

A Genealogical Approach to Spanish Reflections on the Tragedy of Moorish Desire: Calderón's *El médico de su honra* and the Idea of Respect for Women in Cervantes, Galdós, and Feijóo

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"Chaos is come again."
Shakespeare, *Othello* (3.3.92)

Among the great plays of Golden Age Spain, Pedro Calderón de la Barca's *El médico de su honra* 'The Physician of His Honor' has generated some of the most diametrically opposed interpretations. Scholars differ, for example, on whether or not the author endorses the honor code that would justify Don Gutierre's murder of Doña Mencía. There has also been much debate over how to classify the play. Is it really tragedy? If Gutierre suffers no great loss and never recognizes any personal error, then where is the cathartic regeneration that defines the genre? Might the hyperbole of Calderón's honor play evoke a new emotion, something like the *perturbación* 'disturbance' emphasized by his contemporary Jusepe Antonio González de Salas? Should we regard Spanish baroque tragedy as an echo of Senecan horror, or perhaps an anticipation of the existential angst of nineteenth-century romanticism?¹

The classification issue is simplified once we allow that, as per a long Spanish feminist tradition of writing against the possessive excesses of male desire, *El médico de su honra*

¹ Translations are mine. More than a half century ago, Gerald Brenan articulated the still widely held sense that the principal defect of *El médico de su honra* is "Calderón's clearly shown approval of Don Gutierre's action . . . held up to us as a course to be followed" (284). This Nietzschean view of Calderón composing plays that advocate uxoricide has prevailed such that separating author from character is difficult: ". . . siempre dispuesto a reaccionar violentamente contra cualquier imaginada mancilla a su honor: el tipo de hombre que escribiría probatoriamente sobre maridos que matan a sus esposas bajo la sospecha de adulterio" ". . . always ready to react violently against any imagined stain on his honor: the kind of man who would write approvingly of husbands who kill their wives under suspicion of adultery" (Cruikshank 8). Critics embracing this idea see no social criticism in *El médico de su honra*, especially in "the very end which approves the action explicitly and does not condemn it even implicitly" (Reichenberger 45). For the play's status as tragedy see Bruce W. Wardropper, Arnold G. Reichenberger, Raymond R. MacCurdy, Alexander A. Parker, Everett Hesse, and J. H. Parker.

(1635) does indeed criticize honor killing.² This genealogy includes three other texts by important authors: Cervantes's *El curioso impertinente* 'The Curious Impertinent' (1605), an interpolated tale in *Don Quijote*; Feijóo's essay *Defensa de las mujeres* 'In Defense of Women' (1726); and Galdós's early novel *La sombra* 'The Shadow' (1870). This is a relatively self-conscious triad. In Galdós's greatest novel, *Fortunata y Jacinta* 'Fortunata and Jacinta' (1887), a character named Feijóo gives Fortunata a "curso de filosofía práctica" 'pragmatic philosophy course.'³ In *La sombra*, the protagonist Anselmo shares his name and his obsessive jealousy with the protagonist of Cervantes's *El curioso impertinente*. Finally, I would argue that Feijóo had *El curioso impertinente* in mind while writing *Defensa de las mujeres*, which concludes with the example of a "mujer valiente" 'valiant woman' who loses the respect of her husband and succumbs to the flattery of a suitor. *La sombra*, *Defensa de las mujeres*, and *El curioso impertinente* share four characteristics: i) interest in the history and fate of the Spanish nation; ii) mysterious, archetypal representations of male desire; iii) associations between excesses of male desire and the Moorish south; and iv) allusions to the progress of science and reason in opposition to past ignorance. Calderón's *El médico de su honra* displays enough structural and symbolic affinities with the texts of Galdós, Feijóo, and Cervantes to suggest overlapping origins and intentions. By exploring these commonalities we can shed light on the play's details, its general design, and the nature of its tragic vision.

Interest in the History and Fate of the Spanish Nation

Each text focuses on the Spanish nation. Galdós does this in *La sombra* via allegorical descriptions of Anselmo's surroundings. When the first narrator details the fourth floor of the "endiablado caserón" 'twisted giant house' (10) in which Doctor Anselmo lives, among the objects heavy with Spain's past are a stuffed eagle and a dried snake (symbols of Aztec Mexico), a quixotic medieval suit of armor, and a crucifix. Later, Anselmo describes the epic palace in which he lived during his doomed marriage to Elena as containing "la historia y el proceso del Arte en todos tiempos" 'the history and progress of Art throughout the ages' (33). The painting of Paris and Helen that ignites his madness brings home the origins of Western imperialism. Similarly, Anselmo's duel with Paris, followed by his mad dash from the Prado to the Castellana, links these classical allusions to Madrid's avenues extending outward from the art museum nationalized in 1868 at the end of the reign of Isabel II.

As the sixteenth of one hundred eighteen essays in his eight-volume *Teatro crítico universal* 'Universal Critical Theater' (1726-39), Feijóo's *Defensa de las mujeres* participates in a project conceived as patriotic eradication of ignorance. The essay exhibits in miniature the scope and strategy of the collection. Refuting the Aristotelian enemies of Eve, Feijóo offers a variety of biblical, classical, and modern examples of noble, intelligent, and powerful women who prove the ignorance of male chauvinism. Situating famous Spanish

² I employ the term feminism as does Richard Rorty—that is, in its most pragmatic sense, meaning advocating respect for women instead of their abuse. The texts compared in this essay are fundamentally feminist to the degree that they expose and decry males brutalizing women.

³ For the curious role of Feijóo in *Fortunata y Jacinta*, see the essays edited by Peter B. Goldman.

women within this larger tradition of Western heroines is another way Feijóo would keep his nation in cultural contact with the rational empiricism of northern Europe.⁴

The range of Spanish history also plays out in Cervantes's *Don Quijote*. Searching for an identity, the mad knight imitates everyone from Bernardo del Carpio to the Cid. He has been read as a nationalistic allusion to numerous princes, saints, and conquistadors grasping at an empire already in decline. Moreover, there is a kind of north-south unification built into the novel's trajectory, an attempt to resolve the clash between the centralizing Habsburg power of Castile and the rebellious Morisco population of Andalusia. At the heart of this process, *El curioso impertinente* functions like an abstract Florentine window on the male *hubris* that Cervantes would eradicate from the Sierra Morena traditionally separating Christians and Moors.⁵

Calderón's *El médico de su honra* contemplates the tension between King Pedro I and the Infante Enrique, previewing the medieval civil war between the Houses of Burgundy and Trastámara. Enrique's opening fall from his horse near Doña Mencía's house as the court travels from Castile to Seville highlights the dilemmas of desire intertwined with the tenuousness of political power. At the play's end, King Pedro's refusal to punish Don Gutierre for the murder of Doña Mencía confirms his flawed character—his historical status as "Pedro el Cruel"—thus co-opting his future death at the hands of Enrique into what the audience can consider metatextual poetic justice.

