THE SIGNIFICANCE OF BLACK WOMEN TO EARLY MODERN IBERIAN LITERATURE

by

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A DISSERTATION

Presented to the Department of Romance Languages
and the Division of Graduate Studies of the University of Oregon
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

June 2022

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DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

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Doctor of Philosophy

Romance Languages Department

June 2022

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Chapter 1 presents a thorough literary review, further discussion of the field, and how Black women characters are conventionally perceived in order to discuss my own "second look" and reading practices. The introduction also provides context about Spain, Portugal, and Africa geographically, literarily, and culturally in the early modern period. Chapter 2 is a close reading of the character Luzia who is a Black female servant in a Portuguese play by António Ribeiro Chiado titled, "Auto das Regateiras" (1565). I analyze the gestures, motivations, and speech of this character and argue that she is central to the plot of the play. I theorize the move of Blackness through her presence and speech that participate in tropes of Black speech and representation. Chapter 3 is a close reading of the character Micomicona, who is an African princess in Miguel de Cervantes's novel *El ingenioso hidalgo Don Quijote de la Mancha I* (1605). I analyze the representation of the erstwhile African princess Micomicona and argue, (1) that she central character that shapes the plot, rather than the minor character field renders her; and (2) that one key reason for her importance is her connection to the tropes of the African queen and the African princess. Chapter 4 is a close reading of the Black female servant character (la negra) in María de Zayas's novella *Desengaños amorosos* (1647). I theorize the representation of Blackness through beauty. Specifically, I focus on *Desengaño* 4 "Tarde llega el desengaño" (Too Late Undeceived) where the Black female character dies a tragic death after

lying about a mishap with a family member. I argue for a relationship between the description of this character's appearance —her beauty and ugliness— and the elaborate descriptions of her dress participate in greater tropes of Black female appearance active in the present day. Finally, the coda brings forth my critical lenses to a wider field of Black Studies, Africana Studies and Black Feminism. This section shows how my interpretations and analysis are ways toward moving thoughts surrounding racialization, gender, and sexuality forward in the field of early modern Iberian Studies.

This dissertation includes both previously published and co-authored material.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

"Because of my mothers. Because of my fathers. Because of my teachers. Because of my witnesses. Because of my sisters. Because of my brothers. Because of all my relations. Because of my community. Because of my collaborators. Because of our ancestors. Because of the sweet purveyors of our unpromised future. Because of my champion. You know who you are. Multitudes. Thank you."

By beginning my work with this acknowledgment found in Alexis Pauline Gumbs's book, *Spill: Scenes of black feminist fugitivity* I summon and appreciate the how? The how of all the participants and actors mentioned here. How can all of this be done unless I explain who? I give honor to these participants and actors as I embark on investigating black African female presence and characterization in various early modern Spanish and Portuguese literary works. This ultimate recognition and acknowledgment of black African female presence is something consistent throughout this work. Moreover, my scholarly agenda joins this conversation as it grapples with learning from the past to understand the present.

I am forever grateful for my parents, my older sister, my older brother, my twin brother, and my late older brother. My sincere gratitude to my dissertation committee members: Lanie Millar, Lindsay Braun, and Nicholas R. Jones. My sincere gratitude and large abrazos to my dissertation advisor, Leah Middlebrook.

I dedicate this dissertation to my family and community.

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I: INTRODUCTION

Introduction of Seed Motif

Sow seed in the ground. Sow seed into good ground so you can see the fruit the seed bears.

Grateful is an understatement as I approach this paper because if it wasn't for my ancestors I would not be here. This project should not be taken lightly, as the work I do is carrying the fruit sowed before me. I stand as an extension of my African and African-descended ancestors, thereby speaking on mine and their contributions. My black African ancestors[1] planted a seed, and I am living today seeing the fruit of their labor. They planted seeds through their death, which was just a transition. Through this transition I am an extension of my black African ancestors and I reframe the critical framework in the Iberian early modernity archive[2] away from pity, and towards restoration and redefinition of who we are. Therefore, my work plants a seed of restoration, reframing the lens of Blackness in the Iberian early modern archive and seeking to see the harvest. The seed I plant will be through critical discussion and observation of how Blackness has been disenfranchised and I will reshape its roots by being a bearer of the fruit. The fruit that I intend to see borne is fruit that acknowledges how Blackness has contributed greatly to the Iberian Peninsula and to restore Black men's and women's roles on the continent, which

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[1] The nomenclature pertaining to the African diaspora and Black people used in this dissertation are the following: black African, Blacks, Blackness, Black women, African, African-descended, black African women. I use black African to emphasize Africa rather than the somatic color. I use Blacks and Black women to emphasize the somatic skin color and discuss generally Black women. I capitalize the 'B' in Blackness to use as a proper noun when referring to this thematic/literary conceit, gesture, move, and/or approach. This naming list is similar to Nicholas R. Jones's nomenclature in his book *Staging Habla de negros* although there are some differences.

[2] Early modern studies are equivalent to Golden Age studies. In this dissertation, I will refer to the Renaissance and Baroque time frame using early modern era or period. Moreover, I use 'archive' to refer to canonical literary works and production in these time frames. 'Archive' refers to a repository on the Iberian Peninsula that informs the tradition of White European hegemonic supremacy.

will as a result recuperate Iberian Blackness. Ultimately, my goal is to restore and redefine black African presence in early modern Iberia.

History and Central Information about early modern Iberia

The fifteenth-, sixteenth-, and seventeenth -centuries are the foundational and pivotal eras of Spain and Portugal's imperial conquest. Spain and Portugal form the vast majority of the Iberian Peninsula, and just south of it lies the continent of Africa. The influence of North African cultures on the Iberian Peninsula is well known. This influence is widespread and visible within early modern Iberian cultural production, material culture, and ethnicity/ancestry of Spaniards and Portuguese peoples such as "Berebéres" (referring to North Africans from Tunisia and Morocco) or people of the Islamic faith — who are not entirely North African. While the influence of sub-Saharan African culture on early modern Iberia has not been studied extensively within this field, it is key to understanding the inscription of Blackness within early modern culture and thought.

The term "early modern" covers two major historical periods: the Renaissance and the Baroque. For the purposes of this dissertation the "baroque" both an aesthetic and, according to José Antonio Maravall, a historical period in Spain. The Baroque period in Spain is marked by economic crises such as imperial decline and deterioration during the second half of the seventeenth century. Through this period of difficult time for Spain, the literature represents human struggle, reality of miserable conditions, and keen representations of society. As I will demonstrate in this dissertation (and as a number of important critics, such as Josiah Blackmore, Hermann Bennett, Nicholas R. Jones, Elizabeth Wright, among others), literature, through the Baroque period, provides glimpses of a relationship between Iberia and Africa that produces a multiethnic and multicultural frame that shapes the consciousness of Western civilization for

years to come. The Iberian early modern period is inseparable from the continent of Africa, which has been one of the largest contributors to the construction of the Iberian early modern world.

One term devised through this relation for this time period is the African baroque.[3] The canonical works I address in this dissertation are part of the fundamental readings of the Iberian imperial tradition informed by the African baroque, a time frame that encompasses numerous missions, discoveries, and importations. The writings of Miguel de Cervantes, María de Zayas, António Ribeiro Chiado, Gomes Eanes de Zurara, Luís de Camões are canonical works within the field of Iberian early modern studies that engage significantly with this tradition. Rarely are the African dimensions of these works addressed. Only recently have criticism and scholars been able to read and call to attention a new literary tradition of the African baroque. These readings portray black Africans as servants, enslaved, inferior, illiterate, non-human, no soul and much more. This critical framework around canonical readings in the period acknowledges, to some degree, the presence of black Africans on the Iberian Peninsula; however, European Whiteness remains the implied center of Iberian life and culture. Conventional scholarship is formed within White supremacy and supports that system. As a result, it emphasizes racial buffoonery as part of its overall social and political function, which is to center Whiteness, White experience, and White-hegemonic ways of understanding the world and categorizing its people.

As my works recover black Africans' agency, subjectivity, and subject-hood on the Iberian Peninsula during the early modern era, I revive the "improper burial" of black Africans during this time frame in order to lay them to rest in peace. The work of laying them to rest in

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[3] Nicholas R. Jones coins this term in his essay "Sor Juana's Black Atlantic: Colonial Blackness and the Poetic Subversions of *Habla de negros*.

peace comes from the re-rooting and reawakening the narrative of their fruits and contributions to the Iberian Peninsula while pushing through the smoke screen of Whiteness. Whiteness, which is a social construction carefully produced in the early modern period, has been coded as normative, as the literature, and European culture generally has focused on socially constructing Whiteness as hegemonic. The body of criticism develop narratives and aesthetic prose representations, that sets White supremacy in place. Sylvia Wynter suggests that the first major figure that solidified this social construction is the Vitruvian man[4]. This figure was ultimately White and male without disabilities. Whiteness considers a subject position with the figure of the Vitruvian man as the center of it. In order to take up early modern Iberian modernity to redefine black Africans, we must push past the screen of European White supremacy.

From the Renaissance humanist period, Whiteness is increasingly understood as a subject position. Blackness is figured as an abject[5] position. Because Blackness is considered abject, the farthest position away from the Vitruvian man, it is rendered invisible and inconsequential within the field of early modern Iberian studies. My interventions recognize Blackness as having agency, power, resistance, and a voice that is often lost in the presences and European representation of black Africans in the early modern era. My research both responds to and revises the dominant narrative in race studies (specifically sub-Saharan African Blackness) that

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[4] Emily Anne Parker's essay titled, "The Human as Double Bind: Sylvia Wynter and the Genre of "Man" discusses the Virtuvian Man and its "Others." "By referent subject" Wynter means a shared sense, poetic in nature, that can nevertheless exclude many who are also expected to live it. Man, Wynter argues, as a referent subject first appeared in the Italian Renaissance. As Walter Mignolo (2015, 109) has argued, this way of representing an individual is made visual in Leonardo da Vinci s *Vitruvian Man*, a man of perfect symmetry and supposedly ideal form" (440). On the same page Emily underscores Wynter's argument as "There is clearly a referent subject, but it is an implicit one who only acquires words for himself from his Others: blackness, darkness, blindness, penetrability, impregnability, dependence (Wynter 1995, 42). Man is supposedly not these things." Therefore, my reference point is the figure of the Vitruvian Man.
[5] The abject is below the subject. So the abject is known not to have any autonomy nor agency.

underscores an intersectional approach, thereby focusing on the position of the black African woman and how she relates to the central concepts of Blackness and gender studies in the early modern Iberian criticism.

Africa and the Imperial Iberian Project

In one of the most influential and popular texts of Spain and throughout Europe, *Don Quijote de La Mancha* we find instances where Africa is on the table for discussion. An important inflexion point for African presence emerges when Sancho and Don Quijote encounter the Princess Micomicona in chapters 29-30 of *Part 1*. Micomicona hails from the great kingdoms of Africa specifically Ethiopia and Guinea. There is slippage in this episode, as for Sancho, Ethiopia and Guinea are similar places – a confusion that suggests that for his character, at least, Africa is a whole and homogenous continent. Sancho's perception of Africa, with his old Christian mindset, gears towards a colonial logic that maps different places in Africa as the same. Baltasar Fra Molinero describes in *La imagen de los negros en el teatro del Siglo de Oro* (1995), regarding the perception of Africa from Sancho and Don Quijote, "La mezcla de intereses económicos y propósitos evangélicos estaba en la génesis de la práctica esclavista portuguesa y española en África. En la literatura española de los siglos XVI y XVII África era un lugar simbólico, un paraíso a la vez que una selva y un abismo" (5) [The mixture of economic interests and evangelical purposes was at the genesis of the Portuguese and Spanish slave practice in Africa. In the Spanish literature of the 16th and 17th centuries, Africa was a symbolic place, a paradise and at the same time a jungle and an abyss]. The perception of Africa in the eyes of the early modern Iberian Peninsula was one that viewed it as a place to expand territory.

The empires of Spain and Portugal during the fifteenth-century were distinguishable while holding similar traits. Their goal was to expand territory and to map out territory including

continental Africa. In the early part of the fifteenth-century, Spain colonized the Canaries while the Portuguese colonized Ceuta in North Africa and the occupation of the Madeira and Azores archipelagos. These empires were especially strong during the 1500s to the mid- 1600s. The Iberian Union was solidified through the dynastic union of the two kingdoms under the Spanish Crown from 1580-1640. During this period, all he overseas possessions of the Portuguese crown came under the rule of Spanish Habsburg kings Philip II, Philip III and Philip IV.[6] Through ad-hoc missions, improvisation, discoveries, and experimentation, both the Spanish and Portuguese empires cobbled together patchwork systems by which to benefit greatly from black Africans through the institution of slavery. Giuseppe Marcocci theorizes the Spanish and Portuguese empires through a religious and biological frame. [7] He explains that conversion was the center of navigations made by the Spanish and Portuguese. [8] A central part of the imperial Iberian project was the soul of people, and this is what justified numerous journeys to Western and Eastern Africa. Africa is the foundational ground that furthers the imperial projects both in Portugal and Spain and without Africa's contribution, their projects would have failed, or they would not have had much territory. Africa's proximity to the Iberian Peninsula is important as it plays a role in imperial projects during the early modern era. This is important to the dissertation as black African people and their labor made an impact on Iberian society and culture.

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[6] "Holding the World in Balance: The Connected Histories of the Iberian Overseas Empires, 1500-1640." (2007)
[7] "Blackness and Heathenism. Color, Theology, and Race in the Portuguese World, c 1450-1600." (2016)
[8] "The topic of conversion was clearly central in the justification of African slavery in the mid-fifteenth-century papal bulls that regulated the controversy over transoceanic navigation between Castile and Portugal, since they presented physical captivity as a possibility to be instructed in the Christian faith and gain eternal salvation" (42).

The impact of Blackness on early modern Iberian culture has recently become a topic of critical analysis. As a central text to the collaboration of early modern studies and Black Studies, Cassander L. Smith's, Nicholas Jones's, and Miles Parks Grier's collection, *Early Modern Black Diaspora Studies: A Critical Anthology* (2018) reevaluates racial Blackness with regard to black Africans in early modernity. The anthology includes various essays inviting different critical approaches to black African agency and examining Blackness in early modern literary works, performance culture, historical documents, and material and visual cultures. The content helps us to "to uncover the power of blackness as a cultural, ideological, and structural category that affirms black life and identity, while problematizing ideations of black subordination that are informed by the category of Whiteness, and vice versa" (6).

In analyzing the traces of Blackness[9] in early modern Iberian culture, we can see how the Spanish and Portuguese exploited Blackness to solidify their position as full European subjects constructed in contrast to an abject Other. Scholars often continue this early modern racial logic by failing to recognize how Blackness is consequential to canonical works of drama, epic poetry, lyric poetry, and narrative from the period. Scholars such as John Beusterien and José Piedra explain how the Iberian Peninsula was Othered by Christian Europe well into the twentieth century due to Iberia's mixture of faiths and people.[10] For over seven hundred years prior to

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[9] Blackness can be a literary/thematic conceit, a gesture, a move, an approach, racial (embodied materiality), and the position of the abject. For the purposes of the dissertation, I use Blackness within racialization of embodied materiality.

[10] Beusterien asserts in his book *An Eye on Race: Perspectives from Theater in Imperial Spain* that, "An early North-South hierarchy developed out of these two depictions of race [ancestry of people of the Islamic faith and the Black sub-Saharan African]: Europe characterized Iberia as tainted (as bastards, Jews, and heretics) and Africanized it by cutting it off from the European map; Iberia in turn turned to a discourse of skin color to see people from even farther south, the sub-Saharan Africans, to undo its blackness" (42). A canonical essay by José Piedra titled "The Black Stud's Spanish Birth" states, "The history of the Iberian Peninsula from Roman through Islamic times is full of migration tracks from and to Africa. Spain, the darker child of Christian

1492, Iberia was occupied by Islamic rulers who established kingdoms/caliphates with capitals in Córdoba and Granada. Christian "Spain," or the joined crowns of Castilla y Aragón, was a new formation, imposed by the Catholic Kings Isabella and Ferdinand, after they conquered Granada in 1492. It has been argued that a combination of cultural, linguistic, religious, and ethnic insecurity arose from attempts to forge on the Peninsula what we would now call a nation[11]: a unified political and cultural area situated in contiguous geographic space. Part of this project entails establishing a narrative of permanence –of teleological development toward the accomplished form of geographic, political, and ethnic unity achieved (so this narrative goes) in 1492. Part of that mission involved casting 700 years of multicultural, multiethnic history as an Islamic "occupation" of Spain — a temporary interruption of eternal, Christian Spanishness. As central works to these conversations in Early Modern Iberian studies, Barbara Fuchs' essay "The Spanish Race," collected in Greer, Quilligan, and Mignolo's *Rereading the Black Legend: The Discourses of Religious and Racial Difference in the Renaissance Empires* anthology (2007), explores race and Spanish identity both within and outside of Spain. She continues this work in *Exotic Nation: Maurophilia and the Construction of Early Modern Spain* (2009), which discusses in detail how Spain, in particular, has been orientalized by Northern Europe (and the West at large). Moreover, Christina H. Lee's *The Anxiety of Sameness in Early Modern Spain*

Europe and the lighter child of Islamic Africa, first succumbs to the less than charming incursions of the darkest black-African invaders and then avenges itself by taking excursions into what it considers the child-like and libidinally seasoned charms of the black slave/ master of erotica. These black slaves could be Christian, Muslim, Jewish, or of any other faith" (824). Both of these quotes refer to racialization on the Iberian Peninsula and the confluence of black Africans, people of the Jewish faith and people of the Islamic faith — which brings into conversation religious and racial tensions on the peninsula.

[11] Also refer to Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism.*

(2015) discusses how the world view of dominant Spaniards in early modern Spain was deeply anxious about the idea of "sameness" as it related to dominant ideologies of *honor/nobleza* and *limpieza de sangre*. The idea of sameness —that Spain was a Christian kingdom— provoked the idea of difference and exclusionary practices. Spanish writers and rulers, like their counterparts in Great Britain and France, increasingly drew discourses of ethnic and religious othering together with racializing discourse, such that "Morisco," a term which at first indicated people of Islamic ancestry, increasingly pointed to Blackness, despite the somatic lighter skin color of many Moriscos. In this case, Blackness is obscure. A second look, however, reveals the traces of Blackness in the works and its influence on the Early Iberian world and subject building.

Over the course of the 18th and 19th centuries, the exclusion of Spanish Blackness intensified as Spanish and European institutions promoted literary and cultural canons that centered Whiteness. Before I begin my discussion on racial and religious otherness in early modern Iberia, I want to discuss exclusionary practices. During the early modern era, there was an obsession and desire to categorize and label things, people, objects, and land. Through conquests and "discoveries" (a term which I use very lightly), there is a curiosity and desire to recognize things and people by grouping them based on similarities and differences. There are many exclusionary practices that we can reflect on: religious and faith practices, skin color, land, dietary restrictions, hair texture, clothing, language, et cetera. This list is not exhaustive, but the practice of drawing lines between sameness and otherness based on these features begins to be the foundation of how we come to understand otherness in the world we live in today. This discussion of early modern exclusionary practices is foundational to understanding how modern racialization and religious othering begin.

I use the term racialization rather than “race,” as race is not the same in the US 21st century as it was in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries on the Iberian Peninsula. Racialization refers to the process of fusing the various kinds of otherness and sameness dominant groups were establishing (religion, ethnicity, language, and, incipiently, skin tone) during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. “Race” as a term emerges principally in the eighteenth and especially the nineteenth centuries. Racialization would eventually turn into a starker race discourse that promoted and contributed to a White hegemonic European tradition. Although my work focuses on black African women literary characters, this section will explore how the conflation of people of Hebrew faith, people of Islamic faith, and black Africans represent the “blackness” of the Iberian Peninsula from a hegemonic European, often “northern” (and non-Iberian) perspective. I do not seek to group marginalized communities into a homogenous whole but rather to communicate the danger of grouping Others on the peninsula. Iberian elites sought to erase, dispose of, and conquer the “Black” elements during the early modern era.

Ironically, Iberia attempts to claim subjectivity from being the “Other” to Europe by enslaving black Africans – bringing more Black elements to the peninsula, so to speak. As Blackness is naturalized in Spain, (ostensibly) Whiter European societies emphasize Iberian difference, in aphorisms such as, “Africa begins at the Pyrenees” (Greer, et al., 9). During this period, discourses of skin-based Blackness and Whiteness also begin to solidify. It is dangerous to group black and brown communities, communities of different cultures, and communities of different faiths together. Although these communities are marginalized and have not had an invitation to “contribute” to the dominant culture, they are present and contribute more than how the field renders them.

Internal Otherness

There is an "internal otherness" that the Iberian Peninsula experiences as it is "Othered" by Europe. It manifests itself textually in epic poems, travel narratives, theater plays and all literary production in the early modern era. John Beusterien, whose work is devoted to race for sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Spanish literature and culture, analyzes and theorizes the presence of the Hispano-Moorish[12] through a narrativized and denarrativized vision.[13] According to Beusterien, his main concern is:

> to understand how theater depicted blackness as defiled religion and as skin color. To carry out that project, [he] proposes a subaltern approach that critiques the White's eye, or, in other words, hegemony and the possibility of new forms of hegemony. The overall goal of his book is to embrace the useful sides of narrativized and denarrativized vision after identifying and dissembling what he calls the White's eye. (17)

He elaborates on the "White's eye" as it sees certain races and religions as an outsider and invisible yet important within body politic. Postcolonial theorist Oyèrónkẹ́ Oyěwùmí states that, "body politic or "the social body" emerges as the Western culture draws attention to bodies and defines them in terms of a bodily metaphor. This logic's conduit is, "by looking at it [body] one can tell a person's beliefs and social position or lack thereof" (1). [14] The evaluation is based upon the emergence of how early modern Iberian society view bodies through the constructed White's eye, whose gaze conflates the Black body, the body of people of the Hebrew faith, and the body

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[12] The term "Moor" is in contemporary usage a slur so I use "people of the Islamic faith" to substitute this term.

[13] Beusterien defines the Narrativized White's eye as "when it sees through [this] vision it sees through what is typically considered a "European" eye, and the racial outsider is invisible, but conceptual, element within the body politic" (24) and defines the denarrativized White's eye as something that, "informs descriptions of race in the context of North America and England, especially with respect to the legacy of colonial racism" (25).

[14] Visualizing the Body: Western Theories and African Subjects."

of people of the Islamic faith in a figure of blackness within an increasingly dominant Black/White binary. I build upon this Black/White binary as the construction of both Whiteness and Blackness took shape in order to fashion the social existence of the Iberian Peninsula with regard to Europe. Beusterien asserts that:

> An early North-South hierarchy developed out of these two depictions of race [ancestry of people of the Islamic faith and the Black sub-Saharan African]: Europe characterized Iberia as tainted (as bastards, Jews, and heretics) and Africanized it by cutting it off from the European map; Iberia in turn turned to a discourse of skin color to see people from even farther south, the sub-Saharan Africans, to undo its blackness. (42)

This Black/White binary informs a White centering narrative that codes anything as black. If it is not a White Christian European male, then everything that moves away from that center represents Blackness and is an Other. Blackness represents a religious practice and ethnic background that then eventually converts to Blackness to specify somatic skin color. Europe as a whole viewed Spain and Portugal as the “Other” but the quote states that they are “Africanized.” This suggests that Africa was cut off from the European map and therefore Spain and Portugal sought to map Africa by colonial domination. The blackness on the peninsula represented people of Islamic faith and people of Hebrew faith.

Barbara Fuchs explores the story of Ozmín and Daraja, a novella intercalated into Mateo Alemán’s picaresque novel, Guzmán de Alfarache (1599) that depicts Spain’s obsession with the culture of people from the Islamic faith. Fuchs uncovers details about Spaniards and the gesture of blackness. The two main characters, Ozmín and Daraja, are in love with one another and are of the Islamic faith. Daraja is captured by the Catholic monarchs Ferdinand and Isabella. Daraja and Ozmín are then forced to protect their union by disguising their identity, language, culture, and faith until they are converted to Christianity and married.

A close reading of this story shows how Spain's identity is shaped by ideas of cultural, ethnic, and religious hybridity. This idea is painted in the story of Ozmín and Daraja when the text describes Daraja's costume. The outfit Daraja wears before the queen asks her to change her clothes is one that represents her as someone of the Islamic faith. When the queen puts Daraja in Castilian attire, she asserts that it will enhance her beauty, but in fact, Isabella has been seeking to convert the maiden: "She longed for her to become a Christian and prepared her little by little…" That is the reason she asks Darja to change her attire: "In return, I ask that you do something for me: exchange your clothes for some of mine that I will give you so that you may enjoy how our dress enhances your beauty" (4). This scene demonstrates the queen's desire to transform Doraja from showing signs of being someone of the Islamic faith to a Castilian style. It is not hard to understand the scene as shaped by a disregard for those of the Islamic faith.

In the same way, it suggests a certain mixture or hybridity that Fuchs points out: "There is a growing recognition that hybridity — a concept developed in postcolonial studies but eminently suited to a wide range of frontier societies— may best describe much of Iberian culture in the late medieval and early modern period… Costume, language, furnishings — all these evince the lasting, if varies, effects of al-Andalus[15] on the new Christian polity" (2). Daraja still speaks both her native language and Castilian Spanish, bilingualism that gains her favor and access to the queen. Her identity, the fact that she is of the Islamic faith and transforms outward appearance into that of a Castilian woman demonstrates her struggle to survive during a difficult time in Spain. Even so, the text sympathizes with this level of deception in order to promote

[15] Al-Andalus (711-1492) was the name of the Iberian Peninsula during these years. The name is the rule of people of the Islamic faith. More specifically it describes the states that ruled the Iberia — Arab states and North African states. This conquest and rule taints the national character of the peninsula forcing them to search for others to conquer.

ideas of hybridity and the true construction of Spain's identity. In chapter 5 entitled "The Spanish Race," Fuchs argues that Spanish Iberian identity is obsessed with the "Moorish" form and the idea of maurophilia[16]. In addition, she discusses the conflict between sub-Saharan enslaved Black people and the culture of people of the Islamic faith. The North European gaze mixes people of the Islamic faith and black Africans based on their differences to maintain Whiteness as the center.

This idea is relevant to the material value placed on *limpieza de sangre* as a way to differentiate old Christians from newly converted folks in Spain. Fuchs asserts that "Spain's enemies abroad ruthlessly exploited its Moorish past to construct the nation as a racial and religious other. Although the official discourse in Spain loudly renounced Moorishness, the westernmost reaches of Europe remained for many observers part of the Orient or Africa, and thus savage, cruel, or tyrannical" (116). Due to the cultural and religious past Spain and Portugal has, it has created an Othering profile for the Iberia in comparison to Europe that many relate to Africa. As Fuchs asserts, with Spain's past they have been considered as "savage, cruel and tyrannical." Spain and Portugal are represented as partially "others" to Europe, and this is the first step to understanding completely why Africa was on the list for conquest. Edward Said's[17] idea of "Orientalism" centers the relationship of the West (Europe) to constructing an "Other" — different than this West. Building upon this idea, Iberia is the West constructing an "Other" with those on the peninsula as well as the inhabitants of Africa.

There is a separation of Africa and different religious practices. This separation creates a tension in the European imagination between people of Islamic faith and black Africans. Mahir

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[16] Or better known as "literary maurophilia" is the explicit romanticization of people of Islamic faith and the complex, often silent presence of "Moorish" forms in Spanish material culture.
[17] An idea whose starting point can be drawn roughly from the late eighteenth-century.

Saul asserts in his essay titled, “Islam and West African Anthropology” that, “it is therefore important to shake the simplified view that Islam and literacy diffused from the Sahara contact zone in the north to the south in an uncomplicated manner, or that “black” Africa met Islam late and superficially as a foreign religion. Influences went in all directions” (16). The author underscores in this text the relationship between African and other places in the world. A mechanism of the colonial project was to separate the continent of Africa from its influences and contributions to other countries. As it relates to people of Islamic faith, it has been ignored within Africa to ensure that they are not connected to other people in the world. It has been a way to magnify efforts to “help” Africa and deem them as “barbarian.” People of the Islamic faith spans throughout the world including Africa since influences were coming from all directions. “Black” Africa contributes to these influences and their contributions makes the case that this part of Africa played a major role in many ways.

Black Iberian African Presence

Historically, black African presence is solidified on the Iberian Peninsula through research, archival documents and the literary narrative. However, White centering and the White lens work to occlude or erase that historical fact. Only recently have scholars begun to read and recognize within works from the period a new literary tradition of the African baroque. Jones’s discussion of the critic Américo Castro in his essay, “Debt Collecting Disappearance, Necromancy: A Response to John Beusterien” (2018) explains that while the field of early modern Iberian studies has taken up race, it has done so through a limited lens that seeks to eliminate the discussion of racialization. New scholarship expands the lens by uncovering a

continuum between modern and early modern ideas of racialization.[18] As I indicated earlier, in the opening sections of this chapter, the African baroque is an aesthetic style and way of life that intersects an Africana studies approach and the early modern Spanish Baroque while exploring drama, epic poetry, lyric poetry, and narrative with a focus on Blackness. The recognition and comprehensive acknowledgment of the African diaspora on the Iberian Peninsula works similarly to the theory of "necromancy," introduced by Jones in the same essay. "Necromancy" declares that as scholars we must move beyond the "necropolitics" that have dominated twenty-first-century analyses of Transatlantic and Mediterranean history and culture and begin the work of reconstructing and reimagining a concealed past of black Africans and their descendants through the foundations of the Western world.[19] This "necromantic" way to begin the reparative process (218) entails recovering Black agency and subjectivity in literature.

My Reading in the dissertation

My work centers on race, gender, post-colonial studies, Transatlantic Baroque, and the place of sub-Saharan Africa in early modern Iberian culture and society. These disciplines function to shift what has up until now been a focus on "pitying the black African," very often by conflating all Africans with slaves, implicitly or explicitly, toward a critical analysis that will allow us to (1) redefine the black African, and (2) see that the black African woman, in particular, functions as a subject who wields agency within the shaping of the plot and direction of the storyline of a narrative or a work of drama, or the thoughts and images of a poem. In this and subsequent

[18] Nicholas R. Jones, "Debt Collecting Disappearance, Necromancy: A Response to John Beusterien" in *Early Modern Black Diaspora Studies: A Critical Anthology,* ed. by Cassander L Smith, Nicholas R. Jones and Miles P. Grier (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2018), 211-221. Jones's essay seek to restore and reawaken early modern Iberia's Black populations.
[19] Achille Mbembe in his book *Necropolitics* defines necropolitics as having the power to kill or let live through sovereignty's limits.

chapters, I purposefully distinguish between these two entities, the black African and the black African woman, since both are at stake for me. My work modifies and reconstructs Blackness as a whole, even as I discuss the vivid presence of the black African woman as a shaping force in the Iberian cultural imaginary. I achieve this objective through reading practices that bring forward Black speech, Black presence, Black beauty, and Black voice, attending to spaces and places where Black presence can be detected: minor characters, servants, maids, and additional places where Black presence is the token. The Eurocentrism of the field renders these characters insignificant, but these Black characters are everywhere in Iberian literature. Dominant institutions of scholarship, criticism, and pedagogy have trained us to look away from the Black characters, and this situation is exponentially more true for black African women. But through the reading modalities I employ, I restore a sense of dignity to Blackness and a sense of agency to black African women on the Iberian Peninsula and beyond the Canary Islands. The scholarly criticism of Jennifer C. Nash, Cheryl I. Harris, and Kimberlé Crenshaw imbue the black African woman with agency and power. Although their work outlines the construction of European Whiteness and the legacy Whiteness has created, they restore and redefine the black African woman.

The works I will closely read in this dissertation are *Chronica do descobrimento e conquista de Guiné* by Gomes Eanes de Zurara published in 1841 covering imperial missions starting in the 1440s, "Endechas a Bárbora Escrava (aquela Cativa)" by Luís Vaz de Camões published in 1595, *Auto das Regateiras* by António Ribeiro Chiado published in 1565, the Dorotea and Micomicona episode in *El ingenioso hidalgo Don Quijote de la Mancha I* by Miguel de Cervantes published in 1605, *El coloquio de los perros* by Cervantes published in 1613 and *Desengaño 4* ("*Tarde llega el desengaño*") by María de Zayas published in 1647. Each

of these works features a black African woman. As this dissertation explores the servitude, the subordinate, and the abject position black Africans and black African women are placed in, in Spain and Portugal, I perceive them as "conversing" with one another over time. In my view, each figure has a seed to plant and does so through literature. Thus, each chapter of my dissertation centers on black African female characters in Spanish and Portuguese literary texts. On one level, Black female characters are depicted in ways that conform to the literary conventions of the day, as abject and lampooned caricatures of Black womanhood, rather than as complex figures whose actions, motivations, and inner conflicts shape the plot. My readings will draw forward ways in which there is a form of continuity between the stories. Each woman brings something different in her contexts in each work's genre, plot, scenery, matrix of expression. Echoing Audre Lorde in her essays titled "The Transformation of Silence into Language and Action" and "I Am Your Sister," in *The Selected Works of Audre Lorde* (2020), Black women are sisters conversing and working together towards the same goal of Black liberation. Each black African woman gives the baton to her sister that does something different for the literature during this time period. Her contributions add up, in the manner of fertile seeds whose fruits can change our sense of the Iberian landscape. Ultimately by reading Black Iberian female characters together, we begin to recover Black female agency. Moreover, by giving these women a second look through an intersectional lens, we find that each of them makes a significant contribution that should be recognized as consequential to the early modern Iberian archive.

Each black African female figure included in this paper is joined by a sisterhood connected by unity and love. I draw them together as a wall that confronts the smoke screen of the White European supremacy that pushed to break them down. However, the White European

hegemonic apparatus is unsuccessful, as my work revives the large contributions and foundational work these sisters planted. So therefore, what follows serves as a contribution of the black African female figures in my life who passed the baton to me — their sister. Reading black African female presence is my methodology and I work with tropes by attending to the literature and aesthetic production. I am not historicizing the presence of black African woman but rather attending to their representation in early modern Iberian literature. In undertaking this work, I recognize a lineage of Black Feminists who read tropes as helpful to do the work I do in the dissertation. Lorde affirms in her essay "Poetry Is Not a Luxury" in *The Selected Works of Audre Lorde* that:

> [Poetry] forms the quality of the light within which we predicate our hopes and dreams toward survival and change, first made into language, then into an idea, then into more tangible action. Poetry is not only dream and vision; it is the skeleton architecture of our lives. It lays the foundations for a future of change, a bridge across our fears of what has never been before. (5-6)

The weight of disenfranchisement black African women have experienced and internalized on the Iberian Peninsula has led to the establishment and consolidation of racial and sexist capitalism to maintain a White centering. The White European elites and those who authored art, literary, and non-literary works, that created images and narratives around Black folk weaponized black African's lack of power by investing in a narrative that does not center the values or the ideals of black Africans. In fact, current scholarship on Black women in the Iberian early modern period often discuss how writers' portrayals of black African women were deeply racist as well as sexist, denying these characters power and voice. Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie informs us in her essay "African "Authenticity" and the Biafran Experience" (2008) that, "the ideology of racism was derived from ancient and medieval ideas, biblical references, linguistic connections to the idea of blackness, all of which said, in the end: *Black is not as good as white*…and these stereotypes found their way into the popular imagination and literature" (43-

44). She connects stereotypes of Blackness found in literature and popular imagination by dating it back to ancient medieval ideas and biblical references. I rework that analysis by effectively acknowledging the power and valor black African women possessed on the Peninsula. The modalities and gestures I focus on to restore agency, subjectivity and subject-hood are speech, the disapproving aunty look, eroticism, necropolitics, necromancy and guarding of knowledge. Through these modalities and gestures, I acknowledge and recover Black presence and Black female presence. Moreover, it shows the power and valor black African women had in these texts, paintings, art or plays, since their presence was often associated to animal-like traits. I build upon Marjorie Pryse's approach in *Conjuring: Black Women, Fiction, and Literary Tradition* (1985), and her contention that Black women have ancient power, that Black woman novelists become metaphorical conjure women, acting as "mediums" to recognize our literary ancestors. I take this idea further by recognizing Black female presence in the early modern Iberian archive as metaphorical conjure women acting as "fruit carriers" to solidify Black presence and honor black African ancestors. "Focusing on connection rather than separation, transforming silence into speech, and giving back power to the culturally disenfranchised" (5), I use these factors to illuminate the work of the black African sister on the Iberian Peninsula. However, this is not to completely disagree that these texts were just plainly racists but to consider a re-frame to that lens in order to acknowledge, awaken, and refine black Africans and black African women's presence in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Iberian society.

My dissertation will advance the scholarship of Black scholars, African scholars and scholarship focused on black African lives. Scholars such as Jennifer C. Nash, Cheryl I. Harris, Audre Lorde, and Kimberlé Crenshaw play an integral role in giving sense to the Black female presence in cultural production and real-life circumstances. The term "intersectionality" coined

by Crenshaw has become a pathway to discuss challenging intersections such as race and gender that are not addressed through social movements focused on race or gender. Pointedly, she conveys that race and sex as a coupled issue crosses an intersection that specifically targets Black women, and I want to illuminate this cross issue in literary texts in early modern Iberia. Harris makes strong claims to how the Black women's reproductive system has formed empires and continued enslavement and labor. Through her body, which has not been given much credit, we find the beauty of her contributions and sacrifice. Harris outlines how the Black women's body has been property of Whiteness or in other words, no her owns. Nash's book *The Black Body in Ecstasy: Reading Race, Reading Pornography* (2014) explores how pornography has been a tool to weaponize pleasure and desire through racialization. Pornography is categorized by race, and she explains that this has been used to hinder expressions of pleasure and desire. She uses a new method to investigate ecstasy that racialized pornography can unleash. Lorde's work is fundamental for Black liberation and for studying the value of Black women. She underscores in *I Am Your Sister: Collected and Unpublished Writings of Audre Lorde* (2009) the relevance of language and how Black women can't be silent. We must use our voices to transform the narrative for Black women. We must challenge the dominant narrative by using our words to transmit the "real" message of who we are and the language that we embrace. We must be the actors of the language used to create our narrative because our silence wouldn't stop the suffering, pain, or death. This is such a powerful methodology as she uses "sister" to bring together Black women. With my use of the seed motif, I will also use this idea of "sistership" to portray unity within the Black female characters I recuperate. Through the approaches and conditioning of Black Feminism, my work will continue this agenda for early modern Iberian studies.

