their collective identity” (39). En efecto, y a pesar de que algunos quieran seguir viendo a España sumida en la Edad Media, la figura de Pelayo es poco conocida fuera de la Cordillera Cantábrica, e incluso en el norte las pocas personas familiarizadas con la historia no son conscientes de la carga simbólica que arrastra consigo.³ Como veremos a continuación, la intervención de la Virgen María (que dio lugar al culto de la Virgen de Covadonga, patrona de Asturias) o el “milagro de las piedras y las flechas” (el dato más memorable y recordado de la historia) no responden en realidad a la intención original de este intento de legitimación monárquica. Más bien, la espina dorsal del mito fundacional

² En realidad habría que matizar que la obra de Verdi no está basada en el *Éxodo*, sino en *Jeremías y Daniel*, y su argumento principal no es la liberación del pueblo judío por parte de Moisés, sino el exilio en Babilonia tras las conquistas de Nabucodonosor (r. 605-562 a.C.).

³ Compárense las palabras de Boyd con el sensacionalismo de Grieve, para quien el evento fue toda una demostración de patriotismo: “In 2001 –more than five hundred years after the expulsion of the Jews and the fall of Granada, and almost thirteen hundred years after the fall of Spain in 711–, Spain commemorated its national shrine at the Cave of Covadonga, site of Pelayo’s victory over the Muslims; the exposition was a time of regional and national pride” (8). Habría que distinguir –digo yo– entre los actos tradicionales de las instituciones del país y el interés popular o memoria histórica colectiva, que poco entiende ya de ficciones fundacionales, de la expulsión de los judíos o de la conquista de Granada. Asimismo, tampoco he podido corroborar nunca en España la afirmación de que “if one asks a Spaniard, even today [2009], it seems that everyone knows La Cava caused the fall of Spain in 711” (25).

de España es la prefiguración de Pelayo en Moisés, modelo de “héroe libertador” que se ha venido utilizando en todas y cada una de las etapas históricas.

Los orígenes de la historia de Pelayo hay que buscarlos a principios del siglo VIII, cuando la invasión árabe de la Península Ibérica en el año 711 provocó un cataclismo político y cultural de dimensiones nunca vistas. Este acontecimiento dio lugar a la elaboración de una serie de crónicas cuyo propósito principal era el de explicar –bajo los presupuestos ideológicos de la época– la repentina desaparición de la monarquía gótica y la ocupación de la práctica totalidad del territorio peninsular por parte de las fuerzas de Tarik y Musa. La doble necesidad de dar sentido a una catástrofe de tales dimensiones y de justificar la aparición de nuevas monarquías en el norte llevó a una explicación reduccionista según la cual ambos acontecimientos habrían sido resultado de un mismo fenómeno: la indisoluble conexión entre poder político y religioso, o –por así decirlo– que es Dios quien escoge o destituye a sus representantes en la tierra según las virtudes o deméritos de cada uno. Así, mientras que la invasión árabe fue interpretada como un castigo divino por los pecados del rey Rodrigo (r. 710-711), la aparición de varios núcleos de resistencia cristianos en el norte fue vista como resultado del favor divino hacia un determinado héroe o figura fundacional que se encontraba en posesión de las virtudes necesarias para gobernar.⁴

Dicha simbología viene desarrollada en todo su esplendor en las dos redacciones de la *Crónica de Alfonso III* (ca. 884-889), donde se detalla la ascendencia de Pelayo, sus desavenencias con el rey Witiza (r. 694-710) y su enfrentamiento con el gobernador Munuza a causa de su hermana. Después de esta información preliminar sigue la versión más pormenorizada (y fantástica) de la batalla de Covadonga que ha llegado a nuestros días. Cuando Pelayo se refugia con su hermana en el monte Auseva, Munuza avisa al gobernador de Córdoba, quien le envía 187.000 soldados al mando del general Alkama. Con las tropas viaja también el obispo de Sevilla Oppas, quien intenta convencer a Pelayo de lo inútil de su intento. Como Pelayo no cede a los ruegos de Oppas se inicia la batalla, y aquí se inserta el primero de los milagros. Las flechas y las piedras que los árabes arrojaban al interior de la cueva se volvieron milagrosamente contra ellos, causando la muerte de 124.000 soldados. Los 63.000 restantes no tuvieron me-

⁴ La violación de La Cava por el rey Rodrigo es la leyenda más difundida por las crónicas, aunque otra tradición, aludida en la *Crónica mozárabe* de 754 y recogida en la *Chronica Gothorum Pseudo-Isidoriana* (s. XII), afirma que fue en realidad Witiza quien tuvo el desliz con la hija del gobernador. Véanse también las palabras que Ibn Jaldún dedica al reinado de Witiza: “muerto Ayqa [Égica], vino a reinar Gaitixa [Witiza] catorce años, y le pasó lo que le pasó con la hija de Yulián, gobernador de Tánger. Después reinó dos años Rodriq [Rodrigo], y entonces le acometieron los musulmanes” (*Historia universal*, MS BnF 742.Q, f. 89, citado en Fernández Guerra 84).

por fortuna, ya que, al intentar escapar por los confines de la Liébana (Cantabria), el monte se derrumbó, matándolos a todos. Las cosas no pudieron acabar peor para los derrotados. El general Alkama muere en batalla, Oppas es hecho prisionero y Munuza es asesinado al intentar escapar de Asturias. Respecto a los vencedores, Pelayo reinará hasta su muerte en el año 737, será sucedido brevemente por su hijo Fávila (r. 737-739) y su hija Ermesinda se casará con Alfonso, hijo de Pedro, duque de Cantabria, continuando –en teoría– la estirpe de Pelayo hasta nuestros días.

El problema es que la versión contenida en la *Crónica de Alfonso III* se redactó más de ciento cincuenta años después de la supuesta batalla, con lo que es obvio que el texto está influenciado por documentos más antiguos.⁵ En efecto, los presupuestos ideológicos del tercero de los alfonso venían condicionados por los intentos de legitimación de los monarcas anteriores, cuyo extraño neogoticismo consistía en presentarse como continuadores de la monarquía gótica a la vez que se esmeraban por desvincular al naciente Reino de Asturias del desaparecido reino de Toledo. De esta manera, el papel mesiánico de nuestro héroe quedaba ya esbozado unos setenta años antes, en el *Testamentum Regis Adefonsi* (812). Aquí aparece ya la figura de Pelayo como agente divino (*tua dextera, Christe, famulum tuum ervisti Pelagium*), y se afirma que los godos habían salido victoriosos de una gran batalla en los límites de Hispania (*in terminis Spanie*), toda vez que el favor de Dios venía a recaer no ya en los godos, sino en el nuevo reino de los ástures (*christianorum asturumque gentem*) (Ruiz de la Peña 87-88).⁶ De la misma manera, en otro documento en el que Oviedo reclamaba para sí la dignidad metropolitana frente a Toledo, se vuelve a utilizar a un tal Pelayo (poco o nada definido) para dar legitimidad al naciente reino. En el *Antiquum Privilegium Archipresulatus Ovetensis Ecclesie* (821) encontramos ya uno de los planteamientos más efectivos para legitimar una naciente monarquía, el de afirmar que fue Dios quien liberó al pueblo a través de su siervo Pelayo –*quos per servum suum Pelagium liberavit*–, a la vez que se afirma tajantemente que Dios abandonó Toledo en favor de Asturias –*cecidit Toletus et elegit Asturias Deus*– (García Larragueta 14).⁷

⁵ Digo “supuesta” porque todas las fuentes árabes coinciden en señalar que la batalla nunca tuvo lugar y que, por el contrario, los árabes abandonaron a su suerte a los treinta cristianos que quedaron encerrados en la cueva, de difícil acceso. También es cierto que todos los testimonios árabes parecen tener un original común que perpetúan, probablemente, el texto perdido de la crónica de Ahmad al-Razi (887-955), con lo que es lícito dudar de su veracidad. Para un análisis detallado de las crónicas árabes y la batalla de Covadonga, véase Arbesú (2011).

⁶ Véase también la transcripción de Floriano (I: 119-21).

⁷ Sin embargo, y al contrario del *Testamentum*, del cual “se admite de forma general que se trata de un documento auténtico” (Bronisch 162), la crítica todavía alberga serias dudas sobre la datación del *Antiquum Privilegium*, fechado el 15 de junio de 821. En realidad, la duda surge al considerar otro documento estrechamente

Ambos documentos –*Testamentum* y *Antiquum Privilegium*– son importantes en cuanto suponen la primera mención a Pelayo como el elegido por Dios para liberar a su pueblo, aunque también reflejan la ambigüedad con la que Alfonso II el Casto (r. 783, 791-842) planteaba su legitimidad para reinar. Esta doble estrategia legitimista –continuidad y separación– no quedó exenta de problematización, y es por esto, quizás, que C. Sánchez-Albornoz no reconoció en el *Testamentum* ningún vínculo con los godos (1972 I: 92) o que A. Bronisch pudiera afirmar que

la identificación en el ‘Testamento’ del reino de Asturias con el desaparecido reino de los godos, cuyas [sic] restauración buscaba Alfonso [II], en alianza con Dios, conforme a la idea aquí expresada, no resulta, sin embargo, incontrovertida. En la formulación ‘christianorum asturumque gentem’ se advierte una clara antítesis con el desaparecido reino de los godos. (169)⁸

Además de la *Crónica de Alfonso III* (o *Alfonsina*) existe también otra crónica asociada a ésta –y algo anterior– de la cual no podemos prescindir. En la llamada *Crónica Albeldense* (ca. 884), que según J. E. Casariego es “la más antigua de la zona cristiana de la Reconquista que ha llegado a conocimiento de la erudición y la crítica” (1983: 15), se detallan los acontecimientos que nos interesan bajo el *Ordo gotorum obetensium regum*:⁹

Primero en Asturias reinó Pelayo, en Cangas, durante dieciocho años. Éste, según dijimos más arriba, llegó a Asturias expulsado de Toledo por el rey Vitiza. Y una vez que España fue ocupada por los sarracenos, éste fue el primero que inició la rebelión contra ellos en Asturias, reinando Yusef en Córdoba y cumpliendo Munnuza en la ciudad de Gijón [¿] las órdenes de los sarracenos sobre los ástures. Y así por él es aniquilado el enemigo ismaelita, junto con Alkama, y hecho prisionero el obispo Oppa, y a la postre es muerto Munnuza. Y así, desde entonces se devolvió la libertad al pueblo cristiano. Además, en aquella ocasión,

relacionado con éste: *Juan VIII confirma los privilegios de la iglesia de Oviedo*, fechado el 17 de septiembre de 822. El que la fecha de este último sea a todas luces falsa (el papado de Juan VIII duró de 872 a 882), arroja dudas sobre la datación del primero. Según Fernández Conde, “entra dentro de los posibles que Alfonso II quisiera honrar a su sede con la dignidad metropolitana, pero el apoyo documental de este privilegio es nulo” (II: 281).

⁸ De la misma manera, Barbero y Vigil interpretaron este pasaje como una noticia relativa a la caída del reino de los godos y expresión de una nueva conciencia de sí mismos por parte de los cristianos en Asturias (1979: 246; 1988: 88 y ss., 96 y ss.) Sea como fuere, la confusión viene siempre dada por la ambigüedad de las relaciones entre Alfonso II y Toledo.

⁹ Véase también Casariego (1985: 31). Barrau-Dihigo la llama *Crónica de San Millán* (26) y Mommsen se refiere a ella como *Epítome ovetensis* (II: 370). Adicionalmente, existe mucha discusión sobre la primacía de una crónica sobre otra y, por ejemplo, para Barrau-Dihigo la *Alfonsina* sería anterior a la *Albeldense* (23-24). Seguimos aquí el orden propuesto por críticos como Gómez Moreno y Sánchez-Albornoz, quien sentencia que “si la *Albeldense* se escribió en 881 y se añadió en noviembre del 883 y la *Profética* se compuso en abril del 883, la de Roda [*Rotense*] hubo de ser escrita después de este año y la erudita [*ad Sebastianum*] en seguida, antes del 889 en que probablemente ya había muerto Sebastián de Orense” (1967: 107).

los de la hueste sarracena que se libraron de la espada, al derrumbarse un monte en la Liébana, fueron aplastados por sentencia de Dios, y por la divina providencia surge el reino de los ástures. Murió el dicho Pelayo en el lugar de Cangas, en la era 775 [año 737]. (Gil 247)

Como se puede ver, quedan en la *Albeldense* ya esbozados de manera muy simple varios elementos significativos de la historia de Pelayo, como son la ascendencia del héroe, la enemistad de su familia con la del rey Witiza, la batalla de Covadonga o la historia de Munuza.¹⁰ No obstante, para el caso que nos ocupa es necesario insistir en cómo se presenta al primer monarca como libertador de su patria. No sólo se afirma que por él fue “aniquilado el enemigo ismaelita” (*Ismahelitarum ... interficitur*) y que “se devolvió la libertad al pueblo cristiano” (*reddita est libertas populo xpiano*), sino que el único milagro que se detalla en esta crónica es el derrumbamiento del monte donde fueron aplastados los árabes que no murieron en la batalla. Este detalle, que parece ahora insignificante, será crucial a la hora de comparar el relato de la *Albeldense* con el de las dos versiones de la *Alfonsina*, donde la historia de Pelayo alcanza —ahora sí— su versión definitiva.

Interesantemente, la *Alfonsina* se conoció no en una, sino en dos versiones de carácter bien distinto: la *Rotense* —que toma su nombre del Códice de Roda— y la *Ad Sebastianum* o *Crónica de Sebastián de Salamanca*.¹¹ La *Rotense*, de carácter más primitivo, se habría escrito con anterioridad al año 884, y de esta manera precede a la *Ad Sebastianum*, cuyo *terminus ad quem* sería el año 889. De todas maneras, recordemos que, según J. Gil, “las concomitancias que se observan entre ambas [crónicas] pueden explicarse por la existencia ... de una crónica asturiana escrita en los primeros años de Alfonso II, hoy perdida” (40), con lo que la *Albeldense* y las dos versiones de la *Alfonsina* habrían tenido —en principio— una fuente común. Las diferencias entre las dos versiones de la *Crónica de Alfonso III* son demasiado numerosas

¹⁰ Obsérvese que la fecha de la batalla es errónea, o al menos no coincide con las postuladas por la crítica (718 ó 722), ya que Yusef Ibn Abderramán (*Iuzep* en la *Albeldense*) gobernó en Córdoba de 746 a 756.