Mysterious, Archetypal Representations of Male Desire

Each text contains mysterious, archetypal scenes of triangulated desire, which have the effect of turning amorous conflicts into projections of primitive, sempiternal struggles.⁶ The title of Galdós's *La sombra* refers to the ghostly rival that Anselmo sees jumping out of his wife's window: "Al entrar vi que la ventana que da al jardín estaba abierta, y que una sombra, un bulto, un hombre saltaba por ella. Esto fue tan rápido, que apenas lo vi; no vi más que su cabeza en el momento de desaparecer, sus manos en el instante de desasirse del antepecho. Corrí, me asomé y no vi nada; la noche era obscurísima. Sólo creí sentir el golpe de un cuerpo que cae" 'Upon entering I saw that the window which overlooks the garden was open, and that a shadow, a form, a man was jumping through it. This happened so fast that I hardly saw him; I did not see more than his head the moment it disappeared, his hands the instant they vanished from the sill. I ran, I leaned out, I saw nothing; the night was extremely dark. I thought I could just hear the thud of a falling body' (53).

⁴ Historian Stanley G. Payne on Feijóo's importance: "The precursor of the Spanish enlightenment was a Benedictine monk and professor at the University of Oviedo, Benito Gerónimo Feijóo, [who] first set the tone for a more critical and empirical attitude in eighteenth-century Spanish thought. . . . A royal decree of Fernando VI in 1750 forbidding restrictions upon or denunciation of Feijóo's writings may be taken as the turning point that marked the official beginning of the Spanish enlightenment" (368).

⁵ For north-south conflict in *Don Quijote*, see E. C. Graf. For *El curioso impertinente* as a meditation on the arrogant ignorance of males, see Edward Dudley, Javier Herrero, and Diana de Armas Wilson.

⁶ Galdós routinely tacks between mythical and thermodynamic approaches to psychosexuality, very much like Freud several decades later. For the influence of Cervantes on Freud, see León Grinberg and Juan Francisco Rodríguez.

Defensa de las mujeres is archetypal because, like Galdós's allusion to the Trojan War, Feijóo's survey of exemplary women runs the gamut of human history. Early on he attacks the notion that Eve sinned more than Adam. Given Feijóo's subsequent strategy of naming and documenting the lives of famous heroines, perhaps his most symbolic moment is his final anecdote about an anonymous couple:

Pasados pocos meses, después que con el vínculo del matrimonio se ligaron las almas de dos consortes, pierde la mujer aquella estimación que antes lograba por alhaja recién poseída. . . . En este estado de abatimiento está la infeliz mujer, cuando empieza a mirarla, como suelen decir, con buenos ojos un galán. . . . En esta situación ¿qué hará la mujer más valiente? ¿Cómo resistirá dos impulsos dirigidos a un mismo fin, uno que la impele, otro que la atrae? . . . Y si cae, ¿quién puede negar que su propio marido la despeña? (391-93)

After a few months had passed since the souls of two lovers had been tied together by the knot of matrimony, the woman loses the respect that she held in her status as a recently acquired jewel. . . . The unhappy woman finds herself in this beaten down state when a young suitor begins, as we say, to make eyes at her. . . . In this situation, what would the most valiant woman do? How can she resist two forces compelling her toward the same end; the one pushing, the other pulling? . . . And if she falls, who denies that her own husband pushed her?

Earlier in the essay, Feijóo had already indicated the male psyche's virgin/whore complex, whereby jealousy and disdain are two sides of the same emotional coin: "No pocos de los que con más frecuencia, y fealdad pintan los defectos de aquel sexo, se observa ser los más solícitos en granjear su agrado" 'We observe that not a few of those who most frequently and hideously represent the defects of the fairer sex are those most eager to win her pleasure' (326). This kind of "vicioso extremo" 'defective extreme' (391) is the essence of the anonymous psychology of the finale.

Feijóo's triangular drama, abstract, even mythological, yet urban and familiar, draws on Cervantes's *El curioso impertinente*, in which the valiant Camila navigates the treacheries of both her husband Anselmo, who objectifies and neglects her, and his friend Lotario, who tries to seduce her. There is already an archetypal gesture in deploying this Florentine tale as an interlude to the tangled stories of the Sierra Morena, but in typical *mise en abyme* fashion, Cervantes's tragedy at the heart of *Don Quijote* has its own mysterious, primal scene. Lotario is seized with jealousy, having mistaken the lover of Camila's maidservant Leonela first for a ghost, then for a rival:

Camila . . . aunque vio una y muchas veces que su Leonela estaba con su galán en un aposento de su casa, no solo no la osaba reñir, mas dábale lugar a que lo encerrase, y quitábale todos los estorbos para que no fuese visto de su marido.

Pero no los pudo quitar, que Lotario no le viese una vez salir al romper del alba; el cual, sin conocer quién era, pensó primero que debía de ser alguna fantasma, mas cuando le vio caminar, embozarse y encubrirse con cuidado y recato, cayó de su simple pensamiento y dio en otro, que fuera la perdición de todos si Camila no lo remediara. Pensó Lotario que aquel hombre que había visto salir tan a deshora de casa de Anselmo no había entrado en ella por Leonela, ni aun se acordó si Leonela era en el mundo: solo creyó que Camila, de la misma manera que había sido fácil y ligera con él, lo era para otro. . . . (403)

Camila . . . , even though she had seen many times over that her maid Leonela was spending time with her lover in a certain bedroom of the house, not only did not dare to chastise her

about the man, she would give him a place to hide and she would remove obstacles from his path, in order that he not be discovered by her husband. . . .

But she did not manage things so well that Lotario was not able to spy him one day, leaving at the break of dawn. Since he did not know who he was, at first he assumed that he must be some ghost. But when he saw him walk, wrap himself up, and gather his coat about him, he leapt from one foolish idea to another, which might have been to the perdition of them all if Camila had not remedied things. For Lotario did not think that the man he had seen leaving Anselmo's house at such an unusual hour had entered because of Leonela. No, he could not recall if Leonela existed. He could only imagine that Camila, in the same way that she had been free and easy with him, had been so with another. . . .

