LEABHARLANN CHOLÁISTE NA TRÍONÓIDE, BAILE ÁTHA CLIATH | TRINITY COLLEGE LIBRARY DUBLIN
Ollscoil Átha Cliath | The University of Dublin

Terms and Conditions of Use of Digitised Theses from Trinity College Library Dublin

Copyright statement

All material supplied by Trinity College Library is protected by copyright (under the Copyright and Related Rights Act, 2000 as amended) and other relevant Intellectual Property Rights. By accessing and using a Digitised Thesis from Trinity College Library you acknowledge that all Intellectual Property Rights in any Works supplied are the sole and exclusive property of the copyright and/or other IPR holder. Specific copyright holders may not be explicitly identified. Use of materials from other sources within a thesis should not be construed as a claim over them.

A non-exclusive, non-transferable licence is hereby granted to those using or reproducing, in whole or in part, the material for valid purposes, providing the copyright owners are acknowledged using the normal conventions. Where specific permission to use material is required, this is identified and such permission must be sought from the copyright holder or agency cited.

Liability statement

By using a Digitised Thesis, I accept that Trinity College Dublin bears no legal responsibility for the accuracy, legality or comprehensiveness of materials contained within the thesis, and that Trinity College Dublin accepts no liability for indirect, consequential, or incidental, damages or losses arising from use of the thesis for whatever reason. Information located in a thesis may be subject to specific use constraints, details of which may not be explicitly described. It is the responsibility of potential and actual users to be aware of such constraints and to abide by them. By making use of material from a digitised thesis, you accept these copyright and disclaimer provisions. Where it is brought to the attention of Trinity College Library that there may be a breach of copyright or other restraint, it is the policy to withdraw or take down access to a thesis while the issue is being resolved.

Access Agreement

By using a Digitised Thesis from Trinity College Library you are bound by the following Terms & Conditions. Please read them carefully.

I have read and I understand the following statement: All material supplied via a Digitised Thesis from Trinity College Library is protected by copyright and other intellectual property rights, and duplication or sale of all or part of any of a thesis is not permitted, except that material may be duplicated by you for your research use or for educational purposes in electronic or print form providing the copyright owners are acknowledged using the normal conventions. You must obtain permission for any other use. Electronic or print copies may not be offered, whether for sale or otherwise to anyone. This copy has been supplied on the understanding that it is copyright material and that no quotation from the thesis may be published without proper acknowledgement.

No es trágico fin, sino el más felice que se pudo dar:

Women's Interrelationships in the Prose of María de Zayas y Sotomayor

Thesis submitted to the University of Dublin
for the Degree of Doctor in Philosophy

2008

TRINITY COLLEGE
0 6 NOV 2008
LIBRARY DUBLIN

Eavan Mary O'Brien

Declaration

1. This thesis has not been submitted as an exercise for a degree at this or any other University.

2. This thesis is entirely my own work. The published or unpublished work of others, wherever included, is duly acknowledged in the text.

3. I agree that the Library may lend or copy this thesis upon request.

Eavan Mary O'Brien
University of Dublin, Trinity College
July 2008

Thesis
8643

Summary

'No es trágico fin, sino el más felice que se pudo dar'.
–Desengaños amorosos

The enigmatic figure of María de Zayas acquired renown during her own lifetime for her two novella collections, *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares* and *Desengaños amorosos*, which were first published in 1637 and 1647, respectively, and the emergence of feminism has created a renewed critical interest in her works since the early twentieth century. However, focusing on the evidence of abusive patriarchy creates an inherent danger of sidelining women. Although courtship and marriage are undeniably prominent in the social world of Zayas's texts, exclusive reference to these relationships cannot explain how a frame-narrative conclusion that is almost devoid of heterosexual pairings becomes 'el más felice que se pudo dar'. Ironically, by the end of the *Desengaños amorosos*, the male protagonists have been marginalised. As a study of the gynocentrism of Zayas's works, this thesis represents a novel approach to these texts, examining an innovative, oft-neglected aspect and correcting an imbalance in previous criticism.

Thus, I suggest that it is both possible and revealing to view Zayas's twenty novellas from a gynocentric perspective. In so doing, where apposite, reference is made to the theories of Luce Irigaray, Julia Kristeva and Hélène Cixous, among others. I pay particular attention to the frame narrative that links the novellas, as the stories' interconnectedness with the frame is easily overlooked by scholars. For the study of the texts' narrative levels, I apply Gérard Genette's structuralist theory.

Zayas's creation of a 'happy ending' for her female protagonists is all the more striking since, in an opposing trend, cases of women's safety and contentment, as portrayed by her twenty novellas, lessen remarkably as the narration progresses. There is an expansion of woman's perfidy against her own sex, often involving devious honour-code manipulation, with increasingly violent results. Particularly calamitous outcomes ensue when women break the bonds of their sisterhood. In parallel, I trace the frame-tale reaffirmation of Gyn/affection and of sisterly bonds by applying Janice Raymond's terminology; the safe-haven of the convent (namely, the Conceptionist Order) reinforces women's alliances.

Meanwhile, in the novellas, women's friendship cannot overcome the obstacles erected by a hostile patriarchy and the honour code.

The machinations of picaresque serving-women heighten the danger that secular Spanish society poses for the highly born woman who is the focus of Zayas's novellas. Notwithstanding the author's nostalgic tone and omission of a programme for class change, examples of women's inter-class collusion and carnivalesque transgressions depict class boundaries as surprisingly permeable. These texts raise the possibility of class harmony without significant alteration in the established class system.

Zayas takes advantage of her selected genre to explore uncharted territory in her contemporary literature: mother-daughter relations. While maternal acts are consistently rendered futile in the novellas, a mother's authoritative management of the framing events represents a direct contrast. In lieu of mothers' influence in the tales, surrogate mothers provide female protagonists with vital succour. The miraculous intercession of Mary, having adopted a human form, is of particular import among Zayas's nurturing surrogate figures.

Through the novellas' complex portrayal of women's friendship, sisterhood, and motherhood, Zayas inspires optimism in her frame protagonists, as well as in her readers. In this literary reflection of seventeenth-century society, disenchantment pervades not only heterosexual relationships but also the potential for secular cooperation among women. The conspicuous monastic undercurrent suggests the convent's benefits as a potential refuge from these evident dangers, serving as a ready model for Zayas's frame protagonists. The enclosed fate of the frame-narrative women is one for which the reader has been prepared by the foregoing novellas, so that we are inclined to agree with the narrator that, in the context of the *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares* and the *Desengaños amorosos*, the framing conclusion is 'el más felice que se pudo dar'. The centrality of women's interrelationships in relation to this conclusion is the subject of this study; in advancing a view of Zayas's prose through a gynocentric lens, it represents a new contribution to the analysis of her works.

Acknowledgements

Firstly, I wish to extend my sincere thanks to Professor James Whiston; I am greatly indebted to him for undertaking supervision of this lengthy project. He has been a continual source of inspiration, rigorous guidance, and unfailing kindness, both before and during the writing of this thesis.

Staff members, past and present, of Trinity College's Department of Hispanic Studies have nurtured my interest in Spanish literature from its most incipient stages. Dr Ciaran Cosgrove, Head of the Department, exemplifies the remarkable warmth and generosity of its staff. The enthusiasm and encouragement of Dr Grace Magnier and Dr Susana Bayó, together with the sterling practical support of Ms Mary Costello, greatly enhanced the period of my research. Professor Emeritus Victor Dixon and Professor Kenneth Adams, now retired, have each left unique, indelible impressions on my academic work.

Ms Susan Tucker and Mr. Donncha Ó Donnchadha of Trinity College Library have frequently provided me with meticulous, good counsel. Ms Iris Bedford and Ms Jane Moriarty repeatedly rose to the challenge of facilitating the consultation of interlibrary loans, without which this research would not have been possible.

I wish to acknowledge the immeasurable benefits that I have gained through my memberships of WISPS, GEMELA, and the AHGBI, which have introduced me to a vast number of generous and supportive Hispanists.

I am grateful to the Irish Research Council for the Humanities and Social Sciences for provision of research funds. The Department of Hispanic Studies and the Trinity College Postgraduate Research Studentship Scheme also provided me with invaluable financial assistance. Travel scholarships awarded by the MAE-AECI and the Instituto Cervantes/Fundación CajaMurcia supplemented my doctoral experience.

Finally, I dedicate this thesis to my parents, whose friendship, wit, wisdom, and unconditional love have supported and enriched this endeavour in a myriad of ways.

Contents

		Page
Introduction	Zayas's Prose, a Feminine World	1
Chapter 1	**Women's Alliances and the Frame 'Sisterhood'**	8
	Female Alliances in the Novellas	9
	The Frame Tale and its Implications for Zayas's 'Sisterhood'	34
Chapter 2	**Women's Perfidy and the Subversion of Sisterhood**	57
	Female Perfidy in Zayas's Novellas	58
	Subverted Sisterhood in Zayas's Novellas	81
Chapter 3	**Conservatism? Same-Sex Service in Zayas's Feminine World**	107
	Same-Sex Service and its Limitations	113
	Cross-class Transgression and Carnival	126
Chapter 4	**Absences/Presences: Mother-Daughter Relationships**	167
	Mothers in Zayas's Novellas	168
	Mothers in Zayas's Frame Narrative	198
Chapter 5	**Other "Mothers": Surrogates and the Mother of God**	217
	Surrogate Motherhood in Zayas's Novellas	218
	Mary's Role as Protective "Mother"	229
Conclusion	A Gynocentric Ending: 'No es trágico fin'	258
Bibliography		262

Appendix 1: Women's Interrelationships in Zayas's *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares*

Appendix 2: Women's Interrelationships in Zayas's *Desengaños amorosos*

Introduction

Zayas's Prose, a Feminine World

> 'Quién duda, lector mío, que te causará admiración que una mujer tenga despejo
> no sólo para escribir un libro, sino para darle a la estampa, que es el crisol
> donde se averigua la pureza de los ingenios [...]
> Quién duda, digo otra vez, que habrá muchos que atribuyan a locura
> esta virtuosa osadía de sacar a luz mis borrones, siendo mujer, que
> en opinión de algunos necios es lo mismo que una cosa incapaz'.[1]

In this defensive manner, María de Zayas y Sotomayor first addresses the readership of her *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares* (1637) in the 'Al que leyere' prologue. Through her confident defence of female intelligence, she strips her *captatio benevolentiae* of even the barest veil of humility. By contrast, Mariana de Carvajal, one of her successors in the Spanish novella genre, would later adopt a more bashful stance, seeking allowances to be made for 'los defectos de una tan mal cortada pluma' and referring to her *Navidades en Madrid y noches entretenidas* (1663) as 'aborto inútil de mi ingenio'.[2] Zayas's audacity is all the more striking when one takes into account the context of her literary enterprise; her introductory discourse is that of a 'Defensa de las mujeres', predating Fray Benito Jerónimo Feijoó's 1726 essay by almost ninety years.

We possess very little information regarding the life of María de Zayas, most of which derives from the findings of Manuel Serrano y Sanz.[3] Documentation suggests that she was probably baptised in the Madrid parish of San Sebastián on September 12th, 1590. She was the daughter of Fernando de Zayas y Sotomayor, an infantry captain who was granted a knighthood in the prestigious military Order of Santiago, and of Doña María de Barasa.[4]

---

[1] María de Zayas y Sotomayor, *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares* [*NAE*], ed. by Julián Olivares (Madrid: Cátedra, 2000), p. 159; *Desengaños amorosos* [*DA*], ed. by Alicia Yllera (Madrid: Cátedra, 1998). All quotations will be drawn from these editions of Zayas's prose works; henceforth, page numbers will be included in parenthesis after the relevant quotation.

[2] Mariana de Carvajal y Saavedra, 'Al lector', in *Navidades de Madrid y noches entretenidas, en ocho novelas*, ed. by Catherine Soriano (Madrid: Clásicos madrileños, 1993), p. 5. The modesty *topos* is also evident in Ana Caro's *Valor, agravio y mujer*, the closing lines of which read: 'Aquí, senado discreto, / *Valor, agravio y mujer* / acaban. Pídeos su dueño, / por mujer y por humilde, / que perdonéis sus defectos'. Such measures may have been intended to make the publication of women's writing more palatable to a broad readership. (I will later discuss these works in greater detail.) Ana Caro, *Valor, agravio y mujer*, ed. by Lola Luna (Madrid: Castalia, 1993), III. 2753.

[3] Manuel Serrano y Sanz, *Apuntes para una biblioteca de escritoras españolas desde el año 1401 al 1833 II*, Biblioteca de Autores Españoles, 271 (Madrid: Rivadeneyra, 1903–5; repr. Madrid: Atlas, 1975).

[4] Serrano y Sanz mistakenly calls the author's mother 'Catalina de Barrasa', but 'María de Barasa' appears on her birth certificate (Serrano y Sanz, pp. 584–5).

Apparently, she resided for most of her life in Madrid. Don Fernando served the seventh Count of Lemos during the period when the latter acted as Viceroy of Naples (1610–1616). It is uncertain whether or not the Zayas family accompanied Don Fernando at this time; had the author experienced an Italian sojourn, it is conceivable that this could have exposed her to their popular novella genre, inspiring her creative interest.[5] Certainly, she was in Madrid on 18th October 1617, when she added her signature to a book of the *Hermandad de defensores de la Inmaculada Concepción*.[6] With regard to her literary output, she first became known as a poet, taking part in Madrid literary academies.[7] From the 1620s, she composed verse eulogies to honour her eminent contemporary writers, including Miguel de Botello, Juan Pérez de Montalbán, Francisco de las Cuevas, Antonio del Castillo de Larzával, and Lope de Vega. She evidently achieved recognition as a literary figure, receiving, for example, the hyperbolic praise of Lope de Vega in his *Laurel de Apolo* (1630):

> ¡Oh dulces hipocrénides hermosas!
> Los espinos pangeos
> aprisa desnudad, y de las rosas
> tejed ricas guirnaldas y trofeos
> a la inmortal doña María de Zayas,
> que sin pasar a Lesbos, ni a las playas
> del vasto mar Egeo,
> que hoy llora el negro velo de Teseo,
> a Safo gozará mitilenea
> quien ver milagros de mujer desea;
> porque su ingenio, vivamente claro,
> es tan único y raro
> que ella sola pudiera,
> no sólo pretender la verde rama,
> pero sola ser sol de tu ribera,
> y tú por ella conseguir más fama
> que Nápoles por Claudia, por Cornelia
> la sacra Roma y Tesbas por Targelia.[8]

She reciprocated this courtesy by glorifying 'aquel príncipe del Parnaso, Lope de Vega Carpio, cuya memoria no morirá mientras el mundo no tuverie fin' (*DA* 369).[9] Scholars

---

[5] Textual evidence makes a Neapolitan interlude appear likely. *La fuerza del amor* and the second part of *El traidor contra su sangre* take place in Naples during the Count of Lemos's reign as Viceroy. In *La fuerza del amor*, Zayas eulogises this Viceroy, 'Pedro Fernández de Castro, Conde de Lemos, nobilísimo, sabio y piadoso príncipe, cuyas raras virtudes y excelencias no son para escritas en papeles, sino en láminas de bronce y en las lenguas de la fama' (*NAE* 368). On the second night of the second set of *saraos*, the narrator refers to Isabel's song as inspired by 'mi señora', the wife of the ninth Count of Lemos, which suggests a continuing relationship between the author and this illustrious family (*DA* 259). See Alicia Yllera, 'Introducción', in *Desengaños amorosos*, pp. 9–94 (pp. 16–17).

[6] María Isabel Barbeito Carneiro, 'El Madrid Inmaculista', *Anales del Instituto de Estudios Madrileños*, 44 (2004), 471– 496 (p. 477, note 20). Zayas signed this book at the 'Convento de la Conçepción Jerónima de Madrid'.

[7] Namely, she participated in Francisco de Mendoza's *academia*, and possibly in that of Sebastián Francisco de Medrano also. See Willard F. King, *Prosa novelística y academias literarias en el siglo XVII* (Madrid: Real Academia Española, 1963), p. 59, note 81.

[8] Lope de Vega, *Laurel de Apolo*, ed. by Christian Giaffreda (Florence: Alinea, 2002), VIII. 579.

have postulated that she knew at first hand the cities that she enthusiastically describes in her novellas, although this is by no means certain; however, there is strong evidence to prove that she was in Barcelona in 1643.[10] There are no further contemporary references to her after publication of the *Desengaños amorosos* in 1647, and the date and place of her death are unknown. Two death certificates (dated 1661 and 1669) bear her name – not an uncommon one – neither of which may be authentic. The paucity of information has led many scholars to lose their footing in the terrain of conjecture, speculating whether she spent the last years of her life in a convent, like many of her prose protagonists.

The only known example of Zayas's writing for the theatre is *La traición en la amistad.*[11] Today, her fame rests primarily upon twenty short prose narratives distributed evenly in two collections – *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares* and *Parte segunda del sarao, y entretenimiento honesto*, later known as *Desengaños amorosos* – which were first published in Zaragoza, in 1637 and 1647, respectively. Jaime Moll demonstrates that she had probably prepared a version of the former work as early as 1626, but the Consejo de Castilla's suspension of licences for printing *comedias* and novellas (between 1625 and 1634) delayed publication.[12] Once published, her prose was widely read in her lifetime, only lagging behind works by Miguel de Cervantes, Francisco de Quevedo, and Mateo Alemán in terms of commercial success.[13] In *La garduña de Sevilla y anzuelo de las bolsas* (1642), Alonso de Castillo Solórzano lavishly praised her first prose work:

> En estos tiempos luce y campea con felices aplausos el ingenio de doña María de Zayas y Sotomayor, que con justo título ha merecido el nombre de Sibila de Madrid, adquirido por sus admirables versos, por su felice ingenio y gran prudencia; habiendo sacado de la estampa un libro de diez novelas, que son diez asombros para los que escriben este género; pues la meditada prosa, el artificio de ellas y los versos que interpola es todo tan admirable, que acobarda las más valientes plumas de nuestra España.[14]

---

[9] Zayas also composed panegyric poems to commemorate the deaths of Lope (1636) and Pérez de Montalbán (1639).

[10] Kenneth Brown, 'María de Zayas y Sotomayor: Escribiendo poesía en Barcelona en época de Guerra (1643)', *Dicenda*, 11 (1993), 355–360.

[11] There is much debate among scholars with regard to the composition date of this *comedia*. In *Para todos* (1632), Pérez de Montalbán mentions that Zayas 'tiene acabada una comedia de excelentes coplas, y un libro para dar á la estampa, en prosa y verso, de ocho novelas ejemplares' (Serrano y Sanz, p. 584). If we assume that he was referring to *La traición en la amistad*, we can estimate that Zayas completed this play not long before 1632. It predates the complete version of the *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares*, which includes ten novellas.

[12] Jaime Moll, 'La primera edición de las *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares* de María de Zayas y Sotomayor, *Dicenda*, 1 (1982b), 177–9.

[13] Marina S. Brownlee, *The Cultural Labyrinth of María de Zayas* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000), p. 6.

[14] Alonso de Castillo Solórzano, *La garduña de Sevilla y anzuelo de las bolsas. Novelistas posteriores a Cervantes*, ed. by Cayetano Rosell y López, 2 vols, Biblioteca de Autores Españoles, 18, 33 (Madrid: M. Rivadeneyra, 1851–4), II, 169–234 (p. 184).

Famously, Cervantes had already claimed in the *Novelas ejemplares* (1613) to be 'el primero que [ha] novelado en lengua castellana', reinventing the Italian novella as a Spanish genre; Lope de Vega later brought his own creative genius to bear on his *Novelas a Marcia Leonarda* (1621/1624).[15] The Italian novella had immoral connotations; for this reason, in Zayas's *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares*, Laura names their stories *maravillas*, 'que con este nombre quiso desempalagar al vulgo del de novelas, título tan enfadoso que ya en todas partes le aborrecen' (*NAE* 168).

The genre to which Zayas's prose pertains has belatedly acquired the title of *novela cortesana*, this being coined by Agustín González de Amezúa y Mayo in his *Formación y elementos de la novela cortesana* (1929). He described the genre thus:

> La novela cortesana, tal como la desarrollaron la mayoría de sus cultivadores en el siglo XVII, tiene por escenario y campo de sus proezas [...] casi exclusivamente a la Corte y ciudades populosas, y esta circunstancia, tan peculiar, es la que me ha movido a denominarla así. El fondo de la intriga es también, invariablemente, con muy raras excepciones, el amor; sus protagonistas, caballeros, hidalgos, gente de viso, en fin, que vegeta en la ociosidad y opulencia de estas metrópolis. A su vez, la privativa condición social de sus personajes impondrá los valores morales que en ella juegan. Las dos ideas dominantes en todo caballero castellano de aquel tiempo, los dos polos en cuyo derredor gira su vida son el Amor y el Honor.[16]

Zayas's novellas share the genre's common features: the urban setting, protagonists of noble birth, and amorous intrigues. By the time that she penned her novellas, the conventions of this seventeenth-century genre were well on their way towards becoming established. Nonetheless, she put her personal stamp on the stylised subject matter of the novella genre. Notably, as Amezúa observes, 'el galán y la dama' are the principal protagonists of the *novela cortesana*. In Zayas's novellas, the importance of the *dama* expands, and she becomes more than a mere type. The complex ramifications of women's interaction in her prose will be the subject of my study.

Zayas's originality was undimmed by the fact that it was attained after having assimilated miscellaneous works by several authors, including Italian *novelle* by Giovanni Boccaccio and Matteo Bandello. Moreover, this knowledge of literary source materials demonstrates her remarkably extensive reading.[17] In 'Al que leyere' (*NAE*), she includes a list of

---

[15] Miguel de Cervantes, *Novelas ejemplares*, ed. by Francisco Alonso (Madrid: Biblioteca Edaf, 1999), p. 45. The title of Zayas's first volume may have been inspired by Cervantes's *Novelas ejemplares*; the titular emphasis on the works' exemplary qualities is probably designed to mitigate the detrimental effect of association with the salacious Italian novella genre.

[16] Agustín G. de Amezúa y Mayo, *Formación y elementos de la novela cortesana: Discursos leídos ante la Real Academia Española* (Madrid: Real Academia Española, 1929), p. 38 & 48.

[17] Edwin B. Place justifiably considers Zayas's novellas to be 'patchwork' compositions. They continue to provide fertile ground for literary source studies. Edwin B. Place, *María de Zayas, An Outstanding Woman*

illustrious women, linking herself to her foremothers to legitimise her own literary endeavour. Perhaps this measure is also intuitively designed to alleviate what Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar would later call women's 'anxiety of authorship'.[18] The novella became a relatively popular genre for seventeenth-century women writers in the Spanish-speaking world, as evidenced by the Portuguese Leonor de Meneses's *El desdeñado más firme* (1655), in addition to the aforementioned novellas of Zayas and Mariana de Carvajal.

The changing reception of Zayas's novellas reveals much about the world beyond her text. In relation to the time-bound reception of the French *Amadis de Gaule*, Marian Rothstein observes that 'a text requires completion by a reader and that reading is a non-neutral activity, strongly marked by the moment, by the world, in which it is performed'.[19] Zayas apparently escaped immediate censure, despite writing under the strictures of post-Tridentine conditions, and the popularity of her prose continued unabated through the eighteenth century, declining thereafter.[20] More than two hundred years later, critics schooled in Victorian standards of decency, such as George Ticknor and Ludwig Pfandl, condemned her works on moral grounds.[21] They deemed her works to be inappropriate and immodest, as well as morally reprehensible. Later still, the emergence of the feminist movement induced a welcome surge in critical interest in Zayas's works, leading early twentieth-century critics to view the novellas through the lens of feminism. Since the recent 'rediscovery' of Zayas's prose, several studies have praised her exploration of the erotic in her novellas.[22]

Short-Story Writer of Seventeenth-Century Spain, University of Colorado Studies, XIII (Boulder: University of Colorado, 1923), p. 10.

[18] This is the female author's 'radical fear that she cannot create, that because she can never become a "precursor" the act of writing will isolate or destroy her [...] Frequently, moreover, she can begin such a struggle only by actively seeking a *female* precursor who, far from representing a threatening force to be denied or killed, proves by example that a revolt against patriarchal literary authority is possible'. Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar, *The Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth-Century Literary Imagination* (London: Yale University Press, 1979), p. 49 (italics are Gilbert and Gubar's own).

[19] Marian Rothstein, 'Clandestine Marriage and *Amadis de Gaule*: The Text, the World, and the Reader', *Sixteenth Century Journal*, 25 (1994) 4, 873–886 (p. 886).

[20] Marcia L. Welles and Mary S. Gossy, 'María de Zayas y Sotomayor (1590?-1661?/1669?)', in *Spanish Women Writers: A Bio-bibliographical Source Book*, ed. by Linda Gould Levine, Ellen Engelson Marson, Gloria Feiman Waldman (London: Greenwood Press, 1993), pp. 507–519 (p. 508).

[21] Pfandl and Ticknor were particularly appalled by Zayas's *El prevenido engañado*, referring to it as 'la obscena novela' and 'one of the most gross I remember to have read [...] [a tale of] shameless indecency'. Ludwig Pfandl, *Historia de la literatura nacional española en la edad de oro*, trans. by Jorge Rubió Balaguer (Barcelona: Sucesores de Juan Gili, 1933), p. 369; George Ticknor, *History of Spanish Literature*, 3 vols (London: Trübner & Co., 1863), II, 143, note 34.

[22] Juan Goytisolo and Osvaldo Parrilla are among those who have focused on the erotic theme; also, as I will illustrate, several scholars have studied homoerotic undercurrents in the novellas.

There has been a steady output of journal-length articles on Zayas's novellas, many of which are worthy of merit, although the inherent danger of short studies is losing sight of broad tendencies and patterns across the novellas. In particular, the novellas' interconnectedness with the frame narrative tends to be overlooked by scholars, in favour of the tales' more sensational events. Also, focusing on the novellas as a patriarchal world creates the inherent danger of sidelining women. Relations of courtship and marriage are undeniably of import, although they do not solely populate the world of Zayas's texts, nor can they be examined, in isolation, to explain how a conclusion that is almost devoid of heterosexual pairings is 'el más felice que se pudo dar' (*DA* 510). By the final paragraphs of the *Desengaños amorosos*, male protagonists are conspicuous by their absence. Thus, my study represents a new contribution to the study of Zayas's prose, unearthing a neglected and innovative aspect: its gynocentrism.

María Jesús Fariña Busto and Beatriz Suárez Briones have observed astutely that 'el universo emocional más importante tanto dentro de las *Novelas* como de los *Desengaños* es un universo femenino'.[23] Relatively recently, the significance of women's interrelationships has also come to the attention of psychoanalysts. For example, according to Nancy Chodorow's female personality theory, a girl forms her gender identity positively, in becoming like the mother with whom she begins life in symbiotic merger, and the self continues to be defined through social relationships for the rest of women's lives.[24] Where apposite, I will make reference to the poststructuralist theories of Luce Irigaray, Julia Kristeva and Hélène Cixous, among others. Across five chapters, I will view the social world of Zayas's twenty novellas through a feminine lens. This effectively represents a novel approach to Zayas's prose works. In so doing, I will pay particular attention to the frame narrative, which binds these stories together. For the study of the texts' narrative levels, I have recourse to Gérard Genette's structuralist theory.

Specifically, my first two chapters will examine Zayas's portrayal of women's friendships and sisterhood and will also detail their subversion, conceptualising the novellas and frame narrative cohesively. Then, in my third chapter, I organise women's interaction as represented by Zayas's prose along the axis of class (and, to a limited degree, that of race).

---

[23] María Jesús Fariña Busto and Beatriz Suárez Briones: 'Desde/hacia la Otra: Ginoafectividad y homoerotismo femenino en la narrativa de María de Zayas', in *Zayas and Her Sisters, 2: Essays on Novelas by 17th-Century Spanish Women*, ed. by Gwyn E. Campbell and Judith A. Whitenack (New York: Global Publications, Binghampton University, 2001), pp. 121–138 (p. 123).

[24] See Judith Kegan Gardiner, 'On Female Identity and Writing by Women', *Critical Inquiry*, 8 (Winter 1981) 2, 347–361 (p. 352).

My fourth and fifth chapters analyse mother-daughter relationships, including secular and surrogate variants, as well as the divine role of Mary, as Mother of God. Thus, I will concentrate on the gynocentric aspect of Zayas's 'virtuosa osadía' in publishing these two collections of novellas (*NAE* 159): her depiction, through literature, of a feminine world.

Chapter 1

Women's Alliances and the Frame 'Sisterhood'[1]

'Cobrándose las dos tanto amor, que si no era para dormir,
no se dividía la una de la otra' (*DA* 350).

'Tomo por amparo el retiro de un convento [...] y así,
con mi querida doña Isabel, a quien pienso acompañar mientras viviere,
me voy a salvar de los engaños de los hombres' (*DA* 509).

This chapter will identify and explore a tendency within Zayas's gallery of women's interrelations or feminine world: the progressive emergence and consolidation of friendships among female protagonists in the novellas and frame narrative, i.e. the diegetic and metadiegetic narrative levels.[2] Most importantly, I detect in Zayas's prose an early example of what Janice Raymond has since termed 'Gyn/affection'.[3] In the latter part of this chapter, I contrast the burgeoning Gyn/affection among Zayas's female protagonists with representations of friendship in other seventeenth-century Spanish works, including female-authored *comedias*. Several instances of woman's perfidy towards her fellow sex in Zayas's *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares* will be investigated in my second chapter; this represents the disintegration in social structure, as women betray their own kind. In parallel with this treachery, women's friendships remain ineffectual and are largely underdeveloped in this work; relations of courtship are patently the focus of these female protagonists' attentions and priorities. In contrast, the *Desengaños amorosos* emphasise Gyn/affection to a greater degree, against a backdrop of increasing violence. This suggests a limited social reintegration since women's friendships act as a counterbalance to the corrosive disintegration of female solidarity; however, these friendships provide little protection for women in the secular world. Patriarchal and honour-coded values are

[1] Some of the material in this chapter has been published in my 'Female Friendship Extolled: Exploring the Enduring Appeal of María de Zayas's novellas', *Romance Studies*, 26 (January 2008) 1, 43–59.

[2] To aid my textual analysis, I employ Genette's narrative-level terminology. At the extradiegetic level, a mysterious narrator introduces Lisis and her companions; in the closing paragraph of the *Desengaños amorosos*, a previously unknown extradiegetic listener is unveiled: Fabio. Immediately subordinate to the extradiegetic level is the diegetic level narrated by it, i.e. the *saraos*. Furthermore, stories are related by the diegetic *sarao* participants, constituting a metadiegetic level. Thus, narration is always at a higher narrative level than the story it narrates. Rimmon-Kenan prefers the term 'hypodiegetic' to Genette's advocated 'metadiegetic', due to the confusion inherent in its 'meta' prefix. See Gérard Genette, *Narrative Discourse*, trans. by Jane E. Lewin (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1980); Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan, *Narrative Fiction: Contemporary Poetics* (London: Methuen, 1983).

[3] In this chapter, I apply terminology used by Raymond and Irigaray to my analysis of Zayas's literary works. See Janice Raymond, *A Passion for Friends: Towards a Philosophy of Female Affection* (London: The Women's Press Ltd., 1986); Luce Irigaray, *This Sex Which is Not One*, trans. by Catherine Porter and Carolyn Burke (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985).

omnipresent in these diverse female relationships, hampering women's loyalties to each other and their cooperative agency. In this overall context, the developing frame tale will be discussed; its convent 'solution' optimistically offers an ideal 'sisterhood', although of a type which remains largely untested and unexplored within Zayas's work.

Female Alliances in the Novellas

Firstly, women's alliances in two of Zayas's novellas from her *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares* will be examined: *Aventurarse perdiendo* and *El prevenido engañado*. These are 'weak', opportunistically motivated friendships of only very limited duration. Then, I will turn to novellas within *Desengaños amorosos*, namely *La esclava de su amante* and *Mal presagio casar lejos*. The denouements of these novellas revolve around multiple female friendships; altruistic motives link these women in potent friendships, although impediments are posed by women's honour predicaments and by violence stemming from patriarchy. It is not until the close of the frame narrative, however, that a truly effective form of female alliance emerges.

It is worthwhile to note that Zayas was not alone in cultivating the theme of women's alliances in Spanish literature of the Golden Age. A novella by her successor, Mariana de Carvajal, also concedes the importance of women's relationships. Lisa Vollendorf notes that, in Carvajal's *Navidades de Madrid* (1663), women's friendships form the backbone of her novella *Celos vengan desprecios*.[4] Ultimately, Narcisa, the principal female protagonist, opts to forsake her female community for marriage, in keeping with the literary conventions of both the *comedia* and *novela cortesana*. Women's alliances appear with particular frequency in Zayas's novellas, although they are similar to *Celos vengan desprecios* in respect of being short-lived.

Aventurarse perdiendo, the first of the *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares*, counterbalances a woman's betrayal by her female peer with the coexistence of precarious female alliances. Lisarda narrates this tale of Jacinta's travails.[5] Within Lisarda's novella, Jacinta recounts

[4] Lisa Vollendorf, 'The Value of Female Friendship in Seventeenth-Century Spain', *Texas Studies in Literature and Language*, 47 (2005), 425–445 (p. 428). This is an excellent thematic overview of female friendship in women's seventeenth-century Spanish texts.

[5] Along with other protagonists belonging to the diegetic level, Lisarda will be discussed further in the second section of this chapter.

her life-story to a male listener, Fabio.[6] The bucolic scene of Jacinta's narration in Montserrat is laden with pastoral overtones, with which Zayas subversively experiments by presenting 'a female-centred narrative where the heroine easily displaces the traditional male shepherd and becomes the primary focus of attention'.[7] From the outset, Zayas manipulates the conventions of the traditionally male-dominated pastoral genre to accommodate the female voice by her revisionary inclusion of two female narrators, Lisarda and Jacinta, and by giving primacy to the latter's experiential journey.

Isabel, a prominent protagonist early in the narrative, assists Jacinta in the pursuit of her brother's hand in marriage. The two women were childhood friends – 'muy amigas' (*NAE* 183) – while Félix was serving Spain in Flanders. Isabel's motivation being, 'después de su amistad, el dar gusto a su hermano y servirle de fiel tercera en su amor', she faithfully acts as the couple's intermediary during courtship (*NAE* 186). Jacinta and Félix perform a clandestine wedding ceremony in the presence of a servant as witness; she boldly yields 'la posesión de mi alma y cuerpo', her sexual purity, jeopardising her honour in return for his promise (*NAE* 187). In so doing, Jacinta exchanges her virginity for a marriage that was not deemed valid in post-Tridentine Spain, at which time the novella is set; these covert, null unions often have life-threatening repercussions in Zayas's novellas, implicitly supporting the Council of Trent's ruling.[8] While literary texts cannot be expected to represent the social reality of seventeenth-century Spain, Jacinta's actions are highly plausible. Studying early modern Vizcaya, Renato Barahona has shown that there was considerable confusion regarding the nature of marriage after the Council of Trent. In recent years, historians have made valuable contributions towards the study of honour in seventeenth-century Spain, demonstrating that the loss of female honour and of reputation was regularly compensated through legal and monetary means.[9]

---

[6] In Genette's terms, Jacinta's story is a 'meta-metadiegetic' narrative. She recounts her autobiography, making it also an 'autodiegetic' narrative.

[7] Deborah Compte, 'A Cry in the Wilderness: Pastoral Female Discourse in María de Zayas', in *Women in the Discourse of Early Modern Spain*, ed. by Joan F. Cammarata (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2003), pp. 235–252 (p. 238).

[8] The Council of Trent met during three periods between 1545 and 1563; Pope Pius IV formally confirmed its decrees in 1564. In its twenty-fourth session in 1563, with the promulgation of the decree of *Tametsi* ('Decree on the Reformation of Marriage', Chapter I), the Council ruled that, on pain of nullity, a valid marriage must have two or three witnesses, be publicly announced for three consecutive Sundays prior to the wedding, and be performed by the parish priest.

[9] Honour is described by Taylor as 'fluid', by Poska as 'contextual and negotiable', and by Barahona as 'far more flexible and less delicate than has been commonly believed', in studies of early modern Yébenes (a Castilian town), Galicia, and Vizcaya, respectively. See Scott K. Taylor, 'Women, Honor, and Violence in a Castilian Town, 1600–1650', *Sixteenth Century Journal*, 35 (2004) 4, 1079–1097 (p. 1097); Allyson M. Poska, *Women and Authority in Early Modern Spain: The Peasants of Galicia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 109; Renato Barahona, *Sex Crimes, Honour, and the Law in Early Modern Spain: Vizcaya, 1528–1735* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003), p. 120.

Synchronous with the burgeoning alliance of Isabel and Jacinta, the latter comes up against a female opponent: Félix's cousin, Adriana. Adriana becomes ill due to her unrequited love for Félix. When he dashes her illusions by revealing that he has secretly pledged to marry Jacinta, she writes to Jacinta's father to notify him of his family's dishonour, prior to committing suicide. Jacinta exclaims: 'en venganza de su desprecio, hizo la mayor crueldad que se ha visto consigo misma, con su primo y conmigo' (*NAE* 188).[10] Adriana's veiled warning to the patriarchal figure that 'había quien le quitaba el honor' is potent enough to trigger a double-murder plot, effectively exposing the perverse and cruel nature of honour considerations in seventeenth-century Spanish society (*NAE* 189). Jacinta's father's ensuing reaction is to plot with Jacinta's brother to murder both Jacinta and Félix. Jacinta's male relatives demonstrate no mercy in their defence of the family's honour, even though their manoeuvres directly arise from nothing more than a stratagem incited by a woman's jealousy. However, they fatally miscalculate their ability to wreak vengeance on the couple; being attacked by Jacinta's brother, Félix kills him and flees to safety.

Jacinta informs us that Isabel's hopes have been thwarted: 'pensaba ella, siendo yo mujer de su hermano, serlo del mío, a quien amó tiernamente' (*NAE* 192). When Jacinta receives news of Félix's death in a letter fabricated by her father, she and Isabel take nuns' vows: 'tomé el hábito de religiosa, y conmigo para consolarme y acompañarme doña Isabel, que me quería tiernísimamente' (*NAE* 194). Their affectionate relationship resurfaces when both women think their chosen husbands to be dead. Jacinta's active verb 'tomé' governs Isabel as well as the 'hábito', intimating that Isabel passively accepts Jacinta's decision regarding their joint fates.

Jacinta spends only a temporary interlude in the convent, however, due to Félix's unexpected return and the resumption of their sexual relationship. Through Jacinta's disregard of her nun's vows, Zayas radically departs from Catholic orthodoxy; as Irma V. Vasileski writes, 'la doctrina católica requiere que la persona que tome órdenes religiosas escoja a Dios primeramente y ante todo'.[11] The Pope ordains that the couple can live as

---

[10] Zayas's contemporaneous readers would have assumed that Adriana would suffer eternal damnation because of her suicide. Thus, she inflicts the cruellest punishment upon herself.

[11] Irma V. Vasileski, *María de Zayas y Sotomayor: Su época y su obra* (Madrid: Colección Plaza Mayor Scholar, 1973), p. 38. Jacinta violates the Council of Trent's rule of enclosure for nuns (twenty-fifth session, 'On Regulars and Nuns', Chapter V); it required the bishop's permission for nuns to leave the convent and the bishop or Superior's written approval for lay people to enter the convent under exceptional circumstances. The Council of Trent made provisions for cases of invalidity of profession, before five years have passed, on grounds of being underage or of compulsion (Chapter XIX); Jacinta's case does not belong

husband and wife after abstaining from sexual relations for one year. In the interim, Jacinta goes to stay in the home of Guiomar and her mother, relatives of Félix. Jacinta leaves the convent 'dejando escrita una carta a doña Isabel y dejándole el cuidado y gobierno de mi hacienda' (*NAE* 197). It is an abrupt, impersonal conclusion to their loving relationship and intertwined destinies. Jacinta abandons her friend in order to marry Félix; fostering heterosexual love through honourable marriage takes precedence over their friendship. Nonetheless, ameliorating the reader's opinion of Jacinta's conduct somewhat, it is important to note that only marriage to Félix will remove the dishonour that she has incurred through their sexual relationship. The secret marriage ceremony lacked sacramental validity, and staying in a convent with Isabel would not have restored her honour.

In this tale, a second instance of female friendship arises: that of Jacinta and Guiomar; Jacinta is 'en lugar de hija' in the home of Guiomar's mother (*NAE* 201). Within the year in which the couple have sworn not to consummate their love, Félix tragically drowns during a naval operation in Spain's conquest of Mamora (1614). Isabel makes her final appearance in the novella when Jacinta reports that the former unsuccessfully urges her to return to the convent; it is telling that Jacinta does not seek solace from or offer succour to her long-standing friend upon their shared loss of Félix. Jacinta's newfound friendship with Guiomar is a source of consolation; however, suggestions regarding Jacinta's magnanimity discredit the selflessness and sincerity of the women's alliance: 'yo gastaba con ellas [doña Guiomar y su madre] mi renta, bien largamente' (*NAE* 201).

Celio, a charismatic gentleman, visits Jacinta and Guiomar, issuing flattery to both women: 'Igualmente nos alababa, sin ofender a ninguna nos quería: ya engrandecía la doncella, ya encarecía la viuda' (*NAE* 202).[12] Celio's calculated wooing is such that hostile relations do not emerge between the two women who share his visits and attentions. Due to his seductive wiles, Jacinta falls in love with him, only for her to discover that he shuns marriage and instead intends to become a priest (a rare literary case of the *hombre esquivo*). Jealous and distressed by Celio's philandering ways, Jacinta attempts to regain his favour by following him from Madrid to Salamanca. Guiomar and her mother select a travelling-companion for Jacinta's safety; due to their inexpedient choice, Jacinta's fellow

---

to either category. For the purpose of the novella, Zayas portrays Jacinta as having evaded these monastic reforms.

[12] Jacinta is described here as a 'viuda', despite her ambiguous marital status. Due to Félix's premature death before the term that the Pope has ordained for their separation has elapsed, she never enjoys religiously sanctioned marital life with him.

traveller leads her in the direction of Barcelona, robbing and abandoning her in some mountains.[13] There, she is discovered by Fabio, and, on hearing her story, he assists her entry to a convent. On this occasion, she elects not to take vows due to her enduring, albeit futile, love for the religiously ordained Celio. Guiomar joins Jacinta in the convent, although friendship seems somewhat secondary to practical concerns: 'murió su madre, y antes de su muerte le pidió [a Jacinta] que la amparase hasta casarse' (*NAE* 210).[14] Jacinta is again a source of financial support; it seems likely that Guiomar accompanies Jacinta only until a suitable marriage can be arranged for her.

The tale is striking for its inclusion of two pairs of female allies (Jacinta/Isabel and Jacinta/Guiomar), each coinciding with a key phase and a new paramour in Jacinta's romantic history. Neither friendship flourishes, however; primarily, this negligence occurs because marriage is women's principal concern in *Aventurarse perdiendo*.

* * *

El prevenido engañado, fourth novella of Zayas's *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares*, portrays another case of female friendship's subordination to heterosexual relationships. Alonso's novella exhibits a cumulative structure of successive episodes involving the undiscerning Fadrique's sexual liaisons and ensuing victimisation by cunning female characters.[15] The third such episode, involving Ana and Violante, is unusual insofar as other occurrences in the tale show Fadrique and the corresponding, duplicitous woman each acting alone, without accomplices. The relevant episode takes place in Madrid, where Fadrique lodges with his cousin, Juan. The melancholic Juan reveals to Fadrique his love for Ana, whom he cannot marry since they are each promised to others in strategic, family-arranged marriages.

Juan portrays Ana and her cousin Violante to Fadrique in eulogistic terms:

> Doña Ana, que éste es su nombre, es el milagro de esta edad, porque ella, y doña Violante su prima, son las Sibilas de España, entrambas bellas, entrambas discretas, músicas, poetas. En

[13] In my final chapter, I explore the spiritual link of Montserrat (near the site of Jacinta's abandonment) with the Virgin Mary, furthering the possibilities for a gynocentric reading of this novella.

[14] It appears that Jacinta, Isabel, and Guiomar do not dwell in the same convent. Textual evidence implies that the convent in which Jacinta dwelt with Isabel seems to have been located in Baeza, while that which Jacinta shares with Guiomar is in Madrid.

[15] In order of appearance, the women who deceive Fadrique are as follows: Serafina (Granada), Beatriz (Seville), Violante/Ana (Madrid), anonymous woman (Naples), anonymous woman (Rome), a Duchess (Barcelona), and Gracia (Granada).

> fin, en las dos se halla lo que en razón de bella y discreción está repartido en todas las mujeres del mundo. (*NAE* 313–4)

This description highlights the women's intelligence, while their depiction as 'las Sibilas de España' links them with our author, who was pronounced 'gran Sibila mantuana', 'gran Sibila', and 'Sibila de Madrid' by Ana Caro and by Alonso de Castillo Solórzano in poems that preface the *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares* (*NAE* 155–6). Despite Fadrique's frequent exhortations that 'me tienen tan escarmentado las discretas que deseo tener batalla con una boba' (*NAE* 318), he immediately admires Violante. Captivated by her beauty, he dedicates a sonnet to her *hermosura*: 'mata, enamora y alegra' (*NAE* 319). She wears sumptuous attire: 'una saya entera negra, cuajada de lentejuelas y botones de oro, cintura y collar de diamantes, y un apretador de rubíes' (*NAE* 319). Since she is curiously first described as being adorned by this ostentatious garb and positioned decadently in a pose for immortalisation in a portrait, the reader immediately perceives in her a marked narcissistic, hedonistic streak.[16] Contrasting with Juan's precise analysis of the women's mental capacities, Fadrique fails to detect or pay homage to Violante's more remarkable trait: *discreción*.

Shifra Armon suggests that the term *discreción* was associated with a wide range of uses in the seventeenth century. It was considered an invaluable quality for the aristocrat, encompassing such vital attributes as learnedness, shrewdness, discernment and circumspection; it is closest semantically to *prudencia* although, unlike the latter, 'it may be unhinged from moral ends, becoming a malicious or dishonest astuteness'.[17] In a later episode of the same novella, a duchess eloquently praises the same trait of *discreción* in women as essential for the preservation of their honour, regardless of their virtue: 'Y cómo sabrá ser honrada la que no sabe en qué consiste el serlo? ¿No advertís que el necio peca y no sabe en qué? Y siendo discreta sabrá guardarse de las ocasiones' (*NAE* 331). The duchess's proclamation regarding the worth of women's intelligence can be applied

---

[16] Portraits were prized objects of decoration associated with wealth and prestige, adorning houses, palaces, and churches in Golden-Age Spain. Unsurprisingly, they also inhabited the imagination of writers of the time and feature in many dramatists' plays; for example, Rosaura's picture in *La vida es sueño* and Serafina's portrait in *El pintor de su deshonra* are both vital to Calderón's plots. Melveena McKendrick observes that 'the idea of the captured image, the beautiful woman fixed and contained within a frame to adorn man's life, to be owned and gazed upon, is imaginatively exploited by the dramatists'. Zayas abandons the portrait device immediately after remarking that '[Violante] estábase retratando (curiosidad usada en la Corte)' (*NAE* 319). As a symbol of possession and a projection of male fantasy, the portrait can serve no further purpose in relation to the wilful Violante; refusing to be the passive adornment of a male 'owner', she cannot truly be associated with or represented by the painted artefact. Melveena McKendrick, *Identities in Crisis: Essays on Honour, Gender and Women in the Comedia* (Kassel: Edition Reichenberger, 2002), p. 157.

[17] Shifra Armon, 'The Romance of Courtesy: Mariana de Caravajal's *Navidades de Madrid y noches entretenidas*', *Revista canadiense de estudios hispánicos*, 19 (Winter 1995) 2, 241–261 (p. 248).

retrospectively to Violante; as the episode unfolds, it becomes evident that Violante epitomises the duchess's view, astutely succeeding in guarding her reputation despite her covert indulgence in sexual relations. Fadrique's gradual enlightenment regarding the desirability of intelligence in women may be designed in order to convince men of the benefits involved in allowing women to cultivate their minds. Zayas's defence of women in this case is very effectively constructed as she resists gender typecasting by having a male narrator, Alonso, crystallise into a female apologist. It is also significant that Zayas gives a male narrator this story, which illustrates the threat that the *mujer varonil* can pose to men.

While typically it is the lady's maid who serves as go-between in Zayas's tales, Fadrique selects Ana, Violante's cousin and intimate friend, as his intermediary; Fadrique writes to Ana: 'Lo que yo le suplico, / es, que siendo tercera, / diga a su bella prima que me quiera' (*NAE* 322). Henceforth, the women take control of the scenario of seduction. Fadrique and Juan are soon subordinated in the affections of Violante and Ana through the arrival of Ana's fiancé and his brother. The presence of three pairs of characters of equal social standing provides a symmetry that is not typically evident in Zayas's tales. Furthermore, no character displays envy of his or her relative in any of these collaborative pairs or covets the other's partner. In particular, the cooperative alliance of Violante and Ana is evident when they devise a *burla* for Fadrique. They suggest a scheme whereby Fadrique and Juan visit their house under cover of darkness, Fadrique taking Ana's place in bed with her husband while she and Juan spend the night together. Somewhat implausibly, due to Juan's exhortations, the foolhardy Fadrique agrees to take part in the dangerous mission. A comic scene follows, in which Fadrique fretfully passes the night avoiding the advances of Ana's 'husband' – 'el uno procurando llegarse y el otro apartarse' (*NAE* 325). At dawn, Ana reveals the *burla*: his bed-partner is Violante, Ana's husband being absent from home; Fadrique has unwittingly become the object of the women's sexual humour. There is convincing evidence to suggest that Zayas based this erotic scene on Masuccio Salernitano's forty-first novella.[18]

[18] Mateo Alemán may have used the same source material for his *Guzmán de Alfarache* (1599, 1604), in the interpolated novella of *Don Luis de Castro y don Rodrigo de Montalvo* from Part II. Donald McGrady explores Alemán's modifications to the Italian model, concluding that he 'transforms a Renaissance story of almost pagan exaltation of sensuality into a typical product of the Spanish baroque – bitter disillusionment with worldly pleasures'. Zayas imitates the joyful sensuality of her Italian source, reserving Fadrique's disillusionment for a later scene. Donald McGrady, 'Masuccio and Alemán: Italian Renaissance and Spanish Baroque', *Comparative Literature*, 18 (Summer 1966) 3, 203–210 (pp. 206–7).

El Saffar highlights that the women's trickery 'has the effect of putting him [Fadrique] in the place of an adulterous woman, exposing him to the terror of spending the night in bed with a jealous man'.[19] Thus, the women reveal the humiliation that attends powerlessness and the phallic control that cunning and intelligent women can exert over the men who presume to be their masters. The women's mirth and Fadrique's confusion are explicitly portrayed: 'Quedó con esta burla de las hermosas primas tan corrido don Fadrique que no hablaba palabra, ni la hallaba a propósito, viéndolas a ellas celebrar con risas el suceso, contando Violante el cuidado con que le había hecho estar' (*NAE* 326). The *burla* demonstrates the subversive control that these clever female allies temporarily wield over their lovers' sexuality. Fadrique's chagrin does not endure, for he then commences a sexual relationship with Violante, which continues after the return of Ana's husband. By portraying the assertive sexuality of such allies as Ana and Violante, Zayas destroys the myth of woman as sexually passive.

With the foregrounding of Violante's burlesque assumption of erotic agency, the partnership between the female cousins is relegated to the background. Violante begins to operate independently of her married cousin; facilitating her sexual intrigues, she dwells 'en un cuarto aparte, donde estaba sin tener que intervenir con doña Ana ni su marido' (*NAE* 327).[20] Having failed to win Violante in marriage, Fadrique correctly deduces that she has substituted him with a new lover, whose identity he discovers to be Ana's brother-in-law. Nieves Romero-Díaz emphasises the daringly subversive nature of Violante's unabashed, lone pursuit of sexual satisfaction: 'La utilización del cuerpo femenino por parte de las mujeres para su propia satisfacción sexual es una manera de desafiar la ideología patriarcal que tanto énfasis pone en su control'.[21] A second *burla* spontaneously occurs, in which Violante participates during Ana's absence. Fadrique becomes a source

---

[19] Ruth El Saffar, 'Ana/Lisis/Zayas: Reflections on Courtship and Literary Women in María de Zayas's *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares*', in *María de Zayas: The Dynamics of Discourse*, ed. by Amy R. Williamsen and Judith A. Whitenack (London: Associated University Presses, 1995), pp. 192–216 (p. 209).

[20] Violante is portrayed as a zealous protector of her own independence: 'verdaderamente aborrecía el casarse, temerosa de perder la libertad que entonces gozaba' (*NAE* 322). Her bold determination to reject matrimony in order to protect her personal freedom reminds the reader of Cervantes's Marcela, who embraces the autonomous life of the pastoral shepherdess. Marcela famously formulates the emancipatory declaration: 'Yo nací libre, y para poder vivir libre escogí la soledad de los campos'. Of course, the libidinous Violante diverges from the chaste life-path of Cervantes's self-governing heroine. McKendrick uncovers in Golden-Age dramatists, in contrast with both Zayas and Cervantes, an 'inability to conceive of any assertion of female independence other than that based on some reprehensible character trait', citing vanity and arrogant pride as the recurrently ascribed motives to women's *esquivez*. Miguel de Cervantes, *El Ingenioso Hidalgo Don Quijote de la Mancha I*, ed. by John Jay Allen, 20th edition (Madrid: Cátedra, 2000), p. 197; Melveena McKendrick, *Woman and Society in the Spanish Drama of the Golden Age: A Study of the 'mujer varonil'* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1974), p. 145.

[21] Nieves Romero-Díaz, *Nueva nobleza, nueva novela: reescribiendo la cultura urbana del barroco* (Newark: Juan de la Cuesta, 2002), p. 133.

of derision for Violante when her lover frightens him by wielding a shoe in the manner of a pistol.

However, the 'burla del zapato' backfires (*NAE* 328). Frustrated and 'feminised' by the woman's laughter, Fadrique resorts to violence in a desperate bid to reassert his control of the situation: 'la dio de bofetadas, que la bañó en sangre' (*NAE* 328), erupting in frenzied choler as a result of his insecurity. Violante's initial merriment suggests her expectation that she can act alone, toying with lovers in the same manner as she formerly did together with her ally, Ana. When Violante acts without Ana's protection, she is beaten, in every sense, by her male foe. Fariña Busto and Suárez Briones elucidate the scene as follows: 'la insoportable humillación producida por la "todopoderosa" sexualidad femenina explica la necesidad de nuestra cultura de objetificar y fragmentar el cuerpo de las mujeres'.[22] Fadrique resorts to violence as a result of his feelings of 'insoportable humillación' or deep insecurity in the face of Violante's independent sexuality. Daniel T. Alsop observes that Fadrique's increasing frustration causes him to overstep the boundaries of the honour code; even according to honour-coded ideology, his behaviour is entirely unacceptable as he is neither married nor engaged to Violante.[23] The vivid portrayal of physical abuse, which reaches extreme levels of savagery in the *Desengaños amorosos*, graphically illustrates men's moral injustices against women. In need of allies, Violante's distressed shouts bring Ana and her husband to her door, precipitating Fadrique's flight.

By the end of the episode, Ana is no longer Violante's accomplice. Fadrique later hears 'cómo Violante se había casado y doña Ana ídose con su marido a las Indias' (*NAE* 334); the women are ultimately separated by matrimonial and geographical circumstances. By opting to marry, Violante inexplicably forsakes her unusual brand of *esquivez*; likewise, contemporaneous dramatists did not allow their *mujeres esquivas* to remain voluntarily single. In Violante's case, matrimony may represent her renunciation of the independent and rebellious lifestyle that presented the constant threat of physical, male-perpetrated punishment if detected. In a twist on Zayas's 'convent as refuge' theme, this episode illustrates cases of 'marriage as refuge'. While Ana and Violante plot *burlas* at men's expense, they both ultimately have recourse to the security of marriage; their orchestration of social 'games' cannot continue indefinitely. Like several of Zayas's female protagonists, Violante and Ana belong to neither extreme of the binary conceptualisation

[22] Fariña Busto and Suárez Briones, 'Desde/hacia la Otra', p. 126.
[23] Daniel T. Alsop, 'Morality and Feminism in Zayas's *El prevenido engañado*', *Romance Languages Annual*, 8 (1996), 363–367.

of explicitly good or evil women; thus, Zayas frequently emends the polarisation of women based upon the Christian binary opposition of the temptress Eve with the chaste Mary. Commenting upon Zayas's extant play, *La traición en la amistad*, Hegstrom Oakey expresses a similar contention:

> She has the women take on the role of active dominance usually reserved for males, relegating the male characters to passivity. Furthermore, she calls attention to the false dichotomy inherent in the *comedia* generally by suppressing in the end the character who tries to find a new position in a space between the polar oppositions [i.e. Fenisa].[24]

Similar to female protagonists in Zayas's *comedia*, Violante and Ana temporarily impose feminine dominance; like Fenisa of *La traición en la amistad*, these women single-mindedly strive to satisfy their sexual appetites, albeit without harming other women through their ludic schemes and liaisons. Through being physically beaten and eventually yielding to marriage, Violante's independence as a threatening *mujer varonil* is eventually curbed by the demands of oppositions prevalent and inherent in seventeenth-century Spanish culture and its literature. Yet, the false dichotomies of active/passive, masculine/feminine and immoral/chaste are continually exposed, probed and subverted in Zayas's dramatic and prose works. She challenges the binary nature of gender classification by creating complex female protagonists, blurring the boundaries between these opposites, and exploring the possibility of an 'excluded middle'.[25]

Women's manoeuvres in *El prevenido engañado* are defined by their single-minded pursuit of sexual fulfilment, while their cooperation in the previously discussed *Aventurarse perdiendo* revolves around the standard, honourable aim of marriage; in neither case is Gyn/affection considered an end in itself. Both of these novellas appear in the *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares*. Throughout Zayas's second prose work, the *Desengaños amorosos*, nascent female solidarity emerges in tandem with the disenchantment that pervades her depiction of relations between the sexes; the female protagonists develop stronger alliances than those in the *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares*, culminating in the eventual prioritisation of Gyn/affection over heterosexual commitments.

---

[24] Valerie Hegstrom Oakey, 'The Fallacy of False Dichotomy in María de Zayas's *La traición en la amistad*', *Bulletin of the Comediantes*, 46 (Summer 1994) 1, 59–70 (p. 60). (I discuss Zayas's *comedia* in greater detail later in this chapter.) The Christian Church had long portrayed Mary as Eve's opposite. For example, Jerome (Letter 22) wrote: 'Death came through Eve, but life has come through Mary'. See Marina Warner, *Alone of All Her Sex: The Myth and Cult of the Virgin Mary* (London: Vintage, 2000), p. 54.

[25] Julia Kristeva, 'The Bounded Text', in *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art*, ed. by Leon S. Roudiez (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1980), pp. 36–59 (p. 43). Here, I apply Kristeva's essay, 'The Bounded Text', in the same manner as Hegstrom Oakey in her analysis of *La traición en la amistad*. Zayas's interest in exposing the 'dual, hierarchical oppositions' and assumptions that organise her society's philosophical thought, repressing and oppressing the female consciousness, also anticipates the work of Hélène Cixous. Hélène Cixous and Catherine Clément, 'Sorties', in *The Newly Born Woman*, trans. by Betsy Wing (London: I. B. Tauris, 1996), pp. 63–132 (p. 64).

Novellas such as *La esclava de su amante* and *Mal presagio casar lejos* illustrate instances of female friendships and cooperation. However, the latent potential of the women's friendships to safeguard their welfare is continuously thwarted by the intersecting codes of honour and patriarchy, and the physical endangerment of women's bodies in the *desengaños* is readily apparent.

* * *

At this point, the term 'Gyn/affection' requires clarification. In *A Passion for Friends: Toward a Philosophy of Female Affection*, Janice Raymond coined this term to describe female friendships that not only involve fondness and affection, but also create a sense of mutual empowerment among women. In Raymond's words,

> Gyn/affection connotes the passion that women feel for women, that is, the experience of profound attraction for the original vital Self and the movement toward other vital women. There is another meaning to affection, however, which conveys more than the personal movement of one woman toward another. Affection in this sense means the state of influencing, acting upon, moving, and impressing, and of being influenced, acted upon, moved, and impressed by other women.[26]

Furthermore, Raymond defines the wide range of relationships between men and women, which are ordained by men, as 'hetero-relations'. In my examination of Zayas's work, I apply Raymond's theory to advance the analysis of the friendship motif. In terms of the critical study of Zayas's Golden-Age prose, use of this conceptual framework signals a novel departure.

In the first *desengaño*, Isabel's *La esclava de su amante*, Zayas embarks upon an exploration of the trajectory of friendships between female protagonists. Isabel's narrative is not only an account of her quest for her lost honour, symbolised by her extensive travels in pursuit of her rapist, but is also a tale that traces the path towards perfect female friendship.[27] Of course, the frame audience initially knows Isabel as Lisis's Moorish slave, Zelima. Through the introduction of Isabel's disguise, Zayas 'was capitalising on both the aversion to and fascination with the Arab world' within her Spanish society.[28] The amazed

---

[26] Raymond, pp. 7–8. Fariña Busto and Suárez Briones are my only predecessors in applying this concept to Zayas's prose as part of their short study of its homoeroticism. Complementarily, I trace Zayas's development of this friendship-based phenomenon and set my analysis within the frame of Lisis's *sarao* and in the context of literary and philosophical tradition.

[27] Of the ten *desengaños*, this is the only novella whose title can be attributed to Zayas; the other tales lacked titles until the 1734 Barcelona edition. See Yllera, 'Introducción', p. 61.

[28] Deborah Compte, 'The *mora* as Agent of Power and Authority: María de Zayas's "La esclava de su amante", *Hispanic Journal*, 24 (2003) 1–2, 53–64 (p. 55).

reaction of Isabel's audience to her dazzling attire is emphasised and hyperbolised, with repeated forms of the term *admiración*:

> Salió Zelima de la cuadra, en tan diferente traje de lo que entró, que a todos puso en *admiración* [...] *Admirados* quedaron damas y caballeros, y más la hermosa Lisis, de verla, y más arreos que ella no había visto, y no acertaba a dar lugar al disfraz de su esclava, y así, no hizo más de callar y *admirarse* (como todos) de tal deidad, porque la contemplaba una ninfa o diosa de la antiguas fábulas. (*DA* 123–4; my own italics)

Lisa Voigt observes that Zelima's spectacular entrance 'partakes of the Baroque formal tendency toward dazzling visual displays'.[29] Zayas's use of vivid descriptions – often of horrific scenes involving women's intense suffering – adheres to the primacy of the visual in the Baroque. Such striking images and the described reactions to them reflect the Baroque 'art of impact', which aims to overwhelm the senses.[30] Although it is initially her *admiratio*-inspiring change of costume into one suited to 'una princesa de Argel, una reina de Fez o Marruecos, o una sultana de Constantinopla' that enraptures her audience, their attention is quickly switched to the autodiegetic content of her reminiscences: 'Mi nombre es doña Isabel Fajardo, no Zelima, ni mora, como pensáis, sino cristiana, y hija de padres católicos, y de los más principales de la ciudad de Murcia' (*DA* 124 & 127). Isabel's alliances and misalliances with other women are integral to these transformations from Moor to Christian and from slavery to gentility.[31]

The prominence of Zelima/Isabel from the start of the *Desengaños amorosos* effectively brings Gyn/affection to the fore, subordinating hetero-relations; through Isabel's tale and role in the *marco narrativo*, Gyn/affection progressively gains import in Zayas's text. She describes three of her flawed female friendships, each coinciding with a stage in her dishonour, prior to her cathartic alliance with Lisis in the frame narrative. The first friendship-community is formed between Isabel, doña Eufrasia, and their mothers, who dwell in the same lodgings in Zaragoza. Isabel and Eufrasia are known as 'las dos amigas'.[32] Isabel highlights the affection and inseparability of the two girls: 'Nos tomamos tanto amor, como su madre y la mía, que de día ni de noche nos dividíamos, que, si no era

---

[29] Lisa Voigt, 'Visual and Oral Art(ifice) in María de Zayas's *Desengaños amorosos*', in *Writing for the Eyes in the Spanish Golden Age*, ed. by Frederick A. de Armas (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2004), pp. 212–234 (p. 213).

[30] Jeremy Robbins, *The Challenges of Uncertainty: An Introduction to Seventeenth-Century Spanish Literature* (London: Duckworth, 1998), pp. 82–97.

[31] For example, the reader later deduces that Isabel has stolen from Zaida the ornate Moorish attire that she dons, to dramatic effect, at the start of her autobiographical narrative.

[32] This anticipates *El verdugo de su esposa*, in which the male characters (Pedro and Juan) are endowed with this soubriquet. See my discussion of this *desengaño*, and its similarities to Cervantes's *El curioso impertinente*, in the next chapter.

para ir a dar el común reposo a los ojos, jamás nos apartábamos, o yo en su cuarto, o ella en el mío' (*DA* 131).

It seems that Eufrasia is unconscious of her brother's dishonourable intentions towards Isabel. To preserve her own honour, Isabel begins to visit her friend less. When Isabel avoids the company of the love-sick Manuel, Eufrasia berates her; at this juncture, it is apparent that Eufrasia's primary loyalty is to her brother, despite her friendship with Isabel. Isabel resolves neither to favour nor to scorn Manuel, instructing him to ask her father's permission to marry her, and renews 'la amistad de doña Eufrasia, y a comunicarnos con la frecuencia que antes hacía gala' (*DA* 136). However, during the Zaragoza Carnivals, when Isabel is en route 'al cuarto de doña Eufrasia a vestirme con ella de disfraz para una máscara que teníamos prevenida', Manuel detains her, 'cerrando la puerta con llave' (*DA* 137). From the allusive details of the lock, the heroine's fainting and her subsequent distress, the reader infers that Manuel rapes her. Stacey L. Parker Aronson highlights the significance of female protagonists' unconsciousness during sexual assault as differentiating between seduction and rape: thus, 'Zayas effectively removes all doubt as to their complicity and any hint that it might have afforded them some degree of sexual pleasure'.[33] The Carnival is a fitting backdrop for this heinous and pivotal act, given the traditional carnivalesque connotations of chaos, disguise and behavioural inversions. Furthermore, this temporal setting heightens the connection between novella and its similarly Carnival-set frame, creating a *mise en abyme* or 'mirror-text' effect.[34]

The setting of the rape within domestic confines is symbolically significant; Yolanda Gamboa underscores Zayas's demonstration that, contrary to the prescriptions of moral treatises such as Juan Luis Vives's *Instrucción de la mujer cristiana* (1523), 'woman's danger does not reside in venturing outside the house'.[35] In a proleptic remark at the outset

---

[33] Stacey L. Parker Aronson, 'Monstrous Metamorphoses and Rape in María de Zayas', *Revista canadiense de estudios hispánicos*, 29 (2005) 3, 525–547 (p. 540). Isabel takes pains to specify that she suffers 'un mortal desmayo' and, with bizarre precision, that 'pasada poco más de media hora, volví en mí' (*DA* 137). In *La más infame venganza*, Camila faints when suffering rape, and, in *La inocencia castigada*, Inés enters a hypnotic state; see my next chapter for discussion of these tales.

[34] Mieke Bal, *Narratology: Introduction to the Theory of Narrative*, 2nd edn (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997), p. 58. Thus, at key points in the narrative, Zayas mirrors temporal and spatial settings – Carnival and women's household environs, respectively – to heighten the interrelationship between Lisis's and Isabel's courses of action.