¹¹ De la *Rotense* se conserva el Códice de Roda o de Meyá (*MS R RAH 78*), del siglo XI, que se supone escrito en San Millán de la Cogolla o en Nájera. También el *MS M* (BNE 8831) del siglo XII, del que deriva el código cartáceo de la Biblioteca Vallicelliana de Roma R.33, del siglo XV. El *MS E* Escorialense B-I-9 es del XVI, y se supone copia de otro manuscrito perdido que perteneció a Miguel de Medina. Otras copias del mismo código son el *MS N* (BNE 1512) del siglo XVI, y el *MS T* (Toledo BC-27-7). La redacción *Ad Sebastianum* no se conserva en ningún manuscrito medieval y sólo quedan los siguientes códigos renacentistas. El *S*, Códice de Segorbe, del siglo XVI, destruido durante la guerra civil. El *F*, BN 1237, escrito en 1606 por Mauro Castellá Ferrer. El *O*, código ovetense de Morales, del siglo XVI, es copia de un código que perteneció al obispo Pelayo de Oviedo. Otras copias de peor calidad son *A* (BN 7602, siglo XVII); *C* (BN 9880, siglo XVII); *T* (Catedral de Toledo, siglo XVI, que es una copia de *S*); *M* (BN 1376, siglo XVI, copia de *S*); *B* (British Museum Egerton 1873, copiado en 1584 por Juan de Mariana); *V* (BN 8395 de Juan de Ferreras); *E* (BN 51, siglo XVIII) y *H* (Biblioteca Capitular y Colombina de Sevilla 82-5-25).

para traerlas a colación aquí, pero demuestran que ya en los orígenes de la historia se puede ver un claro intento de manipulación ideológica para servir los intereses monárquicos. Aquí nos contentaremos con apuntar que ambas versiones difieren en su estilo narrativo. Mientras que la *Rotense* es más sencilla y directa, en la versión *Ad Sebastianum* prima un aire aristocrático y legitimista que no se observa en la primera, de más valor para nosotros. Al fin y al cabo, fue la *Rotense* la que influyó enormemente en la historiografía posterior, incluyendo crónicas tan relevantes como la *Silense*, la *Najerense*, la de Lucas de Tuy o la de Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada. Por el contrario, como bien ha argumentado Gil, la versión *Ad Sebastianum* “permaneció aislada en su recoleto retiro, sin trascender casi de las montañas de Asturias” (79).

En lo que a Pelayo y Covadonga se refiere, la versión *Ad Sebastianum* se dedicó a retocar aspectos de la historia que no se ajustaban a la ideología regia. Así, mientras que la *Rotense* asignaba a Pelayo el modesto cargo de “espartario real”, la *Ad Sebastianum* se apresuró a hacerle descender directamente del Duque Fávila y especificar que Pelayo no fue un simple espartario, sino un noble de linaje real. Además, no son ya los ástures de las montañas los que escogen a Pelayo como líder en un *concilium asturum*, sino que es la nobleza goda refugiada en Asturias la que le escoge, de entre todos ellos, como nuevo príncipe de los godos. Adicionalmente, y de manera más importante, la *Ad Sebastianum* omitió toda referencia a los amoríos de Munuza –el gobernador árabe de la región– con la hermana de Pelayo, historia que se detallaba por extenso en la *Rotense* hasta el punto de erigirse en causa y motivo de todo el conflicto posterior. Por último, mientras que en la *Rotense* el obispo traidor Oppas se dirigía a Pelayo como “primo e hijo mío” (*confrater et fili*), en la *Ad Sebastianum* no queda trazo de esta supuesta filiación, ya que si Pelayo hubiera sido primo de Oppas, y este último hermano (o hijo, como afirman otras crónicas) del rey Witiza, habría aquí un desafortunado lazo de unión entre el nuevo monarca y sus antagonistas. De acuerdo con Gil, además, el ignorar este pasaje también va de la mano de omitir “el novelesco romance de los amoríos del musulmán Munuza con la hermana de Pelayo, [ya que] cuanto menos se sepa de la vida pasada de Pelayo, mejor” (65).

Sin embargo, y a pesar de los retoques de la *Ad Sebastianum*, ambas crónicas coinciden en otorgar a la historia de Pelayo un papel central. Al contrario de la *Albeldense*, que presentaba “un texto seco, frío, clásico dentro de su barbarie” (Gómez Moreno 565), la versión más erudita de la *Alfonsina* triplica el espacio dedicado a Pelayo, y la más rústica lo cuadriplica. Coinciden además en los aspectos esenciales de la historia. Se especifica el número de invasores árabes –187.000–, se añade el primer milagro (el de las piedras y las flechas), y se establece, de una vez por todas, el paralelismo entre Pelayo y Moisés. Al relatar el segundo de los milagros, el cronista

de la *Rotense* debió darse cuenta de la magnitud de sus palabras y no dudó en añadir que los lectores no debían juzgar el pasaje como vano o fabuloso. Antes bien, afirma el cronista, “recordad que el que abrió las olas del Mar Rojo al paso de los hijos de Israel, ése mismo sepultó bajo la inmensa mole del monte a estos árabes que perseguían a la Iglesia del Señor” (Gil 206). La identificación de Pelayo con Moisés es aún más clara en la *Ad Sebastianum*, donde se afirma que el milagro es idéntico al que “anegó en el Mar Rojo a los egipcios que perseguían a Israel” (Gil 207), y el simbolismo se repite una y otra vez en la práctica totalidad de las crónicas medievales.¹²

Sin embargo, y como ya hemos comentado, el problema con la historia de Pelayo es que a día de hoy ha perdido su simbología original, o —en otras palabras— que muy pocos son conscientes ya de que la identificación de Pelayo con Moisés es el elemento central de la historia. El dato más recordado es, obviamente, la derrota de los musulmanes en Covadonga y, así, la tradición popular ha olvidado todo detalle secundario (las desavenencias entre Pelayo y Witiza, los amoríos de Munuza con su hermana, la participación del obispo Oppas, etc.) para centrarse en el milagro de las piedras y las flechas y la intervención de la Virgen María.¹³ Sin embargo, aunque los elementos bíblicos que componen la historia no son ya evidentes, un análisis detallado de los documentos y crónicas del siglo IX demuestra que, en efecto, la equiparación de Pelayo con Moisés es la espina dorsal de la leyenda.

Para empezar, ni el *Testamento* de Alfonso II el Casto ni el *Antiquum Privilegium* mencionaban los milagros acaecidos en Covadonga o la intervención de la Virgen María, pero sí que incidían sobremanera en el papel de Pelayo como agente divino y libertador de su pueblo. De esta manera, la identificación con el héroe bíblico que libera a su gente de la opresión empieza ya a despuntar a mediados de siglo. Más relevante aún es el testimonio de la *Albeldense*, donde se insiste en este aspecto al mencionar exclusivamente que, al derrumbarse un monte en la Liébana, “se devolvió la libertad al pueblo cristiano ... y por la divina providencia surge el reino de los

¹² En la *Rotense*, “non istut innanem aut fabulosum putetis, sed recordamini quia, qui Rubri Maris fluenta ad transitum filiorum Israhel aperuit, ipse hos Arabes persequentes ecclesiam Domini immenso montis mole oppressit” (Gil 128), pasaje repetido casi palabra por palabra en la *Ad Sebastianum*: “Non istud miraculum inane aut fabulosum putetis, sed recordamini quia, qui in Rubro Maris Egyptios Israhel persequentes dimerisit, ipse hos Arabes ecclesiam Domini persequentes immenso montis mole oppressit” (Gil 129).

¹³ Aunque la *Crónica Alfonsina* deja muy claro que el mérito de la victoria es de Dios, sí que se refiere a la cueva como *domum sancte virginis Marie* (*Rotense*, Gil 128) o *antro qui vocatur cova sancte Marie* (*Ad Sebastianum*, Gil 125). La referencia se repite en la *Crónica Silense* (ca. 115), “Beate Marie suffragia que in spelunca illa usque in hodiernum diem adoratur” (Santos 19); en la *Crónica Najerense* (ca. 1160), “domum Sancte Marie virginis” (Estévez 101); en el *Chronicon Mundi* de Lucas de Tuy (ca. 1236), “spelunca Beate Marie” (Falque IV: 226); y en el *Cronicón del cerratense* (s. XIII), “usque ad covam Sanctae Mariae” (Huici I: 93).

ástures” (Gil 247). De nuevo, no encontramos en las crónicas más antiguas el milagro de las flechas y las piedras, sino que se incide en el derrumbamiento del monte como única señal del favor divino que hace posible, a través de Pelayo, la liberación del pueblo cristiano. Por si fuera poco, un análisis del (doble) relato de la *Alfonsina* demuestra que, en efecto, toda la historia está tomada de fuentes bíblicas, prestando especial atención a la identificación de Pelayo con Moisés.

El episodio más significativo (y discutido) es el diálogo que mantienen Pelayo y el obispo Oppas cuando el primero se encuentra refugiado en la cueva. Al llegar al monte Auseva junto al ejército árabe, Oppas se dirige a Pelayo preguntándole “Pelayo, Pelayo, ¿dónde estás?” (*Pelagi, Pelagi, ubi es?*), a lo que el futuro rey responde “Aquí estoy” (*Adsum*). La crítica ha visto aquí un sinfín de paralelismos bíblicos, ya sea entre las palabras que Oppas le dirige a Pelayo y las que Dios le dirige a Adán en el jardín del Edén, entre la respuesta de Pelayo a Oppas y la de Abraham o Jacob a Dios, o entre el diálogo de Pelayo y Oppas y el de David con el rey Saúl.¹⁴ Adicionalmente, P. Linehan ha manifestado que “while Oppas played God and impersonated Eve, Pelayo’s part resembled David’s worsting of Goliath” (103), para G. Martin el diálogo estaría “inspirée de la seduction d’Eve et d’Adam” (230 n. 65), para L. García Moreno el esquema narrativo del diálogo estaría “calcado del utilizado en las pasiones martiriales, transmutándose [Pelayo] en un mártir y [Oppas] en el praeses inquisitorial” (369), y para J. M. Caso las reminiscencias bíblicas en la historia de Pelayo serían citas y recuerdos que proceden de libros tan diversos como *Éxodo*, *Números*, *Deuteronomio*, *Levítico*, *Baruc*, *2 Reyes*, *Salmos*, *Sabiduría* y los evangelios (I: 276).¹⁵

Si bien es cierto que la interpretación del pasaje hay que buscarla en fuentes bíblicas, la correspondencia de Oppas con Dios no parece apropiada y se limita únicamente a dos palabras (*ubi es?*), toda vez que equiparar a Oppas con una seductora Eva o a Pelayo con el rey David son interpretaciones supratextuales que no vienen al caso. Más acertado va Linehan cuando afirma que Pelayo “responds as Abraham and Moses had once responded [to God]” (102) o Y. Bonnaz, para quien la respuesta de Pelayo antes de la batalla “c’est le thème biblique de la libération du peuple hébreu captif à Babylone”

¹⁴ Dios se dirige a Adán en *Génesis* 3:9 (*Vocavitque Dominus Deus Adam et dixit ei ubi es*), Abraham responde a Dios en *Génesis* 22:1 (*Abraham ille respondit adsum*) y *Génesis* 22:11 (*Abraham qui respondit adsum*) y Jacob hace lo propio en *Génesis* 31:11 (*Jacob et ego respondit adsum*) y *Génesis* 46:2 (*Jacob cui respondit ecce adsum*). Para los paralelismos con el diálogo entre David y Saúl en *1 Samuel* 24 véase Bonnaz (150 n. 4).

¹⁵ Sin entrar en detalles, es cierto que varias de las citas utilizadas en el diálogo proceden de *Marcos* 4: 30-32, *Mateo* 13: 31-32, *Lucas* 13: 18-19, *1 Juan* 2: 1, *Salmos* 37: 17-22, *Salmos* 61: 9, *Salmos* 88: 33-34, *Salmos* 89: 32-22, *Salmos* 112: 2, *1 Corintios* 15: 19, *Efesios* 1: 12, *Eclesiastés* 28: 1, *2 Samuel* 22: 48, *Job* 1: 21 y *Daniel* 2: 20, entre otros. Para más información sobre las citas bíblicas en la historia, véase mi tesis doctoral (Arbesú 2008).

(lxxxvii). Sin embargo, para nosotros la interpretación más apropiada es la de M. C. Díaz y Díaz, para quien buena parte del diálogo entre Oppas y Pelayo está inspirada en la visión de Moisés en el monte Horeb (224 n. 52), refiriéndose específicamente al episodio en el que Dios llama a Moisés y él responde como lo hará Pelayo desde la cueva: “Cuando Dios vio que él iba a mirar, lo llamó de en medio de la zarza: –¡Moisés, Moisés! –Aquí estoy, respondió él”.¹⁶ De todas maneras tampoco conviene otorgar una importancia desmesurada al diálogo entre Oppas y Pelayo, ya que los aspectos más relevantes radican en la interpretación global que las diversas crónicas le dieron a la historia.

Como hemos comentado, tanto el *Testamentum* como el *Antiquum Privilegium* incidían exclusivamente en el papel de Pelayo como libertador de su gente, y el breve párrafo de la *Crónica Albeldense* elaboraba ligeramente la historia, incorporando el milagro del derrumbamiento del monte y afirmando que gracias a Pelayo se había devuelto la libertad al pueblo. Finalmente, a pesar de que las versiones *Rotense* y *Ad Sebastianum* de la *Crónica Alfonsina* incorporaron un segundo milagro, es aquí donde se especifica claramente que el derrumbamiento del monte en la Liébana se corresponde con el milagro del Mar Rojo, y que, si Dios ayudó entonces a Moisés a terminar con los egipcios que perseguían a su pueblo, es ahora Dios también quien ayuda a Pelayo a aniquilar a los árabes. El simbolismo es tan claro que las crónicas medievales, sin excepción, resaltan esta equiparación del “primer rey de España” con el patriarca bíblico. La *Najerense* repite casi palabra por palabra el testimonio de la *Rotense*, para Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada el milagro en Covadonga es “*Egipciorum submersio nouo miraculo*” (Fernández Valverde 117), y en la *Estoria de España* de Alfonso X el Sabio (r. 1252-1284) el milagro del derrumbamiento del monte se convierte ya en el mito fundacional de la nación:

Este nuevo miraglo d-aquel afogamiento fizo Dios *a pro de los cristianos de España* pora librarlos del grand crebanto et del astragamiento de los moros [en] que estaban, así como fizo a los fijos de Israel quando les sacó del cativerio de Pharaon rey de Egipto et afogó a él et a todos los suyos en la mar. (Menéndez-Pidal 323, énfasis mío).

Por ahondar más en el tema, y a pesar de que la *Estoria de España* supone la culminación natural del desarrollo de la leyenda, cuando Pedro de Corral se lanzó en 1430 a refundir la historia de Pelayo en su *Crónica del rey don Rodrigo (Crónica sarracina)*, la simbología era tan obvia que optó por inventarse unas “mocedades” del héroe basadas punto por punto en la historia de Moisés. Así, en la segunda parte de la obra se incluyen cincuenta y dos capítulos en los que Corral detalla los amoríos

¹⁶ En el original, “*Cernens autem Dominus quod perferet ad videndum vocavit eu de medio rubi et ait Moses Moses qui respondit adsum*” (Éxodo 3:4).

entre el duque Fávila y una tal doña Luz –padres de Pelayo–, que deben casarse en secreto para escapar de la ira del rey Abarca (Witiza). Al enterarse de que doña Luz ha tenido un niño, Abarca ordena matar a todos los bebés de tres meses, y Pelayo es arrojado en una cesta a las aguas del Tajo al igual que Moisés fuera arrojado al Nilo para escapar de la ira del Faraón. En palabras de J. D. Fogelquist, en la *Crónica sarracina* Pelayo es claramente “una ‘postfiguración’ (o un ‘retrotipo’) de Moisés, que al mismo tiempo rescata a los israelitas del cautiverio y prefigura la redención del pecador por Jesucristo” (Corral I: 27-28).