Anselmo eventually experiences this same sexual panic when he sees the same lover escape through a window. Here is the inspiration for Galdós's novel:

En fin, una noche sintió Anselmo pasos en el aposento de Leonela, y, queriendo entrar a ver quién los daba, sintió que le detenían la puerta, cosa que le puso más voluntad de abrirla, y tanta fuerza hizo, que la abrió y entró dentro a tiempo que vio que un hombre saltaba por la ventana a la calle; y acudiendo con presteza a alcanzarle o conocerle, no pudo conseguir lo uno ni lo otro. . . . (419)

Finally, one night Anselmo heard footsteps in Leonela's bedroom, and, wanting to enter and see who it was, found that someone was holding the door, which made him all the more desirous of entry. He pushed hard, managing to open it and enter in time to see a man jumping from the window to the street; and rushing up so as to catch him or get a look at him, he succeeded in neither. . . .

Calderón's version of the primordial love triangle occurs in the first act of *El médico de su honra* during a flashback to the event that put everything else into motion. Gutierre confesses to the King that he never married Doña Leonor, because one night he had a vision of her infidelity:

A mi pesar
lo digo: una noche entré
en su casa, sentí ruido
en una cuadra, llegué,
y al mismo tiempo que ya
fui a entrar, pude el bulto ver
de un hombre que se arrojó
del balcón; bajé tras él,
y sin conocerle, al fin
pudo escaparse por pies. (vv. 911-20)

It weighs on me to say it, but one night I visited her house and heard a noise in one of the rooms. I approached, and at the very instant that I entered, I made out the form of a man who threw himself from the balcony. I went down after him, but did not find him; in the end he escaped on foot.

Associations between Excesses of Male Desire and the Moorish South

All four texts represent the irrational extremes of male desire as a moral feature of the Moorish south. Early in *La sombra*, Galdós's narrator informs the reader of Anselmo's

heritage: "Su familia era de las más nobles de Andalucía" 'His family was from the highest nobility of Andalusia' (21).⁷ Later, Anselmo describes his family's house—an extended metaphor for his twisted psyche—as resembling an Arabic *alcázar* 'citadel':

Mi casa estaba construida muy misteriosamente; al exterior no aparentaba nada de notable, pues no era más que un caserón de estos que han quedado en Madrid del siglo pasado. Interiormente estaban todas sus maravillas: como los alcázares de los árabes, fue construida por un gran egoísmo o una extremada reserva, mi padre realizó allí un sueño, expresó todo lo que sabía o todo lo que había soñado. No sé qué medios empleó para ello ni qué artífices trabajaron en la obra: parecía más bien cosa forjada por fuerzas superiores, obra salida de las entrañas de la Tierra al empuje de una voluntad diabólica. (32-33)

My house was built very mysteriously; on the outside there was nothing notable, just one of those twisted old houses left over in Madrid from the previous century. Inside, it was all marvels: like an Arabic citadel, it was built according to great egotism or extreme reserve, for my father had realized a dream there, expressing all he knew and all he had imagined. I do not know by what means he built it nor what artifices he had woven into its structure: it seemed more a thing forged by supernatural forces, something pushed up out of the depths of the Earth by a diabolical will.

It is important to note that Galdós seems to be advancing not so much a stereotypical view of the savagery of Moorish desire as the idea that even the most sophisticated of modern men are prone to primordial behavior when it comes to women. The mysterious, twisted nature of the architectural emblem suggests that for Galdós Islam merely serves as a signpost for the ancient, labyrinthical roots of male sexual aggressiveness.

Feijóo's *Defensa de las mujeres* is more explicit, opening with an assault on the abusive and egocentric male sexuality that underwrites Islam. If Aristotle bears the brunt of Feijóo's critique in the remaining pages, it is only after dispensing with the Koranic imagination:

El falso Profeta Mahoma, en aquel mal plantado paraíso, que destinó para sus secuaces, les negó la entrada a las mujeres, limitando su felicidad al deleite de ver desde afuera la gloria, que habían de poseer dentro los hombres. Y cierto que sería muy buena dicha de las casadas, ver en aquella bienaventuranza, compuesta toda de torpezas, a sus maridos en los brazos de otras consortes, que para este efecto fingió fabricadas de nuevo aquel grande Artífice de Quimeras. Bastaba para comprender cuánto puede errar el hombre, ver admitido este delirio en una gran parte del mundo. (326)

The false Prophet Mohammed, in that ill-conceived paradise he destined for the faithful, denied entrance to women, limiting their happiness to the delight they should feel at seeing from outside the glory possessed inside by their men. And what great joy it must have been for wives to see their husbands welcomed into such obscene bliss by the loving arms of other women, who for this purpose were fabricated virgins by the great Artisan of Chimeras.

⁷ Galdós's narrator continues: "... llevaba el apellido de Afán de Ribera, siendo, por la línea materna, de la casta de los Silíceos, por lo cual se enorgullecía de ser pariente del arzobispo de este nombre" '... he took his last name from Afán de Ribera, linking him by maternal line to the Silíceo clan, according to which he was quite proud to be related to the archbishop of that name' (5). This establishes Anselmo's bloodline with Juan Martínez Silíceo, Archbishop of Cartagena, famous as a sixteenth-century mathematician. The phrasing might also allude to Juan de Ribera, Archbishop of Valencia, an outspoken advocate of the expulsion of the Moriscos.

Seeing this delirium so readily embraced in such a great part of the world was surely demonstration enough of the scale of human folly.

So, in contrast with Galdós, Feijóo's immediate and overt reproof of Islam in the context of a meditation on national norms suggests that in his mind the sexism and violence against women exhibited by Spanish males are indeed rooted in the country's Moorish past. Nevertheless, the worldwide "delirium" of Islam is here clearly not a genetic but, rather, a cultural phenomenon which takes advantage of the universal given of "human folly."⁸

In *El curioso impertinente*, Cervantes's allusion to the sexual distortions of Islam lies somewhere between Galdós's subtlety and Feijóo's directness. When Anselmo requests that he test Camila, Lotario accuses him of thinking like a Moor: "Paréceme, ¡oh Anselmo!, que tienes tú ahora el ingenio como el que siempre tienen los moros, a los cuales no se les puede dar a entender el error de su secta con las acotaciones de la Santa Escritura, ni con razones que consistan en especulación del entendimiento, ni que vayan fundadas en artículos de fe" 'Oh Anselmo, it seems to me that you are now in the same state of mind as the Moors, who cannot be convinced of the error of their sect by citations from Holy Scripture, nor by reasons derived from speculative logic nor by those founded on articles of faith' (381-82). This is a significant detail. Whether we recall Cide Hamete and the Morisco translator, the knight's Moorish-Castilian identity crisis, or Zoraida's escape from Algiers, Lotario's comparison between Anselmo's desire and stubborn Moorish thinking signals the cultural conflict driving *Don Quijote* as a whole.

