Performing Gender on the English-Language Stage: Tirso de Molina's *comedia urbana*

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Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for supplication as a student for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
Trinity Term, 2019

Abstract

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This study analyses gender in three of Tirso de Molina's *comedias urbanas* and their subsequent performances on the modern, English-language stage. Using case studies of three particular Tirso productions from the past decade, I argue that the plays invite a queer reading when tested on the modern stage. To do so, my study involves a seamless consideration of the three aspects of live performance: the play texts, performances, and their subsequent reception.

My introduction opens with a discussion of gender and sex in seventeenth-century Spain, as well as the staging of gender in the *comedia* in the original period. I ultimately argue that Spain's performance practices and its attitude towards gender queered spectatorship and—paradoxically—both empowered and objectified female performers.

In chapter 1, I propose a tripartite analysis of gender in the *comedia* that involves textual study, an analysis of how gender is embodied and performed by actors through choices of casting and characterisation, and a consideration of how gender is decoded and read by spectators. I discuss how the modern theatre grapples with the staging of gender, particularly focusing on Shakespeare performance as a model, as well as modern Spanish- and English-language productions of *comedias*.

Chapters 2 through 4 offer case study examples from modern productions of three Tirso plays: *Marta la piadosa*, *El amor médico*, and *La celosa de sí misma.* In each chapter, I consider both the original Spanish play text and its subsequent performance on the modern English-language stage, analysing two aspects of each play: first, the dramaturgy, which offers on the surface a largely heteronormative message through its rigidly structured narrative but which is ultimately subversive; and second, the plays' characters, who exhibit queer potential, either through their cross-dressing, their ambiguous gender, or their hyperbolic gender performance.

Extended Abstract

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Tirso de Molina's *comedias urbanas* engage with queer discourse, especially when performed on the modern stage. Tirso's dramatic writing, which is known to skirt sexual ambiguity—what we might 400 years later call "queerness"—is ripe for gender analysis. This thesis grapples with the theoretical and practical issues of performing and reading gender in the plays on the modern stage. As a dramaturg by training, my approach is centrally concerned not with looking at performances alone, but at modern performance through an historical lens, considering sex, gender, and the politics of gender performance in early modern Spanish society. This study assumes socio-historical context to be crucial in reading the *comedia* today, even in translation and when performed on the stage. I thus look at theatrical production against the backdrop of two separate contexts: seventeenth-century Spain and the modern day, constantly seeking ways to traverse and join that gap.

My study opens with historical and theoretical context, followed by examples from the modern stage and, finally, three case study chapters in which I look at three of Tirso's *comedias urbanas*, all in performance in the US and UK in the past decade.

After a discussion of the differences between sex and gender in seventeenth-century Spain (compared to today) in the introduction, I argue that the body is not only crucial to the theatre-making experience, but that the presence of gendered bodies has the potential to affect—or even to "queer"—the experience of spectators. In order to probe the potential effects performers had on the early modern Spanish stage, and particularly female performers (given the frequency with which their roles involve cross-dressing), I

argue that the result of women on the stage in Spain in the original period is paradoxical: though women are endowed with agency both by being on stage and performing the parts of strong, clever females, their presence on stage is also a form of objectification, and is coloured by the experience of spectatorship. I thus also argue that the historical context of early modern Spain, with its stage and spectating practices—in which women are both submissive and subversive—ultimately results in an objectification and Othering of the female body.

My first chapter looks at reception of the *comedia* on the modern stage. First, what is at stake in the move from page to stage? How does the contemporary theatre specifically grapple with the staging of gender? For this, I turn to Shakespeare performance as a model for thinking about the *comedia.* Following this, I consider modern productions of *comedias* and how they go about staging gender, both in Spanish (which tends to be modest) and English (typically more bold, inventive productions). While I do not focus solely on Tirso, but instead look at how directors and productions approach the way gender is staged, my ultimate aim is to argue that Tirso grapples with early modern Spain's preoccupation with gender by queering identity from the outside-in: a way to say that the body (or at least appearance) is crucial to Tirso's writing.

Chapters 2 through 4 are the heart of this thesis: using the example of modern productions, staged over the past decade in both the UK and the US, I look at gender on the page and stage in three of Tirso's *comedias urbanas*, melding textual analysis with performance analysis, and drawing on details from the productions, as well as (in chapter 4) audience response. Dramatic texts, bodies of actors, and spectatorship—in conjunction with one another—become the central issues around which I consider the three plays in performance.

Using examples from the original Spanish text, Harley Erdman's English-language translation, and its subsequent 2009 performance of the play, chapter 2 posits that *Marta la piadosa*'s [*Marta the Divine*] reframing of femininity and its patriarchal dramaturgy ultimately make the story—on both page and stage—one which is "queer" and therefore subversive. In the first section, I argue for the multi-gendered aspects of Marta's characterisation (she is both hyperbolically feminine and masculine) and then insist upon the importance of the body in theatrical signification in order to justify the production's strategic cross-gender casting choice. I conclude that the production's approach literalised the text's inherent gender fluidity through the use of gendered bodies. The second section opens with the argument that the entire plot of *Marta* is aimed towards patriarchal ends, but that—ultimately—the play is not completely governed by its end; the tension between the play's dramaturgy and its characters' objectives must also be considered. In this case, a consideration of Marta's feminist objectives juxtaposed against her ultimate journey towards patriarchy is crucial. Despite her efforts, the play ends in an uncomfortably patriarchal way, forcing us (as readers, and especially as theatre audiences) to face the ramifications of such an ending: does it render Marta's efforts moot, or is her subversiveness still alive?

In chapter 3, I look at both characterisation and dramaturgy to argue that *El amor médico* [*Love the Doctor*] seeks to subvert the rigidity of gender typically seen in early modern Spain. While the play underscores the binary gender system, using characters such as Estefanía and Gaspar as markers of gender extremes, it also builds a central character—Jerónima—whose identity is malleable and ambiguous. Ultimately, I argue that Jerónima manipulates the supposed objectivity of identity to get what she wants; she subverts the very structure of binary gender which is meant to trap her in a gender role that is built to suppress her. The play's structure simultaneously subverts

heteronormativity by upending the typical social roles expected of characters. Specifically, the conclusion to the plot—in which Gaspar marries Jerónima—demands ironically that Jerónima fulfil the social role of a man.

My final chapter, on *La celosa de sí misma* [*Jealous of Herself*], posits a tension between heteronormative and non-normative storytelling through its dramaturgy and characterisation. The first part of the chapter argues for the dramatic arc's inherent subversiveness through its simultaneous assertion of heteronormativity alongside the destabilisation of heteronormativity by exposing the insufficiencies of heterosexuality. The second section of the chapter argues that the play establishes the binary system of gender through its concretisation of social roles while also upsetting that binary through its queer characterisation: at times, rigid gender codes are broken down to reveal more gender-fluid characters. A final section introduces the way new queer moments—and highlighting the socially constructed nature of gender—were created in performance.

As a theatre practitioner, in this thesis I focus on the system of meaning-making in performance itself. If the foundation of a production is its text, the other sign systems at work in theatre—lights, costumes, set, bodies—help support the production. As is evident from the multi-semiotic nature of meaning-making in the theatre, performance therefore demands a consideration not only of text but also the other signifiers of the theatre. This theory makes up the foundation of my performance analysis.

While studies of Tirso's dramatic output are increasingly popular, a consideration of the plays in performance is less so. Even more rare are critical analyses of the Spanish play in conversation with modern, translated productions. Studies that do deal with the *comedia* in performance tend—as a result of modest season planning full of "safe" play choices on the part of theatres—to deal with just a handful of plays by Lope and Calderón. This study looks closely at not one but three of Tirso's plays, all in their first-

ever English-language productions. Although all productions were performed at universities and therefore did not benefit from a professional-scale budget, cast, or creative team, each production engaged skilfully with the text and therefore provides rich material with which to perform analysis.

Unlike much performance scholarship on the *comedia*, which looks strictly at productions rather than the processes leading up to them, this thesis gives a glimpse into not only the productions but also rehearsal processes. My personal involvement with the three productions at hand allowed a closer scrutinisation of each step in the move from page to stage. For the production of *Marta the Divine* (2009), I served as dramaturg; I authored the translation/adaptation of *Love the Doctor* (2011, 2013); and I adapted, from Harley Erdman's translation, *Jealous of Herself* (2016), which was staged at Oxford's own Keble O'Reilly Theatre.

A common objection to performance analysis involves an oft-repeated refrain bemoaning the lack of consideration for source text. Although I believe, as I argue in chapter 1, that performance is not a "reading" of a text but a new piece of art altogether, this thesis addresses this concern for the literary by engaging with the theoretical and practical problems of staging drama while simultaneously taking a meaningful look at the source text. This thesis thus contributes to both scholarly and practical conversations of the *comedia* in performance. To this, I add an analysis of one of the most relevant ideological concerns in the modern world: gender, how we perform identities with our bodies, and what is at stake in doing so.

Given my focus on both text and performance, I examine one aspect crucial to each: I consider how the plays are structured, and then how their characters are built and, ultimately, embodied by actors in performance. This study is thus an attempt to explore the characterisation in and dramaturgical underpinning of the *comedia urbana* on the

stage in order to make the case that the plays are full of queer potential in performance. The array of casting approaches in all four productions discussed has allowed for a rich discussion of the potentials of how gender gets embodied on the stage today, through the bodies of both binary-conforming and non-binary actors. The analysis of these productions—in concert with a close look at the original Spanish texts and the potential they open up to in translation—has provided material from which scholarly analysis of these plays and performances may continue, as well as material to initiate a call for more translations and productions of these and other Tirso plays.

Despite the potential subversiveness in staging the *comedia urbana* on the modern stage, such performances—now more than ever—also pose questions, and sometimes even problems. The act of staging the body, an underpinning of the theatrical art form, risks misrepresentation: often, women are exploited, staged not as three-dimensional human characters, but as cardboard cut-outs, or as particular fantasies for the (largely male, patriarchal) gaze of an audience.

Though not explicit, this queer study thus prioritises some of the courses of action of feminism. To Teresa de Lauretis, who first coined the concept of "queer theory" in 1991, the issues at stake in feminism—and its theoretical underpinnings—spoke to queer politics as well; she ultimately arrived at queer theory as a result of her "questions about the ability of women to speak about and otherwise represent themselves using a language and conceptual framework that men had created in a social and political order that took little account of women, except as commodities for exchange" (W. Turner 5). As feminist theory contributed to the foundation of queer discourse, this study is largely concerned with feminist issues and women: from the female actors on the seventeenth-century Spanish stage to the characters in the plays themselves. While I am less concerned with defining some universal notion of "woman," I do use the tools offered by queer theory via

feminism with the aim of upending patriarchy insofar as it oppresses not only women but all gender minorities.

In this way, I look less at separating genders through clear definitions and more at the variety of ways each gender is articulated. I also consider such questions as: if gender is performative, how does one go about constructing femininity or masculinity? If gender is arbitrarily assigned, to what extent is it malleable and non-binary? As we shall see, the *comedia urbana* complicates this further: for plays whose endings are largely heterosexual and predominantly patriarchal but whose middles are full of subversive female voices, how does one stage the plays in such a way that woman is not subjected to further misrepresentation? And how are actors to be directed when the characters they play do not necessarily conform to stereotypical notions of "man" or "woman"? The performance of gender on the stage—which is ultimately a performance of a performance, as I shall contend—becomes complicated when one does not readily conform to what collective intelligence says certain genders look like. All of these are questions with which I looked at productions. Such questions also informed my approach to staging Tirso's *La celosa* for the first-ever time in English. Using these questions as an artistic springboard, this production assigned a role to everyone to play (not just the actors) in its attempt to underscore some of the gendered tensions at work in Tirso's text.

As a study that fundamentally bridges the gap between early modern Spain and the modern English-language stage, this thesis seamlessly weaves together—in true queer form—analysis of Tirso's Spanish text with an interview from a gender non-binary actor, details on sex and gender in seventeenth-century Spain with rich performance details from twenty-first-century productions, in order to reveal the queer potential at work in the *comedia urbana* of Tirso de Molina.

Preface

I would like to thank my supervisor, Professor Jonathan Thacker, for his insights and support throughout this project. Thank you also to Professor Harley Erdman, whose translations of Tirso, and whose unwavering encouragement, have inspired my own creative and academic work over the past decade. I am also grateful for the support provided by the Spanish Sub-Faculty, St Hilda's College, the Modern Languages Travel Grants, the Kojo Minta Research and Travel Grant, the Oxford University Dramatic Society, and the Association for Hispanic Classical Theatre. Thank you as well to those whose opinions, contributions, and time reading and listening at various stages of this project have informed the work presented here: the production team of *Jealous of Herself*, Professor Julie Curtis, Dr Kathleen Jeffs, Dr Oliver Noble-Wood, Dr Roy Norton, Annabel Rowntree, Farrow Ulven, and Professor Duncan Wheeler. Finally, thank you to Christian—for joining me across the ocean, for encouraging me to begin—and to Imogen, for inspiring me to finish.

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Introduction

> La variedad de expresión sexual en el teatro de Tirso de Molina, sin embargo,—mucho más rica que la de otros dramaturgos de su época—, es una realidad objetiva cuyas implicaciones piden nuestra consideración. (Sullivan "Tirso de Molina" 811)

The opening passage of Henry Sullivan's 1977 article "Tirso de Molina: dramaturgo andrógino" unveils a potentially exciting and provocative area of untapped research in the study of Golden Age dramatist Tirso de Molina (1579-1648) on stage. Though Sullivan references eight of Tirso's many "desviaciones sexuales" in his essay, he limits his analysis to the "travestismo en Tirso, y sus posibles implicaciones para una visión andrógina de la situación humana como ideal por parte del autor, ideal andrógino que borrase la diferencia entre los sexos como principio paradójico de la reintegración psíquica" (811).[1] Laura Bass agrees that "[n]o playwright in the Spanish Golden Age better understood the dramatic power of transvestism than Tirso de Molina" (66). What distinguishes Tirso, this "hombre de dos caras" (H. Sullivan "Tirso" 818), is the way he forms characters androgynously: "los llamados hombres y mujeres de su teatro parecen más bien variaciones sobre un prototipo humano que ni es macho ni es hembra, sino andrógino" (817). Although rich with detail, Sullivan's essay is merely eight pages and therefore hardly enough space to develop a full analysis of even transvestism alone in Tirso's works.[2]

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[1] The other deviations that Sullivan lists include "el lesbianismo, el narcisismo, la ninfomanía, el necro-sadismo, el incesto, la donjuanía" and "el fetichismo" (811).

[2] While transgenderism involves the relationship between one's inner and outer expression of gender identity, transvestism is the sartorial expression of gender opposite to that which one typically identifies. My use of transvestism is related to cross-dressed performance—a term I use throughout—which in this study has less to do with identity (cross-gender) than the use of dress in articulating gender. While a binary is often assumed in the use of "cross-gender," my work does not make this assumption: rather, I see such crossings as multiple, as fluid movements along a spectrum rather than steps over rigid junctions. Maleness and femaleness are part of a spectrum rather than a binary.

Even the term androgyny does not quite capture Tirso's characterisation; the term endorses binarism in that it

> assumes that there's male stuff on one side of a spectrum, and female stuff on another side of that spectrum. And somewhere in the middle of this straight line, there's an ideal blend of "male" and "female." However, by saying there's a "middle," androgyny really keeps the opposites in place. […] Androgyny could be seen as a trap of the bi-polar gender system, as it further establishes the idea of two-and-only-two genders. (Bornstein 115)

As Dawn Smith has pointed out, Tirso reveals a specific "interest in experimenting with the juxtaposition of qualities traditionally labelled as exclusively male or female" ("Women and Men" 256). William Forbes has similarly argued that "more than any other dramatist of his age did Tirso focus on the male/female distinction, with an eye toward questioning its most severe and rigid demarcation," in part through writing "supposed 'abnormal' psychological types" (115). It is not just Tirso's characters that become an expression of nuanced gender; although on the surface Tirso's *comedias urbanas* conform to heteronormative[3] discourse dramaturgically, they exhibit a plot that, as I will argue, destabilises heteronormativity.

In this study, I employ a tripartite theoretical approach—including principles from gender criticism, performance theory, and historical analysis—to read three *comedias urbanas*[4] by Tirso de Molina and their subsequent performances of gender on the modern, English-language stage. The three plays that make up the core of this study are *Marta la piadosa* [*Marta the Divine*] (c. 1614-15), *El amor médico* [*Love the Doctor*] (c. 1621),

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[3] Heteronormativity refers to a set of acts "that [constitute] and [regulate] bodies according to normative notions of sex, gender, and sexuality" (Lloyd 819). As Terri Power clarifies, heteronormativity "insists that biological sex, gender expression and sexual preference are congruent and therefore natural; men are masculine and attracted to women" (23). I use "heteronormative" and "heteronormativity" as an umbrella under which many sub-structures—like gender normativity—fall.

[4] The *comedia urbana* offers, through its grounding in real-life scenarios, the opportunity to explore issues of sexual politics. As Jelena Sánchez argues, the *comedia de capa y espada*, or the *comedia urbana* "is a site where the assumptions on the naturalness of gender identity are continually being challenged and subverted" (6).

and *La celosa de sí misma* [*Jealous of Herself*] (c. 1622-23).[5] My approach throughout involves a consideration of three facets of performance: first, the text itself, in both its original and its translation. Next, I discuss the performance of the text by actors, referencing the many sign-systems involved in theatrical production: the bodies of actors, costumes, lights, sound, and set. Finally, I discuss the meaning made out of performances through its live reception by audiences. I explore the nexus of spectatorship, content of the plays, and performance practices in seventeenth-century Spain in order to later consider the effects those elements ultimately have on performance today. My analysis will focus on two aspects of Tirso's text in performance: his characterisation, and his dramaturgy.

Perhaps one of Tirso's responses to his awareness of gender fluidity is his affinity for writing plays that feature the *mujer vestida de hombre*.[6] His cross-dressed women are not simply androgynous; instead, they break down the gender binary, this "calidad distribuída indiferentemente a ambos" [men and women] (H. Sullivan "Tirso" 817), and they "twirl that line [between binary genders] in space, and then spin it through several more dimensions" (Bornstein 116). These women have, by virtue of their disguises,

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[5] The plays appear chronologically by date written, as well as by English-language premiere: *Marta the Divine* was staged first in 2009, *Love the Doctor* in 2011, and *Jealous of Herself* in 2016. While it is perhaps impossible to say with complete certainty that these plays have never been produced before this in the English language, I have carried out extensive Internet research in an attempt to uncover any previous productions and have found none.

[6] Jonathan Thacker estimates that a quarter of Tirso's plays feature women who disguise themselves as men, putting him "on a par with Lope de Vega in the frequency of his use" ("Seré lo que tú quisieres" 338n3). Marjorie Garber describes cross-dressers in general using the phrase "third term": rather than categorise the cross-dresser as one of two sexes, accepting this "third term" presents the opportunity to acknowledge the slippery nature of gender—the "space of possibility" (11) afforded by gender fluidity. While Garber argues that this "third term" is not a third "sex" but rather an "interruption" (13), Judith [Jack] Halberstam criticises the phrase, arguing that it "close[s] down the possibility that there may be a fourth, fifth, sixth, or one hundredth place beyond the binary" (27) and instead "merely balances the binary system and, furthermore, tends to homogenize many different gender variations under the banner of 'other'" (28).

physically sexualised, even romantic, moments with other female characters. Male characters are also attracted to these cross-dressed women. The resulting triangular love plots, and the ambiguities at work in their subsequent identities and desires, produce moments ripe with potential for queer analysis.

Such female characters—who subvert traditional boundaries of sex and gender—become something Other[7] than the typical (heterosexual) leading *galán*; after all, "[o]ne is not born, but rather becomes, a woman" (de Beauvoir 283). As de Beauvoir continues, men are ostensibly not only superior to women, but inherently opposite:

> man today represents the positive and the neuter—that is, the male and the human being—while woman represents the negative, the female. Every time she behaves like a human being, she is declared to be identifying with the male. Her sports, her political and intellectual activities, and her desire for other women are interpreted as "masculine protest." (420)

In the *comedia*, women, the "Other" to men, often exist to fulfil male-centric goals (like heterosexual marriage), though they are also denied subjectivity.[8] But Tirso does not just relegate woman as "Other"; he endows her with her own subjectivity. Tirso's women surpassed all others in intellect and psychological depth (Ashcom 46). Although his contemporaries wrote plays with strong female leads, Tirso's *damas* outperform most others. Their ability to think on their feet also leads to plots more complex than most others. McKendrick has said that Tirso's

> understanding of female psychology was subtler than Lope's and his tolerance of female independence and of female eccentricity greater. […] Lope's women have warmth, great spirit, courage, and determination.

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[7] Otherness was first explored by Simone de Beauvoir in her seminal work *The Second Sex*. De Beauvoir argued that "alterity is the fundamental category of human thought. No group ever defines itself as One without immediately setting up the Other opposite itself" (6). Woman specifically is set up as the Other of man, and masculinity is socially constructed as the norm against which femininity (which is secondary) is constructed. Often the notion of "femininity" was also linked to that of the "Other," while woman is his lesser Other—an inferior version of Man.

[8] The work of Luce Irigaray also argues that men are subjects and women are "Other." As Irigaray asserts, women are the material and symbolic currency in a male world.

> Tirso's have, in addition, intelligence. If Lope's women rise to the occasion, Tirso's create it. Their intelligence, furthermore, is almost invariably greater than that of their men. (*Woman and Society* 330-1)

Surely in part due to staging conditions of the *corrales*, Gail Bradbury suggests that an "irregular sexuality flourished" (567) in Tirso's theatre. In addition to the playwright's women, his *graciosos*, *galanes*, and minor characters exhibit ambiguous gender identity. Though the definition of gender among strata of early modern[9] Spanish society relied heavily on the alignment of one's biology with one's behaviour and appearance, as I discuss later in this introduction, I shall argue that Tirso constructs gender through the language, appearance (dress), and behaviour of his characters in ways that do not always align with the rigid social expectations of early modern Spain.[10] In this way, we might consider Tirso's characterisation to be directly subverting the hegemony of early modern Spain: his characters embody gender fluidity as they traverse rigid gender lines.[11]

The structure, or dramaturgy,[12] of the *comedia* is built in such a way that "we can be assured of a conventional 'happy' ending, ensuring the perpetuation of class and society, as well as its economic viability" (D. Smith "*La celosa*" 827). Though some of Tirso's women "had no objection to love or marriage" (McKendrick *Woman and Society*

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[9] I have elected to use the term "early modern" rather than "baroque" since the latter "has been accompanied by a pejorative connotation" implying "*exuberance*" (Maravall 208).
[10] Similarly, Bass has argued that the costume, voice, and movement of Serafina (in Tirso's *El vergonzoso en palacio*) tantalizes audiences by "teasing the boundaries of sexuality and pushing the limits of gender" (65). She even wonders if "Serafina [could] act like a man so compellingly if she didn't dress like one" and if "her onstage audience [would] marvel at her movements were she wearing her own [female] clothes" (67).
[11] As Jelena Sánchez argues, "the formation of identity" in the plays demands a consideration of "the characters as performing a contentious dialogue of resistance and reinforcement of the hierarchal ideology" (2).
[12] As Chemers and Versényi write, "*dramaturgy* can refer to the aesthetic architecture of a piece of drama" as well as to "the functional means by which that architecture is discovered in rehearsal" (199). My use of "dramaturgy" here is closer to the former: it is essentially the structure of a play. See *Theatre Topics*' special issue (24.3: September 2014) for work on the field of dramaturgy specifically.

330) they often returned to a world of imprisonment when getting married at the end of the play, once again trapped by a constraint all too similar to that which they fought so forcefully to break away from at the beginning of the play. Some women were aware of and resistant to this confinement. Such women are "(re)integrated into the social status quo" (D. Smith "Introduction" 21), even when they take charge; their rebellions are often fruitless. The plots of plays are in this way structured from the perspective of the male: as Barbara Freedman says, in classical theatre "the male is represented as an agent of change" while "the female [is] the passive object to be actively transformed by him" and therefore the action of the play "would also appear to reveal the work of gender ideology. Not only pleasure but plot is derived from male fantasies that depend on the scopic and narrative exploitation of woman" (*Staging the Gaze* 117-18). To illustrate how the *comedia* is structured towards heteronormative ends, I deploy the theoretical framework of Adrienne Rich's work, which postulates that "heterosexuality is presumed as a 'sexual preference' of 'most women'" ("Compulsory Heterosexuality" 633).

But, as I shall argue in this study, there are subversive forces at work in the dramaturgy of Tirso's *comedia urbana* that threaten to upturn its conventional ending. Tirso in particular, who "is known for his subversion of *comedia* conventions" (Ganelin "Who Was That" 116), writes what I will argue are ambiguous endings: Tirso complicates notions of heterosexuality by revealing it to be not always satisfying, although compulsory. Particularly, there is evidence in the plays that certain characters are not always pleased with the plays' "happy" endings. Tirso also does this, I shall argue, by introducing homoerotic stage pictures, unrequited desire, ambiguous dialogue, and sometimes even silence on the part of otherwise powerful female characters. As Sidney Donnell asserts, the presence of the transvestite character too may have been "disruptive to the successful establishment of order at the end of the play, even if it contradicts the

text's unofficial goal of supporting the absolutist state" (164). I thus explore the potential of these moments when staging the *comedia*, whose rigid structure paradoxically allows for its content to be more fluid.[13] Together, I shall argue, both content and form—characterisation and dramaturgy—of these *comedias urbanas* intermingle to produce narratives with queer potential.

The definition of "queer" has significantly expanded since its initial use in the early sixteenth century.[14] Queer no longer refers only to one's sexual identity or preference; rather, "[t]o embrace 'queer' is to resist or elide categorization, to disavow binaries […] and to proffer potentially productive modes of resistance against hegemonic structures of power" (Johnson 166). Queerness is also about action: "[t]o be queer is not who you *are*, it's what you *do*, it's your relation to dominant power, and your relation to marginality, as a place of empowerment" (Dolan "Building a Theatrical Vernacular" 5). To be "queer" or to perform "queer(ness)" is thus subversive.

It is "identity categories [such as gay and lesbian]" that "tend to be instruments of regulatory regimes" (Butler "Imitation" 308) and ultimately restrict and legislate "the boundaries of gender and sexual difference too narrowly" (Johnson 168). Instead, queer theory is based around the notion that identities are not static or fixed, and ultimately do not determine who we are (Gauntlett). It thus proposes that we deliberately challenge all notions of fixed identity.

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[13] As Kate Bornstein asserts, "[t]raditional form permits an audience to experience non-traditional content in relative safety" (150).

[14] The term's first use was c. 1513: "strange, odd, peculiar, eccentric" ("queer" *OED*). Its use as a derogatory term for one's sexuality did not occur until the late nineteenth century. While queer theory is very much rooted in the socio-political landscape of the twentieth century, there are iterations of queerness in many periods of history: it is not an underpinning of a specifically early modern or modern subjectivity, but rather one that melds to the period in which it is being discussed through its inherent malleability.

But this thesis puts into practice Butler's belief that queer theory is not deployed merely to "oppose all gender assignments" (*Undoing Gender* 7); it instead signifies fluidity within a framework of established gender. Gender emerges in the movement of gender itself through a prism of possible identities. As Butler points out, Kate Bornstein argues that transitioning between male and female genders "is not necessarily to stay within the binary frame of gender, but to engage transformation itself as the meaning of gender" (*Undoing Gender* 65).

In this way, as I shall argue in this study, not only is gender fluid, but identity categories allow for that fluidity. Although Butler argues that "the transsexual desire to become a man or a woman is not to be dismissed as a simple desire to conform to established identity categories" (*Undoing Gender* 8), it is those identity categories that allow the transsexual to express and alter their identities in what is ultimately a non-conforming, fluid way.

Judith Butler has made the radical claim across much of her work that sex is as culturally constructed as gender. While a consideration of sex as rooted in biology (wrongfully) implies that sex is natural, Butler instead holds that the "ostensibly natural facts of sex are discursively produced by various scientific discourses in the service of other political and social interests" (*Gender Trouble* 9). As Butler sees it, the fact that sex can be contested means that sex is perhaps "as culturally constructed as gender; indeed, perhaps it was always already gender, with the consequence that the distinction between sex and gender turns out to be no distinction at all" (9-10).

In her study *What Is A Woman?*, Toril Moi argues that this 1960s nature/culture dichotomy of sex and gender is often relied upon by poststructuralist feminist critics despite their attempts to deconstruct that binary. Judith Butler's efforts to non-essentialise the body, Moi argues, rather construe "'sex' [as] an ideal construct which is

forcibly materialized through time. It is not a simple fact or static condition of a body, but a process whereby regulatory norms materialize 'sex' and achieve this materialization through a forcible reiteration of those norms" (Butler *Bodies That Matter* xii). As Moi argues, "[t]he logic of Butler's argument […] implies that someone who does not behave according to the dominant 'regulatory discourse(s)' for femininity, is not a woman" (Moi 77). Butler, Moi contends, employs the very dichotomy she simultaneously attempts to upturn.

Moi instead advocates for the approach taken by Simone de Beauvoir. What is foundational to de Beauvoir's notion of womanhood is, in fact, that biology alone is not crucial to determining sex:

> Although our biology is fundamental to the way we live in the world, biological facts alone give us no grounds for concluding anything at all about the meaning and value they will have for the individual and for society. At the same time, however, biological facts cannot be placed outside the realm of meaning. For Beauvoir and Merleau-Ponty, the human body is fundamentally ambiguous: it is subject at once to natural laws and to the human production of meaning, and it can never be reduced to either one of these elements. (Moi 69)

The body is thus irreducible to either natural laws or social constructions, and Beauvoir's phenomenological analysis and notion of the body as a "situation" shows that the ostensibly "objective" and "subjective" components of the body are, in fact, entwined (Moi 73).

For the purpose that it is generally accepted by society at large today, sex and gender are viewed differently in this thesis: while sex is ultimately linked to the physical anatomy of the body, gender is socially constructed. As Moi explains, "[t]he sex/gender distinction provides the basic framework for a great deal of feminist theory, and it has become widely accepted in society at large" (3).

I differentiate sex and gender in part given the historical context of this thesis: although seventeenth-century Spain pre-dates the distinction between sex and gender as it is commonly viewed today, the nature of discussion on the topic of bodies and identities—which took place often within the context of the "trials conducted by the Spanish and Portuguese Inquisitions during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries" (Soyer 2)—meant in the period that bodies and public identities were examined in separate terms. I have found this a useful distinction when discussing the original period.

My aim across this thesis is to dispel the potentially harmful and essentialising effects imposed by a rigid sex/gender distinction; I do not employ the dichotomy with the purpose of reifying biological essentialism. For example, my reference throughout to binary notions of gender—particularly in reference to notions of the "male gaze"—are in place for their utility in connecting modern spectatorship to early modern subjectivity; while a world free of oppressive gender stereotypes might be ideal,[15] genderedness (and femaleness and maleness—whether or not there was an acknowledged spectrum in between) was fundamental to being a human in seventeenth-century Spain. I discuss the "male gaze" in modern performance so as not deny the gendered experience of theatregoing (and human existence) in the world today. While a spectrum of genders, I believe, exists and indeed manifests in Tirso's writing, as I argue throughout this study, binarism is often the lens through which gender is popularly seen and expressed today.

To this end, I engage with both Butler and de Beauvoir throughout this study, despite their differences: I use de Beauvoir for her acknowledgment of the different lived experiences of women versus men in the world—an acknowledgement similarly present in the characters of Tirso's plays. I draw on Butler for her theories of performativity, but

[15] Moi argues throughout *What is a Woman?* that this sort of genderless world is Gayle Rubin's desire.

also because she explicitly attempts to blur the sex/gender divide. My use of biologically essential categories is thus employed as a shorthand for discussing the body and the way bodies perform identity. It is not within the purview of this thesis to explore sex and gender alone, but rather to look at how gender identities are enacted. In other words, I am interested here in the "doing" of gender, not the "being."[16]

One of the challenges of a modern study of sex and gender on an historical subject is that it risks anachronistically imposing principles that did not yet exist on that subject. Although early modern Spain generally upheld the notion of a rigid, binary-gendered society, various historical and dramatic instances of gender deviance similarly suggest that gender is not strictly biological but performative. Butler defines gender as "the repeated stylization of the body, a set of repeated acts within a highly rigid regulatory frame that congeal over time to produce the appearance of gender ontologies" (*Gender Trouble* 45).

My analysis thus begins with a look at notions of sex and gender in early modern Spain. Following this, the first chapter of this study begins with a discussion of the theoretical issues in the move from page to stage, then surveys some approaches to how the modern theatre grapples with the staging of gender, particularly focusing on Shakespeare performance as a model before moving to both Spanish- and English-language modern productions of *comedias*.

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[16] In this way, Butler locates gender in the body, not just in speech acts. She clarifies later that "[g]ender is not exactly what one 'is' nor is it precisely what one 'has'" (*Undoing Gender* 42): instead, it is what one does. Gender is an effect and has no original: "the ostensible copy is not explained through reference to an origin, but the origin is understood to be as performative as the copy" (209). In this way, gender relates directly to masculinity and femininity: gender is "the mechanism by which notions of masculine and feminine are produced and naturalized, but gender might very well be the apparatus by which such terms are deconstructed and denaturalized" (42).

Each of the three plays dealt with in this study (in chapters 2, 3, and 4), as I shall argue, foreground gender as a (social) construct on the page and subsequently invite an exploration of the methods and politics of staging bodies on the stage. These three chapters introduce the texts alongside their subsequent modern performances.[17] I approach each of these works with a different analytical lens in order to argue that both the characterisation and dramaturgy of the plays are simultaneously subversive and conventional, and ultimately invite non-normative storytelling practices when performed on the stage. While my analysis of *Marta la piadosa* explores the play through cross-gender casting in performance, I use *El amor médico* to examine a play that features a cross-dressed character. Finally, the chapter on *La celosa de sí misma* explores spectatorship thematically, as well as a production featuring cross-gender performance practices.[18] These three plays were also chosen as they have all been tested on the stage in the past decade.

I thus explore various questions related to gender identity[19] when such plays are mounted on the modern stage, such as: How do the plays' dramaturgies affect how they communicate their attitude towards gender identity? What is the effect of such

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[17] Given the inherently symbiotic relationship between performance and text in this process, I thus discuss the original Spanish text, the translation, and the production of all three plays simultaneously.

[18] This is not to say, however, that these lenses are specific to the plays: while I could have focused on spectatorship in the other two plays, for instance, I chose not to since spectatorship became particularly relevant to our production of *La celosa*.

[19] Butler clarifies that gender "now [in 2004] also means gender identity, a particularly salient issue in the politics and theory of transgenderism and transsexuality" (*Undoing Gender* 6). I thus also use the term "gender" as a way to discuss both the public and private identities of people and characters. Though I agree with Robert Stoller that gender as a term is a way to express the measurement of masculinity and femininity of a person, I disagree with his assertion that "the normal male has a preponderance of masculinity and the normal female a preponderance of femininity" (9-10). Historical record reveals that there is no "normal" when measuring masculinity and femininity in bodies; while there might be a more typical amount of male or female hormones in most individuals, calling this range "normal" damages the sense of equality due to all individuals, no matter their measure of masculinity or femininity.

dramaturgy in production? How does Tirso construct his characters on the page? How do those choices inform the characters' and actors' expressions of gender in performance? And how do these qualities (language, appearance, and behaviour) articulate gender(ed) identities and expressions when embodied by actors in performance? How do modern theatre directors read these gender markers for performance? What effects do the staging of these plays have (potentially and actually) on their "messages" to modern audiences about gender and patriarchy?

While my analysis will focus on the text, performance, and spectatorship on the modern stage, my connection back to Tirso's Spain is through the body: how they are adorned, embodied, and articulated on the stage today. As such, a consideration of sex and gender in the early modern period is paramount.[20] In a period in which "the maintaining of proper appearances" was of utmost importance, a study of its drama proves "a rich arena for the examination of the categories of sex and gender" through both reality and identity as it is mediated by actors (Allatson 262).

I. Historical foundation

Like most writers, Tirso's approach to characterisation was informed by the ways in which the people around him were defined and named. As his writing was created for performance on the stage, a consideration of how sex and gender are iterated and embodied is also necessary, bearing in mind the fact that these were to some degree out of control of the *poeta* but instead in the hands of the actors on stage.

Ultimately, I shall argue that Spain's attitude towards gender, performance practices, and transvestite drama queered spectatorship by—paradoxically—both empowering and objectifying female performers. In the first sub-section below, I discuss

[20] While it is not within the scope of this research to express fully how one's gender identity is built in real life, I do discuss how it is constructed on stage. To do so, however, it is necessary to touch upon the former.

early modern notions of sex and gender, on what basis one was considered masculine or feminine, and what effeminacy meant in the period. In the second sub-section, I consider how gender was performed and perceived on the early modern Spanish stage, arguing that the presence of women on the stage surely influenced spectators' attitudes towards the drama they saw performed and the people they saw performing it, just as it would today.

A. Sex and Gender in Early Modern Spain

Concepts of sex and gender were different in seventeenth-century Spain than we perceive them today. As Judith Butler underlines in *Undoing Gender*, "masculine" and "feminine" mean different things at different times and places, and in different contexts; they recur, but their "recurrence does not index a sameness" (10). Gender is ultimately "socially and culturally constructed and may vary by class, age, and other factors" (Lehfeldt 464). While today it is generally accepted that sex is biologically innate,[21] in early modern Spain, sex was considered to be socially acquired.[22] In other words, physical anatomy was not as crucial to the division or conception of the sexes as it is today. This Galenic "one sex" model argued that all individuals, no matter their anatomy, are of one sex: "female genitals were merely inverted male genitals contained within the female body" (Soyer 53). It was this "one-sex" model that Thomas Laqueur has argued was popularly accepted in early modern Europe.

Recently, however, other scholars have argued the opposite: that the body was indeed crucial to determining sex in the early modern world. François Soyer argues that the "two-sex" model also had followers in early modern Spain. This Aristotelian approach "claimed that male and female genitals were completely different as those of the female were produced by Nature with the specific aim of assisting human procreation" (Soyer 53). Ultimately, Soyer "challenge[s] the notion that all strata of early modern Spanish and

[21] See more on sex vs. gender earlier in this introduction (8-10).
[22] In this way, sex was closer to what today we call "gender."

Portuguese society shared [a] strict approach and definition of an individual's gender identity based solely by his or her genitals" (19). Gender definitions were more fluid.

Using Aristotle as his basis, Soyer concludes from his research on inquisitorial trials in early modern Spain and Portugal that physical difference between males and females was, to theologians and social commentators, "an obvious reality" and based merely in part on the presence and performance of "their physical and anatomical differences" (5).[23]

In support of this argument, Soyer cites several cases in which individuals' sex and gender are called into question. Church court records and documents from medical practice reveal that biology was crucial: when questioned, people underwent intimate medical exams to prove their genders—evidence that Spain valued anatomical sex when determining gender—and yet these "definitive" results of exams did not convince witnesses. For instance, the married Valencian man Francisco Roca was suspected to be either a woman or a hermaphrodite because of Roca's ambiguous sexual behaviour[24] and his appearance, in addition to threats of superstitious magic and about his attitude towards Catholicism.[25] Despite this, the physical exams performed throughout his trial revealed that he had a penis and was therefore a man. He was eventually convicted on accounts of

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[23] Although Laqueur argues that a distinction in anatomy was crucial to the separation of male and female individuals into the seventeenth century, he clarifies that what we might today consider the sexual differences between male and female bodies was, to Aristotle, irrelevant to determining one's sex.

[24] The witnesses' testimonies cited the "homosexual relations that Francisco Roca had with various men" (Soyer 97).

[25] Soyer argues that early modern Spain's "fascination with hermaphrodites appears to have focused not so much on their ambiguous genitalia but rather on their apparent ability to cross and transgress gender lines" (93). This suggests that intersexuality is, publicly, pronounced more through dress and behaviour than defined by physical anatomy. As de Beauvoir argues, women's identities are not distinguished from their appearance when gazed upon: a woman is "judged, respected, or desired in relation to how she looks" (724).

sodomy for being a man and for taking a passive, feminine role in his sexual relationships with men.

And yet the basis on which these exams were conducted attests to the socially determined nature of gender: as Soyer goes on to explain, "[e]ven the visible proof of masculinity or femininity, such as the possession of a penis or breasts, was not sufficient to dispel such doubts about the gender of the individuals concerned" (289). In this way, the manner in which bodies acted and were adorned—through behaviour and dress—also played a crucial role in determining one's sex and gender.

A biological female from early modern Spain, Elena de Céspedes, claimed she was both genders. Céspedes' trial, which sought to determine correctly her sex, only brought on more ambiguity: the way Céspedes described her physical body and experiences in life perplexed those at the proceeding. Between her own testimony and stories from others, Céspedes appears to have had both male and female physical parts at different points in life.[26] While punishments for such deviance were harsh (Céspedes was eventually put on trial for bigamy and sorcery by the Inquisition), such punishments did not stop some individuals from living non-normative lives.

What made these female cross-dressers a particularly subversive force was that their presence forced others to question continually the boundaries of genders. While some might praise a woman for trying to better herself through such a transformation, certainly others felt threatened by women who secretly disguised themselves as men.

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[26] Though Céspedes was born female, throughout the trial, she referred to herself as a man, as she had been living as a man (with a wife) for a long time before the trial. And when doctors examined Céspedes, they found that she appeared to have the physical body of a man. One doctor even testified that Céspedes had "a virile member in good and perfect shape with two testicles" (Vollendorf 22). Yet they were set on proving that she was in fact a woman. This dispute over gender testifies to the fact that Céspedes' definition of sex and gender relied on a sense of flexibility and malleability.

Both conceptualisations of sex were ultimately restrictive in that they "embraced clearly defined and demarcated gender identities by reproducing and embracing misogynistic stereotypes of male and female behaviour and appearance" (Soyer 17). As Laqueur argues, the categories of sex were historically based on gender distinctions, such as "active/passive, hot/cold, formed/unformed, informing/formable" (135).[27] Anita Stoll has similarly found that there is psychological evidence of separate behavioural characteristics between men and women. As the psychoanalyst June Singer reports,

> the masculine stereotype [includes] "aggressivity, dominance, hardness, logic, competitiveness, achievement orientation, thinking, inventiveness, reason;" and the feminine stereotype [includes] "passivity, compliance, softness, emotion, cooperativeness, nurturance, intuition, conservation and tenderness." (Stoll "A Feminist Reading" 104).[28]

But both models were also liberal—the Galenic model would even account for sex fluidity and transgenderism—in that they ironically allowed for great fluidity,

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[27] Notions of passivity specifically come up frequently in this study. Although women are typically characterised as passive, Anita Stoll argues that this early modern Spanish notion of woman as "weak, fickle, and not to be trusted" is rejeted by Tirso's play *La mujer por fuerza* "since Finea [its protagonist] is throughout strong, faithful to her love, and capable of trust" ("A Feminist Reading" 106). In *La mujer por fuerza*, "[w]oman is portrayed in every case as inventive, clever, scheming, all descriptions of *action*, opposing the qualities described for the male and female stereotypes, and proving them to be false. The assertion of rigid gender roles as illusion and that heterosexuality is a mandate essential to serve the reproductive needs of a patriarchal society can easily be read as the subversive text of this work" (108). Charles Ganelin similarly asserts that Finea's "complex undermining of gender roles by the play of gazes, names, and disguises calls into doubt the assumed passivity of both female characters and spectators" ("Who Was That" 104). For further discussion of gender distinction in the early modern world, see Laqueur, Mary E. Perry's *Gender and Disorder* (125, and throughout), Tracey Sedinger's "If Sight and Shape be True" (69, and throughout), and Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* (294).

[28] See June Singer *Androgyny: Toward a New Theory of Sexuality* 34. I pick up on gendered stereotypes in subsequent chapters of this thesis.

empowering the individual to destabilise ostensibly fixed definitions by performing gender through their actions and apparel.[29]

Soyer even affirms that "in everyday interaction the very rigidity of [gender] norms could, paradoxically, be the direct cause of gender ambiguity" (287): while "genitals quite literally 'made a man'" they also "obscured the complexities that underpinned the definition and delineation of gender identity in early modern Spain and Portugal" (286). This attitude seems also to be consistent with historical experience: in early modern Europe, "[t]here are numerous accounts of men who were said to lactate […] Girls could turn into boys, and men who associated too extensively with women could lose the hardness and definition of their more perfect bodies and regress into effeminacy" (Laqueur 7).[30] Castiglione's early sixteenth-century *Il libro del Cortegiano* [*Book of the Courtier*], an Italian manual for courtly behaviour, gives an account of how

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[29] The "one-sex" model "allowed for a wide range of 'abnormal' genital development between the 'normal' male and female, which could easily account for hermaphrodites and androgynes" (Soyer 53). Halberstam explains that "[w]ithin a one-sex model […] a hermaphrodite is a woman who *becomes* male […] when her womb drops down. In a two-sex model, she *is* a woman who *has* male genitals hidden within her or who has a monstrous clitoris that serves as a penis" (60, emphasis added).

[30] Since at least the Renaissance, the general belief has been that males are perfect, and females an imperfect version of them. Scholars and medics even believed women could turn into men, but not vice versa: "For Ambroise Paré, a male-to-female transformation was impossible as Nature 'tends always towards what is most perfect and not, on the contrary, to perform in such a way that what is most perfect should become imperfect'. Perhaps more scientifically, Paolo Zacchia argued that thermodynamics would transform female genitalia into male sexual organs by driving them forward and outward but would never cause male genitals to contract into the body and transform into female sexual organs" (Soyer 24). Perhaps this is where the modern notion of male (physical) superiority comes from: Woman's supposed inferiority is demonstrated empirically by the fact that doctors believed a female body could become a male (and improve itself), while a male could never become a female (Laqueur 141). As Dekker and van der Pol assert, "a woman who became a man strove to become something better, higher, than she had been, and that was considered an understandable and commendable effort in itself. If she was successful, one had to admire her" (74). Unlike John Money, who, as Butler clarifies, "argues for the ease with which a female body can be surgically constructed, as if femininity was always little more or less than a surgical construction, an elimination, a cutting away" (*Undoing Gender* 64), I view all manifestations of gender through the body to be equally complex.

men can become like women through "overrefinement" and can "lose the hardness and stability of male perfection and melt into unstable but protean imperfection" through actions like "curling their hair" and "plucking their brows" (Laqueur 125).[31] What these instances reveal, however, is not that gender became fluid because of anatomy, but through one's behaviour and appearance; anatomy was not the cause but the result of gender fluidity. This is still true, to an extent, today: the fact that "although we seem to have a difficult time defining masculinity, as a society we have little trouble in recognizing it" (Halberstam 1) suggests that gender is something articulated with the public body.

Seventeenth-century Spain's fixed gender categories thus allowed for a malleability of gender identity and was generally much more complex than previously thought. Gender was not simply socially constructed; rather, it was extrapolated in the complex negotiations of biology and (socially determined) behaviour and dress.

Like today, one's sex in seventeenth-century Spain was deeply intertwined with power. Possessing a penis was more akin to a status symbol "than a sign of some other deeply rooted ontological essence: *real* sex" (Laqueur 134); it "entitle[s] the bearer to certain rights and privileges" (135). Likewise, "no one was much interested in looking for evidence of two distinct sexes […] until such differences became politically important" (10). What was always in question when seeking out the sex of an individual in this period was not what the person's sexual anatomy looked like but which social positions and rights one was allowed (137). In seventeenth-century Spain (and Europe in general), "to be a man or a woman was to hold a social rank, to assume a cultural role, and not to *be* organically one or the other of two sexes" (8).

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[31] This conversation of gender fluidity appears mostly in Book 3 which is "about the worth of woman, a re-play of the misogynist and antimisogynist arguments of the *querelle des femmes*" (Laqueur 125).

How one adorns their body informs how gender is perceived. Although Butler makes it clear that clothing itself does not dictate gender,[32] apparel at least plays a role in articulating gender identity publicly. In early modern Spain, Quevedo references how "clothing was an essential marker of female and male identity" (Soyer 20).[33] In fact, it is clothing which in part mediates "cultural gender codes": violations of what one "should" wear "take on much greater importance and can be perceived as much more threatening than they would in a culture which considers gender to be securely anchored in biological difference" (Heise 371).[34]

In early modern Spain, male fashion "drifted toward a feminized or 'afeminado' French style" (Paun de García "Zayas's Ideal" 260). This "feminization" manifested primarily in the cuts and specific pieces of male dress in early modern Spain. While the

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[32] In an interview with Liz Kotz, Butler explains how *Gender Trouble* has been misread: many wrongly believe the book argues that "I get up in the morning, look in my closet, and decide which gender I want to be today. I can take out a piece of clothing and change my gender, stylize it, and then that evening I can change it again and be something radically other, so that what you get is something like the commodification of gender, and the understanding of taking on a gender as a kind of consumerism" (Kotz 83). Rather, Butler's argument was that "the very formation of subjects, the very formation of persons, *presupposes* gender in a certain way—that gender is not to be chosen and that 'performativity' is not radical choice and it's not voluntarism" (84). Butler argues that gender is more than "a 'tag' that one wears" ("Against Proper Objects" 24n8).

[33] As Soyer writes, Quevedo "sardonically objected to the blurring of gender identities" in his essay *España Defendida y los tiempos de ahora, de las calumnias de los noveleros y sediciosos*: "Y lo que es más de sentir es la manera que los hombres las imitan en las galas y lo afeminado, pues es de suerte que no es un hombre ahora más apetecible a una mujer, que una mujer a otra. Y esto de suerte que las galas en algunos parecen arrepentimiento de haber nacido hombres, y otros pretenden enseñar a la naturaleza cómo sepa hacer de un hombre una mujer. Al fin hacen dudoso el sexo, lo cual ha dado ocasión a nuevas pragmáticas, por haber introducido vicios desconocidos de naturaleza…" (Quevedo 85, qtd. in Soyer 20).

[34] This is the sort of social mobility that Spain tried its best to suppress. Marjorie Garber argues that "the sumptuary laws enacted in Western Europe from the late medieval through the early modern period were designed to keep *down* social climbers, to keep the rising social groups in their sartorial place" (23). Of sumptuary laws, Garber continues that "[t]he ideal scenario—from the point of view of the regulators—was one in which a person's social station, social role, gender and other indicators of identity in the world could be *read*, without ambiguity or uncertainty" (26).

tops of male and female dress were similarly slender, the focus of masculine dress "was undoubtedly below the waist, exposing the leg. Attention was inevitably drawn to the genitalia, whether enlarged by a codpiece or substituted by a sword" (261). Meanwhile, women's legs were covered with large skirts. Overall, "[m]asculine dress emphasized the body while feminine dress concealed and disguised it" (262). As Heise affirms, while men's clothing in the period "comes to 'embody' femininity […] female apparel is designed to 'dis-embody' it" (368).

Despite (or because of) this strict division, even "wearing the clothing of the opposite sex could alter the sex of the wearer" (Stoll "Achilles" 114). While stereotypes dictated gender to a point, it was when those stereotypes did not match individuals' behaviour and appearance that doubt was cast, and ambiguous gender suggested (289); gender roles in the period thus "were in a state of confusion" (114).

If there was a sliding scale of gender identity, there exists the possibility that a woman could be masculine and a man feminine.[35] This holds up biologically as well: as Anne Fausto-Sterling has argued, "there are many gradations running from female to male; and depending on how one calls the shots, one can argue that along that spectrum

[35] For an excellent account of female masculinity, see Halberstam's *Female Masculinity*. Halberstam astutely wonders: "Why is there no word for the opposite of 'emasculation'? Why is there no parallel concept to 'effeminacy'?" (269).

lie at least five sexes" (21).[36] This fluidity, which would seemingly allow for the existence of non-binary gender today, seems to have been viable in early modern Spain.

Since sex was at least in part determined by biology, many definitions of effeminacy specifically were unquestionably rooted in the physical. Sebastián de Covarrubias Orozco's definition of "effeminate" is as much about the physical as the social:

> It can refer to a man who is of a delicate constitution, even if he might be manly in spirit ("aunque tenga ánimo varonil"), but the first definition is related to performance: "El hombre de condición mujeril, inclinado a ocuparse en lo que ellas tratan y hablar su lenguaje y en su tono delicado." (Paun de García "Zayas's Ideal" 266)[37]

Long hair on a man was "the ultimate signifier of weakness, passivity, and effeminacy" (Lehfeldt 485).[38] As beards were "a visual sign that the text of the body should be read against a particular set of gendered norms" (Paun de García "Zayas's Ideal" 266), "[t]he absence of a beard," along with "a pale complexion, a soft or high-pitched voice and even the possession of fair or red hair were interpreted as signs of effeminacy and symptomatic of a lack of 'manliness'" (Soyer 22).

But gender did not just manifest in physical traits; corporal changes were also at times the result of shifts in gender. There are accounts—or at least expressed anxieties—

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[36] Judith Butler argues that "[t]o be not quite masculine or not quite feminine is still to be understood exclusively in terms of one's relationship to the 'quite masculine' and the 'quite feminine'" (*Undoing Gender* 42). Paun de García reminds us that "gender must be taken as a plurality, not as the binaries it deceptively presents" ("Zayas's Ideal" 265). While deconstructing the gender binary is helpful in articulating one's queerness, as Rosi Braidotti believes, "we must maintain the framework of sexual difference because it brings to the fore the continuing cultural and political reality of patriarchal domination" (Butler *Undoing Gender* 210). I suggest doing so, however, only insofar as the binary can be deployed to affirm and articulate that which exists between the two extremes of female and male.

