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Tragicomic Transpositions: The Influence of Spanish Prose Romance on the Development of Early Modern English Tragicomedy

Josefina Hardman
University of Massachusetts Amherst

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**Tragicomic Transpositions: The Influence of Spanish Prose Romance on the
Development of Early Modern English Tragicomedy**

A Dissertation Presented

by

JOSEFINA HARDMAN

Submitted to the Graduate School of the
University of Massachusetts Amherst in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

September 2017

English

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**Tragicomic Transpositions: The Influence of Spanish Prose Romance on the
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A Dissertation Presented

by

JOSEFINA HARDMAN

Approved as to style and content by:

Jane Hwang Degenhardt, Chair

Adam Zucker, Member

Joseph Black, Member

Harley Erdman, Member

Randall Knoper, Department Chair
English

DEDICATION

To M. and P., through many lifetimes

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of tragicomedy, and developed (I hope!) genius insights. You are an amazing teacher and a wise, open, and caring human being. This dissertation is as much yours as it is mine.

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ABSTRACT

TRAGICOMIC TRANSPOSITIONS: THE INFLUENCE OF SPANISH PROSE
ROMANCE ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF EARLY MODERN ENGLISH
TRAGICOMEDY

SEPTEMBER 2017

JOSEFINA HARDMAN, B.A., FLORIDA ATLANTIC UNIVERSITY

M.A., UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AMHERST

Ph.D., UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AMHERST

Directed by: Jane Hwang Degenhardt

The critical origin story for early modern English stage tragicomedy has frequently centered around Italian playwright and theorist Giambattista Guarini, who offered a tragicomic model in his play *Il pastor fido* (*The Faithful Shepherd*) and in his treatises on the genre. While Guarini's impact on playwrights such as John Fletcher is undeniable, tragicomic critics have generally ignored the pervasive influence of Miguel de Cervantes' work on seventeenth-century English playwrights. This project is the first sustained study of the influence of Cervantean prose romance on the development of early modern English tragicomedy. By looking at English tragicomedies with Spanish sources – particularly Cervantes' *Novelas ejemplares* (1613) – I propose a genealogy for the genre that deviates from the traditional understanding of English tragicomedy as derived from Italian drama. I argue that, in many of their solo and collaborative transpositions of Cervantean material, John Fletcher, Francis Beaumont, William Shakespeare, Philip Massinger, and John Webster crafted a form of stage tragicomedy different from earlier pastoral iterations of the genre, of which Fletcher's *The Faithful Shepherdess* (1609) is

the prime example. After the theatrical failure of this Guarinian-inspired play, Fletcher and his frequent collaborators turned their attention to Cervantes and began transposing the Spanish author's novellas into a form of tragicomedy characterized by more cosmopolitan settings and interactions, an interest in cross-cultural exchange (both formally and thematically), a remarkable generic flexibility, and an investment in a distinct form of audience engagement. Stage tragicomedies transposed from Cervantean material also attempted to teach theatergoers how to become savvy interpreters and consumers of dramatized events and, in the world beyond the theater, of cultural production and political spectacle.

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INTRODUCTION

Now Spain and England, two populous kingdoms
That have long time been oppos'd
In hostile emulation, shall be at one.

—Thomas Heywood, *If You Know Not Me, You Know Nobody, Part I*¹

In their competition with and emulation of each other, empires have long been appropriative builders of culture, including through... concerted practices of translation.

—Laura Doyle²

Early modern English tragicomedy has been largely understood as deriving from the Italian dramatic tradition, especially the plays of Giambattista Guarini, such as *Il pastor fido* (*The Faithful Shepherd*, 1590).³ The English playwright John Fletcher, a key figure throughout this study, began his playwriting career with the theatrical flop *The Faithful Shepherdess*, most likely performed in 1608 and heavily influenced by Guarini. The play is a pastoral tragicomedy, an attempt to integrate the Italianate pastoral tradition with an English, Spenserian version. I suggest in this dissertation that Fletcher began to change course after *The Faithful Shepherdess* failed on stage, specifically by turning to the prose romance works of Miguel de Cervantes and transposing them into a different

¹ Thomas Heywood, *If You Know Not Me, You Know Nobody* (Oxford: Benediction Classics, 2008), 11-12.

² Laura Doyle, "Inter-Imperiality," *Interventions: International Journal of Postcolonial Studies* 16.2 (2013): 159-196 (182).

³ On criticism establishing the Italian influence and traditional narrative of tragicomedy's development in England, see Marvin T. Herrick, *Tragicomedy: Its Origin and Development in Italy, France, and England* (Urbana: U of Illinois P, 1955); G.K. Hunter, "Italian Tragicomedy on the English Stage," *Renaissance Drama* 6 (1973): 123-48; Michael Henke, *Pastoral Transformations: Italian Tragicomedy and Shakespeare's Late Plays* (Cranbury, NJ: U of Delaware P, 1997); and Raphael Lyne, "English Guarini: Recognition and Reception," *Yearbook of English Studies* 36 (2006): 90-102.

kind of tragicomedy with a more cosmopolitan flavor and expansive scope.⁴

Thematically, the crucial distinction between the early English mode of pastoral tragicomedy and later iterations of the genre is the introduction of far-reaching geographic movement, with its accompanying explorations of travel, the foreign encounter, and the potential inner transformation triggered by physical movement (which we shall see most sharply in *Love's Pilgrimage* and *The Renegado* in chapters two and four).⁵ In identifying this subgenre of tragicomedies transposed from Spanish romance, I offer a new genealogy for English stage tragicomedy of the 1610s and 1620s. This is the kind of tragicomedy that, as Garth Kimbrell explains, “had already enjoyed [by 1609] a long history on the stage as the ‘mongrel’ genre that Sidney scorns in his *Defense of Poetry*.”⁶ I propose that the subgeneric shift from pastoral to cosmopolitan tragicomedy was effected by the move, pioneered by Fletcher, from Italian to Spanish sources after 1609.

⁴ Despite his repeated borrowing of Cervantean material, Fletcher was politically and religiously anti-Spanish and anti-Catholic. Alexander Samson and Trudi L. Darby emphasize Fletcher’s duality: “Despite [Fletcher’s] cultural Hispanophilia and profound debt to Cervantes, his political views reflected a strongly Protestant background”: “Cervantes on the Jacobean Stage,” in *The Cervantean Heritage: Reception and Influence of Cervantes in Britain*, ed. J.A.G. Ardila (London: Legenda, 2009), 211.

⁵ On criticism that takes into account stage tragicomedy’s foreign engagements and investments, see Nancy Klein Maguire, *Renaissance Tragicomedy: Explorations in Genre and Politics* (New York: AMS Press, 1987); Valerie Forman, *Tragicomic Redemptions: Global Economics and the Early Modern English Stage* (Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 2008); Gary A. Schmidt, *Renaissance Hybrids: Culture and Genre in Early Modern England* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013); and *Early Modern Tragicomedy*, ed. Subha Mukherji and Raphael Lyne (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2007).

⁶ Garth Kimbrell, “Taste, Theatrical Venues, and the Rise of English Tragicomedy,” *SEL* 55.2 (Spring 2015): 285-307 (286).

In his *Compendio della poesia tragicomica* (*Compendium of Tragicomic Poetry*, 1599), Guarini outlines his particular mode and philosophy of tragicomedy, describing the genre as a unified whole rather than as an amalgamation of comedy and tragedy. However, Guarini in the end sees tragicomedy as more comic than tragic, suggesting that it is “not concerned with the terrible and the horrible, but rather avoids it” and that “it abandons the grave and employs the sweet, which modifies the greatness and sublimity that is proper to pure tragedy.”⁷ The stakes in Italianate tragicomedy are therefore dulled, especially when compared to pure tragedy where death, torture, incest, rape, and betrayal – tragic examples of “the terrible and the horrible” – are foregrounded and ultimately unavoidable. Crafting his early mode of tragicomedy, Fletcher adopts this Guarinian avoidance of the horrible and the grave, suggesting in his preface “To the Reader” in *The Faithful Shepherdess* that tragicomedy is so called because it “wants deaths.”⁸ As long as no one actually dies, in Fletcher’s view, a play can be designated a tragicomedy. This turns death into the tragic signifier *par excellence*, and thus liberates Fletcher and his fellow playwrights to include other typically “horrible” elements (such as rape and incest) into their plays while still retaining the tragicomic label. After turning to the Spanish sources I investigate in this dissertation, Fletcher began transforming his conceptualization of death as a tragic element. In some tragicomedies, he strips death of its tragic overtones; in others, he turns death on its head and transforms it into a comic element, playfully and self-consciously manipulating genre, tragicomic form, and

⁷ Giambattista Guarini, “The Compendium of Tragicomic Poetry,” in *Literary Criticism: Plato to Dryden*, trans. Allan H. Gilbert (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1940), 504-33 (525).

⁸ John Fletcher, *The Faithfull Shepheardesse* (1610), STC 11068, 4.

audience expectation. I suggest that Fletcher's move away from Guarini and closer to Cervantes allowed for this expansion, experimentation, and innovation of dramatic form. Using Cervantean material as his foundation, Fletcher was able to develop a mode of tragicomedy that engages with its audience through sophisticated, complex, and often contradictory layers of meaning that seem to simultaneously undermine and sustain the action that plays out on stage. Through this mechanism, English stage tragicomedy transposed from Cervantes teaches its audience to believe *and* disbelieve, to have faith and to be skeptical, to get lost in a moment and to detach critically from it. These are fundamental skills required to maneuver and move through the world beyond the theater, particularly a world such as early modern England that often expressed itself through spectacle and theatricality.

By looking at a representative sampling of 1610 and 1620s tragicomedies alongside their Spanish sources, I show how characteristic elements of English tragicomedy originate in the sources themselves. I consider four plays performed between 1615 and 1626 – *The Two Noble Kinsmen* (Shakespeare and Fletcher; 1614), *Love's Pilgrimage* (Beaumont and Fletcher; 1615), *The Renegado* (Massinger; 1623/4), and *The Fair Maid of the Inn* (Fletcher, Webster, Massinger, Ford; 1625/6) – as sites of literary, socio-political, and ideological translation. These plays transpose Cervantes, particularly his *Novelas ejemplares*⁹ (*Exemplary Novels*, published in Madrid in 1613) and captivity

⁹ Studies on the *Novelas* are abundant. For foundational criticism that has informed my understanding of Cervantean double perspective in the *Novelas*, see Ruth S. El Saffar, *Novel to Romance: A Study of Cervantes' Novelas ejemplares* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1974); Theresa Ann Sears, *A Marriage of Convenience: Ideal and Ideology in the Novelas ejemplares* (New York: Peter Lang, 1993); Thomas Hart, *Cervantes' Exemplary Fictions: A Study of the Novelas ejemplares* (Lexington: U of Kentucky P, 1994); Joseph V. Ricipito, *Cervantes' Novelas ejemplares: Between History and Creativity* (West

play *Los baños de Argel* (*The Prisons of Algiers*), and in the process they re-locate and domesticate a Spanish worldview, ideology, and literary form into theatrical works suitable for the London playhouse.¹⁰ My overarching argument is that the Spanish sources (and looking at the plays *through* the lens of their sources) offer us an alternative site of origin for English stage tragicomedy, one that deviates from the Italian tradition.¹¹ This insight productively expands our current understanding of the genre, while foregrounding the global transmission of culture, literature, and ideology in early seventeenth-century Europe. Reemphasizing the English debt to Spanish literature, my

Lafayette: Purdue UP, 1996); William H. Clamurro, *Beneath the Fiction: The Contrary Worlds of Cervantes' Novelas ejemplares* (New York: Peter Lang, 1997); and E.T. Aylward, *The Crucible Concept: Thematic and Narrative Patterns in Cervantes' Novelas ejemplares* (Madison: Dickinson UP, 1999). For more recent work, see William Childers, *Transnational Cervantes* (Toronto: U of Toronto P, 2006); David. R Castillo, "Exemplarity Gone Awry in Baroque Fantasy: The Case of Cervantes," *Revista Canadiense de Estudios Hispánicos* 33.1 (2008): 105-20; David A. Boruchoff, "Free Will, the Picaresque, and the Exemplarity of Cervantes' *Novelas ejemplares*," *MLN* 124.2 (2009: Hispanic Issue): 372-403; Barry Taylor, "Exemplarity in and Around the *Novelas ejemplares*," *Modern Language Review* 110.2 (2015): 456-71; and *Las Novelas ejemplares: texto y contexto (1613-2013)*, ed. Aurelio González and Nieves Rodríguez Valle (Mexico, DF: Centro de Estudios Lingüísticos y Literarios, 2015).

¹⁰ See Lawrence Venuti, *The Translator's Invisibility: A History of Translation* (New York: Routledge, 2008). I borrow the term *domestication* from translation theory, particularly Venuti's conceptualization: "an ethnocentric reduction of the foreign text to receiving cultural values" (15). Venuti distinguishes domestication from its opposite, *foreignization*: "an ethnoveviant pressure on [values of the translating culture] to register the linguistic and cultural differences of the foreign text" (15). The English playwrights featured in this study domesticate, rather than foreignize, their Spanish sources. In fact, domestication was the standard form of translation during the early modern period; foreignization is a translational mode born out of a postcolonial sensitivity to cultural difference.

¹¹ In "Embracing the 'Mongrel': John Marston's *The Malcontent*, *Antonio and Mellida*, and the Development of English Early Modern Tragicomedy," *Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies* 12.3 (Summer 2012): 60-87, Nathaniel Leonard aptly argues: "The strong influence of the Italianate tragicomic tradition on the English stage should not lead modern readers to assume that there is only one model for tragicomedy" (61).

dissertation participates in what David Damrosch has recently defined as a “newly ambitious engagement with ‘national’ languages and with the idea of national literature itself that reframes both concepts in global terms.”¹²

This project therefore provides two major contributions, the first in the globalization of the early modern English stage (in many ways a study of influence and interference), and the second in the study of early modern tragicomedy and its historical development and trajectory as a genre. Given my interest in the interconnections between English tragicomedy and Spanish romance, I have chosen to deviate from the model of parallel Anglo-Spanish study originated by Walter Cohen in his influential *Drama of a Nation*. Cohen’s methodology is to analyze the national dramas of Renaissance England and Spain side by side, pointing out their differences and similarities based on historical and economic context. In his explicitly Marxist study, Cohen does not investigate the influence of one literature (or drama) over the other, but rather their parallel trajectories and characteristics. Contrastingly, I look at the English plays and their Spanish sources through an interconnective lens, employing the “points of contact” model that arose as a response to Cohen’s work. This second model acknowledges the profound debt English literature owes to Spain and therefore emphasizes the study of interconnections between the two literary and dramatic traditions. Recent proponents of this comparative method include Diana de Armas Wilson in her article “Of Piracy and Plackets: Cervantes’ *La señora Cornelia* and Fletcher’s *The Chances*,” Samson and Darby in *The Cervantean Heritage*, Carmen Nocentelli in “Spice Race: *The Island Princess* and the Politics of Transnational Appropriation,” and Barbara Fuchs in *The Poetics of Piracy*. The shared

¹² David Damrosch, “Global Comparatism and the Question of Language,” *PMLA* 128.3 (May 2013), 626.

motivation in all of these studies is to recover the significant influence of the Spanish sources on their respective English plays, and therefore to erode the remnants of Hispanophobia and Anglocentrism that have historically characterized our discipline.¹³

The pervasive influence of Spanish romance on the development and character of English stage tragicomedy points to the importance of transnational exchange for so-called national processes, such as the creation of literary genres. “National” literatures are frequently influenced, shaped, and altered by external sources – early modern English tragicomedy is but one example of this process. The English impulse to look internationally for cultural and literary models was particularly strong in the early modern period, as England established itself as a nation and (eventually) an empire with its own vernacular. The impulse to look beyond the English island was, in fact, unstoppable: the continuous turn to Spain, a religio-political enemy, demonstrates England’s willingness to keep its cultural boundaries open and receptive to foreign influence.¹⁴ One of the major ways in which nascent countries (and empires) define and shape themselves is through practices of translation, which can be used to emulate, adapt, and even satirize the models and ideas of more established nations to suit the borrowing culture’s needs.

¹³ See Mary Bjork, “Golden Age Spanish Prose and Jacobean Drama” (PhD diss., University of California at Santa Barbara, 2009). Bjork defines this remaining prejudice as an “almost categorical denial of Spanish influence, which has been ongoing for centuries” and that has “effectively curtailed fruitful explorations of [English playwrights] who looked to Spanish material when composing plays that often became the equivalent of box office hits on the London stages” (3).

¹⁴ John Elliott argues that imitation was natural “in the highly competitive world of a developing European state-system,” and that learning from the enemy was a commonplace tactic especially among states “who felt themselves at a comparative disadvantage” (*Spain, Europe and the Wider World*, xvi-xvii).

Translation theorist Louise von Flotow suggests that all translations are in a fundamental sense doubly political, written out of and reflecting not only the politics and culture of the source text, but “adding yet another layer of politics, that of the new, translating culture and era.”¹⁵ The English playwrights’ general treatment of the Cervantean sources they transpose illustrates the politically ambivalent relationship between England and Spain in the early seventeenth century: the paradoxical phenomenon labeled by Anglo-Spanish critics as “hostility/emulation.”¹⁶ Fletcher,

¹⁵ “Translation in the Politics of Culture,” in *The Politics of Translation in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*, ed. Renate Blumenfeld-Kosinski, Louise von Flotow, and Daniel Russell (Tempe: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2009), 9.

¹⁶ This phrasing now adopted by critics originated in a play by Thomas Heywood. In *If You Know Not Me, You Know Nobody, Part I* (1605), Philip II of Spain proclaims optimistically, after marrying Mary Tudor: “Now Spain and England, two populous kingdoms / That have long time been oppos’d / In *hostile emulation*, shall be at one” (2.1.64-6, my emphasis). Critics and historians continue to explore early modern England’s split perspective vis-à-vis the Spanish and their culture, religion, and politics. In a 2009 special issue of the *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* (appropriately titled “A Fine Romance”), Alexander Samson proposes, “England’s cultural Hispanophilia should be distinguished from the anti-Spanish sentiment that increasingly characterized English reactions to the Spanish on a political and religious level” (66). In *English Renaissance Drama and the Specter of Spain: Ethnopoetics and Empire* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009), Eric Griffin investigates this conflicting state of cultural Hispanophilia and politico-religious Hispanophobia, emphasizing that despite English hostility, “Spain continued to represent an example worthy of emulation” (18). In 2010, Barbara Fuchs used similar terms to describe the general Anglo-Spanish situation, highlighting the “tension between martial opposition and cultural fascination” (“The Spanish Connection,” 1). To summarize radically, the critical consensus is that England hated (envied?) Spain for its imperial precociousness, while admiring its culture, fashions, literature, and even its aggressive foreign policy, leading to this schizophrenic state of hostility/emulation. These two impulses – one to repel and demonize Spain, the other to incorporate it into English culture – are paradoxical yet not mutually exclusive. In *Turning Turk: English Theater and the Multicultural Mediterranean, 1570-1630* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), Daniel Vitkus extends this argument to foreign and “exotic” cultures beyond Spain, stating that “the construction of English identity during this period involves a particularly violent set of contradictions about alien cultures and peoples. They are both demonized and exalted, admired and condemned” (22). We will see this play out with Spanish and Muslim cultures simultaneously in this study’s final chapter on Massinger’s *The Renegado*.

Beaumont, Massinger, and company borrowed from Cervantes freely and enthusiastically, but they also rewrote him in a way that displaced his authorial voice. The English transpositions featured in this study warrant investigation because they not only shed light on Anglo-Spanish cultural relations in the opening decades of the 1600s, but they also raise questions about the transposition of genres and mediums. What happens to the Cervantean material, both prose and drama, when it is transposed onto the English stage?

Throughout this work, I have chosen to privilege the term *transposition* over *translation* to more directly evoke a sense of movement, transportation, trade, relocation, and transformation, all apt characterizations of the relationship between Spanish romance and English drama. *Transposition* is also different from terms employed by previous critics, including *appropriation* and *piracy*, used by Carmen Nocentelli and Barbara Fuchs, respectively. Nocentelli and Fuchs have defined literary borrowing during the early modern period as an extension of political, cultural, and imperial competition among European powers, using aggressive terminology such as “looting,” “poaching,” and “forcible translation.”¹⁷ My aim is not to argue that this kind of literary and imperial competition did not occur, because it clearly did. However, I suggest that framing the process of transposition as a fertile pollination, rather than as theft, piracy, or forceful

¹⁷ Fuchs defines translation as an act of “successful looting” in *The Poetics of Piracy: Emulating Spain in English Literature* (Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 2013), 7. In the article “Spice Race: *The Island Princess* and the Politics of Transnational Appropriation,” Nocentelli argues that Fletcher’s tragicomedy *The Island Princess*, transposed from a Spanish historical source (Argensola’s *Conquista de las islas molucas*) and a French intermediary novella (a translation of Argensola inserted into Cervantes’ *Novelas ejemplares*), “rehearses poetically the modus operandi of early English expansionism, with its habitual looting of Spanish and Portuguese shipping, holding of people and towns for ransom, and poaching in Iberian imperial waters” (581).

conquest, allows us to see how translation productively enables the development of innovative genres and forms. Playwrights like Fletcher, Massinger, Beaumont, and Shakespeare in many instances worked together to bring foreign material to life on stage using inventive techniques that emerged precisely in the moment of transposition, sometimes out of necessity (how to transpose a characteristically “Spanish” moment into something comprehensible to an English audience) and sometimes out of the spark of creativity and inspiration that is ignited through the transpositional process, particularly when the material being transposed is as complex and multilayered as Cervantes’ novellas. For Fletcher and his collaborators, transposition resulted in creations characterized by productive difference from their source material and significant contributions to their national dramatic canon, not only in artistic but also in commercial terms. English playwrights transposing Cervantes’ narrative romance for a theatrical medium recognized the importance of commerce and the early modern theater’s role as a commercial enterprise serving a diverse public audience. Fletcher, in particular, was keenly invested in providing his audience with an innovative form of engagement that would keep theatergoers coming back to see (and pay for) his plays. I address this kind of audience engagement in chapters one and four by exploring stage tragicomedy’s awareness of perspective and use of complex maneuvering to create moments that are simultaneously tragic and comic, depending on both the characters’ and audience’s point of view at any given moment.

The productive borrowing carried out by Fletcher, Beaumont, Shakespeare, Massinger, and other frequent collaborators is, in Laura Doyle’s apt terms, an element of “inter-imperial cultural production: the accretion of ideas and genres fostered or

provoked by inter-imperial conditions of alliance, competition, borrowing and exploitation.”¹⁸ Looking at foreign influences (Spain, and to a lesser extent Italy) allows us to better understand the local (England), and ultimately gives us a fuller picture of cross-cultural and global interactions during the early modern period. Here I situate myself within the field of imperium studies, aligning my work with Doyle’s notion of inter-imperiality: “When we begin to think inter-imperially, we also grasp key elements of the regional and local even as – and in part because – we reframe the global.”¹⁹ Although Doyle’s “inter-imperiality” primarily concerns the stakes of two or more competing empires as they borrow, steal, and mirror each other, this notion is useful for understanding the relationship between an emerging nation (England) and an already established and sprawling empire (Spain), especially during a period of intense empire-formation for England. Analyzing the cultural productions of seventeenth-century England alongside their Spanish sources not only enables us to shed new light on the development, use, and cultural functions of the hugely popular genre of English stage tragicomedy; it also allows us to reexamine the cultural functions and potential effects of the Spanish material within its own context.

For instance, studying the collaborative English plays transposed from Cervantes’ *Novelas ejemplares* alongside the *Novelas* themselves allows us to examine the Protestant and Catholic religious contexts in which these texts were produced. More specifically, unpacking English tragicomedy’s secular irony, self-consciousness, and emphasis on earthly pleasures – including the theater itself – and identifying the origins of these

¹⁸ Doyle, 184.

¹⁹ Doyle, 163.

characteristics in Cervantes' work enables us to access the subtle irony in the Spanish author's particular brand of romance. On the surface, Cervantes' novellas reaffirm and support a Catholic philosophy of sacrifice, suffering, and (eventual) heavenly rewards, but an implicit irony in the novella's realistic and historical – as opposed to romantic – moments undermines that same Catholic structure and perspective. Beaumont, Fletcher, Shakespeare, and other English playwrights drawn to Cervantes' work transpose this kind of religious irony and push it further to make a statement about secular pleasures, as I show particularly in chapter four.

The intense critical focus on transposition as a cultural symptom of imperial rivalry can at times overshadow other motivating factors behind English playwrights' borrowing of foreign material, including commercial motivators and the need to meet playwriting demands for a theater open six days a week. In a 2015 issue of *PMLA*, Fuchs states: "The problem of national distinction in the literary sphere – how to create a vernacular that would match or excel the great classical languages and their contemporary avatars – was for these men [English writers] another facet of a military and political project that involved emulating Spain in order not to succumb to its empire."²⁰ Certainly Fletcher and company's transpositions of Cervantes are part of this broader context of imperial rivalry and nation-building, but the stage tragicomedies that resulted from this borrowing generally do not aim at surpassing the "great classical languages," but rather at drawing an audience to the theater and engaging it fully. In other

²⁰ Fuchs, "Another Turn for Transnationalism: Empire, Nation, and Imperium in Early Modern Studies," *PMLA* 130.2 (March 2015): 412-18 (416). See also Fuchs, "Imperium Studies: Theorizing Early Modern Expansion," in *Postcolonial Moves: Medieval through Modern*, ed. Patricia Clare Ingham and Michelle R. Warren (New York: Palgrave, 2003), 71-90; and "No Field Is an Island: Postcolonial and Transnational Approaches to Early Modern Drama," *Renaissance Drama* 40 (2012): 125-33.

words, the commercial impetus behind plays like *Love's Pilgrimage* and *The Renegado* is as strong a motivation as any lofty desire to outdo Spain and to elevate the prestige of a national English vernacular. We must also remember the *positive* contribution of historical shifts to productive exchange, both cultural and commercial, between established and emerging nations in early modern Europe. The historical moment in which the plays explored in this dissertation were written was particularly conducive to the kind of widespread English borrowing of Spanish material that occurred, due both to a cultural fascination with Spain and, in more logistical terms, to a renewed accessibility to actual Spanish books, manuscripts, and dictionaries.

The years 1604-25 were relatively calm and peaceful for Anglo-Spanish relations, especially compared to the tumultuous relationship between England and Spain during most of Elizabeth I's long reign.²¹ One of James I's priorities after succeeding Elizabeth was to sign a peace treaty with Spain. The 1604 Treaty of London effectively concluded the sixteen-year Anglo-Spanish War, which had been sparked by the Spanish Armada's attempted invasion of England in 1588. Although sentiments of ambivalence and even

²¹ The Anglo-Spanish historian whose work has most influenced my understanding of the period is John H. Elliott, particularly his foundational works *Imperial Spain: 1469-1716* (New York: Meridian, 1963); *Spain and Its World: 1500-1700* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1989); and *Spain, Europe and the Wider World: 1500-1800* (New Haven: Yale UP, 2009). For an extensive account of Anglo-Spanish relations prior to and immediately after the peace of 1604, see Albert J. Loomie, "Toleration and Diplomacy: The Religious Issue in Anglo-Spanish Relations, 1603-1605," *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society* 53.6 (1963): 1-60; *England, Spain, and the Gran Armada 1585-1604*, ed. María José Rodríguez-Salgado and Simon Adams (Savage, MD: Barnes & Noble Books, 1990); and William S. Goldman, "Viewing Spain through Darkened Eyes: Anti-Spanish Rhetoric and Charles Cornwallis's Mission to Spain, 1605-1609," in *Representing Imperial Rivalry in the Early Modern Mediterranean*, ed. Barbara Fuchs and Emily Weissbourd (Toronto: U of Toronto P, 2015), 255-68. See also Jason C. White, "Militant Protestants: British Identity in the Jacobean Period, 1603-1625," *History* 94.2 (April 2009): 154-75.

outright hostility towards Spain lingered indefinitely in England, the renewed peace of 1604 reestablished favorable conditions for trade, travel, and cultural exchange. Spanish diplomats, such as the infamous Count of Gondomar, took up residency and served in James's court for prolonged periods (Gondomar served as Spanish ambassador to England from 1613 to 1622). In addition to diplomats, increased numbers of students and merchants also traveled between England and Spain during this time.²² Early on in his reign, James began to explore the possibility of cementing an Anglo-Spanish alliance via political marriage, seeking to marry his son Prince Charles to the Infanta of Spain.²³ The issue of the "Spanish Match" divided members of Parliament and, indeed, the entire nation, into two factions, one pro- and the other anti-Spain (with the anti-Spain group as the majority). Ultimately, due to a breakdown in negotiations and a disastrous surprise trip to Madrid in 1623 by Charles and Buckingham, the marriage plans fell apart, to the general revelry and relief of the English people. James I renewed open conflict with Spain in 1624 and then died in 1625, leaving the throne to his son Charles who would perpetuate the war through 1630.

English transpositions of Spanish material are highly sensitive to historical, political, and cultural shifts. Particular modes and strategies of transposition are altered

²² On exchange and circulation between England and Spain, see Anne J. Cruz, *Material and Symbolic Circulation Between Spain and England, 1554-1604* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2008); and Fuchs, *The Poetics of Piracy*.

²³ On the Spanish match, see Glyn Redworth, *The Prince and the Infanta: the Cultural Politics of the Spanish Match* (New Haven: Yale UP, 2003); *The Spanish Match: Prince Charles's Journey to Madrid, 1623*, ed. Alexander Samson (Burlington: Ashgate, 2006); and Brennan C. Pursell, "The End of the Spanish Match," *The Historical Journal* 45.4 (Dec 2002): 699-726.

and shaped by the temporal relations between source and target nations.²⁴ Translation historian Peter Burke raises a key question that underlies my analysis of the English plays in this dissertation: “With what intentions and strategies were translations undertaken [in a specific moment in history]?”²⁵ Burke goes on to explain how “translation reveals with unusual clarity what one culture finds of interest in another,” especially how the “choice of items for translation reflects the priorities of the recipient culture.”²⁶ Following the cultural turn in translation studies, Itamar Even-Zohar proposed a polysystem theory of translation (today simply systems theory), in which source and target texts are located within the systems that produced them to explain their distinct functions and characteristics. Even-Zohar is especially interested in the concept of literary interference, which he considers the rule rather than the exception in the development of national literatures: “There is not one single literature which did not emerge through interference with a more established literature.”²⁷ He also insists on the crucial importance of historical moment and context for the production of both source and target texts, recognizing that sources and translations are created to perform different (sometimes even opposing) kinds of cultural work. These assertions lead to the following questions: Why/how did this group of English playwrights transpose from Cervantes, in particular?

²⁴ I borrow these terms from translation theory. In this case, the “source” (or contributing) nation is Spain and the “target” (or borrowing) nation is England.

²⁵ Peter Burke, “Cultures of translation in early modern Europe,” *Cultural Translation in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Peter Burke and R. Po-Chia Hsia (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2007), 7-38 (16).

²⁶ Burke, 20.

²⁷ Itamar Even-Zohar, “Polysystem Studies,” in *Poetics Today: International Journal for Theory and Analysis of Literature and Communication* 11.1 (1990), 59.

Which characteristics did they find attractive in the prose writings of the Spanish author? Which elements – formal, generic, and thematic – did they keep, eliminate, and/or transform in their transpositions? And why was Cervantean romance so suitable a source for the emerging English theatrical genre of tragicomedy? These are the fundamental questions driving this study.

Before I am able to answer these questions, however, it is necessary to map out some of the generic conventions I will be exploring in subsequent chapters. In *The Political Unconscious*, Fredric Jameson (revising Northrop Frye) claims: “Romance... does not involve the substitution of some more ideal realm for ordinary reality... but rather a process of *transforming* ordinary reality.”²⁸ Indeed, transformations of all kinds are possible in the world of romance, enabling characters to get away with otherwise prohibitive behavior for their gender and/or social rank. For instance, in Cervantes’ *Las dos doncellas* (*The Two Damsels*), the titular female protagonists cross-dress and embark on that classic generic adventure: the romance quest. In doing so, they enact at least four conventions that recur in Renaissance prose romance: (1) the trope of the fleeing damsel in distress, (2) subversive – but in the end contained – transvestism, (3) physical wandering, and (4) the suspenseful postponement of naming, leading to multiple cases of mistaken identity that need to be resolved by the end. Cervantes, however, deploys these traditional generic tropes self-reflexively and ironically; in other words, he enacts them self-consciously as romance tropes in order to reveal their limitations.²⁹ Fuchs

²⁸ Fredric Jameson, *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1981), 110 (his italics).

²⁹ Two illustrative case studies of Cervantes’ particular deployment of romance are E. Michael Gerli’s chapter “A Novel Rewriting: Romance and Irony in *La gitanilla*,” *Refiguring Authority: Reading, Writing, and Rewriting in Cervantes* (Lexington: U of

characterizes Cervantes' strategy as a mixing of romance (idealistic) and the picaresque (realistic), which leaves the reader with a "tension between romance and realism, between idealization and the mundane everyday."³⁰ There is a similar tension at work in English stage tragicomedy, between subversive elements (such as cross-dressing, which tragicomedy borrows from romance, but also incest and other forms of desire beyond the heteronormative) and their containment/undoing. For instance, in both Fletcher and Beaumont's *Love's Pilgrimage* and Fletcher, Webster, Massinger and Ford's *The Fair Maid of the Inn*, the threat of brother-sister incest colors the opening scenes, titillating audiences by verging on the taboo but pulling back quickly to return to a sexually and socially conventional state of affairs. In straight tragedy, such a threat is usually carried out fully, leading to fatal and socially destructive consequences. For instance, the ending of John Ford's *'Tis Pity She's a Whore* illustrates the tragic consequences of incest horrifically. Cervantean romance and Fletcherian tragicomedy are united by a distinct family resemblance in their flirtations with potentially catastrophic circumstances, feelings, and desires that are quickly undone or contained through, for example, miraculous discoveries (in brother-sister incest, the audience typically discovers there were no blood ties between the two parties in the first place).

As Jameson argues throughout *The Political Unconscious*, genres do not simply disappear; they morph into other kinds of genres once they are no longer representative of or reactive to certain historical, cultural, and socio-political moments. Early modern

Kentucky P, 1995); and Jonathan Burgoyne, "La gitanilla: A Model of Cervantes' Subversion of Romance," *Revista Canadiense de Estudios Hispánicos* 25.3 (2001): 373-95.

³⁰ Fuchs, *Romance* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 90.

English tragicomedy is a generic transformation of prose romance. Romance's investment in travel, expansion, the cross-cultural encounter, and a general sense of "worldness" is, in particular, taken up by tragicomic playwrights as a way to explore, dramatically, England's position on a global scale, the dynamics of trade, and the possibilities of travel (for instance, travel as an alternative mode of social mobility). So Renaissance tragicomedy emerged during a moment in history where England was positioning itself as a global player.³¹ This made romance, with its narratives of far-reaching and transformative travel, ideally suited as a generic model.

A large part of modern criticism on English stage tragicomedy has focused on the political engagements of individual plays or of the genre as a whole. The politics of tragicomedy are investigated in collections such as *Renaissance Tragicomedy: Explorations in Genre and Politics* (1987) edited by Nancy Maguire, and *The Politics of Tragicomedy: Shakespeare and After* (1992) edited by Jonathan Hope and Gordon McMullan. Zachary Lesser's work contributes to the study of tragicomic politics by taking a stance against critics' tendency to "proleptically unif[y] the politics of tragicomic form around the constitutional issues of 1642 or 1649 or 1660," arguing instead that tragicomedy's popularity was due in part to the "adequation of its self-consciously mixed

³¹ In "Tragic-Comical-Pastoral-Colonial: Economic Sovereignty, Globalization, and the Form of Tragicomedy," *ELH* 74.4 (Winter 2007): 881-908, Zachary Lesser argues that the exotic settings of stage tragicomedy demonstrate the genre's "engagement with debates over the nature of the early modern economy in an age of increasing globalization" (883). For an account of England's rise as a global player and concurrent changes in theatrical practice, see Jane Degenhardt, "Foreign Worlds," in *The Oxford Handbook of Shakespeare*, ed. Arthur F. Kinney (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2012), 433-57; and Bridget Orr, *Empire on the English Stage 1660-1714* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2011), especially 136-9.

form to the pressing political question of early Stuart society.”³² Mimi Dixon’s essay on the medieval roots of early modern tragicomedy stresses the importance of understanding tragicomedy as a genre in its own right, to avoid granting “tragedy and comedy logical priority” by discussing the genre as a mix or hybrid.³³ In *Tragicomic Redemptions: Global Economics and the Early Modern English Stage* (2008), Valerie Forman shifts away from political criticism to explore the economics of tragicomedy as related to England’s emerging role in a global economy of trade, profit, and loss. Forman sees tragicomedy as “the product of a relationship between two potentially opposing genres – one that foregrounds loss, and the other resolution.”³⁴ This tension between loss and gain is what drives the tragicomic plot forward, keeping the audience engaged and in a state of anticipatory suspense. In their introduction to the collection *Early Modern Tragicomedy* (2007), Raphael Lyne and Subha Mukherji describe the genre as “a form that brings things right at the end while allowing for complication in the middle.”³⁵ There is a common errant element in both romance and tragicomedy that needs to be corrected, undone, or redeemed by the end. This element takes on many specific forms, such as the wandering hero/ine who must reach a particular physical and metaphorical destination, the transvestite damsel or hero who must shed her disguise and return to her female gender, the rape victim who must (problematically) marry her rapist to reclaim her

³² Lesser, 883.

³³ Mimi Still Dixon, “Tragicomic Recognition: Medieval Miracles and Shakespearean Romance,” in *Renaissance Tragicomedy: Explorations in Genre and Politics*, ed. Nancy Maguire (New York: AMS Press, 1987), 60.

³⁴ Valerie Forman, *Tragicomic Redemptions: Global Economics and the Early Modern English Stage* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), 1.

³⁵ Lyne and Mukherji, “Introduction,” *Early Modern Tragicomedy*, 3.

chastity, and incestuous protagonists (usually a brother and sister) who must learn that they are not related after all and thus legitimized in their sexual desires. The resolution of these tropes happens quickly and suddenly via the tragicomic turn: that moment of revelation or miraculous synchronicity that undoes death, separation, incest, inconvenient social status, and/or mistaken identity. In Lyne and Mukherji's essay collection, the tragicomic turn is called the "deceitful solution," and includes elements such as the "false incest in Beaumont and Fletcher, the false poison of Shakespeare's Cornelius, and the illusory social transgressions of love in Lope's plays."³⁶ As with Walter Cohen's comparative criticism, the essays in *Early Modern Tragicomedy* offer parallel analyses of English and Spanish plays designated as tragicomedies or *comedias*, but interconnective analyses of English plays and Spanish material are absent. More recently, critics like Nathaniel Leonard and Garth Kimbrell have moved simultaneously beyond the traditional (Italian) genealogical narrative for tragicomedy and from political readings of tragicomic plays. Leonard emphasizes English contributions to tragicomedy's development, focusing on John Marston's plays.³⁷ Kimbrell shifts his attention to stage tragicomedy as "concerned with problems of the early modern theater business."³⁸ However, despite new and productive directions in tragicomic criticism, there is to my knowledge no sustained study of Fletcher and his collaborators' abundant tragicomic transpositions of Cervantes, and of how the influence of Spanish works carved a new path for stage tragicomedy away

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ See Leonard, "Embracing the 'Mongrel.'"

³⁸ Kimbrell, 286.

from Guarini and towards something innovative and infinitely more popular. This project therefore fills an important gap in tragicomic criticism.

In Fletcher's tragicomedies transposed from Cervantes, problematic thematic elements, which are often resolved through the tragicomic turn or "deceitful solution" described in Lyne and Mukherji's introduction, are combined in suggestive ways. In *Love's Pilgrimage*, for instance, the transvestite damsel Theodosia goes on a wandering journey in pursuit of Mark-Antonio, a lover who has abandoned her. While staying at an inn, Theodosia coincidentally runs into her brother Philippo. Since the inn is short on rooms, the innkeeper puts Philippo in Theodosia's room where she confesses to her brother (in the middle of the night, unaware of his identity) that she is actually a woman. For a moment, however brief, Theodosia fears Philippo will rape her (1.2.121). Fletcher quickly undoes the threat of rape and incest by having the innkeeper enter with a candle, conveniently allowing Theodosia and Philippo to recognize each other. This sort of maneuver, which manipulates the spectator by setting up an outrageously dramatic event (incestuous rape) and then promptly dispelling it, is characteristic of Fletcherian tragicomedy and one of the reasons the genre titillated early modern audiences so successfully.

Perhaps the most distinctive characteristics of 1620s English tragicomedy are its generic self-reflexiveness and investment in audience manipulation. Given its popularity, we can assume audiences of tragicomedy were fairly sophisticated theatergoers. A certain degree of familiarity with the conventions of the genre is necessary to get a full enjoyment out of the plays. In other words, most of the pleasure lies in anticipation; in the thrill of watching how a playwright will wrap up loose ends, and how tragicomic

conventions will be fulfilled or subverted – or both, at different times. How will a playwright, above all, turn a tragic element (death) into something comic (resurrection/redemption)? How will he dig himself out of a seemingly impossible hole? The genre’s playful self-awareness about its own dramatic operations was undoubtedly one of its appeals for early modern audiences. With my comparative work throughout this study, I uncover the process by which these trademarks of English stage tragicomedy were transposed from the Cervantean prose romance of the *Novelas ejemplares*, and, in the case of Massinger’s *The Renegado*, out of Cervantes’ captivity play *Los baños de Argel*. My work offers a significant insight into Cervantes’ literary influence in seventeenth-century England, which is so frequently attributed to *Don Quijote*. In reading Cervantes’ novellas, Fletcher and other playwrights valued and transposed Cervantes’ experimentation in story-telling, playful manipulation of the reader, and ironic deployment of romance in a way that both affirms and subverts the genre. For instance, in *Las dos doncellas* Cervantes’ narrator withholds the protagonists’ names throughout the first third of the novella, a maneuver that builds suspense for the reader and creates confusion regarding the characters’ gender, social rank, and familial connections. Cervantes’ narrators tend to speak directly to the reader in self-conscious asides, pretending to be lost in their own narrative progressions, or remarking ironically on the action. Cervantes is, significantly, a master of the tragicomic “deceitful solution,” revealing convenient details about protagonists at the last minute to enable happy resolutions. This project therefore enables us to observe and map out English stage tragicomedy’s debt to Cervantean literary strategies and to Spanish romance beyond *Don Quijote*. In broader terms, this kind of comparative work allows us to see the ways in

which literary transfers occur, how literary and dramatic traditions borrow from foreign literatures and cultures, how genres are transformed throughout time and space, and how no literary tradition or canon is created in a vacuum. Ultimately, bringing into focus English tragicomedy's major debt to Cervantean prose romance demystifies the illusion of a national literature and of a national dramatic tradition.