Regardless of how current scholarship views the community of black African women on the Peninsula, I consider a different framing of this narrative. I query: have we considered the elegance of the Black presence in comedias, the rich lexical items of Black speech or even the constant Black females' voice we see and hear in these texts? Are these entities really demonstrating a chronic Black silence or complete disregard for Black presence? My methodology focuses on speech, presence, necropolitics and guarding knowledge towards agency restoration. My theoretical model features three common themes: theorizing imperialism centered on the Iberian project, postcolonial approaches to culture and Black feminist approaches to culture. Through these interpretive approaches, methodologies, and themes, I acknowledge and recover Black presence and Black female presence. Moreover, it shows the power and valor black African women had in these texts, paintings, art or plays, since their presence is often dismissed or minor. This is not to completely disagree that these texts were just plainly racists but to consider a reframe to that lens to acknowledge, awaken, and redefine Black women's presence in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Iberian society.

Modalities and Gestures

The framework I use for necropolitics comes from the historian and political theorist, Achilles Mbembe in his book *Necropolitics*. In Mbembe's text, what is striking is the idea of agency through death. Death represents agency because it is an immediate solution that can redeem a person from either slavery or constant servitude. Mbembe argues that "Gilroy suggests that death, in this case, can be represented as agency. For death is precisely that from and over which I have power. But it is also that space where freedom and negotiation operate" (91-92). Between the space of death, there is freedom and negotiation. To the subaltern, the present presents an unattainable vision of freedom (life), and death presents a solution to achieve that freedom. So

that power, the power over one's life and the freedom to do anything, is in death. Necropolitics is an important concept when we discuss marginalized groups who sometimes think their lives are invalid. It does not mean that people should die to regain control over their lives, but it is a way of perceiving death as a form of agency. Through this agency is autonomy, to a certain extent, but Mbembe also observes that figures of sovereignty "generalize the instrumentalization of human existence and the material destruction of human bodies and populations" (68). Unlike the idea of regaining freedom and life through death, figures of sovereignty use their power to determine who dies and who lives.

Nicholas Jones presents the approach of "necromancy" as a way to awaken an Iberian Blackness in Spain. Jones conveys that, "[he], as a necromancer, [aims] to awaken the memory of early modern Iberian black lives via placing Hispanism in dialogue with Black Studies" (215). At stake is a resistance to pessimism and to death as a necessary solution. With "necromancy," Jones invites us to remember a group of people that have been erased and suppressed for centuries and to begin to acknowledge their presence, in the form of life (not death) on a global level. It also invites us to awaken, as well as embrace, the legacy of Blackness in Spain, since it seems to have been dormant and almost non-existent in critical narratives. Necromancy provides us a space to reimagine a Spanish and Portuguese Iberia with a true embrace of Blackness.

Necromancy can proceed by means of detecting Black presence in speech, dress, dance, gestures, et cetera. The "disapproving aunty" look, or remark is a clear marker of female Blackness. The disapproving aunty look, or gesture includes nodding the head and using facial expressions such as raising eyebrows. Often times it is associated with a circular motion of the

neck that represents sarcasm and an attitude.[20] In written texts, the disapproving aunty look appears as a tone of disapproval or sarcasm rather than the physical motions. This look and gesture are part of the nonverbal or allusive communication that indicate a form of autonomy and agency. We find this gesture used nowadays globally, and we can also perceive this gesture in literature from the early modern period, as I will show in readings I undertake in subsequent chapters. The written and literary tone of the text and how black African women characters respond yields the non-verbal disapproving aunty look. This look and gesture restore Black female agency in the early modern archive as it is a marker for Black existence and presence. It is the subversion of the White supremacy power dynamic through gesture and non-verbal forms of communication. This look is a sign of black African resistance to the European White hegemonic apparatus.

Pleasure is a concept that has been forbidden from particularly Black women. Another important site of necromancy is the erotic. Eroticism expresses sexual desires, pleasure, and excitement. Jennifer Nash explores how pornography has been used as a tool to weaponize pleasure and desire through racialization in her book, *The Black Body in Ecstasy: Reading Race, Reading Pornography*. Pornography is categorized by race, and Nash explains that this has been used to hinder expressions of pleasure and desire. Often Black women are the center of expressions of desire and pleasure for men, particularly White men. Through this reading, Nash develops a new "method of analyzing racialized pornography: racial iconography… a critical

[20] This attitude/look/vibe is common within Black and Asian communities. In a recent vice-presidential debate between Kamala Harris and Mike Pence in Kingsbury Hall at the University of Utah on October 7, 2020, Kamala Harris portrays it - through her facial expressions. It disapproves something or communicates a disagreement of a comment or idea someone says with simply facial expressions including a blank stare, lifting of the eyebrows, and maneuvering the mouth with lips puckered.

hermeneutic, a reading practice that shifts from a preoccupation with the injuries that racialized pornography engenders to an investigation of the ecstasy that racialized pornography can unleash" (2). This idea unleashes the eroticism of Black women in literature that tends to be viewed in a disapproving manner. Black women do the work of Black liberation, and all the while should be able to enjoy their pleasures and desire, however they might express it. This idea restores agency for the black African female figure in the early modern archive as it unleashes their form of pleasure.

Guarding of information is an important modality throughout the dissertation. Many servants, slaves or captives from different countries who were forcefully moved to various locations held certain information that slave masters or mistresses wanted. They had access to information or secrets that their slave masters or mistresses did not have access to. V.Y. Mudimbe in his book *The Invention of Africa: Gnosis, Philosophy, and the Order of Knowledge* interrogates African gnosis as a system of knowledge and takes a Eurocentric perspective to explore Europeans imagination and invention of Africa. Mudimbe explores the style of Africanizing knowledge and states that "the succession of epistemes, as well as the procedures and disciplines that they allow, account for a historical activity and, indirectly, legitimate a social evolution in which knowledge essentially functions as a form of power" (40). Guarding of knowledge or information signifies power and is a trope on the part of Black characters in early modern Iberian literature, in Maria de Zayas, António Ribeiro Chiado, Miguel de Cervantes, etcetera. Guarding of knowledge humanizes a servant through information he or she holds and serves as a way to restore agency for black Africans.

Language has been used as a weapon of resistance to the hegemonic apparatus that rules over a certain people, place, or object. Black language, commonly known in Spanish as 'habla de

negros,' is an Africanized Castilian that was largely introduced during the diasporic arrival of black Africans to Seville via Portugal starting in the fifteenth-century, building upon the framework by Nicholas Jones. Jones theorizes, "Habla de negros speech forms spoken by black literary characters ultimately exemplify the dispersal of sub-Saharan African linguistic retentions in early modern Spanish [and Portuguese] texts" (15). Through Black speech, we see the rich linguistic and lexical items retained in early modern Spanish and Portuguese texts. Habla de negros is largely recognized in Spain while 'fala de preto' is largely found in Portugal. Habla de negros as well as fala de Guinea is a marker of power where Black agency and resistance meet. Ultimately, Jones's goal is to "shed light on the recurring—not exceptional—instantiations where habla de negros [and fala de Guinea] texts showcase their black characters acting and speaking with agency and destabilizing the category of Whiteness—culturally, linguistically, and in terms of power relations—altogether" (6). Echoing this light, Black speech restores agency for the black African on the Iberian Peninsula and resists the White European hegemonic apparatus.

Scholarly Agenda

My scholarly agenda invites us to embrace the legacy of Blackness on the Iberian Peninsula, and to address the ways in which Blackness has been suppressed within conventional, canonical scholarship, criticism, and pedagogy of the early modern period. Black African culture plays a foundational role on what we call the Iberian Peninsula, and the erasure of this information from the scholarship on mainstream Iberian cultural production appropriates black Africans by using them as bit characters and figures of fun in plots that center Whiteness. This appropriation disenfranchises black Africans. I hope my work shifts the field. Blackness is integral both to the literary canon (Black characters and Black voices are found throughout canonical Spanish and Portuguese genres) and to Iberia's identity.

Most critics of early modern Iberian literature do not detect agency, power, resistance, or voice in European representations of Black Africans in early modern theater, fiction and poetry. Insofar as they discuss black African characters at all, they largely view them as minor figures whose actions, words, and presence are incidental. It is understandable that these scholars did not take up the issue of representation of Blackness in the works they consider, because Blackness is hard to detect in a White-centered field that deploys reading practices and critical approaches anchored in a binary logic, White vs. Black. Anchored in Black and Africana studies, and conditioned by Black Feminism, my work recuperates Black presence in these texts. I show how Blackness is inscribed in these literary works in ways that elucidate many of the ways in which black African epistemologies and cultural practices have shaped early modern Iberian cultures.

The works of Baltasar Fra-Molinero, John Beusterien, Jerome Branche, Antonio Santos Morillo and more situate Blackness and early modern Iberian race relations along the lines of racist banter and racist stereotypes. These critics are representative of a scholarly tradition that does not see agency, power, resistance, nor voice in the presence of European representations of black Africans in early modern Iberia. Santos Morillo's article, "Caracterización del negro en la literatura española del XVI" (2011) thoroughly explains the depiction and presentation of adult black characters in drama as being similar to children or even animals. Moreno (qtd. in Santos Morillo) states that:

> Los negros son presentados en estas obras como niños grandes o bobos que no manejan el idioma con corrección y a los que sus amos, con una actitud paternalista —en el mejor de los casos—, ríen las gracias e intentan a veces enmendar sus errores lingüísticos. Pero, al mismo tiempo, en su tarea civilizadora, imponen su autoridad para educarlos debidamente y mostrarles los límites de la moral católica y de su condición servil. (29)

Along the same vein, John Beusterien's *An Eye on Race* (2006) explicitly depicts how imperial theater in Spain, and arguably the Iberian world, associates Blackness with a defiled religion and skin color. The emphasis and tone of their criticism is a very "white over (vs.) black." Insofar as

they discuss black African characters at all, they largely view them as minor characters whose actions, words, and presence are incidental. With good reason, these scholars did not take up the issue of representation of Blackness in these works: it is challenging to detect them, and this wasn't their scholarly agenda. I take their reading further by interpreting the appearance of black Africans as both marginal *and* central characters in Iberian imperial cultural productions. The plays *Autos das Regateiras and El negro del mejor amo* features Black characters with more agency and significance than criticism suggests since the character in both of these characters are fundamentally acknowledged throughout the play. Meaning, the Black characters are central characters to the plays, and had they not be featured the play would not be the same and would shift the plot. I show how Blackness is inscribed in these literary works in ways that elucidate many of how black African epistemologies and cultural practices have shaped early modern Iberian cultures.

As it relates to Black women, Fra-Molinero writes about this population in Spain in a chapter called "The Condition of Black Women in Spain during the Renaissance" (1995). He exposes racist attitudes towards Black slave women in Spain during the 16th and 17th centuries that are conventional in the field. His reading portrays her as being silent, not having an individual presence in literature, only mentioned in certain documents because of a crime or being the victim of one and her actions are always interpreted by others. While this reading was fundamental to the field of early modern Iberian studies and helps situate Black women's presence in this time frame, it does not portray them as having agency or subjectivity. This is a conventional reading of the lack of Black women's presence in the early modern Iberian canon that dismisses the personhood of the Black woman and renders her as a placeholder (insignificant). My work redacts the personhood and subjectivity of the Black woman literary

characters by recovering her agency through modalities and gestures that render them relevant and integral to the early modern Iberian canon. I find these modalities and gestures in non-canonical works such as Entremeses (the “minor entertainments” shown during intermissions of major dramatic works), novellas, and various other “marginal” or “secondary” varieties of literary production.

Jonathan Goldberg’s *Queering the Renaissance* (1994) interrupted conventional interpretations of early modern literature and culture. He reread major elements of the literary canon by recuperating the place of homosexuality in Renaissance culture and remapping fixed heterosexist norms in Renaissance literature. Similarly, my work interrupts and rearranges the Iberian early modern period to attend to a revised narrative that acknowledges and underscores the contributions of black Africans. I am undoing the erasure of black African lives and their cultural production on the peninsula to highlight what already exists. I am joining a group of scholars that critiques Iberian Studies through a lens of racialization focusing on Blackness.

Scholars such as Nicholas Jones, Herman L. Bennett, Erin Kathleen Rowe, Jennifer Nash, T.F. Earle, and K.J.P Lowe (among others) approach racialization with a focus on Blackness that recuperates Black agency, subjectivity, and subject-hood. Jones’s work seeks to recuperate agency and subjectivity to Black literary characters through material culture. His groundbreaking work and book *Staging Habla de Negros: Radical Performances of the African Diaspora in Early Modern Spain* (2019) and scholarly agenda to the field has shifted thoughts surrounding Black characters and retainment of sub-Saharan Blackness culturally and linguistically to the early modern Iberian canon. Bennett’s work centers on the encounters of Europeans with West Africans as early as 1441 and through this history, he challenges the current discourse on black Africans. He analyzes the social statuses of an African “sovereign

subject" and "legitimate slave" within Roman and canon law through the conquest of Guinea, West Africa, especially in his book *African Kings and Black Slaves* (2019). Rowe's work establishes a platform and tangible information, both textual and visual, on the global impact of Black saints and the construction of sacred Blackness. She reveals how Afro-Iberians, who have traditionally been set aside, played a major role in new forms and practices of Catholic ritual in the early modern Church in Europe and the Americas, especially in her book *Black Saints in Early Modern Global Catholicism* (2019). T.F. Earle and K.J.P Lowe's edited volume *Black Africans in Renaissance Europe* (2005), centers on blackness in Early Modern Studies by recognizing and solidifying black African representation and experiences in Renaissance Europe. This collection focuses on the life and experiences of black Africans in Renaissance Europe shedding light on the complexity of black African life during this era.

Too often, the ones who labor and create something so valuable are forgotten or trampled when the time comes to receive honor or recompense. As it relates to literacy and orality, my sentiments resonate with what Saul says when he tells us, "I interpret in the same light the regret, frequently reported in the West Africanist literature, that traditions have been lost because the ancestors did not know how to write them down" (15). I want to communicate the importance of my spiritual work and my work with GOD. My work and research situate me as an authorial medium with which my ancestors elected me. For this reason, there is a compelling spiritual component to my project that reaches beyond my research but toward a world of humanity.

Therefore, my work plants a seed of restoration, reframing the lens of Blackness in the Iberian early modern archive and seeing the harvest. The seed I plant will be through critical discussion and observation of how Blackness has been disenfranchised and reshaping its roots by being a bearer of the fruit. The fruit that I intend to see borne is a fruit that sees how Blackness

has contributed greatly to the Iberian Peninsula and restored their role on the continent, which will, as a result, recuperate Iberian Blackness.

II: SEED OF LANGUAGE AND THE ROOT

Beauty, Fala de preto and Spiritual Gifts

Portuguese Chapter (2nd chapter of dissertation)

This chapter focuses on the poem: "Endechas a Bárbora Escrava (aquela Cativa)" (1595) by Luís Vaz de Camões and theater and drama in the Portuguese tradition by using the play, "Autos das Regateiras" (1565) by António Ribeiro Chiado. Through lyric poetry and theater, I discuss how black African females were figured into an abject position and how this cultural production in Portugal portrays Black characters as minor and marginal. My interpretation of these black African women in this poem and play is that despite being placed in an abject position, they are the core around which the narrative and plot revolve. I center these characters as Black subjects and recuperate their agency through this theorization of Blackness. In this chapter, I theorize Blackness for these black African woman literary characters through Conjure Feminism and Black subjecthood. And throughout the dissertation, I analyze these characters wielding agency who shape the plot and direct the storyline.

Introduction

Conjure Feminism, according to Kinitra Brooks, et al., is "an embodied theory that recognizes the importance of spirit work in the development of Black feminist intellectual traditions rooted in... the epistemic agency of Black women" (457). This Feminism embodies Black women and includes the spiritual element that Black women bring. They can bring various aspects such as physical and mental comfort and clarity or bring forward spiritual or physical gifts through spiritual knowledge, counsel, and time with the divine. The work of Black women and what they contribute to literature and drama does not always appear explicitly in the text but expands beyond the physical, influencing us indirectly. This is the power of Black women, and their spirit

work gives them a sense of agency that roots back to their ancestors. So Conjure Feminism functions as an "a set of ethical demands that derive from African-based and Christian practices and are grounded in the ontological potential in quotidian Black life. We want to tap into the power of ritual and Black women as agents of transformation for renewing and creating" (qtd in Fett 2002, 53). This embodied theory situates the work of Black women's literary characters as central to literature and drama. When a Black woman character appears in a literary text or drama set, an ethical demand drives them to be as they are and speaks to their subjecthood.[21] For this reason, Conjure Feminism operates to renew the Black woman characters in both Camões's poem and Chiado's play from enslaved and marginal, respectively, to central to their plot. Additionally, through this renewal to central characters, these Black woman characters create their own subjectivities grounded in spirit work.

To approach the Portuguese tradition within the early modern, especially with attention to Blackness, it is essential to discuss the canonical work of Portuguese chronicler Gomes Eanes de Zurara (1841). The work of Zurara recounts the Christianizing mission of the Portuguese on the coast of West Africa, including how they captured black Africans for labor on the Iberian Peninsula. These missions per the Chronicle begin in 1441 when the first black Africans were captured by the Portuguese under the leadership of Antão Gonçalves. Twenty-six years earlier, the Portuguese had conquered Ceuta, led by John I. During the expedition of Gonçalves in 1441, they landed near Cabo Blanco which is in present-day Mauritania. During this expedition, the

[21] To follow up on the quote of Conjure Feminism here, everyone is born with responsibilities to certain things whether it be their family, society, their country and much more. Black women have a set of ethical demands and important spirit work that root back to their ancestors "African-based and Christian practices" and this is how Black woman are "agents of transformation for renewing and creating." As agents of this transformation, it employs a sense of agency and autonomy to make their own decisions and be confident in it.

explorers wanted to go further inland. The previous expedition under the leadership of another explorer had not successfully captured any black Africans. However, the heat was intense, and there was not much water, so Gonçalves's expedition returned to their ship. As they returned to the sea, they saw a naked man following a camel and captured him. Then they saw a "black Mooress" who they also caught.

"E indo assy avyados, viram ir hũa moura negra, que era serva daquelles que ficavam no outeiro" (75). [And, as they were going on their way, they saw a black Mooress come along who was slave of those on the hill]. The presence of this Black woman is deeply embedded in the launching of the transatlantic slave trade as it was through her body that we understand who can be legitimately enslaved. Herman L. Bennett's book, titled *African Kings and Black Slaves,* challenges the social status and beliefs surrounding colonial discourse and black Africans. He analyzes the social status of an African "sovereign subject" and "legitimate slave" within the Roman and canon law through the conquest of Guinea. Bennett comments on the "black Mooress" who was "discovered" initially as the Portuguese encountered the Guinean inhabitants. This Black served as "[a] human measure [through] a black woman's body, so as to delineate who could be legitimately enslaved" (62), and it was through her that the Portuguese determined the social status of each Guinean inhabitant. Although they captured a naked man before this woman, the seed of the transatlantic slave trade was planted through the Black woman's body. Bennett reinforces the distinguishing factors the Portuguese created by producing dichotomies such as Moor from blackamoor, infidel from pagan, African from Black, and sovereign subject from the slave. Moreover, he discusses how the Portuguese, as they encountered more Guinean inhabitants, created more labels: "Negros," "blacks," "black Moors," "Ethiops," and "Guineas" as ways to describe inhabitants and their differences. Bennett's observation of the significance of

this ostensibly minor, marginal Black female figure in Zurara's account is key to my own approach to reading Iberian texts. The "Black Mooress" doesn't receive any significant attention in Zurara, and in fact, she is a relatively minor figure for Bennett, whose arguments do not necessarily center female presence, even though he astutely notes how important a Black female is to Zurara's emergent racializing discourse. I analyze Black women in literary texts in a way that develops Bennett's approach, through reading practices shaped in part by Conjure Feminism.

Moreover, a Black woman and her body play an important role in matters of economics, particularly in relation to slavery and nation-building. Nations were created mainly through the bodies of Black women. This idea attends to Hegel's ideals of the dialectic. Hegel's notion of the dynamics of lord/bondsmen applies in this context since we can understand the entire nation is the lord, and the Black woman is the bondsman. The Lord is the master, and the bondsman is the enslaved person/servant. The Lord is independent, and the Bondsman depends on the Lord. However, the Bondsman constitutes the master. In other words, the lord (Portugal) required the assistance of the bondsmen (black African sisters) to continue the work of building the Portuguese nation. Through the eyes of the nation with regard to construction and creation, the Black woman becomes the object that is subject to that order, the order to help create the nation of Spain and Portugal. This abject position aims to birth more enslaved people to build the nation. The Black woman is a car's ignition; without the ignition, the car would not start. In a pertinent essay entitled "Whiteness as Property," Cheryl Harris states, "The cruel tension between property and humanity was also reflected in the law's legitimation of the use of Blackwomen's bodies as a means of increasing property" (1719) and later, on the same page the text states that, "slaves were bred through Blackwomen's bodies." To connect the Hegelian dialectic of Lord and

master and slavery, there is an essential link to economics and the idea of building a nation or empire. In the context of the transatlantic slave trade, there is constant discussion of how the trade contributed to the economy and how we classify nations, cultures, and people. The bodies of black African sisters on the Iberian Peninsula, such as in the context of Zurara, provide the foundation for launching the transatlantic slave trade. The nations of Spain and Portugal are primarily formed with the contributions of black African sisters and their reproductive systems.

Nevertheless, the Hegelian dialectic from the other direction of servant to Lord conveys the importance of the black African woman. The black African woman captured by the Portuguese had knowledge that the Portuguese wanted. Antão Gonçalves wanted his men to seize this woman because he did not want her to run off with information only known to her and not them. The voyagers under Gonçalves's command, however, did not want to capture the woman since the black Africans who showed up to combat against the Portuguese were doubled in number:

> Antam Gllž todavya disse, que fossem a ella, ca podia seer que o menos preço daquelle encontro farya aos contrairos cobrar coraçooēs contra elles. E ja veedes, voz de capítam, entre gente hush a obedeceer, quanto prevallece. Seguindo seu acordo, a moura foe filhada" (75). [Antão Gonçalves told them to go after her for if (he said) they scorned that encounter, it might make their foes pluck up courage against them. And now you see how the word of a captain prevaileth among men used to obey; for, following his will, they seized the Mooress].

According to Zurara, the Portuguese proceeded to capture the black African woman because it would have shown their weakness. Immediately, she is thrown into an abject role but forced to reveal information the Portuguese need to continue expeditions further inland and capture more black Africans. The information this sister had was exactly what the Portuguese desired because through her body was the delineation of legitimate slavery. Despite the role of the abject, she contributes significantly to the tradition of strength and power of black African womanhood.

Without her body, there would not have been a delineation of legitimate slavery. From Zurara's account, the Black woman is a “Mooress” that leads to the concept of “Blackamoors” during this time. Through the Portuguese search and maritime learning, there is a “discovery” of “Blackamoors” upon the coast of Africa.

The discovery of “Blackamoors” began with the Portuguese' aim to search for more “Moors”[22] outside the Iberian Peninsula to convert them to Christianity. Literary critic Josiah Blackmore in his book *In Moorings: Portuguese Expansion and the Writing of Africa* (2009), offers insight to understand how Africans throughout the continent were grouped as “Moors” or as different from the Europeans. In his chapter called “Encountering the African,” he discusses explicitly how the Africans were perceived as the Portuguese encountered them. The text points out that “…by considering the word Moor, [it is] a shifting and slippery label in medieval Iberia. Prior to the campaigns of maritime expansion initiated by Portuguese travelers in the fifteenth century, the Moor (Portuguese mouro, Castilian moro) was the emblematic African in the Iberian literary and historical imagination” (2). Specifically for the Iberian territory, the term “Moor” is projected on anything unknown to Europe to map the world and convert those to Christianity. Blackmore observes that “in using the term “Moor” to name the African [he does] not mean to repeat the imperialist practice of reducing the demographic diversity of Africa to an undifferentiated mass of otherness with one label. Rather, [he employs] this etymon since it was part of the lexical and conceptual currencies of the late-medieval and early-modern periods and so was a component of historical and imaginative thought.” (xvi). On the same lines, Nabil Matar’s (qt in Blackmore) formulation of the Moor in early-modern English culture is a

[22] The term “Moor” in contemporary usage is a slur, so “people of the Islamic faith” is helpful to substitute this term.

"representation of the non-European non-Christian in the Renaissance [that] was not so much dependent on facts and experience as on cultural molds and imaginary portraits." (xvii)

Even more than what I see in Spain, Africa during the 16th century was central to and solidified the Portuguese's national identity. In 1498, Vasco da Gama, Portuguese explorer and the first European to reach India by sea, led the first fleet around Africa to India. When he arrived in Kozhikode (Calicut), India, he established a maritime route from Portugal to India. In other words, his initial voyage to India was the first to link Europe and Asia by an ocean route, connecting the Atlantic and the Indian oceans and therefore, the West and the Orient.

The very canonical epic poem *Os Lusíadas* (The Lusiads) (1572) in Lusophone Literature established the Portuguese's national identity. The poem consists of 10 cantos recounting the Portuguese explorations by sea for imperial expansion during the fifteenth- and sixteenth-centuries. It stands as an important work for Portugal in foundational Portuguese letters since it includes the historic achievements, they completed that widely expanded their territorial empire. This poem is frequently compared to Virgil's *Aeneid*, a Latin epic poem. *Os Lusíadas* is considered a national epic poem for Portugal, similar to Virgil's *Aeneid* for the Ancient Romans and Homer's *Iliad* or *Odyssey* for the Ancient Greeks. Notably, critics such as Josiah Blackmore, David Quint, and Lawrence Lipking consider the poem a reflection of Portugal's national identity, serving as a foundational work of Lusophone Literature.

A point of entry into the construction of Portugal's national identity through this poem is by way of considering the apparition of a sea giant and titan, Adamastor, in Canto V. In Canto V, Adamastor appears to warn the Portuguese of the danger that awaits them should they continue on their maritime journey by way of the Cape of Good Hope. This journey presents difficulties because it hadn't been voyaged yet, and the sea does not make it any easier. Adamastor and the

sea represent the native populations of African landscapes and people in reference to their resistance. Adamastor appears at the Cape of Good Hope to confront the Portuguese about the African people and landscapes. Along this same vein, Adamastor has a mythological origin that frames his apparition similar to Virgil and Homer's poems. David Quint says that this scene is admirable because of:

> the giant rising up at the midpoint of Camões's ten-canto epic, at the geographical midpoint and boundary of da Gama's journey. More than any episode of the *Lusíadas,* it has given the poem its place in world literature, a place to which Camões and even his hero da Gama self-consciously lay claim. At the end of his narrative, da Gama favorably compares it to the maritime adventures recounted in the *Odyssey* and the *Aeneid*…the claim to historical truth certainly appears odd after da Gama has narrated the apparition of a prophesying cloud-born giant. (255-256)

> Cantem, louvem e escrevam sempre estremos
> D'êsses seus semideuses, e encareçam
> Fingindo, Magas, Circes, Polifemos,
> Sirenas que co canto os adormeçam;
> Dem-lhe mais navegar à vela e remos,
> Os Cícones e a terra onde se esqueçam
> Os companheiros, em gostando a loto;
> Dem-lhe perder nas águas o pilôto;
> Ventos soltos lhe finjam e imaginem
> Dos odres, e Calipsos namoradas,
> Harpias que o manjar lhe contaminem,
> Decer às sombras nuas já passadas:
> Que por muito e por muito que se afinem
> Nestas fábulas vãs, tão bem sonhadas,
> A verdade, que eu conto nua e pura,
> Vence toda grandíloca escriptura. (5.88-89)[23]

[23] All citations of *Os Lusíadas* are from the edition by Emanuel Paulo Ramos.

> [Let them sing, praise, and write, always in the highest terms, of those
> Demigods of theirs and let them exaggerate, feigning sorceress Circes,
> Polyphemuses, Sirens that put men asleep with their song; let them still
> Voyage with sails and oars among the Ciconians and to the land where
> Their companions, having tasted the lotus, become forgetful, let them
> Lose their helmsman in the sea. Let them feign and imagine winds
> Released from wineskins and enamored Calypsos, Harpics that foul their
> Food; let them descend to the naked souls of the dead: for as much, as
> Greatly as they refine these empty fables, so well dreamed up, the truth
> That I tell, naked and pure, outdoes all their grandiloquent writings.][24]

The text about Adamastor discusses different demigods for example, Polyphemuses and Sirens. These mythical gods serve as powerful demigods through their voice or what comes out of their mouth. This is parallel to the figure of Adamastor as it plays a major role in the poem, the sea and models of the *Odyssey* and the *Aeneid*.

The figure of Adamastor complicate its representation for the "Other" in *Os Lusíadas*. Adamastor represents the resistance of the indigenous populations, although he complicates the narrative by focusing more on the Portuguese rather than them. The poem explains the unknown people and land and as a territory to civilize for imperial expansion, but they are classified as "Moors" or the "Other." In the poem, the African represents a Black Moor ("Blackamoor"), which is an imaginary portrait drawn on by the Portuguese. There are several references to Moors in the poem, which was part of the aim for the Portuguese voyage to gain labor force to expand their territory. Joaquim Romero Magalhães remarks that fifteenth century Portugal had demands for slavery and:

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[24] English translation by David Quint in "Voices of Resistance," p. 256.

> In Portugal and southern Spain these new slaves were soon working alongside freemen and captive Moors. The [B]lacks however were in greater demand than the Moors, because they were more open to conversion and also, if they tried to escape, it was easier to recapture them as they did not have so far to run to the Maghreb for example. Furthermore, [B]lacks were expected to be more compliant. They were deeply traumatized by the violence of their capture and removal to another completely different society. Even so, there were no particular difficulties in their integration. The Moors, however, even if Christianized, were always considered dangerous and potentially treacherous. Their native lands and their families were not very far away. (143-144)

The Portuguese imagined Moors as lacking the Christian faith and during their voyage around the Cape of Good Hope, they encountered the "Black Moor" or the African. It is important to note the tension between the Moor and the African as it is presented in the poem because it suggests that the Portuguese were anticipating the Moor but not the African. The poem discloses in Canto V that, "De África, que ficava ao Oriente/A província Jalofo, que reparte/Por diversas nações a negra gente" (5.10.1-3) [From Africa, which was to the East/Jolof province, which divides/Across different nations of black people] which maps Africa. The quote maps a region of Africa to project the same expectations of the "Moor." The Jolof province or Confederation was a large geographical area extending from "the Senegal River in the north to the Gambia River in the south. Included in the confederation were the Mandingo, Fula, Jolof, and Tukulor peoples" (James H. Sweet 84). The poem implies that the Jolof province divides into different nations of Black people because this region has many communities, languages, faiths and cultures. This leads to the subtext that the apparition of Adamastor, a black sea giant, links to the Portuguese encountering the African during da Gama's voyage around the Cape of Good Hope.

The voice of Adamastor in the middle of the epic poem (Canto V) is said to be prophecies of eventual imperial successes since Vasco da Gama writes about this encounter after it occurred. He curses the Portuguese and explain what dangers lie ahead of them that is worse than death: "Que o menor mal de todos seja a morte" (5.44.8) [The least evil of all would be

death]. Quint points out that, “his prophecy of future Portuguese hardships and disasters at the cape recalls the curse of the cyclops in the *Odyssey*, while his monstrous body, “horrendo e grosso [hideous and thick]” (5.40.5), echoes Virgil’s description of Polyphemus: “monstrum horrendum, informe, ingens” [horrible, unformed, huge monster] (3.658)” (256). Here we see Adamastor and his mythological origin and the significance he presents for the Portuguese and their empire. Jared Banks observes that, “although historically Adamastor's curses describe catastrophes which are well documented, Vasco da Gama halts Adamastor's prophetic voice” (6), which shows the interference and interruption da Gama’s fleet made in Africa. One of the curses that is documented is when the text says Adamastor wants vengeance from the explorer Bartholomeu Dias[25]: “Aqui espero tomar, se não engano/De quem me descobriu suma vingança” (5.44.1-2) [Here I hope to seize, if I'm not mistaken/From the one who discovered their great revenge] and what lies ahead is worse than death, as mentioned above. The voice of Adamastor was not as powerful as it seems (being a giant and all) and that this defeat was disseminated upon the Africans. His voice represented the population without a voice, but his defeat communicates the relinquishment of the voice for the Africans that was not considered. This suggests that the same weakness Adamastor had confronted with da Gama is the same weakness the Africans faced when encountering da Gama and his fleet. Adamastor appeared strong against the Portuguese and knowledgeable of their fate, however he eventually vanished when the text states, “Assi contava, e c’um medonho chôro/Súbito d’ante os olhos se apartou/Desfez-se a nuvem negra, e c’um sonoro/Bramido muito longe o mar soou” (5.60.1-4) [“Thus parlied he; and with appalling cry/from out of sight the gruesome Monster died;/the black cloud melted, and

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[25] Bartolomeu Dias was a Portuguese mariner and explorer. In 1488, he became the first European mariner/navigator to round the southern tip of Africa that opened a route from Europe to Asia.

arose on high/sonorous thunders rolled by the tide"[26]]. African colonial Others were subjected to the Portuguese. Da Gama recounts this particular part of the poem and not Adamastor which further implies that there is an implicit bias in the narrative. In this aspect, da Gama is privileged to recount the story how he sees fit for the conventionalities of voyage narratives during the colonial expansion.

Critiques observe the vast importance of Canto V with the apparition of Adamastor, who is essentially an invented figure. On one hand, he is perceived as assurance to the glorification of the Portuguese and on the other hand he represents the unknown that finds the Portuguese as a familiar people, speaking the same language and about future disasters. The Africans who encountered the Portuguese did not speak the same language and thus used hand gestures to communicate, whereas Adamastor immediately presented his speech as understood by the Portuguese by cursing them. Lawrence Lipking contends that Adamastor's importance to the twentieth-century reader is that "in the aftermath of the long colonial shipwreck, the answer has seemed irresistible. Adamastor is the Other; the dark, unconquerable continent; the victims of imperialism; the [B]lacks who already inhabit the land but whom T*he Lusiads* barely notices (217)." He also mentions that "yet Adamastor does emerge from the landscape and dissolve into the elements, [it is] as if his whole being were no more than an optical illusion. Now you see him, now you don't (215)," which directly describes the failure of Adamastor's presence as a voice and resistance for the Africans. Adamastor is in fact a failed resistance on the part of the African colonial others because they still are colonized by the Portuguese and forced to become subject to the Portuguese as Adamastor did as well. Banks, in the same vein, remarks that:

[26] English Translation by Richard Francis Burton, published in 1880, p. 199.

> in terms of the chronology of the voyage, Vasco da Gama and his ships had already rounded the Cape of Good Hope and arrived at the Kingdom of Melinde when Vasco da Gama recounts both events. Thus, in the first stage of the chronicles as in *Os Lusiadas* one finds a tautological voice which predicts the consequences of the Portuguese voyages while assuming their success. (4)

Moreover, since Adamastor is a sea monster, the sea itself has its own personality that advances the voyages of discovery by the Portuguese. This is important to early modern Portugal as the sea was a site for maritime expansion. The sea represents an identity. The identity it represents is of those unknown natives and land along the coast of Africa that will be conquered by a nation. Margarida Calafate Ribeiro (qt by Patrícia Ferraz de Matos) highlights that "*Os Lusíadas* são assumidos como <<o discurso fundador da identidade de uma pátria em expansão>> e o símbolo da <<gloriosa voz onde a imagem nacional e a imagem imperial se fundem>> [The Lusiads are assumed as <<the founding discourse of the identity of an expanding homeland>> and the symbol of the <<glorious voice where the national image and the imperial image merge] (203)." In other words, the epic poem garnered a voice and image for Portugal through the maritime voyages. This is the imperial imagination that the Portuguese seek to find and construct as they make their voyage with Vasco da Gama around the Cape of Good Hope. Therefore, this imperial imagination gave way to the discovery of the Cape of Good Hope that advanced the voyage to India. This idea suggests that the natives and land along the coast of Africa didn't have an identity and were patiently waiting to be defined. Just because this space was uncharted does not mean that these people and land didn't have an identity. That is to say that they had an identity, so the natives and land that existed prior to da Gama's encounters felt culturally and socially violated. Christopher T. Lewis asserts that, "The Portuguese epic, *Os Lusíadas* [by] Vasco da Gama, [discusses] the Portuguese fleet face [as] their epic mirror of fortune in the sea itself as they seek out the maritime route to India" (353). He precedes this by

saying that there is an epic mirror similar to Virgil through the Renaissance, that seeks to find "*an identification*" like Lacan's mirror stage. This stage assumes "an image that is seemingly predestined to have an effect"[27] — that describes the predestined mindset of the Portuguese. The Portuguese didn't possess land territory such like the Spanish and the English, so they were overshadowed in the European context which most likely led to their successful maritime imperial expansion. The Lacan's mirror stage would suggest, however, that the Portuguese were without an identity themselves in Europe within the Iberian Peninsula and pursued to construct one. Therefore, the construction of the Portuguese heroic identity was led by Vaso da Gama overcoming the "unknown" sea and the "uncharted" spaces.

This context of early modern Portugal which includes the work of Zurara, the classification of "Blackamoor," the epic poem *The Lusiads*, the sea and the figure of Adamastor frames the time period and how canonical works during this time shaped Portugal's history and identity. From Zurara's account of the black "Mooress," this context helps to understand the importance of Black women characters in early modern Portuguese literary texts and how their presence and resistance are good sites for agency and subjecthood.

The Black woman characters in Camões and Ribeiro's texts shows us sites of agency and subjecthood through acts of community creation, Africanized Portuguese speech called "fala de preto," as well as how Black women acted both as guardians of cultural practices and provided the foundations for Portuguese national culture and identity. Other critics have begun to attend to aspects of the black African woman and their subjectivities. Celeste Fortes in "O corpo negro como tela de inscrição dinâmica nas relações pós-coloniais em Portugal: a *Afro* como (pre)texto"

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[27] Jacques Lacan, *Écrits: The First Complete Edition in English.* Trans. Bruce Fink. (New York: W. W. Norton, 2007), 76.

[The Black Body as Screen of Inscription of Dynamic Relations in Post-Colonial Portugal: the *Afro* as (Pre)Text], explores the absence and invisibility of the black African in the public Portuguese sphere and the black African female woman. This absence is constructed and inscribed in the Portuguese's national identity. Presumably, ideas of the Portuguese nation and belonging excludes Black people and Black women in particular. However, in this essay Fortes revalues the body of black Africans as the active medium between Portuguese and African relations that lead back to the early modern context. Fortes conveys that, "contudo, aqui e agora, o corpo negro tem sido revalorizado como mediador activo nas relações reconfiguradas, entre Africanos e Portugueses" (240) [however, here and now, the black body has been revalued as an active mediator in the reconfigured relations between Africans and Portuguese].[28] The author uses a contemporary magazine focused on Black people and beauty to describe the importance of African roots in other places such as Brazil. Through public speeches or features in magazines, within the last decade or so, the black body is reconfigured as integral to the relations between Africa and Portugal that leads back to the early modern context.