[35] Yolanda Gamboa, 'Architectural Cartography: Social and Gender Mapping in María de Zayas's Seventeenth-Century Spain', *Hispanic Review*, 71 (Spring 2003) 2, 189–203 (p. 195). In addition to Gamboa, several other critics have explored architectural signs of enclosure, particularly the metaphor of the house, in conjunction with the portrayal of patriarchy in seventeenth-century works. For example, see Elizabeth J. Ordóñez, 'Woman and her Text in the Works of María de Zayas and Ana Caro', *Revista de estudios hispánicos*, 19 (1985), 3–15; Marcia L. Welles, *Persephone's Girdle: Narratives of Rape in*

of her narrative, Isabel suggests that the source of her peril is within the home itself: 'Salí a ver, y vi y fui vista. Mas no estuvo en esto mi pérdida, que dentro de mi casa estaba el incendio, pues sin salir me había ya visto mi desventura' (*DA* 130). In Carmen R. Rabell's analysis of Cervantes's *El celoso extremeño*, she suggests that the house 'is supposed to function as a secondary virginity that will bar any attempt of penetration by an external intruder'.[36] While the fortress that Carrizales, the eponymous *celoso extremeño*, constructs to protect Leonora's honour is ultimately violated by an outsider, Zayas's novella demonstrates in a unique manner the futility of women's confinement: by portraying the house as a dangerous locus for women, the concealing walls of which are screens for men's transgressions. In both cases, the geographical immobility of the virtuous woman fails to preserve her honourable reputation; moreover, as Isabel's case particularly demonstrates, architecture acts as an accomplice in the abusive exercises of phallocentric authority.

Isabel wrathfully attempts to murder her rapist and, when this proves unsuccessful, she attempts suicide; Manuel promises to marry her to ameliorate her 'furor diabólico' (*DA* 137). When Manuel reveals his actions to his sister, her reaction is 'admirada y pesarosa' (*DA* 139). Due to Eufrasia's persuasion, Isabel ceases her rancour towards Manuel. Eufrasia's intentions appear honourable, given that she expects her brother to marry Isabel; she unwittingly acts to her friend's detriment as the unscrupulous Manuel's accomplice. To add to Isabel's misfortunes, Manuel resumes an affair with a married woman. Eufrasia shows more concern for her brother's safety than for Isabel's well-being and honour: 'todas estas desdichas sentía y temía doña Eufrasia, porque había de venir a parar en peligro de su hermano' (*DA* 145).

To avoid marrying Isabel, Manuel flees to Alicante, there to embark for Sicily. Isabel elects to wear the garb of a Moorish slave before initiating her journey in search of redress through marriage to her rapist. As Lou Charnon-Deutsch states, 'Isabel's slavery is a self-induced obsession designed to force physical reality to correctly represent a state of being: she wants to be recognised everywhere for what she is'; her disguise visibly represents her

---

Seventeenth-Century Spanish Literature (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 2000); Amy R. Williamsen, 'Engendering Interpretation: Irony as Comic Challenge in María de Zayas', *Romance Languages Annual*, 3 (1991), 642–648.

[36] Carmen R. Rabell, *Rewriting the Italian Novella in Counter-Reformation Spain* (Woodbridge: Tamesis, 2003), p. 118.

'enslavement' to Manuel.[37] However, her disguise serves a dual purpose. Isabel is never completely subsumed into Zelima; her slavery is an alternate, self-imposed identity that she consciously crafts in order to enable her to transcend her demeaned status. It is the means to her ascendancy and marks the first step towards her liberation and agency, as symbolised by her newfound freedom of mobility through foreign spaces while disguised as the enslaved Zelima.[38] Each instance of Isabel's geographical displacement marks a new movement in the four-part structure of her friendship and honour trajectories. She forms a second female friendship with one of her mistress's daughters – Leonisa. Similar to her friendship with Eufrasia, the women are physically rarely apart: 'me quería con tanto extremo, que comía y dormía con ella en su misma cama' (*DA* 154).[39] Although we must take into account the ambiguity of Isabel/Zelima's identity, descriptions of 'tanta amistad' and 'queríame tanto mi señora' intensify an impression that norms of social hierarchy relating to mistresses and slaves have been abandoned (*DA* 158). Only Isabel's secret identity and mission of honour hinder the complete realisation of this friendship.

When a Byzantine turn of events leads to the abduction of Isabel and Manuel by Moorish corsairs, a third female friendship emerges. By continuing to pass herself off as the Moorish Zelima, Isabel ensures good treatment for herself and her fellow captives. The episode demonstrates her extraordinary resourcefulness and abilities of cultural adaptation. Once brought to Algiers, the captives are given to Zaida, a wealthy, young Moorish lady. 'Queríame Zaida tiernísimamente', says Isabel, although Zaida's primary interest lies not in friendship with Isabel but in Manuel, with whom she has fallen in love (*DA* 159). Zaida intends to make strategic use of her friendship with Isabel, whom she views as a fellow

---

[37] Lou Charnon-Deutsch, 'The Sexual Economy in the Narratives of María de Zayas', in *María de Zayas: The Dynamics of Discourse*, ed. by Amy R. Williamsen and Judith A. Whitenack (London: Associated University Presses, 1995), pp. 117–132 (p. 119).

[38] See Compte, 'The *mora* as Agent of Power and Authority'.

[39] This may remind the reader of Celia's depiction of her friendship with Rosalind in *As You Like It*: 'We still have slept together, / Rose at an instant, learned, played, eat together, / And whereso'er we went, like Juno's swans, / Still we went coupled and inseparable'. *As You Like It*, in *The Oxford Shakespeare: The Complete Works*, ed. by Stanley Wells and Gary Taylor (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), I. 3. 72. It is more intense than Isabel's previous relationship, since the women sleep in the same bed, demonstrating a homosocial closeness that borders on the homoerotic. Some critics view this and other intimate relationships between women in the *desengaños* as subtly homoerotic in nature; however, there is a paucity of incontrovertible evidence of female homoerotic love. See Fariña Busto and Suárez Briones, 'Desde/hacia la Otra', pp. 130–4; Yvonne Jehenson and Marcia L. Welles, 'María de Zayas's Wounded Women: A Semiotics of Violence' in *Gender, Identity, and Representation in Spain's Golden Age*, ed. by Anita K. Stoll and Dawn L. Smith (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2000), pp. 178–202; Mary S. Gossy, 'Skirting the Question: Lesbians and María de Zayas', in *Hispanisms and Homosexualities*, ed. by Sylvia Molloy and Robert McKee Irwin (Durham: Duke University Press, 1998), pp. 19–28; Sherry M. Velasco, 'María de Zayas and Lesbian Desire in Early Modern Spain', in *Reading and Writing the Ambiente: Queer Sexualities in Latino, Latin American and Spanish Culture*, ed. by Susana Chávez-Silverman and Librada Hernández (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2000), pp. 21–42. I will briefly return to the topic of female homoeroticism in my second and fourth chapters.

Moor, by placing Isabel in the trusted position of intermediary. In a bid to escape captivity, Manuel deceives Isabel, pretending that he will marry her if she can persuade Zaida to escape with them to Spain. Isabel is motivated to manipulate Zaida in her desperation to return to Spain and to recover her honour by marrying her rapist, Manuel; thus, she encourages Zaida to negotiate their eventual escape from Algiers. Predictably, when they reach Spanish soil, Manuel reneges on his promise and refuses to marry Isabel, wishing to have the wealthy Zaida instead. To avenge Isabel's dishonour, Felipe stabs Manuel to death; the former is an admirer of Isabel's, an impoverished nobleman who has observed her travails by disguising himself as a servant. Witnessing the murder, Zaida, 'con el dolor de haberle perdido', commits suicide using Manuel's dagger (*DA* 164). Isabel, 'por una parte lastimada del suceso, y por otra satisfecha con la venganza', flees the murder-scene with Zaida's jewels and allows herself to be sold into slavery once more – this time to Lisis's family in Valencia – and thereafter is given to Lisis of Madrid (*DA* 164).

In her autobiographical tale, Isabel explores the permutations of female friendship through her relationships with Eufrasia, Leonisa, and Zaida. Accordingly, Fariña Busto and Suárez Briones conclude that 'el interés por subrayar la solidaridad y la complicidad entre personajes femeninos en la autobiografía de Zelima es notable'.[40] Eufrasia's purpose in the tale may be to demonstrate some of the constraints that prevent the fulfilment of women's friendships. Family loyalty seems to be the primary barrier to Eufrasia's friendship with Isabel in Zaragoza. Pérez-Erdélyi notes that, by failing to assist Isabel in the protection or recovery of her honour, 'Eufrasia quebranta la lealtad de la amistad, y también la que le debe a su sexo'.[41] In Sicily, more promising friendship fleetingly emerges between Isabel and Leonisa, but it is inevitably thwarted by Isabel's adoption of her secretive identity and mission to regain her honour by marrying Manuel. Finally, the lures of freedom from captivity in Algiers and marriage to Manuel prove sufficient for Isabel to attempt to dupe the naïve Zaida, this female alliance being purely instrumental. Later in this chapter, I will show how, once Isabel's circuitous path returns her to Spain, she removes herself from 'enslavement' to Manuel and to the honour code, which commenced with her rape. In Madrid, she attains an unexpected prize: not matrimony to an unworthy suitor, but Gyn/affection with Lisis. At this point, Isabel's autobiographical narrative reaches its conclusion with events preceding the *sarao*, the metadiegetic level of

[40] Fariña Busto and Suárez Briones, 'Desde/hacia la Otra', p. 134.
[41] Mireya Pérez-Erdélyi, *La pícara y la dama: La imagen de las mujeres en las novelas picaresco-cortesanas de María de Zayas y Sotomayor y Alonso del Castillo Solórzano* (Miami: Ediciones Universal, 1979), p. 101.

her novella dissolving into the diegetic frame narrative. In a subsequent section, discussing the frame-narrative 'sisterhood', I will return to Isabel's relationship with Lisis and their veneration of Gyn/affection.

* * *

Further close female alliances emerge in Luisa's *Mal presagio casar lejos*, the seventh *desengaño*, whose focal point is Blanca. The landscape of Blanca's ghastly life-path features two prominent examples of Gyn/affection. However, it becomes increasingly apparent that these alliances provide insufficient protection against patriarchal treachery.

For political reasons, Blanca is matched with 'un príncipe de Flandes'; she exerts some limited authority by imposing a condition: he must court her for one year prior to marriage (*DA* 339). Thus, she simulates agency by responding to the proposed contract with one of her own. As she is an orphan, her brother engineers the expedient union, which illustrates Irigaray's thesis that 'all economic organisation is homosexual. That of desire as well, even the desire for women. Woman exists only as an occasion for mediation, transaction, transition, transference, between man and his fellow man, indeed between man and himself'.[42] Amy R. Williamsen suggests that Blanca's name highlights her powerlessness, since it denotes a unit of currency; Blanca is used as political currency – a commodity for exchange between men.[43] Blanca's futile deferment of the wedding is exposed to widespread ridicule; she discovers the public's derisory response from María, 'la dama tan querida suya [...] como la que, fiada en su amor, hablaba con más libertad' (*DA* 340). Theirs is a relationship of long-standing intimacy: 'se había criado con ella [Blanca] desde niñas, y a quien amaba más que a ninguna, con quien comunicaba lo más secreto de sus pensamientos' (*DA* 340).[44]

Blanca's naïvely idealistic reasoning becomes apparent to the reader through her interaction with María; she ingenuously extols the enduring love inspired during courtship.

---

[42] Irigaray, *This Sex Which is Not One*, p. 193.

[43] Amy R. Williamsen, 'Death Becomes Her: Fatal Beauty in María de Zayas's *Mal presagio casar lejos*', *Romance Languages Annual*, 6 (1994), 619–623. Blanca is also the feminine version of *blanco*, meaning 'target'; Blanca is the female 'target' whom other (male) characters wish to victimise. Moreover, her name possesses obvious connotations of innocence and purity; it also foreshadows the whiteness of her bloodless corpse upon her eventual murder.

[44] There is a class difference between the women, María (a gentlewoman who bears the honorific title of 'doña') being the aristocratic Blanca's lady-in-waiting; however, the high social status of both women has led me to consider it appropriate to examine their relationship in the context of other female friendships.

María perceptively questions Blanca's actions on the grounds that she could not reject the prince, should the courtship period prove unsatisfactory: 'Mas tú, señora, no puedes; aunque conozcas diferentes condiciones en el príncipe de las que en tu idea te prometes, ¿puedes ya dejar de ser suya?' (*DA* 341). María sagely implies that Blanca lacks power to control her own destiny: namely, that of a woman whose personal fate is woven into the broader fabric of political alliance through marriage. Blanca relies upon simplistic contractual terminology and naively insists that, should the prince prove unsatisfactory as a suitor, she can renege on the agreement and opt for life in the convent:

> No tendré obligación de cumplir lo firmado, pues no me dan lo que me prometieron. Y para eso hay conventos, pues no me tengo yo de cautivar con otro diferente del que me dijeron, y me puedo llamar a engaño, diciendo que yo me prometí a un hombre perfecto, y que supuesto que me le dan imperfecto, que no es el que me ha de merecer. (*DA* 341)[45]

The women's exchange reveals the inner reasoning through which Blanca temporarily subverts the notion of woman as merchandise. Her attempt is ineffectual in the long-term, however, because, as María José Delgado Berlanga comments, 'era una obligación impuesta y aunque ella subvierta en el espacio íntimo su papel como producto, al final ella es la mercancía para ser granjeada entre hombres'.[46] Blanca is traded as a politically advantageous commodity on the marriage market. Blanca's demand is a symptom of her self-delusion; self-imposed, albeit officially sanctioned by her guardian, the deferral acts as a placebo to imbue her with a sense of control over her destiny. Her pursuit of the lofty ideal of perfection in the marital arena bodes ill, especially given the foreign alliance's transactional status. María's succinct comments suggest that she is aware of Blanca's folly. Her implicit acknowledgment that Blanca has no option but to marry the prince is evident from her deference to him as 'mi señor' before the courtship phase has concluded (*DA* 342).

When Blanca is bedridden for four days due to a mysterious bout of melancholy, the prince inquires 'cuál era la dama más querida de doña Blanca' (*DA* 343). Discovering this to be María, her lady-in-waiting, he gives her a letter and precious gifts for Blanca and for her ladies; María subsequently expresses Blanca's thanks to the prince for his courteous favours. When the prince serenades Blanca, she relies upon María to transmit the message

---

[45] As daughter of 'un gran señor de España', Blanca does not only seek 'un hombre perfecto', but a perfect prince (*DA* 337). Zayas's contemporaneous writers created several 'espejos de príncipes', treatises on the perfect monarch: for example, Baltasar Gracián's *El político* (1640) and Diego de Saavedra Fajardo's *Idea de un príncipe político-cristiano* (1640/1642). These authors specifically praised the model example of 'Fernando el Católico'; I will examine Zayas's nostalgia for this Catholic monarch's era in my third chapter.

[46] María José Delgado Berlanga, 'Danzando en un hilo mitológico: Formación e inversión del "yo mujer" en la novela de María de Zayas y Sotomayor, *Mal presagio casar lejos*', in *Zayas and Her Sisters, 2: Essays on Novelas by 17th-Century Spanish Women*, ed. by Gwyn E. Campbell and Judith A. Whitenack (New York: Global Publications, Binghampton University, 2001), pp. 111–120 (p. 116).

that 'su señora se daba por muy bien servida de sus finezas' (*DA* 347). There is a structural irony in María's charitable easing of Blanca's passage towards an ill-starred foreign marriage. Even the best-intentioned acts of friendship among women in the *Desengaños amorosos* are feeble gestures when pitted against the patriarchy of the time.

Blanca, María and the other ladies are distressed by the impending cessation of the year's courtship celebrations and by their consequent separation. Blanca appears to oscillate between reluctance to marry the prince and naïvely high expectations of married life. Once she is wed, she receives news of her three sisters' suffering at the hands of foreign men, the revelations exposing Blanca's analogous vulnerability. When her bedridden youngest sister returns, 'imposibilitada de poder andar, porque de las rodillas abajo no tenía piernas ni pies', the striking image is, according to Williamsen, 'a concrete expression of the objectification of woman in the operant system of exchange' (*DA* 348).[47] Blanca immediately announces her regret to her confidantes: 'Y así lo decía a sus damas con muchos sentimientos: antes se hubiera entrado religiosa' (*DA* 348). To Blanca's great misfortune, she does not actively seek refuge in a convent at any point, despite repeatedly referring to the alternative offered by religious life and the nascent monastic proclivities of women in the *desengaños*.

Inconsolably grieving, Blanca insists that María accompany her to Flanders, ordering María's Spanish fiancé to emigrate with them also. Blanca's motivation – her affection for her lady-in-waiting – is stated clearly: 'la quería tanto y se habían criado juntas, y la tenía por alivio en sus mayores penas' (*DA* 348). Upon their departure, Blanca notes the waning of her husband's attentiveness; she seeks consolation and counsel from María: 'daba parte a su querida doña María, que como cuerda la alentaba y aconsejaba, y entretenía la tristeza que llevaba de haber dejado su paternal albergue, y irse a vivir desterrada para siempre de él, y más con los despegos que empezó a ver en su esposo' (*DA* 349). Facing a journey into unknown places and perils, Blanca finds solace through Gyn/affection.

In Flanders, while Blanca endures the indifference of her husband and the severity of her father-in-law, she discovers a new source of consolatory friendship: Marieta, the prince's sister.[48] Although she has married, Marieta still dwells in her father's house. She and

[47] Williamsen, 'Death Becomes Her', p. 620.

[48] This novella contains no less than three characters who share the name María (or its derivative, Marieta): Blanca's youngest sister, lady-in-waiting, and sister-in-law. In doing so, Zayas curiously endows Blanca's allies with onomastic variations of her own name. The name 'María' is seldom repeated in Zayas's other

Blanca alleviate their common plight by entrusting each other with confidences concerning their husbands' disregard. The friends' inseparability is described in terms similar to that of Isabel and Eufrasia in *La esclava de su amante*: 'Con esta señora trabó doña Blanca grande amistad, cobrándose las dos tanto amor, que si no era para dormir, no se dividía la una de la otra' (*DA* 350). Marieta plays an active role in a dispute between Blanca and their male relatives arising from her request that Blanca should sing a ballad on the theme of jealousy; Blanca's husband and father-in-law overhear her song and an argument ensues. Marieta diplomatically intervenes when Blanca's husband begins to abuse her physically: 'fue milagro salir de sus manos con la vida, y ésa se la pudo deber, después de Dios, a la señora Marieta, que con su autoridad puso treguas, aunque no paces, al disgusto de este día' (*DA* 356). In Zayas's novellas, this is a rare instance of a female character's successful implementation of her *autoridad* but proves to be ephemeral in Marieta's case.

The women's friendship ends abruptly when Marieta is murdered. Firstly, one of her favourite gentlemen is stabbed to death, probably at the hands of her father; two days later, Marieta's husband garrottes her in the presence of her father. Upon Marieta's murder, the men's misogyny goes beyond political motives and xenophobic considerations of nationality. Blanca's "otherness" is usually underscored in terms of her national origin, although Marieta is also objectified as "other" despite being in her homeland. This leads Williamsen to deduce that the text conflates nationality and femininity: 'one might read Blanca's "Spanishness" as a metaphor for her "otherness" in a system that violently oppresses the feminine'.[49] It would appear that Marieta's womanhood and undermining of male authority through solidarity with another of the same sex brings about her victimisation. The men impugn Marieta's chastity in order to fabricate a reason to justify her death, but the reader is led to retain the suspicion that her protection of Blanca is its 'true' cause: 'era tan noble y tan honesta, que no se podía pensar de ella liviandad ninguna, si ya no la dañó el ser tan afable y el amar tanto a doña Blanca, que en todas ocasiones volvía por ella' (*DA* 357). The narrator thus vouches for her chastity, disproving any thesis of impropriety. As Margarita Levisi states in her discussion of violence against women in

---

novellas; the author generally seems to reserve it for Marian devotion. Similarly, as Jean S. Chittenden notes, both Lope de Vega and Tirso de Molina employed the name rarely except for historical personages and for the Virgin Mary in their *comedias*. Outside the realm of literature, the name enjoyed great popularity. In Allyson M. Poska's study of the diocese of Ourense in Galicia during the Reformation, she observes that 'despite a slight fall from popularity by 1700, at least one-quarter of the female children born during the century were named María'. See Jean S. Chittenden, 'The Characters and Plots of Tirso's *Comedias*', ed. by Matthew D. Stroud <http://www.trinity.edu/mstroud/tirso/> [accessed 13 September 2008]; Allyson M. Poska, *Regulating the People: The Catholic Reformation in Seventeenth-Century Spain* (Leiden: Brill, 1998), pp. 84–5.

[49] Williamsen, 'Death Becomes Her', p. 620.

Zayas's *desengaños*, 'el honor es sólo un pretexto y los motivos del castigo son especialmente arbitrarios e injustos' in cases such as Marieta's.[50] Blanca's friendships with María and Marieta furnish her with consolation, protection and care, although neither can permanently ameliorate her predicament. It is strongly intimated that Blanca's friendship with Marieta contributes to the latter's murder, that, in effect, Marieta sacrifices her life out of loyalty to their Gyn/affection.

At this climactic point, the lady-in-waiting reappears in the tale. Blanca summons María and her other Spanish ladies, numbering six in total; knowing her own murder to be near, she bestows her jewels upon them to supply their dowries, should they manage to return safely to Spain. By bequeathing the jewels to her servants, she performs her first truly autonomous and soundly motivated act. In particular, she remembers her promise to her lady-in-waiting and supplies her with the means to marry her Spanish suitor, Gabriel. On this symbolic occasion, the reader glimpses the momentary assembly of a female community; however, its members are rapidly rendered powerless against the Flemish men's misogynistic aggression. The bequest of gifts is central to this female community, not only because of the giver's act of autonomy, but because of their monetary value to the receivers, easing their passage to marriage. Blanca's friendships have firmer foundations than those in the three previously discussed novellas; the significance of her gifts plumbs emotional depths far beyond Jacinta's provision of funds to Guiomar in *Aventurarse perdiendo*. Blanca entrusts María's fiancé with the delivery of a letter to her brother in Spain; regardless of their expanding Gyn/affection, women in the tale must resort to seeking male protection.

In a sensational denouement, Blanca discovers her husband engaging with Arnesto, his page, in 'deleites tan torpes y abominables, que es bajeza, no sólo decirlo, mas pensarlo'; instead of experiencing shame or guilt, the men are 'descompuestos de alegría' when Blanca witnesses their tryst (*DA* 360). The previously cited descriptions of the men's homosexual act and their brazen response demonstrate Luisa's diegetic reprobation, magnifying that of Blanca, the metadiegetic protagonist. Paul Julian Smith notes that in *Mal presagio casar lejos* there is a hermetic social system of the male and the female,

---

[50] Margarita Levisi, 'La crueldad en los *Desengaños amorosos* de María de Zayas', in *Estudios literarios de hispanistas norteamericanos dedicados a Helmut Hatzfeld con motivo de su 80 aniversario*, ed. by Josep M. Sola-Solé, Alessandro Crisafulli, and Bruno Damiani (Barcelona: Ediciones Hispam, 1974), pp. 447–456 (p. 448).

which is different to the fitful and halting interactions between men and women.[51] The closed friendship-communities of the tale are delineated strictly by sex. The occurrence of male homosexuality in *Mal presagio casar lejos* is the logical, albeit illicit and ostracised manifestation of man's essentially homo-relational outlook. Whether a male community truly exists in this *desengaño*, or in the *Desengaños amorosos* in general, is open to question, since their obsessive purpose in Zayas's *desengaños* is the exclusion, degradation, and extermination of women. Referring to Blanca's relationships with María and Marieta, Smith states that 'within this shifting female group there is a fluidity of circulation, a lack of division: the lady, the maid and the friend speak freely and intimately to one another, in spite of their differing nationalities'.[52] In spite of the title's focus on national difference, it serves as no barrier to the friendship between Blanca and Marieta, who are Spanish and Flemish respectively; while Blanca's exogamous marriage to the Flemish prince disintegrates, Blanca's 'foreign' friendship with Marieta transcends national boundaries.

Subsequent to Blanca's discovery of the homosexual tryst, she reveals her awareness of the imminence of her own death to María: 'Mi muerte hallé, doña María, y si hasta aquí la veía en sombras, la veo ya clara y sin ellas. Bien sé que lo que he visto me ha de costar la vida. Y supuesto que ya no se me excusa el morir, ya que esto ha de ser, será con alguna causa, o dejaré de ser quien soy' (*DA* 360). Of vital importance to Blanca is 'ser quien soy'; she willingly demonstrates her capacity for the assertion of agency in this instance, regardless of consequences.[53] María reveals herself to be a source of wise counsel by urging caution; she beseeches Blanca not to react until her brother's arrival, for the sake of her fellow Spaniards. However, Blanca chooses not to heed María's advice and audaciously burns the bed in which the homosexual act took place. As she considers her fate to be sealed irrevocably, she rejects María's proposed tactics, boldly seeking vengeance: 'Yo tengo de morir vengada [...] pues el delito que ellos hacen me condena a mí a muerte, no hay que aconsejarme, que servirá de darme enfado y no conseguir fruto' (*DA* 361).

---

[51] Paul Julian Smith, 'Writing Women in Golden Age Spain: Saint Teresa and María de Zayas', *MLN*, 102 (1987) 2, 220–240. The calamitous marriages of Blanca and Marieta exemplify the antagonistic relations between the sexes.

[52] Smith, p. 237.

[53] Through her direct and reported speech, Blanca repeatedly demonstrates pride in her noble Spanish identity and lineage; it would be shameful for her not to take action: 'era degenerar quien soy' and 'o no sería doña Blanca' (*DA* 361).

Smith emphasises these women's 'common impotence and exclusion', deeming the burning of the offensive bed to be Blanca's only positive act – 'a symbolic rejection of desire in all its forms'.[54] Brownlee suggests another explanation for Blanca's behaviour: she is enraged by the discovery of the male union that 'writes her out of the economy of desire in absolute terms'.[55] Certainly, Blanca is frustrated by the usurpation of her conjugal rights, namely her exclusion from the sexual act. Her recourse to fire is symbolically appropriate due to its association with passion; she may also elect to destroy the bed by this drastic method because of the perceived cleansing powers of fire. Also relevant is the 1497 *Pragmática*, in which Ferdinand and Isabel decreed that the punishment for sodomy would be burning at the stake; Blanca may choose to have the bed brought outside and burned as a silent proclamation of the men's homosexual act.[56] The fire is a heroic gesture of defiance against her marginalisation and oppression, which would appear to deconstruct myths of female passivity. However, although Blanca's husband's conduct warrants an outraged response from his spouse, she does not act sufficiently strategically, contributing to the inevitability of her own murder. Initially, powerlessness acts as a stimulant to her desperate, irrational act; likewise, her trial courtship was not a practical measure, but another misguided attempt at asserting her own agency. On both occasions, her lady-in-waiting demonstrates her friendship by proffering soundly reasoned counsel, only for it to be neglected. Edward H. Friedman astutely observes nonetheless that Blanca's 'contribution to the denouement makes the tragedy of her execution less pathetic'.[57] Furthermore, Blanca possesses the altruistic foresight to avoid directly implicating any of her Spanish ladies in her daring act of *venganza*, as well as offering them practical assistance. It is evident that the women are aware of the mortal threat that looms as a consequence of Blanca's actions: María gives jewels to Gabriel for safe-keeping; Blanca sends for her confessor and receives the Blessed Sacrament; and the women urge Gabriel and the priest to go into hiding to ensure their safety, leaving Blanca

---

[54] Smith, p. 237.

[55] Brownlee, *The Cultural Labyrinth of María de Zayas*, p. 51.

[56] Federico Garza Carvajal suggests that, to legal minds of the time, 'only fire, as a natural purifier of the maligned, could provide a remedy for sodomy, the unmentionable vice and the abominable crime against nature'. The *Pragmática* also required that systematic torture be applied to the accused, including the nobility and clergy. See Federico Garza Carvajal, *Butterflies Will Burn: Prosecuting Sodomites in Early Modern Spain and Mexico* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2003), p. 42.

[57] Edward H. Friedman, 'Enemy Territory: The Frontiers of Gender in María de Zayas's *El traidor contra su sangre* and *Mal presagio casar lejos*', in *Ingeniosa invención: Essays on Golden Age Spanish Literature for Geoffrey L. Stagg in Honour of his Eighty-fifth Birthday*, ed. by Ellen M. Anderson and Amy R. Williamsen (Newark: Juan de la Cuesta, 1999), pp. 41–68 (p. 61).

to await death with only female protection.[58] As Friedman contends, the narrative movement hinges on Blanca's acts of resistance.

María watches through the keyhole, 'en lágrimas bañada', as Blanca's husband, father-in-law, and Arnesto (the page) have her bled to death (*DA* 363). Via the imagistic device of the keyhole, María's debilitated role as onlooker during Blanca's death is underlined. Unlike Marieta's case, these executioners create no pretext for Blanca's murder, their wrathful haste making them abandon subterfuge. Once Blanca's murder is committed, the fatalistic, titular portent is fulfilled. Blanca's ladies indulge in extreme displays of grief; María's mourning is particularly striking:

> Unas le besaban las manos, otras la estremecían, pensando que no estaba muerta, y todas hacían lastimoso duelo sobre el difunto y hermoso cuerpo, en particular doña María, que se arrancaba los cabellos, y se sacaba con sus mismos dientes pedazos de sus manos, diciendo lastimosas ternezas, que es de creer se matara si no fuera por no perder el alma. (*DA* 364)

The women's violent distress is a proportionally hyperbolic response to their helplessness to prevent the murder of their beloved Blanca. It is symbolically significant that Blanca's body is laid to rest near Marieta's; after death, the sisters-in-law are reunited in a form of physical closeness.

While the corpses of Blanca and Marieta are enclosed in a vault, María and the other Spanish ladies are imprisoned in a tower. The women's reduced physical space and restricted freedom of movement are symbolic of a wider social incarceration. The Spanish ladies are freed from their confinement when Gabriel arrives with Blanca's brother; their wellbeing is continually reliant upon the presence of male protectors. The tragic irony of *Mal presagio casar lejos* is that the male protagonists are empowered both to kill and to save, while their female counterparts can do neither. This *desengaño* represents an extreme example of women's dependence on men for their survival; the following section, which addresses 'sisterhood' in the frame narrative, reveals the potential effects of women's seizure of agency.

The novella's conclusion describes the marriage of María and Gabriel, whose daughter marries a relative of Blanca's; Luisa, the frame narrator, is their offspring. Thus, the tale concludes with the birth of a new generation of gynocentric women, represented by Luisa,

---

[58] Clerics in both *Mal presagio casar lejos* and *El traidor contra su sangre* minister to endangered heroines' spiritual needs but are portrayed as ineffectual defenders of their physical safety. Zayas's implication of these priests' impotency as protectors of the faithful is an unusual step: Spanish novellas, unlike their Italian counterparts, tended to avoid explicit criticism of the Church in the repressive Counter-Reformation atmosphere.

who are empowered by Lisis's companionship to recount their female ancestors' *desengaño*. Although Blanca knowingly and irrevocably determines her own demise, she also secures the endurance of the women's story. Luisa's narrative achieves its desired effect when, in an insightful declaration on the gentlemen's behalves, Juan recognises women's morally unjust victimisation:

> Que yo, en nombre de todos estos caballeros y mío, digo que queda tan bien ventilada y concluida la opinión de las damas desengañadoras y que con justa causa han tomado la defensa de las mujeres, y por conocerlo así, nos damos por vencidos y confesamos que hay hombres que, con sus crueldades y engaños, condenándose a sí, disculpan a las mujeres. Que oyendo todos los caballeros lo que don Juan decía, respondieron que tenía razón. (*DA* 366)

This is a rare instance of triumph for the diegetic *desengañadoras* on a secular, non-religious plane. As evidenced by the *nostra culpa* of the male listeners, it has become more effective for women of Luisa's generation to assert themselves. Although the double generation gap limits the direct relevance of Blanca's experience, the play of diegetic and metadiegetic narrative levels in the *Desengaños amorosos* creates the illusion of diminishing the temporal distance between one group of protagonists and the other. In this instance, the diegetic commentary and analysis of inset novellas fulfils feminist purposes, a device that was pioneered by Christine de Pizan in her *Livre de la cité des dames* (1405) and perfected in Marguerite de Navarre's *Heptaméron*.[59]

Zayas uses the novellas in her *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares* and *Desengaños amorosos* to explore the permutations and ramifications of harmonious interaction between female characters. However, female interrelations undergo a qualitative shift throughout Zayas's two novella collections. Women's friendships in the *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares* are ephemeral and underdeveloped; they are of secondary importance to women's focus upon their honour-related, pecuniary or sexual needs. In contrast, the *desengaños* incrementally highlight Gyn/affection, although women's alliances are exposed as offering little protection to female characters in the face of traditional, patriarchal values. While secular friendships among women in Zayas's tales are ultimately ineffectual against a self-serving patriarchy, examination of the frame tale will show that the convent community auspiciously alludes to an alternative form of female bonding.

---

[59] Marguerite de Navarre lived from 1492 until 1549, although the collection did not appear in print in its standard form until 1559. Thus, as Donovan notes, the feminist framed-novella tradition has its origins in France. Josephine Donovan, *Women and the Rise of the Novel, 1405–1726* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999).

The Frame Tale and its Implications for Zayas's 'Sisterhood'

Now, I will explore the potentially enduring and empowering form of female alliance that Zayas unveils through the frame-narrative 'sisterhood'. Firstly, I will examine this literary framing device and its evolving role within Zayas's works. This leads to a discussion of the equivocatory 'feminism' that emerges in Zayas's prose and its relationship to her complex treatment of the theme of sisterhood. As I will demonstrate, the 'sisterhood' at the diegetic level of the *Desengaños amorosos* sharply contrasts with the three metadiegetic narratives to be discussed in my next chapter: *El jardín engañoso*, *La inocencia castigada* and *Estragos que causa el vicio*; the novellas' varied instances of female cruelty are diametrically opposed to the frame's validation and reaffirmation of sisterly bonds. Thus, Zayas portrays two radically different forms of 'sisterhood', one of which barely deserves its name; such equivocation is a characteristic feature of her prose and defies complete reconciliation to any one viewpoint. Lastly, I will explore the relative propitiousness of the monastic conclusion experienced by Zayas's 'sisterhood' and expose its innovativeness in the light of its literary and philosophical context.

In the frame narrative of the *Desengaños amorosos*, a *sarao* is convened to celebrate the impending nuptials of Lisis and Diego, wedding festivities that were heralded at the close of the previous *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares*. The nuptials have been delayed by over one year due to Lisis's illness, provoked by the prospect of marrying a 'dueño extraño de su voluntad' (*DA* 115). Of course, Lisis loves Juan – not Diego; Juan's rejection of her in favour of her cousin (Lisarda) causes her first love-sickness, which was the pretext for the diegetic *sarao* of Zayas's *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares*. Thus, Lisis's maladies precede both social, storytelling gatherings. Within frame narratives, calamities, including plague in Boccaccio's *Decameron* (c. 1351) and flood in Marguerite de Navarre's *Heptaméron*, and consolatory storytelling, such as in Castillo Solórzano's *Los alivios de Casandra* (1640) and in Carvajal's *Navidades de Madrid* (1663), were prominent in the catalogue of conventional points of departure to initiate the oral narration of novellas.[60] Zayas cleverly uses love-sickness as her pretext for narration, allowing Lisis's woes to be stitched onto the fabric of women's stories of suffering, particularly in the *Desengaños amorosos*. Therefore, in using the *marco narrativo* both as a counterbalance to the lack of decisive or

[60] The framing consolatory circumstances differ in each instance: in Carvajal's case, consolation is for the recently widowed Lucrecia, while Castillo Solórzano's Casandra is entertained in order to lift the melancholy that has arisen due to her harassment by multiple suitors. See Peter N. Dunn, *Castillo Solórzano and the Decline of the Spanish Novel* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1952).

effective female solidarity in the tales themselves and as a framing context for her female protagonists' plights, Zayas proves herself more than adept at providing a bridge of unity between *marco* and novellas.

Zayas's frame tale and its eventual resolution act as a relatively idealised version of the occurrences that take place in the twenty novellas. William H. Clamurro detects the interrelatedness of Zayas's narrative levels and describes the *desengaños* as 'a kind of parallel and nightmarish projection of the seemingly civil and orderly aristocratic circle made up by Lisis and her friends'.[61] In the less brutal arena of the frame tale, women's suffering does not generally extend beyond their illnesses, and the physical violence of the ensuing *desengaños* is evident only when Isabel merges the two levels of storytelling. The frame narrative acquires characteristics typical of the novella, furthering a process that was gradually espoused by Zayas's contemporary, Castillo Solórzano. Amorous intrigues occur on both of Zayas's narrative planes and, furthermore, the principal themes arising in the tales are also evident in the frame: for instance, female alliances exist between the narrators, particularly among those who participate in relating the *desengaños*; the torment of *celos* is embodied by Lisis's love-sickness; Juan represents male fickleness and infidelity; and Lisarda acts treacherously against her fellow sex by appropriating Juan's affections. The diegetic and metadiegetic narrative levels are interlinked thematically; novellas and frame in Zayas's works are interlaced by analogy and are mutually dependent. Far from being a conventional or superfluous resource, her frame narrative creates a harmonising effect through its interplay with the novellas. Given the role of the twenty novellas in the frame drama of Lisis's vicissitudes, the interconnectedness of the narrative levels is indubitable; in this regard, Zayas's works more closely resemble the *One Thousand and One Nights* than the *Decameron*.[62] The distinction between diegetic levels in Zayas's works is continuously blurred; 'fiction' cannot be distinguished from 'fact', given that Isabel's tale is her own autobiography, Luisa's describes the lives of her ancestors, and most of the *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares* and all of the *desengaños* are alleged 'casos verdaderos' at Lisis's behest (*DA* 118).[63]

---

[61] William H. Clamurro, 'Ideological Contradiction and Imperial Decline: Toward a Reading of Zayas's *Desengaños amorosos*', *South Central Review*, 5 (1988) 2, 43–50 (p. 46).

[62] El Saffar makes a similar point, although her focus is the frame narrative in Zayas's first collection. See El Saffar, 'Ana/Lisis/Zayas'.

[63] Thus, *sarao* participants bear witness to the truth of the silenced – in particular, that of the silenced woman. In the Prologue to the *Heptaméron*, Marguerite de Navarre also promotes her novellas' authenticity: in a similar role to Zayas's Lisis, Parlamente suggests that 'each of us will tell a story which he has either witnessed himself, or which he has heard from somebody worthy of belief'. Marguerite de Navarre, *The Heptameron*, trans. by P. A. Chilton (London: Penguin, 1984), p. 69.

Felisa Guillén describes Zayas as achieving 'la perfecta fusión entre el marco y las historias narradas' by her second prose work.[64] Josephine Donovan explores Zayas's evolutionary advancement of the frame narrative, placing it in literary context: 'her innovations, especially in the frame plot, portend the novel, in which the frame plot becomes dominant, subsuming the inset stories'.[65] Thus, Zayas adopts the literary framing device of a 'marco integrador, diferente del marco-excusa, retórico y superfluo'; her *marco narrativo* represents more than an unconscious imitation of an Italian model.[66] Jenaro Talens contends that Cervantes's *Novelas ejemplares* (1613) is structurally organised or 'framed' by *El coloquio de los perros*, which organically unifies both realistic and fantastical currents flowing through his novellas. Cervantes was probably not averse to the use of a frame narrative for this innovatively unifying purpose; in the prologue to his *Novelas ejemplares*, he announces his intention to write *Semanas del jardín*, a title that hints at its intended, *Decameron*-inspired structural contents.

An intriguing shift in tone follows the ten-year hiatus between the publication of Zayas's two prose texts, in 1637 and 1647. As the title of her second collection would suggest, *desengaño* becomes pervasive. This emergent tendency tallies with José Antonio Maravall's theory of the widespread creation and diffusion of a spirit of worldly disillusionment in Baroque culture.[67] This spirit of disenchantment easily relates to the Counter-Reformation, which demanded spiritual reform and less worldly values. As a literary tendency, *desengaño* often magnified the obstacles of life and railed against the futility of human action. Calderón detects the perils inherent in this worldview and, quoting Daniel L. Heiple, 'in *La vida es sueño*, he undertook the further step of adding the call to action in the face of pessimistic nihilism'.[68] Within the distinct genre of the *novela cortesana*, Zayas may be interpreted as echoing Calderón's call to action in the face of paralysing *desengaño*. In Zayas's second prose work, at the metadiegetic level, there is a

---

[64] Felisa Guillén, 'El marco narrativo como espacio utópico en los *Desengaños amorosos* de María de Zayas', *Revista de literatura*, 60 (1998), 527–535 (p. 528). Similarly, José Miguel Oltra notes that 'una mayor cohesión [...] [o] integración del relato en el marco, y viceversa' markedly takes shape in Zayas's second prose collection with her introduction of Zelima. José Miguel Oltra, 'Zelima o el arte narrativo de María de Zayas', in *Formas breves del relato*, ed. by Yves Rene Fonquerne (Madrid: Publicaciones de la Universidad de Zaragoza, 1986), pp. 177–90 (pp. 183–4).

[65] Donovan, p. 43.

[66] Jenaro Talens, *La escritura como teatralidad: Acerca de Juan Ruiz, Santillana, Cervantes y el marco narrativo en la novela corta castellana del siglo XVII* (Valencia: Universidad de Valencia, 1977), p. 161.

[67] José Antonio Maravall, *Culture of the Baroque: Analysis of a Historical Structure*, trans. by Terry Cochran (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1986).

[68] Daniel L. Heiple, 'Life as Dream and the Philosophy of Disillusionment', in *The Prince in the Tower: Perceptions of 'La vida es sueño'*, ed. by Frederick A. de Armas (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 1993), pp. 118–131 (p. 131).

decreasing tendency for Zayas's female protagonists to enjoy serendipitous plot resolutions involving happy marriages; the heroines' only route to physical safety and fulfilment is via the convent. Parallel to these phenomena is a growing emphasis on female solidarity at Zayas's diegetic level. As the novellas and, more particularly, her frame narrative show, Zayas's female protagonists are specifically and incrementally summoned to action as represented by their decisive rejection of phallocentrism in favour of Gyn/affection. At this juncture, it seems apposite to examine claims of Zayas's proto-feminism in relation to the interplay of 'sisterhood' in her main narrative levels.

* * *

Interpretation of Zayas's texts from a feminist perspective is complicated by female protagonists' disloyalty to their same-sex relatives in her novellas, a point to which I will return in my second chapter. Brownlee highlights the fact that Lisis, the focal point of the two *saraos*, 'offers the most incriminating evidence that calls into question the validity of her unambiguous defence of women':[69] firstly, as narrator, her *Estragos que causa el vicio* centres upon the devious Florentina who plots the murder of her stepsister; secondly, as president of the *sarao*, her own motives are also hypocritically unexemplary as she manipulates the devoted Diego in order to wreak vengeance on the fickle Juan. M. V. de Lara's view that Zayas's writings make her 'la primera feminista teorizante que conscientemente comenta la situación del sexo femenino en España' – a common view among her ardent admirers – fails to explain the presence of several female protagonists who act as cunning victimisers who inflict suffering upon their fellow sex, such as the sisters cited in the following chapter.[70] Furthermore, Zayas's first prose collection, the *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares*, does not consistently espouse the rejection of the matrimonial ideal for women.

---

[69] Marina S. Brownlee, 'Postmodernism and the Baroque in María de Zayas', in *Cultural Authority in Golden Age Spain*, ed. by Marina S. Brownlee and Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht (Baltimore, Maryland: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), pp. 107–127 (p. 118).

[70] M. V. de Lara, 'De escritoras españolas II: María de Zayas y Sotomayor', *Bulletin of Spanish Studies*, 9 (1932), 31–37 (p. 31). Zayas's narrators' polemical statements and their detailing of women's suffering at the hands of men inspire many of her relatively recent defenders to endow her – somewhat repetitively – with such epithets as 'madre de una lucha por los derechos de la mujer' or 'una feminista apasionada'. See Char Prieto, 'María de Zayas o la forja de la novela de autora en los albores del nuevo milenio', in *Memoria de la palabra: Actas del VI congreso de la asociación internacional siglo de oro, Burgos – La Rioja, 15-19 de julio 2002*, ed. by María Luisa Lobato and Francisco Domínguez Matito (Madrid: Iberoamericana, 2004), pp. 1477–1483 (p. 1477); Juan Luis Alborg, *Historia de la literatura española*, 5 vols (Madrid: Editorial Gredos, 1966–96), II (1967), 500.

Brownlee perceptively argues that Zayas refuses to allow her texts to conform 'to an unambiguous causal relationship of female misfortune with the abuses of a predatory androcentric society'.[71] I agree with the suggestion inherent in this viewpoint that, in Zayas's writings, equivocation is especially foregrounded – a feature of Baroque literature. Polysemy is a characteristic of her writing; several ambiguous, conflicting and contradictory discourses are included, and the conventional feminist discourse that blames women's misfortunes on men is only one of these discourses. In his analysis of the Spanish literary Baroque, John R. Beverley detects that the equivocal quality inherent in its constituent works serves to facilitate the articulation of multiple discourses, including subversive subtexts, and lauds 'its ability to engage, through ambiguities and possibilities of plural readings, the attention and conviction of its audiences'.[72] When these Baroque characteristics are ignored, a univocal misreading of Zayas's texts ensues.

The inclusion of both extremely positive and negative portrayals of 'sisterhood' reveals an equivocation in Zayas's writing that is worthy of analysis. In contrast to the three tales of perfidious sisterhood – *El jardín engañoso*, *La inocencia castigada* and *Estragos que causa el vicio* – the frame story evolves into a feminist celebration of the bonds of near-sisterhood. Within the novellas mentioned, familial bonds that should inspire the women to protect and to remain loyal to a same-sex relative are disregarded. Susan C. Griswold makes a crucial point that 'neither feminism nor antifeminism, but rather the conflict between them is clearly a major theme', and the feminist-antifeminist debate is an important structuring element in Zayas's prose; like the *Heptaméron*, these works are dialogical in nature.[73] Zayas's feminism must be regarded as a *topos*; such feminism is not political but literary. The disparity between the conduct of the sister-protagonists in the aforementioned tales and that of the 'sisters' in the frame tale illustrates Zayas's calculatedly problematic use of conflicting *topoi* in her prose. Allegations regarding Zayas's proto-feminism stem from a partial, selective reading of Zayas's prose.[74] Finally,

---

[71] Brownlee, *The Cultural Labyrinth of María de Zayas*, p. 11. In a similar vein, Díez Borque observes that 'es la contradicción el signo fundamental del feminismo de Zayas'. José María Díez Borque, 'El feminismo de doña María de Zayas', in *La mujer en el teatro y la novela del siglo XVII: Actas del II coloquio del grupo de estudios sobre teatro español (G.E.S.T.E.), Toulouse 16–17 noviembre 1978* (Toulouse: Institut d'études hispaniques et hispano-américaines, Université de Toulouse-Le Mirail), pp. 60–88 (p. 64).

[72] John R. Beverley, 'On the Concept of the Spanish Literary Baroque', in *Culture and Control in Counter-Reformation Spain*, ed. by Anne J. Cruz and Mary Elizabeth Perry (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1992), pp. 216–230 (p. 227).

[73] Susan C. Griswold, 'Topoi and Rhetorical Distance: The "Feminism" of María de Zayas', *Revista de estudios hispánicos*, 14 (1980) 2, 97–116 (p. 100).

[74] Salvador Montesa Peydro, *Texto y contexto en la narrativa de María de Zayas* (Madrid: Dirección General de la Juventud y Promoción Sociocultural, 1981), p. 91.

Matthew D. Stroud makes an important point that is relevant to critics' claims regarding Zayas's feminist propensity:

> Even if one were to take the narrator to be "doña María de Zayas [y] Sotomayor" throughout, it is too great a leap to assume that what is written necessarily and accurately represents Zayas's everyday, non-literary thoughts and feelings, and that there is no fictional content to these opinions at all. Zayas clearly exists as the ultimate author of the work, but we cannot assume that she and the narrator are identical.[75]

Too little is known about Zayas's life to make reliable connections between the novellas and her own experience. Given that her diegetic narrators approach their material in distinct manners, reduction to one literary voice – the author's – would deprive the novellas of much of their literary worth. In the next section, I will discuss Zayas's frame-tale convent 'solution' – a conclusion that her extradiegetic narrator ultimately asserts to be 'el más felice que se pudo dar' (*DA* 510).

* * *

In contrast with the novellas' exploration of the betrayal of sisterly bonds, positive representation of 'sisterhood' emerges as an integral theme in the frame tale of the *Desengaños amorosos*. Lisis stipulates that only women are to narrate in this, the second set of soirées; during the previous story-telling celebrations, there was an equal distribution of male and female narrators. Thus, men are displaced from their traditional position at the centre of the diegetic scene and its discourse; in Derrida's terms, phallogocentrism is sidelined. In the frame narrative, Zayas portrays the milieu of Lisis's female peer group in a plausible manner: due to female geographical immobility, women are limited primarily to the home or neighbourhood and to wider interactions at accepted, sociable occasions of dances, visits and evening gatherings.[76] As women dominate the second storytelling scene, 'an initial move toward the reappropriation of discourse by and for women' is executed.[77] Williamsen underscores the radical implications of this step: 'the entire asymmetrical structure of the second volume, which privileges a gynocentric orientation, ironically represents an inversion of patriarchal order'.[78] Increasingly, this textual world becomes a

---

[75] Matthew D. Stroud, 'Artistry and Irony in María de Zayas's *La inocencia castigada*', in *Zayas and Her Sisters, 2: Essays on Novelas by 17th-Century Spanish Women*, ed. by Gwyn E. Campbell and Judith A. Whitenack (New York: Global Publications, Binghampton University, 2001), pp. 79–95 (pp. 91–2).

[76] Cavallo and Cerutti emphasise the crucial importance, in early modern Europe, of the peer group's influence over the early, premarital stages of heterosexual relationships evolving among its members. Sandra Cavallo and Simona Cerutti, 'Female Honour and the Social Control of Reproduction in Piedmont between 1600 and 1800', in *Sex and Gender in Historical Perspective*, ed. by Edward Muir and Guido Ruggiero, trans. by Margaret A. Gallucci, Mary M. Gallucci and Carole C. Gallucci (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990), pp. 73–109.

[77] Ordóñez, p. 7.

[78] Williamsen, 'Engendering Interpretation', p. 647.

feminine one. Lisis temporarily safeguards her female companions' welfare by ensuring their control over discourse. The inclusion of several new storytellers in the *desengaños* is significant. Some additional narrators include Lisis's new neighbours, Luisa and Francisca, who are sisters; thus, sisters are focussed upon even before the *desengaños* commence. As I have shown earlier in this chapter, Luisa's *Mal presagio casar lejos* illustrates the suppression of sisterhood and, progressively, uxoricide claims the lives of the female protagonists with few exceptions.

Isabel is one of the key, newly introduced narrators in the *Desengaños amorosos*. Initially, she is disguised as Zelima, a Moorish slave given to Lisis by her aunt. Lisis bestows on Zelima the honour of telling the first *desengaño* and endows her with further import by entrusting her with control of the music interspersed between novellas. Lisis and Zelima are described as sharing a close friendship, unhindered by class or religious difference: 'Con esta hermosa mora se alegró tanto Lisis, que gozándose con sus habilidades y agrados, casi se olvidaba de la enfermedad, cobrándose tanto amor, que no era como de señora y esclava, sino de dos queridas hermanas' (*DA* 117). As I have already noted, Zelima's prominence from the start of the *Desengaños amorosos* brings Gyn/affection to the foreground.[79] The foundation of the women's friendship has surpassed their society's ordinary constraints founded on religious and class difference. It is through Zelima's curative tenderness that Lisis fully recovers from being discarded by Juan in favour of her cousin, Lisarda.

Lisis's nomination of Zelima as the first narrator catalyses revelations regarding the cause of the latter's bouts of melancholy. When Zelima relates her autodiegetic *desengaño*, she reveals her 'real' identity as Isabel Fajardo. Isabel plays a pivotal role in the frame narrative when her example eventually incites Lisis to shun an unwanted marriage in favour of female companionship. Upon revealing herself as Lisis's social equal, Isabel's *desengaño* readily becomes a model for Lisis, the resolution of which Lisis imitates. Indeed, Voigt suggests that 'Lisis's own disillusionment would surely not have been as

[79] Mercedes Maroto Camino notes that, for Zayas and the dramatist Ana Caro, 'female friendship was [...] a reality as well as a literary subject'. In his *La garduña de Sevilla y anzuelo de las bolsas* (1642), Castillo Solórzano remarks on the women's companionship in Madrid: 'Acompáñala [a Zayas] en Madrid doña Ana Caro de Mallén, dama de nuestra Sevilla'. Like Zayas, the course of Ana Caro's life is largely unknown. It is thought that she was born early in the seventeenth century in Granada, spending much of her life in Seville. She was acclaimed for her poetic *relaciones* and *comedias*. Castillo Solórzano, pp. 184–5; Mercedes Maroto Camino, 'María de Zayas and Ana Caro: The Space of Woman's Solidarity in the Spanish Golden Age', *Hispanic Review*, 67 (1999), 1–16 (p. 3).

complete without having first been deceived by Isabel'.[80] We witness the profound emotional effect that Isabel's revelation has on her: '¡Ay señora mía!, ¿y cómo habéis permitido tenerme tanto tiempo engañada, teniendo por mi esclava a la que debía ser y es señora mía?', Lisis exclaims, 'con mil hermosas lágrimas y tiernos sollozos' (*DA* 167). Vollendorf suggests that Isabel also becomes a narrative model for each of the diegetic narrators of the *desengaños*, particularly for Lisis and her *Estragos que causa el vicio*:

> The important placement of Isabel's tale as first paves the way for the other women narrators to speak, yet none will speak from the "I" in the same way that she does [...] As narrator of the final tale [*Estragos que causa el vicio*], Lisis gives over the narration to her protagonist, and thus the collection ends as it began, with woman speaking of her body and of herself.[81]

This represents another 'autobiography' of sorts.

Isabel is the axis upon which the themes of friendship and sisterhood revolve. By bridging narrative levels, as both metadiegetic character and diegetic narrator, she foregrounds the evolving complexity of Zayas's structure. In her novella, she narrates the evolution of three imperfect female friendships in tandem with the pursuit of her dishonour's reparation. Isabel's narration, in effect, brings about both her own and Lisis's 'release' from their phallocentric society. To borrow Derrida's neologism once more, Lisis's eventual declaration issues an implicit challenge to phallogocentric discourse. Like the female protagonists in Zayas's *comedia*, *La traición en la amistad*, Lisis and Isabel construct 'una estructura narrativa alternativa mediante la voz', counteracting prescribed female silence and passivity.[82] Once Isabel reaches the end of her audacious, transnational journey and relates *La esclava de su amante*, she ceases to be 'enslaved' to her rapist; circumventing her victimisation, she engineers her own emancipation and, perhaps more importantly, she emboldens other women to follow her example. Because Isabel defines herself as a slave, her remarkable agency is easily overlooked; in Charnon-Deutsch's terminology of the marketplace, 'by selling herself repeatedly into slavery, Isabel is also subverting the role of commodity, usurping instead that of producer'.[83] By narrating her life-story, Isabel cements her own increasing empowerment, which enables her to choose to become a nun. In Irigaray's terms, Isabel speaks 'so as to escape from [phallocentric]

---

[80] Voigt, p. 226.

[81] Lisa Vollendorf, 'Fleshing out Feminism in Early Modern Spain: María de Zayas's Corporeal Politics', *Revista canadiense de estudios hispánicos*, 32 (1997) 1, 87–108 (p. 102).

[82] John P. Gabriele, 'El mundo al revés: la construcción de una narrativa femenina en *La traición en la amistad* de María de Zayas y Sotomayor, in *Actas del XIV Congreso de la Asociación Internacional de Hispanistas, New York, 16–21 de julio de 2001: II Literatura española siglos XVI y XVII*, ed. by Isaías Lerner, Robert Nival and Alejandro Alonso (Newark: Juan de la Cuesta, 2001), 239–245 (p. 244).

[83] Charnon-Deutsch, p. 122.

compartments, their schemas, their distinctions and oppositions: virginal/deflowered, pure/impure, innocent/experienced'.[84]

The extradiegetic narrator of the 'Introducción' enigmatically intimates that, during Lisis's convalescence, she has begun to formulate an alternative scheme to marrying Diego: 'tuvo lugar su divino entendimiento de obrar en su alma nuevos propósitos, si bien a nadie lo daba a entender, guardando para su tiempo la disposición de su deseo' (*DA* 116). Thus, the extradiegetic narrator creates an atmosphere of suspense and a complicit bond with the reader. Felisa Guillén describes Lisis's fever as 'el vehículo para la transformación del personaje principal', supplementing its role as a pretext for narration; it is through illness, which Isabel symbolically helps to cure, that Lisis experiences an epiphany.[85] Lisis initiates a Machiavellian strategy through her inspired decision to host a second set of storytelling soirées; orchestration of this carnivalesque tribunal has the surreptitious purpose of being an elaborate and intellectual manoeuvre to extricate her from the quandary of an unwanted betrothal. After Isabel abandons her disguise and reveals her intention to become a nun, Lisis is prompted to realise her own incipient wishes by joining Isabel in the convent. Through her masterful change of plan, Lisis avoids an unwanted marriage to Diego (an undesirable prospect that was at least partially motivated by her wish to take vengeance on Juan) and fosters female companionship with minimal societal disapprobation. The portrayal of characters enacting life-changes in a frame narrative is an evolutionary innovation towards the genesis of the novel.

Female friendship or 'sisterhood', represented by Isabel and Lisis, can come to complete fruition after Isabel announces her wish in her tale's revelatory apogee: 'entregarme a mi divino Esposo' (*DA* 167). The amorous heterosexual structure disintegrates with the final resolution; unlike Isabel, Lisis does not become a "bride of Christ". Raymond contends that Christianity 'transformed the Gyn/affective integrity of the pre-Christian loose woman by symbolically heterosexualising the nun as the "bride of Christ" in its liturgy and traditions of prayer'.[86] Lisis, however, opts for the monastic life whilst rejecting the 'heterosexualised' role of Christ's "bride". In Sherry M. Velasco's words, this 'would prove to be a mere replacement of the marital structure in secular society [...] Through

[84] Irigaray, *This Sex Which is Not One*, p. 212.
[85] Guillén, p. 530.
[86] Raymond, p. 75. Unlike many nuns, Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz (1648/51–1695) seldom employed the bride of Christ metaphor; as Georgina Dopico Black observes, she 'was not – and never intended to be – a *perfecta casada* to any husband, Christ included'. Georgina Dopico Black, *Perfect Wives, Other Women: Adultery and Inquisition in Early Modern Spain* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001), p. 170.

Lisis's shocking decision, the text offers a glimpse of a possible feminine utopian vision'.[87] Lisis's rejection of the nun's vows may also be explained by the greater freedom that this status would entail.[88] By selecting a conventual space, Lisis accords primacy to what Raymond describes as the 'primary locus for the long-term institutionalisation of female friendship under the aegis of sisterhood'.[89] There, a spiritual communion can flourish between Lisis and her companions, expanding the meaning of their affection. This manifestation of Gyn/affection does not merely have a shared heritage of victimisation by men as its basis.

The closeness of the bond between Lisis and Isabel/Zelima is implied from the outset by their physical proximity: Lisis 'apenas se hallaba sin ella [Zelima]' (*DA* 117). On the second night of storytelling, continuing in the same manner after Isabel's disclosure of her identity, Lisis 'traía de la mano a doña Isabel' (*DA* 259). Likewise, on the third and final night, Lisis 'traía a doña Isabel de la mano, y de la otra a doña Estefanía', who is another frame narrator and a nun (*DA* 404). On this occasion, Lisis and Isabel are dressed in an identical fashion; significantly, Lisis never wears the wedding clothes that Diego has chosen. Diego, 'juzgando a disfavor o desprecio el no haberse puesto ninguna cosa de ello [lo que él había enviado]', recognises the non-verbal message that Lisis's clothing communicates (*DA* 405). Zayas meticulously describes the dazzling, white attire of Lisis and Isabel:

> Venían las hermosas damas con sayas enteras de raso blanco, con muchos botones de diamantes, que hacían hermosos visos, verdugados y abaninos; los cabellos, en lugar de cintas, trenzados con albísimas perlas, y en lo alto de los tocados, por remate de ellos, dos coronas de azucenas de diamantes, cuyas verdes hojas eran de esmeraldas [...]; cinta y collar, de los mismos diamantes, y en las mangas de punta de las sayas enteras, muchas azucenas de la misma forma que las que traían en la cabeza, y en lo alto de las coronas, en forma de airones, muchos mazos de garzotas y marinetes, más albos que la no pisada nieve. (*DA* 405)

The virginal hue of their costumes and the fashioning of their jewels in the form of lilies, a Medieval icon of Mary Immaculate, declare Lisis's intention on a symbolic level. The whiteness of the two ladies' dazzling costumes identifies them with Estefanía's 'hábitos blancos y escapulario azul, como religiosa de la Concepción' (*DA* 404). Their Gyn/affection is inscribed in sartorial codes. Conceptionist nuns, like Zayas's Estefanía, are dedicated to the celebration of Mary's Immaculate Conception and wear distinctive habits of white and blue. Beatriz de Silva (c. 1424–1491), a Portuguese noblewoman,

---

[87] Sherry M. Velasco, 'Contradiction, Control and Utopia in María de Zayas', *Journal of Hispanic Philology*, 19 (1994–5) 1–3, 201–212 (p. 206).
[88] Kristine Ibsen, *Women's Spiritual Autobiography in Colonial Spanish America* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1999), pp. 3–4.
[89] Raymond, p. 78.

founded this religious community in Toledo, after Mary appeared to her wearing the colours of the Conceptionist habit.[90] Elizabeth A. Lehfeldt notes that this is the only example in Spain of a religious congregation founded by a woman before the mid-sixteenth century.[91] Like the case of Isabel's ever-changing attire, Lisis's varied costumes outwardly reflect internal decisions and transformations. Vollendorf advocates the reading of Lisis's and Isabel's bodies as texts; the potential for the formation of a mutually beneficial 'sisterhood' is 'written' on their bodies through their white garments, gestures and physical well-being.[92] Thus, it is unsurprising that, at the close of the second set of storytelling festivities, Lisis declares her intention to join Estefanía and Isabel in the convent: 'tomo por amparo el retiro de un convento [...] y así, con mi querida doña Isabel, a quien pienso acompañar mientras viviere, me voy a salvar de los engaños de los hombres' (*DA* 509). She and Isabel make Estefanía's Conceptionist convent their new home 'con mucho gusto' (*DA* 510).

The 'transformative power' of Isabel's friendship incites her companions or 'sisters' to take decisive action.[93] As María del Pilar Palomo notes, interpolated, metadiegetic storytelling effects diegetic metamorphoses, bringing about 'una decisión del personaje principal de la trama general [...] causa determinante del cierre total de su estructura'.[94] Lisis's choice is not only based on a decision to preserve herself from victimisation by men, but signals a positive move toward the formation of another type of bonding: it is the company of women, particularly that of Isabel, that Lisis seeks.[95] Zayas's frame conclusion prioritises female solidarity instead of 'the masculine idea of order epitomized by the quasi-cosmic social harmony of the *comedia*'s happy marriages'.[96] Most unusually for literature of the time, Lisis and Isabel elect to reject matrimonial prospects in order to

---

[90] Pearl is another attribute of the Virgin Mary, and a seventeenth-century biography refers to Beatriz as *La margarita escondida*, the hidden pearl. The white and blue colours of the Conceptionist habit are symbols of purity, although blue can have the interesting double meaning of jealousy. At the start of the *saraos*, the love-sick Lisis, 'vestida de la color de sus celos', wears blue (*NAE* 170). In my fifth chapter, I will describe the consequences of Isabel of Portugal's jealousy of Beatriz de Silva. Nancy Mayberry, 'The Mythological and Astrological Subtexts of *La fundadora de la Santa Concepción*', in *A Star-Crossed Golden Age: Myth and the Spanish Comedia*, ed. by Frederick A. de Armas (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 1998), pp. 75–88 (p. 79 & p. 88, note 13).

[91] Elizabeth A. Lehfeldt, *Religious Women in Golden Age Spain: The Permeable Cloister* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), p. 164.

[92] Lisa Vollendorf, 'Reading the Body Imperilled: Violence against Women in María de Zayas', *Hispania*, 78 (May 1995) 2, 272–282. Here, I redirect Vollendorf's focus on how women's bodies negatively epitomise the detrimental effects of heterosexual relationships to a positive notion of Gyn/affection through the reading of women's bodies as texts.

[93] Compte, 'The *mora* as Agent of Power and Authority', p. 57.

[94] María del Pilar Palomo, *La novela cortesana: Forma y estructura* (Barcelona: Planeta, 1976), p. 73.

[95] Ordóñez makes a similar point.

[96] Mercedes Maroto Camino, 'Spindles for Swords: the Re/Dis-covery of María de Zayas' Presence', *Hispanic Review*, 62 (Autumn 1994) 4, 519–536 (p. 530).

preserve their friendship. Lisis leaves the soirée, 'tomando por la mano a la hermosa doña Isabel, y a su prima doña Estefanía por la otra', demonstrating her Gyn/affection once again (*DA* 510). Lisis neglects to mention any religious motivation for this decision.

It seems noteworthy that, henceforth, Lisis and her companions live in a convent belonging to the Conceptionist Order. One of Zayas's motives for repeatedly mentioning this order may be connected to the strategic issue of patronage. Zayas dedicated her *Desengaños amorosos* to Jaime Fernández de Silva, eldest son of Rodrigo Sarmiento de Silva, Duke Consort of Híjar, who belonged to an illustrious family of writers and patrons. Armon notes that Rodrigo was a generous patron of literature and that Zayas is likely to have coincided with him at Madrid literary academies.[97] It is my contention that these Dukes of Híjar considered themselves to be descendants of Beatriz de Silva, a celebrated historical and religious figure.[98] Beatriz's life would have been widely known to seventeenth-century Spaniards as the subject of several *comedias de santos* that have been attributed to Lope de Vega, Tirso de Molina, and to Blas Fernández de Mesa.[99] Furthermore, for a twenty-two-year period from 1643 onwards, Philip IV corresponded with Sor María de Jesús de Ágreda (1602–1665), a contemporary Conceptionist nun and mystic; Rodrigo de Silva was another of her epistolary correspondents. One can conjecture that Zayas knew of her, given their mutual contact with Rodrigo de Silva and family. By assigning prominence to the Conceptionist Order (and, indirectly, to its founder), Zayas would have ingratiated herself with several key figures in the literary, religious and political arenas of her time.

When Lisis, Isabel and their mothers eventually join Estefanía in the Conceptionist convent, they become 'sisters' in that community. Lisis's rejection of marriage to Diego

---

[97] See Shifra Armon, *Picking Wedlock: Women and the Courtship Novel in Spain* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2002), pp. 153–162. As further evidence of their acquaintanceship, Ramón Ezquerra Abadía unearths similarities between examples of Zayas's and Rodrigo's poetic works. As Zayas's dedicatee, Jaime Fernández was a less controversial choice than his father, who was exiled from Court from 1644 until 1646. In August 1648, after Zayas's *Desengaños amorosos* were published, Rodrigo was famously arrested and charged with attempting to overthrow Philip IV, spending the rest of his life in prison. See Ramón Ezquerra Abadía, *La conspiración del Duque de Híjar (1648)* (Madrid: [n. pub.], 1934).