My dissertation is divided into four chapters and a brief epilogue. The first chapter uses Shakespeare as an entry point into the project by looking at *The Two Noble Kinsmen* (1614), co-written by Fletcher. I argue that although this tragicomedy is a direct transposition of Chaucer's *Knight's Tale*, it also exhibits a looser, indirect Spanish influence. Having collaborated on the now lost *History of Cardenio* immediately before producing *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, Shakespeare and Fletcher still had Cervantes in mind, and they recycle in the latter play certain themes and tropes of the Cardenio episode in *Don Quijote* – essentially, the male friendship between Cardenio and Fernando that is disrupted by petty jealousies and competition when Fernando steals Luscinda from Cardenio, which is mirrored in the disrupted friendship of Arcite and Palamon. However, rather than giving their play a truly happy, comic resolution – as Cervantes does in narrative form when he resolves the tension by introducing Dorotea, a suitable wife for Fernando, into his story – Shakespeare and Fletcher emphasize the tragedy of their tragicomedy by stressing the imperfect reality of marriage and the loss of freedom of the kinsmen's object of affection, Emilia. This first chapter establishes the terms of my project and the processes of transposition that Fletcher develops later on in his more direct use of Spanish sources.

The second chapter looks at Beaumont and Fletcher's *Love's Pilgrimage* alongside its source, Cervantes' novella *Las dos doncellas*, to argue that the English playwrights transform the novella's providential design into theatrical and generic design, stripped of any divine and supernatural elements. Beaumont and Fletcher pick up on the subtle tensions and unresolved conflicts of *Las dos doncellas* and emphasize them in their tragicomedy, transforming the sincere redemptions and transformations that abound in the novella's resolution into performative artifice. Moreover, Cervantes' providentialism is self-consciously associated with royal authority, since God and king are perceived to fulfill similar functions. By stripping Cervantes' providential design of its divine overtones and demystifying theatrical illusion, Beaumont and Fletcher also demystify royal absolutism and the divine "wonder" associated with early modern monarchs.

In the third chapter, I turn to *The Fair Maid of the Inn*, another collaborative tragicomedy by Fletcher, Webster, Massinger, and Ford.³⁹ *The Fair Maid* was first performed in 1625 or 1626, nearly a decade after *Love's Pilgrimage*, and under remarkably different historical conditions: Anglo-Spanish tensions were renewed after the failure of the Spanish Match in 1624 and the death of James I in 1625. With the death of its pro-Spanish king, England declared war against Spain and the two nations became enemies once again. I suggest that the reemergence of conflict between England and Spain influenced the transpositional mode adopted by Fletcher and his collaborators, who used Cervantes' novella *La ilustre fregona* to produce a tragicomedy that is invested in reaffirming English national interests and in promoting a narrative of the nation's

³⁹ The precise authorship of this play has been debated, but for my purposes the key element is Fletcher's heavy-handed involvement in the writing of the play, especially since it is borrowed from a Cervantes novella (Fletcher's standard practice by this time).

collective well-being as more significant than the well-being of its individual members. Through its characters' competing perspectives, *The Fair Maid* presents a binary between leisure/passivity and effort, ultimately defining hard labor, self-sacrifice, and active engagement with the world (for the benefit of one's nation) as virtuous and patriotic.

The fourth and final chapter deals more directly with religious conversion, an issue that is tangentially addressed in *The Fair Maid of the Inn* when the lead character threatens to "turn pirate," a practice closely associated with Islam and with religious renegades. Exploring Philip Massinger's *The Renegado* through the lens of its dramatic source, Cervantes' *Los baños de Argel*, I demonstrate how Massinger uses a process of transposition to craft an English stage tragicomedy out of a Spanish *comedia de cautivos* (captivity play). In his *comedia*, Cervantes privileges the immaterial and spiritual side of conversion, arguing that any kind of earthly pleasure is only temporary, fleeting, and illusionary, and that true salvation is reserved for the afterlife. Consequently, theater itself is a fleeting and evanescent reality far transcended by a spiritual truth revealed to wo/man only after death. Massinger transposes Cervantes' investments and overturns this hierarchy, privileging instead the material side of conversion and suggesting that the comedy of *The Renegado* is directly tied to its earthly pleasures, including the sensory experience of the theatrical event itself.

As a whole, this dissertation is concerned with two primary processes: (1) the development and maneuvers of English tragicomedy as a stage genre, and (2) the inter-cultural and inter-lingual transposition between one text and another that has so often enabled the growth, recycling, and reinvention of genres throughout literary history. Examining English stage tragicomedy alongside its Cervantean sources reveals the

predominant influence of Spanish romance on tragicomedies written by English playwrights in the 1610s and 1620s. Through this comparative and interconnective analysis, it becomes clear that key elements of English tragicomedy originate in Cervantean techniques, rather than in the early pastoral plays of Guarini. Some of these elements are recognized in tragicomic criticism as a double perspective, a “bifronted posture,” an ironic self-consciousness, the tragicomic turn (also called the “deceitful solution”), a mode of audience engagement that seeks to evoke wondrous enchantment and critical detachment simultaneously, and a layered ending that resolves conflict on the surface while raising important and often uncomfortable questions. With this project, I give Spain its due credit and Cervantes the prominent role he deserves in the history of English tragicomedy, showing that the genre’s most popular form on the London stages would not have existed without the ironic, complex, dynamic, and self-aware romances penned by the Spanish author. Similarly, English stage tragicomedy’s collaborative nature is another key feature that made the genre as popular as it was. Playwrights worked together to produce plays that would satisfy, entertain, and teach a diverse, demanding, and often savvy audience with years of accumulated theatrical experience and a familiarity with genre conventions. Cervantes provided the foundation upon which the plays throughout this dissertation were built, but it was also the hard work, inventiveness, and sharp intuition of playwrights like Fletcher and Massinger that made these plays both commercially and culturally significant.

CHAPTER 1

TRAGIC MARRIAGE AND COMIC DEATH: ENGENDERING TRAGICOMIC FORM IN *THE TWO NOBLE KINSMEN*

Shakespeare and Fletcher's *The Two Noble Kinsmen* (c. 1614-15) presents a love triangle that is resolved only after one of the titular kinsmen falls off his horse to an unexpected death. As a result, this tragicomedy veers dangerously close to becoming a full-blown tragedy. Shakespeare and Fletcher self-consciously push the play's tragicomic form beyond the limits established by Guarini – who stated resolutely that “the writer of tragicomedy takes from tragedy... its danger but not its death” – not only by killing off a central character, but also by making the comic resolution of marriage contingent upon this death.⁴⁰ After Arcite's seemingly tragic death, Palamon (the second titular kinsman) is saved at the last minute from execution and is married off to Emilia, Arcite's bride-to-be. Through this substitution, *Kinsmen* seems to achieve a successful turn from tragedy to comedy. However, reading *Kinsmen*'s ending as comic is only possible if viewed through the dominant, patriarchal perspective that runs through the play, epitomized most powerfully in the figure of Theseus. If we shift our focus from this dominant perspective to the play's secondary point of view, embodied by the defiant Emilia, the resolution loses some of its comic integrity, as it enforces a strict patriarchal regulation of Emilia's behavior and desires. For Emilia, marriage represents a kind of tragedy because she wishes to remain an eternal virgin but must obey Theseus's commands. By drawing attention to Emilia's plight and resistance, *Kinsmen* undermines comic investment in

⁴⁰ Giambattista Guarini, “From *Compendium of Tragicomic Poetry*,” *Sources of Dramatic Theory, Vol. 1: Plato to Congreve*, ed. Michael J. Sidnell (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2008): 148-59 (153).

traditional forms of social, political, and cultural structures and institutions by associating marriage with female coercion and making it contingent upon death.⁴¹ Rather than operating as a one-dimensional plotline, tragicomedy functions in this play as a prism, refracting two differently gendered perspectives on comedy and tragedy. By exploring how gender informs *Kinsmen*'s renegotiation of tragicomic form, I illuminate the particular ways in which this play contributes to the development of English stage tragicomedy by departing from the earlier Italianate model and exposing the patriarchal assumptions that underpin conventional comic resolution.

I further argue that looking at *The Two Noble Kinsmen* through the lens of its sources brings its experiments with genre and gender into sharper relief. *Kinsmen*'s main storyline is transplanted, with a difference, from Chaucer's *Knight's Tale*, but there is also a second, often-overlooked source text for this play: the Cardenio episode from *Don Quijote*.⁴² Examining the relationship between *Kinsmen* and *Don Quijote* reveals a transposition that is multidirectional, fluid, and diachronic. Shakespeare and Fletcher use this method of transposition to construct a layered tragicomedy that appropriates both Chaucer and Cervantes, resulting in a generically complex play. Consideration of the

⁴¹ This conceptualization of marriage as tragic is present throughout the Shakespearean canon. For instance, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* features an earlier depiction of Theseus's forceful conquest of Hippolyta (see Glynne Wickham, "The Two Noble Kinsmen, or A Midsummer Night's Dream, Part II?" *The Elizabethan Theatre* 7 (1980): 167-96). There is also the troublesome marriage proposal in *Measure for Measure*, where Duke Vincentio essentially forces a silent Isabella – who wishes to remain an eternal virgin like *Kinsmen*'s Emilia – to marry him.

⁴² Valerie Wayne argues more broadly, but in line with my argument, that "the turn to romance by Shakespeare and his collaborators between 1608 and 1613 was influenced by Cervantes' work" (218). See Wayne, "Don Quijote and Shakespeare's Collaborative Turn to Romance," *The Quest for Cardenio: Shakespeare, Fletcher, Cervantes, and the Lost Plays*, ed. David Carnegie and Gary Taylor (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2012): 217-38.

Cardenio episode enables us to see how the English playwrights transpose Cervantes' ironic treatment of marriage to craft a form of tragicomedy that problematizes the generic conventions and, in turn, the politics of comedy. In problematizing marriage as a social institution and as a marker of comic resolution, Shakespeare and Fletcher leave their audience with unresolved tensions to suggest that any sense of closure achieved by the end is mere illusion, a convenient turn of events to provide a semblance of narrative finality. It is precisely this ironic eschewing of both marriage and closure – or marriage *as* closure – that the playwrights borrow from Cervantes' ironic and self-conscious mode of resolution in the Cardenio episode. On the surface, the episode's ending is comic and even miraculous, culminating in two "happy" marriages and in the moral redemption of the corrupt nobleman Fernando. Fernando is paired off with Dorotea, whose virginity he stole under false pretenses. While this marriage is framed as an exemplum of male redemption, from a different perspective it emphasizes the limits of female agency, freedom, and possibility. Dorotea *must* marry Fernando at this point in the story because she is a servant's daughter and no longer a maid – she has no value without Fernando, and therefore she has no real alternatives. Dorotea's desperation to marry Fernando, and her apparent happiness when he finally agrees, reveal the extent to which she has internalized the patriarchal workings of her culture and society.

If we read *Kinsmen* exclusively through the lens of its more commonly recognized source, Chaucer's *Knight's Tale*, we lose a sense of the play's more complex relationship between gender and genre. While in many ways the plot of *The Two Noble Kinsmen* closely follows the *Knight's Tale*, the resolution of the *Tale* fully assimilates Emelye's subjectivity with the patriarchal point of view. The single perspective afforded

by the *Tale* becomes more apparent when we consider the multidimensional perspective that Shakespeare and Fletcher transpose from Cervantes. While Chaucer's Emelye initially resists marriage, she undergoes a gradual transformation over the course of the narrative and ultimately comes to accept her role as a wife. Her willing acquiescence seems to be confirmed in the climactic moment when Arcite meets her eye after winning the tournament: "Lokyng upward upon this Emelye; / And she agayn [toward] hym caste a freendlich ye" (2679-80).⁴³ This reciprocal gazing is transformed in *Kinsmen* into Emilia's stubborn refusal to watch the tournament, to avoid tainting her "eye / With dread sights it may shun" (5.3.9-10).⁴⁴ Emelye's change of heart in Chaucer enables the *Tale*'s happy resolution, because she finds a way to align herself with the desires of the play's masculine authority, Theseus.

In contrast, Cervantes' Cardenio episode offers at least a glimmer of an anti-patriarchal perspective by making its two heroines, Dorotea and Luscinda, active and willful agents of the story's resolution. Dorotea, in particular, emerges as a powerful icon of female agency when she disguises herself as a boy to venture into the wilderness to locate Fernando after he abandons her. Ultimately, due to her resourcefulness, Dorotea fulfills her desires when Fernando repents and agrees to marry her. It is problematic, of course, that her desire is a result of her social conditioning and that her agency is more limited than it appears, but the episode's conclusion does not fully erase Dorotea's earlier acts of bravery. Similarly, the final moments in *Kinsmen* do not undo Emilia's defiance

⁴³ References are from *The Riverside Chaucer*, ed. Larry Benson, 3rd ed. (New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1987).

⁴⁴ References are from *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, ed. Lois Potter (London: Bloomsbury, 2015).

throughout the play. In fact, it is her earlier defiance that moves us to read her marriage to Palamon as tragic. Despite the traditional association of Shakespeare and Chaucer via their shared Englishness, we can find a kinship between Shakespeare and Cervantes in their parallel treatment of the same themes.

The specter of *Cardenio* looms large over a study on the influence of Spanish literature on English drama. Due to its irretrievable absence, the very concept of *Cardenio* – a play that supposedly brought together the genius of Shakespeare and of Cervantes – has bewitched critics, who frequently find it an irresistible topic of literary, dramatic, and historical analysis. This interest has resulted in rich, nuanced, and inventive criticism, as well as productive experiments with dramatic practice.⁴⁵ However, discussions of *Cardenio* are always ultimately conjectural, and they often reaffirm an endless obsession with Shakespeare and Shakespearean drama. Moving beyond the absence of *Cardenio* to examine actual transpositions of Spanish literature into English plays is necessary for the expansion of Anglo-Spanish studies.⁴⁶ With that aim in mind, I focus here on *Kinsmen* as an indirect transposition of the same Spanish source used by

⁴⁵ The scope of *Cardenio* criticism is sizeable. For recent contributions, see Gregory Doran, *Shakespeare's Lost Play: In Search of Cardenio* (London: Nick Hern Books, 2012); Roger Chartier, *Cardenio Between Shakespeare and Cervantes: The Story of a Lost Play*, trans. Janet Lloyd (Malden, MA: Polity Press, 2013); *The Quest for Cardenio: Shakespeare, Fletcher, Cervantes, and the Lost Play*, ed. Gary Taylor and David Carnegie (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2012); and *The Creation and Re-creation of Cardenio: Performing Shakespeare, Transforming Cervantes*, ed. Terri Bourus and Gary Taylor (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013). On reimagining and staging *Cardenio* for modern audiences, see Stephen Greenblatt, "Theatrical Mobility," *Cultural Mobility: A Manifesto*, ed. Stephen Greenblatt (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2009): 75-95.

⁴⁶ Barbara Fuchs suggests that "leaving *Cardenio* aside for the moment, there is much work to be done in terms of reading *extant* plays that draw on Spain, albeit ones not graced by a connection to Shakespeare" (150). See Fuchs, "Beyond the Missing *Cardenio*: Anglo-Spanish Relations in Early Modern Drama," *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 39.1 (Winter 2009): 143-59.

Fletcher and Shakespeare in their collaborative play, *The History of Cardenio* (first performed by the King's Men in 1613).

Shakespeare and Fletcher had Spain and Cervantes in mind when they wrote *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, first performed immediately after their play *Henry VIII*, which benevolently reframes as providential the unsavory historical realities of Henry VIII's reign and paints a saintly picture of Catherine of Aragon. *Kinsmen* was also performed after the playwrights' *Cardenio*, another rewriting of Cervantean material. Whereas the play *Cardenio* may have offered a closer adaptation of Cervantes' novella, *Kinsmen* demonstrates a looser process of transposition that draws from its Spanish source thematic and formal elements, such as its use of irony, its treatment of same-sex friendship, and its exploration of providence in bringing about a "happy" resolution.⁴⁷ Shakespeare and Fletcher's tragicomedy is therefore crafted out of two modes of transposition: direct (from Chaucer) and indirect (from Cervantes). The playwrights' use of Cervantes is characterized by a looser appropriation of common or shared resources, rather than a direct use of source material. Common resources are stage and narrative plots, genres, performance practices, character archetypes, and other theatergrams that are

⁴⁷ Greenblatt more broadly draws a connection between the Cardenio story and *Two Noble Kinsmen* when he refers to the Cardenio episode as a "characteristic Renaissance tragicomedy of male friendship and sexual betrayal, the kind of story that had gripped Shakespeare's imagination throughout his career, from the early *Two Gentlemen of Verona* to the late *Two Noble Kinsmen*" (80). Similarly, Taylor categorizes the story of Cardenio as a tragicomedy, pointing out that "three of its four main characters... are emotional extremists who come close to committing suicide, but in the end no one dies, each Jill gets the right Jack, and everyone succumbs to a pandemic of happiness" (*Quest for Cardenio*, 17). This final "pandemic of happiness" is, as I argue, filled with unresolved tensions.

continuously borrowed, appropriated, transformed, and recycled between dramatic and literary traditions in a loose rather than a systematic or direct fashion.⁴⁸

From Chaucer to Cervantes

The prologue that opens *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, usually attributed to Fletcher, is markedly different from the prologues that open Fletcher's direct transpositions of Cervantes.⁴⁹ Fletcher's habit of drawing upon Cervantes to write plays would sustain him until the end of his career. When crafting a play out of Cervantean material, however, Fletcher typically erases any trace of Cervantes' authority or influence by emphasizing the newness of his creations: "New / I am sure it is, and handsome" (pro.9-10), he says of *Love's Pilgrimage* in that play's prologue. In *The Fair Maid of the Inn*, the playwrights introduce the play by calling it "our invention," which will only be understood by "nobler Judgements" (1.13; 12).⁵⁰ While Fletcher the playwright is drawn to Cervantes' stageable and intricately plotted novellas, Fletcher the Englishman with anti-Spanish political and religious views takes pains to efface Cervantes out of his own work.⁵¹ The case with

⁴⁸ On "common resources," see Robert Henke and Eric Nicholson's introduction in *Transnational Mobilities in Early Modern Theater* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2014). On the similar concept of "theatergrams," see Louise George Clubb, *Italian Drama in Shakespeare's Time* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1989).

⁴⁹ Ann Thompson ascribes to Shakespeare scenes 1.1-5, 3.1-2, 5.1, 5.3-5, and (probably) 2.1 and 4.3; and to Fletcher 2.2-6, 3.3-6, 4.1-2, and 5.2. See Thompson, *Shakespeare's Chaucer: A Study in Literary Origins* (Liverpool: Liverpool UP, 1978).

⁵⁰ Quotes from *Love's Pilgrimage* and *The Fair Maid of the Inn* are from *The Dramatic Works in the Beaumont and Fletcher Canon*, ed. Fredson Bowers, 2nd vol. (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1970).

⁵¹ Trudi L. Darby and Alexander Samson point to Fletcher's duality: on the one hand, his "cultural Hispanophilia and profound debt to Cervantes" and, on the other, his strongly Protestant background and "political hostility to Spain" (211). Fletcher's political anti-

Chaucer is different: in Fletcher's prologue to *Kinsmen*, Chaucer is front and center, seemingly inescapable, looming over the play with his legacy. The prologue tells us that *Kinsmen* "has a noble breeder," namely "Chaucer, of all admired" (pro.10; 13). Fletcher explains that "it were an endless thing / And too ambitious to aspire to [Chaucer], / Weak as we are and, almost breathless, swim / In this deep water" (pro.22-25). This aquatic metaphor will recur later in the play when Arcite describes himself as aboard a ship at sea propelled by the wind of the gods (providence) but guided by his own continual adjustment of the sails (free will): "So hoist we / The sails that must these vessels port" (5.1.28-9). Similarly, Fletcher and Shakespeare find themselves swimming in the "deep water" of Chaucer's work, but of course they are free to choose – if they regain their full capacity – a direction in which to swim. Certainly Fletcher's addition of the Jailer's Daughter subplot, nowhere to be found in the *Knight's Tale*, points to the liberties he takes with his transposition of the Chaucerian narrative.⁵² The subplot's comic, raunchy, parodic tone reveals that Fletcher's deep anxiety in the prologue is, to a large extent,

Spanish sentiments contributed to his continual disavowal of Cervantes as a literary source. See Darby and Samson, "Cervantes on the Jacobean Stage," *The Cervantean Heritage: Reception and Influence of Cervantes in Britain*, ed. J.A.G. Ardila (London: Legenda, 2009): 206-22.

⁵² I read the Jailer's Daughter in many ways as a parallel figure to Cardenio himself, rather than to any of the female characters in either Cervantes or Chaucer. Both Cardenio and the Jailer's Daughter descend into madness/delirium as a consequence of thwarted desire; they both wander in natural spaces pining for their lovers (Cardenio pines for Luscinda in the mountains, the Jailer's Daughter pines for Palamon in the forest); and they both withdraw from society and from normative social interaction. Additionally, they are both "cured" by the satisfaction of a heteronormative desire: for Cardenio, marriage to Luscinda, and for the Jailer's Daughter, sex with and (suggested) marriage to the anonymous Wooer who pretends to be Palamon. In providing a performative rather than a real resolution to the Jailer's Daughter subplot – she does not get Palamon, but essentially an actor pretending to be Palamon – *Kinsmen* further muddies the idea of marriage as providing sincere, real, and lasting closure.

conventional and facetious. The prologue's (and the play's) expression of anxiety at not living up to the older author's legacy has been explored by numerous critics who see an anxious paternal relationship between Chaucer, the overbearing father, and Shakespeare and Fletcher, the young sons attempting to live up to their father's expectations.⁵³ The playwrights' reverential tone is, to some degree, a conventional paying of dues, a formality that Fletcher in later transpositions will refuse to grant Cervantes.

The Cervantean narratives that Fletcher uses as sources, beginning with the Cardenio episode in *Don Quijote* and moving through the *Novelas ejemplares*, are characterized by seemingly convenient, providential resolutions that are actually subtly ironic and more problematic than they first appear. In other words, these narratives on the surface resolve the knot(s) of conflict successfully and offer neat resolutions that are driven by forgiveness, mercy, reunification, and the characters' surrender to an overarching and benevolent providential design. However, tension and conflict are not fully dispelled. The element of Cervantean narrative that Fletcher persistently magnifies in his reworkings of the Spanish author's work is the subtle, implicit irony that undermines these happy endings.

To unravel Fletcher and Shakespeare's transposition of Cervantes, we must begin with the story of Cardenio, a young nobleman in love with Luscinda. Cardenio asks Luscinda's father for her hand in marriage, but his plans are interrupted when he

⁵³ See Thompson, *Shakespeare's Chaucer*; Charles H. Frey, "Collaborating with Shakespeare: After the Final Play," *Shakespeare, Fletcher, and The Two Noble Kinsmen*, ed. Charles Frey (Columbia: U of Missouri UP, 1989): 31-44; Kathryn L. Lynch, "The Three Noble Kinsmen: Chaucer, Shakespeare, Fletcher," *Images of Matter: Essays on British Literature of the Middle Ages and Renaissance*, ed. Yvonne Bruce (Newark, DE: U of Delaware P, 2005): 72-91; and Misha Teramura, "The Anxiety of Auctoritas: Chaucer and *The Two Noble Kinsmen*," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 63.4 (Winter 2012): 544-76.

(Cardenio) is called by Duke Ricardo to serve his son in Andalucía. Cardenio's father sends him off to Andalucía, and so Luscinda is left only with the promise of Cardenio's eventual return. In Andalucía, Cardenio and the Duke's son Fernando strike up an instant friendship, and so Fernando confesses to Cardenio that he had sex with one of his father's *labradoras* (laborer) after promising to marry her, which of course he does not intend to do, given her low social rank. (This *labradora* is Dorotea, who reemerges later in the narrative.) Cardenio, in his desire to bond with Fernando, shares his own love story and tells Fernando of Luscinda. Soon after, Fernando must find a way to travel away from Andalucía for a few days, to avoid Dorotea. Fernando and Cardenio travel to Cardenio's hometown under pretense of purchasing some world-renowned horses at the marketplace in Córdoba. While there, Cardenio points out Luscinda to Fernando, who becomes mesmerized by her beauty. Fernando thinks up an excuse to get Cardenio back to Andalucía – they “forgot the money to pay for the horses” – and quickly swoops in, asking Luscinda's father for her hand in marriage. Luscinda's father accepts the offer, eager to marry his daughter to a Duke's son. Meanwhile, Cardenio learns of Fernando's betrayal (Luscinda sends him a letter) and returns to Córdoba just in time for the wedding, which he spies from a window. When Luscinda is asked to take Fernando as her husband she says yes, which Cardenio hears, and then she faints, which Cardenio does not see. Cardenio runs away in a frenzy to live in the mountains. Luscinda, however, had placed a note in her dress stating that she was already betrothed to Cardenio and that she only married Fernando to obey her parents' wishes. Fernando attempts to murder her – which we learn later, after the fact – but she flees to a nunnery. Fernando finds her there and abducts her. By this point, the *labradora* Dorotea has disguised herself as a boy to

look for Cardenio in the mountains and to ask for his help in confronting Fernando. Together, Dorotea and Cardenio set off on their quest and quickly find Fernando and the abducted Luscinda. After some convincing, Fernando apologizes for his behavior, recognizes a divine plan at work, repents, and takes Dorotea as his wife. This leaves Luscinda free to marry her true love, Cardenio.

On a surface level, then, Cervantes solves the love triangle (Cardenio-Luscinda-Fernando) by introducing Dorotea into the narrative. Yet, while Fernando's repentance seems sincere and compelling, it does not erase the violence of his behavior, particularly his deceitful coercion of Dorotea and his abduction (or *rapine*, another kind of rape) and attempted murder of Luscinda. The episode's resolution suggests that all is well because Fernando has repented and surrendered to an organizing force more powerful than himself (God), but his apparent transformation does not resolve the problematic issue of Dorotea having to marry her rapist. We must read Dorotea's willingness to marry Fernando not as a justification for this so-called happy ending, but as her expression of a desire that simply cannot be otherwise, because she has internalized the patriarchal, classist, and misogynist value structure of her society. As a woman of low social rank who is no longer a virgin, there are no conceivable alternatives for her.

Ultimately, the Cardenio episode problematizes the generic convention of marriage as the necessary ingredient for a "happy" resolution. It is precisely this problematizing of marriage, particularly through Emilia's ordeal, that Shakespeare and Fletcher emphasize in *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, and that they use to offer a bi-generic

ending (both comic and tragic, depending on our point of view).⁵⁴ Here I build on the work of Laurie Shannon, who has argued that “the play provocatively casts marriage as the expression of unreasoning political power, tainting it as the favored means of a ruler’s caprice and as inimical to a subject’s self possession or volition.”⁵⁵ In my view, marriage in *Kinsmen* is not only associated with abuses (or misuses) of political power, but also with the limiting constraints of generic convention, which can function in a fictional work to restrict the agency of fictional characters much like a sovereign acts in the real world to dictate the limits of his or her subjects.⁵⁶ Conveniently, *Kinsmen* combines both modes of constraint in the figure of Theseus, who through his political authority limits the movement and free will of the play’s characters in order to enforce a comic conclusion. The competition between Arcite and Palamon is resolved not through the addition of a second female character,⁵⁷ but through the subtraction of a male character

⁵⁴ Arguably, the play does not only problematize marriage but actually foregrounds the exhaustion of desire itself as its central issue. For instance, Richard Mallette argues that, “By bringing competing kinds of desire into relation with one another, the play insists more upon the ruin of desire than on the triumph of married love” (30). See Mallette, “Same-Sex Erotic Friendship in ‘The Two Noble Kinsmen,’” *Renaissance Drama* 26 (1995): 29-52.

⁵⁵ Laurie J. Shannon, “Emilia’s Argument: Friendship and ‘Human Title’ in *The Two Noble Kinsmen*,” *ELH* 64.3 (Fall 1997): 657-82 (657).

⁵⁶ In *Shakespeare and Religion* (London: Bloomsbury Arden Shakespeare, 2015), Alison Shell defines the Reformation as a “period constantly asking whether humankind was really free, and often coming up with a negative answer” (181). She reads *Kinsmen* in particular as a “virtuoso exercise in predestinarianism” and as portraying man’s lack of agency before the divine even more so than Shakespeare’s tragedies (222).

⁵⁷ Although the Jailer’s Daughter is a second, potentially marriageable female character in *Kinsmen*, her madness makes her an unsuitable bride for either Arcite or Palamon. On the Jailer’s Daughter and madness, see Douglas Bruster, “The Jailer’s Daughter and the Politics of Madwomen’s Language,” *Shakespeare Quarterly* 46.3 (Autumn 1995): 277-300; and Carol Thomas Neely, *Distracted Subjects: Madness and Gender in Shakespeare and Early Modern Culture* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 2004).

(Arcite) as a result of Theseus's tournament. Theseus also curtails Emilia's freedom when he offers her as a prize to the tournament's winner. Even beyond Emilia's individual situation, marriage throughout the play is represented as an imperfect yet compulsory social, political, and generic necessity. This is nowhere more evident than in the marriage of Theseus and Hippolyta, gained through violent conquest to fulfill Theseus's political agenda. In their tragicomic transposition, Shakespeare and Fletcher stress Cervantes' depiction of marriage as an unsavory social reality, omitting Emelye's crucial change of heart in the *Knight's Tale*.

Same-sex friendship functions in all three texts – the *Knight's Tale*, *Kinsmen*, and the Cardenio episode – as a contrast to marriage, the conventional end goal (for better or worse) of comic resolutions. There is a marked difference among these texts, however, in how male friendships are defined against female friendships, particularly in *Kinsmen*. The love and kinship between Arcite and Palamon is represented as fragile, easily disrupted, and based on competition rather than collaboration. By contrast, the childhood friendship between Emilia and Flavina, which Emilia describes nostalgically in great detail, serves as a model of a prelapsarian same-sex relationship: unspoiled, unselfish, severed only by Flavina's death (literally "till death do us part").⁵⁸ Thus *The Two Noble*

⁵⁸ In "On the Design of *The Two Noble Kinsmen*," *Review of English Literature* 5.4 (1964): 89-105, Philip Edwards argues that Emilia's desire is to "live in the past, in the age before puberty" and that she resists a "stage of life on which nature insists, the life of sexual relations" (100). But Emilia also (primarily) resists marriage, which is not a natural part of life but a social and political construction. To say that Emilia's avoidance of marriage simply arises out of a desire to live in the past is, I think, to diminish the significance of her defiance. Barry Weller points out that, problematically, friendship in the play "depends on negation, on an Edenic absence of conflict or dissonance," such as in the example of Emilia and Flavina's prelapsarian bond (107). See Weller, "The Two Noble Kinsmen, the Friendship Tradition, and the Flight from Eros," *Shakespeare*,

Kinsmen presents a hierarchy of relationships: in first place, and most ideal, is female same-sex friendship; in second place, male same-sex friendship; in third and final place is marriage, least ideal yet socially necessary. Marriage is represented as the tragic, unsavory third option, particularly in Emilia's case, since her model of female friendship with Flavina suggests that their bond would have lasted forever had death not ended it. Women, in other words, can exist in harmonious cooperation and create alternative, productive lifestyles for themselves (e.g. Hippolyta's Amazonian society).⁵⁹ Male friendships, in contrast, end naturally and sometimes violently once boys turn into men and become driven by a procreative instinct.⁶⁰ The (social) danger of same-sex friendships in *Much Ado About Nothing*, for instance, is not that Beatrice will die a spinster, but that Benedick will remain forever stuck in his boyish, immature, socially stagnant ways, therefore failing to achieve true manhood and thwarting the play's festive and fecund resolution.

Although there are striking similarities between the Arcite-Palamon (in both the *Tale* and in *Kinsmen*) and Fernando-Cardenio friendships and their subsequent disruptions, the solution to male competition in Cervantes is markedly different from the

Fletcher, and The Two Noble Kinsmen, ed. Charles Frey (Columbia: Missouri UP, 1989): 93-108.

⁵⁹ On the politics of Amazonian community, see Louis Montrose, "A *Midsummer Night's Dream* and the Shaping Fantasies of Elizabethan Culture: Gender, Power, Form," *Rewriting the Renaissance: The Discourses of Sexual Difference in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Margaret Ferguson, Maureen Quilligan, and Nancy J. Vickers (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1986): 65-87.

⁶⁰ On same-sex friendship (in addition to Weller), see Alan Stewart, "'Near Akin': The Trials of Friendship in *The Two Noble Kinsmen*," *Shakespeare's Late Plays: New Readings*, ed. Jennifer Richards and James Knowles (Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 1999): 57-74; and Wickham.

solutions offered by Chaucer in the *Tale* and Fletcher and Shakespeare in *Kinsmen*.

Whereas Cervantes resolves the conflict through a conveniently ideal turn of events – the introduction of Dorotea into the love triangle – Chaucer relies on supernatural intervention to kill Arcite, and the English playwrights introduce the possible element of human agency (bolstered by divine intervention) when Emilia gifts Arcite the horse that leads to his unexpected death. My reading extends our current understanding of *The Two Noble Kinsmen* by illuminating Emilia’s central role as an agent of opposition not only to Theseus as the play’s patriarchal authority, but also to the comic forces that would avert death and end the play festively. Within and in spite of her inevitable social constraints, Emilia embodies free will. And because her free will advances alternative, nonconformist desires – to permanently revel in female friendship and avoid marriage and motherhood – Emilia’s character is antithetical to comedy, which draws its energy and successful resolution from traditional heteronormative union and the promise of future procreation and abundant fertility.

In the Cardenio episode in *Don Quijote*, as in many of Cervantes’ *Novelas ejemplares*, providence seems to win out over the agency of free will. There are subtle hints throughout of a providential design at work, leading to a conclusion that reaffirms and substantiates earlier references to benevolent divine orchestration. The first of these hints occurs when Cardenio’s father sends Cardenio to serve the Duke Ricardo’s son in Andalucía. This is a deviation from Cardenio’s plan to marry Luscinda. Cardenio does not refuse his father’s alternative request, since his father frames it as providentially ordained: “De aquí a dos días te partirás, Cardenio, a hacer la voluntad del duque; y da gracias a Dios que te va abriendo camino por donde alcances lo que yo sé que mereces”

[In two days you will depart, Cardenio, to serve the duke's will. Give thanks to God, who is clearing your path so you may achieve what I know you deserve] (247).⁶¹ Per Cardenio's father, God is clearing a pathway for his son, yet it is up to Cardenio to walk that path and avoid unnecessary digressions. Of course, Cardenio's friendship with Fernando *seems* an unnecessary, even disastrous, digression, but it is in the end resolved through mercy, forgiveness, and convenient plotting. Ultimately, it is through Fernando's meeting of Cardenio – and all that unfolds because of it – that Fernando's destructive impulses are transmuted, at least on the surface narrative, into repentance and Fernando surrenders to divine forces larger and wiser than himself.

In all three texts – the *Tale*, *Kinsmen*, and the Cardenio episode – the fragility of same-sex male bonds is emphasized through displays of male friendships that begin as seemingly ideal but that quickly deteriorate into petty rivalries. The initial friendship between Cardenio and Fernando is described in positive, hyperbolic terms: “Fernando... en poco tiempo, quiso que [yo] fuese tan su amigo, que daba que decir a todos; y, aunque el mayor [hijo del duque Ricardo] me quería bien y me hacía merced, no llegó al extremo con que don Fernando me quería y trataba” [Fernando... in a short time, desired me to be so friendly with him that he would announce it to everyone; and, even though the eldest [son of Duke Ricardo] liked me and treated me well, he could not surpass the degree of love that don Fernando had for me] (248). Fernando feels great affection for Cardenio at first, demonstrated by their instant rapport and sharing of secrets, such as Fernando's attraction to Dorotea and, later, Cardenio's love for Luscinda. Romantic endeavors, and the suffering that accompany them, are the focal point of Cardenio and Fernando's

⁶¹ Reference is from Miguel de Cervantes, *Don Quijote de la Mancha* (New York: Vintage Español, 2010). All translations throughout this dissertation are mine.

relationship, and also of Arcite and Palamon's friendship in the *Knight's Tale*. Rather than bonding over a heterosexual desire for women, Palamon and Arcite recite vows to each other renouncing any and all romantic pursuits. In Palamon's words:

[I] am thy cosyn and thy brother
Ysworn ful depe, and ech of us til oother,
That nevere, for to dyen in the peyne,
Til that the deeth departe shal us tweyne,
Neither of us in love to hyndre oother,
Ne in noon oother cas, my leeve brother,
But that thou sholdest trewely forthren me
In every cas, as I shal forthren thee.
(1131-38)

They swear never to forsake each other, stand in each other's way, or allow themselves to be separated even under torture. "Til that the deeth departe shal us tweyne," says Palamon, describing exactly what will happen to them – Arcite's death will indeed part them – but not realizing they will part as enemies, rather than as friends. In *Kinsmen*, Shakespeare and Fletcher intensify Arcite and Palamon's vows by turning their friendship into a symbolic marriage. As Arcite tells Palamon during their joint imprisonment, "We are an endless mine to one another, / We are one another's wife, ever begetting / New births of love" (2.2.79-81). Their friendship-marriage is described in productive and gestational terms: "ever begetting / New births of love."⁶² However, this sort of harmonious and continual renewal of love can only be achieved if they remain isolated in their prison cell. Out in the real world, "A wife might part us lawfully, or business," Arcite says, and so this prison will serve as their "holy sanctuary" (2.2.89; 71). Arcite's speech emphasizes the vulnerability of male friendship, suggesting that this kind

⁶² Arcite's description of their friendship can also be read as a metaphor for the process of transposition itself, which is the merging of the minds and ideas of at least two authors. In its infinite potential variations, transposition can also be described as "ever begetting... new births" of, rather than love, fictional or creative works.

of relationship can sustain itself in the long term only through a complete break from society and social obligations.

Part of the irony in all three storylines is that these men make elaborate linguistic displays of love for one another, and yet they abruptly renounce their male alliances as soon as women enter the picture. This kind of insular male friendship is therefore represented as an unsustainable bond that must be replaced, sooner or later, with normative, heterosexual, procreative marriage. Indeed, heterosexual desire and marriage function as the destructive forces that shatter these male bonds. It is either youthful male friendship *or* mature heteronormative marriage; the two are incompatible.⁶³ In the *Knight's Tale*, Palamon's initial view of Emelye through a window is described by the knight-narrator as driven by "aventure or cas" – accident or chance (1074).⁶⁴ However, it is clear that the supposedly accidental entrance of Emelye into the *Tale*, and Palamon's redirected attention because of it, are not accidental at all, but inevitable. In the Cardenio episode, Cervantes features an inverted window-gazing scene when Fernando and Cardenio watch Luscinda through a window from outside her house (Palamon and Arcite spy on Emelye through a window from *inside* their prison cell). Similarly, Fernando's view of Luscinda is initially framed as an accidental misfortune – perhaps a casualty of Cardenio's trusting nature – but is eventually interpreted as an inevitable occurrence, and

⁶³ For the origin of these ideas beyond Shakespearean criticism (particularly on heteronormativity), see Gayle Rubin, "The Traffic in Women: Notes on the 'Political Economy' of Sex," *Toward an Anthropology of Women*, ed. Rayna Reiter (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1975), 157-210; and Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Epistemology of the Closet* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1990).

⁶⁴ On the repetitive use of "aventure or cas" and their variations throughout the *Knight's Tale*, see Lee Patterson's chapter "The *Knight's Tale* and the Crisis of Chivalric Identity" in *Chaucer and the Subject of History* (Madison: The U of Wisconsin P, 1991), 165-230.

as the catalyst that sets off the rest of the narrative's forward momentum and the clever plotting that will enable a happy resolution.

Generic Inversions: Marriage as Tragedy

From Emilia's perspective, Arcite's death in *Kinsmen* may be seen as partly comic because it comes close to relieving Emilia of the marriage she does not want. By the same token, Palamon's interrupted execution is, from this perspective, not comic but tragic, because rather than averting an unwanted marriage for Emilia, Palamon's survival enables it. By transforming death into a comic element, this tragicomedy is able to incorporate death into its narrative without becoming a strict tragedy. The framing of death as comic deviates from the form of tragicomedy previously theorized by Guarini and Fletcher himself, as I have suggested. Guarini and Fletcher's earlier classifications of death as the anti-comic element in tragicomic form are inverted in *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, signaling Fletcher's departure from the Italianate model. What actually needs to be averted in this play is not death but forced marriage, which is worse than death if viewed from an anti-patriarchal position. The threat of marriage is not averted, and this is precisely what makes the tragicomedy tragic. In this, *Kinsmen* follows its indirect Cervantean source more closely than its direct Chaucerian source. This sharp distinction between *Kinsmen* and both the Guarinian and earlier pastoral modes of English tragicomedy arises out of the transposition of Cervantean material, revealing a critically overlooked Spanish influence on the development of English tragicomedy.

In the case of *Kinsmen*, a dominant, heteronormative, patriarchal perspective may win out, but an alternate point of view is also forcefully presented and sustained through

to the end, unlike the thwarted female perspective in the *Knight's Tale*. Despite earlier pleadings to Diana to remain an eternal virgin, Chaucer's Emelye exhibits a change of heart regarding marriage during the tournament. When Emelye looks down at Arcite with a "freendlich ye," the *Tale* has moved us from Arcite and Palamon's one-sided gazing at Emelye in the garden to a reciprocal exchange. In Cervantes, however, Luscinda responds very differently to her arranged marriage to Fernando, calling it a "sacrificio" [sacrifice] and fainting after saying yes at the altar (285). Cardenio carries the metaphor forward when he says to Luscinda: "el decir tú sí y el acabárseme la vida ha de ser todo un punto" [your saying yes and my death are but one single event] (287). Luscinda's marriage to Fernando, then, not only causes her metaphorical death (she faints, then flees to a convent) but Cardenio's as well, who removes himself from civilized society to become a naked recluse in the mountains. This association between marriage and death is the primary source of tension in *The Two Noble Kinsmen*.

Where Cervantes implicitly emphasizes the lack of options for Dorotea by the end of the Cardenio episode, Shakespeare and Fletcher do offer us a potential alternative to enforced marriage for Emilia. This alternative is female friendship. Emilia's nostalgic description of her childhood friendship with Flavina is described by Roger Chartier as evoking the "pure and innocent love of two little girls," which is "greater and more indivisible than the link of marriage or the friendship between two men."⁶⁵ Richard Mallette argues that a "salient feature of Emilia's friendship with Flavina is her recollection of their equality and balance," precisely the elements in Palamon and

⁶⁵ Roger Chartier, *Cardenio Between Shakespeare and Cervantes: The Story of a Lost Play*, trans. Janet Lloyd (Malden, MA: Polity Press, 2013), 87.