The Black body performed many tasks and still had strength to create a community for themselves. José Ramos Tinhorão writes about the work life of enslaved black Africans in the city, focused in Lisbon, Portugal during the fifteenth and sixteenth-century. He presents a chapter dedicated to the work life of literary characters and "na vida urbana portuguesa" where he comments their importance and influence:

> a integração do escravo negro-africano, logo chamado o *preto,* na vida urbana portuguesa, embora limitada às classes mais baixas -- a dos trabalhadores do pesado, do pequeno comércio ambulante, de alguns sectores das actividades mesteirais e, na maioria, dos serviços domésticos --, alcançou em quase quatrocientos anos de presença contínua

[28] The author reflects on the actress Tais Araújo, an Afro-Brazilian woman, who was featured on the opening issue for *Afro* magazine in 2008. Fortes writes that this actress discusses her roots in Africa and how Africa is represented in every corner of the world.

uma relevância sociocultural que se traduziria nos costumes, em especializações profissionais, na crendice religiosa, nas diversões (canto, danças e touradas), no teatro e, finalmente, na criação de um tipo absolutamente original de literatura: o folheto de cordel em <<língua de preto>> (107).

[the integration of the black African slave, soon called the [the Negro, the Black], in Portuguese urban life, although limited to the lowest classes - that of heavy workers, small street commerce, some sectors of artisanal activities and, in the majority, of services in almost four hundred years of continuous presence, achieved a sociocultural relevance that would be translated into customs, professional specializations, religious beliefs, entertainment (singing, dances and bullfights), theater and, finally, the creation of an absolutely original literature: the cordel pamphlet[29] in <<Black speech >>

Tinhorão communicates through this quote, the personhood and power of black Africans. Although "limited to the lowest classes" enslaved black Africans affirms their identity through customs, beliefs, professional specializations, entertainment, and literature.[30] This is a direct representation of how black Africans are not just represented within Portuguese early modern texts, but that they constitute these texts-- their personhood and power animate the texts themselves.

Isabel Castro Henriques in *A presença africana em Portugal, uma história secular: preconceito, integração, reconhecimento (Séculos XV-XX)* offers insight about black Africans in

[29] Cordel pamphlet is string literature and is dates back to the 16th century. It is a popular and inexpensive pamphlet with folk novels, poems and songs. Some poems are illustrated with woodcuts, also used on the covers.

[30] In the chapter, he discusses the importance of interpreters of language to communicate with Portuguese navigators, so they become familiar with both the land and people. There were black African interpreters with the knowledge of language (sometimes Arabic) to communicate with Portuguese navigators about the land and culture. This connects to the account of Zurara, when Antão Gonçalves captures the naked man and black Mooress because Prince Henry the Navigator orders them to bring information about the African land. Prince Henry the Navigator sends Nuno Tristão to be the interpreter for the Portuguese to communicate with the black African natives. Then "O infante D. Henrique pôde iniciar a formação de turgimãos especialistas em línguas africanas" (108) [Prince Henry the Navigator was able to start the training of specialist interpreters in African languages].

Portugal from the fifteenth-century to the twentieth-century. More pointedly, it offers interventions about how black Africans retained their linguistic and cultural tapestries despite living under the dominance of Portuguese language and culture. The two quotes below frame the culture and identity of black Africans during the "time of discovery" specifically in Portugal.

> O próprio facto dos Africanos terem tido o engenho suficiente para criar o Mocambo de Lisboa, põe em evidência uma capacidade de definir estratégias de não dissolução total no espaço português, criando assim um espaço próprio, a partir da população livre ou alforriada. O Mocambo, ou outros espaços urbanos concentrando Africanos, garantiam uma certa discrição e ocultação de factos aos olhos dos Portugueses, como a sua organização face aos nascimentos, face aos casamentos, face à morte, dado que as regras africanas impunham rituais que divergiam das práticas portuguesas. (23)
>
> [The very fact that the Africans had enough ingenuity to create the Mocambo de Lisboa[31], highlights their ability to define strategies for not total dissolution in the Portuguese space, thus creating their own space, from the free or enfranchised population. Mocambo, or other urban spaces with a concentration of Africans, guaranteed a certain discretion and concealment of facts from the eyes of the Portuguese, such as their organization in relation to births, in relation to marriages, in the face of death, given that African rules imposed rituals that diverged from the Portuguese practices.]

This quote speaks to how black Africans lived in different Portuguese spaces where their livelihood was limited. They found strategies to create community and a way to live free from "the eyes of the Portuguese." It is important to note how black Africans used a "certain discretion and concealment of facts" with regard to civil status, birth, death and African rituals. In order to sustain their personhood and their influence over whatever space they occupy, they created their own way to maintain personal records. Their personal records are relevant because they are a reminder of their identity and existence. The Black women characters in Camões and Ribeiro's texts, upholds their identity through Black expression (speech, voice, tone, non-verbal gestures) and Black beauty (physical appearance, spiritual capability). Despite their limited

[31] A community or neighborhood in Lisbon, Portugal with predominately black Africans.

livelihood in these spaces, black Africans manage to use their mental, spiritual, physical and emotional strength to remain true to their identity.

In the same manner, Castro Henriques discusses practices in Portugal more specifically pertaining to black African women that restore a sense of agency and subjectivity to the black African woman:

> Dado o quadro do parentesco classificatório, cada mulher do patriarca era a mãe dos seus próprios filhos, sendo-o também dos outros filhos do patriarca. As mulheres, mais do que os homens, agiam como guardiãs dos valores culturais, ou seja da sua tradição, naturalmente contrariada pelas condições do funcionamento da sociedade portuguesa, mas de que as estratégias religiosas africanas permitiam conservar amplos fragmentos. (23)
>
> [Given the classificatory kinship framework, each patriarch's wife was the mother of her own children, as well as the patriarch's other children. Women, more than men, acted as guardians of cultural values, that is, of their tradition, naturally contradicted by the working conditions of Portuguese society, but of which African religious strategies allowed to preserve large fragments.]

Black African woman are known to retain the African cultures, beliefs, and traditions despite living among the dominant Portuguese culture and language. This shows how Black women guarded customs and tradition that ultimately allowed black African people to maintain their identity. Through African religious strategies, Black woman provided a kinship framework to maintain an identity and a sense of belonging.

Images in early modern paintings can be read not only as degrading but also as powerful. The public representation of Black women in the Portuguese context serves as a way to understand their presence in the world and in the literary sense. It can serve as a way to recuperate and discuss the retainment of sub-Saharan culture and identity in Portugal. Castro Henriques illustrates in *Mulheres africanas em Portugal: O discurso das imagens (séculos XV-*

XXI) (2019), about 60 images of black African women in paintings from early modern Portugal that can be interpreted in various ways. In a review by Diego Zonta, he discusses the works of Castro Henriques. He states that the Portuguese historian Castro Henriques is a "crítica da visão eurocêntrica...se debruçou sobre as relações afro-portuguesas, e não luso-africanas como costuma enfatizar. Essa opção vai muito além de uma simples escolha terminológica, tratando de reconhecer o africano como o ator principal da sua própria história e no seu próprio espaço" (272) [critic of the Eurocentric view, focused on Afro-Portuguese[32] relations, and not Luso-Africans as usual, to emphasize. This option goes far beyond a simple choice of terminology, but rather to try to recognize the African as the main actor of their own history and in their own space]. One of the images presented in this text of images is the cover of "Auto das Regateiras." The cover emphasizes the Black woman's presence by the contrast of her skin and dress. Her skin is shaded black while her dress is shaded white. The other characters are shaded white, and their dress is as well. The Black woman in the cover stands out. Specifically, the author writes about the cover of the play with the following:

> "Xilogravura da Capa desta obra quinhentista de António Ribeiro Chiado que representa diversas mulheres que integram a trama do texto do autor. As figuras femininas negras no teatro da época vicentina, onde se inclui este autor, desempenham papéis reais e simbólicos importantes que revelam as preocupações da sociedade portuguesa de então. O corpo vestido, a língua falada, a beleza branca que se opõe à fealdade negra são marcadores que usam mulheres africanas nos textos, nas narrativas, nas peças teatrais" (13).
>
> [The woodcut cover of this 16th century work by António Ribeiro Chiado represents several women who are part of the author's text plot. Black female figures in theater during the Vincentian period, including this author, play important real and symbolic roles that reveal the concerns of Portuguese society at the time. The dressed body, the spoken language, the white beauty that opposes the black ugliness are markers of the use of African women in texts, narratives, plays.]

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[32] Afro-Portuguese relating to Black Portuguese with ties to sub-Saharan Africa while Luso-Africans are a mixture of Portuguese and African ancestry who speak Portuguese.

This quote engages with the cover of "Auto das Regateiras" (Figure 1) and how Portuguese society was

Figure 1: Cover of "Auto das Regateiras" (1565)

obsessed with the contrast of White beauty and Black ugliness, spoken language and body dress/gestures. The Black servant character in the play is featured in the woodcut cover which conveys her importance in the narrative, as one of the main characters who advances the storyline and contributes to the plot. She presents on the cover to the right side and towards the bottom, her dress is cut off by the end of the frame. This could represent the conventional reading of the Black woman character as marginal and minor as well as a servant. Moreover, often the pervasive thought between White and Black beauty is that Black is ugly and White is

beautiful. Although, the cover is outlined and shaded by a darker color, there is more white that could lead to this subtext of Black is ugly and White is beautiful. However, her presentation on the woodcut cover communicates that Portuguese society was concerned with Black women, and thus this Black servant has some form of influence and power. She is the only Black woman in the play, and she has a voice in the play that shows her influence and power.

The spoken language by the Black woman in the text is fala de preto. Black language or speech, commonly known as 'habla de negros,' is an Africanized Castillian that was largely introduced during the diasporic arrival of black Africans to Seville via Portugal starting in the fifteenth-century. As Nicholas R. Jones theorizes, "Habla de negros speech forms spoken by black literary characters ultimately exemplify the dispersal of sub-Saharan African linguistic retentions in early modern Spanish texts" (15). I am extending his discussion and analysis to the Portuguese context. An example of fala de preto would be from the Ribeiro's play when the Black woman responds to her mistress: "I have not finished dressing" ("A mi não cabá besi" v. 49) in fala de preto and in Portuguese, it would read, "Eu não acabei de me vestir." This example of fala de preto shows the analysis made by John Lipski when he discusses the ways in which we can detect it. For instance, he mentions two that are present in the said example: Loss of final /r/ in infinitives (cabá would be acabar) and use of (a)mi as subject pronoun (A mi would be eu) (5). Through Black speech, we see the rich African linguistic and lexical items retained in early modern Spanish and Portuguese texts. What is recognized as Habla de negros in Spain is called 'fala de preto' is largely found in Portugal. Habla de negros and fala de preto are markers of power where Black agency and resistance meet. Ultimately, Jones's goal is to "shed light on the recurring—not exceptional—instantiations where habla de negros [and fala de preto] texts showcase their black characters acting and speaking with agency and destabilizing the category

of Whiteness—culturally, linguistically, and in terms of power relations—altogether" (6). Black speech restores agency for the black African on the Iberian Peninsula and reawakens their own power and personhood.

The body gesture of the Black woman character is that of the disapproving aunty attitude in Ribeiro's play. The disapproving aunty attitude appears in the text through features of tone and attitude. In David M. Goldenberg's book *The Curse of Ham: Race and Slavery in Early Judaism, Christianity, and Islam* (2003), he mentions this attitude when he references Song of Songs 1:5-6. He writes that, "verse 6 seems to force the translation "but." "Don't look at me that I am dark, because the sun has burned me" 'is a reply to an apparently critical and disapproving attitude. Thus, "I am black, but beautiful' (80). The interpretation of this biblical scripture when read within Black Feminism thought allows us to perceive a powerful and present Black woman. The forceful nature of the "but" in between the black and beautiful demonstrates a solution to a social and epistemological problem, where society sees White as beautiful and only sees Black beauty in comparison to whiteness. The quote also suggests a presumption that black is not beautiful and this actor in the quote has to fight to announce her beauty. This is the same attitude Luzia presents in the play. Luzia announces her presence and agency here in the play when she speaks in fala de preto and other characters follow her lead and also when she boldly retorts with the disapproving aunty attitude. In this way, she subverts the White supremacy power dynamic.

Luzia

Luzia, is the Black woman character in a short verse play by Chiado "Auto das Regateiras"[33] (The Huckstresses Play) written in 1565. Chiado was known as a satirical Portuguese poet in the

[33] Regateiras were street vendors who were the poorest of early modern Lisbon, Portugal, typically women. This can include Black women and lower-class White women. They would sell things like pasta, dressing, olive oil, salt, cloth material, fruit, vegetables, fish and more.

sixteenth century and a contemporary of Luís Vaz de Camões, who wrote the very canonical epic poem *Os Lusíadas.* This play is not very studied nor canonical in the field but features a black African woman who we can identify as representing Black female presence. It is rare to have a black African woman as the center of the play and while Luzia is not, the text presents her in many parts. The little-known play serves as a good site to analyze Black female presence since the character has a voice, speaks in fala de preto, exercises the disapproving aunty attitude[34] and is featured on the cover of the play. The setting and theme of the play is an upper social class wedding which includes a Black female servant in the house of the engaged bride. The engaged bride is Beatriz and Velha (mistress and widow) is her mother. The Black female servant Luzia or at times "Negra," as she is identified in the play, would become part of the bride's dowry. Velha presents is a *regateira* and a homeowner since she has to work to survive and feed herself and Beatriz. When her husband died, she did not receive a large inheritance. Velha runs her home and prepares Beatriz to be a good wife since she will be getting married soon. The groom is part of a wealthy family and Velha picked him out for her daughter. While Velha prepares her daughter to be a good wife, she gets into constant arguments with Luzia since she demands Luzia to handle tasks quickly. This leads to many insults made by Velha to Luzia and Luzia's bold responses. Throughout the story, Velha talks about how street vending is going and that it is running slow. She talks to the godmother who is a guest at the wedding about her business and that she sells fine material. She then meets with the father of the groom, Pero Vaz, and lists out

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[34] This attitude/look/vibe is common within Black and Asian communities. In a recent vice-presidential debate between Kamala Harris and Mike Pence in Kingsbury Hall at the University of Utah on October 7, 2020, Kamala Harris portrays it - through her facial expressions. It disapproves something or communicates a disagreement of a comment or idea someone says with simply facial expressions including a blank stare, lifting of the eyebrows, and maneuvering the mouth with lips puckered.

some of the benefits Beatriz brings particularly Luzia: "E dar-vos-ei ũa escrava/que trabalha como Zeina/amassa e esfrega e lava" (v. 784-786) [And I will give you a slave/ who works like a watermill/she kneads and scrubs and washes]. Pero Vaz attempts to speak with Luzia and uses fala de preto. This part of the scene is important to the ideas set about fala de preto and how Luzia leads other characters to speak in her language. Finally, Beatriz gets married, and Luzia is also part of this transaction.

"Autos das Regateiras" is a play that focuses on a few characters Velha, Beatriz and Luzia. In a review by R.C.C. he explains how the play focuses on the conversation between Velha and Luzia: "*O Auto* preséntanos singularidades curiosas na fala popular e arcaizante dos persoaxes, especialmente a "Velha," e…da "Negra" (498) [The play presents curious singularities in the popular and archaic speech of two characters, especially the "Old Lady" and the "Black woman"]. Moreover, critics mention the importance of fala de preto that Luzia employs. The reading of this play places Luzia and her employment of fala de preto as part of the canonical reading and convention, however often it is read as buffoonery or mockery.[35]

The inclusion of fala de preto in this play specifically represents the Black woman and her subjecthood. A part of Black female presence for Luzia is through Black speech and Black expression with her interactions in the play, as it serves to destabilize Whiteness. As noted above, the Black woman is addressed by Pero Vaz while the wedding parties are getting to know one another. Velha informs Pero Vaz that she will be part of the dowry for the wedding. During

[35] Refer to José Camões's essay titled "Inaptos de oro: figuraciones del otro en el teatro portugués del siglo XVI" [Golden Misfits: Depictions of the Other in Portuguese Theatre of the 16th century]; also refer to Maria do Rosário Pimentel's essay titled "O Escravo Negro entre cenas de palco" [The Black Slave between stage scenes].

this scene, Velha introduces Luzia to Pero Vaz and he begins a conversation with Luzia in fala de preto:

PERO. Quanto ano Portugal?

VELHA. Não é ela tão salvagem;

falai-lhe vossa linguagem,

inda qu'ela fale mal.

PERO. Quanto ano? não tender?

NEGRA. Boso tem grande borosso.

PERO. Como chamar terra vosso?

NEGRA. Terra meu nunca saber;

pera quê boso perguntá?

êsse cousa nunca ouvir.

PERO. Quantos filhos vós parir?

NEGRA. Dosso, tres, quatro juntá.

PERO. A boso tem inda dente?

VELHA. Ainda tem os queixaes;
é môça, vós que lh'olhais? (v. 809-823)

[Pero. How many year Portugal?
Velha. She is not so uncivilized;
Speak your language with her,
Even though she speaks badly.
Pero. How many year? Do you not understand?
Negra. You are very confused.
Pero. How to call your country?
Negra. My country never to know. But why you ask?
Never to hear that thing.
Pero. How many children you give birth to?
Negra. Two, three, four together.
Pero. You still have tooth?
Velha. She still complains;
She is a young woman, are you looking at her?]

Velha gets upset when Pero Vaz speaks in fala de preto and says to him: “Nao e ela tao salvagem / falai-lhe vossa linguagem,” [“she is not so uncivilized /speak to her in your own language”]. Pero Vaz proceeds in fala de preto and asks the Black servant: “Como chamar terra vosso?” [“how to call your country?”] and the servant responds, “Terra meu nunca saber” [“my country never know”]. Vaz is interested in where this woman is from and the name of her country. He also asks about her teeth. The type of questions he asks her, suggests that he is questioning her value as a servant and use of her body. These are strong questions that points out different parts of her culture and body, but the interest remains with the usage of fala de preto. Although the mistress scolds Pero for speaking in fala de preto*,* he proceeds to speak in her language. While this scene clearly portrays the old woman and Black servant objectified since she is sold to a family in marriage, the play also implies a centralized Black woman character and presence.

The fala de preto in this scene is how Luzia Africanizes not only what she says but also what other characters say. This type of speech shows a specific knowledge of how her country is portrayed in the text, so Pero is interested in conversing. As a speaking subject, Luzia takes control of the scene and her speech throughout the play as she only speaks in fala de preto. Luzia forces other characters like Velha and Pero to communicate in her language or at the very least understand it to interact with her. Luzia transforms the text by renewing herself to a centralized character and not marginal and creating her own subjectivity through a type of spiritual work. Fala de preto clarifies Pero’s questions which comes from the spiritual work Luzia works with. Luzia operates with the spiritual gift of language that brings clarity[36] since it is not known how Pero or Velha understands her speech. This type of speech is not taught but learned by experience and listening, so Luzia insists through her constant iterations of fala de preto

[36] Conjuring feminism.

throughout the play that she holds power. Through analysis and ways to detect fala de preto, it shows the persistent appearance of this speech within black characters and that they are not exceptional moments. While Luzia speaks in fala de preto and Pero Vaz responds and interacts with fala de preto, it marks Luzia's resistant power, agency, and subjecthood. The mistress interacts with fala de preto as well and this, by extension further represents the presence and power of Black characters in plays. Luzia resists the urge to speak standard Portuguese throughout the play and upholds her identity as a black African woman with the mixture of her African-inflected language upon Portuguese.

Through this scene, as a result, the Black woman represents a Black sub-Saharan African linguistic retention in an early modern Portuguese play. As she expresses and speaks in her own way through fala de preto, she is announcing her black African identity in the play. She does not speak standard Portuguese but a Black speech with mixtures of her African identity and some Portuguese. Chiado writes a linguistic blackness recognized through fala de preto. Jones theorizes in his book *Staging Habla de Negros* that there is a connection between language, race and the economic value of habla de negros. "Habla de negros allows the speech form to operate as a site of tension in which Castilian writers try to maintain, and at other times alter and mask, their cultural and symbolic capitals" (23). This extends to Luzia's fala de preto where in the text it is a site for tension for both Chiado and Pero Vaz. Chiado's writes the fala de preto into the play while Pero Vaz's questions underscore the economic value of communicating in fala de preto with Luzia. The power in this scene is a direct representation of exemplifying sub-Saharan African linguistic retentions in an early modern Portuguese play.

While Black speech showcases the retention of linguistic and lexical items in early modern Spanish and Portuguese texts and plays, it also conveys power and personhood within

this character. Luzia embodies Black woman power and retains Africanized inflected language.[37] The text highlights fala de preto through these examples: perguntar > perguntá, and juntar > juntá (loss of final /r/ in infinitives). Also, “Terra meu nunca saber” shows how there is an elimination of preposition, which is common within Afro-Iberian languages.[38] Luzia as a character who holds certain responsibilities within the play such as being a Black woman servant and serving as a crown example of a Black woman. Part of her subjecthood is the use of fala de preto which exemplifies an Africanized element in the play. She has a voice in the play and has moments that focuses on her that often advances the play. Her voice within the fala de preto is where the power is upheld.

The body gesture of the disapproving aunty attitude is a marker of female Blackness that Luzia conveys. The textual elements in the play that conveys this attitude is through tone and sarcasm. Towards the beginning of the story, Velha calls upon the Black servant in the morning to see if she is awake and ready to take care of her tasks. The Black servant is awake praying when Velha calls upon her. The mistress calls upon the Black woman as *candela* [equivalent to bitch] which is an insult by a mistress to Black women. However, the Black woman responds to her mistress asserting, “A mim frugá boso matá/boso sempre bradá bradá/cadela, cadela, cadela/bendê-me pera Castela” (v. 23-26) “qualquer momento de folga que tenho, vindes logo com ameaças de morte; e sempre a gritar, gritar: cadela, cadela, cadela! Pois vendei-me para Castela” [any spare moment I have, you come right away with death threats; and always screaming, screaming: bitch, bitch, bitch! So why don’t you sell me to Castile] which

[37] Also refer to André Belo’s essay titled, “Language as a Second Skin: The Representation of Black Africans in Portuguese Theatre (Fifteenth to Early-Seventeenth Century)”
[38] For more information about this refer to Lipski’s article, “Speaking "African" in Spanish and Portuguese: literary imitations vs.(socio)linguistic reality.”

underscores sarcasm and an intense tone. Luzia has a spare moment in the morning to practice her faith and enjoy some time alone. However, it is interrupted by Velha's insult. The sarcasm translates to when Luzia mocks the mistress by repeating what she usually calls her "cadela, cadela, cadela!" The Black servant follows this with a tease to sell her to Castile instead of staying in Lisbon. This comment suggests an intense tone of resistance to how the mistress is classifying the Black servant. From the quote, Luzia dislikes being insulted and interrupted when she has some time alone. She shows a tone of resistance when she answers with sarcasm and mockery. The sarcasm and intense tone of resistance through this scene demonstrates the disapproving aunty attitude.

Luzia uses this attitude to communicate and express her autonomy within the play. Moreover, this attitude represents Blackness in the play, as she blackens the play through this sarcasm and tone of resistance. Another scene in the play that connects to what was discussed in the previous paragraph represents fala de preto as resistance and the disapproving aunty attitude. As the examples above portray scenarios in which Black speech and the disapproving aunty attitude are present, the following scene conveys both at work. The scene happens after Luzia mocks Velha about what she calls her. The Black servant is gets out of bed when the mistress rushes her out of bed to take care of a few tasks:

> Velha. Cadela, tomai essa Talha
> E ido logo ò chafariz
> E levai convosco o assento,
> Ou nam vos lembre de tornar
> Qu'inda havês de pineirar
> E fazer hoje o formento.
> Qués-te tu hoje abalar? (v.43-49)

[Bitch, take this vessel/and then go to the Chafariz[39]/and take the seat with you/do not forget to return/that you still have to knead the bread/and prepare the flour today/do you want to upset me today?]

The Black servant must grab water from the popular King's Fountain with the vessel on the top of her head, knead the bread and prepare flour. Luzia responds to Velha's command by saying: "A mi não cabá besi" (v. 49) [I have not finished dressing]. Luzia feels rushed as she was already interrupted by Velha with na insult while she was praying. And now she is commanded to take care of tasks when Luzia is not ready yet. Luzia's response portrays fala de preto and the disapproving aunty attitude together. In standard Portuguese the above reads as: "Eu não acabei de me vestir." As aforementioned, the loss of the final /r/ in 'cabá' and the use of the subject pronoun a mi are common lexical items in Black speech. There is a beauty in the way Luzia responds in fala de preto that helps her express herself in her own fashion. Moreover, her expression also communicates the disapproving aunty attitude. She is rushed to get up while she prays and enjoys some alone time. She is interrupted and forced to get up quickly to do tasks, but her response resists that. She takes her time to get up and get dressed as she responds to Velha. There is a sarcastic tone in response as she retorts to Velha that she can not complete the tasks since she is not dressed yet. Velha is forced to wait until Luzia is dressed to complete the tasks she asks. Fala de preto and the disapproving aunty attitude restore a sense of agency to this Black servant. While analyzing Luzia and centering her presence in the story, she blackens the play and

[39] Popular fountain in Lisbon, the King's Fountain. During the early modern, it was a fountain where there were equal amounts of Black and White people. There is an oil on panel painting of it called the "*Chafariz d'el-Rei in the Alfama District*, c. (1570-80). For more information refer to *The Global City: On the Streets if Renaissance Lisbon*, edited by Annemarie Jordan Gschwend and K.J.P. Lowe.

incorporates Africanized elements. The Black servant practices autonomy in her responses and her gestures signals her own subjecthood.

"Endechas a Bárbora Escrava (aquela Cativa)"

Black subjecthood and conjuring feminism bring forward Luzia in Chiado's play and Bárbora in Camões's poem. These theories centralize these Black woman characters and allow them to renew and create their own subjectivities. This poem describes a Black captive woman from India by the name of Bárbora whom the poet was in love with:

Aquela cativa que me tem cativo,
Porque nela vivo já não quer que viva.
Eu nunca vi rosa em suaves molhos,
Que pera meus olhos fosse mais formosa.

Nem no campo flores,
Nem no céu estrelas
Me parecem belas
Como os meus amores.
Rosto singular,
Olhos sossegados,
Pretos e cansados,
Mas não de matar.

Uma graça viva,
Que neles lhe mora,
Pera ser senhora
De quem é cativa.
Pretos os cabelos,
Onde o povo vão
Perde opinião
Que os louros são belos.

Pretidão de Amor,
Tão doce a figura,
Que a neve lhe jura
Que trocara a cor.
Leda mansidão,
Que o siso acompanha;
Bem parece estranha,
Mas bárbara não.

Presença serena
Que a tormenta amansa;
Nela, enfim, descansa
Toda a minha pena.

Esta é a cativa
Que me tem cativo;
E pois nela vivo,
É força que viva.

[That captive who has me captive,
Because I live in her, she no longer wants me to live.
I never saw roses in soft bunches,
I wish my eyes were more beautiful.

Not in the field of flowers,
Not in the sky stars
they look beautiful to me
Like my loves.
singular face,
peaceful eyes,
Black and tired,
But not to kill.

a living grace,
that lives in them,
wait be lady
Whose captive?
black hair,
where the people go
lose opinion
That laurels are beautiful.

Pretense of Love,
So sweet the figure,
that the snow swears to you
That changed the color.
gentle meekness,
That the wisdom accompanies;
Well it seems strange,
But not barbaric.

serene presence
That the storm calms;
In it, at last, rest

All my pity.

This is the captive
That holds me captive;
And because in her I live,
It is strength that lives.]

Camões describes the Black woman or dark-skinned woman according to the tradition of Petrarchan poetic activity. Critics have debated whether the beloved should be read as a Black woman, dark-skinned woman, mulatto woman or Indian woman. Rita Mornoto's essay, "Bárbora escrava": Canon, beauty and color: An embarrassing contradiction" grapples with the ambiguity of the Black female's presence while focusing the readings of this poem "in the light of "mimicry" as conceived by Homi Bhabha." Mornoto considers the beloved as Black. This ambiguity, however, also serves as a productive way to explore this beloved as a Black woman. The poet deploys the Black female body as a source of new, exotic tropes that he uses and appropriates for the poet's benefit, – an obsession of Black beauty.

Lyric poetry during the 16th century describes a beloved through the Petrarchan framework of desire, with elements such as skin like lilies, a neck like marble, and white hands. Camões on the one hand follows Petrarch's template. On the other hand, this poem suggests a racializing discourse at work in Petrarchan tropes, since the woman Camões celebrates is not White. As the poem presents Bárbora as an enslaved "darker-skin woman," the poetic voice still sees her as an appropriate beloved of poetic contemplation, yet she remains captive within that poetic tradition in some way. Camões's attitude towards the Black captive woman seems to be strictly within the tradition of this Petrarchan fragmentation and description of the female body. The woman is silenced, and the poetic voice controls the poetic space, all while he describes her physical body and beauty. For example, when the text comments about her "rosto singular/olhos

sossegados/pretos e cansados" (2.5-7) [singular face/peaceful eyes/black and tired] we observe how the poetic voice obsesses over her face.

Camões's poem seems to position the Black woman into the previously deemed *abject* position since she is silenced and trapped in his love. While the Black woman is silenced in the poem, she plays a major role to the poem and is integral to its narrative and interpretation. The progression in the poem allows for more interpretation concerning the power of the beloved. The recognition of Black female presence and Black beauty are helpful ways to observe the power, subjecthood, and presence of this Black captive woman. Towards the end, the poetic voice says that it is in her that I live that captures how impactful the Black woman is. With centering her presence, we must consider a spiritual component, especially as it relates to this concept of conjuring. Her conjuring presence is integral to the narrative of the poem and interpretation as the poetic voice contemplates her beauty and influence from afar.

While the poetic voice describes the beloved, he also announces her captivity status. A conventional reading would see her as (1) enslaved, thus captive and abject; and (2) as a female beloved in Petrarchan discourse, thus again abject. However, the captivity status initiates the poem and immediately invites the beloved's presence, and the poet indicates that he is captive to her love: "Aquela cativa que me tem cativo/Porque nunca vivo já não quer que viva" (1.1-2). Her presence initiates, advances and ends the poem. Not only does she do that but she also blackens the poem through her spiritual presence and centralized contemplation. The poetic voice is mentally comforted by the spiritual impact Bárbora gives him. This suggests that Bárbora operates with the spiritual knowledge of mental comfort for the poetic voice. She is the conjuring subject that holds power to make the poetic voice accountable for his own life. While the

beloved is voiceless, her spiritual presence paints a picture of her influence over the poetic space and poetic voice.

The aesthetic canon changes as this poem explores new tropes focused on Black beauty. Camões's literary corpus opens up thought toward racial discourse as his poem questions the aesthetics of beauty. António Martins Gomes's essay titled, "A Bárbora e o Jau: a escravatura em Camões" (2019) reveals Camões's attitude towards enslavement and different cultures:

> …encontramos também, nos últimos anos da vida de Camões, uma atitude dicotómica perante o tema da escravatura: por um lado, a escrava Bárbora do seu belo poema em redondilha revela originalidade perante o esgotado cânone estético, confirma a euforia dos descobrimentos portugueses e assinala uma maior abertura de mentalidades a outras civilizações distantes e culturas exóticas… (72-73)
>
> [we also find, in the last years of Camões' life, a dichotomous attitude towards the theme of slavery: on the one hand, the slave Bárbora in his beautiful poem in rounded shape reveals originality in the face of the exhausted aesthetic canon, confirms the euphoria of the Portuguese discoveries and marks a greater opening of thoughts to other distant civilizations and exotic cultures]

In the decades following the Lusíadas, as Camões explored a wider variety of themes beyond conquest and discovery, he also took a second look at enslavement. Despite the canonical perspective of beauty focusing on the figure of Petrarchan's beloved Laura, Camões writes a poem focusing on Black beauty. The quote mentions that the "exhausted aesthetic canon confirms the euphoria of the Portuguese discoveries" which connects the Black body and Black beauty as new, exotic tropes to the poem. The Black body and Black beauty are obsessions and for this reason, the aesthetic canon changes. Due to the time frame and the number of "discoveries" (different languages, people, "Blackamoors," land and more) being made, this poem opens up ideas towards the power of the Black body and Black beauty. Other writers such as William Shakespeare (Dark Lady Sonnets or Black Sonnets about Black beauty) and Lord

Edward Herbert of Cherbury (Sonnet of Black Beauty)[40] wrote about Black beauty during the fifteenth and sixteenth century, but Camões is groundbreaking in the Portuguese early modern tradition. There is an obsession over the Black body that calls for a change to the aesthetic canon.

In the same manner, there is much to explore with the idea of questions of racial segregation within this poem. Gomes writes that:

> Com efeito, o poema "Aquela cativa" mostra uma irreverência primícia perante o velho cânone petrarquista, relativiza o paradigma da estética ocidental e questiona a segregação racial no capítulo amoroso, ao ponto de trocar as posições sociais. (73)
>
> [Indeed, the poem "Aquela cativa" shows a primal irreverence towards the old Petrarchist canon, relativizes the paradigm of western aesthetics and questions racial segregation in the amorous chapter, to the point of changing social positions]

With regard to Black beauty and the idea of imitation, it is not necessary to view beauty with limitations. Beauty expands the somatic skin color, culture, social status and more. As Camões literary corpus opens up thoughts toward racial discourse, the beloved as a Black woman changes social positions. The beloved typically is described as Petrarch's Laura who is white-skinned, blonde hair and revered within European representations of beauty. However, he presents an exotic new trope of Black beauty as he writes about Bárbora. Although the poem presents Bárbora as an enslaved Black woman, the poetic voice still describes her despite what social position they hold.

The progression of the poem and how it transitions from distant to near, conveys the Black beloved's influence. The progression allows for a more nuanced interpretation concerning the power of the beloved. The poetic voice initially expresses a distance from the beloved while

[40] Early modern English tradition

towards the end of the poem, the beloved is closer. "Aquela cativa" is in the first line of the poem while "Esta é a captiva" is in the last stanza. António Martins Gomes observes that Camões begins with "um pronome demonstrativo que implica um afastamento físico ("Aquela cativa"); contudo, a afirmação derradeira do sujeito lírico ("Esta é a cativa") exprime já uma proximidade espiritual...(69)" ["a demonstrative pronoun that implies a physical distance ("Aquela cativa"); however, the final statement of the lyrical subject ("Esta é a captiva") already expresses a spiritual closeness…"]. Gomes's observation about the poetic voice's physical distance from Bárbora implies her close spiritual presence. The ending of the poem expresses more of a nearness, and her spiritual presence is considered. The physical Black woman is not there, but the description of her traps her in the captivity of the poetic's soul. It's an agency as distinct from her legal category as a captive. She does not reach the point to have a voice in the text nor is she a physical presence. And while she does not have the kind of agency over her poetic voice or over her own constitution as an acting and speaking subject, she still exerts influence. This progression of distance to nearness within the poem signals the power of Black female presence. The poetic voice begins the poem with a description of a distant captive woman, while towards the end we observe the beloved's spiritual influence. The power of the Black woman advances the meaning and plot within the poem and the poetic voice explicitly through the demonstrative pronouns ('Aquela 'and 'Esta').

Brooks, Martin and Simmons asserts that, "Conjure Feminism helps to underscore the ways in which Black enslaved women, for example, lived as fully human in spaces of dispossession that erased their humanity at every turn. When we use the term *Black life,* we want to underscore complicated and messy human emotions: depression, sadness, hate, love, ecstasy,

and lust" (458). I would add that Black woman literary characters are not perfect and appear and behave in various ways. I do not seek to highlight moments of Black tokenism or exceptionality but rather to pursue authenticity and considerations of how *Black life* is not perfect and presents complicated emotions. This draws authenticity to the Black woman beloved that further demonstrates her power in the poem. Her influence in the poem calls towards a conjuring spirit to "underscore" her "complicated and messy human emotions [and I add spirituality]." I add spirituality as the characterization of the Black enslaved woman moves beyond the physical and mental, but to a spiritual connection that opens up thought towards her subject-hood and control. Although, she does not have a voice nor is she physically present, her spiritual presence and influence speak through the poem – which is conjuring feminism at work.

Black Madonna Icon

While on the topic of beauty, especially the obsession of Black beauty in the poems, it deems necessary to discuss discourses on the Black Madonna icon. John Beusterien informs us that "with the emergence of skin colour as a sign that differentiates people, a conscious masculine erotic fantasy emerged in which the truly beautiful Iberian woman (the one whom a man is *supposed* to reproduce with) is white. As opposed to the Burgos description of the black Madonna as beautiful…, authors begin to dehumanize and objectify black women by making them speak in a non-standard way and by portraying them as physically ugly, immoral, and promiscuous characters" (197). Both poems articulate the Black woman as beautiful ranging from a poem in the early modern to the romanticism time frame. The icon of the Black Madonna helps theorize Black beauty and influence of Black women. Janet Michello writes a compelling review that "The Black Madonna is associated with Mother, Creator, and Protector of the Earth, a supreme advisor, one who understands the struggles of life, and a spiritual intervening force"

(11). She writes with an interest in the Black Madonna as a theoretical framework for the African origins of other world religious beliefs. Moreover, she indicates that “The Black Madonna symbolizes strength and power, in contrast with the traditional nurturing and obedient depictions of the Mary with a fair complexion” (2). My debate here is not to compare the Black Madonna with depictions of a fair complexed Mary, but rather to underscore the representation of the Black Madonna icon as life and as a spiritual force.

These Black women planted seeds of cultural and linguistic to the hegemonic apparatus that gave way to her sisters in Spain. While the Portuguese section features a play and poem within the early modern time frame, it is important that we take a look within the contemporary perspective. As I analyze these Black woman literary characters under Black speech and the disapproving aunty look to portray their personhood and power, I use disparate sites to discuss Black women within contemporary Portuguese literature.