Conclusión importante: El milagro fundamental de Covadonga no es, como así lo ha determinado la tradición popular, el milagro de las piedras y saetas que se vuelven contra los invasores, sino el derrumbamiento del monte en Liébana como reflejo del milagro en el Mar Rojo. La equiparación de Pelayo con Moisés debe considerarse, pues, la espina dorsal de toda la historia, y –como hemos visto– el remitirse a este tipo de héroes fundacionales para legitimar determinados gobiernos o naciones (en el sentido más amplio del término) no es exclusivo de los cronistas medievales, ya que en todas las etapas históricas, incluyendo el siglo XXI, siguieron dándose casos tan anacrónicos como el del Estado de Texas en Estados Unidos o el de las elecciones autonómicas de Cataluña.¹⁷ Es necesario señalar entonces que esta continuidad de modelos fundacionales se debe principalmente a la combinación de dos de los recursos más utilizados en dichas tentativas legitimistas: Por un lado, el héroe debe ostentar ciertas virtudes que le hacen merecedor del favor divino y, por otro, el protagonista debe presentarse siempre como libertador de su gente. De hecho, la continuidad de tal modelo está garantizada porque no existe herramienta de legitimación más efectiva que presentar a un gobernante como el libertador de un pueblo oprimido, y de ahí que el modelo legitimista por excelencia haya sido siempre Moisés. Así, no es de extrañar que aún hoy este modelo siga vigente en determinados estados o territorios con pretensiones más o menos fundadas de independencia, y que más de mil años después de presentar a Pelayo como *el toledano Moisés* –en palabras de M. Laviano– se intente aún reencarnar al patriarca bíblico en la figura del presidente de Cataluña, o se insista en que Moisés fue uno de los personajes históricos que inspiraron la Constitución de Estados Unidos.

¹⁷ En los siglos XV, XVI y XVII los Austrias perpetuaron y reforzaron el supuesto neogoticismo del Reino de Asturias para legitimar así su monarquía universal. De la misma manera, el mito de un “Moisés español” fue utilizado repetidamente durante la etapa romántica, sobre todo a raíz de la Guerra de Independencia (1808-1814); durante el siglo XX, por uno y otro bando de la Guerra Civil española (1936-1939); y –como acabamos de mencionar– en casos más o menos insólitos a principios del siglo XXI.

El problema, pues, no es que a día de hoy se sigan utilizando modelos fundacionales de hace once siglos, sino el que gran parte de la población no pueda descifrar el simbolismo oculto en estos intentos legitimistas. De esta manera, cabe preguntarse si los texanos que a finales de 2014 vieron cómo el Consejo de Educación de su estado exigía que los libros de texto recogieran la supuesta influencia de Moisés en la redacción de los documentos fundacionales de Estados Unidos eran conscientes de la carga ideológica de tales afirmaciones. O si los catalanes que participaron en las elecciones autonómicas de 2012 fueron capaces de descifrar el mesiánico cartel en el que Artur Mas se presentaba ante su pueblo como un nuevo Moisés. O, en última instancia, si los pocos españoles que aún recuerdan la historia del rey Pelayo son conscientes de que, en el fondo, de lo que se trataba aquí era de presentar al primer rey de Asturias como al libertador del pueblo cristiano frente a la opresión sarracena.

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FROM SCOPOPHILIA TO ABJECTION: VISION AND BLINDNESS IN THE *MONJA QUE SE ARRANCÓ LOS OJOS*

ABSTRACT

The brief untitled *exemplum* preserved uniquely in MS 77 of the Biblioteca Menéndez Pelayo and generally known as the *Monja que se arrancó los ojos*, tells the tale of a nun who, rather than submit to the lechery of a king, opts instead to mutilate herself in order to spurn his attentions. This article, which draws on theories of the gaze and of abjection (showing how from a certain theoretical perspective they could be considered complementary hermeneutics for tackling the same issue), analyses the complex symbolic implications of self-mutilation, showing how the Nun's actions could be interpreted from a range of complementary perspectives.

KEY WORDS: *Exemplum*, hagiography, scopophilia, abjection.

RESUMEN:

El breve ejemplo intitulado preservado únicamente en el MS 77 de la Biblioteca Menéndez Pelayo y conocido generalmente como la *Monja que se arrancó los ojos*, narra la historia de una monja que, en vez de someterse a la lujuria de un rey, opta por mutilarse para rechazar sus atenciones. Este artículo, que se funda en teorías de la vista y de la abyección (mostrando como desde una cierta perspectiva teórica podrían considerarse como hermenéuticas complementarias para abordar el mismo asunto), analiza las complejas implicaciones simbólicas de la auto-mutilación, mostrando como las acciones de la monja se podrían interpretar desde un panorama de perspectivas complementarias.

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PALABRAS CLAVE: Ejemplo, hagiografía, escopofilia, abyección.

1. THE MALE GAZE/THE EROTIC NUN

As Laura Mulvey's landmark analysis of twentieth-century cinema has shown, in societies structured by notions of sexual disequilibrium, pleasure in looking has traditionally been predicated on a dialectical opposition between active/male and passive/female roles. The determining male gaze projects its fantasy onto the female figure by scrutinizing prominent anatomical features such as her hair, eyes, lips, or the contours of her breast. This activity codes her appearance for visual and erotic impact, and transforms her into a sexualized plaything, an object of libidinal enjoyment, or as Mulvey puts it, the "leit-motif of erotic spectacle" (11). Having unwittingly satisfied a primordial wish for pleasurable looking, the sexualized woman holds the look and signifies male desire; she is displayed like an object and becomes exhibitionist in nature, her specific ontological status, like that of an unwilling participant in a beauty pageant, invalidated by the sexualizing identities imposed upon her. She begins as a result to connote a quality that Mulvey rightly but provocatively terms "to-be-looked-at-ness" (11).

In Freudian terms, scopophilia takes woman as an object for sexual stimulation and subjects her to a curious and controlling gaze. This concept is qualified in Mulvey's work in terms of its active or fetishistic value (14), as the physical beauty of the object is transformed into a source of pleasure and gratification that is both different from, as well as distanced from, the object under scrutiny. Vision, accordingly, becomes a crucial component in questions of sexuality and sexualization. Yet perhaps more importantly, as Freud recognizes (1977 69), it is one that can function independently of the erotogenic zones. By transforming the female object into a passive erotic spectacle, the process of looking becomes situational and political, and can be related to acts of voyeurism. In its most extreme form it can even become fixated, as Mulvey notes, into a perversion, producing obsessive Peeping Toms whose chief sexual satisfaction is derived from watching an objectified other in an active and controlling way.²

² Although, as Michael Camille notes, there is a danger of leaving "medieval spectators as beholders without a psychology" (2000 198), medieval and modern theories are not incompatible. As James F. Burke explains: "traditional theories of extromission and intromission held that a kind of ocular beam could either issue forth from the eye of the beholder or proceed to him or her from the viewed object. For the human subject, such a ray of light, whether conceived primarily as incoming or outgoing, would be the basic tool that would allow some variety of communication with the surrounding visual sphere" (25).

The medieval Castilian canon abounds with examples of female characters presented as passive raw material for the active male gaze. Yet few are more poignant, or indeed pertinent more broadly to questions of vision and blindness, than an untitled work known both as the *Monja que se arrancó los ojos* and as the *Ejemplo de una monja que era muy hermosa de fuera*. The text, which assumes the form of a pithy *exemplum*, is attested uniquely by MS 77 of the Biblioteca Menéndez Pelayo (fols. 99^v–101^r), which dates from the first half of the fifteenth century and is most likely a copy of an earlier original. The manuscript, as Catherine Soriano and Alberto Miranda have shown, offers a complex and eclectic synthesis of devotional and didactic materials, and although a detailed analytical study is long overdue, a prominent feature is an emphasis on female virtue, with the tale of the Nun sandwiched between a lyrical treatment of the joys of the Virgin Mary (fols. 94^v–99^v) and a narrative account of the legend of St. Ursula and the Eleven Thousand Virgins (fols. 101^r–04^r). It may also be that the hymn “Ilumina oculos meos” (fols 87^v–89^v) was included on the grounds of its thematic and conceptual affinity.

In broader terms, an obvious parallel is with St. Lucy, who is commonly depicted in art (although conspicuously not in early Castilian literature) as one whose eyes are gouged out as she attempts to defend her sexual integrity from the unsolicited advances of the Roman Prefect, Paschasius (González Palencia, Beresford 113–21). For this reason, she is presented in traditional iconography with a pair of severed eyes on a golden platter. The tale has implications in this respect not solely for the relationship between hagiography and the *exemplum* tradition (for it may be that it was either inspired by Lucy’s legend or that it represents Lucy in a different form), but for the broader transformative relationship between torture, identity, and the materiality and significance of the human body. It asks, in particular, about how identities are imposed through the power of the gaze, and how acts of savage corporeal violence are capable of destabilizing the image that is projected outwards and received by the beholder.

The *exemplum* begins with a deployment of the traditional *meollo/corteza* dialectic, as the Nun’s external beauty is presented as a visual correlative of her inner purity.³ This quality, which is constructed through the gaze of the (male) narrator and passed on thereafter to the audience, which accepts it as a standard element of gendered characterization, relates her to a range of female saints, notably Agatha, who displays a comparably harmonious equilibrium of inner and outer perfection:

³ As Berceo writes in the introduction to the *Milagros de Nuestra Señora*: “tolgamos la corteza, al meollo entremos” (Baños 7, st. 16c).

“noble e hermosa por linaje e por cuerpo, mas mucho más noble e hermosa por alma” (Beresford 185). Yet the King’s gaze is differently constructed, and by focusing exclusively on the beauty of the Nun’s eyes (an organ that stands at the interface between interior and exterior, but which is here appraised exclusively in terms of its superficial surface appearance), his sexualized fantasies reach out vicariously in order to draw her into a process of libidinal enjoyment where she is reduced to the status of a passive erotic object. She in this way connotes the quality that Mulvey characterizes as to-be-looked-at-ness:⁴

Dize que un en monesterio de monjas avía una monja, la qual era muy hermosa de fuera e más de dentro. Esta bendita monja avía los ojos muy graciosos; e un rey, viendo la su gran hermosura, fue muy fuertemente encendido del sucio amor carnal de la luxuria e enbió por ella. E como le dixesen los mensajeros las nuevas, ella muy espantada del tal dicho, díxoles que por qué oviera el rey más amor della que de todas las otras; e díxéronle que porque avía los ojos muy más graciosos que todas ellas.

2. VISION DENIED/THE BLINDED NUN

The King’s desire fixes the Nun’s identity by impeding the articulation and circulation of contrary signifiers. In his eyes, she ceases to be a nun (an unattainable *sponsa Christi* defined by the veil as a symbolic marker of celibacy and obedience) and is transformed instead into an erotic plaything, a sparkly-eyed figure of lust. His stereotype denies agency in the construction and projection of identity, and functions on the basis of knowledge that is both simplistic and defective. It also, by defining the Nun exclusively according to the desirability of her eyes, succeeds in essentializing her identity in a single part of the anatomy. The process, which is effectively one of *ocularization*, functions as the sexualizing male gaze imposes an identity that reduces her significance to a single libido-raising attribute. She is in this way rendered different from her fellows (in a sense, becoming her eyes) as the exercise of scopic surveillance imposes a dialectic of pleasure/unpleasure that marks her out as superlative among women. There is an obvious inverted resemblance

⁴ Quotations are from Lacarra (1999 309), and for a palaeographic transcription, see Soriano and Miranda. For a study of related versions, see Lacarra (2000). An analogue appears in the traditional lyric “No me las enseñes más, / que me matarás” (Frenk 284–85, no. 375B), where the speaker’s scopic imagination allows him to see through the Nun’s veil to the “teticas blancas” within. As Freud affirms, “This curiosity [i.e. the gaze of the speaker] seeks to complete the sexual object by revealing its hidden parts” (1977 69). For the poem’s ambiguity, see Deyermond (1982), and for its eroticism, Gornall. The crucial point is that the partial repetition of the *estribillo* suggests that the speaker overcomes his scruples and engages in a voyeuristic ocular fantasy that culminates in sexual climax.

in this respect to the procedures outlined by Frantz Fanon and Homi K. Bhabha, who write on the tendency towards epidermalization in postcolonial discourse, the latter focusing specifically on the relationship between identity and the reductive potential of the stereotype (see also Huddart 35–55).

Yet the Nun refuses to accept the imposition of an externally authored identity and opts to confront the power of the eye as a signifier of difference. She may have unwittingly become a passive object of erotic spectacle and have connoted the quality of to-be-looked-at-ness. Yet through an affirmation of the right to exercise agency, she is able to strike a hammerblow against enforced passivity and regain control over her body, both literally and symbolically. This is achieved in a brutal and gruesome manner, as she gouges out the organ observed by the King:

Estonce ella, con muy gran devoción e fe, acomendóse a su verdadero esposo, Jhesu Christo, el qual nunca fallece a los que verdaderamente lo llaman, e dixo a los mensajeros: “Pues que así es, dadme un poco de espacio para que me apareje, por que honestamente parezca delante el rey.” E entró en su cámara e sacóse sus ojos, e puestos en un plato, dixo a los mensajeros: “Tomad esto por lo qual el rey se enamoró de mí, por que yo sea pura e linpia ante los ojos del mi muy amado e verdadero esposo, Jhesu Christo.” Estonce ellos, muy espantados del tal fecho, dixéronlo al rey.

The act of self-mutilation allows the Nun to question her position as a passive object of erotic spectacle, and to reassert distance by breaking through the alienating facade of gendered identity to discover a hidden reality or inner vision. Her actions accord well in this respect with the Gospel maxim: “If your right eye makes you stumble, tear it out and throw it from you; for it is better for you to lose one of the parts of your body, than for your whole body to be thrown into hell” (Matthew 5:29). By following this course of action, the Nun refuses to regard the process of scopophilic sexualization as natural or inevitable, and in so doing, succeeds in questioning the unconscious structuring of patriarchal society and the implicit norms of the phallogocentric order. As the King once experienced pleasure in looking, the Nun now gains satisfaction not simply by denying herself the capacity to offer visual acknowledgement of the King’s gaze, but by connoting a quality that could potentially be thought of in Mulvian terms as *unable-to-be-looked-at-ness*. This transformation problematizes the dialectical relationship between interior/exterior and blindness/vision, for while she renders herself disgusting in the King’s worldly eyes (the fantasy object dissolving to reveal the empty placeholder of desire as the symbolic gives way to the real), she becomes cleaner and purer in the eyes of the celestial bridegroom, whose sexless desire is inscribed directly into the flesh.