[98] Beatriz de Silva's father was Ruy Gómez de Silva, *alcaide* of Campo Mayor. Citing Félix Lopes, Enrique Gutiérrez observes that, 'para mayor confusión, hasta sucede que vivía por aquel mismo tiempo otro Ruy Gómez de Silva, señor de Ulme y Chamusca, que debía de ser pariente remoto del padre de Beatriz'. This other Ruy Gómez de Silva was an ancestor of Zayas's patron. See Enrique Gutiérrez, *Santa Beatriz de Silva y origen de la Orden de la Inmaculada Concepción*, 2nd edn (Burgos: Aldecoa, 1976), p. 33; James M. Boyden, *The Courtier and the King: Ruy Gómez de Silva, Philip II, and the Court of Spain* (Berkeley: University of California Press, c.1995).

[99] See María Isabel Barbeito Carneiro, 'Recreación dramática de tres santas portuguesas', *Via Spiritus*, 10 (2003), 183–212. Beatriz's canonisation process began in 1636, which may have lent impetus to this literary output.

for the female space of the convent was echoed later by the decision of Madame de Lafayette's heroine (who rejects her lover, Nemours) in *La Princesse de Clèves* (1678).[100] The frame narrative advocates women's mutual dependence and the convent route to their shared emancipation. It presents us with the strongest instance of the bonds of 'sisterhood', although its primary protagonists (Lisis and Isabel) are linked by neither blood nor marriage; in fact, all they required were the three nights of the *desengaños* soirées to seal the bonds of their new sisterhood. There is a deliberate sense of fluidity between the diegetic characters, moving together to the convent, which is reminiscent of Irigaray's images of women. Mary Jacobus uncovers in women's writing 'a plurality contrasted to the unified "I" which falls as a dominating phallic shadow across the male page'.[101] Jacobus echoes the unease of Virginia Woolf regarding the status of the first-person pronoun:

> It was a straight dark bar, a shadow shaped something like the letter "I" [...] I respect and admire that "I" from the bottom of my heart. But – here I turned a page or two, looking for something or other – the worst of it is that in the shadow of the letter "I" all is shapeless as mist. Is that a tree? No, it is a woman. But...she has not a bone in her body.[102]

This powerful subjective presence could not accurately convey the complex plurality of women's existence. As crafted by Zayas, the frame-narrative resolution of women's monastic exodus bears the alternative imprint of this pluralistic, female approach to writing. Next, I will probe Zayas's allusions to occurrences beyond the limits of her text and examine the relative success of her frame 'sisterhood', following the women's decision to abandon their secular surroundings.

* * *

The social gathering in Zayas's frame narrative marks a hiatus between normal obligations, which is made possible by its principal participants' aristocratic class. Clamurro notes that, within this privileged space, 'the usual rules of power and supremacy can be briefly

---

[100] Of course, Lisis and the princess have different motives for choosing the convent. The latter, once widowed, refuses to remarry due to the misery that she would experience should Nemours' love wane, and chooses the convent without mention of the potential formation of 'sisterly' bonds.

[101] Constance Wilkins applies this theory to *comedias* by both Zayas and Sor Juana. Somewhat similarly, Gardiner observes that, in women's writing, female protagonists 'tend to dissolve and merge into each other', while male writing typically splits characters into disjunct fragments. See Gardiner, p. 355; Mary Jacobus, 'The Difference of View', in *Women Writing and Writing about Women*, ed. by Mary Jacobus (London: Croom Helm, 1979), pp. 10–21 (p. 19); Constance Wilkins, 'Subversion Through Comedy?: Two Plays by Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz and María de Zayas', in *The Perception of Women in Spanish Theatre of the Golden Age*, ed. by Anita K. Stoll and Dawn L. Smith (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 1991), pp. 107–119.

[102] Virginia Woolf, *A Room of One's Own and Three Guineas*, ed. by Morag Shiach (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), p. 130.

suspended, in the sense that the women will "rule" and will tell the stories'.[103] Like Scheherazade's stay of execution, the utopian authority of the female voice will only endure for as long as the stories are told. As stated previously, climactic events during Isabel's novella and the frame narrative of the *Desengaños amorosos* take place in women's homes during Carnival time; this, and the fact that the storytelling takes place only at night, suggest that this is what Stephanie Merrim describes as a 'temporary Arcadia – a liminal space, a limbo'.[104] Nevertheless, Natalie Zemon Davis observes that 'play with the concept of the unruly woman is partly a chance for temporary release from traditional and stable hierarchy; but it is *also* part and parcel of conflict over efforts to change the basic distribution of power within the society'.[105] The monastic frame resolution creates a more permanent form of female-empowered community for Lisis and her companions. The 'temporary release' or upside-down world of Lisis's second *sarao* yields criticism of the established social order and harbours imminent change; afterwards, it is not 'righted' predictably through matrimony. Instead, the emergent frame resolution creates a secure monastic community for Lisis, Isabel and their 'sisters'. In Christian liturgy, Carnival immediately precedes Lent, which anticipates the text's monastic conclusion. Furthermore, Jehenson and Welles note that 'the cycle of carnival/lent/resurrection creates a sacred hiatus within the profane world of male/female relations in the *Desengaños*, effecting a space wherein the contemporary relations of power can be reversed and where discursive positions can be negotiated'.[106]

Zayas, with an insistent and near-defensive tone, defines this form of convent-sisterhood as a happy resolution to Lisis's predicament: 'No es trágico fin, sino el más felice que se pudo dar' (*DA* 510). This is an ambiguous statement, which may mean that the frame's conclusion is the best possible one – under the circumstances. By proposing this as 'el [fin] más felice que se pudo dar', Zayas envisions a viable alternative to marriage and/or femicide; she chooses a denouement that is sanctioned by the honour-coded order, albeit selecting it in a manner that favours female bonds. Her novella collections close with an optimistic portrayal of an alternative 'sisterhood' in the convent. The reader is aware that

---

[103] Clamurro, 'Ideological Contradiction and Imperial Decline', p. 46.

[104] Stephanie Merrim, *Early Modern Women's Writing and Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1999), p. 117.

[105] Her argument overtly contradicts the usual conclusion that carnivalesque reversal of the roles of the sexes in its literary and festive forms ultimately reinforces the social order, instead of undermining it. Zayas's carnivalesque frame inversion of the sexes is a literary illustration of this innovative viewpoint. Natalie Zemon Davis, 'Women on Top: Symbolic Sexual Inversion and Political Disorder in Early Modern Europe', in *The Reversible World: Symbolic Inversion in Art and Society*, ed. by Barbara A. Babcock (London: Cornell University Press, 1978), pp. 147–190 (pp. 154–5). (Italics are Zemon Davis's own.)

[106] Jehenson and Welles, 'María de Zayas's Wounded Women', p. 178.

the only evidence of the good fortune of Lisis's fate is the frame narrator's insistence that it is *felice*; with the narrator's categorical assertion, we are encouraged – even obliged – to accept that this enigmatic ending is a triumphant reinvention of sisterly ties. While this narrative assertion occurs, there is no narrative representation of Lisis's life in the convent; furthermore, this female space has no socially representative reality in any of Zayas's tales.[107] It is interesting that Zayas refrains from representing her ideal 'solution', monastic existence, which inevitably leads the reader to elaborate imaginatively upon her assertion regarding its felicity; figuratively, we are compelled to complete the felicitous scene that Zayas has sketched by adding our own paints and brush strokes.

Electa Arenal's discussion of Spanish nuns in the seventeenth century supports Zayas's suggestion that her conclusion is *felice*, describing it as 'a catalyst for autonomy'.[108] She explores the lives of Venerable Madre Isabel de Jesús (1586–1648) and Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz to demonstrate that, despite the rigours of monastic life, there was some allowance for variation and heterogeneity. The convent offered many women the most effective means to elude proximate masculine authority and a space where the female body did not necessarily present itself as an overwhelming obstacle to the furtherance of learning. The most salient male intervention was in the shape of the confessor. Bárbara Mujica notes a discrepancy between the idealistic picture that Zayas paints of convent life and the seventeenth-century reality: 'Aunque esta imagen del convento se aparta de la realidad, ya que en las casas religiosas las mujeres seguían sujetas a las voluntades de confesores y directores espirituales, parece representar un ideal por parte de Zayas'.[109] Recent studies of the Golden-Age 'teatro conventual' reveal the monastic reality to be less than austere; these dramas were regularly performed in Spanish convents, usually by the nuns, to

---

[107] In contrast, Galdós, in *Fortunata y Jacinta*, playfully names two of its chapters *Las Micaelas, por fuera* and *Las Micaelas, por dentro*. In the former, he describes the convent's buildings and the façade observed by characters, such as Maximiliano Rubín, who belong to the secular world. The second chapter describes the 'reality' of its diverse female occupants. In the case of an especially memorable character, Mauricia la Dura, the convent 'solution' only aggravates her afflictions; once her unruly behaviour escalates after consuming the contents of a stolen bottle of cognac, she is ultimately expelled from the convent 'descalza, las melenas sueltas, la mirada ardiente y extraviada, y todas las apariencias, en fin, de una loca'. Even in the seventeenth century, however, the convent was not uniformly an unexamined place of female refuge, as demonstrated by the travails that Tirso's Juana suffers, in his *La santa Juana* trilogy of plays, at the hands of her envious superior. Benito Pérez Galdós, *Fortunata y Jacinta: Dos historias de casadas*, 4 vols (Buenos Aires: Editorial Losada, 1942), II, 218.

[108] Electa Arenal, 'The Convent as Catalyst for Autonomy: Two Hispanic Nuns of the Seventeenth Century', in *Women in Hispanic Literature: Icons and Fallen Idols*, ed. by Beth Miller (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), p. 149. For similar views with outlines of the complex realities of Spanish nuns' lives, see María-Milagros Rivera and others, *Por mi alma os digo: La vida escrita por las mujeres,* 4 vols, directed by Anna Caballé (Barcelona: Lumen, 2004), IV.

[109] Bárbara Mujica, *Women Writers of Early Modern Spain: Sophia's Daughters* (London: Yale University Press, 2004), p. 132.

entertain and to educate the Sisters and to celebrate important ceremonial and liturgical events.[110] The nuns often wrote these plays; the extant works of Sor Marcela de San Félix (1605–1687), the daughter of Lope de Vega, contain six *coloquios espirituales*.[111]

Ultimately, many seventeenth-century women who, in Woolf's words, found 'a room of their own', did so in the convent. Nina Cox Davis highlights the convent's potential as a new 'frame' to preserve the relative empowerment that female frame characters have gained temporarily through their discursive acts at Lisis's *sarao*:

> The alternative, conventual solution proferred at the end of the *Desengaños amorosos* [...] is anticipated [...] as a represented contextual frame within which the heterologic complexity of female discourse may hope to find its most comprehensive audience and to have real efficacy in shaping a community of women who, like Lisis, establish their identities through acts of discourse.[112]

Lisis's very name acts as an onomastic clue, *lysis* being the Greek term for 'release'; by selecting this evocative name for her principal protagonist, Zayas provides the reader with an apt indicator of Lisis's eventual self-release from the confines of a social order that is ruled stringently by the honour code and patriarchal values.[113]

In contrast, Zayas intimates that misfortune may await those frame characters who fail to imitate the life-trajectories of Lisis and her 'sisters'. Lisis is 'separated' from her cousin Lisarda through their rivalry for Juan's affection; from the outset of the *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares*, we are told of Lisis's love-sickness and of Lisarda's triumph, 'contenta como estimada, soberbia como querida, y falsa como competidora' (*NAE* 168). This obstruction to the cousins' friendship remains until the end of the *Desengaños amorosos*, where there is no reference to Lisarda during Lisis's acts of 'sisterhood'. Ironically, Lisarda marries 'un caballero forastero, muy rico' instead of Juan, which distances her further from female friends (*DA* 510). We are led to surmise from this sparse, albeit implicative, detail that Lisarda's motivation is at least partly pecuniary. It is unclear whether or not some belated measure of loyalty to Lisis, her cousin, has incited Lisarda to abandon Juan. In a sense, the all-important end-result is unaffected by Lisarda's choice of husband: female friendship

---

[110] See M. Carmen Alarcón, 'El teatro en los conventos femeninos de Sevilla durante el Siglo de Oro: un *festejo cómico* de 1678', in *Memoria de la palabra: Actas del VI congreso de la asociación internacional siglo de oro, Burgos – La Rioja, 15-19 de julio 2002*, ed. by María Luisa Lobato and Francisco Domínguez Matito (Madrid: Iberoamericana, 2004), pp. 183–192.

[111] Electa Arenal and Stacey Schlau, *Untold Sisters: Hispanic Nuns in Their Own Words*, trans. by Amanda Powell (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1989), pp. 243–4.

[112] Nina Cox Davis, 'Re-framing Discourse: Women Before their Public in María de Zayas', *Hispanic Review*, 71 (Summer 2003) 3, 325–344 (p. 342).

[113] 'Lisis' and its associated form 'Lisi' are routinely used as names for beloved female figures in poetry of the Golden Age, Quevedo's verse being a notable example. Also, Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz addresses her friend and patron, the Countess of Paredes, Marquise de la Laguna, in poetry as 'Lisi' or as 'Lísida'.

takes precedence for Lisis, while Lisarda compounds her isolation from the women by selecting the other honourable option of matrimony. Lisarda's fate appears ominous when the graphic portrayal of exogamy's fatal consequences for Spanish brides in *Mal presagio casar lejos* is recalled; Zayas tellingly omits assurances regarding the happiness of her fate, contrasting with her affirmations regarding those women who favour Gyn/affection over matrimony. While Lisarda marries, Lisis and her companions elect not to do so; to paraphrase Irigaray, the 'commodities' refuse to go to the 'market'.

A question of some import is whether this Spanish 'solution' of monasticism actually creates social reintegration at the close of Zayas's two collections. The tales of treacherous sisters and perfidious female friends that will be discussed in the next chapter represent a social disintegration within the world of Zayas's novellas; in particular, the multiple slayings of *Estragos que causa el vicio* bespeak collapse and disorder in Zayas's novelistic world. *Desengaños* such as *Mal presagio casar lejos* show the potential for some limited social reintegration, but ultimately patriarchal values pose an insurmountable obstruction to the formation of a female community within the novellas. The only glimpse of any successful social reintegration in Zayas's prose is the aforementioned convent community formed by Lisis and her 'sisters'. However, the imperfections inherent in this reintegration are twofold. Firstly, as already stated, the success of the frame's resolution for the convent-destined characters is based on assertion. Thus, it is debatable whether the women's monastic haven represents their dissociation from the world, a context that Raymond identifies as an obstacle to female friendship, or a space from which they can engage and mould the wider world to their ends.[114] In Arenal's words, 'nuns found a way of being important in the world by choosing to live outside it'. Furthermore, if one accepts that their fate is *felice*, it is very much confined to their gender. While these women dwell in a convent, the principal male characters fail to achieve similarly happy ends: Diego dies serving at war, possibly driven by a kind of morally acceptable suicidal impulse, 'porque él mismo se ponía en los mayores peligros', and Juan is rejected by Lisarda only to suffer 'una peligrosa enfermedad, y de ella un frenesí, con que acabó la vida', which also sounds like suicide (*DA* 510).[115] Thus, in a gendered reversal of fortune, Zayas's diegetic male protagonists ultimately perish as gratuitously as her metadiegetic female protagonists within the *desengaños*. Authentic social reintegration would surely require both genders to be encompassed by Zayas's ending.

---

[114] Raymond, pp. 153–164. Arenal, 'The Convent as Catalyst for Autonomy', p. 149.
[115] Felipe, Isabel's loyal protector who fortuitously intervened to kill Manuel, also dies at war.

Such criticisms are easily launched from a chronocentric standpoint; by engendering Lisis's simultaneous adherence to the prerequisites of the honour code whilst privileging female friendship, Zayas accomplishes an innovative masterstroke. Somewhat unfairly, Montesa Peydro criticises Zayas's literary 'message' for not being 'el propio de una revolucionaria, sino de una persona integrada en el sistema y convencida de él'.[116] As Denise Riley notes, there is no clear continuity between defensive celebrations of women and late eighteenth-century claims to rights for women or their advancement as political subjects; the transition, says Riley, is 'intricate and obscure'.[117] It is both simplistic and anachronistic, eliding too much, to rate Zayas on such a scale of pre-feminism. While Greer observes that Zayas 'was not able to break out of the loop between narrative possibility and lived experience to envision any viable alternative for 'good' women beyond those sanctioned in the paternal order, marriage, life in a convent, or a martyr's death', she adds, on a more favourable note, that the author subtly manages to alter the masculine narrative paradigm and 'extends its route beyond the traditional happy ending of a love story'.[118] When Montesa Peydro claims that she portrays her heroines' conventual 'flight' instead of a feminist 'fight', he both devalues the rebelliousness inherent in these women's choice of the monastic life and ignores Zayas's inevitable authorial concerns with verisimilitude and appealing to a widespread readership. Díez Borque conveys some sense of the obstacles that Zayas successfully navigates on her literary voyage: 'no podía ir más allá de los límites acotados por el horizonte mental de su época, pero – a pesar de todo – se muestra distante de la rigidez de los moralistas y predicadores'.[119] Her achievement must be contextualised in order to be appreciated fully: when Lisis chooses to pursue monastic 'sisterhood', the diegetic conclusion gives precedence to Gyn/affection, albeit in a plausible and socially laudable manner. Zayas's frame resolution ultimately incorporates these and other female characters into a harmonious female community. By tracing the development of Gyn/affection, Zayas creates an innovatively gynocentric focus that is integral to the enduring appeal of her prose.

* * *

[116] Montesa Peydro, p. 132.
[117] Denise Riley, 'Does a Sex Have a History?', in *Feminism and History*, ed. by Joan Wallach Scott (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), pp. 17–33 (p. 28).
[118] Margaret Rich Greer, 'María de Zayas and the Female Eunuch', *Journal of Spanish Cultural Studies*, 2 (March 2001) 1, 41–53 (p. 44).
[119] Díez Borque, 'El feminismo de doña María de Zayas', p. 80.

Lastly, it is worthwhile to trace the literary and philosophical context of Zayas's achievement of a Gyn/affective text. In an eclectic overview of Spanish women's writing during the seventeenth-century period, Vollendorf detects the emergence of female homosociality as a literary theme and discerns Zayas's particular innovation: imagining a resolution outside the heteroerotic economy.[120] A sonnet by Sor Violante del Cielo (1601–93) is an example of the thematic ground on which Zayas builds her Gyn/affective prose:

> Belisa, el amistad es un tesoro
> tan digno de estimarse eternamente
> que a su valor no es paga suficiente
> de Arabia y Potosí la plata y el oro.[121]

Clearly, Zayas also values the 'tesoro' that is women's friendship. On a less celebratory note, Catalina Clara Ramírez de Guzmán (1611–c.1663) dedicated a sonnet 'A la ausencia de una amiga, hablando con ella'. The heartfelt lament begins as follows:

> Cuando quiero deciros lo que siento,
> siento que he de callaros lo que quiero;
> que no explican amor tan verdadero
> las voces que se forman de un aliento.[122]

An intense appreciation for female friendship, 'amor tan verdadero', clearly existed among Zayas's contemporaneous female authors.

The frame narrative's unconventional conclusion has attracted much critical interest. This subversively gynocentric culmination of the *Desengaños amorosos* is a positive variant of the *mundo al revés* topos, in contrast with the social calamities of Carnival as represented by Isabel's rape.[123] Commenting on the nuances that the motif of retreat to the convent can assume when wielded by female authors such as Zayas, Merrim notes that it acquires a 'dimensional and utopian cast'.[124] Maroto Camino highlights the convent's provision of 'an alternative feminine community' in Zayas's prose, which Jehenson and Welles similarly describe as bringing about 'a sympathetic female *communitas*'. For Greer, this monastic development has the familial connotations of forming 'a substitute female family'.[125] Zayas's positive representation of women linked by mutual Gyn/affection

---

[120] Vollendorf, 'The Value of Female Friendship'.
[121] Julián Olivares and Elizabeth S. Boyce (eds.), *Tras el espejo la musa escribe: Lírica femenina de los Siglos de Oro* (Madrid: Siglo veintiuno, 1993), p. 271.
[122] *Tras el espejo la musa escribe*, p. 157.
[123] See Monika Bosse, 'El sarao de María de Zayas y Sotomayor: Una razón (femenina) de contar el amor', in *La creatividad femenina en el mundo barroco hispánico: María de Zayas, Isabel Rebeca Correa, Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz*, ed. by Monika Bosse, Barbara Potthast and André Stoll, 2 vols (Kassel: Edition Reichenberger, 1999), I, 239–299 (p. 259).
[124] Merrim, p. 105.
[125] Maroto Camino, 'Spindles for Swords', p. 531. Jehenson and Welles, 'María de Zayas's Wounded Women', p. 195. Margaret Rich Greer, *María de Zayas Tells Baroque Tales of Love and the Cruelty of Men* (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000), p. 134.

warrants praise due to the literary and theoretical tendency among her contemporaries to view women only in relation to men. In *A Room of One's Own*, Woolf discusses an imaginary fictional text: Mary Carmichael's *Life's Adventure*. Woolf discovers innovation in its representation of women's friendship, which she deems to be a powerful symbol of transgression; instead of being portrayed in relation to the other sex, 'Chloe liked Olivia':

> We are all women you assure me? Then I may tell you that the very next words I read were these – 'Chloe liked Olivia...' Do not start. Do not blush. Let us admit in the privacy of our own society that these things sometimes happen. Sometimes women do like women.
> 'Chloe liked Olivia', I read. And then it struck me how immense a change was there. Chloe liked Olivia perhaps for the first time in literature.[126]

Zayas achieves a literary innovation similar to that of the fictitious Mary Carmichael; by portraying the Gyn/affection of Isabel and Lisis, she was able to swim against the tide of the predominant male viewpoint. Philosophical deconstruction will facilitate the contemporary reader's detection of Zayas's innovation. In *The Politics of Friendship*, Jacques Derrida reviews the canonical meditations on friendship, revealing their '*double exclusion* of the feminine, the exclusion of friendship between a man and a woman and the exclusion of friendship *between* women'.[127] When one examines the philosophical works of Antiquity, this 'double exclusion' of women readily becomes evident. Zayas alludes to one such work – Plato's early dialogue on friendship, *Lysis*, which takes place in an all-male setting – by endowing her principal female protagonist with the similar name, 'Lisis'.[128]

This theoretical 'double exclusion of the feminine' is continued in Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*, the eighth and ninth parts of which elaborate on his theory of friendship. Through Aristotle's consistent claims that 'it is between good men that both love and friendship are found in the highest form', the equivalent promise of Gyn/affection is eclipsed.[129] Montaigne's essay 'Of Friendship', which was first published in 1580, reaches a more extreme summation, stridently negating women's capability to uphold perfect friendship:

---

[126] Woolf, p. 106.

[127] Jacques Derrida, *The Politics of Friendship*, trans. by George Collins (London: Verso, 2005), p. 290. (Italics are Derrida's own.)

[128] Sofie Kluge suggests that Golden-Age critics knew Plato's works through such authors as Ficino, León Hebreo, Dante, Cicero, Plutarch, and Pedro de Valencia. See Sofie Kluge, 'Góngora's Heresy: Literary Theory and Criticism in the Golden Age', *MLN*, 122 (2007), 251–271. The possible transmission of this particular dialogue on friendship to seventeenth-century Spaniards would be an interesting avenue of future research.

[129] Aristotle, *The Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. by J. A. K. Thompson, rev. edn, rev. by Hugh Tredennick (London: Penguin, 2004), p. 206. In one of the rare instances when woman is mentioned in Aristotle's discussion of friendship, he concedes that spousal friendship 'may be based also on goodness, supposing the partners to be of good character' (Aristotle, p. 222).

> The ordinary capacity of women is inadequate for that communion and fellowship which is the nurse of this sacred bond; nor does their soul seem firm enough to endure the strain of so tight and durable a knot [...] This sex in no instance has yet succeeded in attaining it, and by the common agreement of the ancient schools is excluded from it.[130]

The phallogocentric underpinning of philosophical tradition percolated through Zayas's seventeenth century and beyond, thus warranting Derrida's eventual deconstruction. As Derrida observes, the figure of the friend in philosophy repeatedly bears the imprint of an androcentric configuration: the brother; his reference to the political analyses of Carl Schmitt perceptively elucidates the general, entrenched situation:

> That which a macroscopic view is able to align, from afar and from high above, is a certain desert. Not a woman in sight. An inhabited desert, to be sure, an absolutely full absolute desert, some might even say a desert teeming with people. Yes, but men, men and more men, over centuries of war, and costumes, hats, uniforms, soutanes, warriors, colonels, generals, partisans, strategists, politicians, professors, political theoreticians, theologians. In vain would you look for a figure of a woman, a feminine silhouette, and the slightest allusion to sexual difference [...] Sisters, if there are any, are species of the genus brother.[131]

Unusual among the philosophical corpus, Nietzsche's *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, written between 1883 and 1885, subtly highlights and playfully subverts this privileging of the male figure within the canonical friendship tradition. In 'Of the Friend', Zarathustra thrice declares that 'woman is not yet capable of friendship'; repeating the incantation for the third time, he turns to consider man: 'But tell me, you men, which of you is yet capable of friendship?'.[132] Thus, both sexes are equally placed under Zarathustra's 'not yet' category in terms of friendship.

Returning our deconstructive gaze to Zayas's era, it is noteworthy that Renaissance theorists adopted the canonical theories of Antiquity and limited the perfect friendship bond by sex and by number to a few male participants. However, in Zayas's frame denouement, the link of Gyn/affection conjoins a wide community of women: Lisis, Isabel, Estefanía and others. This is also the case in Zayas's sole extant *comedia*, *La traición en la amistad*, which foregrounds the friendship of Marcia, Belisa and Laura and contrasts their Gyn/affection with the titular *traición en la amistad* of the seductress Fenisa. Sexual appetite, for the satisfaction of which she willingly sacrifices the friendship of her female

---

[130] Montaigne only considers women's ability to form a friendship through the marital relationship; he is unwilling to conceive of the existence of friendship bonds among women without male presence. Michel de Montaigne, *The Complete Works of Montaigne: Essays, Travel Journal, Letters*, trans. by Donald M. Frame (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1957), p. 138.

[131] Derrida, pp. 155–6.

[132] Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra: A Book for Everyone and No One*, trans. by R. J. Hollingdale (London: Penguin, 2003), pp. 83–4. Montaigne famously attributes a remembered phrase to Aristotle: 'O my friends, there is no friend' (Montaigne, p. 140). In a sense, Zarathustra's words imply that – as yet – there is no friend, of either sex. In both 'Of the Friend' and 'Of Love of One's Neighbour', Zarathustra anticipates some distant, future evolution of friendship, a love conspicuous for its remarkable magnanimity.

peers, dictates Fenisa's actions; her resemblance to Tirso's eponymous *El burlador de Sevilla* is readily apparent. Matthew A. Wyszynski traces Zayas's privileging of instrumental female solidarity, in the face of male theorists' denial or disregard of the possibility of its existence, to her early dramatic work.[133] The convent conclusion of Zayas's prose works could be contrasted with the more conventional weddings of the respective female friends at the close of *La traición en la amistad.* Women's solidarity in the drama has a remarkably decisive impact on their courses of action and marital pairings, although the final resolution of the play's conflict is less transgressive than that of Zayas's frame narrative. Ana Caro's *Valor, agravio y mujer* also dramatizes a community of women: Estela, Leonor, and Lisarda. Caro's *comedia* ends predictably with the women's marriages, although she accords primacy to the kinship that links the female trio: Estela and Lisarda are cousins, and Estela becomes Leonor's sister in marriage. In *comedias* by both female playwrights, women's friendships are merely a transitory phase prior to matrimony. Golden-Age theatre displays the Platonic ideal of love as an integral feature of universal harmony operating within a Christian social context. McKendrick adds that this theatrical pattern of 'the seemingly haphazard batch of marriages with which nearly every plot is brought to an end is not merely an empty convention employed as an easy solution to the action; it reflects a philosophy of life, the belief that continuing security depends on order'.[134] Nor are the dissolving of friendship and inevitable movement towards marriage simply features of the *comedia*; discussing early modern English drama, Jessica Tvordi asserts that 'rarely is there an effort by these female characters to resist this heterosexual imperative and acknowledge a space that privileges female alliances outside its purview'.[135]

Nonetheless, the open-ended structure of both Zayas's *comedia* and of Caro's *Valor, agravio y mujer* – particularly, their ambivalently triumphant matrimonial denouements – tentatively effects a subtle questioning of the portrayed society. One reason for Zayas's

---

[133] Matthew A. Wyszynski, 'Friendship in María de Zayas's *La traición en la amistad*', *Bulletin of the Comediantes*, 50 (Summer 1998), 1, 21–33. Several critics have addressed aspects of women's friendships in Zayas's play, frequently using Ana Caro's *Valor, agravio y mujer* for comparative purposes. *Valor, agravio y mujer* was written between 1628 and 1653, when her other extant play, *El conde Partinuplés*, was published; she disappeared from historical and literary records after this date. See Maroto Camino, 'María de Zayas and Ana Caro'; Pilar Alcalde, 'La hermandad entre mujeres como espacio para la autoridad textual en el teatro de María de Zayas y Ana Caro', *Revista de estudios hispánicos*, 29 (2002) 1–2, 233–243; Laura J. Gorfkle, 'Female Communities, Female Friendships and Social Control in María de Zayas's *La traición en la amistad*: A Historical Perspective', *Romance Languages Annual*, 10 (1998), 615–20.

[134] McKendrick, *Woman and Society in the Spanish Drama of the Golden Age*, p. 173.

[135] Jessica Tvordi, 'Female Alliance and the Construction of Homoeroticism in *As You Like It* and *Twelfth Night*', in *Maids and Mistresses, Cousins and Queens: Women's Alliances in Early Modern England*, ed. by Susan Frye and Karen Robertson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 114–130 (p. 114).

abandonment of the theatrical genre might conceivably have been its demand for marriage or death as its compulsory conclusion; prose fiction offered the seventeenth-century author far greater diversity in plot development. In her frame narrative, Zayas's friendship community is numerically similar to that of the *comedia*: conjoined hand-in-hand, three women seal their friendship by leading the way to the convent – Lisis, Isabel, and Estefanía – with the notable exclusion of the disloyal Lisarda. While Zayas's *comedia* punishes the female betrayer with removal from the marriage market, it is noteworthy that the opposite is the case in her later prose work.[136] The less conventional rewarding of Zayas's female prose protagonists with preservation of their Gyn/affection, via the convent route, demonstrates the evolving originality of her literary works.

In conclusion, women's alliances gain momentum and potency throughout Zayas's prose works. Instances of women's friendships are endowed with secondary importance in the *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares*, contrasting with the primacy of hetero-relations; the *Desengaños amorosos* emphasise female alliances to a greater extent, although proving them to be too ineffectual to safeguard women against the enforcement of rigorous patriarchal and honour-bound value-systems. 'Sisterhood' emerges as a major theme at the diegetic conclusion: the frame tale's resolution is a triumphant celebration of sisterly community and Gyn/affection is revered. Zayas makes innovative use of the frame narrative, in particular, by wielding this literary device effectively to gynocentric ends. Next, I will demonstrate that the abuse of sisterhood becomes a major theme at climactic stages in Zayas's novella collections. Parallel to the phenomenon of Gyn/affection in Zayas's texts, a culpability continuum emerges from her tales of treacherous sisterhood, which I will examine in my second chapter, together with cases of other women's perfidy.

---

[136] Teresa S. Soufas detects Zayas's cynical regard for the 'predictable, cyclical game of insincerity and trickery whose end is the standard pairings of often mismatched couples in the last act' in the standard *comedia*. Although the marriages of Marcia, Belisa, and Laura restore order, in each instance matrimony is, quoting Stroud, 'a force more for fulfilling social obligation than for expression of mutual love'. Fenisa has shown little inclination towards matrimony throughout the play and, were she intent upon wedlock, the prospect of finding another fiancé remains. Zayas appears fettered by the *comedia* model; she adheres to its conventions while providing subtle clues regarding the shift that her literary work will take in the relative freedom of the novella genre. See Catherine Larson, 'Gender, Reading and Intertextuality: Don Juan's Legacy in María de Zayas's *La traición en la amistad*', *Inti: Revista de literatura hispánica*, 40–1 (1994–5), 129–138; Teresa S. Soufas, 'María de Zayas's (Un)Conventional Play, *La traición en la amistad*', in *The Golden Age Comedia: Text, Theory and Performance*, ed. by Charles Ganelin and Howard Mancing (West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 1994), pp. 148–164 (p. 149); Matthew D. Stroud, 'Love, Friendship and Deceit in *La traición en la amistad*', *Neophilogous*, 69 (1985) 4, 539–547 (p. 545).

Chapter 2

Women's Perfidy and the Subversion of Sisterhood

'Diestramente iba la cauta Flora poniendo lazos a la inocente Aminta
para traerla a suma perdición' (*NAE* 224).

'Pensando que traía una hermana y verdadera amiga,
y trujo la destrucción de ella [su casa]' (*DA* 490).

Within Zayas's feminine world, problematically diverse relationships between female characters are frequently of significance in the development of plot in her novellas; relations of courtship between the two sexes do not receive sole or even main authorial attention. Zayas's elucidation of human relationships, particularly those between women, coincides with Brownlee's view of the Baroque epoch where 'contradictions are designed to be foregrounded and insoluble'.[1] It follows that a Baroque writer such as Zayas should illustrate and explore interaction in specific sectors of society, particularly those to which the author would have been most exposed – women's same-sex relationships – and should reveal their inherent problematics.

In this chapter, I will turn from my previous theme of Gyn/affection to examine a contrastive aspect of female interrelations: woman's acts of treacherous agency against her fellow sex in Zayas's novellas. The first section of this chapter is an investigation of the close relationship that emerges between women's treachery and their opportunistic use of the honour code. Zayas's earlier collection, her *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares*, unveils several instances of female perfidy, evidencing disintegration in the prevailing social structure as woman turns on woman. The current of women's perfidy continues to flow through the circuit of desire in her *Desengaños amorosos*. I will demonstrate that the consequences of woman's victimisation by her fellow sex, which frequently cost innocent women their lives, are far graver than the titular 'disillusionment with love' suggested by the latter work. In the denouements of the *Desengaños amorosos*, hope for poetic justice evaporates. The second part of this chapter will explore relationships of sisterhood in Zayas's prose and the treachery among those of her female protagonists who are 'sisters' by blood or marriage. I will show that the three tales that foreground the sisterly bond

[1] Brownlee, *The Cultural Labyrinth of María de Zayas*, p. 27.

contain particularly grievous instances of women's perfidy. In these novellas, sister betrays sister, symbolising the disintegration of that element of the family structure. The abuse of patriarchal values and the honour code is certainly ubiquitous in these diverse instances of female relationships, exacerbating the effects of their betrayals and hindering their loyalties, but the primary focus is on the wrong done to women by women.

Female Perfidy in Zayas's Novellas

Firstly, some instances of female perfidy in Zayas's *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares* will be analysed. From this collection, I shall examine *La burlada Aminta y venganza del honor* and *El juez de su causa*. The poetically just punishment of woman's deception of her fellow sex comes across as inevitable in these early stories. Subsequently, I will turn to the *Desengaños amorosos*, namely *La más infame venganza* and *El verdugo de su esposa*. In these novellas, Zayas's portrayal of women's treachery undergoes an evolutionary alteration: female-engineered victimisation frequently leads to the death of the blameless woman. This is in keeping with the more pessimistic tone of the *desengaños* and their tendency to portray graphically the physical suffering of innocent women. Analyses of *La más infame venganza* and *El verdugo de su esposa* will demonstrate that, even when the violence is executed by men, it is often catalysed by women's intentionally cruel acts.

My starting point is Williamsen's astute observation that Zayas 'portrays women who perpetuate the oppression of other women'.[2] This literary phenomenon has a broader significance than one might initially expect. In a volume of essays on women in early modern England, Susan Frye and Karen Robertson have noted that women 'had few institutional structures beyond the family to guarantee continuity of connection, so that conflict may serve as useful evidence of association. Contention or competition rarely occurred among women who were strangers to one another'.[3] The formality of political, legal, educational, or mercantile institutions was unavailable to early modern women, rendering their interrelations less visible to scholars and making literary evidence of same-

[2] Amy R. Williamsen, 'Lasting Laughter: Comic Challenges Posed by Zayas and Castellanos', in *Echoes and Inscriptions: Comparative Approaches to Early Modern Spanish Literatures*, ed. by Barbara A. Simerka and Christopher B. Weimer (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2000), pp. 46–58 (p. 47).

[3] Susan Frye and Karen Robertson, 'Introduction', in *Maids and Mistresses, Cousins and Queens: Women's Alliances in Early Modern England*, ed. by Susan Frye and Karen Robertson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 3–17 (p. 5).

sex conflict (in particular, that which is scripted by women) assume a newfound importance.

The first striking example of woman's betrayal of her fellow sex occurs in Matilde's *La burlada Aminta y venganza del honor*, second novella of Zayas's *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares*. Given that the narrator's sex is female, there is not necessarily any correlation between the gender of the diegetic narrator and the nature of the narrated tale's portrayal of women's behaviour. Matilde informs us early in her story that Flora is 'una dama libre y más desenfadada que es menester que sean las mujeres' (*NAE* 216). Described as *libre*, her cruelty towards another woman is implicitly connected with a more generalised dearth of morals. Sexual licentiousness is a common trait among several of the women in Zayas's novellas who collaborate with or incite men to harm other women. The wholesomely feminine connotations of Flora's name here possess an evident irony. Standing out from the profusion of ambiguous characters in Zayas's tales, Flora represents the definitive, negative female type. She travels 'a título de hermana' with a libertine who operates under the alias of 'Jacinto', although she is his mistress; we are told that he has a 'legítima mujer' elsewhere (*NAE* 216). Flora detects Jacinto's incipient infatuation with Aminta, a beautiful and wealthy orphan who lives in Segovia; many suitors importune Aminta, but her uncle has pledged to marry her to her cousin. Henceforth, Flora adopts a devious stance.

Flora insists that she is free of anger or *celos* and endeavours to ensure that Jacinto achieves his desires: 'en lugar de enojo tengo lástima, por ver cuán imposibles han de ser tus deseos, si no te vales del engaño [...] viéndome desear y procurar tu gusto, me has de querer más' (*NAE* 218). She counsels Jacinto's use of *engaño* (a term that is conspicuously and tellingly interspersed throughout the tale) in Aminta's seduction, instructing him to woo Aminta deceitfully with the prospect of marriage. In Flora's masterful scheme, only one assumption is later proved to be unfounded: she presumes that she and Jacinto will escape punishment because 'ni ella [Aminta] sabrá el autor de su daño ni osará decirlo por no verse infamada y quizá muerta de su tío' (*NAE* 219). By presupposing that assumed identities and Aminta's shame at her ignominy would protect them from retribution, Flora underestimates Aminta's mettle and ingenuity.

Susan Paun de García underscores Flora's axial role, around which the *engaño* plot revolves: 'in the final analysis, the male who is responsible for the title of the story proves to be incidental. The deception which robs Aminta of her honour is authored by Flora;

Jacinto functions as actor to Flora's script'.[4] Having experienced the precarious consequences of abandoning her own chastity to become Jacinto's mistress, Flora could have redeemed herself by using this worldly knowledge to act as a defender of female honour and virtue; however, instead of taking this commendable course of action, she opts to destroy Aminta's honour also. This behaviour definitively spells the end of any reality of female solidarity before it begins. Flora's interest lies in the maintenance of the *status quo*, which she accomplishes by seemingly endangering her privileged position as Jacinto's lover. Her awareness of the ephemeral nature of Jacinto's concupiscence, a desire likely to be sated by sexual conquest, explains her calculated ability to sustain the appearance of emotional detachment. Cross-dressing forms part of Flora's deceptive arsenal; she vigilantly accompanies her lover 'en hábito de hombre' when he serenades Aminta (*NAE* 220).[5] Within the catalogue of Jacinto's subsequent devious actions, Flora is represented as a vital impetus.

Flora and Jacinto follow Aminta to church to further their plans. Flora's remark to Jacinto in Aminta's hearing is enigmatic: 'Aguarda, hermano, no pasemos de aquí, ya sabes que tengo el gusto y deseos más de galán que de dama, y donde las veo y más tan bellas, como esta hermosa señora, se me van los ojos tras ellas y se me enternece el corazón' (*NAE* 223). Such suggestive comments recall homoerotic remarks in Fernando de Rojas's *La Celestina* (1499), directed by the eponymous bawd at the naked Areúsa: 'déxame mirarte toda a mi voluntad, que me huelgo [...] ¡Bendígate Dios y el señor Sant Miguel Ángel, y qué gorda y fresca que estás; qué pechos y qué gentileza! [...] ¡O quién fuera hombre y tanta parte alcançara de ti para gozar tal vista!'.[6] The homoerotic undercurrent obscures the reader's impression of Flora; the nature of her relationship with Jacinto, her lover, and the victimised Aminta is complicated further by this. The text does not definitively corroborate that Flora has an erotic interest in Aminta, in contrast with the explicit case of male homosexuality and its overt reprobation in *Mal presagio casar lejos* (*DA*).[7] Flora's

---

[4] Susan Paun de García, '*La burlada Aminta*: From Object/Desire to Subject/Vengeance', in *Zayas and Her Sisters, 2: Essays on Novelas by 17th-Century Spanish Women*, ed. by Gwyn E. Campbell and Judith A. Whitenack (New York: Global Publications, Binghampton University, 2001), pp. 3–19 (p. 6).

[5] Flora appears to wear women's clothes for the rest of the tale; for instance, when Aminta meets her in church, she addresses Flora as 'señora' (*NAE* 224). Under the different circumstances of *El juez de su causa*, the next novella to be examined, Claudia (in the guise of Claudio) also accompanies her beloved while he serenades another woman.

[6] Fernando de Rojas, *La Celestina*, ed. by Dorothy S. Severin (Madrid: Cátedra, 1998), p. 202.

[7] The remote possibility that Flora harbours homoerotic desire for Aminta provides a secondary explanation for her perennial presence during Jacinto's serenades, at church and in Aminta's neighbour's house. However, as Vollendorf notes, it is extremely difficult to know how Zayas's contemporaries would have deciphered the homoerotic code of her texts. She suggests that, in the apparent case of female homoeroticism that *Amar sólo por vencer* presents, 'characters do not perceive female homoeroticism as a significant threat

homoerotic remark is merely for the benefit of Jacinto, by arousing Aminta's interest, but without compromising him at this point; Aminta's words reveal that she overhears Flora's flattery: 'Me pienso estimar desde hoy en adelante en más que hasta aquí, y enriquecerme con la merced que me hacéis, pues de amores tan castos no podrá dejar de sacarse el mismo fruto' (*NAE* 223–4). Flora eulogises her 'brother' to Aminta at church and emphasises the suffering that will ensue for him if he cannot marry Aminta. Paun de García suggests that Flora's compliment is intended to be a prelude to friendship and a signal that she is not Aminta's rival. It is true that Flora finds it opportune to feign friendly overtures; however, she has already precluded herself from being classified as Aminta's rival by addressing Jacinto as 'hermano'. During the encounter, the narrator emphasises Flora's cunning and Aminta's naivety in relation to her imminent downfall: 'Diestramente iba la cauta Flora poniendo lazos a la inocente Aminta para traerla a suma perdición' (*NAE* 224). Ultimately, the women's encounter in church proves pivotal, concluding with Aminta's agreement to marry Jacinto; Flora's intercession is a decisive factor in Aminta's dishonour.

Flora's falseness is intensified by references to women's body language, which highlights the apparent intimacy developing between them; they depart with 'señales de eterna amistad' and greet each other 'con los brazos [...], dando a don Jacinto justa envidia' (*NAE* 226).[8] Flora's successful manipulation of Aminta leads her to reap 'mil tiernos y amorosos favores' from her lover (*NAE* 226), highlighting Flora's complex sexual identity once more. This sexual ambivalence is also evident when Flora receives her new *cuñada* 'con abrazos' and escorts Aminta and Jacinto to her own bed in order to accelerate Aminta's dishonour after the fictive wedding (*NAE* 228). Whilst Zayas tentatively posits the possibility of women's same-sex attraction in this novella, *engaño* subsumes any homoerotic undertones. Although Flora's deeds and words are clearly tinged with eroticism, her primary purpose is to control and to retain Jacinto.

[...] [or] as anything more than a non-threatening extension of female friendship'. All who witness Estefanía's amorous declarations trivialise them by reacting with mirth: 'ella [Laurela] y todas lo juzgaban a locura, antes les servía de entretenimiento y motivo de risa' (*DA* 309). Gossy describes the laughter as an 'escape valve for unwelcome sexual tension', inferring a less accepting note. I will examine this novella, *Amar sólo por vencer*, in my fourth chapter. See Mary S. Gossy, 'Skirting the Question', p. 26; Lisa Vollendorf, 'The Future of Early Modern Women's Studies: The Case of Same-Sex Friendship and Desire in Zayas and Carvajal', *Arizona Journal of Hispanic Cultural Studies*, 4 (2000), 265–284 (p. 270).

[8] The latter reference to Jacinto's jealousy while he witnesses the women's intimacy could be read as a further, albeit subtle, intimation of Flora's homoerotic desires.

At the diegetic level, Matilde interrupts the narration in order to condemn Flora's actions as inexcusable: '¡Oh falsa Flora!' (*NAE* 227). Rabell states that, in the Spanish novella, narrators' interruptions and maxims are often intended by authors to criticise the behaviour of their characters, thereby protecting their own moral reputation by separating themselves from the reprehensible actions that they portray; moreover, noting the incidental or ironic nature of novellas' teachings, Rabell adds that 'the maxims of Spanish novellas usually contradict the contents of their narrations'.[9] Matilde's commentary is one such case: it is patently apparent to the reader that Jacinto's acts are motivated more by physical lust than the *amor* that Matilde cites ('A don Jacinto disculpa amor' [*NAE* 227]). By applying the inappropriate term *amor*, the diegetic narrator effectively removes attention from Jacinto's desire and highlights Flora's role in the deception. *La burlada Aminta y venganza del honor* is chronologically the first significant instance of a diegetic female narrator's criticism of a female protagonist's treatment of a member of her sex; as illustrated by this chapter's section on sisterhood, the pattern of same-sex criticism continues throughout Zayas's prose.

Subsequent to Aminta's 'wedding' and deflowering, Flora and Jacinto abandon her in the house of his relatives, the widowed Luisa and her son, Martín; there, the extent of Aminta's deception is revealed to her. While dwelling in this house, Aminta hides her identity by assuming the name 'doña Vitoria' (*NAE* 230). The pseudonym holds obvious semantic connotations of triumph. There is a second reason behind Aminta's onomastic choice: Matilde provides the initial contextual detail that the Basque city of Aminta's origin later acts as her eponym: 'la ciudad de Vitoria, en la provincia de Vizcaya, una de las famosas y nombradas de ella por su hermosura, amenidad y grandeza, *y por la nobleza que en sí cría*' (*NAE* 213; italics mine). The latter assertion is rooted in claims of universal *hidalguía* in Vizcaya; thus, from the outset, Matilde conveys the peerless noble lineage implicit in Aminta's Basque heritage.[10] By dramatically regaining her own honour,

---

[9] Rabell, p. 37.

[10] The prototypical Vizcayan *Fuero* of 1526 proclaimed the universal nobility of its inhabitants. Jon Juaristi adds that the epithet *vizcaíno* implied *hidalgo* and that there was a concurrent tendency for Basques to be indistinctly termed *vizcaínos*. According to Bartolomé Bennassar, Felipe II recognised the universal nobility of inhabitants of Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa; the Basque provinces of Álava and Navarre did not enjoy the extension of the same privilege. Vitoria is actually located in the Basque province of Álava; cartographic consultation suggests that this was also the case during the seventeenth century. It is an instance of Zayas's wielding of poetic license; one must overlook this geographical inaccuracy due to the evocative power of Zayas's twofold allusion to both locales: Vitoria and Vizcaya. See *Biscaia, Alava et Guipuscoa Cantabriae veteris pars* [procede de: "Atlas Major" de J. Blaeu, Amsterdam, 1662], Biblioteca Nacional de España, Sala Goya, Mr/33/445; Bartolomé Bennassar, *La España del Siglo de Oro* (Barcelona: Editorial Crítica, 2001); Jesús de Galíndez, 'Valor de los Fueros Vascos considerados según las circunstancias históricas que les

Aminta sets about proving herself worthy to be bearer of this dually implicative pseudonym.

To facilitate her vengeance plot, Aminta adopts the humble garb of a male servant, the second instance of female transvestism in the novella. While the first instance of its use to plot Aminta's dishonour was negatively motivated, her quest for vengeance is a relatively positive step; through Zayas's demonstration of the two sides of transvestism we are in the presence of Baroque equivocation. Aminta's determination is portrayed vividly when she refuses Martín's assistance: 'supuesto que yo he sido la ofendida, y no vos, yo sola he de vengarme, pues no quedaré contenta si mis manos no restauran lo que perdió mi locura' (*NAE* 236). Maroto Camino contrasts Aminta with transvestite heroines of the time; most unusually, Aminta openly rejects Martín's offer to undertake the task of revenge and, ultimately, she chooses to marry him despite his being neither her seducer nor even her avenger.[11] She categorically refuses to delegate the mission of restoring her sullied honour to a male protector; the stratagem is both conceptualised and executed in its entirety by Aminta. It is only after her act of vengeance that she will agree to marry Martín. Aminta allows Martín to accompany her 'para la seguridad de mi persona', but she insists on avenging herself and adopting masculine garb in order to do so; she gives him her 'palabra de esposa' but denies him marriage or sexual favours until after the murder of her deceiver and the consequent restoration of her personal honour (*NAE* 236).

On Aminta's adoption of male attire, the second stage of the story begins, that of the titular *venganza del honor*. In Zayas's novella, Aminta's self-defence implicitly posits a stand on behalf of the *burlada* by holding the *burlador* accountable for dishonour that is ordinarily solely imputed to the deceived woman. Not unlike Flora, she must practice deceit in order to achieve her aim of vengeance. Understandably and to some extent justifiably, Aminta becomes a reflection of Flora in her perfidy and mirrors her treacherous conduct. The use of male disguise in the vengeance plan of an abandoned woman to murder her *burlador* in this second part of Zayas's novella echoes Ana Caro's *Valor, agravio y mujer*; Caro's play similarly insists upon the worth of the *burlada* as a marriage partner. Leonor, Caro's disguised female character, does not conduct herself as do the more usual male

---

dieron origen', in *VII Congreso de estudios vascos (7/1948 Biarritz)*, ed. by Jean-Claude Larronde (Donostia: Eusko Ikaskuntza, 2003), pp. 623–638; Jon Juaristi, 'Privilegio y poder', *ABC*, 4 January 2006.

[11] See Maroto Camino, 'Spindles for Swords'. Maroto Camino refers specifically to Calderón's Rosaura in *La vida es sueño* as a contrast to Zayas's Aminta. Rosaura sets out alone for revenge upon Astolfo since she has no male protector; the play is eventually resolved when they marry.

protagonists. Under the guise of Leonardo, 'he' intends to avenge Leonor's dishonour by killing the fickle Juan and marrying her:

> Mas yo, amante verdadero,
> la prometí de vengar
> su agravio y, dando al silencio
> con la muerte de don Juan
> la ley forzosa del duelo,
> ser su esposo.[12]

Soufas comments that Caro's Leonor, as a counterfeit male, 'is a "better" (hu)man in the moral sense and enacts a more just and moral response to the question of male attitudes toward a woman deceived by an unfaithful man'.[13] This is precisely the 'real' course of action that Zayas's Martín insinuates he would take but for Aminta's insistence on enacting her own self-defence.[14] At the end of the *comedia*, Juan's mercurial affections are reignited through his jealousy of Leonardo's suit, leading Leonor to reveal her identity and to alter her *venganza* plot. Bloodshed is averted by Leonor's wily manoeuvres, and she is married to Juan. Of course, an insurmountable obstacle to such a harmonious resolution in Zayas's novella is posed by the *burlador*'s already married state. Notably, Caro's less depraved Juan also lacks a female co-conspirator; in Caro's *comedia*, there is no 'Flora' figure to instigate or to prolong his schemes.

The bipartite title of Zayas's *La burlada Aminta y venganza del honor* appositely reflects the dual structure of the novella; in contrast, Caro's play commences after Leonor's dishonour. The bipartite structure is a regularly occurring feature of Zayas's novellas. H. Patsy Boyer discerns a fundamental difference that generally emerges between the two structural parts: 'the first part foregrounds the masculine point of view [...] The second part of the story, often brief and understated, tersely dramatises the female character's experience'.[15] Boyer's theory loosely applies to *La burlada Aminta y venganza del honor*, the second part of which focuses on Aminta's covert mission to recover her honour; Jacinto and his accomplice's dishonour of Aminta occupies the foreground in the novella's

---

[12] Caro, *Valor, agravio y mujer*, III. 2625.

[13] Teresa S. Soufas, 'Ana Caro's Re-evaluation of the *Mujer varonil* and her Theatrics in *Valor, agravio y mujer*', in *The Perception of Women in Spanish Theatre of the Golden Age*, ed. by Anita K. Stoll and Dawn L. Smith (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 1991), pp. 85–105 (p. 89).

[14] In another of Zayas's tales, *La esclava de su amante* (*DA*), Felipe is willing to marry Isabel despite her dishonour through rape. He murders her rapist and declares that he will return for her: 'Ya, hermosa doña Isabel, te vengó don Felipe de los agravios que te hizo don Manuel. Quédate con Dios, que si escapo de este riesgo con la vida, yo te buscaré' (*DA* 164). However, Isabel elects to become a nun, and Felipe later dies at war. This contrasts with Aminta's fate, given that she avenges her own dishonour and marries Martín, who plays only a minor role in the vengeance plot. An interesting point arises from both cases: Zayas seems prepared to broach the idea of a man who is willing to defend and to marry a conventionally dishonoured woman. The reader is left to pursue the consequences of this quasi-taboo literary subject.

[15] H. Patsy Boyer, 'Introduction', in *The Disenchantments of Love: A Translation of the Desengaños amorosos* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1997), pp. 1–26 (p. 4).

first part. However, as Paun de García contends, each part 'is not so much about the deceitful man as it is about the deceitful woman'.[16] From the first episode, which heralded her dishonour, Aminta has appropriated and internalised the machinations of deceit; as a model of fraudulence, Flora's example has schooled Aminta in the underhand arts that she must use to attain her personal vengeance in the second part of the novella or her *venganza del honor*. The two parts share several parallels such as the use of female cross-dressing and false identities to deceive.

Aminta gains employment as a male servant of Jacinto and Flora. Flora's distress at 'his' similarity to Aminta is intimated, 'sintiendo cada vez una alteración y desmayo que parecía acabársele la vida' (*NAE* 240). The locus of power has shifted with Aminta's new male costume and premonitory fear is instilled in Flora. The import of agency is underscored unexpectedly through the tale's female characters: Flora has held dominance, but Aminta later seizes the role of primary actor. While Flora has written the script of Aminta's deception, Aminta authors a perfidious vengeance plot. Deception has caused both Aminta's downfall and her transformation into a spirited, independent agent. Meanwhile, her admirer, Martín, suffers from the 'feminine' complaint of *celos*: 'no podía sufrir verse encerrado en casa, ni a ella en la de un hombre que había sido su primer amor' (*NAE* 244). He is emasculated and excluded while Aminta sets about inverting the traditional honour paradigm of male-authored violence. Aminta's adoption of masculine disguise prior to the decisive action is both an authorising and a transgressive step; through the execution of a double homicide to erase her dishonour, she re-establishes the ascendancy of the honour code while simultaneously subverting it, by refusing to devolve her self-assigned responsibility upon a male relative and by selecting her own substitute spouse. These events aptly take place in 'la ciudad sin nombre', all other locations having been named explicitly (NAE 237). Romero-Díaz describes this anonymous locus where a woman can seize 'masculine' agency as an imaginary, Utopian space: 'La acción de Aminta fuera de las normas del decoro se disfraza con la irrealidad, ese "sin-lugar" donde ha ocurrido, un espacio para la agencia femenina propiamente dicha que aún no existe y no tiene nombre'.[17] Aminta's position in this *sin-lugar* corresponds with the female author's 'dis-location' in a discursive tradition that is suspicious of her; Zayas and Ana Caro inhabited a problematic, 'neuter' domain due to their anomalous position as successful women writers.

---

[16] Paun de García, '*La burlada Aminta*', p. 17.
[17] Romero-Díaz, *Nueva nobleza, nueva novela*, p. 124.

Aminta stabs the deceitful pair to death after one month of being in their service. Through violence, Aminta avenges a dishonour that is at least partially self-imposed; she has generated ignominy through wilfully gambling with her noble origins, social convention, and family reputation by consciously abandoning her virginity and betrothal to her cousin in favour of Jacinto's deceitful suit. Particular emphasis is laid upon her murder of Flora. While the sleeping Jacinto is stabbed 'dos o tres veces' in the heart, Flora's murder is frenzied and graphically portrayed: on the latter's awakening, Aminta 'la hirió por la garganta [...] y volviéndola a dar otras tres o cuatro puñaladas por los pechos, envió su alma a acompañar la de su amante' (*NAE* 245). The stab to the throat is particularly violent and should have been more than enough to induce Flora's demise.[18] Aminta's infliction of extra wounds to the breast bears the imprint of female perfidy; evidently, her quest is not for moral justice, but for personal vengeance. Thus, Zayas shows how the honour code has turned vindication into perfidy. Aminta announces her identity and intention to Flora – '¡Traidora, Aminta te castiga y venga su deshonra!' (*NAE* 245) – while there is the implication that Jacinto is denied this awareness and that his death is instantaneous. It is curious that Aminta does not identify herself to Jacinto prior to mudering him; like the diegetic Matilde, Aminta's focus is upon Flora's actions and eventual retribution. It is noteworthy that Aminta's restoration of her honour is performed secretly and anonymously; although she does not attempt to restore her (or her family's) social reputation, she values her honour sufficiently as a personal trait to commit two murders.

Given that Aminta spills her 'husband's' blood, she becomes a 'widow' and is free to wed Martín. The reader's task is to consider the repercussions of Aminta's imitation of Flora's perfidy. In a stroke of poetic justice, Jacinto's original, abandoned wife inherits his estate. Aside from several nuances, this tale ends in a similar fashion to *El juez de su causa*, which I will now examine: the deceitful woman receives the punishment of death; meanwhile, it is intimated that the female victim achieves contentment through marriage.

---

[18] Aminta's use of violence echoes that of Claudia Jerónima, who avenges a gentleman's breach of his promise to marry her, in Part II of Cervantes's *Don Quijote*. Similar to Aminta's violent act, the ferocity of Claudia Jerónima's attack on Vicente is evident: 'sin ponerme a dar quejas ni a oír disculpas, le disparé esta escopeta y, por añadidura, estas dos pistolas, y, a lo que creo, le debí de encerrar más de dos balas en el cuerpo, abriéndole puertas por donde envuelta en su sangre saliese mi honra'. Claudia Jerónima's philosophy – that her honour will be regained by the spilling of her deceiver's blood – seems to be shared by Aminta. Through the depiction of such murderous acts, these authors sensationally portray their society's neglect of the most basic commandments of Catholic orthodoxy. However, when we compare the two, Zayas's account makes Aminta's stabbing appear more frenzied and bloodthirsty than Cervantes's depiction of Claudia Jerónima's attack. See Miguel de Cervantes, *Segunda Parte del Ingenioso Caballero Don Quijote de la Mancha II*, ed. by John Jay Allen, 18th edition (Madrid: Cátedra, 1997), p. 482.

* * *

As antagonist of *El juez de su causa*, the ninth tale in the *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares*, Claudia evidences some of the most reprehensible behaviour of a female protagonist towards another woman. Ricardo Senabre Sempere traces the influence of Lope de Vega's *Las fortunas de Diana* (first published in 1621) on this novella.[19] Nonetheless, the two female protagonists' problematical relationship is attributable to Zayas. The tale is narrated by Juan, Lisis's beloved and the cause of her love-sickness. Although it would appear to be of significance that a male narrator portrays a member of the opposite sex in an unfavourable light, it is evident from other stories of the *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares* (such as the aforementioned *La burlada Aminta y venganza del honor*) and from the female-dominated *Desengaños amorosos* that narrators' gender does not determine the presence or absence of female villainy.

From the outset, it is intimated that Claudia's morals are of a dubious nature; at the diegetic level, Juan obliquely describes her as 'una dama de más libres costumbres que a una mujer noble y medianamente rica convenía' (*NAE* 488). This prompts the reader to recall Matilde's similarly worded portrayal of Flora as 'una dama libre y más desenfadada que es menester que sean las mujeres' (*NAE* 216). Both women being described as *libre*, their cruelty towards women is connected to an all-inclusive immorality. Claudia's actions are initially motivated by *celos* caused by Carlos's love for Estela. She disguises herself as 'Claudio' and becomes Carlos's page, winning his trust and becoming the lovers' 'tercero, testigo y solicitador' (*NAE* 489). When the distressed Claudia discovers that Carlos and

[19] María Jesús Rubiera Mata unearths Arabic roots for Zayas's novella: the tale of Qamar az-Zamān and Princess Budur, which appeared in late versions of *One Thousand and One Nights* and circulated in Italy in the mid-fourteenth century, being used by Boccaccio in the story of Bernabo's wife in his *Decameron* (II, 9). According to McKendrick, Timoneda's fifteenth *patraña* (1567) was an adaptation of Boccaccio's story, which then influenced at least four *comedias* as well as Zayas's novella. Christine de Pizan also borrowed from Boccaccio's tale in her *Livre de la cité des dames* (1405). According to José A. Rodríguez-Garrido, Lope wrote an early *comedia* (c.1610) with a title that is almost identical to Zayas's (*El juez en su causa*) and a plot that is similar to his *Las fortunas de Diana*; the play was not published until 1647. See McKendrick, *Woman and Society in the Spanish Drama of the Golden Age*, p. 235 & 299; José A. Rodríguez-Garrido, 'El ingenio en la mujer: *La traición en la amistad* de María de Zayas entre Lope de Vega y Huarte de San Juan', *Bulletin of the Comediantes*, 49 (Winter 1997) 2, 357–373; María Jesús Rubiera Mata, 'La narrativa de origen árabe en la literatura del siglo de oro: El caso de María de Zayas', in *La creatividad femenina en el mundo barroco hispánico: María de Zayas, Isabel Rebeca Correa, Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz*, ed. by Monika Bosse, Barbara Potthast and André Stoll, 2 vols (Kassel: Edition Reichenberger, 1999), I, 335–349; Ricardo Senabre Sempere, 'La fuente de una novela de Doña María de Zayas y Sotomayor', *Revista de filología española*, 46 (1963), 163–172.

Estela plan to elope and marry, her intention is 'decirle [a Carlos] quién soy, y luego quitarme la vida' (*NAE* 491).

However, the intrusion of Amete, a recently ransomed Moorish slave of Carlos's father, alters the despairing Claudia's course of action. Amete overhears Claudia and offers an alternative scheme to fulfil her designs. Thus, he performs the vital role of emboldening Claudia in her deception of Estela. Following his advice, still disguised as 'Claudio', she cunningly persuades Estela to board his ship en route to Fez. Claudia counsels Estela that the journey is part of Carlos's plan for the couple's elopement to Barcelona. Amete swears to leave Claudia without any impediments to her wooing of Carlos, in exchange for the abduction of Estela. However, Claudia's plans are thwarted as Amete reneges on their pact, taking both women as captives. Amete lambasts Claudia for her disloyalty. He emphasises the extent of Claudia's treachery against her 'nación y patria', which is, in his view, her worst offence (*NAE* 494).[20] Her disloyalty to her own 'nation' is evident from her deception of Carlos and Estela, her fellow Christians and Spaniards, and her collusion with a Moor, their historical adversary since the Reconquest. Given Amete's insight into her character, it is unsurprising that, 'segura de que, si como Estela no le admitiese, la tratarían como a ella, y viéndose también excluida de tener libertad ni de volver a ver a Carlos', Claudia reneges on her faith and marries Amete's brother in order to attain a more comfortable existence in Moorish territory (*NAE* 496). Juan has already told us that the father of Amete and his brother is 'bajá muy rico' (*NAE* 492). The epithet *libre* was the diegetic narrator's first indication regarding Claudia's lack of moral scruples; as the plot unfurls, so does the exposition of Claudia's disloyalty to her land, to her religious faith, and to her fellow sex.

Claudia's betrayal of Estela reaches new heights in the next phase of the story in Fez. She agrees to assist Amete in a second plot: to rape Estela. Amete again instigates the scheme, although Claudia willingly facilitates his plan to violate, and thereby dishonour, Estela. Evidently, the principle *falsus in uno, falsus in omnibus* applies to Claudia. Juan's narrative fails to provide any more concrete reason for Claudia's continuing to act against Estela in this gratuitous way.[21] She feigns friendship with Estela and presents her with a

[20] Amete's statement is subject to further equivocation, given that he is later put to death when he commits an act of national disloyalty himself by attacking his own prince.

[21] Unlike the constant Estela, Claudia has already abandoned hope of returning to Spain or of seeing Carlos again and has married Amete's brother. Were she expectant of Estela's reunion with Carlos, the planned rape would have had the additional motive of presenting a potential obstacle to their marriage through Estela's dishonour.

plan to escape to Valencia; the naive Estela eagerly agrees to accompany Claudia back to Spain. Juan, the diegetic narrator, links Claudia's accelerating moral decline to her religious conversion; he exclaims in a rhetorical apostrophe: 'Si la primera vez te engañó Claudia cristiana, ¿qué puede hacer ahora Claudia renegada?' (*NAE* 497).[22] She seems to have no loyalty but to herself. Claudia brings Estela to a lonely spot to await other Christians and a boat; there, Amete arrives upon the scene and Claudia reveals her treacherous intentions. Juan emphasises Claudia's condition as a renegade at this climactic point to intensify the impression of her cruelty and to link it to a wider perfidy: 'dijo a esta ocasión la renegada Claudia' (*NAE* 499).

This is Claudia's second major deception of Estela; however, on both occasions, a third protagonist (Amete and, in this case, Jacimín) prevents the fruition of her schemes. Estela's distressed screams summon Jacimín, son of the King of Fez; we are told that he is a virtuous man who treats Christians respectfully. A swordfight ensues between Jacimín and Amete; Jacimín's men arrive upon the scene to take Amete prisoner. Jacimín has both Amete and Claudia put to death: 'fueron los dos empalados, muriendo Claudia tan renegada como vivió' (*NAE* 501). Through Jacimín's benevolent role, Zayas circumvents the simplistic demonisation of the Moor, following the literary tradition of such works as the *Abencerraje*.[23] At the moment of her execution, Claudia's disloyalty to her faith is highlighted for the last time; her life reaches a fittingly dramatic and poetically just conclusion.

Estela is granted her freedom, and she chooses to adopt a male disguise in order to serve as a soldier in Tunis; fighting heroically in military campaigns, Charles V rewards her with investiture in the Order of Santiago, a dukedom, and she even becomes Viceroy of Valencia.[24] Charnon-Deutsch draws our attention to the centrality of women's decision-

---

[22] Renegades are often associated with treachery in Cervantes's works, particularly the *Historia del cautivo* in Part I of *Don Quijote*. The Captive displays reluctance to trust the Spanish renegade who helps him and Zoraida escape to Spain. This is understandable, given the cruelty of his master, a Venetian renegade, towards captive Christians: 'Cada día ahorcaba el suyo, empalaba a éste, desorejaba aquél; y esto, por tan poca ocasión, y tan sin ella, que los turcos conocían que lo hacía no más de por hacerlo, y por ser natural condición suya ser homicida de todo el género humano'. Thus, it was likely to be a commonly held view among Zayas's contemporaries that one could not trust renegades; disloyal to their nation's beliefs, such people were outside the realm of the social contract. See Cervantes, *El Ingenioso Hidalgo*, p. 476.