[37] See "afeminado" (Covarrubias 46) for original quotation.

[38] For more on Spain's fear of effeminisation, see Matthew Stroud's *Plot Twists and Critical Turns*; Ursula Heise's "Transvestism and the Stage Controversy in Spain and England, 1580-1680"; Melveena McKendrick's "Breaking the Silence"; François Soyer's *Ambiguous Gender*; and Sidney Donnell's *Feminizing the Enemy*.

in early modern Europe about how "[m]en's bodies […] could somehow come unglued" (Laqueur 123). Various sermons detail instances in which men become women (Lehfeldt 463). Spanish writer Cristóbal Suárez de Figueroa wrote in the period about effeminate men becoming more womanly:

> La vanidad de músicas y bailes entretiene los efeminados, y los hace vacar al afeite del rostro, al enrizo de los cabellos, al adelgazar la voz, a los melindres, y caricias femeniles, y al hacerse iguales a las mujeres en delicadezas del cuerpo. (153)

Though we often look to the physical body—the most immediate indicator of one's public gender—for manifestations of effeminacy, early modern notions of effeminacy were also fixed in the behaviour and socio-emotional facets of an individual. Gary Spear, who contextualises the term within an early modern English backdrop, looks to the *OED* to define "effeminacy": as a noun, it could define a man who is "'womanish, unmanly, enervated, or feeble' […] 'delicate' […] 'gentle, tender compassionate' […]" (Spear 410), or simply "a sexually passive sodomite" (411). Others' definitions are also rooted in behaviour: "[e]ffeminate includes possessing defective qualities stereotypically associated with women, such as: a preoccupation for trivial conversations, frivolous lifestyles, deceitful and scheming nature" (Sánchez 13).

The term is also linked to desire: Laqueur argues that in the sixteenth century, effeminacy "was understood as a condition of instability, a state of men who through excessive devotion to women became more like them" (123): "men were effeminated by excessive desire" (Paun de García "Zayas's Ideal" 267).[39] Conversely, homosexual

[39] In this way, as Jelena Sánchez argues, women were now equipped with a weapon (their bodies) which they could use as an "[object] of exchange" (22).

behaviour was also believed to influence gender: one man in a homosexual pair would inevitably take on the passive, female role.[40]

As a result of their supposed engagement in homosexual acts,[41] there was "angst" towards these non-conforming people—these individuals with an "ambiguous gender"—because of their potential link to homosexuality (Soyer 27).[42] Being effeminate was therefore not only something that was severely punished; it was also feared for the homosexual behaviour from which it might stem and to which it might lead.

Spain's fear of effeminisation has been linked to its politics on a global level. Particularly at the start of the seventeenth century—given the war in the Netherlands, Spain's importation of manufactured goods, price inflation, and epidemic disease—the country's "[m]ilitary defeat and weakness threatened [its] prominence on the world stage" (Lehfeldt 465) and ultimately left France in position to become the "most powerful European nation" (Sánchez 3). The leadership of the country's noblemen "was mediocre at best" and its "reputation, which included aspects of their masculinity, was under constant attack" (Donnell 27).

This perceived waning masculinity on the national level trickled down to the individual: the idea of the "effeminate man gained currency in Spain […] when the gradual decline of Habsburg Spain caused many Spanish observers to cast blame for the deteriorating fortunes of the empire upon a decline of 'manly' virtues amongst their compatriots" (Soyer 19). In 1635, Dominican Francisco de León asked "[¿]Dónde hay

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[40] See Mary E. Perry's *Gender and Disorder in Early Modern Seville* for further analysis of the role of physical appearances of those condemned for sodomy, especially 126-27.
[41] Homosexuality as a public identity, of course, was not a viable mode of ontological being in early modern Spain. As Tracy Sedinger points out, "the terms heterosexual and homosexual, a binary opposition that governs a uniquely modern apparatus of sexuality, are anachronistic when applied to the sixteenth century" (75).
[42] For more on connections between effeminacy and homosexuality, see Maravall's *The Culture of the Baroque* 37-38.

hombres en España? Lo que yo veo es Mariones […] de hombres los veo convertidos en mugeres" (León 255, qtd. in Lehfeldt 463n1).

This dismantling of masculinity at the individual level was ultimately threatening to the country's security when, as theologians' evaluation of the public theatre from 1600 found "la gente de España muelle y afeminada é inhábil para las cosas del trabajo y guerra" (Cotarelo *Bibliografía* 394) to the point that the Turkish or English could easily attack Spain because *faranduleros* "hacen mujeriles flojos los corazones de nuestros españoles para que no sigan la guerra ó sean inútiles para los trabajos y ejecución dellos" (395). Being feminine was dangerous in the period, for it opened the door to being "accused of frailty and weakness" (Donnell 42).

B. Performing Gender on the Early Modern Spanish Stage

The female actor's body on stage was regulated, and obsessively so: despite women being allowed to act, their bodies were constantly policed. This is in part explained by Spain's fear of its men being effeminised. This general instability of the male self thus manifested in a preoccupation with the female body. While the history of women performing on the Spanish stage dates back as early as 1583, the legal stipulations of their participation—including that female actors be married, accompanied by their husbands, and, at certain periods in history, not cross-dressing (Shergold 506-08)—are evidence of a strict control over these women. It was believed that "actresses ensnare gentlemen, which leads to scandal and financial ruin (for the gentlemen)" (Thacker *Companion* 171). Other reasons for the strict regulation of women on the stage include the following: "it encourages evil thoughts and corrupts the innocent (especially young women)" and "diverts men from military pursuits, making them effeminate" (171). In 1614, Francisco Ortiz warned how powerful a woman was in consuming a man with lust: "Pues ha de ser más que de hielo el hombre que no se abrase de lujuria, viendo una mujer

desenfadada y desenvuelta, y algunas veces para este efecto vestida como hombre, haciendo cosas que moverán a un muerto" (Ortiz 100, qtd. in Heise 368n45). As Cruz and Perry summarise, "women […] were viewed as inherently dangerous to men" (xviii) by the Church and the State during the Counter-Reformation. The fact that laws restricting these female actors were rearticulated frequently[43] however suggests that such caveats were largely ignored, thereby creating a site for the performance of gender slippage.

In fact, the theatre in general was a site of gender slippage: just as some believed women could turn into men, some in early modern Europe believed that attending the theatre "could structurally transform men into women" (Levine 121).[44] As Ursula Heise articulates skilfully in her essay on the subject, Spain's fears of effeminisation was part of the reason the country favoured women (over boys) on its stages:

> Spain, with its elaborate code of male honor, which depends among other things on the chastity of the women in one's family, and a law which in many cases allows the punishment of adultery with death, seems even more obsessively concerned with such issues. But this tendency is outmatched by what is possibly the most violent history of persecution of homosexuals in Europe. (361-62)

Although protecting its men from homosexuality was more important to Spain than protecting them from being seduced by a woman and effeminised through her soft demeanour, women still posed a specific threat at the theatre. Just as women in real life threatened to play with gender, so too do characters in the works of Tirso (and Lope, Guillén de Castro, Luis Vélez de Guevara, and others) occasionally transgress gender norms. Though the authorities let women act, there was thus still considerable fear of

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[43] In 1608, 1615, 1641, 1653, 1672, and 1675. It was also the popularity of transvestite plays that caused "antitheatrical writers and state legislation" to repeatedly "address the question of the legitimacy of female cross-dressing again before a public audience" (Heise 358).

[44] Despite what church officials in the period argued, "theater was not the cause of the putative softening of masculinity that was taking place in Spain" (Donnell 145), though at the same time "transvestism in the theatre […] always [led] to greater femininity, never away from it" (Heise 371).

effeminisation at the hand of women specifically: female sexuality and the practice of transvestism on the stage

> might ultimately not only de-humanize the male spectators by turning them into beasts or dogs but also emasculate them. The assumption seems to be that when the male is confronted with unconcealed, un-covered femininity, he reacts not by asserting his difference but by imitating and adjusting to the female. There is, then, something fundamentally unstable about the male self, which can only keep itself from lapsing into the identity of its sexual other by depriving her of a full expression of what is specifically her own. Theatre, opening up at least temporarily a space for such expression, thus threatens the sexual differentiation on which the nation bases its own identification. (Heise 369)

Spain was fearful not just of homosexuality, but a general blurring of sexuality—"an anxiety over […] 'unnatural' sexual tendencies" (365)—which was concretised through the popular transvestite drama of the period.[45] Women, otherwise covered in long skirts, were physically exposed. But these women did not just threaten men with their bodies; they upset gender norms.

Transvestism was largely responsible for blurring gender lines: drag, and specifically the "absence" created through such a role, is part of "a performance medium that chips away at both the masculinity and femininity of the performer" (Badía 50) and could "affirm the liberating nature of gender performativity because it underscores the artificiality of sex roles and implicitly posits that the ways we categorize sexual difference are neither natural nor necessary" (43). Jelena Sánchez argues that transvestism was "a multifaceted ruse used to provoke laughter, to gratify voyeurism, and to challenge the debates on gender and class" in the period (5).[46] Transvestism also contributed towards a

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[45] For more on cross-dressing in the *comedia*, see Carmen Bravo-Villasante's *La mujer vestida de hombre en el teatro español*; Blanca Oteiza's essay "Un modelo de comedia cómica: 'La mujer por fuerza', atribuida a Tirso de Molina"; Anita K. Stoll's "Cross-dressing in Tirso's *El amor médico* and *El Aquiles*"; and Robert L. Turner's *Golden Age Disguise: Cross-Dressing and Female Disguise in the Works of Tirso de Molina*.

[46] Marjorie Garber also agrees that "[t]ransvestism was located at the juncture of 'class' and 'gender'" (32).

multiplicity in characters that encouraged audiences to see duelling genders. The convention was thus a political act as much as a theatrical ruse.

Cross-gender disguise on the modern stage, as we shall see in the next chapter, at times tends to obscure the public gender of the person playing the role.[47] As Heise suggests, a twentieth-century observer "might be inclined to think that male disguise [on a female actor] would tend to neutralise rather than enhance femininity, and hence diminish the actress's distracting erotic influence on the male audience" (367). But the practice of cross-dressing in the period, as others have argued, seems to draw attention to the curves of a woman's legs: "cross-dressed women were considered particularly attractive, because the generally tighter-fitting men's costumes offered female players with an excuse to appear, relatively speaking, scantily dressed" (Donnell 159).

Ultimately, women wearing men's clothing (in plays with cross-dressing plots) feminises performed notions of masculinity by putting male characters in the bodies of women performers: since they are being played by women, transvestite roles make male disguised characters (like "Doctor Barbosa" in *El amor médico*,[48] or "Don Gómez" in *Bellaco sois, Gómez*) seem womanly. Seeing a woman play a man on stage renders male characters feminine; the female actor's body creates a (stereotypically) constant image of softness, of delicacy, for the audience member's eye, and places it on the male character.

Not only does the fact that a woman plays these roles help make the (male) characters seem more feminine, but so too do certain moments in plays. To some extent, Tirso is enacting this very practice in his writing: "this new dangerous fancy for feminized affected behavior among men," which Tirso created through plays like *Don*

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[47] This is perhaps as a result of the cross-dressing convention being less a staple of the playgoing experience today than it was in the early modern period.

[48] In *El amor médico*, the *gracioso* Tello draws attention to Doctor Barbosa's feminine qualities: "Dotor para con chapines, / que con la amarilla borla / puede llamarse Amarilis" (2524-26). See chapter 3 here (150-51) for further analysis of these lines.

Gil, "unveils the widespread rupture of gender, sex, and class markers in society" (Sánchez 18). Rather than strictly confining actors to play gendered roles based on their sexes, early modern Spain's casting practices also affirm—in cross-dressing plots—that men can be effeminate and women masculine, thereby blurring the line between genders. Early modern Spain's theatrical practices therefore underscore the very concept they are trying to conceal and deny: that there is fluidity in gender.[49]

More explicitly, Anita Stoll argues that cross-dressing "may be described as the act of creating through performance a different gender" and that therefore a "person societally labeled 'woman' who dresses as a man is thus imposing an illusion upon an illusion" ("A Feminist Reading" 105). Cross-dressing is therefore dangerous "because of the consequences of societal instability and chaos should the rigidly structured binary gender system be shown clearly as illusion and therefore open to attack and destruction" (109).[50]

In this way, the female actor playing a cross-dressed character on stage can be seen as embodying a powerful role on the Golden Age stage. These women not only wear the dress of males, but also behave within the context of a masculine psychology:

> Ellas no sólo visten espada, botas, espuelas, capa de hombre u otros aderezos de la agresividad del macho, sino que también se comportan dentro del marco de la psicología masculina, siendo ora caballerescas, ora "bravos compañeros", ora pendencieras y listas con el juramento fanfarrón. (H. Sullivan "Tirso de Molina" 813)

Surely the presence of such women had a significant impact on audiences. As McKendrick observes,

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[49] As Donnell asserts, "cross-dressing in both text (reading and writing) and stage performance served as one of the principal means of exploring variant signs of identity and of interrogating the dominant discourse that supported the ruling elite in the Golden Age" (26).

[50] Stoll references Mary Beth Rose's assertion that manly attire encourages "a free-floating sexuality" which is dangerous (109).

> this close fit between presentation and representation must have affected the audience's perception of the relation between cultural practice and the imaginary world, lending added force to the burden of the words. Seeing and hearing a woman lamenting her ill-treatment at the hands of a faithless lover was a very different experience, for both the women and the men in the audience, from seeing and hearing a boy dressed as a woman going through the same motions. ("Breaking" 17)

They experience both external and internal change: "Lo interesante en el caso de la heroína que adopta el disfraz masculino es que no sólo sufre una metamorfosis superficial, sino una transformación al parecer interna, que se hace evidente en el comportamiento social e interpersonal" (H. Sullivan "Tirso" 813). Such an effect of performance could indeed be powerful and empowering to the female actor, perhaps even after the final moments of the play have passed given the internal rather than strictly superficial transformation.

To what extent were the plays and their performances thus political for their audiences? Did they have the potential to upturn tangibly any societal norms? Ultimately, Jelena Sánchez argues that the "comedic nature of the comedia de capa y espada enhanced the production of variant effects which simultaneously subverted as well as reinforced societal norms" (5). Though the female body is endowed with power by taking up space on the stage, she is ultimately—and paradoxically—objectified and Othered by taking up such stage space, especially given what she adorns her body with (when performing a cross-dressed role). While the enactment of the play text by actors helped assert women's power in the period, the reception of the play by audiences may very well have objectified them. In addition to having their bodies policed by government laws, female performers were objectified by the rules of the playhouse and theatre-going experience: in other words, through the reception of the play itself.

A primary influencer of spectatorship in early modern Spain is the way audiences were segregated in the *corral*. As suggested by the way audience members were counted,

there was a strict separation of each sex in the theatre. Thacker writes that, with the exception of mixed-gender seating in the privately hired *aposentos*, "[m]en and women were strictly segregated" (*Companion* 127). The fact that audiences were physically divided based on their gender illustrates how pervasive the issue of gender was in early modern Spain. This separation surely perpetuated the ideological divide between the (dominant) male spectator and the female spectator. Performing to audiences strictly divided by sex surely also created a space of great tension (and contention) in ideology. In this way, the materiality of theatregoing in early modern Spain has potentially direct implications for how the performance is read by spectators.

As McKendrick observes, women in the *cazuela* at the back of the *corral* and opposite the stage "rattled keys against the railings" and "never stopped talking and laughing" (*Theatre in Spain* 192). McKendrick also notes how disorderly the theatre could be before a play started; spectators tried to enter without paying, and "there was quarrelling over seats and anger over late starts" (192). These audiences "were often unjust and noisy, and always hard to please" (Rennert 117). The presence of men, who sometimes snuck cross-dressed into the *cazuela* (Thacker *Companion 127*), and the attempt to separate men from women, thus created a dangerous space for female audience members, with physical threats becoming part of the experience of attending the theatre.

While unaccompanied women sat in the seats farthest from the stage, men occupied the viewing spaces closest to the stage on the *patio.* Entering through his own entrance, a man could pay a larger fee to get closer, into the seated benches area. The privileging of male spectatorship, through their proximity to the stage, skews the performance experience: the female actor, when on stage, looks out into the (well-lit) *corral* to see in front of her a group of men. It is not insignificant, too, that those men would be at the female performers' feet, viewing her body from the legs up.

This amount of attention given to the fact that female bodies would be on display in the *corrales*, coupled with the fear that such performances might instigate the effeminisation of male spectators, is evidence of the fact that—despite having a varied audience in terms of both class and gender—the seventeenth-century Spanish theatre experience was particularly attuned to the male eye which was positioned to gaze at women as objects. In this way, the Spanish stage offers a sort of inverted homoeroticism: male audience members, upon seeing a female actor dressed as a man in trousers, might become attracted to her/him.

Donnell agrees that "the male gaze continued to dominate the [acting] profession" (159) in Spain at the time. Spain's banning of boy actors, for fear that male audiences would be erotically aroused, similarly assumes a male gaze as Heise argues: "transvestism, male or female, is an act conceived for the eyes of men" (371). In other words, the "resulting sexual dynamic of theatrical representation"—whether boys are playing women or women are playing men—"casts the audience as the male who is attracted, seduced and overcome by the spectacle conceived in essentially female terms" (371). The nature of desire—whether homoerotic or heteroerotic—was irrelevant: Spain did whatever it could to ensure protection of its most prevalent audience member, the male. "Control of the female body was thus not only an economic strategy, but one of the most important means of ensuring men's salvation" (Cruz and Perry xviii).[51]

[51] Similarly, Sedinger argues that a male spectator is also always in mind on the English Renaissance stage: "[C]ritics who speculate on the London theater's libidinal economy, on the types of erotic desires mobilized by playing, usually assume a male spectator: if the boy-actor is evident beneath the dramatic fiction, then the male spectator becomes the subject of a homoerotic desire; if the dramatic fiction of femininity holds sway, then the male spectator, becomes the subject of a heteroerotic desire. In both cases the male spectator's libidinal response, assumed to be either homo- or heteroerotic, is mapped onto epistemological categories of truth and falsity" (Sedinger 66).

If theatre prioritised the gaze of the male eye, what do we make of the women in the audience? As Jelena Sánchez explains, Laura Mulvey argues that female spectators are emasculated

> when a woman identifies with the active hero, and desires to be masculine; to possess the phallus. The female spectator, hence, alternates between a connection with the female object as passive and the male subject as active. (20)

If a woman becomes emasculated when she identifies with the male hero, then what do we make of the Spanish Golden Age female spectator who watched women dominate plays from the disguises of men?

Heise acknowledges that "[t]he woman in male attire […] may, by her physical appearance, appeal to the desires of the male audience, but she also embodies a powerful fantasy of all the social possibilities generally foreclosed to the female spectators in Spanish Renaissance society" (372). She ultimately believes that the transvestite role specifically had a "genuinely disruptive power" (372), even while admitting that modern observers "might see *both* aspects as falling squarely into the category of patriarchal domination strategies—the actress falls victim to the male gaze at the same time that the female audience is fed a temporary illusion of power" (372). Ultimately Heise argues that the transvestite, who is both "seductive and empowering to both men and women […] also leaves both genders at the same time deeply disconcerted, simultaneously confirmed and destabilized in their mutual power relationships" (374). Even—or especially—when women are not cross-dressed in a transvestite play, they are scrutinised by the male eye.

Transvestism on the Golden Age Stage further complicates Spain's attitude towards women's bodies. The practice "enhances on one hand a basically patriarchal structuring of the relationship between audience and performance" but also "becomes on the other hand precisely the moment which projects an alternative structure as a viable

possibility" (Heise 372). As a result, transvestism on the stage in early modern Spain is "conformist" and "subversive," "patriarchal" and "feminist," addressing both the male and female audience (372).

II. Theoretical Foundation: Text, Body, Spectatorship

While an understanding of seventeenth-century sex and gender dynamics is crucial to reading the significance and effect of staging practices in the period, it is also of particular importance that shifting these ideas from the past onto the present does not become an exercise in evoking history for the sake of it; the values and practices of the present-day must also be considered, including modern theoretical structures.

The theatre in particular is a plentiful arena for the study of gender, since in drama "'[m]an' and 'woman' are *already* constructs" and "the imaginative possibilities of critique of gender in and through representation are already encoded as a system of signification" (Garber 39). The theatre specifically poses direct parallels to a queer theoretical approach and is therefore well suited to a queer interrogation. What makes a queer analysis particularly appropriate to drama is that both strive to upturn normativity:

> Theatre and queer theory challenge ideas of fixed identities. Both break through the seemingly impermeable walls of gender and sexual categories by unmooring them from the idea that they derive absolutely and inevitably from an original objective source. *[Q]ueer* has proudly proclaimed itself the signifier of instability in postmodern America. (Solomon and Minwalla 14)

Donald E. Hall describes queer as something that "does not claim or countenance closure" (167); rather, "queer critical practice allows for, invite[s], or incite[s] further complications and investigations" (167). In the same way, theatre is also resistant to permanence and fixity: as it is performed live, it is ephemeral, non-fixed, and fleeting. Like theatre productions, "all readings" in queer analysis "are partial and tendentious"

(168). Since plays are meant to be performed, they therefore demand also a consideration of the meaning-making produced in and through the theatre.[52]

In what follows, I outline the theoretical assumptions with which I write, particularly as they relate to moving Tirso's plays from the seventeenth-century page to the modern stage. To serve as a model for chapters 2 through 4, in what follows I clarify the interconnected relationship between three facets of the move from page to stage—text in translation/adaptation, performance as it is articulated with the body, and the act of spectatorship—while touching upon their links with the performance of gender.

The written text, although important, does not contain the performance. Rather, that which appears on the stage in performance is but one reading that arises from the text. As William B. Worthen argues, meaning making in the theatre is inherently different to that in a play text, and that a theatre production, therefore, builds meaning "rather than [reiterates] it" (60).

Ultimately "performance is constructive as well as interpretive, so what appears on the stage must always be thought of as a *response* to text, not a transmission of that text" (Hartley 19). That which we see on the stage is not completely rooted in the text itself, and therefore will ultimately be grounded in more than just the specifics of a play text. Rather, the actors' bodies, movements, voice inflections and costumes make meaning, just as the set and lights do so by giving us cues which the text might not about space and time. Performance is therefore a response to text: it is a process of construction rather than an interpretation of text. In the theatre—where multiple signs help accrue meaning in the minds of audiences—physical aspects of the performance are important.

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[52] Sidney Donnell similarly calls for an analysis of gender through the lens of Spanish dramatic performance: "the Spanish stage is a privileged site for the study of masculinity and femininity in the early modern period because it assists us in charting the fluid, snake-like course that rival concepts of gender identity took during the Renaissance and Baroque periods" (43).

Thus, highlighting something inherent in the text might be literalised on stage. For some productions, that means a robust concept involving set, costumes, and lighting.

Because meaning-making on the stage is productive rather than interpretive, performance therefore cannot "realize" or "complete" a text (Hartley 18). Rather, performance is a new piece of art altogether. There can never therefore be one "straight" or definitive production of a text. The move from page to stage involves different meaning-making signs. The reader's imagination fades into the background when an audience member steps into the theatre; the lights, sounds, scenery, bodies, and voices dominate their senses.

In drama, bodies and words thus take on two sets of meaning: one on the page, and one on the stage. On the page, a character may be instructed through the stage directions to do something with her body. She is also given words to speak. A literary analysis of those actions is necessary. But when an actor breathes life into a role—when the actions she performs are not just ideas but an actual performance in a real body—the actions take on a new set of meanings. In performing one's gender, a consideration of both the words on the page and the bodies as they flesh out roles on the stage is thus necessary. Particularly, I will focus throughout this study on how directors cast actors, how they adorn those actors with costumes, and how they instruct actors to enact gendered roles.

In her book on reconstructionist performances of Spanish Golden Age drama, Laura Vidler reminds the reader specifically how spectatorship is complicated by "observer bias": "what Susan Fischer calls the 'immediate reactions' of the critic, in other words, the subjective spectator reception that juxtaposes the 'objective' reading of theater signs" is crucial to analysing performance (55). As Vidler clarifies, "[i]f signs mean different things in different cultures, how can the audience of a different space/time

comprehend them?" (55). What thus complicates the experience of watching theatre is not only the event's inherent ephemerality, but the individuality of the spectator's experience. As Marco De Marinis suggests, it is crucial to think of a spectator's experience in the theatre as "a task which the spectator carries out in conditions of relative independence" rather than as something that is "predetermined" by the performance (101).

The performance analysis tools of Patrice Pavis, whose foundations are in semiotics, sociology, psychoanalysis, and the anthropology of the actor and spectator, underscore the importance of live performance. Like Worthen, Pavis argues for a focus on the empirical object (the performance) rather than what inspired it (the text). This includes for him the actor (and the nexus of voice-gesture-text), as well as music/rhythm and space/time/action.

Pavis adds to this an acknowledgment of reception: the presence of spectators. In this way, theatricality—the "audience's awareness of the simultaneity of the means of representation and the thing being represented" (Mazer 101)—is crucial to reading performance. As important as the body in performance is the role of the spectator, who is also central to Butler's analysis of gender performativity since "one does not 'do' one's gender alone" since "[o]ne is always 'doing' with or for another, even if the other is only imaginary" (Butler *Undoing Gender* 1).

The great paradox of writing about performance is it is inherently uncapturable through text: because it is live, it is impossible to contain. The moment it is articulated, it becomes something different, a concrete artefact.[53] This concrete artefact manifests

[53] Diana Taylor's Archive/Repertoire best expresses this dichotomy: the Archive is "documents, maps, literary texts, letters, archaeological remains, bones, videos, films, CDs, all those items supposedly resistant to change" (19) while the Repertoire is "performances, gestures, orality, movement, dance, singing"—events that are "ephemeral" (20). Because the repertoire is live, it exceeds the archive's ability to capture it (20).

primarily through the ostensible permanence of physical bodies on stage. And yet the body directly contradicts the ephemerality of performance, inviting the audience to consider performance as an embodied archive. In this way, the line between performance and reality is blurred. This very tension potentially produces misrepresentation. Further, it is read and interpreted by individual audience members. This study therefore grapples with what it means to stage real bodies and, further, considers how those bodies are gendered, and how layering (gendered) characters atop (gendered) bodies ultimately complicates spectatorship.

III. The Scope of this Study

The number of *comedias* is vast; even those by Tirso alone are too numerous to consider in one study. Of his 84 plays, I have elected to focus my study on three of Tirso's 12 *comedias urbanas.*[54] Inevitably, the findings of this study are distorted by the self-imposed limitations on primary sources, but for good reason: an analysis of all *comedias urbanas* in the period, or even of all Tirso's 12 *comedias urbanas*, would limit the ability to discuss plays and productions alongside one another. Since there are many factors at work in putting a play on its feet, I have elected to limit my discussion of plays to three.

The plays examined in this thesis were selected based on my personal involvement with the English-language productions which followed. Certainly, other *comedias urbanas* by Tirso have been staged in English and would provide ripe material for queer analysis; *Don Gil de las calzas verdes*, for instance, features cross-dressing and, arguably, homosexual desire. But part of what also makes the three plays here desirable subjects of

[54] The full list comprises: *El amor médico; Los balcones de Madrid; Bellaco sois, Gómez; La celosa de sí misma; Desde Toledo a Madrid; Don Gil de las calzas verdes; En Madrid y en una casa; La huerta de Juan Fernández; Marta la piadosa; No hay peor sordo que el que no quiere oír; Por el sótano y el torno;* and *La villana de Vallecas.*

analysis is the fact that their English-language productions are limited, whereas *Don Gil* has been produced several times in English. The newness of the play in English invites an analysis (and reception) which is uninhibited by previous performances.

Francisco Antonio Bances Candamo first coined the term *comedia de capa y espada*, a synonym for *comedia urbana*, in his *Theatro de los theatros*, which included

> Caualleros particulares, como Don Juan, u Don Diego, etcétera, y los lances se reducen a duelos, a celos, a esconderse el galán, a taparse la Dama, en fin, a aquellos sucesos más caseros de un galanteo. (33, qtd. in Thacker *Companion* 150)

Jonathan Thacker sets apart the sub-genre *comedia de capa y espada*, though, explaining that it features characters of:

> low nobility, living in the city, and pursuing love affairs in this urban environment. The plays often involve an *ingénu*'s arrival in a new city, street scenes (often outside a church), love at first sight, jealousy, night scenes, trysts at a balcony or grille, disguise and cross-dressing, coincidental meetings, male posturing and even duelling, and finally the victory of youth and consequent arrangement of marriages. (*Companion* 45)[55]

The work of this study builds on the excellent research of those in many fields from the specifics of this play type, to the *comedia* in general and more. One such area of research is on gender in the *comedia*. François Soyer's *Ambiguous Gender* (2012) and Sidney Donnell's *Feminizing the Enemy* (2003) have been especially crucial in establishing the socio-historical context of gender performance in early modern Spain. Mary E. Perry's *Gender and Disorder in Early Modern Seville* (1990) was also crucial to my analysis of gender in the period. Melveena McKendrick's groundbreaking *Woman and Society in the Spanish Drama of the Golden Age* (1974) paved the way for a study of gender in the *comedia*, followed by the excellent work of Dawn Smith and Anita

[55] See also Dawn Smith's article "*La celosa de sí misma*: A Comedy in Spite of Itself" (827) for more on the characteristics of Tirso's *comedias de enredo*, a sub-genre indeed related to the *comedia urbana* or *capa y espada* which, as Jonathan Thacker explains, has "a precise set of ingredients" (*Companion* 45).

Stoll,[56] as well as Matthew Stroud's *Plot Twists and Critical Turns: Queer Approaches to Early Modern Spanish Theater* (2007). Raúl Galoppe's *Género y confusión en el teatro de Tirso de Molina* similarly deals with gender in the *comedias* of Tirso. While his study focuses on characters on the page through Lacanian psychoanalysis, this thesis considers the text but engages additionally with how character manifests on the stage through the body, as well as with how that embodiment is received by audiences. In looking at the potential and actual ways that characters move, are adorned, and react to other characters and situations, we can discover potential stagings that might otherwise not be obvious when reading a text or speculating on a character's psychological development. There are many individuals—both academics and practitioners—looking at gender in the *comedia* on a more limited scale and who have influenced my analysis.[57]

[56] Smith and Stoll have co-authored and/or co-edited many works together, as well as written several articles individually that are pertinent here: *The Perception of Women* (1991); *Gender, Identity, and Representation in Spain's Golden Age* (2000); Smith's "Women and Men in a World Turned Upside-Down" (1986) and "*La celosa de sí misma*" (1999); and Stoll's "A Feminist Reading of *La mujer por fuerza*" (1993), "Do Clothes Make the Man?" (1999), and "Cross-dressing in Tirso's *El amor médico* and *El Aquiles*" (2000).

[57] See Allatson's "Confounding Conventions" (1996); Galoppe and Dalton's "(Un)faithful Renditions" (2015); Ganelin's *Rewriting Theatre* (1994); "Who Was That Masked Woman?" (1995), "Designing Women" (1999); and "Confusing Senses" (2013); Pedraza Jiménez's "'La celosa de sí misma'" (2004); Ruano de la Haza's "Tirso a escena" (2004); Sánchez's "The Transvestite Woman" (2006); Sullivan's "Tirso de Molina: dramaturgo andrógino" (1977); Turner's *Golden Age Disguise* (2008); and Wheeler's "Golden Age Transvestism" (2018).

In the past decade, research into the performance of the *comedia* in English-language translation has burgeoned. This work has enriched the way we read the *comedia* within the context of performance.[58] My research also engages with and builds on this.

The work of such scholars has primarily focused on large-scale, professional productions in which the author is an audience member. The discussion of student productions, and/or where they are involved in the creative process of staging the plays is limited to essay-length works. In this way, my study is different in that I had direct involvement with the four primary performances examined in chapters 2-4 of this thesis. As a result, I have been able to both create and then observe the productions. In anticipation of performance, I thought consistently in the rehearsal process about how choices would manifest on stage. But such anticipation was also, arguably, an obstacle: rather than focus on the process and the myriad of potential stagings, the product took precedence in my mind. Despite this challenge throughout the rehearsal process, I aim throughout this study to discuss both the process of constructing meaning in rehearsals, as well as the resulting performances themselves and their reception on the stage, sometimes alongside one another and at other times separately. Although my participation was first-hand, I strive not to discuss whether or not I agreed with all staging choices made but instead focus on the functions and results these choices have on reception.

Though her study is of professional productions, Kathleen Jeffs' *Staging the Spanish Golden Age: Translation and Performance* (2018) emphasises the importance of

[58] See Catherine Boyle's *The Spanish Golden Age in English: perspectives on performance* (2007); Harley Erdman's *Remaking the comedia*, co-authored with Susan Paun de García (2015); Susan Fischer's "Staging Lope de Vega's *Peribáñez*" (2005) and *Reading Performance* (2009); Kathleen Jeffs' *Staging the Spanish Golden Age* (2018); David Johnston's "Theatre Pragmatics" (1996), "Sister Act" (2015), and *Translating the Theatre of the Spanish Golden Age* (2015); Catherine Larson's "The Uniqueness of Tirso in Contemporary Stagings" (1996) and "Translating and Adapting the Classics" (2015), and Susan Paun de García's "Zayas's Ideal of the Masculine" (2003) and *The Comedia in English*, edited with Donald Larson (2008).

intellectual and creative exchange between academics and practitioners: she proposes "a model for the successful collaboration between scholars and practitioners engaged in the ever-evolving process of bringing translated drama to the stage" using five main aspects of the season of Golden Age plays at the RSC in 2004 (10).[59] I too strive in this thesis to underscore the crucial role that the practical work of staging a play is as informative as that of the academic. In an interview with Butler, Gayle Rubin calls for a "less dismissive attitude towards empirical work" ("Sexual Traffic" 98). Hall makes a similar argument in *Queer Theories* about the importance of activists' intellectual contribution to queer theoretical models:

> This "top down" model of intellectuals refining ideas and then generously sharing them with nonintellectuals needs further complication. It ignores the fact that important intellectual work and activist struggles over processes of change take place all of the time and among many who do not hold PhDs. (80)

As such, the practical, performance-based work—being in a rehearsal hall and adapting translations—have been crucial to my approach with this research.

In 1949, de Beauvoir claimed that "[t]his world has always belonged to men and still retains the form they have imprinted on it" (721). The world is thus "masculine; it is men who have shaped it and ruled it and who still today dominate it" (639). This was true in early modern Spain and is still true. Added to this today is an unwillingness to acknowledge the slippery nature of gender: those who do not conform to the binary genders of male and female are often cast aside, subjugated by normativity. Since "[i]t takes belonging to the privileged caste to view the universe as one's own" (749), as de Beauvoir claims, "[t]o be a complete individual, equal to man, woman has to have access

[59] Those five areas are: the context of original performance; literal translations; the role of verse; characterisation; and the role of metatheatricality.

to the male world as man does to the female one, access to the *other*" (725). Today, this is true of all genders that are not "man."

Though de Beauvoir wrote with a rigid binary gender system in mind, the advantages to dismantling both patriarchy and the superiority of the male sex are beneficial to those who do not conform as well: "the boy would not have a natural 'superiority complex' if it were not instilled in him and if he held women in the same esteem as men" (762) and "the child would feel an androgynous world around her and not a masculine world" (761).

This potential world—with queer tendencies—can be glimpsed through the theatre of Tirso de Molina. It is the aim of this research to destabilise gender binarism through a queer analysis of Tirso's *comedias urbanas* on the modern English-language stage. The plays ultimately lend themselves to "explorations of the ways that desires exceed or abrade the hetero/homo binary" and to "analyses of the social forces accounting for the entrenched nature of that binary and possibilities for agency in continuing to disrupt its self-assurance" (Hall 167). What I add to this is a consideration of Tirso's characters and dramaturgies as they are embodied through the art of performance; I analyse gender on its feet, articulated—and rearticulated—through the bodies of modern actors to offer a glimpse into a world full of queer potential.

Chapter 1: Staging and Viewing Bodies on the Modern Stage

Over the past couple decades, the modern stage has been witness to radical readings of the *comedia* in terms of gender: as Mindy Badía argues,

> [t]he relatively recent opportunity to see Golden Age plays staged regularly at the Almagro and Chamizal festivals has given modern audiences a chance to explore the concept of gender as performance in texts that do not contain cross-dressed characters. Some productions brought to Chamizal, such as the Mexican staging of *El examen de maridos* [by Ruiz de Alarcón], performed in 1987 by an all-female cast, or the 1990 adaptation of *El acero de Madrid* [by Lope de Vega], in which an important female character was played by a male actor, form part of a tradition of ambiguously gendered characters in *Comedia* texts. These adaptations illustrate the relationship between fidelity to the *text* and fidelity to one's *sex*, because they dramatize the artifice behind notions of authenticity and question the concept of unmediated agency. (46)

This tradition continues in the present day, although not all modern productions are experimental in their stagings of gender. As I discuss in this chapter, the English-language stage has been host to more radical revisionings of the *comedia* than the Spanish-language stage. As more *comedias* are translated for modern performance, the potential for non-normative casting increases, which raises interesting questions and challenges: how do characters become gendered in performance? Do actors consciously play roles as feminine or masculine? To what extent do the actors' gender identities colour their performances of gender? These plays are especially ripe for such approaches given the non-traditional ways in which they manipulate the ostensible stability of gender.

This chapter engages with some of these questions. It is concerned with spectatorship and the staging of the body in *comedias* on the modern English-language stage, primarily in the UK and US, although I also consider some interesting modern productions in Spanish. Using the rich modern performance history of Shakespeare's plays as a model, I consider how the *comedia* already does and might in the future engage with gender in/as performance. Ultimately, I analyse contemporary theatre practices, the

ways in which modern audiences read gender on the stage, and how the *comedia* might be particularly and specifically suited to those aims and have the potential to become queer through performance. As I demonstrate throughout this study, plays of the Spanish Golden Age invite a scrutinisation of gender. Tirso in particular, as I argue throughout this study, constructs gender in his plays in ways that do not align with the rigid social expectations of early modern Spain.

If a performance can be queered, it can be done through reception of the text as it is enacted by bodies on stage. Therefore, it is important to analyse a play and production holistically. What I propose in this chapter is a tripartite analysis, looking at the nexus of text, body, and spectator. First, I underscore the importance of considering how gender is engaged with thematically in the plays. Second, I look at how gender can be embodied and performed by actors through choices of casting and characterisation. Finally, I consider how gender is decoded and read through the actor's body in the theatre. These three facets of gender performance will then become the foundation for how I approach the three plays in the remaining chapters of this thesis.

I. Text: The Move from Page to Stage

When staging a play with an eye on gender, it is important to ask first if the play is in any way dealing with gender thematically or otherwise through plot and, if so, how. The plays analysed in this study, which involve (in one way or another) characters who disguise their true identities, are arguably inherently queer since "hiding a true identity from the wider world" is similar to the way that characters "'disguise' themselves in […] plays and often through the use of a cross-gender persona, in order to gain access or privilege in a world that suppresses their true nature" (Power 125).

But gender is relevant even to plays that do not explicitly deal with role-play and disguise. Since gender is "the repeated stylization of the body, a set of repeated acts"

(Butler *Gender Trouble* 45), any play that places the body on stage could inevitably deploy the body as a tool for meaning-making. While the *comedia* purports to be patriarchal in structure (especially given its conventional endings), female characters in fact often dominate the stage. But that dominance is ultimately undermined by the very staging of the body: as we have seen in the introduction here (29-31), a male gaze dominated spectatorship in early modern Spain, and still does on the modern stage.

Comedias in translation seemingly afford the opportunity for more radical readings and stagings than they do in the Spanish language. In an essay introducing their translation/adaptation of *Don Gil de las calzas verdes* (*Love's a Bitch*), Raúl A. Galoppe and David Dalton argue that the process of translation and adaptation allows for more flexibility in the move from page to stage. Specifically, they discuss the gender ambiguities of Tirso's *Don Gil* in modern performance, noting how such deviations seem to occur more frequently when the plays are staged in English than in their original Spanish:

> Interestingly, these departures from canonical stagings seem to occur more frequently among productions in English, as if translations served the liberating purpose of releasing tensions between texts and their original contexts, hence facilitating the process of adaptation. (131)[1]

This has as much to do with distance in language as distance in time from the original source: translating a play extracts it even further from its original context. As Sidney Donnell argues, "gender-appropriate readings and performances of plays from the sixteenth century [where men play masculine roles and women play feminine roles] adhere to a modern-day politics of respectability and decorum, and as a result, they are

[1] Although the "performance of the *comedia* in Spanish can now be said to be lively in Spain and Spanish-speaking America" (Jeffs *Staging* 17), the *comedia* in English has been invigorated with "renewed interest awakened by Boswell's Golden Age season of plays that ran in repertory during the autumn of 2013 in Bath" and "it looks set to continue" (175). For more on modern productions of the *comedia* in Spanish, see Duncan Wheeler's *Golden Age Drama in Contemporary Spain.*

ahistorical when attempting to reproduce the values and aesthetics of the past" (44). This invitation to adapt is perhaps most popularly expressed by the modern performance of Shakespeare's plays.[2] Textual edits are therefore necessary in preparing scripts for the stage: *comedias* in translation—by virtue of their journey across both time and culture—are rife with references that fall flat on the modern stage. Though concepts which underpin the worlds of *comedias* (like honour) cannot—and should not—be extricated, some references, allusions, and tangential stories can easily be cut without losing the essence of the play itself.

Of course, some *comedias* do deal with gender explicitly, of which cross-dressing is but one example: other plays feature characters who show gender ambiguity, or characters whose actions and motivations are a result of their gender. In such plays, a consideration of how to approach such lines, especially as they manifest through actors, is paramount.

When staging *comedias* in translation, it is thus crucial to spend time polishing—and sometimes even reworking, cutting, and adapting—the text, both in terms of form and content. Very few *comedias* can be staged with no edits, for reasons both practical and theoretical. While this idea will surely be progressive to many, radical revisionings and adaptations were historically common. As Harley Erdman and Susan Paun de García write in the preface to their study on adaptations of *comedias*, "the stage history of the Comedia is very much a history of the plays-as-remakes" (xvii). Besides, all translation and all performance are both already inherently adaptive in nature.

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[2] The American Shakespeare Center in Staunton, VA (US) has launched a program called "Shakespeare's New Contemporaries" which is "a groundbreaking, industry-changing undertaking that is discovering, developing, and producing a new canon of 38 plays that are inspired by and in conversation with Shakespeare's work" ("Shakespeare's New Contemporaries").

II. Body: Staging Gender through Casting and Characterisation

As Anthony Dawson argues, "the body signifies in the theatre as a crucial part of the performance: it establishes *person*" (38). He goes on to explain the importance of the body in theatrical signification:

> The actor, by participating his body, creates his part, constructs the person he represents; the audience participates the actor, exchanging its hold on ordinary reality for an embodied, but also, of course, impersonated, passion. In this process the body of the actor is primarily a rhetorical instrument, and the exchange in which he is engaged can best be constructed as a kind of socially efficacious ritual enabled by the act of participation. (39)

Since the body is, of all the sign systems in the theatre, the most relevant to a discussion of gender, I shall focus on it: how bodies are cast, how they are adorned with costumes, and how roles are ultimately embodied by actors.

There is ample opportunity for the non-normative staging of roles when casting productions. Roles can be cast in line with the sex and gender of the actor, but they can also be cross-gender cast: men can play women, and women can play men. Non-binary actors can play cis-gender roles (and vice versa). These choices to cross-cast can be employed across an entire production (to become a single-sex production), or in select roles (creative casting, as Terri Power refers to the practice). Regardless, such choices have a profound impact on the meaning making produced through a performance since gender, like other corporal signifiers, such as race, is not invisible on stage.

The ethics of casting is particularly pertinent when assigning roles in productions of classic plays. As Dawn Monique Williams, an American theatre director whose specialty in Shakespeare has led her to direct many productions at Oregon Shakespeare Festival, observes, the question is crucial in classics "where no gender non-conforming characters are explicitly written but gender is actually at play in every single text by virtue of cross-gender performance" (Williams personal interview). For Williams, how theatre

directors "avoid re-injury" to actors is of great importance. If a director wants to cast a gender non-conforming actor to play a *mujer vestida de hombre* role, Williams wonders if it is "re-injury to ask that actor to play a female playing a male, or is it a greater opportunity for a trans actor" (Williams personal interview). And what about an actor who once identified as female, went through transition,[3] and now identifies as male? Would the cross-dressed role help or harm the actor? And to what extent is the actor's position important?[4]

Some questions that are pertinent to this study thus arise: first, how do contemporary directors make space for gender non-conforming actors? Should and can characters be (re)imagined as trans individuals? Should such characters be reimagined in Golden Age texts specifically, which originate from a period in which "trans" as a public social role did not yet exist?

As is evident from the work of Judith Butler, gender can be performed, iterated (and re-iterated) in a seemingly endless number of ways, especially if we consider gender to exist on a continuum rather than as a binary. When one's gender performance as a character is not in line with the actor's gender identity, a production (and a role) could be considered queer. The way actors are cast in a production also affects how they are read in performance.

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[3] "Transition" refers to "[a] person's process of developing and assuming a gender expression to match their gender identity. Transition can include: coming out to one's family, friends, and/or co-workers; changing one's name and/or sex on legal documents; hormone therapy; and possibly (though not always) some form of surgery. It's best not to assume how one transitions as it is different for everyone" (Trans Student Educational Resources).

[4] Furthermore, what would the audience see? Depending on the actor and costume, they may see a female actor playing a female role and dressing up as a male, as the conventions of Golden Age performance anticipated. Or, they could see a man cross-dressing (or even in drag) as the female character, and then finally matching his "true" identity when "disguised." The latter might then evoke Shakespeare. In either case, the very personal politics of gender identity for the actor are at stake.

The way the body moves and is dressed is also crucial in the meaning-making process on stage. As Rick Kemp asserts, "much meaning in interpersonal action is communicated non-verbally" (xvi). Clothing in particular is crucial to meaning making in performance: it ultimately communicates "social milieu, era, style, individual preferences" as well as "the identification or disguise of a character" (Pavis *Analyzing Performance* 174).

But theatrical productions are not just about constructing any "part"; they are about the act of construction itself. Building gender in the theatre—an activity which is already (en)acted in real life—thus becomes doubly performative. Matthew Stroud asks if "gender reside[s] in [characters'] behavior, in their clothes, or in their biological sex" ("Performativity" 110). He wonders:

> Is gender so superficial in these plays that it is merely a function of one's choosing the signifiers one wants to wear? Or is there an essentialism to gender that forces each character to assume the gender that corresponds to his or her sex in order to have a happy ending? Or is it something else, perhaps more reflective of Judith Butler's investigations into the performative aspects of gender, in which gender is an inculcated function of the symbolic Other, and is neither consciously chosen nor casually acquired? (109)

What is crucial here is the fact that gender identity involves a matrix of aspects. Stroud posits that the physical is critical in identity formation; "identity markers" involve behaviour (how we speak and carry ourselves) and titles, but also the body—something informed not only by sex, but also apparel (*Plot Twists* 104). In *comedias*, characters' genders are similarly determined (for the audience and other characters, who then react and respond to characters based on that performance of gender) through their behaviours and bodies.

Performing gender with the body is complicated by the approaches of Stanislavski's internal-psychological approach to acting, as well as Lee Strasburg's

"Method" approach, which recommend that actors recall experiences from their own lives to inform their roles as characters—both approaches which still remain a bedrock of modern acting practice.[5]

The aim of all physical and emotional depth, of course, is to build a meaningful character in performance. As Kemp says, in the Western theatre, we deem "good" acting to be when there is a good mixture of actor and character (93). He argues that there are two approaches to this: an internal (psychological), inside-out approach; and an external (physical), outside-in approach (93). But this is a false dichotomy: it is possible to do both simultaneously, especially if we consider the text to be at least linked to the physiological development of a character.

Kemp argues for an approach that is grounded in the text but that is also physical, warning that "the investigation of a script in rehearsal without using movement and action significantly reduces the range of imaginative prompts to the actor" (112). Indeed, a strictly textual, or verbal, exploration and analysis of a script would "inhibit unconscious imaginative responses to the fictional world of the script" (144). Theoretically, the options for such physical exploration are limitless. When considering the way gender is staged in performance, I would like to propose that there are two primary options for approaches from which an actor can choose.[6]

The first option is for one to perform as the gender with which they typically identify publicly. Depending on the character (and the director and approach of the production), a female actor playing a female character, for instance, has the option to play

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[5] Kemp gives a thorough summary of these cognitive approaches of twentieth-century practitioners in the theatre in the first chapter of *Embodied Acting.*

[6] While this list would surely be complicated by any cross-gender roles that are written into the plots of plays, I exclude these here for sake of space.

the female character as similar to or different from the way she performs femininity on a daily basis. If different, this could be considered a sort of stylised femininity.

The second option involves an actor playing a gender with which they do not typically identify. Within this option, there are two distinct approaches: either the actor tries to conceal their "true" gender (through costume, voice, and physicality, for instance), or they make no attempt at concealing their "true" gender but instead let their masculinity be part of their feminine role (or vice versa).

It is important to consider that these two options above include more than just male and female identities for characters and actors. As a result, nuances emerge. Therefore, it is important to not refer to gendered practices on the stage in terms of only a binary. An actor might perform as a non-binary character, for instance: perhaps trans, agendered, polygendered, or merely ambiguous. As the most atypical gender role, this usually happens only when a character in a (probably contemporary) play is written as transgendered. Occasionally, an actor might appear to be androgynous, or both male and female. While some directors lead their actors to this sort of characterisation, other productions' actors end up performing what appears to be an androgynous role, either through costume, voice, or physicality. As I shall argue in this chapter, this resulting androgyny appears to occur more often with female actors.

III. Spectatorship: Gender on the Modern Stage

The fleeting nature of theatre renders it inherently difficult to analyse. Viewing a production for analysis is a challenge for many reasons. While most spectators view a production just once, which could be "sufficient for analysis" (Pavis 20), a production "is rarely based on observable units" unlike the text from which the production originates, which is marked "in accordance with its dramaturgical division into lines/dialogue,

scenes, and acts" (21). What further complicates analysis is the fact that spectators "are sometimes reluctant to translate their images and emotions into words" (31).

The challenges of capturing this ephemeral art through writing make such attempts at performance analysis seem futile. For a start, though, Pavis suggests "dry technical analyses of acting" (63)—something most spectators are capable of articulating—are useful. I would add to this a similarly simple articulation of the design elements of productions, along with the rhythm and mood of the production at large. Such raw, visceral reactions ultimately lead to a rich field for analysis.

Gender, of course, influences spectatorship: specifically, the way audiences gaze upon the performers. Like in early modern Spain, Jill Dolan has argued that traditional theatre on the contemporary American stage typically assumes a "male gaze." Writers anticipate, she posits, that the view of their audiences is largely that of a male. When watching a performance which assumes a male gaze, then, a female audience member is troubled in that she is asked to view the play from the perspective of the "ideal spectator carved in the likeness of the dominant culture" (*Feminist Spectator* 1)—in other words, the perspective of a white, middle class, heterosexual male. Ultimately, the problem is that the "spectators' individuality is subsumed under an assumption of commonality" (1); in other words, every audience member is invited to read the production as a man might. Of course, not all spectators view theatre from the perspective of a male, nor can they be asked to; therefore, an audience member can easily be seen as subversive if s/he does not adopt the view of the "ideal spectator."

What complicates spectatorship further is that the genders of performers must also be decoded. Power argues that "if the audience in the theatre is the same audience that 'genders' the actor on the street outside the theatre, this audience will also use the same gendering process and language to gender the character the actor plays on the stage" (27).

While I do not deny that an audience enters the theatre poised to read gender on the bodies of actors, since they "bring gender expectations and stereotypes to the theatre when they attend a performance" (76), it is also possible for an audience to move beyond this initial reading. Because the bodies of actors are the first aspect we read when we see characters in a performance, "the physical appearance of the actor playing a certain character enables us at first sight to ascribe a temporary identity to this character" which then "shapes our expectations and anticipations regarding the future behavior of this character" (Fischer-Lichte 290). Take, for instance, the cross-cast productions in which audiences claim to forget the "true" gender of a character by the end of the play—to forget who they are looking at. Depending on the framework of the production, this can be good or bad.

In a production with an all-male cast, in which men are playing women and are trying to conceal the fact that men are women, audiences might read "drag" upon seeing the actors—a reading that would not be in line with the intention of the production. If in the same production the "true" genders of the actors were not concealed but instead highlighted by their cross-dressing, audiences might have a similar reaction, but in this case it would be most likely intended. Casting choices therefore have a particular influence on an audience's reading of gender in a production.

Regardless of intention, it is true that the suspension of disbelief necessary in the theatre can also influence the way gender is read (and re-read) on the bodies of actors over the course of a production. In fact, some productions encourage this multi-layered view of actors'/characters' bodies through their characterisation and staging.