Arcite's bond that are destroyed through their competition.⁶⁶ Indeed, Emilia's speech reveals the stark contrast between Emilia and Flavina's friendship and the fragile friendship between Palamon and Arcite. Emilia stresses that Flavina and herself "were things innocent" who "loved for we did and like the elements / That know not what nor why, yet do effect / Rare issues by their operance" (1.3.60; 61-3). They loved without knowing why, without reason, without thinking. They simply loved, and in their instinctual, natural, pure love they stirred each other's souls (1.3.63-4). Like Arcite's language in the jail cell, Emilia's here verges on the procreative: the women's love "effect[ed]" these "rare issues," or generated joint creations as their spirits intermingled. Emilia's unconditional love and painful nostalgia for Flavina leads her to conclude that "the true love 'tween maid and maid may be / More than in sex dividual" (1.3.81-2). This conclusion – the love between two female friends always ultimately trumps the love between a man and a woman – is the climax of Emilia's speech. Indeed, Hippolyta remarks to Emilia: "You're out of breath! / And this high-speeded pace is but to say / That you shall never, like the maid Flavina, / Love any that's called man" (1.3.82-5). Emilia's ardent conviction leads her to assert: "I am sure I shall not" (1.3.85).

Divine providence plays a major role in Emelye's change of heart in the *Knight's Tale*, which in turn brings about the *Tale's* comic resolution. While Emelye is initially resistant to marriage, she ultimately accepts what she perceives as her fate because Diana suggests that Emelye's impending marriage is divinely ordained. Emelye makes a sacrificial offering and prays at Diana's temple: "Chaste goddesse, wel wostow that I /

⁶⁶ Richard Mallette, "Same-Sex Erotic Friendship in 'The Two Noble Kinsmen,'" *Renaissance Drama* 26 (1995): 29-52 (32).

Desire to ben a mayden al my lyf, / No nevere wol I be no love ne wyf” (2304-6). She would prefer to remain a maiden and hunt for the rest of her life, rather than become a “wyf and be with childe” (2310). Her first choice is for Palamon and Arcite to resolve their issues by themselves, leaving her in peace. But she also states that, if there is no way around the marriage, she wishes to marry the man who “most” desires her. Soon thereafter, Diana appears physically to Emelye, with bow in hand, to proclaim Emelye’s fate: “Among the goddes hye it is affirmed, / And by eterne word writen and confermed, / Thou shalt ben wedded unto oon of tho / That han for thee so muchel care and wo, / But unto which of hem I may nat telle” (2349-53). Emelye has her answer: the gods have orchestrated the marriage, and so there is no use trying to wriggle or pray her way out of it. Diana’s physical intervention serves to pacify Emelye and to get her to accept her “writen and confermed” fate. After Diana’s appearance, Emelye agrees to witness the tournament and reciprocates Arcite’s loving gaze after his victory, abandoning her wishes for eternal maidenhood and reconciling herself to the fate the gods – and Theseus – have ordained.

Shakespeare and Fletcher transpose the direct, concrete, and horizontal relationship between humans and gods in the *Tale* into an abstract, invisible, vertical relationship between humans and gods in *Kinsmen*. In Chaucer, gods and goddesses intervene physically and consistently throughout the narrative to orchestrate events and move the plot forward. Diana reveals to Emelye her unchangeable fate; Mercury commands Arcite (in his sleep) to go to Athens; Diana commands Theseus to go hunting (where Theseus finds Palamon and Arcite fighting in the grove); Mars commands Theseus, before the *Tale* even begins, to become a warrior and go to war. Gods are

therefore the puppeteers that pull the strings of humans' lives, and they are also the primary forces animating the narrative's forward motion. This kind of direct supernatural intervention is transformed in *Kinsmen* into an uncertain and abstract relationship between humans and gods: humans presuppose that the gods are orchestrating their lives, but the gods never confirm this as concretely as they do in the *Tale*.

When Emilia prays to Diana's altar in *Kinsmen*, Diana does not appear to her physically to offer an unambiguous answer to her questions, but rather communicates through signs. Emilia approaches the altar dressed in white, and tells Diana: "I am bride-habited, / But maiden-hearted" (5.1.150-1).⁶⁷ When Emilia asks Diana to retain her "file and quality" as a virgin, a rose tree ascends from beneath the altar, brandishing a single rose. Emilia takes this as a good omen: "this battle shall confound / Both these brave knights and I, a virgin flower, / Must grow alone, unplucked" (5.1.166-8). With a "sudden twang of instruments," representing the discord of Emilia's wishes with the opposing commands of Theseus, the rose falls from the tree. Emilia interprets the falling flower as Diana "discharg[ing]" her from her vestal service, but Emilia's final words in the scene emphasize her mystification regarding Diana's true wishes: "I know not thine own will; / Unclasp thy mystery! – I hope she's pleased; / Her signs were gracious" (5.1.171-3). For both Emilia and for us, Diana's signs remain ambiguous, interpretable, uncertain. Does the fallen rose symbolize Emilia's loss of virginity as ordained by Diana?

⁶⁷ Scholars, including Thompson, attribute most scenes in act 5 to Shakespeare, with the exception of 5.2, which is Fletcher's. 5.2 provides a resolution to the Jailer's Daughter subplot, where the Wooer (dressed as Palamon) is instructed by the Doctor to have sex with and marry the Jailer's Daughter to cure her of her "madness." This scene also provides parodic contrast to the final moments of 5.1, the scene that precedes it, where Emilia, dressed as a bride, pleads with Diana to save her from marriage and to keep her virginity intact.

Or is it a physical representation of Theseus's command, which opposes both Emilia *and* Diana's wishes? (Or does the rose foreshadow Arcite's fall and death?) These symbols are not concrete statements like those offered to Emelye by Diana herself in the *Tale*. Emilia is therefore left in the dark, more or less, but in this space of interpretation and of ambiguity Emilia is given more agency than Chaucer's Emelye, whose hopes of remaining a maiden are dispelled by Diana when Emelye's certain fate (marriage) is announced to her. There is no room for Emelye to intervene or resist, since Diana is emphatic that marriage is her predetermined destiny and no amount of mortal struggling will get her out of it. Emilia, however, can choose to interpret Diana's signs optimistically and therefore use them – and Diana's invisible aid – as encouragement and motivation to embolden herself and stay true to her own wishes.

Emilia engages in a series of defiant acts that begins with her private prayers to Diana, progresses into her public refusal to watch Arcite and Palamon's battle, and ends with her gifting Arcite the black horse that leads to his death. The progression of Emilia's agency, displayed through her use of various tactics to resist Theseus's authority, is more aligned with Dorotea's behavior in the Cardenio episode than with Emelye's actions in the *Tale*. Emilia's sense of agency is clear in 5.3, which opens with her adamant refusal to watch the tournament. Shakespeare and Fletcher raise the stakes of this battle by adding a fatal addendum to Theseus's decree from the *Tale*: the tournament's loser in *Kinsmen* will be executed. This turns the tournament far more sinister and pits marriage literally against death. As Emilia, Hippolyta, Pirithous, and Theseus approach the arena, Emilia states, "I'll no step further" (5.3.1). She announces she will stay back: "It is enough my hearing shall be punished / With what shall happen, 'gainst the which there is

/ No deafing, but to hear, not taint mine eye / With dread sights it may shun” (5.3.7-10). Emilia wishes for deafness and blindness in order to avoid any sensory input of the unfolding tournament, and also to renounce any responsibility for either Palamon’s or Arcite’s death (worth noting here that Emelye’s presence in the *Tale* unintentionally distracts Arcite, who falls off his horse after sneaking a peek at her). The bitterness in her tone is aimed at Theseus, the tournament’s orchestrator and ultimately the man who is *punishing* Emilia (“my hearing shall be punished”). He is, as usual, the first to speak up against her wishes and to objectify her: “You must be present: / You are the victor’s meed, the prize and garland” (5.3.15-6). Emilia refuses: “Pardon me; / If I were there, I’d wink” (5.3.18). In other words, even if Theseus got her there physically, she would still use her free will to shut her eyes and imagine herself elsewhere. Theseus insists twice more that she must go, with Hippolyta backing him up once, but Emilia will not be persuaded. Finally, Theseus surrenders: “Well, well, then, at your pleasure” (5.3.34). None of this is actually at Emilia’s pleasure, but her act of defiance is successful, at least momentarily.

Active Labor versus Surrendering to Providential Design

Shakespeare and Fletcher construct a scene of remarkable tragicomic juxtaposition in 5.4, when Pirithous interrupts Palamon’s execution at precisely the last minute to announce that Arcite is dying. Arcite usurps, metaphorically, Palamon’s place on the chopping block. In a departure from the *Knight’s Tale*, where death is not strictly necessary under Theseus’s conditions, *Kinsmen* suggests that a death *must* take place, but either body will do: Palamon’s or Arcite’s, as long as one of them dies. When in the play

Pirithous enters and tells Palamon to “Arise, great sir” from the executioner’s block, it is as though Palamon is resurrected, and Arcite will literally fill Palamon’s grave (5.4.46). Pirithous describes the story of Arcite’s accident as “most rarely sweet and bitter;” namely, tragicomic, since Arcite’s death will save Palamon’s life (5.4.47). There is a different sense in which Arcite’s death is bittersweet, for Emilia: it is sweet because she won’t have to marry Arcite, yet bitter because she will have to marry his replacement.

Arcite’s accident in Chaucer clearly arises out of the gods’ intervention: Venus is disappointed due to Palamon’s loss, so her father Saturn promises to cheer her up by sending a hellish monster – “a furie infernal” – to scare Arcite’s horse (2685). The horse is minimally described:

[Arcite’s] hors for fere gan to turne,
And leep aside, and foundred as he leep;
And er that Arcite may taken keep,
He pighte hym on the pomel of his heed,
That in the place he lay as he were deed,
His brest tobrosten with his sadel-bowe.
(2685-90)

Spooked by the infernal “furie,” Arcite’s horse stumbles, leaps, and turns violently, throwing Arcite on his head and shattering his chest. The horse’s identifying characteristics, such as its origin, training, breed, and color are omitted. Arcite, for his part, is described as incapable of controlling his horse, since his reaction time is too slow: “And er that Arcite may taken keep, / [The horse] pighte hym on the pomel of his heed” (2687-8). The accident therefore seems inevitable, given the gods’ direct intervention and Arcite’s inability to calm his horse quickly and adeptly. There is also a suggestion that Arcite’s vanity was at least partly responsible for his death, since Arcite had removed his helmet to “shewe his face” to the cheering crowd and to Emelye (2677). The accident is

particularly brutal because Arcite falls on his helmet-less head, precisely where he is most vulnerable. The knight-narrator, however, defines the accident as a “miracle” (2675). This implies not only that the gods were somehow involved, in the knight’s view, but that Arcite’s accident is the catalyst for the *Tale*’s miraculous turn of events and for the resolution of the problematic love triangle.

In the *Knight’s Tale*, it is easy for characters to point to divine intervention as a primary force in their lives, since the gods themselves are physically present. There is abundant ocular and auditory proof of the gods, and so a suspension of disbelief is not required. In the Cardenio episode, Cervantes’ characters must take a leap of faith, since there is no direct evidence of divine intervention, and yet the resolution hinges on the characters’ recognition of an overarching and benevolent providential design. This design is referenced as the ultimate solution to the Fernando-Cardenio-Luscinda love triangle and to the competition between Cardenio and Fernando. When Cardenio and Dorotea confront Fernando, Dorotea begins by telling him: “Tú no puedes ser de la hermosa Luscinda, porque eres mío, ni ella puede ser tuya, porque es de Cardenio; y más fácil te será, si en ello miras, reducir tu voluntad a querer a quien te adora” [You cannot belong to beautiful Luscinda, because you are mine, and she cannot belong to you, because she is Cardenio’s; it will be easier for you, if you think on it, to curb your will and love the woman who adores you] (387). Essentially, Dorotea asks Fernando to abandon his stubborn and problematic desires, and to redirect his free will. A providential design is invoked when everyone tells Fernando “Que considerase que, no acaso, como parecía, sino con particular providencia del cielo, se habían todos juntado en lugar donde menos ninguno pensaba” [To consider that they had all come together in this place none of them

had imagined, not by chance, as it appeared, but through heavenly providence] (389). Faced with this realization, Fernando must acquiesce: “el valeroso pecho de don Fernando... se ablandó y se dejó vencer por la verdad, que él no pudiera negar aunque quisiera” [the valiant chest of Don Fernando... softened and allowed the truth to overcome him, a truth he could not deny even if he wanted to] (390). This moment is framed as Fernando coming to terms with a kind of essential truth, with reality, with circumstances that are heavenly orchestrated and therefore inevitable. Fernando is “overcome” by the so-called truth; he is *vencido*, a word that denotes a degree of pressure or force. As the narrative tells us, Fernando could not deny this truth *even if he wanted to*, and so there is an element of forcible conquest that suggests an ironic shift in power dynamics for Fernando, who once sexually “overcame” Dorotea with his promises of love and commitment. This kind of character realization is a recurrent trope in Cervantean resolutions, particularly in the so-called idealistic *Novelas ejemplares*, and the kind of transformation Fletcher seeks to problematize through his later experiments with tragicomic transpositions. These moments are more ambiguous than they first appear; they are simultaneously sincere and ironic, potentially *not* about the realization of an inherent truth, but rather about a human construction of meaning (an interpretation) that accommodates a happy ending and that conveniently resolves narrative conflict.

It is this underlying current of irony in Cervantes’ resolutions that Fletcher picks up and emphasizes in later transpositions of the Spanish author such as *Love’s Pilgrimage* and *Rule a Wife and Have a Wife*. I propose that the intentionally artificial, ironically convenient, and self-conscious mode of Fletcherian tragicomedy is directly influenced by the subtle irony of Cervantean narrative resolution. Writing *The Two Noble*

Kinsmen collaboratively, Fletcher and Shakespeare exploit this irony and tension in their problematizing of both the direct intervention of the gods in Chaucer and the faith-full perception of the gods in Cervantes. In *Kinsmen*, any ocular proof and/or blind faith in the gods' intervention are replaced with doubt, uncertainty, and mystery regarding supernatural aid. This transpositional strategy is nowhere more evident than in the playwrights' rewriting of Arcite's accident.

Pirithous's story of Arcite's accident in *Kinsmen*, which plays up the ambiguity of the event, is remarkably different from the accident's description in Chaucer. The fall occurs offstage, so the audience does not witness it firsthand, but simply hears of it through Pirithous's words and through Emilia's reception of the news. Shakespeare and Fletcher also alter the conditions of the accident significantly:

[Arcite] Mounted upon a steed that Emily
Did first bestow on him, a black one, owing
Not a hair-worth of white, which some will say
Weakens his price and many will not buy
His goodness with this note – which superstition
Here finds allowance – on this horse is Arcite
Trotting the stones of Athens...
(5.4.50-6)

... what envious flint,
Cold as old Saturn and, like him, possessed
With fire malevolent, darted a spark,
Or what fierce sulphur else, to this end made,
I comment not.

...
[The horse] seeks all foul means
Of boist'rous and rough jad'ry to disseat
His lord, that kept it bravely. When nought served –
When neither curb would crack, girth break, nor
diff'ring plunges
Disroot his rider whence he grew, but that
He kept him 'tween his legs – on his hind hoofs
On end he stands,
That Arcite's legs being higher than his head,

Seemed with strange art to hang. His victor's wreath
Even then fell off his head and presently
Backward the jade comes o'er and his full poise
Becomes the rider's load. Yet is he living,
But such a vessel 'tis, that floats but for
The surge that next approaches.
(5.4.62-84)

Unlike the non-descript horse in the *Knight's Tale*, Arcite's horse in the play is described in great detail. It is a "black one," without a single white hair, a characteristic that lowers its price since it is perceived as an indication of viciousness and evil. Rather than discounting these cultural associations, Pirithous gives credence to them when he states that this particular superstition – regarding the horse's coloring and therefore its character – "here finds allowance." Given the horse's behavior with Arcite, the negative connotations of its blackness are reaffirmed and proven true. More importantly, the horse is Emilia's gift to Arcite, which raises the question of whether she would intentionally provide Arcite with an unruly, vicious, "evil" horse in the hopes that such an accident would seriously injure or kill Arcite, thus relieving Emilia of the obligation to marry him. Pirithous's language throughout the rest of his narration points to some kind of black magic or witchcraft as partly responsible for the accident: there is the personified "envious flint" that ignites the spark that spooks the horse, described by Pirithous as "possessed" like "old Saturn" with "fire malevolent." There is also the "fierce sulphur," associated with the fires of Hell. Although we can read Pirithous's language as pointing to supernatural forces akin to Chaucer's Saturn and Pluto, who cause the accident in the *Tale*, I suggest that Pirithous uses this language to associate the accident with black magic, and potentially a black magic produced by a human agent rather than a god: Emilia. After all, it is the specifically black, vicious horse gifted to Arcite by Emilia

combined with the malevolent spark that leads to Arcite's injury. It is clear in the play that Arcite is an excellent horseman, managing to stay on the horse despite the horse's violent attempts to "disroot" him, so it is not Arcite's lack of skill that contributes to the accident. I ascribe Pirithous's unwillingness to comment not to his uncertainty over the accident's cause, but to his suspicions that Emilia may have been more involved than it seems. The unresolved ambiguity and interpretive openness of both the accident and the fallen rose at Diana's altar suggest that in this play resolution does not arise solely from direct divine intervention, but through human interpretation of events – in other words, another form of human agency.

In the *Knight's Tale*, on the other hand, the ultimate divine agent responsible for resolution is Pluto (on behalf of Saturn), who intervenes to scare Arcite's horse. Theseus's "First Mover" speech in Part Four of the *Knight's Tale* cements a definition of the gods as the all-seeing, omnipotent orchestrators of humans' lives. Although *Kinsmen* also wavers between fortune, human agency, and divine intervention as catalysts for human action (and its subsequent outcomes), and the gods are frequently invoked as all-powerful, in 5.4 Shakespeare introduces an element of doubt regarding the powers and scope of supernatural agency.⁶⁸ The accident's catalyst remains a mystery, and Pirithous's refusal to comment or to venture a guess complicates the *Tale's* representation of Saturn's direct and physical intervention in the outcome of Arcite and Palamon's combat. (Or at least the knight's representation of these events, since he is after all narrating the story, which is therefore a reflection of his worldview.) By increasing the

⁶⁸ In *The Swan at the Well: Shakespeare Reading Chaucer* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1985), E. Talbot Donaldson summarizes the issue succinctly, referring to the narrative's darkness: "whereas the horrors in Chaucer seem mostly charged to the gods above, Shakespeare puts them back where they started, in the hearts of people" (53).

ambiguity of the gods' very existence and of their interventions in human affairs, *The Two Noble Kinsmen* questions the idea of heavenly providence and any assumption of its benevolence. Ultimately, the play endorses a philosophy of passivity and of relinquishing control to divine forces, but it does so only because generic necessity (in this case, an ending that is comic through the play's dominant perspective) is more strongly aligned with passivity than with active labor and free will. Therefore, the play's endorsement of this worldview is tinged with the same irony that undermines the "happy" ending of the Cardenio episode, where surrender to providential design is driven by narrative and generic exigencies.

Arcite's failure to win Emilia through his physical prowess is the strongest evidence for the play's ironic endorsement of passivity. In both Chaucer and *Kinsmen* Arcite is portrayed as a proponent of hard labor, or, in Chaucer's term, "travaille." Arcite is concerned, above all, with winning the battle against Palamon, and he believes he must do so through physical strength and active labor. When Arcite prays to Mars in the *Tale*, he acknowledges that Mars controls men's destinies ("hem fortunest as thee lyst devyse" (2377)), yet he also clarifies that he, Arcite "moot *with strengthe* wyne hire [Emelye] in the place [arena]" (2399, my emphasis). Arcite tells Mars: "Myn be the travaille, and thyn be the glorie!" (2406). Shakespeare's Arcite is an even more impassioned proponent of this philosophy, announcing he is "in labour / To push" his former kinsman Palamon aside during combat (5.1.25-6). A link is made here between Arcite's martial "labour" and actual childbirth; Arcite clearly views himself as capable of giving metaphorical birth to his victory over Palamon. In other words, Arcite understands himself – if we read his reference to "labour" as connected to childbirth – as a powerful *creator*, rather than

simply at the mercy of the gods. Arcite also refers to humans as sailors, “hoist[ing]... the sails that must these vessels port, even where / The heavenly limiter pleases” (5.1.28-30). In this perspective, humans have direct influence over the course of mortal events, and the gods’ intervention is limited to setting broad parameters. The arduous labor of hoisting the sails and keeping these vessels on course falls on the humans, while the gods are the wind that animates the sails. Arcite’s address to his knights reinforce his desire to win at all costs: “You know my prize / Must be *dragged out* of blood; *force* and *great feat* / Must put my garland on” (5.1.42-4, my emphasis). His is a philosophy of hard work and forceful, direct action. In defeating Arcite, the play therefore enforces a worldview based on surrender to providential design, but it does so ironically: the play privileges passivity over hard work because it is passivity that enables a “happy,” comic resolution. Similarly, Emilia’s private desires are curbed because they are antithetical to a conventional comic ending. Because they each stand for free will and independent action, Emilia and Arcite are in a sense cut down by the play’s trajectory towards a resolution that hinges on passive endurance and acceptance of (what the play frames as) divine orchestration. In this, *Kinsmen* makes a powerful point about the symbiotic relationship between gender and generic resolution. Active resistance is initially privileged for Emilia, yet it is curtailed once it begins to interfere with the play’s comic, conservatively patriarchal ending. Conversely, the play requires passive acceptance – rather than active labor and effort – from Palamon and Arcite to arrive at its gendered, tragicomic resolution.

Arcite’s primary concern with securing his victory on the battlefield, along with his emphasis on *strengthe*, *travaille*, and *force* are ultimately misplaced in the genres of

chivalric romance and stage tragicomedy, where resolution hinges on the successful outcome of romantic courtship(s): marriage. Palamon and Arcite are described as perfect equals many times in the *Knight's Tale*, and Emilia in *The Two Noble Kinsmen* has difficulty weighing Palamon's strengths against Arcite's (and vice versa). Despite this illusion of equivalence between Arcite and Palamon, they are actually fundamentally different, and this difference comes into stark relief in the two kinsmen's prayers to Mars and Venus. Palamon is allied with Venus, goddess of love, and his most immediate concern is thus to win Emilia's hand, rather than to win the duel. In the *Tale*, Palamon attempts to relate to Venus the hellish torment his heart has experienced being separated from Emelye: "I ne have no langage to telle / Th'effectes ne the tormentz of myn helle" (2227-8). He is so distressed that all he can do is ask for mercy (2231). The point is that Palamon approaches Venus from a stance of victimhood and powerlessness, rather than one of strength. He states clearly that he doesn't care for combat and has no interest in bragging rights: "I kepe noight of armes for to yelpe" (2238). Palamon is chiefly – in fact, wholly – concerned with Emelye. If he cannot win Emelye's hand, he prays to Venus for Arcite to pierce his heart with a spear (2255-6). Following suit, Shakespeare transforms Chaucer's Palamon into a self-designated lover, rather than a warrior: "Such a one I am / And vow that lover never yet made sigh / Truer than I" (5.1.124-6). He defines himself as a patient lover, sighing and praying for his love to be finally requited. This image is also associated with passivity, which is a key element of Palamon's worldview. He describes the world as Venus's "chase," or hunting ground, and humans as "herds in [Venus's] game" (5.1.131-2). Palamon's understanding of mortals as essentially pawns in games

played by the gods offers a radically different picture from Arcite's understanding of himself as "in labour," or as capable of exercising his own creative power.

Palamon's alignment with Venus, with love, and with patient endurance of external events – over which he believes he has little or no control – is juxtaposed in both tale and play with Arcite's alignment with Mars, war, and active, creative participation in one's endeavors. But why do both texts seem to punish Arcite for his refusal to embody the role of powerless victim? After all, Arcite wins the combat but he almost immediately loses not only what he was fighting for – Emilia – but also his life. And he doesn't lose his life bravely in the arena (or on a battlefield somewhere), but pathetically when he falls off his horse. It seems, then, that the play (like its source) endorses Palamon's worldview over Arcite's, especially given Theseus's elaborate "First Mover" speech in Chaucer and his closing lines in *The Two Noble Kinsmen*. In the *Tale*, Theseus points to Jupiter/God as this First Mover who has established how long each person will live in the "wrecched world" before meeting inevitable death (2995-9). For Theseus, to be wise is to know that humans cannot "eschue" their predetermined fate, and that complaining is always in vain: "whoso gruccheth ought, he dooth folye" (3045). Similarly, Theseus's final words in the play point out the stupidity and folly of humans: "Oh, you heavenly charmers, / What things you make of us! For what we lack / We laugh, for what we have we are sorry, still / Are children in some kind. Let us be thankful / For that which is, and with you leave dispute / That are above our question" (5.4.131-36). In Theseus's view, humans are like children pointlessly trying to argue over reality ("that which is") with the gods, who are beyond any kind of mortal questioning. There is nothing to do but bear one's due and express gratitude to the gods for whatever that due may be. This philosophy is similar to

Palamon's, and Palamon loses the combat but he wins Emilia and keeps his life, so his worldview seems to lead to greater success than Arcite's. However, I suggest that the play exposes this tension between an honorable representation of free will (Arcite) and a victorious passivity (Palamon) to enhance generic irony in the resolution. Palamon's worldview wins out in the end because his alignment with Venus, love, and patient endurance leads to a happy tragicomic resolution (for *him*, not for Emilia), and because Arcite's epic concern with battle and military prowess is generically misplaced: it belongs in another kind of world dictated by different conventions. Additionally, the closing down of Arcite's course of action signals tragicomedy's inherently ironic view of comic closure, which so often must curb characters' freedom and individual desires in order to fulfill generic expectations.

Towards the end of the play, Arcite's accident has rendered him a passive vessel, unable to adjust his own sails, succumbing to the surge that takes him wherever it will. This provides a radical contrast to the Arcite so invested in active labor and in orchestrating his own outcomes. The recurrent water/boat metaphors are also linked to Fletcher's self-conscious prologue for the play, where he described himself and Shakespeare as "weak... almost breathless, swim[ming] / In this deep water" (pro.24-5). The "deep water" referenced by Fletcher is of course Chaucer's literary legacy, which the Jacobean playwrights must navigate and ultimately move beyond – in other words, they must take control of the sails – by exploiting the already-problematic elements in the *Tale* through their manipulations of genre.

Transposing Chaucer and Cervantes simultaneously, Shakespeare and Fletcher produce a tragicomedy that inverts the conventions traditionally associated with comedy

and tragedy through the lens of gender. Their recasting of marriage as tragic and death as comic is influenced by the problematizing of marriage in the Cardenio episode. Focusing on the *Knight's Tale* as the direct source for *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, critics have largely overlooked the Spanish, particularly Cervantean, influence over this play.⁶⁹ In taking up Cervantes' problematizing of marriage, Shakespeare and Fletcher also emphasize the connection between marriage, genre, and gender: in *Kinsmen*, Palamon and Emilia's marriage is happy and comic for Palamon (who does not win the tournament but keeps his life and wins Emilia) and for Theseus (who is the marriage's grand orchestrator and the keeper of social and political order), but tragic for Emilia (whose desire to remain an eternal virgin is thwarted) and certainly for Arcite (who dies). *Kinsmen* suggests, then, that genre is not only determined by conventions set forth by the playwright(s), but by the gendered vantage point through which we read the play's events. The quick turnaround between Arcite's death and Emilia's marriage to Palamon – which takes years in the *Tale* – further accentuates the compulsory nature of this happy ending. Fletcher and Shakespeare also imbue Emilia with more agency than Chaucer's Emelye and Cervantes' Luscinda, crafting a female character who is unafraid to challenge patriarchal and heteronormative constraints. Even though her noncompliance is ultimately subsumed in her marriage to Palamon, Emilia's acts of defiance are not erased by the play's end; they remain as models of female agency and as powerful expressions of desires not bound by the limits of heteronormative social expectation. We can find in Emilia's resistance the imprint of Cervantes' Dorotea, who represents more closely than Chaucer's Emelye the

⁶⁹ The exception is Chartier in *Between Cardenio*, who directly links *Kinsmen* and the Cardenio episode based on the shared trope of same-sex friendship and on the similarities between the window gazing scenes in both texts.

kind of female agency dramatized by Fletcher and Shakespeare. The character of Emilia, shaped out of two models of femininity and female engagement with a patriarchal society, therefore becomes a symbolic site of the playwrights' multidirectional process of transposition. Looking simultaneously at the Cardenio episode *and* the *Knight's Tale* as sources for *Kinsmen*, rather than simply one text or the other in isolation, allows us to better understand where the play's dual gendered perspective originates. *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, as a transposition of Cervantes and Chaucer, also provides us with a unique model of tragicomic resolution that broadens our purview beyond simply "death" or "aversion of death" to more complex questions of genre, gender, and narrative closure. *Kinsmen* encourages us to rethink where the "tragedy" and "comedy" of tragi-comedy lie, and how these concepts can be refracted and redefined through the prismatic lenses of gender and of cross-cultural transposition.

CHAPTER 2

UNDOING WONDER: SECULARIZING CERVANTEAN PROVIDENTIALISM INTO THEATRICAL DESIGN IN BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER'S *LOVE'S PILGRIMAGE*

Love's Pilgrimage is an important play for mapping out the trajectory and development of English tragicomedy because it is, in many ways, a generically transitional work. John Fletcher and Francis Beaumont transposed their tragicomedy from Cervantes' novella *Las dos doncellas* (*The Two Damsels*) and premiered it on stage sometime in 1615.⁷⁰ This chapter demonstrates how this play serves as a bridge between late Shakespearean romance, which I examined in the previous chapter, and later cosmopolitan tragicomedy. *Love's Pilgrimage* contains elements of late Shakespearean romance, such as the combination of urban and pastoral settings, the gender-bending cross-dressed damsel(s), the romance quest, and the concluding family reunion. However, this tragicomedy also undoes, or parodies, the fall-and-redemption narrative of Cervantean romance. The unfolding sense of Christian wonder and providentialism we find in Cervantes' novella is replaced in *Love's Pilgrimage* with theatrical artifice. The cosmopolitan tragicomedies I investigate in this dissertation are distinctive in their secularization of the magical, wondrous, supernatural component of the Shakespearean romances that preceded them, such as *The Tempest*, *Pericles*, and *The Winter's Tale*. Fletcher in particular does away with concerns and dilemmas of a moral nature. His

⁷⁰ Transposing *Las dos doncellas* into *Love's Pilgrimage* sometime between 1613 and 1615, Beaumont and Fletcher were the first English playwrights to borrow from the *Novelas ejemplares*. J.A.G. Ardila has argued that in terms of intertextuality, the *Novelas* had, "from 1610 to 1625, a much deeper impact on English literature than *Don Quixote*" (5). See *The Cervantean Heritage: Reception and Influence of Cervantes in Britain*, ed. J.A.G. Ardila (London: Legenda, 2009).

tragicomedies replace the concept of a divinely organized, intentional, fated universe with a self-reflexive framework of a potentially chaotic world that holds together through theatrical design.⁷¹

Beaumont and Fletcher's transposition of their Spanish source differentiates this kind of tragicomedy not only from the Shakespearean romance explored in chapter one, but also from other distinctly English modes of tragicomedy (John Marston's *The Malcontent* being a prime example) and from Italian pastoral tragicomedy (Guarini's *Il pastor fido*). Beaumont and Fletcher's transpositions of Cervantes, including *Love's Pilgrimage*, allowed them to develop a form of tragicomedy that was cosmopolitan in its geographic expansiveness, its representation of far-away locales and cross-cultural encounters, and its insistently global concerns. These characteristics transcend the relative insularity and local focus of Fletcher's Guarinian play *The Faithful Shepherdess*. Additionally, this new mode of English tragicomedy grew increasingly skeptical of divine and absolutist authority, a skepticism that emerges in Beaumont and Fletcher's transposition of Cervantes' Christian providentialism into theatrical and generic design.

I am particularly interested in exploring the English playwrights' transposition of fortune and providential design into theatrical artifice. Beaumont and Fletcher's use of their Spanish source allowed them to devise a new structure and model of tragicomedy, whose denouement is achieved not through divine intervention or providence, but through a self-conscious deployment of theatrical craft. The playwrights'

⁷¹ Sandra Clark ascribes the "moral flexibility" of the Beaumont and Fletcher canon to "their status as part of a collaborative corpus" and to the multivocal construction of meaning that is inevitably produced through the process of collaboration (154). See Clark, *The Plays of Beaumont and Fletcher: Sexual Themes and Dramatic Representation* (Hertfordshire: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1994).

metatheatricality, however, is not an original addition to Cervantes. I suggest, rather, that the seeds of this tragicomic self-consciousness and irony are subtly present in the romance narrative in the first place. Looking at novella and play comparatively not only illuminates how Beaumont and Fletcher transpose the romance; it also brings to the forefront the meta-impulses and strategic use of a device we can characterize as ‘double consciousness’ in Cervantes.

I begin my investigation once again by looking at the productive prologues for the *Novelas ejemplares* and for *Love’s Pilgrimage*, examining the kinds of relationships these texts attempted to build with their original readers/spectators. What did the romance and the tragicomedy expect of their consumers? How did these prologues define “ideal” reading and viewing experiences? Cervantes’ ideal reader will *get* the novella’s irony, its subtly subversive maneuvers, and derive pleasure from this. For Beaumont and Fletcher, the ideal spectator will be able to identify the strings behind the performance, and derive pleasure from simultaneously putting to work and expanding his/her accumulated theatrical competence. Both prologues – in conjunction with the texts that follow them – suggest the ideal reader/viewer is a person of above-average intellectual capacity, who can hold contradictory perspectives: in the novella’s case, the sincerity alongside the irony, and in the tragicomedy’s case, the fiction of the play alongside its concurrent undoing by the playwrights. In other words, Beaumont and Fletcher’s tragicomedy asks its spectators to be both engaged and detached – a key feature of early modern tragicomedy, and of Fletcher’s tragicomic innovations in particular. By tracing the roots of this maneuver to Cervantes, we can further our understanding of the development of English tragicomedy.

The prologues to both novella and play seek to invest the early modern reader or playgoer with autonomy, responsibility, and interpretive freedom. In the *Novelas*, Cervantes establishes a private relationship between himself and his reader through a preemptively defensive (and amusing) “*prólogo al lector*” [prologue to the reader]. Cervantes harps on two main points: (1) the exemplarity, and therefore moral usefulness, of his novellas, and (2) their capacity to entertain and delight. In his words: “Heles dado nombre de *ejemplares*, y si bien lo miras, no hay ninguna de quien no se pueda sacar algún ejemplo provechoso” [I have named [these novellas] *exemplary*, and if you look at them well, there is not one from which you may not elicit a beneficial example] (52; Cervantes’ emphasis).⁷² The brunt of responsibility falls on the reader and on his or her degree of competence, not only to read well but also to extract lessons from the illustrative stories. Cervantes claims the exemplary ideals hidden in his entertaining novellas only become visible if the reader *looks* at them correctly (“si bien lo miras”). The ideal reader will, of course, “look” at the novellas, extract valuable lessons, yet also see through the so-called moral exemplarity and into the novella’s strategic social criticism and questioning of traditional values, gender, identity, and familial as well as political institutions. Critics have pointed to the formal associations between the *Novelas ejemplares* and earlier Italian novellas, such as Boccaccio’s bawdy tales, as further impetus behind Cervantes’ defense of his morally useful stories.⁷³ But his novellas are

⁷² References are from Miguel de Cervantes, *Novelas ejemplares I*, ed. Juan Bautista Avalle-Arce (Madrid: Clásicos Castalia, 1982).

⁷³ Thomas Hart sees the “shady Italian associations” (of Cervantes’ novellas with Boccaccio, for instance) as prompting Cervantes to “emphasize that his own novellas were morally irreproachable and that they were his own invention and not reworkings of foreign originals,” in *Cervantes’ Exemplary Fictions: A Study of the Novelas ejemplares* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1994), 13. See also Barry Taylor,

not bland, Cervantes clarifies, since they are capable of delightfully occupying the reader's "horas... de recreación" [hours of recreation] when he is neither at work nor at church (52). Cervantes' word choice aligns the novellas with theater, which was of course a favorite pastime in early modern Spain, and with the playhouse, a space where men and women spent many "hours of recreation."

The prologue to *Love's Pilgrimage* reminds audience members they are in a playhouse, where they have seen many others plays, and also asks them to imaginatively leave these material surroundings and journey alongside the performance.⁷⁴ The first two lines welcome the audience: "To this place Gentlemen, full many a day / We have bid ye welcome; and to many a Play" (ll.1-2).⁷⁵ The prologue appeals to theatergoers' memories of spectatorship, and of the plays they have seen during the "many a day" spent at the theater.⁷⁶ The point here is not only to stir up good memories, but to reaffirm the audience's cumulative theatrical competence, as in the induction to *Bartholomew Fair*

"Exemplarity In and Around the *Novelas ejemplares*," *The Modern Language Review* 110.2 (April 2015): 456-72. Taylor argues that the exemplarity of the *Novelas* "should be viewed in a context of continuity leading from antiquity to after Cervantes' time," and that Cervantes follows in Horace's tradition by emphasizing the mixture of "what is useful and what is pleasant" in the novellas (468, 459).

⁷⁴ For a brief discussion of this prologue in the context of female spectatorship, see Brian W. Schneider's *The Framing Text in Early Modern English Drama: 'Whining' Prologues and 'Armed' Epilogues* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2011), esp. 104.

⁷⁵ All references to *Love's Pilgrimage* are from *The Dramatic Works in the Beaumont and Fletcher Canon*, ed. Fredson Bowers, 2nd vol. (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1970).

⁷⁶ The particular playhouse where the play was first performed is unknown; Bowers explains in his textual introduction, "The first solid evidence [of *Love's Pilgrimage*] appears in the Master of the Revels' account book, 'renewing' the licence to act *Love's Pilgrimage*, 16 September, 1635" (569-70). Bowers also indicates that the King's Men performed the play (in a revised form) before Charles I and Henrietta Maria at Hampton Court on December 16, 1636. The play was first published in the Beaumont and Fletcher folio of 1647.

(first staged in 1614, only a year before *Love's Pilgrimage*): "It is covenanted and agreed, by and between [the author] and the said spectators, and hearers... do for themselves severally covenant and agree to remain in the places their money or friends have put them in, with patience, for the space of two hours and a half" (ll.91-99).⁷⁷ Here Jonson asks his audience to practice observant motionlessness ("remain in the places"). Conversely, in the prologue to *Love's Pilgrimage* the playhouse functions as an in-between space where audience members may "travel" from reality to fiction. *Love's Pilgrimage* requires its audience to "move" along with the show: "If ye mean / To know the Play well, travell with the Scene. / For it lies upon the road"⁷⁸ (ll.13-5). This is an invitation to the fictional pilgrimage that will take place on stage. Yet the play itself, by drawing attention to the incredulity and performativity of the "Scene," will make it impossible for attentive spectators to travel with or get lost in the performance. The spectators who manage, by turn, to engage and detach, are Beaumont and Fletcher's ideal audience. Knowing the play well, in this case, means recognizing the self-conscious artifice and deriving pleasure from this recognition.

The power and freedom of interpretation are thus explicitly located in reader and audience; both prologues stress that with this freedom comes the responsibility to interpret "well." This could be read as a preemptive maneuver to distance these texts

⁷⁷ Ben Jonson, 'Bartholomew Fair,' *Renaissance Drama: An Anthology of Plays and Entertainments*, ed. Arthur Kinney (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2005).

⁷⁸ Cyrus Mulready argues that stage romance (plays like Thomas Heywood's *Four Prentises of London*, the anonymous *Tom a Lincoln*, and Thomas Dekker's *Old Fortunatus*) engages with its audience in a similar way, frequently employing the chorus to invoke the audience's assistance and imagination to sustain the illusion of expansive journeying and the passing of time. See Mulready, *Romance on the Early Modern Stage: English Expansion Before and After Shakespeare* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013).

from the possible (offensive or inaccurate?) interpretations readers and playgoers could draw. On the other hand, there is a fruitful analogy between the investment of interpretive freedom onto the readerly/theatrical audiences, and the capacity of the texts' characters to interpret their own circumstances – in other words, these narrative and dramatic stories – for themselves. Are the characters in Cervantes and Beaumont and Fletcher invested with similar autonomy as their readers and audience? Do they interpret the texts' events “well”? What kinds of belief systems – whether in happenstance or God or fate or some combination – inform their interpretive choices and the ways in which they frame the events that happen to them? The characters in *Love's Pilgrimage*, more explicitly than the characters in *Las dos doncellas*, display a self-conscious awareness of their existence as characters in a fictional world. Beaumont and Fletcher accomplish this through puns and metatheatrical commentary that call attention to the play as a play. Their characters therefore model the kind of dual perspective that is required of an ideal spectator, turning *Love's Pilgrimage* into a didactic vehicle for learning the complex art of watching and responding to a tragicomic play.

Given the novella's and play's distinct historical, religious, and cultural contexts, the belief systems they depict (and make their characters invested in) are necessarily different. Aside from examining the transposition of literary and formal elements, such as characters, storylines, genres, and themes, I will investigate Beaumont and Fletcher's transposition of the ideological systems through which these characters understand the world, and which consequently determine their behaviors. Of course, generic, thematic, and ideological elements are frequently interrelated and intertwined. For instance, the representational and narrative depiction of Spain's national landscape and internal

conflicts in *Las dos doncellas* is clearly rooted in a particular ideology, or political investment. As in *Don Quijote*, Cervantes is in this novella characteristically ambiguous about his homeland, and he expresses this ambiguity primarily through generic strategies. In her analysis of the novella, Fuchs argues that it “mounts a romance critique of epic ambitions, exposing the internal anarchy – gendered and otherwise – of a masculinist imperial Spain.”⁷⁹ Regarding genre, Fuchs points to romance as signifying a “derailment of the epic project – in both literary and political terms – through error [and] wandering voyages.”⁸⁰ In Fuchs’s view, the novella expresses both generically and ideologically a degree of ambivalence over Spain’s imperial endeavors. Particular scenes of “realism,” as Fuchs explains, highlight Spain’s domestic fragmentation and social tensions, such as a forest scene where criminal *bandoleros* violently assault a group of travelers. My analysis shifts the focus from imperial critique to how Cervantes’ characters react to their circumstances throughout the narrative, and introduces a new set of questions dealing with character autonomy: How do they interpret the story’s events, and through which lens or belief system? What degree of agency and autonomy do they exhibit? Do they recognize these moments of “realism” as failures of local Spanish governance? Do they feel victimized by them? And how do the characters’ personal “setbacks” or circumstances fit into this picture of national conflict?⁸¹

⁷⁹ Barbara Fuchs, “Empire Unmanned: Gender Trouble and Geonese Gold in ‘Las dos doncellas,’” *Passing for Spain: Cervantes and the Fictions of Identity* (Urbana: U of Illinois P, 2003), 47.