Calderón connects the Moorish south and the extremes of male desire throughout *El médico de su honra*. Enrique's fall alludes to the precepts of classical tragedy, but it also symbolizes the Castilian court's journey "down" to Seville:

Si las torres de Sevilla
saluda de esa manera,
¡nunca a Sevilla viniera,
nunca dejara a Castilla! (vv. 5-8)

If he hails the towers of Seville this way, he should never have come to Seville, he should never have left Castile!

The Infante's insistence that he must be dreaming when he awakens to see Doña Mencía means that this southern fall is also erotic. Soon we learn of his affair with Mencía and the confused love triangle once formed by Gutierre, Arias, and Leonor. The ultimate trigger for the play's descent into psychopathic jealousy lies buried in Seville's shadowy past. Similarly, the Infante's departure harbingers civil war, but his route also alludes to Moors and Christians:

Para Consuegra camina,
donde piensa que han de ser
teatros de mil tragedias
las montañas de Montiel. (vv. 2634-37)

⁸ For Voltaire's similarly critical attitude toward Islam, see *Mahomet ou le fanatisme*.

He rides toward Consuegra, where he thinks the mountains of Montiel must be the theaters of a thousand tragedies.

This takes him through Córdoba, Andújar, and the major mountain pass of Despeñaperros—that is, straight through the Sierra Morena along the traditional northern limits of Andalusia. Likewise, the play's two references to Atlas, the mythical King of Mauritania (vv. 675, 2054), imply the geographical etymology of *moro* 'Moor' via the Greek *Mauros*. Finally, I would argue that Calderón makes Spain's oriental south a source of moral anxiety by way of a specific literary allusion. In the second act, we learn that King Pedro and Don Diego have begun wandering through Seville at night in disguise:

Toda la noche rondé
de aquesta ciudad las calles;
que quiero saber así
sucesos y novedades
de Sevilla, que es lugar
donde cada noche salen
cuentos nuevos; y deseo
de esta manera informarme
de todo, para saber
lo que convenga. (vv. 1405-14)

All night I roamed the streets of this city, for I want to learn in this way the topics and happenings of Seville, a place where every night new stories are told, and I hope thus to inform myself of all so as to know what is necessary.

This behavior mimics that of the Sultan and the vizier in "The Tale of the Two Hashish-Eaters" in the *Thousand and One Arabian Nights*.⁹ Furthermore, the King's description of Seville as a place where "cada noche salen / cuentos nuevos" 'every night new stories are told' cuts to the essence of the Arabic collection. The allusion makes sense on a number of levels. Condemned to death and desperate to entertain, Mencía and Coquín are subdivisions of Scheherazade. King Pedro's threat to remove the jester's teeth if he does not make him laugh and Don Gutierre's murder of his wife for supposed infidelity recall the pathology of King Shahryar, who, in the frame tale of the *Arabian Nights*, declares that all women are unfaithful and sets about executing a new bride every day. The advocate of Don Gutierre in *El médico de su honra*, King Pedro not only excuses paranoid uxoricide, he is, symbolically speaking, the most powerful Moor in Seville.

Allusions to the Progress of Science and Reason in Opposition to Past Ignorance

All four texts pit the retrograde psychology of imbalanced male desire against the progress of reason and science. The authors accentuate their protagonists' sexual and social instability by portraying them as scientifically inept. In *La sombra*, for example,

⁹ D. W. Cruickshank also notes this connection in his edition (see vv. 1405-06). The oldest Arabic manuscripts of the *Book of the Thousand and One Nights* date from the fourteenth century. The first European version was translated into French by Antoine Galland in 1704-17. Spanish editions date from Vicente Blasco Ibáñez's translation of a nineteenth-century French edition.

Galdós introduces insanely jealous Anselmo in the context of his pathetic, pseudo-scientific laboratory:

Alambiques que parecían culebras de vidrio proyectaban su espiral sobre enormes retortas, cuyo vientre calentaba un hornillo en perenne combustión. Reverberaba el disco de una máquina eléctrica, y todo el aparato nos amenazaba constantemente con sus ingratas manifestaciones. El sordo rumor de la llama del hogar, el chirrido del ascua, semejantes a la vibración lejana de misterioso instrumento; el olor de los ácidos, la emanación de los gases, el asmático soplar del fuelle, que funcionaba con ansia y fatiga, como un pulmón enfermo, todo esto producía en el espectador ansia y mareo imposibles de describir. (13)

Stills that looked like glass snakes projected their spirals onto enormous flasks, the bellies of which were heated by a burner in perpetual combustion. The disk of an electrical machine cycled, and the entire apparatus threatened us with its ungrateful manifestations. The hushed flutter of the flame in the fireplace and the squeaking of the embers, something like the distant vibration of a mysterious instrument, the odor of the acids, the emanation of the gases, the asthmatic draw of the flue, which sounded distressed and fatigued, like a sick lung, all of this produced in the spectator a combination of anxiety and vertigo impossible to describe.

In his old age, Anselmo has taken up chemistry as a hobby, and Galdós carefully leaves the reader with the impression of useless alchemy. Anselmo still seeks the philosopher's stone circa 1870—that is, his science is false; he only apes true experimentation and investigation:

Además, ¿quién ignoraba que don Anselmo no era nigromante ni profesaba ninguna de las endiabladas artes de la antigüedad? Apenas hubo quien tomara en serio sus trabajos, y más bien le tenían en la vecindad por loco o mentecato que por hombre medianamente sabio, con asomos siquiera de sentido común. Él, sin embargo, se enfrascaba en aquella tarea incesante, de que nunca se vio resultado alguno, y a juzgar por la gravedad con que soplabá sus hornillos y la atención ansiosa con que hacía circular los líquidos verdes y rojos al través del vidrio de los alambiques, grandes y trascendentales problemas traía entre manos. (14)

Besides, who did not know that Don Anselmo was no necromancer and that he practiced none of the diabolical arts of antiquity? Hardly anyone took his experiments seriously; it was more likely that neighbors regarded him as a fool or an idiot than even a moderately wise man with a modicum of common sense. Nevertheless, he became engrossed in his incessant work, from which he never saw any results, but to judge from the gravity with which he blew on his stoves and the nervous attention he dedicated to the circulation of those green and red liquids through the glass tubes, great and transcendental problems were afoot.