[23] *El Abencerraje (Novela y romancero)*, ed. by Francisco López Estrada, 13th edition (Madrid: Cátedra, 2002). This version is from the *Inventario* of Antonio de Villegas, 1565.

[24] As a soldier, Estela goes by the name of 'don Fernando' (*NAE* 502). As Fernando, her boldest feat is to protect the life of Charles V in battle. At a later point, Lisis laments the lack of heroism among her male contemporaries, contrasting them with the valiant peers of King Ferdinand. It is ironic that Zayas's heroic 'Fernando' is actually a woman in *disfraz varonil*. I will discuss Zayas's nostalgia for this era in my next chapter.

making, which typically arises at the nadir of their fortunes in Zayas's novellas: 'It is in moments of extreme stress and adversity that women are called upon to make choices, whether or not contingent upon their relationship with men. Ironically, it is often extreme victimisation that opens to a heroine the realm of decision-making'.[25] We can go further than this and conclude that, similar to Aminta in *La burlada Aminta y venganza del honor*, Estela's trials lead her to develop into an astute and even cunning individual who is able to stand up to the perfidy of her fellow sex. In both cases, their character development coincides with the adoption of a *disfraz varonil*; the manly exterior presented by their garb symbolises the women's newfound inner strength. As men, there is nothing that these women are incapable of doing. At this juncture, the modern-day reader inevitably questions the verisimilitude of Estela's experiences; however, a vestige of realism is gained from the episode's resemblance to the prolonged transvestism of the historical 'monja alférez', Catalina de Erauso (1592–1650).[26] As Viceroy of Valencia, Estela hears Carlos's case; in a striking instance of dramatic irony, he has been accused of her kidnap and murder. Estela elects to reveal her 'real' gender and identity, setting in motion her marriage to Carlos.[27] The tale's conclusion is notable for its poetic justice: while Claudia has received the punishment of a death sentence, Estela is ultimately rewarded for her travails.

Thus, Juan's *El juez de su causa* portrays another extreme case of female perfidy. The resolution differs from that of Matilde's *La burlada Aminta y venganza del honor*, in which Aminta murders her victimiser. Unlike the latter novella, female perfidy does not prevent the victim from becoming fulfilled through marriage to her original spouse of choice in *El juez de su causa*. In the two stories, women triumph over female perfidy and so conclude similarly, but each reaches fulfilment through contrasting routes: one is the *venganza* route, and the other is the judicial (*juez*) route. Thus, Zayas shows two very different ways (secret and personal or legal and public) for women to overcome female perfidy; her very composition of the novellas' titles reveals as much. As I will now demonstrate, Zayas's *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares* and *Desengaños amorosos* may

---

[25] Charnon-Deutsch, p. 125.

[26] Vasileski describes Estela as an idealised version of Catalina de Erauso. It is probable that Zayas knew of Catalina's escapades, as Juan Pérez de Montalbán wrote a *comedia* in 1626 inspired by Erauso's deeds.

[27] McKendrick notes that this novella resembles a group of *comedias* whose salient feature is that 'the heroine eventually attains a position of authority and power which requires her to sit in judgement over her erstwhile lover, arrested, in the commonest form of the story, for the murder or abduction of the heroine herself'. (Dramatic examples of this plot are Lope's *La hermosura aborrecida* and Zabaleta and Villaviciosa's *La dama corregidor*.) McKendrick, *Woman and Society in the Spanish Drama of the Golden Age*, p. 231.

themselves be viewed as contrasting ways of looking at women's lives and their relationships with other women.

* * *

In the *Desengaños amorosos*, a diverse pattern of female perfidy operates in parallel with the emergence of female friendships, as shown by tales such as *La esclava de su amante* and *Mal presagio casar lejos.*[28] In this way, the reader detects that there is a thematic contrast overarching Zayas's two collections and a general concern with the balance of opposites. In her second collection, the consequences of women's perfidy become far graver, and women's lives are frequently endangered in these tales. As both tales of the *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares* studied so far in this chapter show, men's lives are lost as frequently as women's: Jacinto is murdered, and Amete receives a death sentence, for example. In the *Desengaños amorosos*, the female body is in particular danger.[29] Furthermore, women's betrayals of their fellow sex are punished less often than in the previous collection. Although all narrators of *desengaños* are women, they do not shy away from revealing the treachery of their own sex, hence they do not focus solely on the cruelty of of men.

Lisarda, Lisis's cousin and rival for Juan's affection, narrates the second *desengaño*: *La más infame venganza*. Lisarda's relative unwillingness to speak against men at the outset of her storytelling appears strangely contradictory, given the extremely negative portrayal of two men that emerges in her tale; she insists that she relates a *desengaño* 'por la ley de la obediencia', demonstrating her personal reluctance to adhere to the thematic imperative of the *sarao*, which Lisis proposes is to defend 'la fama de las mujeres' by relating their disillusionment in love (*DA* 171 & 118).[30] Brownlee's summation is relevant to Lisarda's evident equivocation: through this frame protagonist, Zayas creates a woman 'who embodies multiple subject-positions, capable of condemning women while portraying their

---

[28] See my previous chapter, which deals with female alliances and the frame 'sisterhood'.

[29] The centrality of the female body and the perils that it suffers in Zayas's texts, particularly in the *desengaños*, are highlighted in Vollendorf's 'Fleshing out Feminism in Early Modern Spain'.

[30] Lisarda's motivation is to appease her suitor, Juan. His presence is emphasised at the introduction and conclusion of her novella: beforehand, she is 'temerosa de haber de mostrarse apasionada contra los hombres, estando su amante don Juan presente', seeking his absolution with a meaningful gaze; and, afterwards, we are told that she is 'congojada y sonrosada', wishing to not 'enojar a don Juan' (*DA* 171 & 196). Perversely, she calls her most amoral metadiegetic character 'Juan', which may be read as an early indication of her oscillating opinion regarding the diegetic Juan.

victimisation'.[31] Thus, a perfidious female relationship also emerges in Lisarda's novella. Given the latent antagonism between Lisarda and Lisis at the diegetic level, it is unsurprising that Lisarda's *desengaño* mirrors this same-sex friction at the metadiegetic level. In *La más infame venganza*, the indirect agency of the vengeful Octavia results in dishonour, intense physical suffering, and eventual death for Camila.

Early in the novella, Octavia is pursued by the wealthy Carlos; in an interpolated remark, Lisarda suggests that the reprobate Carlos feigns love: 'se perdió, o lo dio a entender, que para mí lo peor que siento de los hombres es que publican más que sienten' (*DA* 173). He sets out to seduce her 'con joyas y dineros [...] y, a no bastar, valerse de la fuerza o de algún engaño' without regard for her honour (*DA* 173). Despite Octavia's incipient love, zealous concern for her honour leads her to refuse to entertain his suit until he promises marriage in front of a witness. To excuse the clandestine nature of the marriage, he states that his father wishes him to marry a wealthier woman. Lisarda repeatedly interrupts the narrative to underscore Octavia's folly, lamenting that she gambles with her honour and gullibly yields her virginity to Carlos: 'cuán flacas son las mujeres, que no saben perseverar en el buen intento', '¡qué ignorante cree Octavia!', '¡oh, mujer fácil! [...] ¡oh loca! Entrególe la joya más rica que una mujer tiene, ¡oh hermosura desdichada!' (*DA* 177–9). Lisarda's hyperbolic condemnation of Octavia's naivety is comprehensible when considered in its historical context. Given the invalidity of such marriages in post-Tridentine Spain, Octavia jeopardises her honour by trusting in Carlos's worthless promise.[32]

Neither Octavia's parents nor her dissolute brother represent any significant obstacle to Carlos's regular nocturnal access to her home, which continues for over a two-year period. Predictably, and much to Octavia's distress, Carlos's infatuation turns to disdain. Unlike Flora and Claudia in the aforementioned novellas, Octavia is naïve in her sexual liaison with Carlos rather than being promiscuously *libre*. Her lack of guile has resulted in her dishonour, which becomes publically known. With his father's assistance, Carlos arranges to marry Camila, a wealthier and more virtuous woman. Adding 'un engaño a otro',

---

[31] Brownlee, *The Cultural Labyrinth of María de Zayas*, p. 142.

[32] Octavia's actions would not have been unusual in early modern Europe. According to Cavallo and Cerutti's study of lawsuits in Piedmont, the importance attributed to marriage promises continued throughout the 1600s, regardless of Tridentine regulations, with sexual relations, temporary concubinage, and even cohabitation often following such a promise. Lisarda's previous tale, *Aventurarse perdiendo* (*NAE*), described another clandestine marriage. See Cavallo and Cerutti's article, 'Female Honour and the Social Control of Reproduction'.

Carlos pretends that he will marry Octavia in a matter of months, once his father has come to accept the unequal match; unwittingly compliant with his *engaño*, she elects to seek temporary refuge a convent (*DA* 184). Thus disencumbered, Carlos seizes the opportunity to marry Camila, informing Octavia of this by letter after the event.[33]

Lisarda unequivocally commends Octavia's desire for vengeance as exemplary: 'yo aseguro que si todas vengaran las ofensas que reciben, como Octavia lo hizo, no hubiera tantas burladas y ofendidas' (*DA* 189). The reader is left to question whether vengeance is right and proper or whether Lisarda is an unreliable narrator.[34] Octavia endures a similar plight to the dishonoured Aminta of *La burlada Aminta y venganza del honor*; due to the existence of another spouse, neither Octavia nor Aminta can remedy her own situation peacefully by marrying the treacherous male.[35] While Aminta directs her wrath primarily towards the perfidious Flora, and secondarily towards Jacinto, Octavia misdirects her ire, causing an innocent woman to suffer her vengeance. Less audacious than Aminta, who executes her own scheme singlehandedly, Octavia summons her brother, Juan, 'para causas tocantes a su honor' (*DA* 188).[36] Octavia meekly prolongs her reclusion by becoming a nun and transfers agency to Juan. Since 'la arrebatada condición de don Juan' has been continually underlined through the novella, it should come as little surprise to the reader that he devises a disproportionately cruel vengeance plan in targeting Camila (*DA* 180). In *El juez de su causa*, Estela follows the path of legal justice towards marriage, a route that is not open to Aminta or to Octavia. In Octavia's case, she employs a man as proxy. Although her level of malevolent intentionality is not clearly defined, she cannot be wholly ignorant of or disassociated from the destructive potential that she unleashes and channels through Juan. To judge by the title that the tale later acquired, which implies that this is

---

[33] Carlos's interest in Camila stems at least partially from pecuniary motives: 'No era tan fea, que pudiera por esto ser aborrecida, y cuando lo fuera, la hiciera hermosa más de cincuenta mil ducados que tenía de dote, y deseaba ya Carlos verse dueño de todo' (*DA* 187). This illustrates Zayas's acute awareness of materialistic conditioning within seventeenth-century Spanish life and, in particular, of the pivotal effects that monetary concerns could wreak on the realms of sentiments and marital prospects.

[34] See Wayne Booth's well-known discussion of narrators' unreliability in *The Rhetoric of Fiction*. Lisarda qualifies her comment with a bizarrely misogynistic remark that is wholly inappropriate to the content of her novella: 'Mas hay tantas mujeres de tan común estilo, que la venganza que toman es, si las engaña uno, engañarse ellas con otro, con que dan lugar a aquel que pudiera temer ultraje y salga de cualquiera obligación' (*DA* 189). As this criticism does not apply either to Octavia or to Camila, its purpose seems merely to demonstrate the shifting subject-positions that narrators such as Lisarda alternately occupy.

[35] Aminta discovers that Jacinto is already married and that her wedding was an elaborate *engaño*, and Carlos has married Camila by the time that Octavia sets her plot in motion. Thus, an inability to obtain justice through marriage to the men by whom they were seduced may inspire these women's wish for *venganza*.

[36] Donovan contends that both *La burlada Aminta y venganza del honor* and *La más infame venganza* share the same source: the forty-second novella, in the first volume of Matteo Bandello's *Novelle* (1554). In Bandello's tale, when the central protagonist's secret husband abandons her in favour of a more socially eminent bride, she tortures and kills him for vengeance. The resemblance of Zayas's novellas to Bandello's is faint, suggesting that she brought her own inventiveness to bear on them. See Donovan, p. 96.

the worst imaginable act of revenge, it appears that, when the woman unleashes a man's pursuit of vengeance, the result is especially dire.

Lisarda's commentary revealingly conveys the undeserved nature of the guiltless Camila's fate, effectively employing dramatic exclamations and apposite epithets:

> Vengóse de la culpa de Carlos en quien no tenía culpa, de suerte que hasta en la satisfacción del honor de su hermana siguió sus traviesas inclinaciones, y así, pensó una traición que sólo se pudiera hallar en un bajo y común hombre, y no de la calidad que don Juan era. Y fue que propuso quitarle a Carlos el honor con Camila, como él se le había quitado a él con Octavia. ¡Miren qué culpa tenía la inocente! [...] Camila honesta, Camila cuerda, Camila recogida y no tratando sino de servir a su marido, ¿se quiere vengar de Camila? ¡Oh, pobre dama, y cómo tú sola pagarás los yerros de Octavia, los engaños de Carlos y las traiciones de don Juan! (*DA* 190)

As Lisarda's last exclamatory sentence above boldly states, the faultless Camila is the only character to be punished in the novella. The reader is led to suspect that Lisarda's protestations, claiming incompetency as a narrator due to her own inexperience of *desengaño*, are a rhetorical ploy. Friedman observes that she 'exhibits maturity, wisdom, and a sound knowledge of masculine and feminine temperaments. Timidity or reserve is not discernible in the discourse of the novella, nor does the narrator fail to punctuate the shortcomings and the evil propensities of men'.[37] Here, Octavia's *yerros*, potently interacting with the two men's unscrupulousness, lead to Camila's unwarranted punishment. This absence of poetic justice is a recurring trend for women in the *Desengaños amorosos*, leading to the tragic denouements of these stories.

Boyer notes protagonists' inability to curb the far-reaching implications of their actions: 'Con la excepción de Camila, los personajes parecen tomar decisiones, es decir, parecen tener más responsibilidad por los sucesos, mientras en realidad tienen menos control sobre las consecuencias de estas decisiones'.[38] Although Carlos initiates the chain of calamities by deceiving Octavia, the latter sets in motion the undoing of Camila. When Juan fails in his attempts to seduce Camila, he opts to dishonour her instead by other means: 'aprovecharse de la fuerza' (*DA* 192). Disguising himself as a woman in 'un vestido de los mejores que tenía su hermana', Juan gains entry to Camila's home and rapes her to avenge his sister's dishonour (*DA* 192).[39] The use of Octavia's clothing implicates her, at a

---

[37] Edward H. Friedman, 'Avenging the Intertext: The Narrative Rhetoric of María de Zayas's *La más infame venganza*', *Cincinnati Romance Review*, 17 (1998), 27–34 (p. 32).

[38] H. Patsy Boyer, 'La vision artística de María de Zayas', in *Estudios sobre el siglo de oro en homenaje a Raymond R. MacCurdy*, ed. by Ángel González, Tamara Holzapfel and Alfred Rodríguez (Madrid: Cátedra, 1983), pp. 253–263 (p. 260).

[39] The duplicitous use of male transvestism in order to gain access to a woman is a precursor of *Amar sólo por vencer* (*DA*), which I discuss in my fourth chapter.

practical level of complicity, in the retaliatory crime. Camila, violated despite her behavioural choices, represents the feminine impasse; when men foist unwanted sexual attentions upon women in Zayas's novellas, the woman is lost.

Camila spends one year in a convent, having fled there from 'la ira de su esposo' (*DA* 194). She returns to Carlos's house due to his father and local dignitaries' intercession, although Carlos refuses to forgive his wife's dishonour. Parker Aronson suggests that, raped within the marital home, Camila 'is a constant reminder of his [Carlos's] inefficacy as a man to protect and safeguard her and his own honour against the sexual advances of other men'.[40] Indirectly, Octavia has played a major role in bringing about this predicament. Carlos poisons Camila with grotesque and, ultimately, fatal results: 'Hinchóse toda con tanta monstruosidad, que sus brazos y piernas parecían unas gordísimas columnas, y el vientre se apartaba una gran vara de la cintura' (*DA* 195). Graphically described suffering of female victims is a typical feature of Zayas's *Desengaños amorosos*. It is implied that Camila attains heavenly reward when, on the brink of dying after six months of valiant endurance, she hears an enigmatic announcement: 'Camila, ya es llegada tu hora' (*DA* 195). Lisarda explicitly states that Camila 'vivía mártir' due to Carlos's cruelty and that her slow demise is divinely ordained so that 'esta desdichada y santa señora padeciese más martirios para darle en el cielo el premio de ellos' (*DA* 195). Thus, in *La más infame venganza* and in subsequent *desengaños*, Zayas's female protagonists' physical torment is accompanied by an orthodox implication of reward in the afterlife. So, although Camila suffers the consequences of Octavia's urge for vengeance, Camila achieves a place in heaven, perhaps mitigating the injustice done to her in some small degree.

As a nun, Octavia is 'la más dichosa' and enjoys serenity on the earthly plane (*DA* 195). It is unclear how she can conscionably reconcile herself to the sacrifice of Camila, the innocent scapegoat. Her misdirected reprisal and subsequent complacency reduce the impact of her earlier victimisation by the artful Carlos. Octavia's desire for vengeance evidently backfires, ceasing to be laudable, when delegated to a man. She is exemplary only in a negative sense, although her own retribution is relatively mild: abandonment by her lover. Carlos ultimately goes in search of Juan, mystery shrouding both men's fates. The ensuing frame discussion of Lisarda's novella focuses almost exclusively on Camila

[40] Parker Aronson, p. 536.

and Carlos.[41] Lisis comes to Camila's defence, cites the folly of worsening husbands' jealousy, and insists upon Carlos's culpablility. The diverse framing voices exist in dialogical relationship with one another; parallel to this phenomenon, the inset novellas exist in dialogical counterpoint with the narrative. Within this commentary, the omission of Octavia's involvement in events is pointed; in this oblique manner, Zayas draws readers' attention to her indirect role in causing Camila's rape and murder, the titular *infame venganza*.[42]

* * *

The third and immediately subsequent *desengaño*, *El verdugo de su esposa*, presents another striking instance of woman's perfidy going unpunished. Nise narrates the novella, adopting and adapting a premise similar to that of *El curioso impertinente*, from Part One of Cervantes's *Don Quijote*. It also develops out of the preceding *La más infame venganza*; in both cases, a reprehensible character is named Juan, ironically alluding both to the diegetic Juan and to Tirso's infamous Don Juan Tenorio. *El verdugo de su esposa*'s Pedro and Juan are known as 'los dos amigos' throughout Palermo; however, once Pedro marries Roseleta, he complains that Juan does not visit as frequently as before. Juan falls in love with Roseleta, his friend's wife, which causes Juan both grief and sickness.[43] As part of his pursuit of Roseleta, he feigns the cause of his desolation to be unreciprocated love for another woman – Angeliana. The narrator then reveals a crucial, analeptic detail: Juan 'había ya gozado a Angeliana con palabra de esposo, si bien desde que vió a Roseleta se le había entibiado la voluntad' (*DA* 205).[44] Juan has duped and dishonoured Angeliana using the same method as Carlos for his seduction of Octavia in *La más infame venganza*:

---

[41] Isabel displays little empathy upon hearing of Camila's rape despite its similarity to her own misfortune. The reader easily recognises that Isabel's criticism of Camila's failure to notify her husband of Juan's importuning is hypocritical since she neglected to tell her parents of Manuel's advances and rape. Moreover, the subsequent *El verdugo de su esposa* portrays the gruesome fate of another woman (Roseleta), who is a victim of uxoricide despite adopting the tactic that Isabel recommends: denouncing a man's improper advances to her husband.

[42] Ambiguity suffuses the labelling of the novella, which, as I have already stated, cannot be attributed to Zayas. The particular *más infame venganza* could conceivably be Octavia's enlistment of Juan to avenge her dishonour, Juan's subsequent rape of Camila, or even Carlos's uxoricide. Given that Camila's rape and murder are consequences of Octavia's action, I name the latter as instigator of the *infame venganza*, regardless of whichever act is specified.

[43] Cervantes's tale of Anselmo, Lotario, and Camila bears many similarities to *El verdugo de su esposa*. Even Zayas's epithet echoes Cervantes's: 'de todos los que los conocían *los dos amigos* eran llamados' (*El Ingenioso Hidalgo*, p. 395; italics are Cervantes's own). Of course, Cervantes's story contrasts with Zayas's in significant ways: namely, Anselmo implores his friend to court his wife in order to test her virtue, and Camila voluntarily yields to Lotario; neither of these plot complications occur in Zayas's tale. Crucially, Roseleta is more virtuous than Camila; her murder is gratuitous, given her chastity.

[44] I follow Genette in naming this occurrence 'analepsis', which evokes an event that precedes the point in the story where we are at a given moment. See Genette, p. 40.

promising marriage, probably in the form of a clandestine 'wedding'; like Octavia, Angeliana goes on to sacrifice her blameless rival.

Roseleta's wrath at Juan's impropriety towards her causes her to denounce him to Pedro. When Pedro attempts to kill his disloyal friend, a miracle prevents him from succeeding. At the conclusion to Juan's role in the tale, he repents and atones for his dishonourable intent: 'se fue a un convento de religiosos carmelitas descalzos, y se entró de fraile' (*DA* 219).[45] Upon Juan's withdrawal, the dishonoured Angeliana assumes agency in the tale in order to reap revenge: 'rabiosa de haber perdido a don Juan por causa de Roseleta, se quiso vengar de entrambos' (*DA* 220). Angeliana's wish for vengeance seems to have been brought on by a straightforward case of *celos* due to Juan having forsaken her. Through her emergence as an agent in the tale, another instance of female perfidy occurs. Also, her morals have become *libres* since Juan induced her dishonour: 'Era libre y había errado, causa para que algunas se den más a la libertad' (*DA* 220).[46] While Juan enjoys the security of belonging to a religious order, Roseleta is a vulnerable target for Angeliana's machination.

Angeliana's vengeance plan differs from Aminta's or Octavia's: it is founded upon sexual manipulation. Employing 'ademanes libres' and 'lascivos ojos', she boldly takes the sexual initiative and seduces Pedro, whose affection for Roseleta has hastened to revulsion (*DA* 220). Gossip pertaining to the scandal involving Roseleta and Juan plays a vital role in the diminution of Pedro's love for his wife and its radical transformation into contempt. Boyer notes that in the early modern period – or in Zayas's version of it, at least – 'the touchstone of a man's honour was public opinion', which explains the mutation of Pedro's feelings towards Roseleta into resentment or worse.[47] However, Pedro incites further public outrage by conducting an openly adulterous relationship with Angeliana: 'vino a ser tan pública esta amistad, que la ciudad la murmuraba' (*DA* 220). When the extramarital affair becomes widely known, Roseleta writes Angeliana a letter, ordering her to cease relations with Pedro. This catalyses the second step in Angeliana's scheme for revenge: calumniating Roseleta with the slanderous claim that she has previously committed

[45] It is striking that Nise (Juan's cousin) follows Lisarda in attributing the name 'Juan' to a disreputable male character. As a diegetic suitor of the same name has cruelly rejected their hostess, Lisis, this act on the female narrators' part may be read as a sign of allegiance to her.

[46] Zayas has clearly chosen her 'angelic' name for ironic effect. Angeliana's sexual freedom and treachery link her with Claudia and Flora of the *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares*, whom I have discussed previously.

[47] H. Patsy Boyer, 'Toward a Baroque Reading of "El verdugo de su esposa"', in *María de Zayas: The Dynamics of Discourse*, ed. by Amy R. Williamsen and Judith A. Whitenack (London: Associated University Presses, 1995), pp. 52–71 (p. 65).

adultery with Juan. Angeliana reports to Pedro 'que ella sabía por muy cierto que don Juan había gozado a Roseleta', suggesting to Pedro that Roseleta merely informed him of Juan's improprieties to prevent the latter from marrying Angeliana (*DA* 221).

The credulous Pedro promises to avenge Angeliana's aborted marriage and the alleged 'atrevimientos de su esposa' (*DA* 221). His thirst for vengeance was sanctioned by civil law; according to the *Nueva recopilación* (1567), if a married woman's adultery were legally proven, the husband could dispose of the two culprits (his wife and her lover) as he saw fit, which included the possibility of a public execution.[48] Inevitably, a conflict between civic legal codes and ecclesiastical law arose due to the thorny contradictions between human and divine mandates.[49] While few cases of such uxoricide appear in Spanish legal records in practice, Vollendorf notes that, in theory, the civil law is 'emblematic of the double standards applied with regard to gender and sexuality'.[50] No such allowances were made for the married woman who suffered adultery; McKendrick observes that it 'was a one-sided offence which only the wife could commit in law'.[51] In *El verdugo de su esposa*, Pedro exhibits a hypocritical attitude to his honour, which is supported by the Spanish code of civil law in force at the time, by conducting extramarital relations with Angeliana.

Patricia E. Grieve compares this novella to *La inocencia castigada*; like Inés, 'neither speech nor experience nor the exercise of free will prevents Roseleta from falling victim to

---

[48] For further information regarding women's legal position in cases of their adultery, see: McKendrick, *Woman and Society in the Spanish Drama of the Golden Age*, pp. 35–9; Galo Sánchez, 'Datos jurídicos acerca de la venganza del honor', *Revista de filología española*, 4 (1917), 292–5; Matthew D. Stroud, 'Further Considerations of History and Law in the Wife-Murder *Comedias*', *Hispanic Journal*, 8 (1987), 21–38. Provided that the husband put the culprits to death with express legal permission, he acquired both his wife's dowry and her lover's possessions. Even so, the death of the guilty parties was not obligatory, and there is sparse evidence supporting it on grounds of the suspicion of adultery. Both McKendrick and Stroud contend that convicted wife-murderers received penalties and that societal pressure was against uxoricide. Within the historical context of seventeenth-century Spain, Stroud observes that the actual number of wife-murders was small, suggesting that it was both a rare and a scandalous phenomenon. Also, he illustrates that liberties were taken with the small number of wife-murder *comedias* said to have historical antecedents; moreover, many wife-murder plays deal with characters who are neither Spanish nor the audience's contemporaries, and legal workings are largely absent from these plays. This all suggests that the literature was not intended to represent Golden-Age society faithfully but to entertain an audience.

[49] As Elizabeth Rhodes succinctly points out, 'for a man to murder an unfaithful wife in seventeenth-century Spain was morally lethal for the Catholic soul, according to the operative code of ethics, but was nonetheless sanctioned by civil law'. Elizabeth Rhodes, 'Redressing Ana Caro's *Valor, agravio y mujer*', *Hispanic Review*, 73 (Summer 2005) 3, 309–328 (p. 313).

[50] Lisa Vollendorf, 'Our Bodies, Our Selves: Vengeance in the Novellas of María de Zayas', *Cincinnati Romance Review*, 16 (1997), 93–100 (p. 93).

[51] McKendrick, *Woman and Society in the Spanish Drama of the Golden Age*, p. 15.

society's definition of honour, that is, the man's interpretation of honour'.[52] Ironically, in these and in several of Zayas's other novellas, 'man's interpretation of honour' is effected by a woman's machinations. In this case, Angeliana has instigated the mayhem. She and Pedro carefully form a clandestine scheme to avoid punishment for the illegal uxoricide: 'porque no le diesen a él ni a Angeliana la culpa, se concertaron los dos en los que habían de hacer' (*DA* 221). Pedro executes their cruel plan by bleeding Roseleta excessively when she falls ill, feigning insincere displays of grief upon his wife's 'accidental' death. The bloodletting of the innocent Roseleta bears a strong resemblance to wife-murder in Calderón's *El médico de su honra* (first performed in 1635). Maravall observes that the gruesome violence, so frequently evident in Baroque works, was rooted in a pessimistic conception of the human being and of the world that the former, in turn, reinforced: in the seventeenth century, 'consciousness of violence was more acute, as was acceptance of it, which came to inspire an aesthetics of cruelty'.[53] Roseleta's slow and painful death echoes and is echoed by other innocent wives' murders in Zayas's *desengaños*, such as Camila's poisoning in *La más infame venganza* (the immediately preceding novella) and Blanca's bloodletting in the subsequent *Mal presagio casar lejos*, which I discussed in the previous chapter. Angeliana gains control over Pedro's actions firstly through seduction and then through misinformation regarding his wife's fidelity; ultimately, she inspires him to plot Roseleta's demise. When Pedro commits the murder, he has become a mere puppet for Angeliana to manoeuvre with ease. From the eve of Roseleta's burial, Angeliana lives in Pedro's home, and they are married after three months. Their actions inevitably entail further public scandal and outrage, and there is another reference to neighbourhood gossip: 'empezaron todos a conocer que él la había muerto; mas como no se podía averiguar, paró sólo en murmurarlo' (*DA* 222). As a result of Angeliana's stratagem, Pedro willingly sacrifices both his wife and his reputation. Angeliana's life-story after marriage is a tale yet to be told, which remains as a potential 'sub-fabula'.[54]

At the diegetic level, Nise implies that, although the couple live out their lives together in tranquillity, they may be penalised in the afterlife; they are 'no seguros del castigo de Dios,

---

[52] Patricia E. Grieve, 'Embroidering with Saintly Threads: María de Zayas Challenges Cervantes and the Church', *Renaissance Quarterly*, 44 (1991) 1, 86–106 (p. 98). I discuss *La inocencia castigada* in the second section of this chapter.

[53] Maravall, p. 162. Maravall claims that the spectacle of violence was used by seventeenth-century authority figures to excite and to terrify the masses and, as a result, to succeed in guiding and subjecting the latter to their place in the social order.

[54] I source this term from Bal's work on narratology. Boyer goes so far as to state that the mystery surrounding Angeliana's life after marriage opens up the 'possibility of a sequel' to *El verdugo de su esposa*. See Bal, p. 211; Boyer, 'Toward a Baroque Reading of "El verdugo de su esposa"', p. 67.

que si no se les dio en esta vida, no les reservaría de él en la otra' (*DA* 222). Lisis's surmise upon Nise's conclusion of the tale is that 'a ella le parecía, con el corto caudal de su ingenio, que a Roseleta le había dado Dios el cielo padeciendo aquel martirio' (*DA* 223).[55] Thus, Roseleta experiences the same celestial fate as Camila of *La más infame venganza*. Grieve examines the tale's ending and notes that questions arise naturally from Zayas's work: 'Zayas remains well within Catholic orthodoxy in all of this, but she does show herself to be a questioner who is not silently accepting all she has been taught'.[56] Thus, Zayas simultaneously manages to appease the literary censors and to represent the elusive nature of justice on a secular level, suggesting, through Lisis, that moral justice in its purest form is obtainable only on a divine plane. In a gendered interpretation, male frame listeners justify Pedro's motive for the killing as the suspicion of dishonour, while the women argue that Pedro, 'por quedar desembarazado para casarse con la culpada, había muerto la sin culpa' (*DA* 223).

It is evident that Angeliana receives no earthly punishment for her deceit and manipulation, while the frame audience tentatively speculates on the potential for moral justice in the afterlife. Neither Octavia (*La más infame venganza*) nor Angeliana (*El verdugo de su esposa*) receives tangible, worldly punishment for unwarranted perfidy against women, differentiating their fates from those of treacherous women of the earlier *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares*. Their alliances with men and adherence to the double standards of male-dominated society protect them.[57] In the secular world of the *desengaños*, Zayas inverts poetic justice, portraying innocent women who die hoping for heavenly reward. It is worth noting that an analogous perfidious plot later develops in *El traidor contra su sangre*, eighth tale of the *Desengaños amorosos*. Rejected by Enrique in favour of Mencía, Clavela, yet another 'mujer libre y celosa' (*DA* 378), knowingly endangers both parties by revealing the clandestine relationship to Mencía's relatives. She seduces Mencía's brother and aids his plot to evade punishment for Mencía's murder.

---

[55] Supporting Lisis's theory, the beauty of Roseleta's corpse reflects her spiritual reward. In *Mal presagio casar lejos*, we are told that Blanca's body remains 'tan lindo como si entonces acabara de morir (*señal de la gloria que goza el alma*)' (*DA* 365; italics are my own).

[56] Grieve, p. 98.

[57] As Friedrich Engels later showed in *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* (1884), the basis of the double standard arose from a need for certainty of paternity, in order to transmit private property to heirs, which dictated monogamy for the wife but not for the husband. Thus, despite being protected by alliances with men and by the double standard, Angeliana does not fully comply with the rules of male-dominated society.

As evidenced by the four novellas studied in this chapter and their depictions of Flora, Claudia, Octavia and Angeliana, Zayas's prose collections portray instances of woman's treachery and active dishonour of her fellow sex. In the *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares*, female traitors receive penalties, even death. Analysis of women's relationships in Zayas's second prose work reveals that there are considerable changes in the outcomes of women's treachery. In the *Desengaños amorosos*, grave dangers threaten guiltless female protagonists' physical wellbeing, culminating in lurid death scenes, while their female foes no longer receive certain retribution. The novellas of the *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares* follow the comedic pattern of poetic justice; the two from the *Desengaños amorosos* adhere to the pattern of tragedy, with a disproportionate price being paid by the innocent. The original element of Zayas's stories is that, in every case, the agents of either the potentially tragic route (*NAE*) or the actual tragic route (*DA*) are women. In the following section, I will examine a grave rupture of women's bonds in the social fabric: those existing between sisters.

Subverted Sisterhood in Zayas's Novellas

In the novellas of the *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares* and the *Desengaños amorosos*, together with the developing frame tale, the bonds joining women in various forms of sisterhood are of great import.[58] The following analysis focuses on those of Zayas's stories whose central protagonists are sisters by blood or marriage. From the *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares*, I will discuss *El jardín engañoso*, the main protagonists of which are sisters. Of the *Desengaños amorosos*, *La inocencia castigada*, which describes the treatment of a woman by her sister-in-law, and *Estragos que causa el vicio*, which portrays the rivalry between two stepsisters, are relevant to the sisterhood theme. The tales are narrated by two of the most significant of Zayas's narrators – Laura and Lisis – and occur at climactic points in their respective collections, highlighting the theme of sisterhood as one of great consequence. In these novellas, the rupture of affectionate bonds between sisters is a prominent theme; the culpability of the female protagonists varies, but they are all guilty of wrongdoing against their respective sisters.[59] As in previously discussed novellas, the perfidious sisters manipulate the honour code to the detriment of others.

---

[58] In my first chapter, I examined the frame-narrative 'sisterhood'.

[59] In *King Lear*, Regan calls Albany (married to her sister, Goneril) 'my brother', and he then addresses Regan as 'our very loving sister'. Thus, in the English language at least, this suggests a blurring of the

Significantly, the first of Zayas's stories to bring sisters to the fore as central protagonists occurs at a climactic point in the narration. This is the final story of her *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares*: Laura's novella, *El jardín engañoso*. Of the female narrators participating in the first collection of stories, the reader is aware from the outset that Laura is the most important. The first soirées have been organised in order to accelerate the convalescence of Lisis, Laura's daughter. Due to Lisis's illness, she asks her widowed mother to preside over the storytelling festivities. The honour of narrating the final story is bestowed upon Laura; even Lisis's beloved Juan, the cause of her love-sickness, is relegated to the position of penultimate narrator.

Laura's *El jardín engañoso* hinges upon the exploits of two sisters, described as 'dos hermosísimos soles, que tal nombre se puede dar a dos bellas hijas: la mayor llamada Constanza y la menor Teodosia' (*NAE* 515). Initially, Laura eulogises the sisters as equal in charm: 'tan iguales en belleza, discreción y donaire que no desdecía nada la una de la otra' (*NAE* 515). Lena E. V. Sylvania compares *El jardín engañoso* with its probable source, Boccaccio's *Decameron* (day ten, fifth tale);[60] the addition of the sister, Teodosia, is Zayas's invention, demonstrating that the sisterly complication was of special interest to her. Problems arise because two brothers love the sisters; the story is unique in Zayas for its inclusion of two sets of siblings. Jorge's love for Constanza is requited, and initially it appears likely to conclude in marriage, while that of Federico for Teodosia is in vain. Relations between the sisters appear harmonious because, at this point, Teodosia's scheming is clandestine. In contrast, there is overt rivalry between the brothers; mysteriously, Laura merely states that 'se llevaban mal' (*NAE* 516). Laura's neglect in elucidating the brothers' rivalry reveals that she is primarily interested in the sisters. Chronologically, Teodosia is the first example of the subtle and treacherous sister; she is motivated by jealousy of her sister due to her imprudent desire for Jorge, 'tanto que empezó a trazar y buscar modos de apartarle de la voluntad de su hermana, envidiosa de verla amada, haciendo esto tan astuta y recatada que jamás le dio a entender ni al uno ni al

---

distinctions between sibling relationships of blood and by marriage. Of course, given the significant lack of affection among siblings in the play, the terms may also be used to create dramatic irony. See *The Tragedy of King Lear*, V. 1. 10, 16.

[60] Lena E. V. Sylvania, *Doña María de Zayas y Sotomayor: A Contribution to the Study of her Works* (New York: AMS Press, Inc., 1966), pp. 26–34. Sylvania notes that Boccaccio had already told a similar story in his *Filocolo*. The inclusion of an anthropomorphic devil, albeit one whose magnanimous behaviour is uncharacteristically demonic, is Zayas's invention. The devil-pact motif was commonplace in Spanish literature, possibly descending from the Theophilus legend. Zayas includes another man's pact with the devil in *La perseguida triunfante* (*DA*); see my fifth chapter.

otro su amor' (*NAE* 516).[61] Teodosia's plotting is all the more devious for being undetected even by her relatives. Thus, Laura swiftly departs from her praise of the sisters to differentiate between them by the most important trait: virtue, not included in her earlier description of them as exemplars of beauty, discretion, and wit.

The initial step towards 'el sangriento fin' is catalysed involuntarily by Teodosia (*NAE* 517): Jorge becomes jealous of Constanza's innocent friendship with Federico, which stems from her sympathy due to her sister's scorn for the latter. Teodosia, naïve as to the consequences that her lies will bring, reports to Jorge that Constanza and Federico 'se aman con tanta terneza y firme voluntad que no hay para encarecerlo más que decir que tienen concertado de casarse' (*NAE* 518). The narrator claims that Teodosia's hope and expectation are to usurp her sister's position as Jorge's beloved, but not to cause any further harm, 'pareciéndole a ella que el galán se contentaría con desamarla y no buscaría más venganza' (*NAE* 517). Echoing instances in previously examined novellas, acting as a harbinger of Angeliana's sullying of Roseleta's reputation in *El verdugo de su esposa*, and motivated by sibling rivalry and jealousy, Teodosia here uses the honour code to further her own desire: marriage to Jorge. This sister is not portrayed as reprehensibly as those of the subsequent stories to be discussed; her intentions are treacherous but not murderous. However, believing himself to have been dishonoured, Jorge's wrath leads him to stab his brother to death and to flee to Naples. Teodosia's perfidy results in the murder of Federico, whose brother's subsequent flight thwarts Constanza's aspiration for an imminent marriage.

During the four years of Jorge's absence, Teodosia encourages her sister to marry; the former still covets Jorge: 'deseaba ver casada a su hermana para vivir más segura si don Jorge pareciese' (*NAE* 520). Carlos, a poor nobleman, wins Constanza's hand by befriending the sisters' mother, Fabia.[62] He and Constanza have two children, which brings Constanza to a state of unsurpassable happiness: 'juzgaba perdidos los años que había gastado en otros devaneos, sin haber sido siempre de su Carlos' (*NAE* 523). When Jorge returns and resumes his pursuit of Constanza, she finally discovers Teodosia's love for him; his lack of interest is the cause of Teodosia's melancholy and consequent illness.

---

[61] By favouring Jorge over Federico, Teodosia selects the older, inheriting brother as the object of her amorous attention; moreover, one can hypothesise that the disparity in the brothers' pecuniary fortunes may contribute to their rivalry. Jorge's inheritance is not explicitly cited except when Laura introduces him as 'único heredero en la casa de sus padres' (*NAE* 515).

[62] See my fourth chapter for a discussion of Fabia's role and of her interaction with Carlos.

Constanza summons Jorge and urges him to marry her sister, 'tanto por no verla [a Teodosia] padecer como por no verse perseguida de sus importunaciones' (*NAE* 524–5).

When Constanza's entreaties fail, she flippantly sets him a jocose challenge: if he creates a beautiful garden by morning, she will yield to his will; otherwise, he must marry Teodosia. However, her ill-advised venture results in Jorge's loss of his soul to the devil in exchange for the eponymous garden; this functions as the turning point of the narrative and as a catalyst for its denouement. In an important sense, it was the sisterly bond that, above all, instigated Constanza's impossible wager with Jorge. It threatens to destabilise both Constanza's marriage and her plans for Teodosia's marriage, leading to a potential rupture between the sisters. On seeing the garden, Constanza's deathly swoon induces the grief of Carlos and Teodosia: 'solemnizaban con lágrimas y voces su muerte' (*NAE* 530); on Teodosia's part, this is a rare display of selfless concern and affection for her sister. The male characters – Jorge, Carlos and even the devil – then indulge in a series of altruistic acts, each attempting to outdo the previous one, and both Constanza and Jorge are released from their respective pacts. Constanza is repeatedly favoured more by luck than by her virtuous course of action, which undermines the direction of Laura's discourse as an exemplary lesson.[63] She, the loving sister, has nearly brought the edifice down on all their heads, narrowly escaping with a *comedia*-type ending. Uncharacteristically, Jorge demonstrates remorse and requests of Constanza 'lo que tú ayer me dabas, deseosa de mi bien, y yo como loco desprecié, que es la hermosa Teodosia como mujer'; all protagonists celebrate the marriage and the couple have 'hermosos hijos' (*NAE* 533).

It is probable that the happy resolution of this, the final novella of Zayas's first collection, is intended to induce the reader's further thought. Brownlee notes that, here as elsewhere in Zayas's carefully crafted texts, the ambiguities and interpretative disagreements of the *sarao* participants allow the discerning reader to savour 'the Baroque openendedness of the text'.[64] Ironically, Teodosia's undeserved good fortune is the cause of rejoicing among those whom she manipulated. However, Constanza's personal joy is understandable, given that Jorge and Teodosia's marriage potentially marks an end to her strife. In an instance of Baroque equivocation, Teodosia has achieved the prize that she immorally sought and for which she willingly tarnished her sister's reputation: marriage to Jorge. Friedman aptly

[63] Friedman also makes this point. See Edward H. Friedman, 'Constructing Romance: The Deceptive Idealism of María de Zayas's *El jardín engañoso*', in *Zayas and Her Sisters, 2: Essays on Novelas by 17th-Century Spanish Women*, ed. by Gwyn E. Campbell and Judith A. Whitenack (New York: Global Publications, Binghampton University, 2001), pp. 45–61.

[64] Brownlee, *The Cultural Labyrinth of María de Zayas*, p. 97.

describes the marriage as 'a travesty of the sacrament of matrimony and of the didactic function of literature'.[65] However, unlike Boccaccio, predictable exemplarity is not Zayas's primary concern: 'her interest lies in the power of words to deceive and in deceivers who triumph'.[66]

Morally, the only trace of justice is that Teodosia wins a murderer as a husband. Friedman classifies this novella as 'deceptively idealistic' because of the overall sense of injustice, locating it on the narrative continuum of Zayas's tales as standing 'between hopefulness and disillusionment, between romance and the novel'.[67] As the final novella of the *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares*, the evident lack of justice heralds a thematic shift in her following prose collection. In fact, such injustice is more in keeping with outcomes of Zayas's *Desengaños amorosos*. Furthermore, although the matrimonial conclusion resembles those of many other tales of Zayas's first collection, the murder of the innocent Federico is a forerunner of similar deaths in Zayas's *desengaños*.

Teodosia's treachery towards her sister and its consequences – the murder of the innocent Federico – are unknown until she chooses to reveal them. It seems that Constanza never hears her sister repent and it is certain that Jorge does not:

> Después de muerto don Jorge, Teodosia contó el caso como quien tan bien lo sabía. A la cual, cuando murió, le hallaron escrita de su mano esta maravilla, dejando al fin de ella por premio al que dijese cuál hizo más de estos tres: Carlos, don Jorge, o el demonio, el laurel de bien entendido. (*NAE* 534)

When she dies, Teodosia leaves a written account of the 'true' events of the story; however, even this account does not seem to be confessional in nature. She prepares a game for the reader: to choose the character who shows most virtue in the story, the reader's options being curtailed to a choice between Carlos, Jorge, and the devil. Carlos and Jorge are guilty of fraud and fratricide respectively, whilst Teodosia herself has committed an act of unconscionable verbal deception. Lisis's beloved Juan wins the diegetic competition for his defence of the devil.[68] Bosse contends that, in the *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares*,

> Prevalece la imagen de un salón aristocrático cuyo condicionamiento arcádico influye tanto en las narradoras, que ellas se dejan conducir a su deseo de conciliación hasta llegar incluso a

---

[65] Friedman, 'Constructing Romance', p. 53.
[66] Brownlee, 'Postmodernism and the Baroque in María de Zayas', p. 122.
[67] Friedman, 'Constructing Romance', p. 54.
[68] The inclusion of the devil is far from gratuitous; this subversive demonic recasting as an entity capable of good 'can be read as a revisionist myth that challenges the most fundamental oppositions imposed by traditional doctrine'. See Williamsen, 'Engendering Interpretation', p. 646.

> aplaudir a los endiablados varones, como demuestra su voto unánime al final de la última novela, *El jardín engañoso*.[69]

Men dominate Teodosia's jocose debate both as candidates and as contestants. An ironic detail is Teodosia's omission of Constanza from the contest; she is the only person to show virtue consistently throughout.[70] The virtuous Constanza is written out of the script when the prize for virtue is being decided. Virtue barely triumphs, and perfidious sisterhood goes undetected and unpunished, leading into the *Desengaños amorosos*.

The frame characters, in their response to Laura's novella, unwittingly succumb to Teodosia's metadiegetic game. Thus, fiction intermingles with the 'reality' of the frame. This debate illustrates the dialogical scenario that Zayas creates whereby diegetic audience members express their opinions of each successive tale. In these frame discussions, no narrator's views are to be awarded supremacy.[71] As Boyer states, an optimal interpretation of Zayas's novellas 'depends upon a jaundiced reading of the frame material'.[72] Zayas's reader is as much writing as reading meaning, a process that is modelled by the inscribed diegetic listeners' diverse reactions to the stories that they hear. Before recounting the tale, Laura explained her aim: 'el decirla yo no es más de para dar ejemplo y prevenir que se guarden de las ocasiones' (*NAE* 513). Her audience completely misreads the story: they fail to identify Constanza as the source of virtue and good example. Furthermore, the story is not received as a warning, since immoral protagonists are rewarded and praised (Teodosia, Jorge and even the devil), while the virtuous Constanza remains blissfully ignorant of her sister's treachery and the dangers that it has posed to her and to Federico. Discrepancies between the narrator's attitude and the audience's reactions to novellas such as *El jardín engañoso* illustrate the rich narrative complexity of Zayas's prose, which resists reduction to one voice.[73] Her use of frame discussion creates the possibility for ironising the interpolated tales. As no frame protagonist cites Constanza's virtue, Boyer's hypothesis is illustrated: frame protagonists misguidedly cede primacy to the role of the male character at the expense of female characters (perhaps at least in part because of Zayas's interest in keeping male readers), with the result that 'these kinds of distortion lead

---

[69] This contrasts with the female-controlled *sarao* in Zayas's second collection. Bosse, p. 266.

[70] Zayas probably chose to name her 'Constanza' in order to reinforce her 'constant' virtue. The reader promptly realizes that Constanza is not 'constant' in her love for Jorge – she marries Carlos and is a devoted wife to him. She is indeed 'constant' in a sphere that is far more important than loyalty to a suitor: that is, her exemplary morality.

[71] It is worth noting that Lisis neither uniformly provides the corrective reading of the tales nor does her own unexemplary behaviour endow her with the authority to act as the text's ideological spokeswoman.

[72] Boyer, 'Introduction', in *The Disenchantments of Love*, p. 4.

[73] See Griswold's 'Topoi and Rhetorical Distance'.

the reader to rethink the story from a gender perspective'.[74] Similar to many Baroque authors, Zayas denies the reader facile interpretation of her texts.

It appears that Zayas is more interested in Teodosia's detrimental behaviour to Constanza than in the latter's virtuous exemplarity. By focussing upon Teodosia's deceit and culpability in Laura's tale, we see that the wrongdoings of a sister against her sibling persist to the end of the story and beyond, through the inadequate discussion in the frame tale. Clamurro underlines how the concluding *desengaño, Estragos que causa el vicio*, symbolises the pathological disintegration of the contemporaneous social structure.[75] This societal degeneration is most evident in the latter story, particularly due to its inclusion of the murder of an entire household, representing a microcosm of society; all three tales under discussion here portray social and familial disintegration, in that woman turns against woman and sister betrays sister. Even in a story such as *El jardín engañoso*, with its relatively happy outcome, Zayas certainly seems to reject the ties of the nuclear family as a model of authentic and viable existence among and for women. This may be the 'hidden meaning within the text' that Rabell uncovers as implied by the ironic discrepancy between the Spanish novellas' contents and the didactic goals of their prologues and frames.[76] Benefits of the incidence of double discourses in novellas like Zayas's are threefold: moral goals such as Laura's explicit statement of the novella's exemplarity in the frame narrative achieve censors' official approval; the multivalence of the text has the potential to attract a broad audience, receptive to values other than the official ones of Church and State; and, finally, there is the artistic benefit in creating a tension between 'telling' and 'showing', in which the official or conventional morality is offset against a deeper consideration of the significance of the events portrayed.

* * *

The theme of sisterly treachery is developed further by Laura's *La inocencia castigada*, the fifth story of Zayas's *Desengaños amorosos*. This is Laura's second opportunity to narrate; on this occasion, her narrative is relegated to the mid-point position of the stories, as the first story of the second night. Several other women join the ranks of the *desengañadoras*, and the honour of narrating the final story is bestowed on the increasingly

---

[74] Boyer, 'Toward a Baroque Reading of "El verdugo de su esposa"', p. 60.
[75] See Clamurro, 'Ideological Contradiction and Imperial Decline'. Somewhat anachronistically, Zayas calls for the complete restoration and realisation of traditional aristocratic ideals and obligations; see my next chapter.
[76] Rabell, p. 36.

dynamic Lisis. Having regained her health after another illness, Lisis elects to hold the prenuptial story-telling celebrations and ordains regulations for the ten narrators of the *Desengaños amorosos*. Laura no longer directs the soirées; nonetheless, she remains a significant frame protagonist through her link with Lisis. Since such central narrators as Laura and Lisis relate the tales dealing most explicitly with sisters' bonds and cruel disloyalties, the corrosive implications of sisterhood are underscored for the reader's attention.

The case of sisterhood in *La inocencia castigada* involves Inés and her nameless sister-in-law, the wife of her brother Francisco. It is curious that the sister-in-law remains anonymous throughout the tale despite the importance of the role that she plays in it. Zayas may leave her character nameless in order to focus the reader's attention upon the women's relationship; by repeatedly referring to the woman as Inés's *cuñada*, it becomes evident that the negative nature of the sister-in-law relationship is of some import in the tale.[77] Laura describes Inés's reasons for marrying; she may have been motivated not only by obedience to her brother, but also by her desire to escape her cruel sister-in-law: 'quizá no tanto por él [Francisco], cuanto por salir de la rigurosa condición de su cuñada, que era de lo cruel que imaginarse puede' (*DA* 265). In contrast with the sisters portrayed in Laura's first narrative, *El jardín engañoso*, she 'weakens' the bond of sisterly duty by describing sisters-in-law instead of blood relatives in her *La inocencia castigada*; nonetheless, the impact of female cruelty is greater than ever. The reader lacks detailed information about Inés's relatives, and the motivation behind the early animosity shown by the sister-in-law towards Inés remains enigmatic.

Subsequent to Inés's marriage, Laura describes the persistent courtship of Inés by Diego; when his attempts at seduction fail, he employs the diabolical services of a Moorish sorcerer to lure her to his chamber at night. Here, Zayas uses a motif that would have been familiar to her readers from their exposure to classical mythology, Arthurian literature, and

---

[77] Zayas omits characters' names in various tales; this can entail an added emphasis on family relationships, even to the point of defining characters by these relationships. An example is *Mal presagio casar lejos* (*DA*); in this novella, a principal male protagonist is anonymous: Blanca's husband. He is not known as her 'husband' but as 'el príncipe' throughout the tale. This links him with his father who is 'el príncipe viejo' (*DA* 356), which underlines the paternal, successive relationship. The older man is also called 'padre' or 'suegro' depending on the context; thus, intergenerational relationships are emphasised in the tale rather than marital ties. When the two men are killed, they are linked together in death as 'los príncipes, padre e hijo' (*DA* 365). By using such onomastic labels, Zayas denotes the importance of family ties yet, at the same time, undermines them in the narratives.

the chivalric genre: erotic enchantment.[78] When Inés's nocturnal visits are discovered, her sister-in-law encourages her husband, Francisco, in the suspicion that Inés feigned the magical incapacitation in order to avoid incriminating herself for the dishonour: 'como al fin cuñada, decía que doña Inés debía de fingir el embelesamiento por quedar libre de culpa; su marido, que había pensado lo mismo, fue de su parecer' (*DA* 281–2). Inés's sister-in-law ensures that the family's verdict is that the magic was a ruse and that Inés's sexual crime warrants severe punishment.

After conferring with his wife, Francisco summons Inés's husband; immediately, they plot Inés's murder: 'entre todos tres había diferentes pareceres sobre qué género de muerte darían a la inocente y desdichada doña Inés' (*DA* 282). By conspiring with male accomplices, the honour code enables this woman to exert fatal corporal control over her 'sister', Inés. Relevant to Zayas's subversive message is Rabell's observation that 'cruelty here [in *La inocencia castigada*] is depicted as a result of a failure to read intentions, and as a tendency to construct reputation through the superficial reading and application of the letter of the law'.[79] Although the literal application of the law in Spain could assign capital punishment for proven cases of women's adultery, the 'laws' of the honour code, and not those of legal justice, determine Inés's fate. Admittedly, Inés's mere presence in Diego's bed is legally incriminating; for her honour-obsessed relatives, the evidence is damning. Regardless of the unconscious nature of the dishonour, her sister-in-law uses the honour code, which justifies punishment of Inés to further her own sadistic desires. The critical attitude revealed by conservative members of the frame audience exposes the sister-in-law's relative sadism in the particularly lurid scheme. They comment that, even if Inés had brought dishonour on herself knowingly, 'no merecía más que una muerte breve' (*DA* 289); the sister-in-law engineers a penalty that is far from 'breve': Inés's bodily abasement and, potentially, her eventual eradication. The vigilantism appears especially unwarranted as male authority figures have charitably seen fit to exonerate her. For instance, the *Corregidor* declares Inés's innocence in a verdict that demonstrates admirable gender equity; furthermore, the Inquisition metes out Diego's punishment without showing any concerns regarding Inés's involvement in the transgression. Female manipulation of the honour code to the detriment of other women is a recurring pattern in Zayas's novellas; in

[78] Whitenack highlights some unconventional aspects of Zayas's use of the erotic enchantment motif: for example, a third party provides the spell and its victim is a woman. Judith A. Whitenack, '"Lo que ha menester": Erotic Enchantment in *La inocencia castigada*', in *María de Zayas: The Dynamics of Discourse*, ed. by Amy R. Williamsen and Judith A. Whitenack (London: Associated University Presses, 1995), pp. 170–191.

[79] Rabell, p. 139.

El jardín engañoso, Teodosia's lies regarding her sister's relationship with Federico are not exceptional.

Laura inserts her own judgement into her narrated text, laying most blame on the malevolent sister-in-law: 'Y de quien más pondero la crueldad es de la traidora cuñada, que, siquiera por mujer, pudiera tener piedad de ella' (*DA* 282). Stroud observes that, in this novella, the 'battle of the sexes is not quite so black and white as one would expect from a moral exemplum. Indeed, the particulars of Inés's story also include women who are not simply less than virtuous, but who actually contribute in significant ways to Inés's woes'.[80] Undoubtedly, to a large extent, Inés's suffering is due to the sister-in-law.[81] While in *El jardín engañoso* the brutal consequences of Teodosia's actions were unintentional, Inés's sister-in-law consciously plots a drawn-out murder: Laura's second story contains far graver sisterly treachery, albeit in its 'weakened' sister-in-law form. Laura interrupts her narration to a greater degree than in her previous story, condemning the sister-in-law's actions; through her phraseology ('lo cruel que imaginarse puede', 'como al fin cuñada'), she intimates that cruelty is inherent to the condition of all sisters-in-law. As Inés's freedom is increasingly constrained, Laura's narrative voice undergoes a diametrically opposed expansion through her intrusive commentary.

The motive for the sister-in-law's crime seems arbitrary. Her cruelty began long before Inés's marriage, and it ultimately combines with male lust to procure its end. Covetousness of the 'sister's' suitor or spouse causes Teodosia (*El jardín engañoso*) and Florentina (*Estragos que causa el vicio*) to commit heinous and even murderous acts of disloyalty. Perhaps the pressure of the patriarchal system may be addressed in order to explain the treachery of Inés's sister-in-law. She may want absolute control over the domestic space into which she has moved on marrying Inés's brother. Given the restricted scope of wives' sphere of influence, it would not be suprising if the sister-in-law wished to eliminate Inés, her peer and rival, from the household and family's boundaries. The wall-space may be seen as a grotesque symbol of the limits of the sister-in-law's tolerance in this regard; in marriage, the women compete for the small space allotted to them under patriarchy. Although attributing the narrator's view to the author is fraught with assumptions, it may be that Zayas envisages the cruellest sisterly conduct as coming predictably from its most distant incarnation: the sister-in-law.

---

[80] Stroud, 'Artistry and Irony', p. 82.

[81] In my next chapter, I discuss the role of servant-class women in worsening Inés's plight.

Inés's husband, brother and sister-in-law conspire to trap Inés in a wall with barely space to stand and to receive meagre portions of food. Grieve highlights the progressive reduction of physical space around the heroine, Inés; witchcraft brings her from her home to the confines of Diego's chamber, and later she is immured in this much smaller enclosure. Inés loses control of her own body in a social space where men are the dominant sex, a situation that is facilitated by female accomplices who emulate their misogynistic behaviour. Parallel to Inés's physical confinement and paralysis is her inability to act freely throughout her moral dilemmas, which culminate due to Diego's persistent suit. Diana Álvarez-Amell also emphasises how Inés's immobilised state stems from being besieged by others' wishes and desires: 'La movilidad del cuerpo es, a fin de cuentas, la expresión mínima de un acto de la voluntad individual, de la que es despojada por completo doña Inés'.[82] Analogously, in Golden-Age literature, women are unable to affect the representation of their bodies due to the dearth of writing women. At the authorial level, Gilbert and Gubar formulate a relevant point regarding female writers' anxieties of space: 'imagery of enclosure reflects the woman writer's own discomfort, her sense of powerlessness, her fear that she inhabits alien and incomprehensible places'.[83] Moreover, women are fatally 'misread' by men within the enclosed spaces of Baroque texts such as Calderón's *El médico de su honra*; in *La inocencia castigada*, Zayas goes a step further by illustrating woman's wilful misreading of her fellow sex and deliberate creation of false 'texts' regarding female honour transgressions. In her novellas, Zayas is empowered to alter the relationship between woman and the production of discourse: she acts as *escritora*, not simply being *escrita* by male authors. Ultimately, the tortured Inés refuses to suffer passively and her complaints are heard; this could be interpreted as a metaphor for the emergence of women's literary production despite the prevailing hostility of circumstances. Her survival depends on the assistance of other women, which potentially mirrors the role of a female writing community.[84]

Inés's merciless gaoler is her sister-in-law: 'la llave la tenía la mala y cruel cuñada, y ella misma le iba a dar la comida y un jarro de agua' (*DA* 283). She provides food not due to any charitable instinct but in order to prolong Inés's torture. Her captivity lasts for six years, during which time 'la traidora cuñada, cada vez que la llevaba la comida, le decía

---

[82] Diana Álvarez-Amell, 'El objeto del cuerpo femenino en el "quinto desengaño" de María de Zayas', in *Actas Irvine – 92: II, La mujer y su representación en las literaturas hispánicas*, ed. by Juan Villegas (Asociación Internacional de Hispanistas: University of California, 1994), pp. 25–33 (p. 31).
[83] Gilbert and Gubar, p. 84. Ordóñez makes a similar point (pp. 5–6).
[84] I discuss Inés's immurement and her helpers (including the 'buena viuda') in my fifth chapter (*DA* 284).

mil oprobios y afrentas', demonstrating her malicious enjoyment as she maximises Inés's torture (*DA* 284). Levisi emphasises the unusual sadism evident in Zayas's descriptions of the punishments inflicted upon innocent characters such as Inés:

> Los castigos son prolongados, no hay derramamiento de sangre, y la víctima se consume lentamente [...]. Esta particular insistencia en el aspecto sádico de la situación distingue a María de Zayas y la coloca en un lugar aparte entre los escritores de su época.[85]

Grieve notes that the hagiographic model 'not only permits grotesque descriptions of female martyrs, it practically requires it'; of course, hagiography gave license to the general tendency towards the graphic and the grotesque in the Baroque.[86] The sacred tone is evident from Inés's fervent prayers throughout her ordeal, and her immediate request of a neighbouring servant who overhears her lamentations: to bring the Archbishop so that she may confess and receive the sacrament of the Eucharist before dying; her intense physical suffering is akin to martyrdom.

Interestingly, Laura identifies with Inés's saviour, the 'buena viuda', as both are widows (*DA* 284). This woman causes the release of Inés and the imprisonment of her torturers. The mayor condemns the sister-in-law vehemently; instead of showing remorse, 'ella respondió que hacía lo que la mandaba su marido' (*DA* 287). The explanation that the sister-in-law provides strikes the reader as implausible and duplicitous; she evidently engineers Inés's torture almost singlehandedly. Epithets applied to her in the text ('mala y cruel', 'traidora') condemn her explicitly as the primary agent of Inés's suffering. Inés's relatives view the inhumane living conditions as appropriate for one who has transgressed the honour code by involuntary infidelity. Laura ensures, through horrific detail, that Inés's physical deterioration acts as a visual, symbolic reminder of the sadistic cruelty of her kin. The sister-in-law and the two men are incarcerated; this legally justified punishment is the antithesis of their cruel vigilantism during Inés's wrongful imprisonment. Her three abusers are then sentenced to death; unusually for the *desengaños*, the perfidious female is punished. Given the remarkable viciousness of the sister-in-law's deeds, Zayas perhaps considered it implausible to have her escape due legal penalty. In this novella, there is a definite dichotomy between legal justice, represented by the various conspirators' sentences, and private revenge as inflicted upon Inés.

It is apposite that Laura condemns Inés's sister-in-law harshly in her final epithet: 'rigurosa leona' (*DA* 288), she calls her. With unusual unanimity and insight, the frame protagonists

---

[85] Levisi, p. 449.
[86] Grieve, p. 92.

echo Laura's condemnation of the cruel sister-in-law: 'Y a la que más culpaban era a la cuñada, pues ella, como mujer, pudiera ser más piadosa' (*DA* 289). The brutality involved is such that, in this instance, Laura's audience instinctively reacts to the sister-in-law's treachery with suitable horror. Given the extreme brutality that is integral to Zayas's *Desengaños amorosos*, it is credible, of course, that the frame audience's reactions are proportionately extreme. However, the diegetic discussion soon reveals the group's ineptitude as moral arbiters when there is no reproach for Juan's inappropriate witticism: 'Todos rieron la comparación del tabaco al decir mal de las mujeres, que había hecho don Juan' (*DA* 290). This does a grave disservice to the grievousness of Inés's case. Limited in their capacity to extract valuable moral lessons from the novella, they are readily inclined to 'leave the tale behind and move along to the next story that will excite, move, and even alarm them'.[87] In this case, there appears to be a mixture of the superficial and the discerning in the reactions of the frame-tale characters to what they have just heard. This is a perfect way for Zayas to force readers into forming their own judgements of the situations described. Moreover, it helps to lift the stories out of their fictional setting, accepting that they are also meant to be 'true' stories, and into the realm of the moral and social ethos of Zayas's time.

The shift in plot and in tone between Zayas's two prose collections becomes evident when one compares Laura's two tales. The sister-in-law's vicious abuse in *La inocencia castigada* (*DA*) culminates with a graphic description of Inés's decaying body when she is released from imprisonment in the wall. In *El jardín engañoso* (*NAE*), although Teodosia's naïve scheming leads to Federico's murder, Laura's description of his instantaneous death is succinct and does not dwell upon the savagery of the murder: '[Jorge] le dio una tan cruel estocada por el corazón que la espada salió a las espaldas, rindiendo a un tiempo el desgraciado Federico el alma a Dios y el cuerpo a la tierra' (*NAE* 519). The sister-in-law (*La inocencia castigada*) demonstrates even less repentance than Teodosia (*El jardín engañoso*), who at least commits her 'true' treachery to paper; additionally, her intentions were far worse than Teodosia's, despite failing to result in a fatality. Inés's vivid suffering in *La inocencia castigada* is in keeping with the trajectory of increasing violence against women (including violence by women against women) throughout Zayas's twenty novellas.

[87] Stroud, 'Artistry and Irony', p. 91.

Although Inés is blind because of the torture she endured, her health is restored by the care she receives from neighbouring women. From this initial female community, Inés moves to that of the convent; her choice to enter the convent is based upon a positive move towards sisterly bonding, as in Lisis's case. Thus, we have three types of sisterhood presented in this novella: sisterhood through marriage, sisterhood through friendship and fellow feeling, and sisterhood through religion. Zayas may be suggesting here that the patriarchal arrangement allows for the abuse of the first type, sisterhood through marriage. As regards the second variety, sisterhood through friendship represents a solution of sorts, preparatory perhaps, but too vulnerable to sustain. The third type – monastic sisterhood – offers women a long and peaceful existence. This may be a corrosive comment by Zayas that women are at terrible risk from an honour code that allowed for private action against a presumed offending woman in the patriarchal society of her time. In general, the secular and religious authorities seem unaware of this specifically female plight despite the particular crimes that are perpetrated. The convent ending of *La inocencia castigada* links it to the final *desengaño*, which also deals extensively with the theme of sisterhood.

* * *

Further sisterly cruelty is evident in Lisis's story, *Estragos que causa el vicio*, concluding tale of the *Desengaños amorosos*. That it is the last of all of the stories to be narrated confers great importance on it; this is heightened by the ceremony with which Lisis's diegetic audience receives her 'con ponerse en pie, haciéndola cortés reverencia' while she takes the storyteller's seat (*DA* 469). The story serves as a stark contrast to the preceding ones, particularly Estefanía's *La perseguida triunfante*, in which the principal female protagonist is a model of virtue who suffers unjust punishment.[88] While Gaspar, the primary male protagonist, is present throughout the story, it is Florentina's interpolated tale of sisterly treachery that commands the reader's interest. Gaspar is decentred to the role of listener in order to foreground Florentina as chief protagonist. Her covetous desire bears many similarities to that of Teodosia in *El jardín engañoso*, although Florentina's wrongdoing is manifestly far more serious.