⁸⁰ Fuchs, “Empire Unmanned,” 47.

⁸¹ By “broader picture of national conflict” I not only refer to the novella’s representation of social tensions, but to the generalized crisis of Spain in the early seventeenth century. Historian Helen Rawlings has explained that as the sixteenth century “drew to a close [Spaniards’] fortunes indeed looked bleak” (119; her use of ‘fortunes’ interestingly (and

Las dos doncellas and the Wonder of Providential Design

In *Las dos doncellas*, personal and social conflicts frequently collide. The story, briefly, is this: two teenage girls of semi-noble status, Teodosia and Leocadia, are seduced by a boy of Italian descent, Marco Antonio. He promises marriage to both girls and manages to take Teodosia's virginity. Marco Antonio then flees to Barcelona, abandoning the ladies, with the intention of boarding a ship bound for Naples. Teodosia and Leocadia separately decide to disguise themselves as men and embark on parallel quests to find Marco and hold him accountable. On the way to Barcelona, their journeys are often derailed by external obstacles, such as a violent encounter with Catalonian *bandoleros*. Eventually they cross paths and decide to travel together, along with Teodosia's brother Rafael. Teodosia sees through Leocadia's disguise and wrests a confession out of her, but Leocadia remains unaware of Teodosia's identity until the end of the novella. Once they arrive in Barcelona, the girls find Marco has been wounded in a fight. On what he thinks is his deathbed, Marco Antonio confesses his misdeeds, repents, and marries Teodosia – his lawful wife since they had already consummated their private marriage vows. Rafael, who began to fall in love with Leocadia upon learning of her true gender, proposes marriage to her. She accepts, and the four newlyweds go on a pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela before settling back home in Andalucía.

At the novella's outset, Teodosia (the first titular damsel) expresses a multivalent understanding of the cause behind her situation, conflating fortune or chance with

unknowingly) picks up on the novella's themes). Some of the problems that needed to be solved by the new king – Philip III – were hunger, contagious disease (between 1596-1602, 600,000 Castilians died from the bubonic plague), an acute agrarian crisis, poor harvests, an increase in grain prices, and mounting fiscal pressures due to chronic warfare and the crown's extensive debts. See 119-120 in Rawlings, *Church, Religion, and Society in Early Modern Spain* (New York: Palgrave, 2002).

personal responsibility, but also blaming Marco Antonio for her less than ideal circumstances. In her foundational study of the *Novelas ejemplares*, Ruth El Saffar claims that “Fortune, rather than character autonomy, plays the dominant role in plot development.”⁸² I argue that at this point, through Teodosia’s language, the novella offers its reader two mutually inclusive options for locating agency: in the whims of fortune and in personal free will/judgment. As I will show below, both damsels clearly take responsibility for the personal choices they made regarding Marco, choices that have cost them dearly. Teodosia, already in drag and having fled her father’s home, is roomed with her brother Rafael – a convenient “coincidence” – at an inn in Castilblanco. In the darkness of night, and supposedly half asleep, she laments her situation:

¡Ay sin ventura! ¿Adónde me lleva la fuerza incontrastable de mis hados? ¿Qué camino es el mío o qué salida espero tener del intricado laberinto donde me hallo?... ay de mí una y mil veces, que tan a rienda suelta me dejé llevar de mis deseos! ... ¿Yo no soy la que quise engañarme? ¿No soy yo la que tomó el cuchillo con sus mismas manos, con que corté y eché por tierra mi crédito...? ¡Oh fementido Marco Antonio! ... págame lo que me debes

[Oh, without fortune! Where am I dragged by the unstoppable force of my actions? What is my path, or how can I exit the intricate labyrinth where I find myself?... mercy on me a thousand times, for letting my desires run loose!... Am I not the one who deceived herself? Am I not the one who took the knife in her own hands, to cut down her own credit [honor]...? Oh, deceitful Marco Antonio!... pay me what you owe me] (225).⁸³

Teodosia begins by defining her situation as unfortunate or unlucky, suggesting there is a power greater than herself at play: some abstract force that randomly blesses some with luck, and curses others with misfortune. Her next string of sentences, however, place the

⁸² Ruth S. El Saffar, *From Novel to Romance: A Study of Cervantes’ Novelas ejemplares* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins UP, 1974), 86.

⁸³ References to Cervantes are from “Las dos doncellas,” *Novelas ejemplares III*, ed. Juan Bautista Avallé-Arce (Madrid: Clásicos Castalia, 1982).

blame and agency back onto herself: “the force of *my* actions,” “letting *my* desires run loose,” “Am *I* not the one” (twice), did *I* not “cut down [*my*] own honor?” Teodosia takes responsibility for her circumstances, repeatedly cursing herself and her lack of discipline, willpower, and discernment. But she then curses Marco Antonio for being deceitful and implicitly for being so desirable that she lost all sense of self control. The passage’s final lines use monetary language to describe Teodosia’s loss of “credit” – her honor; literally her virginity, which we later learn Marco Antonio has taken – and her need for Marco to repay his debt to her. This repayment, phrased here in financial terms, is actually the restitution of her chastity and therefore the redemption of her individual and familial honor, which only Marco can restore by marrying her. When Teodosia retells the full story of her relationship with Marco (to her attentive brother Rafael, who is now aware this is a woman in men’s clothing, but not that she is his sister), she reiterates the conflation of chance and free will. Hearing of Marco’s sudden departure to Barcelona, she says she “maldije mi suerte, acusé mi presta determinación” [cursed my luck, and condemned my audacity] (228). Significantly, Teodosia does not see herself as a totally helpless victim to either fortune or to Marco’s actions; she takes some responsibility for where she finds herself.⁸⁴ Yet there is still the hint of an external agent (“luck”) that in some random way influences the outcome of events.

At this point in the novella, Cervantes’ characters repeatedly invoke the random influence of luck in their lives, yet they also recognize they can use their personal agency to work with, rather than against, this haphazard force. Still undiscovered by her brother,

⁸⁴ Jennifer Thompson claims Teodosia recognizes her “youth and lack of experience [as] partly to blame for her present situation,” and that she “did not resist [Marco] as much as she might have done,” in “The Structure of Cervantes’ *Las dos doncellas*,” *Bulletin of Hispanic Studies* 40.3 (1963), 144.

Teodosia ends her narrative swearing to take aggressive action against Marco Antonio: “haré que me cumpla la palabra y fe prometida, o le quitaré la vida, mostrándome... presta a la venganza” [I will make him keep his word and the faithfulness he promised, or I will take his life, showing myself... swiftly vengeful] (229). Here, Teodosia’s active language demonstrates she perceives herself as capable of taking matters into her own hands to alter her circumstances – suggesting she is *not* at the mercy of random fortune, despite her earlier lamentations suggesting the opposite. Additionally, she is on the verge of appropriating the traditionally male role of revenger, darkening the romance narrative with a tragic twist. This sense of suspense – will she get her revenge? – replaces the traditional tragic threat of death, and keeps the audience invested. This is one of Beaumont and Fletcher’s innovations in tragicomedy, a genre that flirts with the idea of killing off characters, yet lacks actual deaths – and thus requires some other form of suspense to grip its audience.⁸⁵ Rafael’s response, while surprisingly sympathetic, offers another possible twist because it suggests that Teodosia may have been partly responsible for the loss of her virginity. His comment, “Siento tanto vuestra desventura” (229) could be translated as “I am deeply sorry for your misfortune.” However, “desventura” literally means “mis-venture,” implying that Teodosia *actively* embarked on a risky commercial venture (Marco Antonio) and lost everything (i.e., her virginity). Teodosia’s earlier explanation of how Marco convinced her with his “promesas, juramentos, lágrimas,

⁸⁵ Fletcher’s oft-cited definition of tragicomedy, “it wants deaths, which is enough to make it no tragedy, yet brings some near it, which is enough to make it no comedy,” appears in his preface “To the Reader,” *The Faithful Shepherdess*, ed. F.W. Moorman (London: Aldine House, 1897), 7. The few characters that really seem to die in these plays are conveniently resurrected and reunited with their families, such as in Shakespeare’s *Pericles*. There are notable (and few) exceptions to this rule, however: in *The Winter’s Tale* Mamillius and Antigonus *really* do die, never to be resurrected.

suspiros” [promises, vows, tears, sighs] to give up her “virtud que hasta entonces no había sido tocada” [virtue, untouched until that very moment] reinforces the idea that he did not force her to have sex, but rather that she surrendered her virginity willingly (if ill-advisedly) with the expectation of a tangible gain: becoming Marco’s wife (227). This marriage would not only clear her name and reputation, restoring her chastity; it would also become a commercial gain for Teodosia, since Marco Antonio belongs to a wealthy Italian family. Once Rafael learns this cross-dressed damsel is his own sister, he suggests not all is lost, despite her seemingly unlucky circumstances – together, they still have the capacity to work *with* fortune rather than against it. The narrator describes Rafael’s state of mind: “como por parecerle que aún no había cerrado la fortuna de todo en todo las puertas a su remedio, quería ... procurársele por todas las vías posibles” [since it seemed to him fortune had not yet fully closed the doorways to her remedy, he wanted to ... procure it by any possible routes] (231-2). In Rafael’s view, luck and personal responsibility interact symbiotically: fortune may leave some doors open, but it is up to him and/or Teodosia to find these doorways and walk through them. This understanding of the world is akin to Arcite’s aquatic metaphor in *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, where the gods/providence provide the wind, but man (or woman) must hoist and direct the sails.

Cervantes gives Leocadia, the novella’s second titular damsel, a far more spectacular introduction that highlights the social and local problems that plague the novella’s Spanish landscape. The reader meets Leocadia semi-naked (and thus only semi-disguised), tied to a tree in a forest in the middle of the day. Unlike Teodosia, who was rendered practically invisible by the dark night and the privacy of her bedroom, Leocadia is exposed for all to see. This dangerous exposure, which puts both her disguise and life

at risk, is a consequence of Leocadia's encounter with Castilian *bandoleros*. Attempting to cross the woods in Igualada, Leocadia and her traveling group are attacked by the bandits. The narrator describes the moment as a visual spectacle: "Era extraño espectáculo el verlos: unos, desnudos del todo; otros vestidos con los vestidos astrosos de los bandoleros; unos, llorando de verse robados... En fin, todo cuanto allí pasaba eran llantos y gemidos de los miserables despojados" [It was a strange spectacle to witness: some, completely naked; others, dressed with the bandits' ratty garments; still others, crying for finding themselves robbed... One could hear nothing but sobs and moans emitted from the miserable victims] (138). The *bandoleros*' particular brand of theft is especially disruptive to a social hierarchy that operates under the assumption that external appearances are reliable markers of identity. In undressing some of their victims and either leaving them naked or redressing them in tattered outfits, the bandits turn clothing into an unstable signifier of rank and even gender. As Fuchs stresses in her reading of the novella, this episode is one of the moments of historical realism Cervantes injects into the romance.⁸⁶ Castilian banditry was a significant social problem in early modern Spain, "the domestic equivalent of English or Moorish piracy."⁸⁷ Fuchs sees Cervantes as engaging in social critique by calling attention to the *bandoleros*, because their disorderly presence signals a failure in local Spanish governance – perhaps one that could have been resolved with greater efficacy if the crown had shown more interest in the state of its local territories and people rather than in expansionist and colonialist agendas. But how does Leocadia herself, one of the *bandoleros*' victims, perceive herself, this moment, and

⁸⁶ Fuchs rightly sees Cervantes' realism as "fram[ing] romance in order to return us to history and to an ironic vision of imperial Spain" ("Empire Unmanned," 49).

⁸⁷ Fuchs, "Empire Unmanned," 51.

the circumstances that have brought her here? In other words, how do Cervantes' characters read, from *within* the narrative, these broader social tensions Cervantes depicts?

Leocadia's autobiographical narrative, which follows the bandit scene, reveals she is only concerned with the personal setback the attack has cost her, not with its broader implications. Characters from within the novella do not perceive the layer of social criticism Cervantes inserts; they are not metafictionally aware of it, nor do they participate in it, either via dialogue or action. My argument here is not that the eruption of the *bandoleros* is not a poignant moment of social and political critique, because it is, but that Cervantes must temper this criticism to avoid censorship. He achieves this by writing his characters as concerned with these social issues only when affected personally, on an individual basis. The resulting effect for the reader – an ideal reader – is a dual, complex perspective containing the broader picture of national conflict and the characters' individual circumstances. Moreover, the robbery by the bandits serves a strategic purpose at the level of plot: they steal from Leocadia the written contract Marco Antonio had given her as proof of his commitment. Leocadia is at further disadvantage than Teodosia, who still has in her possession the ring Marco gave *her*, with the inscription "Marco Antonio is husband to Teodosia." This is a major distinction between the damsels, and one that will determine their eventual romantic fates, as far as Marco is concerned. Although the *bandoleros* are directly to blame for Leocadia's loss of her contract, she ultimately takes responsibility for the actions that have led her here.

Like Teodosia, however, Leocadia begins by conflating fortune, Marco's free will, and her own judgment as the causes behind her current situation. When she first tells

her story to Teodosia (disguised as Teodoro), Leocadia refers to herself as “la hija desventurada” [the unfortunate daughter] (238), implying she is susceptible to forces beyond her control, and thus stripping Rafael’s earlier use of “desventura” of any sense of personal responsibility. A few lines later, though, her language shifts as she tells Teodosia of the days when her father used to hunt with Marco Antonio’s father, who brought Marco to her house: “Destá ocasión tomó la fortuna, o el amor, o mi poca advertencia...” [Fortune, or love, or my poor judgment took advantage of this occasion...] (239). The possibilities are threefold, moving from one end of the spectrum of causality (fortune/luck/chance) to the other (personal responsibility). Leocadia’s language then starts to place the blame back onto herself, as when she says she “di traza como una noche viniese [Marco]... y entrase por las paredes de un jardín de mi aposento, donde sin sobresalto alguno podía coger el fruto que para él solo estaba destinado” [made a plan for Marco to come, at night... and enter through the walls of my garden into my house, where without any sudden disturbance he’d be able to pluck the fruit that was destined only for him] (239). It was Leocadia’s clandestine plan for Marco to enter her house and take her virginity; even though Marco changed his mind and never showed, she recognizes she got herself into this mess. Then, still mirroring Teodosia’s narrative (but with a difference), Leocadia explains she knows of Teodosia and believes Marco has fled with her, and so Leocadia “la buscaré, yo la hallaré, y yo la quitaré la vida, si puedo” [will look for her, will find her, and will take her life, if possible] (241). Leocadia takes on the active role of revenger, like Teodosia, but directs her fury against another woman, rather than against Marco himself. However, the damsels’ desire for revenge turns out to

be short-lived; a momentary display of jealousy and anger rather than a legitimate thirst for murder.

Teodosia's response to Leocadia's predicament, however, marks a shift in perspective, from one of fortune intertwined with personal agency to one of divine authority. Teodosia, still disguised as Teodoro, tells Leocadia to "*dejad el cuidado al tiempo, que es gran maestro de dar y hallar remedio a los casos más desesperados*" [let time take care of this, since *he is the great master* who finds and gives remedy to the most desperate cases] (243, my emphasis). Obviously, the response given by "Teodoro" is partly determined by her own survival instincts: Leocadia has sworn she will find and kill Teodosia, who is ironically standing but two inches from her. Cervantes does not invoke God himself, but this personification of time as a "great (masculine) master" who in his own wisdom rectifies even the direst of circumstances is a clear step in that direction. This advice to practice passive endurance, to refrain from taking action, and to let time heal all wounds – to bring about a happy resolution for Leocadia, and in addition a happy narrative resolution – establishes the beginning of a trajectory of unfolding wonder: namely, the characters' progressive surrender to an external force, which they perceive as mysterious, wonder-full, purposeful providential design.

This progressive unfolding of wonder, or faith in divine authority, contrasts with Cervantes' scenes of disruptive realism, which are grounded in historical and material contexts. This contrast illustrates the mutually inclusive double consciousness that becomes discernable throughout the course of the novella, which Beaumont and Fletcher will transpose into the metatheater of their tragicomedy. The novella's depiction of a violent conflict in Barcelona is another moment that, like the earlier scene with the

bandoleros, raises broader social issues yet is understood by the characters as nothing more than a personal setback. Cervantes initially describes Barcelona proudly, using rich language and contextualizing the city's historical achievements and reputation:

el hermoso sitio de la ciudad, y la estimaron por flor de las bellas ciudades del mundo, honra de España, temor y espanto de los circunvecinos y apartados enemigos, regalo y delicia de sus moradores, amparo de los extranjeros, escuela de la caballería, ejemplo de lealtad y satisfacción de todo aquello que de una grande y famosa, rica y bien fundada ciudad puede pedir un discreto y curioso deseo.

[the beautiful site of the city, considering it a flower among the great cities of the world; Spain's honor; a danger and threat to its enemies, both near and far; a gift and delight to its inhabitants; a safe haven for travelers; a school of horsemanship; a model of loyalty and satisfaction to all those who seek to fulfill their discerning desire in a large, famous, rich, and well-founded city.] (250)

Cervantes represents Barcelona's landscape as beautiful, welcoming, and prosperous; as a place of opportunity and respite for locals and visitors alike. He emphasizes the city's history, its abundance, and its position in comparison to other cities around the world. This lavishly idealistic introduction to the city is quickly disrupted when a violent conflict breaks out between the sailors who have recently arrived in their galleys (including Marco Antonio) and the local Barcelonians. Leocadia, Teodosia, and Rafael suddenly hear "grandísimo ruido y vieron correr gran tropel de gente con grande alboroto, y preguntando la causa de aquel ruido y movimiento les respondieron que la gente de las galeras que estaban en la playa se había revuelto y trabado con la de la ciudad" [the loudest ruckus and they saw a great many people running in a state of chaos. Asking for the cause of such noise and disorder, they were told that the people from the galleys who were stationed by the shore had rebelled and were fighting the city folk] (245). Cervantes emphasizes the violence of this confrontation: "llegando a la marina vieron muchas espadas fuera de las vainas y mucha gente acuchillándose sin piedad alguna" [upon

reaching the harbor they saw many swords drawn from their sheaths and many people stabbing each other without mercy] (245). Historian John Elliott explains that it was the “lack of sense of responsibility towards the community at large which most characterized the Catalan ruling class in this period.”⁸⁸ Early modern Barcelona was located on the shoreline of the eastern side of Catalonia, in northeastern Spain. Elliott describes the provincial aristocracy of this region as “consum[ing] itself in internal feuds” between warring families, and therefore frequently responding inadequately, or not responding at all, to domestic conflicts.⁸⁹ One of these major conflicts was born out of a “deep and instinctive antipathy to outsiders,” including outsiders from within: Elliott here cites, for instance, the armed conflict between Catalan peasants and the Castilians in 1640.⁹⁰ The bloody confrontation Cervantes depicts in his novella is grounded in these historical tensions between the fragmented provinces of early modern Spain. The Catalan citizens, including Barcelonians, were famous for crying out “*Visca la terra*” (long live the land) while charging the “Castilian soldiers making their way to their embarkation-point at Barcelona.”⁹¹ This is precisely what plays out in *Las dos doncellas*: the antagonism between “insiders” and “outsiders,” or Catalans and non-Catalonian Spaniards.

Despite the historically significant and communal disruption of the Barcelonian conflict, the novella’s characters do not exhibit any sense of community consciousness. They are only concerned with the personal implications of the fighting, not with the far-

⁸⁸ J.H. Elliott, *Spain and its World 1500-1700* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1989), 86.

⁸⁹ *Ibid*, 87.

⁹⁰ *Ibid*, 105.

⁹¹ *Ibid*, 105.

reaching, national implications the fighting represents: namely, the ways in which the Spanish crown, in its overzealous imperial and colonial engagements, has turned a blind eye to local and regional governance. By the novella's end, the historical conflicts that plague the narrative are reframed by the narrator and the characters themselves as providential occurrences – a move that cleverly and retroactively reconceptualizes the conflicts as inevitable. Significantly, however, the novella does not replace one ideology with the other; it presents them diachronically, creating a sort of palimpsestic double consciousness. Ultimately, the reader is left with the perspective that is presented last. This is a strategy that critics have identified as a staple of post-1610 English tragicomedy. In an essay on Beaumont and Fletcher, Peter Berek argues that “tragicomedy comforts inconsistency by allowing incompatible ideas to alternate their influence without any necessity for formal resolution,” and “the implicit rule is that the last ideology trumps all others.”⁹² Similarly, Gordon McMullan speaks of the “bifronted posture” that is a “key feature of Fletcher's work, from his habitual practice of collaboration to the characteristic mixed genre of his plays, tragicomedy.”⁹³ I would suggest that the “inconsistency” Berek finds in English tragicomedy, as well as McMullan's “bifronted posture,” is the double – sometimes multiple – consciousness that characterizes *Las dos doncellas* and most of Cervantes' *Novelas ejemplares*.

When the violent conflict erupts in Barcelona, the two damsels turn blind to everything except for the endangered Marco Antonio, rushing to his side immediately

⁹² Peter Berek, “Cross-Dressing, Gender, and Absolutism in the Beaumont and Fletcher Plays,” *SEL* 44.2 (Tudor and Stuart Drama, Spring 2004), 371.

⁹³ See Gordon McMullan, *The Politics of Unease in the Plays of John Fletcher* (Amherst: The University of Massachusetts Press, 1994), 112.

and unsheathing their swords to protect him. The reader's attention is equally zoomed in from the broader historical, social, and political conflict – the insiders-versus-outsiders confrontation – back to the damsels' romantic predicaments. There is no commentary or discussion about the conflict from marginal characters either. Cervantes is deploying his clever strategy here to avoid censorship: he paints a specific and historically accurate picture of some of the failures of provincial Spanish governance, yet he then quickly redirects the reader's attention to the fictional and admittedly more trivial dilemmas of his titular damsels. This move illustrates the novella's double consciousness, and the ways in which Cervantes offers poignant moments of social realism and critique, then subsequently diverts attention from them.

After he is wounded in Barcelona, Marco Antonio – through Leocadia's strategic intervention – sincerely repents his cavalier behavior towards the damsels, invoking heaven (“el cielo”) as a new source of agency and causality in the novella. As he recovers in the house of a noble gentleman, Leocadia tells Marco he is near death and must confess his sins to save his soul. The state of Marco's health is somewhat ambiguous for the reader, and this uncertainty as to whether he will survive or not adds a sense of urgency to his repentance. He says:

Y si os dejé... a vos [Leocadia] suspensa y engañada y a ella [Teodosia] temerosa, y... sin honra, hícelo con poco discurso y con juicio de mozo... creyendo que todas aquellas cosas eran de poca importancia, y que las podía hacer sin escrúpulo alguno[.] Mas doliéndose de mí *el cielo*, sin duda creo que me ha permitido ponerme de la manera que me veis para que, confesando estas verdades, nacidas de mis muchas culpas, pague en esta vida lo que debo...

[And if I left you [Leocadia] afraid and her [Theodosia] betrayed, and... without honor, I did it with little consideration and with the judgment of a boy... believing all the things I did were of little importance, and that I could do them without second thought[.] But I believe *heaven*, sympathizing for me, has placed me in

this position so that I, confessing all these truths, born of my many faults, will repay what I owe in this lifetime...] (252, my emphasis).

Marco's confession suggests that he perceives a divine force, not random fortune, as driving his actions – and, on a meta level, as propelling the novella's *denouement*, which depends on Marco's repentance. There is an emerging sense that Marco has been placed in this position, as he says, not by happenstance or coincidence, but through divine intervention and an overarching "heavenly" plan. Additionally, like Teodosia and Leocadia in their earlier narratives, Marco takes responsibility for his behavior and recognizes his "many faults." He appropriates Teodosia's monetary language of debts and repayments, saying he will "repay what [he] owe[s]": in this case, restoring Teodosia's chastity through marriage and therefore tying up the loose ends of her story.

And yet the unfortunate Leocadia remains, husband-less, rejected by Marco. Cervantes solves this problem by having Rafael propose marriage to her. The language of his proposal strongly emphasizes the presence of a divine organizing force: "el mismo cielo, que hoy os ha quitado a Marco Antonio, os quiere hacer recompensa conmigo, que no deseo otro bien en esta vida que entregarme por esposo vuestro" [heaven itself, which has taken Marco Antonio from you today, wants to compensate you with me, for I wish nothing else in this life but to surrender myself to you as your husband] (254). Rafael picks up Marco's theme of an intentional heavenly design that places people precisely where they need to be at precisely the right time. There is also the suggestion that heaven – or God or whoever is behind this divine orchestration – is largely benevolent: Leocadia may lose one potential husband, but she immediately gains another. The loss is compensated, as Rafael says, by this all-seeing, all-knowing, purposeful force.

Leocadia responds by finally referring to God directly, bringing to its culmination the novella's progression of unfolding wonder and belief in providential design. Leocadia affirms no man (or woman) can oppose God's ("His") will and predestined plan: "pues así lo ha ordenado el cielo, y no es en mi mano ni en la de viviente alguno oponerse a lo que Él determinado tiene, hágase lo que Él quiere y vos queréis, señor mío" [heaven has ordained it thus, and it is not in my power ["hand"] nor in the power of any living person to oppose what He has determined; my lord [Rafael], let this be done in His will and in yours] (255). By using the capitalized pronoun "He," Leocadia brings Teodosia's earlier mention of the "great master" to its logical conclusion. It now becomes clear that the novella's characters no longer interpret their circumstances as haphazard or at the mercy of fortune, or even themselves as capable of altering their fates through personal free will. Opposing God's plan is, as Leocadia says, beyond the power of mortals. Additionally, Leocadia now reads her difficult, labyrinthine, frequently disrupted journey as a necessary obstacle and lesson: "daré al cielo las gracias de haberme traído por tan extraños rodeos y por tantos males a los bienes de ser vuestra" [I thank heaven for bringing me through such strange pathways and so much hardship to the happiness of being yours] (256). The ultimate lesson Leocadia and her fellow characters learn is to surrender to divine authority, the external organizing force that eventually makes all things right.

Las dos doncellas follows a cyclical romance pattern, so its end is characterized by a return to the place(s) where things began. This return is to a geographic point of origin – the travelers return, after a religious pilgrimage, to Andalucía – and to the damsels' original gender, as a priest orders them to ditch their disguises: "El sacerdote,

que presente estaba, ordenó que Leocadia mudase el hábito y se vistiese con el suyo” [The priest, who was present, ordered Leocadia to take off her [male] clothing and put on her own] (256). Teodosia is ordered to do the same. It is significant that a priest, an embodied representation of God, assists in bringing about the novella’s happy resolution. A few paragraphs later, the narrator steps in to remind the reader that the story’s events have been divinely planned: “Dios, que así lo tenía ordenado...” [God, who had ordained it so...] (257). And so the ambiguity of the novella’s beginning – the confusion regarding the interplay and degree of influence of fortune, free will, personal responsibility, and fate – is dispelled and resolved. Events that preceded the conclusion were not random at all, but steps in an inalterable map sketched out by God in advance.

Significantly, there would have been an additional association for early modern readers of *Las dos doncellas*: the inextricability of divine authority from royal authority, particularly in Counter-Reformation Spain where Philip III was officially titled “rey católico” (Catholic king) and where the Church’s influence was felt in all aspects of life. As John Elliott explains, the monarch was conceptualized as of “more than human character,” as God’s representative on earth, and kingship was therefore considered sacred.⁹⁴ Moreover, the monarch was imbued with godly authority due to his strategic invisibility: “the outstanding feature of Spanish court life, at least in the eyes of seventeenth-century foreign observers, was the invisibility, and indeed the sheer inaccessibility of the king.”⁹⁵ Just like God, then, the king oversees and controls his dominion from an inaccessible position. Due to the fragmented nature of early modern

⁹⁴ Elliott, *Spain and its World*, 143-5.

⁹⁵ *Ibid*, 148.

Spain, with its distinct provinces and extensive hierarchy of minor, provincial officials supposed to represent the king on a microcosmic level, most Spanish subjects would never meet or see their monarch physically, a reality that reinforced the king's status as a quasi-divine figure. These Spanish citizens, like the characters in Cervantes' novella, must place their faith in their godly king; to believe he is there, as the organizing principle of their universe, even though he is invisible. Providentialism was in this way indistinguishable from royal authority; believing in and surrendering to God's providential design would have been, for many Spanish subjects, synonymous with surrendering to the authority of their monarch.

The implication of this belief in a divine and by extension royal design is that *all* prior events become necessary and intentional, including the disruptive moments with the *bandoleros* and the violent conflict in Barcelona. Tactfully, Cervantes juxtaposes the scenes of realism and social critique identified by Fuchs with the progressively unfolding sense of religious wonder and faith in providential design I have mapped out. In other words, the characters' increasing belief in a fated, divinely designed world strategically softens Cervantes' earlier depictions of unresolved social conflict, thereby "absolving" the Spanish crown from responsibility and avoiding official censorship.⁹⁶ Cervantean critic Joseph Rikapito has argued the *Exemplary Novels* are characterized by a kind of dualism: "next to the idealistic, fantastic, and wonderfully improbable episodes, we have

⁹⁶ Along with Fuchs, who sees Cervantes as using genre strategically to foreground social issues, Anthony Cascardi reads Cervantes' fiction as employing covert formal and literary tactics to avoid censorship. Cascardi explains how "the official, public structures of politics in early modern Spain placed special constraints on what could and could not be said," which led Cervantes to "speak [or write] obliquely, in a masked voice, and by tropes, sometimes saying too much or by hyperbole... and sometimes not nearly enough (by understatement)," in *Cervantes, Literature, and the Discourse of Politics* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012), 12.

scenes of death, disorder, murder, madness, illness, or other forms of mayhem.”⁹⁷ The incisive social criticism of *Las dos doncellas* is therefore not mutually exclusive with the novella’s unfolding sense of religious wonder and providential design.

Turning to *Love’s Pilgrimage*, I will now show how Beaumont and Fletcher transposed the novella’s providentialism into an artistic pattern of generic and theatrical convention. Additionally, the play’s characters are aware of this pattern and of their place in a fictional universe. They demonstrate this through metatheatrical language and by exhibiting a self-reflexive awareness of the roles they play on stage in front of a watchful audience. Because the novella’s providentialism is associated with monarchical authority, Beaumont and Fletcher’s secularization of religious wonder into aesthetic design also problematizes, or demystifies, the “wonder” of sacred kingship, offering an alternative mode of organizing the universe – one not dependent on either religion or monarchy, but on the workings of theater itself.

Love’s Pilgrimage: Secularizing Divine Authority into Theatrical Design

*Love’s Pilgrimage*⁹⁸ is not only a transposition of language and culture, but of medium and genre as well. Beaumont and Fletcher’s transpositional strategies are bound

⁹⁷ Joseph V. Ricipito, *Cervantes’ Novelas ejemplares: Between History and Creativity* (West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 1996), 5.

⁹⁸ Although Baldwin Maxwell’s early research suggests that Fletcher used a 1615 French translation of *Las dos doncellas* as an intermediary source, it is more than likely that Fletcher knew enough Spanish to read Cervantes directly (see 107-8 in Maxwell, “The Date of *Love’s Pilgrimage* and Its Relation to *The New Inn*,” *Studies in Beaumont, Fletcher, and Massinger* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1939)). Trudi Darby and Alexander Samson claim that “definitive evidence of Fletcher being able to read Spanish... comes from *The Island Princess*,” a play based on Bartolomé Leonardo de Argensola’s prose history *Conquista de las Islas Molucas* (1609). See Darby and Samson’s “Cervantes on the Jacobean Stage,” *The Cervantean Heritage*, ed. Ardila, 210.

up with and informed by the religious and cultural differences between England and Spain. The translation of the novella's title is indicative of the changes within the play I will examine in the rest of this chapter. In *Las dos doncellas*, the two married couples go on a religious pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela to finalize the story, and to reaffirm their belief in the providential design that brought them together in the first place. This religious authority is transposed in the English play into theatrical authority: the tragicomedy, *Love's Pilgrimage*, is the pilgrimage. The tragicomic plot itself becomes the pilgrimage, stripped of its Christian function in the novella.

Beaumont and Fletcher's transpositions of Cervantes allowed them to craft a form of English tragicomedy that was increasingly skeptical of divine authority, absolutist politics, and blind faith in an either religious or monarchical godly figure who was inaccessible yet supposedly omniscient. Instead of surrendering to an unfolding sense of Christian providence, and thus interpreting events as inalterable, purposeful, and intentional, Beaumont and Fletcher's characters participate actively and self-reflexively in the play's deployment of generic convention. The novella's providentialism is not wholly erased in *Love's Pilgrimage*, but rather secularized into its generic design.⁹⁹

The French text of *Las dos doncellas* is a literal word-for-word translation of Cervantes, so we may attribute all differences in the play to Beaumont and Fletcher, rather than to the French translator. See *Les nouvelles de Miguel Cervantes Saavedra. Ou sont contenues plusieurs rares adventures et memorables exemples d'Amour, de Fidelité, de Force de Sang, de Ialousie, de mauvaise habitude, de charmes, & d'autres accidens non moins estranges que vertitables*, trans. by Francois de Rosset and Vital d'Audiguier (Paris: Jean Riches, 1620).

⁹⁹ Verna Foster has argued that Renaissance tragicomedy replaces but also evokes the providential design of medieval drama with metatheater and artistic design, and that tragicomic dramatists' "palpable control over the action" of their plays resembles the authority of God in medieval drama (42). See Foster, *The Name and Nature of Tragicomedy* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004).

Cervantes' characters' recognition of a divine force external to and much greater than themselves becomes in the play a metatheatrical recognition of the playwrights' convenient intervention(s), and of the watchful presence of those audience members who bring their cumulative theatrical experience to the playhouse and are therefore well-suited to judge the performance. The chaotic world of *Love's Pilgrimage* is held together not by divine organization, but by artistic design.¹⁰⁰ There is no overarching heavenly plan that retroactively frames events as purposeful. Rather, events in the play are a consequence of the interplay of chance, free will, character autonomy, and the playwrights' catering to audience expectation.

Throughout *Love's Pilgrimage*, Fletcher's characters express a similar conflation of fortune and personal responsibility we find early on in *Las dos doncellas*. Theodosia's initial narrative, also spoken to her brother (renamed Philippo) at the inn, establishes the interweaving of chance and free will that has led to her circumstances as a wandering transvestite:

Theodosia. Shame, shame, eternal shame! What have I done?

Philippo. Done?

Theo. And to no end: what a wild Journey

Have I more wildly undertaken?

Phil. Journey?

Theo. How without counsel? Care? Reason? Or fear?

Phil. Whither will this fit carry?

Theo. O my folly!

Phil. This is no common sickness.

Theo. How have I left

All I should love, or keep? O heaven.

.....
Phil. How do you gentle Sir?

¹⁰⁰ Interestingly, Foster argues that Shakespearean tragicomedy (or romance) still retains an element of providential design, whereas Fletcher's tragicomedies hinge on a recognition (or "fortunate reversal") that seems to set everything and everyone back in their rightful places. See *Name and Nature*, 20.

Theo. Alas my fortune.
(1.2.7-15; 18-9)

Theodosia blames herself for her situation repeatedly, taking responsibility for what she has done, for her “folly,” and for the double journey she has undertaken: not only the “journey” of her extramarital (or, rather, pre-marital) relationship with Mark-antony, but also the literal journey of abandoning her father’s home, disguising herself as a man, and pursuing Mark to confront him. As she blurts out her lines, unaware Philippo is listening, Phil interprets her condition as a “fit” and as “no common sickness,” implying there is an involuntary component to Theodosia’s outburst, as if she were possessed. Her resigned complaint, “Alas my fortune,” further emphasizes the notion that she is *not* fully responsible for her situation, or that she perceives herself as partially at fault and partially at the mercy of capricious fortune. As the exchange between Theodosia and Phil continues, she confesses: “know / You are deceiv’d with whom you have talkt so long. / I am a most unfortunate lost woman” (1.2.45-7). She defines herself as an unfortunate woman, again implying she is at least partially susceptible to chance, despite her active involvement in her relationship with Mark and in embarking on a dangerous journey. In this early scene, Theodosia’s disclosure of her gender operates on two levels. Firstly, she is revealing herself to Phil within the fictional world of the play, in order to move the plot along; secondly, she is revealing herself to the audience, who has been equally “deceiv’d” about her gender, particularly since the early modern actor playing Theodosia would have been a man (playing a woman disguised as a man).

The scene of Theodosia’s disclosure of gender and identity illustrates how watching a performance, as opposed to reading a narrative, alters the scene’s mode of reception. Theodosia discloses to Phil, whom the audience does not know is her brother,

her situation with Mark: how he convinced her with “many shews of service” to exchange rings privately (1.2.81). The innkeeper Diego enters, precisely at the right time, with a candle. This prop allows Phil to catch a glimpse of Theodosia; the candle is a theatrical substitute for the natural light of dawn that reveals Theodosia’s identity in the novella.¹⁰¹ Since there are no soliloquies or asides to provide the audience with access into the characters’ interiority, it would have been easier for the actors in performance to maintain suspense and set up surprises for the audience, such as with Theodosia’s gender, and Phil’s identity as her brother. The reader’s passive interaction with the novella is clearly different from the spectator’s real-time engagement with the embodied performance. In the theater, there is an interplay between spectators and actors based on physical cues (audience’s laughter, yelling, booing) with the potential to subtly or directly alter the performance as it is happening; this turns the spectator into an active contributor to the theatrical experience, as opposed to the novella’s reader who must receive it as it is written, and whose reactions are powerless to change the course of the action. As a result of the transposition of mediums – prose romance to staged drama – the passive reader, without any control over the narrative or its trajectory, is transformed into an active spectator, who with his/her physical presence in the playhouse participates in the performative experience, in its outcome, and in the construction of meaning that occurs in the interaction of audience and performance. In addition, tragicomedy is as a genre particularly demanding, since its effectiveness depends on the audience’s theatrical

¹⁰¹ In the novella, Rafael and Teodosia rise in the morning after talking through the night, and Rafael “abr[e] las ventanas y puertas del aposento” [opens the windows and doors of the room] (231). This literal opening up of the bedroom, which allows the sun’s light to fill the space and illuminate every corner, physically symbolizes and reinforces the revelation of Teodosia’s gender and identity to her brother.

competence and familiarity with generic conventions – in other words, the accumulated knowledge spectators have gained from spending “many a day” at the theater, as the play’s prologue indicates.¹⁰²

Phil’s reaction to his sister’s dilemma reveals how Beaumont and Fletcher continually lower the stakes of Cervantes’ romance, therefore consciously manipulating the audience’s level of investment. The lower the stakes, the easier it is to disengage from the storyline and observe it from a vantage point of detached judgment. In the novella, Teodosia allows Marco to take her virginity without marrying her, which renders her essentially valueless as a person and as a woman unless she becomes his wife. Beaumont and Fletcher erase this circumstance from the play, decompressing the urgency behind Teodosia’s quest. In the novella, Teodosia’s chastity, reputation, and family honor are at stake: she must find Marco and he needs to repent and repay her, as she says, what he owes. A satisfactory resolution hinges on Marco’s sincere repentance. This necessity infuses the romance quest in Cervantes with a sense of gravity and purpose that is absent in *Love’s Pilgrimage*, where no such restitutions of chastity are necessary for a happy resolution. The urgency driving Teodosia’s quest in Cervantes gives the reader a clear investment in whether the damsel succeeds in restoring her chastity. In *Love’s Pilgrimage*, Phil’s reaction to his sister’s story suggests the play’s tone and conclusion would have been entirely different if she *had* slept with Mark. After her confession, she

¹⁰² Discussing tragicomedy and audience reception, Foster argues that the genre is “deliberately contrived in its overall design to evoke such complex and simultaneous combinations of responses, including simultaneous engagement and detachment, by its mixture of tragic and comic elements in situation, characters... dialogue, and visual effects,” and so the audience is “called upon to be unusually active in its reception” (14).

asks him to kill her, as Teodosia does in the novella, but Phil tells her, “Rise Sister: / I wear no sword for women: nor no anger / *While* your fair chastity is yet untouch’d” (1.2.145-7, my emphasis). The implication is that, had Teodosia’s chastity been “touched,” Phil wouldn’t have reacted as forgivingly, perhaps turning the play into a tragedy by killing his sister to restore the family’s honor.

Beaumont and Fletcher transpose the novella’s divine providence, which is revealed by the end to have orchestrated all events, into self-conscious convenient plotting. Fortune in Cervantes is ultimately defined as not random at all, but as another force under God’s control. In *Love’s Pilgrimage*, fortune is controlled by a different, aesthetic kind of higher “power”: the tragicomedy’s generic design, which requires a happy resolution for the two damsels. Beaumont and Fletcher introduce moments of convenient “coincidence” that draw attention to themselves *as too* opportune, and therefore ironic.

One such convenient coincidence occurs when Phil offers to travel with Teodosia: “Fear not, ile run your own way: and to help you, / Love having rackt your passions beyond counsel, / Ile hazard mine own fame: whither shal we venture?” (1.2.166-8). Not only is Phil willing to “venture” with his sister, but he is also willing to jeopardize his own reputation by doing so. We are back to where we started, with the power of love having “rackt” Teodosia’s passions “beyond counsel”: she is off the hook once again, since it was her uncontrollable desire that drove her to act impulsively. Teodosia’s response is a confused “Alas, I know not Sir” (1.2.169). Yet her confusion is dispelled immediately: as Phil and Teodosia scratch their heads over where to go, Phil’s old friend Pedro enters the scene and announces, “I came from Port Saint Maries, whence

the Gallyes [sic] / Put this last tide, and bound for Barcellona, / I brought Mark-antonie upon his way..." (1.2.186-8). And so the dilemma is solved a mere ten lines later – Phil and Theodosia will travel to Barcelona. Ironically, Phil turns to Theodosia and tells her "Sister you hear this: I beleeve [sic] your fortune / Begins to be propitious to you" (1.2.200-1). Of course Pedro's entrance is not a result of fortune's generosity, but of tragicomic convenient plotting. The play in this moment transforms the concept of fortune, redefining it not as a haphazard force beyond human control, but as under the authority of generic design. Phil characterizes Pedro's information as "happy news" and "unexpected" (1.2.204). Pedro's seemingly miraculous intervention, which sets brother and sister on the right path, is a micro-example of what I define as Fletcher's convenient revelation: a disclosure or event that works in tragicomedy to move the plot along, to offer resolution, and/or to tie up loose ends.¹⁰³ Here it is generic rather than providential design that streamlines the potentially chaotic world of the play. This Fletcherian use of convenient revelation exemplifies the combined influence of Cervantes and Guarini in Fletcher's innovative form of tragicomedy. In his novellas, including *Las dos doncellas*, Cervantes frequently resorts to seemingly miraculous revelations of information that guarantee happy endings; Guarini, in his *Compendium of Tragicomic Poetry* (1599) refers to the "happy reversal" tragicomic authors borrow from comedy to avert tragic conclusions.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰³ Foster uses the term 'expected unexpected' to describe Fletcherian tragicomedy (*Name and Nature*, 20).