A Disparate Site and Physical Feature

This section explores a Black embodied subjecthood through *Esse Cabelo* [*That Hair*] by Djaimilia Pereira de Almeida, translated by Eric M. B. Becker. *That Hair* is about an AfroPortuguese girl, Mila, who finds her identity through hair and hair salons. Hair is a disparate physical feature and hair salons are disparate sites. Together, these present as non-traditional, Black female embodied knowledge, that employs subjectivities. This site and feature are in conversation with each other by pointing to how these disparate and related elements show us how the main character, Mila, grapples with institutional and social limitations on her embodied subjecthood and find unconventional places and features of subject formation and transmission of knowledge that remain outside the reach and thus the structures of those social and institutional boundaries. Mila finds that she writes her own person and that her hair and others’

reactions to it do not constitute her person—but, ultimately, this is a lesson she learns *through* the embodied experience of living with her hair. It is the hair salons in Portugal that push her to fully understand her own identity. Thus, hair salons and hair are embodied knowledge without reducing that knowledge to *just* being available through a site or feature.

The novel's format is through Mila's hair journey and how it has been a metaphor for her life. The novel begins with Mila's first hair experience when she was six months old when her mom shaved her hair off because it was straight. Her hair began to grow from this experience, it was reborn as curly. Leading up to the middle of the novel, Mila has an identity crisis as she analyzes her relationship with her black Angolan mother, who constantly asks her about her hair: "The distance that separated my mother and me was the only observable sign that my head had become unmoored…each time she asked me about my hair…in some indirect way I was given to understand by her questions that she wanted to know whether I'd found myself yet" (77-8). This quote explains how her head was becoming more "unmoored"[41] referring to the distance between her and her mother. This term directly correlates with the discussion of the "Moor" as a being that does not practice the Christian faith and is different (either it be by language, skin color, hair, clothing, traditional practices and more). The term "unmoored" is a term that describes the relationship between Europeans and Others, who did not have the same faith as they did. It was a way to differentiate the dominant culture and those who did not have access to those who were in power during the early modern era. She was not communicating frequently with her mother and due to this, there was a distance between them physically and mentally. Through this distance, she felt a lack of identity within her Angolan roots that led her to feel a sense of displeasure over

[41] The term "unmoored" would refer to a whitening or a person lacking specific identity markers of Others. The novel uses this term to communicate the relationship between the early modern race studies to contemporary studies on race.

her hair. Mila's mother questioned her constantly about her hair every time they spoke which suggests that hair was an identity marker of African roots. Particularly in this novel, the discourse on hair is sifted through the impact of the colonial past and the bridge between sub-Saharan African and the Iberian Peninsula within contemporary thought.

As a result of feeling an identity crisis, Mila shaves off her hair but she discovers that her hair journey reflects the cycles of life. Chapter seven is the ultimate climax of the novel. She begins to question if she should define hair as her identity and if that is wrong. Her identity becomes warped in her hair and the protagonist wonders if she can find a separation between her hair and identity. This part of the text challenges the entire novel about the importance of hair and discourse on hair. The last line in this chapter explains how a Black woman might describe their hair and why other people might want to touch it — referring to versatility and all the oils needed to maintain her hair. She cannot write her hair and her hands are slippery with all the products required to maintain it. Towards the end of the novel, Mila discovers that she doesn't have to be defined by her hair since her hair is something everyone in the world has. Signifying that her hair is part of her identity but does not define her as popular thought from family members and the public made it seem. She also discovers that she has the privilege to write her identity and that her hair would not do that.

Black Embodied SubjectHood

As this section investigates a Black embodied subjecthood within disparate sites, it is productive to understand how I am theorizing this phrase. I find scholars: Frantz Fanon, Tendayi Sithole, Diana Taylor, and Jennifer Nash helpful to my theorization. Sithole's essay "The Concept of the Black Subject in Fanon" uses Fanon's subjectivity and his evaluation of the Black Subject from the ontological zero point as a point of departure to analyze the Black subject: "Through the

Fanonian intervention…the Black subject should be understood from lived experience and the form of a living being that is rendered non-existent but being the one that possesses the possibility to emerge" (25). In the first chapter of *The Archive and the Repertoire* by Diana Taylor, titled, "Acts of Transfer," we learn about how performance practices and studies function as a vital "act of transfer" of epistemology, identity, memory, and knowledge. The text discusses the narrative surrounding functions of performance practices in the Americas dating back to sixteenth-century: "Since ancient times, performance has manipulated, extended, and played with embodiment…understanding [] performance as simultaneously "real" and "constructed" [practices within the contours of the body]" (3-4). While Nash's reading responds to film with pornographic content, I use her theorization of "embodied race-pleasure[42]" in order to understand the embodiment of Black women attending to race and gender: "Embodied race-pleasure and that black pleasures *in* race far exceed possessive ownership over cultural production and in fact can be corporeal, aesthetic, and deeply erotic" (105). As a way to culminate these theorizations in a framework, I define the Black subject hood under the Fanonian intervention of the *lived experience* and the embodiment of this subject through "real" and "constructed" performance conditioned by attending to race and gender particularly the Black woman. Therefore, this framework converges this Black embodied subject hood that I explore through the site of poetry and the hair salon. The lived experience and the "corporeal" yields the embodiment of of these sites that bring to life knowledge production commonly restricted within the institutional and social realm.

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[42] Jennifer Nash's thesis of embodied race-pleasures: "Far more than simply a locus of violent domination, gender is a space that confers a set of aesthetic, corporeal, and even erotic pleasures on its performer. Similarly, I treat blackness as a fraught, complex, and potentially exciting performance for black subjects, as a *doing* which can thrill, excite, and arouse, even as it wounds and terrorizes" (87).

“Hair” and the “Hair salon”

Hair and the physical site of the “hair salon” are prevalent sites of cultural and knowledge production within the Black community, with a focus on the black African diaspora and the Black community within the US context. These two sites offer us tools to bring to the field of Black Studies, Africana Studies, early modern Iberian Studies and Black feminist practices that ultimately challenges what we might consider “useful” or even “acceptable” within these fields and studies. There is a variety of elements to these sites and how it opens up a racially gendered discourse that deserves more examination. To this end, I build upon Taylor’s theory of multicodedness of embodied performance as she states, “The multicodedness of these practices [embodied performance] transmits as many layers of meaning as there are spectators, participants, and witnesses. Sometimes the performances reveal the convergence of religious practices [and more]” (49). This is in conversation to the disparate sites as they can be classified as sites of performance where various elements emerge such as ancestral inheritance, identity, love for oneself, realization, knowledge (among others). The sites are read differently based on who is analyzing or observing the site and in that there is multicodedness. There are various layers of meaning through the embodied performance of hair and hair salons depending on who is there, who is observing, and who is participating. There can be many ways to read this as sites for knowledge that also shows Black embodied subjecthood. Hair and hair salons are not the only sites that generates this Black embodied subject hood but are the focus in this section.

Mila

The protagonist talks about her relationship with her mom and how distant it was. She does remember various things about her mom that surrounds questions about her hair. This quote discusses how the protagonist’s hair is constantly changing and I believe she uses her hair as a

metaphor to describe her life in Luanda and Lisbon, Angola, and Portugal respectively. Her hair is the crowning example that describes the culture and identity within Angola and some of the Black population in Portugal. Her hair is most attributed to those in Angola while her Portuguese family constantly makes comments about it as it the identifying marker of her Angolan background in Portugal.

Through the physical site of the hair salon, Mila begins to understand her identity and how she writes her personhood through a physical intellectual way. "Visiting salons has been a way of visiting different countries and learning to distinguish the features and manners of each, giving new fuel to prejudices. Senegal is a pair of moisturized hands; Angola a certain casualness, a brutal grace; Zaire a disaster; Portugal a burn from a hair dryer, the flesh wound left by a brush" (114). Through the site of the physical hair salon and the many trips to the hair salon she had throughout her life, she found that site to help her define herself. She did not want to be connected to hair nor the hair salons' reactions to her hair, but by how she wrote her subject hood.

Similarly, "On Cuba News" Odette Casamayor-Cisneros, who is a scholar of Latin American and Caribbean Cultures, recently within the past year wrote about her natural hair journey and how since the onset of the pandemic, she has felt a liberation with her hair. She feels a liberation as she views her natural hair, styled in an Afro, as her crown above her head and that while being at home the past year of the pandemic, her hair has had the opportunity to grow. A statement that she repeats a couple times in the news article is: "Mi pelo retoma fuerzas durante el encierro." She finds strength and positivity *through* the imaginative site of her hair as a way to combat the pandemic and restore back positive imagery to herself. This functions similarly to my theorizations of the intellectual site of poetry and the physical site of the hair salon. She reclaims

her power through her styled hairstyle of an Afro: “Nosotras hoy portamos nuestro afro como esplendentes coronas, símbolo de nuestro poder, entonces lucían el pelo desrizado como muestra del dominio de sí mismas, de su cuerpo y su imagen.” Through the styled hairstyle of an Afro, Casamayor-Cisneros finds her true identity that illuminates her body and image. From what I can extrapolate from her personal identity she seems to identify as an AfroCuban which situates well with the discussion of Mila.

The Importance of the Iberian early modern studies

Black embodied subjecthood is a productive framework to converse with disparate sites such as the intellectual site of poetry and the physical site of the hair salon to uncover identity for Afro-Portugueses. I use this framework within contemporary thought to inspect Blackness and a black African legacy. This framework is useful and similar to the one I use within early modern literary and cultural production in Iberian Studies and Africana Studies as a way to assign agency and subjectivity to black African female characters. Connecting the framework used in these texts within modern and contemporary thought to early modern Iberian studies bridges the present to the past.

That Hair particularly articulates the relationship between Africa and Portugal within a modern/contemporary context that points towards the deep African past — the early modern era. This text works across the precolonial/colonial ‘line’ and with sources or sites that are not the standard fare. In Richard Reid’s essay titled, “Past and Presentism: The ‘Precolonial’ and the Foreshortening of African History,” he tackles the challenges and imbalances in African history as a discipline that produce a sense of periodization and a relative diminution of the precolonial past. While Reid compiles many of the reasons why this occurs, other reasons exist—and in particular, there are moments when scholarship emphasizes trends that cross the conceptual line.

His work is helpful in thinking about the metadiscussion within this novel and how I read this past.

Hair and hair salons are factors that reflect the colonial aftermath and thoughts surrounding Angola and Portugal. Mila specifies, “If we were in Luanda, I would spend the afternoons at the balcony window, showing off my ever-changing hair; or I would go to the corner baker, sprinting on my errand, fearing I’d be found out and trying to adjust my accent when speaking with the shopkeepers” (75). This quote discusses how the protagonist’s hair is constantly changing. She uses her hair as a metaphor to describe her life in Luanda, Lisbon, Angola, and Portugal, respectively. Her hair is the crowning example and the physical site of the hair salon that describes the culture and identity within different African countries and some of the Black population in Portugal. Her hair is most attributed to those in Angola. At the same time, her Portuguese family constantly comments about it as it is the identifying marker of her Angolan background while residing in Portugal.

This body of work explores an Afro-Portuguese decolonial theory focusing on Blackness, girlhood, womanhood, gender, black African legacy, feminism, racism, geopolitics, memory, and identity. This author uses discourse and a critical framework not traditionally used to explore Blackness and femininity. Their framework recovers Black agency and subjectivity to female figures through discourse that focuses on black African cultures and identity. Hair and hair salons are tropes that the author conveys as she puts them in conversation with Africa and Portugal’s colonial relationship.

This is the importance of early modern Iberian Studies and how it connects the past to the present. Through contemporary and modern thought on Blackness and the colonial relationship between Africa and the Iberian Peninsula, we see the impact of this time frame in the present.

Hair and hair salons open up a discourse on race with a focus on Blackness, gender, and black African legacy.

Final Meditations

The foregoing discussion shows how Conjure Feminism contributes to a robust and empowering re-reading of the cultural production of the early modern period. The examples above in Chiado's play and Camões's poem provide us with new ways to think about traditions such as Petrarchism to find dimensions of female agency and presence, particularly Black female agency and presence. Black women are "agents of transformation for renewing and creating." Through this theoretical framework, Luzia and Bárbora, in these literary narratives, transform the Black woman's presence as having a sense of subjectivity and an agentive element. Their conjuring subject-hood and spiritual presence transform the literary space and influence their control over the story.

The Black body — the ultimate physical site— and the cultural and intellectual knowledge warped in the physical site of the Black body is where issues arise. Through the *lived* of the Black body and the *experience* of the cultural and intellectual knowledge, Black embodied subjecthood opens up possibilities for agency and subjectivity to assign to Afro-Portuguese women. In Saidiya Hartmann's book, *Scenes of Subjection: Terror, Slavery, and Self-Making in the Nineteenth-Century America* (1997), she asserts, "The confusion between consent and coercion, feeling and submission, intimacy, and domination, and violence and reciprocity constitute what I term the discourse of seduction in slave law" (81). Hartmann discusses how sexual violence against Black enslaved women considered them consenting and willing, so it went overlooked and was not recognized as a crime. Black bodies as a physical site are not allowed agency; this is exponentially more true for the Black female body. Gender then serves as

the ultimate and "final" physical site for the Black body that pushes specifically the Black woman into the *abject*. My framework debates this position of the abject as I establish a reading that recovers agency and subjectivity to the Black woman. Therefore, while using the Black female body as the initial step toward subjectivity, I utilized other sites such as hair and a physical "hair salon" to advance that subjectivity and agency.

Nevertheless, we tap into the abject when we analyze disparate sites or sites not commonly recognized as sites of knowledge production. The abject is not exempt from variety and differentiation, which opens up possibilities for alternate subjectivity and agency. This is not to say that while in the abject position, one can only find agency in that position but that these sites are necessary sites that should be in the dominant narrative. These sites serve as a foreshadowing of what is to come within the dominant narrative. Since the 90s up until now, scholarly criticism has been advancing the notion of recovering agency for Black subjects within all types of literature. Within the dominant narrative, these sites and more will continue to emerge, and knowledge production will be recognized in alternative forms. Knowledge production in alternative forms would become our personal churches of identity, love, and belonging.

III: SEED OF POSITIONALITY AND RESISTANCE

African Princess, Language and Substance

Cervantes Chapter – Spanish Tradition (3rd chapter in dissertation)

Introduction

In the previous chapter, I argued that Luzia and the Black woman from Camoes's poem are integral to the narrative and plot. In the course of my arguments, I transition from the Portuguese tradition to the Spanish tradition. The sisters plant their seeds following the work of their sisters in the Portuguese tradition. In this chapter, I discuss Miguel de Cervantes's work, as I bring in *Don Quijote de la Mancha I* (1605) and *Las novelas ejemplares II* (1613), while I also discuss cultural appropriation with regard to *verba y res*. I focus on the African princess Micomicona and the Black woman from *El colloquio de los perros*. I explore the position of the figure of Micomicona and how her characterization in the episode underscores the subject position of a White elite woman, Dorotea. Despite Dorotea's social privilege, I argue the point that the African character Micomicona is fundamentally necessary to Dorotea's existence, participation, and agency throughout the novel. While historians read this character as theoretical, I analyze Micomicona and bring forward Black female presence through the overall tropes Cervantes uses in this episode and through references and gestures Dorotea and Micomicona employ. Building from my analysis of Dorotea and Micomicona, I explore the gestures and resistance of the Black female character in *El colloquio de los perros*. I do not compare these two characters as I theorize their form of Blackness differently, but both serve to recuperate Blackness and Black female presence.

Reading Micomicona

My reading of the African princess Micomicona is one where I take a second look. Scholarly criticism disregards this character and sees her solely as masked as Dorotea, but it is another character. Micomicona is a marginal character, but my theorization will see her as central to the text. Micomicona represents both 1) Black Africa and 2) the abject position a Black woman is thrown into by her femaleness and Blackness. The position of Micomicona forms and solidifies the subject position for Dorotea, a main character in Cervantes's literary corpus, but Micomicona is not given her due credit. I center Micomicona in this piece as a central character and theorize her Blackness as consequential and necessary to Cervantes's literary corpus. Along the lines of a new phrase coined by Nicholas R. Jones, "Cervantine Blackness," I see this character as embodying that.

It is interesting how we see a gendered position reflected in the narration of Dorotea. Dorotea is a female character within a male writer's imagination. Dorotea masks as an African princess posing as a writer in her own narrative. Both female characters Dorotea and Micomicona, are written within Cervantes's imagination, but Dorotea exercises her limited but sufficient power to use Micomicona for her benefit. Dorotea has a sense of resistance to dismiss the African princess after she receives what she wants, which is a subject position in a patriarchal society. However, the intimacy between Dorotea and Micomicona makes this separation of the two characters uncomfortable for scholars. I discuss the lives of two women with different positions in society and one using the other to gain access to power in this society, but I query: where does that leave the other? Rosilie Hernández-Pecoraro's essay ""Don Quixote's" Dorotea: Portrait of a Female Subject" (2002) states that she explores the topic of male-dominated societal order "by examining the character of Dorotea, one of the most fascinating portrayals in any

Cervantine text of a woman who appropriates and manipulates for her own ends the patriarchal discourses and values that surround her" (20). This is where the field invests in a site of White vs. and over Black, but that is not what I propose. I urge us to take a second look and view these characters separately as I recuperate agency and subjectivity to Micomicona. I focus on her Blackness as it relates to early modern Iberian identity and culture.

Before discussing princess Micomicona and her subjectivity, it is important to understand what critics say. Mar Martínez Góngora's essay "La sombra de Isabel la Católica en Don Quijote: Cervantes, Dorotea y la princesa Micomicona" explains the similarities between the characterization of the figure Queen Isabel and the character Dorotea. This article explores the difficulties and obstacles both figures had to pass to reach their "kingdom" position. Martinez-Góngora emphasizes the masculine position each woman had to pass through to achieve their goals.[43] The historical Queen of Castile and the fictional character negotiate a subject position that aligns with early modern patriarchal norms, and each finds agency and subjectivity.

Martinez-Góngora briefly references racialization regarding Micomicona's people in sub-Saharan Africa and how it was a smart move for Dorotea to use the African princess narrative and place herself in the imperial colonial space, which is usually a masculine position. Martínez-Góngora conveys how Dorotea wants to narrate and construct her subject position from Africa because of the pioneers before her, such as the mythical god Dido of North Africa. Dido, also known as Alyssa or Elissa, was the legendary founder and first queen of the Phoenician city-state

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[43]La conflictiva relación de Dorotea con los personajes masculinos equivale, en cierta medida, a la difícil experiencia de Isabel desde su niñez, debido ejercida por los varones que la rodean, siempre dispuestos a utilizarla como un instrumento al servicio de sus intereses" (225) [Dorotea's conflictive relationship with male characters is equivalent, to a certain extent, to Isabel's difficult experience from her childhood, due to the experience of the men around her, always ready to use her as an instrument at the service of their interests (my translation)].

of Carthage, located in modern Tunisia. This parallel draws in the discussion of conquering parts of Africa and taking the position of princess or queen to constitute power in a male-dominated society. Dido successfully constitutes a subject position in an African space, so Martínez-Góngora uses this narrative to do the same. There is a connection in Cervantes's corpus that links premodern thought to early modern thought. The colonial framework works to gain power and fame in a society that roadblocks it for certain groups, whether in the medieval or early modern times.

Isabel was used by men in her childhood which challenges her subject position. This is a critical point when discussing and exploring women's roles in a patriarchal society and how they recuperate agency and subjectivity. However, I would like to extend that discussion through a description of the place of an African woman from "someplace" in Black Africa in a patriarchal and racialized society. What the male characters and men in Dorotea's life do to her is precisely what Dorotea does to Princess Micomicona. The author uses the narrative of Micomicona, from a place in Black Africa, to authenticate Dorotea's self-image as a woman of power and employing people in service of her interests. Cervantes casts an African princess to build the characterization of Dorotea in a subject position. So, Cervantes initially utilizes a woman in an abject position to create space and the subject position for Dorotea. The author is very keen to subject positions during the early modern era and how similarly, in other works in the time frame, White Castilian elite women use a Black female servant or, in this case, an African princess from some unknown place in Black Africa to frame and build their self-image. The discussion of Dorotea by way of Micomicona depicts how Dorotea constructed her subject position.

Baltasar Fra-Molinero's essay titled, "Sancho Panza y la esclavización de los negros" takes a slave reading of the Micomicona episode. His reading focuses on interpretations of how Sancho and Don Quijote view black African descendants and their effect on the Iberian Peninsula. He discusses Micomicona with a slave reading and describes the different interpretations Sancho and Don Quijote have. This is a conventional reading as it aligns with thoughts and meditations of the Iberia Peninsula and how black Africans 'contributions are not credited to them but are a way to reach fame for others. "Micomicón es sólo un *medio* para ganar la fama, en el caso del caballero, y para ganar dinero en el caso del escudero" (29) [Micomicona is only a *means* to gain fame in the case of the knight and to gain money in the case of the squire (my translation)]. This quote acknowledges how the abject position of Micomicona is used to create the subject position of Dorotea. He reads these positions as Micomicona representing a black Africa where Sancho can turn enslaved Black people into money (gold and silver), whereas Dorotea represents an innocent Africa with hope for the arrival of a Christian knight.

Barbara Fuchs's work on cross-dressing in "Border Crossings: Transvestism and 'Passing 'in *Don Quijote*" focuses on the idea of passing in Cervantes's literary corpus. Micomicona features in Fuch's argument as the princess offers an example of trasvestism: "The Micomicona plot, a peculiar form of racial passing, replaces Dorotea's gender transformation" (26). Dorotea racially passes as an African princess even with the slippage of origin, either being Ethiopian or Guinean. There is a distinct cultural difference between the two, and the slippage further contributes to the racial discourse. While this emphasizes the "disguise" of a white African princess, my ideas push toward viewing the African princess as a separate character to Dorotea. While I find the concept of transvestism profound in this essay, Fuch's discussion

participates in the marginalization of Micomicona. In the interest of setting Micomicona at the center, I propose we read Micomicona and Dorotea as two separate persons, or two separate kinds of people, whose treatment at the hands of Cervantes and his fictional narrator has much to tell us about subject positions, gender, and racialization in the early modern era.

In an essay by Agustín Redondo titled, "Burlas y Veras: La princesa Micomicona y Sancho negrero (*Don Quijote*, I, 29)" we find how this episode traces the way in which Sancho imagines his imperial calling to enslave black Africans and turn them into money. He comments on how the African princess is portrayed in the episode under a slave narrative that entraps her. Moreover, he mentions how her name is also a site of contention as a part of the name signifies monkey: "Pero la princesa Micomicona es la que es más que dos veces mona, como lo subraya el aumentativo final" (129) [But the Micomicona princess is the one who is more than twice a monkey, as the final augmentative underlines]. However, I am interested in his statement of "*Bien merece pues Dorotea llamarse Micomicona*" (130), which shows his reading of these two characters. Redondo suggests that instead of Dorotea disguising herself as Micomicona and the credit she continues to get in scholarly literary criticism, he finds that the foundation of the episode is Micomicona. Redondo is thus one of the rare readers of the Micomicona-Dorotea episode who sets the African princess at the center. This reading remaps the personhood and characterization of an African woman princess marked with Blackness, which translates and extends to discourse of Black women in the early modern era.

Stacey Triplette and Hernández-Pecoraro are similar in their approach to depict Dorotea and the African princess's relationship. Hernández-Pecoraro focuses on female characters in Cervantine text and how Dorotea uses the material, psychological and sexual economies to solidify a subject's position in male-dominated societal order (20). Moreover, Dorotea uses the

African princess narrative to affirm her position in society as one of innocence and of an imperial colonial initiative usually occupied by males. In “Chivalry and Empire: The Colonial Argument of the Princess Micomicona Episode in Don Quijote Part I,” Triplette focuses on the African princess by describing her romantic chivalry and how she is an anomaly in that history based on her interpretations of Sancho's perspective. The text does not explicitly say that the African princess is Black, but Sancho assumes that the inhabitants of the origin of this African princess are, which leads him to plan his way to make money from selling them.

As what is conventional with scholarly critiques concerning the position of the African princess Micomicona, there is a colonial element as Sancho maps out his plan to enslave members of her kingdom which are supposedly Black. Sancho questions himself in chapter 29:

> ¿Qué se me da a mí que mis vasallos sean negros? Habrá más que cargar con ellos y traerlos a España, donde los podré vender, y adonde me los pagarán de contado, de cuyo dinero podré comprar algún título o algún oficio con que vivir descansado todos los días de mi vida? (340)

[What care I, if my subjects be blacks? What have I to do but to ship them off to Spain, where I may sell them for ready money, with which money I may buy some title or office, on which I may live at ease all the days of my life? (183)][44]

This information, however, is ambiguous but through Sancho’s interjections in the episode he aligns with the ideas of Iberian imperialism and its mission to save those who are barbaric and primitive with Christianized principles. I am not here to argue that fact as this remains true in early modern archives. Rather, I seek to restore African female agency and position to the dominant narrative. Not only does this princess help form the character of Dorotea but also is an

[44] All translations for *Don Quijote, Part 1* come from Charles Jarvis’s translation in 1895.

integral part of the legacy of *Don Quijote de la Mancha*. For this reason, while many scholars comment on the princess Micomicona with regards to Dorotea, it is not only highly productive, but I would argue, necessary to analyze her subject position in its own right.

As a starting point, we might consider the matter of Micomicona's skin color. To analyze Blackness in Micomicona, it refers to where she is from and not necessarily due to her somatic skin color. Dorotea uses Micomicona as a mask to get what she wants so Micomicona does not appear as somatically Black. The ambiguity of her skin color references her whiteness, and her Blackness appears to track along the places the speaker associates her with. As Sancho ponders about the Princess Micomicona, he believes that marriage would help him become a king:

> "Porque sin duda alguna pensaba que se había de casar con aquella princesa y ser por lo menos rey de Micomicón: solo le daba pesadumbre el pensar que aquel reino era en tierra de negros y que la gente que por sus vasallos le diesen habían de ser todos negros" (339-340)
>
> [for he made no doubt but that he was to marry that princess and be at least king of Micomicon. One thing only troubled him, which was that his kingdom being in the land of the negroes, his subjects would all be blacks (183)].

This refers to blackness with regard to a foreign county or Othering. Africa in the European imagination during the early modern era is an Other that should be Christianized and used to better of the European self-image. Particularly for the Iberian Peninsula, black Africans are exploited through forceful conversion, hard labor and adaptation to a new language, culture, and identity. There is an implication through her African origin that she is racialized as inferior and is utilized like an object for the subjectivity of Dorotea, although her skin is not explicitly described as Black. The narrative of using an African princess from somewhere in Black Africa

weaponizes and marks black Africans.[45] However, the characters in this episode and the masking of Dorotea as an African princess leads me to read Micomicona as a black African woman.

The Dorotea and Micomicona episode spans from chapters 28 to 47. The priest, the barber and Cardenio meet a woman by the name of Dorotea who tells a tragic story. She meets a guy from a wealthy family. He tries to win her over consistently and she resists him until one day he appears in her bedroom and says he will marry her. She agrees to marry him because she fears that he will take advantage of her in her bedroom. This gentleman leaves town and abandons Dorotea. She relates to the priest, the barber and Cardenio that the man she refers to is Ferdinand, who is the Duke's son. Dorotea tries to find Ferdinand and discovers that he is already married to

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[45] A gaze reading is possible through this paradigm. The White female gaze upon the Black female subject deems relevant to the discussion of Dorotea and Micomicona. Dorotea gazes and utilizes the abject position of the African princess to affirm her subject position in a male-dominated society. Regarding lyric poetry, the poetic speaker directs his (usually "his") gaze at a beloved. By means of that gaze, the poetic speaker objectifies that beloved and makes the beloved an object of his own subjectivity. This gaze fragments the beloved into parts that the poet describes using metaphors. For example, the poem "Mientras por competir con tu cabello" by the Spanish baroque poet Luís de Góngora uses Petrarchan metaphors: eyes like suns, skin like lilies (among others) to describe his beloved or a woman. In general, this process has been discussed by critics starting from sor Juana and even before that and extending through more recent times in scholarship by Nancy J. Vickers, Clamurro, Georgina Sabat-Rivers and others. In this episode, I describe a "racializing gaze" that works in the same way. The character directs a gaze at an object and fragments and describes the object of the gaze this time with regard to origin: Africa/Spain. "Fragmentation and description" is a phrase coined by Nancy J. Vickers in her article "Diana Described: Scattered Woman Scattered Rhyme."

Although the gaze is usually written from a male perspective upon a beloved woman, I use this gaze to explore Dorotea and the African princess's relationship. Through the racializing gaze pointing out the difference of race/ethnicity we find how Dorotea affirms her power. Dorotea's racializing gaze upon the African princess interpellates her as the gaze and objectifies the princess. These theories have been discussed notably by Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, Louis Althusser, Michel Foucault, Frantz Fanon, Judith Butler, Leah Middlebrook and Tendayi Sithole. In terms of the assumed White, heteronormative and masculine nature of the subject as theorized by Hegel, Althusser and Foucault there is a question of Africanness and femininity. The agent is a White Castilian woman that has a feminine nature that objectifies an African woman. Through this objectification, Dorotea solidifies her subject position and autonomy.

another woman in a nearby town. Cardenio, the priest and the barber offer their help to Dorotea to find Ferdinand. Dorotea then poses as the distressed damsel in this plot to find Ferdinand: "A lo cual dijo Dorotea que ella haría la doncella menesterosa major que el barber, y más, que tenía allí vestidos con que hacerlo al natural" (335) [Upon which Dorotea said she would undertake to act the distressed damsel better than the barber, especially as she had apparel with which she could perform it to the life (180)]. Dorotea masks herself as Princess Micomicona. The priest introduces Dorotea to Sancho as Princess Micomicona: "--Esta hermosa señora –respondió el cura--, Sancho hermano, es, como quien no dice nada, es la heredera por línea recta de varón del gran reino de Micomicón" (335-336) ["This beautiful lady, friend Sancho," answered the priest, "is, to say the least of her, heiress, in the direst male line, of the great kingdom of Micomicon (180)].

Micona

In order to begin to bring Micomicona into presence, it is necessary to structure our reading practices along a new set of principles. The first of these principles is a worldview and a cosmos that sets Micomicona at the center. This restructuring establishes the conditions of possibility for a range of subjectivities that populate the previously unspeakable and unreadable zone that is Cervantine Blackness in *Don Quijote*. With Micomicona set at its center, the Dorotea-Micomicona episode is revealed, through a kind of anamorphosis, as thoroughly structured by Blackness, and by a Blackness that is revealed, moreover, in striking variety and specificity. That is, Blackness in fifteenth-, sixteenth-, and seventeenth-century Spanish and Portuguese literature is not solely a matter of somatic skin color. Rather, it is a literary-cultural form, one that connotes a geographical sense of the engagement between Africa and the Iberian Peninsula, attending to influences made by sub-Saharan African cultures and how those influences shaped

and are imbedded in early modern Iberian cultures. As preparation for discerning and "reading" this Blackness, it is necessary to consider that conventional pedagogy, criticism, and scholarship of early modern literature is often shaped by a White lens. Consequently, representations of Blackness and African-ness in the speech, gestures, music, attitudes of Black characters appear as derogatory. Nicholas R. Jones in *Staging Habla de Negros* establishes a second reading of Blackness that is *not* racist buffoonery, but rather its own category — Blackness viewed on its own terms, not in comparison to Whiteness. He analyzes the early modern literary and cultural archive by incorporating the African lineage of Black women characters in the Cervantine literary corpus that opens up racial discourse for various characters.

I draw from Jones as I approach Micomicona intersectionally. In the Dorotea-Micomicona episode, in which a white Castilian character, Dorotea culturally appropriates certain characteristics of the marginalized black African character Micomicona, I see even greater potential to recover the black African female presence. The character DoroMicona enables us to see the intersectionality of race and gender, Blackness and femaleness. These vectors have historically rendered the presence and the agency of the black African woman illegible, first from the perspective of the White gaze, and, as a consequence, from much of the literary criticism that has, to date, focused predominantly on the non-Black aspects of don Quijote's world. In her ground-breaking essay "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics," Kimberlé Crenshaw primarily focuses on the intersection of two varieties of marginalization: race and gender. The concept is useful on its own terms; however, the context for Crenshaw's coinage of intersectionality is relevant to this discussion. Crenshaw is a Black Feminist who addressed the marginalization of wide varieties of female experience (the

experiences of Black women, of poor women, of non-Western women) in first- and second wave feminism of the twentieth century by pointing out the White lens and opening discussion towards a multiple-issue analysis.

Intersectional, multi-axis analysis serves as a powerful tool. In conjunction with Jones's practice of reading black African presence on its own terms, we are able to craft an approach that uncovers DoroMicona's black African female presence. First, we set tropes, asides, gestures and references into conversation with their corresponding signifiers in African and Black cultures. In so doing, we reveal the distinct subjectivities that populate the category previously deemed "abject." Subsequently, we take seriously the life and the agency of these subjectivities.

For example, in the passage from chapter 28, the curate invents the character Micomicona by mobilizing a conventional trope, the chivalric damsel in distress. He adds a salacious touch by making this character African. On the one hand, his fiction draws on narratives found in Amadís and in Iberian romances in the manner explained by Triplette. On the other, it is undeniable that the black African woman is sexualized in the white European imaginary, and this hyper-sexualization leads to readings that identify the Black woman with the abject.

There is another way to read this situation, however. Recent discussions in Black Studies and Black feminisms have utilized the traditionally known abject position to open possibilities for agency for Black women. For example, Jennifer Nash, in her book, *The Black Body in Ecstasy: Reading Race, Reading Pornography* provides a way for us to read the hyper sexualized Black woman as a site from which to identify multiple Black female subjectivities. Nash theorizes tropes of Black female eroticization intersectionally, as embodied race-pleasure: "Far

more than simply a locus of violent domination, gender is a space that confers a set of aesthetic, corporeal, and even erotic pleasures on its performer. Similarly, I treat blackness as a fraught, complex, and potentially exciting performance for black subjects, as a *doing* which can thrill, excite, and arouse, even as it wounds and terrorizes" (87). Even though we now recognize that Nash's framework points to recent problems in Black feminism (i.e., blaming the victim), this framework also offers us a second look at the fiction that the curate and the barber create about a hyper sexualized African woman that positions herself as Micomicona. What Micomicona seems to be, conditioned by Nash's rereading of Black female hyper-sexualization, is a figure representing Black women's race-pleasure. That is, Nash, Crenshaw, and Jones enable us to begin locating subjectivity and agency in Micomicona, and the possibilities she figures deepen our understanding of *Don Quijote* as a whole.

Two Royal African Women

Nash's thesis of race-pleasure establishes Micomicona's introduction as a site of possibility for black African female presence. Subsequently, two distinct kinds of African woman are introduced into the text, via the Micomicona fiction: the Guinean princess (invoked by the curate in chapter 28 and by Sancho in chapters 29-30), and the Ethiopian queen (invoked by Sancho in chapter 29). Notably, both women are royal. This detail has significance since royalty figured prominently in the European concept of Africa. The early modern imagination associated modern-day Ethiopia, and by extension, East Africa with prestige and royalty. Both the literary early modern archive and ancient biblical references describe East Africa as a noble and sanctified region. For example, Juan Latino references Queen Candace with regard to Christ as a direct link to nobility and royal lineage of East Africans. Meanwhile, if Ethiopia and East Africa

are imagined as noble, Guinea ("land of the Blacks"), or West Africa, is imagined as primitive and savage. This hierarchy defines the difference between different regions and peoples of Africa.

The fact that characters in *Don Quijote, Part 1* identify Micomicona variously as Ethiopian, and Guinean might be read as critique. In the European imagination, Sub-saharan Africa is often considered barbaric and abject, while East Africa is closer in proximity to Whiteness. Cervantes may be intentional in creating the slippage between Guinea and Ethiopia as a way to call attention to this hierarchy of African places. It is also the case that fifteenth-, sixteenth- , and seventeenth-century Iberian writers were inconsistent in the ways they used Ethiopia and Guinea. T. F. Earle and K. J. P. Lowe point out that "it was perfectly possible for sub-Saharan Africans not to be slaves in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Europe, and significant exceptions to the rule were African ambassadors and Ethiopian pilgrims (who benefitted from Ethiopian churches and communities at Nicosia and Rome)" (2). Wright raises the issue of the constant reference to sub-Saharan Africa as "uncharted,"while North and East Africa were familiar territories and common sites of reference. She adduces the Spanish chroniclers Luis del Mármol Carvajal and Francesc Relaño as evidence (99-100). Bennett writes about the Venetian merchant Alvise da Cà da Mosto, who journeys to the uncharted "land of the Blacks." His account refers, as many other early modern travelers, to Guinea as "lower Ethiopia."

We cannot know Cervantes's intention in reproducing the two dominant early modern Spanish tropes of Africa in *Don Quijote, Part 1*: first, the fixation on African royalty, and second, a confused series of references to Ethiopia and Guinea. However, he encodes these ideas

in the episode, and by attending to these passages, we encounter new possibilities regarding the African world that co-exists with Castilla-La Mancha in the text.

The figure of the specifically Guinean *princess* or royal woman draws from another set of associations in the early modern European imaginary. In the Golden Age literary works that have long served as the archive through which to explore Iberian early modernity, African elites are often written out. As mentioned earlier, the emphasis in the literature of the period centers on Whiteness and treats Black characters and Black life as marginal, a literary technique I refer to as "White over Black." However, in *Black in Latin America*, Henry Louis Gates, Jr. describes the relations between African elites specified by region: "exchanges between African rulers and the courts of Europe…[knowing] from the visual archival record, for instance, that emissaries from the monarchs of Ethiopia and the kingdom of Kongo came to the Vatican as early as the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, respectively, and established formal diplomatic embassies there" (5). Later, he discusses how African elites played a role in the trans-Atlantic slave trade, and although he does not specify regionally, this suggests that all of Africa - Northern, sub-Saharan, and Eastern - signifies power and royalty.