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In this respect, the Nun conforms to the traditional ambiguity associated with the blind. Having deprived herself of one of the body's most precious gifts, she renders herself anatomically incomplete. Yet she also projects herself as one whose defiled physicality identifies her as alien, as other, as polar opposite. Although innocent, she becomes associated by implication with delinquents blinded for the transgression of basic moral or religious laws. Indeed, as Moshe Barasch (25) observes, (self-)blinding is a primordial act normally reserved for the transgression of taboos such as incest, and offences against God, whether or not they are intentionally committed. It becomes tempting, in view of this, to link self-mutilation to a latent sense of guilt, with the Nun, indoctrinated as a daughter of Eve into an instinctive understanding of her inherent sinfulness, inverting the law of cause and effect by viewing herself as the culpable party.

Yet although the blind have lost an important sense, they are often endowed with a mysterious supernatural ability. This ambivalence explains why audiences can experience pity and compassion, while oscillating awkwardly between moods of awe and anxiety, suspecting that the blind can see into the uncanny recesses of the soul, and that they have been rewarded with knowledge that goes beyond the reach of humanity. In some cases the power of the blind extends to divine intercession, as they are perceived as being able to traverse the liminal space between life and death. A tangible absence is in this way counterbalanced by an ineffable (but nonetheless, perceptibly corresponding) increment in authority. In fact, while the blind may be unable to see, they can in some respects see more clearly than others, experiencing a sublimated, spiritualized form of vision that gives them an aura, an inherent dignity, that mere mortals are denied. They can in this way become threatening, and be seen not simply as disturbingly incomplete, but as harbingers of the defiled physicality that will be experienced (particularly by the sinful) in the afterlife.

3. VISUALIZING LOSS/THE ABJECT NUN

How exactly the Nun gouges out her eyes, and perhaps more pertinently, how she arranges them neatly on a platter and presents them to the King's heralds, are questions that the *exemplum* leaves unexplored. The fact that she experiences no pain or discomfort and is able to go about her business with workmanlike efficiency, however, suggests that she is able to transcend the limitations of the body and react with saintly impassivity, displaying an ability to subject herself to corporeal suffering without any visible or audible reaction. This miraculous quality emphasizes her strength, as well as the efficacy of the decision to undertake an act of self-mutilation. It also sharpens the extent of the polarity between her and the King, whose pain is not merely reported, but linked specifically to a decision to undertake penance

to atone for his wicked desires: “Estonce el rey ovo en sí muy gran dolor, e fizo penitencia de su mal deseo”. Whether or not this comes in the form of asceticism (the deliberate immersion of the self in pain in the pursuit of a higher objective) is once again, a question left unexplored. That the body is able to serve in both instances as a physical *exemplum*, however, succeeds in reiterating the extent to which questions of identity and corporeality become impossible to disaggregate.

As Esther Cohen observes, pain is “essentially an individual experience, unsharable and intransmissible” (48). Yet as it is almost always filtered by cultural dictates, it becomes a form of narrative shorthand capable of establishing or reiterating the boundaries and limits of identity. In Christian contexts, pain functions as part of “a symbolically charged cycle of suffering” (48) and is associated with punishment, sin, and death. Pain is not merely the price paid for original sin and the Expulsion from Paradise, but for the redemption of that sin with the suffering of Christ in the Crucifixion. As a central historical and cosmological force, pain becomes an aspect of communal consciousness and an emblem of intersubjective experience, providing an avenue to knowledge not merely of the body, but “of the soul, of truth, of reality, and of God” (53). It is perhaps unsurprising, therefore, that Christians should be enjoined to accept pain as unavoidably implicated in decisions affecting questions of culpability and future contingency (see Binski, Merback, and Mills).

The King’s experience of pain is complex. With the gift of blindness, the Nun clearly sees him in a way that he is not able to see her, and as she looks deeply into his soul with eyes that in some ways seem to continue working as they are presented to him on a platter, he is forced to confront the appalling physical consequences of his lustful desire. It may even be that an image of his lust has been indelibly imprinted on the eyes themselves, reflecting an uncanny impression of the destabilizing effects of sexual desire backwards towards its point of origin. Yet as an *exemplum* inscribed directly into the flesh, the Nun invites the male gaze upon herself in a self-consciously narcissistic manner, and in so doing, succeeds in replacing pleasure by pain. The transition, which is from passive to narcissistic scopophilia (Mulvey 13–15), is predicated on the function of the body as a bounded system and as a political object over which relations of power and resistance can be played out (Grosz, Camille 1994). In her anatomically complete state, the Nun functions as a semiotic signifying system, which, although spectacularly misread by the King, maintains a degree of ontological stability. However, as she gouges out her eyes and challenges the seemingly irreducible materiality of the human form, she disrupts and distorts the production and reception of stabilized meaning, deliberately undermining the fragility of the symbolic order and in this way ensuring the collapse of the King’s sexualizing desire (Grosz 80–81).

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This process, as described by Julia Kristeva, is one of abjection, with the once clearly demarcated borderline between inside/outside, subject/object, and self/other collapsing into a state of ambiguity, as the Nun separates a part of herself to redefine the self that she regards as authentic — the unwilling sex object re-reading herself as a loyal and devoted *sponsa Christi*. The crucial point, as Kristeva avers, is that in order to maintain a place in the symbolic order and constitute herself as a unified whole, the subject aspires to maintain a *corps propre*, a clean and proper sense of corporeal integrity. Yet as the abject can never be fully eradicated from the construction of identity, it continues to linger at the periphery of self-image, forever threatening its illusory unities and stabilities with suggestions of disruption and dissolution. This most commonly results in a situation in which the subject becomes immured by ambiguity, locked into a type of in-between state that disturbs our conventional understanding of identity, system, and order. The result is a contradictory oscillation between moods of horror and fascination, as the abject reminds the ego not merely of the act of breaking away from an unwanted (self-)image, but of the possibility of a humiliating return. Indeed, as Kristeva explains (see also Oliver 48–68, McAfee 45–57, and Grosz):

The abject has only one quality of the object — that of being opposed to *I*. If the object, however, through its opposition, settles me within the fragile texture of a desire for meaning, which as a matter of fact, makes me ceaselessly and infinitely homologous to it, what is *abject*, on the contrary, the jettisoned object, is radically excluded and draws me toward the place where meaning collapses. A certain “ego” that merged with its master, a superego, has flatly driven it away. It lies outside, beyond the set, and does not seem to agree to the latter’s rules of the game. And yet from its place of banishment, the abject does not cease challenging its master. (1–2)

Although the Nun’s precarious self-image can be challenged by the eyes on the platter, which belong neither to the subject nor the object, and the empty sockets that invite completion, the most obvious function of the abject can be seen in relation to the King. In its fetishistic form, as Mulvey (14) affirms, scopophilia takes the subject as an object for stimulation by imposing its controlling and curious gaze. Yet in its narcissistic form, the observer is invited to experience identification in a process that has often been related to the Lacanian mirror stage (see Mulvey 9–10, Lacan 2002, and Homer 24–26). This begins when an infant first encounters itself as a separate entity, typically by means of a reflected image or equivalent. Recognizing a human face with characteristics similar to its own, the infant experiences a moment of joyful identification. Yet as the process is based on imaginary misrecognition, with the mirror offering an ideal ego that is perfect, complete, and, unlike that of the child, fully in control of its own bodily experience, it can also produce a sense of incompleteness. This can in turn lead to moods of alienation and fragmentation, and

ultimately, to situations of conflict, as self and other become locked into a never-ending cycle of recognition and concomitant disavowal.

The gift of gouged-out eyes presented on a platter shifts the emphasis of the narrative from fetishism to narcissism, as the Nun, once unwillingly observed, now enthusiastically invites a very different form of observation upon her. With gouged-out eyes and empty sockets, she becomes a source of abjection, of disgust, of repugnance. Her invitation vigorously encourages procedures of identification, but in her state of fragmentary incompleteness, she becomes a paradigmatic generator of horror, preying on the deepest fears of the King's imagination, and in this way inviting automatic rejection. This process can be read in Lacanian terms, for as fantasy dissolves and the real is made accessible through the other, the object ceases to appear as something worthy of love, and instead leaves behind an unrecognizable remainder, which is referred to in his work variously as the "cadeau d'une merde", "le fruit anal", and "le *a* excrémental" (1979 268). This, as Gerald Moore (65–70) recognizes, is the innermost kernel of being, stripped of the fantasmic support that rendered it palatable to subjective experience, and which is rejected accordingly.

For Mitchell B. Merback, the power of the abject lies specifically in the wound, which generates disgust at the pulsating boundaries of the body. Once a wound appears before our eyes, "it is as if a fault line has opened up across the body's topography, one that threatens to tear open the ever wider expanses of the body's hidden interior" (113). The process of identification is in this sense mimetic, as the King, invited to consider the dissolution of the integrity of the vital distinction between interior and exterior, experiences the pain of an opened body with a form uncannily close to that of his own. Indeed, as Merback argues, "the wounded body of our vision somehow ceases to be *that* body and becomes, in an uncanny way, *our* body as well" (113, emphasis in original). His reading accords in this respect with that of Kristeva, who argues: "The body must bear no trace of its debt to nature: it must be clean and proper in order to be fully symbolic. In order to confirm that, it should endure no gash other than that of circumcision. ... Any other mark would be the sign of belonging to the impure, the non-separate, the non-symbolic, the non-holy" (102). Needless to say, the process of abject repudiation reaches its natural extreme when overlaid by issues of responsibility, blame, and ultimately, self-loathing. The King, recognizing not simply his disgust at the gift of severed body parts, but his agency in ensuring their production, is compelled to question his own anatomical integrity, with visions of his liquid interior spilling out in an act of involuntary mimetic identification.

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4. VISUALIZING IMPOTENCE/THE CASTRATED KING

In Lacanian psychoanalysis, the hollowed-out eye is structured in the form of a rim, a corporeal interface between that which is inside the body, and therefore a part of the subject, and that which remains outside the body, and thus, an object for the subject (Grosz 86–89). The blurring of the distinction between the two, and the impossibility of maintaining clear-cut lines of demarcation, conforms not only to Kristeva's reading of the abject, but to the inversion of Mulvey's principle of to-be-looked-at-ness, which could (at least from this perspective) be regarded as an inverted theoretical way of addressing the same essential issue. Indeed, as John Lechte argues, the abject is the ego's undesirable face: not simply "the dark side of narcissism", but precisely the image that "Narcissus would not want to have seen as he gazed into his pool" (160). It seems strange in this respect that the two discourses, despite the fact that they are antithetically related (and in this sense mutually reinforcing), have developed in almost complete isolation from one another.

As all boundaries, Lacan argues, can be traversed by the incorporation or expulsion of objects, many of which have an erotic value, the rim functions simultaneously as a symbol both of excess, or that which is unwanted, and lack, or that which becomes necessary for completion. It becomes possible in this respect to question whether the Nun's eyes are purely literal, or whether as an essentialized anatomical signifier, they can be related more figuratively to the process of ocular exchange that underpins the relationship between the King and the Nun. As a site of ingress/egress capable of compromising the notion of the body as a bounded entity and of impacting on the ontological instability of self-image, the eye becomes a type of surrogate for the sexual organ. In the opening section of the narrative, the King's ocular contemplation redefines the Nun as an object to be sexually enjoyed: a body to be lusted after, undressed, and ultimately, penetrated by the phallus. Yet if phallic penetration, whether in the form of ocular fantasy or anatomical reality, can be read as a procedure of internalization, with two bodies becoming one, then the act of gouging stands reciprocally and antithetically as symbol of externalization, with one body clearly becoming two. The Nun's self-mutilation stands in this respect not just as a provocative rejection, but as one that is charged with corrosive symbolic significance. In fact, it becomes possible to relate the eyes specifically to the traditional root of the male sexual drive in the testicles, and to read the gift both as a stern admonishment designed to humiliate and belittle masculine authority and as a gruesome proleptic warning.

For Freud, the correspondence between the eyes and the testicles is imbricated with the issue of castration anxiety. The infant, recognizing that his mother lacks the phallus, fears the rivalry of his father and the possibility that his own sexual

organ may be severed. The parallel between the two is enhanced partly by the fear of blindness, which commonly functions in the unconscious as a symbol of castration, but perhaps more obviously as a result of basic visual association, particularly with regard to questions of comparability in size, shape, and form. Indeed, as Freud notes: “The study of dreams, fantasies and myths has taught us also that anxiety about one’s eyes, the fear of going blind, is quite often a substitute for the fear of castration. When the mythical criminal Oedipus blinds himself, this is merely a mitigated form of the penalty of castration, the only one that befits him according to the *lex talionis*” (2003 139).

For Martha A. Easton, “Both the eyes and the testicles are soft, round objects, and damage to one body part could unconsciously suggest damage to the other” (101). It becomes possible in this way to read the content of the platter not simply as a powerful rebuff, but as a symbolically charged rejection of male sexuality and its relationship to worldly dominion. The King, coming face to face with the power and effect of his libido, is presented with a form of symbolic castration that succeeds in dampening his ardour, and in offering an abrupt reminder not only of his essential impotence, but that of the order for which he stands. It may also, at the level of a symbolic prolepsis, suggest a more profound neurosis concerning the judgement that he will eventually be brought to face. This seems most likely in view of the medieval fondness for literalism and appropriateness in the depiction of hellish torment, with sodomites skewered anally by flaming hot pokers and other devices, and the lustful subjected to a range of comparably sexualized fates, notably in church carvings, which offer an implacably efficient means with which to entrench a sense of disgust for the flesh and of the punishment meted out to those who err (see Jerman and Weir). In fact, the King may, in a very real sense, fear that the gouging of the Nun’s eyes will be punished in the afterlife by the severing of his masculinity.

5. VISUALIZING OPPOSITION/THE SYMBOLIC NUN

The crucial point, of course, is that the King is not just a man, but an exemplar of the symbolic order and the law. His erotic drive may lead to a compromising situation and an act of personal penance, but as his masculine phallogocentric role as reigning monarch is also challenged, he is revealed as being unfit to exercise dominion over his underlings. His misuse of power subjects an innocent woman sadistically to his will, while his gaze transforms her voyeuristically into an object of sexual stimulation. In so doing, the mask of ideological correctness slips temporarily to reveal a fallible human interior. Yet the Nun, in her own performatively melodramatic way, becomes an instrument of education, reorienting and inflecting the lord/vassal relationship

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by reminding him of the need to exercise spiritual purity. The suggestiveness of this relationship is enhanced by the fact that she too is nameless: she is an idealized abstraction, an everywoman, a cipher for pious women leading virtuous lives.⁵

Yet we might also wonder, from a certain perspective, whether the Nun is a woman at all. If the clash between Nun and King can be read ideologically, it becomes tempting to see the text not as an encounter between individuals, but between conceptual entities locked (at least in part) within the confines of the symbolic order. In this light, the encounter could potentially be read as a comment on the relationship between Man and Woman and the gendering of sexual paradigms in society. A possibility more pregnant with suggestiveness, however, is that the confrontation could be mapped onto the relationship between Church and State, with the lowly female standing inevitably as a representation of nurturing mother Ecclesia. If this is the case, then the implications of the text become rather more tantalizing, as the implicit suggestion appears to be that the Church must occasionally shed its blood in order to maintain an appropriately symbiotic and proactively educational relationship to the State.