Feijóo's *Defensa de las mujeres* is again part of the larger Enlightenment project of the *Teatro crítico universal*, which is precisely to debunk myths through natural science: the title page states “para desengaño de errores comunes” ‘for the eradication of common errors.’ Thus scientific and social progress are explicit aspects of this text, and the chauvinistic attitudes shared by Aristotle, the Koran, and so many misguided husbands and seducers are examples of the ignorance that Spain must ameliorate.

Cervantes opposes scientific progress to retrograde male desire by mocking Anselmo's logic as a perverse extreme of empiricism. When Lotario accuses Anselmo of reasoning like

Moors, he notes that the latter are so resistant to abstract ideas that they cannot even grasp Greek mathematician Euclid's third common notion:¹⁰

Paréceme, oh Anselmo, que tienes tú ahora el ingenio como el que siempre tienen los moros, a los cuales no se les puede dar a entender el error de su secta con las acotaciones de la Santa Escritura, ni con razones que consistan en especulación del entendimiento, ni que vayan fundadas en artículos de fe, sino que les han de traer ejemplos palpables, fáciles, inteligibles, demostrativos, indubitables, con demostraciones matemáticas, que no se pueden negar, como cuando dicen: "Si de dos partes iguales quitamos partes iguales, las que quedan también son iguales". Y cuando esto no entiendan de palabra, como en efecto no lo entienden, háseles de mostrar con las manos y ponérselo delante de los ojos, y aún con todo esto no basta nadie con ellos a persuadirles las verdades de mi sacra religión. (*Médico* 381-82)

Oh Anselmo, it seems to me that you are now in the same state of mind as the Moors, who cannot be convinced of the error of their sect by citations from Holy Scripture, nor by reasons derived from speculative logic nor by those founded on articles of faith, but, rather, must be presented with examples that are palpable, simple, intelligible, demonstrable, and indubitable, along with mathematical proofs that are irrefutable, such as when we say, "If from equal parts we subtract equal parts, the remainders are also equal." And when they do not understand such phrases, for in effect they do not understand them, then you must make them see with your hands and put it right before their eyes, but even with all that, still there is no one who can convince them of the truths of my sacred religion.

The irony is that while Moors were once mathematics pioneers, by the sixteenth century algebra, trigonometry, and natural logarithms were the stuff of the European Renaissance. In a truly tragic sense, Anselmo thinks highly of himself, but his jealous schemes spring from a culture that, as historian Bernard Lewis demonstrates, is in relative decline. And as is typical of Cervantes, there appears to be a further irony here in the fact that Lotario explains Anselmo's inability to engage in rational thought as a refusal to embrace a mode of speculative thought (the neoplatonism so popular in Florence) and certain articles of a religious faith (the Orthodox Catholicism so championed by Spain). Since Lotario proves not to be the most reliable judge of human character (indeed, in the end he becomes just as irrationally jealous as Anselmo), the sense of this compound irony might be that, from a humanist perspective, Orthodox Catholicism could use its own dose of rationalism; otherwise, Spain risks falling into relative decline as well.

In *El médico de su honra*, Calderón positions his protagonist with respect to astronomy and medicine. There is a slight difference here; since the play is set in the fourteenth century, Gutierre cannot know what he cannot know. Unveiling his character's ignorance, the author colludes with the audience.¹¹ Galileo revolutionized astronomy around 1610,

¹⁰ Euclid's third common notion is found in book one of his *Elements*. Rodrigo Zamorano (1542-1623) translated this work into Spanish in 1576.

¹¹ Tom Stoppard employs a modern version of this technique in his absurdist tragicomedy *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*, where major scientific discoveries remain tantalizingly out of reach. Cory A. Reed reads Calderón's message as an anticipation of postmodern "chaos theory" and argues Gutierre's failure to embrace "unpredictability and nonlinearity" is an example of "Newtonian reductionism" (30). I see Gutierre reacting against actual discoveries by scientists like Galileo and Harvey. The *locus classicus* of this essential contrast between good science (Galileo, Harvey, and eventually Newton) and bad science (Gutierre) appears to be the preamble of Aristotle's *De partibus animalia* 'On the Parts of Animals' (a different part of which is

announcing and publishing discoveries of sunspots, phases of Venus, and moons orbiting Jupiter. Demolishing Aristotle's view of an unchanging, perfect universe, he rendered Ptolemy's geocentric model indefensible. The contrast made good metaphorical material for a play about a man's outmoded, egocentric obsession with sexual purity. Early in *El médico de su honra*, Doña Leonor hails King Pedro with odd precision:

Pedro, a quien llama el mundo Justiciero,
planeta soberano de Castilla,
a cuya luz se alumbra este hemisfero;
Júpiter español. . . (vv. 609-12)

Pedro, whom the world calls the Just, sovereign planet of Castile, in whose light does bask this hemisphere, Spanish Jupiter. . .

More details of Galileo's discoveries appear in the second act when, agonizing over the state of his honor, Gutierre stumbles onto the explanation for "manchas solares" 'sunspots':

Y así acortemos discursos,
pues todos juntos se cierran
en que Mencía es quien es,
y soy quien soy; no hay quien pueda
borrar de tanto esplendor
la hermosura y la pureza.
Pero sí puede, mal digo;
que al sol una nube negra,
si no le mancha, le turba,
si no le eclipsa, le hiela.
¡Qué injusta ley condena
que muera el inocente, que padezca! (vv. 1647-58)

Thus we cut short all discourses, for they all point to Mencía being who she is, and I who I am. Nothing can threaten the beauty and purity of such splendor. But I misspeak! For it is possible for a black cloud, if it does not stain the sun, to at least perturb it, and if it does not eclipse it, to at least cool it. What an unjust law this is that condemns the innocent to death and suffering!