IV. Examples from the Modern Stage

While the *comedia* lacks a robust modern performance tradition, Shakespeare has blossomed on the modern stage. Directors of Shakespeare productions have no issue exploring "radical" stagings from 400-year-old texts. Nearly 50 years ago, Peter Brook's 1970 white-box production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC)—which featured actors dangling from trapezes on a nearly empty stage—was one of the first instances a director's staging of the play broke away from a "traditional" Victorian aesthetic.[7] The production thus ushered in the tradition of staging Shakespeare's plays in ways that are more accessible to its present audiences. But the *comedia*—still in a nascent stage of modern performance history—is typically conservative in its casting and staging.[8] Still, there are a few examples of more radical approaches to staging the plays in terms of gender, and this chapter seeks to offer an overview of some of those Spanish- and English-language productions.

Before doing so, however, I first use the example of a select number of Shakespeare productions as a model for thinking about how to do so. I aim to share an abbreviated modern performance history of Shakespeare to point towards some examples of how other early modern plays have engaged gender thematically and artistically with the ultimate aim of uncovering the potential in the *comedia* for similar treatment. As we shall see, the *comedia* has generally offered up more radical stagings when presented on the English-language stage than in their original Spanish. Ultimately, these analyses of

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[7] As one reviewer of production archival footage reports, "[m]any critics and directors, including Gregory Doran, current artistic director of the Royal Shakespeare Company, have referred to Brook's production as a "game-changer" in the history of Shakespeare performance, infusing modern performances with simplicity and greater physicality via the influence of the Chinese circus and Noh drama, among others" (McJannet).

[8] See Duncan Wheeler "The Performance History of Golden-Age Drama in Spain (1939-2006)." Fascist Spain was clearly not a welcome place for radical artistic experimentation.

modern productions will serve as a template for how I approach the more comprehensive gender analyses I perform of Tirso's plays in subsequent chapters.

One of the most prevalent examples of gender deviance in classical theatre on the modern stage is through cross-gender roles. Reviews of such production often refer to the "androgyny" of actors and characters. Today, androgyny often manifests as masculine; gender-neutrality is conceptualised in masculine terms. This is a testament to the "neutrality" assumed of men and masculinity—something perhaps unsurprising in a patriarchal society. As a result, men are seen as "genderless," while women and femininity is seen as "gendered," thereby reinforcing the notion of woman as "Other." Because of this, it is more acceptable for a woman to want to dress masculine—to better herself—and less acceptable for a man to dress feminine.[9] In fact, the latter is not as readily accepted as "androgynous," ironically, despite the term linguistically leaning towards male: a biological male's masculinity is ostensibly too strong and visually present when cross-dressed to completely erase his masculinity. Especially on stage, male cross-dressing thus presents typically as drag rather than "true," subversive cross-dressing.

The exception to this seems to be all-male productions that attempt to conceal masculinity and construct femininity, such as in Mark Rylance's portrayal of Olivia in an all-male production of Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*. On the other hand, as I shall demonstrate, all-female productions seem to assert gender as androgynous more readily. In such productions, usually thin, often flat-chested women are able to more easily perform masculinity and therefore androgyny. As a result, these productions are often viewed as subversive. All-male productions that feature cross-gender casting instead often appear more light-hearted and "camp."

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[9] See introduction for more on this historical notion of favouring masculinity over femininity.

A. Shakespeare

Shakespeare's plays are different to the *comedia* in structure and content, not to mention the fact that they emerge out of different socio-historical milieu. They are similar, though, in many ways as well: even when the *comedia* is translated into English, it typically shares a similar verse structure (and sometimes heightened language) with that of Shakespeare's plays. Because they roughly overlap in time, the plays share a similar—though ultimately distinct—set of values about gender.

Following the framework developed in Terri Power's *Shakespeare and Gender in Practice*, I discuss here a few productions of Shakespeare plays, staged in the US and the UK, as well as productions by companies that either utilise single-sex casts or that employ creative casting (putting a woman in the role of a man, for instance). My aim is to consider how such practices affect the meaning built through performance. All of these productions, as Power argues, "are appropriating, dismantling, challenging and redressing Shakespeare in engaging and provocative stagings and making inroads in changing attitudes and perceptions of gender" (25) in the same way I believe is possible for the *comedia* in performance. As with the *comedia* productions that follow, I shall limit my analysis of Shakespeare productions to roughly the past 10-15 years.[10]

Propeller, an all-male company led by Edward Hall, the son of the RSC's Peter Hall, began in 1997 and is still staging productions across the world today. The origin of their experimentation with single-gender performance was in their first production: Shakespeare's *Henry V*. Rather than a conscious choice to stage the play with all men, director Hall had the idea to stage the play with an ensemble. The production's "choral approach […] gave the actors license to play the female characters in the story" (71). As

[10] Though specific to gender, this study is in many ways a continuation of the fine performance analysis of Jeffs in *Staging the Spanish Golden Age.* As the RSC season about which Jeffs writes began 15 years ago, I aim to confine my analysis to productions that follow it.

in their subsequent productions, Propeller aims neither to revive an historical notion of Shakespeare in performance nor to engage with original practices: they do not seek to "emulate the practice of a boy player [n]or represent women in a naturalistic portrayal" (72). In sacrificing the psychological depth of some productions of Shakespeare, what Propeller does instead is focus on the physicality of the performance, and "never allows [the audience] to fully forget that the actors are an ensemble composed entirely of men" (73). As Power extrapolates, "[e]ven in feminine farthingales, suggestive headbands and lipstick—five o'clock shadows—hairy chests and well-defined biceps disrupt the gender allusion" (73). Rather than conceal their masculine bodies, Propeller's male actors—as actor Johnny Flynn put it to Power—"'might be in a dress and some lipstick, but you will see bald spots and chest hair'" (66). Their cross-gender casting is "simple and suggestive rather than an embodied representation" (71).

Dugald Bruce-Lockhart, an actor and director with the company, discussed his repertory performances of Petruchio and Olivia in Propeller's 2006 productions of *The Taming of the Shrew* and *Twelfth Night* in an interview with Power. While his (and the company's) approach to playing women involves "refin[ing] […] movements" and "mov[ing] in a certain way," the company also makes no attempt to "convince the audience that [they are] women. That's not the point" (75). They "are just trying to play the characters" (75). Rather than "embody" characters, they "present" them (75).[11] This tactic—of foregrounding the performer's gender—can thus be used as a tool to make the performativity of gender central to one's role.

The approach of Shakespeare's Globe Theatre to staging gender in certain productions is different. The Globe produced (and then revived) a production of *Twelfth*

[11] Such an approach is reminiscent of a Brechtian method, in which actors use the "Alienation effect" (*Verfremdungseffekt*) in order to distance themselves from the character role and ultimately provoke social change.

Night with an all-male cast, starring Mark Rylance as Olivia in 2002 and 2012. Unlike Propeller, who does not pretend to conceal the fact that female characters are performed by male bodies, the Globe's production of *Twelfth Night* employs costume and make up to create "a sense of 'natural' gender codes recognised by audiences, conveying a physical and psychological representation of Elizabethan women" (Power 67). This is surely in part given the physical playing space of the Globe—a re-creation of the original Globe theatre, which was built in 1599.[12]

Rylance's rendering of Olivia was considered successful by many theatre critics: he was "as brilliant in trousers as he is in a dress" (Brantley "Boys"). In fact, the only way in which actors in these all-male production appear androgynous is when they look like women trying to be men: that is, when their biological sexes are concealed, and when they already reveal stereotypically female traits (the ability to speak in a soft, quieter voice; small facial features) which are poised to assert masculinity. Mark Rylance's portrayal of Olivia in *Twelfth Night* only approaches androgyny because his voice work and his body already communicate biological femininity:

> When Olivia is away from Viola, his voice is all whispery disdain; when she's in the same room as her beloved, his vocal cords relax and his throat opens, rounding his sounds. And you can barely believe what he's able to express with his body. Small and trim, his skirts swinging beneath him like a bell, he circles the stage, his face flushed with wit or his chin drawn deep into his ruff in longing. (Als)

As Rylance's Olivia reveals, constructed femininity can be aided in part with the help of make-up, voice work, and movement work, but to what end? It is not that the actors in these productions "strive to imitate *real* women" (Power 67, emphasis added)—

[12] Even under new artistic director Michelle Terry, today the Globe's mission is "informed by the unique historic playing conditions" of the original theatre ("Our Cause").

but in dressing and performing as women, they "[bring] the complexities of the depiction of gender in the play into sharp focus" (64).

While all-men's companies seem to be more prevalent, there have also been several all-female productions of Shakespeare's plays. Such productions' attempts at staging masculinity seem to be more easily androgynous. Female actors do not need to "erase" their genders in the way that men do: the fact that men put forth such effort in constructing femininity through make-up, voice, and movement, while women simply throw on a pair of trousers, sometimes even leaving their long hair down, speaks further to the presumed neutrality of masculinity and essential "genderedness" of femininity.

In 2012, 2014, and 2016, the Donmar Warehouse in London staged a trilogy—*Julius Caesar*, *Henry IV,* and *The Tempest*—with an all-female cast directed by Phyllida Lloyd. Set within a frame story of a women's prison, the female actors in these productions had the opportunity to perform roles typically filled by male actors. In a series of workshops conducted at Holloway prison in the London borough of Islington before the play began rehearsals, Lloyd and actor Harriet Walter

> [a]sked the participants 'how' they were approaching the cross-gender roles. They wanted to discern if the women were playing the roles as men, as women or as women playing male characters. Intriguingly the women replied 'more the characters' (Murray 2012). This idea influenced Lloyd's approach to the theatrical portrayal of the genders in her production. (Power 37)

Ultimately, the production's actors focused less on playing gender and more on character. As Walter puts it, they do not "focus heavily on the gender of the character but [take] […] cues from the text" (Power 38). The way this manifested on stage was unquestionably successful, given the production's aim: "I rarely stopped to consider that I was watching women playing men. I was too much under the spell of make-believe that is theater, in which a talented person can will herself into any form," admits a well-known theatre

critic of the New York Times in watching *The Tempest* (Brantley). Another reviewer, praising Lloyd's *Casear* and *Henry IV*, asserts that "[g]ood actors make you notice the differences between characters, not the differences the actors bring to a show" (Clapp "Shakespeare Trilogy"). In other words, the reviewer's eye was not on the actors' bodies but on the characters.

But can bodies actually read as gender-neutral on the stage? Audiences are always actively reading gender, just as we do in real life. The same is true of race: while some directors claim to perform "colour-blind casting," for instance, it is impossible for an audience not to read skin colour on the stage.[13] Audiences are also constantly aware of the fiction of watching theatre: the spell of make-believe does not conceal the artificiality of performance, but rather underscores it.

Therefore, if the "true" gender of the women in Lloyd's trilogy somehow communicated either "male" or "androgyny," it was less because of their approach and more to do with the ostensible neutrality of masculinity. Though the male is often considered primary and woman secondary, it is easier to construct masculinity with the body of the female.[14] Perhaps too it is the fact that, in the Western world, it is ostensibly acceptable for women to adorn themselves in either skirts or trousers, while it is less socially acceptable for men to wear skirts.

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[13] Dramaturg and Shakespearean Andrew Hartley explores this idea in *The Shakespearean Dramaturg*: "While many people want their Shakespeare on stage to be democratically inclusive, there are reasons to be suspicious of wholly color-blind casting, not least because race is usually inscribed in the body of the actor in ways the audience sees, ways that therefore alter the construction of meaning. To cast a white Ophelia and a black Laertes [in *Hamlet*], for instance, does not simply create a sense of visual paradox for an audience looking to see a brother/sister relationship that is somehow without race, it also alters the ways the roles will be perceived of themselves. This might be a good thing, or it might not, but it needs to be anticipated […] We live in a racially aware culture and that awareness—even if it is relatively unencumbered with prejudice or stereotypical association—should be expected to signify on stage as it does off" (85).

[14] See introduction here (18n30) for more on the historical possibility of women becoming men (but rarely the opposite).

Despite the fact that both all-male and all-female companies in the examples above strive to focus less on performing gender and more on character, it is the all-female productions that end up staging androgynous characters—"male" characters who cannot quite seem to fully cover up the femininity of their bodies.

What happens when certain (but not all) roles are creatively cast—when a male actor plays a female role alongside other men playing male roles (and vice versa)? With the precedence of many major productions at the end of the twentieth century and beginning of the twenty-first century,[15] Manchester's Royal Exchange theatre cast Maxine Peake in the title role of *Hamlet* for a 2014 production. Rather than re-gender the role, Sarah Frankcom directed Peake to play a man while other roles in the production—like the gravediggers, Polonius, and Rosencrantz—were regendered as women and played by female actors. Though this casting approach is problematic, in that it confuses the production's overall attitude and approach towards characterisation, Peake's Hamlet conveyed clear messages about gender:

> Peake's portrayal of Hamlet was both delicate and fierce, and it is this balance between the feminine actor and the masculine role that allowed her performance to 'amplify' Hamlet's sexual ambiguity and social gender failure as expressed in the text. Clapp (2014) describes Peake as 'a stripling prince, almost pre-sexual, who glides, without swagger and without girlishness' but this is where most comparisons between the two productions end. (Power 116)

As Power continues, Peake approached the male role by trying to embody it through "physical and psychological choices" (116): her hair was chopped short, for instance, and she spoke in a lower register and "bound her breasts" (116).

Whether a gender role is performed in selective cross-casting or across an entire production, the examples above illustrate that there are many possible approaches to

[15] Fiona Shaw as Richard II at The National in 1995; Kathryn Hunter as Lear at The Leicester Haymarket Theatre in 1997; Vanessa Redgrave as Prospero at the Globe in 2000, to name a few. See Wheeler's "Golden Age Transvestism."

performing gender on the stage. We might think of them as several positions on a sliding continuum: at one end, the "true" gender of the actor is prominent, with the gender of the character perhaps fading in and out at different moments, but with the focus being on the very dichotomy of actor versus character gender. At the other end of the continuum is a focus on psychological development via the gender of character, and therefore on building the characters' gender while letting that of the actor slip away. There is, of course, also a middle ground, and depending on the intention of the production team, this ambiguous approach might be deliberate or not, successful or not. The prominence of actor gender versus character gender is something to keep in mind in the analysis of Tirso's *comedias urbanas* in the chapters that follow.

B. The *Comedia* in Spanish

While I shall make no attempt to summarise the performance history of the *comedia* in Spain, an examination of how gender has been performed on the Spanish stage in the plays discussed in this thesis is crucial for our understanding of the plays in translation, especially in the modern world, given the case of artistic exchange and the frequency of (transatlantic) viewings and artistic consumption.[16] Though not easily quantifiable, the likelihood of Spanish productions of the *comedia* either directly or indirectly affecting English-language productions of the *comedia* (and vice-versa) is significant—and indeed increased by tools like the Internet, YouTube, online blogging and reviewing, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and other digital social and video streaming platforms.

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[16] Because my focus in this chapter (and thesis) is not on the performance of *comedias* in their original language, my discussion of Spanish-language productions here is necessarily limited. At the risk of making generalisations, I have opted to limit my analysis of productions to those which meet at least one of the following criteria: is written by Tirso; is not written by Tirso but is similar to one of the three Tirso plays explored in this thesis; or has been staged in the past 15 years (i.e., since the RSC's 2004 season).

Extensive research in contemporary productions of *comedias* in Spain has been undertaken by Duncan Wheeler, whose study *Golden Age Drama in Contemporary Spain: The* Comedia *on Page, Stage and Screen* explores how Golden Age dramatists' works have fared in Spain from the end of the Civil War.[17] As he concludes, while there have been surges of interest and developments in staging the *comedia*, even the creation of the Compañía Nacional de Teatro Clásico (CNTC) has been inadequate in building a performance tradition in Spain for its own classics.

Despite Spanish practitioners' failure to establish a robust performance tradition, the limited presence of *comedia* productions still merits analysis. There even exist some performances which have employed strategic cross-gender casting. As Wheeler describes, around the turn of the century "Emilio Hernández directed an all-female cast in a heavily edited version of [*Fuenteovejuna*] by Ana Rossetti to focus on how women continue, so often, to be the victims of bellicose conflict" ("The Performance History" 142).

With a limited number of exceptions, modern productions of *comedias* in Spain often utilise period costumes and, as such, a milieu that underpins this world: an historical presentation of female characters. While men wield swords and bow before *damas*, the women in these productions do needlework and seek the attention of men. This is of course—to some extent—prescribed by the dramatic texts from which these productions originate. Other stage action, however, is the result of modern directorial interpretation. In a way, Spanish productions have been largely staid and unimaginative despite the richness and ripeness of dramatic material. Even the casting choices of Spain's productions reflect this conservative attitude in the move from page to stage.

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[17] Wheeler's study includes a very useful chart on the number of *comedias* produced from the beginning of Franco's victory up until the first decade of the twenty-first century.

While the productions I write about later in this thesis are all university productions and are therefore freer to take artistic risks—given sometimes robust departmental budgets and more reliable audiences, generally made up of students—the Spanish productions discussed in this section are all professional shows. Such a setting often (although not always) implies less artistic freedom; budgets are strict, and appeasing audiences, usually with "safe" artistic choices, can become paramount. The generally traditional choices of Spanish-language productions are thus not necessarily a result of nationality but type of theatre company.

Amaya Curieses' production of *Marta la piadosa* was staged in Almagro in 2015 and featured a regendered Don Gómez: rather than Marta's father, "Doña Antonia" was the girl's aunt. Eliana Sánchez, who played the role, also doubled as Inés who, as one review put it, "pasó de ser la rígida Doña Antonia a la inocente y flexible Inés" (A.R. "Un Rosario de camuflaje"). The "texto de jocoso sabor" (A.R.) was embodied through extreme physical comedy. This non-naturalistic depiction of character was echoed in the production's scenic and sound design:

> Catorce sillas para todo tipo de disposiciones, encuentros y apartados, dos biombos y una gran cruz presidiendo se dispusieron en el escenario para la representación de una trama en la que se emplearon recursos como quedarse congelados los personajes como maniquíes mientras uno de ellos reflexionaba para sí y para el público, en la que se enlazaron escenas con música de órgano y espirituales coros y en la que se mostraron y desenmascararon fingimientos y segundas intenciones. (A.R.)

Even in plays with cross-dressed characters, Spanish directors tend to remain conservative in their use of gendered casting practices. In Curieses' adaptation of Tirso's *La mujer por fuerza* in 2008, José María Ruano de la Haza aimed to "conseguir un equivalente moderno del impacto que hubiese tenido la pieza en el espectador del siglo XVII" (*Olmedo clásico*). In the production's staging, Finea (Alicia Rodríguez) makes little attempt to conceal her female identity when disguised as the male Celio: her long

hair is merely tied back in a ponytail. While she does take on the physicality of a male, her feminine identity seems ever-present to the audience. Given its title, the play's ending is noteworthy: Finea accepts the marriage offered to her while still disguised as a man and, once all other characters have drifted away at the close of the play, Finea gingerly removes her doublet, lets it drop to the stage floor, and raises her arms above her head. She is not violently forced back into her role as a woman by anyone in particular, but realises in this more private moment that, if not a person, then circumstances have led her back to womanhood.[18] This moment thus invites spectators to passively (and similarly) accept—as Finea does—her role as woman.

Despite these conservative uses of casting and staging gender, some Spanish-language productions are explicitly sexualised. The Teatro Español staged a rock musical adaptation of *Marta la piadosa* in 1973-74. The set for this production used "a giant bed on which the various couples could simulate sexual acts" (Wheeler "The Performance History" 131) and featured more than one hundred performances of this production, a testament to its commercial success.

Similarly, Juanma Navas' rendering of *La celosa de sí misma*, staged in 2009 and directed by Marta Torres,[19] features the expression of desire not only through language but sexual acts. As the play progresses, Ángela and Melchor's attraction increases, and their scene together in the final act is physicalised and sexualised: she bites his finger and slips it into her mouth. Melchor, trembling, is excited by her. But Melchor's attraction is

[18] Blanca Oteiza instead believes that in the play it is not Finea who will become a wife by force, but Federico a husband by force: "el título se ha entendido ambiguo, pero no reviste equívoco alguno. Finea, que no es el sujeto del título, no es mujer a la fuerza ni por la fuerza, sino que es Federico quien va a tener mujer por fuerza, es decir obligado, sin su voluntad, si nos atenemos a lo que dice él mismo refiriéndose a Finea en dos ocasiones" (Oteiza "Un modelo" 659).

[19] This production fuses past and present, combining period costumes with contemporary props (like a neon "La Victoria" sign and box-movers wearing noise-cancelling headphones and wielding flashlights).

not just for Magdalena—even once Magdalena has entered and seen Ángela luring Melchor in her disguise as the Countess, Melchor is happily squeezed in between both women.

This production physicalized characters' objectives in other ways and through other characters. For instance, Quiñones is mischievous: when "helping" Magdalena get dressed, she tucks her lady's skirt in her undergarments. She also ruins Magdalena's make-up in the same scene, making her look more and more ridiculous as the scene progresses. Ángela in Torres' production is controlled in the opening act; even when Sebastián introduces Ángela to Magdalena, he shoves his sister's body down into a curtsy before Magdalena. The women are also physically aggressive: shortly after Magdalena and Ángela are introduced, when Ángela first speaks to Magdalena, the former slaps Magdalena on the shoulder with her fan. Lines later, Magdalena swipes Ángela with her large skirt.

Despite these two examples of sexualisation in performance, Spain's productions of its own classics remain conservative in that the casting, characterisation, and directorial choices largely uphold traditional values. In another production of *La celosa*,[20] at the Teatro Pavón de Madrid in December 2003, desire is not physicalised sexually, but rather explored on stage through a physical preoccupation over the female body in a way that ultimately objectifies the female actors on stage. Several choices throughout this production of *La celosa* literalised Melchor's obsession with the Countess' physical beauty. From her first entrance, Magdalena is veiled; since neither the audience nor

[20] The production featured period costumes, a somewhat pared down script, and much movement work (including a choral dance, in pairs, with all the women veiled at the start of the production). Scene changes throughout were facilitated with (sometimes similar) choral dances, and the production was at times underscored by instrumental music. Other moments—when Magdalena first reveals her hand to Melchor, for instance—are punctuated with the sound of stringed instruments being plucked.

Melchor can see her face, his attraction is indeed to only her hand. This production's Melchor also shows no modesty with Magdalena; before she can even speak, he has pulled off her glove and put it on his head. In the first scene with her *dueña* Quiñones, Magdalena undresses (and changes into another dress) as she tells Quiñones how attracted she is to the man she met in front of the church. In the final moments of the play, when Magdalena has revealed her true identity, Melchor seems pleased with the outcome—but he only wants to kiss her hand and does so before even kissing his new wife on the lips. He is obsessed not with Magdalena as a person, or even the Countess, but rather with a (disembodied) part of his new bride. As such, his love makes a fragment of the female. This staging literalises the blazon: as Laurie A. Finke says of Shakespeare's sonnet 130, the fragmented female body is fetishised (229). The difference, though, is that Tirso's women make whole their fragmented selves through their self-restoration. At the end of *La celosa*, Magdalena does not simply let Melchor love her hand, for instance; she forces him to love her entire self—body and all.

A September 2019 production of *El amor médico*, performed at the Corral de Cervantes in Madrid by the Ensamble Bufo, boasts the title of the first-known production of the play—"esta obra de la que no tenemos constancia que se haya representado anteriormente" (Castro). The production script, adapted by Alberto Gálvez, was condensed: "agilización de escenas y discursos, respeto por las expresiones de gusto barroco, clarificación de la trama por parte del coro, […] eliminación de personajes prescindibles" (Improrrogable). Five actors played nine characters, while some characters were doubled; one actor played both Quiteria and Doña Estefanía, while another played Don Rodrigo, Don Gonzalo, and the King, and a third played both Tello and Don Íñigo. A woman played the role of Doña Jerónima.

Post-production reviews claimed a feminist message was evident: "será el *leitmotiv* de la obra, haciendo hincapié en la capacidad de decisión de su protagonista así como su inteligencia y sagacidad" (Migueláñez). One review said the production was rife with "ridículo feminismo" (Catalán Deus), while another claimed that the production endeavoured to "reivindicar a la mujer y sus derechos" (González Subías). The same reviewer also claimed that the production was full of "equívocos—también sexuales" (González Subías).

Despite such claims of its feminist aims, the production seemingly remained relatively conservative, and reviews that mention such focus offered scant advice of its feminism outside of the plot itself. Production stills also reveal a seemingly comic yet traditional aesthetic: costumes evoke an original setting, and playful (rather than sexually promiscuous) same-sex play. While the production presumably elicited laughter in its substitution of "las alusiones humorísticas de la época por otras contemporáneas en un intento de reproducer el efecto buscado entonces por el dramaturgo" (Improrrogable), it did not overall seem to take any radical risks; in an attempt to mimic the aesthetic of Ron Lalá, the production turned out at times instead to be "chusco y basto" (Catalán Deus).

Modern approaches to staging the *comedia* in Spanish thus vary extensively. While it is fruitless to attempt to draw conclusions about such a wide range of theatrical work, it is noteworthy that many modern Spanish-language productions use nudity—toward various ends—in their stagings. While some productions re-gender characters, others embrace the cross-gender role-play built into the plays' dramaturgies and do not seek to create characters who entirely conceal their true gender from the audience: in other words, their gender performance remains visible to the audience but invisible to other characters. As a result, they do not utilise more radical revisionings of gender in

performance. Ultimately, while these Spanish productions make use of the body—both *desnuda* and dressed—and even physicalise sexuality and desire, they are ultimately not queer. Wheeler's assertion about Spain's staging of its own classics remains true today: it is still generally conservative.

The role of the spectator, as well as the role of the male character, in consuming the female actor/character will also be crucial in subsequent chapters. Such readings of the female body are ultimately also influenced by the casting and performance of gender. As we shall see in the following sub-section, the approach to staging *comedias* in English-language productions is slightly more radical, including in its engagement with questions of gender.

C. The *Comedia* in English

In his own translation of Calderón de la Barca's *No hay burlas con el amor*, Laurence Boswell intentionally removed any vestiges of repression for an English-language production, *The Phoenix of Madrid*, which was staged at the Ustinov Studio at the Theatre Royal in Bath, England in the autumn of 2011:

> I trimmed two of Don Alonso's rants in the second act because I think the idea of him being a wild man and a self-conscious misogynist, a woman-hating reprobate may have been more attractive to a contemporary Spanish audience. It just felt that he was alienating us too much. He's got to have enough charm to keep you on side, and yet enough of his irascible unpleasantness. Calderón's subtitle for the play was "The Critic of Love", showing Calderón's self-indulgence with Alonso. He's the Jeremy Clarkson character, as we were saying in rehearsal, from Top Gear. (Jeffs "Interview" 193-194)

Such an example is a testament to the freedom with which directors approach English-language productions of the *comedia*. While Spanish-language productions of the *comedia* have remained generally conservative, in that they infrequently employ the use of single-sex casts or creative casting, English-language productions are generally bolder: as Wheeler has recently argued, cross-gender casting is "a trend that had become

increasingly normalized on the British stage" (Wheeler "Golden Age Transvestism" 272). In this section, I discuss select productions of *comedias* on the English-speaking stage since the 2004 RSC season.[21] Because of my selective interest on the performance of gender specifically, I do not discuss all English-language productions of the *comedia* but rather focus on those written by Tirso, those of a similar sub-genre of the *comedia*, and/or those whose productions engaged in queer casting practices.[22]

Fortunately, these sorts of characters and dramaturgies exist also in the works of playwrights other than Tirso. I thus conclude this chapter with an analysis of five productions, only some of which are by Tirso: Lope's *La dama boba* (1613), Tirso's *Don Gil de las calzas verdes* (c. 1615, in two different translations), Luis Vélez de Guevara's *La Serrana de la Vera*[23] (1613), and Guillén de Castro's *La fuerza de la costumbre* (c. 1610-15), all in recent English-language translation and performance. These plays deal explicitly with gender, and as such invite a consideration of the queer potential at work in the plays themselves, as well as how that potential can be articulated on the stage.

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[21] There are a number of productions about which I do not have the space to write in this study. Absent here are the many wonderful English- and Spanish-language productions staged at the Chamizal National Memorial's annual Siglo de Oro Drama Festival in El Paso, Texas—a city which straddles the border of the US and Mexico. The festival has largely staged *comedias* in their original Spanish, bringing in companies from Spain as well as North, Central and South America. It boasts the title of the longest-running festival of performance of Golden Age drama. Since 2004, only a handful of productions have been performed in English translation. And in its 40 years, the festival has seen 32 productions of plays by Tirso as of June 2019.

[22] For an excellent study of Golden Age drama on the contemporary English-speaking stage, see Catherine Boyle and David Johnston's 2007 *The Spanish Golden Age in English: Perspectives on Performance.* The collection features essays from many preeminent scholars, including several who were involved with the RSC's season of Golden Age plays. Of particular relevance to this study is the appendix ("Modern productions of Golden Age plays in English in Great Britain," assembled by Kathleen Mountjoy [Jeffs] and Duncan Wheeler, 23-28) to Thacker's essay "History of Performance in English."

[23] Erdman follows C. George Peale in capitalizing "*Serrana*," despite most critical work on the play using a lower case "s."

1. *The Force of Habit*

Guillén de Castro's *La fuerza de la costumbre* deals explicitly with the question of whether gender is biological or socially constructed.[24] Shockingly modern in its content, the play follows two siblings, Hipólita and Félix, raised separately and as the opposite gender to one another: Hipólita as a boy by their father, and Félix as a girl by their mother. When they meet, they are taught a series of lessons in order to "become" the "correct" gender—an undertaking that is, despite some resistance, ultimately successful given their (heterosexual) love interests in Don Luis and Leonor, respectively. At the end of the play, Hipólita returns to her male attire, poised to kill Don Luis in a duel (she thinks he betrayed her) but is instead outperformed. When Hipólita returns to her male attire at the end of the play, she is forced by her lover into having sex. It is through sex, "which may or may not be consensual depending on how you read her final monologue," that Hipólita "'becomes a woman'" in the play (Jeffs "The Challenge").

Kathleen Jeffs' English-language translation of the play, *The Force of Habit*, was produced for the first time at Gonzaga University in February 2013. Although the play problematises the idea that one's biology alone produces their gender, its conclusion reinstates the siblings into heteronormative roles. To a modern audience, such an ending could be potentially upsetting or uncomfortable. After all, the play explores the riskiness of role-play: it

> dramatizes the importance of social role-play to a functioning society, and the dangers to the individual of either not knowing the appropriate social language or having one's signals misunderstood. The play charts the feminization of a *mujer varonil*, and the simultaneous masculinization of her effeminate brother, a less common *hombre femenil*. (Thacker *Role-Play* 23)

[24] Certainly the title—"*costumbre*"—underscores the importance of habit and repetition in the construction of gender.

Despite the play's dated treatment of gender roles, the production of the play was, as Jeffs explains, shockingly (and disturbingly) "well-received as a successful comedy; they laughed, they cried, they went home happy" which was "[n]ot entirely [Jeffs'] intention with a play full of fascinating gender inversion and a lot of insistence on heteronormativity" (Jeffs "The Challenge").

The play (and this production) ultimately raises some important and difficult questions about whether gender is learned or something with which one is born. Ultimately, as Vélez Quiñones suggests, Hipólita and Félix's "trouble 'getting it right' suggest[s] in fact that no such thing as 'right' exists and that *costumbre* is always relative, at best, whether it produces manly men, masculine women, effeminate youths, tomboys, queer subjects or straight boys and girls" (192).

But audiences of this production experienced no such ending. This is not to say that the play does not make the case that gender is not necessarily biological (it does), but is more to do with audiences: to what extent is a subversive play read as normative to a certain audience?

Through future performance, this play poses even more opportunities. Consider cross-gender casting, for instance: if Hipólita is played by a male actor and Félix by a female, the second half of the play becomes an exercise in non-normative identity; Hipólita's slow transition from social female to social male instead becomes the insignia of queer identity. Characterisation in performance—such as the way the siblings' parents interact with their children, or the ease with which they transition to their "true" genders, or Hipólita's attitude in her final speech—would all make for different productions and therefore starkly different readings of the play.

2. *A Lady of Little Sense*

Although Boswell extracted repressive tendencies in his translation of *No hay burlas* in order to make the play more relatable on the modern stage, not all of Boswell's directorial work is similar. One such example is his production of Lope's *La dama boba* [*A Lady of Little Sense*], in a translation by David Johnston, at the Theatre Royal's Ustinov Studio in Bath in 2013.[25] The play is, as theatre critic Michael Billington put it in his review of Boswell's production, "a good, rather than a great, comedy." He compares the play, and particularly its gender politics, to Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew*:

> Lope is expert at portraying the dilemma faced by women in a patriarchal society where, whether as daughters or wives, they are the victims of male egos: Finea is initially despised for her stupidity, yet, once her intelligence is sharpened by love, an unnerved Laurencio says: "I was safe in your simplicity." In the end, however, this is what makes it a good, rather than a great, comedy. With Shakespeare's Shrew you feel that Petruchio, as well as Kate, learns something about life. Here, there is no mutual maturation process, so the new-flowering Finea winds up with a partner who still believes that "a woman, like a little lamb, is a golden fleece to her husband. (Billington)

While Billington's understanding of Shakespeare's *Shrew* ignores the possibility of a darker, more misogynist reading, his point about Lope's play holds up: despite a transformation, Finea ends up with a husband who has little respect for her. The production was generally successful, although in a way it anticipated this unhappy ending through an antiquated approach to staging Finea's transformation.

An extended dance and song piece, which felt like the dramatic centre of the production, fuelled Finea's metamorphosis. In the competition, Finea outperforms her

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[25] This production was part of an entire season of *comedias* performed at the Theatre Royal in Bath (UK) in 2013. The three repertory productions—Lope's *Punishment Without Revenge,* Lope's *A Lady of Little Sense*, and Tirso's *Don Gil of the Green Breeches*—were rendered by three different translators. As his extensive writing about translation suggests, Johnston's approach to translating *La dama boba* is liberal and encouraging of a contemporary aesthetic. It is one which echoes what he advocated for in an essay in 2008: "*La dama boba* is dead to us; we're not of that time, the details and nuances are gone" ("Translator Doubleness", qtd. in Larson "Translating and Adapting" 32).

sister Nise. The result was that the production felt at moments sexist given the quality of Finea's change: her transition from lady of little sense to a woman of wit is both intellectual and physical, suggesting that intelligence can manifest physically. As Fernández and Vázquez explain in their review of the Golden Age season, the actress playing Finea (Frances McNamee) "embodied to perfection Finea's gradual physical and intellectual transformation" (615). She went "[f]rom a beast-like character whose savagery was apparent in her matted hair, lost expression, and aggressive rodent-like gestures" to "a witty heroine who even surpassed her smart sister" (615). At the start of the play Finea was "socially challenged" with chopsticks and rag bits tied to chunks of her hair, "impersonating animals […] scratching herself and grimacing with tics, spewing out food and the wine she swigged from a bottle" (Fischer "Lope and Tirso Translated" 238). Her oversized white shift made her look like a patient in a mental institution. After her transformation, though, Finea indeed becomes "a woman of sense, refinement, and intelligence, cleverer than both her sister and the misogynistic men around her, as she got control over the proscriptions that would affect her life" (238).

In an essay discussing six translations of *La dama boba*, Catherine Larson describes translator John Farndon's reaction to Boswell's production of the play against his own reading (and translation). Farndon's reading distinguishes between the agency at the core of Finea's change: rather than the man teaching the girl to be smart, Farndon asserts that it is the clever girl being smart enough to play stupid:

> he felt [Boswell's production] presented the protagonist as "a stupid and wild girl who was tamed and given sense by a man" instead of as "a clever girl playing dumb because it's the best way to get by in a man's world," a view, shared by others, that points to the ambiguities of reading Finea's "transformation." To support his reading, Farndon's translation eliminates some of the key lines that might illuminate Laurencio as a teacher who understands the power of love to produce reason and enlightenment. The first elision occurs in Act 1 when Laurencio promises Finea, "Tú verás, de mí querida, / cómo has de quererme aquí; / que es luz del entendimento /

> amor" (Lope 828-31). The second omission, a central moment in the play, is Finea's famous soliloquy at the beginning of Act 3, an apostrophe in which she thanks Love for her intellectual transformation. (Larson "Translating and Adapting" 28)

Fernández and Vázquez argue that the three plays in the Theatre Royal's Spanish Golden Age repertory assert specifically a criticism of the Spanish honour code "and particularly its impact on women" (617).[26] This was apparent in Boswell's production through Finea's sister Nise's expression of honour (and, I would argue, femininity), which was communicated "through a 'high heels mentality': an upright physicality grounded in gold-rimmed spectacles and a tight-fitting dress with modified panniers, which not only restricted movement but also kept her aloof and distant" (Fischer "Lope and Tirso Translated" 239). In many ways, the production thus presents woman in a role similar to that in seventeenth-century Spain: with not only "pressures to conform" (Thacker *Role Play* 58), but also a willingness to play her assigned role. As Thacker points out, Donald Larson argues that the play is largely about "[learning] to play the correct role" (57).

Boswell's production anticipates the unhappy ending common to the *comedias urbanas* I discuss in this study, but ultimately does so in such a way that Finea appears less clever than she might be in another production. Though English-language productions often feature empowered women, Boswell's approach to the role instead strips Finea of her agency.

3. *Don Gil of the Green Breeches*

One of the other productions staged in the Theatre Royal's season—and the only play by Tirso—was *Don Gil de las calzas verdes*, staged in a new translation by Sean

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[26] While *Punishment* is an obvious example of the violent results of adherence to such an honour-based system, even *A Lady* and *Don Gil*, they reason, "nevertheless imply the objectification of women, subject to the will of men" (Fernández and Vázquez 614).

O'Brien, and directed by Mehmet Ergen. Juana's Don Gil disguise—a bright green doublet and cape—stood out against the otherwise neutral period costumes. Bright blue, cloudy skies make up the production's upstage design, and a bright yellow ladder facilitated the actors' movement between the multi-level set.

In addition to reviews, both scholarly and popular, there have been two noteworthy academic studies of the production (alongside other *comedia* productions), most of which take note of the body and physicality of the actor playing Donna Juana/Don Gil (Hedydd Dylan)—though perhaps that is not so surprising in a play which features, as one review put it, "no less than four men […] dressed in green" (Schofield). Fernández and Vázquez observe the physical freedom with which Dylan moves, while the other women move in more restricted spaces (617). Jeremy Brien's critique poignantly (though also somewhat alarmingly) describes Juana/Don Gil as "sagacious, coquettish and desirable to both sexes" (Brien, qtd. in Wheeler "Golden Age" 277). Wheeler's own analysis points to how "Dylan's physique facilitated an androgynous performance"—though he points out that the actor also played "the role of the prostitute in the opening scene of *Punishment without Revenge*" and therefore the topography of her body "did not imply an asexual stage presence" (276). Wheeler also asserts that the costume designer's work "[transformed] Dylan, and Elvira, into a hyper-sexualised classical beauty" akin to figures in Velázquez's paintings (277). Such costume choices invite male characters to objectify the female actor/character.

While theatre productions spend at least some rehearsal time developing the physicality of characters—a crucial step in the development of a three-dimensional character on stage—the text typically (if problematically) remains uppermost, especially when staging classics. What is particularly interesting, though, is that the actor playing

Juana/Don Gil shared in an interview that the nature of her own approach to the role was firstly physical:

> Of all the characters I play in the Season, Donna Juana is closest to myself, so I found her relatively quickly. I came at Elvira [another character Juana disguises herself as in the play] from a different angle; I thought about how she spoke, what she looks like, what effect I wanted to have on Ines, etc. I worked on her from the outside in, which is not how I usually work, but it seemed fitting as she was not a real character but an invention by Juana. Don Gil was the most difficult for me. I initially tried to aim for a very convincing man, doing a lot of work on masculine physicality and lowering my voice, etc. I found this quite inhibiting; it made me feel quite stiff and unable to act freely. I also felt very encumbered by the costume. The sleeves and doublets are very tight, whereas I had hoped for broad shoulders and loose sleeves to help me feel able to swish around like a pirate! So with all these things considered, we settled on a more androgynous Don Gil, which does actually fit the text. (276)[27]

Despite Dylan's intention, not all see "androgyny" in the role of Juana/Don Gil. In fact, in a way not so different to how original audiences may have seen the character, Rosie Seagraves asserts that cross-gender roles do "not create androgyny, but rather a break between the visible and the knowable" which "signals the heterogeneous nature of Juana's character" in this play specifically (260-61). In other words, Juana's "blended" character identity reminds audiences of the actor's identity. Seagraves goes on to explain that as audiences watch a female actor flip back and forth between Juana/Don Gil,

> the servant characters consistently remind us that Doña Juana is a manly woman and Don Gil is a womanly man. As Jelena Sánchez points out in her discussion of Tirso's play, if Juana offers a version of masculinity for audiences, it is a highly effeminized version that "represents the ubiquity of a feminized mass culture in Spain" […]. In addition to the sexual connotations of the green breeches, Caramanchel's consistent commentary lets no one forget the feminine aspects of Don Gil's appearance. This constant reminder of Don Gil's effeminacy does not just resonate with a feminized society, but also offers a blended figure that the audience can identify as neither man nor woman throughout the play. These reminders signal the way in which only a blurring of these identities can sustain the

[27] Though the actress playing Donna Juana acknowledges the restrictive nature of her costume (as Don Gil), Fernández and Vázquez describe the set as being open, which in turn "accentuated her ability to move through various spaces, unlike the other female protagonists, whose spaces tended to be more constrained" (617).

> break between appearance and reality that follows (and multiplies to the point of farcicality). (261)

Seagraves looks to Tracey Sedinger's reasoning as proof for audiences' focus on actor rather than character: when looking at a crossdresser who "passes," "in order not to look *through*" the crossdresser, "one must know that one is looking *at* a crossdresser" (Sedinger 63). In other words, "audiences […] see one gender proposed by the play but know the actor to be of another" (Seagraves 260).[28]

But the fact that actor-character gender lines up (i.e., that Juana is played by a female actor), means that even if what Sedinger says is true—that audiences gaze upon the actor's body in order to see their cross-dressed role—it does not matter because both actor's body and the primary role (in this case, Juana) are both the same gender. What matters instead is that there is a disguise atop the character (of Juana, in this play), and that there is any ambiguity at all—whether between Juana/Don Gil or female actor/Don Gil. If the "highly effeminized version" (Sánchez 261) of masculinity that Juana presents is not androgyny, then what is?

The very discrepancies between male and female, between masculine and feminine, in such "blended figure[s]" is what constitutes "queer" characterisation. This "queer" nature of Juana/Don Gil also facilitates, as Galoppe and Dalton observe, reactions "of queer confusion" from other characters (Juana, in this case) throughout the play (141).

Thus, the production explores gender through queering characters' identities, but also queer sexuality. To Galoppe and Dalton, the Ustinov production "embrace[d] queer discourses of gender and desire that transcend geographic or cultural boundaries and

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[28] This concept of seeing two signifiers on one object brings to mind Joseph Jastrow's 1899 duck-rabbit drawing, which Wittgenstein in 1953 wrote about in *Philosophical Investigations* (194): the heads of a duck and a rabbit can both be seen, though not simultaneously. Similarly, the Golden Age audience member's awareness perhaps flickered back and forth between actor and character.

translate well in present-day domestic narratives" (135) through the characterisation of Quintana—a character whom they call queer (146n5). Such a revisioning, as they elucidate in a footnote of their essay,

> changes the dynamics of his interaction with Doña Juana and, more decisively, with Don Martín when he reports the "death" of his mistress in childbirth at the beginning of Act 3. Later on in the play, when confronted by Don Juan, Don Martín confuses him with the wandering soul of Doña Juana and, disregarding the sex of his opponent, passionately kisses him in a queer pronouncement that dislocates sexual attraction from conventional binaries. (146n5)

What is certain is that the performance of gender in this production is a performance. As Wheeler observes, the production "simultaneously reflect[s] on and reproduce[s] principles contained in Judith Butler's claim that there 'is no gender identity behind the expressions of gender; that identity is performatively constituted by the very "expressions" that are said to be its result'" ("Golden Age" 279).

4. *Love's a Bitch*

In 2018, Dalton directed his own adaptation of the play, titled *Love's a Bitch*, at the University of Virginia (US), which "engages with postfeminist and queer narratives, a strategy that serves the double purpose of reflecting on the source while bringing more familiar analogies to the foreground" (Galoppe and Dalton 133).[29] Dalton's adaptation, which was based on his reading of several different English-language translations, involved several changes to Tirso's original play for performance. In the adapted opening scene of Dalton's adaptation, for instance, Juana expects her father to act as a father might—with affection—but he refuses to protect her, threatening instead to send her to a

[29] The production ran from 22 February-1 March 2018 and featured Renaissance-inspired costumes, but with anachronistic touches, like certain characters wearing trainers and sunglasses. Dalton adapted the play in many ways. For instance, after a long series of readings and drafts of the adaptation, Dalton decided to eliminate the ruse Don Martín instigates and simply instead call him "Don Gil" from the start.

convent.[30] In retaliation, Juana steals her father's sword and forces him to undress before her, after which she puts on his green outfit—the clothing that allows her to embody (and create) the green breeches role of "Don Gil." In this way, the production reverses the expected power dynamic between male and female, placing agency in the role of the woman. It is through this reversal that this version of *Don Gil* begins to engage with forms of non-normative storytelling. From this point, the production and its creative team "propose a queer approach […] that breaks away from the binaries of gender and sex, whether straight, lesbian, or gay, which have so far permeated most critical considerations" (134).

In fact, several aspects of Dalton's version render the production "queer." These "queer" aspects manifest through both the materiality of the stage performance (such as costume and hair choices), but also through the script itself;[31] as adaptor Dave Dalton explained to me in an interview, his version involves a moment in which three characters express their love of "Don Gil" in succession: first Doña Inés, then Doña Clara, and finally Don Gil (Martín in Tirso's play). When Don Gil/Martín expresses his love for "Don Gil," he does so (wrongfully) thinking "Don Gil" is a man. Although "Don Gil" is actually a woman, and is being played by a female actor, Don Gil/Martín—within the context of the play and performance—is here expressing homoerotic desire. Dalton's script heightens Don Gil's desire here, elaborating it through asides.

While the adaptation "explores desire rooted in the fluidity of subjectivity beyond a gendered body and defined by clothes" (Galoppe and Dalton 141), the production also

[30] In Tirso's play, this opening scene is between Juana and her servant, Quintana.
[31] I have attempted several times to obtain Dalton's script in order to provide specific examples but, unfortunately, my requests have been unmet.

used hair and costume to "queer" its characters in performance.[32] As Dalton described, the production's design, although anachronistic, was inspired by the look of the Cavalier. As such, the three males in the production donned long hairstyles. When Juana was disguised as "Don Gil," then, the actor wore her long hair down. In this way, Juana's "Don Gil" did not appear particularly masculine, but androgynous: the actor did not attempt to hide her true gender. Even so, "Don Gil's" androgyny was apparent. Interestingly, however, the men in the production thus—within a modern context, to its twenty-first century audience—appeared to be particularly feminine. But while this material aspect of the production helped emphasise Juana's character, Dalton explained that there were no other corporal changes for the actor when going from Juana to "Don Gil": she did not, for instance, change her physicality or her voice. What Dalton did encourage, though, was that the actor use the tools of power and status to embody "Don Gil": as Juana, the actor thus played a lower status character, and when "Don Gil" she played higher status (Dalton personal interview).[33]

What else was striking about Dalton's adaptation and subsequent production was his view that, as I will argue of Tirso's other plays, by the end of the *comedia* Juana is not actually interested in marrying Martín. In Dalton's version, Juana's "love [for Martín] turns to hatred" over the course of the play (Dalton personal interview). After Don Gil/Martín is unmoved by Juana's lie that she has become pregnant, she becomes "even

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[32] As Galoppe and Dalton clarify, "a character's attire may help reveal the body underneath but the attraction is preconceived and remains fixed while gender flows in multiple directions" (141).

[33] Status, or the difference of power between characters, is a bedrock of (successful) improvisational comedy. Characters of higher status exert more power than those with lower status. Power, or status, is articulated through both body and voice. See Keith Johnstone's understanding of status, as he articulates in his *Impro: Improvisation and the Theatre*, which centres on one's actions rather than their social status. See also Robert Trappl and Paolo Petta's *Creating Personalities for Synthetic Actors: Towards Autonomous Personality Agents.*

more mad," but then "she decides she's going to destroy him" when even the lie that she has told fails to change Don Gil/Martín (Dalton personal interview). As Dalton describes, Juana then "becomes enchanted with the power she receives" (Dalton personal interview) when she is disguised as a man: it is what leads her to seduce Doña Clara.

At the end of Tirso's play, Juana reveals her true identity to which Don Gil/Martín immediately converts. He suddenly swears his devotion to Juana:

> Confuso
> Te la beso, prenda cara,
> Y agradecido de ver
> Que cesaron por tu causa
> Todos mis persecuciones. (*Don Gil* 3221-25)

In Dalton's adaptation, Don Gil/Martín demonstrates his love to her, thinking her revelation is "an expression of her devotion" (Dalton personal interview). Though Juana protests, she is restrained (by a set of guards, characters invented by Dalton) and forced by her father. As a result, the patriarchy and convention of marriage is converted into a punishment—a sentiment consistent with many of Tirso's other plays.[34] As Galoppe and Dalton put it, the "awkwardness of the conventional ending is shaped as a question to the audience: Should order be restored and heteronormativity reimposed?" (145). Like many other productions of Tirso, the audience of this production was aware of Juana's disappointment over having to get married. Although she increasingly tries to avoid marriage, through her male disguise Juana ironically puts herself into a position in which "she has to get married" (Dalton personal interview).

5. *Wild Thing*

In February 2019, a production of Luis Vélez de Guevara's *La Serrana de la Vera* (1613) was staged at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. The production was of

[34] See chapter 3 here (134) for more on the comparison of "matrimonio" and "Argel" in *El amor médico.*

Harley Erdman's English-language translation of the play, titled *Wild Thing*.[35] The play follows the trajectory of a brash, masculine mountain (wo)man,[36] Gila, as she is faced with a marriage proposal from a Captain. She at first resists because she is forced into womanhood:

> y agora echo de ver, pues que me tratas
> casamiento con este caballero,
> que soy mujer, que para tanto daño
> ha sido mi desdicha el desengaño. (526-29)

Eventually, though, she accepts, excited by the prospect of becoming the Captain's equal, "por imitar a vuestro lado luego / a la gran Isabel" (560-61) with whom Gila is in love. But after just one night together, the Captain abandons Gila, who then returns to the mountains and takes revenge on the men who pass by, throwing them one by one over a cliff to their deaths. The play closes with Gila about to be executed for her wrongdoings.

In this English-language debut production, Gila—who has been described by various scholars as "manly, irregular, monstrous, feminist, homosexual, bisexual, ambiguous, lesbian, transsexual, hybrid, and queer" (Erdman "Introduction" *Mountain Girl* 2) was played by a gender non-conforming actor who uses "they" pronouns. Though the casting circumstances for this production are by no means typical, the use of non-traditionally gendered actors is becoming increasingly common. As more *comedias* are translated for modern performance, the opportunity might arise for actors who identify as non-binary to take on the roles of *damas* and *galanes*. The role of Gila in particular raises

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[35] This production was directed by Gina Kaufmann, and toured to El Paso, TX in April 2019, where it was staged as part of the 33rd annual Chamizal National Memorial's Siglo de Oro Drama Festival. This is, as far as I am aware, the most recent example of an English-language production of a *comedia* which utilises cross-gender casting.

[36] Gila refers to herself as a man throughout the play: "Hasta agora / me imaginaba, padre, por las cosas / que yo me he visto h[az]er, hombre y muy hombre" (Vélez de Guevara 523-25); In response to the Captain's "Ni yo mujer que tan bien / lo jure" (349-50), Gila replies "Si imagináis / que lo soy, os engañáis, / que soy muy hombre" (350-52).

interesting questions and challenges when played by a non-binary actor: how does the character become gendered in performance? Does the actor consciously play the role as feminine or masculine? Or non-binary, perhaps? And to what extent does the actor's gender identity colour their performance of gender in the role?

In his critical introduction to the play in translation, Erdman offers up the category of "transgender" as perhaps "the best frame for Gila—that is, someone at odds with the gender assigned to them at birth or whose combination of masculine and feminine facets" render them ambiguous (2). As a result, the production team's "conversations about Gila […] gravitated toward using 'they' pronouns to talk about Gila" in part because "Gila's identity is in flux in the play" (Erdman "Program Note"). The decision ultimately "allow[ed] the production team to dig into our contemporary understandings of gender roles and gender expression while opening up a new possible interpretation of a classical text" (Lefevre "*Wild Thing* Study Guide" 2). While the term "transgender" is not used by the actor in real life, there are obvious parallels between them and Gila: for instance, an unwillingness to conform to a binary gender.[37]

In *La Serrana*, Gila's identity at the start of the play, in the mountains, is stereotypically masculine: she "hunts, fences, gambles, ploughs, even bull-fights" (Erdman "Introduction" *Mountain Girl* 1). But once she agrees to marriage with the Captain, she accepts a feminine identity, albeit reluctantly. When he leaves her after taking her virginity, though, Gila becomes more aggressively masculine. The actor who

[37] It is important to note that the use of "they" pronouns does not imply that the individual identifies as "transgender": "There are many different people who use 'they' as a gender pronoun for an incredible breadth of motivations (as an intermediary pronoun before transitioning, itself a process not necessarily in binarist realm), as a means of testing the waters of non-binary expression, as a matter of political preference, as a pronoun used only in particular settings or with particular people (publicly 'they' but use he/she/ze/ey/other pronouns as they feel or with particular people, etc). The point being: there is often a quality of 'otherness' in the use which seeks to overcome or move beyond the binary" (Ulven).

played Gila (Catherine Newell) pointed out in an interview how other characters' perceptions of Gila shifted in this moment too: after desertion by the Captain, "people see her as just female" (Newell personal interview). And, in true fashion as a *mujer varonil*, Gila uses her feminist characteristics against those people, upturning what it means to be traditionally "female."