The image of Ecclesia, as Jo Spreadbury demonstrates, is derived ultimately from Ephesians 5:21–33, where the union of husband and wife is modelled on the mystery of the relationship between Christ and the Church. This association echoes the nuptial language used for the Old Testament covenant between God and Israel, while in the Middle Ages the formalized embodiment of the Church as an institution became enshrined in conceptual commonplaces such as “*corpus quod est Ecclesia*” and “*corpus scilicet Ecclesia*” (94). Perhaps the most obvious point of applicability, however, is in visual symbolism and its relationship to questions of anatomical extraction, for while Ecclesia is often depicted as being born from the wound in Christ’s side (in itself a typological reworking of the birth of Eve from Adam’s rib), it is also frequently represented as a figure carrying a chalice replete with the blood of Christ. It becomes in this way, as Spreadbury argues, a powerful female image and an embodiment of Christian identity. The parallel is enhanced by the fact that in both instances the formalized presentation of body parts leads not simply to a process of acceptance and repentance, but is presented specifically as being salvifically beneficial.

⁵ Lacarra notes that in some versions the King is identified as English, or more specifically, as Richard the Lionheart (1999 308, 2000 88). A Castilian example is given in Clemente Sánchez de Vercial’s *Libro de los exemplos por a. b. c* (no. 322), although in a slightly later example (no. 370) both Nun and King are anonymous (see Keller 251 and 286). In a related example (no. 371), St. Thomas of Canterbury acts as intercessor.

The relationship between the Nun and Ecclesia reflects most pertinently on the identity of the King, as it becomes tempting to read his symbolic significance in terms of the traditionally antithetical pairing of Ecclesia and Synagoga. While the former, as Barasch (77–91) shows, stands for Christian virtue, and is beautifully arranged in regal garb, the latter stands for the perceived ignorance of Judaism and the Old Law, and is commonly depicted not merely with a blindfold, but with shattered symbols of monarchy. The most important are a crown that teeters precariously on its head and a broken lance with a pennant trailing almost to the ground. The essential correspondence is that if the Nun, who blinds herself anatomically whilst retaining perfect vision, can be equated to Ecclesia, the King, who retains vision but is morally blind, comes to stand by antithetical implication as an embodiment of Synagoga. His sexual folly is not in this sense a mere sin, but a symptom of a more insidious blindness that relates him to the perceived ignorance of the Jews in denying and failing to assimilate the truth of Christian victory. Indeed, as Barasch affirms, Synagoga is blind “not because of the sins that Israel has committed, but because of the very nature that prevented it from seeing the light of redemption” (84).

A more significant implication is that, by inverting traditional gender representations, which present Synagoga as female, the parallel provides a further means with which to belittle the King’s masculinity. The broken lance could potentially be related in this respect to the deflation of his lust and the questioning of the phallogocentric order. Indeed, as Gregory S. Hutcheson has shown in relation to depictions of the sodomitic Moor, the relationship between blindness and sexual sin is used as a marker not just of difference, but as a way of collectivizing identities that are ideologically opposed to behaviours that should be promoted and lauded. As such, the King becomes a foil to normativity, an antithetical moral aberration, a symbol of all that kingship is not. The corollary is that blindness is not just a convenient word, but a powerful signifier, capable of marginalizing and collectivizing those who oppose the authority of the Church. In fact, it becomes a way of marking him out as a symbolic Jew, as one whose actions compel the Nun to engage in a form of Christ-like sacrifice by inscribing his sins upon her body. She could be read in this respect not just as a female victim, but as a Christological surrogate capable of transcending the limitations and restrictions of gender, and of functioning as a powerful focal point for the expression of devotion.

6. VISUALIZING TRIUMPH/SIGHT IMPROVED

The important didactic point, of course, is that the King dutifully undertakes penance. He accepts the eyes as a brusque corporeal reprimand from mother Ecclesia and thereafter adopts a chaste and disciplined approach towards matters of sexual

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transgression. Whether or not the eyes can be read as part of the pan-European fondness for sacred relics, and whether or not they are subsequently incorporated into acts of devotion in which the severed part functions synecdochally as an evocation of the pious whole, are themes that remain unexplored. Yet by accepting the gift, the King opens his eyes, both literally and metaphorically, and in so doing, comes to a realization of the danger of the gaze and the sexualization of unattainable female subjects. It may be in this respect that there is a subliminal reference to a third iconographic tradition, that of Concordia, as Synagoga's blindfold is removed when repentance leads to an acceptance of the inevitable Christian victory (see Deyermond 1989).

The Nun, in contrast, is commended for her steadfastness and devotion to Christ, and rewarded with a pair of eyes that are clearer and better than those that she gouged from their sockets:

E luego la noche siguiente, como la bendita monja estudiase muy consolada porque así avía escapado, e estando así muy fea ante los ojos de los hombres, e muy amada e muy hermosa ante los ojos del su muy amado esposo, Jhesu Christo, en la mañana quando despertó, fallóse sana e sus ojos muy más claros e mejores que los tenía de antes. ¡O, bendita sea esposa que más quiso a sí mesma atormentar que ofender al su esposo, Jhesu Christo! ¡Mas mucho más sea bendito el esposo que tal gracia e ayuda da a los que verdaderamente lo aman e sirven!

For the narrator, the moral of the tale is loyalty, with self-mutilation regarded as a pragmatic and legitimate mechanism for spurning the attention of rivals to Christ in his role as celestial lover. The Nun, who subjects herself to a savage and brutal act, finds a way not merely to defend her integrity, but to strengthen and reinforce the power of her bond, as she focuses on an inner, spiritual gaze that gives both parties pleasure in looking. Her actions in this way become political, as she plays on the relationship between interior/exterior and beauty/ugliness, and in so doing succeeds in transforming the focus of the narrative from “the mere description of woman as spectacle to the male psyche whose needs the spectacle serves” (Chaudhuri 33). She also, by temporarily inscribing a symbol of her devotion to Christ in the flesh (and thereby connoting the quality of unable-to-be-looked-at-ness), succeeds in setting her sexless but spousely devotion against the irrevocable corporeal damage that would have been suffered during coitus.

The efficacy and appropriateness of her actions are validated by an act of miraculous intervention. The restoration of sight, as Barasch avers, offers an image not simply of the transition from bondage to salvation, or darkness to light, but of the passage from death to eternal life. It is in this sense the most important of Christian miracles, an event that goes far beyond the conceivable boundaries of the terrestrial world, and is so utopian in character that it is commonly understood in

Christian literature as a distinctive sign of the Messianic age. The crucial point is that “In its sheer improbability, the miracle of healing the blind, of giving back sight to those who have lost it, has a certain affinity to the ultimate miracle of the revival of the dead. Because of this polar inversion, one understands how Christianity, totally oriented toward redemption, was mentally and emotionally prepared to make the healing of the blind a central image” (54). Its status accords in this respect with the formulation of prophecy in Isaiah, where we are told of the day when “the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness” (29:18). It also recalls the multiplication in the New Testament of tales of the miraculous healing of the blind, which perform an instrumental role in affirming Christ’s divinity. Perhaps most immediately applicable, however, are the words of John 9:39 (“the blind will see and those who see will become blind”), as they reflect in various ways on the resolution of the complex, ambiguous interplay between literal and metaphorical.

The tale, in this sense, is an illustration of a new beginning. The Nun’s mental and physical trauma shunts the emphasis of the narrative from the symbolic to the real. Her damaged, mutilated body becomes the antithesis of aesthetic desirability, and in its temporarily abject state, it offers an evidentiary witnessing of the precarious fragility of phallogocentric power. By tearing open one orifice in order to maintain the anatomical integrity of another, the Nun ruptures the traditional homogeneity of self by producing a grotesque, heterogeneous body. In so doing, she affects a transgressive inflection of patriarchal norms and is able to problematize questions of sexual difference by replacing an externally authored identity by one in which female agency is key. She becomes in this way a type of phobic object, a sacrificial victim whose incomplete body compels the observer to experience the disturbing agony of the wound and the concomitant inevitability of death and judgement. The process, fundamentally, is mimetic, and is predicated on procedures of homeomorphic identification in which human bodies (both male and female alike) are appraised in terms of their essential ocular function. Yet by replacing scopophilia by abjection and forcing the King to appreciate the significance of his actions, the Nun gains better eyes and is able to cement her status as a *sponsa Christi*. The King, in turn, abandons his lustful self and embarks on a course of action that will lead to a better life, and ultimately, his salvation. The abject conforms in this respect to Kristeva’s assumption that it is “a resurrection that has gone through death (of the ego) ... an alchemy that transforms death into a start of new life, of significance” (15).

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RESEÑAS



RAFAEL ALARCÓN SIERRA

*VÉRTICE DE LLAMA. EL GRECO EN LA LITERATURA HISPÁNICA.
ESTUDIO Y ANTOLOGÍA POÉTICA*

Ediciones de Universidad de Valladolid, 2014, 316 pp.

En el marco de las conmemoraciones que el año pasado han jalonado el cuarto centenario del fallecimiento del Greco (1541–1614), algunas de las propuestas más enriquecedoras han venido en forma de revisiones críticas de la obra del pintor candiota que han tenido en cuenta su decisiva influencia en la creación más reciente. En lo expositivo, este esfuerzo comparatista ha cristalizado en muestras colectivas como *Entre el cielo y la tierra* (Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando, Madrid), basada en obras de artistas españoles actuales y, especialmente, en la que el Museo del

Prado acogió durante su temporada veraniega. *El Greco y la pintura moderna* sintetizaba, acaso por primera vez en un espacio museístico, la compleja relación entre la obra del enigmático candiota y la de maestros contemporáneos que, desde Cézanne hasta Francis Bacon o Antonio Saura, lo han asumido como modelo de experimentación plástica y como un eslabón entre el academicismo y la liberación formal de las Vanguardias.

El libro de Rafael Alarcón Sierra que ahora reseñamos podría considerarse, de un modo bastante ajustado, como el

«Vértice de llama. El Greco en la literatura hispánica. Estudio y antología...»

equivalente literario a aquella exposición. *Vértice de llama. El Greco en la literatura hispánica. Estudio y antología poética* culmina años de trabajo sobre uno de los aspectos más llamativos –y poco estudiados– del cretense: la conversión del Greco –tanto su obra como su enigmática personalidad– en tema literario, esencialmente poético, en la contemporaneidad.

Alarcón Sierra parte de la idea del Greco como *moderno anacronismo* para culminar un recorrido ambicioso y exhaustivo por la presencia del pintor renacentista en la poesía hispánica. Para ello, ha establecido una estructura en tres partes. La primera de ellas reconstruye la visión contemporánea del Greco a través de la prosa, y centra su mirada en las ideas que, a través del ensayo, la historiografía del arte o la escritura más personal, desgarraron una nómina de autores en la que encontramos a miembros destacados del 98, a Ortega y Gasset y a otros ensayistas menos conocidos, pero igualmente influyentes. El capítulo comienza citando a los autores que homenajearon al Greco en su fallecimiento o en vida, y constatando después el silencio crítico y literario que, nacido pocas décadas después, se extendería hasta finales del siglo XIX. En ese sentido, El Greco, como Luis de Góngora, representa una visión heterodoxa del clasicismo español que no encontraría una correcta valoración hasta que, en el siglo XX, la mirada contemporánea ayudara a desenterrar su esplendor perdido.

El recorrido que plantea Rafael Alarcón, extraordinariamente documentado, se abre con Cristóbal de Mesa y se cierra con música pop y retórica publicitaria.

Respaldado por una apabullante documentación bibliográfica, facilita una inmersión exhaustiva en las ideas modernas sobre el Greco, y satisface uno de los desafíos más acuciantes del texto: conseguir un ensayo sólido no sólo desde lo filológico, sino desde la Historia del Arte. En ese sentido, apunta de forma certera la influencia de ciertos textos, como *El Greco* (1908) de Manuel Bartolomé Cossío, y sortea con éxito las dificultades de este enfoque multidisciplinar porque es precisamente éste uno de sus ámbitos de trabajo predilectos.

No en vano las relaciones entre literatura y artes visuales son un campo de estudio que ha ocupado numerosas páginas de la ya extensa obra ensayística de Alarcón Sierra, autor de ediciones críticas y ensayos dedicados a poetas tan ‘pictóricos’ como Manuel Machado o Juan Ramón Jiménez. En este caso, el reto es doblemente arduo, puesto que el investigador ha prescindido de corses cronológicos o estilísticos para conformar el segundo y el tercer bloque de *Vértice de llama*. Es en ellos donde aflora la meta más ambiciosa del libro, cuyo objetivo, en definitiva, es rastrear el modo en que El Greco (su personalidad y su obra) se transforma en un tema predilecto para los poetas hispánicos a partir de finales del siglo XIX.

En la antología, un poema de Antonio de Zayas publicado inicialmente en 1902 abre la veta contemporánea del Greco en la poesía española, y lo hace con un soneto que, como recuerda el profesor Alarcón Sierra, supone un ejemplo perfecto de éfrasis mo-

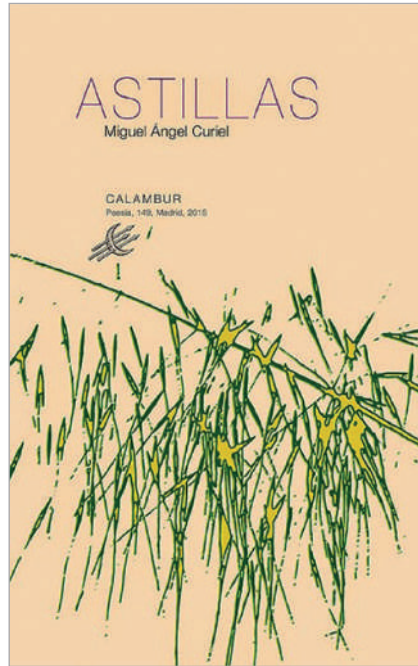
dernista. A partir de ese punto, el libro debe leerse con dos puntos de lectura: uno en los análisis del profesor y otro en los poemas que ha reproducido en una abultada antología poética que ocupa la segunda mitad del volumen. Permítasenos sugerir una tercera lectura en paralelo: un buen catálogo del Greco —o, en su defecto, un motor de búsqueda de imágenes— para disfrutar doblemente del recorrido en compañía de las imágenes citadas.