¹⁰⁴ The other elements tragicomedy borrows from comedy are, in Guarini's view, "laughter that is not excessive, modest amusement, [and] feigned difficulty" (131). See "The Compendium of Tragicomic Poetry," *Theatre/Theory/Theatre: The Major Critical Texts from Aristotle and Zeami to Soyinka and Havel*, ed. Daniel Gerould, trans. Allan H. Gilbert (New York: Applause Books, 2000).

Despite using Cervantes as a model and affirming his literary cachet, the English playwrights erase the *moral* exemplarity of the characters in *Las dos doncellas*. This element is intricately connected to the novella's providentialism: in Cervantes, moral exemplarity is illustrated by the characters' sincerity and progressive surrendering to divine authority. The novella's broader implication is therefore that sincerity is indeed possible; that there is an essential core to human beings that can be accessed by stripping away all layers of illusion and artificiality. In this view, ultimate agency lies not in attempting to control one's universe (which is a futile endeavor anyway), but in recognizing a divine *force majeure* and in trusting that all circumstances are intentionally designed by God to achieve a moral or spiritual lesson. In *Love's Pilgrimage*, the exemplarity and sincerity of the novella's characters are transformed into artifice: all there is in the play is performance, or illusion behind illusion. In this play, as in most of Fletcher's tragicomedies, the very concept of sincerity is problematized, and the idea of an inherent essence within human beings is replaced with irony and self-conscious posturing. We see this most clearly in Mark-antony, who is continually performing within the play: his self-created roles include carefree misogynist, duplicitous lover, and reckless sailor. Agency in *Love's Pilgrimage* does not lie in surrendering to an external divine force, but in pulling off an entertaining and commercially successful performance for an all-seeing audience, or "they that look on" (3.2.198), as Leocadia self-reflexively refers to the spectators.

Imbuing their characters with greater autonomy and at times with moral ambiguity (sometimes downright moral bankruptcy) is one of the major ways in which Beaumont and Fletcher shift the tone of Cervantes' narrative to write a play that caters to

the expectations and tastes of an English audience. A stark example of this move from moral exemplarity to corruption occurs in Beaumont and Fletcher's transposition of the *bandoleros* scene. Although the robbers seem to have the same *modus operandi* as in Cervantes, the English scene downplays their violence and their capacity to disrupt social order. In the play, the social disorder associated with the location of Igualada and its bandits is displaced onto the victims themselves. Fletcher's characters are frequently active catalysts of chaos, rather than simply passive subjects reacting to external events. When Theodosia, Phil, and their traveling companion Diego debate whether to enter the forest, Theodosia fears what may befall them in this particular setting: "Methinks these woody thickets should harbour knaves" (2.2.7). But the potential dangers lurking in the forest – especially the threat to personal safety and social order posed by the *bandoleros* – is displaced onto Diego, who is supposedly guiding Theodosia and her brother through the woods. Diego poses a more sinister threat of violence than the bandits themselves. Of the potential "knaves" lurking in the forest, he says:

I fear none but fair wenches: those are theeves
May quickly rob me of my good conditions
If they cry stand once: but the best is, Signiours,
They cannot bind my hands; for any else,
They meet an equall knave, and there's my passport.
(2.2.8-12)

Diego fears he will encounter "fair wenches" in the woods who will "rob [him] of [his] good conditions." The only thing that may be "robbed" from him is his own self-control. Diego inverts the victim/perpetrator binary that is so clearly drawn in *Las dos doncellas*, where the threat of violence is externalized onto the Castilian *bandoleros*. In *Love's Pilgrimage*, Diego claims he can cross the forest safely ("there's my passport") because he is an "equall knave" to any criminals that may be lurking within. His following speech

paints a more alarming picture of Diego's lack of a moral compass. He tells Phil that what frequently takes place in the woods is rape, which he refers to as the "sport of all sports" (2.2.15), and then elaborates:

Such turning up of taffataes; and you know
To what rare whistling tunes they go, far beyond
A soft wind in the shrowds: such stand there,
And down [in] thother place; such supplications
And subdivisions for those toys their honours;
One, as ye are a gentleman in this bush,
And oh sweet Sir, what mean ye? ...
.....
... another scratches,
And crys she will die first, and then swones
(2.2.17-25)

Disturbingly, Diego seems to speak from firsthand experience; it appears he has been the one to "turn up" some of these "taffataes." The violence escalates in his speech, progressing from the "rare whistling tunes" of the turned up skirts to the "soft wind in the shrowds" – with its ominous allusion to death shrouds – to the "supplications and subdivisions" emitted by the assaulted maids. He concludes with the scratching, which conjures up the unsettling *tableau* of a lost maid in the woods in physical confrontation with her rapist. Diego's speech, absent from Cervantes, offers the audience a moment of titillating sensationalism with its vivid imagery of sexual assault and rape. The moment obliterates any sense of moral exemplarity we find in Cervantes, where even Marco Antonio, after deceiving the two damsels and taking Teodosia's virginity, restores his morality through his final confession and repentance.

In addition to transforming Cervantes' characters into morally corrupt versions of themselves, Beaumont and Fletcher make them ironically self-aware of their status as actors on a stage. Since a defining characteristic of the morality of the novella's

characters is their increasing authenticity, and their relinquishment of illusion and disguise, this performative self-awareness in the play's characters only serves to further de-moralize them. The exchange between the two damsels, when Leocadia first tells her "unfortunate" story to the disguised Theodosia, is written by the playwrights as comically self-reflexive. For instance, Leocadia speaks of Theodosia as lacking honor, condemning herself by proxy. She says: "none of her part, honor, shee [Theodosia] deserves none, / 'Tis ceas'd with wandring Ladies such as she is, / So bold and impudent" (3.2.160-3). There is double irony here: not only is Leocadia faulting Theodosia with her own "impudence," as she says (they are both "wandring Ladies" in the world of the play), but the male actor who would have spoken the line was clearly *not* a wandering lady, and neither was the actor playing Theodosia. This ironic self-consciousness purposefully draws attention to the material conditions of performance – male actors playing female roles – and it creates distance between the actor and the role.

Leocadia continues to display metatheatrical awareness throughout the scene, highlighting the ability of performance to create and sustain a believable fiction, like magic. Paradoxically, however, this meta-reference to theater itself reveals the strings behind the performance and undoes the fiction of the play. Leocadia swears to take revenge on Mark and Theodosia, assuming they have fled together. Theodosia in her self-protective mode tells her she is too violent, to which Leocadia responds, "[Theodosia] has Devils in her ey[e]s, to whose devotion / [Mark-antonie] offers all his service" (3.2.150-1). Ironically, Leocadia is looking into Theodosia's devilish eyes as she speaks these lines, accusing her of charming Mark with black magic. Some lines later, Leocadia fleshes out her condemnation:

I shal find her out, with all her witchcrafts,
Her paintings, and her powncings: for *'tis art*
And only art preserves her, and meer spels
That work upon [Mark's] powers...
(3.2.182-5, my emphasis)

Leocadia links Theodosia's "witchcraft" with her physical appearance: her "paintings" and "powncings,"¹⁰⁵ or the make-up she uses, allegedly, to hide her imperfections and seduce Mark. This deceiving make-up is of course also part of the male actor's costume, which is the only thing that "preserves" Theodosia, the female character. Only "art," or theatrical illusion, is capable of preserving the character in front of the audience's eyes. The "meer spels" Leocadia accuses Theodosia of casting on Mark are on a metatheatrical level the words of the play itself, which similarly cast a spell on the audience. Ironically, this reading is complicated by the fact that Beaumont and Fletcher continually undo the spells they cast, precisely because they refer through the characters to their own "art" and to the artifice of their tragicomedy. Consequently, the play offers at least two sources of entertainment and pleasure: the first source exists at the level of plot, and is aimed at audience members who *will* become invested in the play's storyline and who will be carried away by its fictions. The second, more complex source of pleasure exists at the level of metatheater and self-reference, and is aimed at those ideal spectators who will

¹⁰⁵ The OED defines "pounce" as "To ornament (cloth, silk, etc.) by cutting or punching eyelets, figures, etc." and alternatively as "To seize prey with claws or talons; to swoop down on and grab." Leocadia clearly refers to both definitions, suggesting Theodosia has adorned herself to attract Mark, and also pounced on him like a rapacious animal or bird of prey, which puts the agency and responsibility back on Theodosia.

"pounce, v.1". OED Online. September 2014. Oxford University Press.
<http://www.oed.com.silk.library.umass.edu/view/Entry/149008> (accessed November 10, 2014).

"pounce, v.3". OED Online. September 2014. Oxford University Press.
<http://www.oed.com.silk.library.umass.edu/view/Entry/149009> (accessed November 10, 2014).

obtain greater enjoyment from recognizing the strings behind the performance, rather than journeying with it. According to Guarini, the well-constructed tragicomedy mingles “comic and tragic pleasure” in such a way that it “does not allow hearers to fall into excessive tragic melancholy or comic relaxation.”¹⁰⁶ The implication is that there is an alternative mode of reception that tragicomedy must (or should) accomplish, one that keeps the ‘hearer’ from *falling* into the excesses of pure comedy and pure tragedy. In Fletcher’s reworking of this definition, the alternative tragicomic mode of reception is one where the engaged spectator is by turns delighted by the play’s fiction and distanced from its artificiality.

Through its recurring self-reflexiveness, the play makes the process of theatrical “magic” visible. After calling out Theodosia on her “art,” Leocadia recognizes she is being too rash, and apologizes: “Pray forgive me / If I have spoke uncivilly: *they that look on / See more then we that play*” (3.2.197-9). Her comment invests the audience – “they that look on” – with godly authority, due to their omniscient vantage point. We see more than the characters because we see Leocadia complaining of Theodosia to Theodosia herself, which strips Theodosia’s male disguise of effectiveness: *we* can see right through it, even if Leocadia momentarily cannot. The singular male references to God as the external agent who looks on in *Las dos doncellas* – time personified as a man; “the great master;” “Him;” “he;” and finally God himself – are transposed into the collective “*they that look on*” in the play, transferring God’s all-seeing yet invisible presence into the audience’s physical presence. Here it is worth remembering the play’s prologue, with which I opened my chapter, where the spectators were asked to “travel

¹⁰⁶ Guarini, 131.

along with the scene.” This request (or suggestion) for the spectators to travel along with the fiction of the play cements the audience’s critical importance to the play’s not only commercial but also dramaturgical success. An effective deployment of generic convention cannot happen in a vacuum: the playwrights must rely on the attentiveness and theatrical savvy of their spectators. And so it is truly a symbiotic relationship between playwright, actors, and audience, with each one performing a necessary function for the play to be staged successfully.

Unlike the moment of sincere repentance in *Las dos doncellas*, Mark’s redemption scene in *Love’s Pilgrimage* suggests that a performative or artificially contrived repentance is just as efficient as a sincere one in bringing about a happy resolution. Mark-antony is throughout the play an immature, misogynistic cheater, characterizing women as “things ignorant” and accusing them of inconstancy (2.3.77-99) – all the while promising marriage to two women at once, then abandoning them, as he himself explains, to avoid responsibility. Beaumont and Fletcher set up Mark’s character as consistently corrupt in order to highlight the implausibility of his repentance in 4.3. In the play, we are granted access to Mark’s misogynistic internal motivations, so it becomes impossible to read his attempt to redeem himself as anything but convenient and contrived. Emphasizing the incredulity of his redemption, Beaumont and Fletcher insert an original moment into the scene, where Mark tries to seduce Eugenia, the Governor of Barcelona’s wife. The Governor and his wife, two of the novella’s characters largely expanded by the English playwrights, rescue Mark after he is beaten in the street for trying to tear off Eugenia’s veil – a prop borrowed from Spanish culture and theater.

Recovering in their house, Mark asks to be left alone with Eugenia, to whom he will “confess” his misdeeds. He does the opposite, telling her:

... I know as well as you
My wound is nothing, nor the power of earth
Could lay a wound upon me, in your presence,
That I could feel; But I do laugh to think
How covertly, how far beyond the reach
Of men, and wisemen too, we shal deceive ‘em,
Whilst they imagine I am talking here
With that short breath I have, ready to swound
At every full point; you my ghostly Mother
To hear my sad confession, you and I
Will on that bed within, prepar’d for me,
Debate the matter privately.
(4.3.70-81)

The potentially tragic moment of Mark’s death is quickly turned comic when he himself informs Eugenia his wound is “nothing.” The audience is invited to laugh, since there is no real danger of tragedy, and it is once again invested with godly omniscience, being made privy to this moment of attempted deceit and, more importantly, to Mark’s performative nature. If Cervantes’ Marco Antonio can be viewed as an exemplary figure, because he sins and then sincerely repents (enacting romance’s fall-and-redemption structure), Fletcher’s Mark-antony is the embodiment of moral corruption. After his failed seduction of Eugenia, she calls him a “dissembling man, that fellow worth / Nothing but kicking” (4.3.97-8). Her use of “dissembling” underlines Mark’s performativity, which he ineffectively tries to use to his advantage.

To finally get Mark to “repent,” Leocadia turns his performative tactics against him, and succeeds: she convinces him he is *actually* dying to wrest a confession out of him. Leocadia uses performance to create the illusion of a fatal injury – an illusion Mark believes, which leads him to confess: “I have done wrong upon wrong so thick, / ...

Forgive me both” (4.3.164; 166). Mark’s change of heart is based on Leocadia’s effective lying, as well as his unknowing suspension of disbelief. But rather than placing his faith in providential design – the novella’s “time,” “heaven,” or “God” – he places it in performance itself. Her dissembling is so convincing that Mark’s senses are temporarily hijacked, as he exclaims, “oh I do feel the power / Of death seize on me” and “I must speak fast, because I fear my life / Will else be shorter then my speech would be” (4.3.167-8; 170-1). For the all-knowing audience, who heard Leocadia devise her plan a few moments earlier in an aside, Mark’s comments are self-consciously comical. There is no danger of death; if he must “speak fast” it is only because there is but one act left and many loose ends to tie up. The sense of urgency does not arise from Mark sincerely wishing to make amends, but from the playwrights who have limited time to wrap up their tragicomic arc. Once he has confessed and promised Theodosia to marry her, she informs Mark: “Rise up, and stir your self, ‘tis but amazement / And your imagination that afflicts you” (4.3.204-5). It was Mark’s faith in Leocadia’s strategic performance that elicited his feelings of imminent death, causing him to repent conditionally, because he believed and felt he was dying.

In *Las dos doncellas* Marco Antonio affirms his genuine repentance when he expresses his blind belief in a God or heaven that has purposefully orchestrated his life’s events leading to this moment of redemption, of setting things right, and of surrendering to a mysterious yet intentional plan. In the play, Mark’s confession is prompted wholly by Leocadia’s strategic exaggeration and by Mark’s belief in her performance, and it does not lead to any expression of faith in an overarching providential design. Unlike the seemingly divinely orchestrated resolution in the novella, the play’s conclusion arises out

of character autonomy and a deployment of generic convention. When Phil proposes marriage to the jilted Leocadia, he tells her: “Go home, and by the vertue of that Charm [marriage] / Transform all mischiefs, as you are transform’d: / ... / Unfold the Riddles you have made; what say you? / Now is the time” (5.4.118-9; 122-3). Phil equates marriage with a magical “charm” that can transform (or undo) Leocadia’s mischiefs, just as with theatrical “magic” she has been transformed from a man into a woman. Phil’s language also draws self-reflexive attention to Leocadia’s autonomy: as an active character in this play, she has made riddles that she now must unfold – or can choose to unfold. Phil instructs her to “make new choyce,” referring to her new choice of husband, but also emphasizing her freedom (5.4.112). Once again, Phil’s comment has metatheatrical implications: it is not only time for Leocadia to unfold her riddles within the storyline, but it is time for the playwrights to clear up unresolved tensions.

The narrator of *Las dos doncellas* offers the reader an ultimate resolution when he asserts God has ordained the story itself, and it therefore couldn’t have been told any other way. In the secularized *Love’s Pilgrimage* Beaumont and Fletcher refrain from making any references to God, or suggesting that the play’s trajectory – or the events within it – has been divinely ordained. Instead, the English playwrights use Eugenia as a *human ex machina* to avert a duel between the fathers of Leocadia, Theodosia, and Mark-antony, and therefore to dispel the play’s last remaining conflict.¹⁰⁷ When her husband, the Governor, attempts to take control of the situation himself, Eugenia tells him “Nay love, I prethee let me manage this” (5.6.70). She then adopts Leocadia’s earlier strategy

¹⁰⁷ The “fathers” subplot is a comic addition to the play by Fletcher and Beaumont; almost an undercurrent to the events that take place in the main plot, enacting the repercussions of the young characters’ actions on their elders.

of performative dissembling to “manage” – or stage-manage – the crisis: she sets up a duel, with all the necessary props (weapons), and goads the fathers into killing each other. Her tactic is immediately and comically effective: one of the fathers, Sanchio, relents (“I ha’ not the heart” (5.6.109)) and the other two follow suit. Eugenia then announces to the full cast of characters, in comic tradition: “A feast / Waites you within, is better then your fray” (5.6.113-4). Her husband adds, metatheatrically, “It is well: / All are content I hope, and we well eas’d, / If they for whom we have done all this be pleas’d” (5.6.118-20). These two figureheads of mortal law function to smooth over tensions between the other characters, to unite everyone in a feast, to reestablish social order, and to end the play on a comic note, once again cementing bonds of loyalty between performance and audience.

The Governor’s final couplet makes the audience extraordinarily powerful, raising them to the status of “they for whom we have done all this.” The entire performance relies on the audience’s physical presence, without which there would be nothing to perform. By calling attention to the performance *as a performance*, as something that has been “done” in front of an audience, Beaumont and Fletcher once again pull back the curtain to refer self-consciously to the workings of theater itself. In these final lines the relationship that is reaffirmed is not one of Christian believers and their God, in whom they place their blind faith, but one of actors and their audience – an audience for whom they have deployed a specific design of theatrical and aesthetic convention. By continually referring to itself metatheatrically, and through the characters’ self-reflexive awareness, *Love’s Pilgrimage* makes the process of theatrical magic visible. Beaumont and Fletcher take Cervantes’ sense of Christian wonder and demystify the notion of

invisible, divine authority. By extension, the playwrights also problematize the concept of divine kingship.¹⁰⁸ The English, like the Spanish, defined royal authority as quasi-godly and viewed their monarch as God's earthly representative.¹⁰⁹ Early modern monarchs were therefore understood as divine figures, largely inaccessible to most of their subjects.¹¹⁰ These subjects, in turn, were asked to place blind faith in their kings and queens, believing in their physical and all-seeing presence, yet rarely experiencing it firsthand. In *Love's Pilgrimage*, Beaumont and Fletcher offer an alternative way of organizing the universe; one that is secular and entirely visible, based on performance itself, on the use of artistic design, and on the synergistic relationship between playwright, audience, and performance. The "wonder" and the mystery of divine and royal authority are dispelled, and revealed to be nothing but air: as Mark says early on in the play, "For heavenly beauty is as heaven it self; / Too excellent for object, and what is

¹⁰⁸ Gordon McMullan describes the politics of Fletcher's plays as "cynical of court and assertions of absolutism" in *The Politics of Unease in the Plays of John Fletcher* (Amherst: The U of Massachusetts P, 1994), 35. McMullan echoes Philip Finkelpearl's earlier suggestions that, despite the royalist associations of the 1647 Beaumont and Fletcher folio, and Samuel Taylor Coleridge's description of their politics as those of "servile *jure divino* royalists," most of their plays feature a central urge of "political criticism of court and king" (*Court and Country Politics in the Plays of Beaumont and Fletcher* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 1990), qtd in 5, 7). Fletcher's central writing practice – collaboration – is in itself a powerful mode of diluting authorship and authority and making the creative process democratic, rather than absolutist.

¹⁰⁹ For instance, historian John McCafferty describes the meeting of 12 January 1604 between James I, his bishops, and his deans as one where James defended the *status quo* of England by conjuring up "an image of a Christian prince ruling by divine authority and supported by an apostolic order of bishops" (54). See McCafferty, "The Churches and Peoples of the Three Kingdoms, 1603-1641," *The Seventeenth Century*, ed. Jenny Wormald (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2008).

¹¹⁰ On the basis of royal invisibility, Finkelpearl makes a connection between James I and the ruler figure Pan of Fletcher's *Faithful Shepherdess*: "Like the Pan of this play, James spent a notable amount of time secluded from his subjects" (*Court and Country Politics*, 109-10).

seen / Is but the veil then, airy clouds” (2.3.55-7). In the play’s view, heavenly beauty, or the outward show of things, is made of the same stuff as heaven, or the thing itself. They are both “airy clouds”: mere illusions emptied of any authentic sense of wonder.

CHAPTER 3

TRAGICOMEDY AS NATIONAL UNIFIER: *THE FAIR MAID OF THE INN* AND *LA ILUSTRE FREGONA*

The Fair Maid of the Inn, first performed at least a decade after Beaumont and Fletcher's *Love's Pilgrimage*, uses its Spanish source to craft a form of tragicomedy that is redemptive, optimistic, and nationally invested. A collaborative tragicomedy by John Fletcher, Philip Massinger, John Webster, and John Ford, *The Fair Maid* is based on Cervantes' novella *La ilustre fregona* (*The Illustrious Kitchen Maid*). In multiple ways, the transposition of *La ilustre fregona* into *The Fair Maid* is an inversion of the transposition of *Las dos doncellas* into *Love's Pilgrimage*. As I argued in the previous chapter, *Las dos doncellas* features a narrative where idealism and sincere redemption are privileged over irony and realism. Beaumont and Fletcher reverse this hierarchy in *Love's Pilgrimage*, where insincerity and performativity undermine any sense of true redemption. In contrast to *Las dos doncellas*, the final moments of *La ilustre fregona* are characterized by a caustic irony that corrodes the novella's preceding idealism. Inversely, the final scenes in *The Fair Maid* are characterized by the protagonist's sincere moral transformation and a sense of redemption aligned with national allegiance and a willingness to take risks for one's nation. The radical perspectival shift that occurs between *Love's Pilgrimage* and *The Fair Maid* illustrates the flexibility and adaptability of the tragicomic structure: both demystification *and* idealism can serve, variously, as the foundation for stage tragicomedy. The genre never requires a complete banishment of either perspective. Rather, it staggers them palimpsestically, continually reversing the hierarchy between them.

This shift in tragicomic structure – from the sardonic mode in *Love's Pilgrimage* to the redemptive in *The Fair Maid* – is also a response to and a symptom of historical changes between 1615 and 1625. *Love's Pilgrimage* was transposed from Cervantes and first performed during a period of Anglo-Spanish cooperation and peace, following the Treaty of London of 1604 and characterized by James I's cautiously anti-war foreign policies (he termed himself *Rex Pacificus*).¹¹¹ This climate had changed drastically by 1624, a year of radical shifts in England's position regarding Spain. These changes were initiated by the onset of the Thirty Years' War in 1618 and concretized by the 1623 failure of the attempted marriage between Prince Charles and the Infanta of Spain.¹¹² Thomas Cogswell has argued that “the eventual result [of the Thirty Years' War] was one of the more dramatic reversals in early Stuart history; in 1624, James abandoned his longstanding entente with the Spanish Habsburgs for a bellicose policy of confrontation, which the following year led to open war.”¹¹³ The Hispanophobia of the post-Armada

¹¹¹ On the signing of the peace Treaty with Spain, see Pauline Croft, “*Rex Pacificus*, Robert Cecil, and the 1604 Peace with Spain,” *The Accession of James I: Historical and Cultural Consequences*, ed. Glenn Burgess, Rowland Wymer, and Jason Lawrence (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006): 140-54.

¹¹² In 1618 the Elector Palatine Friedrich V and his wife Elizabeth Stuart (James I's daughter) were forced to flee Bohemia and take refuge in The Hague “while Spanish and Imperial armies [overran] their ancestral estates in central Germany, the Upper and Lower Palatinate” (699), in Brennan C. Pursell, “The End of the Spanish Match,” *The Historical Journal* 45.4 (Dec 2002). James I stood in the middle of the conflict, attempting to remain neutral, but eventually siding with the Dutch against Spain in the mid-1620s.

¹¹³ Thomas Cogswell, *The Blessed Revolution: English Politics and the Coming of War, 1621-1624* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1989), 1. On the failed Spanish Match and the events of 1623, see Glyn Redworth, *The Prince and the Infanta: the Cultural Politics of the Spanish Match* (New Haven: Yale UP, 2003); *The Spanish Match: Prince Charles's Journey to Madrid, 1623*, ed. Alexander Samson (Burlington: Ashgate, 2006); and Leticia Álvarez Recío, “Opposing the Spanish Match: Thomas Scott's *Vox Populi* (1620),” *SEDERI: Yearbook of the Spanish and Portuguese Society for English*

years quickly returned, as virulent anti-Catholic and anti-Spanish pamphlets filled booksellers' stalls, preachers delivered scathing anti-papist sermons, and plays like Thomas Heywood's *A Game at Chess* (1624) demonized the Spanish as scheming and corrupt. Another consequence of this renewed Hispanophobia was an emphatic "Protestant unity" against the Catholic threat, resulting in a hiatus of anti-Puritan rhetoric.¹¹⁴ Internal divisions within England dissolved once the nation became united, out of necessity, against a common external enemy: Catholic Spain (and Rome). *The Fair Maid* dramatizes this necessary turn to national unity and redefines what it means to be noble by aligning nobility with patriotism and a willingness to sacrifice one's personal safety for the well-being of the nation. That is, rather than using Fletcher's usual form of tragicomedy that undermines, demystifies, and questions national politics and investments, the playwrights turn to a tragicomic form that is idealistic, nationalistic, and redemptive, in multiple ways aligned with Shakespeare's romances of the early 1600s.

A brief discussion of the controversy surrounding *The Fair Maid*'s precise date, authorship, and source text must precede my textual analysis of the play. Sir Henry Herbert's license of the play dated January 1625/6 attributed it to Fletcher, who died in August 1625.¹¹⁵ Cyrus Hoy finds mere "traces" of Fletcher in 4.1, and assigns the rest to

Renaissance 19 (2009): 5-22. On the aftermath of Charles's return to England from his 1623 trip to Madrid, see Robert E. Ruigh, *The Parliament of 1624: Politics and Foreign Policy* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1971); and Mark E. Kennedy, "Legislation, Foreign Policy, and the 'Proper Business' of the Parliament of 1624," *Albion: A Quarterly Journal Concerned with British Studies* 23.1 (Spring 1991): 41-60.

¹¹⁴ Cogswell, 283.

¹¹⁵ See the textual introduction to the play in *The Dramatic Works in the Beaumont and Fletcher Canon*, ed. Fredson Bowers, 10th vol. (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1996), 555-557.

Webster, Massinger, and Ford.¹¹⁶ However, *The Fair Maid* was included in the 1647 Beaumont and Fletcher Folio, and we can confidently attribute to Fletcher the practice of transposing Cervantes' novellas into stage tragicomedies – more so than to Webster, Massinger, and Ford individually and combined.¹¹⁷ A 1944 entry in *Modern Language Notes* by Baldwin Maxwell attempts to refute the argument that *La ilustre fregona* was used as a source for *The Fair Maid*. After a detailed analysis of the play's plot points, in comparison to the novella's, Maxwell concludes that *La ilustre fregona* cannot be declared the primary source for the play, but that the “dramatists *may well have* borrowed certain situations from it which could be blended into and promote a happy ending to... their main plot.”¹¹⁸ Maxwell's inconclusive language reveals his uncertainty as to whether *La ilustre fregona* served as a source for this play at all. Recent work on seventeenth-century English plays based on Spanish sources has offered a corrective to Maxwell's conclusions, affirming the status of *La ilustre fregona* as a source for *The Fair Maid*.¹¹⁹ Trudi Darby maintains there was no common third source that Cervantes and Fletcher could have used independently of each other, and that “Cervantes is most insistent in the prologue to the *novelas* that he was the first to write these stories, so [we

¹¹⁶ Cyrus Hoy, “The shares of Fletcher and his collaborators in the Beaumont and Fletcher canon (v),” *Studies in Bibliography* 13 (1960), 102.

¹¹⁷ In “Cervantes on the Jacobean Stage,” *The Cervantean Heritage: Reception and Influence of Cervantes in Britain*, ed. J.A.G. Ardila (London: Legenda, 2009), 206-222, Trudi Darby and Alexander Samson confidently state Fletcher “worked directly from the Spanish texts on... *The Fair Maid of the Inn*” (210).

¹¹⁸ Baldwin Maxwell, “The Source of the Principal Plot of *The Fair Maid of the Inn*,” *Modern Language Notes* 59.2 (1944): 122-127, (quoted from 122 and 127, respectively; my emphasis).

¹¹⁹ See Darby and Samson, 210.

may] rule out the chance of Fletcher having come across the plot in an Italian or French novella.”¹²⁰ In a 2005 dissertation with investments similar to mine, Mary Lucille D. Bjork calls for a “careful scrutin[y]” of Fletcherian and non-Fletcherian plays “with clear Spanish sources”; second on her list is *The Fair Maid of the Inn*, which she pairs unequivocally with *La ilustre fregona*.¹²¹

I argue that the controversy surrounding the play’s source arises largely due to the transpositional complexity between the two texts, which demands a new understanding of the nature of transposition, particularly when the target text is produced collaboratively.¹²² In the case of *The Fair Maid*, the already double authorship of *Love’s Pilgrimage* is quadrupled, resulting in a sense of structural and generic hybridity. In its manifold plots and subplots, *The Fair Maid* seems to contain elements of tragedy, romance, farce, and city comedy, to name a few. The unifying concern that underlies the varied plots is also the central theme of *La ilustre fregona*: an examination of nobility, its origins, and its frequently problematic cultural definitions. However, the play resituates this theme in a new context of cross-cultural concerns more germane to contemporary England. The Italian setting of *The Fair Maid* operates, much like the foreign and at times ambiguous settings of Shakespeare’s plays, as a possible iteration of the playwrights’ England, upon which they reflect and work out current preoccupations of English national consciousness.

¹²⁰ Darby, personal communication, April 13, 2015.

¹²¹ Mary Lucille D. Bjork, “Golden Age Spanish Prose and Jacobean Drama” (PhD diss., University of California Santa Barbara, 2005), 140.

¹²² “Target text” as opposed to “source text,” in translation theory.

In the source text, Cervantes continues to experiment with the double consciousness – the clashing of idealism and irony – of *Las dos doncellas*, which chronologically precedes *La ilustre fregona*.¹²³ The questions Cervantes raises in the latter novella, which is considered neither “idealistic” nor “realistic,” as per the traditional categorizations, but as a hybrid mix, are chiefly questions about nobility. Is inherited or acquired nobility more valuable? What determines nobility: bloodline, material wealth, social rank, or education? Or is one truly noble only by adhering to a strict moral code, regardless of external circumstances and lineage?

Cervantes addresses these questions by juxtaposing ideologies that seem mutually exclusive, without explicitly privileging one over the other. We have seen him deploy this tactic successfully in *Las dos doncellas*, and it becomes a chief characteristic of the *Novelas ejemplares* as a whole. Ultimately, Cervantes paints a satirical picture of the Spanish nobility, questioning its patriarchal investments in traditions such as primogeniture, arranged marriage, and the misogynistic objectification of women. Cervantean critic Paul Lewis-Smith has explored the novella’s representation of noblemen as morally and ethically corrupt, arguing that “the realist treatment of romance material is chiefly concerned with sexual and family life, emphasises the corruption of men, and treats the wealthy nobility as the social class in which men are at their worst.”¹²⁴ Eric Kartchner, in his application of Bakhtinian theory to the novella,

¹²³ On the chronology of the novellas, see Ruth S. El Saffar, *Novel to Romance: A Study of Cervantes’ Novelas ejemplares* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins UP, 1974), 91.

¹²⁴ Paul Lewis-Smith, “Realism, Idealism, and the Transformation of Romance in ‘La ilustre fregona,’” *Bulletin of the Cervantes Society of America* 30.1 (Spring 2010): 17-31 (20).

highlights the “double-voiced nature of the entire text.”¹²⁵ Lewis-Smith and Kartchner join the group of Cervantean critics – including Fuchs and Cascardi, whose views are discussed in the previous chapter – who consider Cervantes’ duality one of his primary literary strategies, and who locate this duality in the author’s ironic or subversive use of genre.

The novella, like most of the *Novelas ejemplares*, contains at least two perspectives or points of view: idealistic (the romance, or the fictional storyline) and satirical, which underlies the idealism of the fiction. On the idealistic level, *La ilustre fregona* suggests that inherited nobility, high social rank, and material wealth are preferable to all other qualities, possessions, or states of being. On its satirical level, the novella denounces the cultural over-valuation of this kind of nobility, juxtaposing it with nobility of mind and heart, with integrity, self-respect, humility, and a fair treatment of others. The novella’s contrasting modes of nobility, and its condemnation of corrupt nobility emerge most clearly in its resolution (as I discuss below), where Cervantes’ irony reaches its peak.

In transposing *La ilustre fregona* into *The Fair Maid of the Inn*, the English playwrights did not duplicate its exact plot, but they did transpose the novella’s central dualism regarding nobility. The English tragicomedy complicates matters by presenting not two but *three* models of nobility: nobility defined by material wealth and rank;

¹²⁵ Eric Kartchner, “Metafiction in *La ilustre fregona*: the Search for Meaning in a Semiotic Carnival,” *Romance Languages Annual* 10 (1998): 646-52 (647). Edwin Williamson has also discussed Cervantes’ prose, and *La ilustre fregona* in particular, as displaying two modes of writing. In Williamson’s definition, the *idealistic* is replaced with “romance,” and the *realistic* is replaced with “early ‘proto-novelistic’ forms of picaresque fiction.” See Williamson, “Challenging the Hierarchies: The Interplay of Romance and the Picaresque in *La ilustre fregona*,” *Bulletin of Spanish Studies* 81.4-5 (2004): 655-674 (656).

internal nobility defined by a carefully calibrated moral and ethical compass; and – the play’s addition – nobility defined by active engagement with the world, bravery, and a willingness to take risks. This final model of nobility in the play is gendered; it’s only accessible to men, who are granted the option due to their gender to participate in risky endeavors that can lead to great rewards. These endeavors in *The Fair Maid* are primarily armed conflict (preventing the Turks from invading Italy, where the play is set) and overseas travel. This active, acquired nobility, framed in the play as arising from a willing involvement with the world beyond Italy, relies on a marked element of cosmopolitanism. This element is explored satirically in the play’s subplot, where a con artist named Forobosco and his assistant (“Clown”) discuss their worldly travels and the techniques required to cozen different nationalities, and who offer to “teleport” (for a fee) gullible characters to exotic locations. This comic subplot is one of the playwrights’ innovations and it focuses on the role of conning and performance in acquiring social status and nobility.

The play’s tragicomic structure, which requires a character to journey beyond Italy to facilitate the family reunions, resurrections, and redemptions that resolve the plot, aligns it with earlier stage romances, such as Shakespeare’s *Pericles, Prince of Tyre*. *The Fair Maid* exemplifies how the tragicomic genre shared in the tradition of stage romance to “[tap] into the demands and interests of the English, a people with an increasing desire to become more globally aware and ‘cosmopolitan.’”¹²⁶ The play does so by dramatizing

¹²⁶ Cyrus Mulready, *Romance on the Early Modern Stage: Early Expansion Before and After Shakespeare* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 12. Criticism on the slippery distinctions and similarities between early modern stage romance and tragicomedy is abundant. In “‘What’s in a Name?’ Tragicomedy, Romance, and Late Comedy,” *A Companion to Shakespeare’s Works*, vol. 4, *The Poems, Problem Comedies, Late Plays*,

two opposing models of international travel that are also essentially two disparate modes of empire-building, one through the acquisition of foreign knowledge and customs to aid in imperial conquest, and the second through the use of force in physical confrontation. The first kind of travel, associated with Forobosco and his Clown, is travel for personal gain: they journey throughout the Continent to learn how to best cozen a variety of nationalities. In 2.2, Forobosco and his man discuss their endeavors, stating how “I’th Low-countries we did pretty well,” how “Switzer[s]” are easily cozened because they are always drunk, and the necessity to learn a new trick to gull “these Italians” who are “more nimble-pated” than the Swiss, the Dutch, and the English (2.2.97-110).¹²⁷

Forobosco also uses the appeal of travel as a form of superficially improving oneself – by acquiring foreign fashions, accents, and mannerisms – to gull the fair maid’s working

ed. Richard Dutton and Jean E. Howard (Oxford: Blackwell, 2003), Barbara A. Mowat applies Ludwig Wittgenstein’s “family resemblance” theory of genre to Shakespeare’s late plays to suggest that, despite their remarkably different structures, *Pericles*, *The Winter’s Tale*, *The Tempest*, and *Cymbeline* point to a clear family resemblance in their “shared story of loss, suffering, and joyous reunion” (138). Mowat argues that using *romance* and *tragicomedy* in combination to describe the plays is more productive than privileging either term over the other; ultimately, though, she concludes that these plays “belong in the genre of dramatized romance,” which is in essence tragicomic (140). On family resemblances, See Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, trans. G. E. M. Anscombe (New York: Macmillan, 1988); and Alastair Fowler, *Kinds of Literature: An Introduction to the Theory of Genres and Modes* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1982). See also Maurice Hunt, “Romance and Tragicomedy,” *A Companion to Renaissance Drama*, ed. Arthur Kinney (Oxford: Blackwell, 2002): 384-98; Christopher Cobb, *The Staging of Romance in Late Shakespeare: Text and Theatrical Technique* (Delaware: U of Delaware P, 2007); Lawrence Danson, “The Shakespeare Remix: Romance, Tragicomedy, and Shakespeare’s ‘Distinct Kind,’” *Shakespeare and Genre: From Early Modern Inheritances to Postmodern Legacies*, ed. Anthony R. Guneratne (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 101-20; and Janet Clare, *Shakespeare’s Stage Traffic: Imitation, Borrowing and Competition in the Renaissance Theatre* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2014), esp. her chapter on “Generic Transformations,” 230-63.

¹²⁷ All references are from Fletcher et al., “*The Fair Maid of the Inn*,” *The Dramatic Works in the Beaumont and Fletcher Canon*, ed. Fredson Bowers, 10th vol. (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1996).

class suitors, offering to teleport them in exchange for money. The Forobosco subplot intertwines travel and performance by suggesting that travel can teach the traveler to become a better performer of class, fashion, and worldly etiquette. At the same time, the emptiness of Forobosco's claims – he himself performs by pretending to be a conjurer – is linked to the emptiness of his form of travel, which is purely for selfish gain. This is a case of travel that is not simply idle, but actively harmful and corrupt.¹²⁸

The play's contrasting model of journeying is presented in the main plot, and focuses on the travels of Alberto, father to the play's protagonist Cesario. Alberto is assigned by the Duke of Florence to fight an invading Turkish fleet. Alberto's traveling, unlike Forobosco's, is therefore underpinned by imperatives both moral and national. Forobosco travels to accumulate knowledge of different nationalities and their respective temperaments; a kind of knowledge that is profitable for himself, but not for the broader interests of his nation. In the end, the play will punish him for his selfishness and reward Alberto for his courageous travels, which are meant to protect Italy and reaffirm its national identity against an external other, the Turks.¹²⁹ Alberto's journeys are thus

¹²⁸ In *Mind-Travelling and Voyage Drama in Early Modern England* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), David McInnis explains that, in the early modern period, "idle travel was [considered] a profitless pursuit" and mocked in plays such as Ben Jonson's *Volpone*, where Sir Politic Would-be is depicted as an uncultured traveler who records trivial and mundane facts in his travel journal, rather than bringing back to England relevant information regarding foreign nations and cultures (23). Sir Pol does precisely the opposite than is instructed in treatises such as Thomas Palmer's *How to Make Our Travailes Profitable* (1606), where Palmer stresses the usefulness of travel as a means of acquiring knowledge of foreign lands, for the state's benefit. On travel as a mode of education and personal refinement, see Edward Chaney, *The Jacobean Grand Tour: Early Stuart Travellers in Europe* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2014).

¹²⁹ Despite the fundamental cultural and religious differences between England (which the play's Italy mirrors) and Turkey (as well as the variety of Mediterranean cultures implied by the early modern use of "Turks"), I use the term "other" in a way that accounts for a more complex self/other relationship than a strict binary or hierarchical

categorized as “true travel” or *peregrinari*, in opposition to “purposeless vagrancy or wandering” (*vagari*), the two major types of travel discussed in early modern treatises for the instruction of English travelers.¹³⁰ *Peregrinari*, a kind of purposeful and nationally-invested travel, is associated with religious pilgrimage and is therefore loaded with

opposition. As Daniel Vitkus explains in *Turning Turk: Theater and the Multicultural Mediterranean, 1570-1630* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), England did not simply construct its own national identity by demonizing and repelling external cultures; rather, England built an identity by alternately rejecting and absorbing elements from foreign “others.” Vitkus reminds us of the intense “English anxieties about cultural pollution, miscegenation, [and] religious conversion” but also points out that “cultural, ethnic, and religious differences were often embraced and internalized as English culture began to absorb and articulate those differences as a part of its own process of self-identification” (23). In *Traffic and Turning: Islam and English Drama, 1579-1624* (Newark: U of Delaware P, 2005), Jonathan Burton similarly suggests that the “numerous images of Islam and of Muslim peoples produced by English authors of the early modern period ranged from the censorious to the laudatory, from others to brothers” (12). In *Islamic Conversion and Christian Resistance on the Early Modern Stage* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 2010), Jane Hwang Degenhardt argues that the English tolerance, admiration, and even internalization of Islam suggested by critics such as Vitkus and Burton reached its limit with conversion, which was viewed as wholly negative. Degenhardt points out that Mediterranean “commerce depended upon certain risks, which included not only the dangers of seafaring and the economic risks of piracy and foreign investment, but also the personal risk of losing English bodies and souls to Islamic conversion” (1). As Degenhardt argues, conversion to Islam was considered worse than being “captured by Turks, stripped, beaten, and mercilessly killed” (1).