Gutierre is so attached to a perfect universe that news of its imperfections cannot distract him from sacrificing his innocent wife to restore order. Also self-serving is his backwards attitude toward medicine. When he makes Ludovico bleed Mencía, he flaunts his ignorance regarding the discoveries of pulmonary and systemic circulation by Servetus and Harvey in 1553 and 1616 respectively, discoveries that not only made the ancient medical theories of Hippocrates and Galen untenable, but also murderous. A further irony, one which suggests that Calderón might be constructing the kind of unrestricted and self-reflexive critique of

also quoted by Coquín), where the philosopher expressly points out that a properly educated man should be able to evaluate whether or not the work of a scientific specialist is convincing. Given Coquín's citation of this work, and given Gutierre's inept attempts to be scientific precisely in the regulation of his household, Aristotle's example of the two specialists whom an educated man should be able to evaluate suggests that Calderón had *De partibus animalia* in mind while writing *El médico de su honra*: "For the doctor and the builder define health or house, either by the intellect or by perception, and then proceed to give the accounts and the causes of each of the things they do and of why they should do it thus" (*Parts of Animals* 995).

Moorish reasoning that we find in Cervantes, is the fact that Servetus was likely inspired by Ibn al-Nafis's account of 1242, translated into Latin in Venice in 1547. While these ideas may not have been common knowledge throughout Spain, I see *El médico de su honra* as good circumstantial evidence that elites, especially playwrights such as Lope and Calderón who were ever in search of cases of tragedy rooted in recent events, had access to some version of Harvey's discovery and saw in it the metaphorical outlines of a national tragedy in combination with Spain's arrogant willingness to reject the scientific advances of northern Europe.¹²

Conclusions

La sombra, *Defensa de las mujeres*, *El curioso impertinente*, and *El médico de su honra* are meditations on the Spanish character that deploy archetypal critiques of the possessive excesses of male desire in conjunction with allusions to science and reason, all in the process of analyzing a misogynistic mindset that persists like a Moorish residue. Calderón's baroque text, dark, extreme in its violence, remains the most difficult to understand. Our analogical genealogy helps.

First, the play's affinities with works by authors as feminist as Galdós, Feijóo, and Cervantes argue for Calderón's negative attitude regarding Gutierre's murder of Mencía.¹³ The moral message concerning women anticipates Aretha Franklin's "R-E-S-P-E-C-T" as well as Feijóo's "Estímenlas" 'Respect them' (392). Doña Mencía, the slave Jacinta, the maids Inés, Teodora, and Silvia, and even the rival Doña Leonor represent a community of female victims of the metaphorical injustice of Pedro "el Cruel," whose final gesture is to offer Gutierre's freshly bloodied hand in marriage to a woman who has already sparked his jealousy once before.

Second, the irony of the play's title involves Gutierre's poetic brushes with, but willful rejections of, scientific progress. Calderón underscores his tragic blind spot by figuring his jealousy (his *hamartia* 'error') as a kind of anti-scientific *hubris* 'arrogance.' Since a physician is a popular and ancient metaphor for a leader, the play's tragic irony with respect to Gutierre, a vindictive murderer instead of an honorable doctor, also applies to his enabler, King Pedro.¹⁴ The bloodthirsty fates of physician and tyrant are linked:

¹² Harvey announced his discovery in 1616 and published his essay *Exercitatio anatomica de motu cordis et sanguinis in animalibus* 'An Anatomical Exercise on the Motion of the Heart and Blood in Living Beings' in Frankfurt in 1628. Harvey's discovery likely motivated the 1629 version of *El médico de su honra* attributed to Lope. Servetus's description of pulmonary circulation appeared in his *Christianismi restitutio* 'Restitution of Christianity' in 1553. He was persecuted for his anti-trinitarianism, but his scientific influence should not be underestimated (Stefanadis et al.). Although eventually put to the stake by Calvinists, Spanish Catholics also embarked on an international hunt for Servetus, which, curiously enough, was understood in terms of his heretical affront to the honor of the nation's orthodoxy.

¹³ For detailed feminist readings of *El médico de su honra*, see Georgina Dopico Black and María M. Carrión.

¹⁴ The analogy is complex. In "Plato's Pharmacy," Jacques Derrida addresses the *Phaedrus*, the Egyptian King Thamus, and the *pharmakon* as "medicine/poison." Aristotle implies a good legislator can "heal" a regime and "make it lasting," but without proper laws, unstable regimes such as Carthage, tumble: "... should some mischance occur and the multitude of the ruled revolt, there is no medicine that will restore quiet" (*Politics* 83). In part two of *Don Quijote*, Ricote describes Felipe III's expulsion of the Moriscos as a surgical operation: "... como él ve que todo el cuerpo de nuestra nación está contaminado y podrido, usa con él antes

Gutierre's fall into jealous madness precipitates Pedro's future demise by sending the Infante toward Montiel, where we know he will kill Pedro and then reign as Enrique II. A tragic tumble is coming, just not within the timeframe of the play.

A third consequence of our comparison is that the demented society which triumphs at the end of *El médico de su honra* requires that we tinker with traditional definitions of tragedy. Lope de Vega's romances 'ballads' anticipate the folkloric grace of Federico García Lorca's poetry; perhaps Calderón's tragedies pave the way for the heavy pessimism of Lorca's theater. Indeed, *El médico de su honra* borders on the nihilistic naturalism of a play like *Bodas de sangre* 'Blood Weddings,' where heredity, environment, and cultural history are the "furies" that destroy characters struggling to escape. For starters, by noticing the play's geopolitical specificity—the court's move from Madrid to Seville, the civil war that awaits resolution at Montiel, and the cultural weight of the allusion to the *Thousand and One Arabian Nights*—we sense something tectonic at work, like Hegel's notion of tragedy as a clash between great forces (cf. Bradley). Although Calderón's horrific conclusion veers away from Hegel's amoral resolution of conflicting values, he does anticipate the German philosopher's disinterest in tragedy as individual penance. We sense a metonymy of scarified victims in Mencía, Jacinta, and Leonor. Another example would be the symbolically Arabic perspective shared by Gutierre and Pedro. The point is that Gutierre's jealousy and Pedro's cruelty represent irrevocable parts of a collective psyche (cf. A.