In the discussions throughout the production process, the pronouns used for Gila shifted, and Gila was responsive and sensitive to those pronouns in performance depending on who used them. For instance, Gila accepts her father calling her "daughter," but when others label Gila as feminine, it is an insult. Newell admits that it was in this way that their personal experience informed their fleshing out of the character in performance.

But the fact that they are a gender non-conforming actor does not necessarily make the production more about gender than it otherwise is or would be. And, as a result, Newell's experience is not so different to that of a cis-gendered actor in the production, especially given the re-gendering of Gila from "she" to "they." But, as Newell admits, "this is something that gender non-conforming actors are going to have to be up against" as they are cast in cis-gendered roles (Newell personal interview). As discussed in this chapter, there is always the potential to (re)injure gender non-conforming actors when cast in binary roles. Though Gila bounds between "she" and "they" throughout this production, Newell's personal gender identity turned up in reviews of the production:

> Gila's character, played by Catherine Newell, an actor who identifies as a 'they' versus a 'her,' is truly both a man and a woman, displaying both a man's strength with her sword and the passion and grace of a vulnerable woman. (Hartshorne)

Newell's (and Gila's) impetus not to conform to gender binarism (and the expression of this ambiguity) ironically, to the outside world, only affirms their place within the binary: Newell is suddenly, and publicly, deemed both a man and a woman.

While this production makes use of non-traditional casting, the directorial choice also raises interesting questions about the ethics of casting. When actors' personal identities are at stake publicly, does the choice to disclose such details put at risk the production's potential subversiveness? Even so, Erdman's impetus to reflect in his adaptation the gender ambiguity of Gila by neutralising some of the language in the play (for instance, "village girl" becomes "villager") marks a substantial step towards non-normative storytelling, as does Kaufmann's support of queer identity on the modern stage.

V. Conclusion

This chapter has put forth various models for how *comedias* might engage with gender in/as performance on the modern stage. Central to such an approach is not only the script and a direct engagement with how bodies move and appear on stage, but also how spectators read those bodies.

Through a consideration of the performance history of Shakespeare's canon, we are able to access the mechanisms behind approaches that work, as well as some that do not work, in order to apply them to Tirso's *comedias urbanas*. Such an analysis is the focus of the following three chapters. Chapters 2, 3, and 4, which focus on three particular *comedias urbanas* by Tirso in modern production, grapple with the role of the audience in staging plays and reading gender on the modern stage, as well as casting choices and how to approach cross-gender plots in translation.

Chapter 2 explores Tirso's *Marta la piadosa*, first staged in the English language (in a translation/adaptation *Marta the Divine*) in 2009 at the University of Massachusetts Amherst (UMass, US). Chapter 3 features an exploration of *El amor médico* (*Love the*

Doctor) in two English-language productions at UMass in 2011 and the University of North Carolina Charlotte (US) in 2013. Chapter 4 deals with the most recently translated Tirso in the English-language—*La celosa de sí misma* (*Jealous of Herself*), which was staged at the University of Oxford's Keble O'Reilly Theatre in 2015.

All three of these plays by Tirso engage with issues of gender. The very reason for the plot of Marta (in *Marta la piadosa*)—in which a woman is frustrated in her romantic pursuits—is because of her sex. How she evades gendered roles, as I will argue, depends on how she performs her gender. These topics, intrinsic to the text, are further explored through casting in the play's English-language debut performance. *El amor médico* perhaps most explicitly deals with gender through its primary *dama*, Jerónima, who takes on the disguise of not only a man, but also multiple feminine roles as well. Finally, Magdalena's jealousy of herself (in *La celosa de sí misma*) is rooted in something which at least partially makes up her gender and femininity: her body. As vision becomes a central motif in the play (and manifests in not only Magdalena but the *galán*, Melchor), a consideration of the play through the frame of spectatorship—both metaphorical and actual—sheds light on gender dynamics in the play and its performance.

Chapter 2: *Marta la piadosa*

The title character of Tirso de Molina's c. 1614-15[1] play *Marta la piadosa* invites a wide range of interpretation. Marta's affinity for improvisation was readily apparent when she—played by Monica Giordano in the 2009 English-language world premiere of the play at the University of Massachusetts—devises lies about a vow of chastity. Marta falls to her knees and clasps her hands into a position of prayer, convincingly feigning a religious conversion and claiming that she has "a holy calling" (30).[2] When the act ends and she has—temporarily, at least—avoided marrying the feeble Captain Urbina, who is hunched over the young woman in his gold and black doublet and cape, Marta's sister Lucía—played by a man in this production—scuttles off the stage, thrilled that s/he will soon be paired off with the young and attractive Felipe. Marta's final words to her lover Felipe are justifiably ambiguous: when asked if her sudden devotion is for Felipe or for her love of God, Marta responds, "You'll soon see how I keep my vows" (33). Marta's success in manipulating her circumstance in order to achieve her desires relies on her ability to make choices spontaneously; she draws on her ability to improvise.

The character's choice to feign a religious conversion in order to avoid an arranged marriage to an old Captain allows us to view her sympathetically—as a woman who can expect little agency over her very own life. Literary responses make the play out to be serious from the start: as Melveena McKendrick argues, "our sympathies, and Tirso's, are entirely with her and the play presents what is surely one of the most

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[1] The Ensign's account of a battle at Mamora narrates an event that took place in August 1614. Gerald Wade puts forth the idea that this event, which was recounted in the Horozco chronicle (and first appeared at the beginning of 1615), was Tirso's source (69). Also see Elvira E. García (10-12), Blanca de los Ríos (who says the play was written one year later), and Cotarelo y Mori (*Comedias* xxvii).

[2] Lines of the play in English come from Erdman's unpublished adaptation, "MARTA El Paso cut." Cf. Erdman's published version of the translation. All quotations in Spanish come from Ignacio Arellano's edition.

persuasive cases against forced marriage in the Spanish theatre": Marta is "not a hypocrite" but rather "merely uses hypocrisy to achieve her rightful ends" (*Woman and Society* 137). An equally legitimate reading is more critical of Marta: she has been called a "manipulator" despite creating a "clever plot" to "achieve her way" (García 4). According to Jane Albrecht, "[w]e do not identify with her; we laugh at her" (*Irony* 83).

Though the play opens with two sisters mourning, the 2009 production elicited laughter from the start: Marta and Lucía entered in darkness, threw themselves on the stage floor, and wailed. Later in the first act, audiences laugh at Marta's attempt to avoid marriage, Lucía's excitement over Felipe's sudden availability, and Captain Urbina's ignorance as he suggests to Gómez "Maybe you should ask her if she's sure?" (31). Though aided by the material elements of performance, this production consistently made audiences laugh. Albrecht's assertion that the play is not an overt comedy but instead a "satire" ("The Satiric Irony" 38) holds little ground when tested on the contemporary stage. As this production exhibits, a theatrical performance does not offer a mere reading of or approach to a script, but a new artistic product in and of itself. Marta, as a physical presence on the stage, is brought to life not only through the lines of the play themselves, but her physicality, her tone, and her dress.

In considering how Marta is played, then, certain questions must be asked in rehearsal that would not typically be considered in a reading of the play alone. For instance, are there dimensions of her character to be discovered in an analysis when she is embodied by an actor? And, further, how might we be able to make sense of the gender performativity explored on the Tirsian page when those words are moved to the stage and into the mouths of actors? The aim of this chapter is to examine the representation and construction of gender in Tirso's *Marta* on both page and stage. Given the appropriate behaviour for women in seventeenth-century Spain, I offer an analysis of the play's title

character, as well as its form and content, in performance and text. I argue that *Marta* on both the page and stage subverts patriarchy in two ways: in its reframing of femininity, and through its dramaturgy. Specifically, I argue that both the printed text and performance script reframe the symbol of all things traditionally feminine through the character Marta, as well as feature a "queer" dramaturgy in the play's tension between a patriarchal structure and non-normative message. It is these elements of the play's content and form that produce a subversive play text. Ultimately, I argue that this play is justifiably "queered" in its English-language debut performance by its director and actors through its non-normative casting and staging.

As a result of its casting specifically, the production transgressed the image of woman in the social imaginary and deconstructed power relations within the context of the world of the play. It also actively undermines hegemony in that it draws on queer notions of gender. It does so by not defining gender based on categorical gender binaries (male and female), but instead by characterising gender and identity as something that is always in flux, and as multifaceted. The characters' identities in this production are always shifting: Lucía, for instance, performs femininity, but appears physically masculine as she is embodied by a male actor. Furthermore, I argue in this chapter that this "queering" is a valid reading of Tirso's textual characterisation in the original Spanish play.

Despite a rather meagre performance history, the *comedia* in English has been produced in various theatrical milieux: from period-specific productions to more contemporary, abstract contexts as we have seen throughout chapter 1.[3] What makes this

[3] One particular production of Lope's *Los locos de Valencia* (2007), for instance, featured a black canvas with white impressionistic drawings of buildings. On the stage was what resembled a white tree, with hands and arms as branches. The costumes in this production were equally abstract.

first-ever English-language translation and production of *Marta* particularly relevant to this study is that it sought to explore the malleability (rather than the fixedness) of gender roles. For this particular production, I also served as dramaturg.[4] The script, developed from a literal translation by Harley Erdman and directed by Gina Kaufmann, was a heavily adapted version of Tirso's play.[5] The production was staged on the main, proscenium theatre at UMass, the Rand. *Marta* was also revived in El Paso, Texas the following March (2010) at the Chamizal National Memorial's Siglo de Oro Drama Festival in conjunction with the AHCT (Association of Hispanic Classical Theatre) conference.

The collaboration on this production was also unconventional in that it did the opposite of what happens in most production processes: while texts usually inspire stage images, blocking, and set designs, in this production the directorial vision informed the translation. Erdman completed a literal translation in April 2009, followed by a draft in verse in June, both of which he shared with Kaufmann. These drafts inspired Kaufmann's particular interests in the play, which resulted in Erdman "highlight[ing] Tirso's theme of the interchangeability of desire and the malleability of identity as he redrafted" (Kaufmann "Directing" 156). This resulted in small changes at the sentence-level, as well as the addition of entire scenes.[6]

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[4] At UMass, the position of the dramaturg typically involves having a role in the preparation of the performance script (in the case of translations, adaptations, and any plays subject to alteration), preparing an actor's "manual" and glossary to accompany the text in which specific references as well as general contexts are laid out, attending rehearsals, and being in regular communication with the director about the overall ideological and artistic direction of the production.

[5] Among many adaptive choices in Erdman's version of *Marta* is his decision to expand and transform Juan and Diego into the comic brotherly duo, Sancho and Pancho. Erdman's adaptation also bolsters Inés' role.

[6] This is the same director/translator team as the production of *Wild Thing* discussed in chapter 1 here (83-87).

I. "Ni es carne ansí ni pescado": Reframing Gendered Characterisation

It is impossible to escape the inherent gendered and identity-forming nature of social roles; some roles, after all, are only open to members of one particular sex. Tirso's characterisation, though, often blurs those identity lines. If Marta, for instance, did fit neatly into a binary category, she would align with the majority of women in early modern Spain. These women, and indeed most women, are typically seen as and expected to be "weak" and "submissive."[7]

In Golden Age Spain specifically, upper-middle class women lived confined lifestyles. They were often kept under the strict supervision of their elders and, most notably, their male relatives. In fact, writing in the period suggests ways in which women are both physically and socially confined. This type of imprisonment was the subject of Juan Luis Vives' *De institutione feminae christianae*, written c. 1524-8 and requested by Catherine of Aragon for her daughter Princess Mary. Fray Luis de León also wrote *La perfecta casada*, a document intended as a gift for a recently married female relative, in 1583. The instructional manual is Fray Luis' personal interpretation of a section of text in Proverbs 31 which begins with "A woman of worth, who can find her?" In his document, Fray Luis applies the verses to what he considers the rules an ideal wife should follow. Among his many recommendations, he advises new wives to be chaste, frugal, modest and silent. Marta's father similarly urges her to either avoid humiliation or get married:

> Hazte beata y después
> haz, Marta, lo que gustares,
> pero así es bien que repares
> en lo que dirá después
> la gente.
> […]
> Cásate, pues, y casada,

[7] That is, through the lens of traditional gender roles. For more on how, in traditional gender roles, women are "cast," see Lois Tyson "Feminist Criticism" (85). Cf. introduction here throughout for more on how women have been historically viewed as passive.

> más segura y más honrada
> seguirás tu inclinación,
> que el Capitán gustará
> de ese empleo y ese oficio. (1490-94, 1499-1503)

Margaret O'Connell notes that in families with larger incomes, unmarried women were often "segregated from the outside world to the point of being virtually prohibited to associate with persons not of their own household—especially persons of the opposite sex" (27). It was assumed that a woman would not practice promiscuous or otherwise questionable acts; rather, women were urged to develop submissive qualities such as modesty, shyness and timidity. If a woman possessed "good morals," it was expected that she would not even show her face in public (40).

Rather than conform to gender binarism, the characters in this play at times cross over and blur such rigid gender distinctions. In the first act of the play in the 2009 performance, Marta performs exaggerated femininity—a heightened version of her feminine self—in order to fulfil what patriarchy expects of her and to avoid overt punishment.[8] This manifest in performance through Marta's high-pitched shrieks and extreme physical movements. (Figure 1)

[8] Elaine Aston refers to such "attempts to foreground the construction of femininity through the deconstructive use of 'feminine'" as "over-display" (90). For her, an "emphasis on 'over-display', on rehearsing/constructing the female body as a spectacle, transforms the body from a sight of looking to 'lookingness'" (91).



Figure 1

When she is faced with having to marry Urbina, Marta successfully dodges the undesirable situation by leaning into the part of an almost-*beata*: a role open only to women, and one in which her chastity is guarded by the veil of religion. Though not beneficial to the men, the choice to not marry but take a vow of chastity is (initially, at least) one of which they can make sense. Gómez confirms that the decision, while unfavourable, is not atypical when he says there are theologians in Madrid "que mi conciencia aseguren" (1010).

On the stage in 2009, Marta was the picture of femininity in this moment: she sat on her knees at the edge of the stage, demure and seemingly submissive. Her decision to lie helps her avoid marrying someone she does not love, but it is also testament to the fact that Felipe—to an extent—controls Marta's narrative. She avoids union with Urbina, after all, to keep the possibility of marriage with Felipe open, thereby rendering herself an object to be won in the patriarchal game of wedlock. When Felipe overhears Marta's lie on stage, he celebrates with a shouted "Long live the empire!" (30). Despite her own desires, in the eyes of patriarchy, Marta in this moment is under control. (Figure 2)



Figure 2

Marta constructs a role for herself and subsequently performs it. In this way, she is similar to Lope's title character in *La dama boba*: both characters create, for dramatic effect and self-preservation, a heightened version of themselves. As Lope's play progresses, Finea pretends to misunderstand, and "creates the illusion of ignorance and stupidity" (Hicks 136). She is "clearly aware of the ways in which language can be used to conceal and misinterpret," (144) and positions herself in such a way that words work to the benefit of her ruses (and therefore her desires).

While Finea plays the ignorant girl, Marta plays the devout, chaste woman: she performs her femininity, often using it as support for her scheming. Through her transformation, Marta fulfils the expectations men have for a woman. As a result, men's sense of control is reified, and they fear neither effeminisation nor loss of control: ideal circumstances for a woman to disrupt patriarchy. Since gender is compulsory to her disguise, Marta looks to the physical (religious robes) and linguistic to perform various

versions of femininity. Through her gender performance, on the page Marta is to some extent free from the rules patriarchy ascribes to women. While she plays the role of the religious woman, Marta "experiences a carnivalesque freedom from hierarchy, and creates a world where the woman dictates to the men, a world upside-down" (Thacker "Comedy's Social Compromise" 274). In the safety of this world, Marta's very femininity shifts.

Marta's inflated sense of femininity does not last, though, and she therefore does not conform throughout the play to what was expected of Golden Age women. In many of Tirso's plays, *damas* take on the disguise of a male. Though the title character in *Marta* never dons breeches, she still fulfils a traditionally masculine role, especially in relation to her family. As Thacker writes, men in Golden Age Spain had a freedom unknown to most women. A man would have been

> free to inhabit public space, to use language to express desire, to badger and pursue women, to demonstrate his masculine and physical qualities whenever and wherever possible. Men are the guardians of the precarious honour of the family and must be prepared to fight, quite literally, to defend their reputation. (*Role-Play* 22)

Marta meets nearly all these criteria. She roams Madrid freely in a way that she was never able to before because of her gender. She tells Pastrana

> Nunca tuve libertad
> mientras que viví a lo damo
> como agora: si intentaba
> salir fuera me costaba
> una riña; ya no llamo
> a la dueña, al escudero,
> ni aguardo la silla y coche,
> ni me riñen si a la noche
> vuelvo: voy a donde quiero. (1573-81)

Rather than being locked up at home, Marta now has the freedom to come and go as she wants. In the second act, after the Alférez's long speech, Marta reports that she has been out working in the hospital (1470-73). In reality, of course, she had been talking with

Felipe to work out a plan for him to come see her (1461-64). Though we do not see this in-between action on stage, it is clear in the 2009 production in the many asides delivered to Inés. In the second act, Marta confirms with Pastrana that Felipe has received her message about the scheme she has planned in order to sneak Felipe into her father's house.

Like most men, Marta also uses language to express desire. She openly tells Inés and Pastrana how she longs for Felipe. She even tells Felipe directly. As she reports in the same act:

> le dije que le adoraba
> tanto, que por su ocasión
> andaba desta manera,
> pues si estoy devota él era
> mi imagen de devoción. (1453-57)

While typically men pursue women, Marta actively pursues Felipe. She makes demands of Felipe which she would not otherwise be able to if not performing from the safety of her role: she tells him: "salid, falso jurador, / o besad luego la tierra / por tanto grande desvarío" (2371-73). Marta even slaps Felipe across the face when he threatens to leave. Though she gets down on her knees at Felipe's demand, she ultimately achieves her objective: he stays. In the English-language production, it was clear in this moment that Marta and Felipe are hostile to one another; she exits, looking back at him once before continuing off stage.

Finally, it is not Gómez who avenges the honour of his family after his son Antonio is killed, but Marta: she rights the wrong by replacing the financial loss of her brother with the gain of Felipe.[9] And, thanks to her ruse, her family also receives

[9]Allatson offers the example of *Fuenteovejuna*, as a play in which women take up the issue of defending honour. In the play, women do "the violent avenging of honour and the recuperation of sullied reputation. Peasant women not only incite and lead a revolt against a sexually rapacious lord, but participate in the killing deed itself" (265).

additional gold from Captain Urbina's travels to the Americas. Urbina writes in his letter to Gómez that he has earned "cien mil pesos y más que para que os sirváis con ellos ofrezco en arras a mi señora doña Marta." And at the start of the third act, Urbina pledges an additional "ocho mil ducados" which would have been worth around $288,000 today (Erdman *Marta the Divine* 238). By the end of the *comedia*, Marta has singlehandedly secured for herself a more comfortable financial future.

While women are typically the protected and men the protectors, it is Marta who—in the end of the 2009 production—asserts herself in a conventionally masculine manner. While the title character is rendered silent in Tirso's original,[10] Erdman's adaptation gives her a voice. Upon entering from the garden, disguised as a Portuguese countess, Marta's demand "[o]n the ground" (84) sends Gómez, Urbina, Sancho and Pancho to the floor. (Figure 3) When the brothers try to defend themselves, Marta silences them, and directs her retort towards her father:

> You.
> You're the main offender. That's right.
> I have heard a lot about you.
> You'd sell a daughter for a bag
> of gold. Would you also sell
> your soul? You deserve to beg.
> Kiss my feet or feel my wrath
> forever. (85)

[10] Marta's silence is something I shall return to at the end of this chapter (122-23).



Figure 3

At the start of this short passage, Marta picks up her father's cane, poking him from behind while he attempts to crawl away on all fours. In this moment, Marta enacts what Matthew Stroud calls one of men's fears in the early modern period: penetration.[11] The masculine fear of penetration, so central to early modern identity, is in this stage moment literalised: the gender-evading Marta prods her own father with the phallic cane.

But as the patriarch, Gómez surely does not just fear penetration of himself: he also fears the penetration of his daughter. When Felipe visits their home, disguised as a wandering scholar, Gómez tells Marta that he does not like her squeezing him:

> Marta, apartaos, que no gusto
> de veros tan pegadiza. (1892-93)

On stage, seeing Marta cling to her boyfriend in front of Gómez is comic, but it also reveals how willing Marta is to tread dangerous patriarchal ground; Felipe's true identity could be discovered and killed.

Marta's self-fashioning allows her to break from the confines of patriarchy and achieve that which a "proper" Spanish woman would not be allowed: a sexual life,

[11] Stroud explains several aspects of a man's life where he fears penetration: of his body, his house, his wife, his personal space, and his reputation (*Plot Twists* 111). Penetration, for Stroud, is a form of feminisation.

physical freedom, and a say in whom she marries. She views herself not as an object but as a subject with a malleable identity. Through her masculine actions, Marta's gender is thus queered in that what constitutes femininity and masculinity is blurred; she is at once a woman and masculine. As a result, Marta is difficult to define; her behaviour does not line up with her perceived public gender and her appearance.

The result of her multi-gendered performances is that Marta fails to fit into an orderly category. Her identity shifts when it suits the pursuit of her desires. This is the very reason she is subversive. Jonathan Thacker writes that Marta "appears to remain within patriarchal law, when in fact, she is undermining it from the margins" (*Role-Play* 75).[12] But Marta is not at the margins in the 2009 performance; she undermines patriarchy from the very centre in that she, at times, enacts it. Her centrality is even clearer at the end of the production. In feigning a religious conversion specifically, Marta does not even adhere to the characteristics of a *beata*. As Urbina observes, "Ni es carne ansí ni pescado" (1103): not only does she not fit into one neat category (she is neither fish nor fowl) but she is also good for nothing.[13]

The role of the *beata*—only open to women—allowed for the opposite of what was expected of women in the period. This religious role, influenced by mysticism, encouraged an "internal spiritual experience" for women and "a 'feminization' of religion" (Perry 98). Women were also granted more rights than they would have as daughters and wives: *beatas* "could laugh and shriek and cry"; they could engage in "intimate experiences with males and other females, and they hugged and kissed them"

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[12] Thacker's *Role-Play and the World as Stage in the Comedia*, which examines the social implications of metatheatre in the Spanish Golden Age, also underscores in a large section devoted to *Marta* the constructed essence of social roles through Marta's subterfuge (67-90).

[13] Marta is akin to what Catherine Larson describes as a female character that is both angelic and demonic: just as Ángela in *La dama duende* is both and neither ("*La dama duende*" 44), Marta both conforms to and subverts patriarchy.

(101). This role, then, gives Marta space to engage with a man while not needing to live under the patriarchal umbrella of marriage.

In the 2009 performance, Marta's costume echoed this freedom: she had a complete change of costume in her move from the first to second act. While in the first Marta wears a crimson satin gown, she willingly trades it in for a brown wool habit in the second act. As Gómez says in Erdman's adaptation,

> She's another person, it seems.
> She no longer wears silk, says it pricks
> her conscience. Now she goes around
> in cheap brown linen; plain, baggy,
> ungainly skirts; a boxy rag
> of a house-dress—second hand no less!
> As for jewelry, she's given it up.
> Perfume? Hah. Make-up? Forget it.
> What's more, she doesn't even change
> her clothes when it's time to eat. (33)

While the actor playing Marta is physically constricted in the first act of the play by her corset and wide hoop skirt, she is later free to bend, twist, and run. (Figure 4)



Figure 4

In fact, the actor's physicalisation of the part echoed the very characteristics typical of a *beata*; not only through her easy intimate access to Felipe, but through her shrill voice and large physical movements. In the second act of the play, from the freedom

of her cassock, Marta and Felipe even end up in a passionate embrace on the stage floor after Marta attempts to bring Felipe back to life after he has pretended to faint. In the moment before this, Gómez kneels at Marta's side, comically thrusting up and down over Felipe's genitals. (Figure 5)



Figure 5

What makes Marta's position even more elusive and non-categorical is her unwillingness to adhere to the (very few) codes of being a *beata*. Gómez has to urge her into the position. When she refuses, he tells her to at least get married. As Thacker observes, Marta accepts none of the roles offered to her by her father, and instead "remain[s] immune to that bastion of maleness—reason. Her unwillingness to conform even to the relatively undemanding life of the *beata* troubles him" (*Role-Play* 82). The result is that the men "feel threatened" by her since she "escapes definition" (82). Thus, Tirso showcases the inverted stereotype that women can only occupy positions of passivity and weakness. And, further, he opens up a religious position to a lying,

scheming woman who may have already lost her honour.[14] Thus, the womanly *beata* role is contradictory: it is at once submissive and domineering; religious and secular; masculine and feminine; chaste and sexual.

Marta's blurring of gender identity—something central to the text—warrants a reframing of femininity and reimagining of gender categories on the stage in performance. The 2009 production of *Marta* reframed femininity largely through its approach to casting. In her essay about directing *Marta the Divine*, Kaufmann notes that her reading of Erdman's adaptation is that "every character […] is hypocritical or deceitful in some way, and that highlighting deceitfulness, behavioral masks, and role-playing" were all important to her "directorial approach" ("Directing" 155). One of the levels of role-playing that Kaufmann recognises as important in the play is that which operates "within the given circumstances of the world of the play—the roles the characters play in a rigid hierarchical culture with rigid gender roles" (156). In directing the play, then, Kaufmann's aim was to "make visible the unquestioned gender expectations of the time and place without either becoming didactic or simply letting them go unexamined" (156). These gender expectations Kaufmann writes of—one of which had fathers choosing spouses for their daughters—were grounded in the belief that there were two separate categories of gender, and therefore "clear social boundaries" (Laqueur 135). This rigid and binary nature of gender means that "violations of cultural gender codes, such as clothing,

[14] Act II ends with some flirtatious lines, perhaps—as Harley Erdman's adaptation suggests—"leaving Marta and Felipe in bed?" (54). Erdman's last stage direction suggests even more: "Marta and Felipe go under the sheets?" (54). As the two are embracing passionately on the stage floor at the end of act II (in both adaptation and performance), there is the potential—our production team discussed—that the two consummate their relationship before the third act begins. Such an encounter would raise the stakes further for Marta: should she err, a "fallen woman is not often allowed a second chance in the *comedia*: if the man who wrongs her is not prepared to marry her […] she must pay the price of infamy (real or imagined) by death or by banishment to a convent, or she may sometimes be redeemed through divine intervention" (D. Smith "Introduction" 21).

logically [take] on much greater importance and can be perceived as much more threatening than they would in a culture which considers gender to be securely anchored in biological difference" (Heise 371).

But one of the tensions of the *comedia* is its insistence upon gender binarism and heteronormativity while presenting characters who—on both page and often on stage—cross over those very lines of gender. Thus, Kaufmann rightfully concludes that the way audiences see the sisters Marta and Lucía was important to the production.

Kaufmann's fascination with the "interchangeability of people and the rigidity of gender and class roles" ultimately led her to employ an examination of these tropes through "strategic cross-gender casting" ("Directing" 156). Though this was the English-language premiere of the play, Kaufmann was interested in cross-gender casting early on in the process, as she sensed that such casting would "emphasize the fact that everyone is playing an assigned role in this society and, indeed, any society, and that gender roles themselves are social constructs" (157). Though Erdman expressed some doubts about whether such casting would be successful in performance, the audition and call-back process made it clear that cross-gender casting was feasible. Below is a breakdown of what the cast ultimately looked like in terms of the gender of both actor and character in the 2009 production:

Character	**Gender of character**	**Gender of actor**
Marta	Woman	Woman
Lucía	Woman	Man
Don Gómez	Man	Woman
Captain Urbina	Man	Man
The Ensign	Man	Man

Felipe	Man	Man
Pastrana	Man	Woman
Inés	Woman	Woman
Don Sancho	Man	Woman
Don Pancho	Man	Man
TOTALS	3 Women, 7 Men	5 Women, 5 Men

Table 1

In a cast of ten, then, four roles were cross-cast: Lucía was played by a man, while Don Gómez, Pastrana and Don Sancho were played by women. This resulted in just one romantic pairing—Marta and Felipe—which was cast according to the gender ascribed to characters in the original Spanish. The romantic pairing of the Ensign and Lucía—what would be a heterosexual union in the original play—joined instead two male actors, while that of Pastrana and Inés linked two female actors.

As post-production reviews confirmed,[15] the highlight of the show was Lucía's character, played by the undergraduate male actor Sam Bosworth. What was particularly exciting for audiences were moments in which Lucía and Felipe were on stage together. At the start of Tirso's play, there is evidence that Lucía had a relationship with Felipe before (or while) Marta did. In the first scene of the play, Marta asks her sister

> ¿Tan boba te parecí,
> por más que encubrirte trates,
> que jamás eché de ver
> lo que a don Felipe quieres? (63-66)

[15] "Bosworth, whose performance stole the show, seemed to enjoy every moment on the stage, embracing his female role to the fullest. This casting choice set up more than one outrageous moment during the course of the night—including kissing his male counterparts—and brought newfound meaning to parts of the dialogue that might have gone unnoticed otherwise (e.g., "Do you take me for a man?")" (J. Wade 160).

Erdman's adaptation underscores this hint at a relationship between Lucía and Felipe when, in act III, Felipe says: "Calm down, or I'll give back the ribbon / you gave me. (63).

In the same scene, when Lucía threatens to expose Felipe for being in the house, Felipe lies to Lucía in order to quiet her; he says "light of my eyes, I swear the reason / for this scholastic transformation / is you and you alone" (62). When Lucía asks if Felipe is to be hers, he confirms it with a kiss. During one particular performance, a kiss between Lucía (Bosworth) and Felipe (Andrew Ferlo) elicited so much laughter, cheering, and clapping that the actor playing Marta could not immediately speak her next line when she re-entered. The kiss lasted 19 seconds rather than the planned brief kiss, and Marta's first line was thus delayed as the audience cheered for Felipe and Lucía. Later in the scene, Lucía asks Felipe for "one more kiss" (64). In the same performance, audiences giggled in anticipation. To confirm his love for Lucía, Ferlo then kisses Bosworth's arm—from hand to shoulder—and then holds Bosworth around his waist as they passionately embrace. Unsurprisingly, audiences once again cheered—even screamed—in delight. (Figure 6)



Figure 6

Though some of Bosworth's character choices made audiences laugh, his costume and role as Lucía was not meant to prompt laughter. Inevitably, though, seeing a man play

a woman does often lead to laughter, at least in the ostensible safety of the theatre. This was especially true when lines from Erdman's translation (and Tirso's Spanish text) took on new meaning thanks to the cross-casting: for instance, in the opening scene of the play, Lucía asks her sister "¿tiénesme por hombre a mí" (81). Even the director admitted that, though she wishes it were not true,

> it is generally more thrilling and theatrical to see a man playing a woman than to see a woman playing a man […] There is something powerful for audiences about men cross-dressing and men becoming romantic and sexual with one another, particularly physically large, charismatic men in dresses. Women, on average of smaller size and with higher voices, have trouble matching men. (Kaufmann "Directing" 159)

While the production elicited laughter at every performance, not all spectators thought this uncommon casting choice was a natural extension of Tirso's play or Erdman's adaptation; in his review of the production's performance in El Paso, Texas (US), Jonathan Wade writes that the cross-gender casting

> was certainly an entertaining choice that changed the terms of the play and influenced the audience's reception, but it did not appear to be a decision grounded in Tirso's work per se. In any number of *comedias*, a leading male or female character could be played by someone of the opposite sex for comic relief. In this particular production, the gender switches underlined the contemporary feel of the play and created a point of entry for modern audiences. (Wade 160)

But there is nothing overtly contemporary about these "gender switches," nor would heteronormative, "straight" casting necessarily harken us back to seventeenth-century Spain.

Wade's observation that the cross-gender casting resulted in a comedic affect speaks to the fact that male to female cross dressing generally reads as "camp" or "drag: it "self-referentially draws attention to its not-quite-rightness" (Drouin 23). This echoes as well Kaufmann's belief that male to female cross-dressing is inherently more "theatrical."

While it is true that many *comedias* feature cross-dressing for comic relief, the function of cross-dressing is not only used for laughs. Female to male cross-dressing in particular is generally subversive. In the case of this production, the choice to cross-cast in either direction is about exposing the idea that gender is a malleable social role, not something inherent or fixed. In this way, cross-gender casting can be subversive and therefore quite serious.

In casting the production, the director specifically sought out actors who would perform cross-cast roles "truthfully." Kaufmann noted that in searching for an actor to play the role of Lucía—male or female—it was necessary to find one who would play her "as a dimensional human being within those constraints" ("Directing" 159). Bosworth thus played the character as he would if it matched his own gender. In this way, Bosworth's performance was a form of "cross-dressing" in that at no point in the production was an attempt made to reveal that Lucía was actually being played by a man. Still, no real attempt was made to conceal Bosworth's true sex or gender.

But for audiences, there were additional levels of genderplay in Bosworth's performance. As Drouin confirms, theatrical cross-dressing can at times "be layered with drag or passing" (25). She goes on to explain drag as a "dramatization of gender" (27), where actors (or drag queens and kings) "highlight their artificiality rather than conceal it" (26). Since there was also no attempt to conceal Bosworth's artificiality (in playing a woman), he could be considered a cross-dressing actor in drag. Though drag "is not subversive when it is produced within the context of a heteronormative discourse as a temporary form of entertainment that is eventually recuperated and contained by the same discourse" (28), there is a subversive level to Bosworth's performance; in addition to cross-dressing in drag, Bosworth was also attempting—for the sake of the audience's experience and the production—to "pass" as a woman. Bosworth could be said, at times,

to be passing because his performance of Lucía was non-parodic; he did not try to get laughs from audiences because he was playing a woman, but rather as the woman Lucía herself. In this way, his performance aimed to be something similar to that of that of Mark Rylance's Olivia in *Twelfth Night* at Shakespeare's Globe Theatre.[16] (Figure 7)



Figure 7

While audiences might consider Bosworth to be a cross-dressing actor in drag who is trying to pass, to Marta, Gómez, and the rest of the characters in the play, Bosworth's Lucía is something else. The characters do not acknowledge Bosworth's gender, and they do not reveal that the masculine voice they hear belongs to a man.[17] To them, he is simply a woman with a baritone voice: a more masculine woman. This is a testament, then, to the play world's acceptance of non-normative depictions of femininity (on stage and in this

[16] See chapter 1 here (58-60) for more on this production at Shakespeare's Globe.
[17] Kaufmann instructed the actors early on to not "alter the pitch of their voices to play the opposite sex" ("Directing" 160). In this way, the cross-cast actors' strategies for playing their roles were more similar to that of Propeller Theatre's. See chapter 1 here (57-58) for more on Propeller's approach to staging gender.

production). The perception, after all, is what matters: Drouin states that "whether a character does drag or passes is a matter of how he or she is perceived by other fictional agents (just as, to extend the comparison, drag and passing in real life operate in reaction to people one meets on the street, not an omniscient god-like figure spying on our world" (40). What thus resulted was a cross-dressing actor in drag who passes; that is, a male actor dressing as a female character in what results as a slightly comic, self-referential way. The fact that the man playing Lucía performed femininity quite convincingly speaks to the fluidity of gender presented in this production.

Not only were romantic pairings considered in this casting, but so too was the pairing of sisters. Kaufmann notes that Marta and Lucía "had to be played by a man and a woman, so that, side by side in identical constraints of movement, dress, and behaviour, the idea of 'female' could be clearly seen as a gender 'role'" ("Directing" 159). (Figure 8)



Figure 8

These "constraints of movement, dress, and behavior" were most clearly borne out in the production's costume design (159). Created by Felicia Malachite, Marta and Lucía's matching red and blue dresses had hoops at their hems.[18] At times, the actors found it

[18] The costumes for this production utilised the same silhouettes and textures of those from Golden Age Spain, but in sometimes exaggerated ways. The *galanes* (Don Felipe

difficult to pass through the set piece door frames without getting the skirts caught.[19] Eventually, the actors found that if they held the skirts as they walked through the doors, they were able to pass through the frames. At first, this was a concern brought to the attention of the costume designer. Eventually, though, we realised that this struggle—specific to female characters in the play—was an expression of the very constraints experienced by women in the period. The dresses thus spoke to one of the various restrictions of women in the Golden Age: in this case, the physical limitations put on them by obstructive apparel.

Ultimately, Kaufmann's directorial approach resulted in a queered production in that it subverted traditional casting practices and, as a result, subverted gender norms. This cross-gender casting spoke to one of the tensions of the play: that is, the relationship between who and what we appear to be (whether that is about our gender, occupation or religious practices), and who and what we actually are. This casting also reminded audiences of the performative and socially constructed aspect of gender: identity is mutable. While Butler makes it clear that gender performativity is not as simple as putting on a costume piece, in theatre performance we must overlook this if we are to analyse the

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and the Ensign) and *barbas* (Don Gómez and Captain Urbina) wore doublets, with the fathers also wearing capes. The *gracioso*, Pastrana, wore a loose-fitting shirt appropriate to his rustic status. When Marta takes on her religious vow, she dons a coarse brown cassock, as does Felipe when he goes incognito as Master Berrío. In the final scene of the play, which occurs in the garden, Marta and Lucia enter in undergarments with their hoop skirts, of which now we only see the framework. Felipe and the Ensign enter shortly after wearing just breastplates and codpieces.

[19] The set for this production, designed by Dennis Berfield, consisted of a massive white muslin sheet which covered the entire playing space—from the top of the back wall to the floor in front of the stage, swooping down like a blanket on the concealed stage. Atop this blank canvas were four wiry silver door frames in the style of Moorish architecture. Throughout the production, these doorways were moved to indicate different spaces—from plazas to rooms in houses to a garden. In an interview, director Kaufmann said she "always wanted the set design to be a playground […] a nimble world where we didn't have any architecture weighing us down" (Kaufmann personal interview). What Kaufmann found successful about this set was the fact that it "didn't put us in a specific place" but instead allowed for "a playful nimbleness" (Kaufmann personal interview).

characters as real within the fiction of the *comedia*. Cary Mazer writes that "cross-gendered performances in the contemporary theatre that erase or ignore the theatricality of cross-gendering are at greater risk of normalizing gender roles and essentializing the body than are productions that embrace the inherent theatricality of cross-gendering and cross-dressing" (101), where theatricality is the "audience's awareness of the simultaneity of the means of representation and the thing being represented" (101). Rather than have actors try to make their voices match those of the gender of the character they were playing, Kaufmann's production featured actors whose bodies and voices intentionally did not present to its contemporary audiences a binary view of gender, but rather one which is malleable. While contemporary audiences are unlike Tirso's original audience, the differences in spectatorship serve as a justification for the contemporary production's imaginative approach to classical Spanish drama: the production literalised the text's gender fluidity through the strategic use of gendered bodies.

II. "I'll do whatever father says": Patriarchal Dramaturgy

Such subversive female characters could be found, ironically, in the rigid dramaturgy of a three-act *comedia nueva*, the new form of popular theatre that had conquered the Spanish stage at the time. In this period, dramatic form was—to some extent—out of the playwright's hands; Tirso's plot was not his own but rather the standard Lopean plot. While he could not manipulate form, he was able to undermine it in subtle (yet possible) ways. In what follows, I argue that Tirso's play purports to follow a patriarchal structure, and it is the tension between this form and the play's content that ultimately makes the play subversive and anti-patriarchal.[20]

Through repetition of a similar structure—one that ends in heterosexual union—

[20] While dramaturgy is the sum of actions over the course of the play, characters' objectives are those things characters want and are trying to achieve. Marta's objectives have feminine concerns in mind, but the acts of the play build towards a patriarchal end.

the *comedia urbana* as a form asserts normativity, however unstable it may turn out to be; that which serves patriarchy best is heterosexual marriage. Throughout *comedias*, then, patriarchy urges women closer to marriage—a transaction that sends her from the hands of her father into those of her husband. As Stroud states, the "repetition of the marriage scenario in *comedia* after *comedia* is one manifestation of this cultural insistence upon the inculcation of heterosexuality" ("Performativity" 117). After all, it is not just the singular play, but also the repetitive force of the entire genre that contributes to this sense of traditionalism. Perhaps this is not surprising for, as Jonathan Thacker writes of patriarchy, many have noted previously that "any society which operates on a hierarchical basis tends to develop in a way favourable to its dominant members, who then dictate the parts that they require others to play" (*Role-Play* 19).

The entire movement of *Marta*'s plot is thus towards a heterosexual union in which Marta marries Felipe. In other words, patriarchal plots build to patriarchal ends. Marta's labyrinthine, contradictory journey in this play is followed by a neat and quick sorting out of marriage partners.

From the start of the play, Marta subscribes to what patriarchy says she should desire: a man. In the first act, she is constrained by the options available to her. As Thacker says, her options are:

> acceptance, and thus capitulation to the dominant order and consequent personal misery; feigned acceptance, to buy time, in the hope that an obstacle can be found to the marriage (unlikely here given her father's determination); delaying tactics involving a demand for more time or a feigned illness/madness; refusal on the grounds of already being "married" (committed sexually) to another (a frequent recourse at the end of act 3 in the comedia); refusal due to a religious vocation, which Marta chooses; or to run away or elope. ("Comedy's Social Compromise" 273)

Before Gómez receives Urbina's request for Marta's hand, she longs for a union with Felipe. In fact, heterosexual love is what drives Marta. Her sister Lucía's feminine role-

playing even encourages the same in Marta; just as Marta does, so too does Lucía cry for "un hermano muerto y un amante / de su vida homicida y mi confianza" (17-18). As Elvira García observes, "[n]either Marta nor Lucía […] ever bother to ask who was at fault in their brother's death or what caused it. They are concerned only that Felipe's role in the killing will jeopardize their prospective marriage" (29). In the opening scene of the play, the sisters even compare their own sexual and marital worth to one another's. Marta begins by claiming she does not long for the man that Lucía does, for she would not want to be "fría y necia" as her sister is (Molina 115). Lucía shoots back an insult, claiming Marta's burning heat, which would scald men, merely makes for more suitors for Lucía (117-44).

Marta strays from a direct path aimed at heteronormative marriage. This play, and some of Tirso's other *comedias urbanas*, often also expose heterosexuality's limitations while simultaneously revealing heterosexuality as the only option available. As Rich has argued, "women have been convinced that marriage, and sexual orientation toward men, are inevitable, even if unsatisfying or oppressive components of their lives" (640). Compulsory heterosexuality, Rich continues, both "reaffirm[s] patriarchal values" and "undermines the mythic naturalness of heterosexuality" through "its drive to cajole, coerce, convince" (N. Sullivan 120). Judith Butler similarly argues that heterosexuality is socially constructed. To uphold its dominance, heterosexuality strives to "*repeat itself* in order to establish the illusion of its own uniformity and identity" ("Imitation" 315). As such, she argues, heterosexuality is "an identity permanently at risk, for what if it fails to repeat?" (315). Jagose echoes this, asserting that "[h]eterosexuality is naturalised by the performative repetition of normative gender identities" (85). This assumption therefore calls for a consideration of heterosexuality as a political expression.

Since heterosexual unions at the end of the play are built up to from the start, a look at the beginnings of plays is crucial. The opening of *Marta* is contradictory to its general form: while two women share the stage in the first scene, they speak sonnets—a form of verse which, though used in *comedias*, could potentially slow down the action and was thus typically something which was "built towards and flagged up" (Thacker *Companion* 184). The Spanish *soneto*, derived from that established by Petrarch in fourteenth-century Italy, featured original subject matter that was typically "the torments of sexual love (usually within a courtly love convention)" and was penned by a male, often about a female subject (Baldick). While the poetic structure at the start of the play reveals to audiences the gendered structure of the story through a traditionally masculine form of articulating desire, Tirso upends this by placing masculine articulation in the mouths of two women yearning for a man. A sonnet is a microcosm of the same idea: the feminine voice is contained within the masculine form of the sonnet.

Even in the Spanish text itself—before adaptation and casting—Marta takes concrete steps in the play to obtain her objective of avoiding a heteronormative relationship. In the first act, she turns down a marriage with Captain Urbina, though such a marriage—given Urbina's old age—could potentially lead to a subsequent marriage with Felipe.[21] Even Pastrana recognises this; after they learn from the Ensign that Marta and Lucía are to be married off, he tells Felipe "Será con quien hace bodas / como las casas de Illescas, / que de viejas se caen todas" (842-44). Marta could have married Urbina, then waited for his death to gain a greater sense of control and agency, not only financial but also personal. Marta could have married Urbina, then waited for his death to gain a greater sense of control and agency—both financial and personal. Her choice to

[21] Common law at the time stated that if a husband died, his wife became legal head of the family. McKendrick discusses this in *Woman and Society* 15-18, citing Uyá i Morera's *Fuero Juzgo,* Libro III, Título I (viii).

remain single is evidence of her rash, individualistic, stubborn love for Felipe which ultimately puts her in danger of patriarchal punishment: when she first says she cannot marry Urbina, Gómez says "¡O morirá o hará mi gusto!" (960). It could also, depending on the production, be evidence of Marta's unwillingness to marry at all.[22]

While certain moments in the play seemingly fuel heteronormative desires, in the 2009 production of *Marta* those structures are "queered." Some such moments even appear in Tirso's original play, while others are a result of adaptation and staging. In the original play, for instance, Marta at times exploits her maid Inés, turning her into man's prize: in the second act, Marta assures Pastrana there will be "a reward" if he pretends to be "some bailiff from Seville, / who traces his bloodline to the virgin birth" (43). When he agrees to play the role, Marta confirms "Inés will be [his]" (42). In the Spanish and in the stage adaptation, the couple's language is possessive:

MARTA: Ser tuya doña Inés.
PASTRANA: ¿Mía?
DOÑA INÉS: Tuya, soccarón.
PASTRANA: Y habrá melindre doncel?
DOÑA INÉS: Lo que se usa. (1632-35)

MARTA: Inés will be yours.
PASTRANA: Has she agreed?
INÉS: She's thinking it over.
PASTRANA: What about the prudish maid?
INÉS: A maid can sometimes be of service. (42-43)

In the 2009 performance, this scene was complicated by the fact that two women played the roles of Inés and Pastrana: on the surface, the two appeared to be in a lesbian relationship. (Figure 9) While audiences could likely see the character's bodies (Pastrana and Inés, a man and a woman), they could also surely glimpse the actors beneath this cross-casting, make an assumption of the actor's genders, and see a lesbian relationship.

[22] This objective is one that I shall return to in my analyses of *El amor médico* and *La celosa de sí misma* in chapters 3 and 4.

Although perhaps atypical for female cross-gender casting, this supports my earlier contention that the play queers gender through its casting.[23]



Figure 9

Erdman's dramaturgical craftsmanship also complicates the linear thrust of Tirso's plot: his invention of an encounter between Inés and the Ensign both underscores heterosexual relationships and subverts them. In part to expand the role of Inés, Erdman's adaptation features the maid in an additional scene at the very end of the play while the Ensign struggles to enter the Duke of Lerma's garden.[24] Though the Ensign and Inés never meet in Tirso's play, they do in this adaptation. While the Ensign searches for the gate to the garden, Inés helps him, "pointing [him] in the right / direction" (81). Their lines—and on-stage action—become increasingly sexualised: he tells her "I can almost taste / my lover's lips," and Inés responds "Just keep quiet / while you're tasting. This way. Good. / Can you feel the latch?" (81). (Figure 10)

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[23] See chapter 1 throughout for more on the potential illusion created by cross-gender casting and cross-gender role-play.

[24] The role of Inés, who has just 22 lines in the original play, is expanded so as to become a complementary character to Pastrana. Erdman even writes two new scenes in which she plays a large role, both as a counterpart to Marta and to Pastrana.



Figure 10

In an interview, Erdman justifies this change:

> We wanted to try to come up with an ending that was in the spirit of what Tirso was doing, both in this play and other plays, but sort of became the logical culmination of the action and the events that we've seen in my translation, in my adaptation […] There's just much more baroque kind of confusion and ambiguity about who's with who and I think it […] brings the comedy to a new level and the sense of doubling and uncertainty and the illusory nature of desire and relationships and who's really with the right person at the end of the day. (Erdman personal interview)

Though the Ensign and Inés end the play betrothed to different partners, their flirtation here is justified and, as Erdman says, "consistent with the way men act in the world of this play" (Erdman personal interview). The erotic language between the two characters, which could lead to a sexual encounter, "seem[s] consistent with his character" (Erdman personal interview). Inés' bolstered presence in the play also "helps the play, in adaptation, to speak more forcefully about gender relationships" (Erdman "The Dramaturgy of Absence" 170). The garden is particularly appropriate for this adaptive choice; as in *Don Gil de las calzas verdes*, "el jardín—conjunción de lo poético, lo

plástico y lo musical—es un espacio femenino por el protagonismo de las tres damas (Doña Juana, Doña Inés, Doña Clara)" (Pagnotta "Espacio e ingenio" 253). The sexual metaphor of the woman as garden being forcefully entered by a male provides audiences with an historical and sexist common-place (through the dichotomy of passive female and active male) against which we can then compare Marta's subversion and disruption.

Despite Marta's efforts throughout the play, she is ultimately directed towards marriage. Felipe even, at times, must remind her of her initial objective to marry. In Erdman's adaptation, the addition of a line clarifies that Felipe is concerned they will not be able to continue tricking the old men, to which Marta replies: "We have time to plan our next move / and make this fraud go on forever!" (76). Because of Sancho and Pancho (who enter just after this line), the deception is discovered, and Marta is faced with telling the truth.

This leads us to the problematic ending of the *comedia*, with woman subjugated, back in the same place at which she began.[25] *Comedias urbanas* almost always end in marriage, with previously subversive women put back in their submissive places. Kaufmann posits that Marta passes through three phases in the course of the action, "transforming from a rich and privileged party girl into a holy woman who has taken an irrevocable vow of chastity and finally, in the last scene, back into a woman of the world" ("Directing" 162). But Marta is certainly not a "party girl" in the first act. If she were, she would not have to depend on her wit and subterfuge to get what she wants; she would

[25] The end of *Marta* recalls what Luce Irigaray argues which is that we live in gender indifference. In this system, women are not "Other" but defective men, and man cannot perceive himself as the "Other" of women. As a result, men do not just oppress women; patriarchy relies on women to construct itself. Men's superior status (and the very system of patriarchy) depends on women's inferior position in hierarchy. For a similar reason, the end of Tirso's *Marta*, in which women are oppressed (by being married off, for some without their approval) demands the very presence of women. Cf. Irigaray's *This Sex* throughout.

simply do it. But Marta, whose position at the end of the play is near the place where she began, has learned something. Thus, she seems to straddle instead two worlds, her (temporary) "transformation" occurring mid-drama rather than at the end. In the first act of the play, she operates within a rigid system of patriarchy. In the second, her role-playing allows her narrowly to evade those constricting rules. And in the third, she returns once again to her role as pawn in a patriarchal world. As García says, she is, ultimately, "a woman in a man's world" (4). Marta's subterfuge—which by the end of the play has "gone awry"—must end with her "fac[ing] up to the dominant social force, to return to being manipulated by men" (Thacker "Comedy's Social Compromise" 286). While good theatre often relies on the reveal of a dramatic, internal change in the protagonist come the end, Marta's journey instead resembles the pastoral plays of Shakespeare: like Rosalind in *As You Like It* and Viola in *Twelfth Night*, the heroine plays for some time before reverting back to the world from which she originates.

Catherine Connor, unsurprisingly, asserts "feminist criticism […] seems uncomfortable with the presumed defeat of the formerly subversive heroine by the forces of patriarchal order, tradition and stability" (23). She goes on to explain that there have historically been two approaches to such endings in performance: a "soft or idealized view" which renders a positive image of women, and a "hard or more realistic" view in which women are victims (23). The former tends to want to "uncover forgotten positive images of women" (23) while "hard criticism […] has emphasized the supposedly realistic view of the wedding convention, remarking that the comic heroine's subversion is ultimately for naught because she ends up subjugated by marriage in the repressive patriarchal society of seventeenth-century Spain" (23-4). As Catherine Larson argues of Calderón's *La dama duende*, the end of *Marta* also "reveals a type of social reintegration that undercuts the feminist gains made by his protagonist" ("*La dama duende*" 45). In

other words, Marta's attempts at subversion over the course of the play are, come the end, futile.

What further complicates the ending of *Marta* (and many other *comedias*) is the *dama*'s silence.[26] McKendrick calls women's silence a "condition of male dominance" ("Breaking the Silence" 16). What is particularly astonishing is that Marta—a character poised to devise subterfuge with no notice and always armed with a biting wit—does not speak for the final 129 lines of the play.[27] As Erdman points out, "Tirso starts the play with Marta's eloquent sonnet, and ends the play by giving her nothing to say" ("Introduction" *Marta the Divine* 21). After a dizzying experience in the gardens, Marta is stunned—burning, as she tells Inés—and curiously silent. As her father and husband-to-be sort through the details of their financial exchange, Marta stands on stage, off to one side in this production, without speaking.