Así, el lector asiste al desarrollo de una tradición iconográfica que va adquiriendo complejidad a medida que la cronología avanza. Señala Rafael Alarcón que, para los Modernistas, influidos por la visión de Pío Baroja y Azorín, El Greco presentaba rasgos muy claros, de una enigmática espiritualidad, por un lado, y también de síntesis del alma española que reverenciaban los escritores del 98. Tampoco olvida que, en aquel turbulento fin de siglo, el conocimiento general del Greco se limitaba aún a tres imágenes muy concretas. Las dos primeras son sendas pinturas —el *Caballero de la mano en el pecho* y *El entierro del Conde de Orgaz*—, y la tercera es el espacio urbano tradicionalmente asociado al pintor candiota: la ciudad de Toledo, como síntesis de mezcla de civilizaciones, y también como la más española de las “ciudades muertas” tan apreciadas por los finiseculares.

Sin embargo, la investigación ha dado también con textos tan interesantes como dos sonetos del poeta y filólogo Ángel Valbuena Prat que tratan la crisis de fe en el contexto de la Guerra

Civil, e interiorizan la obra de la candiota al tiempo que inauguran un cambio de percepción. Con el análisis del largo poema que Rafael Alberti dedica al Greco en *A la pintura* (1948), el libro se adentra en la contemporaneidad a través de una gavilla singular de textos poéticos. Por un lado, espléndidos poemas de León Felipe, Luis Cernuda o Pablo García Baena. Por otro, el resultado de una encomiable labor de investigación que ha llevado a Rafael Alarcón a rescatar y poner en valor un sinfín de textos poco conocidos, con sorpresas tan estimulantes como las que depara una aguda décima de Carlos Murciano o una interesante cala en la obra poética de Diego Jesús Jiménez.

Son varias las conclusiones a las que conduce la lectura de *Vértice de llama*. Por un lado, la constatación de que los lugares comunes en torno al Greco — el caballero, el Toledo renacentista, el misticismo— han encontrado acomodo de forma dispar —en ocasiones, muy sugerente— en autores de muy distinto signo. Por el otro, el descubrimiento y la revalorización de obras poéticas que por sí mismas demuestran la necesidad de un trabajo de estas características. Escrito desde un exquisito rigor filológico sin desatender el ritmo de lectura y la riqueza de comentarios y matices, *Vértice de llama* es, como los anteriores trabajos de Rafael Alarcón Sierra, una aportación esencial para desvelar las corrientes subterráneas de la literatura hispánica del siglo XX.



MIGUEL ÁNGEL CURIEL

ASTILLA

Calambur, 2015, 82 pp.

Lo habíamos dicho alguna vez de Miguel Ángel Curiel. Ahora lo reiteramos con motivo de *Astillas* (2015) y su tristar sin variaciones, particularizado y reflejado en un haz o caz desbordado de heridas. Las de un quietista, sin Allen Ginsberg o Walt Whitman, exterioridad, desbordamiento de palabras, locuacidad. Curiel es lacónico, puro intimismo del pliegue, el repliegue, la retaguardia. Su capazo obsesivo de desánimos viene repleto de la palabra *derrota* y el sustantivo intimismo. Rebosa, si prefieren, de fragmentación

y disolución (*astillas* nos dice, como Juan Andrés García Román, entre cavilaciones de otro orden, más valentianas, sin mimetismos, sin tanta abstracción y más declaración de impotencia). Curiel trae en el fondo una evolución ajena a la poesía esencial de corte *lanzarotista* o pasada por Sánchez Robayna, de su pesadumbre y evaporización, en su recuperación de un fin de siglo que le impregna (o de una parte del mismo, esencial, *enmismimada* y talentosa, propiciadora, siempre sin *el otro*, que no tiene por qué ser en el

Miguel Ángel Curiel

poema siempre, según se demuestra... ácima, con vocación de *vacío*). Un precipicio o coqueteo con la nada que han hecho de esa herencia en él un Robert Walser frente a la elegancia evanescente de Wallace Stevens y su arquitectura del vacío delicuescente. No, no esperen al americano, ni las acumulaciones de Román o del último Mestre sobre tropos de comienzos de siglo, sino *astillas* de palabras rezadas o susurradas, al hilo de la vida, dentro. Pura Ya se sabe, si grazna como un pato, nada como un pato y vuela como un pato, es un pato.

Esta moderna poesía *barroca*, desnuda pero *barroca* en su desoropel pesimista, sufre la vida como pesadilla no calderoniana sino impotente, incapaz del sueño de la vida (o del dolor a la alegría, junto a Bethoven y el José Hierro de *a la alegría por el dolor* (de *Alegría*), pues viene herida de muerte en su walserianismo. Poco gozo trae el desánimo introvertido como en pocos de Miguel Ángel Curiel, tal y como habíamos dicho de *Trabajos de purificación* al hilo de sus versos: la única alegría *la da el vino*, o esas *cucharadas de vino*, instantes de lucidez, *visiones breves*. Aquellos trabajos de purificación instituían el reconocimiento de la propia identidad en quien ha *mermado*. A quien el traje de la vida le queda grande, y grotesco en el desencanto. El hombre *no sobrevivirá* decía, escupe su oprimente silencio (el hombre), *convertido en saliva*. Esa es la atmósfera de quien ve la poesía como una (su) salvación, cucharadas de vino, o *unas pocas*

palabras que con vergüenza van abriéndose camino, rozando la tierra. Astillas no tocará esa trayectoria.

En efecto, el silabeo entrecortado de su verso obsesivo, de los infelices, y de quienes tienen pulsión de muerte, *solo si hubiera muerto de frío sería feliz*, generan esas palabras rotas (*astillo las palabras*), cuando no hay nada que cantar en su poética desolada, sino esa pulsión catabática del desánimo. Nos lo cuenta en un verso corto, personal, libre, suelto, *enfermo* diríamos, agónico y funámbulo, desvitalizado y abortivo, pero también, *enajenado*. Duro en su falta de horizontes, salvo esta identidad del *palud*, de la podredumbre de ser sin horizonte, en quien no sabe sortear(se) para *cantar* o celebrar, tomar impulso para hacer fuera de la poesía reconcentrada en el fracaso. El prestigio del desánimo ha creado un tono en la posmodernidad y Curiel, hijo de esa atmósfera gravitante, pesada, se ausulta y autorremite en sus evidencias y resistencias *ad libitum*. Su palabra se deletrea con parsimonia en el vacío dolorosamente entre vagabundeos de *baudaud*, no del *flâneur* en su ocio elegante y atento, donde quiere ver y ser visto...sino del atormentado que no sabe dónde ir y transita en círculo. Tal vez su poesía busque en ello resistencia (agónica), pues apenas *puede* este exiliado verso y el mundo, por trochas solitarias y soledades, en vez de aproximarse al otro. Algo dijo Luis García Montero al respecto (con mucha razón). Siempre reiterado, en exce-

so tal vez, próximo a las corrientes del momento (el *proema* en ocasiones de Ponge antes que Paz, *dixit*), llega este poemario de quien ha revuelto demasiado dentro sin riesgo, sin el valor de arriesgar por no sufrir el terror de ser vencido, *de perder*, dijeron Fernando Pessoa y Bernardo Soares al unísono. El wallserianismo era esto y Miguel Ángel Curiel, un poeta que puede así llamarse sin mentira, lo ha sabido decir en este magnífico *otoño* vital, bien representado (no solo) por el estupendo *Octubre*. O tantos otros donde el paso se hace temblor, se aurorremite y no sabe decirse sino bajo ese mantra del dolor reiterado, cogido por unas palabras y unos paseos heridos de un misterio repliegue. De un adelgazamiento del decir y el pensar en el horizonte de un yo prisionero de sí como único horizonte, atado al mástil de un tristeo unívoco.

En efecto lo habíamos dicho y vuelve a valer. Estamos ante uno de los mejores libros del año, como broche del mismo. No ha cambiado paradójicamente, o tal vez no, la perspectiva de Miguel Ángel Curiel: el tono permanece, aunque la desnudez se ha hecho más clara y narrativa, sin discurso, en los poemas en prosa. Con todo el paseante solitario continúa siendo un solitario anónimo desesperanzado, la naturaleza sigue presente sin amabilidad... pero trae una unidad de sentido y sentimiento del desvalimiento en sus

variaciones, reflexiones y memoria, que le hacen un poemario completamente distinto. La inteligibilidad y la fortaleza de la herida sabiamente leídas, junto a una sencilla manera de explicar cuanto antes era irresuelto hermetismo, se ha hecho sabia madurez e impuesto la elaboración adensada. Así se nos acerca minuciosamente y se cuenta desde un abanico de circunstancias desde el ayer al hoy, en los *Días cortantes/ tardes abúlicas* de quien crea una atmósfera dura: *Solo si hubiera muerta de frío sería feliz* y busca decirlo en esa modernidad pongiana (de Francis Ponge y relectores poetas españoles) de las cursivas como distanciamiento, frente al *personaje*. En definitiva, la verosimilitud ha perfilado su fórmula de decir, de ese saber decir así, en *cursiva*, desde Antonio Méndez Rubio, Vicente Valero y Jordi Doce por citar a la carrera. También su verosimilitud obsesiva, reiterada en el campo léxico de la tristeza y el desánimo sobre el desencanto...o su fraternidad con el homenajeadó espejo donde se refleja Robert Walser, como espejo del sumergido, o azogue de cuantos *camina bajo el agua*. O de ese mundo inestable asido a la nada, donde los demasiado ateridos por su sensibilidad, se contemplan heridos o conmocionados, hechos *astillas*, o palabras como última resistencia en el sinsentido o impotencia.

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CLARA JANÉS

MOVIMIENTOS INSOMNES. ANTOLOGÍA POÉTICA 1964-2014

Selección e introducción de Jaime Siles. Galaxia Gutenberg.

Barcelona. 2015, 384 pp.

Hay poetas que no pueden vivir con el corsé de su contextualización: es decir, sobrepasan esas voluntades clasificatorias que los sitúan en ciertas líneas estéticas armónicas (o desarmonías) con su tiempo histórico. La buena poesía crea sus propios contextos para nutrirse. Entonces ¿para qué leer a una poeta como Clara Janés con las lentes de la temporalización de su obra? Propongamos otro giro más a esa tuerca del canon y busquemos aquello que realmente alimenta las librerías de buenos títulos sin dejarnos llevar por lo eventual ni tampoco por lo clasificado de antemano. Hagámoslo, porque así la poesía de Clara Janés— como

demuestra esta amplia antología titulada *Movimientos insomnes*— requiere mentes despiertas que sepan poner en entredicho las limitaciones de la cronología para romper el punto final de lo sensible y hacerlo un *dos puntos* que nos dé paso a otro nivel de conocimiento. La empresa no parece fácil y no lo es; pero Clara Janés, de trayectoria dilatada y rica en matices, supera la traba de la diversidad y lo superficial, y nos lleva a una unidad y una hondura insospechadas, a través de esta selección poética que, muestra su genuina palpación y vibración auténticas.

¿Qué ofrece esta selección poética con respecto a otras tantas publicacio-

nes de la misma autora? Pongamos ya el primero de los dos grandes motivos por los que este volumen resulta imprescindible: el pórtico de su lectura, superado el umbral de su título que tanto nos invita a la vigilia y al desvelo inquieto y dinámico, nos lleva al prólogo del poeta y académico Jaime Siles. Difícilmente puede incitar tanto a una lectura de poesía un prólogo como este, elaborado con la sensibilidad del poeta y la inteligencia del estudioso. Sin duda, invita, con gran naturalidad, a la reflexión simultánea de sus palabras, mientras nos desgaja los ejes temáticos del libro sin desorientarnos en las teorías y en las citas de terceros. Quizá porque va abriéndose él mismo a un caudal de revelación continua. Y sobre esta misma pasión el lector acaba convencido de que el prologuista, en este caso, es un compañero de viaje y no un intruso que asalta desde la maleza de los márgenes de las páginas. Pero también la poeta ha decidido tomar nuestra mano y, en un Epílogo de fina textura reflexiva, quiere guiarnos no por lo dicho, sino por todo lo callado, así que los poemas quedan perfectamente enmarcados por una prosa que, sin embargo, tiene alma poética.

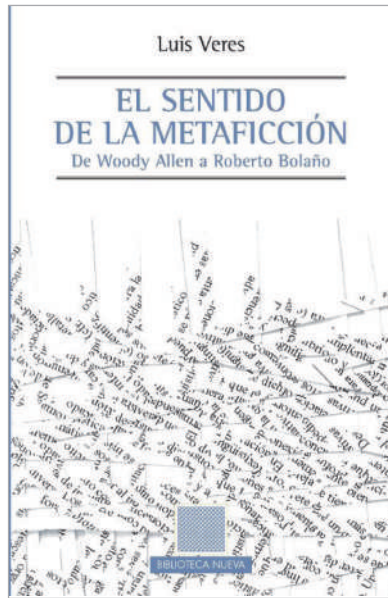
El segundo de los motivos es la excelente obra poética de Clara Janés, miembro de la RAE (sillón U): se recoge en este caso desde los primeros libros, con *Las estrellas vencidas* (1964), hasta su más recientes *ψ o el jardín de las delicias* (2014), más la inclusión de cinco poemas visuales, un libro inédito, titulado *Estructuras disipativas*. Así hasta un total de 29 libros de poemas, y en todos ellos su poesía parte de un conflicto, que nos lleva a las lindes

de la escisión interior, muy vinculado a la pérdida— tan temprana— de su padre y que, desgraciadamente, le dio conciencia temporal y de palabra. Parece que su poesía, sellada sobre una unidad tonal y simbólica, es un camino de conciliación interior; lo que nos acerca a la tensión más honda: los límites de nuestra capacidad sensitiva y de nuestra voluntad de expresarlo. Porque el poema es el lugar donde la ficción de la vida se convierte en realidad del significado.

Afirma Siles que se trata de un regreso de lo enigmático, por lo que el poema no surge de la experiencia de la vida, sino de lo no vivido que busca vivirse desde la sensibilidad carnosa de la palabra. Efectivamente, es un regreso, pero justamente cuando aún se está en la ida, en el viaje, porque el poema se erige como el lugar de la ausencia, que es tanto lo pasado como lo futuro. Y esto explicará esa evolución que se nos remarca en el prólogo: del lirismo trágico al místico, porque de la escisión se nace al deseo, es decir, a la imposibilidad de ocupar las coordenadas espacio-tiempo del *otro* y de *lo otro*. Es, por tanto, una poesía de reinención de un yo que no busca restituir las heridas abiertas del tiempo, sino regresar al punto mismo de la plenitud desde la conciencia de su limitación. Y es ahí donde su obra se tensa y se arquea y donde deja al lector con la serenidad de la palabra y el deseo de superarla, porque siempre habrá otra cosa tras su piel.

SERGIO ARLANDIS

Universidad de Valencia



LUIS VERES CORTÉS

*EL SENTIDO DE LA METAFICCIÓN. DE WOODY ALLEN
A ROBERTO BOLAÑO*

Madrid, Biblioteca Nueva, 2015, 129 pp.