Bennett develops a similar point, making more substantial claims. According to Bennett, « trade then and now brought nations and polities into relief" (120):

> The incessant search for Guinea's sovereigns, the language and enactment of protocol, and the desire for treaties belie the idea that Portugal's sovereigns perceived Guinea as terra nullius. Trade in a land without sovereign power was at best precarious for it did not offer the securities and certainty preferred by merchants. The respect for sovereignty brings the morphology shaping Portugal's fifteenth century trade in Guinea into focus while underscoring the ways in which the rule of law forged the early modern slave trade. Despite —or perhaps because of— the alleged despotic nature of sovereignty in Guinea, the Portuguese accorded the lords in the 'land of the Blacks 'diplomatic recognition. Symbolizing the feudal corporate structure informing the early Guinea trade, the

> Portuguese vis a vis this gesture ascribed Guinean inhabitants' distinct juridical identities. By deploying a feudal corporate structure in their encounter with Guinea, the Portuguese imposed specific subjectivities on the region's inhabitants that had been implicitly framed around the concepts of sovereignty or the lack thereof. Intended for the regulation of Christians, the very terms of this corporate structure became the referents whereby Europeans inscribed Guinea's inhabitants into the colonial and diasporic archives. (119-120)

I would add fiction and literature to this list since Sancho's thinking tracks along with this set of associations in chapter 29. For him, an African woman is of value only since she serves as a point of insertion into an emerging trade that enables Iberian men to ascend the social ladder by changing their economic status from agrarian laborer to urbane merchant. Notably, Jones points out that characters in some Golden Age Spanish plays refer to their lineages within matriarchies. He cites the character Guiomar, in Lope de Rueda's *Los engañados*, who is associated with "maternal elders [of] African nobility, the minting of coins and other metal objects, and the monetization of black bodies (especially the offspring of royal African sovereigns sent to the Iberian Peninsula, and in this case Guiomar)" (154-155). The "making of gold and silver" on Black bodies from sub-Saharan Africa underscores the nobility and royalty of the Guinean princess Micomicona. Bennett, Gates, Jones, and Wright open the path to productive alternative readings of Micomicona.

The Ethiopian Queen

The Ethiopian queen invoked by Sancho suggests that Ethiopia and arguably East Africa are close to Whiteness. Sancho Panza introduces Ethiopia into the fiction when he first describes Micomicona to don Quijote in chapter 29 ("Bien puede vuestra merced, señor, concederle el don que pide, que no es cosa de nada: solo es de matar un gigantozo, y esta que lo pide es la alta princesa Micomicona, reina del gran reino de Micomicón de Etiopía") (338). [Your worship may

very safely grant the boon she asks; for it is a mere trifle—only to kill a great lubbery giant; and she who begs it is the mighty princess Micomicona, queen of the great kingdom of Micomicon, in Ethiopia (182)]. However, Dorotea's first performance of Micomicona already conforms to the European fantasy of the Ethiopian:

> De aquí no me levantaré, ¡oh valeroso y esforzado caballero!, fasta que la vuestra bondad y cortesía me otorgue un don, el cual redundará en honra y prez de vuestra persona, y en pro de la más desconsolada y agraviada doncella que el sol ha visto. Y si es que el valor de vuestro fuerte brazo corresponde a la voz de vuestra inmortal fama, obligado estáis a favorecer a la sin ventura que de tan lueñes tierras viene, al olor de vuestro famoso nombre, buscándoos para remedio de sus desdichas. (337-338)
>
> [I will never arise from this place, O valorous and rodoubted knight, until your goodness and courtesy vouchsafe me a boon, which will redound to the honour and glory of your person, and to the lasting benefit of the most, dis consolate and aggrieved damsel the sun has ever beheld. And if the valour of your puissant arm correspond with the report of your immortal fame, you are bound to protect an unhappy wight, who, attracted by the odour of your renown, is come from distant regions to seek at your hands a remedy for her misfortunes (182)].

She speaks with an elevated register of speech that conforms to the European imagination of Ethiopia being noble, even if this speech is exaggerated for satirical effect. This is the start of how the Ethiopian queen is introduced in these chapters.

The elegant dance in this first encounter, Dorotea-Micomicona's regal submission to the fame and power of the famous Castilian knight, and don Quijote's gallant and gracious reply conforms to a number of tropes: conversations between knights and princesses in tales of chivalry; the tropes and conventions of discourse between European traders and the real and invented African royalty described above; and an important literary tradition of North African queens found in Vergil, Dante, and the *Bible*. Dido is one example. According to Virgil and

Dante, Dido was the mythic founder and first queen of the Phoenician city-state of Carthage, located in modern Tunisia. She fled from her homeland to the coast of Africa and founded the city of Carthage. In the *Aeneid* and the *Inferno*, Dido is known for her beauty and sense of the value of her sexuality and chastity. She rejected all suitors until she met Trojan prince Aeneas. She fell in love with Aeneas after he arrived in Africa through a shipwreck arranged by the gods. Unfortunately, when she discovered that the love of her life planned to leave Carthage, she was enraged and committed suicide. Her dying curse on the Trojans provides a mythical origin for the Punic Wars between Rome and Carthage.

The underlying link, Rome and Carthage, situates Dido in a tradition that becomes increasingly elaborate as modern discourses of Whiteness and Blackness develop, namely, proximity to Whiteness. This trope also informs the early modern tradition of Queen Candace, also of Ethiopia. In Juan Latino's elegy for Philip II, "On the Birth of Untroubled Times," Candace of Ethiopia is not only Black but a symbol of power and royalty:

> There, a white man who visits the East is considered vile,
> and there are black leaders, and there is
> even a dark-skinned king. Queen Candace sent
> her relative and black emissary to Christ in a chariot. (v. 21-24)

Latino references the Ethiopian emissary of Queen Candace in Acts of the Apostles 8:27-39. Notably, in that text, the Queen is sovereign over her country and holds an official title. By showing that a white man in Ethiopia is as "other" as the Black man is in Spain, he sets Ethiopia and Candace in proximate relation to Iberian Whiteness.

The Guinean princess

As I have discussed, "Guinea," or what at the time was known as the "land of the Blacks," designated sub-Saharan Africa, with a focus on West Africa. Sancho knew the association, as he

followed his reference to Micomicona as a Guinean princess with a reverie about his personal project and forayed into the African slave trade. As has been touched on in this essay a number of times, the European fantasy of African royalty underwrote the early decades of the African slave trade. Merchants and traders sought kings and queens to sell their subjects. In this sense, the Guinean princess is absolutely essential to chapters 28-47 because one important aspect of Dorotea-Micomicona's value to Sancho, at least is the slave trade.

Dorotea uses Micomicona for two ends. Micomicona furnishes the "damsel in distress" narrative that allows Dorotea to move from a marginal position in the narrative to the central plot. She also saves Dorotea by alleviating the taint of her sexuality. Like Sancho Panza, Dorotea makes use of Micomicona's Black body, but there is far more at work in these episodes: gender, beauty, and sexuality; in chapter 30, Dorotea tells the story of her search for don Quijote:

> ("Dijo también mi padre que después de él fuese muerto y viese yo que Pandafilando comenzaba a pasar por mi reino, no aguardase a ponerme en defensa…" (348); "que si este caballero de la profecía, después de haber degollado al gigante, quisiese casarse conmigo, que yo me otorgase luego sin réplica alguna por su legítima esposa, y le diese la posesión de mi reino, junto con la de mi persona"). (350)
>
> [My father's advice was that when, upon his decease, Pandatilando invaded my kingdom, I should not make any defense (187); that if this knight in his prophecy, after cutting off the giant's head, should desire to marry me, I must immediately submit to be his lawful wife, and with my person give him also possession of my kingdom (188)].

That is, just as Dorotea does, Micomicona enjoys beauty, regal deportment, gracious rhetoric, and sexuality. Therefore, she is a combination of the Ethiopian queen character and the Guinean princess. The figure of the Ethiopian or East African queen is of limited use to Dorotea as she seeks to achieve a central subject position in the novel. The Guinean princess is necessary because she is embodied, and her body is associated with invisible and uncompensated labor, including, as Bennett argues, the symbolic labor of the Black female abject to serve as the anchor for racialized modern subjectivities. But literary and Biblical figures such as Dido and Candace

contribute prestige, status, elevated registers of speech, and the Biblical and Renaissance literary traditions to the Micomicona figure, even as the Guinean princess does the physical work of lifting Dorotea out of ignominy.

Anthony Close in his essay "La Comicidad Innovadora del *Quijote*: Del Extremismo Tradicional a la Normalidad Casera" calls attention to Cervantes 'interests in complicating the dichotomies of black and white, Christian, Muslim/Morisco. For Close, this polarity maps onto the binary black/white and yields a comic effect. But he also observes:

> En el Quijote, los polos blanco y negro tienden a contaminarse continuamente; la venta, a la mitad de la primera parte, va cobrando aire de palacio efectivo gracias a la compenetración de episodios románticos con aventuras caballerescas. Además, a diferencia de lo que ocurre en la novela picaresca, el polo negro no se concibe como foco de interés en sí mismo, sino como espejo deformador y correctivo que marca el extremismo del delirio quijotesco, y, lo mismo que éste, va cediendo a las fuerzas que lo reducen a los límites de la normalidad. (10)
>
> [In Don Quijote, the black and white poles tend to be continually contaminated; the sale, in the middle of the first part, takes on the air of an effective palace thanks to the blending of romantic episodes with chivalrous adventures. In addition, unlike what happens in the picaresque novel, the black pole is not conceived as a focus of interest in itself, but as a distorting and corrective mirror that marks the extremism of the quijotic delusion, and, like the latter, it gradually gives way to the forces that reduce it to the limits of normality.]

According to Close, the poles black and white are extremes Cervantes reverses to bring humor to the novel and present counterpoints to settings, characters, and social class. When we reverse the poles and center Africa, as I seek to do in this essay, the humor persists, but the binary logic breaks down. Micomicona's complexity comes into focus. Instead of a marginal stock character, she is revealed as a site of multiple possibilities for black African female subjectivities.

Close is also interested in a hero's tale, and we can note that Dorotea follows a similar route. The obstacle she must overcome is her shame at losing her virginity and her husband. Micomicona

provides the key to overcoming that shame, but as Close observes, black and white in *Don Quijote*" *tienden a contaminarse continuamente*." In the same manner that Close identifies in other places of *Quijote,* Micomicona exists in a gray area. She facilitates Dorotea's access to the position of central character, even as she carries connotations of the abject. Indeed, while Triplette argues that "the fictional African princess Micomicona is quite literally Don Quijote's golden opportunity" (165-169), I would suggest that, in fact, Micomicona is *Dorotea's* golden opportunity.

Hyper-Sexualized Micomicona

Recovering the royal agency and lineage of Black women as referenced in the Micomicona episode, reverses the tendency to read and represent them as abject or as commodities. I have shown the significance of Micomicona as, variously, the Guinean princess and the Ethiopian queen: the trope of African royalty is important to her character. However, there is more to say about the eroticized damsel in distress narrative. Micomicona introduces black African female royalty in *Don Quijote* but recalls that Micomicona's sexuality is also at issue in chapters 28-47. For example, in chapter 30, Sancho Panza counsels don Quijote on how he must marry the Guinean princess so that he can gain colonial rule over Black subjects:

> ("Cásese vuestra merced una por una con esta reina, ahora que la tenemos aquí como llovida del cielo, y después puede volverse con mi señora Dulcinea; que reyes debe de haber habido en el mundo que hayan sido amancebados ») (353) [Marry this queen, sir, once for all, now we have her, as it were, rained down upon us from heaven, and afterwards you may turn to my lady Dulcinea: for there have been kings who have had mistresses (190)].

Sancho overtly introduces the theme of illicit sexuality by raising the possibility of marrying Micomicona and taking Dorotea as a mistress. Don Quijote's sexual desires have been present

throughout this episode. Earlier in chapter 30, Micomicona's story stirs him to ask Sancho to undress him:

> Don Quijote diría, señora —dijo a esta sazón Sancho Panza—, o, por otro nombre, el Caballero de la Triste Figura.
>
> — Así es la verdad —dijo Dorotea—. «Dijo más: que había de ser alto de cuerpo, seco de rostro, y que en el lado derecho, debajo del hombro izquierdo, o por allí junto, había de tener un lunar pardo con ciertos cabellos a manera de cerdas.»
>
> En oyendo esto don Quijote, dijo a su escudero:
>
> — Ten aquí, Sancho, hijo, ayúdame a desnudar, que quiero ver si soy el caballero que aquel sabio rey dejó profetizado.
>
> — Pues, ¿para qué quiere vuestra merced desnudarse? —dijo Dorotea. — Para ver si tengo ese lunar que vuestro padre dijo —respondió don Quijote. (348-349)

["Don Quixote, you mean madam," quoth Sancho Panza, "or otherwise called the knight of the sorrowful figure." "You are right," said Dorothea. "He said, farther, that he was to be tall and thin visaged; and on his right side, under the left shoulder, or thereabouts, he was to have a grey mole, with hair like bristles." Don Quixote, hearing this, said to his squire, "Come hither, Sancho; help me to strip, that I may know whether I am the knight alluded to in the prophecy of that sage king." "why do you want to strip, sir?," said Dorotea. "To see if I have this mole that your father said," responded Don Quixote (187-188)].

Even before Dorotea-Micomicona arrives on the scene, don Quijote has been moved by unconscious or conscious desires. His penance in chapter 25 involves disrobing and frolicking in "carnes y pañales" (360). Thus, while Sancho suggests that Micomicona will be don Quijote's queen and Dulcinea his mistress, this scene is another example of Cervantine "slippage." It is through the Micomicona plot that erotic pleasure for its own sake becomes a possibility in don Quijote's world. Notably, Cervantes separates the pleasures enjoyed with a mistress from the socially oriented function of marital sexual relations (the production of heirs and acquiring wealth via a profitable marriage). Sancho's pleas for a marriage between don Quijote and Micomicona are motivated by his desire to have his own land.

The origin of the narrative of Micomicona may also suggest a reading through the lens of Porn Studies. Recall that the curate introduces her within a narrative of damsel-in-distress. She is searching for help as she defends against forced marriage to a giant who has invaded her kingdom in Guinea. While this backstory corresponds to scenes in chivalric novels, it also reproduces a trope in pornography. To characterize this trope as "sexualized" is not to demonize the character but rather to engage how Cervantes's literary corpus presents a complex and sensual argument about Micomicona's African body representing a sexualized trope. As a disciplinary space of possibilities, Porn Studies as a field opens up promising alternative interpretations to the meaning of this content. *Pornographic Sensibilities* edited by Nicholas R. Jones and Chad Leahy introduces the argument that "pornographic content" in conversation with Medieval/Early Modern Hispanic Studies offers an innovative perspective on sexuality and gender that takes into account early modern literary cultural productions. They advocate for "a turn to 'the pornographic 'as a field of study in its own right, a politically and ethically engaged disciplinary space of possibilities" (3). While Micomicona introduces a number of important and relevant African female subjectivities into the world of *Don Quijote, Part 1*, ultimately, these subjectivities are enabled by an initial erotic, even hyper-sexualized, subtext, in the form of Micomicona's persecution by a giant lustful for her kingdom and her body. Viewed from this angle, Micomicona's body is fundamental to her entry into the plot, which is to say, her body and her sexuality are the keys to Africa's entry into this novel's version of Spain and the Hapsburg Empire. Furthermore, the sexualized trope that Micomicona's African body represent in chapters 28-47 become the reproduced trope within a long tradition of the pornographic that extends from the early modern period through the present day. After all, the pornographic content that

Cervantes writes onto the body of Micomicona is one that commonly circulates in the early modern literary archive.

Black Feminist writing on the erotic and more recently the field of Porn Studies is also illuminating as we consider the significance of black African women's body. Audre Lorde, in her essay "Uses of the Erotic," argues that when we are not conscious of what we feel, we lose that part of ourselves, an experience that reduces us to the pornographic, the abused, and the absurd (36). Recall the telling detail about Dorotea; that she forgets some things, such as don Fernando's abusive behavior and Micomicona's name and story. Dorotea uses Micomicona to assist in that forgetting, but in this sense, Micomicona attains a power that we can see in the imagery of giants, dire threats to a kingdom, and desperate circumstances. Lorde offers a way to make new sense of these elements of the Dorotea-Micomicona episode. In "The Uses of the Erotic," the erotic highlights a Black female power that has been suppressed (29). This power gives access to express Black pleasure as a resource to tap into.

A Porn Studies approach suggests that the sexualized aspects of the Micomicona character open another dimension of Black female agency in the early modern world. On one side, we see how Dorotea uses the Micomicona episode to gain her subject position, but on the other, centering the episode on Micomicona opens up Micomicona's sexualized identity that was traditionally viewed as abject but in this case, now yielding a sense of subjectivity. As is the case with a reading that foregrounds the trope of African royalty, a reading organized through the lens of Porn Studies demonstrates the arbitrary nature of the association of the Black woman with the abject. She is abject only when Whiteness is centered. When she is read on her own terms, she is powerful, meaningful, and has an agentive presence.

Ideas of Verba and Res

When Micomicona is centered, Black femaleness is as well. As it relates to the ideas of language, there is a possible racialization encoded in Renaissance humanist discourses of *verba* and *res* ("word" and "substance") that sometimes becomes freighted with differentiation between empty verbiage and language of substance. In chapters 19-22 of *Don Quijote, Part 2*, Don Quijote and Sancho meet some students on the way to the wedding of the rich Camacho and the beautiful Quiteria. The students tell Don Quijote about a man named Basilio who is in love with Quiteria. Basilio is not as wealthy as Camacho, so Quiteria's father arranges for her to marry Camacho: "el padre de Quiteria… ordernó de casar a su hija con el rico Camacho, no pareciéndole ser bien casarla con Basilio, que no tenía tantos bienes de fortuna como de naturaleza" (196) [Quiteria's father... ordered his daughter to marry the rich Camacho, not seeming right to marry her to Basilio, who did not have as much wealth as his excellent character and ability]. Don Quijote and Sancho arrive to the wedding and have different opinions about the marriage and wealth. Sancho praises Quiteria for marrying Camacho for his wealth, while Don Quijote does not. When Camacho and Quiteria arrive to their wedding, Basilio shows up with a trick. Basilio is in love with Quiteria and desires to marry her, so he shows up the day of her wedding with a dagger which he uses to "kill" himself. He falls to the ground in pain and with blood as if he was taking his final breath. Quiteria gets to Basilio and hears his cry to marry her before he dies so that his soul can live. Through sympathy, Camacho and Quiteria agrees to this plan. The priest blesses the union between Quiteria and Basilio and then Basilio gets up from the ground. Basilio's return from the dead inspires one member of the crowd to shriek, "¡Milagro, milagro!" [Miracle, miracle!] but Basilio corrects this shriek with "¡No <<milagro, milagro>>, sino industria, industria! (217)" [Not miracle, miracle, rather industriousness, industriousness!]

He tricks everyone to think he is dying when he uses "un canon hueco de hierro lleno de sangre" (217) [a hollow iron cannon filled with blood] to marry the woman he loves.

Critics read this scene as an example of theatrics, appearance and aesthetics. Basilio's clever trick anc Camacho's wealth show how Cervantes incorporates the theme of performance. Francisco Vivar in his essay "Las Bodas de Camacho y la Sociedad del Espectáculo" [Camacho's Wedding and the Society's Spectacle/Performance] (2002) focuses on how Camacho's wedding represents "guerra económica" [economical war]. The idea is that rich Camacho creates his identity through his wealth and that Camacho creates the scenery and elements that leads to a performance. Vivar writes that, "la apariencia y la teatralidad ocupan todo el episodio de las bodas, no solo la acción ingeniosa de Basilio" (87) [appearance and theatricality occupy the entire wedding episode, not just Basilio's witty action]. Jorge Checa in his essay "'The Play's the Thing': Teatro, Poder y Resistencia en las Bodas de Camacho" (2007) examines theater and theatricality in the chapters focused on "las bodas de Camacho" in *Don Quijote, Part 2.* He writes that, "junto a los asistentes a las bodas, también los lectores terminan comprendiendo que la "industria" de Basilio no sólo alude al engaño consistente en finger su suicidio. Este truco es un eslabón – el más spectacular sin duda – de una actuación fuertemente teatralizada" (478) [Along with the wedding attendees, the readers also end up understanding that Basilio's "industriousness" not only alludes to the deception consisting of fingering his suicide. This trick is a link – the most spectacular without a doubt – of a heavily theatrical performance]. Seth Kimmel's essay titled, "'No Milagro, Milagro': The Early Modern Art of Effective Ritual" (2013) explores how seventeenth-century Spanish authors present scenes of theatrical and literary production "to underscore the shared conventions of art and ritual" (434). He writes that the wedding attendants did not say much after Basilio revealed his trick because

Don Quijote asserts that "Quiteria era de Basilio, y Basilio de Quiteria, por justa y favorable disposición de los cielos" (218) [Quiteria belonged to Basilio, and Basilio to Quiteria, by the just and favorable disposition of the heavens].[46]

This scene introduces a theme that remains important throughout *Don Quijote Part 2,* and which arguably is a matter of preoccupation in Spain and is shared throughout Europe during the early modern period; namely, the nature of language. The first distinction Cervantes calls attention to is the question of human power and agency versus divine interventions in the human world. These are the stakes of *industria* ('industriousness,' i.e., a human being's ability to use labor and skill to accomplish great things, from agriculture, animal husbandry, and weaving to, in Basilio's case, preventing losing the woman he loves to a wealthy rival) versus *milagro* ('miracle,' i.e., an occurrence that attests to the power and presence of God). *Don Quijote, Part 2* is preoccupied on all levels with the ability of human beings to accomplish things on a grand and powerful scale, perhaps especially in 17th century Spain, which had conquered the globe through *industria*: the skilled warmongering, conquest, and shrewd use of marriages employed by the Spanish Hapsburgs. *Don Quijote, Part 2* consistently weighs Spanish men's and women's excitement about *industria* against the moral and ethical shortcomings of human action and human perspectives. *Milagro/industria* signals the difference between God's accomplishments and gifts to humankind (on the one hand) and human achievements (on the other).

Is it a miraculous gift from God, or if is it a human construct that may or may not carry God's truth (res). I will trace key scenes in *Don Quijote, Part 2* with regard to questions of *verba* (language, verbiage) and *res* (substance, reality). This dichotomy seems to inform the plot,

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[46] Also refer to Anthony J. Cascardi's edited book *The Cambridge Companion to Cervantes* (2002); Augustin Redondo's book Otra manera de leer el "Quijote: historia, tradiciones culturales y literatura (1997); and Américo Castro's book *El pensamiento de Cervantes* (1973).

perhaps because of new concerns that emerged in sixteenth-and seventeenth- century around meaningful language in the age of print culture. Moreover, I will explore the nature and function of language with attentiveness to the ideas of verba representing princess Micomicona and res representing Dorotea. I discuss two different episodes from the novel: the guessing monkey and the enchanted head that highlights two entities with concerns of meaningful language. This will help my theorization of how I situate Micomicona and Dorotea within these early modern ideas.

Some of the reasons for Cervantes's concern are apparent in the discussion I presented above regarding Dorotea and Micomicona. The biggest act of *industria* Hapsburg Spain accomplished in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was transforming much of the globe into Spanish colonies, vice-realms, and —in the case of Africa— trading posts. In the course of this activity, Spanish rulers, jurists, councilors, Church authorities, and merchants assumed the authority to determine the value of kinds of human beings, a process that relegated a number of kinds of person into varieties of subordinate status: women, people of the Jewish faith, people of the Islamic faith, Moriscos (people whose ancestors practiced the Islamic faith, but who had officially converted to Christianity), black Africans, the indigenous inhabitants of the Americas, etc. In *Don Quijote, Part 2*, Cervantes examines this activity, and the confusion and the moral and ethical risks *industria* carries with it, insistently. But the human power to make things that accomplish things (*industria*) and the power, truth, and goodness of God are important themes that structure *Don Quijote Parts 1* and *2*. We see this in the Dorotea/Micomicona episode in *Part 1*.

In order to understand the ideas surrounding milagro vs industria, one must comprehend verba y res. *Verba* is language or words and is described as a vehicle while *res* is the truth that is captured in the language or things. Without *res*, words are not meaningful since *res* is the truth,

and this is the tension that surrounds the use of vernacular languages for writing and communication regarding important matters in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. During this period, the Holy Bible in Latin began to be translated into vernacular languages such as Spanish, French, Italian, etc. As the Christian truth had long been understood as something communicated in Latin by priests and fathers of the Church, the question of whether and to what extent vernacular languages were meaningful and capable of capturing God's truth was a matter of concern. Cervantes explores that question; the question of essential truth (*res*) and how it is measured. He questions the nature of language and its function as a means of communicating truth, and he measures how the human further aims to capture the providence similar to God's truth through vernacular languages. In other words, Cervantes was intrigued by the question of whether human language, and perhaps especially aesthetic language such as fiction and poetry, was milagro or industria, God's work or a product of the ingenious human mind.

The Guessing Monkey

In the day with Quijote (XXV), the text explains the encounter with the guessing monkey and a famous puppeteer who brings an altarpiece of Melisendra de la Mancha de Aragón and its history of the kingdom. The Master Peter arrives at the inn and whispers people's fortunes into the Master Peter's monkey. The monkey has a very rare ability where he can guess and declare the past and what is to come. Don Quijote is under the impression that Master Peter has made a pact with the devil: "debe de tener hecho algún concierto con el demonio, de que infunda esa habilidad en el mono" (257) [he must have made some concert with the devil, that he instills that ability in the monkey]. While the monkey is an animal, it has a similar trait with that of humans during this time period, which is the ability to create language and make them into possible substance.

The monkey has the ability to speak a vernacular language which challenges whether what the monkey say is coming from God or not. The guessing monkey is a relevant representation of the concerns of the period concerning meaningful language. The question remains if vernacular languages are a possible human construct, but this monkey further challenges that idea. The innkeeper character tells us that:

> Trae asimismo consigo un mono de la más rara habilidad que se vio entre monos, ni se imaginó entre hombres, porque si le preguntan algo, está atento a lo que le preguntan y luego salta sobre los hombros de su amo, y, llegándosele al oído, le dice la respuesta de lo que le preguntan, y maese Pedro la declaró luego; y de las cosas pasadas dice mucho más que de las que están por venir, y no todas veces acierta en todas, en las más yerra, de modo que nos hace creer que tiene el diablo en el cuerpo. (253)
>
> [He also brings with him a monkey of the rarest ability that was seen among monkeys, nor imagined among men, because if they ask him something, he is attentive to what they ask him and then he jumps on the shoulders of his master, and, reaching his ear he tells him the answer to what they ask him, and Master Pedro then declared it; and of the past things he says much more than of those to come, and he is not correct about everything, in the most erroneous things, so that he makes us believe that he has the devil in his body.]

The quote mentions that this is such a divine monkey that one cannot even imagine, not even a human performing this wondrous thing of prophecy, well supposed prophecy. Prophecy is a sign of God's providence because it provides truth to a situation to aid the person's life doubts. Further in the episode, the monkey speaks with language by prophesying to several characters in the novel and uses substance by saying things that are intelligible and understood. For instance, Don Quijote asks the monkey a question concerning La Cueva de Montesinos and if what happened in this place is true or false. This question has been the source of important doubt throughout *Part 2*. Did this monkey capture truth similar to God?

This question suggests that in the episode, the monkey possesses the power to language and substance even though it is an animal. Perhaps there is reason to believe that this is truly a human construct because the quote and episodes makes clear that the monkey does not always

give truth (no todas veces acierta en todas). The last part of the quote says that there is a possibility that this monkey has the devil inside of him (de modo que nos hace creer que tiene el diablo en el cuerpo), since the devil would be a representation of industria due to being a fallen angel. In the Garden of Eden in Genesis of the Holy Bible, the enemy was very clever to trick Eve into eating the apple that began the sin of the Earth. Since the enemy is against God, this conveys that language and substance the monkey attempts to perform is part of industria, which signifies a human construct further from God's providence.

Cervantes presents the ideas of meaningful language through an animal, which does not seem all that strange since animals are also from God. What follows the episode is a resolution indicating that the monkey did not in fact know what he was saying and knew things about people only because his puppeteer was telling him. Specifically in the case of Don Quijote and Sancho, the puppeteer was someone very familiar with both of these characters and knew of the doubts that Sancho and Don Quijote held. To return back to the ideas of milagro and industria, it seems as if the guessing monkey is a representation of milagro and industria since an animal is made by God and its speech was controlled by a man (the puppeteer). The monkey had to jump on the shoulder of his puppeteer in order to tell him what he guessed to tell the person whatever truth he received after hearing the question. The guessing monkey was fiction and all of the language and substance he performs is a trick, which alludes to its human construction of language in order to attempt to have substance.

There is a possibility that the monkey has its own language, even though it was a fictional occurrence. The guessing monkey had to communicate with his puppeteer what he thinks, and the puppeteer is the one that would communicate it to the human. This idea conceivably suggests that what the monkey was guessing was just what his puppeteer was thinking, and the language

and substance is the monkey. The idea that a monkey can speak past things or things to come would be a miracle from God, but the trickery or fictional aspect is that the puppeteer knew about the people to whom the monkey was attempting to speak truth. The question remains if this monkey or the puppeteer communicates language as a gift from God or by human construct attempting to capture substance like God.

The Enchanted Head

In chapter (LXII) Sancho and Don Quixote encounters Don Antonio Moreno and his delightful, enchanted brass head that gives truth when asked. The narrator states that the head was made by one of the greatest enchanters that was of the Polish nation and disciple of famous Escotillo. Don Antonio Moreno shares with Don Quijote that he has an enchanted brass head and:

> Esta cabeza, […] ha sido hecha y fabricada por uno de los mayores encantadores y hechiceros que ha tenido el mundo… que tiene propiedad y virtud de responder a cuantas cosas al oído le preguntaren. Guardó rumbos, pintó caracteres, observó astros, miró puntos, y, finalmente, la sacó con la perfección que veremos mañana… que [la cabeza encantada] por experiencia sé [dice don Antonio] verdad en cuanto responde. (555-556)
> [This head, […] has been made and manufactured by one of the greatest charmers and sorcerers the world has ever had… who has the property and virtue of answering whatever questions are asked to the ear. He kept directions, painted characters, observed stars, looked at points, and, finally, he produced it with the perfection that we will see tomorrow ... that [the enchanted head] from experience I know [Don Antonio says] true as soon as he responds.]

After Don Antonio Moreno shares what the enchanted brass head does, the following day he wants them to experience it. Sancho, Don Quijote and two other guests experience what the brass head can do by asking questions. Don Antonio Moreno asks the first question:

> El primero que se llegó al oído de la cabeza fue el mismo don Antonio, y díjole en voz sumisa, pero no tanto, que de todos no fuse entendida:
> --Dime, cabeza, por la virtud que en ti se encierra: ¿qué pensamientos tengo yo agora?
> Y la cabeza le respondió, sin mover los labios, con voz clara y distinta, de modo que fue de todos entendida, esta razón:
> --Yo no juzgo de pensamientos. (559)

> [The first to reach the ear of the enchanted head was Don Antonio himself, and he said to him in a submissive voice, but not so much so that he was not understood by everyone:
>
> --Tell me, head, by the virtue that is enclosed in you: what thoughts do I have now?
>
> And the head answered him, without moving its lips, with a clear and distinct voice, so that it was understood by all, this reason:
> --I don't judge thoughts].

Following don Antonio, friends and the two lady guests ask personal questions and the response from the brass head is incomplete. The friends and guests are not happy with the answers and questions the validity of the enchanted head. Finally, Don Quijote asks the enchanted head about La Cueva de Montesinos. The enchanted head answers Don Quijote's question mentioning that Sancho's whips will go slowly, and that Dulcinea (Don Quijote's imagined lady) will be disenchanted, when suddenly Don Quijote stops him. Don Quijote did not want to hear more about La Cueva de Montesinos. The narrator then informs us that the talking brass head is not real, and that Don Antonio's nephew was the one answering the questions.

Cervantes writes about an enchanted brass head with no body that talks, and answers questions people ask without even knowing them. This brass head not only talks but predicts the future and the present. This ability is similar to people of the early modern period with regard to vernacular languages. The brass head has the right and validity to predict the future because it truly experiences what human beings read and / or see to create this "human knowledge." The "human knowledge" refers to when don Antonio presents the excellence of the head (guardó rumbos, pintó caracteres, observó astros, miró puntos, y finalmente, la sacó con la perfección) that gives it legitimacy to predict the future. Don Antonio Moreno ensures us that the head has lived a "human life" by filing directions, painting characters, observing the stars and looking at points. The enchantment shows how the head is an inanimate object and should not speak or predict the future. The episode opens limitations to imagine the differences in the way people

talk. The enchanted head can be a metaphor to represent the variation of meaningful language. This is not to resolve the question of vernacular languages and measure if it captures truth or if is just a human construct, but rather to understand how the text presents this machine as capturing substance similar to what God does. Don Antonio portrays a meaningful language through a machine that has no body but a tongue to supposedly capture truth. This brass head also prophecy similarly to the guessing monkey but they differ in function of language. The enchanted head is specifically made and manufactured by a human, however this does not completely resolve the question of if it is from God or not.

The idea of the enchanted head infers that a machine, which is a human construction, can attempt to create language and substance. Although the monkey and enchanted head are not conventional functions or users of vernacular languages, these episodes say otherwise. The enchanted head strikes more attention than the monkey because the text explicitly say that it is constructed by a human whereas there is small truth that a monkey can possess the skill of communicating meaningful language. The brass head, on the other hand, is another person inside the head talking. The text affirms that:

> La cabeza, que parecía medalla y figura de emperador romano, y de color bronce, estaba toda hueca, y ni más ni menos la tabla de la mesa, en que se encajaba tan justamente…un sobrino de don Antonio, estudiante agudo y discreto, fue el respondiente, el cual estando avisado de su señor tío de los que habían de entrar con él en aquel día en el aposento de la cabeza, le fue fácil responder con presteza y puntualidad a la primera pregunta; a las demás respondió por conjeturas, y, como discreto, discretamente. (561-62)
>
> [The head, which looked like a medal and figure of a Roman emperor, and bronze in color, was all hollow, and neither more nor less the tabletop, in which it fitted so precisely ...a nephew of Don Antonio, a sharp and discreet student, was the respondent, who being advised by his lord uncle of those who were to enter with him that day at the head of the chambers, it was easy for him to answer the first question promptly and punctually; to the others he answered by conjecture, and, as discreet, discreetly.]

Therefore, the enchanted head is empty and shallow, not carrying a cerebrum or the complexities of a human brain. Additionally, the enchanted head is don Antonio's nephew that is a sharp and witty student that already knows who is in the room and if he did not, he answered wittingly. Again, Don Quijote and Sancho ask about doubts they have from *Part 1* and *Part 2*, which was expected since the text finds itself another episode measuring meaningful language. Don Antonio told his nephew about Don Quijote and Sancho and for that reason, the enchanted head seemed so marveled, especially the response to the question of La Cueva de Montesinos. This enchanted head is trusted, and other characters use its services such as a married woman and people with identity crisis. This head held more attempt at language and substance than the nephew inside, although he is smart. This case is more profound than the guessing monkey since this is a machine and there is not any small truth that a machine can predict the future. Nevertheless, this case does not resolve the question of language and substance, but it does engage those ideas with a speaking, future-talking enchanted brass head.

Miraculous Unconventional Users

In order to return to the ideas of verba and res, Juan de Jáuregui (qt. in López Bueno) comments that, "Hay, pues, en los autores dos suertes de oscuridad diversísimas: la una consiste en las palabras, esto es, en el orden y modo de la locución, y en el estilo del lenguaje solo; la otra en las sentencias, esto es, en la materia y argumento mismo, y en los conceptos y pensamientos dél" (21). [There are, then, in the authors two very diverse kinds of darkness: the one consists of the words, that is, in the order and mode of the locution, and in the style of language alone; the other in the sentences, that is, in the matter and argument itself, and in the concepts and thoughts of it.] The verba represents how words and the style of language moves while res represents the substance of the thing that verba creates. Verba is the language itself and res is the sentences that

captures truth in the language. Moreover, the milagro and industria scene undoubtedly informs the plot throughout the novel considering meaningful language in the 17th century. Accordingly, what I find thought-provoking is that in both instances there was a human behind the mask (the monkey and the head). This leads me to think that both episodes attempted to use an animal or a machine to communicate meaningful language with the vernacular languages without showing who was behind it (a human). These human characters wanted to measure the function of language using fictional entities to address questions of verba and res. Cervantes took a concern in Spain and all of Europe and engaged it into these specific episodes as well as the first scene of milagro and industria above-mentioned. It would seem more miraculous and extraordinary to see a monkey and a head communicating meaningful language because it would separate them from human vernacular languages. Therefore, the guessing monkey and enchanted head were used to measure if vernacular languages through unconventional users, were a human construct that carried God's truth (res).

To create a list of entities that would be closer to capturing God's truth through vernacular languages, the following list is possible: God, humans, animals and finally machines. These episodes challenge the vernacular languages, created by humans when translating the Bible in the 17th century, being used by both an animal and a machine. Cervantes was very aware of meaningful language during the 17th century to include such wonderful episodes that captures the ideas of verba and res.

Micomicona (verba) and Dorotea (res)

Micomicona and Dorotea in *Don Quijote Part I* emphasize their positions in society and in Cervantes's literary corpus. Verba (language) represents Micomicona because as she is situated in the abject position to create the position of Dorotea and is the vehicle that moves this along.

On the other hand, Dorotea represents res (God's truth) as she narrates this part of her story within Cervantes's corpus that captures what Micomicona's story makes possible. Res stands as the foundation and vehicle that moves words to be meaningful and communicate significance. The importance of verba can easily be dismissed as it can be insignificant if not given res to gain importance. Micomicona is in the abject position and stands as the words whereas Dorotea is the sentences and narrate the story to gain a subject position. In other words, Micomicona is the vehicle and Dorotea has the keys to make it function. Similarly, to the guessing monkey and enchanted head episode in *Don Quijote, Part 2,* Micomicona is an unconventional element who is utilized by a human to make her story come alive. Micomicona is part of Dorotea's plan to constitute a subject position, so Micomicona is not narrating her story. Dorotea is simply using Micomicona for substance in order to advance herself. Therefore, this makes Micomicona an unconventional user. The monkey and enchanted head are tools to measure language and its meaningfulness whereas Micomicona is a tool to advance Dorotea in a subject position and boost herself image in a patriarchal society.

The interaction between Dorotea and the African princess would identify the princess as an unconventional user. Dorotea uses Micomicona for her own personal gain and is successful. I query: Why is Micomicona an unconventional user of her own history? Micomicona is from Black Africa and was immediately placed in an abject position. Through these indexes, she is not situated in a place to represent res as she is forbidden to capture the meaningfulness of her story or character. Although, the difference in this episode from the ones from *Don Quijote, Part 2* is that Micomicona is an actual human figure while the episodes feature an animal and a machine. I am not comparing Micomicona to these entities as there is a significant difference between the three; however an African princess would be on the list of unconventional users.