While the offer of eight thousand *ducados* from Urbina (along with the ten thousand *ducados* from Felipe's late father) make the prize of Felipe's soon-to-be bride more precious—literally endowing Marta with additional monetary value—what might this mean to Marta? To see Urbina's offer transferred from funding her own ministerial missions (whether or not she was actually planning on following through) to her husband is surely, at best, disheartening. While such a moment is not as apparent in reading the play to oneself, Marta's silence is stark in performance, as the character stands on stage,

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[26] McKendrick asserts the "importance of utterance to the early modern Spanish theatre's representation of the condition of women" since "female speech" at the time was "rationed and controlled by men" ("Breaking the Silence" 14). In the patriarchal world of Golden Age Spain, it is not just wealth and space which give the male power; it is the fact that he speaks, and that he regulates woman's speech. This is, in part, what is so remarkable about women on stage (16). Thus, as McKendrick goes on to argue, rebellious words in a woman "were rebellious acts—the very process of speaking up and speaking out is an act of insubordination, a challenge to the symbolic power of the male, the father, the head of the family, and therefore of the social order itself" (26).

[27] Her last line is "¡Ay, doña Inés, que me quemo!" (2917).

literally speech-less. The reasons for such silence are intriguing on the page: is Marta burning and therefore stunned by what has happened in the garden? Or is she now realising that a marriage with Felipe is not what she actually wants?

The 2009 production of *Marta* gave voice (and therefore power) to its leading lady; Erdman's adaptation provided Marta with an additional 28 lines of speech in the final scene of the play. On the stage, the actor playing Marta controlled the physical space until Lucía exposed her sister's scheme; Lucía refutes Marta's demand for Gómez to kiss her feet and says "No need to, father. Rise" (88) followed by a cowardly "I will do whatever father says" (91) when the Ensign expresses his desire to marry Lucía. In an appropriately ironic closing moment, Marta—though successful in securing herself a husband and financial future—is relegated to an inferior physical and metaphorical space: the margin(al). Though beat by the old men at her game of subterfuge, Marta—in this production—appears pleased with the result. Such an ending served as an invitation to the audience to feel uncomfortable with Marta's supposed happiness and acceptance of patriarchy.

But plots are not controlled entirely by their conclusions. As D.A. Miller argues of nineteenth-century novels, stories are "never fully or finally governed by" their closures (xiv). While the play's heteronormative ending might seem to conflict with the subversive, anti-patriarchal aims of *Marta* (and some of its characters), we must not dismiss all that has occurred to forward the action of the plot.

In addition to considering Marta's role over the course and at the end of the play, a consideration of what occurs afterwards is also crucial. As Sidney Donnell argues, the *comedia* features a

> formulaic (and sometimes sudden) use of marriage in order to signal that the story is resolved and that the values extolled by church and state have once again been upheld. This, however, represents a conflation between

> story and discourse. Simply because a closed system is deployed in the *way* a tale is told does not necessarily mean that the tale itself is over once the curtain has fallen. (Donnell 33)

What thus complicate the reception of these plays are their conventional endings, which uphold heterosexual ideals and thereby assert a generally patriarchal message to audiences. But even though the narrative structure is conventional and results in marriage, what happens in the process of that conventionalisation is often "unresolved." Characters do not always willingly marry, or by the end of the play they at least show hints of losing the desire to marry with which they began the play.

The opportunity for ambiguity in the degree of Marta's success at subverting patriarchy exists both on page and stage. What are we to make of such disturbing endings, which at times render their protagonists silent? Connor says female spectators in Golden Age audiences could identify with the female characters' subversions and desires to wed, and that the married state was not necessarily a fantasy-based "happy ending" (39). Their states at the end of *comedias* do indeed seem to bring them back to the constricted positions from which they began—but at least at the end, they have experience living both in and outside of patriarchy, living it and subverting it.

III. Conclusion

Through its use of queer ideology, within a framework that has been influenced by patriarchal forces, *Marta la piadosa* on the page, and *Marta the Divine* on the stage, subvert hegemony. While the play and production provide glimpses of a world ruled by men especially in its dramaturgical thrust towards heteronormativity, the play overwhelmingly positions itself in such a way that women, the construct of the feminine, and an ambiguous sense of gender and identity all merge to subvert and undermine patriarchy. Marta and *Marta* can certainly advocate a feminist agenda and the queer view that sexuality is constantly in flux.

In this chapter, I have thus argued that *Marta* warrants a less dualistic and more nuanced, or "queer," consideration of gender in performance through its reframing of the feminine and its dramaturgy. By means of its cross-gendered casting, the 2009 English-language premiere of *Marta the Divine* underscores and exaggerates Tirso's own attempts at subversion, justifiably challenging both the dramatic form's pliancy and the ideas of a nearly 400-year-old play. Directors might be keen to stage either positive portrayals of women, or to victimise them so as to teach the male spectators a lesson about what not to do, but this is neither realistic nor in line with what the text is doing. *Marta* is contradictory and ironic, just as is real life, and invites audiences to engage with a more fluid definition of gender.

Chapter 3: *El amor médico*

The leading lady of Tirso de Molina's c. 1621[1] *El amor médico*, Jerónima, is a cross-dresser: she disguises herself as a man in order to pursue the *galán* Gaspar and become a practicing physician. In the English-language premiere of the play, at the University of Massachusetts in October 2011, the actor playing Jerónima makes this shift from woman to man before the audience: Jerónima's maid Quiteria helps her into the academic robes of a doctor as the lights fade and early modern orchestral music plays to signal the end of the first act.

Jerónima's disguise is precipitated by her feeling offended when her brother Gonzalo's friend, Gaspar, comes to stay in their home but ignores her. When her brother flees to Pamplona to defend Spain against attacks from the French,[2] and Gaspar retreats to Portugal, Jerónima decides to follow Gaspar. Her role thus allows her to both pursue Gaspar and practice medicine.

In Portugal, Gaspar prepares to marry the lovesick Estefanía, whose father fears she has come down with the plague. When a doctor is called in, Jerónima enters—disguised as a man, "Doctor Barbosa"—and woos Estefanía. Jealous of Estefanía's attraction to the "doctor," Gaspar later goes to talk with "him," but along the way runs into the doctor's sister, "Marta"—also Jerónima, now in a female disguise. As "Marta,"

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[1] While Ruth Kennedy dates the play c. 1625-26, based on the similarity of versification in the play to Tirso's other plays in that date range ("The Dates" 11), Blanca de los Ríos puts it at 1621. She also suggests the possibility of an even earlier date—c. 1619-20—based on Tirso's trip to Portugal (*Obras dramáticas*). Cf. Oteiza's edition on dating the play (23-29), as well as Halkhoree's chapter "*El amor médico*" in *Social and Literary Satire* (particularly 95-97).

[2] In my adaptation, Gonzalo does not flee to Pamplona.

Jerónima successfully woos Gaspar. Meanwhile, Gaspar's friend Rodrigo[3] falls in love with Estefanía.

Later confronted by Estefanía after her identity is nearly found out, "Doctor Barbosa" confesses that he is not really the doctor but "Marta," dressed as her brother. After a series of tricks that nearly go awry, "Marta" confesses that in fact "she" really is the doctor, not his sister, and that "he" wants Estefanía's hand in marriage. Estefanía agrees, but before the two can marry, Jerónima—still dressed as a man—gets Gaspar to agree to marriage with "Marta." Jerónima's true identity is revealed moments later upon the announcement that her brother has died defending Spain. Jerónima has successfully won Gaspar, and the two are to marry, as are an (unhappy) Estefanía and Rodrigo.

As it features a cross-dressed heroine, the play often gets discussed alongside some of Tirso's other transvestite plays, such as *Don Gil de las calzas verdes, El Aquiles,* and *La mujer por fuerza*. Jerónima's identity for a large portion of the play is grounded in a gender with which she does not typically identify. While at the start of the play she is a woman, in act II Jerónima takes on the identity of a man and aims to "conquistar a don Gaspar y ni siquiera se excusa con rubores o se vale de procedimientos más tradicionalmente femeninos" (Parajón 189): femininity, then, is not part of her strategy in achieving her objectives.

While the play invites an analysis of transvestism, an examination that reveals Jerónima merely to be a woman who passes as a man ultimately only reinforces the binary

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[3] One of the main changes my adaptation and this production make to Tirso's original play involves merging the characters of Gonzalo and Rodrigo into one. It is thus Jerónima's brother (Gonzalo) who marries Estefanía, and Jerónima's father rather than her brother who dies at the end of act III. In this way, Jerónima's role in my adaptation becomes similar to that of Violante in Tirso's *La villana de Vallecas,* who cross-dresses and faces the threat of being discovered by her own brother, Don Gabriel, in Madrid. Finea in *La mujer por fuerza* also must dodge the presence of her brother, Alberto, throughout the play.

gender system (and therefore patriarchy) in its insistence on two concrete and very separate genders.[4] Drag performance, one form of transvestism, "frequently represents gender in such a hyperbolic fashion that it has been viewed as a practice that perpetuates sexist stereotypes, a potentially subversive performance medium that cannot fully escape the heterosexist binaries that structure it" (Badía 43). Transvestism (and analyses that focus on transvestism) could thus "be seen as a trap of the bi-polar gender system" (Bornstein 115).

Rather than look at transvestism to remark upon the ability for Jerónima to successfully pass as a man, what seems more striking about this play is the fact that her disguise as a man ironically helps her secure a union with a man, while her role as "Marta" allows Jerónima the opportunity to express homoerotic desire.

While Jerónima's role underscores the ambiguity of gender, *El amor médico* still unsurprisingly affirms the diametric difference between cultural man and woman, using not only Jerónima's "triple personalidad: la suya verdadera, la de médico y a la de fingida portuguesa" (Bravo-Villasante 121),[5] but also other characters. While Gaspar represents the paragon of maleness and masculinity, Estefanía stands as a marker for woman: she is emotional and melancholic—a habit she ostensibly learned from her mother: "es costumbre / que de su madre heredó / la tristeza" (1457-59).[6]

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[4] As Kate Bornstein, an M to F transsexual and performance artist, eloquently articulates, "gender seems to be basic to the patriarchy. After all, men couldn't have male privilege if there were no males. And women couldn't be oppressed if there was no such thing as 'women.' Doing away with gender is key to the doing away with the patriarchy, as well as ending the many injustices perpetrated in the name of gender inequality. There is no gender inequality that doesn't first assume there is gender—the only two genders at that. Gender inequalities include sexism, homophobia, and misogyny" (115).

[5] In this way, Jerónima is like Magdalena in *La celosa de sí misma* and Juana of *Don Gil de las calzas verdes*, who take on three separate identities over the course of the plays.

[6] Quotations in Spanish come from Blanca Oteiza's edition of the play.

Through its characterisation, *El amor médico* thus posits men and women as opposites, acknowledging the role that society's rules play in determining their difference: for instance, Jerónima herself acknowledges the role marriage plays in limiting women's freedom. The play also uses physical descriptions, such as beards, to assert the difference between genders: while "real" men have beards, for instance, women (and men who are not "real" men) are hairless.

But at the same time, I shall argue that in this play Tirso uses the character of Jerónima, whose gender is indeterminate, to blur notions of femininity and masculinity, thereby revealing the apparent malleability of gender. Jerónima's disguise has a neutralising effect: she appears not masculine in her male doctor's garb, but ambiguous. Both Jerónima and Finea in *La mujer por fuerza* wear multiple masks to create identities that are both masculine and feminine:

> Jerónima y Finea emplean los recursos dramáticos de la suplantación identitaria (femenina y masculina), y su maestría se mostrará en su capacidad de invención, en sus habilidades proteicas que les permiten crear sucesivas máscaras de éxito con las que cambian de sexo (travestismo), identidad y condición social […] Pero también comparten las mismas tácticas: desactivar la relación amorosa de sus amados con sus damas y rivales, haciéndose pasar por hombres que las enamoran: de manera que dominan tanto el comportamiento masculino como el femenino y su físico seduce a estas jóvenes sin asomo de inclinaciones homosexuales tan afectas a cierta corriente de la crítica. (Oteiza "Un modelo" 656)

By taking on multiple disguises, Jerónima's gender becomes ambiguous and fluid.[7] This slippage was literalised in the 2011 English-language premiere of the play through Jerónima's costume: while she wore trousers in acts II and III, with her long hair tucked into an academic cap, she also kept her high-heeled shoes on throughout the production.

[7] Kate Bornstein discusses various forms of gender slippage in *Gender Outlaw*, including ambiguity and fluidity: "If ambiguity is a refusal to fall within a prescribed gender code, then fluidity is the refusal to remain one gender or another. Gender fluidity is the ability to freely and knowingly become one or many of a limitless number of genders, for any length of time, at any rate of change. Gender fluidity recognizes no borders or rules of gender" (51-52).

My analysis based on this production does not claim that Jerónima is transgendered, despite her insistence on her newfound masculinity; rather, I assert that her gender becomes malleable in the play: in this way, she does not play "the traditional passive female role" (Stoll "Cross-Dressing 90).[8] Ultimately, I will argue that Jerónima manipulates the supposed objectivity of identity to get what she wants; she subverts the very structure of binary gender roles which is meant to trap her.[9]

Tirso does not just use characters to undermine the rigid binary gender system: he also uses the very structure of the play. *El amor médico*'s plot demands that Jerónima be both a man and woman, since she cannot reach her objective at the start of the play—to marry Gaspar—as just a woman: she has to be a man in order for the play to, ironically,

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[8] Stoll goes on to suggests that the play's "dramatic and linguistic recourses support the main point of gender indeterminacy. The movement of the representation of gender and identity is away from a strict binary division and toward a more flexible concept for the organization of the human sexual being, particularly for women" ("Cross-Dressing" 93).

[9] The ostensible objectivity of gender identity is the subject of Robert Stoller's 1968 *Sex and Gender*, which analyses several case studies of homosexuals, transvestites, and transsexuals that (problematically) aim to "serve as a caution to those who optimistically believe that one's gender identity is so unstable that it can be easily dispensed with and a new one created at will" (28). He draws some troubling conclusions, including often blaming mothers for their "need" to "feminize their little boys" (183), as well as "too much contact with the mother's body" resulting in feminization (138). Similarly, Stoller argues against "the implication that this fundamental aspect of character structure—gender identity—can shift easily" (37). His methods are equally troubling: he admits that "great pressures were put on her [a 40-something female who dressed as a male, believed she was growing a penis in her abdomen, was romantically involved with another female, and who denied homosexuality] by all of us, which in effect forced her to submit to surgery [an "exploratory laparotomy] " (150). Marjorie Garber criticises Stoller for assuming that women who cross-dress are either "the occasional, recreational cross-dresser who does not wish or try to pass" or "the transsexual" (Garber 45), but never a transvestite, since the mark of a transvestite is in the sexual excitement of cross-dressing. As Garber clarifies, "[f]or Stoller, then, women who wear men's clothes really want to *be* men—and in this society, who can blame them? They are not even psychotic—their desires are perfectly 'natural.' According to most doctors, male transvestites derive sexual excitement—and erections—from wearing women's underclothing, but women are regarded as having not *sexual* but *cultural* desires—desires that the culture and its doctors understand. For Stoller the penis is the "*sine qua non*," or, as he repeatedly describes it, the *insignia* of maleness, and the index, in erection, of sexual excitement. Since women do not have penises, and do not (sic) have erections, they are not demonstrably erotically excited by male clothing, and therefore are not transvestites" (Garber 45).

come to its heteronormative conclusion. Tirso's dramaturgical craftsmanship also anticipates, as I shall argue, Simone de Beauvoir's notion of "becoming" a woman: "[o]ne is not born, but rather becomes, woman" (283). Like de Beauvoir, Tirso underscores the process—in this case, the transformation from one gender to another—rather than asserts that gender is "scripted on the body" (Butler "Performance Acts" 531). Ultimately, Jerónima's disguises both support a patriarchal dramaturgy and also subvert, or "queer," that structure by undermining it through all Jerónima is able to accomplish before returning to her role as a woman.

In considering Jerónima as a transgressive character whose gender at moments comes unfixed, as well as through the play's dramaturgy, I thus argue that the play advocates for fluidity of gender. Despite the rigid social expectations of what constitutes a man or a woman in seventeenth-century Spain, in order to be successful in work and love Jerónima has habitually not only to cross but blur the gender divide and be both a man and a woman—and sometimes something in-between.

As of 2019, there have been two English-language productions of *El amor médico* (*Love the Doctor*), both of which use my translation/adaptation of the play.[10] The first was a production at the University of Massachusetts Amherst (UMass), running from 13 to 15 October 2011 with a total of four performances. This production, directed by Noah Simes,

[10] My adaptation was the result of a collaborative "literal" translation of Tirso's play, written by both myself and Josephine Hardman while we were graduate students at the University of Massachusetts. The project originated in a translation theory course, and eventually became my Master's thesis project, both of which were overseen by Professor Harley Erdman. Since I had the experience (and interest) in translation for stage production, we agreed that it would be best if I took over and worked on the stage version of the play. Therefore, Hardman's involvement ceased when it was time to create a stage translation for the 2011 performance. In this chapter, I refer to lines in both productions. Since my adaptation went through an additional set of revisions before the second production at UNCC, I refer to two separate unpublished typescripts when quoting lines in the English-language productions: Brew and Hardman for the 2011 production, and Brew for the 2013 production.

aimed to resemble seventeenth-century Spain in its design and soundscape. The set design (by Miguel Romero) for this show was sparse; in the university's black box Curtain Theater, the actors played on a stage comprised of two sets of stairs, both of which connected to a mezzanine level of the theatre. Every surface of the space was painted black, and there were no set pieces. Props were also very minimal in this production. The costumes (by Evan Laux) for this production were from roughly the period in Spain during which the play was written, though the play is set some hundred years earlier, c. 1500.

The second production was at the University of North Carolina Charlotte (UNCC), running from 30 October to 10 November 2013 with a total of 10 performances. Unlike the premiere, this production was set within the context of an Edwardian world. The director, Lon Bumgarner, called it a "hybrid" production: one with a Spanish setting and Edwardian dress (by Steven Stines). Live, acoustic music bridged the acts of the production. The play was performed in a black box theatre space in thrust formation (with audience on three sides). The set (by Anita Tripathi Easterling) was shaped like a courtyard, with ochre-coloured walls framed by Romanesque arches on three sides of the playing space. A set of wooden benches served as on-stage seats for the actors, as well as props to indicate the passage of time between scenes and acts.

Since both productions pre-date this study, neither engaged with gender as a motif as actively as other productions might. My reflections on these two productions of *Love the Doctor*, therefore, have less to do with the process and discovery of gender dynamics in the rehearsal process, and rather focus on the result: the performances themselves. That said, I do believe both productions ultimately asserted the difference of gender very rigidly, and so the ways in which actors behaved, dressed, spoke, and ultimately performed their genders makes up a substantial portion of this chapter. Specifically, I will

focus my analysis at first on how Jerónima's gender fluidity manifested in each production, and then on the play's dramaturgy.

I. "[N]inguna diferencia hay en los dos": Gender Fluid Characters

As discussed in the introduction to this study (14-25), life in early modern Spain offered a very rigid, binary view of gender: men and women wore certain apparel, spoke and behaved in specific ways, and therefore enacted separate social roles. *El amor médico* offers a similarly divided view of gender, primarily through Gaspar and Jerónima. In this section, I argue that through its characterisation, *El amor médico* affirms and underscores gender difference and privileges men. It does this by asserting the difference in genders both through behaviour and appearance. At the same time, I also argue that, while the play prioritises the stereotypical difference between men and women, it also brings to life characters (like Jerónima) who use the very structures within which they are trapped to subvert and escape imprisonment. In this way, Jerónima is like Finea in *La mujer por fuerza*: "[b]y playing the appropriate social game, she subverts it at the same time" (Ganelin "Who Was That" 112). The play is therefore not merely underscoring the difference between genders, but teasing out the complexities and ambiguities of gender, thereby revealing how gender can be used as a political tool. Throughout this chapter, I use details from the two English-language productions to help elucidate how these nuances of the text can be explored and clarified on the stage.

El amor médico (and its subsequent English-language productions) depicts men and women as opposites: gender is consistently articulated and differentiated through one's behaviour. The play also prioritises masculinity through male characters' control and power over women. The play concretises this motif through the function and role of marriage. Like a *mujer esquiva*, Jerónima sees the ceremony of marriage to be a sentence

of imprisonment for women. As Jerónima tells her maid Quiteria, "[e]l matrimonio es Argel, / la mujer cautiva en él" (134-5).[11]

Estefanía's father, Don Íñigo, similarly acknowledges the limiting nature of marriage for women, presenting it as the most prevalent concern of women: "ya sabéis que la mujer / no tiene mayor cuidado / que el casamentero" (1991-93). To him, the "prison" of marriage is her destiny. Estefanía father thus becomes the mouthpiece of patriarchy. The place of the woman in marriage is, in the play and real life, one of passivity while that of men is active: as Simone de Beauvoir argues, the young girl "is *married*, *given* in marriage by her parents" whereas "[b]oys *marry*; they *take* a wife" (442).[12]

Like Íñigo, Tello too advocates for the positive function of marriage while retaining man in the position of power: in his assertion that Jerónima's father wants to "aliviarla de doncella" (1254), he paradoxically reveals the negative aspects of maidenhood while also reminding us of the control a man has over a woman as soon as she is not a maiden—indeed a negative aspect of heterosexual marriage for women. Tello's retort places men in a greater position of power than it does women. As Oteiza illustrates, "[e]l único fin de la mujer era el matrimonio y la preocupación de los padres casar convenientemente a sus hijas. Luego, la doncellez 'soltería' era una carga, y frecuente motivo chistoso" (*El amor médico* 147). Later in the play, Tello not so subtly hints at this: "Pues poco valen, o nada, / vasija y virgin quebrada" (1542-3). Tello

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[11] Blanca Oteiza points out in her edition of the play that "[l]a comparación del matrimonio con Argel ('cárcel') es frecuente en la época" (Molina *El amor médico* 98n). The theme of the woman reluctant to marry was present even in sixteenth-century drama; in *Woman and Society*, Melveena McKendrick traces this character type back to the sixteenth century (50, et al.). See also 142-73 of McKendrick's chapter on the *mujer esquiva.*

[12] See introduction here throughout for more on the links between femininity and passivity.

objectifies woman, comparing her to a food or liquor vessel—and one that is, furthermore, broken when not virginal.[13] Tello underscores his point later in the same scene:

> El más eficaz remedio
> de toda doncella ha sido
> cuatro arrobas de marido
> sin suegra que se entre en medio (1565-68)

To Tello, unmarried women are in need of cure; to him, marriage is that cure. The UNCC production echoed Tello's harsh retort in performance: his remarks are biting, as he shouts them in the women's faces, but he ultimately pays for such behaviour: he is smacked with their purses, as well as by the men.

Masculinity is perhaps best represented through the role of Gaspar, especially in relation to women. While characters in the play disparage women, they venerate men. Even when women comment on men, they are still respectful of man. For example, Quiteria describes Gaspar in the opening scene to be nothing short of perfection:

> un pino de oro;
> un alma en cualquiera acción;
> de alegre conversación,
> guardando en ella el decoro
> que debe a su calidad;
> en lo curioso un armiño,
> mas no afectando el aliño
> que afemina nuestra edad; (13-20)

Gaspar's actions reveal his assumption that there are privileges that come with being a man—indeed a patriarchal sensibility: rather than honour women, at the start of the play Gaspar is running from the family of Micaela. The fact that he later falls for the veiled Jerónima in Portugal in act II while he is supposed to marry Estefanía further exposes the fickle nature of Gaspar.

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[13] Although Tirso's use of the broken vessel analogy is likely proverbial (see Oteiza in Molina *El amor médico* 159n, although the proverb does not appear in *Correas*), Tello's comparison is still insensitive and offensive to women.

In the original text, when Gaspar is with Estefanía, he assumes a physical entitlement over women. As he watches "Doctor Barbosa" hold Estefanía's wrists, he says in an aside:

> ¡Que tenga un dotor licencia
> tan amplia que lo que goza
> el tacto a mí se me niegue!
> ¡Oh facultad venturosa! (1667-70)

His use of *negar* here indicates his disappointment at being restricted—an assumption that he should be given access to Estefanía's body but is instead being denied. The body thus facilitates an illusion of power that men wield over women's bodies.

In a monologue following "Doctor Barbosa's" examination of Estefanía, Gaspar again expresses his frustration over not being allowed access to Estefanía:

> ¿Él una y otra visita
> y a mi tanta privación?
> […]
> ¡Oh médicos,[14] que inhumanos
> con los cuerpos sois, dejad
> las almas con libertad,
> que ya perseguís tiranos!
> Dos veces le dio las manos
> y a tocarlas le importuna;
> envidie amor su fortuna
> y llorad desdicha vos;
> él manos de dos en dos,
> yo con celos y ni aun una. (2057-58, 2063-72)

It is not just Estefanía's body that Gaspar feels restricted from: he expresses similar tendencies with other women in the play. In a scene later in act II, when Gaspar meets the veiled Portuguese lady (who turns out to be "Marta," Jerónima in disguise), Gaspar asks the woman to remove her veil and reveal "dos dedos […] / de cara" (2200-01) so that he can see her properly. When she does not immediately de-veil, he exclaims

[14] It is noteworthy that Gaspar does not see the threat—"Doctor Barbosa"—as a threat because of his (male) sex, but instead categorises doctors in general as a threat to a man's access to a woman. Doctors, in this case, are not a masculine threat, but simply people who are "inhumanos / con los cuerpos" (2063-64).

"¿Queréis despicarme vos?" (2205). His reasoning for this is further disturbing: "Amor a una dama tengo / con muchos inconvenientes" (2206-07). In performance at UMass, Gaspar's entitlement was accentuated: as he asks "[a]ren't you going to satisfy me?" (Brew and Hardman 44) and "[o]f all the women I have seen while traveling, / none have cared to love me as I deserve" (45), he assumes control over the veiled woman. At one point in the scene, Gaspar snatches "Marta's" hand, presses it against his chest, and demands that her "hand" do him a "favour" as he guides it down his body until Jerónima pulls away. (Figure 1) Rather than fight him and defend herself, though, Jerónima merely tries to avoid his touch for the remainder of the scene.



Figure 1

In the UNCC production, when Gaspar stumbles upon Jerónima as "Marta," Jerónima and her maid are physically constrained: they sit on benches while Gaspar looms over them. At one point, he even chases the women up a set of stairs, then back

down in an attempt to glimpse "Marta's" body. Eventually, Gaspar changes his tactics with her: he lowers his voice and convinces her through seduction; she nearly kisses him.

Throughout the play text, Gaspar moves from woman to woman. A scene in act II after he has met the veiled Portuguese lady illustrates this well:

GASPAR: Tello, esta mujer me ha muerto.
Desde el punto que la vi
tapada el alma la di
y ya que se ha descubierto
mil almas tener quisiera
que ofrecerle cada día.
TELLO: ¿Pues de nuestra Estefanía
qué has de hacer?
GASPAR: Echarla fuera.
TELLO: ¿Y de doña Micaela?
GASPAR: Desterrarla por tirana.
TELLO: ¿Y de nuestra sevillana?
GASPAR: Ni la vi, ni me desvela.
TELLO: ¿Y estotra?
GASPAR: Triunfa imperiosa;
es serafín, no es mujer. (2307-20)

It is Tello who tells Gaspar he is always looking for a new woman; after Gaspar goes to "Doctor Barbosa's" home to meet with Marta, Tello taunts him:

[…] mientras pasa
otra que en todo distinta
te pique por despicarte
destotra y nos desenmarte;
vendrá a ser la dama quinta. (2774-78)

All these instances are indicative of Gaspar's presumed superiority over women, as well as his attitude towards women: they are not subjects but rather objects of affection between which he can swiftly move. Gaspar thus constantly seeks to draw a distinction between men and women, to distance the two poles of the binary gender system, in part to assert his own masculine sexuality.

The UNCC production reversed this at certain moments: in her first scene as "Doctor Barbosa," Jerónima demands, with a flip of her hand, that all men on stage turn

away from “him” as “he” examines Estefanía. (Figure 2) The start of the performance even features Jerónima admiring the image of Gaspar, lit behind a cyclorama, as he flexes his biceps. In this way, the production subverted the objectification of women, instead putting her in a position of greater authority. (Figure 3) The audience’s first glimpse of Estefanía was also framed with woman in power: from a platform above the stage, Estefanía looked down from a place of control onto the men on stage. (Figure 4) Throughout the scene that follows, Estefanía is paid in banknotes by her father, seemingly for behaving as he wishes; her role as a dutiful daughter, therefore, does not come for free, but is instead something for which she is rewarded.



Figure 2



Figure 3



Figure 4

The text's presumed male superiority is issued and withheld based on how people look—evidence that the play considers gender to be socially constructed. When threatened by the presence of "Doctor Barbosa," Gaspar repeatedly indicates that the doctor does not look man enough to hold his position. Gaspar refers to the small stature of the doctor many times: he points out that "Doctor Barbosa" is "sin autoridad de barba"

(1751) and refers to the "pizca de dotor" (1979).[15] Gaspar thus clearly also associates masculinity with the physical body.

Tello also reflects Gaspar's preoccupation with how "Doctor Barbosa" does not live up to what a man ought to look like: he threatens that the doctor is "Barbosa, mas sin barbar" (2370), and that "he" is merely "dotor tilde" (2400) and complains of "médicos meñiques" (2570). When Tello and Jerónima (as "Doctor Barbosa") are alone on stage, Tello hints at the feminine nature of the doctor: "así esa cara barbeche / y salga tenor de tiple" (2541-42). He teases the doctor for his lack of a beard, as well as references his high-pitched voice.[16]

Jerónima also shows an awareness of the central role the body takes in determining one's gender. In order to dismiss the notion that she should be disrespected as a man, when disguised as the male doctor she places emphasis on her "small stature" to Íñigo and Gaspar, implying that men are not typically small: "Ni de mi estatura corta / menor alabanza espero, / cuando el sabio las abona" (1786-88).[17] In the final act, when Jerónima as "Doctor Barbosa" is trying to convince Estefanía that she was merely

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[15] As Oteiza explains, *pizca* is an "alusión despectiva a la estatura del dotor" (Molina *El amor médico* 179). Cf. Covarrubias: "Una cosa muy pequeña, como miaja, que se ase con los dos dedos" (873).

[16] "[T]enor de tiple" is an allusion to the castrati—a male singer who is castrated to preserve his youthful, high-pitched voice. Earlier in the play, after Jerónima has taken on her male disguise, Quiteria also threatens that there is nobody who, upon seeing her, would not mistake Jerónima for "el Hipócrates capón" (2118).

[17] Interestingly, Jerónima's physical shortcomings as a man are also reason for her to underscore the social constructedness of gender: "que la falta de mi cuerpo / en el espíritu es sobra" (1823-24). As a woman, she recognises that her physical deficiency as a (cross-dressed) man needs to be made up for, that she ostensibly is inferior—the "Other"—to men. While that which Jerónima lacks is height, as the characters discuss in this scene, one cannot help but also reflect on the fact that the phrase is a double entendre and Jerónima also obviously lacks a phallus. Cf. Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*: "they shall think we are accomplished / With that we lack" (3.4.64-65).

pretending to be "Marta," Jerónima references her scanty beard that turned her into a woman:

> No mi señora. Su traje
> solo en mí sostituido,
> mi poca barba y edad,
> el fuego en que me derrito,
> la dispensación severa,
> los celos siempre atrevidos,
> en mujer me transformaron. (3505-3511)

To Jerónima, then, gender can be facilitated by the physical: a lack of facial hair, in this case. It is also significant to note here the dramatic irony of the female character Jerónima having to insist on her temporary transformation from man ("Doctor Barbosa") into woman ("Marta")—and then back into man—when her "true" identity at the start of the play is that of a woman. Even earlier in the same scene, Jerónima ironically insists on her body as proof of her identity: "Miradme y veréis si os finjo" (3378).

Both English-language productions literalised this aspect of Tirso's play: though there are many approaches to playing gender, as we have seen throughout chapter 1, the two actors playing Jerónima in these productions used the materiality of their bodies to communicate gender. At UNCC, when Jerónima is the doctor, she takes up space in a way that women often do not despite the fact that she is smaller than the men on stage. Still, the result is somewhat ambiguous: her hair tucked up neatly in a hat, it is hard to tell from her face alone whether or not she is a man or a woman.

At UMass too, the actor playing Jerónima, as "Doctor Barbosa," similarly commands the stage with a strong physical presence and lowered voice: Jerónima here medically examines Estefanía confidently in their first scene together, even as Estefanía screams in delight "Yes, yes!" while Jerónima reaches up her skirt then holds hands over her chest. (Figure 5) Jerónima is successful in her performance in that her true identity is not questioned, but to the audience she is both man and woman here.



Figure 5

The difference between genders is further made clear in performance through sartorial differences: while the *galanes* and *barba* wear doublets with capes and hats and the *gracioso* dons a vest and open-neck shirt in the premiere of *Love the Doctor* at UMass, the women wear ornate bodices and skirts.

But despite the centrality of the body's appearance in distinguishing genders, Jerónima is able to successfully (and ironically) subvert the binary system and attain the goals she has that would not otherwise be open to her as a woman. As a leading lady, Jerónima takes issue with being objectified. Like Finea in *La mujer por fuerza,* she "refuses to be relegated to some obscured object of desire" (Ganelin "Who Was That" 109).

Through behaviours and appearances, Jerónima does not necessarily conform to notions of how a typical woman of her type behaves. In the entire first scene of the play, Jerónima argues with Quiteria about how she would rather study and learn Latin than get married like most women and, as Quiteria argues, like their Queen:

> Haces bien; mas dese modo
> procura imitarla en todo,

> por mujer y por vasalla;
> cásate, pues se casó. (126-29)

In performance at UNCC, the moment becomes a point of contention for the two women: Quiteria yells these lines at Jerónima, while the feisty Jerónima shouts back that she would happily marry if she had a mate like Ferdinand. Jerónima thus fulfils in performance the stereotypes of the *mujer esquiva* rather than the characteristics of a well-behaved early modern woman.

Jerónima's gender is fluid not only to the audience and the play's other characters, but also to herself, in part because the social world in which she exists only supports a rigid system of gender. As Butler argues, one is only able to determine their own "sense of gender to the extent that social norms exist that support and enable that act of claiming gender for oneself" (*Undoing Gender* 7). Though encouraged to conform to gender norms, Jerónima increasingly resists throughout the play. Her use of disguises facilitates this resulting ambiguity.

Ultimately, Jerónima actively manipulates gender identity in order to liberate herself. She uses the supposedly objective dichotomy of male/female to achieve her goals—both professional and personal—and in doing so proves the binary gender system false by becoming not just a transvestite character, but also a character who blurs the distinction between man and woman. Jerónima's role over the course of the play similarly avoids categorisation: rather than being explicitly male or female, Jerónima—in many moments of the play, whether she is purporting to be a male or a female—is ambiguously gendered.

In what follows, I analyse the several instances in which the play engages with this blurring of identity as it becomes embodied through the character Jerónima. I will argue that Jerónima's gender identity becomes blurred both though her appearance and also

through her actions. I also elucidate the potentials of this embodiment for the play in performance by drawing examples from the two English-language productions of *Love the Doctor*.

Halberstam argues that "when a woman is mistaken consistently for a man […] what marks her gender presentation is not androgyny but masculinity" (57).[18] While this appears to be true in cross-gender casting, the inherently cross-gendered role of Jerónima complicates this: although she asserts herself publicly as a woman and a man at different moments throughout the play, there is often confusion over who Jerónima is; she is not always successfully read by others as a man. Rather than see her as a man, or even as merely androgynous, Jerónima is read by others as ambiguous: she has some male features and some female features. While male her disguise as "Doctor Barbosa" fails to present her as entirely masculine. The other characters in the play, who view and therefore interpret her gender, fail to express her gender with words. As a result, they refer to her as both.

Perhaps the most "queer" moment of the play occurs when Jerónima transforms back and forth between "Doctor Barbosa" to "Marta" while on stage, in front of Estefanía, to reveal that gender is expressed and read through one's behaviour and dress rather than through their anatomical sex. At the start of this penultimate scene of the play, Estefanía meets "Marta" for the first time and sees no difference between the doctor and "Marta":

> ¡Qué dellos que os parecéis
> a vuestro hermano! Tenéis
> su misma fisonomía;
> ninguna diferencia hay
> en los dos; quedo admirada. (3144-48)

[18] This is an example of the sort of masculine skewing that manifests through, in this case, cross-dressing.

Estefanía's observation creates dramatic irony: the audience knows that "Marta" and "Doctor Barbosa" are both characters invented and created by Jerónima, so of course there is "ninguna diferencia" (3147) between the two. In the production at UMass, Jerónima (dressed as "Marta" here) is nervous after Estefanía removes her veil and sees her face; she walks away from Estefanía and avoids meeting eyes. But Estefanía insists, while thinking "Marta" and the doctor are different people, that they appear the same. The fact that Estefanía sees "ninguna diferencia" between a man and a woman, and that she sees the "misma fisonomía" (3146), at first seems like support for the idea that gender is something that cannot simply be constructed with a costume. But it is also an insistence that the difference between men and women is fluid and ambiguous: it is possible for a man and a woman to look very similar.

While Estefanía sees Jerónima as a man, Jerónima is clearly still herself—a woman—to the audience, thus straddling (and indeed blurring) her "true" gender. The audience knows she is Jerónima, for the objectives she pursues in this scene are those of Jerónima, but the extent to which she is fully embodying a female subjectivity here can, arguably, become unclear in performance. For example, when played by an actor, does Jerónima/"Doctor Barbosa" seem attracted to Estefanía? To the extent that she might abandon her objectives as Jerónima and instead pursue a relationship with Estefanía? Estefanía shows sexual attraction for the doctor but is similarly taken with "Marta" and wants to spend time with her. While in UNCC's production Estefanía is not attracted to "Marta," at UMass, she is: on her line "Doctor Barbosa is very handsome (Brew 59), when talking to "Marta" Estefanía slowly reaches for her face, gently touching her chin as if to lean in for a kiss. While the women are physically intimate with one another in this scene, Estefanía avoids physical contact with the doctor until "he" convinces her "he" is actually "Marta." (Figure 6)



Figure 6

Later in this same scene, Jerónima transitions from "Marta" to the doctor, then back to "Marta" in order to avoid being caught in her lie by Estefanía (3372-3376). Jerónima's confession blurs her identity: she is not only the female "dotora," who Estefanía previously thought to be a man, but also "doña Marta." Estefanía assumes "Marta's" transformation from "Doctor Barbosa" to "Marta" is an illusion, some sort of trick:

> Decís bien; mas ¿qué artificio,
> con qué traza o en qué parte
> pudo en hombre convertiros
> tan brevemente? (3396-99)

The multiple ways in which Estefanía asks this question, and the number of words she tries in order to describe what has happened—a man turning into a woman—suggests she cannot fully comprehend the transformation. This "artificio," as Estefanía describes it, is

itself suggestive of something magical:[19] according to Covarrubias, *artificio* is "la compostura de alguna cosa o fingimiento" (154). The foundation being a dichotomy between what is true and what is false, and further that something is trying to be passed as true when it is false, suggests that Estefanía is aware of "Doctor Barbosa" trying to trick her.[20] This dramatic *artificio* is further explored in the theatre, where the signifying power of costumes and behaviour are already at work in communicating identity.

If Jerónima's transformation is not magical, then, Estefanía reasons, it could be a physical deception: while "traza" could signify here a trick or ruse, the noun is also indicative of one's general appearance. This suggests that Estefanía sees the transformation from "Doctor Barbosa" to "Marta" as one which is purely physical, despite the fact that the transformation which has taken place before her is linguistic rather than physical. In performance, since initially she enters the scene as "Doctor Barbosa," Jerónima is likely still dressed as a man when she claims she is "Marta." In the UMass production, Jerónima's physicality and voice changed with each identity shift: as "Marta," she bounces on her tiptoes while walking, raising her voice to a higher register.

While Estefanía (correctly) suspects deception, to Jerónima, becoming "Marta" is simply about the clothing she wears:

> El tener
> una amiga y un vestido
> de mi hermano en esta calle,

[19] As Laura Levine argues, "[t]he idea that a man can be turned into a woman is a version of the more basic 'magical' idea that a given person can be turned into another person. This idea is not explicitly magical—it does not self-consciously allude to charms or potions—but it is implicitly so, for it involves a belief in a fairly mysterious process which violates the notion of discrete and individual identity" (123). As she goes on to explain, "[t]his belief [that one can be turned into another] itself turns out to be based on two interrelated ideas, both of which involve magical processes: the idea that watching leads inevitably to 'doing' and the corollary that watching leads inevitably to 'being' (because action, particularly imitative action, is constitutive)" (128).

[20] "Artificio" can also simply mean something made in the name of art—which is not necessarily intentionally deceptive.

que así industrias apercibo. (3399-3402)

But an outfit is not enough to convince Estefanía. A few lines later, Estefanía still cannot settle on which Jerónima is: she says "Dúdolo, dotor o Marta" (3403); to Jerónima it only takes "una amiga y un vestido" to become a man (3400). And, indeed, Jerónima becomes—socially, performatively—a man only through a change of costume. As both Simone de Beauvoir and Kate Bornstein insist, one "becomes" rather than is inherently born a gender. Being a successful male—that is, fulfilling the social role of a man—does not demand that Jerónima is inherently male; it is not about some inner "male" truth. In this way, perhaps Butler would agree that Jerónima need not inherently be male to play out her role of "Doctor Barbosa": gender here is not an "inner truth" but merely a social definition which can be constructed with a costume. Ultimately, the fact that Estefanía cannot seem to explain who Jerónima is at this point, or how her identity could shift so easily, speaks to her very fluidity.

Jerónima must rely on clothing to solidify her identity at the end of the play. During the final scene, when she is trying to convince Gaspar of her "true" identity (as "Marta") while disguised as the doctor, Jerónima first turns not to her knowledge of Portuguese, or citing an instance the two experienced together before, but to clothing:

No juzguéis por los vestidos
la persona. Doña Marta
soy. (3554-56)

The moment thus becomes yet another instance in which Jerónima argues for the non-inherent quality of identity: one's gender identity is something that can be constructed with a costume.[21] Although clothing has a powerful signifying function, especially on

[21] The moment works on two levels: not only as an argument for the non-essentialist placement of gender, but also as a moment of dramatic irony since she is dressed as the doctor.

stage, and can help communicate one's gender, regardless of the body's sex. Despite Jerónima's small stature, then, clothing has the power to queer her identity.

Jerónima's ambiguous gender comes back repeatedly to her physical appearance, and typically to her clothing specifically, and yet clothing is not enough to prove one's gender. At times, costumes fail to communicate gender; clothing proves to be the very reason for ambiguity and gender fluidity in *El amor médico* on the stage.

Clothing is, for instance, not enough to convince Gaspar of Jerónima's identity. She thus uses gendered behaviour to communicate her identity: in the performance at UNCC, Jerónima's "Don't judge me by my clothes" (69) is said with some anger, while at "I am Marta," (69) Jerónima shifts her voice to a higher register, placing a hand in front of her face where a fan previously stood: her actions are meant to feminise her, despite her male disguise at this point.

The way gender is categorised in the play is also present in Tello's observations of Jerónima. In the first scene of act III, after Gaspar exits, Tello and Jerónima (as the doctor) remain on stage, and—for the first time—Tello reveals his suspicion that the doctor is a woman in disguise:

> Dotor para con chapines,[22]
> que con la amarilla borla
> puede llamarse Amarilis,
> en mí los tales diviesos
> son de linaje de chismes,
> que unos van naciendo de otros
> y me abrasan los cojines. (2524-30)

This passage involves a tripartite reflection of the feminine qualities of "Doctor Barbosa." First, Tello points out the women's shoes—"chapines"—that the doctor is wearing.

[22] Julio Monreal explains that "[l]os chapines eran también como la señal y marca de que la mujer salía de la infancia, y, calzándolas, parecían decir a los galanes que podía ya escuchar sus conceptuosos requiebros" ("Costumbres" 226 b-c., qtd. in Edwin S. Morby's edition of Lope's *La Dorotea* 395n32).

Second, Tello alludes to a traditionally female character, usually a shepherdess, in Classical pastoral literature: *Amarilis*. As Blanca Oteiza notes in her critical edition, "amarilis" is not only a "nombre poético de mujer" but also "relaciona fónicamente con amarillo, el color de la Facultad de Medicina, que lleva en la borla" (204).[23] Finally, Tirso suggests that "Doctor Barbosa" is one of many "diviesos" who are descended from "chismes" (2527, 2528).

Tello's view of Jerónima here is thus not strictly that of a man: he also sees femininity in her (male) apparel. Tello thus reads Jerónima as "a male doctor wearing women's shoes" (Brew and Hardman 57). This suggests that Tirso views that which makes a man and woman as something which is external—clothing and perhaps behaviour too, in this case.

In the production at UMass, Tello showed explicit sexual desire in this scene, grasping his genitals—a plea for the doctor to do the same to him, perhaps because of the femininity he sees in the doctor. Jerónima begins her response by matching Tello's tone, seemingly seducing him as a woman, but then seizes the collar of his shirt at "six ounces of hot peppers" (Brew and Hardman 57). She threatens him until Tello's exit a few lines later.

It is Tello's attraction to the ambiguously gendered Jerónima that inspired a line change, and, in performances at UMass, a fully realised erotic desire of Tello for "Doctor Barbosa." The line occurs when, after entering as "Doctor Barbosa," Jerónima attacks Gaspar for trying to escape when he sees her/him coming, and for exhibiting such loose behaviour. In the Spanish, in a later scene of act III, Tello exclaims in an aside "¡Zape!

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[23] Ruth Lee Kennedy offers a different perspective on this allusion: "it was seemingly the inimitable 'Amarilis' who acted the captivating role of Jerónima" (21). Kennedy also notes that Amarilis probably performed in a 1626 production of Tirso's *La huerta de Juan Fernández*. Cf. Bergman, *Luis Quiñones de Benavente y sus entremeses*, 1965, 559-63 (Kennedy 31-32n39).

Por Dios / que es el dotor desbarbado / hombre de sangre en el ojo" (2810-12). While a literal translation of the line might suggest Tello is merely saying the beardless doctor is a man of honour,[24] the final draft of my adaptation uses the line as an opportunity to clarify Tello's eroticised reading of the doctor:

> *(Aside)* My God,
> This doctor's got some balls! (Brew 63)

I used this line specifically to suggest some sexual slippage on the part of Tello since his reference to the masculine and feminine quality of "Doctor Barbosa" here ("el dotor desbarbado / hombre de sangre en el ojo" (2811-12)), given the earlier suggestion that he might know "Doctor Barbosa's" true (female) identity, implies he continues to see the doctor as exhibiting a non-normative gender.

In the production process, the line became a particular point of contention. Given the sexual tension expressed between Jerónima and Tello in this production's staging—or at least the possibility that Tello anticipates the doctor's true feminine identity—a line change emerged in our rehearsals: "My God, / she's got some balls."[25]

After the production closed, I revisited this line; when faced with changing the pronoun back to "he," I realised that what worked about this moment was not that Tello discovers that "Doctor Barbosa" is a woman disguised as a man, but that the doctor's

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[24] Blanca Oteiza references in her footnote Covarrubias' reference to "sangre en el ojo" as "ser hombre de valor" (Molina *El amor médico* 216). Cf. Covarrubias 925.

[25] Rather than arguing for a more literal translation of the line (to do with honour), several of my collaborators on the production became preoccupied with my reference to "she" in Tello's line. They argued that if Tello knew "Doctor Barbosa" was actually a woman disguised as a man, he would immediately tell Gaspar, Jerónima would be found out, and the play would be over. With some resistance, the line was changed quite late in the process—during technical rehearsals—back to "My God, / he's got some balls" for the sake of storytelling clarity.

gender is somewhat ambiguous.[26] In the final version of my adaptation, Tello thus makes an observation not about the gender of "Doctor Barbosa," but rather about the fact that the assumedly male doctor has a feminine quality: "For such a gentle one," he says, "this doctor's got some balls!" (63).

My adaptation of the play underscored such queer aspects of Tirso's play and ultimately built on them: in the second act of the play, when Jerónima is "healing" Gonzalo, I extend their interaction by having Gonzalo notice Jerónima holding a hand to her own heart. He asks her if she is in pain, and she admits her heart aches, but that she cannot seem to heal it. When he suggests another doctor lay a hand on the doctor's "swollen breast," Jerónima quickly declines and diverts their conversation.[27]

This queer articulation of gender in the play is also exhibited in the opening of Jerónima's act III scene with Estefanía. After Estefanía threatens to have her removed, Jerónima—who has been pretending to be "Marta"—now claims that she is "Doctor Barbosa":

JERÓNIMA: Quedo, que soy el dotor.
¡Cuerpo de tal, no deis gritos!
ESTEFANIA: ¿Quién sois?
JERÓNIMA: El dotor Barbosa.
ESTEFANIA: ¿Ya empieza otro laberinto?
JERÓNIMA: ¡Bravos sustos os he dado!
ESTEFANIA: Hombre en mujer embebido,
acabemos de saber
uno o otro.
JERÓNIMA: Yo eso pido.
ESTEFANIA: ¿Quién eres?
JERÓNIMA: Vuestro dotor,
que dos veces os visitó;

[26] It is also this ambiguity—the uncertainty about whether the character is male or female—that creates some of the exciting sexual tension in the earlier "bleeding" scenes between Tello and Jerónima as mentioned earlier.

[27] There are several similarities between the real-life cross-dressing women in seventeenth-century Spain and the character of Jerónima in my adaptation. This moment is supported by the fact that a woman's true gender was often discovered "when she became ill or was wounded" (Dekker and van de Pol 21).

una en nombre de mi hermana
y otra agora en nombre mío;
como mujer la primera
y ésta en traje masculino. (3489-3502)

Estefanía's response to Jerónima's admission that she is the doctor suggests something complex about how gender is constructed. The idea of a man imbibed into a woman's body (3494) indicates that Estefanía considers the doctor's "true" identity to be that of a woman—"Marta"—despite the fact that Jerónima is here admitting that she is "Doctor Barbosa." "Embebido" indicates an absorption, or an assimilation: it is no longer one unit, but two, in that the former "loses its separate existence" ("absorb") and becomes both (or queer). In this way, Estefanía is suggesting that Jerónima's identity is indeed not singular, but complex, doubled.

Yet at the same time, Estefanía's insistence that "Doctor Barbosa" "acabemos de saber / uno o otro" (3495-96) indicates a tension around the idea of being both: she demands that the doctor choose whether s/he is "Doctor Barbosa" or "Marta," for she cannot be simultaneously man and woman.

The play is thus acknowledging, by setting up gender as a binary, its discomfort with the notion of being both: it tries to make characters fit into just one category of gender. But in doing so, the play rather acknowledges that gender is not as simple as fitting one of two gender descriptions; there is a certain malleability and ambiguity in gender.

Jerónima's response to Estefanía indicates her awareness of (or intention to be) both (or neither): she is purposefully unclear (3497-3502). In the production at UMass, at this moment the actor playing Estefanía ascends a set of stairs, presumably which lead into her home: she is off to have "Marta" removed. Rather than confuse Estefanía further, Jerónima's declaration that she is "Doctor Barbosa" makes Estefanía seemingly

disappointed. Estefanía is no longer angry in this moment, but complacent: it is as though she has been fooled too many times, and merely wants to hear the truth. Estefanía seems disappointed to learn that "Marta" was not with her earlier. In the UNCC production, Estefanía is genuinely sad at the final reveal of Jerónima's true identity, despite the audience chuckling at her question "[s]o you don't have a sister?" (Brew 73). At UMass, the moment elicited no such laughter; it is once again a genuine query on the part of Estefanía, after which she wonders "[i]s there a worse betrayal than this?" (84) when paired off with Gonzalo. (Figure 7)



Figure 7

The moment could also be played in such a way that Jerónima seems simply confused by her own deceptions up to this point that she is struggling to look for an escape from her lies, or a method to successfully continue her ruse. But an equally valid reading of this moment involves Jerónima insisting on not choosing just one identity. Even when her objective here demands that she be "Doctor Barbosa," she does not feel comfortable fully committing to being just a man or just a woman.

All of these queer moments eventually inspired similar moments in my adaptation and the play's subsequent English-language productions. One such occurs during the

opening of act III, which features the King appointing Jerónima (in her disguise as "Doctor Barbosa") to the position "Dotor de cámara." My adaptation—changing the King to Queen María of Aragon—instead features a woman conferring the title upon the disguised Jerónima.[28] Because at other moments in the play I suspect some slippage in Jerónima's identity, in this scene I add lines in order to suggest that the Queen similarly suspects "Doctor Barbosa" is actually a woman:

JERÓNIMA: Your Majesty, may Spain admire you
in the many happy centuries to come.
Your lofty praise is more precious than
that which Marcus Aurelius gave to the
esteemed Roman doctor, Galen.
Not even the golden statues
Athens erected for Hippocrates
parallel the grace, my Lady, that
Your royal highness has granted me.
QUEEN: (*Aside to Jerónima*) And she who praises
the Queen raises her own status. (Brew and Hardman 54-5)

In performance, this moment illuminated what is at work in other parts of the play: a sense of ambiguous gender, but also sense of fear on Jerónima's part for possibly being found out. The farther she goes with her disguises, the more dangerous her ambiguity becomes.