Gaspar, a Spanish nobleman, accompanies Felipe III to Lisbon in 1619 to swear in Felipe IV as successor to the kingdom of Portugal.[89] In church, Gaspar observes two beautiful

[88] A detailed discussion of this novella follows in my fifth chapter.
[89] The secession of Portugal from the Spanish Crown did not occur until 1640.

women and admires one in particular; a page enlightens him about their relationship as siblings: 'se llamaba doña Florentina y que era hermana de doña Magdalena' (*DA* 475). He learns that Florentina is unmarried, while Magdalena is Dionís's wife. Subsequent to his fruitless attempt to court Florentina, he discovers her lying bleeding outside the home that she shares with her sister and brother-in-law. The minute detailing of the events surrounding Florentina's confession merits interest. When Gaspar encounters her wounded body, she repeatedly beseeches him to help her confess in case she should die: 'que me llevéis adonde procuréis, antes que muera, darme confesión' (*DA* 478). When under his protection, she reveals that she caused the great misfortunes that he is to discover inside the house: 'Ya es imposible, según el mal que hay en aquella desdichada casa (por culpa mía) encubrirse, ni menos cautelarme yo, sino que sepan dónde estoy, y si mereciere más castigo del que tengo, me le den' (*DA* 481). She regains consciousness in the early hours of the morning; again, she delays her confession by sending Gaspar to discover the carnage in her household. Together with the servants' corpses, Gaspar finds those of Magdalena and Dionís, who has taken his own life. When Gaspar returns, we are merely told that Florentina is resting 'después de haberse confesado' (*DA* 483). The only detail that is supplied regarding this spiritual confession is that it was 'larga'; interestingly, a doctor tells Gaspar this – no priests are mentioned as being present.[90] Due to the ambiguity, the only confession that the reader accepts as veracious is recounted in a secular context to Gaspar.

Mirroring both frame audience and reader, Gaspar awaits Florentina's explanation in suspense while she convalesces. A further fortnight passes due to Florentina's fragility before she provides any explanation to the *gobernador*; we are explicitly told that she deceptively avoids casting any blame upon herself on this occasion. She reports to the authorities 'cómo don Dionís había hecho aquel lastimoso estrago, celoso de doña Magdalena y aquel criado, de quien injustamente sospechaba mal' (*DA* 483). Florentina's second declaration incriminates Dionís and, by implication, her sister (in 'reality', her stepsister), Magdalena; she casts aspersions on the dead Magdalena by claiming that the latter made her husband *celoso* to the point of homicide. It is interesting that, on this occasion, she shrewdly omits her own role in Dionís's destruction. Consequently, the authorities' investigations cease and the forces of legal justice pardon her.

---

[90] Since Gaspar was absent and details are surprisingly sparse, the reader is led to doubt whether Florentina actually confessed. This would have lessened Zayas's contemporary readers' opinion of Florentina, since it is uncertain whether she repents in the accepted format, that is, to a cleric.

More than one month passes before Gaspar can compel Florentina to provide her explanation for the shocking murders. One wonders whether she would have confessed to Gaspar, had she not implicated herself earlier while seriously ill and expecting to die. Clamurro emphasises the structural complexity of Lisis's novella and its disorienting effects both for the reader, externally, and for the internally spectating Gaspar: 'the peculiar sequence in which the actions are presented, an order based on a subtle reversal of chronology and a certain sense of repetition', and the aforementioned superposition of narrating characters combine to project the mimesis of delirium, which is parallel to Lisis's recovery from her feverish illness.[91] In Florentina's 'confession', she provides an analeptic account of her family background: her father, a widower, married a widow who also had a daughter; due to their indiscriminate affection for both of their daughters, Magdalena and Florentina seemed more like 'sisters' than stepsisters: 'tan amantes la una de la otra, y tan amadas de nuestros padres, que todos entendían que éramos hermanas' (*DA* 485). In fact, Florentina only understood her true relationship to Magdalena when her father died: 'supe que no era [...] hermana de la que amaba por hermana' (*DA* 485). When Magdalena's mother died, they were cared for by Magdalena's uncle; although Florentina emphasises the equality with which Magdalena's uncle treated them, it is apparent that he did so to gratify Magdalena: 'porque era con tan gran extremo lo que las dos nos amábamos, que el tío de doña Magdalena, pareciéndole que hacía lisonja a su sobrina, me quería y acariciaba de la misma suerte que a ella' (*DA* 486). Florentina emphasises the immense affection between the 'sisters'; however, Florentina's latent envy of Magdalena intensified with the latter's courtship by don Dionís.[92]

Similar to Teodosia's rivalry with Constanza in *El jardín engañoso*, Florentina coveted her 'sister's' beloved, 'envidiosa de que fuese suyo y no mío, y al fin, enamorada y perdida por él' (*DA* 486). A further similarity between the stories is that neither Magdalena nor Constanza detected their sisters' affection for Dionís or Jorge (at least while both sisters are unmarried in *El jardín engañoso*); additionally, the treacherous sisters' unrequited love led to illness. Unlike in *El jardín engañoso*, however, the treacherous 'sister' of *Estragos que causa el vicio* lost Dionís to her sibling in matrimony; Magdalena married Dionís since Florentina had yet to set her treachery in motion. In Laura's tale, Jorge's flight fortunately led to Constanza's marriage to another man, Carlos. Magdalena unwittingly facilitated

[91] William H. Clamurro, 'Madness and Narrative Form in "Estragos que causa el vicio"', in *María de Zayas: The Dynamics of Discourse*, ed. by Amy R. Williamsen and Judith A. Whitenack (London: Associated University Presses, 1995), pp. 219–233 (p. 221).

[92] Both Florentina (*Estragos que causa el vicio*) and Teodosia (*El jardín engañoso*) are younger 'sisters'; it seems that their position as the second child in their respective families may have intensified their jealousy.

Florentina's designs by bringing her to share her marital home, 'pensando que traía una hermana y verdadera amiga, y trujo la destrucción de ella [su casa]' (*DA* 490). Gamboa notes the progressive enclosure of Zayas's female characters, symbolising the reduction of the feminine to familial fields under incipient capitalism, yet the house 'can never be the paradigm of security [as] heroines are exposed to danger from within the house itself'.[93] *Estragos que causa el vicio*, *El jardín engañoso* and *La inocencia castigada* are prime examples of the heightening of women's plight, in the face of family adversaries of both genders, when the home is a place of danger rather than one of safety.

Florentina, undetected, acted as enemy within domestic walls. She obstructed Magdalena's charitable attempts at finding a husband for her 'sister' and revealed her illicit love to Dionís; by doing so, Florentina overcame all obstacles, even 'el agravio que hago a tu esposa, que aunque no es mi hermana, la tengo en tal lugar' (*DA* 491). Florentina's statement that Magdalena 'no es mi hermana' is revealing; it conveys Florentina's awareness that their bond was less than that of true sisters. As the interior narrator, she frequently draws Gaspar's attention to the nature of her relationship to Magdalena; she attempts to use their lack of close consanguinity, a 'weakened' form of sisterhood, as a justification for her treachery towards Magdalena. A clandestine relationship between Florentina and Dionís continued for four years. Florentina usurped Magdalena's role in the household: 'Ya era el regocijo y alegría de toda la casa, porque yo mandaba en ella' (*DA* 492). She emphasises the role reversal that took place between the 'sisters' due to Dionís's neglect of his wife, in spite of which Magdalena failed to suspect her 'sister' of disloyalty: 'Primero Magdalena estaba alegre, y Florentina triste; ya Florentina era la alegre, Magdalena la melancólica, la llorosa, la desabrida y la desconsolada' (*DA* 492). It is important to recall the parallels that exist between the predicaments of Florentina and the narrator, Lisis. Velasco describes the novella as 'Lisis's fantasy version of the love triangle'; if so, Lisis occupies the role of Florentina, who flouts society's rules and yet goes on to establish a comfortable lifestyle.[94] Through her escapist narrative of Florentina's intrigue, Lisis vicariously enjoys the love affair that she has been denied and symbolically punishes her erstwhile suitor and rival, Juan and Lisarda, through the violent deaths of their counterparts, Dionís and Magdalena.

* * *

[93] Gamboa, p. 195.
[94] Velasco, 'Contradiction, Control and Utopia', p. 205.

Another similarity between the three stories of sisterhood under discussion is their overt representation of female eroticism. This is especially striking given the rigid cultural context of Zayas's novellas: as Foucault posits in his 'repressive hypothesis', the seventeenth century was the advent of an age of sexual repression.[95] Zayas's prose has received particular praise from Juan Goytisolo for its interrogation of women's eroticism:

> Muestra que las mujeres no son meros instrumentos de la sexualidad de los hombres sino que gozan de una sexualidad propia y poseen el temple y valor necesarios para satisfacerla. La autonomía sexual de las heroínas las libera de su pasividad tradicional y les confiere a veces el papel amoroso activo, ordinariamente atribuido al varón.[96]

Goytisolo intimates that Zayas subtly undermines the honour code that she outwardly respects by representing women's sexuality in a positive and liberating light. On the other hand, Amezúa, writing in the 1950s, does Zayas's treatment of women's eroticism a disservice. He understates its role in a feebly unconvincing attempt to defend the author from criticisms of salaciousness:

> A doña María la indulta el hecho de que jamás pone intención lúbrica ni lasciva, ni busca de propósito tales situaciones, sino que éstas surgen como consecuencia lógica e inevitable de la acción, sin que nunca su autora se recree maliciosamente en ellas ni incurra en pecador regodeo o morosa delectación, aunque no por eso ciertos lectores escrupulosos o recatados puedan escandalizarse con aparente causa.[97]

Amezúa's defence stemmed from his contemporaries' denunciation of Zayas's explicit treatment of erotic themes. For example, Pfandl broaches the issue of Zayas's inclusion of erotic episodes with the loaded question, '¿Se puede dar algo más ordinario y grosero, más inestético y repulsivo que una mujer que cuenta historias lascivas, sucias, de inspiración sádica y moralmente corrompidas?'.[98]

These three novellas reveal that Zayas's exploration of women's sexuality is intricately ambivalent and, consequently, deserving of a more complex response than either divisively condemnatory or commendatory polar views. In the cases of Teodosia (*El jardín engañoso*) and Florentina (*Estragos que causa el vicio*), their covetousness of the men who are betrothed or married to their 'sisters' reveals their identities as sexual and erotic beings and unveils the dangers that such eroticism can bring in its wake when separated from all

---

[95] Michel Foucault, *The Will to Knowledge: The History of Sexuality, Volume 1*, trans. by Robert Hurley (London: Penguin, 1998).

[96] Juan Goytisolo, 'El mundo erótico de María de Zayas', in *Disidencias* (Barcelona: Editorial Seix Barral, 1977), pp. 63–115 (p. 100). Praising Zayas's literary exploration of eroticism, Goytisolo concludes that she returns to an abandoned theme that was vibrant in Spanish Medieval literature such as *La Celestina*.

[97] Agustín G. de Amezúa y Mayo, Prologue of *Desengaños amorosos: Parte segunda del sarao y entretenimiento honesto de Doña María de Zayas y Sotomayor*, ed. by Agustín G. de Amezúa y Mayo (Madrid: Aldus, 1950), pp. vii–xlv (p. xiii).

[98] Pfandl, p. 370.

moral considerations. The negative consequences of these women's illicit eroticism are revealed; lives are lost as a result of women's desire. Goytisolo applauds Zayas's audacious representation of women as desiring subjects, and not merely as desired objects: 'no se contentan con ser objeto pasivo del placer del hombre: es decir, no sólo son deseadas sino que desean, y, si son objeto erótico del varón, éste puede ser igualmente objeto erótico suyo'.[99] Nevertheless, he insufficiently explores the linkage between the sexual and violent undercurrents within Zayas's prose; their thematic interconnectedness is inevitable due to the prevalence of the honour code's sexual proscriptions.

For the victimised Inés in *La inocencia castigada*, it is not a clear-cut case of woman's desire; regardless of the lack of consent involved, she suffers great guilt as a result of her nocturnal sexual encounters with Diego even though she presumes them to be nightmares. The confusion of dreams and reality is a common Baroque topos; the dream experience could approximate the plane of reality to such a degree that it could seem like another level of reality. Segismundo's words in Calderón's *La vida es sueño* encapsulate the ambiguity:

> No,
> ni aun ahora he despertado,
> que según, Clotaldo, entiendo,
> todavía estoy durmiendo.
> Y no estoy muy engañado;
> porque si ha sido soñado,
> lo que vi palpable y cierto,
> lo que veo será incierto;
> y no es mucho que rendido,
> pues veo estando dormido,
> que sueñe estando despierto.[100]

Similar to Segismundo, Inés's experience is 'palpable y cierto', albeit of a sexual kind. She is also troubled by the misdemeanours that she mistakenly perceives to be erotic dreams, despite the fact that dreams are something over which she could, self-evidently, exert no control. Inés endures this distressing ordeal for more than a month, during which time she attempts to alleviate her guilt through the religious channels of prayer and confession. The guilt that Inés experiences, in spite of her apparent lack of free will due to witchcraft, reveals that Zayas's portrayal of women's sexuality needs further elaboration.

Zayas's treatment of women's sexuality in *La inocencia castigada* is complicated further if one accepts Whitenack's interpretation that 'on the unconscious level her [Inés's] free will

---

[99] Goytisolo, p. 97.
[100] Pedro Calderón de la Barca, *La vida es sueño*, ed. by José María Valverde (Barcelona: Planeta, 1981), II. 18. 2098.

– her ability to choose freely – is compromised by her own sexual needs'.[101] Whitenack contends that both the popular belief and Christian doctrine of Zayas's contemporaries would have defended the pre-eminence of Christian faith over diabolical magic. She highlights the possibility of Inés's susceptibility through spousal neglect and sexual deprivation. The incident of erotic enchantment notably occurs during her husband's lengthy absence. At the start of her tale, Laura berates neglectful husbands and issues strict orders: 'Quiéranlas, acarícienlas y denlas lo que les falta, y no las guarden ni celen, que ellas se guardarán y celarán, cuando no sea de virtud, de obligación' (*DA* 266). Laura goes on to say that it was Inés's beauty – not spousal neglect – which led to her misfortune, 'porque siempre la belleza anda en pasos de ella [la desgracia]' (*DA* 266). When Laura's latter statement is juxtaposed with her previous one, the reader is stirred to adopt a sceptical stance and to form the suspicion that spousal neglect is more relevant to her tale than she, its narrator, is prepared to admit. The two poems that appear at the beginning and end of the tale support Whitenack's thesis; they appear to document a husband's neglect of his wife, Atandra, and her subsequent infidelity. The poet asks of the neglectful husband, '¿Adónde vas sin tu Atandra? / ¿Cómo te cansó tan presto?' (*DA* 261). The evidence suggests that witchcraft is not the sole cause of Inés's dishonour; other factors such as her repressed sexual desires may have contributed to her susceptibility to the magic, and her husband's absence facilitates its workings.[102] Such ambiguities enable Zayas to advance a complex presentation of women's sexuality, and she allows the reader to judge the power of magic and Inés's guilt or innocence. Regardless of the efficacy of witchcraft in *La inocencia castigada*, there can be no doubt regarding the intrinsic connection between Inés's immurement and her sexuality; as Laura J. Gorfkle observes, this punishment reflects the bodily abasement her relatives impute to her due to her sexual dishonour and manifests the eradication of the perennial threat that woman's bodily desire represents.[103]

Of the three novellas exploring perfidious 'sisterhood', Florentina's eroticism in *Estragos que causa el vicio* is most explicitly portrayed. Boyer aptly describes Florentina as 'a

---

[101] Whitenack, '"Lo que ha menester"', p. 186.

[102] Some of Whitenack's other arguments against the effectiveness of erotic enchantment are less convincing. For example, she claims that Inés's expressions of guilt are excessive, especially when she asks her husband to kill her 'pues había sido mala, que, aunque sin su voluntad, había manchado su honor' (*DA* 281). However, I find Inés's reaction verisimilar for two reasons: she was extremely distressed when she deemed her sexual encounters to be mere dreams and, regardless of intentionality, her very presence in Diego's bed would have been cause for dishonour. Whitenack also cites as evidence of her viewpoint that the frame audience does not seem to consider Inés's experience to have been rape – they describe her actions as a 'yerro' (*DA* 289). However, frame characters' views are an unreliable indicator of the tale's significance and of Laura's (or Zayas's) intentions in narrating it.

[103] Laura J. Gorfkle, 'Seduction and Hysteria in María de Zayas's *Desengaños amorosos*', *Hispanófila*, 115 (1995), 11–28.

woman with desires too powerful to be contained within conventional gender expectations'.[104] The titular *vicio* is Florentina's overt expression of her intense sexual desire for her sister's husband. She is portrayed as initiating the betrayal of her sister through her sexual relationship with Dionís; the reader is left in no doubt regarding their adultery: 'Y añudándome al cuello los brazos, me acarició de modo que ni yo tuve más que darle, ni él más que alcanzar ni poseer. En fin, toda la tarde estuvimos juntos en amorosos deleites' (*DA* 491). While this frank and suggestive description of Florentina's adulterous encounter appears positive, particularly the titillating phrasing of 'amorosos deleites', the reader is aware that Florentina, as autodiegetic narrator and internal focaliser, provides this description; it is to be expected that she will present illicit love in a favourable way.[105] On the battlefield of male honour, Florentina's expression of her illicit sexual desire is a dangerous manoeuvre that is revealed to have grievous repercussions. Clamurro unveils the feverish sexual delirium that pervades the tale.[106] Gaspar's prior discovery of a man's corpse buried in the cellar of his Portuguese mistress's house is a highly charged symbolic prelude to more sordid action; it is implied that the anonymous man died due to some sexual intrigue. Further on in the tale, Dionís becomes the embodiment of love's insanity at the bloody denouement of the novella.

* * *

In the events leading to this denouement, Florentina fully disclosed the affair to her maid and the intervention of the latter convinced her to plot the murder of her 'sister', Magdalena, to enable her to win Dionís in marriage. Florentina, now aware of the evil that she has done, proclaims that, in her maid, 'hablaba y obraba el demonio' (*DA* 494). Claiming that diabolical influence impeded her own efforts to prevent the carnage from escalating, Florentina cites the devil as the new master of her household: 'el demonio, que ya estaba señoreado de aquella casa, me ató de suerte que no pude' (*DA* 496). Responsibility seems to be displaced from Florentina to her maid, and then to the devil,

---

[104] Boyer, 'Introduction', in *The Disenchantments of Love*, p. 23.

[105] See Rimmon-Kenan's discussion of focalisation.

[106] Clamurro also highlights parallels between the nocturnal setting of the initial episode and of Florentina's subsequent story. Crucial events take place under the cover of darkness and lead to Florentina's narrative. 'Una noche, poco antes que amaneciese', Gaspar discovers the wounded Florentina (*DA* 477); as dawn has yet to break, the murderous events have all taken place during the night. Dionís returned home 'pasada de medianoche', discovering his wife and servant in the same bedchamber (*DA* 495). The nocturnal environs intensify the sense of chaos and horror that envelops the ensuing carnage. Florentina and her maid are described as bearing candles, sources of light that contrastively heighten the impression of oppressive darkness; just as the violence that the women have unleashed escalates beyond their control, so their attempts to penetrate the engulfing darkness are futile. See Clamurro, 'Madness and Narrative Form', p. 224.

which might seem to limit the culpability of the 'sisterhood'.[107] Like Inés, these morally ambiguous women are susceptible to negative supernatural influence. Of course, given that Florentina narrates this portion of the tale, it is plausible that this displacement of blame should occur. Through false testimony, the maid orchestrated events so that Dionís would suspect that the innocent Magdalena was cuckolding him, would then discover a male servant in her chamber, and would commit uxoricide. Florentina manipulates the inequities of the honour code regarding adultery in order to attain her desire: to legitimise her sexual relationship with Dionís through the socially approved status of marriage. She emphasises the delusion of Dionís, since Magdalena's 'puro y casto lecho' appears to him 'sucio, deshonesto y violado con la mancha de su deshonor' (*DA* 496).

Deceit regarding a 'sister's' fidelity is as crucial to the evolution of this novella, *Estragos que causa el vicio*, as it was in *El jardín engañoso*. Similar to Jorge's role within Teodosia's scheme in the latter tale, Dionís is but a pawn to be manoeuvred by Florentina and her servant, an actor in the metadrama that they direct. Due to Florentina's manipulation, he becomes both vengeful husband and victim, adulterer and victimiser. The punishment received by the victimised woman in this tale is absolute; as a result of her 'sister's' treachery, Magdalena suffers death at the hand of her husband. The suffering of the innocent 'sister' is even greater in *La inocencia castigada.* Inés's sister-in-law and husband meticulously devise her murder; she endures six years of a tortured existence and is consequently blinded. In contrast, Magdalena died instantaneously, receiving multiple stab wounds: 'La dio tantas puñaladas, cuantas su indignada cólera le pedía. Sin que pudiese ni aun formar un ¡ay!, desamparó aquella alma santa el más hermoso y honesto cuerpo que conoció el reino de Portugal' (*DA* 496). A scale of cruelty emerges from the three tales of sisterly perfidy that peaks with the sister-in-law relationship in *La inocencia castigada.* The sisters of the other two tales do not intend to cause the extent of carnage that results, although the uncompromising honour code ensures that male violence is the outcome of each case of sisterly malice.

---

[107] Several further references to the devil coincide with the maid's appearance in *Estragos que causa el vicio*: 'ella, a hacer oficio del demonio', 'todas seguíamos lo que el demonio nos inspiraba', and 'endemoniado enredo' (*DA* 494–5). The aforementioned role of the nocturnal throughout the novella seems to extend beyond the atmospheric to hint that evil – the frequently referenced devil – stalks the world by night in a similar manner to *Macbeth.* Diabolical influence links *El jardín engañoso*, *La inocencia castigada* and *Estragos que causa el vicio.* With the remarkable exception of the diabolical magnanimity evident at the end of *El jardín engañoso*, the devil is more than likely a narrative device to symbolise negative qualities in the convention of a Calderonian morality play. One of Calderón's plays to feature the devil is *El mágico prodigioso* (written in 1637), in which Cipriano sells his soul to the devil in order to attain the inaccessible Justina; this reminds us of the diabolical pact in *El jardín engañoso* that Jorge seals in order to win Constanza.

Dionís creates mayhem, in thrall to the honour code. As a consequence of Florentina's scheming, he massacres all the servants in his household; in a kind of 'special-effects' finish to the series of stories, the violence of the *desengaños* culminates with this slaughter of innocent bystanders in the final tale. The astonishing quantity of corpses exceeds even Baroque norms. When Florentina's maid confesses her own involvement in besmirching the character of the innocent Magdalena, declaring 'la muerte merezco, y el infierno también', Dionís murders the maid, attempts to kill Florentina and commits suicide (*DA* 498).[108] Bosse detects a deep-rooted cause behind Dionís's crimes: 'La violencia fatal de su ejecución está más bien responsabilizada por la implacable eficacia del código del honor masculino que, una vez (supuesto) ofendido, exige para ser restituido, automáticamente, hasta incluso actos de venganza monstruosos y perversos'.[109] By representing scenes of carnage as a consequence of a 'sister's' treachery, Zayas exposes the black hole in the family 'system' and the latter's underpinning by the honour code. The savagery of such stories is an implied indictment of the patriarchal honour code, with its potential to cause destruction through sactioning the operation of a parallel system of justice with that of the legal system. Under the honour code, Dionís's actions are an accident waiting to happen, and Zayas has portrayed it in its extremity.

The honour code here is a by-product of a deeper human inclination: female desire, perhaps erotic in the first instance, but advancing to covet the status of marriage. This spiralling course of events, instigated by Florentina's unrestrained eroticism, poses a grave peril to the entire membership of her domestic milieu. Once the bonds of sisterhood are broken by illicit eroticism, the entire household comes under threat of destruction. This novella dramatically illustrates the dangers of loss of life and of societal disorder inherent in sisterly treachery, given that the latter is invariably intertwined with the honour code. Furthermore, since the 'sister' does not intend to cause many of the murders that occur, an inability to exert complete control over the male avenger's aggression is demonstrated.

---

[108] Nancy Lagreca interprets this novella as an allegorical rewriting of Portugal's struggle for independence that would appeal to a Spanish audience. In this allegorical reading, Dionís represents João IV of Portugal. Lagreca explains Dionís's suicide as an act of Portuguese defeat, whereas historically João IV successfully waged war against Spain. Florentina represents his wife, the Spanish Luisa de Guzmán; after marriage, Guzmán supported the uprising against her native Spain in 1640. Thus, the politically ambitious Guzmán's act of national betrayal is transformed into illicit lust by allegory. Nancy Lagreca, 'Evil Women and Feminist Sentiment: Baroque Contradictions in María de Zayas's "El prevenido engañado" and "Estragos que causa el vicio"', *Revista canadiense de estudios hispánicos*, 28 (Spring 2004) 3, 565–582.

[109] Bosse, p. 292.

Other than the injuries that she suffered, Florentina receives little punishment; she states that she could have died or committed suicide like don Dionís, 'mas no lo debió de permitir Dios' (*DA* 499). Ironically, she cites God as her protector, despite describing herself previously as 'dejada de la divina mano' – forsaken by divine counsel – during her initiation of the adultery with Dionís (*DA* 490). As a result of these revelations, she loses the possibility of wedding Gaspar, who returns to Spain. Nevertheless, her fate is far from unfortunate: Gaspar intervenes so that she receives a royal pardon and can enter 'uno de los más suntuosos conventos de Lisboa [...], donde hoy vive santa y religiosísima vida' (*DA* 500). Florentina apparently fulfils her physical, practical and spiritual desires through her adultery, the achievement of pardons by the forces of earthly justice, and her retreat to the convent.[110] Greer suggests that, despite the evidence of discourse in support of a conservative, aristocratic ideology, Zayas knew that 'only wilful, actively desiring women who refused the castrating knife of social codes could have the power to challenge patriarchy's rules and survive to inherit its wealth'.[111] Although one can only speculate regarding Zayas's personal views, the resolution of *Estragos que causa el vicio* certainly illustrates the relative triumph of Florentina, the unprincipled epitome of the 'wilful, actively desiring woman'.

Florentina demonstrates very limited repentance, similar to Teodosia's confessional 'game' in *El jardín engañoso*. There are various indicators of Florentina's sorrow in the text: she tells Gaspar of her intention to do 'penitencia de tantos males como he causado' and, upon concluding the retelling of her tale to Gaspar, there is a poetic description of her 'copiosos raudales de lágrimas' and 'profundo y hermoso desmayo' (*DA* 499). However, Florentina does not seem to comprehend the enormity of her offence; her belated demonstrations of remorse appear calculated to extract sympathy from her potential suitor, Gaspar. When Lisis concludes her tale with a synopsis of Florentina's monastic fate, she subtly implies that the latter suffers some guilt, although it is the physical pain of Florentina's wounds that she highlights: 'sirviéndole de castigo su mismo dolor y las heridas que le dio don Dionís' (*DA* 500).

Florentina's enjoyment of her inheritance, which is supplemented by 'la parte de su hermana, por herencia, y la de don Dionís, en pago de las heridas recibidas de su mano', strikes the reader as ironically unjust (*DA* 484). Her acquisition of a 'gruesa hacienda' and

---

[110] See H. Patsy Boyer, 'The "Other" Woman in Cervantes's *Persiles* and Zayas's *Novelas*', *Cervantes*, 10 (1990) 1, 59–68.
[111] Greer, 'María de Zayas and the Female Eunuch', p. 52.

her imitation of the life of a 'santa' also link her to Inés, who dwells in a convent 'sustentándose de la gruesa hacienda de su hermano y marido, donde hoy vive haciendo vida de una santa' (*DA* 288). Both Florentina and Inés benefit from relatives' wealth and apparently become paragons of virtue; the same words are applied to both women but their effect on the reader differs. The application of the superlative 'religiosísima' to Florentina intensifies the difference between the two women. This hyperbole could be taken to imply that the narrator ridicules Florentina's false piety; it suggests that exaggerated religious trappings are Florentina's focus and not Inés's genuine imitation of '[la] vida de una santa'. Florentina's sudden conversion to saintly virtue seems more hypocritical than verisimilar. One suspects that Florentina enters the convent as a last resort; it is implied that she loves Gaspar – 'no fuera muy dificultoso amarle [...] aun estoy por decir que le debía de amar' (*DA* 484). The possibility of salvaging a prospective marriage to Gaspar evaporates once she makes her horrifying disclosure. He proposes that she go to the convent; having little choice in the matter, she agrees. Thus, Florentina dwells peacefully in the convent.

Lisis's narrative content contradicts the didactic goal in the frame prologue: insisting that the women should narrate *desengaños*, 'fue la pretensión de Lisis en esto volver por la fama de las mujeres (tan postrada y abatida por su mal juicio, que apenas hay quien hable bien de ellas)' (*DA* 118). Thus, Lisis's explicit feminist position is complicated implicitly by the novella she narrates, which presents two women in a highly unflattering light: Florentina and her maid.[112] The virtuous Magdalena dies, as well as the servants of the household; apart from one maid, all other servants are portrayed as innocent of any wrongdoing. Florentina's entry into the convent's female space foreshadows the discovery and embrace of such a sisterhood by the tale's narrator, Lisis. However, the endings of Lisis's *desengaño* and the frame tale function dialectically rather than analogously: Zayas flaunts the fact that Florentina, the antithesis of exemplarity, inappropriately 'brings amorality into women's space' – the convent.[113] This is a classic example of equivocation in Zayas's novellas, particularly in her approach to sisterhood.

---

[112] See Griswold. The emergence of contradictions between the contents of novellas and didactic goals of prologues or narrative frames, and even of equivocation within the discourse of prologues or frames, is a frequent feature of the Spanish Baroque novella. I discussed Zayas's 'feminism' in my previous chapter.

[113] Edward H. Friedman, 'María de Zayas's *Estragos que causa el vicio* and the Feminist Impasse', *Romance Languages Annual*, 8 (1996), 472–475, para. 12 of 12. The amoral Florentina's refuge in the convent is a parody of the events that close Zayas's frame narrative.

In the case of *El jardín engañoso*, both treacherous and virtuous sisters are rewarded with good fortune, even though it is undeserved in Teodosia's case. Similar to the frame characters' omission of criticism of Teodosia's acts, Lisis blames a maid and not Florentina, in *Estragos que causa el vicio*, 'porque los criados y criadas son animales caseros y enemigos no excusados' (*DA* 508). Lisis's extreme condemnation of servants strikes the modern reader, in particular, as extraordinary; her ability to judge characters' culpability must therefore be regarded as suspect. The final stories of Zayas's two collections include the reward of the sisters who least deserve it, and such conclusions fail to provoke the expected outcry among the frame audience. In both stories, Zayas directs the reader's attention towards the shortcomings of the fictional frame audience's reception of the text; surely, Zayas intends the reader to realise that this is far from a 'model' audience and that its judgements are to be questioned.

This chapter has revealed the incremental growth of woman's perfidy against her own sex and its increasingly disastrous effects on the social structure throughout Zayas's twenty novellas. To achieve their desires – sex, status, or possibly even sadism – women deviously have recourse to the unyielding honour code. Instances of poetic justice become more sparsely distributed as Zayas's prose works progress. Particularly grave consequences ensue when women disloyally abuse their consanguinity or sisterhood. The three novellas detailing sisterly cruelty lead one to expect the extradiegetic narrator ('Zayas') to dismiss and to denounce bonds of friendship and sisterhood between women. However, as the previous chapter demonstrated, Zayas intersperses and concludes her texts with a celebration and triumphant reaffirmation of the bonds of sisterhood in its varying degrees. Lisis's aforementioned censure of the servant class as 'animales caseros y enemigos no excusados' is relevant to my next chapter, an examination of women's inter-class alliances in Zayas's prose.

Chapter 3
Conservatism? Same-Sex Service in Zayas's Feminine World

'Una doncella [...] a quien yo quería mucho
por habernos criado desde niñas' (*DA* 133).

'Recibe, infierno, el alma de la más mala mujer que crió el Cielo,
y aun allá pienso que no hallará lugar' (*DA* 498).

This chapter will explore another significant aspect of the gynocentric orientation of Zayas's prose works: the intersection of gender with class in women's interrelationships. I will demonstrate that she weaves the threads of these class-based interactions into two distinct tapestries. While many critics simply contend that Zayas espouses a conservative agenda that poses no challenge to her society's class structure, I intend to uncover the richness of her class-based discussion: through the focus of her female gaze and the medium of her woman's voice, she intricately explores the complexities of inter-class issues throughout the novellas. Thus, I wish to consider how class discourse cuts across women's relationships in her literary output.

Firstly, I will examine patterns of affection and reliance between mistresses and maids in Zayas's tales, revealing the obstacles to their interdependency. To this end, I will examine two novellas, *Al fin se paga todo* and *La esclava de su amante*, one from each of her prose collections. I will demonstrate that these stories illustrate concrete instances in which, to a limited degree and in relatively positive forms, same-sex service takes place within relationships defined by secrecy and trust. However, these servant-class allies can be shown to possess little ability to affect the fates of their superiors in the social hierarchy. Then, I will analyse the negative effects of serving-women's usurpation of power, of which there is considerable evidence in Zayas's text, applying carnivalesque theory to their subversive activity. Her prose encompasses a diverse range of female protagonists who actively pursue personal advantage, simultaneously engineering the downfall of the women who represent their social and moral superiors. To illustrate this phenomenon, I discuss *El castigo de la miseria*, *La fuerza del amor*, and *Tarde llega el desengaño*, and I reexamine *La inocencia castigada* and *Estragos que causa el vicio.* The final three of these tales

appear in the *Desengaños amorosos*, which regularly ascribe women's suffering to crimes committed by the female underclass; I will demonstrate that the servant-class women vitally contribute to the spiralling violence of this collection. Similar to my previous study of Zayas's perfidious sisters, the physical danger posed by female servants equals or even surpasses that embodied by male characters.

Overall, cross-class collaboration between mistress and maid is a temporary survival strategy that can bring about mutual benefit. However, in the second category, there is a direct contrast: redistribution or reversals of class power have catastrophic results for Zayas's *damas*. In the first instance, the role of the female servant is beneficent, though limited; in the second, it is a considerable threat. Thus, the combined effect of the described servant activity does not represent a unified picture in the society depicted by Zayas. Before turning to the novellas, I will outline the prevailing attitude to class in her literature.

* * *

Zayas airs class issues in an earlier extant work: the *comedia*, *La traición en la amistad*; in the third act, Belisa recounts the fable of a presumptuous wolf's unsuccessful plot against a humble fox in order to chide the *gracioso*, León, for his opinionated loquaciousness. Belisa concludes her story in the voice of the *zorra* with this conservatively class-based summation:

> Caballero,
> vuelve acá la cara,
> el de los zapatos,
> guantes y celada,
> si os veis otra vez
> con personas altas,
> contad vuestras cosas.
> Las demás dejaldas.
> Sabed que eso medra
> quien en corte habla.[1]

This is a starting point from which we can consider Zayas's conservative depiction of her society's class structure.

---

[1] María de Zayas y Sotomayor, *La traición en la amistad*, ed. by Valerie Hegstrom, trans. by Catherine Larson (London: Associated University Presses, 1999), III. 2705. Gwyn E. Campbell offers an alternative interpretation for Belisa's fable; transposing it to the highly born characters of the play, she compares Marcia with the crafty vixen who outwits Fenisa (representing the wolf), at the end of the *comedia*. While Campbell's is a plausible reading of the fable, it is worth noting that Belisa's audience within the milieu of the *comedia* is León, the *gracioso*; she recounts the story as a lesson to him and her closing remarks distinctly bear a conservative, class-based flavour. See Gwyn E. Campbell, '(En)gendering Fenisa in María de Zayas's *La traición en la amistad*', *Romance Languages Annual*, 10 (1998) 2, 482–487.

In her prose works, frame narrators frequently make claims regarding the illustrious lineage of protagonists, the majority of whom they portray as the descendents of *caballeros*, and openly criticise the misuse of the honorific *don*. Of this title, Covarrubias said in his *Tesoro de la lengua castellana o española*: 'Es título honorífico, que se da al cavallero y noble y al constituydo en dignidad'. Later, he added: 'Muchas casas de señores han rehusado el don, y no se le ponen; y por estos pocos que le dexan le han tomado muchos, que no se les deve. En las mugeres se admite con más indulgencia y facilidad'. Through her narrators, Zayas satirises the adoption of *don* by those who were not entitled to it.[2] For example, in *Amar sólo por vencer*, Matilde ridicules 'la vanidad de las señoras': 'si tiene picaza, la llaman "doña Urraca", y si papagayo, "don Loro"; hasta a una perrita llamó una dama "doña Marquesa", y a una gata "doña Miza"' (*DA* 299). In the same tale, there is also poetic commentary on the customary misappropriation of the title:

> Que sobre los "dones"
> echen alcabalas,
> y la cantidad
> a pobres repartan,
>
> Que si cada uno
> ofrece una blanca,
> el uno por ciento
> no hará suma tanta. (*DA* 305)

In *Mal presagio casar lejos*, Luisa engages in a much lengthier fulmination against the misuse of *dones*, using almost identical terms:

> Nadie hace ostentación de los "dones" como en España, y más el día de hoy, que han dado en una vanidad tan grande, que hasta los cocheros, lacayos y mozas de cocina le tienen; estando ya los negros "dones" tan abatidos, que las taberneras y fruteras son "doña Serpiente" y "doña Tigre". Que, de mi voto, aunque no el de más acierto, ninguna persona principal se le había de poner. Que no ha muchos días que oí llamar a una perrilla de falda "doña Jarifa", y a un gato "don Morro". Que si Su Majestad (Dios le guarde) echara alcabala sobre los "dones", le había de aprovechar más que el uno por ciento, porque casas hay en Madrid, y las conozco yo, que hierven de "dones", como los sepulcros de gusanos. Que me contaron por muy cierto que una labradora socarrona de Vallecas, vendiendo pan, el otro día, en la plaza, a cualquiera vaivén que daba el burro, decía: "Está quedo, don Rucio". Y queriendo partirse, empezó a decir: "don Arre", y queriendo pararse, "don Jo". (*DA* 350)

In promoting the preservation of the honorific title's correct usage, Zayas's narrators defend the strict demarcation of class boundaries. By adhering to this viewpoint, at an onomastic level, social strata would be clearly separated and defined. Much like the *comedia*'s presumptuous wolf, unsanctioned social ostentation is negatively portrayed.

---

[2] Zayas was far from being alone in providing comical examples to parody this phenomenon. Subsequent to the 'knighting' ceremony, Cervantes's Quijote takes the liberty of endowing the two women present, whom the reader easily discerns as being of extremely humble parentage, with the titles 'doña Tolosa' and 'doña Molinera' (Cervantes, *El Ingenioso Hidalgo*, p. 116). In the Second Part, Sancho reports that Quijote, as a mere *hidalgo*, has himself aroused his neighbours' ire by appropriating the *don* title (*Segunda Parte*, pp. 42–3).

Several critics have observed that, at each narrative level, Zayas's principal imagined audience belongs to the *caballero* class. Moreover, as Elizabeth Teresa Howe observes, there is the implicit suggestion of 'a far larger circle beyond the frame story, that of the aristocratic world'.[3] This was not unusual for Baroque writing, which was often not intended for a broad audience but rather to intervene in discrete circuits of power.[4] In particular, although the *novela cortesana* genre has a protean character, it is distinguished by certain conventional elements, which include 'el espacio cortesano, los personajes de estirpe noble, [...] un cierto conservadurismo ideológico'.[5] More generally, Maxime Chevalier underscores the predominance of a conservative ideology in Golden-Age fiction, and in the *novela cortesana* in particular; also, Sara T. Nalle notes 'the fascination that noble status and values held for sixteenth-century Castilians', relating this 'aristocratization of Spanish culture and values' to the popularity of chivalric novels.[6] The milieu of the frame narrative of Carvajal's *Navidades de Madrid* is no exception, taking place among the 'nobles moradores' of Doña Lucrecia de Haro's household. Recently widowed by an honourable *caballero*, Lucrecia's lineage is of 'conocida y notoria calidad', and the exclusive nature of the social gathering is emphasised: 'Y pues estamos libres de la murmuración de los vecinos y este cuarto está retirado de la calle'.[7] Nonetheless, Armon notes that, even in the relatively 'sanitized schema' of Carvajal's prose, servants and slaves occasionally interfere in and destabilise the *status quo*.[8]

Brownlee concludes that Zayas is 'an accomplished marketing strategist who manages to captivate readers with notably divergent alliances – conservative and radical, sentimental

---

[3] Elizabeth Teresa Howe, 'Into the Vortex: María de Zayas's *Desengaño cuarto: Tarde llega el desengaño*, *Journal of Hispanic Philology*, 20 (1995–6), 1–3, 77–91 (p. 79).

[4] Deanna Mihaly notes that the highest echelons of Zayas's society are the primary focus of her narrative, as she 'writes for, and her narrators speak to, the nobility', and Beatriz Suárez Briones formulates a similar argument. Deanna Mihaly, 'Socially Constructed, Essentially Other: Servants and Slaves in María de Zayas's *Desengaños amorosos*', *Romance Languages Annual*, 10 (1999) 2, 719–725 (pp. 719–20); Beatriz Suárez Briones, 'Voces e ideología en "Estragos que causa el vicio", de María de Zayas', *Monographic Review*, 13 (1997), 39–52 (p. 41).

[5] Lissette Rolón-Collazo, 'La forma de la novela cortesana según María de Zayas', *Torre de papel*, 4 (1994) 2, 47–60 (p. 47).

[6] Estimates of literacy in early modern Spain vary considerably due to the variety of measures and sources used. Nonetheless, it is worth remembering that, in the seventeenth century, Spanish consumers of novellas and other works of fiction included illiterate listeners to whom stories were read aloud. See Maxime Chevalier, *Lectura y lectores en la España de los siglos XVI y XVII* (Madrid: Turner, 1976); Sara T. Nalle, 'Literacy and Culture in Early Modern Castile', *Past and Present*, 125 (1989), 65–96 (p. 88); D. W. Cruickshank, 'Literature and the Book Trade in Golden-Age Spain', *MLR*, 73 (1978), 799–824; Pedro M. Cátedra and Anastasio Rojo, *Bibliotecas y lecturas de mujeres: siglo XVI* (Salamanca: Instituto de Historia del Libro y de la Lectura, 2004).

[7] Carvajal y Saavedra, pp. 13–14 & 17.

[8] Armon, 'The Romance of Courtesy', p. 256.

and sadistic – eluding censorship while cashing in on the "tabloid" craze that gripped Spain in the seventeenth century'.[9] As a conservative undercurrent to Zayas's works, Montesa Peydro correctly detects 'una nostalgia de tiempos pasados más "corteses", un deseo de vuelta a la caballerosidad de épocas precedentes', which offers some explanation for the limited level of social militancy of her texts.[10] In Lisis's voice, Zayas alludes to 'otros tiempos, y en particular en el del rey don Fernando el Católico' as an era when women's dignity was protected by the chivalry of men (*DA* 505).

Regarding the Church, I have already commented on Zayas's promotion of the Conceptionist Order, which found a staunch supporter in Isabel of Castile. In 1484, Queen Isabel provided its founder, Beatriz de Silva, with the Palace of Galiana in Toledo to house her first convent; the community obtained papal approval in 1489.[11] Along with Francisco Jiménez de Cisneros (1436–1517), Archbishop of Toledo, Isabel was an influential figure in shaping the future of the Order after Beatriz's death. In 1511, through Cisneros's initiative, Pope Julius II gave the Conceptionists a rule of their own.[12] Within the State arena, Henry Kamen contends that Olivares and Philip IV adopted the thesis of a 'decline of Spain' as scapegoat for political failure and economic crisis; most *arbitristas* 'agreed that Spain was suffering a decline or a change in its fortunes, which they dated from the early years of Habsburg rule, thereby preserving the image, on which they all agreed, of the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella as the apex of Spain's glory'.[13] A conservative, reactionary attitude against social mobility and ideological change is often said to have

---

[9] Marina S. Brownlee, 'Genealogies in Crisis: María de Zayas in Seventeenth-Century Spain', in *Generation and Degeneration: Tropes of Reproduction in Literature and History from Antiquity to Early Modern Europe*, ed. by Valeria Finucci and Kevin Brownlee (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001), pp. 189–208 (p. 192).

[10] Montesa Peydro, p. 99.

[11] Pope Innocent VIII granted Beatriz and Isabel's request to found the convent. In 1494, Isabel oversaw the incorporation of the Conceptionists into the rule of Saint Clare; previously, they had been under Cistercian rule. The reign of Isabel of Castile lasted from 1474 until her death in 1504.

[12] Gutiérrez (Chapters 29–31) provides considerable evidence to demonstrate the importance of Isabel of Castile and Cisneros in guiding the Conceptionists through difficulty and into a more successful era. Starting with his own Order, the Franciscans, Cisneros set about the reform of the monastic orders in Spain, backed by Isabel's influence. He became Archbishop of Toledo in 1495, and Julius II made him Cardinal in 1507. The Conceptionist Order evidently had a close connection with the Franciscans, from which it derived much of its success. J. H. Elliott, *Imperial Spain: 1469–1716* (London: Penguin, 1963), p. 104.

[13] Henry Kamen, *Spain 1469–1714: A Society of Conflict*, 2nd edn (London: Longman, 1991), pp. 233–4. Praise for Queen Isabel continued beyond the span of Zayas's writing career. María de Guevara's *Desengaños de la corte, y mujeres valerosas* (1664) praises her as 'valerosa' during the Reconquest, and Feijoó's 'Defensa' (1726) cites her 'prudencia consumada'. Benito Jerónimo Feijoó, 'Defensa de las mujeres', in *Obras escogidas del Padre Fray Benito Jerónimo Feijoó y Montenegro*, ed. by Vicente de la Fuente, Biblioteca de Autores Españoles, 56 (Madrid: M. Rivadeneyra, 1863), pp. 50–58 (p. 54); María de Guevara, *Warnings to the Kings and Advice on Restoring Spain: A Bilingual Edition*, ed. and trans. by Nieves Romero-Díaz (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), p. 76.

underlain the Baroque.[14] Social nostalgia is epitomized by Baroque imagery of the Iron and Golden Ages, which Zayas's protagonists use in their roles as proponents of *desengaño*. In her *comedia*, the *gracioso* unfavourably contrasts a mythical 'Edad Dorada' of times past with his contemporary world:

> En ésta de Yerro,
> tan pobre y tan falta
> de amistad, pues vive
> la traición malvada,
> son los males tantos,
> tantas las disgracias,
> que se teme el mundo
> de que ya se acaba.[15]

Interpolated poetry in the *Desengaños amorosos* (namely, in *Amar sólo por vencer*) also contrasts 'la edad dorada' with 'la de hierro, / tan pobre y tan falta / de amistad, que en ella / no hay más que marañas' (*DA* 300). Such imagery has a backward gaze as its foundation.

Given the evidence of historical nostalgia and insistence on class distinctions in Zayas's literary output, it is to be expected that she does not attempt to propound a 'sisterhood' that would eclipse all social differences, in either the *comedia* or the novella genre, which casts serious doubt upon claims regarding her proto-feminism. Her convent 'solution' could not solve problems of class or race, as it mirrored the hierarchical social structure of the secular sphere.[16] Maravall correctly posits that, despite the defence of women's intellectual capacities at Zayas's diegetic and extradiegetic narrative levels, her works do not necessarily entail a rejection of the 'marco estamental'.[17] Lía Schwartz notes the anachronism of the feminist-related argument, considering it inevitable that, through socialisation, Zayas's works would propound 'lugares comunes de la ideología del estamento nobiliario, cuyos intereses comparte'.[18] Within seventeenth-century Spanish society, Zayas was dominated by reason of her gender, while also being a member of the dominant social class. The expectations of Zayas's twenty-first-century readers should not overly influence the criticisms that they level at her texts, particularly as she chose not to create a political manifesto but to contribute to the popular *novela cortesana* genre. Although she does not employ her artistic endeavours to propose a revolutionary

---

[14] Maravall is a particularly emphatic proponent of this view, to the point that he has been accused of overstating the extent and coherence of Baroque conservatism. See J. H. Elliott, 'Concerto Barocco', *New York Review of Books*, 9 April 1987, pp. 26–9.

[15] Zayas, *La traición en la amistad*, III. 2545.

[16] Arenal and Shlau, *Untold Sisters*, p. 4.

[17] J. A. Maravall, cited in Díez Borque, 'El feminismo de doña María de Zayas', p. 88.

[18] Lía Schwartz, 'Discursos dominantes y discursos dominados en textos satíricos de María de Zayas', in *La creatividad femenina en el mundo barroco hispánico: María de Zayas, Isabel Rebeca Correa, Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz*, ed. by Monika Bosse, Barbara Potthast and André Stoll, 2 vols (Kassel: Edition Reichenberger, 1999), I, 301–321 (p. 307).

disintegration of her society's class structure, a critical focus on gender and class issues will expose other merits in her texts. Jehenson and Welles's assertion that 'servants are consistently spoken of with disdain throughout the tales' does a disservice to the rich complexity of Zayas's literary treatment of these women's social roles.[19]

Same-Sex Service and its Limitations

Debra D. Andrist's analysis of cross-class friendship and betrayal among female protagonists, which she applies to her study of *Don Quijote*, is relevant to the forthcoming discussion. She rationalises the traditional intimacy between lady and maid:

> From a historical perspective, given the societal attitudes that have dictated the limited mobility of women, in order to guard their honour, a friendship between a woman and her maid, reinforced by proximity, lack of other options, and intimacy, would not be unexpected.[20]

Due to the social inequality of these female friends, a common identity would be unlikely; in addition, the friendship would be of a hidden nature and not be publicly recognised. Competition for a male between these women would be uncommon; Andrist argues that it is likely that lady and maid will cooperate to attain the object of the former's desire, 'necessitating cessation of hostilities and, probably, active good will, between them'.[21] Likewise, in Caroline B. Bourland's overview of the seventeenth-century novella, she observes that 'relations of friendly familiarity not infrequently existed between masters and servants [...] Certain servants were on the most intimately confidential terms with their young masters and mistresses and, depending upon the degree of their honesty or veniality, were great factors for good or evil in their lives'.[22] 'Active good will' among women of discrete social classes is evidenced by the novellas to be discussed in this section. This is not to say that, in Zayas's tales, altruism alone shapes the servant-class women's behaviour. Self-interested pragmatism is frequently a motivating factor in the *novela cortesana*, a feature that is readily evident in the actions of these protagonists.

---

[19] Jehenson and Welles, 'María de Zayas's Wounded Women', p. 180.
[20] Debra D. Andrist, 'Male versus Female Friendship in *Don Quijote*', *Cervantes*, 3 (1983) 2, 149–159 (p. 154).
[21] Andrist, p. 155.
[22] Caroline B. Bourland, *The Short Story in Spain in the Seventeenth Century* (Portland: Southworth Press, 1927), pp. 35–6. Bourland makes some valid points in her study of the Spanish novella, although her critical comments are conditioned and limited by her time of writing – the 1920s. (The same can be said of Amezúa and others.) Literary criticism of this genre, as evidenced by that of Zayas's novellas, has developed considerably in recent decades.

As evidence of this 'active good will', it is worthwhile to outline cross-class collaboration in Zayas's literary output prior to her prose works: namely, *La traición en la amistad*, in which Fenisa's maid, Lucía, performs a significant role. Throughout the play's dramatisation of Fenisa's duplicitous schemes and eventual downfall, Lucía is her principal confidante, source of counsel, and accomplice. Furthermore, as Romero-Díaz notes, Lucía's asides importantly address a female audience; in the third act, she overtly warns women against Fenisa's path of amorous involvement with unscrupulous, idle men: 'Señoras, las que entretienen, / tomen ejemplo en Fenisa. / Huigan destos pisaverdes'.[23] Thus, although Lucía's final act is to marry the *gracioso*, León, her cautionary words belittle male superiority. Paradoxically, her last aside is revealing in spite of its inherent ambiguity:

> Digan, señoras, ¿no miente [Fenisa]
> en decir que quiere a todos?
> Cosa imposible parece,
> mas no que quiera una muger
> que vive mintiendo siempre
> pedir verdad a los hombres.
> Necias serán si lo creen.[24]

Romero-Díaz comments that, when advising women in the audience, 'las palabras de Lucía ponen de manifiesto la relatividad de principios de organización sociocultural establecidos como verdades absolutas por el hombre'.[25] Despite her lowly social status, Lucía's acts have import within the text and, additionally, her commentary resounds due to its relevance to gender relations beyond her fictional framework. In terms of the honour code in the *comedia*, women such as Lucía are often less constrained by its dictates and are characteristically better able to circumvent impasses created by conflicting obligations that paralyse their higher-class counterparts.

Turning to the novellas, an inter-class partnership is formed between Hipólita and her maid in *Al fin se paga todo*, seventh tale of the *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares*, which has Miguel as its narrator. At the start of the novella, García discovers a scantily clad, injured and abandoned woman: Hipólita. She beseeches him for protection, alluding to imminent danger. Thereafter, Hipólita recounts to García her tale of attempted adultery, in which her maid played a prominent role. The reader must bear in mind that, although Miguel narrates *Al fin se paga todo*, a masculinist reading of the tale is attenuated by Hipólita's internal or meta-metadiegetic narrative. Her ethereal beauty captivates García,

[23] Zayas, *La traición en la amistad*, III. 2473. See Nieves Romero-Díaz, 'En los límites de la representación: la traición de María de Zayas', *Revista canadiense de estudios hispánicos*, 26 (Spring 2002) 3, 475–492.
[24] Zayas, *La traición en la amistad*, III. 2481.
[25] Romero-Díaz, 'En los límites de la representación', p. 482.

predisposing him to a positive interpretation of her self-reported actions: 'creyó sin duda que no era mujer sino ángel, tanta era su belleza y la honestidad y compostura de su rostro' (*NAE* 415). Infatuation renders him incapable of objectively criticising Hipólita's behaviour; it is the task of Zayas's readers to do this.

According to Hipólita, her abundant physical charms and social status as daughter of 'padres tan ricos como nobles' attracted many suitors, which included two brothers among their number (*NAE* 417). Her parents selected the older sibling, Pedro, to be Hipólita's husband. For eight years, Pedro was an attentive, loving spouse, but, instead of valuing his devotion, she succumbed to the charms of a Portuguese soldier, Gaspar. Hipólita emphasises the role of Gaspar's seductive charms in her downfall:

> Él me robó la voluntad, la opinión y el sosiego, pues ya para mí acabó en una hora. Era su gallardía, entendimiento y donaire tanto que, sin tener las demás gracias que el mundo llama dones de naturaleza, como son música y poesía, bastaran a rendir y traer a quererle cualquiera dama que llegase a verle, cuanto y más la que se vio solicitada, pretendida y alabada. (*NAE* 419)

Hipólita distracts her listener, García, from focussing upon her own involvement in the impending seduction; instead, she redirects culpability to Gaspar and his overwhelming 'gracias', which she claims are sufficient to cause any woman's willpower to evaporate. Her use of forceful verbs such as 'robar' and 'rendir' likens Gaspar to a wartime pillager, intimating the futility of the virtuous reluctance with which she was supposed to resist adultery. To dramatic effect, she employs a hyperbolic listing technique to emphasise Gaspar's seductive bombardment: 'la voluntad, la opinión y el sosiego', 'su gallardía, entendimiento y donaire', and 'solicitada, pretendida y alabada'. Thus, Hipólita justifies her subsequent actions and absolves her own guilt through reference to love as an amorous onslaught. However, despite her claims to the contrary, Hipólita is not under the control of others or of external forces such as love.[26]

At this crucial point in Hipólita's honour trajectory, her maid began to assume an integral, active role. Gaspar and Hipólita communicated their incipient, mutual admiration through letters delivered by Hipólita's maid; with bitter hindsight, Hipólita retrospectively describes this vital intermediary as 'espía fiera y astuta perseguidora de mi honor' (*NAE* 419). It must be remembered that, even though Miguel narrates this tale, Hipólita recounts

---

[26] As Williamsen notes, syntax throughout the novella and the description of events portray Hipólita as an agent who acts upon others. Amy R. Williamsen, 'Engendering Early Modern Discourse: Subjectivity and Syntactic Empathy in *Al fin se paga todo*', in *Zayas and Her Sisters, 2: Essays on Novelas by 17th-Century Spanish Women*, ed. by Gwyn E. Campbell and Judith A. Whitenack (New York: Global Publications, Binghampton University, 2001), pp. 33–43.

her own story within this narrative framework. Through assignation of unflattering epithets to her maid, Hipólita clearly endeavours to displace a share of the blame to the serving-woman (much as she does with Gaspar) to mollify the listening García. It later becomes obvious that the maid merely supplied her mistress with assistance in the formulation of schemes to facilitate the latter's adulterous desire. Despite the women's relationship of intimacy, the maid's actions had little lasting effect on the outcome of events.

When Pedro went on a hunting excursion, the maid, 'aquella criada secretaria de mi flaqueza', brought Gaspar a letter instructing him to come to the garden behind Hipólita's house that night (*NAE* 423). Prior to Gaspar's arrival, Pedro returned home unexpectedly and joins Hipólita in the garden. When Gaspar espied them, he unsheathed his sword only to recognise Hipólita's sleeping companion as her husband. Undeterred by this perilously aborted tryst, the maid emboldened Hipólita to undertake the arrangement of another audacious liaison with Gaspar: 'aconsejándome con aquella criada secretaria de mi amor, me respondió que se espantaba de una mujer que decía tenerle [amor a Gaspar] que tuviese tan poco ánimo y se aventurase tan poco' (*NAE* 426–7).

Hipólita's repeated application of 'secretaria' as her maid's epithet intensifies an impression of the latter as vital and active intermediary throughout Hipólita's dauntless stratagems to commit adultery. In the introduction to Lope's *El perro del hortelano*, a notable *comedia de secretario* about ladies enamoured of their scribes, Victor Dixon observes that the funcion of the *secretario* 'was spelt out in works descriptive of the various trades or vocations, or of the duties of the different types of servant (*mayordomo*, *camarero*, *gentilhombre*, *lacayo*, etc., etc.) in households great and small'.[27] However, Hipólita's maid did not act as a scribe, merely passing on letters. The word could also be used figuratively to describe a keeper of secrets or confidant: as Dixon contends, 'an essential requirement of that role [of *secretario*], the manuals agreed, was *el secreto*'. This is the sense in which *secretaria* is applied to Hipólita's maid, suggesting a degree of intimacy and trust not normally accorded to a servant. The *Diccionario de autoridades* defines *secretaria* both figuratively as a confidante and literally as a female scribe: 'La muger à quien se encarga, ù de quien se fia algun secreto, que se le comunica', and 'la

[27] Victor Dixon, 'Introduction', in *El perro del hortelano, Lope de Vega: A Critical Edition* (London: Tamesis Texts, 1981), pp. 9–67 (p. 22 & 26). Dixon clarifies this point by providing a bibliography in the notes to his edition. I am indebted to Professor Dixon for his correspondence, which elucidated the role of the *secretario*.

muger que sirve de escribir las cartas, y otros papeles de alguna señora, ù Monasterio, donde hai este oficio'. In *Al fin se paga todo*, the social status of the maid is raised by responsibility. Additionally, the maid's name is later given alongside the ubiquitous 'secretaria' epithet: 'Leonor, que así se llama la criada, secretaria de mis devaneos' (*NAE* 432). Raised from anonymity, this confers added significance on her role within the novella; also, Zayas's choice of this particular name for the *criada* warrants a brief onomastic note. In Gemma Domingo Carvajal's thesis on the *comedias* of Guillén de Castro, she notes that 'Leonor' is not a name normally given to *criadas*.[28] The same appears to be the case in the plays of Lope de Vega and of Tirso de Molina, who, according to Chittenden, employed this name for *damas*. Thus, in choosing this name for the *criada*, Zayas elevates her position socially and blurs the boundaries between social classes.

As a determined adulteress, Hipólita obtained encouragement and assistance from Leonor. The woman's complicity in her mistress's scheme for seductive conquest recalls that of Fenisa and Lucía in *La traición en la amistad*, albeit on a lesser scale. Leonor created a second, more hazardous plot: to hide Gaspar in her quarters, where Hipólita would meet him while Pedro slept. Hipólita feigned illness, waiting for an opportunity to steal away to her maid's room; juxtaposition of Pedro's affectionate concern for her welfare, 'harto desconsolado de verme indispuesta', highlights women's treachery by contrast (*NAE* 427). Contrary to the women's plans, the house caught fire during the night, a remarkable coincidence that is probably meant to induce *admiratio* in the reader. Despite the catastrophic damage to the house and deaths of several servants (excluding Leonor), Gaspar and Hipólita renewed their adulterous intentions and again attempted to execute Leonor's plan.

During the foolhardy duo's third foray, the doors of the house were locked before Gaspar's arrival; at Leonor's suggestion, Gaspar sought entry through a small window, which led to a farcical scene when he became wedged in its frame: 'se quedó atravesado en el marco por la mitad del cuerpo, de suerte que ni atrás ni adelante fue posible pasar' (*NAE* 429). While Leonor loosened the frame from its window, other servants raised the alarm, thinking that a robbery was underway, and Gaspar was forced to flee still wearing the window-frame. Symbolically, Zayas's window-frame can be read as a spatial metaphor for

[28] Gemma Domingo Carvajal, 'Tipología de los personajes en la dramaturgia de Guillén de Castro y Bellvís (1569–1631)' (unpublished doctoral dissertation, Universitat de Barcelona, 2006), p. 113 & 1059; Chittenden, 'The Characters and Plots of Tirso's *Comedias*'.

the restrictive patriarchal order of her society. In *Desde la ventana*, Carmen Martín Gaite discusses the window as negative symbol in discourses advocating women's enclosure and explores the highly censorious connotations of the *ventanera* concept:

> La interpretación de la conducta femenina se establecía con arreglo a cánones tan estrechos como para suponer que, cuando una mujer se asomaba a la ventana, no podía ser más que por mero reclamo erótico, por afán de exhibir la propia imagen para encandilar a un hombre. Se descartaba la posibilidad de que tal vez quisiera asomarse a la ventana para tomar aire, para ver lo de fuera, y no para ser vista desde fuera.[29]

Through the subversive irony of *Al fin se paga todo*, the male protagonist becomes an object of ridicule as he struggles to negotiate the obstacle of the 'ventana'. While Hipólita and her accomplice successfully bypass the hindrances of a patriarchal honour code, Gaspar's window-frame entrapment represents, in a parodic way, the impositions that this rigid social code places on women: the representative of the patriarchal order is trapped by a frame that is meant to keep women inside.[30]

The amusement of Hipólita and Leonor is evident as they ridicule the aspiring paramour's vexatious predicament: 'fue tanta mi risa [...], ayudándome mi secretaria a solemnizar la burla' (*NAE* 429). Humour lightly veils the seriousness of the adulterous theme. By revealing a deplorably frivolous and dissolute attitude towards her marital vow of fidelity, Hipólita falters in the project of self-exoneration, despite the obvious advantage of self-portrayal afforded by her role as narrator of her own tale. The two women fail to give due consideration to the dishonour inherent in adultery or to its potentially fatal consequences, instead extracting amusement from the incident as if it were a trivial *burla*. Their carefree laughter emanates from what they deem to be a secure vantage point of personal liberty; they are unaware that, given women's weakened position under the honour code, their untroubled situation is precariously susceptible to change. Ordóñez notes that, in Zayas's novellas, women's jests at male protagonists' expense are one of their methods of exerting autonomy and power; an aforementioned scene involving Ana and Violante in *El prevenido engañado* is another example in a male-narrated tale. Male protagonists and their amorous pursuits are the objects of women's ridicule while the latter temporarily wield control over their external circumstances.

---

[29] Carmen Martín Gaite, *Desde la ventana: Enfoque femenino de la literatura española* (Madrid: Espasa Calpe, 1987), pp. 35–6.

[30] Furthermore, this literal 'marco' conjures thoughts of the literary *marco narrativo*, which is an integral part of Zayas's prose. Martín Gaite describes the window as, literally, 'el punto de enfoque, pero también el punto de partida' for the female writer (Martín Gaite, p. 37); figuratively, the *marco narrativo* is 'punto de enfoque' for interpretation and 'punto de partida' for the happenings of Zayas's novellas.

On the following day, no sooner had Gaspar finally succeeded in gaining entry to the house than Leonor brought news of Pedro's unexpected arrival; 'sirviendo de atalaya y espía', she played an important supporting role in each of the four attempted *rendezvous* (*NAE* 430). Hipólita displayed a sudden awareness of the consequences that her infidelity could entail: 'vi que nos importaba la vida; la cual perdiéramos todos, o los más, al mismo punto que llegara a los ojos de mi marido su afrenta y mi atrevida descompostura' (*NAE* 430). Hipólita's husband returned home, 'pidiendo a gran prisa en qué hacer las necesidades ordinarias, que ese desconcierto le había vuelto a casa. En esto, y en tomar unos bizcochos, por no haberse desayunado, se entretuvo más de hora y media' (*NAE* 430). Later in this chapter, I will apply Bakhtin's notion of Carnival to women's cross-class behaviour in Zayas's texts. Carnival links with the grotesque, which includes the bodily function of evacuation, as well as those of eating and sex.[31] In this carnivalesque scene, food, excrement, and adulterous sex are under the narrative spotlight. Hipólita hid Gaspar in a trunk but, by the time that Pedro departed, she thought that Gaspar had suffocated. Despite the arrival of Leonor, these two resourceful women were unable to extricate themselves from the plight, 'pidiéndome ella a mí, y yo a ella con lágrimas y suspiros, consejo para tener modo de sacarle de allí' (*NAE* 431). In distress, Hipólita recounted the fateful events to Luis, her brother-in-law, who realised that Gaspar was still alive and had him removed so as to regain consciousness.

The crisis of the trunk catalysed a series of events to the detriment of all protagonists involved. Henceforth, the alliance between mistress and maid is no longer in evidence, and Leonor vanishes from the narrative foreground. In Leonor's absence, the plot of *Al fin se paga todo* loses its burlesque flavour and plunges into more tragic territory. Her departure from the scene and loss of 'secretarial' influence coincides with the descent into mayhem that follows. As the plot turns to embrace the crimes of rape and murder, the aforementioned mildly scatological reference marks the end of the frivolous segment of the tale. Luis unsuccessfully attempted to pressurise Hipólita into yielding to his desires, and, in the last reference to Leonor, Hipólita describes her as protection against his advances: 'El que más me servía era haber mandado a mis criadas, particularmente a Leonor, que no se apartasen de mí ni me dejasen sola con él, porque no se valiese de fuerza' (*NAE* 436). However, Leonor's assistance was insufficient, and Luis succeeded in raping Hipólita.

[31] Motifs of sustenance and of excrement are recurrent properties of the carnivalesque: 'Excrement was conceived as an essential element in the life of the body and of the earth in the struggle against death. It was part of man's vivid awareness of his materiality, of his bodily nature, closely related to the life of the earth'. Mikhail Bakhtin, *Rabelais and his World*, trans. by Helene Iswolsky (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984), p. 224. These carnivalesque motifs also appear in *El castigo de la miseria*.

Leonor's scope of influence is restricted, and she appears to lose even her counsellor's role in relation to Hipólita.