¹³⁰ McInnis points to these two distinctions in *Voyage Drama*. He also makes a productive analogy throughout the book between the idle traveler and the “idle” spectator: both are condemned for paying attention to the wrong things, either during foreign travel or when watching a performance in a London playhouse. The idle spectator is therefore the counter figure to the ideal spectator, who is aware of generic and theatrical convention and who is “trained” to see and interpret correctly, something Cervantes emphasizes repeatedly in the *Novelas ejemplares* (which I discuss more fully in the previous chapter). On early modern travel, see also Justin Stagl, *A History of Curiosity: The Theory of Travel 1550-1800* (Chur: Harwood Academic Publishers, 1995); *Travel and Drama in Shakespeare’s Time*, ed. Jean-Pierre Maquerlot and Michele Willems (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1996); Claire Jowitt, *Voyage Drama and Gender Politics, 1589-1642: Real and Imagined Worlds* (Manchester: Manchester UP, 2003); Joan-Paul Rubiés, *Travellers and Cosmographers: Studies in the History of Early Modern Travel and Ethnology* (Aldershot: Ashgate Varorium, 2007); and Daniel Carey, *Continental Travel and Journeys Beyond Europe in the Early Modern Period: An Overlooked Connection* (London: Hakluyt Society, 2009).

moralistic overtones. In the end, Alberto's journeying beyond Italy to engage with (or confront) a foreign enemy proves to be redemptive. It is Alberto's willingness take risks in the name of his nation and religion that indirectly brings about the play's resolution. He is taken captive by the Turks, which leads him to reunite with his old friend Prospero, which ultimately leads to their triumphant return to Italy and to the final scene of miraculous reunions.

The hints of cosmopolitanism and cross-cultural encounter of *Love's Pilgrimage* – staged at least a decade before *The Fair Maid* – therefore take on a central role in the second play. The process of transposition becomes more complex and in some ways more fragmented as the dual authorship of *Love's Pilgrimage* is multiplied by two in *The Fair Maid*. Transposing *La ilustre fregona* into *The Fair Maid*, the English playwrights seem to participate metaphorically in the two kinds of travel they represent in their tragicomedy. These two modes of travel are synthesized in the process of transposition itself. By symbolically “traveling” abroad and bringing back the Cervantean material from which they construct their play for personal gain – and which they use to put on a performance for money, as Forobosco will do in the subplot – Fletcher and his collaborators enact Forobosco's selfish wandering for monetary gain. But in successfully engaging with and symbolically rewriting/relocating Cervantes (who, being Spanish, is also an external other like the Turks), the English playwrights enact Alberto's mode of purposeful travel, participating in the construction of English national and cultural identity.

***La ilustre fregona* and the Irony of Nobility**

La ilustre fregona tells the story of two noble teenagers, Diego de Carriazo and Tomás de Avendaño. The novella opens with Carriazo leaving his father's house at thirteen years old to join the picaresque and seemingly idyllic lifestyle of tuna-fishing in Zahara de los Atunes (in the province of Cádiz). When Carriazo returns to his hometown of Burgos three years later, he convinces his friend Avendaño to join him in Zahara. On the way there, the boys overhear a traveler's story of an exceedingly beautiful *fregona* (kitchen maid) at an inn in Toledo. Carriazo wants to continue towards the tuna fisheries, his newfound obsession, but Avendaño is adamant about seeing this eighth wonder of the world, the gorgeous *fregona*. Carriazo gives in to his friend's desire and the boys travel to the inn in Toledo, where they get a glimpse of Costanza, which is enough to hook Avendaño and ignite his pursuit of the illustrious kitchen maid.

The noble teenagers disguise themselves as commoners: Avendaño offers his services to the innkeeper (Costanza's father) as a bookkeeper, and Carriazo opts for the humble disguise of water-carrier. With his new identity, Avendaño tries to court the virginal Costanza to no avail. When he reveals his noble status, Costanza rejects him on the basis of their social inequality. Carriazo, meanwhile, participates in the "underworld" of Toledo, gambling with his fellow water-carriers, getting into heated brawls, and eventually being imprisoned for nearly killing a man (Avendaño is tasked with rescuing him). The novella's *denouement* begins when the *Corregidor* (Mayor) of Toledo – whose son has also been courting Costanza unsuccessfully – visits the inn asking about Costanza, prompting the innkeeper to tell the story of her true identity. Coincidentally, Carriazo's father (also named Carriazo) arrives the next day, after the innkeeper has

revealed Costanza is not his biological daughter. Ultimately, it is revealed that Costanza's mother was a noble widow whose dying wish was for the innkeepers to raise her daughter as their own. Costanza's father is Carriazo senior, who raped the widow and who resurfaces to claim his daughter fifteen years later. Costanza is separated from her adoptive parents in a painful scene and married off to Avendaño by her biological father. In its idealistic mode, the novella frames the ending as a fortunate reunion and happy resolution for all. However, the conclusion is highly problematic and riddled with unresolved tensions when viewed through a realistic or satirical lens.

As the novella's narrative unfolds, it presents varying and at times contradictory definitions of nobility. Carriazo, who is thirteen years old when the novella begins, frequently becomes the canvas on which questions of inherited versus acquired nobility are illustrated. Carriazo's parents are noble, yet he wants to follow his "inclinación picaresca" [picaresque inclination] (153) and leave – at least temporarily – his father's house.¹³¹ He spends three years in the tuna fisheries of Zahara de los Atunes, on the shore

¹³¹ All references are from Cervantes, "La ilustre fregona," *Novelas ejemplares* II, ed. Juan Bautista Avallé-Arce (Madrid: Clásicos Castalia, 1982). The Spanish picaresque, and Cervantes' relationship to it as a narrative and generic form, have been discussed productively by various critics. Chad M. Gasta defines the picaresque as a form that "narrates in episodic fashion the life story of a young boy, orphaned by his mother, and forced to become the apprentice to a series of masters who train the child to survive using cunning and wit in a society that is morally, ethically, and financially bankrupt," in "The Picaresque According to Cervantes," *Philological Quarterly* 89.1 (Winter 2010): 31-53 (33). Williamson makes a distinction between romance, which he defines as socially conservative and as "celebrating... the values of the ruling class," and the picaresque, which is "written from the perspective of an outsider striving to survive at the lowest end of the social scale" ("Challenging the Hierarchies," 656). The form's twin pillars are the anonymous *Lazarillo de Tormes*, first published in 1554, and Mateo Alemán's *Guzmán de Alfarache* (1599). The picaresque antihero, marginalized from mainstream society, narrates his own story with a biting, critical, and satirical tone that is antithetical to the idealistic and frequently sentimental mode of the chivalric and romance narratives of Golden Age Spain. In *La ilustre fregona*, Carriazo fails at being a true *pícaro* because,

of the Mediterranean Sea in Cádiz, where he masters the art of tuna fishing. Despite his seeming disavowal of his inherited nobility, Carriazo turns out to be a “pícaro virtuoso, limpio, bien criado y más que medianamente discreto” [virtuous *pícaro*, clean, well-bred, and exceptionally discreet] (154). In other words, his nobility is inescapable; Carriazo can’t become a true *pícaro* no matter how hard he tries. Yet his desire to escape the paternal home and abandon his social rank is not particular to Carriazo, but far more widespread. The novella clarifies the tuna fisheries in Zahara have attracted many a young nobleman seeking the picaresque lifestyle. This seemingly collective desire reveals, as Edwin Williamson notes, that “the honour-system [was] suffocating and oppressive, which [was] why so many noble youths [would] seek release from the restrictions imposed by their social status.”¹³² The move from Burgos to Zahara concretizes Carriazo’s attempt to leave everything familiar behind, including his patrilineal inheritance. But Carriazo never truly integrates into the picaresque underworld of Zahara; his inherent nobility has a protective effect over him. Carriazo plays at being a *pícaro*, but he actually gets to experience the best of both worlds: he escapes temporarily to the tuna fisheries, where he is released from the constraints of his rank and free to have adventures, yet he can also conveniently return to Burgos where a sizeable inheritance

despite his attempt to disassociate from his father, he ultimately belongs to a privileged class that is more aligned with the corrupt ruling class that the picaresque typically criticizes, rather than with the socially, economically, and politically marginalized underworld the *pícaro* inhabits. See also Manuel Durán, “Picaresque Elements in Cervantes’ Work,” *The Picaresque: Tradition and Displacement*, ed. Giancarlo Maiorino (Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1996), 226-47; Mark Mascia, “Cervantes and the Reinvention of the Picaresque Narrative in the *Novelas ejemplares*,” *Atenea* 21.1-2 (2001): 33-47; and Edward H. Friedman, “Picaresque Partitions: Spanish Antiheros and the Material World,” *Objects of Culture in the Literature of Imperial Spain*, ed. Mary E. Barnard and Frederick A. De Armas (Toronto: U of Toronto P, 2013), 159-180.

¹³² Williamson, “Challenging the Hierarchies,” 658.

awaits him (he is Carriazo senior's only son). The kind of travel Carriazo embarks on is associated with freedom and emancipation, a crucial step in his transition from boyhood into manhood. Travel is also represented as a potential equalizer, stripping the traveler of his or her rank and temporarily destabilizing a rigid social hierarchy. However, the novella emphasizes that travel is not without risk by transporting Carriazo to the particular setting of Zahara.

Zahara is historically significant and it introduces an Islamic element to the novella that will be transposed into the English play, as I investigate later in this chapter. Cervantes' portrayal of Zahara is rooted in its actual social and economic history, which is marked by the region's prominent associations to Islam. Arabic settlers in the region were pushed to the south of Spain after the *Reconquista*, where they introduced a tuna-fishing technique called *almadraba*. Zahara then began to attract men who wanted to earn a living, including *pícaros* and ex-convicts who could not find work elsewhere. The region developed socially and economically. Problematically, given its proximity to the Barbary coast – Zahara is located on the coast directly across Tangier, Morocco – it suffered frequent raids from Moorish pirates, so the possibility of captivity and/or death was unusually high. Cervantes depicts Zahara as a place of freedom and festivity, almost carnivalesque in its inversions of social order and propriety, and as a dangerous place where hyper-vigilance is required at all times. The initial description of Zahara emphasizes its festive and disorderly atmosphere: “Aquí se canta, allí se reniega, acullá se riñe, acá se juega, y por todo se hurta” [Here people sing, there they renege, over there they fight, over here they play, and everywhere they steal] (155-6). Intertwined with its joyful elements – singing and playing – are Zahara's unsavory realities: violence, theft,

and, interestingly, reneging. The word *reniega* evokes cultural fears of religious and ideological conversion, pointing to the post-*Reconquista* anxiety that Muslims in Spain who had been forced to convert to Catholicism – called *moriscos* – had only converted outwardly and would return to their Islamic faith at the first possible chance.

Additionally, there is the fear that Spanish-born, Catholic gentlemen of “pure” blood who traveled to places such as Zahara, like Carriazo, would be either taken captive to Barbary and forced to convert or, worse, that they would be seduced to Muslim conversion. To clarify this point, the narrator adds that “toda esta dulzura [de Zahara] tiene un amargo acíbar que la amarga, y es no poder dormir sueño seguro sin el temor de que en un instante los trasladan de Zahara a Berbería” [all of Zahara’s sweetness is made bitter by the inability to sleep safely without the fear of being transported in the blink of an eye from Zahara to Barbary] (156). The Catholic anxiety over potential captivity and conversion, as a result of contact with Muslim culture and people, originates from within Spain itself, which was in the early modern period defined both by itself and other European nations as “exotic” and “Moorish.” Barbara Fuchs has drawn attention to this phenomenon and to the Moorishness that was then, and is still today, “a habitual presence in Iberian culture.”¹³³ Critics have written about Spain’s ambivalent relationship to Islam, which is an integral part of its history and culture, but which has been repeatedly rejected from within Spain through the numerous expulsions of Muslim subjects.¹³⁴

¹³³ Barbara Fuchs, *Exotic Nation: Maurophilia and the Construction of Early Modern Spain* (Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 2009), 3.

¹³⁴ See James B. Tueller, “The Assimilating Morisco: Four Families in Valladolid prior to the Expulsion of 1610,” *Mediterranean Studies* 7 (1998): 167-77; Ana Echeverria, *The Fortress of Faith: The Attitude Towards Muslims in Fifteenth Century Spain* (Leiden: Brill, 1999); Pedro Damián Cano Borrego, *Al-Andalus: el Islam y los pueblos ibéricos* (Madrid: Sílex, 2004); L.P. Harvey, *Muslims in Spain: 1500 to 1614* (Chicago: Chicago

In transposing the domestically cross-cultural tension between Catholics and Muslims in Spain, Fletcher and his collaborators turn it into an international conflict by pitting their Italian characters – who in the play take the place of the novella’s Spanish Catholics – against the invading Turks, who represent an external religious and political threat. The play externalizes the novella’s internal other (Muslims) into the foreign and explicitly non-Italian “Turks.” The hostile cross-cultural dynamic between Spanish Catholics and Muslims, which in the novella plays out in the domestic sphere, becomes an issue of international scope in *The Fair Maid*, contributing to the play’s distinctive cosmopolitanism.

Despite the dangers of travel highlighted in the novella, Carriazo seems to move from place to place with ease, his nobility and – more crucially – his money operating as prophylactics against the potential risks of bodily harm, material loss, and Turkish abduction. With his scenes of Carriazo in Toledo, Cervantes begins to question the inextricable relationship between aristocratic status and virtue in early modern Spain. When Carriazo disguises himself as a water-carrier, renamed Lope Asturiano, he once again exists in a dual state of being, participating in the plebeian society of Toledo through his disguise yet still inevitably displaying his nobility, which can’t seem to be contained. When some of his fellow water-carriers invite him to play a game of cards (for money), Carriazo first loses his donkey and six *escudos*, but then wins everything back plus all the players’ money. After one of his opponents throws himself on the ground inconsolably, Carriazo/Lope

UP, 2005); Luis F. Bernabé Pons, *Los moriscos: conflicto, expulsión y diáspora* (Madrid: Catarata, 2009); and *The Expulsion of the Moriscos from Spain: A Mediterranean Diaspora*, ed. Mercedes García-Arenal and Gerard Wiegers (Leiden: Brill, 2014).

como bien nacido y como liberal y compasivo, le levantó (al hombre que estaba llorando en el piso por haber perdido todo) y le volvió todo el dinero que había ganado... y aun de los que él tenía repartió con los circunstantes, cuya extraña liberalidad pasmó a todos.

[being well-born and generous and compassionate, raised him up (the man who was crying on the ground over having lost everything) and Lope gave him back the money he had won... he even split up the rest of his own money with the players. Lope's unusual generosity left everyone speechless.] (200)

The narrator equates Carriazo's "well-born" status with his compassion and liberality, cementing a link between nobility and virtue. The card players' reaction to "Lope," their speechlessness and surprise at his compassion, set him apart from the other water-carriers, who are not as well-born and therefore seemingly lack selflessness. However, it is worth remembering that Carriazo and Avendaño stole the 400 gold *escudos* their fathers provided at the journey's onset, assuming their sons were headed to the University of Salamanca to complete their studies. Carriazo's noble generosity and selfless spirit are not entirely virtuous after all, since he isn't really sharing his meager income but simply giving away some of the *escudos* he stole from his wealthy father.¹³⁵ The gambling scene reveals that it is easy to play at being a *pícaro*, as Carriazo did in the tuna fisheries, when one's material needs are fully met and when financial resources abound. Cervantes draws a clear line between role-playing at being a *pícaro* and truly living the picaresque lifestyle.

The difference between being and role-playing is also what saves Carriazo from prison after he nearly murders a water-carrier, in another similar episode. Carriazo is jailed after accidentally splitting a man's head in two, the result of a heated brawl.

Avendaño quickly restores Carriazo's freedom by posting bail with their fathers' money.

¹³⁵ Williamson in "Challenging the Hierarchies" notes the 400 *escudos* "play an indispensable role in smoothing [the boys'] way in the picaresque world" (658).

Given the boys' financial security, they can afford to be materially generous, just as they can afford to take risks. Carriazo's generosity in particular is demystified, becoming an empty gesture. In this way the novella questions the common assumption in early modern Spain that high rank and virtue go hand in hand, suggesting instead that the true link is between high rank and money, and that money goes a long way in enabling a range of ethically questionable behavior. To further exemplify this distinction, the novella offers the reader an opposing model of nobility in Costanza, the illustrious kitchen maid. Carriazo knows he is of high rank, yet he pretends to be of low status in Seville; Costanza, on the other hand, is not aware she is well-born, yet despite her base surroundings she unknowingly behaves more virtuously than any of the novella's aristocratic characters.

The inverted parallel between Carriazo and Costanza is especially illuminating given that they share the same father, as the novella's end reveals. Costanza is raised as a commoner at the *posada del Sevillano* by the innkeeper and his wife, unaware of her noble lineage. This ignorance about her origins allows Costanza to develop the virtue and internal nobility that her half-brother Carriazo lacks. Costanza's virtue is defined primarily by her sexual abstinence (she is relentlessly courted by numerous suitors and rejects them all) and her graceful elegance, which seems to raise her above her material circumstances. There is also the implication that Costanza is a national treasure, literally and metaphorically. Her physical value is so great that it extends from Seville to the rest of Spain and even to the entire world. When Carriazo confronts his friend Avendaño for being in love (or lust) with a simple kitchen maid, Avendaño replies that she is so much more than that – in fact, her resplendent beauty overflows: her “sobras de belleza pueden

enriquecer no sólo a las hermosas desta ciudad, sino a las de todo el mundo” [excess of beauty may enrich not only the beautiful women of this city, but women all over the world] (179). That particular word, *enriquecer* (enrich), points to Avendaño’s perception of Costanza as materially valuable. He also suggests that, “debajo de aquella rústica corteza debe de estar encerrada y escondida alguna mina de gran valor y de merecimiento grande” [beneath that rustic outer shell there must be, locked up and hidden, a mine of great value and excellent worth] (180). *Rústica corteza* conjures the image of a dry, crusty outer shell that will eventually crack to reveal Costanza’s true worth underneath, here figured as a mine because it will raise her in both status and wealth.

In addition to her internal nobility, Costanza displays a sense of skepticism that is both self-protective and an exemplary model for the reader to follow. When Avendaño reveals his true identity in a letter, stressing that he will inherit six thousand ducats and asking Costanza to be his wife, she responds with suspicion: “esta tu oración más parece hechicería y embuste que oración santa, y así, yo no la quiero creer ni usar della, y por eso la he rasgado, por que no la vea nadie que sea más crédulo que yo” [your prayer seems to be witchcraft, a scam, rather than a holy plea, and so I do not wish to believe it or use it. I have torn it up, so no person more gullible than I shall see it] (196). She calls Avendaño out for using his financial position as leverage, defining it as *hechicería* (witchcraft) and *embuste* (a scam or a trick). Costanza links Avendaño’s *oración* (prayer) with black magic and with deceitful business ventures, essentially labeling him a con artist. This form of skepticism is in some ways analogous to Leocadia’s suspicion of Theodosia’s “witchcraft” in *Love’s Pilgrimage*, as I discuss in chapter two. Both Costanza and Leocadia fear the power of witchcraft or, in other words, the power of

performance to cast spells on its viewers. Costanza suspects Avendaño is putting his wealth and rank on display to seduce her, as Leocadia feared Theodosia seduced Mark through her use of (theatrical) make-up and black magic. Costanza's skepticism of Avendaño makes her a sophisticated reader of social dynamics, which leads her to reject his proposal of marriage. At the same time, Costanza serves not only as a moral but also a readerly exemplar, modeling rigorous virtue *and* skeptical interpretation – by reading between the lines of Avendaño's proposal – for Cervantes' readers.

The novella employs the trope of convenient and miraculous revelation to resolve its loose ends and provide its characters with a supposedly happy ending. Yet, this happy ending is problematized by two major quandaries: the disclosure that Costanza is the product of rape, and the arranged marriage between Costanza and Avendaño, orchestrated by the fathers of Carriazo and Avendaño and by the *Corregidor* (Mayor) of Seville. The novella once again sustains an ironic dualism by suggesting that its conclusion is “happy” because Costanza is revealed to be the daughter of a wealthy nobleman. Her rise in social status, however, is juxtaposed with the revelation that she is the daughter of an unrepentant rapist.¹³⁶ Her father's source of nobility is therefore purely external, and the novella's ideal reader will see through it, just as Costanza saw through Avendaño's proposal based exclusively on his material wealth. Costanza's resistance to the conditioned behavior of wealthy, upper class men – a behavior born out of their fundamental value system based on external markers of rank and success – is the novella's exemplary lesson, a model for the perceptive reader to emulate.

¹³⁶ See Lewis-Smith, “Realism, Idealism,” 23.

Both religious and patriarchal authority are questioned in the novella's final moments, where Costanza's biological father, under the idealistic pretense of making amends and improving his daughter's circumstances actually rips apart the fabric of her life. Carriazo Senior describes Costanza's mother as a rich widow, and paints a vivid picture of how he raped her: "yo la gocé contra su voluntad y a pura fuerza mía: ella, cansada, rendida y turbada" [I enjoyed her against her will and through sheer force: she was exhausted, limp, confused] (213). Adding insult to injury, the *Corregidor* uses his official authority not to punish Carriazo Senior, but to objectify Costanza: "Recebid, señor don Diego, esta prenda, y estimadla por las más rica que acertárades a desear" [Receive, don Diego, this valuable possession, and consider her the richest you could ever wish for] (215). On a surface level, the novella suggests that Costanza's life is now redeemed because her bloodline is "pure." On a subtler level, aimed at Cervantes' ideal reader, the novella undoes any material benefits Costanza stands to gain from her wealthy father, since his internal nobility is bankrupt. The shock that is not expressed within the novella when Carriazo Senior tells his story is meant to be displaced onto the attentive reader, who will respond with the appropriate discomfort. Costanza is not only handed over to her "new" father, but forced to marry Avendaño (the son), whom she previously rejected. When the *Corregidor* orders Costanza to kiss her father's hand, she reacts as if traumatized: "Costanza, que no sabía ni imaginaba lo que le había acontecido, toda turbada y temblando, no supo hacer otra cosa que hincarse de rodillas ante su padre" [Costanza, who couldn't fathom or conceive what had happened to her, confused and trembling, didn't know what else to do but fall onto her knees before her father] (215). This description of Costanza's state calls up Carriazo Senior's description of her mother,

who was similarly “cansada, rendida y turbada” (exhausted, limp, and confused) after the rape.¹³⁷

Rather than emphasizing the ending’s *actual* problematic elements – Carriazo Senior’s impunity and the objectification of Costanza – the narrator shifts the focus to the trivial disillusion of a marginal character, don Pedro (the Corregidor’s son), who is unhappy because he wanted to marry Costanza himself. His disappointment is quickly resolved when Avendaño Senior offers up one of his daughters for don Pedro to marry. The narrator states conclusively: “Destá manera quedaron todos contentos, alegres y satisfechos” [In this way, all were left happy, content, and satisfied] (217). This radical oversimplification of events is clearly ironic. The novella’s ending is structurally aligned with traditional Fletcherian resolutions, which seem perfunctory and contrived, and which often gloss over rather than fully addressing problematic tensions that remain. Cervantes in *La ilustre fregona* manipulates the romance form to offer a dual perspective – idealistic and satirical – on the same events and in the process deconstructs cultural associations between class, wealth, and virtue. By moving his characters geographically and through different social ranks, Cervantes shows through compelling examples that internal nobility is ultimately unrelated to social rank. If there is anything inherent in Carriazo’s “nobility” that transcends his water-carrier disguise in Seville, for instance, it is not a natural virtue passed down in his bloodline, but rather the inherently protective effect of his father’s money.

¹³⁷ As Lewis-Smith indicates, the forced rearrangement of Costanza’s life is, like Carriazo Senior’s rape of her mother, a problematic element that has troubled the novella’s critics. Lewis-Smith also remarks that the marriage between Costanza and Avendaño is forced because Costanza, aside from rejecting Avendaño himself, “has never shown any interest in marriage, and she clearly possesses a vocation for celibacy” (25).

Transposing the novella for the London stage, Fletcher, Webster, Ford, and Massinger maintained a central focus on nobility and its origins, primarily whether nobility is inherited through blood, or acquired through education and/or travel. *The Fair Maid* also suggests a third alternative: nobility acquired through meritocracy, through being active in the world and performing courageous or otherwise notable deeds. The play's emphasis on a kind of nobility based on courage, bravery, and sacrifice in the name of one's nation is influenced by the historical and political situation leading up to renewed Anglo-Spanish conflict in 1625. This context explains the remarkable shift between Fletcher's use of Cervantes in 1615 and his use of Cervantes a decade later. During a time of relative Anglo-Spanish peace, Fletcher transposed *Las dos doncellas* into *Love's Pilgrimage*, a tragicomedy that uses both its Spanish source and its ironic, self-reflexive structure to demystify religious or providential authority and also the absolutist providentialism of Jacobean politics. In 1625, however, once any hope of continued Anglo-Spanish peace was abolished with the failure of the Spanish Match, Fletcher and his co-playwrights transpose *La ilustre fregona* to craft a redemptive tragicomedy that seeks to provide a model of nationalism to unify England against external enemies.

Redemption and Nationalism in *The Fair Maid of the Inn*

The Fair Maid of the Inn shares generic traits with English loss-and-redemption tragicomedies, particularly plays such as Shakespeare's *Pericles* and *The Winter's Tale*. *The Fair Maid* is therefore an example of a later tragicomedy that takes up this structural and thematic thread and applies it to a transposition of Cervantean material. The gains

that result from losses in *The Fair Maid* are both individually and nationally beneficial. For instance, Alberto – the leading man’s father – is dispatched to fight the Turks at sea, is presumed dead (a loss), but actually returns alive and well by the play’s end, bringing with him long-lost characters leading to redemptive family reunions (a gain). Alberto’s “death” results in a structural and theatrical gain as well, since his miraculous “resurrection” enables the play’s resolution. Additionally, it is Alberto’s safe return to Italy that finalizes his son Cesario’s transformation from an arrogant and wealth-obsessed young gentleman into a humbler man who believes in the importance of active effort in achieving and maintaining one’s status and nobility. Throughout the play, Cesario experiences a material loss that leads to a greater immaterial gain: after his father’s presumed death, his low birth is revealed (he is not Alberto’s biological son), rendering him ineligible to inherit Alberto’s wealth. Out of this loss arises Cesario’s internal conversion from a belief system based on passive inheritance to one based on personal responsibility and active engagement with the world.

Cesario’s parents Mariana and Alberto represent two opposing models of nobility. In the play’s opening scene they disagree over the proper course of action and education for their son, the play’s version of Avendaño Junior (Carriazo Junior, his friend, is renamed Mentivole). The playwrights depict Cesario’s father Alberto as a courageous man of war. He is most comfortable at sea, his “true Mother,” where he says he has “sought / Honor, and wealth through dangers” (1.1.123; 124-5). Alberto defines nobility, essentially, as male honor achieved through active participation in the world. In his view, which is the view endorsed by the play, the more dangerous and extreme the endeavor – and the more it contributes to a national cause – the more honorable the man who

embarks on it. Alberto expects his son to behave accordingly, but Mariana, Cesario's mother, has different plans:

Ile keep him safe at home, and traine him up
A compleat Courtier: may I live to see him,
By sweet discourse, and gracious demeanor,
Winne, and bring home a faire wife, and a rich;
Tis all I rest ambitious of.
(1.1.177-81)

Mariana defines nobility and success in terms that oppose Alberto's. She emphasizes the training and education required to become a "compleat Courtier," including good manners, articulate speech, and courteous behavior. If he excels at these, as Mariana hopes, Cesario will "winne" a fair and rich wife. Mariana's idea of nobility is insular and passive, and its ultimate aim is the creation of a wealthy, educated family for Cesario. Alberto's rebuttal to his wife stresses his belief system that active participation in the world is the only path to true nobility:

A Wife!
As if there were a course to purchase one
Prevailing more then honourable action?
Or any Intercessors move so farre,
To take a Mistris of a noble spirit,
As the true fame of glorious victories,
Achieved by sweat and bloud!
(1.1.182-8)

It seems the end goal for both parents is for Cesario to find a wife. His successful marriage is generically necessary for the play to end comically, hence the parents' focus on whether Cesario's endeavors will earn him a wife. The difference lies in precisely *how* Cesario will achieve this. Where Mariana emphasizes training in the ways of a courtier, a princely education, and maternal protection from the outside world ("Ile keep him safe at home"), Alberto stresses the opposite: "honourable action" and "true fame" acquired

through “sweat and blood.” Cesario would have to leave the safe insularity of home and risk life and limb in armed conflict to achieve the “glorious victories” his father envisions. Alberto’s definition of nobility is the play’s answer to what it means to be noble in a broader global and imperial context. Despite Alberto’s hopes for his son, however, Cesario’s journey is ultimately internal, as he learns to recognize the true origins of inner nobility and the crucial distinction between virtue and social rank.

While mapping out Cesario’s internal transformation, the tragicomedy simultaneously reprimands the audience for its potential oversights and misinterpretations. The playwrights insert a problematic element in the beginning of the play that must be resolved by the end: the incestuous feelings between Cesario and his sister Clarissa. In the opening scene, Cesario and Clarissa discuss her virginity and Cesario declares he loves her “With more then common ardor” (1.1.46). He gives her a ring that she must keep until marriage to preserve her chastity. Cesario says of Clarissa’s hand: “[if] it were not my sisters, I should kisse / With too much heate” (1.1.117-8). In act five, as the play wraps up, Clarissa turns to Cesario and clarifies the issue: “We lov’d together, you preferring me / Before your selfe, and I so fond of you / That it *begot suspition in ill mindes* / That our affection was incestuous” (5.3.130-3, my emphasis). By this point, the audience knows that Cesario was adopted as a baby and Clarissa is not his sister after all. The initial hint of incest is retroactively erased. This turns a potentially tragic storyline into a comedy with a happy ending. Clarissa condemns the audience for even considering that brother and sister were ever incestuous: our love, she says to Cesario, “begot suspition in ill mindes.” The “ill mindes” belong not to Cesario or Clarissa, but to the spectators who read the earlier scene as a display of sexual attraction

between siblings. The audience is ironically chastised for misreading a scene that the playwrights clearly constructed to suggest the possibility of incest. Savvy spectators familiar with stage tragicomedy, a popular genre for over a decade once *The Fair Maid* was first performed, would be able to read the opening scene as a trick and see through the playwrights' suggestion of taboo sexual behavior – or at least recognize that the hint of incest would be resolved, one way or another, by the play's conclusion. The pleasure arises, in this case, from observing exactly how Fletcher and his collaborators redeem their characters. At the same time, the tragicomedy uses this device of misinterpretation on the part of audience members to (1) teach them how to be competent readers of plays – “understanders,” in Ben Jonson's term – and (2) didactically reflect back to the spectators their own moral depravity, and to force them to correct it.¹³⁸

Costanza's counterpart in *The Fair Maid*, renamed Bianca, illustrates a model of nobility based on hard work rather than passive inheritance. Mirroring Carriazo's calculated generosity in the gambling scene in *La ilustre fregona*, where Carriazo gives away great quantities of his father's money to appear generous, Cesario offers Bianca an “abundance of all varieties.” This abundance is problematic, in Bianca's view, because it is not a result of Cesario's own labors; it is simply an inheritance he receives passively

¹³⁸ In *The Alchemist's* introduction (1610), Jonson addresses his reader with characteristic suspicion and high expectations: “If thou beest more, then thou art an understander, and then I trust thee. If thou art one that takest up, and but a pretender, beware of what hands thou receivest thy commodity; for thou wert never more fair in the way to be cozened, than in this age, in poetry, especially in plays” (“To the Reader,” *The Alchemist*, ed. Elizabeth Cook (London: A & C Black, 2006), 25). Jonson's distinction between “understanders” and “pretenders” is analogous to Cervantes' division between ideal readers, who recognize and learn from the implicit moral examples of his novellas, and passive readers, who simply receive the texts as they are but are unable to read between the lines. Similarly, English stage tragicomedies in this period consistently strove to establish didactic relationships with their spectators, to turn them into discerning readers of plays, of social cues, of politics, and of culture at large.

and effortlessly. “Labor” is an especially important concept for Bianca, which she emphasizes along with “honest paines” as the only avenues to true nobility. When Cesario asks Bianca to preserve her virginity for him – which he defines as “the treasure of those sweets thy youth yet glories in” (3.1.202) – she responds forcefully with a resounding no: “Thus to yeeld up then / The cottage of my vertue to be swallow’d / By some hard-neighboring landlord such as you are / Is in effect to love, a Lord so vicious!” (3.1.207-10). Bianca would rather house her “vertue” in a humble dwelling, a “cottage,” than allow it to be “swallow’d” by Cesario. The differentiation between internal and external nobility arises again: internal nobility is the “vertue” Bianca mentions, which is separate from one’s material circumstances. Bianca lives a humble life as an innkeeper’s daughter, yet she is virtuous and displays integrity and strong moral convictions. She firmly rejects Cesario and says that with “base discourse” she would “Draw curses on [his] Pallaces” (3.1.213-4). For her part, she tells him, she “will eate / The bread of labour, know no other rest / Then what is earned from honest paines” (3.1.215-7). Bianca here emphasizes the “labour” and “honest paines” that she views as the righteous path towards “rest.” The disparate models offered in this exchange are passive inheritance of material wealth, which allows for easy or calculated generosity, versus acquisition of status, wealth, and leisure through laborious effort. Bianca recognizes Cesario is noble by birth, but she refuses to be coerced by his high status; she implies she would only be able to love him if “[he] were / As noble in desires” as he is in social rank (3.1.218-9). By ending the scene abruptly, and not giving Cesario the opportunity to respond to Bianca (she runs off stage), the play leaves these two models of nobility percolating in the spectators’ minds instead of explicitly privileging one over the other.

Bianca not only functions as a mouthpiece for this model of nobility based on hard labor; she also fulfills the role of subtle agent of transformation for Cesario – and, ideally, for at least some members of the audience, for the true “understanders.” When read alongside the scene that follows it, Bianca’s rejection of Cesario’s proposal comes into relief as a moment where an ideological seed is planted in Cesario’s mind. This seed begins to bloom with Mariana’s revelation that Cesario is not her biological son, and Cesario’s subsequent “fall” in status. These events, preceded by Bianca’s emphasis on a philosophy of labor and honest pains, push Cesario to the beginnings of a new understanding of nobility. Mariana calls her son and daughter to meet with the Duke of Florence after Alberto has been dispatched to fight the approaching Turks by sea, and after news of his death in a shipwreck. Mariana reveals the truth about Cesario because Alberto’s (supposed) death has “left to his heire possession / Of faire revenew” (3.2.51-2), and she wants that inheritance to go to her biological daughter, Clarissa. When Mariana first married Alberto, they had difficulty conceiving, so to preserve his love Mariana pretended to be pregnant. Following her mock pregnancy was a mock birth – ironically, the opposite of a true “labor” and “honest paines.” Rather than delivering her own baby, Mariana took baby Cesario from a servant and presented him to Alberto as their son (3.2.73-92). Soon after Mariana became pregnant with Clarissa, whom she now believes deserves to receive Alberto’s full inheritance. Mariana compels Cesario to “disclaime / All interest in Albertos blood” because he “hast not / One drop of his or mine” (3.2.110-2). When Cesario finally speaks, after only a few brief remarks between the moment of Bianca’s rejection and the revelation of his true birth, his speech denotes a new understanding of nobility:

Nobilitie claym'd by the right of blood,
Shewes chiefly that our Ancestors deserv'd
What we inherit; but that man whose actions
Purchase a reall merit to himselfe,
And rancks him in the file of prayse and honour,
Creates his own advancement...
(3.2.127-32)

In Cesario's new perspective, inherited nobility is evidence of the deeds and status of one's ancestors, but it is not necessarily a reflection of one's own actions. Cesario now adopts a language of meritocracy: men must work to achieve "reall merit" and to actively create rather than passively inherit their own advancement. This point of view aligns Cesario with Bianca's philosophy that "rest" must be earned through "honest paines." Yet, this speech marks only the beginning of Cesario's ideological conversion, since the Duke of Florence takes mercy on him and orders Mariana to marry him – or, alternatively, to provide him with a dowry so he may obtain a wife.

Cesario's material fall and his behavior to attempt to recover his noble status lead to his moral deterioration and ultimately serve as a catalyst for his transformation and redemption. With the transposition of Avendaño into Cesario, the English playwrights take the novella's role-playing and identity-switching – which never actually effect a real change in the two lead male characters – and push them further. Rather than making Cesario a "true" nobleman by birth and placing him in a situation where he disguises himself as a commoner to blend into Bianca's world, Fletcher and his collaborators turn the plot on its head: Cesario is actually a commoner by birth, yet he has unwittingly been pretending to be a gentleman to blend into the world of his adoptive family. Cesario's loss of status, or, rather, his return to his original status, is more real than Avendaño and Carriazo's temporary role-playing at being commoners. Therefore, Cesario undergoes a

more radical transformation throughout the course of the play than his male counterparts in *La ilustre fregona*.

The language Cesario uses throughout *The Fair Maid* is indicative of his progressive, though not always linear, internal transformation. It is a language that emerges from self-reflection, granting the audience access into Cesario's inner dilemmas and subtle shifts in perspective. It is also a language that is absent in the Cervantean source, where neither Carriazo nor Avendaño (or their fathers) express any lasting moral, philosophical, or psychological transformation. The play dramatizes Cesario's inner reactions to shifting external circumstances through his language, and how those circumstances affect his interiority – his values, beliefs, and investments. After Mariana rejects his offer of marriage and he is informed that Clarissa is betrothed to his former best friend Mentivole, Cesario delivers a humbling speech: "I could curse / My fate, o with what speed men tumble downe / From hopes that soare to high. Biancha now / May scorne me justly too, Clarissa married, / Albertos widdow resolute... / ... and I forsaken" (4.1.221-6). Cesario shifts the blame for his situation partially to fate, but he also takes some responsibility when he claims Bianca "may scorne [him] *justly*," because he arrogantly dismissed her when she offered him her hand after Mariana disowned him. However, Cesario's transformation but progresses in fits and starts, alternating between moments of enlightenment and self-recognition and moments of arrogance and self-centeredness. By depicting Cesario's transformation as an arduous endeavor, the play dramatizes the difficulty of sincere reformation and of becoming free from the corrupt nobility that Cervantes satirizes in *La ilustre fregona*. Cesario's internal journey from self-centered boy to a humbled, repentant, morally mature man is, indeed, laborious – the

plot forces him to undergo the labor and “honest paines” espoused by Bianca as the single route to true nobility.

When Cesario approaches Bianca a second time with the intention of marriage, after Mariana and Clarissa have rejected him, his behavior indicates he is undergoing a period of regression in his internal development, despite his self-awareness in the previous scene. Cesario tells Bianca: “I bring repentance ‘bout me, / And satisfaction, I will marry thee” (4.2.356-7). Cesario’s “repentance” is at this point brought about by his hopelessness and fear of dying a “Batchelor” (4.1.227), and so is not credible enough for Bianca or her parents to accept it. Bianca responds with an incredulous, “Ha?” to which Cesario replies: “thou think’st I faigne / This protestation, I will instantly / ... / Contract my selfe unto thee, then I hope / We may be more private” (4.2.358; 363-8). The innkeeper interrupts forcefully: “But thou shalt not sir, / For so has many a maiden-head been lost, / And many a bastard gotten” in the manner in which Cesario intends to take Bianca aside (4.2.369-71). Cesario’s true goal, which he now reveals, is to take Bianca “instantly to bed, and there be married” (4.2.371). This offer, humiliating to both Bianca and her foster parents, is turned down by the innkeeper, who calls Cesario a “begger” (4.3.376). Bianca adds that she pities Cesario and asks him that his “suite to mee, / Henceforth be ever silenc’t” (4.3.388-9). Cesario’s behavior in this scene is analogous to Mark-antony’s false repentance in the fourth act of *Love’s Pilgrimage*, where Mark pretends to confess his misdeeds to Eugenia in private but instead attempts to have adulterous sex with her. Cesario reverts in this scene to the morally corrupt behavior of Cervantes’ young noblemen, who are blinded by privilege and cannot discern what makes a person fundamentally noble.

Alberto's pseudo-resurrection and return to Florence is the catalyst for the play's resolution. As in the novella, where Avendaño and Carriazo Senior must intervene to provide the revelations that lead to the story's "happy" ending, Alberto is in the play a crucial figure. Alberto's exchange with Cesario in 5.1 is what ultimately sparks a real change in Cesario. Alberto finishes the work initiated by Bianca, aimed at transforming Cesario's nobility from one based on external and inherited status to one based on internal virtue and hard work. Where Bianca functions as a model of humility and constancy for Cesario, Alberto functions as an example of nobility acquired through active engagement with the world beyond Italy and actual risk-taking, as opposed to performative or calculated risk. In turning Alberto into the catalyst of the story's resolution and into the final agent of redemption not only for Cesario but for the two families that have been at war throughout (Alberto's and Baptista's), the play holds up Alberto's mode of travel as an ideal, especially in contrast with the corrupt and self-serving travels of Forobosco and his Clown. The final scenes of *The Fair Maid* affirm Alberto's mode of selfless, nationally-invested travel as necessary for the redemption and reunion of long-lost characters, as well as the reunification of the two central families. In this way, the play suggests idealistically that internal strife – whether in Italy or in England – can be resolved through renewed national unity and a laying aside of differences resulting from conflict with a foreign threat.