el cauterio que abrasa que del unguento que molifica . . ." ' . . . since he sees that the entire body of our nation is contaminated and rotten, he uses a burning cauter rather than a soothing ointment . . .' (1165-66). In *El médico de su honra*, Gutierre knows the King well, and he hovers around what Derrida writes about Plato's *pharmakon*: "¿Celos dije? / ¡Qué mal hice! Vuelva, vuelva / al pecho la voz; mas no, / que si es ponzoña que engendra / mi pecho, si no me dio / la muerte, ¡ay de mí!, al verterla, / al volverla a mí podrá; / que de la víbora cuentan / que la mata su ponzoña / si fuera de sí la encuentra" 'Did I say jealousy? How wrong of me! Back, back, speech, into my breast. But no, for if it is poison that my breast engenders, and if it did not kill me upon spilling forth, woe is me, it might well upon its return; for it is said of the viper that its own poison can kill it once it is left its mouth' (vv. 1697-1706). For the influence of medicine on the development of Greek philosophy, see Werner Jaeger (3: 3-45). Jaeger points in particular to Aristotle's *Politics*, where the philosopher uses knowledge about medicine as an analogy for knowledge about politics: ". . . he mentions three different grades of knowledge: that of the practising physician, that of the man engaged in creative medical research, who communicates his discoveries to the physician, and that of the man who is medically cultured. . . . What he wants to prove by this example is that not only practical politicians but also men who are politically trained have the right to judge political problems . . ." (3: 14). This link would seem at the root of the tragic irony of Calderón's play, in which the political prelude to a civil war serves as the background for a horrifically misguided act of revenge expressed in terms of a medical metaphor. Of course, this subtle ironic use of the classical estimation of doctors accords very well with the generally overt negative regard for doctors in the early modern period. Cervantes's sardonic slap at doctors as signs of the apocalypse in *El coloquio de los perros* 'The Conversation of the Dogs' is a good example of this attitude: "BERGANZA. Desa manera no haré mucho en tener por señal portentosa lo que oí decir los días pasados a un estudiante, pasando por Alcalá de Henares. CIPIÓN. ¿Qué le oíste decir? BERGANZA. Que de cinco mil estudiantes que cursaban aquel año en la Universidad, los dos mil oían Medicina. CIPIÓN. Pues ¿qué vienes a inferir deso? BERGANZA. Infero, o que estos dos mil médicos han de tener enfermos que curar (que sería harta plaga y mala ventura), o ellos se han de morir de hambre." BERGANZA. If that is so then I will not be amiss in taking as an apocalyptic sign what I heard a student say a while back as I was walking around in Alcalá de Henares. CIPIÓN. What did you hear him say? BERGANZA. That of the five thousand students who were attending the University that year, two thousand of them were studying Medicine. CIPIÓN. And what do you infer from that? BERGANZA. I infer that either these two thousand doctors by now have sick people to cure (which would be a plague and a bad portent in its own right) or that they are doomed to die from hunger' (214).

Parker). The Spanish audience encounters an ignorant, misogynistic tyrant, and they must understand that Pedro represents what they once were. Walter Benjamin also studied the distortions of baroque tragedy, with its myriad tyrants who have “a certain resemblance to the figures of El Greco in the smallness of their heads, if we understand this in a metaphorical sense” (71). He pointed to the genre’s tendency toward a “display of craftsmanship, which, in Calderón especially, shows through like the masonry in a building whose rendering has broken away” (179). In addition to underlining the irrationality of tyrants as the subject matter of baroque tragedy, Benjamin appreciated Calderón’s concern for the foundational architecture of the form. We should not be surprised to find that the protagonists of what we might term “collective tyrannical tragedy” are unsympathetic characters who gain little self-awareness. Its authors are not interested in artificially plastering over human volcanoes.

Nevertheless, I think *El médico de su honra* contains even more subtle modifications of Aristotelian norms. It makes conscious nods toward classical authorities: the opening fall of Enrique alludes to tragedy as the demise of an heroic character; the operative metaphor of Sophocles’s great tragedy haunts Guitierre: “Mato la luz, y llego / sin luz y sin razón, dos veces ciego” ‘I kill the light, and I arrive without light and without reason, twice blind,’ and later, “hombres como yo / no ven” ‘men like I do not see’ (vv. 1911-12, 2127-28); the sacrificial theme underscores tragedy’s roots in pagan ritual: “a pedazos sacara con mis manos / el corazón, y luego / envuelto en sangre, desatado en fuego, / el corazón comiera / a bocados, la sangre me bebiera” ‘piece by piece I would rip out her heart with my own hands, and then, covered in blood, softened by fire, I would eat it, I would drink her blood’ (vv. 2024-28); the singers’ chorus-like allusion to “teatros de mil tragedias” ‘theaters of a thousand tragedies’ (v. 2636) in the mountains of Montiel traces the Mediterranean history of the form. Despite these acknowledgments of tragedy’s legacy, however, the play presents problems: instead of a hero who suffers, the title character is a villain who benefits from his wife’s death; and, of course, there is the absence of catharsis in the conclusion, in which Gutierre learns nothing and is seemingly rewarded for murder.

So the play literally cries out for a discussion of tragedy, with particular attention to Aristotelian precepts. Nevertheless, the only direct citation of Aristotle in *El médico de su honra* comes not from his descriptions of literary genres but, rather, from his observation in a completely different work—*De partibus animalium*—that man is the only animal that laughs. Significantly, the *gracioso* ‘jester’ Coquín makes the reference about halfway through the play while pondering King Pedro’s threat to remove his teeth. The King remains unnaturally impervious to jokes:

El Rey es un prodigio
de todos los animales.
.....
La naturaleza
.....
... sólo permitió dalle
risa al hombre, y Aristóteles
risible animal le hace,
por difinición perfeta;
y el Rey, contra el orden y arte,
no quiere reírse. (vv. 1507-08, 1509, 1516-21)

The King is a marvel of all the animals. . . . Nature . . . allowed that laughter was given only to Man, and Aristotle makes of him the laughing animal by definition; and the King, against the order and art of things, refuses to laugh.

Now, the most immediate distinguishing factor between the dramatic genres is mood, as can be seen in the ancient masks associated with tragedy and comedy (cf. González de Salas 9, 149ff.). Accordingly, pure tragedy is the absolute absence of comedy. Meditating on the primitive origins of the form, Calderón fuses Aristotle's separate thoughts on poetry and animals into a deeper conclusion: our ability to appreciate tragedy ultimately has to do with our humanity, with what makes us different from animals.