Dominant Language

Another set of concerns that arise when thinking about these episodes in *Don Quijote, Part 2* is the idea of language domination and different language registers. The guessing monkey manifests himself similarly to Sancho with his actions to say things past or those to come. To clarify: Sancho is the squire of Quijote and respects his friend, but through his actions, Quijote is perceived as someone who knows more than him. For this reason, Sancho has a lot of confidence in Quijote as a language master and is similar to the monkey with his puppeteer. Also, Sancho says things that are not always true. It is to say that the language register Sancho uses is like that of an animal and is therefore not perceived as a human communicating language at Don Quijote's level. Who says Don Quijote speaks more intelligible and Sancho does not? Who measures that? I ask these questions not to resolve them but simply view them through a colonial apparatus some hundred years later through Frantz Fanon's theory, one of the most important writers in Black Atlantic theory in an age of anti-colonial liberation struggle. As we look at Dorotea and Micomicona, there poses a difference in their relationship as Micomicona does not really talk. We understand that Dorotea does all the talking and narrates her story to create this subject position through the "eyes" of Micomicona. Dorotea's voice holds the hegemonic power conventionally in the field as a White Castilian woman who silences an African princess. This is not to say that Micomicona does not have a dominant voice but that this is how scholarly criticism presents her voice.

Micomicona's silenced voice is dominant. Through her body and personhood, we find the characterization of both the African princess and Dorotea. This African princess's personhood and "voice" is assigned to Dorotea, but that does not dismiss the African princess's dominant

language. As Dorotea masks herself as an African princess, she acts as the African princess and therefore becomes her. This switch fully characterizes the African princess and how she makes a subject position possible for Dorotea. An agentive voice can be assigned to Micomicona as it is through her personhood that we find Dorotea. Dorotea would not reach her goal of having a subject position in society if she did not use Micomicona's narrative. Therefore, Micomicona's voice is the hegemonic power that makes anything possible for Dorotea. If we view Micomicona in this light, we see how powerful Micomicona is and how she helps shape the novella's plot.

Thoughts on Dorotea and Micomicona regarding recognition

Language is essential with regard to recognition from society and position. In the case of Dorotea and Micomicona, Dorotea's voice and position give her the space to be recognized, whereas the voice and position of Micomicona are silenced and low. In Iberian early modern society, Micomicona is silenced, and someone else narrates her story, which is what occurs in the text. At the same time, Dorotea has the freedom to tell her story and gain advancement in society - position-wise. Dorotea gets recognition while Micomicona stands below with no consideration. Language also marks an entire community or population, and we see through the position Micomicona is in that her community is being dismissed and silenced.

This idea further interprets how scholarly criticism reads Micomicona. She is read through a privileged White elite position, similar to how Dorotea narrates her. The difference is that there is intimacy there as both characters are female. There is more to theorize here as we see a cultural and linguistic appropriation between two female characters. It is essential to understand that a White Castilian woman writes through the personhood of an African princess to gain a position in society.

For this reason, the African princess Micomicona is not a marginal character, nor is she illegible. While she is masked as Dorotea and is imaginary in the fictional world centered on don Quijote's tale, she is nonetheless central to the plot of *Don Quijote, Part 1,* when the entire novelistic habitus is taken into account. Hall points out, "The image of a white embedded in darkness, of discovering and merchandising a precious whiteness from "dark" continents is a typical colonialist gesture in Elizabethan England that works to define and preserve the value of whiteness" (218), which explains the racial valence between the White bourgeoise woman and African woman. My arguments identify that the African princess narrative and character are central to the plot and Dorotea's characterization.

The purpose of using narration of an African woman is to speak generally of the era. An early modern reading of the figure of an African woman is that they lack a voice to narrate their history and are tools to be utilized at their masters or men's disposal. In this case, the African woman narrative is being used first by Cervantes and then solidified to reify the self-image of Dorotea. Cervantes writes the African women character in conventional readings of this figure of the era and acknowledges the relationship between a White bourgeoisie woman and an African woman.

I urge readers to consider what Micomicona offers us as we work to discern African female subjectivity. Cervantes 'corpus casts a variety of characters, animals, economies, and wordplay, and while his work is imaginative, it gives a picture of the early modern Iberia and Africa relations. There is no mistake that Cervantes cast an African princess from an unknown place in Black Africa to construct the subject position of a White bourgeoisie woman. This setup is not foreign to the early modern Iberian Studies canon, as both María de Zayas and Mariana de

Carvajal y Saavedra write in a Black female servant in their text. Although conventional scholarship classifies these representations of Black woman characters as a demonstration of racist buffoonery of the authorship, my reading finds them central and necessary to the text and plot. Zayas's characterization of *la negra* in Desegaño 4 ("Tarde llega el desengaño") describes the life of a Black female slave who lies to her master about a personal relationship and, at the end, confesses to her lie and violently dies at the hand of her master. An established interpretation of this episode is that the text is antiBlack and teaches women the treacheries of men. I do not disagree that these texts are racist; instead, I make a case for these Black woman characters that are dismissed and marginal. The Blackness and Africanness in this episode of *DQ* show how Africa is marked as an Other in the Iberian imagination and how Sancho can put his imperial colonial project to practice.

While the field reads the Dorotea-Micomicona episode as racist and profoundly anti-Black, especially concerning Sancho's comments, another reading opens up possibilities of subjectivities and agency for marginal or minor characters. When we examine the value of the African princess and the foundation she creates for Dorotea's success, we not only recuperate the agency and subjectivity of Micomicona, but also open possibilities for rereading all such characters.

El colloquio de los perros

El colloquio de los perros by Cervantes is a novella included in his *Las novelas ejemplares II.* This story discusses the story of two dogs, Cipión and Berganza. Berganza retells the story of his masters and experiences in Seville, Córdoba, and Granada and Cipión promises to tell his after Berganza's. Cipión teaches Berganza how to tell a story and make it enjoyable, so he interrupts him frequently. This text is an example of a picaresque novella, typical of the Baroque tradition,

with elements of reality and verisimilitude. In Cervantes's literary corpus, he brings in the discussion of an enslaved Black woman and I explore how this character uses resistance and eroticism in a way that recuperates a sense of agency and subjectivity. Berganza asserts:

> «Dígolo porque la negra de casa estaba enamorada de un negro, asimismo esclavo de casa, el cual negro dormía en el zaguán, que es entre la puerta de la calle y la de en medio, detrás de la cual yo estaba; y no se podían juntar sino de noche, y para esto habían hurtado o contrahecho las llaves; y así, las más de las noches bajaba la negra, y, tapándome la boca con algún pedazo de carne o queso, abría al negro, con quien se daba buen tiempo, facilitándolo mi silencio, y a costa de muchas cosas que la negra hurtaba.(349-350). [There was a black female servant that lived in the house who was in love with a black man also belonging to the house but slept in the porch between the street door and the one I guarded. The black woman would come downstairs at night and distract me with a piece of meat or cheese and open the door for the man with false or stolen keys. The bribes were enough to keep me silent, but not for long. I started to question my loyalty to my master by remaining silent at the many things the black woman was hiding.]

Berganza talks here about the Black woman servant and Black male servant. They supposedly had a relationship, per Berganza. Berganza was the watchdog to protect the house, but the Black female servant gave Berganza (dádivas) bribes such as meat and cheese so he wouldn't bark to get her in trouble. This relationship between a Black female servant and a Black male that was hidden since they secretly had a relationship challenges us and leads to a subtext about Black eroticism. Lorde's scholarly agenda for Black women seeks to make them feel comfortable in their desires and pleasures while doing the work of Black liberation. Although the Black woman servant is involved in a secret relationship, it begs us to question why a secret relationship was necessary. Since the Black woman servant had a relationship with the Black male servant, it opens possibilities for the idea of eroticism of the Black woman servant. The text explains that the Black woman sneaks to see the Black man. The Black woman is interested in seeing this male servant at night, perhaps because it is the best time to sneak without being caught. The Black woman's interest in the Black male servant and sneaking at night to see him and bribing

Berganza aligns with Lorde's concept of eroticism and pleasure. The Black woman finds pleasure and desires to maintain a relationship with the Black male servant despite bribing the dog. Moreover, Nash offers us a Porn Studies reading for Black women but in a sense to explore and enjoy their pleasurable desires and needs. This episode Berganza recounts to Cipión features the third sister in Spain that resists the White European hegemonic apparatus by pushing through the obstacles Berganza presents. Berganza bites and injures the Black female servant because he believes she is dishonest, a thief, and rude. Despite putting the Black female servant in bed sick for various days, she returns to spend time with the Black male servant. When she returns, she starves Berganza by not giving him bribes and then tries to hurt him when she gives him a sponge covered in fried grease. Berganza interprets this as a trick that she wants to kill him. He is frightened that she might kill him and leaves that house for another master. Berganza states:

> «Finalmente, mi buena intención rompió por las malas dádivas de la negra; a la cual, bajando una noche muy escura a su acostumbrado pasatiempo, arremetí sin ladrar, porque no se alborotasen los de casa, y en un instante le hice pedazos toda la camisa y le arranqué un pedazo de muslo: burla que fue bastante a tenerla de veras más de ocho días en la cama, fingiendo para con sus amos no sé qué enfermedad. Sanó, volvió otra noche, y yo volví a la pelea con mi perra[47], y, sin morderla, la arañé todo el cuerpo como si la hubiera cardado como manta. Nuestras batallas eran a la sorda, de las cuales salía siempre vencedor, y la negra, malparada y peor contenta. Pero sus enojos se parecían bien en mi pelo y en mi salud: alzóseme con la ración y los huesos, y los míos poco a poco iban señalando los nudos del espinazo. Con todo esto, aunque me quitaron el comer, no me pudieron quitar el ladrar. Pero la negra, por acabarme de una vez, me trujo una esponja frita con manteca; conocí la maldad; vi que era peor que comer zarazas, porque a quien la come se le hincha el estómago y no sale dél sin llevarse tras sí la vida. Y, pareciéndome ser imposible guardarme de las asechanzas de tan indignados enemigos, acordé de poner tierra en medio, quitándomeles delante de los ojos. (352-353)
> [So, having seen the shameful acts of the black couple, I decided, like a good servant, to put an end to it, and I completely succeeded in my purpose. As I said, the black woman would come downstairs to get together with the black man and bribe me to keep quiet with a piece of meat or cheese. One night, however, my integrity prevailed. When she came downstairs, I silently attacked her, to not wake the household and to send her a warning. She stayed hurt in bed for eight days after that, telling the masters that she

[47] Esclava.

> simply had the flu. She came down another night and I attacked her again, this time with scratches. After this she started to retaliate, first by starving me, and then eventually she threw me a sponge covered in fried grease. I saw through the trick that was meant to kill me, and upon realizing that she wouldn't stop until I was dead, I decided to run away.]

I build on the framework of Lorde and Nash as this sister in Spain is resisting the hegemonic apparatus by resisting the damage ensued by Berganza. Berganza, in this context, represents the White European hegemonic apparatus, while the Black female servant represents the resistance to that. The author's literary corpus opens interpretation and racial discourse surrounding the Black female servant. A conventional reading of this episode is that the text is racist and continues to show how racist the early modern era was; however, I take a second look at this episode. I do not necessarily disagree that this text is not racist, but I am interested in how this Black female servant used resistance through her interactions with Berganza. It is interesting to note that while a conventional reading interprets this episode as participating in racial discourse, there is also a touch of sarcasm and play on with words with the usage and imagination of a dog. Berganza recounts his story to another dog and explicitly identifies a Black female servant. The dog immediately recognizes that she must bow to him, so he does not harm her. Through this episode, we observe how the Black female servant enjoys her form of pleasure with the Black male servant while resisting the hegemonic apparatus that attempted to hold her back. Both Nash and Lorde's reading bring forward the pleasures and desires of the Black woman servant. This sister fights the good fight while she enjoys herself with personal pleasures and desires.

Berganza's interactions with the Black female servant represent black Africans in a way that largely converses with the society in which they lived. The context is near Sevilla in Spain (Southern part of Spain), where there was a port with many black African enslaved folks. The

title is sarcastic as it is titled regarding the speech of dogs. The buffoonery is that dogs have their own speech, so humans or people do not understand them. They have a "colloquial" language they share. Berganza incorporates a story that involves two enslaved Blacks that want to be with one another. This reflects ideas and conventional narratives of Blacks in scholarly criticism during this period as they were known to speak a "colloquial" or "creole language" that distinguished them from other folks. One of the main factors that we see within the black African population on the Iberian Peninsula is speech. As Nicholas R. Jones resolves this with his theorization of "habla de negros," we see how pertinent speech is within the black African population. The title foreshadows how black Africans were classified as animals with identifying traits, including Black speech. In Antonio Santos Morillo essay titled, "Caracterización del negro en la literature Española del XVI" he asserts that, "Así pues, para demostrar la inferioridad del esclavo negro, las incompetencias lingüísticas, social e intelectual que lo particularizaban literariamente lo presentaban como un ser más próximo al bruto que al humano" (27). Santos Morillo claims how inferior the enslaved Black was in Europe during the 16th century and how they were depicted in a literary sense as being close to a brute or animal. The enslaved Black differentiates from the privileged population in Europe, so their characterization is that of an irrational, speechless animal.

As I analyze Black speech and the interactions between the Black woman servant, I query: why does a pidgin language lose its authenticity and culture when it enters the hegemonic world? I use the term pidgin as I examine this question through the eyes of Frantz Fanon's essay *Black Skin, White Masks* (2008). This essay is filled with personal experiences, themes, and intertextuality to respond to this question successfully. Fanon was appropriated to the white world as a Martinican man who spoke French. In contrast, other Blacks during this time

predominantly spoke a pidgin language from a base/central language, either Arabic, French, or English. Fanon reflects the language as a form of style rather than content to exemplify language linguistically because of the social state. The way someone speaks or demonstrates their accent results from their social class. The language permeates the individual that sparks the question of appropriation in the white world. In this case, the pidgin language is inappropriate in the white world and should not be spoken in public, but it is ridiculed in films and television.

Nevertheless, these pidgin languages bring authenticity and culture to a people. When that is stripped from a people due to a lack of recognition, it changes the identity of a people. Other works from Fanon, such as *A Dying Colonialism* (1967) and *The Wretched of the Earth* (2004), perceive the language as worn like a scarlet letter to describe a form of expression inappropriate or non-standard in the white world. I further analyze how Fanon uses language as something permeated to define an individual by their social status, which will globalize the idea of linguistical appropriation.

Fanon asserts that language reflects a style that determines a social state. This idea is consolidated throughout his works of *Black Skin White Masks*, *A Dying Colonialism, and The Wretched of the Earth*. Based upon a person's linguistic style, the style determines their appropriation level in the white world. Appropriation requires that the dominant language being spoken and any other dialect is subjected or inferior to it. For this reason, Fanon writes in his first chapter of *Black Skin, White Masks* that:

> Speaking pidgin means imprisoning the black man and perpetuating a conflictual situation where the white man infects the black man with extremely toxic foreign bodies. There is nothing more sensational than a black man speaking correctly, for he is appropriating the white world. (18-19)

Fanon uses “pidgin” to allude to Creole, a French-spoken “dialect.” The Creole “dialect” continues to put the Black man in a challenging situation, forcing him into a lower social state in the hegemonic world. To challenge the lower social state, the Black man must begin to allow the “white man to infect” him. This “infect” refers to learning the dominant language, perhaps resulting in losing the pidgin language. The loss of this pidgin language appropriates the white world— confirms that the pidgin language is inferior.

The quote incorporates the words “extremely toxic foreign bodies,” which is not typical jargon in this sense but makes perfect sense. Fanon uses this phrase to refer to the Black man being “infected” by the white man with the hegemonic language. The word “toxic” is used to explain how this “dominant language” enters the body of the Black man as something rejected but forced to appropriate to the white world. The “foreign bodies” refer to the “new dominant language” that perhaps never existed in the Black man’s body. When a Black man learns the language, instead of speaking pidgin, it is a sign that the Black man, therefore, possesses some “foreign bodies.” These foreign bodies translate into the “white bodies” that enter the Black man to create the title of this work, a Black man that covers up his culture or idiolect with a white mask. By accepting these foreign bodies, the pidgin language is secondary to the dominant language and thus loses its value in the hegemonic world. In the essay “Pidgin Language” by Robert A. Hall Jr., he writes that:

> The structures of pidgin languages, although reduced in contrast to "major" languages, are nonetheless clear and consistent once they are analyzed and described in their own terms. The lowly social origin of some vocabulary items is not a justifiable reason for condemnation or ridicule. (134)

Although pidgin languages are formed from a "major" language, it does not negate its importance nor significance in a society or within a group of people. Sure, the language borrows from the major languages and incorporates a distinctive vocabulary, but it should be ridiculed or condemned. The quote mentions that pidgin languages are also "clear and consistent, " meaning they have an order and transparent way of composing sentences—a way of speaking equivalent to the "major languages." This leads to the next idea concerning pidgin languages that are typically not written when Hall reiterates that:

> People who wish to denigrate pidgin languages sometimes point out that they are not written, the implication being that any unwritten language is an unlicked bear cub, an unintelligible jargon never submitted to the necessary discipline of the schools. This reflects a basic misunderstanding of the nature of language. (125)

Pidgin languages are not languages that should be disparaged just because they are not "major languages." This shows a misunderstanding of the totality of the language because it contains so much culture and personality since it is spoken and understood by different groups of people and areas. Fanon emphasizes this point of pidgin languages in *Black Skin White Masks*, *A Dying Colonialism,* and *The Wretched of the Earth* to reinforce the importance of pidgin languages and how they are perceived in the dominant world. Moreover, the quote discusses how many pidgin languages are not written and therefore hold this low level of expertise in society that affects their significance in the world. With the implication of being unwritten but spoken, pidgin languages carry a lower level of discipline because it is not taught nor demonstrated orthographically in schools. For this reason, it has no significant purpose in the dominant world. The "unintelligible jargon" is only called that because it is unknown to the majority since a pidgin language is spoken within a particular group of people. This phrase, unintelligible jargon, refers to what people do not know—the unknown is always called something inappropriate due

to ignorance. So, one must speak the hegemonic or primary language to be appropriated to the white world.

Another way to view this episode is how the Black female servant enters the White European world by providing bribes to Berganza to bypass this smoke screen. Since Berganza starts to take matters into his own hands by injuring the Black female servant, she uses her power to overcome the smoke screen and continue to explore her eroticism with the Black male servant. We see the agency of the Black sister in Spain and how she uses her subjectivity to frighten Berganza from bothering her again. We see the Black baroque tradition as Berganza presents a perspective of Blacks that is often associated with how the White Europeans imagined black Africans in the early modern era. Since Berganza acts upon these pretentious claims, the black African sister resists by not giving bribes to the dog and throwing something that could harm him. I am not in favor of violence or harm, but this represents how the sister resists the White European hegemonic apparatus. She is living as a servant, which is conventional for black Africans on the Iberian Peninsula. Still, her interactions with Berganza reflect the other side of the African Baroque tradition—restoring the black African.

IV: SEED OF LOVE AND RESTORATION

Black Beauty and Freedom

Zayas Chapter – Spanish Tradition (4th chapter in dissertation)

In the previous chapter, I argued that Princess Micomicona and the Black woman from Berganza's tale wield agency and power through active participation and resistance. In this chapter, I press further with this inquiry by examining one of Iberia's Black sisters, the unnamed Black servant devised by Maria de Zayas y Sotomayor, in her tale, "Tarde llega el desengaño."[48] In this story, often simply referred to as Desengaño 4, the noble Spanish elite, don Jaime unsuccessfully falls in love with a woman named Lucrecia. Don Jaime then finds Elena, a woman reminiscent of Lucrecia, whom he later falls in love with. He and Elena remain happily married for eight years until Don Jaime receives wounding news from a Black maid in his castle. The Black maid cries to Don Jaime:

> Sabe Dios la pena que tengo en llegar a decirte esto: mas no es justo que pudiendo remediarlo, por callar yo, vivas tú engañado y sin honra. Y por no detenerme, que temo que no será más mi vida de cuanto me vean hablar contigo, porque así me han amenazado, mi señora y su primo tratan en tu ofensa y ilícito amor, y en faltando tú, en tu

[48] This project was motivated during a reading conference with my advisor during the Winter 2019 quarter. We explored Spanish literature during the Renaissance and Baroque periods, focusing on a Blackness approach. We analyzed lyric poems, dramas, prose narratives, and novels. This reading conference was undoubtedly one of the most inspiring times of my career as I began to understand the bigger picture of my research goals. After this inspiring reading conference and various conversations about this type of research, my advisor arranged an event with scholars having overlapping interests. At a powerful symposium held at the University of Oregon titled "Race, Racialization and the Early Modern—Emerging Views" in 2019, there were four beautiful scholars whose research engaged with race, religion, gender studies, cultural studies, and Blackness in the early modern. One of the scholars, Nicholas Jones, whose work on Black Baroque, Black feminism, and Black speech (habla de negros) in the early modern Iberia, inspired my research immensely. This formative event and experience solidified my interests and scholarly agenda of recovering and restoring black African voices and lives in early modern Iberian studies. Not only inspiring, but the work has also provided a trajectory for the fortification of my own work.

> lugar ocupa su primo tu lecho. Yo lo había sospechado, y cuidadosa lo mire, y es mal que lo sintieron. Yo te ha avisado de la traición que te hacen; ahora pon en ello el remedio. (248-249)
>
> [God knows how sad I am to tell you this: but it's not fair that being able to find a solution, by keeping quiet, you live deceived and without honor. And to not stop myself, I fear for my life when they see me talking to you, because that is how they have threatened me, my mistress and her cousin address their offense and illicit love, and when you are not here, her cousin takes your place in your bed. I had suspected it, and carefully looked at it, and it's bad that they felt it. I have warned you of the betrayal they are doing to you; now fix it].

The Black maid reports Elena having an affair with a handsome young cousin, who lived with them while studying for the priesthood. He believes the Black maid and burns the cousin alive, saving his skull as a drinking vessel and souvenir for Elena to remember every day. The Black maid becomes the lady of the house and Elena is subjected to mistreatment.

> Lo primero que hice, ciego de furiosa cólera, en llegando aquí, fue quemar vivo al traidor primo de Elena, reservando su cabeza para lo que habéis visto, que es la que traía en las manos para que le sirva de vaso en que beba los acíbares, como bebió en su boca las dulzuras. Luego, llamando a la Negra que me había descubierto la traición, le di todas las joyas y galas de Elena, delante de ella misma, y le dije, por darla más dolor, que ella había der ser mi mujer. (249)
>
> [The first thing I did, blind with furious rage, on arriving here to the house, was to burn Elena's traitorous cousin alive, reserving his head for what you have seen, which is the one she carried in her hands to serve as a glass in which she drinks bitternesss, as she drank sweetness in her mouth. Then, calling the Black maid, who had discovered my betrayal, I gave her all of Elena's jewels and finery, in front of her, and called the Black maid, to give Elena more pain, my woman (lady of the house)].

Unfortunately, it is not until the Black maid is dying that she then confesses her lying about Elena's supposed affair. Towards the end of the episode, the Black maid confesses about the lie she tells Don Jaime. The Black maid confesses to Don Jaime:

> Porque lo cierto del caso es que yo me enamoré de él, y le andaba persuadiendo fuse mi amante, y como yo veía que siempre hablaba con mi señora, y que a mí no me quería, di en aquella mala sospecha que se debían de amar, pues aquel día mismo que tú viniste riñendo mi señora conmigo, le dije no sé qué libertades en razón de esto, que indignada de mi libertad, me maltrató de palabra y obra, y estándome castigando, entró su primo, que, sabido el caso, ayudó también a maltratarme, jurando entrambos que te lo habían de

decir. Y yo, temiendo tu castigo, me adelanté con aquellas mentiras, para que tú me vengases de entrambos como lo hiciste. (251-252)

[Because the truth of the matter is that I fell in love with him (Elena's cousin), and I was persuading him to be my lover, and as I saw that he always talked to my mistress, and that he did not love me, so I held bad suspicion that they must be in love. Well, that same day that you came home, my lady arguing with me, I told her I do not know what freedoms because of this, that, outraged of my freedom, she mistreated me with her words and deeds, and while she was punishing me, her cousin entered, who, knowing the case, also helped her mistreat me, both of them swearing that they would tell you. And I, fearing your punishment, came forward with those lies, so that you could take revenge on both of them, as you did].

Don Jaime violently kills the Black maid after her confession and goes to save Elena, but he finds her dead in a saintly pose. Even though the Black maid dies towards the end of the episode, I theorize and assign an agentive element to this literary character. I restore the subjectivity and agency through the Black maid's presence, through her guarding of knowledge and through necropolitics.

An established interpretation of this episode within sixteenth- and seventeenth-century studies is that this text reflects the masculine patriarchal society in which the author resides.[49] The author writes in a time where she must affirm her power as a woman and casts of a Black woman helps to do this.[50] *Desengaños Amorosos,* written by a White Castilian female, canonically shows women who write about women, and to teach women the treacheries of men and the aristocratic life. The feature of the Black maid in the episode, however, explores the racial and sexist society of the Iberian Peninsula and Europe at large. Through the death of the unnamed Black maid and the harsh treatment of Elena, the field reads this as men have the ability to control women's destiny. This kind of reading does not recognize Blackness and the

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[49] Margaret Rich Greer talks about this point in her book *Tells Baroque Tales of Love and the Cruelty of Men* (2000)

[50] The Black woman's presence affirms the subject and personhood of the author during this time period.

Black maid is placed in the same category as the White maid. The Blackness of the Black maid is therefore rendered invisible. Using Kimberlé Crenshaw's approach of "multi-axis" analysis and aided by a number of important interventions in Black studies and Africana studies, I will revive this figure, Zayas's Black, most likely African, maid to show what we can glean of her personhood. The approach I use can be used to reanimate and center other ostensibly "marginal," or "invisible" Black characters in White-centered texts.

While I theorize this Black maid through presence (attending to speech and details of appearance, and social position), guarding knowledge and necropolitics, I rely on the theory of "necromancy" introduced by Nicholas Jones[51] to probe this deep recognition of the African diaspora in Spain. The methodology of "necromancy" declares, in sum, that as scholars we must reimagine a concealed past of the black Africans and their descendants through the foundations of the Western world in a "necromantic" way in a larger reparative process (218). Jones also highlights that, "[he], as a necromancer, [aims] to awaken the memory of early modern Iberian black lives via placing Hispanism in dialogue with Black Studies" (215). This methodology invites us to remember a group of people that have been erased and suppressed for centuries and to begin to acknowledge their presence on a global level. It invites us both to embrace the legacy of Blackness in Spain and awaken it, seeing as though it has been dormant and almost non-existent in narratives not exclusive to literature. Black African lives have been erased from the record in scholarship and criticism, even though their labor and cultural contributions helped shape Spanish Iberia. Black and brown people actively contributed to Spanish society.

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[51] in his essay titled "Debt Collecting, Disappearance, Necromancy: A Response to John Beusterien."

Necromancy, as an approach, opens a space to reimagine a Spanish Iberia with a true embrace of Blackness.

Some of the ways in which we can reimagine this awakening is by being accountable to "exposing and preserving the legacy of Blackness in Spain" through "debt collecting," Jones's term for resuscitating the memory of black African lives in Spain. Debt refers to the inarguable, yet unacknowledged contribution of Black and Brown people's invaluable labor to the establishment of the Spanish Iberia. Through this form or dimension of debt, Jones asserts that we must confront "the virulent conjunction of economic processes—centuries of forced unpaid labor— [… and] the imposed erasure of memory and culture" (217). This model of necromancy can function as a framework through which introduce new theories and ideas that give voice and homage to the black African Diaspora. These tools parcel out a return to the concealed past of black African lives in Spain and provide a model and methodology to engage this population and community through Iberian, Black and Africana Studies.

María de Zayas y Sotomayor (1590 - ?) has become an important name in Iberian studies in recent decades.[52] Her rich literary has increased in importance within the last, roughly 40 years. Her rich literary corpus includes the two-part collection of novellas, *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares* [*Exemplary Tales of Love*] (1637) and *Los desengaños amorosos* [*Tales of*

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[52]During this same period, Mariana de Carvajal y Saavedra is a famous woman writer along with Zayas. She has a novella collection *Navidades de Madrid* (1663) where in the seventh novella "La industria vence desdenes," she features a Black female slave named Antonia. While I don't discuss this novella in this chapter, the authorship, and the writing of casting a Black female character in a literary works suggest a curiosity of exploring her role in literature. They use the Black character in similar ways. They both underscore the social and domestic life of the Black woman character and expose her presence more than male authors during the time period. Both Zayas and Carvajal played a major role in the early modern cultural production and were successful, both including a Black woman in their novellas.

Disillusion] (1647) and a comedia *La traición en la amistad*, offers us a breadth of critical engagement and inquiry. [53]

I build upon Friedman's essay "The Narrative Models of María de Zayas" when he asserts, "María de Zayas finds a vehicle to bring the marginal, the eccentric--the disenfranchised, the anachronistic, the madman, the artist, et al.--into a new and precarious center (11)." To add to Friedman's assertion, I would point out that the "marginal" and the "disenfranchised" is the Black maid, who is centered in the tale through her prevalent presence and monologue. I also build upon Eduardo Ruiz's essay "Three Faces/Phases of Male Desire: Veiled Woman, Passive Virgin, and African Devil in María de Zayas's "Tarde llega el desengaño" where he writes, "this specific story turns to an ethnic/racial, African component to further ground the radicalness of the critique—in line with the didactic, baroque tendency toward shock by means of graphic imagery" (154). By this comment, Ruiz urges us to observe the three different "phases" of relationships with don Jaime in the tale: Lucrecia, Elena, and the Black maid. The veiled woman is Lucrecia, who is the ex-wife of don Jaime, Elena is the passive virgin, and the unnamed Black maid is the African devil. Ruiz's discussion of animalization and devil-like nature of the Black maid is useful because it sheds light on the canonical depiction of this character. He writes that, "The use of Moorish others, Flemish women, and African slave women—typical representatives of marginality and alterity—historically clarifies Zayas's aesthetic project" (160).

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[53] Based upon a foundation of scholarship by Marina S. Brownlee, Margaret Rich Greer, Sandra Foa, Lisa Vollendorf, Edward H. Friedman, Nieves Romero-Diaz, Javier Irigoyen-García (among others) that investigates Zayas's literary corpus through material culture, visual culture, identity, critical race studies, Cervantine influence, death politics, religion, gender, porn studies, violence, the novella format, and questions of love and power.

Besides the African component Ruiz points out, he claims that there is a "baroque tendency" that advances the story and public interest through "graphic imagery." As I state in the introduction of this dissertation, the "baroque" is both an aesthetic and, according to José Antonio Maravall, a historical period in Spain. The Baroque period in Spain is marked by economic crises such as imperial decline and deterioration during the second half of the seventeenth century. Through this period and difficult time for Spain, the literature embodies human struggle, reality of miserable conditions, and keen representations of society. Early modern baroque traits are drama, emotional exuberance, movement, tension, exaggeration and grandeur.

There is evidence of this means of graphic imagery in Ruiz's discussion through the final scene in the tale where the Black maid is killed: "[don Jaime] se acercó de un salto a la cama, y sacando la daga, la dio tres o cuatro puñaladas [la negra], o las que bastaron a que llegase más presto la muerte. Fue hecho el caso con tanta presteza, que ninguno lo pudo prevenir, ni estorbar, ni creo lo hicieran, porque juzgaron bien merecido aquel castigo" (252) [He jumped over to the bed, and drawing his dagger, he stabbed her three or four times [the Black maid], or with enough to make death come quicker. The case was made so promptly that no one could prevent or hinder it, nor believe that he did it, because they judged that punishment was well deserved.] The graphic imagery appears in this quote by the following phrases and words: "salto a la cama," "sacando la daga," "puñaladas," "llegase más presto la muerte" and "porque juzgaron bien merecido aquel castigo." The baroque elements or "tendency" here relies on clear detail used to produce drama and exaggeration. Zayas uses the Black maid and her death to produce drama through her Blackness and positionality as a servant. The motion and urgency conveyed by the

language Zayas uses, accelerates the sense of dramatic movement. The emotive image captured by the amount of violence and anger in this part of the tale acknowledges the period in which the tale was published.

In the spirit of death

Elena dies after the Black maid is killed. Greer's reading of the Black maid as she sees her as an "anamorphic object" proposes that the maid is perceived differently when centered. She says that, "the black maidservant, who has become a kind of anamorphic object, functioning like the dark, elongated skull..." (187) which signifies a sense of blackness. Greer points to the skull, encoded in Hans Holbein's famous painting, and its message that all men, no matter their wealth and power, are skulls waiting to die. Zayas mobilizes this famous allusion, but, consciously or unconsciously, includes a racialized dimension by drawing together, not a merchant and a man of the Church, but a White and Black woman. Holbien's anamorphic message relies on a viewer's recognizing something that is hidden in plain sight, although we are trained by conventions of viewing and reading not to see it. In the case of Zayas, a white lens trains readers and scholars to minimize or discount the racial dimensions of these kinds of scenes and episodes. However, necromancy instructs us in the urgency of countering this systemic erasure, and Black Studies tells us how to go about doing so. First and foremost, it is necessary to follow through on the anamorphic logic that structures the scene and center the Black maid. While the Black maid occupies Elena's position, as mistress of the house, she holds the lie that continues to haunt her until the day she dies. The "elongated skull" as Greer mentions conveys the haunting or blackness of the skull of the young cousin, that is a treasure of memory for Elena.

The Black maid "functions" as the dark and overcomes the light by replacing Elena, taking her position. This is a moment where the baroque aesthetic trope of chiaroscuro emerges and encodes racial messages in the binaries of light/dark, good/evil and Whiteness/Blackness. As Kim F. Hall has demonstrated, sixteenth- and seventeenth- century artists and writers deployed the dark/light binary to elaborate and enhance whiteness as a privileged social attribute.[54] Initially, Elena is the lady of the house, so the beauty of the Black maid is compared to hers. This leads to the subtext that the Black maid's beauty is imitative. Chiaroscuro informs the social constructs in Spain with reference to Black beauty and how it is viewed as imitative.[55] In Hall's classic study *Things of Darkness: Economies of Race and Gender in the Early Modern England*, chapter 2 "Fair Texts/Dark Ladies: Renaissance Lyric and the Poetics of Color" she asserts, "[In engravings] both women [Black and White women] are portrayed as "painted" and degenerate, but the Black woman is positioned to be slightly lower and thus perhaps imitative of the white woman" (89), which affirms the ideas that Black woman's beauty was represented as imitative to their White counterpart. In a process similar to the one Hall describes, the Black maid enhances Elena's status and beauty.

"Y [don Martín] entrando dentro, vio a la desgraciada dama muerta estar echada sobres unas pobres pajas, los brazos en cruz sobre el pecho, la una mano tendida…" (252) [And [Don Martín] entering inside, saw the unfortunate dead lady lying on some poor straws, her arms

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[54] I draw upon a concept of the "blackening effect." Using white and black visuals to contrast one another in order to "preserve the value of whiteness" (218). This further encourages the racial valence of chiaroscuro.

[55] Hall offers insight into visual representations of Blacks throughout England and Italy in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, although primarily paintings and sculptures. However, I will compare her representations to those of Spain and note pervasive similarities to inquire about Black beauty. The visual culture Hall draws upon is that of a racial valence.

crossed over her chest, one hand outstretched]. After don Jaime stabs the Black maid, he gives his guest don Martín the key to open the area where Elena is imprisoned under the table. The narrator describes don Martin finding her dead in a saintly pose. Elena's death follows in close proximity to the death of the Black maid, and this quick succession invites some consideration. Zayas structures the narrative such that Elena's time of death coincides with that of the Black maid death gives an interesting perspective towards female proximity. Because of the timing of the women's deaths, this scene conveys a spirit of death and presents the Black maid's major role in connection with this theme. When the Black maid leads in dying and Elena follows her, it appears that a spirit of death enters the scene, falling first on the Black maid and next upon Elena. The description of the Black maid's death is dramatized and a climatic part of the story, whereas the death of Elena is not described similarly. Elena's death is calm and has a loving description of how she died: in a saintly pose. This could lead to the subtext that the Black maid's death is primary and draws more attention rather than Elena's death. There is a level of seriousness in the dramatized effect of the Black maid's death that lacks in Elena's death. The Black maid leads in dying and Elena gets the second part of that, which is less dramatized.

These points have important implications for the broader domain of spirituality and the power of it between the two maids. As I center the Black maid her subjecthood shows and reading her becomes possible. As the Black maid enjoys the benefits in the house, Elena continues to live under the table miserably. Despite the pain and misery Elena suffers, she continues surviving until the Black maid dies. We then see that Elena's will to live/spirit to live is directly correlated with the life of the Black maid. To link female proximity and the spirit of death, the Black maid holds a very special power that affects Elena.

The roles of the two maids are reversed and their death opens space to theorize a conclusion of uncertainty. Ann T. Delehanty's essay "María de Zayas's 'Tarde llega el desengaño 'and the Contradictions of Modernity," argues that the contradictory elements in this scene open up the limits of epistemology. She focuses on don Martin's, the narrator's, and perhaps the reader's shared experience of *admiración* in the episode, "a mental state that involve[s] fear inspired by a lack of knowledge or understanding" (947). This idea is at the center of the episode, and "point[s] us toward the limits of epistemology in the face of contradictory phenomena, especially at those moments when characters use superficial evidence to place other characters in categories such as social class or cultural identity" (947). That the death of Elena takes place *after* the Black maid is killed suggests a question or uncertainty regarding Elena's social class. When we center the Black maid in our reading of the story, we encounter her powerful contributions to elements such as Elena's Whiteness, her purity, and her saintly death. In this way, we can begin to discern the Black maid's agentive presence.

The Baroque aesthetics of exaggeration and distortion underscores this interpretation, since the *admiración* Zays evokes is related to a persistent message of uncertainty about the nature and status of both women, both of whom are maids, and both of whom die at the end. The link between the spirit of death and female proximity help to resolve that sense of uncertainty and disenchantment (*desengaño*). The Black maid and Elena are in inverted roles in the domestic space, considering, the conventional roles in the early modern time period of a Black and White woman. The tale questions Elena's social class and the Black maid's cultural identity. The Black maid used falsifying information to be lady of the house and invert the role in the domestic space with Elena. Elena is hidden and not privy to what occurs to the Black maid which gives this episode a level of uncertainty. Finally, there is the strange narrative dynamic by which the Black

maid appears to keep Elena alive during the period of her captivity, since the two women's death is presented near each other in the text. In assuming the role of death's medium, the Black maid paradoxically begins to appear as the agent of Elena's life.