Vemos en este trabajo una pretensión compleja: literatura, cine y el sentido (¿función?) de las estrategias narrativas de la metaficción. Acercarnos a un ensayo que trata de examinar algunos de los límites de las expresiones literaria y cinematográfica es, sin duda, una experiencia singular. La literatura (y también el cine) ha sido desde siempre una suerte de puente entre lo narrativo y lo real, puesto que una cosa no se entiende sin la otra. En un sentido muy generoso, este trabajo explora los límites de dicha relación. Una contingencia que se ofrece a partir del

análisis de la fórmula del relato autorreferencial. Sobre una cuidada selección de *escritores* (de los de pluma y papel y audiovisuales), el texto desgrana una elaborada perspectiva que permite al lector profundizar en las claves de la metaficción en el cine y las letras.

El trabajo que firma Luis Veres Cortés es una *rara avis*. Progresivamente, hemos dejado de pensar en el cine y en la literatura como herramientas de comprensión acerca de aquello que los antiguos llamaron *lo real*. No sabemos con certeza si los mitos fundacionales

de La Religión fueron creados para negarle a la literatura (y después al cine) estas capacidades. Pero no debemos olvidar que los seres humanos somos seres narrativos (narrados y narradores) y que las nociones de experiencia y conocimiento están íntimamente ligadas a las capacidades del lenguaje. El autor nos recuerda (p. 92) con mucha lucidez que la desconfianza acerca de lo que es verdadero hunde sus raíces en la crisis del propio lenguaje en tanto que sistema de representación. Las citas cuádruples (y quíntuples! p. 49) pueblan todo el texto. También observamos una apuesta por dirimir las preguntas que plantea su argumentación en base a la oposición de pares dicotómicos: verdad y veracidad, pasado y memoria, narración y relato.

El contenido se estructura a partir de una introducción en la que se presentan los elementos que vinculan la narración y la metaficción con la cultura hispánica... aunque no de forma exclusiva. Dichos componentes contextualizadores son hispánicos (Cortázar, Goytisolo, Rodríguez Monagal...), y no hispánicos (Benjamin, Goethe, Kernan...). La relación final plantea la que, a nuestro juicio, es una de las ideas estructuradoras del ensayo en su conjunto: la crisis de la Modernidad desde el punto de vista de sus narrativas y sus reformulaciones postmodernas.

No es de extrañar, atendiendo a la singularidad referida de lo autoanalíti-

co de los textos metaficcionales, que a continuación el autor elija como objeto de estudio al histriónico Woody Allen. Allen protagoniza dos capítulos en los que (re)aprendemos algunas de las características fundamentales de su cine. Por ejemplo, la inserción de los signos del pasado como elemento de multiplicación de la vida y como visión paródica de la misma, o de la presencia del cine dentro del cine; algo que “nace de la propia formación de Woody Allen, alguien que desde niño se encerraba en los cines para huir de la vida real” (p. 25). Después llega la conexión de las propuestas más negras de Allen con la tradición novelística y cinematográfica norteamericanas. Welles, Kubrick, o Howard Hawks departen con Raymond Chandler y Vernon Sullivan (alias americanizado del escritor de novela negra francés Boris Vian). *Lo negro* en Allen tiene una fuerte impronta vital; aunque en este caso para desacreditar la realidad.

Allen cede el paso al escritor peruano Santiago Roncagliolo. Primero, se lleva a cabo un análisis de las singularidades del trabajo periodístico y literario de Roncagliolo, a quien se le debe considerar miembro nato de una generación de narradores latinoamericanos legatarios, no como sucesores, sino como relevo generacional, de la del boom de los años 1960 y 1970. Luis Veres rastrea los pedazos de vida que Roncagliolo introduce en sus novelas. El autor, convertido en parte de la historia, expone en ellas los lugares

comunes del fenómeno de la inmigración, para desnudarlos y desmitificarlos. Esto lleva al debate acerca de la crisis postmoderna y la incardina en el seno de un *nuevo género* cultivado por los escritores hispanos: la nueva novela histórica; aquella que inserta personajes reales en un espacio y tiempo reales y que busca nuevos marcos de referencia.

Esta idea sirve de introducción para el siguiente capítulo; fragmento del libro dedicado al análisis de la obra periodística de Javier Marías: La narración de la memoria, supone una oposición a cierto concepto de modernidad mal entendida. La impronta vital en los textos de Marías es innegable y el papel que esta “memoria fermentada” (p. 88) juega en ellos es el de recuperar el pasado. “Cuando la literatura se centra en la averiguación del pasado colectivo, esa mirada presenta también más rasgos de lo imaginario” (p. 91).

En este punto, el libro nos lleva al último capítulo dedicado a Roberto Bolaño. La metaficción, en tanto que presencia en las narrativas literarias de la suma de experiencias vitales y unos referentes en constante proceso de redefinición (disolución), no alcanzaría

plenamente su sentido si no tratara la cuestión de la identidad. Y, de nuevo, el autor nos introduce en una miríada de variables analíticas a través de la obra de Bolaño. “(Su) búsqueda identitaria refleja una ambivalencia” (p. 119), aquella de sentirse latinoamericano y buscar la reacción frente al canon del realismo presente en aquel boom mencionado.

Luis Veres no defiende tesis cerradas. El autor propone una interpretación libre de aquellos elementos que desde su punto de vista construirían un *cierto sentido* de la metaficción, pero no impone conclusiones. El lector encontrará en su lectura la misma libertad de apreciación. Aunque en la introducción del libro nos sugiera la existencia de un espacio común hispano, Luis Veres tiende puentes hacia narrativas, literarias y cinematográficas, mucho más amplias. Sin pretender en ningún momento ser exhaustivo, ofrece una excelente revisión del sentido del relato que se nutre de otros relatos para convertirse en un texto único y genuino.

GERMÁN LLORCA ABAD
Universitat de València



OTROS ENLACES DE INTERÉS:

revistas
y congresos

REVISTAS

REVISTA INTERNACIONAL DE
LINGÜÍSTICA IBEROAMERICANA
(RILI)
www.ibero-americana.net/delrili1.htm

LETRAS PENINSULARES / DAVIDSON
COLLEGE
www3.davidson.edu/cms/x6120.xml

DECIMONÓNICA, REVISTA DE
PRODUCCIÓN CULTURAL HISPÁNICA
DECIMONÓNICA
www.decimononica.org

REVISTA ESPÉCULO. REVISTA DE
ESTUDIOS LITERARIOS. UNIVERSIDAD
COMPLUTENSE DE MADRID
*[www.ucm.es/info/especulo/numero44/
index.html](http://www.ucm.es/info/especulo/numero44/index.html)*

REVISTA ESPAÑOLA DE LINGÜÍSTICA
APLICADA. UNIVERSIDAD DE LA
RIOJA
www.aesla.uji.es/resla

REVISTA MONTEAGUDO. REVISTA
DE LITERATURA ESPAÑOLA,
HISPANOAMERICANA Y TEORÍA DE
LA LITERATURA. UNIVERSIDAD DE
MURCIA
www.um.es/dp-liter-esp/revista.php

REVISTA DIECIOCHO. HISPANIC
ENLIGHTENMENT. UNIVERSITY OF
VIRGINIA (EE. UU)
<http://faculty.virginia.edu/dieciocho>

REVISTA HISPANIC POETRY REVIEW.
<http://hispanicpoetryreview.tamu.edu/hpr>

REVISTA PARNASEO. CIBER-PASEO POR
LA LITERATURA. UNIVERSITAT DE
VALÈNCIA
<http://parnaseo.uv.es>

ACADEMIA EDITORIAL DEL HISPANISMO
www.academiaeditorial.com

452Fº - REVISTA DE TEORÍA DE
LA LITERATURA Y LITERATURA
COMPARADA
www.452f.com

HISPANIC REVIEW – REVISTA DE LA
UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA
<http://hr.pennpress.org>

CONGRESOS Y JORNADAS

MAYO

Del 27 al 30 de mayo de 2016
XXXIV INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS
OF THE LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES
ASSOCIATION (LASA)
Nueva York - Estados Unidos

JUNIO

Del 1 al 3 de junio de 2016
V CONGRESO EAM (EUROPEAN
NETWORK FOR AVANT-GARDE AND
MODERNISM STUDIES)
Universidad de Rennes 2 (Francia)
Rennes – Francia

Del 1 al 3 de junio de 2016
LII CONGRESO DE LA ASOCIACIÓN
CANADIENSE DE HISPANISTAS 2016
«Energizing Ideas»
University of Calgary
Calgary, Alberta – Canadá

Del 15 al 18 de junio de 2016
CONGRESO INTERNACIONAL DE
ATENUACIÓN LINGÜÍSTICA
Perspectivas Semánticas y Pragmáticas
Facultad de Filología, Traducción y
Comunicación
Valencia - España

Del 23 al 25 de junio de 2016
III CONGRESO INTERNACIONAL NEBRIJA
EN LINGÜÍSTICA APLICADA A LA
ENSEÑANZA DE LENGUAS
«En camino hacia el plurilingüismo»
Universidad de Nebrija. Campus de la
Dehesa de la Villa. Calle Pirineos 55
Madrid - España

Del 28 de junio al 21 de julio de 2016

SIMPOSIO EL NEGRO DESENCANTO:

LA LITERATURA NEOPOLICIACA

LATINOAMERICANA

VIII Congreso del CEISAL. Tiempos
posthegemónicos: sociedad, cultura y
política en América Latina
Universidad de Salamanca
Salamanca - España

Del 28 de junio al 1 de julio de 2016

VIII CONGRESO CONSEJO EUROPEO
DE INVESTIGACIONES SOCIALES EN
AMÉRICA LATINA

Simposio: «Las lenguas amerindias: Retos
para el siglo XXI»
Universidad de Salamanca
Salamanca - España

JULIO

Del 6 al 8 de julio de 2016
CONGRESO INTERNACIONAL LILETRAD
2016. LITERATURA, LENGUA,
TRADUCCIÓN
Símbolos, lemas, fantasía. Entre Tú y Yo
Facultad de Filología. Universidad de
Sevilla
Sevilla - España

Del 11 al 17 de julio de 2016
CONGRESO INTERNACIONAL DE LA
ASOCIACIÓN INTERNACIONAL DE
HISPANISTAS 2016
Universidad de Münster
Münster – Alemania

Del 12 al 15 de julio de 2016
THE FOURTEENTH TRIENNIAL CONFERENCE
OF THE BRITISH COMPARATIVE
LITERATURE ASSOCIATION
University of Wolverhampton
(City Campus)
Wolverhampton - Reino Unido

Del 19 al 22 de julio de 2016
XLI CONGRESO DEL INSTITUTO
INTERNACIONAL DE LITERATURA
IBEROAMERICANA: «LA LITERATURA
LATINOAMERICANA – ESCRITURAS
LOCALES EN CONTEXTOS GLOBALES»
Universidad Friedrich Schiller
Jena - Alemania

AGOSTO

Del 2 al 5 de agosto de 2016
V INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
AFRO-HISPANIC, LUSO-BRAZILIAN,
AND LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES
(ICALLAS)
Universidad de Ghana
Accra - Ghana

Del 8 al 12 de agosto de 2016
JORNADAS ANDINAS DE LITERATURA
LATINOAMERICANA (JALLA)
La Paz
La Paz - Bolivia

SEPTIEMBRE

Del 7 al 10 de septiembre de 2016
XXVII CONGRESO INTERNACIONAL DE LA
ASOCIACIÓN PARA LA ENSEÑANZA DEL
ESPAÑOL COMO LENGUA EXTRANJERA
(XXVII ASELE)
*«Panhispanismo y variedades en la
enseñanza del español L2-LE»*
Logroño - España

Del 22 al 24 de noviembre de 2016
VI SIMPOSIO «ENCUENTROS»
La hispanidad multicultural vista desde
Cracovia
Polonia / Polska
Cracovia / Kraków - Polonia

Del 26 al 29 de septiembre de 2016
VIII CONGRESO INTERNACIONAL DE
LINGÜÍSTICA HISPÁNICA (CILH 2016)
Leipzig - Alemania

OCTUBRE

Del 12 al 14 de octubre 2016
COLOQUIO INTERNACIONAL DEL
CRLA–ARCHIVOS. «1996-2016:
DECONSTRUCCIÓN DEL ESPACIO
LITERARIO»
MSHS de l'Université de Poitiers
Poitiers - Francia

Del 17 al 21 de octubre de 2016
CONGRESO INTERNACIONAL CERVANTES,
SHAKESPEARE Y LA EDAD DE ORO DE
LA ESCENA
Facultad de Filología, Universidad
Complutense de Madrid
Madrid – España

Del 20 al 22 de octubre de 2016
EL ARTE DE CONTAR
Congreso internacional en homenaje a
Luis Mateo Díez y José María Merino
Saint Louis University-Madrid Campus
y Universidad de Alcalá (Colegio San
Ildefonso - Rectorado)
Madrid y Alcalá de Henares - España

NOVIEMBRE

Del 7 al 17 de noviembre de 2016
CONGRESO INTERNACIONAL «CERVANTES
& SHAKESPEARE: 400 AÑOS EN EL
DIÁLOGO DE LAS ARTES»
Faculdade de Letras de Lisboa
Lisboa - Portugal



CONTENIDOS
DE
MIRÍADA HISPÁNICA

La estructura de *Miriada Hispánica* está concebida en torno a tres ejes principales:

1. Sección monográfica de artículos relacionados con un tema específico. En cada edición se elegirá a un «Editor invitado» o se realizará un «call for papers» animando a estudiantes de posgrado, profesores y especialistas a contribuir con sus ensayos.
2. Sección de artículos varios organizada en tres líneas académicas distintas:
 - a) literatura y cine.
 - b) lingüística y didáctica de la lengua.
 - c) historia, cultura, y arte.
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- Teoría y crítica literaria.
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- Didáctica de la lengua, la literatura y la cultura hispánica.
- Enseñanza del español a través de las nuevas tecnologías.
- Estudios feministas, sociales, culturales y artísticos relacionados con las humanidades.
- Podrán proponerse otros campos, aparte de los indicados, si se entiende que pueden tener relación con la línea general de la revista.
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- Revisión de trabajos de otros autores sobre el mismo asunto.
- Rigor en la argumentación y en el análisis.
- Precisión en el uso de conceptos y métodos.