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[28] Though Tirso's original play has a role for Manuel, the King of Portugal, Queen María of Aragon—the daughter of Queen Isabel, who Jerónima references here—takes his place in my adaptation, and therefore becomes central to the adaptation's plot. In Tirso's play, the King appears in just one scene, at the very beginning of act III. Though the appearance of the King at this moment in the play is dramaturgically justified, such an insignificant amount of stage time renders the role insignificant to the plot at large. Given this, my adaptation incorporates the role in several additional places throughout the play: once in the first scene of act III, and again later in act III, fulfilling a typical *comedia* ending with the *deus ex machina* presence. When left as a male role (King), this addition changes the spirit of the ending: Jerónima is no longer only being forced to give up her masculine disguise but is being told to do so by a man. Though such words coming from the King make sense, given gender dynamics in the period, such an ending would be too heavy-handed and perhaps formulaic. My adaptation of the role instead creates an ending in which one woman (the Queen) tells another (Jerónima) that she must return to her life as a woman—something more equivocal that therefore captures the spirit of ambiguity and contradiction with which Tirso writes.

II. "He sido quien a la naturaleza con mi industria he contradicho": Problematising Dramaturgy

It is not just the characters Tirso creates who contribute towards a fluidity of gender in the play: it is also the structure of the play itself. As we have seen from the core of *Marta la piadosa*, the structure of a *comedia urbana* is traditional, patriarchal and conservative: a pair of lovers goes through various trials, and at the end of the play unites in marriage. Such endings hardly help advocate for an alternative coupling of lovers in that they never unite homosexual pairs but always heterosexual, with the fathers of the women typically having at least some control over who marries whom.

But such an ending feels unstable when, just minutes before the play ends, two women kiss one another passionately. This was the case in Tirso's play and both English-language productions of *Love the Doctor*: Jerónima embraces Estefanía before being interrupted by two male characters.

In his play, Tirso uses the dramatic tool of disguise to queer these typically normative dramaturgical structures: Jerónima's disguises as "Doctor Barbosa" and "Marta" simultaneously serve to uphold a heterosexual marriage and ending, while also allowing Jerónima the freedom to express homoerotic desire.

Jerónima is constantly aware of the dangers cross-dressing creates, and therefore devises sub-plots in which she must also disguise herself as other characters, providing the dramaturgical support to her own main objective to win Gaspar.[29] And yet, as I will argue throughout this section, by act III there is evidence that Jerónima no longer wants

[29] One such danger is, of course, being discovered in her disguise, especially by her brother Gonzalo. Like Violante in Tirso's *La villana de Vallecas*, who risks "ruin[ing]…her reputation by traipsing around unescorted in Madrid, instead of waiting patiently in the hopes that her brother might do something" (Krebs 97), Jerónima too puts her reputation in danger. Perhaps even worse is the fact that Jerónima has not yet been dishonoured and therefore risks ruining a perfect reputation.

Gaspar in the way she did at the start of the play.[30] In fact, there is evidence that Jerónima feels desire for Estefanía which, at best, complicates her desire for Gaspar.

Ironically, it is her disguise as the man "Doctor Barbosa" that helps secure her marriage with Gaspar, while at times her disguise as the doctor's sister "Marta" helps her express desire for Estefanía. The union between Jerónima and Gaspar can only occur if Jerónima cross-dresses as the male "Doctor Barbosa" and, further, only if there is some slippage in her gender identity: she must constantly alternate between her male and female disguises.[31] The very irony of Jerónima's existence is that she cannot marry a man without first becoming a man. As Anita Stoll suggests, Jerónima "has little use for the traditional woman's role" ("Cross-dressing" 90).

In this sub-section, I first demonstrate how Jerónima's disguises help lead her to a heteronormative marriage with Gaspar (and therefore a normative ending). Second, I argue that the text supports a homoerotic reading of the women's relationship, and then demonstrate how her disguises aid her expression of desire for Estefanía. This desire becomes most prevalent in the extended scene of act III, mentioned in the previous section, in which Jerónima shifts identity six times in the space of under 500 lines.

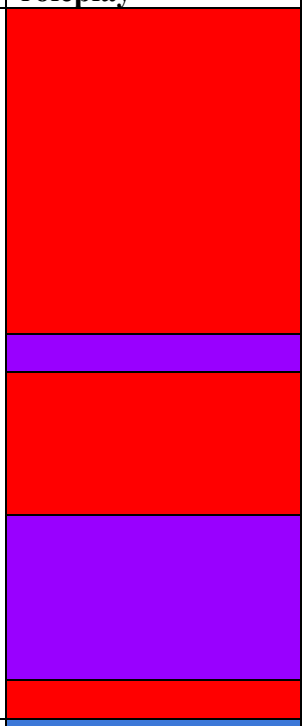
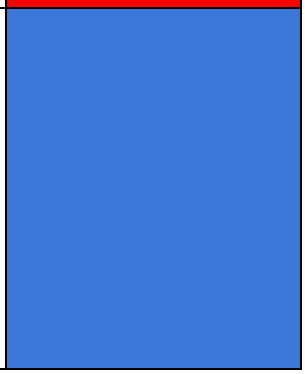
A consideration of the identity shifts in this play are also useful to the extent that they track not only how many times Jerónima's identity changes, but also why,

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[30] Blanca Oteiza argues that love is absent in the equivalent characters of Tirso's *La mujer por fuerza*, just as in *El amor médico*: "En realidad, ninguna de las dos [Finea and Florela] consigue enamorar a sus respectivos amados, Gaspar y Federico, y cuando se caen las máscaras el emparejamiento es puramente dramático y convencional, aunque para Gaspar viene a ser feliz, pues al fin y al cabo está enamorado de la misma persona, la dama portuguesa y Jerónima" ("Un modelo" 657).

[31] This brings to mind Tirso's play *La mujer por fuerza*, in which the *dama* (Finea) falls for a friend of her brother who stays at their home. Though he does not know Finea lives there, she pursues him in retaliation, disguised as a man. Although she toys with others' expectations of her gender until the very end of the play, circumstances eventually thrust Finea back into the role of a woman.

particularly in the scene mentioned above.[32] Jerónima's identity shifts sixteen times in the play between five different personas, only one of which is a man: herself, a veiled woman, "Doctor Barbosa", a veiled Portuguese woman, "Marta", and an unnamed veiled Spanish woman in Portugal. (Chart 1)

Scene	Lines	Jerónima's roleplay
Act 1	1-324 Jerónima (324 lines) 735-756 Spanish woman (21 lines) 829-972 Jerónima (143 lines) 973-1137 Spanish woman (164 lines) 1138-1152 Jerónima (14 lines)	
Act 2	1585-1944 Dr. Barbosa (359 lines) 2083-2157 Jerónima (74 lines) 2158-2302 Portuguese woman (144 lines) 2343-2414 Dr. Barbosa (71 lines)	

[32] In her monograph *Staging the Spanish Golden Age*, Jeffs analyses the role of verse in the RSC's 2004-05 season of Golden Age plays. To do so, Jeffs creates a series of scenic breakdowns in the form of charts. Her charts are primarily used to indicate the verse shifts in the *comedias* produced by the RSC and show how these shifts manifested in performance. Using the verse charts, Jeffs' third chapter also makes a case for how charting versification can illustrate meaning in the *comedia* through translation and performance. Her breakdown was inspiration for my own in this chapter, which instead charts Jerónima's disguises as "Doctor Barbosa" and "Marta."

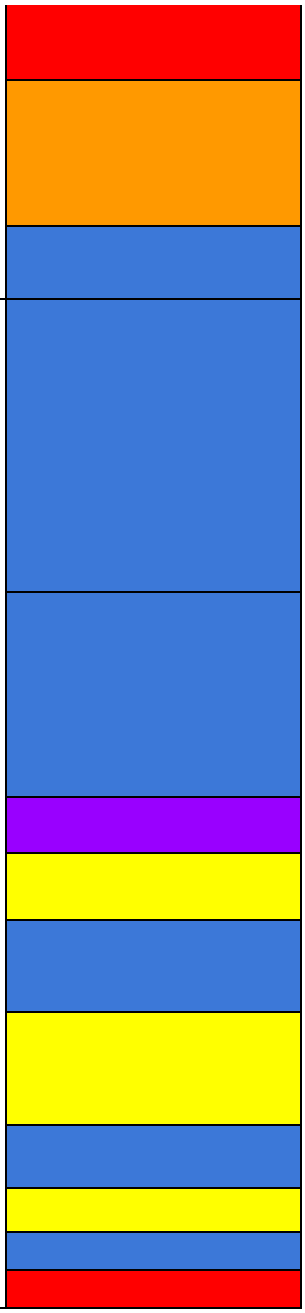
		
Act 3	2415-2707 Dr. Barbosa (292 lines) 2779-2982 Dr Barbosa (203 lines) 3067-3122 Spanish woman (55 lines) 3139-3206 Marta (67 lines) 3283-3374 Dr. Barbosa (91 lines) 3375-3488 Marta (113 lines) 3489-3551 Dr. Barbosa (62 lines) 3552-3573 Marta (21 lines) 3574-3615 Dr. Barbosa (41 lines) 3616-3648 Jerónima (32 lines)	

Chart 1

Jerónima's female disguises, as a relief from her masculine disguise, also protect her by restricting the male audience members' view of her body. As has been noted elsewhere, female actors donning male disguises resulted in a rather overt display of their bodies: women were eroticised. In original productions of the play, male disguise would have entailed "form-fitting pants, revealing the woman's ankles, legs, and buttocks.

Clearly, male clothing on the stage allowed the audience to view the actress's body in a provocative way" (Tigner 173-74). The fact that the play brings Jerónima back to her female disguise over and over is thus a form of protection.

At the same time, doing so also restricts her physically: women's dress in the period "would have covered the body nearly entirely, encasing it in a kind of cage" (173). Therefore, my analysis also considers the materiality of Jerónima's body—and the female actor's body—particularly in the moments in which her on-stage identity and disguise does not match the way she is dressed.

Jerónima's need to continually disguise herself manifests most clearly in the final act of the play, shortly after Jerónima reveals herself to Gaspar. She learns, in the moments between this scene and the next with Estefanía, that it is not sufficient just to be Jerónima: she must continue to deceive. Jerónima's return to her disguise as "Doctor Barbosa," though she speaks in Portuguese (3574-77) becomes a political statement: society says she is not allowed to dress as a man and practice medicine, yet she also cannot practice medicine as a woman. She must continue to mask her true identity until she undoes the web of confusion she has created, until social order is restored through her untangling. She becomes ill—both as a result of love and loss—and is forced, as she anticipates at the start of the play, to minister to herself: "En accidentes de amor / no cura bien el dotor / que no cura para sí" (322-24).

The fluidity of Jerónima's identity exemplifies the argument of Kate Bornstein—who is "carrying the legacy of Simone de Beauvoir" (Butler *Undoing Gender* 65)—that gender is, at the core, transformation. As she travels back and forth between man and woman, Jerónima literalises de Beauvoir's notion of "becoming" a woman: "[o]ne is not born, but rather becomes, woman" (283). Being a woman is "an active process of appropriating, interpreting, and reinterpreting received cultural possibilities" (Butler "Sex

and Gender" 36). Rather than being biologically determined, de Beauvoir argues that gender is formed out of culture; femininity in woman "is a trait that develops in her from her earliest years. But it is false to claim that therein lies a biological given; in fact, it is a destiny imposed on her by her teachers and by society" (de Beauvoir 294). Sex and gender are thus distinct, as they are in the world of the *comedia urbana.*

But de Beauvoir's claim goes further than this: it speaks to the already established codes of gender that make their way into individuals' bodies at the time of first gendering—usually at birth. This theory is similar to Jerónima's gendered experience in that "[t]he choice to assume a certain kind of body, to live or wear one's body a certain way, implies a world of already establish corporeal styles" (Butler "Sex and Gender" 40). A sensitivity to gender "styles" was heightened in early modern Spain—a world obsessed with appearances. In this way, "[r]ather than a radical act of creation, gender is a tacit project to renew one's cultural history in one's own terms" (40).

In her constant shift back and forth between man and woman, Jerónima enacts de Beauvoir's theory that gender is not only traditionally contextualised within a larger nexus of extant genders but is also not sequential. As Butler explains, "[a]lthough we 'become' our genders, the temporal movement of this becoming does not follow a linear progression. The origin of gender is not temporally discrete because gender is not originated at some point in time after which it is fixed in form" (39). Because gender is temporally constrained—because it is always a "becoming" rather than a "became"—the moment at which gendering occurs is immeasurable: "[i]n an important sense gender is not traceable to a definable origin precisely because it is itself an originating activity incessantly taking place" (39).

While becoming a gender is "not possible at a moment's notice," it is instead "a subtle and strategic project which only rarely becomes manifest to a reflective

understanding" (40). In this way, Jerónima's gendering (and regendering) in Tirso's play, which is in part a choice, is unlike de Beauvoir's understanding in that it is temporally measurable: with the exception of a few ambiguous moments, Jerónima even typically announces her gender switches as they occur rather than rely on sartorial shifts: "que soy doña Marta yo" (3375), for instance.

Although not explicitly stated, de Beauvoir's notion of becoming is a fluid and inclusive one: it opens up the possibility of genders other than man and woman by foregrounding the importance of gender's historical construction. For instance, de Beauvoir insists "that these are historical constructs which must in every case be appropriated by individuals suggests that a binary gender system has no ontological necessity" (Butler "Sex and Gender" 47-48). But "becoming" a woman, for Jerónima, is more complicated. In one sense, to become a woman is positive, as it is Jerónima's womanhood that enables her male disguise, which ultimately leads her to manipulate her circumstances and achieve her objectives. And yet becoming a woman is also an interruption to Jerónima's desired trajectory (as a man, as a doctor, and perhaps as a lover to Estefanía). Jerónima's duelling identities thus both support and resist normativity.

As I discuss in the introduction to this study (11n16), Judith Butler too believes that one "is" not a gender, but "becomes" a gender. As such, since one is always "in the mode of becoming" and since one is "always living with the constitutive possibility of becoming otherwise, the body is that which can occupy the norm in myriad ways, exceed the norm, rework the norm, and expose realities to which we thought we were confined as open to transformation" (Butler *Undoing Gender* 217). Jerónima's "becoming"—from man to woman and back again—is thus the means by which she ultimately also breaks free of the entrapments of a binary system of gender.

The ending of the play—in which Jerónima and Gaspar unite in marriage—is not possible unless Jerónima first become a man. This is in part evident from Jerónima's failed attempts to win his affection in act I as a woman but is underscored by Gaspar's departure for Portugal in act II. Gaspar's apathy for her from the start of the play is one reason Jerónima first resorts to role playing, disguising herself as a veiled Spanish woman in act I (735-756, 973-1137): she wants to first test Gaspar to see if he is still in love with Micaela. For Jerónima, "becoming" a woman is more complicated. In one sense, to become a woman is positive, as it is Jerónima's womanhood that enables her male disguise, which ultimately leads her to manipulate her circumstances and achieve her objectives. And yet becoming a woman is also an interruption to her desired trajectory (as a man, as a doctor, and perhaps as a lover to Estefanía): the duelling identities thus both support and resist normativity.[33]

Later in act I, Jerónima again takes on this disguise of a veiled Spanish woman (973-1137)[34] and fulfils her plan to test his love: having found out about his former lover Micaela by breaking into his room, she teases Gaspar with the (false) news that Micaela wants him back:

> Sabed que la dama vuestra,
> pesarosa en desdeñaros
> y triste con vuestra ausencia,
> ha despedido a don Jaime
> y ansiosa veros desea. (1056-60)

To Jerónima's disappointment, Gaspar is pleased:

> ¡Oh iris de mi ventura,
> que disfrazada en tinieblas

[33] In this way, *El amor médico* is different to *La celosa de sí misma*: in *La celosa*, from the start of the play Magdalena is successfully winning Melchor from the disguise of another woman and thus is able to continue to pursue Melchor as a veiled woman.
[34] In both English-language productions, these two scenes were merged into one and appear as continuous action.

reflejos del sol retocan
colores con que me alegras! (1061-64)

Jerónima's two attempts to dissuade Gaspar from Micaela fail, thereby necessitating Jerónima's additional disguise—that of "Doctor Barbosa"—in acts II and III. At the end of the first act, Jerónima still believes Gaspar will be tempted by other women away from her:

¿A Lisboa se me parte
donde amor en sus bellezas,
extranjero con las damas,
perpetúe su asistencia?
¿Qué intentáis, locuras mías? (1145-49)

If her objective at the start of the play is to win the affection of Gaspar, she learns at the end of act I that she will not be able to do so as a woman—either as herself or a mysterious, veiled woman.

In the UMass production, after the men exit at the end of act I, Jerónima changes from a dress and into male garb on stage with the help of Quiteria. Her donning of male garb here initiates a powerful signifying function: clothing (and therefore her identity) becomes performative.[35] Since she cannot have Gaspar as a woman, she will try as a man.

At the start of act II, we learn that in Coimbra Gaspar will marry his cousin, Estefanía: an additional competitor with Jerónima. While her disguise as the doctor serves her aim to practice medicine, this alter-ego also allows Jerónima to interrupt the impending marriage between Gaspar and Estefanía.

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[35] The performance has a similar effect as a moment in Tirso's *El vergonzoso en palacio* in which Serafina gets into her male disguise on stage: "Tantalizing them further with a kind of reverse strip tease, Serafina finishes getting into costume before their very eyes, putting on a collar, wrapping herself in a cape, pinning up her hair, and tucking it under a hat" (Bass 66-67). As Bass points out, at the end of a play-within-the-play rehearsal of *El vergonzoso en palacio*, Serafina tells Juana that "she will put on her own dress over her male costume until the actual performance later that evening. If costume constituted Serafina's theatrical, male persona, then, by extension, putting on her [own] dress suggests that her female self is likewise the stuff of fabric, something performed, as Butler theorizes" (67).

Jerónima's infiltration of Don Íñigo's home is calculated: she enters with the aim of keeping Gaspar and Estefanía apart. The performance at UNCC, however, did not read the play in this way: when Jerónima first enters as the doctor in their production, she pauses after "Let God be upon this house" (Brew 25), shocked to see both Gaspar and Gonzalo in Estefanía's home.[36]

Jerónima also knows that, like her, Gaspar will be fuelled by jealousy: when Íñigo guesses that Gaspar does not like the doctor, he replies in an aside: "Será señal / de que me abrasa de celos" (1975-76).[37] If Jerónima is disguised as a man, "Doctor Barbosa," she can make Gaspar jealous of the doctor's time with and access to Estefanía. Doing so will distract Gaspar from courting Estefanía and instead force him into conflict with the doctor. This crucial time "healing" Estefanía will create a window in which Jerónima can attempt to win Gaspar's affection. It is thus her male identity that will help facilitate a heteronormative union.

From her entrance as "Doctor Barbosa" in act II, her ruse works well; Jerónima almost instantly makes Gaspar jealous (1667-70). Later in the scene, Gaspar even tries to challenge the disguised Jerónima for s/he has neither the "autoridad de barba" o "la edad" of a doctor (1751, 1752).[38] Gaspar's monologue at the end of the scene clarifies his feelings: he fears the doctor, especially given that Estefanía seems happier when "he" is around, and is upset that the doctor will have access to Estefanía while Gaspar is forbidden.

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[36] This in part explains the UNCC production's reading of Jerónima, who seems relentlessly angry rather than in love with Gaspar.
[37] Cf. Gaspar's speech 2033-82.
[38] Throughout this scene, Gaspar's incessant hostility towards "Doctor Barbosa" is about his age. Cf. lines 1752, 1951-56, 1972-74, and 2045.

Jerónima's disguise also facilitates her being able explicitly to prevent Gaspar from marrying Estefanía: in an aside with Don Íñigo, "Doctor Barbosa" explains that although Estefanía favours Gaspar,

> cualquiera acción imperiosa,
> en tiempo que es tan enfermo
> y en complexión melancólica,
> censa la imaginativa,
> y es fuerza que descomponga
> la sangre y dañe el celebro. (1932-37)

Don Íñigo therefore instructs Gaspar to avoid Estefanía until she is healthy (2005-11).

In addition to Jerónima's disguise, Estefanía's unanticipated affection for "Doctor Barbosa" further secures Jerónima's plan to make Gaspar jealous. As Estefanía admits in an aside,

> No gastéis, señor dotor,
> De aforismos tanta copia,
> que es almacén ordinario
> de todo médico broma;
> ved si tengo calentura. (1655-60)

This affection for the doctor distracts Gaspar, encouraging him to spend his time not pursuing Estefanía but fighting off his new rival:

> Forzaránme mis desvelos
> a hablarle y no dispensando
> retiros que estoy dudando
> vengaránse mis recelos. (2073-76)

Jerónima's disguise as the doctor also has the added benefit of giving her opportunity to test Gaspar's love for Estefanía. Just as she may have tried as the veiled woman in act I to test Gaspar's love for Micaela, she does so again here. When she sees that preventing Gaspar from seeing Estefanía upsets him (as she tells Quiteria in the very next scene, 2085-86), Jerónima resorts to a new disguise—that of "Marta," the doctor's sister.

In her first scene as "Doctor Barbosa," Jerónima invents the excuse of having to receive "his" sister who is coming to live in Coimbra (1883-87). When pressed by Estefanía, Jerónima devises the name "Marta." Rather than abandon this particular lie, since she must still remain close to keep Estefanía and Gaspar apart, later in act II Jerónima therefore dresses up as "Marta." But when preparing to meet Estefanía as the doctor's sister for the first time, Jerónima instead runs into Gaspar—something she did not plan on. In this way, Jerónima's female disguise is less about winning Gaspar than going to see Estefanía. Though Jerónima first visits Estefanía to practice medicine, her return to Estefanía as "Marta" could support the argument that there exists lesbian desire between Estefanía and Jerónima, which is further supported by several moments in their extended scene together near the end of act III.[39]

When she runs into Gaspar, her impulse is to interact from the safety of a disguise and, as Quiteria exclaims, "[n]uevas tramoyas comienzan" (2163). She thinks quickly enough to begin speaking in Portuguese: "*Fidalgo, os anjos vos vençan*" (2166). Unsurprisingly, Gaspar falls for this veiled woman when she extends an ungloved hand: "¡Ay, qué mano!" (2178). After spending most of the scene wondering whether her face matches her hand, Gaspar then shifts his objective. He (quickly) decides he will no longer pursue Estefanía, but this veiled woman:

> A un dotor
> buscaba que vive aquí,
> mas después que os llegué a ver
> pienso que no es menester.
> De cuantas bellezas vi
> en esta corte, ninguna
> cuidado de amor me da
> y no sé qué me hace acá
> vuestro donaire […] (2230-38)

[39] I revisit this idea at the end of this chapter (174-76).

But if Jerónima initially planned to test Gaspar's love for Estefanía (so that, if he chooses to move on from Estefanía, Jerónima can intervene as herself), Jerónima's intent is somewhat derailed: it is now complicated by the fact that Gaspar loves yet another woman: "Marta." Though Jerónima and "Marta" are one and the same, the same problem that exists for Magdalena in *La celosa* is the same here: the *galán* is in love with an invented woman.

If Jerónima's ultimate objective at this point is still to marry Gaspar, it is noteworthy that she continues her ruse into acts II and III rather than get Gaspar to agree to marriage. After all, Jerónima is (ironically) in the same situation here in act II as she is at the end of the play: she is disguised as a woman who Gaspar loves, and could try to get him to agree to marriage after which she would reveal her true identity as Jerónima.[40] At the end of the play, while similarly pretending to be "Marta" (but disguised as "Doctor Barbosa"), Jerónima accepts Gaspar as her husband:

> JERÓNIMA: ¿Queréis casaros conmigo?
> GASPAR: ¡Jesús, dotor! ¿Estáis loco?
> JERÓNIMA: No juzguéis por los vestidos
> La persona. Doña Marta
> soy. (3552-56)

Instead of proposing marriage, in act II Jerónima as "Marta" plays coy, running away at the end of the scene when she sees her brother: "*Mais naon, que he meu hirmaon aquele.* /

[40] Jerónima accomplishes only a few things between this moment and the end of the play, when she actually finally agrees to marry Gaspar: first, she arranges Estefanía's marriage with Rodrigo (Gonzalo in my adaptation); second, she makes progress as a doctor and gets more time to practice medicine; finally, she gets more chances to cross-dress through all of act III.

Martiña, entremos em casa" (2295-6).[41] This suggests ultimately that Jerónima derives at least some pleasure from her role playing.

In act III (3067-3122), Jerónima takes on yet another disguise as an unnamed Spanish woman. The scene begins like all other scenes with Gaspar and Tello: both men are attempting to coax the women out from behind their veils. But rather than play along, Jerónima delivers a brief (and perhaps intentionally confusing) monologue before exiting. While the men at first think she is "Marta," she speaks Spanish (rather than the Portuguese "Marta" usually speaks), and she begins by declaring "[n]o soy la que imagináis" (3107). If she is not "Marta," she is also not herself, as the history she shares is not that of Jerónima:

> Yo nací en Toledo, hidalgo;
> En ella, si os acordáis
> —que no haréis—, os tuve un mes
> por mi huésped regalado,
> en Sevilla descuidado
> y en Portugal descortés. (3109-14)

While Jerónima was indeed Gaspar's hostess for a month, it was in Seville—not Toledo.[42] Her identity, then, is obscure at this point: is she Jerónima? "Marta"? Or perhaps pretending to be a veiled Micaela? Or another woman? Unlike her shifts into the male doctor disguise, the reason for Jerónima's shift to becoming a woman here depends on who she purports to be.

The end of Jerónima's speech features three repeated lines from a previous scene, which "Doctor Barbosa" speaks to Don Gaspar: "antes que noticia den / a quien, cuando

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[41] The merging of Gonzalo and Rodrigo in my adaptation does something convenient at this point in the play. When disguised as "Marta," Jerónima's reference to seeing her brother here functions on two levels: not only does she refer to seeing her brother, "Doctor Barbosa," in order to justify her departure to Gaspar, but also pre-empts running into her real brother, Gonzalo, while dressed as a woman when he enters (as Rodrigo, in the original Spanish play) a few moments later (2343).

[42] It is possible that this is an error on Tirso's part: he might have meant to reverse Toledo and Sevilla here.

no por bien, / os haga casar por mal" (3120-22).[43] This repetition supports the theory that Jerónima is playing "Marta" here, perhaps given Gaspar's already established affection for "Marta."

In my first draft of *Love the Doctor*, for production at UMass in 2011, I chose to adapt this particular moment in the play in order to imply that the veiled woman is Jerónima herself, and further, that Gaspar realises this. Jerónima's request for loyalty suggests an existing level of commitment between Gaspar and Jerónima: Gaspar would otherwise not be forced to marry her, as she says. In the production at UMass, we reasoned that the two had an earlier opportunity to consummate their relationship: there might have been some off-stage sexual interaction between acts II and III when Gaspar goes into the home of "Doctor Barbosa" and "Marta."[44]

Such an adaptive choice called for the addition of some lines in act III for the purpose of clarifying off-stage events.[45] When Gaspar tells the doctor that he is in love with "Marta," the two have the following exchange:

JERÓNIMA So you have seen her?
GASPAR I did, yesterday,
gracing a window with her presence.
JERÓNIMA And are you pleased with what you saw?
GASPAR Not just that, I am pleased with what I had.
JERÓNIMA Is that so?
GASPAR Your sister can work miracles, Doctor.
Her heavenly touch seems to improve my health.
In fact, she's so good to me that I want for us to
share our fortune. (Brew 147)

JERÓNIMA ¿Pues vístesla vos?
GASPAR Ayer,

[43] The earlier instance of these lines occurs at 2980-82.
[44] In this way, the moment could be very similar to what might happen after act II in *Marta la piadosa*. Cf. chapter 2 here (104n14).
[45] I have included the Spanish along with my adaptation in English not to show translation choices, but to communicate which lines in the English are explicitly not part of the original Spanish.

honrando aquella ventana.
… Que por no obligar desdenes
de quien enferma por vos
quisiera que entre los dos
partiésemos nuestros bienes (2869-74)

The change in lines here clarifies off-stage events which thus raise the stakes for Jerónima in her pursuit of Gaspar: she will be disgraced if she does not end up with him. In the UNCC production, this moment was further clarified by Gaspar stroking his cane—indeed a phallic symbol literalised in their performance—on his line "Her heavenly touch seemed to improve my health" (Brew 58).

But this reading—that Jerónima enters as herself (3107), and that Gaspar realises it—was not particularly successful in production,[46] nor is it consistent with the lines that follow.[47] It merely "[a]umenta la confusión in Gaspar" (Oteiza *El amor médico* 34). Tello is observant enough to realise that this veiled woman is similar to Jerónima, "la mujer / es la propia de Sevilla" (3129-30), but Gaspar cannot get past the fact that she looks like "Marta" (3131-32). Tello's rational conclusion, however, is merely that "[Marta] le contó tu amor" because "no es lo que te dijo chanza" (3133-34).

After a whirlwind scene with Estefanía, in which Jerónima alters disguises six times, she surrenders all her masks and admits to having loved Gaspar since he was their house guest in Seville: "a don Gaspar he querido / desde que fue huésped nuestro" (3618-19). As a final plea to a silent Gaspar, Jerónima pronounces that he "es mi esposo, merecido / a precio de estudios tantos, / tanto disfraz y suspiro" (3630-32). Gaspar accepts, and the two plan to marry; heteronormativity is upheld through their union. But, like many of Tirso's plays, there is some ambiguity—both in this ending and leading up

[46] While in the UMass production Gaspar realised the veiled woman here was Jerónima, it had little impact on the plot that follows: Gaspar does not mention Jerónima, nor does it influence his acceptance of her in the final moments of the play.
[47] Gaspar says to Tello "¡Jesús! ¿Qué es esto?" and "No lo acabo de entender" (3125, 3128).

to it—that suggests marriage to Gaspar is not Jerónima's ultimate goal. It is through her multiple disguises that Jerónima is able to express homosexual desire: that is, for Estefanía.

Like other *comedias* by Tirso, Jerónima is arguably not pleased with her marriage to Gaspar but only suggests marriage as is the custom in *comedias*: heterosexual couples are regularly paired off.

From the start of the play, it is somewhat unclear what Jerónima's objectives are. The fact that many different objectives are possible is a testament to just how conflicted a character Jerónima is—something exacerbated by her multiple disguises. Although she begins the play in pursuit of Gaspar, she also shows hints of ambiguous sexuality.

While the play ends in heterosexual union, it also contains much evidence for the case that Jerónima no longer wants to marry Gaspar at the end of the play and is displeased with the outcome. She takes on the role of "Marta" not to directly seduce Gaspar but to please a woman, Estefanía, even though interaction with the woman is dramaturgically unnecessary. Gaspar falling in love with Jerónima as "Marta" complicates her desire for Gaspar: now that the man she loved has returned that love, can her interest in Estefanía be sustained? A closer consideration of the women's interaction can help offer answers to this question.

It is as "Doctor Barbosa" that Jerónima first interacts with Estefanía. In the UNCC production, Estefanía expresses her desire clearly: she whispers her asides about loving the doctor into Jerónima's stethoscope, and even slips in a kiss. Jerónima, however, does not reciprocate this early in the play in this production: in fact, in this scene, Jerónima even shoves Estefanía away from her to argue with Gaspar and appears generally

displeased with Estefanía's advances. As shown in the image below, Jerónima grimaces and feigns happiness throughout the scene. (Figure 8)



Figure 8

Jerónima's disguises in the final scene of the play further complicate Estefanía's desire: it is the first and only time in the play that Jerónima switches roles while on stage. At the start of the scene, Jerónima has come dressed as "Marta" to follow up on the lie she told Estefanía while the doctor: that "he" has a sister in Coimbra.[48]

There are many possible readings of why Jerónima visits Estefanía as "Marta," one of which points to potential lesbian desire: Jerónima could be in denial that she is actually attracted to Estefanía, and is therefore trying to convince Estefanía that she does not love her (as "Doctor Barbosa").[49] Regardless of her motivation, Jerónima's goal—as

[48] Her previous attempt to do this (2152-53) was interrupted by Gaspar, as I discuss earlier in this chapter (168).
[49] As Ashcom argues, the "[l]esbian motif is implicit in most of the plots involving masculine women" (59).

both "Marta" and "Doctor Barbosa"—in this scene seems to be to dissuade Estefanía from loving the doctor.

After Jerónima re-enters as the doctor, Jerónima is nearly thrown out of Estefanía's home since Estefanía thinks the doctor is courting Leonor instead of her:

> pues, dotor casamentero,
> desde agora os notifico
> que no entréis en esta casa
> ni aun a curar sus vecinos. (3339-42)

It is when Estefanía begins to shout for Gaspar (and others) that Jerónima relinquishes her male disguise and becomes "Marta": "Paso, digo, / que soy doña Marta yo" (3374-75). As "Marta," Jerónima here allows herself one further attempt to get Estefanía to hate the doctor. But Jerónima begins to see that Estefanía is still, despite her attempts, in love with the doctor.

> porque [Barbosa] estaba, os certifico,
> despulsándose por vos
> y con celos infinitos
> de no sé qué don Gaspar,
> vuestro amante y su enemigo. (3418-22)

She thus reasons that at least her attraction can be requited through her male disguise, if not when she is a woman. At this point, her objective thus seems to change, and she is now trying to get Estefanía to love and marry the doctor rather than Gaspar.

To do so, Jerónima tries to convince Estefanía that marriage to Gaspar is not good: "dicen que, vuestro consorte, / juntáis mayorazgos ricos" (3441-42). She also lies to Estefanía that "[p]ierde el juicio / mi hermano ["Doctor Barbosa"] por esta causa" (3446-47).[50] That is seemingly all Estefanía needs to once again convince her that the doctor is sufficient to be her lover, because Estefanía is shortly after this giving her word that she

[50] This is another moment of dramatic irony created in adaptation: it is true that Jerónima's brother Gonzalo would not like the idea of Estefanía marrying the Doctor since he (Gonzalo) loves Estefanía.

will marry the doctor. But when Estefanía briefly hestitates, Jerónima (as "Marta") once again threatens that Leonor will take her place as the doctor's wife if she does not act now:

> Quiso
> desposarse ayer con él
> y agora, a lo que colijo,
> los dos juntos tratan dello
> por prevenir descaminos. (3466-70)

When this upsets Estefanía, Jerónima yet again falls back to her male disguise—"Quedo, que soy el dotor" (3489)—perhaps in anticipation of Estefanía finally requiting Jerónima's love with her as the male doctor.

After proposing to Estefanía as the doctor (3530), and after she accepts, the sexual tension reaches a climax: Tirso's stage directions indicate that Jerónima kisses Estefanía, only to be interrupted by the entrance of Gaspar and Rodrigo (3531). In the UMass production in particular, the women's kiss was prolonged: it began out of ritual, but then shifted midway to a more affectionate embrace. (Figure 9)



Figure 9

Once Gaspar and Rodrigo enter, Estefanía is finally content knowing she will marry the doctor. Jerónima thus uses this as an opportunity quickly to propose to Gaspar (although still dressed as "Doctor Barbosa"): "¿Queréis casaros conmigo?" (3552).[51] Although on the surface Jerónima's proposal implies her desire to marry Gaspar, it also allows her the option of exiting: everyone is happy at the moment, and her silent departure would leave Gaspar (rightfully) without a bride and—even better—thinking that he is engaged to marry "Marta." Her ruse would fittingly serve him the same "descortés" (1) behaviour she felt he delivered her at the beginning of the play.

Once Gaspar agrees, Jerónima resumes her public identity as "Doctor Barbosa," but confuses all of her identities by speaking to Gonzalo and Estefanía in Portuguese:

> *Chegai a ser testimuna*
> *de que he dom Gaspar marido*
> *de doña Marta* (3575-77)

[51] This same device, used very rarely, appears in Tirso's *La mujer por fuerza.*

After a whirlwind of identity shifts, there is no reason for Jerónima to return to her true identity (or gender). But shortly after this, Quiteria enters with Íñigo, Martín, and Tello. In order to continue her ruse, Quiteria simply announces that Jerónima's brother Gonzalo[52] died in Pamplona, making her the eldest born son, being careful to keep the gender of Jerónima (and therefore her true identity) concealed:

> Tu hermano murió en Pamplona
> deshojando francos lirios
> y su mayorazgo heredas. (3605-07)

Surprisingly, it is Jerónima who ultimately gives up her ruse when she announces:

> Prodigios
> de amor disculpen finezas.
> Don Gonzalo, hermano mío,
> Murió por su rey y patria;
> a don Gaspar he querido
> desde que fue huésped nuestro.
> Él solo médico me hizo
> y él, en fin, es hoy mi esposo. (3614-21)

From the safety of her male identity, "Doctor Barbosa" declares that Gaspar is the reason "he" became a doctor": "Él solo médico me hizo" (3620). She therefore merely asserts her love for and impending marriage with Gaspar.[53] For these eight lines, Jerónima's identity is ambiguous: to Gaspar she is "Marta." To Rodrigo and Estefanía she is "Doctor Barbosa." To Íñigo, Martín, and Tello, her identity is unclear. But since when she last entered the stage (3283) she was "Doctor Barbosa," Jerónima is likely dressed as a man when she proposes to Gaspar. The image created on stage is thus that of a homosexual couple: Jerónima as man professing her/his love for Gaspar.

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[52] Since Gonzalo is a character in my adaptation, I elected to change this scene so that Quiteria announces instead the death of Jerónima's father. Like in Tirso's play, Jerónima's "true" gender remains concealed in my adaptation at this moment.

[53] This is one moment that, if read in this way, my adaptation does not work as well as Tirso's original play. In my adaptation, Gonzalo is on stage and instantly recognises Jerónima as his sister. In the original play, though, there is much more ambiguity over Jerónima's gender.

It is Íñigo, the patriarch of the play, who appropriately forces her into the category woman: "Luego, ¿sois mujer?" (3622). Jerónima's response is resistant to a definition that fits within the binary gender system. Even when her female identity is revealed, Jerónima avoids falling back into the role of the woman:

> He sido
> quien a la naturaleza
> con mi industria he contradicho. (3622-24)

Rather than confirm explicitly that she is a woman, Jerónima's answer invokes the negative: she has contradicted nature through practicing medicine—a traditionally masculine profession. In other words, it is not that she is admitting to being a woman, but rather that she is admitting to being something other than a woman because of the actions she has performed—actions traditionally not permitted. This is yet further evidence, on Tirso's part, for a constructionist sense of gender.

While Jerónima confirms her union with Gaspar, it is possible that it may be less out of love than necessity: after all, "woman is taught to assume her condition" since "virile prestige […] stands on solid economic and social bases" (de Beauvoir 279). Jerónima treats marriage to Gaspar not as a choice, or even an honour, but merely the logical next step: the answer to her skilled performance and perfected disguise.

Furthermore, she and Gaspar have agreed to marriage earlier in the scene, and perhaps even consummated their relationship between acts II and III; marriage is thus the next natural step if Jerónima's honour is to be retained. The reading of this moment in both productions, at UMass and UNCC, was that Jerónima no longer wanted to marry Gaspar—a reading that works well given all the ambiguity of Jerónima's identity and objective throughout the play, and one which upturns the normativity of the very same moment.

As the *damas* are paired off with men in this final scene, Estefanía wonders aloud "[l]uego ¿no tenéis hermana?" (3625) to which Jerónima answers that love has transformed both Marta and the doctor into one body: "El amor la ha convertido / a ella y al dotor Barbosa / en un cuerpo" (3626-28). In this moment, Jerónima writes herself out of existence; "Marta" and "Doctor Barbosa" have been amalgamated with one another and turned into one body—that of Jerónima. Her penultimate lines in the play echo this ambiguity. On the stage at UMass, the women look longingly at one another across a stage full of men; they have stolen one kiss, but the erotic potential looms large even after the lights have dimmed.

Jerónima's many disguises throughout *El amor médico* ultimately serve two conflicting ends: while they are what lead her to a union with the man she falls in love with at the opening of the play, they also allow her the freedom to feel and express non-normative desire—desire that would otherwise be forbidden.

III. Conclusion

It is easy to see how Tirso could have written *El amor médico* with a male spectator in mind. If anyone enjoyed the end of the play, in which Jerónima is subjugated and sent back to Spain, it was the men in the audience. But Tirso's writing in this play does not solely assume a male gaze; he wrote just as much with a female spectator in mind, if not for women in the audience. Even though Jerónima is put back in her place (as a woman) in the final moments of the play—since the rigid structure of playwriting in Tirso's day only allowed for him to be radical and subversive to an extent—Tirso's female spectators were able to watch a woman dominate and trick men for a majority of the play. Jerónima does not get the last word, but Tirso's female spectators did get the encouragement of watching a woman break from the control of her brother and rise to the status of *dotor de cámara*, a role reserved only for men in the period.

And yet while Jerónima is pursuing her goals, she is disguised as a man. Jerónima sees through a male perspective for a large portion of the play. In Tirso's play, gender is ambiguous and fluid; one can dress as a man and subsequently become, in another's eyes, a man. As in the relationship between Jerónima and Estefanía, the play posits that a woman can fall romantically in love with another woman, yet still end up in a heterosexual relationship. And while a woman can disguise herself as a man in the play, a man in the play can passionately, vehemently, and perhaps even with the emotional fervour typically associated with women, fall in love.

In the final moments of my adaptation, Tirso's view of what a woman in the seventeenth century must do to get what she wants is illuminated in the lines of the Queen of Portugal. Though the Queen (who, at this moment in the play, is dressed in male attire) demands that Jerónima give up her medical license and position at the university, in a private moment between the two women the Queen urges Jerónima to "henceforth study only in the solitude / of your home in Spain" (Brew 72). Though social order must be restored, these two women—who have experienced by this point in the play positions of great power in a male-dominated society—understand and acknowledge their slippery, evasive nature, while they also subvert the hegemonic social norms of the period. Perhaps the most interesting thing about her role is that Jerónima's position and power are continually ambiguous. Her male disguise constantly raises questions about whether such women are being placed in the role of authority or of subservience. A *mujer varonil* who must hang up her doctor's robes and revert back to her life as a woman, Jerónima has become transgressive and progressive.

Chapter 4: *La celosa de sí misma*

> To be born a woman has been to be born, within an allotted and confined space, into the keeping of men. The social presence of women has developed as a result of their ingenuity in living under such tutelage within such a limited space. But this has been at the cost of a woman's self being split into two.
> --John Berger, *Ways of Seeing*, 46

In November 2016, the University of Oxford hosted the first-ever English-language production of Tirso de Molina's c. 1622-23[1] play *La celosa de sí misma* (*Jealous of Herself*), the story of a young woman whose fiercest rival in love is herself.[2] The world-premiere production was performed in adaptation, and made several substantial changes to the text: the characters Don Luis and Don Sebastián were merged into one, new scenes were written and added, and four song-and-dance pieces were included between each act. The physical organisation of the theatre—asymmetrical traverse, with a cascading set of rectangles suspended above the stage—echoed the production's theoretical engagement with what the production team considered to be the play's vision motif.[3]

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[1] These are the dates settled on by Torres Nebrera in his edition of the play. Given the play's reference to the Plaza Mayor in act I, which was finished at the end of 1619, the very earliest possible dating of the play is 1620-21 (Torres Nebrera 32n19).

[2] *Jealous of Herself* opened at the O'Reilly Theatre in Keble College at the University of Oxford on Tuesday 22 November 2016, and ran for six performances, closing on Saturday 26 November. A recording of the live performance can be viewed here: https://youtu.be/IecQpaBqp5c. A trailer of the production, filmed and editing by Jake Hatt, can be viewed here: https://vimeo.com/192194593/926f2f051a. The English-language script was an adaptation that I authored, and was based on Harley Erdman's translation.

[3] For example, at the start of the play, Melchor and Ventura are in awe of the bustling city of Madrid as they stand in the Plaza Mayor, "a site to see and be seen" and "a marketplace where nobles gathered to flaunt and barter their influence" (Cruz 65). The street is also considered by some to be "el espacio abierto o público," perhaps in opposition to the "jardín […] un espacio femenino" (Pagnotta 253). Anita Stoll points out that "seeing" is also an "obvious motif" in Tirso's *La mujer por fuerza* ("A Feminist Reading" 105): "[t]he comedy […] may be described as turning on the thwarting of the societal mandate to hide women from sight, to banish them to the darkness of the absent

Like many of the women in Tirso's *comedias urbanas*, *La celosa*'s female protagonist—Magdalena—is strong, smart, and resourceful. It is her dual identity that at first seems to fuel not only the plot but the achievement of her desires. Magdalena is engaged to marry the *galán* Melchor, though they have not yet met. On the day they are to meet, Melchor falls in love with the hand of a veiled woman he sees in a Madrid church, unaware that it is actually the hand of Magdalena. When Melchor fails to make the connection later that night, Magdalena is irritated by his mindlessness, and subsequently becomes jealous of herself—the alter ego with whom Melchor falls in love. A sophisticated game follows: Magdalena creates a new identity for herself, the "Countess of Chirinola,"[4] tricking Melchor into thinking the hand he fell in love with belongs to an Italian Countess. Melchor's imagination draws the picture of the mysterious beauty, unaware that the lady is his fiancée, up until the final minutes of the play. In a hasty conclusion, Magdalena reveals that she was the Countess all along, and the couple marries.[5]

Although the play features a strong female lead, like the dramaturgy of many *comedias*[6] the play opens with several scenes in which male characters discuss women—everything from their dowries to their bodies: Melchor describes, in Petrarchan-like detail, the beauty of this woman's hand as he witnesses it at *La Vitoria* church.[7] He gives

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subject, an attempt foiled by the daring Finea, who, disguised as a man, is constantly present and who is the prime mover of all of the action" (106).

[4] Santillana actually creates the identity for Magdalena when prompted by Ventura (1773-82).

[5] This ending, which is no hastier than most other *comedias*, concludes just 50 lines after Magdalena appears on stage as herself.

[6] A quarter of Tirso's extant *comedias* begin in a way similar to that of *La celosa*—with two men on stage. By contrast, approximately just fewer than 10% of the extant plays begin with two women, one of which is *Marta.*

[7] Petrarchan verse, which was at its zenith in sixteenth-century Europe, drew on themes such as "love through vision, the power of the lady's glances, her angelic purity, her dazzling beauty, and the anguish of unfulfilled desire" and employed the use of blazons,

a report to his sidekick Ventura of the hand's physical qualities ("Una mano hermosa, / blanca, poblada y perfeta" (365-66));[8] he describes the orgasmic experience of seeing this hand ("vi, al fin, nieve en fuego envuelta" (380)); and he explains, with what seems an unnerving, obsessive sense of accuracy, the movements of the woman's hand at Mass—across her breast, in and out of her glove, and so forth. Tirso gives detailed descriptions of this woman, all filtered through the mouth (and eyes) of a male suitor who becomes her primary spectator.

In this play, like others, such choices provide an invitation to relate to the journey of the male: that is, one in pursuit of a female. As Laura Mulvey has argued of cinema, the primarily "male gaze projects its fantasy onto the female figure, which is styled accordingly. In their traditional exhibitionist role women are simultaneously looked at and displayed" (19). Although "cinema builds the way [woman] is to be looked at into the spectacle itself" (25), theatre production can at times also turn the act of gazing into a spectacle. Our production of *Jealous of Herself*, for instance, used the architecture of the theatre space to make the act of viewing bodies on stage about spectating itself: with audiences facing one another, spectators simultaneously looked at actors and were seen by other spectators as they looked at actors. Despite the differences between this form of spectating and that in the cinema (which is ostensibly a private experience), both forms of entertainment have the potential to engage with multiple forms of "lookingness."[9] Such a

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or "the catalogue of lovely features—e.g. hair like golden wires, eyes as blue as the sky and sparkling like diamonds, lips of coral, bosom white as snow […] and metaphors such as the eyes as windows of the soul; precious metals, flowers, and jewels as symbols of aspects of the lady's beauty; and fire as metaphor for lust and ice, its opposite, for chastity" (Hardison, et al. 1383).

[8] All quotations from the Spanish play come from Torres Nebrera's edition. All English-language quotations come from either Harley Erdman's published translation, or the 2016 unpublished performance script (Grunnah "Jealous of Herself").

[9] See 195 here for discussion of Elin Diamond's refutation of Laura Mulvey's notion of "to-be-looked-at-ness."

model invites spectators in performance to similarly view Magdalena from a patriarchal perspective. As performance assumes a white, heterosexual, middle-class male to be its ideal spectator, audiences more easily identify "with the main male protagonist" while "he projects his look onto that of his like […] so that the power of the male protagonist as he controls events coincides with the active power of the erotic look, both giving a satisfying sense of omnipotence" (20).

But Tirso does something ironic with this play: although vision (and visual consumption) is crucial to his male characters, he hides away his *dama* from their sight, as well as the audience's. When we eventually meet Magdalena for the first time halfway into act I (529-697), we do not even get to see her: she is veiled and, furthermore, does not reveal her identity. Melchor may objectify her, but Tirso's plot tactic—delaying the woman's entrance—intentionally undermines the men's obsession with observing women.

The Oxford production literalises this choice: the first time the audience sees Magdalena is during Melchor's monologue as he recounts the story of seeing her in church. As he describes the mystical transcendence of witnessing this woman's hand in worship, Magdalena appears behind a white cotton cyclorama, backlit so that all one can glimpse is her silhouette: a slender figure framed by a tight-fitting skirt, with a veil and, of course, the seductive movements of a hand. Magdalena's body—merely a screen upon which Melchor projects his desires—is thus literalised.[10] (Figure 1)

[10] In a Lacaninan analysis of the play, Anne J. Cruz points to Ellie Ragland-Sullivan's description of the *moi*'s relationship to the other, who becomes "a screen on which the identity drama is projected" (73). The original quotation can be found in Ragland-Sullivan's *Jacques Lacan and the Philosophy of Psychoanalysis* 41.



Figure 1

Vision and sight thus become central to storytelling in both the Spanish play and the English-language production. Bernardo Sánchez, whose adaptation was staged at the CNTC in Madrid in 2003, asserts that *La celosa* "[e]s un texto que […] trata de lo que se ve y de lo que se imagina […]" (84). On both page and stage, vision (and the failures of such) affects not only the complications in plot, but also the way characters are gendered.

Given the largely normative dramaturgical thrust of *La celosa*, and the fact that the play ends in multiple heterosexual unions, a reading of the elements underpinning those structures is necessary. As I shall argue in this chapter, the play ultimately reveals how heteronormative desire and relationships can ultimately be personally unfulfilling, and the product of repetitive, patriarchal pressure. In the first section of this chapter, I propose to expose the assumed heterosexuality of the play, and to read both Tirso's submission and resistance towards heterosexuality alongside one another as a dramaturgical strategy for queering heteronormativity and revealing the potential for subversive storytelling. Tirso, I argue, uses the trope of vision—and male characters' inability to see women without idealising them—to create a complex plot, paradoxically undermining its own heteronormative structure.

Like the plot, how characters are gendered in *La celosa* is equally contradictory:

the *gracioso* Ventura is at times feminine and makes explicit homosexual references; the old squire Santillana is subject to homoerotic advances; and Magdalena performs various versions of femininity, each of which underscore "to the playgoer that so-called true or real identity [hold] no meaning other than what others may assign [them]" (Cruz 73). The play works to destabilise binary gender identity as it reveals how the seemingly stable category of woman is disrupted. The play also reveals how fickle the "stable" role of man is. These nuances of the text are further complicated by virtue of fleshing out two-dimensional roles with the bodies of actors. The second section of this chapter thus looks at how characters perform or enact gender in the world of the play and on the stage, as well as how those characters are read by audiences. In order to explore what we perceived to be a non-normative, queer characterisation, our 2016 English-language production was mindful of how gender was embodied and performed by actors and used strategic cross-gender casting to explore this. Characters' performance of gender was carefully choreographed, and we employed a gender-neutral ensemble of storytellers to fill the gaps between acts.

Through an intense month-long rehearsal period, we found a pervasive tension between heteronormative and non-normative storytelling in *Jealous* on the stage, through which the play queers ideas of both gender identity and desire. These findings inspired us to open up our production to new moments of queerness that were in line with Tirso's story. One such way we accomplished this was by placing a gendered spectator frame on the production itself through the use of a thrust stage with two sets of audiences watching the performance against the backdrop of more audience. A consideration of spectatorship—both on and off the stage—became central to the storytelling. The third section of this chapter thus explores this staging strategy and the ways in which our production created new queer moments.

I. "[L]o que no ve, no estima": Destabilising Heteronormative Dramaturgy

In early modern Spain, heterosexuality was assumed in marriage (if one did not choose an alternative path). Melveena McKendrick explains that, for middle- and upper-class women,

> four main courses were open. They could join the ranks of the *mujeres de mala vida* somewhere in the hierarchy from courtesan to common prostitute. They could enter a convent. They could enter into service as a *dueña* or a lady-in-waiting. Or they could remain with their families, marrying or not as inclination or opportunity decided. (*Woman and Society* 24)

Marriage, of course, was always intended to be heterosexual:

> The union of man and woman, therefore, was a cornerstone of the social order – "the most important and the most perfect union that there can be among human beings" (Camos II, 57). The censuses tend to suggest that, as in the rest of Western Europe, it was mostly nuclear, with the father and mother and their children, excluding other relatives. (Casey 211)[11]

With obvious exceptions, the plots of many early modern European comedies that end in heterosexual marriage focus on using heteronormative desire as a solution to mistaken identity: characters' opposite sex desires for one another are part of what untangles the plot and leads them to marriage.[12] In fact, the *comedia* in general often assumes heterosexuality: in the plays that end in marriage, "protagonists duplicate socially prescriptive behaviour […] or fall prey to the social insubordination that then irreversibly calls for a tragic ending" (Cruz 64-65). On the surface, *La celosa* feels like a similar romantic comedy that naturally progresses towards a heteronormative ending with a few comedic obstacles and plot twists along the way.