These race dynamics play out against a backdrop of patriarchy and the fundamental trope of woman's otherness. The Black maid for the story and for patriarchy becomes the repository for the indignity and subordinate status of all women within a patriarchal system. By separating women into Black and White, Zayas participates in a larger racializing logic in which White women's lesser status and vulnerability to mistreatment is masked by the category of Blackness, which White- dominated society singles out as a category of the abject. Cultural and societal assumptions about Black and White people (including a sometimes unconscious association between Blackness and slavery) can distract readers (and scholars) from a key message of this story; namely, that Elena and the Black maid have more in common than the narrative allows them to recognize. Both are victims of don Jaime's violence and confusion.

While the maid roles are inverted in the domestic space, the Black maid and Elena are two dimensions of the figure of woman within patriarchal culture. This reading of inverted maid roles, it is possible to leads us to the subtext that the Black maid and Elena are one person. Elena begins with a nice lifestyle; however, the narrative later leads to her living under the table. The opposite is true for the Black maid. To accept that the story encodes a subtext of Elena and the Black maid as one person challenges the Black/White binary many critics read in early modern texts. In Desengaño 4, this is not fully the case. Delehanty writes that don Jaime viewed both Elena and the Black maid as aestheticized objects, relying on their representations for their identity. Towards the end as both maids die, "their dead, aestheticized bodies become the tragic and necessary end in a society that cannot control the proliferation of potential definitions of

women, servants, or those from different cultures" (955). This reading is not to make the Black maid invisible but to covertly explore the Black maid's influence and power. Through this portrayal, it can be hypothesized that there is one maidservant. During this time in history, women suffered from the patriarchal society and servants were treated unfairly, and women or servants from different cultures.

Female Proximity

Toni Morrison writes about the relationship between two women, specifically the White woman and the Black woman in *Playing in the Dark*. Morrison describes these women's relationship as "the compelling attraction of exploring the possibilities of one woman's absolute power over the body of another woman: confrontation with an uncontested assumption of the sexual availability of black females" (23). There is an unsaid intimacy between women through gender and gender expression as it relates to the public. This intimacy often informs women's relationships and their interactions with one another. The caveat is that this intimacy looks differently when a Black woman is present-- with exploitation oftentimes looming nearby, especially in literary works during the early modern period.

Zayas depicts this concept of female proximity, first as the Black maid displaces Elena to share the bed and the table of the presumably White husband, don Jaime, and subsequently, with the coinciding deaths of Elena and the Black maid. Moreover, the author's relationship to the Black maid and her relationship to the White maid is noticeably distinguishable. Zayas refers to the character as "la negra" and never gives her a name. This intentional denotation of gender and service reflects how patriarchal culture pits women against each other for power. Perhaps Zayas

uses her form of power, as a writer, to gain societal and economical gain by using the "uncontested assumption of the availability" of the Black maid.

Zayas's literary corpus explores this power site by using the Black female servant as an uncontested assumption. The Black maid is a human being without power. This condition results in the end of her life, which according to Zayas's White gaze is seemingly depicted as worthless. When the Black maid is viewed as a marginal character, which is how a White lens positions her, her value is to prove a point, not illustrate the living existence of a particular kind of person (the Black woman). In a related vein, throughout the narrative the Black maid is the crowning example of hypersexualization as various text fragments describe her Black body. Pornography distorts beauty by exposing its participation in patriarchy, sexism, and White privilege. The Black maid inspires don Jaime's sexual jealousy by telling him lies about Elena's supposed affair. Since the Black maid invents these stories, the narrative draws on stereotypes of the active sexuality and imagination of Black people. The narrator also describes the Black maid's appearance in eroticized terms when don Martin perceives the Black maid: "tan tinta, que el azabache era blanco en su comparición, y sobre esto, tan fiera, que juzgó don Martín que si no era el demonio, que debía ser retrato suyo. (237) [The other woman who had come in through the kitchen door was black, so black that jet would pale in comparison. She was of such fierce aspect that don Martin thought if she wasn't the devil, she was his very likeness.] Elena is punished for the accusations the Black maid voices.

The concept of love over lust is a concept widely known within a biblical context that shows the power of love. In "María de Zayas Tells Baroque Tales of Love and the Cruelty of Men, Greer discusses "Love over Death" and describes the importance of love to Zayas's worldview. Her discussion takes into consideration the amount of violence written into the world

of the *Desengaños amorosos*. In this world, death triumphs over love or as she states, "[it] is not a love that triumphs over death but love that brings death…" (267-8). As Greer engages with this violent world, she pinpoints *Desengaño 4* and clarifies that this love is written through the beauty of two women's bodies. Both the Black maid and Elena are described through a beauty filter, primarily as beautiful bodies, and this filter is ever more present at the end of the episode. This suggests that both maids died through love.

The contrasting women also stage a tension between lust and love. Elena is described in terms of saintly love. The final view we get of her body is in a saintly pose. The Black maid is represented as lustful, and not necessarily loving. The Black woman accuses Elena of adultery because the young cousin rejected her advances whom she loved, and through her confession at the end it led to her death. Elena is in love with don Jaime and after the false accusation against her, it eventually led to her death. Love brings death is informed in both cases and it is so productive as Greer titles this section "Telling Bodies." It is through the body, the beauty filter, and the concept of love and death that are the descriptors of the bodies of both maids. As mentioned earlier, it is through a spirit of death and the corpses at the end of the episode that leads to this subtext. Greer asserts that the narrator of this episode describes the burials of both maids saying that the Black maid "parecía un retrato de Lucifer" while Elena "parecía estar más hermosa" (272). This is towards the beginning of the episode when both maids are being described through a beauty filter and being introduced in the episode. The descriptions of their bodies are "telling" their death burials.

While authorship is often treated as irrelevant to close critical analysis, here it is worthwhile to take into consideration. Elena lives below the standards of a White maid and the Black maid lives above the standards for a Black maid according to early modern Iberian society.

Their proximity as women and maidservants serves as an attraction with possibilities of absolute power. Initially, Elena was the woman with power in the home but when the Black maid voices accusations about Elena, the power dynamic switches. The behavior and politics of a Black female servant and White female servant are switched in this episode as we observe prevalent conventions of European society. At the end, both the Black maid and the White maid die at the hands of their master, a male. Both suffer from harsh punishment, but the Black maid's death is described in a theatrical way and is brutal. Oppositely, the White maid dies without the theatrical depiction. Yet, the Black woman's position in this story is inarguably one that lacks proper acknowledgement. The role she played in the house kept Elena alive and subsequently, contributed to her death as well. Ironically, the magnitude of influence the Black maid represents in this story is an unspoken and unwritten prose of her power and lack thereof.

This framework prepares us to examine black African women's presence and agency in Spain more closely. My interests in this story results from the demonstration of material presence and the agency of a black African woman. Many scholarly analyses and representations of black Africans during this period in Spain portray them as needing pity and rescue from the White hegemonic system. However, the reading practices I am using here reveal a strong and courageous black African woman who navigates life as best she can. Zayas's depiction shows the ideological and social construct of Whiteness as a dominant masculine power. The idea of dominant masculine power connects with the patriarchal culture. Delehanty argues about how don Jaime places both Elena and the Black maid under the control of patriarchy. "Tarde llega el desengaño" allows us to dismantle this idea. The maid is clearly a Black woman. Her self-expression and her "presence at the table" generally and literally calls attention to the ironies, contradictions, and frustrations posed to women by patriarchy. That it is a Black woman who

furnishes this insight furthermore provides a clear view of Blackness as a commodity. Marina S. Brownlee in her excellent work *The Cultural Labyrinth of María de Zayas* informs us that, "Zayas was as committed as Cervantes to the representation of modern appreciations of subjectivity – of the possibilities for multiple, fragmented, even contradictory subjects, of human subjectivity in all its complexity" (17). What follows is to probe a Black gendered theory approach in Zayas's work through the theory and model of necromancy. I have already performed some of this work in the reading I have offered above. I will now move onto explain three further moments in the text that ultimately captures Black agency through the Black maid's presence and expression.

La negra: the Black woman as person and subject

"Tarde llega el desengaño" starts with don Martin on a ship with his comrade, but their shipwrecks near the castle of don Jaime. Two days after they miraculously see land, they come across don Jaime. The gentlemen offers them help, shelter, and food at his castle for as long as they need.

The first striking view that don Martin and the comrade see as they entered the castle was when they sat at the banquet table to eat. They laid eyes on a Black woman who is embellished with jewelry and treated well by don Jaime. At the same time, Elena lives under the table and is subject to mistreatment by don Jaime and the Black companion.

The text describes the beauty and embellishment of the Black sister while it also underscores the beauty of Elena. don Martín provides his perspective and lens of both maids as they enter the text:

> La mujer que por la pequeña puerta salió parecía tener hasta veinte y seis años, tan hermosísima, con tan grande extremo…no traía sobre sus blanquísimas y delicadas carnes [[sino]] un saco de una jerga muy basta. (236) [The woman who emerged through the little door looked about twenty-six. She was breathtakingly beautiful and

exquisite…the only dress she wore to cover her delicate white body was a coarse burlap sack.]

> La otra que por la puerta salió era una negra, tan tinta, que el azabache era blanco en su comparición, y sobre esto, tan fiera, que juzgó don Martín que si no era el demonio, que debía ser retrato suyo. (237) [The other woman who had come in through the kitchen door was black, so black that jet would pale in comparison. She was of such fierce aspect that don Martin thought if she wasn't the devil, she was his very likeness.]

The text describes both characters by their phenotypic descriptors: skin color and the degree of that color. The description of the Black sister also includes her image being compared to the devil since her skin is *so* black (my emphasis). We observe a White/Black binary and how the Black maid is compared to a devil while the White maid is simply described for her White beauty. This contrasting dichotomy between Black and White is part of the tradition of the African baroque. The Blackness and Whiteness subtends the baroque aesthetic trope of chiaroscuro--- a painterly technique within baroque visual culture and encodes racial messages in the binaries of light/dark, good/evil and Whiteness/Blackness. These descriptions associate the Black maid to dark and evil comparing her to the devil while the White maid is light and good. This Black woman represents the foundational ground in which the black/white binary is created. Without the presence of the Black sister these descriptions and how comparative they are would not be made to describe Elena. The Black sister's Blackness creates the discourse of Whiteness in this episode and at large in Europe during this time. Whiteness is coded as normative as the description of Elena is not compared to anything while the Black sister is compared to a devil. don Martin and his comrade were in awe of the two maids they saw because it subverts their beliefs and experiences between a White and Black maid.

Moreover, the text explicitly describes the elaborate dress of the Black maid and anatomy which encompasses the Black maid's presence. Every part of her body is described in the text

and signals the Black female's body as the foundational ground from which to establish and consolidate the strong and dominant White hegemonic system. This system could not have been established had the Black maid not been present.

Herman L. Bennett's book underscores the Black female body as the foundation to Blackness and Whiteness. His book *African Kings and Black Slaves* considers how "the Portuguese employed [a] human measure [through] a black woman's body, so as to delineate who could be legitimately enslaved" (62). Bennett writes about the encounters of the Portuguese in Guinea-Bissau during the fifteenth century, at the point of departure for the enterprise of chattel slavery. The Black woman's body is the platform and foundation that establishes who could be legitimately enslaved. The Black woman's presence speaks volumes. Similarly, in the passage I quoted above from "Tarde llega el desengaño," Zayas mobilizes the sexualized Black female body in a way that captures the social and cultural significance of the trope of lustful desire. Daniel Nemser's has analyzed this concept. In "Triangulating Blackness" Nemser asserts that the Black body is the eruption of unrestrained desire when he says, "Even enslaved Blacks, then, are insufficiently enslaved, because they are subject to unrestrained, bodily passions" (351). We can connect Nemser's ideas with Jones's observations regarding the Black body was a playground of reinvention of the art of exaggeration and excess — baroque aesthetics. Since, as Bennett observes, the Black female servant is the crowning example of all unrestrained desire. Zayas describes her in this manner, in language of baroque inflation and excess that reveals her importance in this story and its plot: the Black female's body is used to lay the foundation socially and racially on don Jaime's island.

On don Jaime's island, the setting and beauty establishes context for the eventual appearance of the Black maid. The setting of the story takes place in the Canary Islands which is

adjacent and below in reference to Spain, however it is part of the Spanish archipelago. It is also an island that is off the coast of West North Africa. Islands are often described as land isolated by bodies of water which can isolate their identity or culture. The Canary Islands are not the mainland, and that fact suggests an off-centered approach that text continues to develop, for example, as a beautiful White woman (Elena) is established by means of the Black maid's presence. At dinner, don Jaime recounts that:

> Saqué a Elena de la mayor miseria a la mayor grandeza, como habéis visto en esta negra que ha estado a mi mesa esta noche, dando envidia a las más nobles damas de toda la Gran Canaria tanto con la hermosura como con la grandeza en que la vían, luciendo tanto la belleza de Elena con los atavíos y ricas joyas. (247) [I raised her from great poverty to the most lavish elegance, as you must have seen in the attire of the Negress who sat with us at table this evening. Elena could have made even the noblest ladies of the Great canary Island envious of her beauty as well as of her rich finery, the clothes and jewels which so set off her beauty that she dazzled all who saw her.]

This quote shows that the Black maid is the platform from which the White aristocratic beauty is being compared to on this small island off the mainland. The connection between the Canary Islands and the imitative Black beauty is a good space to discuss the Black sister's agency as the platform for beauty. As the Canary Islands are not on the mainland, this Spanish story is decentered from Spain and set in a margin. In this margin, the Black beauty actually exists. The text suggests that the island is isolated and in search for a way to describe and praise White aristocratic beauty but that does not dismiss the Black maid's presence. The very role and position of the Canary Islands within the early modern Iberian imagination situates an adjacent and perhaps imitative element that plays an important role to understanding this desengaño. Early voyagers such as Alonso de Espinosa, Antonio de Viana and Friar Juan de abreu de Galindo describe inhabitants of the Canary Islands specifically on the island of Tenerife as foreign with possible kinship to sub-Saharan and North Africans. Although by 1496 it was

territory of Spain, the inhabitants of the Canary Islands needed their souls saved as they supposedly didn't practice the Christian faith according to the Spanish imperial imagination. In *Comedia la famosa de Los guanches de Tenerife y conquista de Canaria* by Lope de Vega, Act one describes the Spaniards exploring Tenerife Island in order to conquer it. The character captain Castillo meets the native woman Dácil for the first time and falls in love with her at first sight. Through this encounter, we begin to understand the differences and mixtures created through this union. Captain Castillo is a Spaniard while Dácil is a woman from Tenerife. The comedia points out that neither the captain nor the Tenerife woman can understand one another. "¡Lindo español!" is what Dácil responds to the captain various times in the first act when they have their first encounter. It is through the repetitive response to the captain that we understand that these two characters don't speak the same language. The Spaniards came to conquer this island in the Canaries and this comedia asserts through the relationship between these two characters that they are a different people and community that speaks a different language. A linguistic gap is often a point at which differences enter in. From the time of the Greeks, a people an explorer or conqueror cannot understand are "barbarians" and available for conquest, religious conversion, and/or dispossession. Bennett historicizes that Cà da Mosto, the Venetian merchant, recounted the bestial and uncivilized people of the Canary Islands. "Cà da Mosto implied that the Canary Islands transformed themselves into a distinct race" (113) separating them from the Iberian Peninsula.

Ultimately, what is at stake here is the confluence between sub-Saharan Africans and inhabitants of the Canary Islands. The European imagination as informed by travel accounts and literature, that there is or a creation of rivalry between the sub-Saharan Africans versus the inhabitants of the Canary Islands. The finding that inhabitants of the Canary Islands are bestial,

lack the proper attire, and are uncivilized should be of interest to early modern critics because this creates conflict between representation of Blackness in early modern literary texts. Bennett writes that, "For Cà da Mosto, like many of Europe's early modern travelers, the body often manifested distinct customs. Even after his encounter with "the Blacks of lower Ethiopia," whose bodies fascinated him to no end, Cà da Mosto positioned the Canary Islands on the lowest rung of his genus." (113) These conclusions, which Bennett discusses in his book, add weight to the argument that Africa had no history. Through this contention between sub-Saharan Africans and inhabitants of the Canary Islands, this suggests that both are separate communities while evidence shows that there are some kin connections to both. Historian Jennifer Morgan writes in her book *Reckoning with Slavery*, that "the long standing accusation that Africans have no legible past is older than Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel and as contemporary as the hundreds of lives lost to the Mediterranean Sea as North African refugees desperately tried to enter Italy in recent years" (22). In no way do I seek to resolve this tension, but to mention the contention for further exploration and attention to this depiction.

Furthermore, both Greer and Irigoyen-García observe the location of the tale on the Canary Islands as one that plays into the tale. Greer focuses on the size of the Canary Islands and how it affects small places in the tale "the physical setting is compressed into ever smaller spaces" (180), while Irigoyen-García emphasizes how the text contrasts don Jaime's castle in the Canary Islands to Lucrecia's home in Flanders to discuss his masculine identity. Don Jaime was forced to flee from Flanders after Lucrecia had six armed men with masks and pistols shooting at him "de una casa más abajo de donde yo estaba seis hombres armados y con máscaras, y disparando los dos de ellos dos pistolas" (246). The threat was made by Lucrecia when don Jaime wanted to make their relationship public. There is a subaltern element to how the Canary

Islands is figured in the text and how both these critics depict it. The text describes don Jaime as "un hombre de hasta cuarenta años, algo moreno, mas de hermoso rostro" (234) [a man up to forty years old, somewhat dark, but with a beautiful face] which is striking. His skin color is described as "algo moreno" which suggests that this character is not somatically white. Irigoyen-García later writes in his essay that, "Si Filis caracterizaba a don Jaime en Canarias como un "moro" figurado, de color "algo moreno" y rodeado de esclavas blancas, don Jaime utiliza parecida estrategia al construir a Lucrecia como la "mora" que causa sus desdichas en Flandes" (364) [If Filis characterized don Jaime in the Canary Islands as a figurative "Moor[56]", with a "somewhat brown color" and surrounded by white slaves, don Jaime uses a similar strategy when constructing Lucrecia as the "Mora" who causes his misfortunes in Flanders]. The fact that don Jaime is described as having features similar to people of the Islamic faith is a good way to theorize how colorism and race shows itself in the beginning of the tale before the Black maid appears on the scene. Adding to Irigoyen-García, don Jaime is the middle person between Elena and the Black maid. It seems that Irigoyen-García considers that the tale plays on the somatic skin color of the three main protagonists: Elena, White, don Jaime, somewhat brown color master, and the unnamed Black maid. This subtext leads to how critical race theory is a good lens to view this tale.

Black beauty does exist since the Black maid's beauty is compared to that of the noble women on the Canary Islands. How could the Black maid have been imitative to White beauty had she not have had some form of beauty herself? This moment conveys the relevance of the

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[56] The term "Moor" is in contemporary usage a slur so I use "people of the Islamic faith" to substitute this term.

Black maid's presence in reference to the Canary Islands and beauty. Therefore, this relevance represents the agency of the Black maid because the text explicitly compares her beauty to the noble Castilian women on the island to praise their aristocratic titles. This idea suggests that the Black maid shapes the social construct of whiteness as a dominant masculine power. The reason why the Black maid shapes this construct is because the Iberian Castilian woman wants to feel dominant and significant, so she uses moments to do that through a Black woman's body. The Black woman's body and beauty is then hidden and seen as imitative to embellish the beauty of the White aristocratic women.

The marginality with respect to the mainland fulfills a few functions, including making it possible to reinvent a hegemonic system that, on the mainland, at least, essentially excludes her. The Black maid's presence at the table literally signifies her inclusion to the banquet. This inclusion makes her appearance and even elaboration a place to reinvent and maintain a hegemonic system that essentially excludes her. During this moment, the Black sister sits at the table next to don Martín, and his friend sits in front of her. The placement of people seated at the banquet or table signifies the Black sister being a contributor to the table and conversation as well. While Zayas kills off both women, Black presence has nonetheless been introduced into the textual Spanish imaginary in a way we should not overlook.

The Black maid's subjectivity and personhood are evident in her capacities to invent stories, to imagine, and to love. The Black maid lies about the affair Elena and her cousin have because she was in love with the cousin, but he rejected her love. Out of fear and hurt, she tells her master that her wife was having an affair with his cousin. The Black maid must have developed a trust with her master since he trusted the claims about his cousin. However, towards the end of the episode when the Black maid is on her deathbed, she makes a horrifying

confession that leads to her death. The guarding information the Black sister holds and does not tell her master until she dies restores agency. She decides not to say anything to her master with the true confession of the affair between Elena and her cousin since she was rejected and hurt. The result of guarding this information from her master afforded her power and privilege. She partook in the life of a White lady of the house and enjoyed it until she was on her deathbed confessing to the lie she was keeping.

Additionally, this moment also incorporates a description of the Black maid being compared to the devil, "era una negra, tan tinta, que el azabache era blanco en su comparición… que juzgó don Martín que si no era el demonio, que debía ser retrato suyo" [she was a Black maid, so black, that her jet blackness was white or pale in comparison…don Martín judged that if she was not the devil then she should be his reflection/portrait] that describes her position and presence. To build upon Bennett's assertion of the black woman's body and how it delineates who could be enslaved, the narrative indicates the significant power wielded by Black women in the Iberian social, cultural, and political imaginary. Her association with the abject brings the subject-status of White people in Spain into stark relief. If she is compared to the devil, who is bad, there must be another side to that, the good. The shade of her Black skin was compared to the devil which means that her presence is bad but that also means the opposite which would be White skin and God would signify good. Again, the Black maid's presence formulates the ideas of whiteness and maintains them. To further analyze this moment, the fact that the Black maid is compared to two sets of animals — dogs and a lion, "las narices eran tan romas que imitaban los perros bracos… y la boca…que parecía boca de león" [the noses were so blunt that they imitated pug-nosed dogs… and the mouth… that look like a lion's mouth.] Her nose is compared to a specific dog breed that is described by their distinct nose. Also, the shape of her mouth was

compared to that of a lion's. It was not rare during this time frame to compare Black bodies to those of animals. The general idea is that they were like animals and as a result should be treated as such. Again, this comparison and description is made through the ungovernable Black female body which is a testament to her presence. Her agentive presence through description recuperates her presence and relevance in the story. The presence of the Black maid in this story is no mistake but a deliberate moment to recognize who existed at this table or banquet of Spain and the Canary Islands.

The Black Maid's Monologue

The portrayal of the Black maid's mouth as having the shape of a lion foreshadows what comes towards the end of the story. The final moments of "Tarde llega el desengaño" are the most important and best-known passages in this story. The Black maid delivers a monologue which has been read in various ways by critics. Following the logic, I have been building up in this chapter, I maintain that this speech humanizes her as a character. Her fate, which is death, after her speech is where the lion shape of her mouth foreshadows her violent death. As she confessed this lie to her master, she was violently killed after expressing what happened and her subsequent feelings of living with the lie. She states her position of abjection as she gives a monologue of her confession:

> Señor mío: en este paso en que estoy no han de valer mentiras ni engaños. Yo me muero, porque a mucha priesa siento que se me acaba la vida. Yo cené y me acosté buena y sana, y ya estoy acabando. Soy cristiana, aunque mala, y conozco, aunque negra, con el discurso que tengo, que ya estoy en tiempo de decir verdades, porque siento que me está amenazando el juicio de Dios, y ya que en la vida no le he temido, en la muerte no ha de ser de ese modo. (251) [My lord, I find myself in straits where lies and deceit are of no avail. I'm dying. I feel my life drawing quickly to its end. When we dined and then I went to bed I felt hale and hearty and now I'm at death's door. I'm a Christian, albeit a bad one, and with my intelligence, even though I'm black, I know the time has come for

> me to tell the truth, for I feel God's final judgment hanging over me. I may not have feared Him during my life, but now I'm dying I see things differently.]

This quote embodies Black expression, and Black female presence. The Black maid reveals herself as an agent and subject of knowledge and information that is released after she makes her remarks and states her abjection. Her presence is clarified as she mentions that she is "negra." She expresses herself in a way that situates her as a Black servant, as she begins the monologue with "señor mío." "My lord" shows respect to don Jaime and her positionality as a maid. The Black maid wants to confess to the lie, since she feels like that at this point in her life it is not worth it to keep lies and deceit "en este paso en que estoy no han de valer mentiras ni engaños." She then speaks her reasoning of confession and that it is because she feels like she is dying "yo me muero, porque a mucha priesa siento que se me acaba la vida." When she says, "Yo cené y me acosté buena y sana, y ya estoy acabando" this portrays the benefits she received by being lady of the house. She had a hearty dinner and rested well in a nice bed. Before I analyze the second part of the monologue, the first part focuses on her benefits of being lady of the house and how she did not want to continue living with the lie she held because she was nearing death. As she claims that she is nearing death, she must be alive and solidifies Black female presence. The first part of the monologue traces her presence. Moreover, she is an agent of information and releases it right after this first part. She states that it is not worth it to continue to hold this lie. She wants to release it before she dies. This leads to the subtext that she is foreshadowing her death. It is not clear whether she expected to be stabbed by her master after confessing to the lie. But on the other hand, perhaps she was expecting to die at the hands of her master. But she is

haunted by the lie she held and by the skull of the handsome young cousin that Elena uses to drink.

As we transition to the second part of this monologue, we enter in the declaration of abjection: "Soy cristiana, aunque mala, y conozco, aunque negra, con el discurso que tengo" because it paints a picture upon the Black female body, and it rounds the idea of Black expression. It starts with her declaring her faith-belonging to the Christian faith, and her level of practice of her faith-being that it is "bad." On a spectrum of good versus bad, the Black maid imposes that she is on the bad side of the Christian faith and leads her to confess to the lie. She is haunted by this lie and understands that she stands on the "bad side." "Con el discurso que tengo" she asserts. The English translation by Boyer has "intelligence" and this selection of meaning layers the Black maid with another level of presence and expression. Not only is she a "bad Christian" but she has intelligence. She follows this statement, with racializing and gendering herself with the word, "negra." She remains unnamed in this episode, and it is striking to observe that the Black maid remains unnamed as she herself aligns with that classification. Black female presence and expression embodies intelligence. Moreover, "el discurso" is [speech, talk] which suggests that her expression is different from what society classifies as the standard. I query: Is that Castilian Spanish? Is it habla de negros? The text does not articulate if the servant has a different accent of Spanish but what is clear is that the Black servant as her own way of expression and perhaps a different tone. She is in the moment to give truths: "que ya estoy en tiempo de decir verdades, porque siento que me está amenazando el juicio de Dios." "Verdades" is plural. She is telling truths to herself, her master and to God. She is also haunted with this lie and feel that God's judgment is "hanging over her." A common biblical reference: "the truth shall

set you free or make you free" gives meaning to how the Black maid is releasing truths to be set free. She says she practice the Christian faith "badly" but states this and then she admits to tell truths discerning that God is judging her. She decrees that she has not feared her God while she has been living, and now that she is nearing death, she sees things differently: y ya que en la vida no le he temido, en la muerte no ha de ser de ese modo." Zayas centers this kind of expression by making space in this episode. Zayas constructs linguistic Blackness with an agentive voice as the monologue announces the identity of the Black servant.

There are two parts to this monologue, the first part signaling Black female presence and the second part Black expression while both parts convey guarding knowledge. Since she was killed after her speech, it signals that her speech was valid. This can suggest a new paradigm of thinking, a paradigm in which Black expression is privileged and necessary to advance a story line. The Black maid endorses the statement of being a "bad Christian" and intelligent while being a Black woman as this is the position a Black female was in — the previously deemed abject position. However, she was guarding very relevant information not known to the master but decided to liberate herself of it before dying -- denoting agency and power as she was able to make a decision for herself and held power over her master.

The agentive element and subjecthood of this Black sister open up through necropolitics. She is liberated from the guarding knowledge she had, and the servitude imposed on her as a Black maid when she dies. She is liberated through her death which restores an agentive element to her life. In her death, her master does not have any power over her, and true freedom is achieved through her death.

This specific part of the episode represents the actions, motivations, and inner conflicts of this character, which shaped the plot of this prose narrative. Centering Black female presence in

this episode brings forward Black speech, Black voice, and Black woman personhood. I build upon Kevin Quashie's assertion in his book, *Black Aliveness, or A Poetics of Being* that "a liminal identity, a subjectivity that is material and corporeal, but which also transcends the limits imposed by corporeality, visual culture, and colonization—a selfhood that challenges the normative constructions of "self… This liminal subjectivity is not exactly an achieved state; instead, it is a series of uncoverings" (78) later he writes that "the liminal, the self-centered, the self-created: …are bodies of divinity and this practice is one of spiritual subjectivity" (79). I interpret this as a selfhood centered position yielding spiritual subjectivity. One that is created through the self and not upon the viewer or reader. My discernment is that the Black maid is a character that embodies a spiritual subjectivity through the proximity in death of Elena. Throughout the episode, the Black maid's motivations and actions are arguably "self-centered" and "self-created" which makes her an authoritative and thinking subject. Moreover, it's the practice of spiritual subjectivity or divine subjectivity of thinking about the "self" within her actions and behavior. I do not achieve a certain goal by reading the Black maid in the way that I do but I "uncover" more of the personhood of this literary character. By doing so, I treat the Black maid under the premises of Kimberlé Crenshaw's intervention of multiple issue analysis, which allows for a multiplicity and multifaceted life within the previously deemed abject.

Towards the end of the tale, we understand that don Jaime recounts this story anywhere he goes so others aren't deceived by [malas criadas y criados (254)] by disloyal servants. The narrator of this prose narrative gives us insight into women's reputation with these words: "Y es bien mirar que, en la era que corre, estamos en tan adversa opinion con los hombres, que ni con

el sufrimiento los vencemos, ni con la inocencia los obligamos" (255) ["We should also take into account the fact that in these times we women have such a bad name among men that we can't change their minds through our innocence, nor through our suffering shall we overcome." (163)]

Conventional ideas pertaining to this period did not privilege Black expression nor Black presence. Critics also say that the Black maid's speech in this story was mediated. Her presence and expression complicate that conventional narrative. Hiding in plain sight is that the Black maid's body is foundational and vital to examine Black and White presence and the start of racialization during this time. In that vein, her presence and expression are brought forward through Jones's logic of necromancy. Black presence is necessary in this desengaño through many ways such as the setting taking place on the Canary Islands and the beauty of a White Castilian aristocrat woman. Also, Black presence is privileged through the anatomy of the Black maid and the elaboration of her dress filtered through Baroque aesthetics of inflation. Lastly, Black expression is privileged and brought forward through the Black maid's moving monologue. All these moments and elements cater to a larger idea of Black subjecthood and specifically in this story, black African women's subjecthood. The Black maid's black expression and presence is valid and treasured that establishes an agentive element to Black femaleness. The text explicitly allows for Black speech that would, in other works, be nonexistent or extremely short. I am not entirely convinced that this work does not participate in the hegemonic ideology of the Spanish Iberia, however Black expression and Black presence is privileged and consolidated in the text.

Black Beauty and Miss Black America

August 17, 1968, Saundra Williams was the first Miss Black America pageant since Black women were not allowed to be crowned Miss America. Her talent was a traditional African dance and for the Question-and-Answer segment, she said that men and women should do equal housework since "the make is getting awfully lazy." This pageant took place on the same day as Miss America and there were not any news reporters there. 16 years later, Vanessa Williams was crowned Miss America. The Miss Black America pageant continues today.

As I reflect on this piece of history and my work on the Iberian early modern, as a subset within the wider discipline of studies in modernity, I ponder about the resistance this Black woman demonstrated. Williams was determined to resist the dominant narrative and construction of White eliteness and beauty by creating a pageant where Black women are centered. White beauty, especially in the United States context seems to have exploded as a cultural phenomenon during the 1920s. White beauty was posted everywhere and displayed on anything. In Holly Grout's 2013 essay "Between Venus and Mercury: The 1920s Beauty Contest in France and America," she explains the importance of women's visibility and beauty after the Great War. There is a focus on the visual after the Great War and "editorials, articles, advertisements and magazines helped shape definitions of feminine beauty" (50). Grout does not take up race in the article but the image in the article of the Third International Pageant of Pulchritude in Galveston, Texas shows twelve White "American" women and one White "French" woman. White beauty was the standard.[57] It was a way to contribute to the dominant narrative and maintain White

[57] Grout says that "Throughout the 1920s, the Miss America Pageant grew, attracting a growing number of contestants and spectators and adding a panel of expert judges who evaluated contestants using increasingly standardized rules. Contestant height, weight, and measurements had to be within a certain range; age, race, and marital status became a formal part of the contest's eligibility criteria; and winners were prohibited from entering future contests" (55).

beauty. Zayas's use of tropes of Black sexuality, Black beauty, White beauty, and White innocence help reveal the link between 1920s "White beauty" and the parallel historical and cultural phenomenon of anti-Black racism, with such touchpoints as the erection of monuments to confederate heroes and the destruction of Black wall street. At this juncture, in the twenty-first century, it is possible to declare that Black beauty matters as well, and that Black is beautiful. Not only did Williams win the pageant, but she also did a traditional African dance that speaks mountains. What Saundra did was restore black African roots and stand for her ancestors. She then gave the baton to Vanessa Williams, and we see the seed Saundra planted.

This same moment presents the agentive nature of the Black maid through her presence and the ideas of necromancy. Her presence is deemed as necessary in order to set boundaries of White aristocratic beauty, but her presence also collects a debt. Earlier I explained through Jones's intervention of necromancy, the idea of awakening and being accountable of the black African lives in Spain.

As a trope during the early modern era, Black beauty presents in other forms of cultural production such as lyric poetry. Not only do we see Black beauty in prose narrative but also within poetry and other forms of cultural production. As it relates to Black beauty, various codes within Petrarchism, such as skin like lilies, a neck like marble, white hands, have often been treated as "merely" aesthetic touches, but they can receive a second look through a racial lens and emerge as discourses of whiteness.

Conventional ideas of dark skin or blackness along with beauty in the medieval and early modern are condemned and classified as "ugly." This stark difference is noted when David M. Goldenberg (2003) describes feminine beauty as such in postbiblical images that "the sixth-

century Carthaginian poet Luxorius, who takes white as a typifying feminine beauty and black as feminine ugliness (informes et foedas puellas 'hideous and ugly black girls')" (85).

The legacy of the Petrarchan tradition in the medieval context was not limited to time frame nor region since the legacy still lives on today. The codes of beauty and the Petrarchan tradition in lyric poetry heavily influenced the poetic traditions in Spain. Umberto Eco makes this very clear as he expands on the ideas of beauty, visual art, status, and power in the medieval context. As the Renaissance took place in Spain, two particular poets transformed the Spanish lyric with the Petrarchan traditions. Juan Boscán (ca. 1490-1542) and Garcilaso de la Vega (ca. 1501-1536) changed the nature of Spanish lyric by incorporating and setting the terms for the Spanish Petrarchist literary theory. Both poets draw connections and inspiration from the Petrarchan tradition and weave their own tradition as well. For instance, in Boscán's lyric sequence, he discusses the theme of love and an idea of self-possession. Boscán's lyric sequence poem 29 and Petrarch's *Canzoniere* poem 1 show many similarities. Both poems are discussing the theme of love and how it has been experienced in a negative manner. Petrarch 1 states, "between vain hopes, between vain suffering" (6) refers to how he experiences love. Boscán 29 asserts, "esto siempre juzgó mi entendimiento/que de este mal todo hombre se guardase (5-6) [This always judged my understanding/that from this evil every man should beware] refers to a warning to any man looking for love. Both poems discuss this position of "I" when they both refer to future generations or those that will read their work. This idea of self-possession takes place in the poems as both poetic voices brag about their fame.

In the same manner, Garcilaso's lyric sequence sonnet 13 (XIII) draws connections with Petrarch's *Canzoniere* and with the Petrarch tradition by referring to Daphne, discussing the color of a woman's skin, describing body parts of a women and the idea of existential singularity. Garcilaso discusses the metamorphosis of Daphne and how she changes from woman to a laurel tree, which is presented in the *Canzoniere*. Garcilaso asserts that, "los cabellos que el oro escurecían" (4) [the hair that gold darkened] and "los blancos pies en tierra se hincaban" (7) [the white feet on the ground were sinking], which refers to the color of the hair and skin. This beloved apparently has gold hair and white skin that is indicative of how beauty was viewed in the time frame and similarly how Petrarch describes Laura. Moreover, Garcilaso described different body parts of the beloved as did Petrarch in the *Canzoniere*. Garcilaso imitates the effect of singularity through words like the Petrarch tradition and use writing in order to describe a particular moment and his feelings in that moment. Garcilaso writes about a particular moment where he felt and cried, which reveal the sense of 'self.'[58] Therefore, as a result, one observes that the Petrarchan tradition continued throughout Spain. However, the idea of beauty differs in the context of the medieval and the early modern.

The idea of beauty and divinity as seen in the Petrarchan tradition transforms in the early modern tradition of lyric poetry in Spain. Petrarch emphasizes the mechanisms to describe beauty and the importance of human virtue whereas the early modern simply emphasizes beauty. Divinity is the specific element that is unique to medieval beauty while early modern poetry

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[58] Leah Middlebrook's book *Imperial Lyric: New Poetry and New Subjects in Early Modern Spain* explores how lyric poetry was a site of negotiation for masculine identity and that poetry was inscribed in Spanish culture as it relates to modernity (self, language and modernity within Europe and America).

deprives the beloved from this. It is to say that the early modern poetry describes the beloved's body and beauty, as does Petrarch, but there is an absence of the divine section. This differentiates the codes of medieval beauty from the codes of early modern beauty. Early modern poetry does not incorporate spiritual and divine elements to describe the beloved, just the body and beauty. However, both contextual codes of beauty develop ideas of the beloved body and how it becomes a site of fragmentation.

This site of fragmentation refers to how the beloved is described in the lyric poetry for both the medieval and early modern context. The descriptions of each body part of the beloved separated by line or poem, creates a fragmented image that leads to a fragmented artifact. Since medieval and early modern lyric poetry describe the beloved's physical body and feminine beauty, the beloved is therefore fragmented. This is the definition of blazon poetry as it assumes a male gaze upon the beloved and to describe her beauty and body by reassuring the subject's position. The subject is the male gaze, and the object is the beloved, who is objectified.

These codes are apparent in Góngora's sonnet CLXVI, "Mientras por competir con tu cabello…" [While trying with your tresses to compete]. Góngora's poem contrasts the beauty of youth and the grotesqueness of death, while making numerous references to "white" for positive aspects and "black" for the opposite. He attributes positive associations to mark whiteness. He uses "blanca" to describe the forehead, and "cristal" to discuss the neck as a sign of youth:

> Mientras con menosprecio en medio el llano
> Mira tu blanca frente al lilio bello;
> Y mientras triunfa con desdén lozano
> Del luciente cristal tu gentil cuello.