When Alberto is dispatched to fight the Turks, he risks life and limb to serve his nation. In the single act of true risk-taking in both novella and play, Alberto leaves his family and wealth behind to fight an encroaching external enemy. The risk Alberto takes leads to his capture at the hands of the Turks, as the tragicomedy reveals in 5.1. But

Alberto's venturing beyond Italy to fulfill a noble cause is eventually rewarded, since it allows him to collect along the way the play's long-lost characters – Alberto's friend Prospero and Baptista's first wife (and Bianca's mother) Juliana – and return them to Florence, where family reunions ensue. Rather than abstractly collecting knowledge of foreign lands, as good early modern travelers were meant to do, Alberto collects the play's dead characters – the missing links – and resurrects them by bringing them back to Florence to reveal the truths that will give the play a happy ending, such as the revelation of Bianca's noble status. Alberto's journeying and risk-taking are thus framed as the necessary elements that bring about the play's resolution. Consequently, the tragicomedy locates authority and agency in the act of venturing beyond one's circumscribed, domestic space and engaging with the world beyond, particularly when the venturing is done selflessly and in support of national investments. The play sets up this model of travel early on, when Alberto and Baptista reminisce on their "glorious victories, / Achievd by sweat and bloud" (1.1.186-7). Alberto states that he still "remember[s] it with joy... / When from the rescue of the Genoa fleete, / [Baptista] didst returne, and wert receivd in triumph. / How lovely in thy honord wounds and scars / Thou didst appeare?" (1.1.200-4). The emphasis is placed consistently on the rewards of dangerous travel, particularly the personal rewards, such as Baptista's "loveliness," honor, and triumph achieved through military service. His wounds and scars, acquired at sea, adorn Baptista more honorably than any inherited status or title. Unlike Cervantes in *La ilustre fregona*, who balances out the rewards of Carriazo's travel – his temporary freedom from a rigid social structure – with the real, inglorious, terrifying dangers of captivity and death, the English playwrights glorify the risks of international travel and define the scars and

wounds that result from it as noble and lovely. This glorification of war is another consequence of the play's historical moment in 1625 as England prepared to raise arms against the Spanish once again. In addition, the play's adoption of this staunchly national and idealistic perspective – a contrast to the satiric mode of *Love's Pilgrimage* and most Fletcherian tragicomedy – illustrates the flexibility of stage tragicomedy, a shape-shifting genre that transforms to adapt to historical, political, social, and cultural changes.

Alberto's selflessness does not only emerge in his self-sacrifice for Italy's sake, since he is equally selfless with Cesario upon learning of Cesario's true birth. Alberto reacts to Mariana's confession that Cesario is not their biological son with grief, disbelief, and unconditional fatherly love: "That I should thirty and odde winters feed / My expectation of a noble heire, / And by a womans falshood finde him now / A fiction, a meare dreame of what he was; / And yet I love him still" (5.1.23-7). In what seems a tragic moment, Cesario, stripped of all status, asks his adoptive father to kill him. Cesario then veers dangerously close to a third form of travel – or a third mode of interaction with foreign nations and peoples – that is more aligned with Forobosco's corrupt journeys than with Alberto's noble traveling. Cesario claims he will turn pirate, since he has nothing left to lose (5.1.79). His brief flirtation with the idea of piracy is actually more dangerous than it seems, associated as it was with other forms of moral, religious, and even national abnegation.¹³⁹ Piracy was viewed in the early modern period as potentially aligned with monarchical authority – for instance, Elizabeth I's strategic use of piracy for the crown's

¹³⁹ As Vitkus, Burton, Degenhardt, and others point out, turning pirate was closely associated by the English with conversion to Islam.

benefit – but also potentially “separate from orthodox national allegiance.”¹⁴⁰ Barbara Fuchs explains that as “piracy grows uncontrollably, mimicking the English state in ruling the seas, it poses a challenge to the very powers who [earlier] authorized it.”¹⁴¹ Cesario’s stance by this point in the play is not one of alignment with Italy or with national causes, but one of disillusionment with the economic and social systems of his native land, and thus of disavowal and rejection of Italy in favor of a renegade lifestyle. The successful completion of Cesario’s moral transformation hinges on Cesario making the right decision in this very moment, which is essentially his final test: either abandon his homeland and become a lawless pirate, or achieve true nobility by facing his troubles courageously and retaining his allegiance to his nation and to the father who raised him.

Alberto embodies a nobility that arises out of an unwavering commitment and loyalty to one’s nation, despite any risk to one’s personal safety. Alberto fulfills a pedagogical function for Cesario not through elaborate speeches, but through his deeds, which in the play speak louder than words. Alberto achieves nobility not only through his risky travels, but also through another truly noble deed: reclaiming Cesario as his son, despite the truth regarding Cesario’s birth. Alberto tells him to “be thy selfe, be mine Cesario” and to “beare thy wrongs / With noble patience, the afflicteds friend / Which

¹⁴⁰ Claire Jowitt, *The Culture of Piracy, 1580-1630: English Literature and Seaborne Crime* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2010), 2. For a description of the diplomatic, political, economic, and social consequences of piracy during James I’s reign, see David D. Hebb, *Piracy and the English Government, 1616-1642* (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1994). For English narratives of captivity, see *Piracy, Slavery, and Redemption: Barbary Captivity Narratives from Early Modern England*, ed. Daniel Vitkus (New York: Columbia UP, 2001).

¹⁴¹ Barbara Fuchs, “Faithless Empires: Pirates, Renegadoes, and the English Nation,” *ELH* 67.1 (Spring 2000): 45-69 (45).

ever in all actions crownes the end” (5.1.91; 94-6). The language of Cesario’s response reveals he has finally learned the lesson, at least for now:

You well awak’d me, nay recover’d me
Both to sence and full life; o most noble sir,
Though I have lost my fortune, and lost you
For a worthy Father: yet I will not loose
My former vertue, my integrity
Shall not yet forsake me; but as the wilde Ivy,
Spredds and thrives better in some pittious ruin
Of tower, or defac’d Temple, then it does
Planted by a new building; so shall I
Make my adversity my instrument
To winde me up into a full content.
(5.1.97-107)

Alberto has “awak’d” Cesario to his true self, stripped of titles, inheritance, and material wealth. Cesario picks up and furthers the distinction he made earlier between inherited and acquired nobility. He defines the latter as “vertue” and “integrity,” describing it metaphorically as “wilde Ivy” that grows and thrives most abundantly in “some pittious ruin” or a “defac’d Temple,” rather than in a “new building.” This aligns Cesario with Bianca’s philosophy; more specifically, with her privileging of a humble, noble “cottage” over tyrannous “Pallaces.” Significantly, Cesario finally stops blaming others and/or fate for his circumstances, recognizing free will as the primary agent in his life. Rather than pointing to providential design as a solution to his circumstances, Cesario takes full responsibility for himself, stating he will begin using his adversity as an “instrument” to “winde [himself] up into a full content.” This not only aligns Cesario with Bianca’s philosophy of rest achieved through hard work, but with Alberto’s model of meritocracy. Cesario’s reunion with his adoptive father highlights the importance of father-son dynamics in the play, as well as Alberto’s crucial role in his son’s internal transformation. This is an opposite role to the one the fathers fulfill in *La ilustre fregona*: Avendaño and

Carriazo Senior are agents of stasis and unquestioned continuity, reinforcing and maintaining a status quo where men of high status and wealth are allowed to get away with corrupt, misogynistic, and immoral behavior.

A comparative analysis of the novella's conclusion with the play's final scene reveals the play's more optimistic and sincerely happy resolution. This marks an unusual departure for Fletcher and his collaborators, who tend to give their plays ambiguous, ironic, and inconclusive endings. The conclusion in *The Fair Maid* points back to the sincerely redemptive and wondrous design of Shakespearean late romance, particularly in plays such as *The Tempest*, *The Winter's Tale*, and *Pericles*, where the central characters achieve some form of awakening, ask for forgiveness, and are redeemed by the end.¹⁴²

Not coincidentally, the character most associated with the resolution's sense of wonder is Baptista's old friend, Prospero – aptly named after Shakespeare's principal figure of redemption and of miraculous endings. Prospero is, like Alberto, an embodiment of acquired nobility and of the virtuous masculinity associated with it, qualities he earned through his own combat against the Turks and his time served in captivity. Aside from being redeemed himself, Prospero becomes a redeemer for Alberto when he rescues his old friend from the Turks and facilitates their triumphant return to Italy after reuniting with Juliana at the Greek monastery.

¹⁴² In “Tragicomic Romance for the King's Men, 1609-1611: Shakespeare, Beaumont, and Fletcher,” *Comedy from Shakespeare to Sheridan: Change and Continuity in the English and European Dramatic Tradition*, ed. A. R. Braunmuller and J. C. Bulman (Newark: U of Delaware P, 1986), Lee Bliss argues that the endings of Shakespeare's late plays are characterized by “benevolent coincidences [that] seem part and parcel of a providence that has operated throughout,” whereas the resolutions of Fletcherian tragicomedy seem “less wondrous than arbitrary and wittily surprising” (156; 158). Bliss's distinction holds up for most Fletcherian tragicomedy, but I argue that *The Fair Maid* is an interesting example of a play that returns, due to historical exigencies, to the wondrous structure of Shakespeare's dramatized romances.

The return of Alberto, Prospero, and Juliana is framed by the play as a miraculous resurrection and reunification. The setting is Clarissa and Mentivole's wedding, interrupted by Alberto and Cesario after the two families have become enemies following a petty brawl. Prospero, Juliana, and Bianca enter the scene as well, and Prospero announces he "shall make a true relation of a story / That shall call on your wonder" (5.3.172-3). His statement is clearly self-referential: as in the ending of *The Winter's Tale*, it is not only the off-stage audience who will be amazed by the ensuing wonder, but the on-stage audience as well. Prospero narrates a story that, like a play, will call forth the imaginative powers of the rest of the characters (and the offstage audience). The story he tells is this: Baptista was banished from the court of Genoa thirteen years ago, where he unknowingly left his second wife Juliana – niece to the Duke of Genoa – pregnant. Juliana gave birth to a "hopefull daughter" (5.3.193). Seemingly suffering from postpartum depression, Juliana asked Prospero to "place her in a Greekish Monastery" and gave her daughter away to him (5.3.197). Prospero then gave the baby to a "faithful friend" – her adoptive father in Florence – before being imprisoned in Turkish galleys for twelve years (5.3.201). He was eventually saved by an Italian crew, and then rescued Alberto. On the way back, Alberto and Prospero stopped in Greece to collect Juliana. Hearing this, Baptista is overwhelmed with happiness, throws away the sword with which he was going to injure Alberto, and exclaims, "Rage and fury leave me" (5.3.220). When Baptista asks about his daughter, Prospero points to Bianca: "That your happinesse / May be at all parts perfect, here she is!" (5.3.227-8). Symbolically, Bianca experiences a rebirth through this revelation and through the shift in perspective with which the rest of the characters now gaze upon her. The Duke states, in disbelief, "Above wonder"

(5.3.235). Alberto also attests to the power of Prospero's narrative: "I doe begin to melt too, this strange story / Workes much upon me" (5.3.236-7). In *Pericles*, the titular character is similarly overwhelmed by the reunions and resurrections of the final scene, stating he is nearly undone by the violence of a "great sea of joys rushing" upon him (5.4.210).¹⁴³ Both Alberto and Pericles use liquid metaphors to describe the effect of these miraculous resolutions, with the first melting down and the latter being engulfed by a "sea of joys." This language illustrates the affective power of the paradoxical tragicomic resolution, characterized as it is by "sorrow-in-joy" and "separation-in-union."¹⁴⁴ To cement the bonds of friendship and family newly redeemed, the Duke orders the marriages of Clarissa and Mentivole, and Bianca and Cesario. These double cross-over marriages (Bianca is, in the end, Mentivole's half-sister) function to restore an alliance between the noble families of Baptista and Alberto. The play relegates offstage the collection of dramatic events that provides resolution, beginning with Alberto's death and ending with his resurrection and productive return to Florence, illustrating tragicomedy's "interest in margins" in its formal structures.¹⁴⁵

The playwrights radically improve Costanza/Bianca's circumstances, a transpositional change that produces a sincerely happy rather than ironic ending. In the

¹⁴³ William Shakespeare, *Pericles, The Norton Shakespeare*, ed. Stephen Greenblatt et al., 2nd ed. (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2008).

¹⁴⁴ See Mimi Still Dixon, "Tragicomic Recognitions: Medieval Miracles and Shakespearean Romance," *Renaissance Tragicomedy: Explorations in Genre and Politics*, ed. Nancy Klein Maguire (New York: AMS Press, 1987), 56-7.

¹⁴⁵ I borrow Julie Sanders' term from "Mixed Messages: The Aesthetics of *The Two Noble Kinsmen*," *A Companion to Shakespeare's Works. Vol. 4: The Poems, Problem Comedies, Late Plays*, ed. Richard Dutton and Jean E. Howard (Oxford: Blackwell, 2003), 446.

novella, Costanza is ripped from her adoptive parents, forced to accept her biological father – a man who violently raped her mother and just as violently disrupted her own life – and married off to a man she once rejected. Costanza’s loss of her adoptive mother is portrayed in the novella as a kind of death. In contrast, the playwrights provide Bianca with two sets of loving parents: the innkeepers and Baptista and Juliana. Significantly, Baptista was married to Bianca’s mother, and Bianca was conceived in wedlock. Unlike her counterpart Costanza, Bianca is the product of love, not rape. Also unlike Costanza, Bianca has shown affection for Cesario and even proposed to him earlier in the play. Therefore, Bianca’s marriage to Cesario is potentially fruitful and happy, unlike Costanza’s forced marriage to Avendaño. Before the wedding is carried out, Cesario kneels in front of Bianca to denote his submission to her as her new husband. Bianca sees Cesario’s gesture and responds, “Kneele not, all forgiven” (5.3.250). Rather than being forced into a life she does not want, silenced and powerless like Costanza, Bianca has the final say in her marriage to Cesario, opting to forgive him for his past behavior and literally raising him up from the ground as she will raise him in social rank. Because he has learned his lesson in the true origins of internal nobility, Cesario is redeemed and rewarded by the play with a wife who is not only noble but who also represents constancy and virtue earned through active labor.

In dramatizing Cesario’s internal (and external) transformation, the play is more optimistic than the novella about the possibility of forgiveness and redemption. This marks another departure for Fletcher and his collaborators, whose plays tend to emphasize the emptiness of repentance, the impossibility of authentic internal transformation, and performative rather than sincere redemptions. As I explored in the

previous chapter, *Love's Pilgrimage* is invested in a theatrical kind of authority that is self-contained and based on a self-referential interaction between play and audience. *Love's Pilgrimage* cynically questions whether there is or can be anything beyond theatricality and artifice. *The Fair Maid*, first performed a decade after *Love's Pilgrimage*, reflects a shift in perspective in response to the radical shift in Stuart foreign policy from James's early pacifist stance to the militant, anti-Spanish, pro-war position espoused most strongly by Prince Charles and Buckingham after their return from Madrid in 1623. *The Fair Maid* engages in a more expansive representation of and engagement with global concerns than *Love's Pilgrimage*, and it does so during this period of remarkable "Protestant unity" and nationalistic consensus (despite the few pro-Spanish holdouts) over England's renewed war with Spain. The dramatized, risky travels of Alberto and Prospero, which become necessary in an early modern world of cross-cultural exchange and conflict, enable the stage to reinvest the religious crusade with new authority. Risking their lives to combat the Turkish infidels, Alberto and Prospero offer a model of masculinity and nobility based on bravery, active combat against foreign enemies, greater loyalty to one's nation than to oneself, and an investment in a noble, risky, and ultimately Christian cause. This redefined nobility, which relies on an external Other for its construction, is a consequence of increased global interaction, and it replaces the old-fashioned, insular, and inactive mode of nobility passed down through patrilineage and bloodline. In addition, this theme of reconfigured nobility based on transnational conflict provides the English playwrights with an opportunity to play out current national concerns and to offer a model of national unity on the stage through an idealistic and nationalistic form of tragicomedy.

Despite the play's wondrous resolution, a problematic element remains: Forobosco, the play's resident conjurer/conman, who has cozened other characters – particularly Bianca's suitors in 3.1 – by convincing them he can “make gold” (4.2.11), cast love spells, and teleport them around the world to learn new fashions, manners, and languages. The Clown, Forobosco's sidekick, introduces Forobosco to the suitors as the “great artist” who “hath promist to give all your severall suites satisfaction” (4.2.1-2). Forobosco promises one of Bianca's suitors, a muleteer, to magically transport him to Spain after the muleteer asks for “some new spectacle” (4.2.171). This conjurer figure is, in some sense, a parody of Shakespeare's Prospero: Forobosco pretends to conjure, but he is unable to actually do so, and by the end of the play he finds himself at the Duke's mercy and having to account for his criminal behavior. Forobosco is also aligned with Fletcher's earlier conjurer/wizard figure Vecchio, in Fletcher's solo play *The Chances* (ca. 1617) transposed from Cervantes' novella *La señora Cornelia*. Vecchio and Forobosco fulfill the same role in their respective plays, standing in for the playwright(s) with their “magic” and ultimately being punished for gulling customers into purchasing nothing but thin air. The Clown eventually announces to Forobosco's clients (or victims) that the conjurer “sells winde, and tells you fortye lyes over and over” (4.2.231-3). The anti-theatricalists had for decades levied the same accusations against playwrights, claiming the theater was a den of sin and lies. In the play's final lines, when the Duke announces that Forobosco and the Clown will be separated and condemned “to th' Gallies” (5.3.284), Fletcher and his collaborators are self-consciously poking fun at the

outrageous claims against the theater and at the abuses hurled against playwrights and actors for “gulling” spectators into paying for nothing but evanescent illusions.¹⁴⁶

Once Forobosco is punished and his comic subplot is resolved, the Duke offers a further sense of closure by suggesting everyone go “to the Temple, / And there with humbleness praise heavens bounties; / For blessings nere descend from thence, but when / A sacrifice in thanks ascends from men” (5.3.287-90). This final suggestion to a return to humility and sacrifice, an acknowledgment of “heavens bounties,” and an offer of gratitude and subservience to a higher power reflects a gradual assimilation on Fletcher’s part of Cervantes’ narrative resolutions, which frequently hinge on the characters’ recognition of the providential design at work in their lives – as we saw, for instance, in *Las dos doncellas*. Rather than maintaining the unresolved tension of Cervantes’ conclusion in *La ilustre fregona* or constructing their own, Fletcher and his collaborators dispel that tension in their transposition. The playwrights return to a more idealistic model of tragicomedy, one more aligned with Shakespeare’s late romances of forgiveness and redemption, rather than with Fletcher’s usual acerbic emphasis on irony and insincerity. The transposition of *La ilustre fregona* into *The Fair Maid*, particularly when viewed alongside *Las dos doncellas* and *Love’s Pilgrimage*, exemplifies tragicomedy’s adaptability and remarkable capacity to accommodate opposing perspectives. *The Fair Maid* additionally suggests a shift to a nationally invested mode of tragicomedy that takes into account global concerns and dramatizes distinct ways for a nation’s citizens to engage with the world at large. If the lesson for the audience of *Love’s Pilgrimage* is in

¹⁴⁶ On the antitheatricalists, see Jonas Barish’s classic study, *The Antitheatrical Prejudice* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1981). For source texts, see Phillip Stubbes’s *Anatomie of Abuses* (1583) and Stephen Gosson’s *Schoole of Abuse* (1579), and, for a rebuttal to antitheatrical claims, Thomas Heywood’s *An Apology for Actors* (1612).

critical discernment, both within and without the playhouse, the lesson for the audience of *The Fair Maid* is *both* in critical discernment and in how to be a good citizen of a country that trades, engages with, and inevitably fights against foreign nations. The good English citizen – if we take the play’s Italy as a stand-in for England – is defined in Alberto, who sacrifices his personal safety for the interests of his nation. This turn to a kind of nationalistic tragicomedy comes precisely in 1625, one year after the failure of the Spanish match and James I’s declaration of war against Spain. Despite the renewed Anglo-Spanish conflict, Fletcher and his fellow playwrights continue to borrow from Cervantes, but they do so with a different transpositional strategy: rather than emphasizing the irony and social critique of their source text, the English playwrights offer their audience a less cynical, more wondrous, and more idealistic tragicomedy, stressing the importance of active participation, risk-taking, and personal sacrifice during times of conflict and war.

CHAPTER 4

WONDROUS AND MONSTROUS TRAGICOMEDY IN *THE RENEGADO AND LOS BAÑOS DE ARGEL*

Philip Massinger's *The Renegado* (1624) is a case of Cervantean transposition that diverges from what we have seen in preceding chapters. The play borrows its source material not from another novella, but from Cervantes' captivity play, *Los baños de Argel* (1615). Thus, throughout the process of transposition, Massinger grappled with, adapted, and responded to Cervantes' dramatic, rather than narrative, form and investments. I have argued previously that John Fletcher's tragicomic "bifronted posture" is transposed directly from Cervantes' novellas, where the Spanish author employs a dual, layered perspective on the events that occur. In his own innovative way, Massinger transposes the "double perspective" of Cervantes' *comedia* into *The Renegado*.¹⁴⁷ Reading *The Renegado* as a Cervantean transposition therefore enables us to understand the origins of its particular tragicomic form, and its dramatic and generic investments as reactions to the Spanish play's alignments and agenda. Where Cervantes privileges the immaterial or spiritual side of conversion, faith, and personal transformation, Massinger in his transposition emphasizes the reverse: the material or earthly side. Invisible faith and internal conversion – with God as the privileged audience – carry the weight in *Los baños*. By contrast, in *The Renegado* it is the outward performance of conversion and faith – with both an on- and off-stage audience – that matters. Where Cervantes demystifies and even underscores the potential dangers of theatrical illusion, Massinger

¹⁴⁷ On "double perspective" in *comedia*, see Geraint Evans, "The Minotaur of Stage: Tragicomedy in Spain," in *Early Modern Tragicomedy*, ed. Subha Mukherji and Raphael Lyne (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2007), 71.

consistently re-mystifies theatrical magic, which he locates (paradoxically) in the theater's materiality. Additionally, Cervantes provides a view of pleasure and comedy as arising out of a divine or cosmic perspective. Earthly or mundane reality is generally tragic in Cervantes' play, only redefined as comic when understood through a divine point of view. Massinger, in contrast, suggests that earthly reality contains within itself the possibility of comedy, and that pleasure need not be delayed until a heavenly afterlife. Therefore, for Massinger the final comic element is pleasurable marriage on earth (Donusa and Vitelli), rather than Cervantes' divinely comic death via physical torture and martyrdom (Francisquito and Hazén).

Comic possibility arises in *The Renegado* when Vitelli, the play's male protagonist, first sets eyes upon the Muslim woman Donusa in the Tunisian marketplace. Vitelli exclaims, "What wonder I look on!" and sets off, in a sense, the traditional plot of stage comedy: a romantic pursuit and relationship that must face multiple obstacles but that ultimately ends in happy marriage (1.3.140).¹⁴⁸ As critics have pointed out, the market is fitting as Vitelli and Donusa's initial meeting place, considering the subsequent material (and symbolic) exchanges that take place between them.¹⁴⁹ When he gazes on Donusa and remarks on her wonder, Vitelli objectifies her; she is another ware up for

¹⁴⁸ References to Philip Massinger's *The Renegado* are from *Three Turk Plays from Early Modern England*, ed. Daniel J. Vitkus (New York: Columbia UP, 2000).

¹⁴⁹ See Michael Neill, "Turn and Counterturn: Merchanting, Apostasy and Tragicomic Form in Massinger's *The Renegado*," in *Early Modern Tragicomedy*, ed. Mukherji and Lyne (2007), esp. 157-8; Valerie Forman, "Balance, Circulation, and Equity in the 'Prosperous Voyage' of *The Renegado*," in *Tragicomic Redemptions: Global Economics and the Early Modern English Stage* (Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 2008), esp. 162-5; and Jane Degenhardt, "Catholic Prophylactics and Islam's Sexual Threat: Preventing and Undoing Sexual Defilement in *The Renegado*," *Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies* 9.1 (2009): 62-92 (esp. 67-8).

sale. Because she is so visually striking, Vitelli decides he will “run the hazard” and visit Donusa in her palace (1.3.174), even though earlier in the same scene he insists that “mixing” with non-Christian women “Must of necessity... / ... / Strangle such base desires” (1.3.16-20).¹⁵⁰ It is Donusa’s physical appearance that moves Vitelli to relinquish his position regarding Christian men “mixing” with non-Christian women. It is also, later in the play, Vitelli’s physical appearance that moves Donusa to offer him abundant riches as well as her own body. Looking, gazing, eyeing, and measuring the value of a thing, person, or event through sight are therefore central to *The Renegado*’s opening scene and, indeed, to the play as a whole.

Massinger associates sight – particularly the sighting of a beautiful “object,” such as Donusa or even Vitelli – with an earthly kind of pleasure. By locating wonder in Donusa’s physical body, for instance, Massinger materializes the divine. In doing so, the English playwright emphasizes beauty and pleasure from an earthly perspective, thereby crafting a form of stage tragicomedy that is invested in a secular point of view. In Cervantes’ *comedia*, a cosmic perspective of the events that unfold insistently trumps an earthly point of view, suggesting that material reality can never be enduringly comic and that true pleasure is only found once we transcend our physical existence. While Cervantes privileges an internal mode of sight – the capacity to recognize a spiritual truth

¹⁵⁰ On English anxieties about Islam, trade and exchange with Islamic nations, and the threat of Muslim conversion, see Jonathan Burton, “English Anxiety and the Muslim Power of Conversion: Five Perspectives on ‘Turning Turk’ in Early Modern Texts,” *Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies* 2 (2002): 35-67, in addition to Vitkus and Degenhardt. On the “problem” and expulsion of *moriscos* in Spain, see James B. Tueller, “The Assimilating Morisco: Four Families in Valladolid prior to the Expulsion of 1610,” *Mediterranean Studies* 7 (1998): 167-77; and Javier Irigoyen-García, “El problema morisco en *Los baños de Argel*, de Miguel de Cervantes: de renegados a mártires cristianos,” *Revista Canadiense de Estudios Hispánicos* 32.3 (2008): 421-38.

beyond human events – Massinger privileges a material sight, where the audience watches Donusa’s body and is invited to experience its “wonder.”

Generally, it is men who gaze and women who are gazed in Massinger’s play. This follows a traditional, patriarchal dynamic between men and women, where women are performative objects (performative in the sense that they can be *displayed*) and men are spectating subjects. Dennis A. Britton points out the play’s “persistent gendering of eligibility for conversion – women far more than men.”¹⁵¹ Women, then, are not only objects to be wondered at, but also pliable clay that can be adapted to fit a variety of different molds. Massinger’s representation of femininity as performative directly contrasts with the kind of femininity presented in *Los baños*. Cervantes offers a mode of femininity – or, more specifically, female agency – that is observant, surreptitious, and that effectively controls (by allowing or disallowing) the objectifying male gaze. In Cervantes’ play, the female protagonist Zahara acts independently and resists becoming a malleable object for men to shape into their own desires. Rather than being “eligible” for conversion (performed by a man), in Britton’s terminology, Zahara has already actively converted to Christianity, of her own accord, before the play even begins. Zahara is free of male influence in a way that Donusa is not. Cervantes refuses to provide his audience with Zahara as an object or as a spectacle, portraying her instead as an agent of internal spirituality. Massinger, in contrast, highlights Donusa’s performativity and physicality in order to create a tragicomedy that not only emphasizes earthly pleasures for its characters, but that also seeks to provide a physically pleasurable experience to its audience.

¹⁵¹ Dennis Austin Britton, *Becoming Christian: Race, Reformation, and Early Modern English Romance* (New York: Fordham UP, 2014), 142-3.

Zahara's freedom from male influence is nowhere more evident than in her relationship with Don Lope, Cervantes' counterpart to Vitelli. Lope and Zahara's initial meeting happens under conditions totally opposite to Vitelli and Donusa's. Throughout two-thirds of the play, Lope is held captive for ransom in one of the *baños* with his friend and confidante Vivanco. Zahara belongs to a prominent Muslim family that lives next to the prison where Lope is held. Despite her religious affiliation by birth, Zahara shows that nurture is stronger than nature, since she was nursed and educated by a Christian handmaiden who convinced her that Christianity was the only true religion. Zahara is, therefore, a secret Christian leading a Muslim life. She desires to marry a Christian man who will bring her back to Spain, where she can practice her religion freely and openly. Having seen Lope inside the prison, Zahara decides that he is the man for her – the man who will save her and bring her closer to Christ. In an inversion of the Vitelli-Donusa relationship, where Vitelli sees and desires her first, Zahara sees and desires Lope from behind the safety and privacy of a prison wall. Moreover, Zahara does not desire Lope physically, as Vitelli clearly desires Donusa, but rather as a strategic means to an end. If Donusa's power resides in her physical beauty and assertive sexuality, which actively invite men to gaze at and desire her, Zahara's power resides in her surreptitious and strategic planning, which are wholly unrelated to her external appearance.

Donusa exploits her physical attributes and makes herself visible (by returning to the marketplace to see Vitelli again) in order to get what she wants. She knows her power lies in her physicality and external beauty, and so she uses them to her advantage. Even when she converts to Christianity, she does so in a performative, externally visible way – this time not so much to attract Vitelli, but to evoke wonder and awe in Massinger's

audience (and to avert the danger of both her own and Vitelli's death). Contrastingly, Zahara understands that her power lies in her *secret* Christianity, and so everything she does is strategically cloaked in darkness. She is the one who sees Lope first, before he has a chance to see her, and reaches out to him from behind a wall to plot his escape. He only sees her when *she* decides to be seen. In the play's second *jornada* (act), Zahara visits Lope's prison with her female companions. Since Zahara wants Lope to finally see her, but she is wearing a traditional veil, she pretends to be stung by a wasp in the neck so she can reveal her face. She throws off her veil in a frenzy, and Lope quickly recognizes her as the anonymous woman who is trying to liberate him. He whispers to Vivanco, "¿Hase visto industria tal? / ¿Hay tan discreta maraña?" [Have you ever seen such plotting? / Such a tactful ruse?] (2.1600-1).¹⁵² In Lope's eyes, Zahara's cleverness eclipses her physical beauty – or, to be more precise, it *augments* her beauty. Zahara is also the play's agent of resolution, since she arranges Lope's escape to Spain, where he retrieves a ship to rescue Zahara and many of the play's Christian captives. In *The Renegado*, the Christian heroine Paulina is Zahara's counterpart in this particular aspect of her character, but it is worth remembering that Paulina does not work of her own volition; she is guided and directed by the play's male stage manager Francisco. Early on, Francisco establishes his clandestine authority over the play's characters when he instructs Vitelli how to perform in order to redeem his sister Paulina and achieve a happy ending: "Be, therefore, patient. Keep this *borrowed shape* / Till time and opportunity present us / With some fit means to see her; which *performed*, / I'll join with you in my desperate course / For her

¹⁵² References are from Miguel de Cervantes, *Los baños de Argel, Ocho comedias y ocho entremeses*, ed. Florencio Sevilla Arroyo and Antonio Rey Hazas, vol 3 (Alcala de Henares: Centro de Estudios Cervantinos, 1995).

delivery” (1.1.154-8, my italics). It is his strategic plan that brings about the play’s successful resolution. Both Vitelli and Paulina are just moving pieces in Francisco’s broader stratagem. Moreover, Paulina is just as performative as Donusa (if not more), given Paulina’s exceedingly dramatic mock conversion.

Whether any moment in the play is perceived (by the characters and/or the audience) as wondrous or monstrous depends on perspective, another kind of internal sight. Through his particular development of the genre’s form, Massinger fashions a kind of tragicomic coin, with wonder and monstrosity on opposite sides. The didactic purpose of this coin is to model proper viewing practices for early modern audiences, expanding individual theatergoers’ horizon of perspective. On the side of wonder, Massinger materializes Vitelli’s awe at Donusa’s physical beauty not only to emphasize the sensual carnality associated with the Muslim characters, but also to replicate on stage the experience of his audience. Theatergoers will be moved, ideally, not necessarily to wonder at Donusa’s beauty (although this is, of course, possible), but to experience a similar kind of wonder by “sighting” or watching the embodied performance, particularly the final scenes of Vitelli’s Christian resistance and Donusa’s conversion. Through its scenes of wonder – which can only arise through a suspension of disbelief – the play teaches its audience where to place its faith. Believing in something intangible is a risky endeavor, the play suggests, and for certain characters the act of suspending disbelief ends in disastrous consequences. This is poignantly true for Asambeg, who places his faith in Paulina’s mock conversion to Islam only to be deceived later on. Donusa’s conversion is wondrous for the play’s Christian characters (and, presumably, for an English audience), but it is monstrous for the play’s Muslim characters. Paulina’s mock

conversion is monstrous on a surface level – if it were true – but it is also wondrous precisely because it is false and because it plays a crucial role in giving the play a “happy” ending, at least from a Christian perspective. Additionally, in the Cervantes *comedia* the wondrous is associated exclusively with the divine and immaterial, whereas Massinger produces a kind of tragicomic wonder that can be either spiritual or earthly, and is often both simultaneously.

Christian Transcendence in *Los baños de Argel*

The double perspective in Cervantes’ play juxtaposes a mundane vision of reality with a transcendental one. This is nowhere more evident than in the martyrdom of the young boy Francisquito, whose death can be interpreted as wondrous and/or monstrous, depending on perspective. The wonder of his death is only perceivable once he has transcended all physical pain and limitation, shed his material body (which he does symbolically on stage by taking off his costume), and crossed over into the afterlife. Francisquito is a young Christian boy who is captured, taken to Algiers, and eventually tortured and crucified for refusing to convert to Islam. Francisquito’s Christ-like martyrdom is, from an earthly or mortal perspective, brutal and tragic. From a cosmic or providential perspective, however, the boy’s martyrdom represents the ultimate success of his Christian resistance and also his return to heaven, where he will reap the rewards of his own sacrifice.¹⁵³ The double perspective in Cervantes juxtaposes an earthly or mundane point of reference with a cosmic one. The earthly perspective is associated with tragedy, fiction, and performance. Performance itself is, in turn, conceptualized as

¹⁵³ On cosmic irony in Spanish *comedia*, see also Evans, 71-2.

limiting and limited. The cosmic perspective is, on the other hand, associated with comedy, reality, and a kind of unbound authenticity that transcends performance. Viewing Francisquito's death from a cosmic perspective turns it comic and points to the dominant belief system of the *real* world beyond the stage. The same circumstances apply to the death of Hazén, the play's renegade (Christian turned Muslim turned back) and counterpart to Massinger's Grimaldi. Unlike Grimaldi, however, when Hazén repents and converts back to Christianity, the Muslim officials he has betrayed sentence him to death. After Zahara witnesses Hazén's fatal impalement, she comments: "Vile morir than contento, / que creo que no murió" [I saw him die so happy, / it made me believe he didn't die] (2.990-1).¹⁵⁴ Zahara's words in this moment are a perfect epitome of the play's general philosophy, illustrating Cervantes' double perspective. Hazén died so happy, that he did not really die. His earthly body died a miserable death, but his soul never died and so his death is happy from a cosmic perspective. As Nova Myhill has argued, the spectacle of martyrdom does not inherently compel a "universal response,"¹⁵⁵ but rather one that must be interpreted. In her article on Massinger and Dekker's *The Virgin Martyr*, Myhill posits that the difference between reading martyrdom as tragic or miraculous lies in the "difference between pagan and Christian understanding, and the true narrative of martyrdom [versus] the false narrative of theatrical illusion."¹⁵⁶ For Cervantes, the "false narrative of theatrical illusion" is always inferior to and superseded by the true Christian

¹⁵⁴ References are from Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra, *Ocho comedias y ocho entremeses*, 3rd vol, ed. Florencio Sevilla Arroyo and Antonio Rey Hazas. Alcalá de Henares: Centro de Estudios Cervantinos, 1995.

¹⁵⁵ Nova Myhill, "Making Death a Miracle: Audience and the Genres of Martyrdom in Dekker and Massinger's *The Virgin Martyr*," *Early Theatre* 7.2 (2004): 9-31 (27).

¹⁵⁶ Myhill, 9.

narrative behind seemingly horrific events. The unfortunate, tragic circumstances of Hazén's life have led to his eternal resurrection and rejoicing in the afterlife – in other words, a classic example of *felix culpa*. In *The Renegado*, Massinger introduces Vitelli's potential martyrdom and death as the threateningly tragic elements that must be dispelled to enable a happy ending.¹⁵⁷ However, in the play's hierarchy of tragedy, the threat or prospect of Vitelli's death is actually more comic than his near-conversion to Islam. But, because Massinger emphasizes an earthly kind of comedy, Vitelli's marriage to Donusa is of course more comic than his Christian death would have been.

It is important to note the crucial difference between the Christian perspectives in Massinger's play and in Cervantes' *comedia*. For Cervantes, Christianity is aligned with immateriality and it transcends the *illusion* of a concrete, touchable, sensory, earthly reality. For Massinger, on the other hand, Christianity is not divorced from a material and earthly reality, but rather finds expression and affirmation through it. When Donusa physically acts out her conversion to Christianity in a moment of simultaneous spiritual and physical ecstasy, her theatricality reaffirms the truth of her new religious conviction. A similarly spectacular conversion in *Los baños* would mean very little, and would actually arouse suspicion about the moment's authenticity. This contradiction between Massinger and Cervantes' representations of Christianity implicitly complicates the relationship between Catholicism and Protestantism. In a sense, even though Cervantes is writing within a Catholic context, he endorses a kind of Christianity that does away with spectacle, ritual, and material spirituality. In addition, Cervantes' Christianity is based on

¹⁵⁷ On martyrdom, see also John R. Knott, *Discourses of Martyrdom in English Literature, 1563-1694* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1993); and Huston Diehl, *Staging Reform, Reforming the Stage: Protestantism and Popular Theater in Early Modern England* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1997).

a personal, private, and invisible relationship between Christ and believer, without the need for an intermediary priest – an approach to devotion more in line with the Protestant belief that subjects can worship privately and foster a personal relationship with God. Paradoxically, Massinger’s Christianity embraces the traditionally Catholic practices that Cervantes disavows. Massinger’s focus on a materially based, earthly, and theatrical Christianity is not an outright endorsement of Catholicism, however, but rather an endorsement of the power of spectacle and of the theater, which relies on material practices to awaken its audience’s faith.

Conversely, by emphasizing how a reality beyond the world of the play trumps the fictions that are being staged, Cervantes highlights the limits of performance rather than its potentially powerful influence on reality. In *Los baños*, reality itself repeatedly breaks through performance to remind us of the futility of “acting.” This occurs, for instance, when Francisquito’s performance of martyrdom is interrupted by his real death. Carahoja, one of his captors, tells Francisquito that to be spared all he needs to do is “alzar el dedo, / y decir ‘Ilá, ilalá’” [raise a finger and say, ‘Ilá, ilalá’] (2.1982-3).¹⁵⁸ Francisquito refuses to convert, throws away his wooden top (*el trompo*), and tears off his clothes. Naked, he exclaims: “¡Ea!, vaya el trompo afuera, / y este vestido grosero, / que me vuelve el alma fiera, / y es bien que vaya ligero / quien se atreve a esta carrera” [Come! Away with this top, / and with these gross rags, / which make my soul beastly. / Whoever attempts this journey / must go lightly dressed] (2.1992-6). When Francisquito throws away his top, he symbolically leaves his childhood behind to become a Christian martyr. Throwing away his toy and shedding his costume, he indicates that the time for

¹⁵⁸ The words “Ilá, ilalá” open the Muslim credo. Reciting such credo was the only external marker of conversion.

trifling and playing has come to an abrupt end, as the reality of his imminent death breaks through. The ripping apart of his costume is a literalization of the limits of performance; by returning to his natural state and stripping himself of any external trappings, Francisquito emphasizes the reality of his predicament. This renunciation of exteriority in favor of an unseen interiority is a common theme throughout the play. When Francisquito and his brother Juanico's father first sees them wearing Muslim garb (forced upon the children by their captors), Juanico exclaims: "si nuestra intención / está con firme afición / puesta en Dios, caso es sabido / que no deshace el vestido / lo que hace el corazón" [if our intention / is firmly fixed on God, it is well known / that these clothes cannot undo / what our hearts feel] (2.1325-9). Juanico suggests that the true believer's Christian essence, then, is unchangeable – or at least unchangeable by any external means. Juanico's philosophy is reaffirmed through his brother's immutable Christian interiority despite the attempts of his Muslim captors to force him to convert (i.e., dressing Francisquito as a Muslim and tempting him with material excesses, then torturing him, and finally sentencing him to death).

However, this philosophy of immutable interiority does not extend to the Muslim characters, as we see in the case of Zahara, who has spent most of her life as a secret Christian posing as a Muslim. But Zahara's childhood conversion and turn to Christianity does not make her monstrous in the way that Francisquito's willing conversion to Islam would have made him. Quite the opposite, Zahara's conversion makes her wondrous and worthy of the audience's sympathy. Additionally, her secret Christianity is what makes her subterfuge with Lope admirable rather than condemnable. In Cervantes' play, female conversion to Christianity (from any non-Christian religion, but particularly from Islam)

therefore has an inverse relationship to male conversion to Islam: the first is desirable, worthy of admiration, and – in generic terms – comic. The latter, however, is monstrous, tragic, and worthy of condemnation. As I discuss later on, this dynamic is the same in *The Renegado*.

The next time Cervantes' audience sees Francisquito, he dies, still naked and tied to a pole. To emphasize that he is *really* dead, Cervantes brings his remains onstage later on when Francisquito's father carries a *pañó blanco ensangrentado* (white bloodied handkerchief) containing Francisquito's bones. In *The Renegado*, Massinger transfers the performance of martyrdom onto Vitelli, but Vitelli's *performance*, rather than his actual death, is in the English play enough to achieve a "happy" conclusion. Vitelli's performed willingness to die also contributes to the potential comedy of his death. In other words, Massinger removes the death (real) but keeps the simulacrum of martyrdom (acting), because in his model of tragicomedy the latter is enough to achieve a satisfactory outcome. Of course, Francisquito's "death" after his martyrdom is not really real (it is still *acting*), but it brings with it a sense of finality and tragedy that Vitelli's performance of martyrdom lacks. Francisquito's death also challenges the ability of Cervantes' play to turn its tragedy into comedy, which it must eventually do by assuming a future and reality beyond the world of the play: Francisquito's death is comic because he died a martyr and his soul will now rejoice in heaven. As Jean Canavaggio aptly describes, "in exchange for the game of mirrors of earthly life, one gets the certainties of salvation in eternal life."¹⁵⁹ Viewed through a purely mortal lens, Francisquito's brutal torture and crucifixion are

¹⁵⁹ Jean Canavaggio, "Cervantean Variations on the Theme of Theater within the Theater," *Critical Essays on Cervantes*, ed. Ruth El Saffar (Boston: G.K. Hall, 1986), 157.

entirely devoid of comedy. But if we shift from an earthly perspective to a cosmic one, as Cervantes' ideal audience would do, we see beyond the tragic fiction of Francisquito's death into the comic reality of his transcendental salvation, which is everlasting. Francisquito's mortal sacrifice, then, leads to greater rewards in the afterlife. His soul's liberation after death is more real than his performed crucifixion because it is a belief anchored in the dominant system of thought of Cervantes' audience, a belief in which the average Spanish theatergoer would ideally have already placed his or her faith without requiring any material proof of its reality. Therefore, this belief powerfully transcends performance and materiality.