Hipólita attained vengeance by brutally murdering Luis; for the first time in the novella, she acted alone without any implication that Leonor is her accomplice.[32] By killing Luis, Hipólita repaired her own dishonour without considering her husband, whose dagger she uses to accomplish the savage deed; she is both victim and victimiser. Immediately after her crime, Hipólita went to Gaspar for succour, but he beat and forcibly ejected her from his lodgings. Thus, the narrative circles back to the opening scene of Miguel's novella, in which García discovers the injured Hipólita. Following García's advice, and from the safety of a convent, she reveals herself as Luis's killer; ultimately, she receives a royal pardon. This is a striking case of the convent as a physical refuge, where Hipólita can feel safe from the wrath of her husband. Her obstinate refusal to return to her married life has fatal repercussions, causing Pedro 'tanta tristeza que, sobreviniéndole una grave enfermedad, antes de un año murió' (*NAE* 444).[33]

Once widowed, Hipólita inherits Pedro's 'gruesa hacienda' and remarries, taking the steadfast García as her second husband (*NAE* 444). As female avenger and author of violence, Hipólita resembles Aminta of *La burlada Aminta y venganza del honor*.[34] Moreover, unions at the close of both tales reflect a general tendency in Zayas's *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares*. While monastic life and uxoricide are the typical fates of women in Zayas's second work, the majority of novellas among the *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares* conclude optimistically in matrimony.[35] Legally absolved by the Spanish monarch, Hipólita goes on to attain unmerited pecuniary rewards and a second devoted husband. Thus, the novella has a conventional matrimonial ending, which comes about by highly unconventional means. Leonor has long since been written out of the narrative

---

[32] Hipólita can be contrasted with Lucretia, the chaste Roman heroine who chooses suicide when she is dishonoured by rape. Hipólita executed the premeditated murder of her rapist with the same determination with which she pursued adulterous relations with Gaspar. Her physically aggressive agency is revealed when she instantaneously killed Luis but ferociously continued to strike 'otras cinco o seis puñaladas, con tanta rabia y crueldad como si con cada una le hubiera de quitar la infame vida' (*NAE* 439). In contrast, the wronged Pedro does not have the opportunity to react vengefully at any stage.

[33] To explain her refusal to resume married life with Pedro, Hipólita contends that 'honor con sospecha no podía criar perfecto amor ni conformes casados' (*NAE* 443). Given the violence that suspicions of infidelity frequently generate in Zayas's later novellas, Hipólita's fear of returning to the husband whom she attempted to cuckold does not appear to the reader as unfounded, despite the tale's sympathetic portrayal of Pedro.

[34] The comparison is not a straightforward one. In Aminta's case, it is vital to note that she avoids legal retribution by wearing a disguise and fleeing the scene of her crime. In contrast, Hipólita's murder of Luis becomes publicly known, and she receives an official pardon.

[35] *La burlada Aminta y venganza del honor*, *El desengaño amando y premio de la virtud*, *El imposible vencido*, *El juez de su causa*, and *El jardín engañoso*, in addition to *Al fin se paga todo*, end in wedlock.

script. She did not wield sufficient power or influence to bring about this end; in fact, she has had no lasting effect on Hipólita's fate. Through Hipólita's avoidance of divine punishment and legal reprimand for murder and adultery, Zayas breaches religious orthodoxy and moral justice. Neither ideal nor evil, she is one of Zayas's most complex protagonists, in a tale that represents a highly subversive treatment of the institution of marriage, as well as a creative insight into same-sex service.

Irony is evident in the specific title of this tale and in Miguel's related remarks upon completing his narration: 'yo me he animado a escribirle para que cada uno mire lo que hace, pues *Al fin todo se paga*' (*NAE* 444). From the outset, he pledges that his novella will illustrate a case of moral justice: 'Que nadie haga tanto cuanto pague es cosa averiguada, porque el mal jamás deja de tener castigo ni el bien premio, pues cuando el mundo no le dé, le da el cielo. Esto se verá más claro en mi maravilla' (*NAE* 411). As narrator of *Al fin se paga todo*, Miguel overlooks Hipólita's dalliances and omits any commentary on the fact that she eludes retribution.[36] Spain's Baroque authors demonstrated a strong awareness of their readers' capabilities, which becomes apparent through the regular appearance of the epithets of 'vulgo' and 'discreto': for example, Mateo Alemán's two prologues to *Guzmán de Alfarache* address the 'vulgo' and 'discreto lector' separately and distinctly. Zayas challenges her actively questioning 'discreto lector' to evaluate the discrepancy between the novella's outcome and its narrator's faulty judgement of it as morally just; she invites the reader to participate in determining whether this is a tale of 'just deserts'.

Jennifer Wood encapsulates the far-reaching effects of Zayas' encouragement of an interrogative reading of the text: 'Zayas provokes the reader to question whether there is justice not only in this case, but in society'.[37] For the 'discreto lector', an optimal reading of her texts involves interrogating and decoding them as literary reflections on her social milieu, and, namely, its class and gender issues. As a Baroque author, Zayas seemingly strives to provoke the reader into a 'defamilarised' state of active, meditative involvement.

---

[36] Williamsen posits a general tendency whereby the male reader is the audience of the text's literal meanings and the female reader is the audience of the ironic. As male reader of his own text, *Al fin se paga todo*, Miguel illustrates this phenomenon through failure to recognise the irony that is encoded in his tale's title and in its supposed moral message. Of course, it is highly problematic to draw a sharp distinction in terms of textual readings based on gender. Margalida Pons suggests a possible solution by replacing Williamsen's terms of 'lector masculino' and 'lector femenino' with 'lectura masculina' and 'lectura femenina'. See Williamsen, 'Engendering Interpretation'; Margalida Pons, 'Extrañamiento e identidad en *La fuerza del amor* de María de Zayas', *Romance Languages Annual*, 7 (1995), 590–596.

[37] Jennifer Wood, '*Al fin se paga todo*: An Ironic Example of Zayas's Sense of Justice', *Romance Languages Annual*, 7 (1995), 669–75 (p. 669).

As described by Victor Shklovsky, 'defamiliarization' is a method whereby the reader's perception is stimulated from a level of automatic habituation to one of active participation: 'The technique of art is to make objects "unfamiliar", to make forms difficult, to increase the difficulty and length of perception because the process of perception is an aesthetic end in itself and must be prolonged'.[38] Shklovsky's 'defamiliarization' technique can easily be applied to Baroque literature, which famously resists facile interpretation. Ultimately, the authority to interpret these texts is transferred to the reader. Leonor's role, which illustrates both surprising levels of cross-class interaction and the limited extent of servant-class influence, is one of many subjects for the 'defamiliarised' reader to consider in *Al fin se paga todo*.

* * *

The class dynamics of *Al fin se paga todo* are compatible with the overarching context of Zayas's *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares*, which Boyer defines as emphasising how women 'cope with deception', in contrast with the *Desengaños amorosos*, in which 'the central theme is women's powerlessness and inability to cope'.[39] Boyer's distinction between Zayas's prose works is somewhat simplistic: in Zayas's *Desengaños amorosos*, women's coping mechanisms are also in evidence, albeit under increasingly difficult circumstances. In my first chapter, I explored one such female strategy: increased Gyn/affection. Furthermore, inter-class alliances continue to feature in Zayas's second collection of novellas. I will now examine Zayas's *Desengaños amorosos* for collusive bonds similar to those of *Al fin se paga todo*, from the *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares*.

Turning to re-examine the first *desengaño*, *La esclava de su amante*, we witness an alliance between mistress and maid that is important for a while. Initially posing as Zelima, the narrator elevates her status by revealing her 'real' identity as Isabel Fajardo. Rolón-Collazo suggests that the anagnorisis that reveals Isabel's noble, Christian identity is necessary 'para que el personaje disfrazado pueda ser considerado igual en el medio cortesano'.[40] The closeness of the friendship between Lisis and Zelima creates a social parity such that the latter's right to narrate was never in doubt. However, the revelation of

---

[38] Victor Shklovsky, 'Art as Technique', in *Russian Formalist Criticism: Four Essays*, translation and introduction by Lee T. Lemon and Marion J. Reis (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1965), pp. 3–24 (p. 12).
[39] H. Patsy Boyer, 'Introduction', in *The Enchantments of Love: Amorous and Exemplary Novels* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), pp. xi–xxxi (p. xvi).
[40] Rolón-Collazo, p. 56.

Zelima's 'true' identity as Isabel may retrospectively justify Lisis's rapport with her *esclava*. Moreover, having a similar status to the female listeners enhances the effectiveness of Isabel's storytelling by allowing them to identify with her.

In the first part of her autobiographical novella, Isabel cites her relationship with her own maid, Claudia.[41] Thus, she presents the *criada* as worthy of inclusion in the densely populated panorama of named protagonists in her tale's introductory scenes. During Manuel's courtship, Isabel's serving-woman is introduced as 'una doncella que me vestía y desnudaba, a quien yo quería mucho por habernos criado desde niñas' (*DA* 133).[42] The reader is led to surmise that the maid shares a relatively intimate, lifelong bond with Isabel through their families' connectedness; servants and ladies are linked, even through several generations, despite the class divide. Women's friendship is portrayed as having the potential to penetrate class difference without creating social disorder or rupture; thus, class barriers are revealed to be permeable structures, albeit lasting ones. Such statements of affection negate the possibility that women merely use and discard servants in Zayas's stories; nonetheless, servants' lesser investment in the social hierarchy of the honour code makes them useful in liberating their mistresses from its restrictions, in order to assert some autonomy.

Isabel interrupts the narration in order to suggest that her maid furthers Manuel's unscrupulous plans: 'estaba prevenida contra mí, y en favor del ingrato y desconocido don Manuel', 'la juzgaba más de la parte contraria que de la mía' (*DA* 133 & 135). Isabel's choice of epithets for the maid underscores the latter's shrewdness: 'la cautelosa Claudia', 'la astuta Claudia' (*DA* 133–4). When Claudia urges Isabel to take pity on the lovelorn Manuel, Isabel even accuses her of being bribed by Manuel: 'Sobornada parece que estás, pues abogas con tanta piedad por él' (*DA* 134). Despite Claudia's denial, it seems plausible that she might have received payment from him. However, it becomes evident that Claudia believes that Manuel's intentions are honourable and that his suit will conclude in matrimony; she does not seek to cement the downfall of her mistress, Isabel,

---

[41] This is an unusual name for a female protagonist of any class. According to Chittenden, Tirso de Molina seldom used the name of 'Claudia', only giving it to an Italian *noble* in *Quien da luego, da dos veces*. It also appears to have been an uncommon name for women of any social class in Lope's *comedias*. However, Guillén de Castro endowed *criadas* with this name in two of his plays, *El caballero bobo* and *El curioso impertinente* (Domingo Carvajal, p. 114). Thus, in this case, we cannot readily infer that Zayas raises this servant's status by name alone.

[42] This recalls Cervantes's *El curioso impertinente*. Camila shares a relationship of long-standing intimacy with 'una doncella suya llamada Leonela, a quien ella mucho quería, por haberse criado desde niñas las dos juntas en casa de los padres de Camila'. Cervantes, *El Ingenioso Hidalgo*, p. 410.

through pursuit of her own selfish motives. Claudia claims that Manuel allayed her own doubts with regard to the nature of his objective: '[Manuel] me respondió que cómo se había de atrever a pedirte por esposa incierto de tu voluntad; pues podrá ser que aunque tu padre lo acepte, no gustes tú de ello' (*DA* 135). Thus, Claudia encourages Isabel's devotion to Manuel, albeit without surmising that anything less than a suitable marriage to the benefit of all parties would ensue. Isabel is evidently highly amenable to Claudia's persuasive promotion of Manuel: 'Estaba ya mi corazón más blando que cera, pues mientras Claudia me decía lo referido, había entre mí hecho varios discursos, y todos en abono de lo que me decía mi doncella, y en favor de don Manuel' (*DA* 135).

It is never Manuel's intention to wed Isabel: he rapes her once an opportunity arises. Much as in the case of Hipólita's rape in *Al fin se paga todo*, no member of the household, even including the wily maid, can protect the mistress from violation. To calm Isabel's subsequent fury, Manuel swears to marry her; he recounts these events to Claudia and asks her to pacify Isabel, 'prometiéndole a ella lo que a mí, que no sería otra su esposa' (*DA* 138). Anguished by her predicament, Isabel becomes perilously ill and refuses to see Manuel for two months. Continuing to believe Manuel's reiterated promises of marriage, Claudia urges Isabel to forget her rancour. Her counsel assuages Isabel's despair by underlining the potency of wedlock to counteract dishonour:

> En siendo tu esposo queda puesto el reparo [...] Ya no sirven desvíos para quien posee y es dueño de tu honor, pues con ellos das motivo para que, arrepentido y enfadado de tus sequedades, te deje burlada [...] Mira, señora, que esto es lo que te está bien, y que se pongan medios con tus padres para que sea tu esposo, con que la quiebra de tu honor quedará soldada y satisfecha, y todo lo demás es locura y acabar de perderte. (*DA* 138–9)

For a servant in Zayas's prose, Claudia gives a relatively lengthy speech. Furthermore, it contains the pragmatic advice not to deter Manuel through *sequedades* and to obtain parental consent for marriage. The first instruction is ambiguous and might be interpreted as meaning to accept Manuel's advances while arranging the marriage; either way, Claudia is clearly making a cross-class impact here. Eventually, the joint efforts of Claudia and Eufrasia, Manuel's sister, lead Isabel's scorn to abate: 'finalmente ella [doña Eufrasia] y Claudia trabajaron tanto conmigo que me rindieron' (*DA* 139). Their well-meaning efforts prove fruitless due to Manuel's inordinate fickleness and depravity.

Vollendorf notes that 'as the tale proceeds she [Isabel] shows herself to be increasingly autonomous – a woman in control of her identity and in search of justice for the wrongs

done to her'.[43] Thus, from the rape onwards, Isabel's dependence on other characters, including Claudia, progressively diminishes. Repeating the pattern of *Al fin se paga todo*, the role of the *criada* in *La esclava de su amante* is short-lived. Claudia's final appearance occurs when Isabel requests that she follow Manuel to the house of his lover, Alejandra. Claudia reveals herself and chastises Manuel for his behaviour: 'no pudiendo ya la fiel Claudia sufrir tantas libertades cometidas en ofensa mía [...] le dijo lo que fue justo, si, como fue bien dicho, fuera bien admitido' (*DA* 144). One notices a radical change in epithets applied to Claudia, varying from 'cautelosa' or 'astuta' to 'fiel'; here, she is defined by her loyalty to Isabel (and to a far greater extent than Eufrasia, Isabel's friend) as opposed to being noted for her craftiness. This qualifier compounds the deduction that, although perhaps bribed by her mistress's suitor, Claudia has consistently acted without intending to contribute to Isabel's dishonour. As a consequence of Claudia's courage, Manuel berates her, and Alejandra 'se atrevió a Claudia con palabras y obras' (*DA* 144). This is not an isolated incident in demonstrating Claudia's loyalty. As Alejandra becomes increasingly brazen, often visiting Manuel's chambers and threatening to reveal Isabel's dishonour, 'en diversas ocasiones se puso Claudia con ella a mil riesgos' (*DA* 144). Thus, the maid repeatedly undergoes verbal and even physical abuse in return for defending Isabel's interests. Claudia colludes with her mistress in a similar manner to the women of the previously discussed *Al fin se paga todo*, albeit with an important difference: while Hipólita and Leonor set out to deceive Hipólita's husband in the latter novella, the women of *La esclava de su amante* have a more moral aim. Their wish, in accordance with Manuel's false oaths, is to hasten his marriage to Isabel in order to cleanse her honour, which he so unscrupulously besmirched. When Manuel eventually flees to escape his predicament, Isabel follows in pursuit without notifying any member of the household prior to her departure. During the ensuing upheaval within Isabel's household, which culminates in her father's sudden death, Claudia is portrayed as 'triste y llorosa', sharing in the family grief (*DA* 152). In an emotional sense, this is another intimation of Claudia's cross-class interaction.

Claudia acts as Isabel's loyal assistant throughout the episode, even though her well-intentioned plans are thwarted by her misjudgement of Manuel and by Alejandra's interference. Even after Manuel's 'true' intentions surface, Claudia actively and selflessly seeks to obtain for her violated mistress the honourable state of marriage. This is the only incidence of an alliance between a 'true' maid and mistress in Isabel's tale. Isabel goes on

[43] Vollendorf, 'Fleshing Out Feminism', p. 98.

to adopt the identity of a Moorish slave – Zelima – in her pursuit of Manuel; however, Charnon-Deutsch notes that, unlike 'real' servants such as Claudia, financial security 'empowers Isabel to choose the circumstances under which she will be a slave to others'.[44] Nonetheless, Manuel strongly disapproves of her downward social mobility (the inverse of the misuse of the honorific *don*), refusing to marry her on these grounds.[45] As I demonstrated in my first chapter, Isabel liberates herself from her predicament by self-expression of her own story and subsequent accession to female space. Deliberately enacted, finite, and obvious with hindsight, Zayas's contemporary reader would have found Isabel's temporary downward social mobility to be ideologically undisturbing.

The *criadas* here discussed wield little influence over the lives of their mistresses; nonetheless, they occupy positions of trust and 'secretarial' roles. From the foregoing subject, I move to an analysis of the negative effects of serving-women's usurpation of class power. Before turning to examine transgressive cross-class behaviour in Zayas's prose, the subject of Carnival merits brief digression.

Cross-class Transgression and Carnival

Bakhtin devotes much of his *Rabelais and His World* to the study of the carnivalesque as a historical and literary phenomenon. Historically, he describes the carnivalesque as 'not only carnival per se in its limited form but also as the varied popular-festive life of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance'.[46] Importantly, in direct relation to the current discussion, Bakhtin formulates his dramatic contention that 'in the world of carnival all hierarchies are cancelled. All castes and ages are equal'. Through the carnivalesque, systematic social inversions can temporarily take place; most scholars agree that carnivalesque inversions posed no lasting threat to the established social norm, ultimately serving to affirm and to preserve ordered stability in a hierarchical society by providing an

---

[44] Charnon-Deutsch, p. 121.

[45] Manuel decries Isabel's transformation into Zelima: '¿Qué disfraz es éste, doña Isabel? ¿O cómo las mujeres de tus obligaciones, y que han tenido deseos y pensamientos de ser mía, se ponen en semejantes bajezas? Siéndolo tanto, que si alguna intención tenía de que fueses mi esposa, ya la he perdido, por el mal nombre que has granjeado conmigo y con cuantos lo supieren' (*DA* 155).

[46] Bakhtin, *Rabelais and his World*, p. 218 & 251. Application of Bakhtin's theory to Zayas's texts is inevitably limited because of his limited inclusion of women and his failure to draw sufficient attention to Rabelais's misogyny.

acceptable release of tension.[47] According to Bakhtin, the influence of Carnival was exceptionally strong during the Renaissance, the Carnival atmosphere predominating in great writings of the era such as Cervantes's *Don Quijote*; the popular-festive culture offered vital support in the struggle against official medieval culture and in the movement towards a belief that radical change and renewal were necessary and possible. José Montero Reguera notes the gradual diffusion of the culture of Carnival beyond the limits of popular culture and its infusion of aspects of ideological life with its characteristics.[48] Carnival shares an obvious affinity with familiar Baroque topoi, such as *el gran teatro del mundo* and *el mundo al revés*.

Kristeva describes the carnivalesque as essentially dialogical in nature; in Carnival, sexuality and death assume primary importance and, 'out of the dialogue that is established between them, the structural dyads of carnival appear: high and low, birth and agony, food and excrement, praise and curses, laughter and tears'.[49] Furthermore, she elaborates on the linkage between Carnival, comedy and tragedy:

> The word 'carnivalesque' lends itself to an ambiguity one must avoid. In contemporary society, it generally connotes parody, hence a strengthening of the law. There is a tendency to blot out the carnival's *dramatic* (murderous, cynical and revolutionary in the sense of *dialectical transformation*) aspects, which Bakhtin emphasised, and which he recognised in Menippean writings or in Dostoyevsky. The laughter of the carnival is not simply parodic; it is no more comic than tragic; it is both at once, one might say it is *serious*.

Similarly, Terry Eagleton also detects this interconnection between tragedy and laughter in Bakhtin's theory, both elements of which uniquely strive to expel fear from change and catastrophe: 'Tragedy and laughter equally fearlessly look being in the eye, they do not construct any sort of illusions, they are sober and exacting'.[50] To paraphrase Bakhtin, Zayas uses the diverse properties of Carnival to look aspects of her society fearlessly in the eye.

---

[47] For example, see Amy R. Williamsen, 'Sexual Inversion: Carnival and *La mujer varonil* in *La fénix de Salamanca* and *La tercera de sí misma*', in *The Perception of Women in Spanish Theatre of the Golden Age*, ed. by Anita K. Stoll and Dawn L. Smith (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 1991), pp. 259–271. On the contrary, Zemon Davis suggests that Carnival has the potential to undermine and to challenge the social order.

[48] See José Montero Reguera, *El Quijote y la crítica contemporánea* (Madrid: Ediciones del Centro de Estudios Cervantinos, 1997).

[49] Julia Kristeva, 'Word, Dialogue and Novel', in *The Kristeva Reader*, ed. by Toril Moi (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), pp. 34–61 (p. 49 & 50; italics are Kristeva's own).

[50] Eagleton continues to note Bakhtin's emphasis on the worth of Carnival, tragedy remaining 'an inferior mode to carnivalesque laughter. Indeed, it is precisely from the tragedy of the self-enclosed individual life, rigorously bounded by life and death, that the carnivalesque redeems us'. Terry Eagleton, *Sweet Violence: The Idea of the Tragic* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2003), p. 185 & 186.

Many of the narrated tales in Zayas's *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares* and *Desengaños amorosos* could be described as carnivalesque in spirit, particularly through their portrayal of the hierarchical inversions often associated with Carnival. In my first chapter, I discussed the potency of Carnival to effect change in gender relations within the context of Zayas's prose. All narrators in the *Desengaños amorosos* are female, which marks a temporary 'suspension of all hierarchic differences, of all ranks and status' similar to Bakhtin's theory of Carnival, because it unbalances the former equilibrium of the *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares*, in which narrators were equally distributed by gender.[51] Henceforth, women monopolise the storytelling; meanwhile, men are temporarily 'uncrowned', losing their discursive authority and control as narrators. As regards class relations, in common with the impermanent nature of Carnival, Zayas's texts warn against major power reversals in society. Despite the relative optimism of the *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares*, women experience danger through servants' actions, from which fatal violence stems, in Zayas's later work.

* * *

With carnivalesque theories in mind, I will examine transgressive class relationships in the *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares* (namely, *El castigo de la miseria* and *La fuerza del amor*) and *Desengaños amorosos* (*Tarde llega el desengaño*, *La inocencia castigada*, and *Estragos que causa el vicio*). In these novellas, similar to my previous analysis of Zayas's perfidious sisters, the threat embodied in female servants matches or even exceeds that in male characters. These serving-women actively pursue personal benefits and plan the demise of their social (and moral) superiors, often by allying themselves with the honour code, misappropriating its patriarchal tenets as part of a social conspiracy against highly born members of their fellow sex. Romero-Díaz notes the conflictive effect of Zayas's membership of the dominant class and acceptance of the hierarchical class structure on her 'feminist' discourse: 'Es la pertenencia de clase y todo lo que ideológicamente implica esta pertenencia la que condiciona el discurso feminista contradictorio de Zayas'.[52] In the novellas discussed in this section, servant-class women are shown in a particularly unfavourable light as the enemies of their mistresses, complicating claims regarding Zayas's emancipatory objectives.

---

[51] Bakhtin, *Rabelais and his World*, p. 246. Bakhtin describes the clown's reign as king during Carnival, after which he is beaten and mocked. The women's departure from the secular world at the end of Zayas's frame narrative may be interpreted partially as a strategy to avoid some retaliatory penalisation, at the hands of men, for the brief period of female dominance during the *saraos*.

[52] Romero-Díaz, *Nueva nobleza, nueva novela*, p. 102.

An important instance of women's inter-class treachery occurs in the picaresque-influenced *El castigo de la miseria*. Its narrator, Álvaro, is the first male protagonist to fulfil his storytelling duties. The didactic tone of Álvaro's introductory remarks suggests that his is to be an exemplary tale:

> Es la miseria la más perniciosa costumbre que se puede hallar en un hombre, pues en siendo miserable, luego es necio, enfadoso y cansado, y tan aborrecible a todos, sin que haya ninguno que no guste de atropellarle, y con razón. Esto se verá claramente en mi maravilla, la cual es de esta suerte. (*NAE* 251)

However, instead of developing the novella to condemn Marcos as the personification of 'la miseria', he sympathetically portrays his naïve protagonist's entrapment by female conspirators. Two *criadas* initially cooperate with Isidora in order to further her scheme to deceive Marcos through their shared pecuniary motives. Ultimately, however, the female alliance proves fragile: the women betray Isidora once their interests are no longer promoted through loyalty to her.

As prelude to the main action, *El castigo de la miseria* opens with a pitiful description of the poverty endured by the young Marcos and his elderly father:

> A servir un grande de esta Corte vino de un lugar de Navarra un hidalgo, tan alto de pensamientos como humilde de bienes de fortuna, pues no le concedió esta madrastra de los nacidos más riqueza que una pobre cama, en la cual se recogían a dormir y se sentaban a comer este mozo, a quien llamaremos don Marcos, y un padre viejo; y tanto que sus años le servían de renta para sustentarse, pues con ellos enternecía los más empedernidos corazones. (*NAE* 253)[53]

Images of the men's sole possession of 'una pobre cama' and the father's advanced age, which melts even 'empedernidos corazones', arguably combine to create the most striking depiction of a protagonist who faces impecunious circumstances in Zayas's works. Henceforth, Álvaro's commentary is such that it inevitably leads me to disagree with Foa's claim that he 'prevents empathy on the part of the reader' and 'never allows the novella to become tragic, maintaining a playful distance throughout'.[54] The aforementioned description of Marcos's background is the first indication to belie the suggestion of the narrator's ironic detachment. The men's sustenance depends upon Marcos's employment serving a grandee at Court, which is supplemented by meagre proceeds from his father's begging. As a page, Marcos must develop the dubious skills of 'picardía, porquería, sarna y miseria' (*NAE* 253). Álvaro tells us that it is the latter practice – 'miseria' – at which

---

[53] In *El castigo de la miseria*, the two principal protagonists – Marcos and Isidora – go by the title of 'don' (or 'doña'). Although Álvaro does not comment on this, it seems likely that neither protagonist is entitled to the honour. Marcos is an *hidalgo*; presumably, Isidora can claim similar status.

[54] Sandra M. Foa, 'Humor and Suicide in Zayas and Cervantes', *Anales cervantinos*, 16 (1977), 71–83 (pp. 80–81).

Marcos truly excels. He details Marcos's penurious daily habits, using a humorous metaphor to convey Marcos's piteous physical state caused by abstinence: 'con la sutileza de la comida se vino a transformar en hombre de espárrago' (*NAE* 254). By beginning the narrative *ab ovo* during Marcos's childhood, instead of *in medias res*, the evolution of his remarkable parsimony is endowed with psychological verisimilitude.

Marcos's life-story resembles a picaresque adventure; Amezúa notes the natural interweaving of picaresque and courtly worlds in Zayas's literature, which mirrors the reality of her social environment: 'en la vida real de entonces y en las novelas que la retratan es muy difícil separar lo picaresco de lo cortesano, que brotan y florecen en un campo común, el de la corte y ciudades populosas, donde a menudo se confunden'.[55] Thus, Zayas is able to produce a text that, in its literary construction, transcends the rigidity of the *novela cortesana* social-class structure to some degree. This reinforces the idea of Zayas's broad appeal through the creation of richly polysemic texts.

Marcos gains 'nombre y fama de rico' by the age of thirty; renowned for his temperate lifestyle, he is offered many marital opportunities. Isidora is among Marcos's eager female suitors. The narrator immediately makes it apparent that some enigmatic 'reality' lies behind this woman's elegant façade. Isidora's 'true' age and status cannot be readily determined; Álvaro suggests that she artfully employs 'galas, adornos e industria' to project a deceptive public image (*NAE* 256). Embellishing the publicly held belief, a matchmaker (whose name is later revealed to be Gamarra) assists Isidora's suit by emphasising her immense wealth as a widow. By deliberately outlining Marcos's devolution into *miseria*, Álvaro makes plausible his protagonist's mercenary interest in Isidora as potential consort, which is grounded credibly and compassionately in his destitute history. Moreover, considerations of wealth and status were not uncommon bases for marriage in Zayas's or many other eras.

Isidora's plot to ensnare the now-wealthy Marcos advances decisively upon his first visit to her home for a lavish luncheon. The dazzling opulence of her milieu, 'con tanto aseo, olor y limpieza que parecía, no tierra, sino cielo', assaults Marcos's starved senses (*NAE* 257). He is pleased not only by Isidora's splendour and that of her sumptuous home, but also by

[55] Agustín G. de Amezúa y Mayo, Prologue of *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares de Doña María de Zayas y Sotomayor*, ed. by Agustín G. de Amezúa y Mayo (Madrid: Aldus, 1948), pp. vii–xlv (p. xxix). Juan Hurtado y J. de la Serna and Ángel González-Palencia cite Emilia Pardo Bazán's description of Zayas's novellas as 'la picaresca de la aristocracia'. Juan Hurtado y Jiménez de la Serna and Ángel González-Palencia, *Historia de la literatura española* (Madrid: SAETA, 1949), p. 481.

her two charming maids, 'una de labor y otra de todo y para todo' (*NAE* 257). With the maids' assistance, Isidora plays upon the economic nature of the marriage transaction, in general, and on Marcos's mercenary weakness, in particular. Self-interested love is a typically picaresque theme; for both Marcos and Isidora, it is a case of *amor interesado*. Impetuously, the gullible Marcos gives credence to appearances and falls in love with Isidora; at this point, Álvaro inserts a reminder regarding Marcos's honest nature: 'no sólo se agradó, mas le enamoró, mostrando en sus agradecimientos el alma, que la tenía el buen señor bien sencilla y sin dobleces' (*NAE* 257). Marcos is ultimately portrayed as a 'buen señor' despite his previous guile in relation to financial matters, which evidently led to his accumulation of wealth.

Isidora's serving-women are introduced as Inés and Marcela. Like *criadas* in *Al fin se paga todo* and *La esclava de su amante*, these characters of common social status do not remain anonymous, highlighting their importance in the text. 'Inés' is a name that is frequently given to *damas* in the works of Tirso and of Guillén.[56] Chittenden also contends that, in Tirso's dramas, 'Marcela' was a name for *damas*, as well as for *criadas*. Domingo Carvajal observes that these names were among those attributed to *damas*, and not solely to *criadas*, in Lope's *comedias*.[57] By electing not to choose from the more traditional names of *criadas* in contemporary literature, Zayas may deliberately confuse the social boundaries between her protagonists. These serving women seem to move temporarily out of their lowly class and become confidantes and agents in the world of their mistresses.

Inés and Marcela overwhelm Marcos's senses with aesthetic pleasures, having already impressed him with their beauty: the former serves him delicacies, while the latter plays music and sings 'con una voz que más parecía ángel que mujer' (*NAE* 258). Bakhtin describes abundant victuals and musical merriment as the essence of carnivalesque celebration: 'In the atmosphere of Mardi Gras, revelling, dancing, music were all closely combined with slaughter, dismemberment, bowels, excrement, and other images of the material bodily lower stratum'.[58] Heightened by a lifetime of economical self-denial, Marcos's sensory delight is immense. With the vital accompaniment of these 'angelic' maids, Isidora presents herself as an irresistible marital prospect to Marcos. In discussion with Gamarra, Marcos reveals his consuming wish to be married to Isidora as soon as

---

[56] See Chittenden; Domingo Carvajal, p. 88 & 114.
[57] Domingo Carvajal, p. 1053 & 1059. Calderón, in contrast, made very frequent use of 'Inés' as a name for his *criadas* (Domingo Carvajal, p. 1071).
[58] Bakhtin, *Rabelais and his World*, pp. 223–4.

possible. Having combined forces to create an alluring spectacle, the women successfully conquer his will.

When the matchmaker congratulates Isidora after the luncheon, Álvaro intimates that Isidora is a perpetrator of some deception, which is soon to be disclosed: 'Ella, que lo sabía mejor que no él [el casamentero], *como adelante se dirá*, dio luego el sí' (*NAE* 264; my italics). Gamarra, the intermediary, appears to act unwittingly as Isidora's accomplice and as Marcos's 'procurador de pesares' (*NAE* 265). It quickly becomes evident that, in contrast, the maids are cognisant of the 'real' situation. Álvaro's suspenseful narrative interpolation is a complicit signal to his diegetic audience – and, consequently, to Zayas's readers – creating a distance between the forewarned listener (and reader) and the credulous Marcos. The couple swiftly agree marriage terms; Marcos, as 'hombre tan sin malicias', neglects verification of Isidora's dowry (*NAE* 271). These women from differing social strata have temporarily allied themselves for mutual benefit to the detriment of their male victim and, through this alliance, effectively treat class demarcation as a porous structure. However, after the wedding, Isidora's two maids lament the austerity of Marcos, their new master. The reader is left to surmise that the servants envisioned material benefits and a pleasant lifestyle as stemming from their mistress's satisfaction. In the case of *El castigo de la miseria*, rewards fail to transpire for Inés and Marcela as a result of their allegiance to Isidora. They, therefore, independently plot to ensure their own contentment, unconcerned for the welfare of either their mistress or for that of their new master.

Álvaro introduced another key character during the decisive luncheon scene: Agustín, 'al cual doña Isidora regalaba a título de sobrino' (*NAE* 258); however, he later reveals Agustín's 'true' status: Isidora's gigolo. Discussing the fusion of picaresque and courtly genres in the prose of Zayas and Castillo Solórzano, Pérez-Erdélyi notes the influence of the picaresque through *burlas* and self-interested deception within courtly love-entanglement plots. Her analysis of the portrayal of women, in relation to these interwoven genres, is particularly relevant to *El castigo de la miseria*:

> El concepto de la mujer en la picaresca está condicionado más que todo por la tradición ascética y misógina. Por lo tanto a la mujer se la presenta como lasciva, la concreción humana del mal y consiguientemente representa el mayor peligro para el hombre. Por otra parte, aunque en la tradición cortesana la mujer suele representar el ideal (la hermosura, la discreción y la virtud), estas damas a veces se sirven del estereotipo, que cumplen en apariencia, para encubrir sus tretas. Son diestras en las artes engañosas de la mentira y el disimulo y llegan a

> manifestar astucia e ingenio en sus relaciones con los hombres. Su comportamiento por lo tanto llega a parecerse más al de las pícaras.[59]

Isidora and her maids embody this astute judgement: behind their appealingly cultivated image lies a deceitful 'reality', and together they represent 'el mayor peligro' for the naïve Marcos. Furthermore, in common with the libidinousness of *pícaras*, it soon becomes apparent that each of these hedonistic women takes a lover.

During the maids' confabulation, Inés covetously declares to Marcela that Isidora's lover 'es la cosa que más quiero' (*NAE* 276). Evidently, as the women's cause for gaiety diminishes, so their loyalty to Isidora ebbs accordingly. When the cosseted Agustín implores Inés to sleep with him, she willingly betrays her mistress. On the morning following their conversation, Inés discovers that Marcela has absconded during the night with her own lover. Thus, Álvaro's narrative contains allusions to the sexual exploits of all three female protagonists, independently of their social class. This narrator echoes the sentiment of León, the misogynistic *gracioso* in Zayas's *La traición en la amistad*, who brands women of all social classes as unchaste, although he does not view this to be entirely a negative trait; he reserves special praise for the lowly sexual favours of the *fregoncillas* at Court, 'las gallegas / rollizas, cariartas y que alzan / doce puntos – o trece por lo menos – / dos baras de cintura, tres de espalda'.[60] Isidora, Marcela, and Inés personify the intrusion of traits of the *pícara* into Zayas's *novela cortesana*. Given the characteristic misogyny of the picaresque genre, it is apposite that Zayas selected a male narrator to be Marcos's sympathiser.

Marcos experiences intense displeasure when, in a farcical and climactic scene, he awakens suddenly to view his bride for the first time without the aesthetic disguise of cosmetics. The narrator evidently sympathises with Marcos, to whom he alludes as 'el pobre hidalgo'; in contrast, he berates 'la maldita Marcela' and portrays Isidora as an object of ridicule (*NAE* 277). During the commotion, Isidora discovers that Marcela has stolen her costly bridal garments and jewellery. Inés and Agustín covertly extract malicious pleasure from Isidora and Marcos's distress. Assistance rendered by Inés and Marcela during the courtship phase of the novella has ceased abruptly upon their dual acts of perfidy. The two unscrupulous maids opt to act independently once Marcos inadvertently stems the flow of benefits originating from the women's collusion: Marcela purloins Isidora's wedding finery, and Inés 'steals' her young lover by seduction.

---

[59] Pérez-Erdélyi, p. 28.
[60] Zayas, *La traición en la amistad*, I. 303.

To Marcos's chagrin, he makes a succession of perturbing discoveries: Isidora's house, furnishings, and finery are rented or borrowed. Several scholars have noted the imprint of Cervantes's novella, *El casamiento engañoso*, on *El castigo de la miseria*; from the revelatory stage of Zayas's tale onwards, the aptness of this comparison becomes apparent. In the Cervantine prototype, Campuzano is lured into marriage by Estefanía's attractive and wealthy demeanour; similar to Isidora's stratagem in Zayas's novella, Estefanía's possessions are revealed merely to be borrowed goods. However, in a double act of deception, Campuzano has already duped his bride using artificial finery.[61] Contrastingly, through Álvaro's narrative, Zayas presents Marcos as lacking in guile and worthy of empathy, 'miseria' being his sole moral weakness.[62] A childhood distinguished only by stark necessity plausibly leads him to become this miser who is spellbound by the charming prospect of an avaricious match. In this, I wish to reiterate Sylvania's praise for Zayas's character development of Marcos, which she compares favourably with Cervantes's *El casamiento engañoso*, contending that

> Necessity, the pinch of poverty, and the honour of the Spanish gentleman, had forced D. Marcos to become niggardly in his habits of living. It is not until he allows his covetousness to influence him in the choice of a wife that he can indeed be called avaricious and a miser in the veritable sense of those words.[63]

Álvaro's insightful commentary supplements the reader's understanding of Marcos's avaricious mindset; upon Marcos's discovery of his wife's duplicity, Álvaro compassionately remarks: 'Quien supiere que a costa de su cuerpo lo había ganado, podrá ver cuán al de su alma lo sentiría' (*NAE* 278). In spite of Marcos's amassed wealth, his penurious habits are firmly implanted in his psyche. Of course, a significant contrast between the two authors is Zayas's creative development of female characters in her novella through the portrayal of Isidora, Marcela, and Inés as archetypes of female cunning.

---

[61] Campuzano's suffering eventually extends to the contraction of syphilis through his wife's promiscuity. The reader is left to conjecture whether Isidora, like Cervantes's Estefanía, might have supported herself formerly through earnings from prostitution. The source of Isidora's income prior to marriage is mysteriously left unexplained. When rent for her borrowed furnishings is due, she must use her husband's funds to pay, 'porque la señora, como ya había cesado su trato y visitas, no sabía de qué color era, ni los veía de sus ojos, más que la ración de don Marcos' (*NAE* 280). Marcela also alludes to Isidora's suspicious 'trato y costumbres' (*NAE* 283). Álvaro does not elucidate the nature of Isidora's activities, although the other analogies with Cervantes's novella lead one to posit that these were the transactions of prostitution.

[62] When Paul Scarron recreated Zayas's novella as *Le châtiment de l'avarice*, in his *Nouvelles tragi-comiques* (1655), he elided its compassionate narrative stance. See Segundo Serrano Poncela, 'Casamientos engañosos (Doña María de Zayas, Scarron y un proceso de creación literaria)', *Bulletin Hispanique*, 64 (1962), 248–259 (p. 251).

[63] Sylvania, p. 43.

When Marcos is absent, Isidora, Inés, and Agustín seize the opportunity to take flight with his fortune. Coincidentally, Marcos encounters the thieving Marcela once more; feigning innocence, she blames Isidora for the wedding-night theft and discloses Agustín's 'real' status as her mistress's gigolo. By nature a 'buen necio' and 'poco malicioso', Marcos lends credence to Marcela's false tears (*NAE* 281 & 283). Resuming her deception of Marcos, she deviously convinces him that, for a fee, she can reveal Isidora's whereabouts through sorcery. Álvaro contrasts Marcela with Marcos in unambiguous terms, pledging his narrative allegiance to the virtuous, albeit foolish, Marcos: 'Es muy propio de los malos, en viendo a uno de caída, ayudarle a que se despeñe más presto, y de los buenos creer luego. Así creyó don Marcos a Marcela, y ella se determinó a engañarle y estafarle lo que pudiese' (*NAE* 284).

Marcela and her lover devise an elaborate *burla* involving a wild cat covered with firecrackers and assorted sorcerer's props. Marcos endures severe burns and faints; the feline *burla* leads him to believe that 'no había visto un diablo, sino todos los del infierno' (*NAE* 287), which reminds one of Don Quijote's agonizing encounter with cats, or 'enchanters', in the Duke and Duchess's castle. Zayas may have borne the latter scene in mind when describing Marcos's deception, perhaps hoping to enhance the reader's sympathy towards Marcos much as Cervantes does in his scene. Amid the commotion, legal officials arrive upon the scene; to Marcos's chagrin, the case results in widespread amusement and judicial chastisement for his naivety. The incident has a profound effect on him: 'No parecía el que antes era, sino un loco, tantos suspiros y extremos que daba lástima a los que le veían' (*NAE* 288).

While Marcela and her cohorts are unpunished, Isidora makes an epistolary reappearance to wreak a final act of cruelty on Marcos: she mocks his parsimony in a letter, which she signs as 'Doña Isidora de la Venganza'. Regarding the miser's fate, a note in relation to the first and second editions of *El castigo de la miseria* is apposite. In the first edition (Zaragoza, 1637), a lengthy final section follows: Marcos again encounters the matchmaker, Gamarra, who is about to hang himself; when Marcos imitates his actions and commits suicide, it transpires that this was no less than a diabolical apparition in the matchmaker's form.[64] The cover on her second edition of *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares*

[64] Zayas does not generally shy away from including suicidal acts in her prose nor does she overtly condemn them for moral or other reasons. Other suicides involve Adriana in *Aventurarse perdiendo* (*NAE*), Lucrecia in *El desengaño amando y premio de la virtud* (*NAE*), Zaida in *La esclava de su amante* (*DA*), and Dionís in *Estragos que causa el vicio* (*DA*).

in 1637, and on the two pirate editions dated 1638, bore the words 'De nuevo corretas, y enmendadas por su misma Autora'.[65] For the revised edition of this novella, Zayas succinctly ends the tale with Marcos's fever-induced death; this is the more frequently reproduced version. Alicia Yllera rejects the possibility that external imposition of censorship led to the change; the 1640 Madrid Index does not censure this text.[66] Deliberating over the author's literary motivations behind the alteration, Julián Olivares suggests that suppression of the suicide episode creates a more tragic ending for Marcos: 'Su avaricia lo precipita a la muerte. Hacer que el demonio también lo engañe, empujándolo al suicidio, sería mermar la dimensión de su flaqueza trágica y su anagnórisis. Marcos morirá a causa de su propia debilidad moral y de su propio desengaño'.[67] Furthermore, Olivares underscores Zayas's ironic inclusion of sympathetic demonic apparitions in other tales of the *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares*, such as the magnanimous devil of *El jardín engañoso*. Representation of a malevolent demon would not be in keeping with his more unusual diabolical role, through which 'con punzante ironía, Zayas tal vez quería representar al demonio con mayor sentido de bondad y "caballerosidad" que los mismos caballeros de su época'.[68]

As Yllera suggests, it seems probable that Zayas considered that the implication of eternal damnation would be an overly harsh demise for her protagonist. Simultaneously, her altered ending balances tragedy with an alleviation of the original finale's extreme pessimism. Foa describes the first edition of *El castigo de la miseria* as having a 'particularly dark and unredemptive ending', which she contrasts with the optimism of Cervantes's *El casamiento engañoso*.[69] While Brownlee detects that, as narrator, Álvaro 'feels torn between ridicule and compassion for Marcos', it is my view that compassion predominates; Álvaro demonstrates considerable empathy for Marcos's victimisation, perhaps more particularly in the novella's second version with the removal of the suicide ending.[70]

---

[65] Julián Olivares, 'Introducción', in *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares* (Madrid: Cátedra, 2000), pp. 11–135 (p. 118).

[66] Also, Yllera notes that the first ending of *El castigo de la miseria* reappears in a pirate edition dated 1646; she conjectures that French writers, Paul Scarron and Claude Vanel, adapted this version. Alicia Yllera, 'Las dos versiones del *Castigo de la miseria* de María de Zayas', in *Actas del XIII Congreso de la Asociación Internacional de Hispanistas, Madrid. 6–11 de Julio de 1998. I: Medieval, Siglos de oro*, ed. by Florencio Sevilla and Carlos Alvar (Madrid: Castalia, 2000), pp. 827–836.

[67] Olivares, p. 98.

[68] Ibid.

[69] Foa, 'Humor and Suicide', p. 72. Campuzano redeems himself by praying, despite having considered suicide, and convalesces in the evocatively titled 'Hospital de la Resurrección'.

[70] Brownlee, *The Cultural Labyrinth of María de Zayas*, p. 134.

Isidora's fate is sealed by the deception of her maid, Inés, who opportunistically robs her and absconds with Agustín to Naples; through employment as a courtesan, Inés replaces Isidora in cosseting Agustín. Thus, like Marcela before her, Inés chooses to rid herself of the shackles of her relationship of interdependency with Isidora. Neither of Isidora's serving-women receives punishment for her duplicity. All that is left for Isidora is to return to Madrid, 'donde, renunciando el moño y las galas, anda pidiendo limosna', from whence she relates her story to Álvaro (*NAE* 290–1). Álvaro's closing remarks overtly reiterate his didactic intent: 'yo me determiné a escribirla [la maravilla], para que vean los miserables el fin que tuvo éste, y no hayan lo mismo, escarmentando en cabeza ajena' (*NAE* 291).[71]

The two maids, Inés and Marcela, profit most from the defrauding of Marcos. To some extent, they rise in the social scale, while Isidora is reduced to begging. There is, therefore, an unusual twist to the inter-class collaboration, because the outcome turns the latter on its head. For the women, the result goes beyond Carnival: the maids gain the mistress's riches, while the mistress is reduced to an even lower status than a maid's, that of mendicancy. So, in this tale, class subversion is highly problematic, as it is based initially on elaborate deceit, then on robbery by two of the deceivers (the maids) from the third (Isidora), and finally on the defrauding of Marcos by Marcela. The maids overthrow others' claims to dominate based on class or gender, and neither Marcos nor Isidora can match their cunning. Isidora suffers a menial fate, not wholly or necessarily due to her deception of Marcos, but due to involving the servants in her scheme. In other words, without the robbery committed by the servants, the deceit might have ended as a *casamiento engañoso*. The servants bring penury to Isidora and, indirectly, death to Marcos. According to Zayas's tale, this is what happens when servants have the opportunity to take deception into their own hands.

The diegetic listeners do not appear to tax their critical faculties by offering an insightful assessment of the tale: their reaction is simply 'grandísimo gusto [...] viendo castigado a

[71] We can juxtapose Álvaro's comment at the close of his *El castigo de la miseria* with Miguel's concluding remark: 'yo me he animado a escribirle para que cada uno mire lo que hace, pues *Al fin todo se paga*' (*NAE* 444). In the oral narrations of the *sarao* participants, among claims of veracity and statements of exemplarity, we unexpectedly encounter references to a written work. These are isolated examples of a more widely occurring phenomenon in Zayas's prose: the mixing of narrative levels, an occurrence that Gérard Genette terms 'metalepsis' (see Genette, pp. 234–5). In remarks by Álvaro and Miguel, we detect an intrusion by the writer into their diegetic (orally narrating) world. By defiantly overstepping narrative boundaries, authors draw attention to their very existence. As Velasco suggests, violations of narrative boundaries in Zayas's texts 'emphasise the purpose of the story by awakening the passive reader' ('Contradiction, Control and Utopia', p. 210).

don Marcos' (*NAE* 291). However, the notorious unreliability of this audience, combined with Álvaro's sensitive portrayal of his miserly protagonist, leads the reader to a more complex reaction than relishing Marcos's demise. Our sympathies lie with Marcos upon his manipulation by Isidora and her assistants. Once the two maids, Inés and Marcela, elect to operate independently to ensure their personal benefit, Isidora is stripped of power and wealth and left in a vulnerable position. The women's same-sex service is effective in terms of exploitation of the male. However, the alliance is short-lived; ultimately, these are self-serving *criadas* who will wilfully act to their mistress's detriment when it is advantageous for them to do so.

* * *

La fuerza del amor features another relationship of service, in which one woman is willing to harm her higher-born counterpart in order to secure material benefits. This is the fifth tale of the *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares*, which Nise narrates to portray the incremental deterioration of the marriage of Laura and Diego, catalysed by Diego's adultery. Rosilie Hernández Pecoraro contends that, as the titular similarity suggests, *La fuerza del amor* may be a literary response to Cervantes's *La fuerza de la sangre*, from his *Novelas ejemplares*. At the outset of Cervantes's novella, Rodolfo rapes Leocadia, and the tale then traces Leocadia's vicissitudes until she finally succeeds in regaining her honour through marriage to Rodolfo. Thus, Hernández Pecoraro concludes that 'if Cervantes's male protagonist is a figure whose lust leads him to marriage, Zayas's Diego is a warning of what happens to that lust within marriage: it tires and becomes loathing and abuse'.[72] The tale has a key thematic and tonal role in Zayas's corpus: dwelling on the misfortunes that can follow an apparently promising union, it acts as a forerunner of her *Desengaños amorosos*. It is under these particular circumstances of marital *desengaño* that an inter-class relationship emerges between Laura and a woman who provides the service of witchcraft.

Against a Neapolitan setting, Nise initially explores events leading to marital crisis. Laura's exceptional attributes of beauty, lineage and virtue receive special emphasis. Through elaborate delineation of Laura's attractive qualities, Nise ensures the reader's high estimation of her as a worthy wife for Diego and predisposition to alignment with her

[72] Rosilie Hernández Pecoraro, '*La fuerza del amor* or the Power of Self-Love: Zayas's Response to Cervantes's *La fuerza de la sangre*', *Hispanic Review*, 70 (Winter 2002) 1, 39–57 (p. 45).

before conflict ensues. Nise specifies the nobility of Laura's father, don Antonio, as 'del linaje y apellido de Garrafa, deudo de los Duques de Nochera y Señor de Piedra Blanca' (*NAE* 345). Laura's conduct is exemplary, 'viviendo con el recato y honestidad que a mujer tan rica y principal era justo, siendo los ojos de su padre y hermanos, y la alabanza de la ciudad' (*NAE* 345–6). Lineage is again emphasised among the merits of 'don Diego Pinatelo de la noble casa de los Duques de Monteleón, caballero rico y galán discreto' (*NAE* 346). Their families arrange the marriage, which Nise succinctly portrays as an exceptionally felicitous union.

Nise then introduces an interloper into the propitious match in the form of Diego's abandoned former lover, who successfully entreats him to renew their relationship.[73] Laura discovers her husband's infidelity through her servants; in a prejudiced digression, Nise remarks that 'a los criados no es menester darles tormento para que digan las faltas de sus amos, y no sólo verdades, pues saben también componer mentiras; y así los llama un curioso "poetas en prosa", común desdicha de los que no se pueden servir a sí mismos' (*NAE* 355). She explains that Laura suffers the torment of *celos*: 'Pasaba sin esperanzas la más desconsolada vida que decirse puede. Tenía, en fin, celos, ¿qué milagro?, como si dijésemos rabiosa enfermedad' (*NAE* 356). The couple's heated verbal disputes reach an apogee with Diego's physical abuse of his wife. As an exploration of matrimonial discord culminating in near-fatal abuse, Nise's *La fuerza del amor* is a forerunner of Zayas's *Desengaños amorosos*, announcing the latter's thematic concerns. Anticipating the unifying theme of Lisis's second *sarao*, Laura angrily pronounces her matrimonial *desengaño* to be a lesson for other women: 'Tomen escarmiento en mí las mujeres que se dejan engañar de promesas de hombres, pues pueden considerar que, si han de ser como tú, que más se ponen a padecer que a vivir' (*NAE* 360).

Unable to bear witness to Laura's suffering, her father abandons her and moves his household. Antonio fears that the distress of seeing his daughter suffer would hasten his death; he is unwilling to endanger himself or his sons for the sake of the daughter. No further explanation is forthcoming regarding the men's hasty departure; at this point, the mechanics of plot seem poorly manipulated by Zayas, although it is in keeping with her

[73] The names of participants at the diegetic level of Zayas's text are duplicated at the metadiegetic level of *La fuerza del amor* with varied effects. Diego's role in the novella as an abusive husband is ironic in the light of Lisis's courtship, within the frame narrative, by a protagonist of the same name. This is not the only case of onomastic doubling in *La fuerza del amor*. Within Nise's narrative, she endows Diego's mistress with her own name; it is curious that she does so, despite the potentially detrimental effects of onomastic association with the latter.

representation of breakdowns in the familial support structure.[74] This act of family neglect prompts Laura's moving monologue: '¿Y quién verá mis lágrimas que me las enjugue? Nadie por cierto, pues mi padre y hermanos, por no oírlas me han desamparado, y hasta el cielo, consuelo de los afligidos, se hace sordo por no dármele' (*NAE* 364).

Bereft of sanctioned forms of succour, the increasingly despondent Laura avails of an unconventional source, a witch. Nise comments that, 'como no hay el freno de la Inquisición y los demás castigos', witchcraft is widespread in Naples, the tale's setting (*NAE* 362). Ingrid Matos-Nin describes seventeenth-century Naples as 'una de la ciudades más liberales de la época. Las prácticas ocultas no se perseguían tanto como en el resto del Continente'.[75] Thus, in her plight, Laura is left vulnerable to exploitation and her fading hope comes to rest upon the promise that witchcraft seemingly offers. Pons makes the point that magic serves in the tale as 'un pretexto que evidencia las dificultades que tiene una mujer sola', illustrating the scorned wife's defencelessness as she forlornly seeks succour from this unorthodox source.[76] As a 'mujer sola', Laura is driven to magic in order to restore harmony and stability to her married life, while pecuniary advantage seems to motivate the professional sorceress; the women share distinct but equally pragmatic concerns. In the Spanish context, María Helena Sánchez Ortega notes the predominance of women's involvement in love magic, describing its practitioners as 'essentially pragmatic souls'.[77] From the outset, Nise explicitly states her disapproval of this course of action by dismissing the ostensible powers of sorcery as 'común engaño' (*NAE* 362). Laura enlists the witch's services by sating her demands for gifts: 'sed de semejantes mujeres' (*NAE* 362). Nise applies the condemnatory epithets of 'falsa enredadora' and 'taimada hechicera' to this woman and states the latter's ulterior intent: 'quería entretener la cura para sangrar la bolsa de la dama' (*NAE* 363). Throughout most novellas discussed in this section, pecuniary motives underlie the actions of those women occupying the lowest rungs in the ladder of their society. They exemplify the growing value placed on money and commodities in Zayas's seventeenth-century society, which were already considered

---

[74] While Laura was unmarried, she was the sole concern of her father and male siblings; Carlos (one of Laura's brothers) initially defers to his father in abandoning her, but soon renews his responsibility and brotherly affection for his sister.

[75] Ingrid Matos-Nin, 'La importancia del tema sobrenatural en María de Zayas y Sotomayor', *Atenea*, 23 (June 2003) 1, 103–14 (p. 108).

[76] Pons, para. 18 of 32.

[77] María Helena Sánchez Ortega, 'Sorcery and Eroticism in Love Magic', in *Cultural Encounters: The Impact of the Inquisition in Spain and the New World*, ed. by Mary Elizabeth Perry and Anne J. Cruz (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), pp. 58–92 (p. 62).

highly important in *La Celestina*. Picaresque acquisitiveness can be imputed to the specific case of the witch in *La fuerza del amor*.

Laura's sorceress sets her a hazardous task in order for the witchcraft to take place: to obtain, by her own hand, a hanged man's hair and teeth. Not content with the sole pursuit of monetary interests, the witch fabricates a horrific scheme; clearly, the woman preys upon Laura's desperate plight by guaranteeing the revival of her spouse's love. This type of magic would have been familiar to seventeenth-century readers: Celestina describes the witch Claudina's extraction of a hanged man's teeth ('Siete dientes quitó a un ahorcado con unas tenazicas de pelarcejas, mientra yo le descalcé los çapatos'), and Fabia performs a similar ritual in Lope's *El caballero de Olmedo*.[78]

It is worth noting that, unlike Zayas's literary portrayals of enmity between social equals, the threat of direct violence between these women is non-existent. The treacherous servant-class woman in *La fuerza del amor*, as well as in Zayas's other novellas, inflicts harm on her social superiors in an indirect manner. Laura, with 'ánimo increíble' and 'gran valor', travels to a distant chapel where corpses are left after hanging (*NAE* 366). Nise highlights Laura's impressive mettle as a lone woman visiting the isolated place by emphasising the lateness of the hour and the unnatural darkness of the scene: against the stark backdrop of 'la más oscura y tenebrosa [noche] que en todo aquel invierno había hecho', Laura daringly travels with only 'una pequeña linternilla' (*NAE* 365). In the chapel, she attempts to follow the sorceress' instructions by obtaining the necessary body parts; however, this particular mission proves unsuccessful. A sense of impending doom permeates Laura's audacious enterprise; it is dispelled by an unexpected occurrence, which seems more authentically supernatural than Nise's sceptical portrayal of witches' sorcery.

Nise briefly shifts her focus to Laura's family. Carlos, Laura's brother, mysteriously awakens and telepathically fears for his sister's safety. On his journey to Laura's marital home, Carlos's horse instinctively stops at the remote chapel, and the faint light of her lantern attracts his attention. The witch's instructions are founded upon avarice and perhaps also on ill will, but 'real' supernatural events hinder the development of her scheme; Laura and Carlos can fathom the remarkable incidents that lead to his arrival only on the grounds of being 'milagrosa' or willed by God (*NAE* 368). Pons makes an

[78] See Rojas, p. 196; Lope de Vega, *El Caballero de Olmedo*, ed. by Joseph Pérez, 5th edn (Madrid: Castalia, 1983), II. 959 (Tello's description).

interesting suggestion that these strange events may have been caused by the titular 'power of love', namely, the mutual love of siblings. Laura – or, more likely, Carlos – rediscovers *la fuerza del amor*. Thus, love imputed to blood ties assumes great importance, uniting the tale with Cervantes's *La fuerza de la sangre*. By taking the siblings' love as the title's referent, this reading allows us to interpret it without irony; in contrast, the failure of marital *amor* is charted by the novella. The effect for Laura is freedom from fear of her husband. Reunited with her father and brothers, Laura travels with them to seek succour by bringing her case before the Neapolitan Viceroy.

Crucially, Nise describes Laura as narrator of her own account of events to the Viceroy.[79] Concluding that 'ella estaba desengañada de lo que era el mundo y los hombres, y que así no quería más batallar con ellos', Laura proclaims her desire to live in a convent (*NAE* 369). On hearing Laura's *desengaño*, Diego undergoes a radical change; he promises to mend his ways as her husband because, in a titular reference, 'ya estaba enterado de la fuerza de su amor' (*NAE* 369). The apogee of Zayas's tale contrasts with that of *La fuerza de la sangre*. In Friedman's words, Cervantes's 'metaplot is successful if it is seen as a restoration of honour rather than as the redemption of Rodolfo. Despite the apparent conversion of Rodolfo following his marriage – a conversion based only on information provided in the narrative coda – the best remedy is hardly ideal'.[80] While Cervantes ironically underscores this point by ending the tale with an unsatisfactory, formulaic marriage, Zayas's narrative coda and rejection of marriage is more conspicuously transgressive. Even though her family, Diego and the Viceroy implore Laura to return to her married life, she insists on moving to the convent of 'la Concepción' and eventually takes the habit there after Diego's death. Likewise, in the following novella, *El desengaño amando y premio de la virtud*, Juana renounces the secular world and instead also chooses 'la Concepción' as her monastic home (*NAE* 389).[81] These references to the Conceptionists are harbingers of the frame-narrative conclusion, in which Lisis and her companions elect to live in a convent under the rule of this very monastic order.

---

[79] Laura exerts authoritative control over her life story by recounting it twice: to the Viceroy and, later, to Nise.

[80] Friedman, 'Constructing Romance', p. 48.

[81] In *La fuerza del amor*, after Laura's monastic entry, Diego goes to war and dies dramatically: 'Don Diego, desesperado, se fue a su casa, y tomando las joyas y dineros que halló, se partió sin despedirse de nadie de la ciudad, donde a pocos meses se supo que en la guerra que la Majestad de Felipe III, Rey de España, tenía con el Duque de Saboya, le voló una mina' (*NAE* 369); Laura is consequently enabled to take the veil as a nun. Lisis's Diego also dies at war: 'Don Diego, descontento, con bascas de muerte, sin despedirse de nadie, se salió de la sala; dicen que se fue a servir al rey en la guerra de Cataluña, donde murió, porque él mismo se ponía en los mayores peligros' (*DA* 510). Descriptions of the men's deaths are remarkably similar, and the second example subtly tinges Diego's heroics with suicidal undertones.

The Viceroy symbolises the legal arm of the body of societal support; while the monarch in the *comedia* tends to have a redistributive role towards pieces of the social jigsaw, a woman pointedly ignores the Viceroy's advice in Zayas's novella. Laura's determination to live within convent walls instead of those of the matrimonial home may be read as a resolute challenge to the morally prescribed enclosure of women within the father's or husband's domain. As Williamsen notes, *La fuerza del amor* challenges 'the ethical "myths" that bind the woman to her husband's house forever'.[82] In common with Zayas's other novellas and narrative frame, Nise omits any narrative representation of the 'reality' of convent life; on a related note, Hernández Pecoraro contends that 'the convent remains a place beyond the confines of the novella itself, [...] beyond patriarchal discourse and its ideological mandates and limitations'.[83]

Therefore, indirectly, Laura is indebted to the sorceress for her liberation from an abusive marriage. It is likely that this is why Laura protects the woman from persecution, obstinately refusing to identify her to the Viceroy. Nise notes that the usual punishment for witchcraft in Naples was financial loss: 'Y aunque los confesores y el virrey andan en esto solícitos, como no hay el freno de la Inquisición y los demás castigos, no les amedrentan, porque en Italia lo más ordinario es castigar la bolsa' (*NAE* 362). Mary Elizabeth Perry highlights the desperate economic vulnerability of Spanish women who performed love magic and folk healing, a hazardous venture in which they risked incurring the wrath of Inquisitors.[84] It is feasible that Laura's benevolent act might have been inspired by her empathetic recognition of the sorceress' financial plight, even without the added threat of the Inquisition. Despite Laura's loyalty to the witch, haunting memories of her dreadful interlude in the hangmen's chapel linger: 'tan arrepentida de su atrevida determinación que, cuando se acuerda, tiembla, acordándose donde estuvo' (*NAE* 369). Also, there may be a forgiveness aspect to Laura's charitable behaviour, given that she evidently wishes to become a nun, an ambition that she carries out as soon as she is enabled through widowhood.

In the novellas analysed in the first section of this chapter, maids collude with their mistresses ostensibly so as to help the latter achieve their objectives; even so, in cases such

[82] Williamsen, 'Engendering Interpretation', p. 646.
[83] Hernández Pecoraro, p. 52.
[84] See Mary Elizabeth Perry, 'Crisis and Disorder in the World of María de Zayas y Sotomayor', in *María de Zayas: The Dynamics of Discourse*, ed. by Amy R. Williamsen and Judith A. Whitenack (London: Associated University Presses, 1995), pp. 23–39.

as *El castigo de la miseria*, maidservants purposely thwart their mistress's plans so as to further their own aspirations. *La fuerza del amor* acts here as introduction to those of Zayas's *desengaños* in which serving-women's endeavours to further their own ends have the potential to place their social superiors in perilous circumstances. In this case, however, the actions of the sorceress indirectly cause favourable results for the principal female protagonist, which are in harmony with the general optimism of the *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares*. In contrast, the *Desengaños amorosos* create an overarching novella of mounting worldly disillusionment. Unlike the witch who involuntarily unleashes *La fuerza del amor*, the societal obsession with impugned honour invariably sets in motion a concatenation of events that entails more than just the casualties of these maidservants; this is in keeping with the gruesomeness of Zayas's second work. From this collection, I will now discuss *Tarde llega el desengaño*, which provides a striking example of a servant-class woman who plots to reverse the power hierarchy by jeopardising the honour, and consequently the life, of her mistress.

* * *

Williamsen highlights the shifting tonal difference between Zayas's two prose works: 'Significantly, the ludic tone present in the examples of manipulated men enclosed by women in the *Novelas* contrasts sharply with the tragic one dominant in the cases of hapless women enclosed by men in the *Desengaños*'.[85] Serving-women's malicious usurpation of class-based power becomes an increasingly common tendency as Zayas's twenty novellas progress through her two collections. The perpetuation of female oppression by *criadas* helps us to avoid feminist-inspired, Manichean oversimplification in Zayas's works. Such women illustrate Mihaly's assertion, in relation to the *Desengaños amorosos*: 'The issue that resurfaces throughout the stories is the difficulty of projecting and maintaining honour in a society whose standards can be manipulated by women from a lower class level'.[86]

A maid's power to manipulate the honour code is the focus of Filis's tale, *Tarde llega el desengaño*, fourth novella of the *Desengaños amorosos*: Elena's maid bears false witness

[85] Williamsen, 'Lasting Laughter', p. 55. Of course, in reality, novellas among the *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares* juxtapose episodes that belong to tragic and ludic categories (*Al fin se paga todo*, for example), complicating the possibility of an exact separation of the two prose collections on this basis.
[86] Mihaly, p. 720.

against her to her husband in a manner that anticipates later novellas.[87] The serving-woman eventually outlines her own motives for the deception, providing us with remarkable psychological insight into her machinations. In her introductory comments, Filis denounces male insecurity as the origin of women's passive femininity:

> Como los hombres, con el imperio que naturaleza les otorgó en serlo, temerosos quizá de que las mujeres no se les quiten, pues no hay duda que si no se dieran tanto a la compostura, afeminándose más que naturaleza las afeminó, y como en lugar de aplicarse a jugar las armas y a estudiar las ciencias, estudian en criar el cabello y matizar el rostro, ya pudiera ser que pasaran en todo a los hombres. (*DA* 228)

Once Filis's diegetic remarks are applied to her tale, it becomes apparent that the maid deftly exploits this prevalent 'feminised' passivity with which Elena has been socially imbued, to fatal effect.

The opening scenes of Filis's tale portray the inclement circumstances under which Martín and a fellow-passenger survive shipwreck, this being among the frequently occurring symbols in literature of *desengaño* and conveying a pessimistic view of worldly existence.[88] While sailing homeward to Spain to marry and to receive royal honours for his valiant deeds in Flanders, Martín's ship encounters a violent storm, which appropriately occurs amid enveloping darkness.[89] Filis minutely details the chaotic images of natural disaster, setting the tone for ensuing calamities. Towards the end of four tempestuous days, the vessel directs its passengers to a sandy beach on Gran Canaria.[90] Martín and his companion encounter Jaime, who hospitably invites them to spend the night at his castle. Wild forces of nature are shown to compel Martín's fate to become intertwined with Jaime's. Zayas wields artistic license by selecting an exotic and isolated location, distancing her protagonists from ordered society, for the ensuing chaos of her novella. These scenes set a violent tone and create suspense, prefacing forthcoming events.