By the end of *El médico de su honra*, Coquín is clearly associated with the continuity of victims of Pedro "el Cruel," who rules over a society that does not value self-directed humor any more than women's voices. It is Coquín, for example, who makes a final effort to save Doña Mencía by going for help. Ángel M. García Gómez has demonstrated how Coquín is also a pivotal character for understanding the play. *El médico de su honra* exudes such despair that, in an existentialist way, its solitary, comical character seems as significant as Clarín in *La vida es sueño* 'Life Is a Dream.' Grotesque *graciosos* are crucial to Calderón's vision of tragedy as the reflection of an emotionally imbalanced world. It is as if he were squeezing every drop of levity out of the new tragicomedy, leaving only tyrants and their minions, yes, with the occasional jester, but always schizophrenic, hollowed-out, and defeated. A clue to this world in *El médico de su honra* is found in the fact that it is precisely a *gracioso* who recalls Aristotle's idea that laughter distinguishes humans from animals. Following this logic, the brutally unfunny society that reigns in the end is one in which humanity is trapped in its most animal state (García Gómez 1029). The last aside between King Pedro and Coquín rings with metatextual significance:

REY. No es ahora tiempo de risa.
COQUÍN. ¿Cuándo lo fue? (vv. 2769-70)

KING. Now is not laughter's time.
COQUÍN. When was it ever?

Therefore, I agree with critics such as Wardropper, A. Parker, J. H. Parker, and Hesse who hold that the play qualifies as a special type of tragedy. I imagine Calderón deliberately appropriating the psychopathology of Senecan tragedy, which often trumps viewers' experience of catharsis. Also, in *El médico de su honra*, Calderón stages an extreme case of female suffering as the ultimate sign of an inhumane and unhappy world; in this light, González de Salas's choice of Seneca's *Trojan Women* as an exemplary tragedy might be *ex post facto*. There are geographical, nationalistic, and political reasons why Calderón should turn to Seneca, but he is also simply signaling his extreme approach to the genre in question. After "teatros de mil tragedias" 'theaters of a thousand tragedies' (v. 2636) between ancient Greece and modern Spain, Calderón struggles to innovate against boundaries established by precursors. Accordingly, González de Salas's *perturbación* also makes sense with regard to Calderón's tragedies because it foregrounds the overwhelming feeling of horror in lieu of any cleansing or regeneration.

Finally, thinking about emotions in his book *The Literature of Jealousy in the Age of Cervantes*, Steven Wagschal describes an obsessive “culture of jealousy” driving the early seventeenth-century Spanish imagination. He assesses this jealousy in terms of the brutality and exclusion involved in the simultaneous domestic centralization and overseas expansion of early modern European power. According to Wagschal, a series of characters in works by Cervantes, Lope, and Góngora are jealous as a consequence of the general imperial urge to conquer people and hoard their riches. The trajectory of jealous protagonists that I have described, from Cervantes and Calderón in the early seventeenth century to Feijóo and Galdós in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, allows for a different, more self-reflexive perspective. Rather than a psychotic response to the threat of fragmentation at the moment of imperial ascendancy, *La sombra*, *Defensa de las mujeres*, *El curioso impertinente*, and *El médico de su honra* represent the problem of Spanish jealousy as an inherited or learned condition, a psychologically repressive state that reverberates with a Moorish past as much as it does with any centralizing or colonizing Spanish present. Moreover, these texts’ shadowy, archetypal scenes of male desire point to a dilemma even deeper than ethnicity, history, or nation. This dovetails with the common emphasis on the importance of self-reflection in these texts. *La sombra*’s older, narrating Anselmo knows he has a poor reputation and offers his story in meek defense of behavior that likely caused Elena’s death. In *Defensa de las mujeres*, Feijóo urges readers to despise male chauvinists instead of women: “Contra tan insolente maledicencia, el desprecio, y la detestación son la mejor Apología” ‘Against such insolent backbiting, the best responses are disdain and contempt’ (326). In Cervantes’s *El curioso impertinente*, Anselmo is an uninformed viewer of “la tragedia de la muerte de su honra” ‘the tragedy of the death of his honor’ (414), but his death leaves us with an emblem of authorial self-awareness: “. . . tendido boca abajo, la mitad del cuerpo en la cama y la otra mitad sobre el bufete, sobre el cual estaba con el papel escrito y abierto, y él tenía aún la pluma en la mano. . . . *Un necio e impertinente deseo me quitó la vida. . . . pues yo fui el fabricante de mi deshonor . . .*” ‘. . . slumped over face down, half his body in the bed, the other half over the lectern, on which he had left open the letter he had been writing, and he still had the quill in his hand. . . . *A stupid and impertinent desire took my life. . . . for I was the artisan of my own dishonor . . .*’ (422). Cruickshank, who suggests that Calderón endorses uxoricide, also manages to find a self-reflexive quality in his plays: “Es posible ver en las frecuentes referencias en su teatro a la necesidad de ‘vencerse a sí mismo’, un reflejo de una toma de conciencia de una debilidad personal” ‘It is possible to see in his plays’ frequent references to the need to “conquer the self” a reflection of his arrival at self-awareness about a personal flaw’ (10). Even the similarly skeptical Brennan holds that Calderón later adopted a more reasonable point of view, taking the shepherd Febo’s phrase in *Eco y Narciso* ‘*Echo and Narcissus*’ “en zelos nunca hay nobleza” ‘in jealousy there is never nobility’ (2.1075) as evidence of a kind of authorial epiphany: “Here . . . we have the mature Calderón: honour is on the side of generosity and is opposed to the violent passions” (286). I am simply suggesting that our playwright had already consciously formulated this opposition when he wrote *El médico de su honra*.

But even when a man is fully aware of his malfunctioning feelings and desires, he may not stop abusing women. Some men seem pre-programmed to fits of jealousy and possessive paranoia. As Gutierre says:

... hombres como yo
no ven; basta que imaginen,
que sospechen, que prevengan,
que recelen, que adivinen. . . . (vv. 2127-30)

... men like me do not see; it is enough that we imagine, that we suspect, that we anticipate,
that we distrust, that we guess. . . .

How does a culture even begin to deal with such cases? Perhaps the “turbulence” felt during a staging of *El médico de su honra* is itself a kind of bitter medicine, a venomous antidote, which, if understood and administered properly, might help.¹⁵

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¹⁵ Carrión indicates Enrique’s historical attempts to expropriate his wife Elvira’s estate as well as her body, arguing that *El médico de su honra* raises “profound doubts” through “the irony with which it represents the figures of authority, its staging of violence, and the resistance of subordinate subjects to such violence” (460).

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