Francisquito's death is also aligned with Valerie Forman's conceptualization of how *English* tragicomedy works: "the solution tragicomedy offers to the problems of loss depends on transforming that loss into profit."¹⁶⁰ Francisquito's martyrdom is an earthly loss but a cosmic gain, and in the world of Cervantes' play the cosmic always trumps the earthly. This is different in Massinger's play, where pleasure and comedy arise out of a secular, earthly existence. *Los baños* further accentuates this tragicomic philosophy of loss-turned-into-gain when Vivanco remarks on the monetary inequality between the money Zahara has given Lope to rescue her (three *escudos*) and the money it will actually take to rescue her and the other Christian characters (three thousand *escudos*). Despite the financial imbalance, and the perceived material loss, Vivanco states, "Más se ha ganado / de lo que hemos perdido" [We have gained more / Than we have lost] (2.1535-6). Vivanco refers to the gain for Christianity of Zahara's soul, and all the (future) good

¹⁶⁰ Forman, 146. Of course, Forman's understanding of tragicomic profit is primarily economic, whereas Cervantes' play privileges spiritual salvation over earthly riches.

deeds Zahara will perform. Again, the cosmic trumps the earthly: money is not as significant as the sincere Christian conversion of a Muslim woman.

Cervantes' conception of tragicomedy, which incorporates "greater extremes of laughter and danger," differs from Guarini's, which aims to integrate comic and tragic elements harmoniously.¹⁶¹ This difference further demonstrates the influence of Spanish, rather than Italian, tragicomic form on the development of English tragicomedy. In fact, Melveena McKendrick's definition of Spanish *comedia* as a genre may be seen to apply to English stage tragicomedy and, in essence, to all of the tragicomedies discussed in this dissertation:

The tone is varied, with comedy and danger or disaster promiscuously rubbing shoulders. This mixture is capable of ending happily or tragically, but a tragic ending is the exception rather than the rule. As a result, the tragicomedy (for want of a better term) – usually a play heading for tragedy which is finally resolved in some satisfactory way – becomes a high art form in the Spanish theatre, not least because there is often a sting in its tail which compromises the satisfactory nature of the ending.¹⁶²

McKendrick's definition of the *comedia*, a genre to which *Los baños* belongs, is more aligned than Guarini's pastoral tragicomic form with English stage tragicomedy. In particular, McKendrick's definition of the "sting in [the *comedia*'s] tail which compromises the satisfactory nature of the ending" is an apt descriptor for most of Fletcherian tragicomedy, where resolutions are so often ironic, self-conscious, and unable to fully contain or dispel potentially tragic elements.

Los baños also shares with English tragicomedy the elements of self-reflexivity, irony, and metatheatricality. The play's self-awareness is displayed most strongly during

¹⁶¹ Evans, 70.

¹⁶² Melveena McKendrick, *Theatre in Spain, 1490-1700* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1992), 74.

a scene of theatrical rehearsal, offering a second instance of reality intruding on performance. The rehearsal of a play put on by Spanish captives is interrupted with the frantic news of an actual battle breaking out in Algiers. As the captives rehearse a play by Lope de Rueda,¹⁶³ two wounded Christians rush into the captives' performance space and announce that they are being massacred by the Algerian moors, who believe they have spotted a Spanish armada in the distance coming to attack. Guardián Bají, one of the play's Muslim protagonists, runs into the arena announcing that a fleet of ships bearing a flag with an image of Christ has terrified the Algerian moors: "Tal hay que dice haber visto / a vuestro profeta muerto / en la gravia de una nave, / en una bandera puesto" [People say they have spotted / your dead prophet / drawn on a flag / at one of the ship's helms] (3.2313-6). It turns out, soon thereafter, that the entire armada has dissipated in the sun. Bají tells the captives, "Ya el sol deshizo la armada; / volved a hacer vuestros juegos" [The sun has already undone the armada; / you may return to your games] (3.2347-8). When the "armada" (or the mirage of it) was first spotted, and it was perceived to be real, it caused a rift in and interrupted the captives' performance. It also led to *actual* deaths, since the moors in their defensiveness slaughtered Christian captives. In a sense, the Algerian moors projected their own worst fears onto this imagined fleet: the very image of Christ, the captives' savior and redeemer. Perceiving this imagined vision as reality has caused fatal consequences, therefore not only pointing to the limits of performance but, even worse, to its potential dangers. To be precise, the real danger lay not in the vision itself, which was nothing more than mists dissolved by

¹⁶³ Canavaggio provides further context for this scene: "On the occasion of the Easter festival, the Spanish captives are assembled in the convict prison of the king to attend an improvised theatrical production" (148).

the sun, but in the reactions of its spectators. In this remarkably self-referential scene, the on-stage play put on by the Christian captives becomes real (in the world of the larger play) as the Christians are attacked and killed by their Muslim captors. Given Cervantes' real captivity in Algiers after he was captured by Barbary pirates, this moment underscores that a performance of captivity – as put on not only by the Christian captives within the play but also by Cervantes himself with *Los baños* – can never truly do justice to the reality of slavery and torture. Cervantes not only demystifies theatrical illusion; he also exaggerates the potentially perilous outcomes of an audience that misperceives what it sees and takes mere illusion as reality. As we shall see, Massinger transposes this element of dangerous misperception and, in fact, racializes it by transferring the quality of faulty spectating onto his Muslim protagonists, specifically Asambeg.

Cervantes' demystification of theatrical illusion and his emphasis on the limits of performance are recurrent themes in other plays that accompanied *Los baños* when it was first published in his *Ocho comedias y ocho entremeses* (1615). Part of Cervantes' reactivity against performance arose out of a disillusionment with his own theatrical career, upstaged as it was by more prolific playwrights such as Lope de Vega. But in another way the theater was Cervantes' ideal medium to experiment with his characteristic strategy of layered perspectives, given that the theater itself is simultaneously material and evanescent, real and not real, present and absent – in short, loaded with contradictory meanings. The Spanish *comedia* as a genre was also ideally suited to Cervantes, since it allowed for such generic flexibility and for the juxtaposition, and often superimposition, of comedy and tragedy. The richness and complexity of Spanish *comedia* as written by Cervantes, especially when it serves as a direct source for

an English play, helps us to deepen our understanding of the complexity and multilayered perspective of English tragicomedy.

Earthly Pleasures in *The Renegado*

Massinger's consistent re-mystification of theatrical magic, which he locates in the theater's materiality, is especially visible in the play's scenes of Christian conversion and redemption. Jane Degenhardt argues, "Although *The Renegado* overtly posits the triumph of Christian spirituality over Islamic carnality, it anchors Christian resistance in Catholic objects, ceremonies, and bodily practices, and repeatedly marks spiritual redemption in outward, visible, and material ways."¹⁶⁴ I would extend this argument by pointing out that Massinger tends to externalize many of the internal processes that occur in *Los baños de Argel*. Indeed, reading Cervantes' *comedia* first (or alongside *The Renegado*) makes Massinger's externalization and materialization of internal, invisible processes apparent. Zahara's Christian conversion is one of these processes, which even precludes the action of the play. Donusa, on the other hand, converts in a highly public, performative, and interactive way – "interactive" in the sense that other characters, i.e. Vitelli, must participate by playing their own roles in her conversion. Donusa's conversion is a spectacle performed for both an on- and off-stage audience, whereas Zahara's conversion is totally inaccessible to the audience, having already occurred in the past. Indeed, Zahara's audience would have consisted only of an all-knowing, powerfully discernable God, to whom she privately and internally "performed" her rebirth as a Christian. Cervantes resists the theatricality of a public conversion; even when he stages

¹⁶⁴ Degenhardt, 62.

Francisquito's dramatic martyrdom, it is only to make the point that its performative aspects are empty, and that we can only find true meaning in Francisquito's transcendence of materiality. Massinger reverses these investments and imbues performance with so much power that it is Paulina's mock conversion – directed by Francisco's theatrical plotting – that saves Vitelli and Donusa and buys time for the play to resolve itself successfully, at least through the eyes of the Christian characters.

The Renegado's ending, then, is only comic (or wondrous) when viewed through a Christian perspective. Viewed through the eyes of the Muslim characters, particularly Asambeg, the ending is monstrous, painful, and tragic. Here, Massinger retains Cervantes' model of a double perspective, but transposes *Los baños's* earthly/cosmic binary into a complex fan of dichotomies, including Muslim/Christian, male/female, earthly/divine, and tragic/comic. Massinger's crucial reversal lies in his association of earthly reality with comedy, and in the comic possibilities of an earthly existence that he not only represents on stage for his audience but that he also actually provides them through the material experience of attending the theater to see *The Renegado*.

The tragedy of Asambeg's outcome is based on his inaccurate interpretation – his faulty “spectating” – of Paulina's conversion, which is merely a performance rather than an authentic internal shift. In contrast, Vitelli's seemingly misplaced wonder (from a Christian perspective) upon first seeing Donusa in the marketplace, and later his faith in her Christian conversion, seem to denote his growing capacity to see clearly – in fact, to accurately see the intangible beyond material appearances. The play uses Vitelli as an on-stage spectator and substitute to the off-stage audience in order to cultivate proper viewing practices. Moreover, Vitelli's influence on Donusa and on her subsequent

Christian conversion emphasizes the potential power of spectating, which can effectively alter the object (or subject) of its attention. Here the play makes a distinction between Vitelli and Asambeg's abilities to perceive things clearly, and their capacity to discern when to suspend and when to maintain their disbelief.¹⁶⁵ Massinger portrays Vitelli, his Christian protagonist, as the more discerning spectator.

In Massinger's model, English stage tragicomedy is therefore not only tragic and comic at once, but also simultaneously wondrous and monstrous.¹⁶⁶ These perceptions, these opposing ways of viewing and understanding the genre, are inextricably linked to tragicomedy's kaleidoscopic treatment of comedy and tragedy. As we have seen in the plays explored in earlier chapters, English stage tragicomedy does not simply "merge" comic and tragic elements, or even produce a "third" kind of genre (as Guarini would

¹⁶⁵ On the suspension of disbelief and theatrical faith, see Susannah Monta, who argues that early modern English plays propose "active, complex models of audience engagement [characterized by] dialectics of distance and affective commitment, of mixed participation... of imaginative allegiance and metatheatrical awareness": "'It is requir'd you do awake your faith': Belief in Shakespeare's Theater," in *Religion and Drama in Early Modern England*, ed. Jane Degenhardt and Elizabeth Williamson (Burlington: Ashgate, 2011), 115-37 (127).

¹⁶⁶ Philip Sidney famously refers to tragicomedy as a "mongrel" in his 1595 *Defence of Poesy*. See *Sir Philip Sidney's An Apology for Poetry and Astrophil and Stella: Texts and Contexts*, ed. Peter C. Herman (Glen Allen, VA: College Publishing, 2001), 116-17. On the development of and reactions to stage tragicomedy in England, see Garth Kimbrell, "Taste, Theatrical Venues, and the Rise of English Tragicomedy," *SEL* 55.2 (Spring 2015): 285-307. Interestingly, Lope de Vega was consistently labeled a *monstruo* (monster) for championing the tragicomic genre of *comedia nueva* in Spain. The term as applied to Lope was understood as "cualquier parto contra la regla y orden natural" [any departure from rule and natural order]: Sebastián de Covarrubias, *Tesoro de la lengua castellana o española*, ed. Felipe C.R. Maldonado and Manuel Camarero, 2nd ed. (Madrid: Castalia, 1995), 96. On the Spanish understanding of "monstrous" and its gender implications, see Elizabeth Rhodes, "Gender and the Monstrous in *El burlador de Sevilla*," *MLN* 117.2 (March 2002): 267-85. For a brief history of tragicomedy in Spain, see Sofie Kluge, "A Hermaphrodite? Lope de Vega and the Controversy of Tragicomedy," *Comparative Drama* 41.3 (Fall 2007): 297-333.

have it), but rather it offers a multivalent treatment of genre where the comedy and tragedy – and everything in between – are contingent on the characters’ and the audience’s vantage points. Stage tragicomedy therefore produces a trick of perspective, containing in the same scene or moment a range of generic possibilities that can be opened up like a fan, if the audience is astute enough and receptive to a multi-generic interpretation and experience. This trick of perspective is directly borrowed not only by Massinger from Cervantes’ *comedia*, but also by Fletcher, Beaumont, Massinger, and other Fletcher collaborators from Cervantes’ *Novelas ejemplares*. Although it is unlikely that an average English spectator would have been cognizant of the play’s Muslim perspective, and that this spectator would view Asambeg’s devastating betrayal as tragedy rather than comedy, this contrasting perspective is there in the play complicating its seemingly happy ending. That the play closes with Asambeg’s painful words of humiliation and defeat only serves to emphasize the tragic nature of his position.

Theatrical and generic transpositions are characteristically messy, in the sense that some elements from the source text are incorporated into the transposition, other elements are ignored, and yet others are transformed into something new. Similarly, multiple sources can be transposed into the same text at once, with varying degrees of influence. In working with Cervantean material, Massinger did not erase *all* traces of an earlier Guarinian influence. Massinger returns, for instance, to Guarini’s dictum about tragicomedy lacking death. In this, Massinger differentiates his own model of tragicomedy not only from Cervantes’ *comedia*, but also from Fletcher’s (both tragicomic models incorporate death). Fletcher initially aligned himself with Guarini’s definition (tragicomedy “wants” deaths in Fletcher’s prologue to *The Faithful Shepherdess*), but he

eventually overturned it in practice, as we saw in *The Two Noble Kinsmen*. Massinger effectively erases the multiple deaths of *Los baños* when he transposes it into *The Renegado*. In Cervantes' model of *comedia*, which is generically a hybrid of tragedy and comedy, as most Golden Age Spanish plays, death can be incorporated without losing the comedy – as long as death is *perceived* in a particular way. It is here that Cervantes' trick of double perspective plays a major role in determining the audience's interpretation of the play. From a mortal perspective, Francisquito's Christ-like martyrdom is tragic, but from a cosmic perspective it is generically comic. Offering an additional point of view, Cervantes also materializes the rewards of Francisquito's death in a more practical and ironic way that highlights the tyranny of Counter-Reformation Spain. Francisquito's father, unnamed throughout the play, collects the remains of his son after his crucifixion. He must hold onto these not purely for sentimental and/or sacramental value, but because when (and if) he returns to Spain he will be questioned by Inquisitorial officers about his religion, given his captivity in Algiers. Francisquito's father will only have his son's bones to present to the Inquisition as material proof of his Christian suffering and resistance.¹⁶⁷ Francisquito's bones will work as a return passport into a Spain that demands ocular and material proof of its subjects' religious and cultural affiliations.

¹⁶⁷ On the practice of interrogating rescued and returning captives, Javier Irigoyen-García states how “El cuerpo... de Francisquillo es el ‘documento’ que le permitirá demostrar ante las autoridades españolas, siempre suspicaces con los retornados, que su linaje no pertenece al de los renegados moriscos, sino al de los mártires de la fe católica” [Francisqu[ito]'s body is the ‘document’ that will enable [his father] to demonstrate to the Spanish authorities, who were perpetually suspicious of *retornados* [Spanish captives returning to Spain], that his lineage does not belong to Moorish renegades, but to the martyrs of the Catholic faith]: Irigoyen-García, “El problema morisco,” 429. On Spanish anxieties about captivity and conversion through a Cervantean lens, see Willard King, “Cervantes, el cautiverio y los renegados,” *Nueva Revista de Filología Hispánica* 40.1 (1992): 279-91.

Cervantes' use of death in his tragicomic play is thus complex and multilayered: tragic if viewed from a mortal perspective (Francisquito suffered greatly before his death), comic if viewed from a cosmic perspective (Francisquito resisted the temptation to convert to Islam even under the harshest conditions), and – interestingly – *also* comic if viewed from a material perspective of sorts (Francisquito's bones will now grant his father safe passage into Spain when he returns).

Rather than crafting death in a way that makes it both tragic and comic (or even simply comic), Massinger avoids death in *The Renegado* altogether. As I examined in the opening chapter, the tragic threats in Shakespeare and Fletcher's *Two Noble Kinsmen* are forced marriage and patriarchal oppression. In *The Renegado*, death does not rule as the ultimate tragic element, since it is superseded by the potentially far worse outcome of Muslim conversion for the play's male Christian characters. For the play's female Christian protagonist Paulina, sexual intercourse with her Muslim captor and a subsequent Muslim conversion reign supreme as the truly tragic elements and also displace death from its "traditional" (or Guarinian) role in tragicomedy. Ultimately, in *The Renegado* neither Vitelli's conversion nor his death are necessary, because Massinger uses performance itself to provide the tragicomic turn that resolves the play's conflicts. This miraculous performance is Paulina's mock conversion, which is doubly performative and imbued with the power of deception and trickery.¹⁶⁸ The conversion's deception brings about the final "comic" scene precisely because it entraps the Muslim

¹⁶⁸ Paulina's conversion is "doubly performative" because (1) the real actor is performing as Paulina, and (2) the character of Paulina is performing a false conversion for an on-stage (and off-stage) audience.

protagonist in a Christian-centric play. Asambeg's faith in Paulina's performance is, in the end, misplaced and therefore marks him as an incompetent spectator.

By insisting on the power of illusion and on the capacity of performative acts to have a tangible effect on reality, Massinger offers a contrast to Cervantes' demystification of theatrical magic. An anecdote from Thomas Heywood's *Apology for Actors* (1611) aptly illustrates Massinger's conceptualization of theater and the power of performance. This anecdote, moreover, provides a striking reversal of Cervantes' interrupted play-within-the-play scene in *Los baños*. Heywood recalls an extraordinary occurrence during a performance by a company of Cornish actors:

certaine *Spaniards* were landed the same night unsuspected, and undiscovered, with intent to take in the towne, spoyle and burne it, when suddenly, even upon their entrance, the players (ignorant as the townes-men of any such attempt) presenting a battle on the stage with their drum and trumpets strooke up a lowd alarme: which the enemy hearing, and fearing they were discovered, amazedly retired, made some few idle shot in a bravado, and so in a hurly-burly fled disorderly to their boats.¹⁶⁹

As established earlier, the Spanish captives' rehearsal in Cervantes' *comedia* is interrupted by a real battle that breaks out in Algiers. The opposite occurs in Heywood's anecdote: the performance of a battle interrupts an attack in the real world, driving the attacking Spaniards away with its loud "drum and trumpets." In the anecdote, then, performance is capable of significant interventions that directly affect the real world. In fact, this particular performance by the Cornish actors is unintentionally (but providentially?) aligned with a nationalistic, anti-Spanish agenda. Apologetically, Heywood employs the anecdote to conceptualize performance/theater as a useful tool that can uphold and even serve national interests, rather than as a harmful, immoral, and

¹⁶⁹ Thomas Heywood, *An Apology for Actors* (London, 1611), sig. G2r, 12.

wasteful pastime. *The Renegado* is more strongly aligned with Heywood's apologetic perspective on performance than with Cervantes' demystification of theater. In a sense, transposing *Los baños de Argel* Massinger re-mystifies the theatrical illusion that Cervantes strips down in his play of captivity. But, to complicate matters, Massinger does not simply re-mystify theatrical illusion or define performance as an act that is *always* effective; he also makes theatrical illusion contingent on the competency, self-awareness, and astuteness of the spectator. This is why some of *The Renegado*'s on-stage performances (Vitelli's martyrdom and Donusa's conversion, for example) are framed as authentic and believable, while other performances (Paulina's conversion) are, despite their powerful usefulness, framed as outlandish and void of any real meaning. Both kinds of performance can and do have effects in the real world, but the latter is only effective when the spectator (in this case, Asambeg) lacks the skills to suspend his *belief* and recognize the performance as an empty act. *The Renegado* therefore suggests, ultimately, that the power of performance is not contained inherently within performance itself, but rather that it arises out of the complex interaction between performance, performer, and (competent or incompetent) spectator.

When Vitelli first meets Donusa, the play characterizes him as an incompetent or inexperienced spectator, becoming entranced by her physical beauty and therefore being unable to resist her advances. Donusa's external beauty and ostentatious wealth blind Vitelli, preventing him from seeing clearly. As Vitelli says when he first enters Donusa's room in the palace: "[Is] this a heavenly vision? Howsoever, / It is a sight too glorious to behold / For such a wretch as I am" (2.4.7-9). He exclaims he is "ravished" by Donusa, her music, her jewels, and the perfumed air of her private chambers (2.3.12). In other

words, he is swept away by her theatricality; he has not yet learned the skepticism and detachment of an astute spectator. During his conversation with Donusa, she tells him she “must hold [him] for a *dull spectator*” for misunderstanding her (2.4.75, my italics). Donusa successfully seduces him, inviting him deeper into her chambers, where they have their first sexual encounter. Soon thereafter, once Vitelli has been physically transformed by Donusa, it is Francisco who begins to work upon him to open his eyes and to help him see more clearly. In 3.2, Vitelli enters the scene telling Francisco: “you have made me see my follies / And wrought, perhaps, compunction” (3.2.4-5). As the play’s redeemer, stage manager, and practical strategist, Francisco counteracts Donusa’s initial effects on Vitelli, which have made him blind, weak, and vulnerable to her sexual advances – and, since the play associates sex with religious turning, to Muslim conversion. Donusa’s intention to convert Vitelli is clear from the beginning; she calls him “Christian” but in an aside adds she will only call him that “till thou art mine by a nearer name” (2.4.51-2). Donusa’s sexual seduction of Vitelli is purposefully correlated with Vitelli’s risk of conversion. Because Vitelli’s conversion would be, as Valerie Forman indicates, “the most potentially tragic outcome of the play’s plot,” Francisco must come to the rescue to restore Vitelli to his senses and open his eyes.¹⁷⁰ After Francisco’s intervention, Vitelli aggressively tells Donusa that he regrets his “purchase” of the “wanton treasure of [her] virgin bounties / That in their *false fruition* heap upon [him] / Despair and horror” (3.5.41-4, my italics). Donusa’s seemingly material “bounties” are therefore mere illusions, offering nothing but “false fruition.”

¹⁷⁰ Forman, 178.

Vitelli must not only learn to see through Donusa's external theatricality and sensuality; he must also invert the hierarchical relationship between them in order to bring about a happy (read, Christian) resolution. Donusa can try to "turn this Christian Turk and marry him," but once Francisco has worked *his* magic on Vitelli, only the opposite (Donusa's conversion to Christianity) becomes possible. When Donusa comes to convert Vitelli with her words, he replies: "What strong poison / Is wrapped up in these sugared pills?" (4.3.74-5). His reply suggests that he has learned to look *beyond* the external materiality of a thing – the sugared pills, as sweet as Donusa once looked – and into its true interior – the strong poison lurking within. Asambeg and Mustapha confirm this reading when they exclaim:

ASAMBEG: How he eyes her!

MUSTAPHA: As if he would look through her.

(4.3.105-6)

Donusa will only look "truly fair," as Vitelli tells her, "when [her] mind's pureness answers / Your outward beauties" (4.3.146-7). It is in this moment that Donusa experiences a shift within herself, and states, "I came here to take you, / But I perceive a yielding in myself / To be your prisoner" (4.3.147-9). Vitelli's act of looking through and into Donusa effectively alters her interiority, despite her earlier fear of death for having had sex with a Christian man. Vitelli is now such an astute and discerning spectator that his gaze has the power to alter what he sees into whatever form he desires. In a sense, this is a powerful act of projection, where Vitelli looks at Donusa in a particular way and manages to transform her, from the inside out, into what he wants. This moment also highlights Donusa's malleability and how her interiority is influenced more strongly by external male desires than by her own internal wishes. Donusa's suggestibility to male

influence is a clear departure from, as we saw earlier, Zahara's self-reliance, independence, and strategic controlling of the men around her.

In the character of Paulina, Massinger synthesizes the attributes of both Donusa and Zahara, offering a third kind of femininity that integrates a performative exteriority with a fiercely independent and impenetrable interiority. Ultimately, given Francisco's direction and influence over her, Paulina is more closely aligned with Donusa, but she still displays moments of female agency similar to Zahara's in *Los baños*. For instance, Paulina effectively resists the sexual advances of her Muslim captor Asambeg, just as Zahara holds Lope at bay and clearly explains that her desire for him is not necessarily for *him*, but for what he can do for her. Despite his fiery lust, Asambeg cannot get past Paulina's impenetrable shield of protection: "Ravish her, I dare not: / The magic that she wears about her neck, / I think, defends her" (2.5.161-3). Paulina's "magic" is repeatedly invoked throughout the play as her source of power. Significantly, it is Francisco who once gave her the relic that she wears around her neck and that seems to repel all threats of harm (1.1.147). The play makes the point that Paulina's power resides in *Francisco* and in the material object he bestowed upon her – but not in Paulina herself. As Francisco's pawn, she self-consciously plays out on stage the dynamics and process of theater: Paulina enacts Francisco's plan just as the early modern actor playing Paulina enacts Massinger's. Significantly, Francisco's plan is, in the end, benevolent (through a Christian lens), which implicitly reaffirms Massinger's play as benevolent as well. In *Los baños*, the dynamic between Zahara and Lope is an inversion of this, since Lope is a pawn in Zahara's stratagem to escape Algiers.

Paulina displays some of Zahara's self-sufficiency, with certain limitations imposed by Massinger. However, Paulina is in the end more strongly associated with Donusa's theatricality. Paulina is described in wondrous terms, just as Donusa. Donusa herself asks if Paulina is "such a wonder / As 'tis reported," while Donusa's servant Manto describes Paulina's words as "enchant[ing]" their "hearers" like music (1.2.4; 1.2.11). Asambeg curses her "enchancing tongue" for driving him mad with lust (2.5.114). Paulina's hypnotic musicality and wondrous appeal are comparable, paradoxically, to Donusa's sensuality, which the play firmly defines as Muslim. Just as Donusa captivates Vitelli with her physical beauty and rich display of jewels, Paulina captivates Asambeg with her magic relic and the irresistible power she derives from it. But unlike Donusa who grants Vitelli access to her palace's inner chambers and subsequently to her own body, Paulina continually rejects Asambeg through her impenetrable Christian resistance. Under Francisco's command, Paulina changes her strategy and turns Asambeg's attraction to her against him by delivering the play's most outrageously theatrical, deceptive, *and* successful performance with her mock conversion.¹⁷¹ Francisco instructs her directly, as he did earlier with Vitelli, telling her that "the viceroy's extreme dotage on you / May be the parent of a happier birth / Than yet our hopes dare fashion" (5.2.86-9). He then hands her a paper outlining her role and says, "From this learn... what you must attempt" (5.2.93). Later on in the play, Paulina will reveal to Donusa in secret that her mock conversion was part of a "present means, *not plotted by myself*, / But a religious man, my confessor" (5.5.16-17, *my italics*).

¹⁷¹ Degenhardt argues that *The Renegado* "marks Francisco as a hero for advocating equivocation as a means for subverting the Turks" (70).

Paulina is therefore not enacting her own plot, but following Francisco's.¹⁷² She is the actress delivering someone else's lines, not the playwright or director. Zahara, on the other hand, enacts her own self-conceived stratagem and instructs Lope in the role that *he* will play in her deliverance – and so, in a sense, Zahara is closer in agency to Francisco than to Paulina or Donusa. Zahara functions as her own stage manager and playwright, rather than enacting someone else's script. This is another way in which Cervantes demystifies the power and traditional operations of theater, by revolutionizing the role of his lead actress from simply an enactor of a playwright's plot (as Paulina is of Francisco's) to a kind of creative agent and stage manager in her own right.

Massinger, then, uses theater/performance to save the day through Francisco's machinations and the other characters' enactment of them. As we saw with both Vitelli and Paulina, Francisco distributes roles to his "actors" throughout the play and manages to put on a performance that has real effects on the characters' reality, not only for the Christian characters who are spared (Vitelli, Paulina, and the converted Donusa) but also for the blindsided Asambeg. In *The Renegado*, performance therefore plays a powerful role in bending and influencing reality. By producing a real outcome in the world and trajectory of the play, Paulina's on-stage performance – the effective theatricality of her mock conversion – becomes an instance where, in the words of Ellen MacKay, "theater intervenes in history."¹⁷³ Paulina's mock conversion, as a performance, operates similarly

¹⁷² As Degenhardt argues, Massinger's portrayal of the Jesuit priest Francisco in a positive light and, essentially, as the play's savior is remarkable "given the usual vilification of Jesuits in Protestant England" (70).

¹⁷³ Ellen MacKay, *Persecution, Plague, and Fire: Fugitive Histories of the Stage in Early Modern England* (Chicago: Chicago UP, 2011). In full, MacKay states: "if sometimes for the worse, then surely also for the better, the theater intervenes in history" (20).

to the battle performance described in Heywood's anecdote, which managed to successfully interfere with and stop an attack in the real world. Paradoxically, at the same time that the play uses Paulina's conversion as a critique of excessive theatricality (perhaps inoculating itself against antitheatricalist attacks), the play also employs her performance as the key element that brings about the tragicomic resolution. The play ultimately shows that the effects or consequences of performance on reality hinge on how we (and the characters) perceive, measure, and interpret the performances that we spectate.

Act five, scene three in *The Renegado* most pointedly stages rituals of conversion and challenges its audience to place its faith in the "right" performance. Paulina's conversion follows Donusa's immediately to juxtapose it and to provide a comparison for the audience. In a sense, Donusa's conversion is *more* performative than Paulina's because it relies on a second actor (Vitelli) and on a physical prop (water). And yet Donusa's conversion is more believable than Paulina's because (1) it happens progressively throughout her romance with Vitelli, and (2) because within the play's logic a Muslim woman's conversion to Christianity based on her love and attraction for a Christian man is credible *and* it enables a happy, comic resolution. To clarify, the play does assert that a Christian man's conversion to Islam is plausible, via the figure of Grimaldi, but of course his conversion is monstrous and the audience is repeatedly dissuaded from feeling compassion for him. At any rate, Grimaldi does eventually convert back to Christianity, redeeming himself and shedding his monstrosity. After Vitelli throws water on Donusa's face, as instructed by stage manager and redeemer Francisco, Donusa delivers a powerful speech on blindness and sight, where the "films of

error” are taken from her “soul’s eyes” (5.3.124-5). Here Donusa’s transformation is from the “blind ignorance and misbelief” of Islam to a miracle of sight (Christianity) (5.3.132). In this moment, she is reborn as a Christian and must learn to see the world, through her soul’s eyes, in a different way – the “correct” way. But of course the subject of the speech is not only Donusa’s eyes, but the audience’s eyes as well. What/how does the audience see? Where does the audience place its faith? Rather than actively asking the spectators to place their faith in her conversion, as Paulina does in *The Winter’s Tale* (“It is requir’d / You do awake your faith” (5.3.94-5)),¹⁷⁴ Donusa leaves the matter open by focusing on her own personal shift from blindness to sight. As Michael O’Connell aptly describes, “The effect on the spectators would appear quite precisely analogous to religious experience in that an act of faith is required for the enactment of the seeming miracle.”¹⁷⁵ In other words, if the audience does not believe in Donusa’s conversion, there is no conversion. Similarly, if Asambeg does not believe in Paulina’s conversion, which comes right after Donusa’s (potentially didactic) words on “seeing” correctly, then Paulina’s performance fails and Asambeg is saved from her betrayal. But Asambeg represents a spectator who, rather than seeing and interpreting skeptically, projects his own desires onto Paulina’s performance and therefore measures it as truthful and real.

Here is the full performance delivered by Paulina immediately after Donusa’s conversion:

PAULINA: Ha! ha! ha!

ASAMBEG: What means my mistress?

¹⁷⁴ William Shakespeare, *The Winter’s Tale*, in *The Norton Shakespeare*, ed. Stephen Greenblatt et al., 2nd ed. (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2008).

¹⁷⁵ Michael O’Connell, *The Idolatrous Eye: Iconoclasm and Theater in Early Modern England* (Oxford UP, 2000), 141.

PAULINA: Who can hold her spleen
 When such ridiculous follies are presented,
 The scene, too, made religion? O my lord,
 How from one cause two contrary effects
 Spring up upon the sudden!

ASAMBEG: This is strange.

PAULINA: That which hath fooled her in her death, wins me,
 That hitherto have barred myself from pleasure,
 To live in all delight.

ASAMBEG: There's music in this.

PAULINA: I now will run as fiercely to your arms
 As ever longing woman did, borne high
 On the swift wings of appetite.

VITELLI: O devil!

PAULINA: Nay, more; for there shall be no odds betwixt us:
 I will turn Turk.

(5.3.138-51)

Paulina opens her scene with irrepressible and somewhat aggressive laughter (“Ha! ha! ha!”), pointing out the ridiculousness of Donusa’s conversion/baptism. Paulina’s laughter works, subliminally, to underscore the performative nature of Donusa’s conversion for the off-stage audience; to remind them that what they have just witnessed is merely theater, not a real act based on internal authenticity. The external and internal are thus juxtaposed in Paulina’s speech, which in a sense also operates as (1) a foreshadowing of her own conversion – which is even more ridiculous than Donusa’s, since it is doubly performative – and (2) as a potentially didactic moment for Asambeg, who *should* respond to Paulina’s conversion with the same “Ha! ha! ha!” that she uses to respond to Donusa’s. Asambeg begins as a semi-skeptical spectator, muttering to himself, “This is strange.” But as soon as Paulina delivers her next line, saying she will now “live in all delight,” Asambeg begins to fall into her trap, perceiving “music” in what he hears. At this point, Paulina’s dreamy theatricality begins to seduce him. Once she states her (false) desire to turn Turk, and then tells Asambeg she will be at his “dispose,” he is entirely lost

in her performance: “I am rapt / Beyond myself with joy” (5.3.158; 160-1). Asambeg’s lack of skepticism and inability to see through Paulina – in the way Vitelli started to see through Donusa after Francisco’s instruction – lead to his tragic end.

Asambeg’s confidante Mustapha even tries to intervene and get Asambeg to see more objectively (in a sense, Mustapha is Asambeg’s Francisco): “You are too violent / In your desires, of which *you are yet uncertain*; / Having no more assurance to enjoy ’em, / Than a weak woman’s promise, on which wise men / Faintly rely” (5.8.10-13, my italics). Mustapha calls on Asambeg to show more restraint and question Paulina’s performance, or at least wait until there is further proof of her sincerity. Blindly, Asambeg replies: “Tush, she is made of truth” (5.8.14). His misinterpretation of her performance, arising out of his stubborn projection of his own desires onto it, leaves him betrayed, alone, and deeply ashamed in the play’s final moment, where he calls himself a “Dull, heavy fool” and vows to “hide / This head among the deserts, or some cave / Filled with my shame and me” (5.8.33; 36-8). Massinger ends the play with these lines, emphasizing simultaneously Asambeg’s painful, tragic end (from a Muslim perspective) *and* Asambeg’s comic end (from a Christian perspective – in other words, he got what he deserved). *The Renegado*’s final lines are therefore a clear example of tragicomedy’s trick perspective, which is, as we have seen, a tactic transposed by Massinger and other English playwrights from the characteristically Cervantean double perspective.

The conceptualizations of performance we find in *Los baños de Argel* and in *The Renegado* oppose each other. In the Spanish play, performance is never as real or effective as truth, implying therefore that there *is* such a thing as truth, or the inherent essence of a person or thing. Cervantes presents this truth or essence as the play’s cosmic

perspective, which juxtaposes and ultimately trumps its earthly one. Moreover, Cervantes suggests that performance is not only inferior to reality, but actually potentially dangerous; this is nowhere more evident than in the scene where the Algerian moors perceive a Spanish fleet where there is none and start butchering captives in a frenzy. Despite its illusionary nature, the imagined armada moves the Algerians to act and has actual, tragic consequences in the real world (of the play). Cervantes' conceptualization of performance in this way is likely a mixture of his reactionary nature against the theater, due to his personal disappointments in that world, and of his critique of the state of theatrical practice and lack of competency in the average spectator. *The Renegado* is more playful with performance and its potential uses, offering multiple performative acts on stage to teach, enrapt, and awaken the audience's wonder and skepticism simultaneously. In the end, Massinger's view of performance is more aligned with the definition offered by Thomas Heywood in his anecdote about the Cornish actors: performance can and does have powerful, actual effects in the real world. Very often, these effects are positive and they serve England's national interests. However, whether performance's effects are perceived as wondrous or monstrous – for instance, whether Asambeg's misreading of Paulina's performance leads to a tragic or comic end for him – depends on (1) the astuteness of the spectator, and (2) the kind of perspective or lens through which the effects are viewed.

EPILOGUE: TRAGICOMIC LESSONS FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

Like all the plays throughout this dissertation, *The Renegado* is deeply rooted in its historical moment and shaped by its social, cultural, and political contexts. Massinger's tragicomedy is in many ways the product of a shifting imperial configuration between England, Spain, and the Ottoman Empire in the early to mid-seventeenth century. None of the tragicomedies I have explored in the preceding chapters would exist without a complex interplay between early modern nations and empires. The interrelationship between England and Spain during the early modern period can itself be described as tragicomic, including elements of comedy – profitable trade, diplomatic and cultural exchange, political alliances, useful emulation – and elements of tragedy – cultural and religious prejudice, war, imperial competition, piracy. Whether we characterize the relationship between Spain and England as tragic or comic depends on our point of view and our framing of the historical events that transpired between them. Similarly, if we return briefly to *The Renegado* we can recognize that the early moderns themselves frequently shifted their points of view regarding foreign nations. The lead characters in Massinger's play are not English but Italian, and are therefore *a priori* allied with Spanish Catholics, with whom Italy formed a Holy League in the sixteenth century to fight back the encroaching Ottoman Empire. This example illustrates the way in which long-time adversaries (for England, Catholic Spain) can become desirable allies in the face of a common threat (the Ottoman Empire). Models once condemned as outdated and heretical can also resurface during times of shifting historical and political relations, as we saw with Catholic materialism in *The Renegado*.

Early modern tragicomedy could therefore be criticized for its “wishy-washiness,” or its stubborn unwillingness to take sides or to dramatize a black-or-white world shaped by clearly delineated guidelines and classifications. This kind of depiction, of a world that hurtles towards a more-or-less predetermined fate with clear laws of cause and effect, is more characteristic of early modern tragedy. The territory inhabited by tragicomedy is more fluid, more open, and more difficult to pin down. While many early modern critics condemned tragicomedy for its openness, it seems to me that its slippery resistance to committing to one singular and unified point of view is a productive quality our world would benefit from exercising today. Many of us must be taught, as early modern theatergoers once were, to sit more comfortably with contradiction, paradox, and uncertainty, and to be willing to hold opposing perspectives in our minds without judgment and without fear.

If the tragicomedies I have examined throughout share a common thematic element, it’s the dramatization of literal and symbolic border-crossings in a range of manifestations. As a collective unit, the tragicomic transpositions in this dissertation theorize what it means to cross a border and the way in which perspective colors as tragic and/or comic different iterations of border-crossing. Like the self-consciousness, irony, and layered perspective of English tragicomedy, the theorization of border-crossing is another predominant element in the plays’ Cervantean sources. When the damsels in *Las dos doncellas* and *Love’s Pilgrimage* dress up as boys, the effect is largely comic, particularly since they return to their original genders in the end. When the Barcelonian “insiders” fight the non-Barcelonian (but still Spanish) “outsiders” in *Las dos doncellas*, however, there is a heightened sense of discomfort and danger with crossing territorial

borders. A similar danger is represented in *La ilustre fregona* when the narrator highlights the threat of sudden and forcible “relocation” of Spaniards from Zahara to Morocco. In Cervantes’ captivity play *Los baños de Argel*, Francisquito’s devastated father must hold on to his martyred son’s remains if he wishes to return to Spain, where he will have to show material proof of his religious and cultural loyalty in order to cross the border. Cervantes includes the detail of Francisquito’s bones to emphasize the tragic historical reality of Inquisitorial Spain.

Out of all these moments, Asambeg’s humiliation in *The Renegado* comes closest to the reality we are currently experiencing. As we saw in chapter four, Asambeg’s betrayal and degradation is perceived as comic from a Christian (and majority) point of view, but as tragic from a Muslim one. Similarly, our current administration’s executive order on immigration – the infamous “Muslim ban” – is terrifying and tragic if viewed from a certain perspective, but comic and comforting if viewed through a different lens. The interpretation of the ban depends on the interplay between performance (the Trump administration) and audience (essentially, all of us and the rest of the world). How the ban is perceived also depends on the accumulated knowledge, beliefs, and investments of individual spectators. For those who believe that the closing down of borders is actually possible and necessary, the ban represents a “comic” step towards progress and safety. For the spectators who believe that borders are largely illusory, man-made, and therefore impossible to control will interpret the same ban as misguided and xenophobic.

Given the current backlash in the U.S. against inclusion, cultural and religious tolerance, and openness to foreign nations, it is more important than ever to remember that nations do not and cannot exist (let alone thrive) in “splendid isolation” and

insularity. The idea of a self-sufficient, closed off, and nativist nation is simply wishful thinking and nostalgia for an imagined past that never actually existed. Throughout this project I have focused on the importance and fertile productivity of cross-cultural exchange; in other words, the exact opposite to building walls and securing borders. Early modern English playwrights were keenly aware of the creative profitability of borrowing from external cultures and nations and incorporating foreign customs, art, literature, languages, and even political and naval strategies into their native landscape.

This is not to say, though, that Fletcher, Massinger, Beaumont, Shakespeare, and other playwrights were perfect models of cultural and religious tolerance. They were not. In many cases they erased Cervantes' contributions and/or labeled them as their own. As I mentioned earlier, Fletcher's cultural stance of Hispanophilia contrasted starkly with his political position of Hispanophobia and anti-Catholicism. It is easy to retroactively characterize Fletcher, in particular, as a thief or literary pirate, stealing what did not belong to him and using Cervantes to make a name for himself. But Fletcher's recurrent borrowing from Cervantean material to craft exciting, innovative, and layered plays points to the natural and inevitable human drive to look beyond oneself to define one's identity. Especially in their representations of layered perspectives, Fletcher and the other playwrights in this dissertation in one way or another emphasized the importance of *point of view*, and how one person's triumph (or comedy) can be another person's painful misfortune (or tragedy). In so doing, the plays featured herein asked their audiences to look at fictionalized events from an array of perspectives and to perhaps – even for one moment – consider an unfamiliar viewpoint. As we have witnessed with our 2016 election, it is all too easy and tempting to become entrenched in one belief system or

perspective, negating others' experiences, fears, and desires. This makes English tragicomedy's mechanism of dual perspectives so relevant and crucially significant today. We must all exercise the compassionate practice of holding seemingly mutually exclusive points of view in our minds. We must become more comfortable with uncertainty, contradiction, and with solutions to our modern problems that are neither black nor white, but gray-ish and flexible and somewhere in between.

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