The gentlemen dine and converse at Jaime's home, the subsequent dramatic events presumably taking place during one night. This portends the final *desengaño*, *Estragos*

---

[87] Namely, it foreshadows the last two tales: *La perseguida triunfante* and *Estragos que causa el vicio*.

[88] See Heiple's 'Life as Dream and the Philosophy of Disillusionment'. Storms, which usually interrupt the protagonist's journey to introduce a new story, are a recurring *topos* in novellas of this period. Another example occurs at the start of Mariana de Carvajal's *Quien bien obra, siempre acierta*, where Alonso witnesses the attempted murder of Esperanza, while sheltering from a storm during his return to Córdoba from Flanders.

[89] During this dramatic prefatory episode, Filis references the incessant passage of time and the imminent approach of nightfall: 'la venidera noche', 'más de medio día sería pasado', 'a cosa de las cuatro de la tarde', 'ya que quería anochecer', 'ya el día va a la última jornada' (DA 233–5). For the reader, her increasingly regular allusions to time create a sense of urgency and an impression that the pace of the novella is gaining momentum as it is propelled towards a cataclysmic, nocturnally set finale.

[90] As the discerning reader becomes suspicious of the topographical details' accuracy, their implausibility adds to the enticing sense of mystery and disorientation that surrounds the tale.

que causa el vicio, in which a rapid sequence of key events, culminating in multiple deaths, occurs within the time-span of one night. Even as Martín and his friend enter Jaime's castle, 'cerrando y echando el puente, por ser ya tarde y aquellos campos mal seguros de salteadores y bandoleros', the image of the closing drawbridge ominously intimates that they have exchanged oceanic perils for a dangerous, remote and constricted space: marooned on the island, they enter the narrower confines of Jaime's isolated castle (*DA* 235). It rapidly becomes clear that evil rules Jaime's household in the personified form of Elena's maid. Through the latter's agency, the household descends into a hell-on-earth, from which, as the tale unfolds, Elena eventually attains salvation through death, but to which Jaime is indefinitely condemned through insanity. Cristina Enríquez de Salamanca evocatively describes the nightmarish atmosphere of the tale as that of 'a "mundo al revés" where the hierarchical order is only one of many types of order that have been inverted; the shipwreck at sea anticipates the domestic shipwreck that Don Martín witnesses within Jaime's household.[91] Zayas's novella shares features of chaotic inversion with the carnivalesque; earlier in this chapter, the interconnection of Carnival with the tragic has been noted.

At the host's dining table, an anomalous sight greets his visitors. Two women simultaneously arrive on the scene, descriptive juxtaposition heightening the contrast between them. In lieu of their direct discourse, vital extralinguistic codes operate around them. Enríquez de Salamanca observes that these women 'stand as powerful presences through contrast, in which clothing and colour speak a symbolic, theatrical language'.[92] Thus, the first woman enters through a small door that is unlocked by a servant; Martín deems her exceptionally 'hermosísima', although she is 'tan flaca y sin color, que parecía más muerta que viva, o que daba muestras de su cercana muerte' (*DA* 236). Despite her coarse attire, Filis lyrically conveys the woman's delicate beauty: her skin is described as 'blanquísimas y delicadas carnes'; her hair is likened to 'madejas de Arabia'; her hands 'parecían copos de blanca nieve'; and her 'hermosos ojos' spill tears, which are poetically described as 'sartas de cristalinas perlas' (*DA* 236–7). She crawls under the dining table, carrying a skull.

---

[91] Cristina Enríquez de Salamanca, 'Irony, Parody, and the Grotesque in a Baroque Novella: "Tarde llega el desengaño"', trans. by Susan Fitzgerald Fansler, in *María de Zayas: The Dynamics of Discourse*, ed. by Amy R. Williamsen and Judith A. Whitenack (London: Associated University Presses, 1995), pp. 234–253 (p. 239).

[92] Enríquez de Salamanca, p. 238.

Contrasting with the aforementioned lady, who is so pale as to appear 'sin color', 'la otra que por la puerta salió era una negra, tan tinta, que el azabache era blanco en su comparación' (*DA* 237). The women's difference of race makes for a startling role-reversal. Filis describes this 'fiera y abominable negra' in grotesque minutiae and highlights the incongruousness of her dazzling attire through corporal associations with animal and demonic imagery:[93]

> [Era] tan fiera, que juzgó don Martín que si no era el demonio, que debía ser retrato suyo, porque las narices eran tan romas, que imitaban los perros bracos que ahora están tan validos, y la boca, con tan grande hocico y bezos tan gruesos, que parecía boca de león, y lo demás a esta proporción [...] Traía la fiera y abominable negra vestida una saya entera con manga en punta, de un raso de oro encarnado, tan resplandeciente y rica, que una reina no la podía tener mejor: collar de hombros y cintura de resplandecientes diamantes; en su garganta y muñecas, gruesas y albísimas perlas, como lo eran las arracadas que colgaban de sus orejas; en la cabeza, muchas flores y piedras de valor, como lo eran las sortijas que traía en sus manos. (*DA* 237)

Jaime welcomes her to his table, addressing her courteously as 'señora mía', and attentively gives the best morsels during the meal to 'su negra y endemoniada dama', while the beautiful lady hungrily eats scraps under the table (*DA* 237). After the meal, the latter woman is given water in the skull, which serves as a drinking-vessel, and she is again locked behind the small door. Thus, Filis meticulously explores the carnivalesque inversion of binary oppositions. While the unsightly 'negra' enjoys magnificent splendour, her beautiful counterpart is demeaned under humiliating circumstances; while the former is associated with brutish imagery, it is the latter who endures dehumanising treatment. As explanation of the sartorial confusion, it is soon revealed that the lavishly dressed 'negra' had been the other lady's servant; this descriptive segment represents an unusually intricate physical portrayal of a maid within Zayas's prose. We shall see that the maid's upward social mobility came about through deception.

Although Jaime reveals that the wan beauty is called Elena, neither he nor the diegetic narrator grants the other woman the courtesy of being named, instead denoting her solely by reference to her swarthy skin-colour throughout the novella: 'la negra'. Mihaly highlights the indignity of the racially inspired description, which serves to confirm her

---

[93] Zayas associates demonic imagery with the dark complexion of another character, albeit with more subversive intent. In *El prevenido engañado* (*NAE*), Fadrique observes Beatriz's servant: 'un negro tan atezado que parecía hecho de un bocací su rostro [...] tan feo y abominable que no sé si fue la pasión o si era la verdad, le pareció que el demonio no podía serlo tanto' (*NAE* 309). Misled by appearances, Fadrique thinks Beatriz to be 'un ángel' and the black servant 'un fiero demonio' (*NAE* 310). However, a startling scene reveals Beatriz's lascivious abuse of the servant, which hastens his death. Thus, although Zayas lends support to racial stereotyping in *Tarde llega el desengaño* by demonising Elena's maid, she shows racial prejudice to be misleading in *El prevenido engañado*. Equivocation is evident, yet again, in Zayas's exploration of racial issues. Of course, racial prejudice was not uncommon among authors of the time. Shakespeare reveals the racist attitude of his contemporaries through characters' derogatory references to Othello as 'the thick-lips', 'the devil', and 'an old black ram' in contrast with Desdemona's 'white ewe' (*Othello*, I. 1. 66, 88, 89 & 91).

otherness; simultaneously, she lacks 'a name, [and] she is also stripped of any cultural heritage through her role as mannequin to the noble dress and jewels'.[94] The wickedness of the 'negra' may have been viewed as a self-fulfilling phenomenon by Zayas's contemporaneous readers, pre-constructed by those who were prone to the racial prejudices of their era, although, to her recent readership, the black protagonist is more complex and multifaceted due to less prejudiced racial precepts. The slave's dark, unsightly features are a visual manifestation of her evil; such unequivocal physical reminders of characters' evil natures are not usually present in Zayas's tales.[95] Symbolically, the brightly gleaming 'resplandecientes diamantes' and 'gruesas y albísimas perlas', which inappropriately adorn the former servant instead of her noble mistress, are portrayed as being in chromatic discord with her dark skin (*DA* 237). These ill-gotten material 'props', as identifiers of wealth and class, dramatically illuminate her grotesqueness and her impoverished victim's beauty through disharmony.

Once both women leave the scene, Jaime recounts to his guests an autobiography of events that have led to this puzzling scene. Thus, within Filis's tale, yet another meta-metadiegetic narrative emerges.[96] Jaime describes the exploits of his militaristic past in Flanders, which he shares in common with Martín, and depicts a hazardous sexual affair that he undertook on the initiative of a widow, Princess Lucrecia. Against the backdrop of the patriarchal *status quo*, Lucrecia is a remarkable fictitious figure: she secretly subverted the double standards of her day, asserting her right to personal and sexual freedom; she manipulated Jaime in a premeditated sexual adventure and tried to kill him for disobeying her. It is no coincidence that Elena is 'un retrato de Lucrecia'; on the basis of Elena's uncanny resemblance to Jaime's former lover, he transferred his love to her (*DA* 247). Poor but *noble* and virtuous, Elena rose with marriage to enjoy the riches that now adorn her maid. Using anaphora to dramatic effect, Jaime conveys the polar shift in his sentiments towards her after eight idyllic years of marriage: 'Elena era mi cielo, Elena era mi gloria, Elena era mi jardín, Elena mis holguras y Elena mi recreo [...] Pues ya es Elena mi asombro, mi horror, mi aborrecimiento' (*DA* 247). In continuation, Jaime reveals the

---

[94] Mihaly, p. 722.

[95] Many of Zayas's female protagonists possess alluring beauty despite their lack of virtue: for example, Beatriz of *El prevenido engañado* (*NAE*), and Florentina in *Estragos que causa el vicio* (*DA*). This illustrates a recurring Baroque theme, the deceptiveness of appearances.

[96] This meta-metadiegetic narrative structure appears in three other tales from Zayas's prose works: *Aventurarse perdiendo* (*NAE*), *Al fin se paga todo* (*NAE*), and *Estragos que causa el vicio* (*DA*). *Tarde llega el desengaño* is unusual among these four novellas as the only one in which the internal narrator is male.

source of his dramatic alteration to be the 'negra', whose family has long been affiliated with his.

The maid brought him devastating news: Elena and her impoverished cousin, whom Jaime had charitably welcomed into their home, have been cuckolding him. Maids' deceitful 'storytelling' in both *Tarde llega el desengaño* and *Estragos que causa el vicio* wreaks dramatic changes on their masters' and mistresses' lives. The evidence against Elena is even more tenuous than that which was used against Magdalena in *Estragos que causa el vicio*, where the latter was incriminated by the presence of a male servant in her bedroom.[97] In retaliation, Jaime burns Elena's cousin alive, saving only the skull that the visitors have witnessed Elena use as a cup, due to his belief that 'al honor de un marido sólo que él lo sospeche basta, cuanto y más habiendo testigo de vista' (*DA* 249). Jaime interprets the honour code to justify protracted spousal abuse without pausing to determine his wife's guilt or innocence in relation to the maid's accusation. Through merciless logic, he further deduces that 'una muerte breve es pequeño castigo' (*DA* 249); instead of a swift death, Elena must suffer prolonged imprisonment in a confined space for her suspected adultery, similar to the immured Inés in *La inocencia castigada*.

Elena's punishment is to be locked in a tiny cell, eating only scraps and witnessing her maid's enjoyment of all the honours due to her as Jaime's wife. At the time of Jaime's narration, two years have passed since Elena's physical hardship commenced. Cervantes's musing in *El curioso impertinente* is especially relevant to her vicissitudes: 'este daño acarrean, entre otros, los pecados de las señoras: que se hacen esclavas de sus mesmas criadas'.[98] Literally, Elena becomes her maid's *esclava*; however, this transpires through no fault of Elena: a fabricated accusation of guilt is sufficient to bring about a carnivalesque reversal in class roles. Despite Jaime's calculated pretence of inverting the two women's roles, he intimates abhorrence for the 'negra' whom he uses to torment his

---

[97] In my fifth chapter, I discuss the popularity of the Calumniated Wife motif in medieval and Renaissance literature. Francis James Child divides analogous tales involving unjustly accused wives into three families. The Oliva-Sibilla family, beginning around the thirteenth century, has the characteristic trait of a 'loathly lover placed in the queen's [i.e. the wife's] bed by her accuser to provide circumstantial evidence of her adultery'. The maids in *Tarde llega el desengaño* and *Estragos que causa el vicio* incriminate men of relatively low social status (namely, a poor cousin and a man-servant), placing them in the 'loathly lover' position. Thus, I place the tales within the Oliva-Sibilla family. See Donald S. Taylor, 'The Lineage and Birth of Sir Aldingar', *Journal of American Folklore*, 65 (1952) 256, 139–147 (p. 141).

[98] Cervantes, *El Ingenioso Hidalgo*, p. 418. Of course, unlike Cervantes's Camila, Zayas's Elena does not commit any 'pecados'. However, this does not protect Elena against a false accusation, which is only removed when her accuser faces death. In this, Elena's fate reminds us of the false charges brought against the Sultana of Granada in the first part of Ginés Pérez de Hita's *Guerras civiles de Granada* (1595); the latter's life is saved, as she has the good fortune of being defended by Christian knights.

wife. We can infer that the maid only superficially supplants her mistress as Jaime's wife in the social structure and that it is intended only as a temporary measure, occurring over a finite period.[99] Thus, the carnivalesque text ultimately reinforces the social structure, despite its ostensible abandonment, and maintains class divisions regardless of their apparent reversal.

The thirty-second tale of Marguerite de Navarre's *Heptaméron* is a probable source for this episode.[100] William Painter introduced her story to English literature in *The Palace of Pleasure* (1575).[101] The source tale has a similar premise: a stranger arrives at a gentleman's castle; dining there, he observes the mysterious appearance of a beautiful, shaven-haired lady of melancholic countenance who drinks from a skull. Her husband recounts events that led to this impasse. Suspecting her of infidelity, the husband waits to enact his vengeance until he has conclusive, visual proof; once he witnesses the illict tryst, he vengefully murders his wife's lover, keeps her locked in captivity with her lover's skeleton, and gives her the deceased lover's skull to use as a cup. Despite the wife's adultery, his compassion is inspired by her remorse and his wish for heirs. Zayas's version of the much-recounted story is unusual insofar as the wife is innocent. As Donovan observes, when Jaime punishes Elena on grounds of suspected adultery, there is 'the implicit possibility that don Jaime is really avenging himself on Elena for Lucrecia's rejection of him – at least this has disposed him to believe the false accusations'.[102] While spousal mercy allows the guilty wife in the source to revert to her secure, original state, Zayas's Elena receives an unwarranted death sentence despite her unwavering fidelity. Related to these contrastive denouements is a further crucial difference between the tales: Zayas's inclusion of the maid as a pivotal character in her novella; Elena was wrongfully accused through the agency of the 'negra', which led to her prolonged suffering and eventual death. There is no such meddlesome protagonist in other versions of the novella. From this intertextual point of view, the reader's sense of the unjust nature of Elena's punishment in Zayas's novella is intensified; false witness endangers her spousal security

[99] Jaime implies that he does not have sexual relations with the maid and tells Martín that he intends to murder her: '[a Elena] le dije, por darla más dolor, que ella había de ser mi mujer, y como a tal se sirviese, y mandase el hacienda, criadas y criados, durmiendo en mi misma cama, aunque esto no lo ejecuto, que antes que Elena acabe, la he de quitar a ella también la vida' (*DA* 249).

[100] The first episode of Jaime's narrative, involving his clandestine relationship with Lucrecia, may have been modelled on Marguerite de Navarre's forty-third tale. In the French tale, a sexual escapade arises on the initiative of the woman (Jambique), closely resembling that of Lucrecia and Jaime. In both texts, to the impertinent male protagonist's misfortune, the secret affair ends abruptly.

[101] See his tale *A Straunge Punishment of Adulterie*, novella 57 of the first volume.

[102] See Donovan, p. 44.

to fatal effect. Familiarity with Zayas's source heightens the reader's awareness of the cruel agency of the maid as protagonist who vitally contributes to Elena's tragic demise.

Filis omnisciently reveals that Martín and his companion, relatively impartial observers, disapprove of Jaime's depraved spousal abuse and discerningly mistrust the testimony of this 'maldita esclava' (*DA* 250). As my previous application of theories (such as Shklovsky's 'defamiliarization' technique) to Zayas's prose suggests, the author's aim is to awaken readers from passivity to active involvement with her text; in Roland Barthes' language, Zayas makes the reader a producer rather than a consumer of her 'writerly' text through this unusual reversal of the mistress-maid situation.[103]

Later during the eventful night of Martín's arrival, the maid suffers the sudden onset of grave illness. Filis attributes this course of events to the miraculous intervention of 'Dios, que no se olvida de sus criaturas' (*DA* 250); ironically, it soon becomes evident that this divine benevolence comes much too late for Elena. To Martín, the 'abominable figura' is an incongruous sight in Elena's opulent bed of 'damasco azul, goteras de terciopelo con franjas y fluecos de plata', which becomes the site of her demise (*DA* 251). From her ill-gotten bed, the 'negra' exonerates Elena by declaring to Jaime that she fabricated the lie; furthermore, she reveals her motives: love for Elena's cousin, jealousy of his intimacy with Elena, and her desire for vengeance on them both. The pivotal quality of this scene is marked by the rare occurrence of a woman's direct speech within the tale:

> Que no me perdone Dios si cuanto te dije no fue testimonio que la levanté; que jamás yo le vi cosa que desdijese de lo que siempre fue, santa, honrada y honesta, y que su primo murió sin culpa. Porque lo cierto del caso es que yo me enamoré de él, y le andaba persuadiendo fuese mi amante, y como yo veía que siempre hablaba con mi señora, y que a mí no me quería, di en aquella mala sospecha que se debían de amar, pues aquel día mismo que tú viniste riñendo mi señora conmigo, le dije no sé qué libertades en razón de esto, que indignada de mi libertad, me maltrató de palabra y obra, y estándome castigando, entró su primo, que, sabido el caso, ayudó también a maltratarme, jurando entrambos que te lo habían de decir. Y yo, temiendo tu castigo, me adelanté con aquellas mentiras, para que tú me vengases de entrambos, como lo hiciste. (*DA* 251–2)[104]

---

[103] Roland Barthes, *S/Z*, trans. by Richard Miller, ed. by Richard Howard (London: Jonathan Cape, 1974). See my discussion of *Al fin se paga todo* earlier in this chapter.

[104] Rather implausibly, the servant acknowledges that, 'aunque negra', she knows that she must confess since she is in danger of dying (*DA* 251). Similarly, in *El príncipe constante*, Calderón has a Moorish character, Muley, begin describing his rescue of Christian sailors with 'aunque moro'. To the modern reader, the comments seem bizarrely unsuited to being enunciated by black or Moorish characters, which shifts the focus from protagonist to 'pen'. These offhand remarks reveal the racial and religious prejudices that prevailed in their seventeenth-century era; Spanish writers such as Calderón and Zayas were not immune to the racism and Islamophobia that prevailed among many of their contemporaries. See Pedro Calderón de la Barca, *El príncipe constante*, ed. by Fernando Cantalapiedra and Alfredo Rodríguez López-Vázquez (Madrid: Cátedra, 1996), I. 293.

The maid admits that there was no improper relationship between Elena and her cousin and that she invented Elena's role as her rival. Concupiscence and covetousness are at the root of the maid's perfidy; her motives are the same as those of Inés in *El castigo de la miseria*. In this novella, social decline (Spain's 'Iron Age') is represented at the domestic level by the immoral and usurpatory actions of Elena's maid and by Jaime's reaction to them. Nonetheless, some credit should be given to the maid for her deathbed sincerity, which could be seen as a form of repentance, reversing her aforementioned links with the devil.[105]

Upon hearing this, Jaime is enraged and stabs the deceitful servant to death without absolution, which all witnesses deem to be 'bien merecido aquel castigo' (*DA* 252). In parallel with the two women's simultaneous appearances in *Tarde llega el desengaño*, their deaths are synchronised also. Elena has died alone on an altogether humbler deathbed; grief at overhearing Jaime's telling the story of her shame, which lent credence to the maid's lie, hastened her death. For the listening *sarao* guests, Filis intensifies the impression of Elena's sanctity by describing the ethereal pose of her corpse amid primitive surroundings:

> Echada sobre unas pobres pajas, los brazos en cruz sobre el pecho, la una mano tendida, que era la izquierda, y con la derecha hecha con sus hermosos dedos una bien formada cruz. El rostro, aunque flaco y macilento, tan hermoso, que parecía un ángel. (*DA* 252)

Thus, she paints an emblematic portrait of the deceased Elena as a heroine who is 'martyred', not for religious faith, but for her unbroken conjugal fidelity. Levisi links the description of the deceased Elena with hagiographic scenes of martyrdom in Baroque art: 'Frente al marcado intento de plasticidad de toda la escena, es casi imposible evitar el recuerdo de cuadros y retablos donde se presenta el martirio de diversos santos'.[106] Enríquez de Salamanca detects Zayas's purpose in juxtaposing supernatural and 'real' planes in the tale: 'incongruency between the hagiographic model and the narrative's realistic context exposes the inadequacy of the religious model proposed for women's behaviour'.[107] Until her deathbed confession, the maid successfully manipulates this religiously influenced code of suffering, as well as that of honour, creating the circumstances for Elena's ordeal and eventual death merely by fabricating a scenario of marital guilt.

---

[105] She refers to 'Dios' throughout her monologue, but, unconventionally, it is Jaime's pardon that she seeks: 'Lo que ahora te pido es que me perdones y alcances de mi señora lo mismo, para que me perdone Dios' (*DA* 252). Ironically, this raises Jaime to a divine position, elevating him from that of domestic monarch to omnipotent God.

[106] Levisi, p. 451.

[107] Enríquez de Salamanca, p. 241.

Martín is fittingly moved by the tragic denouement, aptly deducing for Jaime's benefit that 'Elena no tiene necesidad de que vos le deis el premio de su martirio, que ya Dios se le ha dado en el cielo' (*DA* 253). Miraculously confirming Martín's pronouncement, Elena's corpse 'cada hora parecía estar más hermosa' (*DA* 254). The household becomes the scene of mass mourning and, although Martín impedes the anguished Jaime's suicide attempts, 'no le pudieron aquietar, hasta que rematadamente perdió el juicio [...] Y después de sepultada Elena con igual sentimiento de todos, se trató con médicos afamados dar remedio a don Jaime, mas no fue posible' (*DA* 253–4). The maid's prolonged treachery and usurpation of her mistress's role also has an impact on Jaime at the end of the episode, by pushing him completely ('rematadamente') into madness.[108] Jaime's delirium is a harbinger of Dionís's madness in Lisis's *Estragos que causa el vicio*. His madness also anticipates the mysterious circumstances of Juan's death: rejected by Lisarda in the frame tale, 'le sobrevino una peligrosa enfermedad, y de ella un frenesí, con que acabó la vida' (*DA* 520).

Having survived both literal and figurative, domestic 'shipwrecks', Martín returns to Spain, marries and lives 'contento y escarmentado en el suceso que vio por sus ojos, para no engañarse de enredos de malas criadas y criados' (*DA* 254). Thus, alongside predictable commentary regarding men's cruelty and women's unwarranted suffering, Filis concludes her narrative by reiterating the maid's importance, albeit a negative one in this instance. Martín disseminates the valuable lesson that he has garnered for marriage through the example of his ordeal at Jaime's castle:

> Y en las partes que se hallaba contaba el suceso que habéis oído de la misma manera que yo le he dicho, donde con él queda bien claramente probada la opinión de que en lo que toca a crueldad son los hombres terribles, pues ella misma los arrastra, de manera que no aguardan a la segunda información; y se ve asimismo que hay mujeres que padecen inocentes, pues no todas han de ser culpadas, como en la común opinión lo son. (*DA* 254–5)

Three protagonists – the husband, guest, and maid – respectively report, interpret, and distort key events that affect Elena's fate. When the 'truth' is revealed, all three appear to acknowledge the maid's blameworthy role, while the narrator also condemns the cruelty of men. Through the tragic consequences that the maid's besmirching of Elena's honour entails, *Tarde llega el desengaño* serves as a thematic precursor to subsequent novellas, including *La inocencia castigada*, to which I now turn.

---

[108] Filis has skilfully created her novella so that her announcement of Jaime's madness seems verisimilar. She cites his overwhelming distress, having recalled his autobiography to his guests: 'dando suspiros y golpes una mano con otra, que parecía que estaba sin juicio' (*DA* 250). As I have already noted, his passionate adoration of Elena stems from a highly irrational premise: her physical resemblance to the lover who formerly endangered his life.

* * *

Laura's narrative, *La inocencia castigada*, is immediately subsequent to *Tarde llega el desengaño* in the *Desengaños amorosos* and is also thematically pertinent to serving-women's treachery. Previously, I examined the role of the perfidious sister-in-law in Laura's novella; now, I return to the tale to address an early episode, which serves as a pivotal precursor to Inés's erotic enchantment and to her torture at the hands of her husband, brother and sister-in-law. When Diego pursues Inés, his amorous quest proves fruitless until he employs two women to assist him; I will now discuss their vital contribution to Inés's plight. His facilitators belong to a lower, more impoverished social group than his or Inés's class, and their scheming is reminiscent of maids in Zayas's other tales.[109] Instead of defending Inés's chaste wishes, the women instigate a conspiracy to sate Diego's lust.

Diego falls in love with Inés and, unconcerned for her honour as a married woman, publicly follows her to church and frequents her street. By association, Laura's portrayal of an amoral 'Diego' bodes ill for her daughter's suitor of the same name. Through naivety and modesty, Inés fails to do anything about his amorous pursuit: 'lo uno, por parecerle que con su honestidad podía vencer cualesquiera deseos lascivos de cuantos la veían; y lo otro, porque en su calle vivían sujetos, no sólo hermosos, mas hermosísimos, a quien imaginaba dirigía don Diego su asistencia' (*DA* 267). Her faith in her ability to protect her own honour soon proves tragically misjudged when faced with the destructive potential posed by the zealous endeavours of Diego and his allies. Diego's dejection is observed by 'una mujer que vivía en la misma calle, en un aposento enfrente de la casa de la dama' (*DA* 269). She proffers help and claims to enjoy the privilege of being Inés's lifelong confidante: 'Si alguna en el mundo le podía dar remedio, era ella, porque su señora doña Inés la hacía mucha merced, dándole entrada en su casa y comunicando con ella sus más escondidos secretos, porque la conocía desde antes de casarse, estando en casa de su hermano' (*DA* 269). Thus, the neighbour casts herself in the 'Celestina' role as go-between in Diego's seduction of Inés.[110]

---

[109] The narrator, Laura, highlights the elevated social status of Inés (through her relatives) and of Diego: Inés's brother is a 'caballero principal y rico, casado con una dama su igual hasta en la condición', and Inés marries 'un caballero [...], no inferior a su calidad, ni menos rico, antes entiendo que la aventajaba en todo'; as a 'caballero mozo, rico y libre', Diego is a member of the same social and economic class (*DA* 265–6).

[110] Of course, the reader is quickly made aware that the neighbour merely feigns her role as go-between; instead of helping Diego to seduce Inés, she presents him with a prostitute in disguise. A more authentic

The woman, who appears to be poor, as we shall see presently, is repeatedly defined by the epithet 'astuta': for example, 'ella, como astuta, y que no debía de ser la primera que había hecho' and 'éste astuto verdugo'; her other epithets are more damning: 'la mala mujer' and 'la engañosa mujer' (*DA* 269–70). Her gift for oral persuasiveness is made explicit: she initially wins Diego's confidence through uttering 'cariñosas razones' and promotes her abilities as intermediary so forcibly that he suspects that she does so at Inés's behest (*DA* 269). As narrator, Laura highlights the neighbour's talent for skilled deception through the language of artistry: 'ella lo *pintó* tan bien y con tan finas *colores*' (*DA* 269; my own italics). To further her plan, she then proceeds to verbally ingratiate herself with Inés 'con la arenga y labia necesaria, de que la mujercilla no carecía', persuading her to part with her most frequently worn dress (*DA* 269). The pretext she provides is that the borrowed dress is to be worn by her niece on her wedding-day; she rejects Inés's kind offer of a better dress on grounds of poverty: 'no quiero que sea demasiado costoso, que parecerá (lo que es) que no es suyo, y los pobres también tenemos reputación' (*DA* 270). She certainly shows her ingenuity by this clever reply. By addressing Inés as her 'señora' and referring to herself as amongst 'los pobres', her instrumental discourse signals their class difference. It is highly ironic that she should portray herself as a defender of her class's 'reputación'.

It is clear that, contrary to the neighbour's claims, the two women are only barely acquainted: '[Inés] apenas conocía a la que le llevaba [el vestido]' (*DA* 270). Like the majority of the serving-women studied in this section, Inés's neighbour is motivated by material rewards; when Diego becomes convinced that her scheme holds promise, he munificently bestows on her 'una cadena que traía puesto' and repeatedly pledges 'grande interés', 'ofreciéndola de nuevo suma de interés, dándole cuanto consigo traía' (*DA* 269–70). She deviously selects her accomplice from a 'casa de unas mujeres de oscura vida que ella conocía, y escogiendo entre ellas una, la más hermosa, y que así en el cuerpo y garbo pareciese a doña Inés, [...] llevóla a su casa, comunicando con ella el engaño que quería hacer, y escondiéndola donde de nadie fuese vista' (*DA* 269).[111] The neighbour makes use

---

'Celestina' figure appears in another of Zayas's novellas, *La burlada Aminta y venganza del honor*: Elena, Aminta's neighbour, assists Jacinto in the execution of his seduction plot. Fearing that Elena will reveal his deceit, Jacinto ensures that she dies as violent a death as her literary forerunner: 'le apuntó al corazón con un pistolete, con que, sin poder llamar a Dios ni manifestarle sus pecados, rindió el alma y llevó el merecido premio de lo que había hecho' (*NAE* 229). At the end of the twelfth act, Celestina is murdered by her former accomplices, Sempronio and Pármeno, and dies calling for '¡confessión!' (Rojas, p. 275).

[111] Mary Elizabeth Perry notes that the 1621 ordinances in Seville protected brothel *padres* (administrators of city-licensed brothels), limiting their number to two and doubling to two reales per day the amount they could charge each prostitute; the emphasis was on enclosing prostitutes in the brothel as a means to enforce

of her association with other characters belonging to the social underclass. Pérez-Erdélyi notes the potent mingling of the picaresque underworld with the courtly setting of the novellas: 'Encontramos en Zayas que el mundo cortesano de damas, galanes y de amores llega a ser penetrado por prostitutas, otros personajes de baja extracción, y por el engaño, el truco y la crueldad. Zayas por lo tanto nos presenta un mundo híbrido compuesto de elementos cortesanos y picarescos'.[112] In the short term, the neighbour will achieve pecuniary gain, Diego will sate his sexual desire for Inés, and the latter's virtue will remain intact. However, the trick will endanger Inés's reputation, and, as the *Desengaños amorosos* frequently demonstrate, women's loss of honour often consequently entails their loss of life.

The neighbour dupes Diego into believing that she and Inés will visit his house at night. She alleges that Inés's decorum requires her complete concealment: 'no quiere ser vista; que no haya criados, ni luz, sino muy apartada, o que no la haya' (*DA* 270). She cunningly disguises her accomplice so that she is a convincing substitute for Inés, 'mirada algo a lo oscuro' (*DA* 271). The exchange of goods between Diego and the intermediary culiminates in the substitution of Inés's garments for her body and will. Mihaly notes that, in Zayas's novellas, the material signs or 'props' of wealth are consciously appropriated and manipulated to stage misleading performances of class. This leads Mihaly to deduce that Zayas's work 'reflects a conservative desire to maintain distance between the nobility and others in society, the slaves and servants who can too easily feign a social position which lies beyond their true financial means or blood line'.[113] *La inocencia castigada* illustrates Mihaly's theory regarding the far-reaching repercussions of a traversal of class distance through deceptive performance in Zayas's texts. Several novellas illustrate the displacement of responsibility for male honour to women's bodies and the consequent

---

order. In 1623, Philip IV formally prohibited all brothels in his kingdom; however, women evaded these regulations, broadening the sexual economy from the brothel to streets, and concern about unenclosed women continued. In other novellas of the *Desengaños amorosos*, there are subtle intimations from which we can infer that female protagonists support themselves financially by prostitution. For example, in *La esclava de su amante*, Isabel alleges that Alejandra, the woman with whom Manuel conducts an ongoing sexual relationship, supports herself and her husband by promiscuous means: 'aunque casada, no hacía ascos de ningún galanteo, porque su marido tenía buena condición: comía sin traerlo, y por no estorbar, se iba fuera cuando era menester; que aun aquí había reprensión para los hombres; mas los comunes y bajos que viven de esto no son hombres, sino bestias' (*DA* 141). Implicit suggestions in *El traidor contra su sangre* convey that Clavela, with whom Enrique enjoys sexual relations until he falls in love with Mencía, is another 'dama, casada, mas libre y desenvuelta' (*DA* 377). Clavela also socialises with ill-reputed women whom we are led to suspect of being courtesans: 'Tenía esta dama amistad con unas señoras, madre y hija, de la ciudad, de lo bueno y calificado de ella, aunque en su modo de vida no se portaban con la atención competente a su sangre, porque recibían visitas con gran desdoro de su opinión' (*DA* 378). Mary Elizabeth Perry, *Gender and Disorder in Early Modern Seville* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990).

[112] Pérez-Erdélyi, p. 95.

[113] Mihaly, p. 719.

societal obsession with women's extramarital sexuality; *La inocencia castigada* joins *Tarde llega el desengaño* and *Estragos que causa el vicio* as noteworthy examples of the ease with which unsuspecting wives' chastity could be impugned by the false reports and representations of the servant class.

To Diego's great joy, he recognises the dress and is convinced that his veiled visitor is its actual owner, Inés; the women thus become merely interchangeable bodies for him to possess. Laura succinctly conveys the erotic nature of the ensuing scene in the darkened bedroom: 'don Diego, bien ciego en su engaño, llegó al colmo de los favores, que tantos desvelos le habían costado el desearlos y alcanzarlos, quedando muy más enamorado de su doña Inés que antes' (*DA* 271). Yonsoo Kim notes that, to Diego, the dress is a synecdoche for Inés, suggesting 'la distancia infranqueable entre el hombre y el objeto que ama, precisamente porque el hombre se ha contentado con el objeto físico'.[114] At this juncture, Laura attributes her most censorious epithet to the neighbour: 'la vil tercera'; this coincides with Diego's sexual relationship with 'su fingida doña Inés' (*DA* 271). Following the neighbour's instructions, the prostitute plays her role so well that they reap bountiful material rewards; Diego bestows lavish gifts, 'cargándola [the feigned Inés] de joyas de valor, y a la tercera de dinero' (*DA* 271). For the false duo, the scheme is simply a commercial transaction.

The women continue to visit Diego until the neighbour returns the dress to Inés two weeks later and tells Diego that 'Inés' can no longer visit him, as her husband has become more vigilant. The women merrily divide their spoils, 'muy contenta con la burla', seemingly without sparing a moment to consider the possible ramifications of their actions for Inés (*DA* 272). Thus, the dupe begins in this comic fashion. When the downcast Diego importunes the neighbour to bring a letter to Inés, she claims that the latter refuses to have contact with her 'o era miedo de su esposo, o que se había arrepentido' (*DA* 272). In desperation, Diego approaches the 'real' Inés in church to rebuke her inconstancy, which leads her to discover her neighbour's *burla*. With the intention of vindicating her reputation, Inés invites Diego to her home and secretly summons the Corregidor so as to proclaim her innocence in the case. With her maids as witnesses, Inés reveals that she loaned her dress to her neighbour and declares that neither she nor her husband left their home on the specified nights.

---

[114] Yonsoo Kim, 'La recreación cromática de la luz en la novela de María de Zayas: "La inocencia castigada"', *Romance Review*, 12 (2002), 69–78 (pp. 72–3).

Legal authority, in the guise of the Corregidor, sides decisively with the victimised woman in the novella. Inés fearlessly sends for this representative of male authority; her trust is not misplaced, as he intervenes to exonerate her. As a Baroque novella, *La inocencia castigada* is a complex narrative in terms of its depiction of gender: few women are good; moreover, authority figures such as the Corregidor prove that not all men are evil.[115] Diego and the Corregidor together visit the 'desdichada tercera', who confesses her misdeed and returns valuable gifts that Diego gave her in payment; as her legal penalty, the Corregidor metes out 'doscientos azotes por infamadora de mujeres principales y honradas, y más desterrada por seis años de la ciudad' (*DA* 274). Like Celestina, the neighbour is ultimately victim of her own greed. In this episode, which contrastively sets the scene for Inés's immurement, legal justice takes precedence over personal vengeance. However, in the context of the application of the law to *La inocencia castigada*, it is interesting to note that the unnamed prostitute is not mentioned again. It seems that no attempt is made by Inés or by the legal authorities to identify her. It is unlikely that Inés consciously shields the prostitute from punishment; after all, the woman's involvement almost destroyed Inés's life. Inés may innocently assume that the case is closed.

Inés's reputation is left untarnished by the ordeal as the Corregidor, the exiled neighbour and the enigmatic prostitute guard the secret of the *burla*.[116] However, the two women's deception indirectly causes Inés's near-fatal suffering. Kaminsky highlights the fatal significance of the neighbour's trick with Inés's dress; Diego perceives a 'disjunction [...] between the rejection of her verbal language and the acquiescence of her sartorial language'.[117] Through the 'language' of Inés's clothing, the women transmit misinformation to Diego with far-reaching results. The foiled suit increases Diego's obsession with Inés: he is 'aún más enamorado de doña Inés que antes' and 'más perdido que antes' (*DA* 274). Diego's delusion leads him to believe that he has actually seduced Inés and that the scene involving the Corregidor was merely a ruse to protect Inés's honour. When he resumes his pursuit of Inés, her disdain leads him to employ 'un moro, gran hechicero y nigromántico' whose magic facilitates Inés's actual dishonour (*DA* 276).

---

[115] The ambivalence of the moral exemplum, particularly its gendered aspects, continues into the tale's later episodes: Inés's sister-in-law personifies feminine treachery when she engineers Inés's painful punishment for familial dishonour; on the other hand, the 'Arzobispo' and 'Asistente' rescue the immured Inés and execute her persecutors.

[116] This is plausible as Inés's husband is described as being away from home to manage his financial affairs.

[117] Amy Katz Kaminsky, 'Dress and Redress: Clothing in the *Desengaños amorosos* of María de Zayas y Sotomayor', *Romanic Review*, 79 (1988) 2, 377–391 (p. 387).

Inés's husband, brother, and sister-in-law uncover the rape and, deeming her blameworthy for the familial dishonour, punish her through excruciating torture. Although the neighbour and the prostitute's *burla* does not immediately catalyse Inés's suffering, such cross-class interaction triggers a concatenation of events that culminates in her torture and near-death.

* * *

Collusion between mistress and maid sparks the most violent results in *Estragos que causa el vicio*, final tale of the *Desengaños amorosos*, which Lisis narrates. The novella's premise, in which the injured Florentina relates her life-story to her male rescuer, imitates that of *Al fin se paga todo* in the *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares*.

Florentina introduces the maid at a decisive moment in her intricate narrative: when a confessor refuses her absolution during Holy Week, because of her involvement in an adulterous affair with her stepsister's husband, her tearful sobs are overheard by 'una doncella mía, que se había criado conmigo desde niña' (*DA* 493).[118] Thus, Florentina intimates the familiarity that exists between the two women through their long-standing relationship, echoing that of Isabel with her maid ('a quien yo quería mucho por habernos criado desde niñas' [*DA* 133]) in *La esclava de su amante*, although without the same affectionate emphasis in its descriptive wording. It rapidly becomes apparent that, under tense circumstances, the bond between Florentina and her serving-girl is sufficient to override any remaining loyalty to Florentina's stepsister, Magdalena, and for the maid to convince her to plot sororicide. At a turning point in the novella, the maid instigates dramatic events.

Florentina confides the full extent of her sordid guilt to her servant, for which the latter suggests a very different redemptive route to that prescribed by Florentina's priest: 'El remedio que hallo, cruel es; mas ya es remedio, que a llagas tan ulceradas como éstas quieren curas violentas. Que muera doña Magdalena; que más vale que lo padezca una

[118] It is revealing that the maid is described here as Florentina's servant – not Magdalena's – even though the 'sisters' grew up together and, we assume, in the company of the same servants. It has already been explicitly stated that Florentina has become the mistress of their household: 'Yo mandaba en ella [la casa]. Lo que yo hacía era lo más acertado; lo que mandaba, lo obedecido. Era dueño de la hacienda, y de cúya era. Por mí se despedían y recibían los criados y criadas' (*DA* 492). At this point, the maid's loyalty is to Florentina; however, when one examines Lisis's judgement at the end of the tale, one sees that she focuses on Magdalena and on the maid's treachery against her.

inocente, que se irá a gozar de Dios con la corona del martirio, que no que tú quedes perdida' (*DA* 493–4). The unexpected appearance of the maid in the textual foreground is an interesting plot device, since, by suggesting Magdalena's murder, she shares the culpability that, otherwise, would have been solely Florentina's due. The maid appropriates the Scriptural story of David and Bathsheba (II Samuel 11.1–12.25) to convince Florentina that, by marrying Dionís and doing penance, her soul will be saved: 'Hacer lo que hizo David: Matemos a Urías, que después haremos penitencia. En casándote con tu amante, restaurar con sacrificios el delito; que por la penitencia se perdona el pecado, y así lo hizo el santo rey' (*DA* 494). David orchestrated Uriah's death in order to marry his widow, Bathsheba, whom he had impregnated.[119] The maid underscores how, in common with the predicament of the adulterous Bathsheba, Florentina endangers her own life and reputation through her liaison with Dionís: 'Y tú me parece que estás cerca de lo mismo, pues el día que doña Magdalena se desengañe, ha de hacer de ti lo que yo te digo que hagas de ella' (*DA* 494). In a persuasively exculpatory measure, she re-casts Florentina in the active role of the biblical King David instead of endowing her with Bathsheba's passivity. Thus, the maid formulates a strategy whereby Florentina wields King David's murderous agency; the servant makes strategic use of the adultery-themed, biblical story to suggest the possibility of a harmonious resolution garnered through unrighteous death. Wearing 'la corona del martirio', Magdalena is superficially similar to Uriah, who will die nobly in battle, but her worldly reputation and honour will also be destroyed.

Zayas makes yet another cross-class switch here, in making the *doncella* use the example of David and Bathsheba. Although 'desde niña' she has been with Florentina, it stretches credibility that the serving-girl would know this biblical story in the detail that she does. For the purpose of the narrative, Zayas deliberately engenders this example of cross-class 'mobility', raising the maidservant to a position of learning beyond her conventional sphere. The innocent Magdalena is the primary victim of the inter-class alliance, and Dionís is also embroiled in the adverse effects of their machinations: the women cruelly deceive and induce him to commit uxoricide.

Florentina is easily convinced to adopt the extreme course that her maid prescribes: 'Tantas cosas me dijo, y tantos ejemplos me puso, y tantas leyes me alegó, que como yo

[119] See *The Anchor Bible: II Samuel, A New Translation with Introduction, Notes and Commentary by P. Kyle McCarter, Jr.* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1984).

deseaba lo mismo que ella me persuadía, que reducida a su parecer, dimos entre las dos la sentencia contra la inocente y agraviada doña Magdalena' (*DA* 464). There is a clear reversal of social roles, where the subordinate 'lays down the law' ('tantas leyes me alegó', 'reducida a su parecer') to her superior; ordinary class roles are inverted. Of course, the reader must take into account that Florentina recounts the tale, and her shifting of responsibility to her maid is somewhat predictable. The two women conspire to seal Magdalena's death sentence, and, as the misguided executioner, Dionís is entangled in their duplicitious web. The maid plays a key role in bringing the ensuing domestic chaos to its apogee, acting as Florentina's alter ego and unrecognised fourth protagonist in the novella. El Saffar's deduction regarding the role Leonela, Camila's maid in *El curioso impertinente*, may also be applied to Zayas's novella, *Estragos que causa el vicio*, which similarly 'presents a triangle that is resolved when the hidden fourth protagonist makes her appearance'.[120] Among Zayas's four key protagonists (Florentina, the maid, Dionís, and Magdalena), only Magdalena is innocent of wrongdoing. Consistently voiceless and powerless throughout the novella, she easily falls victim to the other three protagonists' stratagems; in other words, her figurative status is lower than the maid's.

The adulterous impasse dramatically ceases once Florentina's maid leads Dionís to believe that his wife is dishonouring him with her fellow servant, Fernandico.[121] In this manner, the maid fatally ensnares an additional household member in her plan and, due to the gravity of the imputation, ensures another innocent death. She sends the unsuspecting servant to Magdalena's bedroom only to be discovered there by Dionís. Under these compromising circumstances, Dionís assumes that he has been cuckolded by Magdalena and Fernandico and vengefully murders both innocent wife and servant. Regardless of his own infidelity, Dionís reacts violently to allegations concerning his wife's adultery. Insofar as Magdalena's murder is concerned, the maid's plot is a consummate success. However, perhaps because of Dionís's own adultery with Florentina, the maid has crucially underestimated the extent of his hypocritical, self-righteous wrath: he continues his bloodthirsty vengeance with a murderous rampage through his household.[122]

---

[120] Ruth El Saffar, *Beyond Fiction: The Recovery of the Feminine in the Novels of Cervantes* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), p. 71.

[121] Fernandico is described as 'un mozo de hasta edad de diez y ocho o veinte años, que había en casa, nacido y criado en ella' (*DA* 495). His close relationship with Dionís mirrors that between Florentina and her own maid. These servants are bound in life-long service to a master/mistress.

[122] Dionís's downfall puts one in mind of the mass murders committed by Shakespeare's Macbeth. As I have already indicated, signs of Florentina's remorse are undercut by the narrative structure: she confesses to Gaspar, in whom she hopes to inspire a sympathetic reaction; the emotional turmoil of Lady Macbeth has none of this ambiguity. In the final speech of *Macbeth*, Malcolm endows the duo with telling epithets: 'this

Concerns relating to death and the afterlife surrounded Florentina's first interaction with the maid in the novella; the maid first appeared amid Florentina's anxiety regarding 'la perdición de mi alma', as a result of a confessor's admonitions. When Florentina reports details of her disclosure to the maid, she ominously adds that 'ya la fatal ruina de todos se acercaba' (*DA* 493). As I noted in my previous chapter, Florentina's allusions to diabolical influence coincide with her maid's accession to agency. In the maid's exposition of her plan, she lays particular emphasis on redemption from sin, yet Florentina's summation condemns her as one in whom 'hablaba y obraba el demonio' (*DA* 494).[123] This casts the cross-class activities of the maid in a remarkably negative light; that is, in acting outside her sphere (quoting the Bible for evil ends, for example), the maid becomes an agent of the devil: her ambition to lead and to counsel is equivalent to a diabolical act.

Upon witnessing this unanticipated multiplication of murders, the maid apparently undergoes a radical *volte-face* and confesses the truth. Florentina offers various psychological and divine hypotheses regarding the maid's remorseful change of heart:

> O porque se arrepintió del mal que había hecho, cuando no tenía remedio, o porque Dios quiso le pagase, o porque el honor de doña Magdalena no quedase manchado, sino que supiese el mundo que ella y cuantos habían muerto, iban sin culpa, y que sola ella y yo la teníamos, que es lo más cierto. (*DA* 497)

Thus, Florentina intimates that divine intervention overcomes diabolical dominance. Another interpretation is to question Florentina's narrative reliability when reducing her own culpability through attribution of demonic traits to the maid. This less mystical explanation stems from the reader's awareness that events are seen through the lens of Florentina's autodiegetic narrative; with Gaspar as interlocutor, it suits her self-exculpatory purpose to portray the maid as a momentous, devilish force that can only be overcome by God's intercession. Although, by her own admission, Florentina is adept at deceit and has covertly conducted an affair with her stepsister's husband for a period of four years, the maid is more persuasive and more cunning than herself. The maid has used both intelligence and opportunity, albeit with catastrophic results.

The maid dramatically declares her guilt to Dionís, voluntarily forsaking life as her own death is the inevitable reprisal: 'Sola yo soy la culpada, y la que no merezco vivir, que yo

---

dead butcher and his fiend-like queen' (V. 11. 53). Florentina's unconscionable machinations demonstrate further the literary extremes of female, 'fiend-like' behaviour.

[123] Diabolical imagery links Florentina's maid with Elena's maid (in *Tarde llega el desengaño*), who is described as 'su negra y endemoniada dama' and 'un retrato de Lucifer' (*DA* 237 & 254).

hice este enredo [...] para que, matando a mi señora doña Magdalena, te casaras con doña Florentina, mi señora, restituyéndole y satisfaciendo, con ser su esposo, el honor que le debes' (*DA* 498). Kristeva notes that 'the carnival challenges God, authority and social law; in so far as it is dialogical, it is rebellious'.[124] By adapting Scripture to suit Florentina's murderous needs, the maid illustrates carnivalesque rebellion against religious, moral, and societal norms; her remorseful self-accusation marks the termination of this rebellious enterprise and demonstrates regret for the challenge that her insubordinate act represents. While the maid's compunction is incompatible with the anti-Christian tendency that Kristeva detects in the carnivalesque, it is germane to a powerful, opposing influence: the Counter-Reformation context of Zayas's writing. The maid does not attempt to distract Dionís or to detract from her own guilt by elaborating on Florentina's predicament, instead issuing a frank confession of her own involvement. Upon her retaliatory slaying at the hands of Dionís, the episode of inter-class collusion draws to an abrupt and violent conclusion. Reporting the maid's dying words, Florentina implies that she receives eternal damnation in punishment:

> —Recibe, infierno, el alma de la más mala mujer que crió el Cielo, y aun allá pienso que no hallará lugar.
>
> Y diciendo esto, la rindió a quien la ofrecía. (*DA* 498)

Of course, the reader is aware that, once more, we only have Florentina's declaration as proof of the maid's self-damnation. Administering his own death, an act which is described by Florentina as 'insistido del demonio', Dionís's last utterance is also addressed to a demonic listener, 'llamando al demonio que le recibiese el alma' (*DA* 499).

Thus, it appears that the devil ultimately claims both the maid's and Dionís's souls. These protagonists' final words are in contrast with those of the murdered Fernandico; innocent of evildoing, he appeals to the divine forces of goodness by exclaiming '¡Jesús sea conmigo!' (*DA* 496). At this juncture, Florentina begins to fear for her own soul's fate against the 'tribunal supremo de la divina justicia' (*DA* 496). At the secular level, the women's inter-class collusion is to the immediate detriment of all protagonists, even Florentina, who fails to win either Dionís or her rescuer, Gaspar, in marriage. Nevertheless, she uncovers an alternative path to fulfilment. Despite losing her lover through suicide and a potential suitor due to her unbecoming revelations, she receives an

[124] Kristeva, 'Word, Dialogue and Novel', in *The Kristeva Reader*, p. 49.

unexpected reward: she lives comfortably in a convent, despite sharing the guilty burden of responsibility for multiple deaths.[125]

Lisis's 'reading' of her own tale lays all blame at the maid's door by obliterating Florentina's responsibility:

> [A] doña Magdalena no le sirvió el ser honesta y virtuosa para librarse de la traición de una infame sierva, de que ninguna en el mundo se puede librar; porque si somos buenas, nos levantan un testimonio, y si ruines, descubren nuestros delitos. Porque los criados son animales caseros y enemigos no excusados, que los estamos regalando y gastando con ellos nuestra paciencia y hacienda, y al cabo, como el león, que harto el leonero de criarle y sustentarle, se vuelve contra él y le mata, así ellos, al cabo, matan a sus amos, diciendo lo que no saben, sin cansarse de murmurar de su vida y costumbres. (*DA* 508)[126]

The maid is definitively the culpable party, if we are to believe Florentina, in whose version of events the maid masterminds the plan whereby Dionís murders Magdalena. As narrator, Lisis executes a jarring interpretative shift away from Florentina, who has thus far featured prominently as both narrator and protagonist; she belatedly reconsiders Magdalena's role in the novella, raising the latter to primacy in her concluding judgement of the tale. She displaces her focus from the maid's pivotal fealty to the artful Florentina to the serving-woman's treachery against the powerless Magdalena. Until this point, the relationship between Magdalena and the maid has been left unexplored; the maid's only indication of her awareness of a debt of loyalty to Magdalena appears immediately prior to her death: 'Yo soy la mala, y mi señora, la buena' (*DA* 498). I interpret this blameless 'señora' to be Magdalena. This is the maid's only self-referential remark in relation to being Magdalena's servant; until this point, in terms of allegiance, she seems to consider Florentina to be her sole 'señora'. Perpetuating the viewpoint of the internally narrating Florentina, Lisis effectively attributes a primary role in the entire household's demise to a maid, albeit by now representing her as Magdalena's – not Florentina's – maid. The focus veers unexpectedly to Magdalena as the maid's other mistress. Lisis reaches the correct conclusion (the maid's culpability), for the wrong reasons. One is led to dwell upon the various women's roles all the more as a result of Lisis's bizarre reasoning; the logical deduction is that Florentina is also morally culpable for instigating the cycle of adulterous

---

[125] Similar to Hipólita (*Al fin se paga todo*), Florentina evades legal penalties for her sexual and murderous misdemeanours. Ferrer Valls reads these women's expulsion from an interior space into the street as 'símbolo del rechazo social y de la marginación'. Society re-welcomes them, in spite of their crimes, through the safe-havens of marriage and the convent respectively. Teresa Ferrer Valls, 'Del oratorio al balcón: Escritura de mujeres y espacio dramático', *Insula*, 714 (June 2006), 8–12 (p. 10). Adding to the linkage between the two novellas, a key character bears the name of Gaspar in each.

[126] This is not the only reference to servants' scandalmongering. In *Amar sólo por vencer*, Matilde says of *criados* that 'su ejercicio es murmurar de los amos, que les parece que sólo para eso los sustentan' (*DA* 298).

betrayal and for willingly accepting the maid's counsel to bring about her stepsister's murder.

The phraseology of Lisis's response betrays curious levels of class prejudice; in gross generalisations regarding 'la traición de una infame sierva, de que ninguna en el mundo se puede librar', she adopts animal imagery to describe members of the serving class as 'animales caseros' who, like lions, turn on their master (*DA* 508). It is tempting to deduce that classism lies behind Lisis's biased judgement of her tale, although her intimate friendship with her own maid, Zelima, problematises this viewpoint; of course, Zelima is revealed to be the high-born Isabel Fajardo, not a 'real' maid. Complex instances of equivocation frequently arise in these Baroque novellas; in this case, the equivocatory discourse relates to issues of status and class. Suárez Briones quotes the Lisis passage as evidence that 'la conciencia de clase, la soberbia de clase, aparece reflejada nítidamente en la obra de la escritora, que resulta despiadadamente clasista y misógina con las mujeres de clase inferior a la suya'.[127] However, in this Baroque labyrinth of equivocatory discourses, the reader must resist the temptation for automatic attribution of any of Lisis's views, including her diatribe against women of the servant-class, to the elusive author, Zayas.

Thus, we can safely say that maids' agency is prominently featured at pivotal interludes of Zayas's novellas, whether it takes the form of inter-class cooperation or of manipulation. Notwithstanding evidence of a nostalgic tone in Zayas's prose and the absence of a class manifesto for change, analysis of relationships rotating on the axis of class unearths interesting results. Fleeting examples of maids' collusion with their mistresses in Zayas's novellas illustrate a surprisingly porous class structure and allow for the possibility that women's alliances can cross class boundaries. However, a second type of inter-class relationship includes women who actively seek personal benefits and also the downfall of their mistresses; the threat posed by female servants is considerable. These usurpatory activities generally bear the features of carnivalesque intervals. As the tragic eclipses the ludic in the *Desengaños amorosos*, these picaresque protagonists add vital impetus to the accumulating perils that secular Spanish society poses for the highly born woman who is the focal point of Zayas's novellas.

Helen Nader's comments, in relation to the powerful women of the Mendoza family, are of some relevance: 'Systemic change could not attract them. They were, after all, privileged

[127] Suárez Briones, 'Voces e ideología', p. 46.

and worked all their lives to retain and improve their status within the established system'.[128] From her literary and privileged vantage point, Zayas refrains from proposing systemic change, particularly in relation to class, and instead creatively stimulates awareness regarding the state of the established social order. Nonetheless, her prose presents us with an image of a permeable class structure; despite the disasters that result from the excessive passage of *criadas* through class boundaries, the possibility of harmonious class relations remains.

[128] Helen Nader, 'Introduction: The World of the Mendozas', in *Power and Gender in Renaissance Spain: Eight Women of the Mendoza Family, 1450-1650*, ed. by Helen Nader (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2004), pp. 1–26 (p. 5).

Chapter 4

Absences/Presences: Mother-Daughter Relationships

'Doña Leonor que vio a su madre tan cerca de sí,
abrazándose con ella, empezó a llorar tiernísimamente' (*NAE* 478).

'Y en poniendo Laura la hacienda en orden, que les rentase lo que habían menester,
se fue con ellas, por no apartarse de su amada Lisis,
avisando a su madre de doña Isabel, que como supo dónde estaba su hija,
se vino también con ella, tomando el hábito de religiosa' (*DA* 510).

In an oft-quoted remark, Adrienne Rich wrote that, 'before sisterhood, there was the knowledge – transitory, fragmented, perhaps, but original and crucial – of mother-and-daughterhood'.[1] Having discussed the dialectics of women's sisterhood, betrayals and service in María de Zayas's prose, I will turn my attention to this other axial female relationship: the intergenerational mother-daughter bond. In Coppélia Kahn's terms, I will trace the 'maternal subtext' of Zayas's tales, with specific reference to *El prevenido engañado*, *El imposible vencido*, and *El jardín engañoso*, from the *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares*.[2] In these novellas, family separation and restrictive, external circumstances hamper mothers' efficacy to varying degrees. Mothers are largely absent from the bleak narrative landscape of Zayas's later work, the *Desengaños amorosos*; when mothers' presence is felt, such as in *Amar sólo por vencer*, their agency is again ineffectual and ephemeral. Lastly, I will examine Zayas's overarching frame narrative in relation to this theme; motherhood is integral to its resolution, insofar as mothers play a prominent role during the two *saraos* held in Lisis's home and, most particularly, at their close. I will demonstrate that, unlike secular ruptures in the familial structure of the novellas, Zayas portrays the monastic denouement as fostering and enshrining the bonds of motherhood in her frame narrative.

* * *

[1] Adrienne Rich, *Of Woman Born: Motherhood as Experience and Institution* (London: Virago, 1976), p. 225.

[2] Coppélia Kahn, 'The Absent Mother in *King Lear*', in *Rewriting the Renaissance: The Discourses of Sexual Difference in Early Modern Europe*, ed. by Margaret W. Ferguson, Maureen Quilligan and Nancy I. Vickers (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), pp. 33–49 (p. 35).

Mothers in Zayas's Novellas

Contemporary feminist theorists have placed the uncharted territory of mother-daughter relations at the forefront of their works. For example, Rich describes mother-daughter relations as 'the great unwritten story', and, in *A Room of One's Own*, Woolf places special emphasis on the necessity for female authors to 'think back through our mothers'.[3] Responding to Rich's charge, Marianne Hirsch proclaims that 'the story of mother and daughter has indeed been written, although it is not often found on the surface but in the submerged depths of literary texts', particularly in works written by women.[4] I will explore key manifestations of this female 'story' in the two main narrative levels of Zayas's prose, beginning with the diegetic level of the interpolated novellas. Before doing so, however, I will sketch an outline of the maternal motif, placing it in the context of Spanish Golden-Age literature.

Contrasting Timoneda's *Patrañuelo* with Zayas's prose, Charnon-Deutsch underscores the centrality of family relations to the *patrañas*:

> Timoneda's narrators are more preoccupied with family relations. A woman's sexuality is inseparable from her reproductive capacity and responsibilities. In fact, female sexual desire not directly responsive to procreative needs is scarcely imagined. Consequently, children play a much more significant role in the *patrañas* [...] Male and female transactions also tend to be more often than not based on familial ideology, and a woman's role is thus determined by her family status.[5]

In contrast, Charnon-Deutsch suggests that sexual desire plays a more important role in Zayas's prose: women are appreciated as providers of sexual gratification, although sexual desire is not solely confined to men. Irrespective of Zayas's creative interest in the passions of both women and men, I posit that the family unit forms a vital nucleus of Zayas's tales and of her frame narrative. Her gynocentrism extends to a literary exploration of women's interaction across the generations. When we examine the *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares*, it becomes apparent that Zayas portrays mothers' physical presence and performance of diverse functions in many of her tales. Zayas emphasises rather than excises maternal ties.[6]

---

[3] Rich, *Of Woman Born*, p. 225; Woolf, p. 99. Woolf is not only writing about biological mothers, but also literary mothers; she highlights the limited legacy of female role models or precursors within literary tradition as a hindrance for writing women.
[4] Marianne Hirsch, 'Mothers and Daughters', *Signs*, 7 (Autumn 1981) 1, 200–222 (p. 204).
[5] Charnon-Deutsch, p. 126.
[6] Merrim, p. 121.

In an overview of motherhood in Spanish literature, Anne J. Cruz detects a reduction in the maternal role during Medieval times, which further diminishes through the literature and didactic treatises of the Golden Age. She posits that,

> En todos los géneros literarios que han llegado a formar el canon de la literatura del Siglo de Oro – la poesía lírica, la comedia o las obras en prosa tales como las novelas de caballerías y las picarescas –, las madres o quedan excluidas del todo o, si acaso se mencionan, se les atribuye un valor negativo, extrínsico a su función materna y sin subjetividad propia.[7]

Cruz links the misogynistic and anti-humanistic attitude of Counter-Reformation treatises to the increasing focus on procreation as the sole aim of marriage, displacing the multifaceted maternal role. El Saffar's related study examines cultural conditioning in Renaissance Spain and its reflection in Golden-Age literature. Under the sociohistoric conditions of sixteenth-century Spain, 'the divided, masculinized subject' formed.[8] Largely the product of punitive Renaissance schooling, the divided subject was necessarily alienated from all association with maternal care. Increasingly, 'the Other that is Nature, the Mother, the passions, the animal world' is criticised and denied. El Saffar highlights the dynamics of fear and dependency in relation to literary maternal figures prior to the Renaissance, citing the slaying of Rojas's Celestina as an image of 'the new self emerging in the sixteenth century, a self formed out of the repudiated and mutilated body of the mother'. Driven by the fear of maternal power, there was a cultural insistence on the containment and control of the otherness of feminine figures, which was recreated both by the plots of popular novellas and of *comedias* and by the rigorous scrutiny of female visionaries. As Rich has argued, the mother-daughter relationship is stifled in literature and 'minimized and trivialized in the annals of patriarchy'.[9]

Within this sociohistoric panorama, which Cruz and El Saffar study in thought-provoking articles, we trace the conscious displacement of female figures, and of the mother in particular, to the periphery. In relation to seventeenth-century literature's sparse treatment of the motherhood theme, the *novela cortesana* warrants particular attention. Bourland pinpoints novella writers' exploitation of this genre's suitability for representing contemporary, quotidian customs:

> Family relations are represented more completely and more naturally in the novela of the seventeenth century than in the drama of the same period, in which the picture of domestic life

---

[7] Anne J. Cruz, 'La búsqueda de la madre: Psicoanálisis y feminismo en la literatura del Siglo de Oro', in *Historia silenciada de la mujer: La mujer española desde la época medieval hasta la contemporánea*, ed. by Alain Saint-Saëns (Madrid: Editorial Complutense, 1996), pp. 39–64 (p. 45).

[8] Ruth El Saffar, 'The "I" of the Beholder: Self and Other in Some Golden Age Texts', in *Cultural Authority in Golden Age Spain*, ed. by Marina S. Brownlee and Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1995), pp. 178–205 (p. 180, 182, 183).

[9] Rich, *Of Woman Born*, p. 236.

> is both incomplete and distorted, owing to the almost total elimination of the mother and the stereotyped behaviour of father to daughter and brother to sister.[10]

Vasileski cites the depiction of familial relations – maternal bonds, in particular – as a salient feature of Zayas's novellas:

> Las relaciones familiares, por ejemplo, forman parte integrante de muchos de sus relatos. Aparecen éstas representadas más completa y naturalmente que en el drama de la misma época, ya que en este último la vida doméstica es incompleta y deformada debido a la completa eliminación de la madre [...] A menudo las novelas cortas de Zayas sugieren si no describen las relaciones mutuas que existen en un grupo familiar, y en éstas, la madre, cuando aparece, desempeña su papel normal.[11]

Zayas's prose foregrounds ordinary domestic relationships between mothers and daughters. Likewise, mothers later play important roles in the frame narrative and novellas of Carvajal's *Navidades de Madrid*. I tentatively posit that these authors detected the novella genre's comparative suitability for the detailed depiction of family life, particularly that which involves female relatives.

The mother's relative primacy in the Spanish novella is in contrast with her marginalisation in the *comedia* genre. Zayas's *La traición en la amistad* is no exception: mothers are entirely absent from the female-dominated dramatic landscape, despite its principal setting being an interior, domestic environment.[12] They also fail to appear in Caro's plays; Rosaura, Empress of Constantinople, describes the premature death of her mother in the opening scene of *El conde Partinuplés*:

> También sabréis como mi madre hermosa
> sin sucesión dichosa
> estuvo largo tiempo [...].
> Ya se ve, pues se hicieron tanto efecto
> las generosas quejas de su afecto,
> que el cielo, o compasivo u obligado,
> les vino a dar el fruto deseado;
> mas fue con la pensión ¡oh infeliz suerte!
> de la temprana muerte
> de aquella hermosa aurora
> del Puzol, Rosimunda, mi señora
> que de mi tierna vida al primer paso
> la luz oscureció en mortal ocaso,

[10] Bourland, *The Short Story in Spain*, p. 24.

[11] Vasileski, p. 120. Contrary to common opinion, E. H. Templin describes mothers as being numerically and dramatically important in *comedias*; he estimates that more than 145 mothers appear in Lope de Vega's plays, excluding the Virgin Mary. See E. H. Templin, 'The Mother in the *comedia* of Lope de Vega', *Hispanic Review*, 3 (1935), 219–244.

[12] Only Fenisa's mother receives passing mention (*La traición en la amistad*, II. 1726). When Laura recounts the backstory of her dishonour, she reveals that she was orphaned as a child: 'Quedé niña, sola y rica / con un noble caballero / que tuvo gusto en criarme, / por ser de mi madre deudo' (II. 953). As for the other female protagonists, Marcia merely remarks that her father is in Lombardy (I. 35), and the parents of her cousin, Belisa, are not mentioned.

dando causa a comunes sentimientos.[13]

Studying the mother's role in Lope de Vega's *comedias*, Templin concludes that the playwright is not attracted by 'the housewifely *status quo* of everyday existence', but rather the involvement of highly literary mothers in 'displays of heroicity and dynamic adventures'.[14] By seizing the opportunity to represent a range of everyday mother-daughter relationships in her *novelas cortesanas*, Zayas breaks the silence that surrounds them in contemporeanous genres.

Through the novellas, Zayas explores women's relationships in the seventeenth-century social structure at the level of the family. By exploring maternal genealogies, she displays an innate appreciation of this aspect of family life, anticipating, for example, Irigaray's psychoanalytic view that 'women as mothers are the unacknowledged foundation of the social order [...] [and that] this relationship with the mother needs to be brought out of silence and into representation'.[15] The androcentric writings of Freud and Lacan repress the woman's role – that of the maternal figure in relation to her daughter, in particular.[16] Irigaray contends that Western culture functions on the basis of matricide; in patriarchal society, mothers are 'murdered' by denying the mother-daughter relationship. In contrast, Zayas engenders literary mothers, disallowing her novellas from replicating a culture of matricide. I will now turn to examine specific manifestations of the maternal role as in Zayas's novellas, beginning with the fourth novella of the *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares*, *El prevenido engañado*.