> [While with abundant scorn across the plain
> Does your White brow the lily's hue behold;
> And while with graceful scorn your lovely throat
> Transparently still bests all crystal's light]

This positive association to youth and a light colorization contributes to the role of whiteness during this period. These verses are in the beginning of the poem. The poem begins with this positive association to beauty and youth in the form of white colorization, to mark the importance of whiteness. The poem leads to a black/white binary because the last verse of the poem describes aging and death through a "blackening effect":

> Se vuelva, más tú y ello juntamente
> En tierra, en humo, en polvo, en sombra, en nada.

> [Will turn, but you and all of it as well
> To earth, smoke, dust, to gloom, to nothingness.]

Hall's "blackening effect" refers to how stanzas in Góngora poem transition from youth and associations to beauty (signifying life) whereas at the end it references aging and uses associations that marks grotesque tropes and a dryness (signifying nonexistence): "en tierra, en humo, en polvo, en sombra, en nada." The words "tierra," "humo," "polvo," "sombra," and "nada" refer to a dark colorization or a melancholy theme that associates to aging and death. Now, dust can be pale, smoke can be white, and 'nada' does not specifically signify black, however the organization of the stanzas and the "blackening effect" leads to this subtext. The poem highlights a white forehead, and a light crystal-colored neck then leads to smoke, dirt, shade and then nothing attributes to the dark colorization at the end. Unarguably, the poem

establishes white as the opposite of black. The beginning mark whiteness while the end mark blackness. These dark color tropes invoke an idea of nothingness. Nothingness at the end of the poem with reference to the color black, seems to directly participate in racial discourse between Blacks and Whites. Subsequently, this idea of nothingness engulfs the color black and hinders discourse on Black beauty.

Góngora makes use of the black/white binary to align female beauty with not only death, but complete obliteration in the progress of the final line of the poem. Along the lines of Bennett's logic of Blackness and abjection, Góngora points out that nada is Black, in the same vein as chiaroscuro. sor Juana, however, expands the color palette to dismantle the White/Black binary and open the way for new logics and representational strategies. Both Hall and Jones work contribute to my second look through a racial lens and discourses of whiteness found in Góngora's sonnet, "Mientras por competir con tu cabello." Jones asserts that:

> The Africa that begins at the Pyrenees is also a sub-Saharan Africa that white Christian cultural elites have a keen interest in exorcising, along with all the typical Muslim baggage they want to discard. And nowadays, that old move is reinfused with new vigor because the Africa that starts in the Pyrenees now is really about an Iberia that is actually diverse, and not homogenous, and is very much sub-Saharan thanks to recent displacements of huge amounts of people. (216)

There is an invisibility that Jones draws from within the Blackness in Spain that informs a racialized gaze. For this reason, he marks his call to necromancy as a "reparative starting point" to reimagine a concealed past for black Africans and their descendants. Both Hall and Jones use the chiaroscuro aesthetic that directly establishes discourse on racialization.

As I have done throughout this chapter, I build a somewhat different critical lens, working with concepts from sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, and from later scholars and critics such as Hall, Jones and David Sterling Brown. This Black-centered work allows us to pose a different,

but related, question about the Petrarchan tradition. Does Petrarch help us see Black beauty? Focusing on the Blackness and Whiteness that subtend the baroque aesthetic trope of chiaroscuro and how it encodes racial messages in the binaries of light/dark, good/evil and Whiteness/Blackness, I am testing the extent to which racialization is a useful frame through which to reconsider some of the social and cultural codes communicated and rehearsed in early modern poetry.

This question can first be addressed by filtering Góngora through sor Juana's critiques of Peninsular, masculinized discourse. Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz engages and critiques the Petrarchan representation of beauty as her work mocks these ideas of whiteness along with challenging the masculine gaze.[59] In the sonnet, "Este que ves, engaño colorido" sor Juana shows the false nature of a portrait: that portraits are always an illusion created by a play of representational techniques. The poem extends that insight about what paintings and verbal

[59] Important scholarship on "Mientras por competir con tu cabello" and "A Su Retrato" by Mary Malcolm Gaylord, Frederick Luciani, Stephanie Merrim, Nancy J. Vickers, William Clamurro, Georgina Sabat de Rivers, Emilie Bergmann, Ignacio Navarrete (among others), has shown us that sor Juana undoubtedly led the way in exposing Petrarch's aesthetic tropes as enacting objectification and transforming the discourse of love and desire into a discourse of self-knowledge on the part of a gazing subject. Malcolm Gaylord's essay "Góngora and the Footprints of the Voice" writes about the nature of voice in Góngora's verse and culterano language. Luciani in his essay "Anamorphosis in a Sonnet by Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz," argues that anamorphosis in sor Juana's sonnet links painting and poetry between image and discourse. Merrim focuses on feminist perspectives of sor Juana and the past, present and future directions of criticism in her edited collection *Feminist perspectives on Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz*. Vickers coins "fragmentation and description" to describe the Petrarchan sonnet activity in "Diana Described: Scattered Woman Scattered Rhyme." Clamurro in his essay "Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz Reads her Portrait" talks about the inherent complexity and doubleness of the Sor Juana's portrait sonnet. Sabat de Rivers explores the Petrarchan representation of woman in her essays "Sor Juana: Diálogo de retratos" and "Juana y sus retratos poéticos." Bergmann in "Sor Juana, Góngora and Ideologies of Perception" explores the poetic reflections on intellectual and aesthetic aspects of visual perception. Ignacio Navarrete in his book *Orphans of Petrarch: Poetry and Theory in the Spanish Renaissance*, describes how Petrarch was a model for Renaissance poets throughout Europe, but lyric poetry played a role in the Spanish struggle for cultural self-justification. He describes the trajectory of Garcilaso - Herrera – Góngora.

portraits are to critique Góngora and Petrarchan writers who use those techniques and codes to "represent" female beauty while completely denying the reality of actual women. I will first consider how sor Juana criticizes Petrarchan poetics to point out that the "woman" portrayed by Petrarchan codes is not a woman but an aesthetic object. Following that, I will begin to look at the ways in which an early modern racializing gaze may be at work in this poetry as well. What she does is contest the connection that Petrarch, Garcilaso and Góngora have, by mocking the representation of women during the 16th and 17th century:

Este, que ves, engaño colorido,
que del arte ostentando los primores,
con falsos silogismos de colores
es cauteloso engaño del sentido:
éste, en quien la lisonja ha pretendido
excusar de los años los horrores,
y venciendo del tiempo los rigores,
triunfar de la vejez y del olvido,
es un vano artificio del cuidado,
es una flor al viento delicada,
es un resguardo inútil para el hado:
es una necia diligencia errada,
es un afán caduco y, bien mirado,
es cadáver, es polvo, es sombra, es nada.

[This coloured counterfeit that thou beholdest,
vainglorious with excellencies of art,
is, in fallacious syllogisms of colour,
nought but a cunning dupery of sense;
this in which flattery has undertaken
to extenuate the hideousness of years,
and, vanquishing the outrages of time,
to triumph o'er oblivion and old age,
is an empty artifice of care,
is a fragile flower in the wind,
is a paltry sanctuary from fate,
is a foolish sorry labour lost,
is conquest doomed to perish and, well taken,
is corpse and dust, shadow and nothingness.]

The poem involves three figures: the woman drawn in the portrait, the person observing the portrait and the living woman. The poetic speaker or observer of the portrait directs his (usually "his") gaze at a beloved, the person drawn in the portrait. The living woman embodies the reality of the aging process:

> Es una necia diligencia errada,
> es un afán caduco y, bien mirado,
> es cadáver, es polvo, es sombra, es nada.
>
> [is a foolish sorry labour lost,
> is conquest doomed to perish and, well taken,
> is corpse and dust, shadow and nothingness.]

By means of that gaze, the observer of the portrait objectifies that person drawn and makes the beloved an object of his own subjectivity. This gaze fragments the beloved into parts that the poet describes using Petrarchan metaphors, in a process discussed by critics starting from sor Juana, and, in more recent times, in the classic essays of Nancy J. Vickers, William Clamurro, Georgina Sabat-Rivers, among others.

The representation of a woman in Petrarchan poetry, and the point sor Juana makes; namely, that the beauties/beautiful women described in Petrarchan poetry are not real women because real women age, but autonomous aesthetic objects do not. Sor Juana depicts her identity in "Este que ves, engaño colorido" by demonstrating how she is a lively female intellectual while living in a male-dominated society. For this reason, Clamurro in "Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz Reads her Portrait" affirms that:

> Against a portrait's mirroring capability, its implicit promise of faithful representation, Sor Juana clearly sensed its potential for distortion and its inescapable otherness, its autonomy as object. In the tension between these two extremes, she seems to have found the adequate vehicle for expressing the complex situation of her identity and existence as a lively female intellectual within a culturally conservative and male-dominated society. (27-28)

The portrait itself also marks a time in her youth and demonstrates her beauty at that moment and nothing later due to the deterioration of that beauty. How can a woman's beauty be measured by a portrait or by its autonomy as an object? This leads to the subtext that the true beauty of a woman is nonexistent considering that a real woman ages and dies. It is as if the beauty of a woman must be glued to a portrait and that picture is to speak of the wonderful youth and beauty, but nothing of the aging and death after, through the blackening effect.

The visual culture Hall draws upon is that of a racial valence, but her argument speaks more broadly to contexts of imperialism and colonialism. Hall points out that, "The image of a white embedded in darkness, of discovering and merchandising a precious whiteness from "dark" continents is a typical colonialist gesture in Elizabethan England that works to define and preserve the value of whiteness" (218). This idea explains that dark refers to evil while light refers to good. The discourse of Christianity and evangelization functiones as ways to justify colonialism. The idea to christianize people who did not share the same faith were subject to conversion. Through christianizing missions and journeys, people who did not share the same Christian principles were forced to convert. Through evengelization, the discourse on Christianity and the idea of Whiteness and purity arises. Discourses on Christianity as a colonial tool links Whiteness to purity and anything that is Black or not pure does not fit. The idea of preservation of the value of whiteness implies preserving the coded "privileged" in Europe.

Góngora notwithstanding, Black beauty was in some ways an active trope in early modern poetry. Fray Luís de León (1527 – 1591) chose to translate the "Song of Solomon" into

Spanish. There is such a thing as Black beauty as evidenced in the Song of Solomon. The Song of Solomon references a darker shade of color upon a woman:

> Morena yo, pero amable, hijas de Jerusalén, como las tiendas de Cedar, como las cortinas de Salomón.
>
> [My skin is dark and beautiful, like a tent in the desert or like Solomon's curtains]

The mention of Black beauty in the Song of Solomon demonstrates the blatant overlook of the topic of Black beauty within codes of Petrarchism. And even here in this quote, it denotes the dichotomy that exists between the concepts of Blackness and beauty. However, my intervention of this Biblical scripture works as restoration of Black beauty. This version reads differently than other translations and uses the conjunction 'and 'to describe dark and beautiful skin. This contribution works with the embroidery discussion of Black female servants and redefines Black presence. In Núria Silleras-Fernández's essay "Nigra sum sed Formosa: Black Slaves and Exotica in the Court of a Fourteenth-Century Aragonese Queen," the role of Black slaves in royal households of the Crown of Aragon reveals that African captives were sometimes given privileged position at court. African slaves were also the object of embroidery and ornamental fixtures. The essay explores how enslaved Blacks who were to labor or be in the house were given as gifts to the royal court. Enslaved Blacks were dressed in elaborate dress with bright colors to signal their purpose as objects. Nevertheless, the essay theorizes the "Black but beautiful" phrase that serves as an avenue to recuperate Black female agency. Silleras-Fernández states that, "They [enslaved Black women] were deliberately chosen for the color of their skin, which, along with their youth, reflected an image of beauty perceived as excitingly different" (555). The color of their skin along with their youth was a signal of their beauty rather than ugliness. The attention was made towards their beauty rather than their loyalty as enslaved

women. However, the focus on skin color is not separate from specifically describing enslaved Blacks by their body but marks the uniqueness or distinctness of enslaved Black women. Towards the end of the essay, she comments on how the Iberian Peninsula during the sixteenth-century valued black Africans and it was not by their appearance rather their behavior and physical capabilities. During the late fourteenth-century she remarks that, "European society as a whole had yet to become bound in the massive African slave trade, and…in this courtly context, black slaves were prized precisely because, paraphrasing the Song of Songs, "black is beautiful" (564).

In this section, I discussed race and gender separately to frame it during the 16th and 17th century. I highlighted the ideas of racialization though Góngora's sonnet and how the organization of the stanzas trigger thoughts towards this subtext. While the interpretation of Sor Juana's sonnet addresses the ideas surrounding representation of women, the idea of deception and the blackening effect, I pose the question again, is there such a thing as Black Beauty? From the ideas of racialization, darkness represents insignificance or nonexistence while female representation of beauty is weighed by a portrait—still showing a devalue to aging and the true beauty of a "living woman." Jones in his essay "Cosmetic Ontologies, Cosmetic Subversions: Articulating Black Beauty and Humanity in Luis de Góngora's "En la fiesta del Santísimo Sacramento," proclaims that Black women in early modern Spanish poetry and theatrical works were often called "putas negras" and "galguinegras," especially when they were debased and dehumanized in animalistic ways in literature by Hispanic male writers" (46). This proclamation perhaps extends to the ideas I put forth in this paper concerning Góngora's sonnet that there is, in fact, a racializing gaze that debases darkness. Moreover, it defends the claims of the gendering

lens that sor Juana establishes within the literature by Hispanic male writers as dehumanizing women to a portrait or object, but nothing more. From these thoughts and analyses, it seems as if Black beauty is nonexistent and is worth reimagining from a concealed past as Jones mentions. The color black is associated negatively, and the woman is devalued and weighed by her beauty in a portrait. The blackening effect that takes place analogous to the dark aging process of a woman and its connection to nothingness simultaneously depicts an institutionalization of the rejection of Black beauty.

African Beauty

There are readings that emphasize an African beauty that is not always referring to somatic Black skin. However, this beauty is embedded in a distinct beauty that is often seen as pure and virtuous. I do not probe African beauty in contrast to Black beauty. I am interested in how distinct the two are as African beauty is describing an entire continent rather than a somatic skin color. I take Petrarch's *Africa* by Francesco Petrarch as a case in point to analyze African beauty as it is framed in the European gaze. The *Africa,* published in the 14th century, contains nine books. The poem recounts the ancient historical events of the Second Punic War. Specifically Book 5 concentrates on the portrait of Sofonisba, a Carthaginian noblewoman, who falls in love with Massinissa, a Roman ally. However, in the end her fate is fatal as she poisons herself to not be a slave to Scipio, the Roman hero. The poetic voice admires the portrait of Sofonisba in order to acknowledge the existence of African beauty and humanity. The poem draws a parallel between the portrait of Sophonisba with that of Laura's, an Italian woman with whom Petrarch describes the *Canzoniere* to praise her beauty and contemplate the female figure. I contend that the character of Sophonisba demonstrates an acknowledgment of African beauty in the medieval

and early modern context while it simultaneously supports the establishment of a universal humanist project.

I can make this case by contrasting two different examples of descriptions and images of both Sophonisba and Laura. Book 5's portrait of Sophonisba and poem 126 from the *Canzoniere* of Laura's portrait. These examples demonstrate the similarities between the portraits of both women as they are described by Petrarch's poetic voice. Therefore, this section illustrates African beauty in the medieval and early modern imagination.

Petrarch's *Africa* has been conceived as a counterpart to the classical collection of ancient biographies written by Petrarch, inspired by *De viris illustribus* that recounts Livy's History of Rome. He takes Sophonisba from the Livy's History of Rome. *Africa* is written in the medieval time frame and both shapes the medieval and early modern's concepts of beauty. Book 5 presents the portrait of Sophonisba, who is a Carthaginian noblewoman that falls in love with a Roman ally. Massinissa, before becoming king of Numidia fought in the Second Punic War first against the Romans as an ally of Carthage, and later switched sides becoming a Roman ally. Numidia is located in what is now Algeria, a smaller part of Tunisia and small part of Libya in the Maghreb. Scipio feared above all that Massinissa will lose his military vigor being in love with Sophonisba. However, the poetic voice describes this woman's beauty similarly to the beauty of Laura in the *Canzoniere.* Laura is an Italian woman Petrarch describes and admires. Additionally, he respects her beauty as divine and places her in a position close to the Almighty God. Nonetheless, it seems that this same author admires Sophonisba's beauty similarly.

Primary Accounts of Laura and Sophonisba's Portraits

The portrait of Laura is described in poems 77-78 and 126 in the *Canzoniere*. The poems present Laura as a crowning example of what beauty is. Because her beauty is so perfect, it is impossible to recreate it in portrait, although the *Canzoniere* suggests that poetry, in the form of Petrarch's lyrics, can achieve this feat. In poems 77-78, Petrarch addresses the portrait of Laura, painted by Simone Martini, rendering praise but also suggesting that the portrait is unable to depict the divine beauty of Laura.[60]

Sonnet 77

Per mirar Policleto a prova fiso
con gli altri ch'ebber fama di quell'arte
mill'anni, non vedrian la minor parte
de la belta che m'ave il cor conquiso.

Ma certo il mio Simon fu in paradiso
(onde questa gentil donna si parte),
ivi la vide, et la ritrasse in carte
per far fede qua giu del suo bel viso.

L'opra fu ben di quelle che nel cielo
si ponno imaginar, non qui tra noi,
ove le membra fanno a l'alma velo.

Cortesia fe'; ne la potea far poi
che fu disceso a provar caldo et gielo,
et del mortal sentiron gli occchi suoi.

[*Per mirar Policleto a prova fiso*
Polyclitus gazing fixedly a thousand years
with the others who were famous in his art,
would not have seen the least part
of the beauty that has vanquished my heart.

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[60] Polyclitus, was a 5th century BC Greek sculptor; Simone Martini, 1283-1344, was a Sienese painter. He was a friend of Petrarch and painted a lost portrait of Laura referred to in the poem.

But Simone must have been in Paradise
(from where this gentle lady came)
saw her there, and portrayed her in paint,
to give us proof here of such loveliness.

This work is truly one of those that might
be conceived in heaven, not among us here,
where we have bodies that conceal the soul.

Grace made it: he could work on it no
further when he'd descended to our heat and
cold, where his eyes had only mortal seeing.]

Sonnet 78
Quando giunse a Simon l'alto concetto
ch'a mio nome gli pose in man lo stile,
s'avesse dato a l'opera gentile
colla figura voce ed intellecto,

di sospir' molti mi sgombrava il petto,
che cio ch'altri a piu caro, a me fan vile:
pero che 'n vista ella si mostra humile
promettendomi pace ne l'aspetto.

Ma poi ch'i' vengo a ragionar co llei,
benignamente assai par che m'ascolte,
se risponder savesse a' detti miei.

Pigmalion, quanto lodar ti dei
de l'imagine tua, se mille volte
n'avesti quel ch'i' sol una vorrei.

[*Quando giunse a Simon l'alto concetto*
When Simone had matched the high concept
I had in mind with the design beneath his
hand, if he had given to this noble work
intelligence and voice with the form,

he would have eased my heart of many
sighs, that make what's dearer to others vile
to me: since she's revealed to the sight, so
humble, promising peace to me in her aspect.

But when I come to speak with her,
benignly though she seems to listen,
her response to me is still lacking.

Pygmalion, what delight you had
from your creation, since the joy I wish
but once, you possessed a thousand times.]

Poem 126 further describes the ideal portrait of Laura. The poetic voice paints her body with a divine beauty that beauty should be measured by. The poem describes her body indicating that she "would rest her lovely body" (3). Her eyes are defined as "where Love with those fair eyes opened my heart" (11). Laura's earthly presence is confirmed through his description of being "with her lovely veil" (39). "Veil" refers to body and affirms her beauty on the earth realm. Next, her breasts "were flowers in a rain upon her bosom" (42) and hair were "some [flowers that] fell on her blond curls" (47). Her smile is described as a "sweet smile" (57). Additionally, if we take into consideration the vulgate representation of Laura in Petrarchan manuscripts and incunabula, the ideal portrait of Laura and beauty consists of golden hair, pale and beautiful white face, dark eyebrows and shining eyes and her clothing is a green robe, sometimes embroidered with violet, scarlet or crimson.

These descriptions of Laura's portrait are echoed in a different text that describes a different woman. In Book 5 of Petrarch's *Africa*, Petrarch uses similar codes to represent Sophonisba. In lines 51-55, Petrarch describes the lady's eyes: "And where she wished to turn it she could rouse/desire or bend a will however firm/or to Medusan marble change the heart/of an admirer—nay, it is a wonder/that Africa has no second monstrous breed." Her eyes wield a

divine force with their radiant beauty. Like Laura's gaze, in *Canzoniere* 23, Sophonisba which could turn a beholder into marble or stone.[61]

Medusa played an important role in Petrarch's strategies of representation of women. Medusa was a mythical female god who that had the power to look at her beholder with her eyes and change them to stone.[62] Therefore, the poetic voice points out that Sophonisba will be the figure to create another "monstrous breed"[63] in Africa because of her radiant beauty and divine eyes. Petrarch describes her beauty in a manner that eliminates obvious elements of racialization. Petrarch connects beauty to human virtue to establish a universal beauty and contribute to his universal humanism project that does not exclude anyone. For instance, the poem does not necessarily describe her skin as darker but rather points out that it is like a cream, when the text declares "the flaxen strands/commingled with the white of milk and cream/and virgin snow shone 'neath a golden sun" (44-6). Petrarch recognizes Sophonisba's African beauty while simultaneously adoring Roman culture and Scipio. Petrarch admires Scipio, the Roman hero, and

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[61] Specific lines from *Canzoniere* 23: Questa che col mirar gli animi fura/m'aperse il petto, e 'l cor prese con mano/dicendo a me: Di ciò non far parola./Poi la rividi in altro habito sola/tal ch'i' non la conobbi, oh senso humano/anzi le dissi 'l ver pien di paura;/ed ella ne l'usata sua figura/tosto tornando, fecemi, oimè lasso/d'un quasi vivo et sbigottito sasso. [She who maddens men with her gaze/opened my chest, and took my heart in her hand/saying to me: 'Speak no word of this.'/Then I saw her alone, in a different dress/so that I did not know her, oh human senses/and full of fear told her the truth:/and she turning quickly back/to her usual guise, made me, alas/semi-living and dumb stone.] Also, Vickers reading of this *Canzoniere* in "Diana Described" conveys that when the poetic voice becomes victim of the beloved's gaze, "he is dismembered and scattered" (269) and can turn into marble or stone. This construct is used to "explain both the scattering of woman and of rhyme in vernacular lyric" (270).

[62] Ovid Metamorphoses talks about Medusa and how Perseus uses her head to turn Atlas to stone in Book IV. "In the fields and along the paths, here and there, he saw the shapes of men and animals changed from their natures to hard stone by Medusa's gaze."

[63] "Monstrous breed" indicates a prodigious, fabulous breed, that is comparable to gods and mythical figures like Medusa.

Roman culture, but he does not describe this character or culture in this manner. Therefore, as he adores all of these cultural aspects, he recognizes African beauty on the same level as Roman culture and Scipio.

In the same manner, Umberto Eco writes about the shades of light in the medieval time frame and how this informed status and power. He asserts that light colors and vibrant colors in visual art emphasizes the social status of a person. For instance, he states that vibrant colors and the richness of colors mark someone of high status in medieval society. The rich colors he points out include gold, ornaments and jewels dyed with gold or purple, green, red. Both portraits point out these colors that mark power and desire. Subsequently, Petrarch accounts for their beauty in the written text that supports this idea of being marked with power and nobility. Laura and Sophonisba are from different places on different continents that brings into question the difference between Italian and African beauty. He purposefully described the beauty codes of two women from different locations with different responsibilities to differentiate their beauty.[64]

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[64] Beauty in medieval Europe was expressed through explicit description of a woman generally. There was an ideal portrait and schema through which most women were described. For instance, beauty was measured by length and color of hair, color of skin, eyes, cheeks, eyebrows, lips, forehead, nose, chin, breasts, hips, buttocks and feet. As a result of these measures, beauty was defined by the entire body. Claudio Da Soller summarizes that beauty in medieval Europe was measured by three different factors: youth, health, and reproductive value. Soller examines how men's attractiveness and feminine beauty were analyzed in literary works from the twelfth century to the fifteenth century. Specifically, he chose seventeen literary works including both individual works and lyrical works to prove that beauty in the medieval time frame on the Iberian Peninsula follows the guidelines of the canon of beauty in medieval literature. The works she chose were the most representative of medieval literature on the Iberian Peninsula and included some manuals of Spanish literature. Her analysis convincingly presented this same ideal portrait and schema with which to measure men's attraction to feminine beauty. The results overwhelmingly demonstrated that when feminine beauty is mentioned in a text from this period, a body part is referenced to describe it. Hence, both written portraits of Sophonisba and Laura emphasize their body parts that accumulates this feminine beauty.

Laura was the first woman Petrarch described with a divine beauty, but he does the same with this "other" woman named Sophonisba.

The "Other" woman

The "Other" woman in this case is Sophonisba since she was a woman described by Petrarch after Laura. The poetic voice describes and recognizes the beauty of these two characters as parallel, which emphasizes North African beauty on the same level of Italian beauty. Moreover, the poetic voice genders both portraits as they are only pertaining to women rather than men. Petrarch seeks to establish a universal humanism project and project his codes of beauty upon the North African woman. The North African woman is an Other that facilitates this establishment. He desires to connect beauty to human virtue by presenting and describing the beauty of Sophonisba. Sophonisba is an Other and North African that supports his project of universal humanism. The poetic voice describes the beauty of Sophonisba as a "monstrous breed" that makes her portrait powerful enough to create another wondrous breed or population on the continent of Africa. He uses this description of Sophonisba to translate beauty and human virtue from Italy to Africa. Therefore, if he describes these two portraits, he must have the anecdote or key to establish a universal humanist project. It is to say that, although she is North African, she possesses beauty similar to Laura.

The poetic voice in Book 5 of *Africa* addresses every part of Sophonisba as he paints a beautiful canvas of her beauty. He discusses her neck, shoulders, skin color, cheeks, lips, eyes, breasts, manner of walking and feet. The poem addresses this African noblewoman as a beauty that is rare to find in Africa with the comparison to Medusa in lines 51-55 above. In this way, Petrarch establishes a code of African female beauty. The portrait extensive, but it is worthy of

being fully described. Petrarch describes Sophonisba's neck as "slim, graceful" (39) and the garment over her shoulders as "encased her slender shoulders as they fell" (42). The description of her neck and the garment over her shoulders demonstrates the beauty this African woman had. Moreover, the poem indicates that the skin color of the woman was "the flaxen strands/commingled with the white of milk and cream/and virgin snow shone 'neath a golden sun" (44-6) that perhaps eliminates the wonder of what color she was. Further on, her eyes and brows are "so clear/[that] their radiance gleamed beneath her beauteous brows" (47-8) which continues this praise of her African beauty. The cheeks and lips are "the pure hue of the lily in her cheeks/blended with red of roses, and beyond/her lips of ruby dazzling ivory gleamed" (62-4) and her breasts are "Her bosom's curve, exposed and softly swelling/in tender palpitation" (65-6). Further on, the poetic voice describes her clothing as filled with adornment, jewels and a purple bodice. The poem is very explicit in its description of her beauty to not disdain her for being African but to acknowledge her beauty. The beauty codes in medieval Europe differs from what we see beauty as in more contemporary periods. In order to fully comprehend the portraits of Laura and Sophonisba, we must look closer at what the beauty codes were in medieval Europe.

Additionally, both Laura and Sophonisba are beautiful and part of an honorable breed. The poetic voice emphasizes that her beauty has shaped her and made her honorable by description. Sophonisba's beauty is used as a tool to establish this universal humanism Petrarch was looking for. He wanted to establish human virtue from beauty in different places with different people in order to understand the earthly things - people. However, it was easy to link human virtue and beauty with two portraits described as women of a white, cream skin color.

Perhaps, Petrarch stamped his codes of beauty upon the description of Sophonisba, as a "North African" woman. In any case, Petrarch described their beauty as parallel and codifies beauty in Italy and Africa. By way of these codes of beauty stamped upon Laura and Sophonisba in the medieval context, some of these same codes reflect the imagination of early modern Iberia as the Petrarchan codes influenced many poets on the Iberian Peninsula.

Early modern's Iberian Imagination of Beauty

Book 5 presents Sophonisba as having human virtue similar to Laura in the *Canzoniere,* which revamps the imagination of Africans in medieval Europe. It is clear, then, that Petrarch acknowledges African beauty, which links Petrarch's ideals of a universal beauty. Although Petrarch's approach and description are original, the approach lacks information on Black beauty. He recognizes North African beauty, but the portrait of Sophonisba presents a woman of a white, cream color. As we move into the imagination of beauty in the early modern, it is important to understand the legacy of the Petrarchan tradition in the medieval time and how it influenced poets in Spain.

Vickers describes in her article "Diana Described" that there is a strong relationship between the blazon poetry and fragmentation of the beloved. She emphasizes the relationship between Actaeon, a stag, and Diana, a goddess of the hunt and of the moon in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* to compare it to Petrarch and Laura's relationship. The relationship precedes that of Petrarch and Laura's as Vickers describe both relationships as similar in their fragmentation of the beloved. Petrarch imitates the Actaeon's story and follows this subtext in his work of the *Canzoniere*. This imitation was the basis for extension of codes of beauty in the medieval context

and Petrarch isolated Laura's body parts to describe her beauty and divine element. Vickers explains that Petrarch isolated each body part of the beloved and described it in his poem, which has become the foundation of a fragmented image of the beloved and transformed poetry in the following centuries.[65]

By the same token, the idea of fragmentation of the beloved is equivalent in medieval and early modern poetry. As Vickers emphasizes, this legacy of fragmenting the image of the beloved in poetry becomes the site where feminine beauty is observed. The fragmenting image is specific and describes a certain type of woman that is Laura or Sophonisba, in this case. The representation of their beauty is fragmented with descriptions of their isolated body parts. One major description of their beauty is their white, cream-colored skin. This is a conventional skin color of beauty that the codes of Petrarca and the Spanish poets underline in lyric poetry. Therefore, subsequently, this fragmented description excludes any variety to that skin color. Particularly, the pole opposite, a black skin color, is absent in the description of skin color regarding beauty. Is beauty then only seen to be a white feminine beauty?

Conclusion for African Beauty

Nonetheless, Petrarch acknowledges an African beauty in the same manner as he does with Laura's portrait. He links beauty with human virtue and levels both Sophonisba and Laura at the same spot. There is no difference between the two, and they both demonstrate true beauty whether it be in Italy or Africa. Moreover, Petrarch acknowledges African beauty and human virtue in the medieval and early modern by presenting and describing the beauty of Sophonisba

[65] "It would surely seem that to Petrarch Laura's whole body was at times less than some of its parts; and that to his imitators the strategy of describing her through the isolation of those parts presented an attractive basis for imitation, extension, and, ultimately, distortion" (267).

in Book 5 of *Africa*. He compares Sophonisba's beauty to creating a "monstruous breed" in Africa and recognizes her beauty equivalently to Laura's.

The transition of an Italian beauty and North African beauty draws various parallels that include skin color where if the portrait presented was a Sub-Saharan African, the stakes would have been different; her dark skin color would have changed the parallelism between the portraits. This is not to say that all Sub-Saharan Africans are Black but rather to challenge the ideas of beauty Petrarch presents with the portrait of Sophonisba.

The medieval concepts of beauty include two important elements which are the divine element of the beloved as well as their physical beauty. While, on the other hand, the early modern concepts of beauty focus on the physical beauty and not the divine element. There is a strong continuity of the Petrarchan tradition as it becomes the basis of poetry in the Spanish Renaissance. While the codes of beauty differ in each time frame, they also share similarities. They emphasize blazon poetry and a fragmented description and image of the beloved. These two elements converge both medieval and early modern poetry. However, there is an absence or recognition of black Sub-Saharan African portrait. The portrait of both Laura and Sophonisba presents a skin color of a white cream color beloved which excludes the portrait of black skin colored beloved. As Petrarch recognizes African beauty and human virtue, his approach lacks the representation of a Black African feminine beauty. This weakens his attempt to establish a universal humanist project as it is created for a particular representation and beauty. Petrarch wants to establish a universal humanism that includes everyone, so he uses the portrait of Sophonisba in the abject position to achieve this goal. Petrarch describes Sophonisba as a "North African" beauty which presents a different ideal from the European ideal beauty. Despite that, he uses her beauty as part of his universal humanist project using the codes of beauty on two

different beloveds, her, and Laura. While he does recognize North African beauty, he fails to incorporate a complete African beauty that includes a Black African beloved. If one seeks to recognize African beauty and human virtue, it must include all Africans, whatever shape, color, or size.

V: CODA

Starting with Portugal and transitioning to Spain, each black African female contributed significantly to the early modern Iberian canon that exclusively leaves them out. Their work and presence grounded discourses of Blackness and Whiteness that carried its legacy throughout the centuries. Drawing from Samantha Pinto's work of exploring the histories of five Black women celebrities in the 18th and 19th centuries in *Infamous Bodies: Early Black Women's Celebrity and the Afterlives of Rights* (2020). I assemble the lives of four black African female literary figures in the early modern Iberian archive to generate new ways of imagining the Black baroque tradition. During the time frame in which these literary productions were written, these four black African female figures were not upheld as famous but rather as "infamous bodies." The field of the early modern studies did not honor their contributions of the material such as food, hair, clothing, and language but instead focused on harsh labor and enslavement. Therefore, their Black female bodies were rendered an economic gain to support the Iberian imperial project. This work urges us to see these infamous black African female figures as famous since their seeds bore the fruit, we take part in today. The field has perpetuated the smoke screen of White European supremacy, which continues to blind those from seeing the contribution of the black African. The field and works mentioned in this paper have not recognized Blackness but used the Black baroque tradition to construct Whiteness as normative through enslavement and exploitation. There is much more work to be done that identifies Blackness in the early modern Iberian archive as a contributor to the field and consequential.

Necropolitics, necromancy, disapproving aunty look, eroticism, guarding knowledge, and speech are material signs of Black presence and agency. These modalities and gestures are evidence of ancient and modern African diasporas and Blackness as consequential to early

modern Iberian thought and culture. The aesthetic representational reflection of the Black baroque tradition insists that the literary production of this field take a second look and reawaken the contributions of the black African and the black African female. Each episode represents the authenticity and result of recognizing Blackness as visible. It challenges us to take a second look at these works and how we can read them as solidifying Black presence and agency.

The strength of the sisterhood between these four black African female figures solidifies the ancient power Pryse talks about. Through their connection, their bodies read as a Black presence foundational to the Iberian sphere generating an Iberian Blackness. An Iberian Blackness recognizes Blackness as consequential as European Whiteness and that they both played a role in what we consider early modern Iberian thought and culture. The legacy of Black baroque and Iberian Blackness exist through the modalities and gestures centered in each work presented in this paper. They signal Black presence and agency, interpreting Blackness as visible and consequential to the early modern Iberian archive.

As I was reading this piece by Black Feminist scholar Kinitra Brooks on July 8, 2020, titled, "The Dead Still Crave Dessert: Appetites are eternal in the Afro-Cuban Lukumi religious tradition," I finally realized an essential aspect of death. Her piece describes the importance of the cultural roots of West Africa and religion and rituals of the ancestors. This was the importance of Africaneity even though most folks view this as primarily in Latinx and Hispanic communities. Brooks traces black Africans and West African roots by announcing and discussing their contributions to the modern world of Blacks. A significant way to remain connected is through speaking to ancestors that are dead but still feeling their energy and providing them with sweets, food, time, and love. Despite that, one thing that she asserts is that "Connecting to the elders and the passed-on has strengthened black folks through the

oppressions of enslavement and Jim Crow. Death is only a transition, never an end." This powerful statement leaves us speechless and filled with rigor to understand that life after death is still a declaration to continue the fight. I do not mean this in a morbid inhuman way, but as a way to see the power of Blacks and their ancestors through death. Through death, Blacks have remained in contact with family members and ancestors to be strengthened to endure the remaining trials and tribulations. I invite you to view death as a transition and not an end to continue the fight in other means - such as connecting with living Blacks and providing them strength, energy, and wisdom to sustain the lifelong battle.

This idea connects well with the concept of necromancy introduced by Nick Jones and necropolitics introduced by Membe Achilles. The tools necromancy offers us are to reawaken and restore black African contributions to Iberia. The tool necropolitics provides us is that the hegemonic apparatus instrumentally controls those under it and either gives them life or removes their life. Both concepts surround death, but I want to invite Brook's perspective that death is just a transition, not an end. Through this transition, we find that death makes a powerful statement for those that didn't choose to die but still show their strength, energy, and wisdom through the living Blacks. These living Blacks have an opportunity to show the continued struggle and fight for equality and for their contributions to be recuperated on the Iberian Peninsula.

On one level, Black female characters are depicted in ways that conform to the literary conventions of the day, as abject and lampooned caricatures of Black womanhood rather than as complex figures whose actions, motivations, and inner conflicts shape the plot. With a second look, however, Black female characters make a significant contribution to Iberian culture that should be recognized as consequential to the early modern Iberian archive.

Audre Lorde's work is fundamental toward Black liberation and studying the value of Black women. In *I Am Your Sister: Collected and Unpublished Writings of Audre Lorde*, she underscores the relevance of language and how Black women can't be silent. We must use our voices to transform the narrative for Black women. We must challenge the dominant narrative by using our words to transmit the "real" message of who we are and the language we embrace. We must be the actors of the language used to create our narrative because our silence would not stop the suffering, pain, or death.

I conclude with the concept of "Sankofa" derived from King Adinkera of the Akan people of Ghana, West Africa, found in Kinitra Brooks, Alexis McGee, and Stephanie Schoellman's essay titled, "Speculative Sankofarration: Haunting Black women in Contemporary Horror Fiction." The concept commonly connects with an Akan proverb: "it is not taboo to go back and fetch what you forgot." "John Jennings coined the term "sankofarration" [which is] a cosmological episteme that centers on the act of claiming the future as well as the past. In sankofarration, time is cyclical.

The conditioning of Black Feminist approaches conveys the role and value of Black women in society as people. My discernments are a forward-thinking meditation of the field and conventional thought towards racialization and gender during the early modern era that uncovers more of black Africans 'personhood and lives. Therefore, my scholarly agenda joins this conversation as it grapples with learning from the past to understand the present.

Remember: Yu grandpa n yu grandma go watch you. Salone Krio proverb about your ancestors.

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