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[11] Casey is citing Marco Antonio Camos, *Microcosmia y Govierno Universal del Hombre Cristiano* (1592), Barcelona.

[12] For example, in Shakespeare's cross-dressing comedy *Twelfth Night*, the leading woman Viola—who disguises herself as the page boy Cesario—eventually marries her beloved Orsino when she removes her disguise. And in *As You Like It*, Rosalind stops tricking Orlando (from her disguise as the male Ganymede) in order to marry him.

As some have argued, Magdalena—and specifically her *manto* and "*hipersensibilidad*"—is the reason for the play's central conflict and thus her subjugation, and that the conflict of the play arises not from an external event, but from Magdalena's internal state:

> Pero si nos fijamos en la motivación de *La celosa de sí misma*, veremos sus diferencias. El origen, el conflicto, también es algo extrínseco al carácter de doña Magdalena: su prometido llega a Madrid y, sin conocerla, le hace el amor. Desde este momento el conflicto nace no del hecho externo—que terminaría con declarar la dama su personalidad—, sino de una matización especial de su psicología: los celos de ella misma, sus dudas, sus encontrados sentimientos, en una palabra, de su *hipersensibilidad*, que ha de provocar la sutileza de sus reacciones. A esos 'celos de sí misma' se mezclará, desde luego, el temor a la liviandad del galán, pero a este temor va a sumarse algo que ya afecta muy particularmente a su sensibilidad femenina: don Melchor la adora cuando la imagina tras su manto, pero la aborrece cuando la ve. Por lo tanto, tiene la certeza de que, injustificadamente si le quiere, no le agrada. (Palomo Vázquez 4)

Palomo Vázquez argues that while an external event could create the dramatic conflict, it instead is the result of Magdalena's "celos de ella misma, sus dudas, sus encontrados sentimientos," merely blending with Melchor's "liviandad" (4). In other words, it is Magdalena's desire for Melchor that makes her jealous of herself.

Similarly, P.R.K. Halkhoree posits that Magdalena's *manto* in the first church scene of the play is "at the source of the whole problem" (76). While Halkhoree acknowledges that Melchor "creat[es] an obstacle in his own imagination" and "insists on making himself the victim of a traditional dramatic—and social—convention," (71) he also maintains that the source of the problem in the play is Magdalena's doing. Specifically, he argues that Melchor's attraction to Magdalena is because of her disguise. One reason, he proposes, is that Magdalena is in part covered: "interest in the female body is increased by semi-disclosure, a partial revelation, the point of maximum interest being the frontier between the concealed and the revealed" (72). Halkhoree even goes so

far as to argue that Magdalena's use of the *manto* was calculated: "Magdalena seems to have been aware of Melchor's not uninterested presence" (72). It is not just her awareness, Halkhoree argues, but her interest in Melchor, that incites the main conflict: "Magdalena is herself guilty of losing her heart to the (then) unknown stranger" which results in her "test[ing] Melchor's constancy by assuming a dual identity" (74). The implication here is that Magdalena must assume an alternate identity and test Melchor because she has fallen in love with him.

But if either of the two are in love, it seems to instead be Melchor, particularly given what Melchor reports about the mystery woman's hand:

> Tenía hasta el pecho el manto
> y santiguóse cubierta:
> pudo ser de verse ansí
> transformado en su belleza. (381-84)

Melchor assumes the same: her hand is meant for his pleasure. When she exits *La Vitoria* later, he ambushes her, calling her hand "mano mía" (543).[13] In their first on-stage interaction, Melchor continues to worship "esa mano hermosa," (587), and in the Oxford production can barely take his hands off of her hands. (Figure 2) Magdalena's offering of her hand as a sign she will return at the end of the scene (697), therefore, is a result of Melchor's obsession with it: it is not proof that she used her hand in church earlier to flirt with Melchor in church.

[13] Ventura even underscores his master's obsession with the hand in his introduction to the *dueña* Quiñones: "¿Tiene vuesa dueñería / la mano, cual su señora (569-70).



Figure 2

The assumption—by scholars and characters—that a woman crossing herself and offering her hand is for the pleasure of a man's gaze is objectifying, and strips Magdalena of her own subjectivity.[14] Their opening interaction thus establishes the centrality of the way men visually consume women in the play. It is the male gaze that is ultimately crucial to the plot maintaining a heteronormative conclusion: the play's fixation on appearance and sight is not limited to just Melchor; Magdalena's father too underscores the importance of the visual. When Alonso introduces his daughter to Melchor for the first time at the end of act I, he encourages her to compare her idea of Melchor to the real version who stands before her:

> Vesle, Magdalena, aquí.
> No pudo tu pensamiento,
> por más que encarecedor
> galán te le haya pintado,
> ser más que un tosco traslado
> del talle de don Melchor. (1131-36)

He goes on, further encouraging her to find in his face the traces of his father, Don Juan:

> Haz cuenta que en él abrazas
> de don Juan la imagen propia;

[14] Perhaps unsurprisingly, even Melchor himself assumes the woman's hand performs at Mass for his pleasure: "Duró esta vez el gozarla / sin la prisión avarienta, / hasta consumir el cáliz" (397-99).

> que yo, viéndole en su copia,
> mientras tú su cuello enlazas
> [mostraré mi regocijo]
> renovando en esta edad
> la juvenil amistad
> del noble padre, en su hijo. (1137-44)

Alonso's insistence that Melchor is a copy of his father is not only a reminder of how men value the visual, but also the maintenance of heterosexuality. As Butler argues, the stability of heterosexuality relies on the repetition of itself, which puts such an identity in danger: "heterosexuality is always in the process of imitating and approximating its own phantasmatic idealization of itself—*and failing*. Precisely because it is bound to fail, and yet endeavors to succeed, the project of heterosexual identity is propelled into an endless repetition of itself ("Imitation" 313). The moment is also not unlike the way Melchor sees the copy of another woman in the body of Magdalena earlier in the act. Like Melchor, Alonso "exalts […] physical qualities" (Turner "Reality" 60).

Ventura too constantly reminds Melchor to love only after he has seen physical proof of something worth loving. Such logic encourages Melchor to think of love as being linked to the physical and visual, rather than the emotional. As are many other characters in the play, Ventura is obsessed with public perception. When Melchor thinks the Countess has stood him up and he wants to return to León at the start of act III, Ventura suggests that Melchor bring a woman back with him—not so that Melchor can just be married, but so that people will also see he was able to secure a bride:

> Sólo que vuelvas deseo
> a nuestra patria de modo
> que no hagan burla de ti
> los que el parabién te dieron
> en León, cuando te vieron
> venir a casarte aquí. (2419-24)

After all, "public perception of an individual is paramount" in seventeenth-century Spain (Robbins 120). When Ventura encourages Melchor to ask forgiveness from Magdalena's

father and make her his bride, his logic is not based on righting an ethical wrong, but on her physical worth and her social status:

> Dos ojos llegaste a ver
> y una mano, sin saber
> si la tal tiene narices;
> y la Magdalena basta,
> y aun sobra, para abrasar
> catorce Troyas, y dar
> a veinte linajes casta. (2446-52)

Ventura's lines immediately following these further prove his encouraging a reunion with Magdalena is not about her personally, but about beauty and wealth. If Magdalena is not sufficiently pleasing, Ventura recommends he instead take her neighbour as his wife, as she is both attractive and rich:

> Pero cuando no te agrade,
> de su vecina te dije
> que por su amante te elige,
> y que a su hermosura añade
> doce mil de dote. (2453-57)

Melchor's gaze (usually on women, like Ángela and the invented "Countess of Chirinola") is unsurprisingly constant through the play. When he first meets Magdalena (as herself) at the end of the first act, Melchor says:

> La memoria
> de aquella mano, Ventura,
> como quien ve por antojos,
> tiene ocupados mis ojos.
> ¡Fea mujer! (1164-68)

Even when he is prompted by Magdalena's father, Alonso, Melchor excuses his silence by explaining that he has been observing Magdalena:

> Agraviáis
> las cuerdas ponderaciones
> que en esta belleza admiro,
> si limitáis su silencio:
> callo, adoro, reverencio
> y hablo más cuanto más miro.
> Perdonad, señora mía,

> a la lengua, si a los ojos,
> para gozar los despojos
> de ese sol que luz me envía,
> se pasa […] (1199-1209)

Melchor's constant gaze is also underscored in his rhetoric: seeing her hand gives rise to other visions. After seeing the mysterious woman's hand in church, Melchor tells Ventura in a long monologue that in seeing the hand, "vi jazmines, vi mosquetas, / vi alabastros, vi diamantes" (378-79). Over and over, Melchor swears he is in love with the mysterious woman and yet, ironically, also says she cannot love that which he does not see: "lo que no ve, no estima" (907).[15]

After first seeing the veiled woman's hand, Melchor asks Ventura how he could have seen her face "si me embarazó los ojos / aquella blancura tierna" (343-44). In fact, after he sees her hand, Melchor says he has to readjust his sight:

> Estaba yo reduciendo
> a los ojos mis potencias,
> para que todas gozasen
> la gloria de su belleza (413-16)

The veiled lady's hand, returning to the glove, even has the power to blind him, just as an eclipse robs its spectator of the right by which to see:

> Volvió a ponérseme el sol
> hasta que, acabando, empiezan
> el Evangelio postrero,
> siendo también la postrera
> liberalidad feliz
> que hizo a mi vista, ciega
> con la oscura privación
> de su cándida pureza. (401-08)

Melchor therefore prioritises the visual. As objects for Melchor to consume, women in this world are not just courted and adored, but also objectified piecemeal. In this way, *La*

[15] This is even more ironic given that Melchor backs out of marriage with Magdalena for a veiled woman he has not fully seen.

celosa is reminiscent of the relationship between men and women that Mulvey describes, and the concept of to-be-looked-at-ness:

> The determining male gaze projects its fantasy onto the female figure, which is styled accordingly. In their traditional exhibitionist role women are simultaneously looked at and displayed, with their appearance coded for strong visual and erotic impact so that they can be said to connote *to-be-looked-at-ness*. (19)

The additional presence of the audience, as well as "a polyvalence to the body's representation, for the performer's body is also *historicized*, loaded with its own history and that of the character," means for Elin Diamond that female performers indicate not Mulvey's suggested "to-be-looked-at-ness" but "'looking-at-being-looked-at-ness' or even just 'looking-ness'" (Diamond 89). In other words, women are aware of their bodies being gazed upon. John Berger similarly argues that women are continually self-aware of their physical being:

> A woman must continually watch herself. She is almost continually accompanied by her own image of herself. Whilst she is walking across a room or whilst she is weeping at the death of her father, she can scarcely avoid envisaging herself walking or weeping. From earliest childhood she has been taught and persuaded to survey herself continually. (46)

As a result, Berger continues, woman "comes to consider the *surveyor* and the *surveyed* within her as the two constituent yet always distinct elements of her identity as a woman" (46). Of particular importance is "how she appears to men" as her success in life depends on it. Berger ultimately summarises his views of women's inward gaze and her relationship to men: "*men act* and *women appear*. Men look at women. Women watch themselves being looked at" (47).[16] As a result, woman "turns herself into an object—and most particularly an object of vision: a sight" (47).

[16] This is yet another example of the perceived passivity of women.

This theory is literalised in *La celosa* through the opening church scene, when Melchor observes Magdalena from afar. Jerónima's potential awareness of being looked at, however, does not imply sexual performance; in fact, many women aware of such a gaze try to conceal themselves.[17] In this way, the play calls into question the authority of the gazer (men) over the gazed (women).

Blue explains the importance of women's ability to see in this play:

> *La celosa de sí misma* posits woman as she who sees clearly, as she who must/can lead the man past his preconceptions, past traditional, received idealizations to another way of looking at her, and consequently to another way of looking at himself. (37)

Women are thus constantly observing both themselves and others. While women see, men are, ironically, blind. Melchor's inability to recognise the Countess' eyes extends to a much more serious consequence: he does not know her real identity. And because he does not know her real identity, he invents one and projects that (idealised) reality onto her, thus creating the central conflict of the play. While Melchor falls in love with the Countess (Magdalena) because she is in part concealed, Magdalena falls in love with Melchor because she sees all of him. The great irony of the play, then, rests in the fact that Melchor loves a woman he cannot see.[18]

Throughout the play, Melchor is both comically and ironically blind to the truth in front of him: that Magdalena is the very Countess he has fallen in love with. For a man who values beauty above all, his perception of what constitutes a woman is somewhat skewed: when confessing to the Countess that he met Magdalena, he explains that thoughts of the Countess' hand affected him so strongly that Magdalena did not even

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[17] It is possible for Magdalena to be attracted to Melchor and still not be intentionally flirtatious or promiscuous; just because she might be attracted to him, or even looking for an amorous encounter, does not mean she is trying to actively seduce him.

[18] Magdalena, too, expresses a similar concern to Quiñones before meeting her fiancé: "Sin ver, / ¿he de amar a quien aguardo?" (1024-5).

seem a woman. He says "No es bien diga / de mujer" (1660-61).

Ventura tells Melchor he wishes Santa Lucía[19] would "[abrirle] / los ojos" (1511-12). What Ventura sees and Melchor fails to see throughout the play becomes a source of comedy. When later meeting his bride-to-be, Melchor fails to make the connection that Magdalena is the same woman he met at the church, while Ventura—directed to look at her hand—says

> Yo la vi,
> cuando me llevó tras sí
> con el bolsillo los ojos,
> y juro a Dios que es la propia. (1182-5)

And later in the play, when Ángela turns up disguised as the Countess of Chirinola, Ventura is observant enough to discern that she is not the real Countess:

> mas, o mi vista se engaña,
> o no es ese ojo el de ayer;
> que su niña era mulata,
> y hoy se ha vestido de azul,
> que llama el vulgo, de garza. (2866-70)[20]

Melchor, on the other hand, remains confused. When looking at Ángela's eye, he says "[y]o sé que es ése el que adoro" (2883).

Despite the pervading importance placed on vision throughout the play, Melchor is blind to what is before him.[21] Melchor's blindness first manifests at the end of act I when he fails to see that Magdalena is the very same mystery woman from the church.[22]

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[19] Saint Lucy is patron saint of the blind.
[20] Sometimes, Tirso's *graciosos* make similar observations while their masters fail to see what is right in front of them.
[21] As Pedraza Jiménez writes, "Don Mechor es incapaz de ver lo que tiene ante sus ojos" (166). Blue also refers to Melchor's "blindness" throughout his chapter on the play in *Spanish Comedy and Historical Contexts in the 1620s*.
[22] There are many parallels between Melchor and Federico, the *galán* of Tirso's *La mujer por fuerza*, whose "discourse is characterized by the lack of sight" (Ganelin "Who Was That" 106).

Even Ventura sees the truth here: after Melchor scorns Magdalena's hand, Ventura realises it is the same hand they saw earlier (1182-85).

His blindness—at first a source of comedy—becomes the very reason for the main conflict in the play. It is Melchor's obsession with the visual that, ironically, blinds him to the truth that Magdalena is his fiancée.[23] The problem of the play therefore has to do with vision and perception, primarily in the way Melchor is both obsessed with visual consumption and yet also fails to see clearly.[24] In this way, the plot is fuelled not by two lovers' elaborate plans to deceive an older generation, nor for their love of one another, but by the fact that the *galán* is aloof from Magdalena's machinations. The purpose of Magdalena's deception is not to secure a marriage; that is already arranged at the start of the play. Instead, it has to do with solving a problem with the main lover himself: his inability to see what is in front of him.

William Blue posits that while men may see women in the play, those men see women "with other men's eyes, or with the eyes of tradition, of poetic formula, or cultural or social stereotype, with eyes inherited from the past" (48). In Melchor's case, although his imagination is indeed constructed, to an extent, from literary and poetic models, what Melchor sees is very much influenced by his own imagination.

Just as it focuses on literal vision and eyes, then, the play also ruminates on the image created in one's mind, no doubt in part because of Melchor's inability to see with his eyes. Though he sees Magdalena merely in parts (her eyes, her hand), "Melchor creates a whole body from a hand" (Turner "Reality" 56) with his imagination. Turner

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[23] This dramaturgical structure is yet another parallel to *La mujer por fuerza*, where, "[b]ecause Federico has never seen [Finea], she is guaranteed the misrecognition essential to constructing her subjectivity" (Ganelin "Who Was That" 107).

[24] Even more problematic is the fact that Melchor, like many *galanes*, feels entitled to view women. As he says to the veiled Magdalena, "no desdeñéis enojada / la confusión de un amor / que ni os conoce ni agravia" (2904-06).

also argues that Melchor seeks to fill the "gap between his imagination and objective reality," a gap that "only exists because Magdalena, in her disguised form, acts as a blank canvas upon which Melchor paints his fantasies" (57). Though Turner attributes Melchor's creation of "illusions" about the veiled woman to "Magdalena's desire for anonymity," (57) Melchor seems to always be thinking about expectations of physical appearance. Rather than see his fiancée, Melchor instead imagines an ideal mate, moulding Magdalena to match his mind's fancy thereby creating a second, better version of herself. As Pedraza Jiménez says, "[Melchor's] fantasía crea dos mujeres cuando la realidad solo lo ofrece una" (165). From the privileged place of looker, Melchor is able freely to construct the woman of his dreams while Magdalena struggles to fulfil his fantasy: he idealises a woman and projects his fantasy onto the passive female body. When he first sees her hand, Melchor even wishes she were untouchable (and deified) as a statue:

> ¡Ay, qué bella
> imagen vi! Si es imagen
> quien a sí se representa!
> ¡Ay si de la Soledad
> esta hermosa imagen fuera,
> y no de la compañía,
> porque ninguna tuviera! (290-96)

At the end of the play, Melchor indirectly admits to his love being a creation of imagination, something carved from his own vision: after Ángela falsely admits to being the Countess all along, Melchor begins "¡Ay señora de mis ojos!" thereby mistaking her for the real Countess (3571).

Before he (thinks) he has met Magdalena, Melchor's fear that he will not impress her (985-92) turns out, in principle, to be true: truth does indeed fall short of reality. The real Magdalena does not live up to the ideal that Melchor imagines. Though she shifts identities back and forth throughout the play, Melchor's dissatisfaction with the real

Magdalena is evident in act II especially, when Magdalena returns to Melchor as the Countess and tests him:

> Haced una cosa pues:
> los conciertos se despidan
> de esa doña Magdalena
> que mi quietud martiriza.
> No viváis más en su casa,
> y llevándoos yo a la mía,
> averiguaréis verdades
> que el temor desacredita. (1705-12)

Blue argues that Magdalena abandons her objective as Magdalena here because she sees "Melchor's blindness" and that if she were to reveal her true identity to him, "in no way could she live up to the image Melchor has painted in his mind" (208). The 2016 production's reading of the play was that Magdalena returns to Melchor in disguise here because she knows that it is the only way she will get to be with Melchor: if she can indulge him in his fantasy, and if he continues to think she is another woman. Even as early as the ending of act I, Magdalena's attitude reveals that she has very little hope in Melchor loving the real her:

> Pensamientos solicitan
> guerra, en mi pecho, crüel,
> y si unos vuelven por él,
> otros le desacreditan. (1269-72)

Halkhoree argues that the play's resolution comes later than it should. Since resolution can only come with "the discovery of the Condesa's identity," Halkhoree sees "no dramatic reason why the *dénouement* should not have been effected" via "self-revelation" (79) in a scene in which the disguised Magdalena confronts Ángela, also disguised as the Countess (2884-3059).[25] Rather than by outing herself, he posits, the end of the play is "forced by external factors" instead (79). His answer, though he does not

[25] Robert Turner makes the case that the play could end even earlier after act II, like a morality play ("Reality" 68).

acknowledge it, comes at the end of his chapter: "A man cannot marry an abstract concept of beauty" (92).

In act II, when disguised as the Countess, Magdalena is an idealised version of beauty in Melchor's eyes. It is what prevents her from announcing her true identity when he still only sees the Countess in her. Their marriage at this point would not function. In this way, the plot can be read as patriarchal in that its resolution depends on a man's romantic desires being fulfilled. It is not until the end of the play that Melchor is able to see Magdalena as a real person.

If he does not love her, at least by the end of the play Melchor has agreed to marry the real Magdalena. Ultimately, Halkhoree asserts that the play's structure is "itself satirical of dramatic conventions" and "a perfect example of Tirsian 'anti-drama'" (82). The answer to such a late *dénouement* also rests in the fact that Magdalena does not just seek heterosexual union; she wants her mate Melchor to go further, to love her for who she is rather than the perfect woman he imagines she is. In the balcony scene, pretending that the Countess is friends with Magdalena, Magdalena persuades Melchor to agree to marriage with Magdalena: "digo –¡ay Dios, y qué forzado!– / digo, en fin, que os doy promesa / de hacer lo que me mandáis" (3411-13). Though he hesitates, he agrees. But even then, he does not necessarily love Magdalena herself; after all, he still does not think he has met her.

As Nikki Sullivan suggests, one way to queer heterosexuality is by revealing it as a social construct by showing the dangers one is exposed to if one does not conform to heterosexual life (133-34). The conclusion of such a plot ultimately exposes the unfulfilling aspects of heterosexual marriage in this way: as has been established, Magdalena's honour is put at risk if she does not end up in a union with a man. In fact, the play is no longer a *comedia urbana* if Magdalena refuses marriage to Melchor. The play's

comedic genre, signalled through plot and character, is in part what tells the audience that it will end in heterosexual union. In this way, the audience is privy to the dramatic irony Tirso has built: we know the true identity of the Countess, and that Melchor will ultimately be paired off with the "proper" partner. But Halkhoree's assumption that the comedy could end in the duelling Countess scene, when Melchor is still in love with the idea of a perfect woman (rather than the real Magdalena), is problematic.

When Magdalena announces her ruse at the end of the play, Melchor's response is at best an acknowledgment that he finally recognises the hand: "Conózcola, y con vergüenza / en ella sello mis labios" (3600-01). Depending on a production's reading of Melchor's lines, it is possible that Melchor never does transfer his love for the Countess to Magdalena. The Oxford production's Melchor was reluctant to accept Magdalena here, despite Melchor's previous obsession with the hand. By the end of the play, Melchor is still "a callow young man from the provinces, whose eye will probably continue to wander after he is married" (Smith "La celosa" 831). The other marriages are equally unfulfilling; "Ventura and Quiñones are almost certainly mismatched and will fight like cat and dog after they are married; Doña Ángela accepts Don Jerónimo as her future husband with what seems like ill-disguised pique […] or, at best, resignation, since at least he will inherit half his father's wealth" (831). The result is that, "[t]o a modern reader the play has a bitter taste" (831).

If heteronormative desire results in an unfulfilling marriage union at the end of the play, how that end gets staged in performance is crucial to meaning-making, as well as communicating a production's reading of the play. While productions of *comedias* often depict characters as pleased with the outcome of marriage, the director and I agreed that there was a dark underbelly, and even disturbing tone, to Tirso's play, particularly in its conclusion.

After her initial reading of the play, I was pleased to see that the director found the end of the play particularly unsatisfying. In one of her first emails to me, Potter articulated some of those ideas:

> There are parts of the play that do read almost like a tragedy—in particular, the ending. I found the conclusion peculiarly unsatisfying, unsettling even. There's so much room for interpretation; I'd love to play around with the characters and try to understand if Magdalena really does want to live with Melchor by the end, and if Melchor ever loves Magdalena for who she is (rather than what he imagines her to be). There's so much room here to find discomfort where we would expect joyful denouement…I suppose it would be a case of deciding whether we want to emphasise this darker side of the story—deception, denied desire, the idealised image of woman (particularly pertinent, and something I'm sure an Oxford audience would love to see played out on stage in this way)—or let it remain a more traditional 'comedia.' (Potter, 14 April 2016)



Figure 3

This grim tone eventually manifested in our promotional materials for the production. (Figure 3) The final moments of our production sought to reflect this dark, unsatisfying outcome. With the full cast on stage, and during a musical interlude, Magdalena processes towards Melchor, only to reach him and have him turn down her veil: the inversion of what typically occurs with a bride's veil in a marriage ceremony. (Figure 4) In the final moment we see her, Magdalena glances up at her new husband as he stares forward blankly.

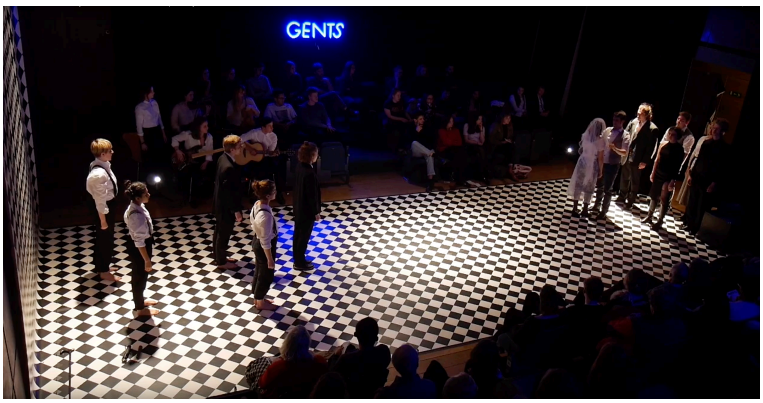


Figure 4

Some spectators were—to our delight—dissatisfied with the marriage at the end of the production.[26] When asked if they were happy when the characters were coupled off, in a post-show audience interview audience member G said "no. Not happy. Thought it was perverted." Audience member H noted that they "thought the marriage was a little bit unexpected at the end […] in a feminist view, the fact that she in the end just conforms to her role either way, despite his […] unfaithfulness […] It was actually kind of outrageous." When asked about the tone of the ending, audience member J said "That was, I suppose, a happy ending, and the tragedy really and the stiffness of it, and yeah, it was quite a sad ending," elaborating that Magdalena and Melchor's situation "can only get worse from there on."

Audience member F commented on this "dark" ending of the play, wondering "if that was maybe the adaptation trying to make a commentary on […] women's roles and […] generally how marriage is controlled […] in this period, or whether that was kind of just a decision to change the tone." The same spectator, though, registered surprise at what was perceived to be a traditional ending: "I wondered if there was going to be some sort of subversion at the end, and there wasn't. That kind of subversion came in with the way they chose to play the ending in a much more sort of subdued ending." Audience

[26] Anonymous interviews and post-show surveys were conducted after all performances of *Jealous*. Not all those interviewed are quoted here.

member I affirmed, "it was just very traditional, with the dowry and the woman needing the consensual thing, the father figure […] [it] just played to the traditional roles of men and women." The audience's (hetero-) expectations (today, but also in the play's historical moment) help to assert *La celosa's* heteronormative thrust. Our staging thus worked to complicate and upset what is often read as a traditional, normative structure. Rather than assert a heteronormative experience, our production sought to underscore the centrality of the visual in Tirso's text whose heteronormative ending lent itself to problematising on the stage.

II. "[U]na sola en tres soy": Destabilising Characterisation

As they are grounded in the world in which they were written, the characters in Golden Age *comedias* largely conform to the binary system of gender. Men defend honour and protect their ostensibly weak daughters and sisters, while women stay at home, passive, their chastity guarded. Plays usually end in heterosexual union. Real women in the period necessarily "conform to a largely male-defined notion of what a woman should be (passive, chaste, virtuous, obedient etc.)" (Robbins 124).[27]

While generally "being of one sex or another entitled the bearer to certain social considerations" (Laqueur 135), the exception to this was

> in the theatre where a significant degree of latitude was permitted in two key ways: (1) the development of character types such as the *mujer varonil*, the woman who, whether out of choice or necessity, refuses to conform to (male) social expectations of her; and (2) the fact that in comedies women were permitted a far greater degree of sexual and moral license than in other types of plays. (Robbins 124)

Tirso's plays illustrate this point explicitly; his characters often do not fit their society's rigid, binary system. Female characters often display masculine tendencies, sometimes going so far as to dress as men in order to pursue (admittedly heterosexual) objectives.

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[27] See the introduction throughout for an explanation and history of the term "passive" as it is linked to women.

Men, in other instances, fulfil the characteristics more often described as feminine: they are weak, passive, sensitive, and submissive. As Hugh K. Long has noted, Tirso's men also often pass up the opportunity for a sword fight; Tirso uses the device much less frequently than Lope and Calderón (Erdman "Introduction" to *Jealous* 7-8).

La celosa is one of Tirso's plays that upturn traditional definitions of what it means to be masculine and feminine in early modern Spain. The play therefore invites the underscoring of such subversions—a queering—on the modern stage. Disguise is one tool for this exploration as it helps pose questions about reality and performance: is Magdalena's disguise, for instance, really what creates the image of idealised femininity? Matthew Stroud believes "in general in the *comedia*, one is what one wears" (*The Play in the Mirror* 51). Identity, therefore, is at least in part linked to appearance.

Gender, which is "performative," as Butler says, upsets stable, binary gender identification, as we have seen. Similarly, Queer Theory calls into question the ostensibly stable terms "man" and "woman" (Jagose 3). It works to upset stable gender categories, instead advocating for ambiguity and non-binary identity. As David Halperin insists, queer is "whatever is at odds with the normal, the legitimate, the dominant" (62).

Tirso's play text similarly works to upset the "stable" category of woman, exposing man's idealisation of her as an unattainable object, in part through its stress on physical appearances. Gender is not as simple as Magdalena putting on a disguise and performing as the "Countess of Chirinola." As Dawn Smith says, after "Ventura bids Quiñones turn her widow's weeds into 'manteles de boda' (1492b)" the audience "would know that a change of clothes does not mean a change in character. No sleight-of-hand, or 'tropelía,' can alter what lies behind the facade" ("La celosa" 831).

Spectatorship is thus crucial to the performance of gender. In fact, it is through the power of the gaze that "normal" social roles are concretised. Barbara Freedman introduces the idea that normative social roles are inescapable because of their ability to be perceived by others. Specifically, she says:

> As Shakespearean comedy reminds us, master and servant, husband and wife may exchange roles but never escape the tyranny of roles themselves—which is, after all, simply a function of the gaze, of being and so being seen in society. ("Frame-Up" 59-60)

Ventura is aware of the importance of appearances in cementing (high) social standing, as he advises Melchor to only return to León with a bride (2419-24). The key is thus the presence of two subjects, one of which perceives the other. William Blue explains "Tirso recognizes gender roles as arbitrary but necessary and continually shows the price women must pay for participation in the system they inhabit" (211). As illustrated through the character Melchor, "[woman] exists as a fantasy, as a theatrical construct" (211). The fact that the play exists as a text that was intended to be staged and viewed by a live audience both underscores and complicates this: if a theatrical construct is largely two-dimensional (in that it is not a real person but a character), how does a (three-dimensional) actor portray such a role?[28]

Blue argues that men and women who are "reduced to a role, an identity, or a class"—much like Magdalena is by Melchor—"accept the patriarchal order's division of the world and live by its master tropes: this is what a man is, this is what a woman is

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[28] Patrice Pavis discusses the role of the actor in *Analyzing Performance*, explaining the theatrical contract established between spectator and actor as one in which "nothing the observed person does or says is taken at face value; instead it is read as a fictional action that only acquires meaning and truth within the possible world that observer and observed agree to inhabit" (58). He goes on to say that "theater actors have a dual status: they are both real, present people *and* at the same time imaginary, absent characters, or at least located on 'another stage.' Describing this ambiguous presence is one of the most difficult tasks, for the indices of presence resist any objective pinning down, and the 'mystical body' of the actor both makes itself available and takes itself back" (59).

[…]" (215). He goes on to say that "[c]ulture imposes gender difference from birth; thus gender identity is an enforced ideology and always political" (215). At the same time, however, Tirso also works to upset the "stable" category of woman in *La celosa* in many ways—perhaps as a reaction against her "painful awareness of how man tries to fit [her] with a unitary mask" (211).

While my adaptation takes into account what it means to translate (and construct) one's gender on the page, the 2016 Oxford production also explored to what extent actors' embodied performances of gender are non-binary, non-conforming, and thus queered. The presence of bodies on stage immediately asks audiences to make meaning out of how those actors move and speak. In the production process, we thus spent time focusing on the physicality of the characters, and how audiences might read gender and sex from their bodies.

In what follows, I progress through three of the play's characters—Magdalena, Ventura, and Santillana—to elucidate how the play invites us to read these characters as atypical for their sexes, as well as describe how the 2016 production illuminated these characteristics on stage. The approach used in *Jealous of Herself* rehearsals was one which sprang from the text: after script analysis, or "table work," actors began to build their characters by physically exploring their roles while speaking their lines. Characters were thus built from a psychological semi-understanding of the character on the page and yet primarily through physical exploration in rehearsals. As such, the Butlerian notion that no subject can precede its body[29] was realised through our staging methodology.

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[29] "It is […] clearly unfortunate grammar to claim that there is a 'we' or an 'I' that does a body" ("Performance Acts and Gender Constitution" 521); "there is no preexisting identity by which an act or attribute might be measured" (528); "Gender is performative insofar as it is the *effect* of a regulatory regime of gender differences in which genders are divided and hierarchized *under constraint*. Social constraints, taboos, prohibitions, threats of punishment operate in the ritualized repetition of norms, and the repetition constitutes

The character Magdalena raises questions about what constitutes femininity and, further, how Melchor imagines and idealises feminine beauty. The play ultimately destabilises Magdalena's own identity by dividing her into three parts: herself, an unnamed covered woman, and the Countess of Chirinola. In her performance, the character Magdalena becomes evidence for the constructionist idea that gender is neither static nor essential, but instead a process (Jagose 79).

Magdalena's awareness of her herself too implies a level of performativity to the woman's identity. Like a signature that has been counterfeited, as Derrida would describe it, the idealised woman—the Countess—is an infelicitous performance that has also been subject to "citational grafting" (Salih 63); she is a veiled Magdalena who has been mis-cited and therefore quotable and reiterative. That is, she is not the Countess but the "Countess." Judith Butler's application of gender to the concept of iterability also applies here; Magdalena's citational performance of the Countess is additionally a performance of the female gender. The Countess' femaleness—like the choreography of her hand in Mass, and the other feminine physical qualities that attract Melchor to her—are not innate or natural, but inauthentic and citational performances of gender. In this way, her gender is "an illusion discursively maintained" (*Gender Trouble* 186). Butler's arguments suggest that "the stereotype of maleness and femaleness are impossible to fulfil" (Stoll "A Feminist Reading" 105).

In her essay on the characteristics of women's writing in theatre, Josette Féral writes about contemporary women's plays in which "women are divided, multiple beings, whose lack of oneness is expressed in the text by another theatrical device, the diversity and simultaneity of voices" (559). It has been established that Magdalena's identity is

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the temporalized scene of gender construction and destabilization. There is no subject who precedes or enacts this repetition of norms" ("Critically Queer" 21).

similarly multiplied. Pedraza Jiménez argues that "Tirso […] crea un fantasmagoría en que un personaje puede multiplicarse y también […] en que dos personajes pueden representar […] un único papel en la vida social" (168). Blue has asserted that Magdalena "works to show Melchor and the audience that any one definition of her is wholly inadequate to her protean being" (211). Henry Sullivan makes the case that this division of identity is "a hallmark of the Mercedarian's [Tirso's] art" (*Tirso de Molina* 113-14 qtd. in Turner *Disguise* 82). Turner has also argued that, in the play, "it becomes clear that identity is an unstable construct that is subject to changes in perception as well as to deliberate manipulation" ("Reality" 55). Magdalena has a greater chance to influence events if she is not constrained by an identity that is not allowed speech, and employs instead multiple personae to create a polyphonic voice (Turner *Disguise* 79).[30] The ambiguity created by such layers of disguise is evident in the Spanish text in that the name Magdalena is given by Santillana—that of the Countess of Chirinola—"meant, among other things, '*enredo*, *embrollo*'" (Blue 35n4).[31] Our production also successfully communicated this complexity of character, for as audience member A noted, Magdalena seemed to be

> simultaneously this virtuous woman and supposedly this sort of provocative woman […] So she embodies the two sides of the Spanish kind of Catholic woman, and […] if you [think] in religious terms, the Mary and the Eve aspect of things. Women, then, were viewed as less polarised in terms of gender and more mixed.

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[30] Paun de García asserts that multiplicity is inherent to gender in her study of masculinity and María de Zayas y Sotomayor: "Masculinity is changeable, adaptive, reconfigurable; it is constructed rather than inherent. This is a pillar of Judith Butler's beliefs about gender, as well; as she explains, "there are nuanced and individual ways of *doing* one's gender" ("Performative Acts" 525).

[31] See Jane Albrecht's *Irony and Theatricality* 85n16. Perhaps Orlando Jardini is thinking of this quality in Ángela when disguised as the Countess of Chirinola, as he posits that Ángela reveals "the unpredictable capricious nature of the female that confounds and confuses even those closely related males who begin to think that they understand the workings of her mind and heart" (85).

Magdalena is often described either as a one-dimensional heroine, or as an unambiguous binary; while Magdalena's "cloak once represented anonymity, chastity, and inaccessibility, in Melchor's mind that same cloak now represents perfect beauty and the ideal woman" (Turner "Reality" 59). But her identity is—and becomes over the course of the play—more complex, as well as more sexualised.

Though she is chaste and mostly obedient, Magdalena's intentions for turning up at "the most fashionable church in Madrid, where people went to see and be seen as much as to worship the enormously popular image of the Virgen de la Soledad that was housed within it" (Bass and Wunder 128) on the day she is to meet her husband must be considered.[32] As Erdman says, this fact "enriches our understanding of her" ("Introduction" *Jealous* 14). While it is possible that Magdalena's attendance in church on this particular day was a daily devotion, churchgoing in the period was not just about religious worship. Bass and Wunder point to the research of Hilary Dansey Smith, which "paraphrases the Portuguese traveler and writer Peneiro de Veiga, who observed that churchgoing was a social activity […] giving people the chance 'to see and be seen, and perhaps carry on a discreet flirtation with a *tapada* (10)" (Bass and Wunder 130n52). It was well-established, even in the period, that veils "provid[ed] opportunities for anonymous flirtatious encounters" (120) such as the one in *La celosa*.[33] The freedom

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[32] Rather than a means by which she could flirt, Turner argues that Magdalena's cloak was initially intended to be "a covering, an erasure of her identity that would allow her to perform her religious devotions while still being symbolically enclosed" (*Disguise* 62). He goes on to argue that in "presenting no face to the world, she [Magdalena] is theoretically able to avoid the temptations that could lead to loss of honor" (62). Temptations, though, are a threat because the subject can see, not because the subject cannot be seen by others.

[33] There were plenty of sumptuary decrees—"anti-*tapado* legislation" (Bass and Wunder 108)—in early modern Spain that attempted to regulate the way in which women wore veils. This was in part because "[t]he anonymity afforded by the *tapado* style readily became associated with female infidelity, for it supposedly allowed a woman to go out in public unrecognized by her husband, her neighbors, or her suitors (so suggested the

given to women as a result of their wearing veils was indeed part of the reason why the Cortes de Castilla requested that face covering be banned. Part of their reasoning was that the social status of women would go unnoticed by men while "la luz discerniese las unas de las otras" (qtd. in Bass and Wunder 98). As Erdman explains, "[u]nder this mask of incognito, [Magdalena] is already attempting to skirt her social situation and challenge restrictions put on her as a result of her gender" ("Introduction" *Jealous* 14-15). Given that she was in charge of putting on and removing her own veil, the *tapada* was "quite difficult to catch. The controversial fashion was thus a matter of intention more than anything else, and it was the *tapada*'s anticipated actions under cover that generated so much excitement and controversy in the early modern Hispanic world" (Bass and Wunder 112). Like many other soon-to-be brides of the *comedia urbana*, the fact that Magdalena lets herself feel attracted to a stranger before she meets her fiancé speaks to her willingness to be disobedient.

Although Magdalena's hand—which glides in and out of her glove—crosses her body "in a gesture charged with the ambivalent pull of eroticism and piety" (Bass and Wunder 130), this is not necessarily Magdalena's intention. The sexualisation of Magdalena is instead Melchor's doing, who "[i]nstead of focusing his attention on the Virgen de la Soledad […] cannot take his eyes off of the *tapada* Magdalena" (130). Perhaps Melchor, like male lovers of the Renaissance, "repeatedly imagine[s himself] as the hollow forms [gloves] into which the female beloved enters" (Stallybrass and Jones

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legislation banning the style)" (115). Though León Pinelo's treatise on the veil *Velos antiguos y modernos en los rostros de las mujeres* advocated for women to wear the veil, the veil itself also "provid[ed] opportunities for anonymous flirtatious encounters" (120) such as the one in *La celosa.* The *tapado de medio ojo* style in particular, in which a woman would "[wrap] [her mantle] around her head to cover all but one eye" (108), was thought to be particularly promiscuous. This is the style Magdalena later wears when confronted by Melchor: she says "Aplicad la vista / a este ojo, fiador de estotro" (1800-01), which forces Melchor to later ask "¿Son reliquias / de una en una?" (1824-25).

128). And like the women in many plays of the period, Magdalena is devout while also potentially deceptive.

Eventually, in his analysis of the play, Turner acknowledges the multiplicity of Magdalena, arguing that "her choice to embody a new persona helps her to move away from the 'scripted cultural codes' which lock her into a certain role. The unnamed woman, whom Magdalena now represents, is not as tightly locked into the cultural norms which bind her identity" ("Reality" 64). In this way, Magdalena is like the title character in *Marta la piadosa*: "Ni es carne ansí ni pescado" (Molina *Marta la piadosa* 1103). Magdalena's "lack of definition" allows her to "act more freely. Gender, and indeed identity as a whole, is neither entirely a matter of individual choice nor imposed norms, but a combination of the two" ("Reality" 64). Judith Butler similarly views gender as neither fully a choice nor the subject of imposed gender but rather interpretive within the confines of a "corporeal space":

> As a public action and performative act, gender is not a radical choice or project that reflects a merely individual choice, but neither is it imposed or inscribed upon the individual, as some post-structuralist displacements of the subject would contend. The body is not passively scripted with cultural codes, as if it were a lifeless recipient of wholly pre-given cultural relations. But neither do embodied selves pre-exist the cultural conventions which essentially signify bodies. Actors are always already on the stage, within the terms of the performance. Just as a script may be enacted in various ways, and just as the play requires both text and interpretation, so the gendered body acts its part in a culturally restricted corporeal space and enacts interpretations within the confines of already existing directives. ("Performative Acts" 526)

Like so many other *damas*, Magdalena is able to speak more from her disguise than she could as herself (Turner "Reality" 65). Ultimately, her disguise "has a power that […] women lack. Disguise allows Magdalena the space necessary for her to circumvent the strictures of society and win her husband-to-be" (74).

But Magdalena does not merely role-play; her part as the Countess leads to the existence of a second Countess. Though Melchor worships Magdalena, fetishising her feminine body piecemeal, Tirso ultimately trivialises Melchor's love for Magdalena first by multiplying her body (when Ángela disguises herself as the same Countess), and then by turning the duet performance of feminine beauty into the reason for Melchor's confusion: the presence of two identical Countesses nearly leads Melchor to marry the wrong woman. Furthermore, the first time we see Magdalena, we do not actually see her face because she is covered. The second time we see her, the image of her face is doubled in performance; as she prepares to meet her fiancé, Magdalena asks Quiñones to hand her a mirror, which she uses to prepare herself for meeting Melchor. Eventually, Magdalena is "celosa de todas tres" (3222). Her role in *La celosa* is thus about her constant multiple subjectivity—something which is characteristic of queer subjects.

In rendering Magdalena's role on the English-language stage, picking up on the potential of Tirso's character I sought out places where she could reflect back the duality and multiplicity of her subjectivity onto Melchor. One example of such a place is, when criticising Melchor for being unfaithful to her, the Countess tells him

> ¡cuán necia es quien fía
> en palabras forasteras,
> falsas, si ponderativas! (1622-24)

In my adaptation, I opted to create a moment of dramatic irony in which the Countess turns Melchor's words ("forasteras") into an insult: "How foolish the woman who confides / In the words of a two-faced stranger!" (Grunnah 30). Given the number of references to eyes in the play, I coloured characters' vocabulary with allusions to eyes, vision, and sight. One such instance is when Magdalena, posing as the Countess, chastises Melchor for straying when she sees a second Countess. In the Spanish, she scolds Melchor for another woman taking a place which she thought rightfully hers:

> Sólo en vuestro noble trato
> estribó la confïanza,
> don Melchor, que hice de vos,
> pero pues tan presto os falta,
> y venido de antiyer,
> me ocupan mantos la plaza
> que pensé yo que era mía,
> cuando la juzgué estar vacía. (2887-94)

In my adaptation, Magdalena attributes Melchor's wandering to his gaze on feminine subjects: "Don Melchor, / Another veil has caught your eye / And usurped my place in just two days?" (Grunnah 60).

If, as the Countess, Magdalena is full of confidence, in private she is insecure. In the third act, Magdalena confides in Quiñones, explaining the paradoxical nature of her current relationship with Melchor: "Esta mano causa enojo / y esta misma mano enciende" (2069-70). Rather than just a mere annoyance, in the English adaptation Magdalena's hand has much more serious consequences: "This hand makes him hate me, / Yet this same hand sets his heart ablaze" (Grunnah 41). The purpose of this was to help create an even more severe divide between Melchor's perception of Magdalena and his perception of the Countess, thereby underscoring her multiplicity.

Tirso's Spanish play expresses the inherent duality to Magdalena's identity as she speaks from the perspective of the Countess: at the end of the same monologue in the Spanish, Magdalena says "porque me adora, le adoro / y porque no, le aborrezco" (2087-88). Erdman's translation follows the logic of the expression: "I love him because he loves me, / and I hate him because he abhors / everything I am" (Erdman *Jealous* 165).[34] In my adaptation, the inversion of love and hate accentuates Magdalena's emotional confusion: "I love him because he hates me, / I hate him because he loves me" (Grunnah

[34] In other words, Magdalena loves Melchor because he loves her (as the Countess), but she (the Countess) hates him because he abhors her (Magdalena). While it was important to communicate that duality in the adaptation, the line—in a mostly literal rendering—is not as forceful as using the juxtaposition and subsequent contrast.

41). This articulation also gets closer to what is true elsewhere in the play: that Magdalena loves that he hates her as Magdalena, since it is still she who is the Countess—the woman he loves. The second phrase also upsets Magdalena's singular subjectivity: she says that, as Magdalena, she hates Melchor because he loves the Countess. Even though she knows the Countess is not real, she feels an investment in the persona she has created.[35] In fact, it goes beyond an investment: as Henry Sullivan argues,

> [i]t is because the Condesa is the ideal woman that Melchor loves her, and this, in turn, is why Magdalena wants to be the Condesa and is angry in III, xvii when Melchor agrees to marry Magdalena. But Magdalena's identification with the Condesa is only possible for so long as the latter remains the abstract Platonic ideal, without an identity. ("Love" 89)

In addition, Magdalena also fears that she has evidence of Melchor's fickleness; he falls for a hand while engaged, after all. Though in the balcony scene of act III Melchor first swears his love to the Countess, he changes his mind rather easily when persuaded by the veiled Magdalena, and vows instead to love Magdalena (3399-3418). In this way, Melchor shows many of the typically female characteristics: he is capricious and fickle.

Turner argues that though "Magdalena is able to perform the role thrust upon her [the Countess], she never controls it and is unable to integrate the Countess […] with Magdalena" ("Reality" 72).[36] Our reading of the play, however, was that, as the plot progresses toward its end, Magdalena inadvertently and increasingly blends herself with the Countess. As Blue argues, rather than killing off the Countess character, Magdalena "incorporates her into her new self" (210). Like an actor playing a part in a play, one is

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[35] In the same scene, Magdalena again acknowledges the duality of her role, one of which is fictional: "pues soy dos imaginada, / aunque en la verdad soy una" (2117-18).
[36] Turner argues that there is a point of transition where control shifts "from Melchor to the various women in the play" including Magdalena (*Disguise* 77).

naturally linked to—and, indeed, dependent on—the other.[37] Whereas in the second act of the play, when she meets Melchor as the Countess for the first time, Magdalena is able to separate the Countess (and her desires) from her own, by the end of the play she begins to mingle the two. The third act is indeed "dedicado a mostrar la lucha interna de Magdalena" (Ruano de la Haza 189). Rather than a binary—an individual neatly divided into two—Magdalena's two personalities (as herself and as the Countess) naturally blend into each other. It is this fluidity of identity that in part constitutes Magdalena's queerness.

Ultimately, it falls on the actor playing Magdalena to "construir un personaje que explique este contradictorio y complejo carácter" (Ruano de la Haza 190). The idea of combining two characters into one—while maintaining a difference for the audience—is a challenge for an actor, though. It is especially challenging for a university-level actor who, though talented, has limited training and experience. Still, it was important to create two distinct characters from the start of the play.

At the beginning of the process, therefore, the director encouraged the actor playing Magdalena, Rebecca Hamilton, to develop two very different characters for Magdalena and the Countess. The character Magdalena became quick, impulsive, and capricious. The Countess—in part to aid the audience in following the plot—was more grounded than Magdalena, more confident, and spoke in a slightly higher register. Hamilton had the challenge of playing Magdalena playing the Countess—a character laid on top of another character. And, in the very first scene in which we meet her, Magdalena is pretending to be a veiled lady. This distinction, however, was not as much a challenge

[37] As I discuss in the final section of this chapter, the lyrics of one of the musical interludes reflects this division: "An ominous path / For a couple to embark / A binary partitioned into three" (Boyd).

as was creating the Countess, a character given a name and an address by Santillana, and created by Melchor (Turner "Reality" 66, 73).

This merging of identities for Magdalena culminates and is most apparent in the balcony scene, when Magdalena's objectives seem to switch back and forth. This is also, coincidentally, the first and only time in the play in which the situation demands she play both Magdalena and the Countess in rapid succession. When she first sees Melchor in this scene, Magdalena—who is pretending to be the Countess—seems pleased and asks him to approach the window (3277-78). But soon after, the "Countess" already has Magdalena's interests in mind: in my English version, she says "But I'm still angry. / I hear you've met and exchanged words. / With the forged copy of me" (Grunnah 69). As the Countess, Magdalena asks Melchor if the forged copy of her (Ángela, in disguise) is pretty. After Melchor's failed attempt to reach her hand on the balcony, Magdalena as the Countess explains that she must leave for Italy and asks Melchor to marry Magdalena instead. But when he eventually—with hesitation—agrees, Magdalena (still playing the Countess) returns to her initial objective (as the Countess) and is angry with Melchor:

> Traitor! Who would trust
> In desires so shallow they
> Shatter like glass at the first touch!
> All it takes is my feigned absence
> To reveal how fickle you are.
> I'll find a mate whose honesty
> Matches my own. (73)

Magdalena's motivation here seems to be one which is counter to her own as Magdalena. Though she has just successfully managed to do what she seems to have been trying to do throughout the play—to get Melchor to agree to marry Magdalena—she is unhappy, which suggests she is caught up in the Countess' own objectives. She continues:

> What person in this world would ever
> Order her lover to love
> Another, even if she were off

To America or the ends of
The earth? I wanted you to swear
Your love for me and paint her faults.
I wanted you to wish for death
Before taking her to bed with you. (73)

Magdalena here has thus given up on Melchor being faithful to Magdalena, and instead wants him to be faithful to the Countess—perhaps the only hope left for him. But when he breaks his promise to be devoted to the Countess, he is doubly unfaithful—and Magdalena's conflicting objectives are further exacerbated.

When the Countess calls Magdalena out onto the balcony immediately following these lines, it is a return to the end of act II: Magdalena urging Melchor to return home, as he is unsuitable for her desires. The play could seemingly go on forever:

O Don Melchor,
It's clear you do not understand
Women of virtue. In losing
My friend's respect, you've lost mine too.
Get back to your village idiots
In the mountains of León;
You're not suited for Madrid. (74)

This final balcony scene—in which we see that Magdalena's subjectivity is perpetually multiple—is crucial to our understanding of her, as well as to our understanding of Magdalena and Melchor's relationship. When she does finally reveal her identity in the final moments of the play, Magdalena still cannot let go of her other identity: she instead insists that "yo soy la condesa" (3580), using the present tense (in both the Spanish and my adaptation) while also explaining, though she tricked him, that "It was still me that Don Melchor / Fell in love with at the church" (Grunnah 76). This fusing of identities suggests that Magdalena still remembers Melchor's inability to be faithful. She still knows that what he values above all else is what he sees—or, rather, what he imagines he sees. Therefore, as proof of her identity, Magdalena offers physical objects: "let these / Strings and purse, this squire and *dueña* / Serve as my proof" (76). In

her final words of the play, she offers the most important physical proof she can still claim as her own:

> And as final proof, let this hand
> Remove any lingering doubt;
> This was the hand you idolised;
> This was the hand you loved. (76)

In performance, Magdalena shouts these last two lines at Melchor, waving her hand in Melchor's face. Her frustration with him as she proves herself his worthy suitor expresses the paradoxical conclusion at which she has arrived: though she could easily not tell her father she was tricking Melchor all along, she sees confessing her true identity as a better option than Melchor marrying Ángela—whom he seems prepared to marry when she reveals herself as the Countess. Magdalena's marriage to him, then, is less about her true love for him and more about stopping him from loving another woman. While at the beginning it is possible Magdalena desires marriage, by the end she does not. In this way, Magdalena is like Marta, Jerónima, and many of the other leading ladies of Tirso's *comedias urbanas*, who first realise they are bound by patriarchy, and then try to later fight it—all through different methods and to varying degrees of success. The only thing worse than marrying a man she does not love, it seems, is watching another woman marry him.