- Discusión de implicaciones y aspectos teóricos del tema estudiado.
- Utilización de bibliografía actualizada.
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Claridad y adecuación del título y el abstract con el artículo.					
Objetivo del artículo					
Base crítica y metodológica de la investigación					
Solidez de la argumentación y las conclusiones alcanzadas					
Estilo y uso del lenguaje.					
Relevancia de la bibliografía					

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- * Márgenes: - Superior, inferior, izquierdo y derecho: 3 cm.
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- * Imágenes, gráficos y tablas: Estarán incluidos en el artículo y también se presentarán en soporte informático en formato *.JPG, *.TIFF o *.EPS (han de tener buena resolución y estar libres de derechos de autor).
- * Título del artículo: Debe ir centrado al comienzo de página (en la primera línea), en mayúsculas, negrita, sin punto final. A continuación, se deja una línea en blanco entre el título de la comunicación y el nombre del autor.
- * Nombre del autor: Debajo del título de la comunicación, alineación derecha. En la línea siguiente, y también a la derecha, se indica la Universidad o Centro de procedencia. En el caso de ser dos personas dejaremos un espacio entre los datos de cada persona.
- * Dedicatoria del artículo: El artículo NO podrá ser dedicado.
- * División en apartados: Los distintos apartados y subapartados se tienen que numerar, comenzando siempre por el número 1. La excepción la representa la bibliografía, que aparecerá sin numerar.
 1. En negrita y sin sangrar, minúsculas. La frase no acaba en punto final.
 - 1.1. En negrita y sin sangrar, minúsculas. No acaba en punto final (no se deja línea en blanco anterior si va justamente después de la línea del 1.).
No se dejará una línea entre el subtítulo y el texto siguiente.

Ejemplo:

1. Introducción
 - 1.1. Objetivos principales
 - 1.2. Fundamentación pedagógica

CITAS TEXTUALES

- * Citación en el pie de página de la bibliografía. No se debe citar a pie de página, sino que se hace una referencia a la bibliografía final. Tampoco se utilizarán los términos: sic., vid., véase...
- * De tres o menos líneas: entre comillas (« ») e insertadas en el texto; el tamaño de la fuente sigue siendo 12.
- * De cuatro o más líneas: sangradas a la izquierda 1'25 cm (una tabulación) tamaño de la fuente 11. No hay que sangrar en inicio de párrafo. Hay que dejar una línea en blanco entre el texto y la cita, o entre la cita y la siguiente línea. Si no se indicara la autoría antes de la cita aparte, se podría, igualmente, poner entre paréntesis, al final de la misma:
...en trance de recomponerse anagramáticamente. (R. Rodríguez Ferrándiz 1998: 245) (Para más información al respecto consultar las normas de publicación de la revista).

CORRECCIÓN ORTOGRÁFICA Y LINGÜÍSTICA

Recomendamos que visiten el Diccionario panhispánico de dudas, el Diccionario de la Real Academia Española y el apartado «Consultas lingüísticas» de la RAE, así como también «El Museo de los horrores» del Instituto Cervantes.

BIBLIOGRAFÍA

SOLO se citará la bibliografía que ha aparecido durante el artículo, y no toda la que se conoce con respecto al tema. El apartado se llamará Bibliografía. Irá en negrita, sin punto final y sin numerar. Después una línea en blanco. Se seguirán las normas marcadas por MLA.

NORMAS DE PUBLICACIÓN

Las contribuciones deberán respetar las normas de MLA (www.mla.org) Modern Language Association of America.

NORMAS PARA CORREGIR MANUSCRITOS

En líneas generales la revista intenta reducir al máximo las notas al pie de página, incluyéndolas dentro del texto y evitando así repeticiones de información. Los datos bibliográficos de los libros sólo deben ir desarrollados en la bibliografía que se encuentra al final de cada artículo. Se recomienda la concisión y brevedad en las citas intratextuales, y la información completa y precisa, sin escatimar dentro de la bibliografía datos que puedan servir al lector.

A. BIBLIOGRAFÍA AL FINAL DE LOS TEXTOS

Cada artículo debe ir acompañado por una bibliografía donde aparezcan todas las obras mencionadas y utilizadas por el autor. Debe estar organizada alfabéticamente por apellidos.

1) *Libros*

El orden en que deben aparecer los datos es el siguiente:

— Apellido del autor, nombre. Título del libro (cursivas). Lugar de publicación: Editorial, año:

Frye, Northrop. *Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957.

Si el libro tiene un encargado de edición o un coordinador, debe incluirse después del título del libro:

— Colón, Cristóbal. *Textos y documentos completos*, ed. Consuelo Varela. Madrid: Alianza Universidad, 1984.

Si se tiene el año de la primera edición del libro y se considera pertinente colocarlo, éste deberá ir después del título:

— Martín Barbero, Jesús. *De los medios a las mediaciones*. Comunicación, cultura y hegemonía. 1987. México: Ediciones G. Gili, 1991.

Si el libro tiene 2 autores:

— Magaña Esquivel, A. y Lamb, R. *Breve historia del teatro colombiano*. ...

3 autores:

— Borges, Jorge Luis, Silvina Ocampo y Adolfo Bioy Casares. *Antología de la literatura fantástica*. ...

Más de 3 autores:

— Müller Bergh, Klaus y otros. *Asedios a Carpentier*. ...

2) Artículos de revistas

El orden en que deben aparecer los datos es el siguiente:

— Apellido del autor, nombre. “Título del artículo” (entre comillas), *Nombre de la revista* (cursivas) volumen/número (año de publicación): páginas:

Adorno, Rolena. «El sujeto colonial y la construcción de la alteridad», *Revista de Crítica Literaria Latinoamericana* 28 (1988): 55-68.

Concha, Jaime. «La literatura colonial hispano-americana: Problemas e hipótesis», *Neohelición* 4/1-2 (1976): 31-50.

3) Capítulos de libros

Debe citarse el título del artículo entre comillas, antecediendo al título del libro donde se encuentra.

Citar utilizando el apellido del autor del artículo al que se hace referencia:

— Apellido del autor, nombre. “Título del artículo” (entre comillas). *Nombre del libro* (cursivas), ed. Nombre del editor. Lugar de publicación: Editorial, año. Páginas:

Goic, Cedomil. «La novela hispanoamericana colonial». *Historia de la literatura hispanoamericana*. Tomo I. Época Colonial, ed. Luis Iñigo-Madrigal. Madrid: Ediciones Cátedra, 1982. 369-406.

Si se utilizan varios artículos de un mismo libro se deben incluir todos los datos bibliográficos en cada una de las referencias, y también incluir una referencia bibliográfica al libro completo, en la que aparezcan los editores o recopiladores al principio de la cita. Esto facilita al lector encontrar con rapidez y claridad el lugar donde se encuentran editados los artículos y el libro:

— Franco, Jean. «La cultura hispanoamericana en la época colonial». *Historia de la Literatura hispanoamericana*. Tomo I. Época colonial. Luis Iñigo-Madrigal, editor. Madrid: Ediciones Cátedra, 1982. 35-56.

- Mignolo, Walter. «Cartas, crónicas y relaciones del descubrimiento y la conquista». *Historia de la literatura hispanoamericana*. Tomo I. Época colonial. Luis Iñigo-Madriral, editor. Madrid: Ediciones Cátedra, 1982. 57-116.
- Roggiano, Alfredo. «Bernardo de Balbuena». *Historia de la hispanoamericana*. Tomo I. Época colonial. Luis Iñigo-Madriral, editor. Madrid: Ediciones Cátedra, 1982. 215-224.
- Iñigo Madriral, Luis, editor. *Historia de la literatura hispanoamericana*. Tomo I. Época colonial. Madrid: Ediciones Cátedra, 1982.

NOTA: Cuando se cita en la bibliografía un autor que incluye un artículo o una preposición dentro del nombre, debe colocarse dentro de la bibliografía atendiendo a la primera letra del apellido y no a la preposición o artículo que lo antecede:

- Cruz, Sor Juana Inés de la
- Certeau, Michael de

4) Periódicos

El orden en que deben aparecer los datos es el siguiente: apellido del autor, nombre. «Título del artículo». *Nombre del periódico* (cursivas). Fecha (día, mes, año): sección, página:

- Cabrujas, José Ignacio. «Con real y medio». Nacional. 16 nov. 1990: C-7.

Algunos periódicos contienen diferente información en sus distintas ediciones. En este caso es importante especificar la edición después de la fecha y precedido por una coma:

- Collins, Glen. «Single-Father Survey Finds Adjustment a Problem». *New York Times*. 21 Nov. 1983, late ed.: B-17.

B. CITAS INTRATEXTUALES

Las citas o referencias intratextuales deben marcarse entre paréntesis dentro del texto de la siguiente manera:

- 1) La información intratextual sólo requiere el apellido del autor y el número de la página. No se separan por ningún signo. Cuando son páginas no continuas, se separan con comas. No se utilizan las abreviaciones 'p.', 'pp.', 'pág.' o 'págs.': (Rorty 38) o (Heidegger 25, 42)

- 2) Cuando existen varias obras del mismo autor se le añade a la cita intratextual el año que corresponde en la bibliografía. El apellido del autor, el año de la edición y el número de la página no se separan por ningún signo: (Ricoeur 1969 33)
- 3) Cuando varias obras del mismo autor corresponden al mismo año, entonces se coloca una letra –en orden alfabético– al lado del año. Esta misma referencia debe mantenerse en la bibliografía al final del texto.
Ejemplo:
[En la Bibliografía]:
Davidson, D. (1997a) «Indeterminism and Antirealism». En: *Subjective, Intersubjective, Objective*. Oxford: Claredon Press, 2001. 69-84.
Davidson, D. (1997b) «The Emergence of Thought». En: *Subjective, Intersubjective, Objective*. Oxford: Claredon Press, 2001. 123-134.
[En el texto]: (Davidson 1997a 85) o (Davidson 1997b 42).
- 4) La abreviación ‘cf.’, usualmente empleada cuando la referencia no es textual, es opcional.
(cf. Rodríguez 54)
- 5) Cuando la referencia bibliográfica no remite a un conjunto de páginas del texto, sino a toda la obra, se introduce sólo el apellido del autor y el año correspondiente.
(Lévinas 1980)
5.1) Además, si el apellido del autor en cuestión se menciona explícitamente en la oración en la que aparece la referencia, sólo se escribe el año correspondiente, así:
Kripke (1972) esgrime una serie de argumentos en contra de la teoría descriptivista de la referencia de los nombres propios.
- 6) Cuando está claro el nombre del autor, puede incluirse únicamente el número de página (y si es necesario se incluye el año de la edición, si existen más obras del mismo autor; ver numeral 2).
- 7) Para enfatizar un subrayado, o cursivas resaltadas por el autor del artículo, debe escribirse dentro del paréntesis y después del número de la página: «énfasis mío»:
(Rama 1990 31, énfasis mío)
- 8) Cuando en el mismo párrafo se cita la misma obra y la misma página, entonces se coloca «Ibid.», entre paréntesis, en cursiva y sin tilde: (Ibid.)

- 9) Cuando en el mismo párrafo se cita la misma obra, pero diferente página, entonces se coloca «Id.» en cursiva y el número de la página: (Id. 48).
- 10) Esto se aplica a todos los casos, con excepción de los textos clásicos. En éstos se utiliza la convención canónica relativa a la obra a la que se hace referencia. Por ejemplo:
Según señala Kant, «la unidad en la multiplicidad, criterio de la belleza pura, define las formas bellas» (KU 267, 291), y describe aquella relación en la que el objeto se muestra al sujeto en su apertura más originaria.
Aristóteles despliega algunos argumentos para demostrar «que hay un principio y que las causas de los seres no son infinitas» (Met. 994a1-2).

C. CITAS TEXTUALES

- 1) Las citas textuales de más de cuatro renglones deben realizarse en un párrafo aparte, sangrado a la izquierda.
Ejemplo:
Cabe señalar lo que, en su estudio sobre el mito de Antígona, nos dice George Steiner, refiriéndose precisamente a la interpretación que ofrece Hegel de esa figura trágica en la *Fenomenología del Espíritu*:

Todo el discurso de Hegel representa una negativa a prestarle un carácter fijo, una definición formal. Esta negativa es esencial a su método y hace engañosos los conceptos de «sistema» y de «totalidad» que habitualmente se atribuyen al hegelianismo. En Hegel la reflexión y la expresión se mueven constantemente en tres niveles: el metafísico, el lógico y el psicológico, el último de / los cuales abarca a los otros dos en la medida en que trata de hacer explícitos los procesos de conciencia que generan y estructuran operaciones metafísicas y lógicas (35-36).
- 2) Cuando la cita es de menos de cuatro renglones puede incluirse dentro del texto, marcándola con comillas:
Por un lado, la rechaza al ver su vanidad, y por otro se deslumbra: «Era tal la impresión que Aureliana me había causado, que no podía apartar mi vista de su precioso rostro» (Acosta de Samper 1990 383).
- 3) Si existen comillas dentro del texto que se cita, las comillas generales de la cita deben ser dobles y las que están dentro de la cita deben cambiarse a simples:

Como lo señala Antonio González: «El núcleo social de la familia, a su vez, funciona como el modelo 'natural' de la comunidad nacional, con los mismos ideales de unión, y con las mismas jerarquías»

C. ALGUNAS NORMAS ESTILÍSTICAS

- 1) Las palabras extranjeras van en letra cursiva:
Fiestas, celebraciones, performances o representaciones artísticas...
- 2) Se utilizan corchetes [...] para intervenciones u omisiones.
«...para ellos [los italianos] fue siempre así», sostiene Pedro.
«Las letras equivocadas [...] se tachan con un signo o llamada que se repite al margen.
- 3) No deben tener notas al pie de página, ni los títulos, ni los epígrafes.
- 4) Las comillas siempre preceden a otra puntuación (la coma, el punto, Habla de la existencia de «montones de notas sobre una novela».
- 5) En inglés y en portugués las palabras de los títulos llevan mayúscula.
As I Lay Dying - O Crime do Padre Amaro.
En español solamente la primera palabra y los nombres propios:
Maldición eterna a quien lea estas páginas.
Los terribles amores de Agl.
En francés sólo las dos primeras palabras importantes del título:
Les Femmes savantes.
Les Liaisons dangereuses.
- 6) Se debe utilizar la mayúscula cuando se nombra un período o una corriente:
Romanticismo, Modernismo, la Colonia, la Conquista, Edad Media.
No así cuando se utiliza la palabra como adjetivo o nombre de lugar:
«La poesía modernista de Darío». «Había estado en la India antes, y se resolvió volver a vivir en la colonia». «Los tapices medievales».
- 7) Utilícese «pos» en lugar de «post» en palabras compuestas:
Posmoderno - Pos-feminista
- 8) Palabras compuestas muy utilizadas, deben escribirse sin guión:
Sociopolítico - Sociohistórico

- 9) Los números deben ser escritos en letras, dentro del texto:
uno, dos, tres.
- 10) Las letras mayúsculas deben estar acentuadas.
AMÉRICA - Álbum - LA NACIÓN.
- 11) Se recomienda no usar abreviaturas y siglas en el cuerpo del texto. Si tuvieran que usarse (para uniformar criterios) nombramos algunas abreviaturas reconocidas y usadas por la revista:
Ant. (Antología) - Col. (Colección) - Comp. (Compilador) - Ed. (Editorial) - ed. (1ra ed.; 2da ed.) - ed. (editor) - O. C. (Obras Completas) - seud. (Seudónimo).

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Survey of Spanish Literature I (Middle Ages-1700)	Introduction to Spanish Art
Survey of Spanish Literature II (1700-present)	Modern Spanish Art
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