To this end, Tirso creates a leading lady who, rather than fulfil the literary (and often real-life) stereotype of a one-dimensional female, weaves a complex plot from a position of power in her disguise. As she is veiled, Magdalena is able to exercise considerable authority from a place of anonymity (Halkhoree 82). Tirso thus queers the character of Magdalena by turning the traditionally submissive female trope upside down: she is reframed instead as an insecure yet powerful agent of her own plot—something the Oxford production chose to further develop and emphasise.

Ventura is a character who often treads the divide between hetero- and homo-, and between masculine and feminine. In a post-show interview, audience member D said, of all the characters, they "felt that Ventura was the most neutral in terms of gender spectrum." Although in the original Spanish Ventura is arguably an excessively masculine character, certain moments—with Santillana and Melchor, as I shall discuss here—reveal Ventura to also show hints of femininity. It was our production's aim to underscore these moments through textual adaptation and staging in order to clarify his queer identity.

Though in some instances Ventura gives morally sound advice to Melchor—after the duelling Countess scene, he advises Melchor to go back to either Magdalena or Ángela—in other moments Ventura only affirms Melchor's misogynist belief that beauty and worth reside in physical appearance. In response to Melchor's "Magdalena is ugly," Ventura replies that "[t]wo eyes and a hand is all you saw" (Grunnah 47-48). His stress on "the partial body highlights the expansive power of Don Melchor's imagination while simultaneously deconstructing the female body" (Turner "Reality" 56). Ventura also objectifies women: "[l]as mujeres constituyen el blanco principal de los ataques de Ventura" (Mata Induráin 173). To Ventura, "la belleza de la mujer no es más que solimán y manto, esto es, cosméticos y trucos de ocultación, todo pura apariencia" (174). In addition to Ventura's harsh judgments of women, the *gracioso* also asserts woman's perceived fickleness when trying to convince Melchor not to rely on his fiancée's dowry. Speaking first of her father, Don Alonso, he says:

> ¿Y si ése se hubiese muerto,
> acomodado la novia,
> o le parecieses feo,
> y te echase en hora mala,
> que es mujer, y puede hacerlo? (726-30)

Ventura assumes women are an obstacle to man's primary concern: his own happiness.

Ventura also tries to assert his masculinity, and in a way that is at odds with how Judith Butler describes gender. In a play obsessed with physical appearance, it seems appropriate that Ventura conforms to the assumption that gender is rooted in physical appearance. In response to Melchor's affectionate plea to "Venturilla" (3307), Ventura attempts to express his own (physical) virility to his master: "¡Bueno, por Dios! ¿Me requiebras? / Más barbón soy que un peraile" (3308-9). In our production, audience members interpreted Ventura's insistence at face value; as audience member F noted, Ventura "was really quite masculinised."

The addition of a scene between Ventura and Quiñones in my adaptation also helped to underscore his inherent virility. As Dawn Smith explains in her essay on the play, *dueñas*[38] (Quiñones) usually pair off with *escuderos* (Santillana), but in this play Quiñones ends up with Ventura.[39] Though Anglophone audiences unfamiliar with the conventions of the *comedia* likely did not realise a flirtatious scene between Quiñones and Ventura was not in Tirso's original, such a scene helps justify their relationship at the end of the play, as well as assert Ventura's heterosexuality. Though some audience members interpreted Ventura as being most neutral on the gender spectrum, audience member F thought "the scenes between [Ventura] and [Quiñones] were quite fun, because that was a very heterosexual […] gendered […] way to play those flirting scenes."

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[38] Interestingly, some versions' *dramatis personae* indicate that Quiñones is a *criada*, while others name her a *dueña*. Certainly Quiñones plays the role of a *dueña*. Erdman explains that the dueña is "a somewhat unusual character for a *comedia de enredo.* Normally a respectable widow who oversees the other household servants, *dueñas*—in literature, at least—tended to be unreliable if not malicious women, given to lying and deceit. Quiñones indeed fulfills this expectation […] But Quiñones is not punished for her deceit; indeed, she gets to marry, another hint that all is not right with the order restored at the play's end" ("Introduction" *Jealous* 17).

[39] Smith quotes Deleito y Piñuela here: "'Escuderos y dueñas habían de ser ancianos, para mayor respetabilidad de la función que desempeñaban. El escudero tenía proverbialmente luenga barba' (Deleito y Piñuela 132)" ("La celosa" 831n13).

But in addition to his assertion of masculinity, Ventura also shows signs of sexual slippage, either through language or behaviour. Throughout Tirso's play, Ventura's language sexualises and genders inanimate objects. As Mata Induráin explains, there is ample wordplay in the Spanish on the words *pesado, preñado, virgen, sortija*, *precio* (176). Together, the frequency of such language suggest an excess—a concept linked to females as opposed to males.[40] Before they have seen inside it, Ventura's description of Magdalena's purse, which Melchor has stolen, contains both masculine and feminine imagery:

> Por Dios,
> que es en lo pesado un necio.
> Alma tiene de arcabuz.
> Abrámosle, que recelo
> que es barriga de opilada,
> y habrá tomado el acero.
> ¿Qué es eso? (777-83)

Though the latter half of the passage makes reference to women drinking steel water ("tomar el acero") after eating clay to make their faces pale (Jardini 303), the middle of the passage—in which Ventura likens the woman's purse to a firearm—blends both masculine and feminine imagery. The firearm itself is, in both shape and function, phallic and masculine. But the muzzle of the firearm is shaped more like the female vagina, and its opening—which gets filled with ammunition—is also suggestive of female anatomy. The etymology of *arcabuz* is also suggestive of female anatomy: as *Autoridades* explains, the nomenclature of this firearm derives from *Arca* and the Italian "*buso,* que vale

[40] In the ancient world, females were thought to have an excess of moisture in their bodies which "was excreted in the blood that was evacuated monthly, and in a pregnant woman, the excess blood (and moisture) went to the foetus. In a lactating woman, the excess blood was converted to milk" (Salisbury 143). Ian Maclean also clarifies that it was believed in the Renaissance that a woman's "residues," when she is not lactating, "account for the physiological and anatomical features peculiar to women" (34).

agujero, que es por donde se le comunica el fuego a la pólvora" (Real Academia Española *Autoridades* 376).

As the men open Magdalena's purse, Ventura's comments are pointedly linked to the female body. When Melchor removes a paper from the purse, Ventura says it is "preñado" (783),[41] and wonders whether it is "hijo o hija" (789)—a line which could mean both "boy or girl" or "good news or bad" (Jardini 304). Ventura's jokes about pregnancy continue: when Melchor announces it is "hija," Ventura responds "[y] yo los dolores tengo" (790).

Melchor eventually reveals the object he has found in the purse: "Una piedra es verde oscura, / atada a un listón" (791-92). As he goes on to explain, the stone relieves stomach cramps in old women. In the English adaptation, I re-envisioned this stone into one used instead to "relieve stomach cramps" (Grunnah 14). This change provided a moment for Ventura to express his disgust with the natural reaction of the female body to menstruation (cramping), and was therefore following in the English with the misogynist retort "Let's hope she does not need that" (14).

Ventura's fixation on the (sexual) female body is not limited to the linguistic: he also displays some characteristics and behaviours that tread the porous boundary between masculine and feminine—even in the same scene—on both page and (potentially) on stage. In order to reach for the Countess' hand when she is standing at her balcony, Melchor demands that Ventura "Ponte aquí debajo. Llega" (3310) so that he can stand on his back. Ventura protests, asserting that "soy macho y no eres hembra" (3318). In addition to "*macho*" meaning masculine, *Autoridades* also defines the word as an "[a]nimal del sexo masculino o viril" (Real Academia Española *Autoridades* 446), in

[41] Erdman explains in his translation that "This line is Melchor's in the *Primera Parte*, but I follow X. A. Fernández in assigning it to Ventura, which seems much more in keeping" ("Introduction" *Jealous* 267n58). My own adaptation follows Fernández and Erdman.

opposition to "*hembra*," an animal of the female sex. Though Ventura might have chosen "*hombre*," his use of "*macho*" compares the two men to animals, who—like Melchor mounting Ventura's back—mate from behind. In insisting that he is "*macho*," Ventura is telling Melchor that, since he is not a woman, he ought not be mounted like a female animal. Before mounting him, when Ventura reminds Melchor that he too is a man, the language here might bring to mind sodomy. In this way, Ventura becomes feminised in his perceived taking on of a feminine sexual role.

Ventura's responses in the original play hint at homosexual desire; he tells Melchor he is "en cuatro pies," (3331) a sexually submissive, even feminine, position. My adaptation takes this one step further: when Melchor says it is on Ventura's back that he will "rise to heaven," Ventura (in the English version) reiterates Melchor's image of divine ascension, sexualising it in his reply "There's no way you're going to rise / While on my back" (Grunnah 70). Ventura again evokes the idea of sodomy. In the Spanish, his response to Melchor's request for "esta merced" (3319) calls to mind "*servicio*" in multiple sense of the word; both the labour of a servant, as well as a chamber pot:

> Dijeras
> servicio, que agora hay hartos
> que a todo Madrid inciensan. (3320-22)

Though Ventura continues to resist, he ultimately agrees. Ventura concedes when Melchor offers "este vestido" (3327)—an object whose double meaning (as women's dress)[42] provides further allusion (although not explicit reference) to Ventura's femininity.

In performance, all of these aspects of Ventura's character on the page inspired a further feminisation of Ventura on the stage. One way this was accomplished was through

[42] One definition of "vestido" in the *Diccionario de la lengua española* as "[t]raje enterizo de la mujer" (Real Academia Española).

Ventura's interactions with Santillana. When Ventura speaks to the male squire Santillana when they first meet, encouraging him to share secrets about the veiled lady's true identity, he bribes him:

> pero aquí está un real de a cuatro
> que secretos desvalija
> de arrugados entresuelos. (1749-51)

The Spanish *desvalijar* suggests the taking, by force, of the contents inside a container—specifically, a *maleta* or *valija* (Real Academia Española *Diccionario de la lengua*). And *entresuelos*—literally, a small room between floors in a building—is sometimes emended to *entrecejos*,[43] suggesting that Santillana's face is one which can be opened to share information.[44] In the English—in both Erdman's translation and my adaptation—Ventura's language sexualises the old squire: "Perhaps four *reales* will / Unzip those tight lips of yours" (Grunnah 32). This was further sexualised on stage by virtue of Santillana being played by a woman (with a second set of "lips").

Though Tirso's characters fall into specific, binary gender categories, the characters' behaviours—like Ventura's—thus sometimes break down that definition and reveal more fluid characters. Such characteristics can also be clarified and elaborated in performance.

Tirso also places subversive agency in the unstable identity of the old squire Santillana. Though in the text Santillana is an old man, the character is also the subject of Ventura's erotic (and comic) advances.

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[43] Torres Nebrera considers "*entresuelos*" to be "más acordo con el lenguaje irónico del gracioso." To him, *de arrugados entresuelos* signifies "secretos muy occultos, bien escondidos entre los pliegues de la mente y del corazón" and "enterrados bajo las losas" (200n.)

[44] Jardini's footnote on *entresuelos* proposes that "Tirso might have been suggesting here that money was capable of loosening the secrets which were uncovered by the diligent pursuit of knowledge. Or more simply, the *entresuelos*, since they were isolated from the main parts of the house, may have been, from time to time, the scene of some suspect or secret activities" (322).

As part of our mission to underscore the queer tendencies of *Jealous*, our production reframed gender in the body of Santillana's character because Santillana is on the receiving end of Ventura's suggestive language throughout the play. Though he is a man in the play, in our production Santillana was played by a female actor. While casting a female eliminated the potential for explicitly queer moments on stage—such as a kiss between Ventura and Santillana, as I explain below—such casting opened up many other moments in the Spanish play to new meaning. When Melchor asks if the "Countess" is married, Santillana replies "To put it bluntly, I hear that / Her field is open for planting" (Grunnah 33). When coming from the mouth of a female actor, the stereotypically crude, misogynistic, and heterosexist retort is jarring. It complicates the way we read Santillana, thereby queering our perception of the squire—both in relation to the character's function in the play as a whole, as well as to Ventura: are they two mates having a laugh? Is this a masculine woman? The potential this staging opens for this particular line is rich.

In a later scene, when Santillana announces the good news that the Countess wants Melchor back, Ventura exclaims "Por Dios, que te he de besar" (2516) and attempts to kiss Santillana. Though our rendering results in a heterosexual kiss, the cross-gender casting also illuminates the sexual wordplay in Santillana's reply: "He kisses me? So help me God, / I knew I should have come with a sword" (Grunnah 51)—an object, when literally imagined, might remind audiences of the female actor's missing symbolic "sword." Santillana also threatens Ventura with a report to the holy Inquisition, the "implied denunciation being sodomy" (Erdman "Introduction" *Jealous* 268n109). Such moments throughout the play consistently foreground the Otherness of Santillana's identity, setting him—and therefore his crucial function in the play—apart.

Surprisingly, audiences either did not realise the character Santillana was male, or that the role was played by a woman. Of those who did not claim to have known the role was cross-gender cast, audience member J said they eventually noticed the choice:

> I only realised that after the scene when she…he…she…the character ran off saying 'only if you don't try to kiss me again.' At that point I still thought it was a woman, and it was only afterwards when they referred to it as a man that I realised it was a man.

The same audience member commented that, eventually, this realisation changed their perception of the kiss between Santillana and Ventura: "it was kind of more comical in retrospect, whereas at that point it felt kind of quite an oppressive moment of a man jumping in and a woman trying to run away from it, so at that point it was quite uncomfortable, even though it was done in a comic way, and then it changed that perspective on it."

Those who did notice the role was cross-cast seemed to approve of the choice:

> I thought that worked really well. I thought it was quite an interesting decision considering that the Squire was also playing one of the puppet characters in the ensemble, so […] the idea that the Squire was really controlling a lot of the stuff behind the scenes.

Audience member F affirmed that the choice "added an interesting tension, the bit where the Squire is kissed as well." The same audience member commented on our choice to cross-cast given the framework of the gender-neutral ensemble: "It's quite interesting, because most of the gender roles in this play are very, very set, so having that one character who's crossing over and is played with, was quite interesting, quite unexpected." Audience member H was another who liked the choice, making note of its relevance to contemporary gender politics:

> I think it was good that it was a woman because it did kind of highlight this thought of gender and being…being who you are or being yourself differently, of being jealous of yourself, or being a double, being two different characters, I guess that kind of has the whole transgender […]

> does raise questions in the whole transgender argument, so I thought that was great.

In a post-show poll, of 22 respondents, 68% described Santillana's character as "feminine and masculine," and more described him as masculine (14%) than feminine (5%).[45] When asked about the actor playing Santillana, just over half described her as feminine (59%), while 27% described her as masculine and feminine, and another 14% as "Other." Such mixed reactions attest at least in part to our efforts to queer the gender performance of Santillana.

III. Creating Queer Moments

As discussed in chapter 1 of this thesis (45-47), the move from page to stage demands a careful articulation of what exists in the text so that it might be underscored (through the use of theatre's multi-semiotic system of meaning-making) on the stage. Of course, not every reading of a text is of equal importance when on its feet: a director must choose just one version to tell. In our process with *Jealous*, it was important to highlight moments of the text that are queered in the two primary ways discussed in the sections above: first, by tracing the dramatic arc's inherent subversiveness through its destabilisation of heteronormativity; and second, by underscoring how the binary system of gender is upset through the staging of characters. In this spirit, our production also created new moments rich with queer potential. These are moments which are not in Tirso's original play but were forged through performance in the spirit of his play. In this section, I discuss two such elaborations: first, our creation of a gendered spectator experience; and second, the use of a gender-neutral ensemble.

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[45] For all questions about gender, the choices available were: very feminine, feminine, feminine and masculine, masculine, very masculine, and Other.

Given that Tirso concretises the motif of perception and sight in the play text, we similarly sought to underpin our production with images and physical manifestations related to perception, the act of seeing and spectatorship. As these elements were crucial to my reading of the play, I was keen to explore them in performance. The fact that moving a text from page to stage is one which demands an audience actively spectating is yet another reason this aspect of the play might prove interesting in performance. As William Blue recognises, the "problematics of viewpoint […] involve not only the characters in the play [*La celosa*], but extend beyond the stage to encompass the audience as well" (37).

Thus, our production sought to support the inherent queer aspects of Tirso's play through gendering the experience of spectatorship. The impulse comes from the reality of staging *comedias* in seventeenth-century Spain: though women were allowed on the stage, audiences were strictly separated by sex in the *corrales*, with the unaccompanied women occupying the *cazuela* at the back and in the centre. I was intrigued by the idea that, depending on who one sat near, an original audience member's experience of a production might vary significantly. As De Marinis affirms, "it has long been known that the actual placement of the spectators within the theatrical space and their relation to the playing area are central to the way in which the performance is received" to the extent that if the same spectator saw a production on two different nights from two different seats, they would see different performances, resulting in not only a different interpretation of the event, but also an alteration in the spectators' "emotional and intellectual reactions" (104, 105). Given the traverse design of our stage space, our production broke the "fourth wall" between audience and actors and, as a cultural feminist would prefer, "challenged the distinction between performers and spectators so rigidly

imposed in traditional dramatic theatre" (Dolan *Feminist Spectator* 85) despite being a generically traditional play.

The staging also provided an invitation to think about how spectating itself is a gendered act, as we have seen, primarily using cinema as an example.[46] Though cinema and the theatre ultimately feature two different experiences, given the one-way gaze in the former and two-way in the latter, both often offer up woman as an object. As Dolan too argued in her seminal *The Feminist Spectator as Critic*, Mulvey makes the case that while the cinema spectator "identifies with the main male protagonist, he projects his look onto that of his like, his screen surrogate, so that the power of the male protagonist as he controls events coincides with the active power of the erotic look, both giving a satisfying sense of omnipotence" (20). The same often holds in the theatre: "By means of identification with him, through participation in his power, the spectator can indirectly possess [female characters] too" (21).

While the voyeuristic one-way gaze of a cinema audience member is different to the two-way gaze in the theatre, our production's seating configuration—traverse, with two groups of audience facing one another on either side of a strip of stage—naturally lent itself to complicating the way women are looked at on stage. Audience members entered the traverse space and sat on one of the two sides of our space. The show opened with an ensemble of five singers-dancers on stage who, breaking the fourth wall, drew attention to the divided nature of the audience seating by illuminating two signs—one that said "Ladies," and another "Gents"—over each side of the audience, despite the mixed-gender makeup of both sides. (Figure 5) This introduction to the space invited audiences to consider the socially constructed nature of gender, as well as to test what Mulvey refers

[46] See Mulvey's *Visual and Other Pleasures* for a collection of essays related to this subject, as well as my discussion earlier in this chapter.

to as "the 'masculinisation' of the spectator" (29). Our approach allowed the audience to not only watch the actors, but also each other, illuminating the play's themes of spectatorship and observation. It also served as an acknowledgment that seventeenth-century Spain is sexist, misogynist, and unwilling to make room for non-binary identities. Audience therefore became participants in the performance of gender.



Figure 5

This arbitrary labelling and segregation also reinforced some of the very questions this play deals with: the expectations and restrictions of gender roles, and how gendered desire is ultimately unstable and illusory. The aim was to literally frame queerness with the gender binary by placing it in the centre of "Ladies" and "Gents." The performers, then, occupied the physical middle ground of the spectrum from men (on one side) to women (on the other). The production also acknowledged the typically heteronormative, cisgendered gaze on queered bodies in order to invite audiences to think about how characters, actors, and spectators (on either side of the stage) perform gender, and how one's gender does not always match one's physical or biological appearance. This gendered configuration gave audiences the chance to view what at first glance appeared to be a heteronormative romantic comedy, while also inviting them to view this from the unfamiliar, foreign position of a segregated audience. Our production of *Jealous of*

Herself aimed to problematise stable gender identity through its queering of gender on the stage.[47]

In retrospect, audience reactions to this gendered divide varied. Audience member F was unsure "if we were meant to have sat on the side echoing our gender." Interestingly, audience member H thought they were supposed to conform to the divide but chose to not: "I guess it didn't really work [because] the audience didn't actually sit apart […]." Audience member E attested to how several audience members did conform to the divide, though: "My partner suggested that he sit on one side and I sit on the other, and that made me a little cross actually. We ended up sitting on the ladies' side, but I did see more gents on the gents side." While most of the feedback was negative or neutral in this way, audience member H did note that they "were facing each other and we both saw each other […] I really enjoyed that, seeing into the other side." Such feedback attests to the role spectators themselves play in the theatrical experience.

Ultimately, the choice was not as effective as we had hoped because of a major design flaw: we originally intended for the "Ladies" and "Gents" signs to only be visible after the start of the performance—that is, after it was too late to switch sides. Such a restriction would have more forcefully asserted the performative role of gender by imposing a gender on the individual spectators and insisting on their masculinity or femininity despite their biology. But because audiences were able to see the signs as they entered the theatre space, they either took a seat on the side to which they ascribe (thereby

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[47] John Berger explores the idea of spectatorship in Renaissance nude paintings. In them, he argues, "the subject (a woman) is aware of being seen by a spectator" (49) while in non-European traditions women are "naked" rather than "nude" in that they are active, and often depicted with men—rather than passively gazing at being gazed. He also clarifies that "[t]o be nude is to be seen naked by others and yet not recognized for oneself. A naked body has to be seen as an object in order to become a nude […] Nakedness reveals itself. Nudity is placed on display" (54).

reasserting their public gender), or they were simply confused as to where they could sit if in mixed company.

Despite these weaknesses, the audience segregation by gender was effective in that it urged audiences to view what I have above argued is a play that engages with notions of spectatorship and sight. As the spectators' reactions communicate, our audience spent at least some of the production thinking about gender.

Our production also highlighted moments of the text that are queered by building an ensemble of actors who were intentionally constructed to appear non-binary and letting them exist on the periphery of the play world. In addition to the nine characters making up the world of the play, our production featured an ensemble of five singers-dancers, who—throughout the rest of the play—were on stage between each of the acts, performing short movement-based pieces while singing original music.[48] (Figure 6)



Figure 6

This addition is in part inspired by the variety show quality of theatre-going in seventeenth-century Spain, where *comedias* were bookended by a festive *loa* and *fin de*

[48] All four original songs were written by Alice Boyd. They can be streamed at the following link: https://soundcloud.com/aliceboyd/sets/jealous-of-herself-written-to.

fiesta, with song-and-dance *entremeses* between the three acts. One of these ensemble members was the same actor (Cara Pacitti) who played Santillana—a connection which was made by audiences after the opening interlude of the production. The simultaneously masculine and feminine presence of this interlude performer specifically was a reminder to audiences of the character's queer sensibilities in performance.

In her statement for our bid to stage *Jealous*, director Potter first articulated her vision for these pieces

> as highly stylised interludes of music and motion which comment on and observe the main material of the play. The actor-musicians, dressed like mime artists with arresting monochrome make-up, will be allowed to interact with the play world, but the play world cannot reciprocate the communication. Likewise, they will be able to interact with the audience […] The interludes will become darker in tone as the plot becomes more and more twisted and deceptive. Throughout, the theme of mirroring will be paramount in the movement. (Grunnah and Potter 7)[49]

Each of our interludes was thematically centred on one concise action: first, woman is "constructed," followed by "divided," "idolised," and "destroyed." As they progress, the titles of these four interludes mirrored the world of the play's action.

The entire performance opens with the first—"Woman is Constructed"—in order to establish the constructive (rather than essentialist) nature of gender, both in the world of the play and in our audience. In this opening interlude, the ensemble—a group of four women and one man—appear somewhat non-binary: they wear mismatched, dishevelled black suits and bare feet, with black clown-like diamonds painted across their eyes. At the start of the performance, the four women shuffle on stage, freezing with exaggerated smiles when the lights come up. When the fifth actor—the only man in the ensemble—

[49] Potter was inspired by the work of Joan Jonas, and specifically, "Mirror Piece I: Reconfigured" (https://vimeo.com/77162791), as well as Watson and Whelan's *Other Stories.* Bellaluz Gutierrez Danza's "Dead Doll Dance" was also an early source of inspiration for the interludes, as was the movement sequence between Faustus and Helen of Troy in Maria Aberg's 2016 production of *Doctor Faustus* at the Royal Shakespeare Company in Stratford-upon-Avon.

slowly enters, he walks to one side of the traverse stage and snaps his fingers, illuminating the neon blue “Gents” sign above one side of audience. The other four shuffle over to this side, in awe of the light. He does the same on the other side, the second time illuminating a “Ladies” sign. The four women have a similar reaction, but the presence of this second sign make them aware of this binary—on either side of the stage—is forcing them to choose a side. They run sporadically across the stage, nearly bumping into one another, as they try to decide where they “belong.” Most of the women feel for their breasts, trusting that biology is a sure sign of where they belong. Another tries to escape, running towards the entrance to the stage—but is stopped by an invisible force. When she bends forward and looked between her legs, she has her confirmation. Eventually, the four women line up in front of the “Ladies” side of the audience, facing the centre of the stage. The last to join the line is forced by the male actor: as she tries to escape, he lifts her over his shoulder, walks over to the “Ladies” side, sits her down, and once again snaps, this time cuing the sounds of a live string band.

In the course of this opening interlude, the four women perform robotic movements with the man, as if objects on an assembly line: as he moulds them into “perfect” women through comical yet painful positions, their movements get more and more strained. Potter describes this first interlude as funny, yet also “hint[ing] at the more serious edge of the play—that of moulding the female form into an idealised image” (Grunnah and Potter 7). This is a reflection of Albrecht Dürer, who “believed that the ideal nude ought to be constructed by taking the face of one body, the breasts of another, the legs of a third, the shoulders of a fourth, the hands of a fifth—and so on” (Berger 62). This opening interlude was intended to mirror the way Melchor manipulates the idea of who the Countess is and what she might look like. Ultimately, it sought to communicate that it is the appearance of women with which Melchor falls in love rather than anything

internal.[50] As the song during this opening piece is about to end, the man snaps his fingers a final time, prompting the four women to be called to attention, and eventually they morph into a chorus of churchgoers, their hands folded delicately as if processing to church. This becomes the start of the play—as Melchor and Ventura arrive in Madrid in front of *La Vitoria*.

The erasure of gender here—or at least the distortion of a clear binary among the bodies of these performers—had a similar function as that which Elin Diamond describes when discussing the overlappings of Brechtian and feminist practice in the theatre: "[w]hen gender is 'alienated' or foregrounded, the spectator is enabled to see a sign system *as* a sign system—the appearance, words, gestures, ideas, attitudes, etc., that comprise the gender lexicon become so many illusionistic trappings to be put on or shed at will" (85). That is, the foregrounding of gender in the bodies of the performers allowed audiences to see that one *is* not a gender, but that one *does* a gender.

The second interlude, "Woman is Divided," follows act I of the play, at the end of which the audience learn Magdalena and Melchor are betrothed, and that Melchor fails to realise Magdalena is the same as the veiled lady from *La Vitoria*. The title of the interlude thus comes from this crucial point in the plot: when Magdalena realises Melchor thinks she is two separate women. In an aside, Magdalena confides "Pensamientos, / ¿qué piélago os ha engolfado / de contrarias suspensiones?" (1195-97). The tone of this second interlude is light-hearted: the five performers, now gender-neutral through uniform choreography, dance on stage in a line, led by one interlude performer playing the guitar.

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[50] In act III, when faced with two Countesses, both Ángela and Magdalena know to appeal to Melchor's favouring of the visual: Ángela first offers the purse as proof of her identity (2971-74), then Magdalena an eye (3007-08) and then purse-strings (3015-22). Finally, Melchor himself looks for proof in none other than the ladies' hands: "Mostradme, señoras mías, / cada cual la suya y salga / vitoriosa la que obligue / que mi amor llegue a besarla" (3047-50).

They snap, eventually get the audience to clap along, and—like the first interlude—perform sharp, stylised movements with their arms, dramatising what feels like a comic piece.

The lyrics for the second interlude, sung by Alice Boyd, come from Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz's Sonnet 164, accompanied by a refrain in English: "My broken heart is in your hands" (Boyd). Our use of the poem by Sor Juana—who was born in Mexico three years after Tirso died—was an attempt to fuse the production with cross-cultural material, but material which was from vaguely the same period and spoke to the themes our production was interested in exploring. The juxtaposition of these lyrics—about a woman begging another subject not to be angry, while attempting to dispel jealousy—sung in a comical way gives us the opportunity to blend elements of comedy and tragedy. (Figure 7)



Figure 7

The third interlude, "Woman is Idolised," occurs at the close of act II of the play, when Magdalena tells Melchor that the Countess has left for Italy and after a defeated Melchor tells Ventura he wants to return home. This interlude, though originally intended by songwriter Boyd to follow act I of the play—was moved here as it is in this moment that we see Melchor's devotion to the Countess as being the most serious obstacle to his

love for Magdalena: Alonso has just heard news of Melchor's infidelity to his daughter, and has happily bade farewell to him. It is both his faithlessness to and idealisation of Magdalena here that make for what feels like an emotionally low moment of the play. The lyrics—like the interlude—are both sweet and disturbing, with the speaker asking for both another's presence and their submission:

> Follow me, don't speak
> I want you all week to myself
>
> You are all I need,
> Growing through the air that you breathe
>
> Let me hold you tight
> Captive in the warmth of your light
>
> Follow me and see
> That you mean the world to me (Boyd)

The concept for the third interlude is that the performers—here, a duet of one man and one woman performer—are mirrors to Magdalena and Melchor.[51] The female, now in a black leotard and black tights, with her white dress shirt unbuttoned, begins by sitting on the floor. The male enters and begins to gently prod her into movement: he first lifts her chin, which falls back into a resting position, and then tries her arms and shoulders. Eventually, he nudges her into life, getting her to stand, walk, and dance with him. As they move in tandem, they look happy—in love, even—though the woman's face is blank through the entire interlude. He is delicate with her, mirroring her leaps and catching her when she topples over. (Figure 8)

[51] A video recording of this interlude can be viewed at the following link: https://youtu.be/35szc81ocaM



Figure 8

As we near the end of the song, however, his movements of her body become increasingly more violent and forced. (Figure 9) First, he thrusts her back down and spins her, then lifts her over his shoulder—mirroring his movement with the same actor in the opening interlude—and begins to carry her away. When he sets her down, she tries to run away, and escape past him, but he catches her, throws her to the floor, forcibly crosses her legs, and puts her back to a resting position with one tap of her chin.



Figure 9

This interlude was intended to feel both loving and disturbing: while it begins with what appears to be a gentle, nurturing relationship, it becomes increasingly uncomfortable to watch as the male forcibly moves the woman—here the erotic object of the man—where he wants her to be. The interlude was also intended to be a reminder—as we begin the third act, with Melchor on the road back to León—to feel little sympathy for him. Like women in film, the woman displayed here, with her top unbuttoned and her body

thrust in positions by a man, "function[s] on two levels: as erotic object for the characters within the screen story, and as erotic object for the spectator within the auditorium" (Mulvey 19). The presence of the audience on either side of the stage also provides an additional layer of perception; unlike in film, the audience itself is also watched as it gazes on the female body.

The fourth and final interlude of the production comes immediately after the last line of the play: Magdalena's "At last, / I won't be jealous of myself!" (Grunnah 77). While some could view the end as a moral tale in which the woman has learned to not trick men into thinking they are someone they are not, our reading of the end is that it is dark, unsettling, and unfulfilling. Even Melchor's last lines—"It is the hand I recognise. / In shame I seal it with my lips" (76)—are different to his passion in earlier scenes. As Blue explains, they "stand in stark contrast to his earlier inflated, blind, poetic flights as he admits his errors and kneels, chastened, before his knowing bride" (36). Of the three marriages to occur—Magdalena and Melchor, Jerónimo and Ángela, and Ventura and Quiñones—our production viewed the last as the happiest of the three. Some scholars agree; Dawn Smith argues that the play comes dangerously close to ending in tragedy: "By juggling the two possible outcomes, Tirso keeps us in suspense until the end and, even then, does not provide the reader/spectator with a clear resolution—none of them can be said to be a true love match" ("La celosa" 830).

Interactions among the other characters left on stage—Don Alonso, Don Sebastián, Santillana, and Don Luis in the original Spanish play—offer the opportunity for further evidence that a homosexual union is perhaps more fulfilling. Though my adaptation merged the characters of Luis and Sebastián, Luis' last line to Sebastián is peculiar: "consolado / con vos, mis amores cesan" (3609-10). The suggestion here might

be, like many of the endings of other Tirso *comedias urbanas*, that the two men settle for each other, as both are left without a heterosexual partner.

Our final interlude, then, sought to extend the instability of this ending. After Magdalena's line, Santillana—the only character who was up until now allowed to exist in both the play world and the interlude world—snaps his fingers (like the male did in the opening interlude), and all characters on stage freeze. As the music begins to play, the interlude performer who also played Santillana—and the other four interlude actors, who begin to enter—walk around stage, observing the frozen characters. Eventually, they begin to manipulate the positions in which the characters stand, moving an arm or tilting a head. While some of these are arbitrary, others are purposeful: while one performer turns Melchor's head towards Ángela, another moves Ángela's head towards Melchor—a suggestion that the two would have made a happier couple than Magdalena and Melchor will and that the play's resolution is amiss.

In the second phase of the final interlude, the entire ensemble of five interlude actors simultaneously snap, washing the stage in bright light, and illuminating the neon "Ladies" and "Gents" signs. The cast is then paired off with interlude actors, and perform a mechanical, deconstructed courtship dance reminiscent in some ways of a dance from the original period. Magdalena, though, is left alone at the centre of stage. At the end of this, the characters process slowly to one end of the traverse stage as the ensemble moves to the opposite, the lights once again dimming. As an echo of the first interlude—in which women performers were part of an assembly line, being moulded into more perfect women—the ensemble forcibly dresses Magdalena in scraps of white fabric as they move her towards the cast of characters. They twist her, contort her like a puppet on strings, dress her in scraps of white fabric that resemble a wedding gown, and eventually pin a long, white veil into her hair before sending her down a procession towards Melchor. She

hesitates at first, turning back towards the small ensemble, but they back away from her. As the lights rise once again, Magdalena walks slowly towards Melchor, as if a bride walking down an aisle towards her husband. When she arrives in front of him, Melchor gently takes the edge of her veil and pulls it down over her face—the reverse of what typically happens in a wedding ceremony. She turns to stand beside him, and as the violin slowly fades away and the sound of plucked guitar strings fill the space, Magdalena slowly places her hand in Melchor's, but he does not look at it; he merely accepts it in his. The moment echoes earlier instances in the play, when Melchor is obsessed with Magdalena's hand—a body part which "conventionally functions as a synecdoche for woman as corporeal object of desire and as object of exchange between men," and which functions as both the material and rhetorical body part a husband asks for and receives in marriage (Cruz 70).

In the final moments of the interlude, Magdalena turns to the ensemble as they sing the final chorus—an echo again of the structure of lyrics in the opening interlude:

> Magdalena, forget the way you love
> We see through your sorry disguises
> A man one day will fall for them
> And to him you'll have to be betrothed
>
> Magdalena
> Magdalena
> Magdalena
> Magdalena (Boyd)

On the final "Magdalena," the leading lady turns to Melchor—an ambiguous look of hesitation, or perhaps fear, or perhaps victory—before the lights go dark.

The use of theatrical aspects of production beyond just the actions—that is, the moulding of the audience experience, as well as the use of music and movement—thus worked in tandem with our staging of the play text to complicate and upset what could

otherwise have been a heteronormative experience. Rather, our production sought to underscore the queerness of Tirso's text in all aspects of the text on stage.

IV. Conclusion

La celosa de sí misma is rich with queer potential, both as a text and on the stage in performance. While its dramaturgy and characterisation—unsurprisingly, given its historical context—follow dominant modes of identity and sexuality, it at the same time exposes the social constructedness of heterosexuality by revealing both how unfulfilling heteronormative desire is, as well as the performativity inherent to gender identity.

In addition, Tirso teases out the complexities of gender identity through his use of vision and sight as a motif in the play. Magdalena's fractured identity—in which she is (and sees) both herself and the Countess, her own competitor—invites Melchor to view women piecemeal—a hand here, an eye there. Furthermore, our production explored these inner workings of Tirso's play through cross-gender casting, placing a frame of spectatorship on the theatre-going experience, and devising brand-new song-and-dance pieces to complement the play text.

In this chapter, I have thus argued that the 2016 English-language world premiere production of Tirso's *Jealous of Herself* sought to explore the play text's inherent queer characteristics through its destabilisation of heteronormativity and gender identity. The primary tool used to accomplish this—spectatorship, and the act of seeing—was inspired by the play text's exploration of gazing, and the failures of the male gaze, particularly on the female body.

Conclusion

This study has argued that the *comedias urbanas* of dramatist Tirso de Molina subvert patriarchy in terms of their dramaturgy and characterisation when performed on the modern, English-language stage. The plays, I have argued, put forth characters that overturn gender binarism. These characters, advanced for their time, are still relevant on the modern stage as they provide a platform from which to explore contemporary issues of gender identity.

In the introduction to this study, I have set out to contextualise gender and cross-gender role-play in both real life and the *comedia* in early modern Spain. I have foregrounded the theoretical issues at stake in the move from page to stage, and articulated the scope of this study, which is limited to Tirso's *comedias urbanas* and looks closely at three of those 12 plays in performance. I also outline the methodological approach I take across the chapters, which involves an analysis of text, bodies, and spectatorship. As I have set out here, in each subsequent play analysis chapter I focus my analysis on two separate aspects of each play: its dramaturgy, or structure; and its characterisation.

Chapter 1 has offered some examples of how the modern theatre stages gender in plays similar to the *comedia urbana*, namely using the robust modern performance history of Shakespeare's comedies. It is in this chapter that I delve deeper into my tripartite analytical framework of text, body, and spectatorship, defining the purview of each.

The next three chapters make up my analysis of Tirso's plays, all of which bound between the specifics of text and details from modern productions of the plays in English. In chapter 2, I have taken on an analysis of *Marta la piadosa* (*Marta the Divine*), in which I argue that the play is queered on page and stage through its reframing of femininity,

particularly in the title character, and through its patriarchal dramaturgy. Chapter 3 has explored *El amor médico* (*Love the Doctor*) through two modern performances. In this chapter, I have argued that the play both subverts and resists hegemony by underscoring the binary gender system while devising characters whose genders are ambiguous. In my analysis of the play's structure, I have argued that Jerónima's gendered disguises both uphold normativity and allow her the freedom to express non-normative desire. Finally, chapter 4 has looked at the most recently staged English-language Tirso, *La celosa de sí misma* (*Jealous of Herself*) in order to argue that the play both upholds normativity and exposes the insufficiencies of heterosexuality. I have also argued that the characterisation in this play asserts gender binarism while simultaneously upsetting that binary through queer characters.

One of the most important matters relevant to the real world, outside the halls of academia, that arises out of this research is that of the personal and political issues at stake in staging gendered bodies on the modern stage. As I have argued throughout this study, androgyny—both in real life and on the stage—typically, and problematically, manifests as masculine. Perhaps even more problematic is the fact that androgyny further establishes the supposed stability of gender binarism. My hope is that the research offered in this study, through textual and theatrical analysis of Tirso's work and characters, allows readers, producers, spectators, and scholars of the *comedia* to see the potential for non-binary rather than merely androgynous characters and, as such, to glimpse a bit of their companions (or themselves) in early modern plays.

Fortunately, these sorts of characters and dramaturgies exist in many of the works of playwright Tirso de Molina. While this study has focused in on just three such plays, many of Tirso's other *comedias urbanas*—even some that have been translated into English—engage with similar themes. One *comedia*, though, is largely unknown to the

English-speaking world: *La mujer por fuerza* (c. 1612-13), which I have referenced throughout this thesis.

The play shares many dramaturgical parallels with the plays discussed in this thesis. While staying at the home of Alberto in Hungary, Count Federico of Naples unknowingly attracts the affection of Alberto's sister, Finea. In male disguise, Finea leaves for Naples with her servant Fabio, meeting Federico along the way. She becomes his page, "Celio," but is jealous upon hearing he is in love with the beautiful Florela. The King of Naples learns that Federico is accused of having abducted Finea, which Federico denies in a letter to Alberto and asks "Celio" to confirm. "Celio" claims "he" is actually Alonso, son to the King of Aragón, to Florela and, as "Celio," promises to show Finea to her. Alberto and Lusidoro try to kill Federico but fail, as "Celio" and Federico fight them away. In the final act of the play, Finea has arranged for a series of deceptions: her maid Fenisa will pretend to be her (Finea) for Florela. As herself, Finea then tells the King of Naples that Federico abducted her. When Alberto arrives and draws his sword on her, Finea flees. Federico finally agrees to marrying Finea if he is allowed to see her. Finea convinces the King of Naples to give her to "Don Alonso de Aragón"—the identity she has invented for herself. The King allows Federico and Alberto to duel, but before they can fight—in typical Tirsian fashion—Finea appears in male disguise. Claiming to already have a marriage set up, Finea finally removes her disguise and admits to having loved Federico all along. While the King approves, Florela of course protests as she is paired off with Alberto. Fenisa and Clarín, Federico's servant, also agree to marry.

While the play has been performed on the modern stage, it lacks a full-length English-language translation for performance.[1] *La mujer* is topical in its gender politics:

[1] José María Ruano de la Haza has authored a free translation/adaptation of Tirso's *La mujer por fuerza*. His one-act version, *Whether You Like it or Not*, also received a

given the play's use of explicit gender ambiguity, Anita Stoll ponders, "what is Finea's gender?" Is s/he man? Is s/he woman?" ("A Feminist Reading" 109). Like *La celosa*, the play engages with the motif of "seeing" (105) and "toys with multiple levels of audience" (Ganelin "Designing Women" 136), which is literalised in its 1989 Spanish-language performance at Chamizal National Memorial's Siglo de Oro Drama Festival. *La mujer*'s ending is ambiguous: while the play's title suggests Finea is forced into her feminine role (in English, perhaps *Woman by Force*, or *A Wife Perforce*), the play offers some room for interpretation on the stage: is she forced by circumstances? By an individual? Or is her marriage to Federico ultimately her own choice? The play also raises questions about the nature and stability of desire. As one of Tirso's strongest *comedias*, the play is ripe for translation and performance.

In addition to *La mujer por fuerza*, there are many other *comedias* that have yet to be translated into English, and even more that have not yet been performed on the modern stage. Aside from the Theatre Royal's season of Golden Age plays in Bath in 2013, the UK has seen very little of the *comedia* on the professional stage. The US is in a similar position, though I am hopeful that Barbara Fuchs' project, "Diversifying the Classics," which is based in California, will encourage a more robust performance tradition. The project

> promotes the vibrant, Spanish-language theatrical tradition developed on both sides of the Atlantic by playwrights such as Spaniards Lope de Vega and Calderón de la Barca, or Mexicans Ruiz de Alarcón and Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz. The project seeks to foster awareness and appreciation of Hispanic classical theater in Los Angeles and beyond, expanding the canon to include the heritage of US Latino communities. While our work is based in Los Angeles, we hope to reach theater professionals and audiences

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production at the Odyssey Theatre in Ottawa, Canada in July-August 2015 alongside two other one-act Spanish adaptations (from Cervantes and Lorca). The piece was presented as a whole under the title *The Things We Do For Love.* More about the production can be found here: http://www.odysseytheatre.ca/index.php/events/past-productions/the-things-we-do-for-love/.

> across the US, offering them the materials and tools to explore the rich tradition of the *comedia*. ("Diversifying the Classics.")

Fuchs' initiative sells *comedias* well: they are "plays for the people" and simultaneously "sophisticated urban dramas, offering pointed reflections on the constructed nature of class and gender as well as the performativity of social roles in the burgeoning city, issues that resonate with audiences today" ("Diversifying the Classics"). In addition to bringing the *comedia* to the K-12 classroom, the project also produces staged readings in Los Angeles, California.

The accessibility of early modern texts through digital archives, alongside filmed modern productions, is now readily accessible on Internet resources such as www.comedias.org and www.teatro.es. Out of the Wings, www.outofthewings.org, remains an excellent resource on Spanish drama in English-language translation, and includes thoroughly researched documentation of productions, not to mention script samples to encourage theatre practitioners towards performing these topical works.

The politics of gender today serves as a fruitful backdrop for the performance of such plays as the ones I have discussed throughout this study, making them relevant for new audiences. In a time when the selection of plays for performance at theatres is competitive, when Shakespeare is the safe choice, the *comedia* can offer, as I hope this thesis has revealed, a provocative alternative while also speaking to gender issues relevant to modern viewers.

Appendix: Production Log

What follows is a record of all the productions mentioned in this study.

Primary Productions

1. Tirso de Molina, *Marta the Divine (Marta la piadosa)*, trans. Harley Erdman, dir. Gina Kaufmann, Rand Theater, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, MA, 12-21 November 2009. Actors: Sam Bosworth (Lucía), Kaitlin Carver (Inés), Andrew Ferlo (Felipe), Monica Giordano (Marta), Sabrina Gogan (Pastrana), Tim Howd (the Ensign), J.L. Kaufman (Sancho), Becca Keohane (Don Gómez), Nick Ortolani (Captain Urbina), Zachary Smith (Pancho). Designers: Dennis Berfield (scenic), Jessica Greenberg (lighting), Jonathan Hicks (sound), Felicia Malachite (costume).
2. Tirso de Molina, *El amor médico (Love the Doctor)*, trans. Sarah Grunnah (née Brew) and Josephine Hardman, dir. Noah Simes, Curtain Theater, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, MA, 13-15 October 2011. Actors: Julia Piker (Jerónima), Kate Jones (Quiteria), Ryan Moore (Gaspar), Mac Leslie (Gonzalo), Toney Brown (Tello), Monica Giordano (Estefanía), Justin Avergon (Ignacio), and Emma Cohen (Queen). Designers: Margo Caddell (lighting), Evan Laux (costume), Miguel Romero (scenic), David Wiggall (sound).
3. Tirso de Molina, *El amor médico (Love the Doctor)*, trans. Sarah Grunnah (née Brew), dir. Lon Bumgarner, University of North Carolina Charlotte, Charlotte, NC, 30 October-10 November 2013. Actors: Olivia Radley (Jerónima), Celeste McCants (Quiteria), Steven Sherwood (Gaspar), Brandon Hendricks (Gonzalo), Timothy Vang (Tello), Emma Curtis (Estefanía), Hoke Pittman (Ignacio), Auburn Hicks (Queen), and Jaciel Sojo (musician). Designers: Bruce Auerbach (lighting), Anita Tripathi Easterling (scenic), Steven Stines (costume).
4. Tirso de Molina, *Jealous of Herself (La celosa de sí misma)*, adap. Sarah Grunnah, trans. Harley Erdman, dir. Ell Potter, O'Reilly Theatre, Keble College, University of Oxford, Oxford, UK, 22-26 November 2016. Emily Bell (Quiñones), Alice Boyd (Ensemble), Anushka Chakravarti (Ensemble), Rory Grant (Jerónimo), Rebecca Hamilton (Magdalena), Cara Pacitti (Santillana, Ensemble), Joe Peden (Ventura), Ali Porteous (Sebastián), Tobias Sims (Alonso), Finlay Stroud (Melchor), James Tibbles (Ensemble), Kate Weir (Ángela). Designers: Harriet Bourhill (scenic), Alice Boyd (composer), Louise Drognat-Landré (lighting), Emmy Everest-Phillips (choreographer).

Productions of *comedias* (in English and Spanish)

1. Calderón de la Barca, Pedro, *No hay burlas con el amor (The Phoenix of Madrid),* dir. and trans. Laurence Boswell, Ustinov Studio, Theatre Royal, Bath, England, 14 September-23 December 2011
2. Guillén de Castro, *La fuerza de la costumbre* (*The Force of Habit*), trans. and dir. Kathleen Jeffs, Gonzaga University, Spokane, WA, 22 February-3 March 2013.

3. Lope de Vega, *El acero de Madrid*, dir. Hugo Márquez, Tiempo Común, Caracas, Venezuela, 1989. Also performed at the Chamizal Siglo de Oro Drama Festival in 1990.
4. Lope de Vega, *El castigo sin venganza (Punishment Without Revenge)*, trans. Meredith Oakes, dir. Laurence Boswell, Ustinov Studio, Theatre Royal, Bath, England, 30 November-21 December 2013.
5. Lope de Vega, *La dama boba (A Lady of Little Sense)*, trans. David Johnston, dir. Laurence Boswell, Ustinov Studio, Theatre Royal, Bath, England, 15 October-21 December 2013.
6. Lope de Vega, *Fuenteovejuna,* ver. Ana Rossetti, dir. Emilio Hernández, Mercat de les Flores, Barcelona, Spain, 19-30 May 1999.
7. Ruiz de Alarcón, Juan. *El examen de maridos*, dir. Germán del Castillo, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Mexico City, Mexico, 1986. Also performed at the Chamizal Siglo de Oro Drama Festival in 1987.
8. Tirso de Molina, *El amor médico,* ver. Alberto Gálvez, dir. Hugo Nieto, Corral de Cervantes, Madrid, Spain, Valencia, Spain, 3-21 September 2019.
9. Tirso de Molina, *Don Gil de las calzas verdes* (*Don Gil of the Green Breeches*), trans. Sean O'Brien, dir. Mehmet Ergen, Ustinov Studio, Theatre Royal, Bath, England, 16 October-20 December 2013.
10. Tirso de Molina, *Don Gil de las calzas verdes (Love's a Bitch)*, dir. and adap. Dave Dalton, Ruth Caplin Theatre, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA, 22 February-1 March 2018.
11. Tirso de Molina, *La celosa de sí misma*, ver. Bernardo Sánchez, dir. Luis Olmos, Teatro Pavón, Compañía Nacional de Teatro Clásico, Madrid, Spain, from 21 November 2003.
12. Tirso de Molina, *La celosa de sí misma*, ver. Juanma Navas, dir. Marta Torres, Corral de Comedias, Almagro, Spain, 19-20 June 2009.
13. Tirso de Molina, *Marta la piadosa*, ver. Jaime Campany, dir. Alberto González Vergel, Teatro Español, Madrid, Spain, 1973-4.
14. Tirso de Molina, *Marta la piadosa*, dir. Amaya Curieses, Espacio Miguel Narros, Almagro, Spain, 18 July 2015.
15. Tirso de Molina, *La mujer por fuerza*, Brazodoble Producciones, ver. José María Ruano de la Haza, adap. Amaya Curieses, dir. José Maya Cortés, La casa de los miradores, Festival de Almagro, 18-20 July 2008; Teatro Fernán Gómez, Madrid, Spain, 13 April-12 May 2013; Corrala Palacio del Caballero, Olmedo, Spain, 13-19 July 2013.
16. Tirso de Molina, *La mujer por fuerza* (*Whether You Like It or Not*), dir. Laurie Steven, trans. José María Ruano de la Haza, Odyssey Theatre, Ottawa, Canada, 23 July-23 August 2015.
17. Vélez de Guevara, Luis, *La Serrana de la Vera (Wild Thing)*, trans. Harley Erdman, dir. Gina Kaufmann, Rand Theater, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, MA, 14-23 February 2019. Also performed at the Chamizal Siglo de Oro Drama Festival in 2019.

Productions of non-*comedias*

1. Marlowe, Christopher, *Doctor Faustus*, dir. Maria Aberg, Royal Shakespeare Company, Stratford-upon-Avon, UK, 11 February-4 August 2016.

2. Shakespeare, William, *Hamlet*, dir. Sarah Frankcom, Royal Exchange Theatre, Manchester, UK, 11 September-25 October 2014.
3. Shakespeare, William, *Henry IV*, dir. Phyllida Lloyd, Donmar Warehouse, London, UK, 9 October-29 November 2014.
4. Shakespeare, William, *Henry V*, dir. Edward Hall, Propeller Theatre, 1997.
5. Shakespeare, William, *Julius Caesar*, dir. Phyllida Lloyd, Donmar Warehouse, London, UK, 30 November-9 February 2012.
6. Shakespeare, William, *King Lear*, dir. Helena Kaut-Howson, The Leicester Haymarket Theatre, 1997.
7. Shakespeare, William, *A Midsummer Night's Dream,* dir. Peter Brook, Royal Shakespeare Company, Stratford-upon-Avon, UK, 1970.
8. Shakespeare, William, *Richard II*, dir. Deborah Warner, The National, London, UK, 1995.
9. Shakespeare, William, *The Taming of the Shrew*, dir. Edward Hall, Propeller Theatre, 2006.
10. Shakespeare, William, *The Tempest,* dir. Lenka Udovicki, The Globe Theatre, London, UK, 2000.
11. Shakespeare, William, *The Tempest*, dir. Phyllida Lloyd, Donmar Warehouse, London, UK, through 17 December 2016.
12. Shakespeare, William, *Twelfth Night*, dir. Edward Hall, Propeller Theatre, 5 January-17 February 2007.
13. Shakespeare, William, *Twelfth Night*, dir. Tim Carroll, Shakespeare's Globe Theatre, London, UK, through 28 September 2002. Remounted in 2012.

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