* * *

In *El prevenido engañado*, Alonso depicts a series of women through their interaction with Fadrique, the principal male protagonist. Fadrique's adventures begin and end through his involvement with a mother-and-daughter duo in Granada. These women are not linked by consanguinity alone: they are Fadrique's first fiancée and his eventual wife, respectively.

---

[13] Ana Caro, *El conde Partinuplés*, in *Women's Acts: Plays by Women Dramatists of Spain's Golden Age*, ed. by Teresa Scott Soufas (Lexington: The University Press, 1997), pp. 137–162, I. 131. Fathers are also absent from Caro's and Zayas's plays, in which peer groups supplant parental figures of authority.

[14] Templin, p. 239. El Saffar (in 'The "I" of the Beholder') suggests that the *comedia* generally focuses on the feminine figure who is least capable of defending herself, i.e. the young maiden rather than the mother; the same could be said of many *novelas cortesanas*.

[15] Luce Irigaray, *The Irigaray Reader*, ed. by Margaret Whitford (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1991), p. 25.

[16] See Cruz, 'La búsqueda de la madre'. In 'Stabat Mater', Kristeva highlights Freud's shortcoming: 'The fact remains, as far as the complexities and pitfalls of maternal experience are involved, that Freud offers only a massive *nothing* [...] There thus remained for his followers an entire continent to explore'. Julia Kristeva, 'Stabat Mater', in *The Kristeva Reader*, ed. by Toril Moi (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), pp. 160–186 (pp. 178–9).

The first episode involves this mother, Serafina, and later events concern her daughter, Gracia; mother and daughter underpin and 'frame' this tale. As El Saffar notes, 'undergirding the whole series of comic adventures of Don Fadrique is the tragic and yet scarcely recorded story of mother-daughter separation and forced abandonment'.[17] Despite such obstacles as abandonment, lengthy separation, and marital ties, this female family unit ultimately enjoys a lasting reunion.

Fadrique's first love is Serafina, 'un serafín en belleza', whom he courts with matrimonial intent (*NAE* 295). Aware from the outset that he has a rival for Serafina's affection, he trusts that his wealth will guarantee the success of his suit. The reader is privy to no more information than Fadrique and must wait until the opportune, climactic moment for further revelations. He knows that Serafina favours his competitor, Vicente, and soon learns that she suffers from a melancholic illness, which he suspects to have arisen as a result of the latter's cessation of courtship. Fadrique's marriage request meets with favourable results, and Serafina's parents zealously grant their permission for the union. Serafina accepts her parents' will without complaint; her only stipulation is that they delay the wedding until her convalescence: 'ella, que era discreta, dio a entender que se holgaba mucho y que estaba presta para darles gusto, si su salud la ayudase, que les pedía que entretuviesen a don Fadrique algunos días hasta que mejorase, que luego se haría cuanto mandaban en aquel caso' (*NAE* 297). Initially, Serafina's parents and fiancé are satisfied by this response. On Fadrique's chaperoned visits, he attentively notes her 'color y tristeza' (*NAE* 297). He becomes increasingly anxious when her mysterious confinement continues for several months.

Fadrique keeps assiduous watch over the house of his betrothed, 'tanto por el amor que la tenía, cuanto por los recelos con que le hacía vivir don Vicente' (*NAE* 297). Late one night, he sees Serafina leave her house; 'casi muerto de celos', he follows her to an abandoned building, a destination that he suspects has been chosen by her for illicit 'travesuras amorosas' (*NAE* 298). To his amazement, he watches Serafina give birth in this lonely spot to 'una criatura', whom she then abandons, 'dejándose aquella inocencia a lo que le sucediese' (*NAE* 298). The reader shares Fadrique's astonishment at this unexpected turn of events. Together with Fadrique, we deduce that Vicente has deserted Serafina after impregnating her; her illness has been a contrivance to conceal the pregnancy. Fadrique brings the baby to a midwife and issues instructions to find a

[17] El Saffar, 'Ana/Lisis/Zayas', p. 211.

wetnurse, 'dando infinitas gracias a Dios' for this timely discovery (*NAE* 299). Even though the child bears no direct relation to him, he goes to great lengths to ensure its survival, entrusting its care to an aunt. We are told that the baby is a girl, whom they baptise 'Gracia'; even in infancy, she possesses her mother's ethereal beauty: 'era una niña tan hermosa que más parecía ángel del cielo que criatura humana' (*NAE* 299). The narrator notifies the reader that Gracia is to assume great importance as the tale develops: 'Dejémosla criar, que a su tiempo se tratará de ella como de la persona más importante de esta historia' (*NAE* 299).

To preserve the appearance of honour, Serafina has feigned illness to conceal her pregnancy and has faced the perils of childbirth alone. Alonso's narration of events does not state definitively whether she has successfully concealed the telling signs of her physical transformation from her parents, living a double life within her own home. Eric J. Kartchner compares her parents' role with that of the reader: 'they witness but cannot interfere in the development of the narrative'.[18] The overwhelming eagerness with which Serafina's parents have accepted Fadrique's proposal ('acompañado de infinitos agradecimientos' [*NAE* 297]) leads the reader to harbour suspicions regarding their awareness of her plight. Seemingly for propriety's sake, Fadrique has visited Serafina 'en presencia de su madre y criadas' (*NAE* 298). It stretches credibility that the precise nature of Serafina's ailment would have escaped the notice of her watchful mother. Her mother's vigilance may have a clandestine purpose: to safeguard family honour by hiding the unsanctioned pregnancy and to preserve Serafina's marital prospects. Whether Serafina's mother is unaware of her predicament or knowingly conceals the pregnancy without proferring further assistance, the lack of intimacy between mother and daughter during this crisis is important. The near-invisibility of the mother, which was not uncommon in the contemporary literature, allowed Zayas to include and yet write the mother out of the script at this point in the narrative.

Serafina's experience of pregnancy contrasts with that of Leocadia, in *La fuerza de la sangre* (from Cervantes's *Novelas ejemplares*), whose benevolent parents are involved in the upbringing of her child, who is born of rape. After Leocadia has a son, her parents assist her in concealing his identity from outsiders while showing him great tenderness as he matures through childhood. Despite adverse circumstances, Leocadia's parents

[18] Eric J. Kartchner, 'Fictional Realities of *El prevenido, engañado*', in *Zayas and Her Sisters, 2: Essays on Novelas by 17th-Century Spanish Women*, ed. by Gwyn E. Campbell and Judith A. Whitenack (New York: Global Publications, Binghampton University, 2001), pp. 21–32 (p. 28).

welcome their grandchild's arrival: 'Y de tal manera su gracia, belleza y discreción enamoraron a sus abuelos, que vinieron a tener por dicha la desdicha de su hija por haberles dado tal nieto'.[19] In contrast, in the harsher 'reality' of Zayas's *El prevenido engañado*, Serafina must dangerously undertake childbirth alone. Mere coincidence ensures that the birth is witnessed, not by a family-member, but Serafina's suitor, and that the infant is removed from imminent danger. The loving support that Leocadia's parents provide is not made available to Serafina, which has the dual effect of making her actions psychologically verisimilar and of lessening her reprehensibility in the eyes of the reader. In fact, the image of Serafina as she gives birth in a ruined house, 'tragándose unos gemidos sordos, llamando a Dios y a muchos santos que le ayudasen' (*NAE* 298), is one of the most empathy-inducing scenes in the *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares*. Serafina's abandonment of her baby mirrors another mother-daughter situation: Serafina's apparent "loss" of her own mother during her pregnancy. Nonetheless, the text contains an implicit warning to mothers against abandoning their children, since the helpless Gracia's safety depends upon a prodigious occurrence.

Serafina hastily notifies her parents that she is ready to marry Fadrique; he dashes Serafina's hopes by leaving Granada and sending her a sonnet to reprimand her duplicity. Prior to his departure, he assigns guardianship of Gracia to his relative, claiming that she is his daughter and demanding the utmost secrecy. Fadrique's instruction to have Gracia placed in a convent reinforces the prevailing ideology of female enclosure as a means of control. By claiming that the infant is his daughter, Fadrique falsely asserts his right to determine her destiny. Of course, Fadrique's act need not be interpreted solely in a negatively controlling manner: he displays a humanitarian, caring side by rescuing the forsaken child from certain death. Thus, he prevents Serafina's desire for concealment of her trangression from resulting in infanticide. Having left the baby in a perilous environment, she has surrendered her maternal rights to influence her offspring's fate. Fadrique's compassion does not extend to informing Serafina promptly of the baby's safety and whereabouts, tidings for which she would undoubtedly have been grateful, despite the fear that his power over her would surely inspire. In so doing, he punishes Serafina for her deceit, although this may be involuntary; it is likely that he does not accurately predict the full extent of the emotional turmoil that she subsequently experiences.

[19] Cervantes, *Novelas ejemplares*, pp. 287–8.

To allay her parents' anxiety regarding the sudden evaporation of her marital prospects, Serafina chooses to become a nun. Unable to ascertain the fate of her offspring, fearful imaginings assail her, and the newly chosen life of repentance reflects her personal sense of guilt:

> Así se entró en un monasterio harto confusa y cuidadosa de lo que le había sucedido, y más del desalumbramiento que tuvo en dejar allí aquella criatura, viendo que si se había muerto o la habían comido perros, que cargaba su conciencia tal delito, motivo para que procurase con su vida y penitencia no sólo alcanzar perdón de su pecado, sino nombre de santa, y así era tenida por tal en Granada. (*NAE* 300)

Thus, the child is again depicted as a 'criatura', through which the narrator conveys its vulnerability; only when Gracia reappears at the end of the tale is she endowed with human characteristics. Serafina's fear as to whether 'la habían comido perros' goes deep into the heart of a mother-child relationship; of course, the reader knows that the baby was rescued, but Zayas is able to explore (and exploit, in a literary sense) Serafina's remorse. Her contrite reaction demonstrates that, at the time of this inhumane act, she was unhinged by desperation. Although she ostensibly avoids public dishonour, her inner turmoil and self-reproach reveal that the negative self-image of the uncaring mother is one which she can only overcome through a life of penance. Zayas allows Serafina's psychological process of remorse to take its course. Brownlee suggests that 'Zayas seeks to demythologise impoverishing depictions of women according to the limited categories operative in fairy tales – as either exclusively good or bad, as virtuous or depraved'.[20] Elsewhere, Brownlee commends Zayas's insightful exploration of Serafina's 'contradictory impulses': the prospects of motherhood, matrimony, and monasticism inspire radically conflicting reactions in her.[21] Charting Serafina's life-course reveals a nuanced, complex, and sensitive authorial approach; as a protagonist, she is capable of extreme maternal neglect, as well as of compunction and concern, and even of saintly behaviour in the convent environment.

The life-threatening implications of Serafina's abandonment of this 'criatura' make Zayas's novella relatively unusual among contemporary literary works. Christiane Faliu-Lacourt discusses maternity in the *comedia* and, regarding infanticide in the dramas, comments that 'más numerosas son las comedias que relatan abandonos destinados a proteger al niño y darle oportunidad de vida más favorable, sacrificándose la madre en este

---

[20] Brownlee, *The Cultural Labyrinth of María de Zayas*, p. 36.
[21] Marina S. Brownlee, 'Elusive Subjectivity in María de Zayas', *Journal of Interdisciplinary Literary Studies*, 6 (1994) 2, 163–183 (p. 167).

caso para preservar el porvenir del niño'.[22] Thus, Zayas goes against the established pattern of the *comedia*. It appears that, but for Fadrique's obsessive vigilance of his intended bride, Serafina's well-founded fears would have been confirmed. Straying far from literary stereotyping, Zayas's novella shows the deceived suitor as being unexpectedly prepared to oversee plans that ensure the child's wellbeing. There is an element of role reversal here; the mother reverts to chastity in the convent, while the suitor takes over the maternal role. Zayas concentrates the narrative focus on the trauma of the mother following her loss of the child.

After a series of amorous misadventures, Fadrique returns to Granada; having repeatedly experienced the manipulative capabilities of intelligent women, he intends to find 'una mujer tan inocente y simple que no sepa amar ni aborrecer, ni entienda qué color tiene el engaño ni la astucia' (*NAE* 333). Fadrique's aunt appraises him of the intervening years' events: Serafina lives a holy life of penance; Vicente has died, 'arrepentido del desamor que con ella tuvo' (*NAE* 334), after his offer of marriage met with her refusal to leave the convent; Gracia, aged sixteen, lives in another convent. Templin discusses similar cases of children born of secret liaisons in the *comedia*; like Gracia, these young protagonists are often reared in seclusion, reappearing as adults after a lengthy interval. Gracia's intellectual shortcomings lead Fadrique to view her as his ideal bride. Without her mother's mental capacity for deception, Gracia seems to represent the perfect wife: gullible, rather than an agent of guile. Juan Luis Vives would have disapproved of Fadrique's viewpoint; his *Instrucción de la mujer cristiana* (1523) cautions against women's ignorance, proclaiming that learning can prevent them from sinning.[23] Moreover, Fadrique's desire increases 'por parecerse mucho a Serafina su madre' (*NAE* 334). Although separated since Gracia's birth, each being unaware of the existence of the other, physical clues indicate that mother and daughter are inextricably linked. Mother and daughter do not become rivals for a suitor due to Serafina's prior entry to the convent;

---

[22] Christiane Faliu-Lacourt, 'La madre en la comedia', in *La mujer en el teatro y la novela del siglo XVII: Actas del II coloquio del grupo de estudios sobre teatro español (G.E.S.T.E.), Toulouse 16–17 noviembre 1978* (Toulouse: Institut d'études hispaniques et hispano-américaines, Université de Toulouse-Le Mirail), pp. 39–59 (p. 47).

[23] Vives warns that 'ni hay mujer buena si le falta crianza y doctrina; ni hallaréis mujer mala sino la necia y la que no sabe y no considera cuán gran bien es la castidad y no piensa en la maldad que hace si la pierde'. Consequently, his advice for women is that 'sus estudios deben ser en las letras que dan forma a la crianza y costumbres, instituyen la vida, enseñan obrar conforme a virtud, encaminan a la razón, y finalmente muestran vivir sin perjuicio de nadie, ni de sí misma'. Juan Luis Vives, *Instrucción de la mujer cristiana*, ed. by Elizabeth Teresa Howe, trans. by Juan Justiniano (Madrid: Fundación Universitaria Española, 1995), p. 50 & 55.

thus, Zayas avoids the undignified spectacle of the infatuated mother, whose presence is noted by both Faliu-Lacourt and Templin in Lope's *comedias*.[24]

Once married, Fadrique realises his folly, learning to esteem female intelligence, after Gracia naively cuckolds him during his absence and is unable to comprehend the implications of adultery.[25] Instead of punishing his wife, Fadrique guards her zealously, so that she does not dishonour him again, until he dies childless some years later.[26] By the end of the novella, Fadrique's death precipitates a mother-daughter reunion. He leaves Gracia his wealth, on condition that she becomes a nun 'en el monasterio en que estaba Serafina, a la cual escribió un papel en que le declaraba como era su hija' (*NAE* 340). Instead of exploring the fates of Serafina and Gracia, the narrator's concluding remarks focus on the importance of discretion in women. Thereafter, we are simply told that Gracia cheerfully enjoys her inheritance: 'Entró doña Gracia monja con su madre, contenta de haberse conocido las dos, porque, como era boba, fácil halló el consuelo, gastando la gruesa hacienda que le quedó en labrar un grandioso convento, donde vivió con mucho gusto' (*NAE* 340).[27] The language here (in particular, the reference to 'un grandioso convento') suggests that Gracia is still inclined towards a superficial life of self-indulgence; in *Un voluntario realista* (1878), Galdós later made the imaginative leap over the walls of the fictitious convent of San Salomó, describing its 'arte culinario' with relish.[28] The reader must infer the mother's joy upon reunion with her daughter; a descriptive void engulfs any potential accounts of maternal love in this exclusively female community. Despite Zayas's omission, her complex portrayal of Serafina piques the

---

[24] Faliu-Lacourt, p. 48; Templin, p. 224.

[25] Donald McGrady demonstrates that Zayas adapted the circumstances of Gracia's infidelity, including her nightly accoutrement of armour, from Giovanni Sercambi's seventh tale in his *Novelle* (c. 1399–1400). The story reappeared in *Les Cent Nouvelles nouvelles* (forty-first tale, 'La coutume des clercs'), albeit with major changes. *Les Cent Nouvelles nouvelles*, ed. by Roger Dubuis (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2005), pp. 282–6; Donald McGrady, 'Were Sercambi's *Novelle* Known from the Middle Ages on? (Notes on Chaucer, Sacchetti, *Cent Nouvelles nouvelles*, Pauli, Timoneda, Zayas)', *Italica*, 57 (Spring 1980) 1, 3–18.

[26] Through Fadrique's benevolent reaction to this moral dilemma, we witness the dawning of his wisdom and compassion. He shares with the reader the realisation that, having desired an unintelligent woman and having been cuckolded by the same, he is 'the master of his own dishonoured fate' (Lagreca, p. 574).

[27] In a collection of essays on widowhood in medieval and early modern Europe, Sandra Cavallo and Lyndan Warner note that withdrawal from the secular world was considered the most culturally acceptable option for widows. Jodi Bilinkoff describes how, between 1463 and 1512, five of Avila's socially elite widows decided to spend their inherited wealth by founding religious houses, usually for other women. In making this choice they were hardly alone, as female founders and patrons of religious institutions in early modern Italy, Spain, and Spanish America were virtually all widows. Cavallo and Warner suggest these spiritual communities can be valued from a gynocentric perspective as 'households free from male authority, where the role of "the mother" was central'. See Sandra Cavallo and Lyndan Warner, 'Introduction', in *Widowhood in Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, ed. by Sandra Cavallo and Lyndan Warner (Harlow: Longman, 1999), pp. 3–23 (pp. 20–21); Jodi Bilinkoff, 'Elite Widows and Religious Expression in Early Modern Spain', pp. 181–192.

[28] Benito Pérez Galdós, *Un voluntario realista* (Madrid: Hernando, 1946), p. 10.

reader's curiosity, and we are led to surmise a happy conclusion for the mother who is reunited, in adulthood, with her daughter.

At the close of Fadrique's adventures, the monastic reunion of Serafina and Gracia brings structural equilibrium and thematic unity to the tale. In summation, as Romero-Díaz observes, 'la odisea que comenzó don Fadrique no es sino la odisea hacia el reencuentro de madre e hija en el convento'.[29] Gracia is still a *dama boba*, but her second stay in the convent gives some hope of success, having been reunited with her mother. Although this novella pays tribute to female intelligence, it also serves the additional purpose of insightfully exploring the mother-daughter sub-plot. Rich describes the separation of mother and daughter as 'the essential female tragedy', a tragedy that *El prevenido engañado* narrowly averts.[30] Specifically, the tale demonstrates the severity of social impediments to the natural development of this maternal relationship. The convent walls shield and thereby allow the bond between mother and daughter to be restored, performing a social function. Crucially, Fadrique enables the women's reunion, despite his involvement with them through a failed engagement and a disastrous marriage, illustrating circumstances under which male mediation and control can prove integral to the preservation of the maternal relationship. By contrasting the first episode's desolation with the final scene's happiness, an image is projected, on Zayas's part, of the lengths to be undergone for restoration of this mother-daughter bond.

* * *

In *El imposible vencido*, eighth novella of the *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares*, family relations are of primary importance for the male and female protagonists during the initiation of their courtship. In this, Zayas's treatment of the *difunta pleitada* theme, the mother's role is of interest.[31] Furthermore, it is one of several novellas that serve as exceptions to modify Greer's claim that 'Zayas makes the absence of the mother figure a precondition for the first heterosexual commitment [...] by the great majority of her heroines'.[32] Now, I will examine the role of Leonor's mother in *El imposible vencido*.

---

[29] Romero-Díaz, *Nueva nobleza, nueva novela*, p. 137.
[30] Rich, *Of Woman Born*, p. 237.
[31] In Edwin S. Morby's study of this recurrent motif, he suggests that Zayas adheres closely to native *romances*. Another likely source is Bandello's forty-first novella of Part II. Otherwise, the premise of the lovers' tale resembles both the *Amantes de Teruel* and *Macías* legends. See Edwin S. Morby, 'The *difunta pleitada* theme in María de Zayas', *Hispanic Review*, 16 (1948), 238–242; Place, *María de Zayas*, pp. 27–30.
[32] Greer, *María de Zayas Tells Baroque Tales*, p. 91. Greer also observes that maternal absence is evident in some of Cervantes's *Novelas ejemplares*: specifically, separation of the daughter from her mother can be

While Gracia suffers abandonment as an infant in *El prevenido engañado* because of her mother's unmarried status, marriage places a different set of constraints on Leonor's relationship with her mother.

With Lope as narrator, the first paragraph of *El imposible vencido* imparts vital genealogical information regarding its central protagonists, Rodrigo and Leonor: Rodrigo has the misfortune of being a second son, while Leonor is 'única y sola en la [casa] de sus padres y heredera de un riquísimo mayorazgo' (*NAE* 447). Because of the remarkable closeness of their families, love grows between the pair from an early age: 'Eran vecinos y tan amigos los unos de los otros que casi se hacía el amistad sangre, siendo la de los padres causa de que los hijos desde sus más tiernos años se amasen' (*NAE* 447). According to Lope, Leonor's parents discourage the fledgling romance by limiting her contact with Rodrigo.[33] Thus, familial bonds both enhance and hamper the burgeoning affection of the two youths.

Despite the impediments that Leonor's parents erect, the young couple advance their courtship through covert communication. Rodrigo urges his parents to petition Leonor's parents for permission to marry her, but, much to their surprise, they meet with refusal on grounds that, 'aunque don Rodrigo merecía mucho, [Leonor] no era prenda para un menor' (*NAE* 449). Due to socio-economic factors, another gentleman, Alonso, is selected to be Leonor's spouse. There is no consultation with Leonor on the matter, nor is there any attempt to gauge her viewpoint or to allow her an active role in what effectively becomes a marital 'transaction'. As a result of the unanticipated rebuff, hostile relations develop between the families of Rodrigo and Leonor. To alleviate his disappointment, Rodrigo's parents arrange for him to leave Salamanca to perform military duties in Flanders. Despite the families' discord, Leonor secretly promises Rodrigo to remain unmarried for three years, by which time he will return from Flanders, having obtained the necessary honours and wealth to satisfy 'la codicia de mi padre' (*NAE* 450).[34] Leonor cites her father's greed

---

through abduction of the daughter (Preciosa of *La gitanilla*, for example) or death of the mother (such as Cornelia in *La señora Cornelia*).

[33] During the legal case at the end of the novella, the names of Leonor's parents are revealed to be Francisco and María (*NAE* 479).

[34] The effects of parents' *codicia* on their selection of the daughter's spouse are also witnessed in the next novella, *El juez de su causa*. Socio-economic concerns incite Estela's parents to choose an Italian Count to be her husband instead of allowing her to choose Carlos, whom she loves. Estela demonstrates greater mettle than Leonor of *El imposible vencido* in her willingness to sabotage her parent's wishes by eloping with Carlos. In *El juez de su causa*, Estela's mother does not perform any individual acts, except in the final reunion scene; having thought her daughter to be dead, she is seen 'ayudando al regocijo con piadoso llanto' (*NAE* 511).

as the main marital impediment; this specification differentiates her parents, who have hitherto been presented as a homogenous unit, and implies that her mother does not present a direct obstacle to her happiness. Pérez-Erdélyi describes filial relationships in Zayas's novellas as being characterised by 'intereses divergentes que junto con la falta de comunicación y de comprensión llegan a constituir un conflicto entre generaciones'.[35] Precarious, clandestine relationships invariably occur as a result. Implicitly central to Leonor's predicament is the civil code of *Las siete partidas*, which gave parents the right to disinherit their daughter for marrying against their wishes (*Partida* IV, Title I, Law X).[36]

Although Leonor's sadness has made her gravely ill, she rises from her sickbed on the day that Rodrigo is to depart for Flanders and asks her mother to accompany her to Mass. According to their prearranged plan, Rodrigo waits by the church for the arrival of her coach; when he bows courteously, an overpowering sense of melancholy makes her collapse in her mother's arms. At this juncture, Lope, the narrator, discloses some vital information to clarify the involvement of Leonor's mother in previous events: she is 'inocente de estos sucesos, por no haberle dado su marido parte de las pretensiones de don Rodrigo, ni de su respuesta' (*NAE* 451); without this integral knowledge, she mistakenly deems Leonor's fainting-spell to be the result of her sickness. She attempts to act as a protective carer, taking her daughter back to her sickbed. Misinformation hinders her ability to execute her maternal role effectively. Thus, Lope has erroneously misled the reader in using third-person plural verbs (for example, 'respondieron que su hija era única heredera de su casa') in relation to the rejection of Rodrigo's marriage proposal (*NAE* 449). This falsely implies that both of Leonor's parents are responsible for her unhappy predicament; the confusion is simply attributable to an incident of grammatical carelessness in Lope's text. Oblivious to the extent of Leonor's emotional attachment to

---

[35] Pérez-Erdélyi, p. 49.

[36] Furthermore, a man who married a woman secretly and against her parents' wishes could be obliged to become a servant of his wife's family or could lose his possessions (*Partida* IV, Title III, Law V). *Las siete partidas* was a compilation of mainly Roman laws codified by Alfonso X, which extended to Latin America as the common basic law of the Spanish Empire during the sixteenth century. In 1505, the *Leyes de Toro* (namely, Law XLIX) reiterated the disinheritance principle. Of course, disinheritance was voluntary and may not have been widely enforced, in practice. Nonetheless, in theory, the civil rights that were granted to parents contradicted canon rules that defended the mutual consent of marriage partners (twenty-fourth session of the Council of Trent, *Tametsi*, Chapter IX). As Zayas seems to suggest in this novella, the civil code limits the juridical capacity and hinders the exercise of free will among subaltern subjects, particularly women. See Rabell, 'Introduction'; *Las siete partidas del Rey don Alfonso el Sabio, cotejadas con varios codices antiguos por la Real Academia de la Historia*, 3 vols (Madrid: Imprenta real, 1807), III; Juan Álvarez Posadilla, *Comentarios a Las Leyes de Toro, según su espíritu y el de la legislación de España, en que se tratan las cuestiones prácticas, arreglando sus decisiones a las leyes y resoluciones más modernas que en el día rigen* (Madrid: Antonio Martínez, 1826), pp. 301–2; Asunción Lavrin, 'Introduction: The Scenario, the Actors, and the Issues', in *Sexuality and Marriage in Colonial Latin America* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1989), pp. 1–43 (p. 6).

Rodrigo and to her husband's obstruction of the match, the mother's well-intentioned efforts are misdirected. Leonor does not confide in her mother, suggesting not merely a lack of intimacy between mother and daughter but also the overwhelming omnipotence of patriarchal control. Despite maternal presence, patriarchal control subsumes Leonor's household. Her father's stereotypical portrayal is more akin to the father's role within the family relations of the *comedia*. In Vollendorf's feminist interpretation of Zayas's texts, she reads 'the paternally imposed mindset' as 'metaphor for the patriarchy and its abuses of women'.[37] Certainly, in *El imposible vencido*, the father's dominance evinces the impositions of patriarchy at the domestic level and leaves little or no room for the mother-daughter relationship.

Almost four years pass, exceeding the duration of Leonor's promise.[38] Her melancholic illness continues, which she uses, along with her youth, as excuse to delay the planned marriage to Alonso. Lope highlights the loving concern of her parents, and we deduce that her mother is beginning to suspect the cause of her unhappiness:

> No atreviéndose a disgustar a su hija, que por no tener otra la querían tiernísimamente; si bien andaban tan cuidadosos que no perdían las ocasiones que podían alcanzar para asegurarse de las sospechas que tenían de que la ausencia de don Rodrigo era la mayor causa de su tristeza. (*NAE* 467)

Leonor's despair reaches its apogee through Rodrigo's inaction, until, 'combatida de sus padres, apretada de su amor y desesperada de esta ausencia', her resolve weakens (*NAE* 467). From the list of such adjectives as 'combatida', 'apretada', and 'desesperada', the reader can infer her heightened distress. The imperative for filial obedience exerts considerable pressure on Leonor. Up to this point, her parents are portrayed as a unit, rather than as two distinct and independent agents. Leonor's mother fails to emerge as a source of support for her daughter, despite possessing some level of intuition into the cause of her sorrow. In soliloquy, Leonor laments her plight; her love conflicts with the urge to obey her parents: 'Pues si los obedezco te pierdo, y si los digusto no te gano, pues aun todavía vives ausente y olvidado de mí, cuando yo estoy metida en un caos de confusión, donde amor y obediencia, ausencia y constancia, combaten, consumen y amenazan mi vida' (*NAE* 468). She evidently wishes to be a dutiful daughter: 'Son padres, y no pueden desearme cosa que no me esté muy bien, y cuando me estuviese mal, déboles el ser y el mayor amor que pensarse puede. ¿Pues en qué podré pagarles sino en obedecerles y darles

---

[37] Lisa Vollendorf, *Reclaiming the Body: María de Zayas's Early Modern Feminism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, Department of Romance Languages, 2001), p. 116.

[38] As more than three years have passed, Rodrigo has broken his promise to Leonor. Furthermore, three years was the legal expiration time of a betrothal when one of the parties involved was absent from the country. Thus, Leonor is then both legally and morally free to marry another suitor. See Rabell, p. 134.

gusto?' (*NAE* 469).[39] However, she reaffirms her resolve to remain steadfast in her love and to resist her parents' will: 'Contradiré a mis padres, sufriré sus rigores, no huiré sus castigos' (*NAE* 470).

Unknown to Leonor, her mother, 'muy cuidadosa de saber la causa de sus tristezas', has listened to her outburst with interest (*NAE* 470). Furthermore, Leonor's mother stealthily reads the lovers' correspondence. Her subsequent actions exert great influence over her daughter's fate; despite the seeming homogeneity of Leonor's parents, her mother independently takes the initiative on this occasion. She speaks to her husband and they plot together to hasten Leonor's marriage to Alonso. Leonor's parents forge a letter to Rodrigo's parents, duping them with a false notification of their son's marriage.[40] When the news spreads, Leonor finally yields to her parents' wishes by marrying Alonso. It is noteworthy that Leonor's father has known of his daughter's wish to marry Rodrigo for several years; once Leonor's mother becomes fully aware of the situation, she conspires with her husband to remove Rodrigo as obstacle to Leonor's marriage to Alonso, engaging in duplicity in order to achieve this end. This is a rare episode of maternal activity in Zayas's tales, and the author chooses to portray it in a negative light. We witness the influence of drama through Leonor's theatrical soliloquy. It is interesting that Zayas chooses to use a theatrical ploy in order to generate a substantial role for a mother in one of her stories.[41]

The mother's actions, which have considerable repercussions for Leonor, indicate the relative complexity of her role in the tale. In Robert Con Davis's words, the mother's power 'persists in patriarchal logic specifically as an effacement; hence the disruptive nature of Motherhood as agency of power'.[42] As we saw in Serafina's act of abandonment, the Mother has a limited potential for action, although, on the rare occasions when she can and does act, the effects are considerable. Leonor's mother forms an alliance with the paternal authority figure, and her capacity for active manipulation and control does not

---

[39] This is a contradiction on Leonor's part, given her earlier reference to 'la codicia de mi padre' (*NAE* 450). Her father may simply wish her to have a higher status in society than she would reach by marrying Rodrigo. He appears blind to the fact that a marriage arranged in the interest of the family's socio-economic position is not necessarily compatible with the enhancement of her welfare.

[40] The motif of the forged letter first appears in *Aventurarse perdiendo*: Jacinta becomes a nun after her father falsifies a letter notifying Félix's family of his death.

[41] Leonor's lengthy soliloquy (*NAE* 468–70) also serves the purpose of giving the reader an insight into her psychological torment. Zayas includes another memorable soliloquy: namely, Laura's heartfelt lament (*NAE* 363–5) before making her journey to find hanged-men's body parts in *La fuerza del amor*.

[42] Robert Con Davis, *The Paternal Romance: Reading God-the-Father in Early Western Culture* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993), p. 157.

extend to contravening her spouse's wishes. She manages to shape her daughter's fate, although her interference is to the latter's detriment.[43] In Raymond's terms, she exercises her role within the confines of hetero-relations, becoming an obstacle to Gyn/affection; 'at best, she is a misguided mentor; that is, what counsel she can give is well-meaning but misdirected'.[44]

In selecting Alonso to marry their only child, Leonor's parents have made a poor choice, which is founded on socio-economic concerns; with a spouse who is 'celoso, y [...] amigo de seguir sus apetitos y desconciertos, sin perdonar ni las damas ni el juego', Leonor is condemned to an unhappy married life (*NAE* 473). By the time that Rodrigo returns, Leonor has already embarked upon the unwanted marriage. When she catches sight of her erstwhile lover, she screams and collapses; the commotion draws her mother and maids, and Leonor is pronounced dead. Regardless of her parents' earlier hopes and intentions, they have been thwarted by the death of their only child. Lope fails to elaborate on her parents' grief; he merely generalises that her death is a source of sadness, 'no sólo para su casa sino para toda la ciudad, que como se publicó su repentino fin generalmente la lloraba, sintiendo todos como propia suya la pérdida de tan hermosa dama' (*NAE* 473). While Lope lends insight into the public mourning surrounding Leonor's death, the reader can infer little from his slight intimation regarding her parents' sense of loss.

Leonor's coffin is brought to church and placed in an underground chapel. There, Rodrigo's fervent prayer at a crucifix is answered, and Leonor miraculously returns to life; alternatively, Leonor's 'resurrection' could simply be a case of a wrong diagnosis of death. Rodrigo takes her to Ciudad Rodrigo, where his relatives live, and summons his parents. The reunited lovers plan their wedding with the help of Rodrigo's family, who appear willing to forget the slight inflicted on them previously by Leonor's father. Following Tridentine regulations, the banns are read three times at church in Salamanca. Ironically, Leonor's parents and husband are present; 'estando seguros de que era muerta y la habían enterrado', hearing Leonor's name provokes no reaction from them (*NAE* 477). The couple celebrate their nuptial Mass, as Leonor's parents and former husband look on with incredulity. Lope describes the tearful reunion of mother and daughter; during this family gathering, the mother expresses tenderness and embraces her 'querida Leonor', who weeps

[43] The mother's reasoning may not be malevolent; given Rodrigo's relatively low socio-economic position and his delay in returning to Spain, she may believe that her daughter's best interests lie in marriage to another.
[44] Raymond, p. 186.

'tiernísimamente' with joy (*NAE* 478). The mother's reaction during the reunion scene is more revealing than that involving Serafina and Gracia in *El prevenido engañado*. The encounter fails to provoke similarly heartfelt rejoicing from Alonso, Leonor's former husband, who is more concerned with the legal ramifications of this event.[45]

When the foregoing events are explained to Leonor's parents, they decide to defend the couple against Alonso. Henceforth, they seem rather more preoccupied with the civil and canonical status of the marriage than with their daughter's astounding resurrection. There is no mention of parental love in relation to their decision to support Leonor:

> Como prudentes, sabiendo que don Rodrigo y sus padres no determinaran de hacer tal, sin acuerdo maduro, pareceres de teólogos y letrados, considerando los caminos que tiene Dios para efectuar su voluntad y descubrir sus secretos, le dieron muchas gracias, disponiéndose a defender por justicia esta causa, si don Alonso, como pensaban, les pusiese pleito. (*NAE* 479)

When conflict with Alonso ensues, Rodrigo and his family appeal to the ecclesiastical authority of a bishop to defend the canonical validity of his marriage to Leonor. As a mitigating factor, he cites 'la fuerza que sus [Leonor's] padres le habían hecho, engañándola, diciendo que él se había casado en Flandes, cuya obediencia reverencial la había obligado' (*NAE* 480). Leonor reiterates this point and adds that, having been forced into the first marriage by her parents, she had not allowed it to be consummated. Ultimately, the bishop consults with a professor of law and his students in Salamanca; unanimously, they declare '¡Dénsela a don Rodrigo, dénsela a don Rodrigo, que suya es!' (*NAE* 482), deeming the marriage valid. While Alonso loses both Leonor and her dowry, the ending is apparently a satisfactory one for Leonor, Rodrigo, and their families.

Through canonical discourse, Zayas appears to legitimise daughters' marital choices, which mothers and fathers should heed instead of assuming that they possess superior judgement in such matters. As Morby observes, 'the *imposible vencido* is less the lady's death than the sacrament that joins her to an unloved husband'; by forcibly arranging the latter match, Leonor's parents were instrumental in allowing events to reach this impasse.[46] Regardless of the legal ramifications, the 'real' reason for the mayhem was the parents's assumption that they knew best, representing the abuses of the patriarchy and of those, such as Leonor's mother, who collude with it. More than Leonor's mother or other

---

[45] Alonso instigates the legal dispute, 'no porque le obligase el amor que la tenía, sino la codicia del gran dote que le habían dado con ella' (*NAE* 478). Yet again, 'codicia' is cited as the primary motivation for marital arrangements, sidestepping the canonical issue of mutual consent.

[46] Morby, p. 241.

relatives, ecclesiastical and legal authority figures provide her with crucial assistance.[47] In this extreme case, the woman has to be resurrected in order to evade an unwanted marriage. For Leonor's future happiness, nothing less than her presumed death is essential for her free will and choice of spouse to be respected; in order to vindicate her right to choose a husband, another Leonor has to be invented to take the place of the former one.

After the brief reappearance of Leonor's mother, during the crucial reunion scene at the Salamanca church, Lope does not mention her again. In the epilogue, Rodrigo and Leonor's marriage is foregrounded, and her family dissolves into the background. Throughout the tale, despite the mother's sporadic activity, her capacity to affect her daughter's fate does not extend to a direct contravention of the father's will; in this case, the mother's hands are tied with patriarchal bonds. Like *El prevenido engañado*, the narrative of *El imposible vencido* provides only fleeting glimpses of intimacy between mother and daughter; they withhold secrets, leading to the proliferation of misunderstanding and deceit, but their embrace in the story injects a rare note of human warmth in a world of deceit and avarice.

* * *

In my second chapter, I examined the role of sisterhood in the final tale of the *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares*, Laura's *El jardín engañoso*. As a widowed mother, family relations hold a particular interest for Laura, which she reveals through the domestic focus of her narrative. Her novella warrants re-examination for its relevance to the motherhood theme; although the sisterly relationship between Teodosia and Constanza occupies the narrative foreground, their mother also plays an important role in the tale. The experience of widowhood enhances the ability of this mother to exercise her maternal functions.

At the outset of the novella, the reader's attention is drawn to the special qualities of the parents who raise Teodosia and Constanza: 'un caballero noble y rico, y él por sus partes merecedor de tener por mujer una gallarda dama, igual en todo a sus virtudes y nobleza, que éste es el más rico don que se puede alcanzar' (*NAE* 515). The focus on their parents soon sharpens, and the mother becomes one of the tale's central protagonists. Although

[47] At times, Zayas expresses greater faith in such legal and religious institutions than in the family; see also *La inocencia castigada* (*DA*), to which I return in my final chapter.

Constanza chastely welcomes Jorge's courtship, she seems to accept, without complaint, her father's will on the matter of matrimony,

> Teniendo por seguro el creer que apenas se la pediría a su padre, cuando tendría alegre y dichoso fin este amor, si bien le alentaba tan honesta y recatadamente que dejaba lugar a su padre para que en caso que no fuese su gusto el dársele por dueño, ella pudiese, sin ofensa de su honor, dejarse de esta pretensión. (*NAE* 516)

Similar to Leonor's mother in *El imposible vencido*, Constanza's mother is given no role in the acceptance or rejection of her daughter's marriage proposals at this point. Ultimately, Constanza's hope to marry Jorge does not come to fruition, due to the covetous scheming of her sister, Teodosia.

Constanza's marital disappointment is followed by the death of her father. Two years have passed since Jorge's abrupt departure when a poor *hidalgo*, Carlos, takes lodgings opposite the women's household and falls in love with Constanza. Aware that his lack of wealth precludes him from marrying Constanza by accepted means, he instigates a cunning stratagem to achieve this aim. At this juncture, we are told the mother's name: Fabia; being named, a new importance is conferred upon her role, which coincides with her widowed status. In Vasileski's terms, Fabia is an example of one of Zayas's 'personajes mayores de edad como modelos de nobleza y caridad hacia el prójimo'.[48] Zayas's positive portrayal of Fabia presents, in this instance, a favourable view of contemporary motherhood, whereas in most of her novellas a more passive, restrained picture of motherhood is the norm. Widowhood in *El jardín engañoso* differentiates between Fabia and maternal figures in *El prevenido engañado* (i.e. Serafina) and *El imposible vencido* (i.e. Leonor's mother), who are of unmarried and married statuses respectively. Logically enough, what it means to be a woman (or what Denise Riley calls 'different densities of sexed being') is in flux, with changes being experienced throughout the life-course, such as during the transition between married and widowed status.[49] The husband's death in *El jardín engañoso* signals a greater role for the mother; Fabia attains a newfound autonomy once the paternal figure is removed from the familial equation. Here, Zayas is toying with the notion of the household without a male head, or of what might happen if women were allowed to make their own life-decisions, where its members are unencumbered by an immediate patriarchal presence and where financial issues do not arise.

---

[48] Vasileski, p. 93.
[49] Riley, 'Does a Sex Have a History?', p. 22.

Describing the widowed mother's loving care, Laura's only implied criticism is that, 'ocupada en el gobierno de su hacienda' (*NAE* 520), she is dilatory in the arrangement of marriages for her two daughters. It is significant that the narrator is herself a mother, a widow and in the final stages of arranging her own daughter's marriage to her suitor, Diego. Through Laura's portrayal of a widow's family situation that encapsulates her own experience, Zayas cleverly creates a doubling, *mise en abyme* effect. In Gardiner's discussion of women's writing, she contends that 'the text and its female hero begin as narcissistic extensions of the author'.[50] Thus, as 'author' of *El jardín engañoso*, Laura initially creates Fabia – a widowed mother of daughters – as an image of herself, portraying a protagonist with whom she can readily identify.

As Constanza's suitor, Carlos's first step is to seek to ingratiate himself with Fabia and, consequently, with her daughters. Having bribed his maid and a doctor, Carlos manages to dupe the kindly Fabia into thinking him gravely ill; this provokes a motherly response: 'Supo la noble Fabia la enfermedad de su vecino, y con notable sentimiento le fue luego a ver, y le acudía como si fuera un hijo a todo lo que era menester' (*NAE* 521). We can infer that, as a widow, Fabia's independence enables her to visit Carlos freely. He pursues the stratagem to its logical limitations: he makes his will, takes the last sacraments, and seizes the opportunity to implement the final step of his scheme. Fabia is greatly saddened by Carlos's sickness, 'como si fuera un hijo suyo' (*NAE* 522), and he exploits her maternal instinct. He tells her, in confidence, that he had wished to marry Constanza; now that he is 'dying', he movingly requests 'la licencia [...] para que yo le deje toda mi hacienda, y que ella la acepte, quedando vos, señora, por testamentaria' (*NAE* 522). His deception continues when he includes considerable wealth and property, all of which is to be Constanza's, in a fabricated will. By misleading Fabia through his false performance of a magnanimous dying act, the mother and daughter feel greatly indebted to him and pray for his recovery. Fabia laments Constanza's imminent 'loss': '¡Ay hija mía, en qué obligación estás a Carlos! Ya puedes desde hoy llamarte desdichada, perdiendo, como pierdes tal marido' (*NAE* 522). Constanza, 'agradada de las buenas partes de Carlos, y obligada con la riqueza que le dejaba', feels similarly grateful to Carlos (*NAE* 522).

---

[50] Gardiner, p. 357.

Carlos 'miraculously' recovers his health and his scheme brings forth the desired result.[51] His stratagem succeeds insofar as Fabia arranges Constanza's marriage to Carlos. Fabia's admiration has been won by Carlos's apparently generous act; hence, she and Constanza regard this as an indication of his virtuous character and deem him a suitable husband. For the reader, the problem of his deception remains but is apparently forgotten by the tale's protagonists. The result of Fabia's independence is that she is duped and manipulated by Carlos; this is a rather conservative outcome and not a particularly feminist one. The patriarchy still seems alive and well, albeit under a different guise, despite the demise of Fabia's husband.

Once married, Constanza is 'tan contenta porque su esposo sabía granjear su voluntad con tantos regalos y caricias' (*NAE* 523), which may be augmented by her previous experience of disappointment through Jorge's sudden abandonment of her. When Carlos reveals his deception, he is already assured of his wife's love, and Fabia and Teodosia consider the happy match to be heaven's will, 'viendo a Constanza tan contenta, y que con tantas veras se juzgaba dichosa, le amaban con tal extremo que, en lugar de sentir la burla, la juzgaban por dicha' (*NAE* 523). While Leonor's father, in *El imposible vencido*, chooses her spouse according to pecuniary criteria, Fabia's furtherance of Carlos's suit does not seem to be entirely motivated by his wealthy status. His false will blurs the issue of romantic love; more importantly, as a distinguishing feature of this novella, it is evident that Constanza willingly consents to the marriage. Constanza's contentment is of primary importance to her mother; given Constanza's satisfaction with her new husband, Fabia does not berate or reject him for his deception or poverty. There is no indication to suggest that Laura, the narrator, disapproves of Fabia's willingness to forgive, suggesting that she may also believe that a daughter's happiness in marriage is more important than its propagation of wealth.

Another two years pass before the reappearance of Jorge, Constanza's first suitor, during which time her happiness in marriage has multiplied. By now, Constanza is also a mother: 'la bellísima dama tenía por prendas de su querido esposo dos hermosos hijos' (*NAE* 523). Now that Constanza has entered motherhood, Fabia's maternal role in the novella diminishes. In order to rid herself of Jorge's immoral advances, Constanza proposes a

[51] Friedman, 'Constructing Romance', p. 55. Friedman suggests that the courtship of Carlos and Constanza echoes the episode of Camacho's wedding in *Don Quijote* (*Segunda Parte*, Chapters 20–1). Like Carlos, the humble Basilio creates a ruse whereby he feigns suffering a mortal, self-inflicted wound in order to win Quiteria's hand; however, unlike the unknowing Constanza, Quiteria seems to be have been privy to the trickery.

challenge: should he produce a garden overnight, she would forefeit her honour to him; should he fail, he must marry her sister. The mother has been written out of the script at this point, and, in Fabia's stead, Constanza undertakes to engineer her sister's marriage, albeit by these inexpedient means.

Fabia is briefly mentioned as an onlooker of the dazzling garden created by Jorge: 'A las voces que Carlos dio, se levantó Constanza, y su madre y cuantos en casa había' (*NAE* 529). Carlos spares his wife's life, and Jorge displays a sudden change of heart. I noted in my second chapter that Constanza is favoured by luck rather than as a result of virtuous actions by her mother or by herself. Subsequently, Teodosia weds Jorge amid widespread rejoicing: 'Todos ayudaban a este regocijo, unos con admiraciones y otros con parabienes' (*NAE* 533). Dopico Black notes, as an issue related to her study of the wife in early modern Spain, the 'question of the missing mother' in texts of the Golden Age; quoting El Saffar, she suggests that 'the role of mothers as defined by the period was one of self-giving, so that she in effect disappears into the lives of those whose nurturance [*sic*] and growth she provides'.[52] This offers some explanation for Fabia's sporadic disappearances in *El jardín engañoso*: when it is unnecessary for her to fulfil the 'self-giving' role for her daughters, she receives little or no mention by the narrator. By the time of Teodosia's wedding, Fabia has retreated into the narrative background, receiving no specific mention; we can infer that, upon the marriage of her second child, Fabia's maternal duties have been fulfilled.

The role of motherhood in Zayas's texts, particularly in her *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares*, should not be overlooked. Key episodes of concealed maternity in *El prevenido engañado* explore Serafina's abandonment of her infant, Gracia, and its aftermath. In the aptly named *El imposible vencido*, Leonor must appear to die in order to overcome parental opposition to her marriage to Rodrigo; the patriarchal figure dominates this household landscape, leaving little space for independent maternal agency. Thus, Zayas's portrayals of motherhood include both married and unmarried women who lack the ability to affect their daughters' lives. Zayas skirts the question of maternal efficacy in *El jardín engañoso*, in which Fabia successfully (if accidentally) arranges a joyous marriage and future for her daughter, Constanza. As a widow, Fabia is potentially free of the societal and domestic constraints that the mothers experience in the two aforementioned novellas; however, there is very little feminine efficacy in the story. Zayas

[52] Dopico Black, pp. 221–2, n. 25.

has the opportunity to liberate the mother through widowhood but then shows her being duped and manipulated by Carlos. Ultimately, Constanza's contentment with Carlos cannot really be attributed to Fabia. Constanza's happiness and safety initially depend on her own and, later, on Carlos's understanding attitude, the latter being to the point of stretching credulity, if we are to take Zayas's other novellas into account.[53] The happy ending has more to do with the actions and attitudes of Carlos and Jorge than with any action of Fabia, the 'freest' mother in Zayas's stories.

Mothers also wield negligible influence in the *Desengaños amorosos*. Specifically, I will now discuss *Amar sólo por vencer*, which provides us with another case of a widowed mother in Zayas's novellas.

* * *

In Zayas's second prose work, we seldom witness the interaction of mothers and daughters.[54] However, *Amar sólo por vencer* presents an unusual case, which bears an interesting resemblance to later frame-tale events. Laurela's parents are both alive during most of the tale, until her mother is widowed towards its conclusion. Similar to Fabia's independence, once widowed in the aforementioned *El jardín engañoso*, the removal of male influence from *Amar sólo por vencer* elevates the mother's role in the all-female family group. Laurela's father overshadows her mother, his power extending to the murder of her beloved Laurela. This male figure dwells in a household that is populated almost entirely by women. We shall see that, once men are eliminated from the text, following Laurela's murder, bonds of the women's community are strengthened. On the patriarch's death, the mother is united with her surviving daughters in the convent; in this monastic sanctuary, some semblance of harmony is restored to the remaining family members – namely, a mother and her daughters.

---

[53] Laura attributes Carlos's understanding to Constanza's wealth, 'pues el que escoge mujer más rica que él no compra mujer sino señora' (*NAE* 531). As I go on to show, Laura also undermines the tale by remarking that she does not wish to 'venderos por verdades averiguadas los sucesos de esta historia' (*NAE* 512).

[54] Although it is beyond the scope of my gynocentric study, it is worth noting that the second episode of *El traidor contra su sangre* (*DA*) explores the shortlived, tender relationship between Ana and her infant son. Zayas includes the telling detail that, 'muy madre', Ana chooses to breastfeed instead of hiring a wetnurse, as was common practice (*DA* 391). Although Ana's husband murders her, the boy survives.

Matilde narrates *Amar sólo por vencer*, sixth novella of the *Desengaños amorosos*. The tale shares the Madrid setting of the frame narrative.[55] Its central protagonist, Laurela, is the third and youngest daughter of 'padres ilustres y ricos' (*DA* 295). Matilde informs us that Laurela's parents zealously provide a complete education for their daughter. Her lessons include reading, writing, and instruction to an advanced level in music, as well as more traditional 'feminine' skills. Initially, this dedicated parental care for their youngest daughter inspires optimism in the reader. Laurela's idyllic family existence inevitably instills naivety in her regarding any danger posed by the outside world. At the age of fourteen, she receives the admiring attentions of Esteban, of which she remains innocently oblivious. Although Esteban hides his origins, Matilde makes it evident that he is poorly qualified, in terms of social standing, to be Laurela's suitor, 'pues su más conocida renta era servir, y en faltando esto, faltaba todo. No se le conocía tierra ni pariente, porque él encubría en la que había nacido, quizá para disimular algunos defectos de bajeza' (*DA* 296). The disparity of social status between Laurela and Esteban is considerably greater than that which is between Leonor and Rodrigo in *El imposible vencido*. Indeed, with regard to Esteban's unsuitability as Laurela's suitor, Matilde contends that 'ni aun para escudero le estimaran sus padres' (*DA* 296). Esteban's opportunities for seduction are limited, 'porque las veces que [Laurela] salía de casa era con su madre y hermanas' (*DA* 296); the barriers presented by the female community of mother and daughters are impermeable to the male interloper under ordinary circumstances.

Esteban formulates a cunning stratagem to infiltrate this female community: he will disguise himself as one of their own sex and gain employment as their maid. Esteban is informed that Laurela's parents hire their household servants on the basis of musical ability, 'porque aman tan tiernamente esta hija, que no tratan sino de agradarla' (*DA* 298). The reader's first impression of Laurela centres on her privileged upbringing by parents in a nurturing environment. Announcing himself as 'Estefanía', Esteban sings at length and captivates the family's female members, although, 'como madre y hermanas querían ternísimas a Laurela' (*DA* 299), the final decision regarding the maid's employment rests

[55] Furthermore, the novella and frame tale may take place in the same area of Madrid. When Esteban meets Laurela's former maid, they recognise each other from the area – 'hacia el Carmen' – surrounding Laurela's house (*DA* 297). After the first night of the *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares*, several guests attend Midnight Mass in the Carmen area: 'Y los demás caballeros y damas, unos a otros, tocaron a maitines en el Carmen, y determinando oírlos con la Misa del Gallo, para dormir descuidados, avisados para la segunda noche, se despidieron de Lisis y su madre, que no quisieron oírlos' (*NAE* 237–8). The first tale that Matilde narrates, *La burlada Aminta y venganza del honor*, is also partially set 'en esta Corte' (*NAE* 212).

with her.[56] Laurela's loving embrace of Estefanía signals the beginning of 'her' employment; proclaiming Estefanía her 'hermana y amiga' (*DA* 306), Laurela unwittingly endows 'her' with a privileged position in the family's household that was denied Esteban. The success of this 'sex-change' stratagem becomes verisimilar when one considers the contemporaneous prevalency of the one-sex model in thinking about sexual difference.[57] Henceforth, Esteban sets about weaving an elaborate web of seduction in order to trap the unsuspecting Laurela, whose family has hitherto provided her with a sheltered existence. He uses the guise of Estefanía to declare love for her, claiming that 'el poder de amor también se extiende de mujer a mujer, como de galán a dama' (*DA* 306).[58]

Laurela's parents are individually named at this point in the tale: Bernardo and Leonor; this attribution of names seems to formalise the narrator's process of distinguishing the husband from his wife. Unlike the perplexed Bernardo, Leonor demonstrates partial understanding of the amorous intent that lies behind the maid's declarations of love. Interpreting Estefanía's song, Leonor explains to her husband that '¿Qué enigmas han de ser, sino que Estefanía está enamorada de Laurela desde el punto que la vio, y lamenta su ausencia celebrando su amor, como habéis visto?' (*DA* 308). Importantly, Leonor fails to detect that this is part of a 'sex-change' stratagem. Being tricked by Esteban, she repeats the mistake of Fabia, who is duped by Carlos in *El jardín engañoso*. Thus, both mothers fail their daughters; while the latter novella ostensibly ends with happy marriages, *Amar*

---

[56] Laurela's father does not encounter the new maid until after the women have negotiated 'her' employment in their home.

[57] Thomas Laqueur outlines the one-sex model, which imagines women as inverted and imperfect men, and proposes its domination from classical antiquity until the end of the seventeenth century. He observes that 'in this world, the body with its one elastic sex was far freer to express theatrical gender and the anxieties thereby produced than it would be when it came to be regarded as the foundation of gender'. Also, as the legal case of Elena/Eleno de Céspedes demonstrates, early modern medical experts agreed that transformation into a hermaphrodite was theoretically possible. Israel Burshatin, 'Interrogating Hermaphroditism in Sixteenth-Century Spain', in *Hispanisms and Homosexualities*, ed. by Sylvia Molloy and Robert McKee Irwin (Durham: Duke University Press, 1998), pp. 3–18; Thomas Laqueur, *Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990), p. 125.

[58] Zayas's critics have expended much energy analysing the homoerotic undertones of Estefanía's amorous discourse. It is important to note that Esteban, whose underlying intent is seduction, pronounces a defence of women's love. Later, he derides the possibility by asking incredulously: '¿Quién ha visto que una dama se enamore de otra?' (*DA* 320). I have already suggested that in *La burlada Aminta y venganza del honor*, when Flora intimates that she experiences 'deseos más de galán' (*NAE* 223), *engaño* overwhelms the homoerotic undertones. Furthermore, I have commented on Isabel's intimacy with Leonisa while playing the part of Zelima. If the reader is to provide an answer to Esteban's question based on Zayas's novellas alone, it cannot be affirmative, as there is a lack of unambiguous evidence of female homoerotic love; deception is evident in each potential case. Judith Brown notes that lesbian sexuality was recognised as sinful and criminal in medieval and early modern Europe, which potentially affected the possibilities for its representation in literary spheres. Judith C. Brown, 'Lesbian Sexuality in Medieval and Early Modern Europe', in *Hidden from History: Reclaiming the Gay and Lesbian Past*, ed. by Martin Bauml Duberman, Martha Vicinus and George Chauncey Jr. (London: Penguin, 1989), pp. 67–75.

sólo por vencer ends tragically, as we shall see, in keeping with the violent tone of the *Desengaños amorosos.*

Bernardo's salient feature is his concupiscence; he persecutes the new maid with lascivious importuning, 'prometiéndola casarla muy bien si hacía por él lo que deseaba' (*DA* 310). Welcoming the attractive stranger into his home, lust blinds Bernardo to Esteban's fraudulent agenda. Ironically, due to his own sly pursuit of the maid, he fails to detect that 'she' is participating in a far more cunning plan with the same end in mind: seduction of a vulnerable young woman. Apart from the irony of gender involved, these seductive pursuits are conducted from opposite ends of the social scale: the father seeks to abuse his position of power; from a lower social stratum, Esteban uses the opposite ruse. Driven by their desire, each of these men is eager to permeate the gendered boundaries of the household's intimate, exclusively female community of mother, daughters, and maids. Esteban has adopted the feminine identity of Estefanía to enter the community undetected, and Bernardo openly pursues 'her', its newest member. Matilde later describes a domestic scene in which the disguised Esteban sings a lengthy song on the theme of jealousy for Laurela's mother and sisters while they embroider. Thus, the narrator subtly conveys the spirit of concord that prevails among this mother-and-daughter group. Despite Esteban's sexually ambiguous behaviour, the familial gathering has a convivial atmosphere; the tranquil ambience is soon to be shattered, once he reveals his 'true' male identity.

Esteban accelerates his plans when Bernardo, 'codicioso', accepts a lucrative marriage proposal on Laurela's behalf (*DA* 318). He declares his stratagem to Laurela, citing her father's pecuniary motives in his reasoning:

> Aunque tengo nobleza con que igualarte, soy tan pobre, que no he tenido atrevimiento de pedirte a tu padre, teniendo por seguro que el granjear tu voluntad era los más esencial; pues una vez casado contigo, tu padre había de tenerse por contento, pues no me excede más que en los bienes de fortuna, que el cielo los da y los quita. (*DA* 319–320)

Avarice joins lust in the list of Bernardo's vices, echoing the father's greed in relation to his daughter's marital prospects in earlier tales such as *El imposible vencido.* Yet again, in contrast with Zayas's omnipotent father figures, mothers are represented as wielding little influence over family decisions. Esteban threatens to commit suicide, which would lead to the scandalous disclosure of his 'true' identity and would arouse public suspicion regarding Laurela's involvement in his fraudulent stratagem. Profoundly perturbed by her predicament, Laurela considers taking her own life, but Esteban soothes her qualms by

retaining an arbitrary gender identity: 'Estefanía sería mientras ella gustase que no fuese don Esteban' (*DA* 321).

That night, Laurela vacillates between potential courses of action, repeatedly mentioning 'sus padres' in relation to her fears: 'Ya se aseguraba en lo mucho que la querían sus padres y cuán ciertos estaban de su virtuosa y honesta vida; ya reparaba en que, cuando sus padres se asegurasen, no lo había de quedar el que había de ser su esposo' (*DA* 321). Her anxiety stems from consideration of the possible outcome of the discovery of Esteban's secret presence in her home. In her plight, she fails to envision her mother specifically as a useful ally. Inner turmoil leads to illness, and she remains bedridden for more than one month due to 'un accidente de calentura' (*DA* 322). In the interim, Laurela agrees to elope with Esteban. Laurela intends to have intermediaries seek 'el perdón de su padre', according primacy to his opinion and no importance to that of her mother (*DA* 323). Taking money and jewels, Laurela leaves a letter for her father, 'pidiéndole perdón con tierno sentimiento' (*DA* 324). Evidently, from Laurela's viewpoint, the father is an absolute domestic monarch who divests maternal rule of its authority.[59] The day after the elopement, however, Esteban divulges his lowly status as 'hijo de un pobre oficial de carpintería' and reveals that he is already married (*DA* 325). Until now, Matilde has withheld the revelation of Esteban's married status; the reader simultaneously shares Laurela's dismay. The fact that he is already married removes the possibility of even an ill-suited marriage for Laurela. At this apogee, he callously flees to safety with Laurela's stolen wealth. As harbinger of disenchantment, the dawn appears to mock her cruelly in an apt image: 'se empezó a reír la mañana' (*DA* 324).

When Esteban departs, he suggests that her relatives will obtain her father's forgiveness: 'tienes deudos que te ampararán, y ellos reportarán el enojo de tu padre, que al fin eres su hija, y considerará la poca culpa que tienes, pues has sido engañada' (*DA* 325). Subsequently, any assumptions regarding the mercy of Laurela's father or his willingness to ameliorate her plight are shown to be unfounded. Matilde shifts our attention to the scene of Laurela's household once her absence has been detected. Bernardo reads her letter and covertly plots his revenge, while Leonor and her other daughters tearfully lament the situation. He calms the women's grief, feigning clemency, in order to ensure the success of his plans. Contrary to Bernardo's charitable claims, torment and death await

[59] Quoting from Ariès, Gamboa also uses the term 'domestic monarch' to denote the (male) head of household's role.

Laurela. When her uncle finds her in the church of 'Santa María', where she has found temporary sanctuary, she asks for his help. Instead, he berates her and takes her to her aunt, who demonstrates greater severity by beating her. Laurela's uncle and aunt keep her in their house for one year and, with Bernardo, plot her murder. Laurela's new life is in stark contrast with her previous carefree, music-filled existence: 'no salía si no era muy de mañana, a misa; ni aun reír ni cantar, como solía' (*DA* 329). Velasco notes that, consequently, 'the general tone of the story shifts from the jovial and pleasant discussion of lesbian desire to the ominous and sinister chain of events involved in heterosexual passion that results in violent homicide'.[60]

The suitor whom Laurela was to marry demonstrates tremendous compassion; overlooking her misdemeanour due to the deception involved, he asks to marry her nevertheless – 'tan enamorado estaba don Enrique' (*DA* 328). Thus, through marriage, the possibility of salvaging Laurela's reputation arises. However, Laurela's father prevents her from accessing this route to deliverance, and her mother lacks the independent power of the widowed Fabia in *El jardín engañoso* to arrange her daughter's marriage at this crucial time. Displaying a proprietary attitude towards his wife and daughters, Bernardo's command is that Laurela should remain in her aunt's house, 'sin ver a sus padres ni hermanas' (*DA* 329). In Zayas's novellas, the role of honour is to facilitate the exploration of human behaviour – in this case, Bernardo's violent revenge on his daughter.[61] His rule keeps Laurela physically separate from her mother and sisters, who are impotent to affect her fate, and he scapegoats her for the family's collective deception at Esteban's hands by devising a scheme whereby a wall falls, killing her. Repeating a familiar pattern in Zayas's *Desengaños amorosos*, architecture here serves as 'accomplice in the exercise of patriarchal authority'.[62] In discussing Fadrique's recourse to violence in *El prevenido engañado*, when he beats Violante for taking another lover, Alsop explains that 'the need to resort to violence is typical when socialization of the woman has broken down to the point that she does not adhere to the man's wishes'.[63] Similar reasoning lies behind

---

[60] Velasco, 'María de Zayas and Lesbian Desire in Early Modern Spain', p. 29.

[61] Cyril A. Jones contends that dramatic honour is a convention for 'showing us something of the truth about human beings and their behaviour'. I would suggest that Zayas uses the honour code in her *novelas cortesanas* as a device to explore human behaviour. Cyril A. Jones, 'Spanish Honour as Historical Phenomenon, Convention and Artistic Motive', *Hispanic Review*, 33 (1965) 1, 32–39 (p. 39).

[62] Gamboa, p. 196. Gamboa cites *La esclava de su amante*, in which Isabel's enclosure in the home facilitates her rape by a neighbour. Foreshadowing *Amar sólo por vencer*, *La inocencia castigada* also portrays use of the walls of the house as an instrument of torture. Each of these tales portrays a woman as being complicit in the torture: Inés's sister-in-law and Laurela's aunt. The role of Laurela's aunt as executioner contrasts sharply with the female bonding among the rest of her relatives.

[63] Alsop, para. 19 of 30.

Bernardo's homicidal act. The 'socialization of woman' would have been considered to be the father's role, far more so than that of a forsaken lover, such as Fadrique in *El prevenido engañado*. As head of his household and as its sole male member, Bernardo is frustrated by his failure to mould his youngest daughter's future. By eloping with Esteban, despite the mitigating circumstances, Laurela has flagrantly disobeyed him and has rejected his choice of spouse. Predictably, her transgression provokes an extremely violent reaction from him.

We may cautiously posit a second motive for Bernardo's violent act: Estefanía's disguise dupes Bernardo so successfully that he experiences sexual attraction to 'her'; in fact, Esteban infers that Bernardo 'se había enamorado' (*DA* 307). Given the prevailingly negative view of male homosexuality in seventeenth-century Spain, Bernardo experiences a personal humiliation; Laurela acts as a physical reminder of this memory, which he attempts to annihilate through her death. Whether or not he is aware of it, there may plausibly be another agenda here, aside from his self-perceived patriarchal duties: exasperation and self-loathing at almost being duped into committing a homosexual act. Perhaps, by killing Laurela, with whom Esteban has been intimate at the closest degree, Bernardo moves to conceal the secret of his own amorous proclivities towards Estefanía/Esteban.

Laurela dies on 'un día de Nuestra Señora de Agosto', the Feast of the Assumption of Mary, having visited the Church of 'Nuestra Señora de Atocha' that morning (*DA* 329). This pair of Marian references, particularly to the Assumption, suggests that Laurela benefits from a heavenly reward for her suffering, perhaps under Mary's special protection. When Bernardo brings news of Laurela's death to her mother and sisters, their 'tiernos sentimientos' contrast with his incriminating intimation of just punishment (*DA* 330). A maid, who overheard the murderous scheme, confirms the women's suspicions. She reports to Laurela's eldest sister 'lo que había visto y oído, y ella a su madre y a la otra hermana, que fue causa de que su sentimiento y dolor se renovase, que les duró mientras vivieron, sin poder jamás consolarse' (*DA* 331). Together with Laurela's two sisters, the mother, 'después que enviudó' (*DA* 331), enters a convent. The women, united by familial solidarity in the convent, withdraw from the world of violent male treachery; there, they can safely create a homosocial community for women, an improved version of the intimate domestic environment that they shared before Laurela's death. Williamsen offers an interesting interpretation of Laurela's murder, which is caused by the collapsing wall: 'At

the same time that patriarchal architecture destroys the young woman, it itself crumbles'.[64] In restoring Bernardo's 'life' or reputation, the honour code rests upon the destruction of life. Soon after the wall's fall, the novella's principal representative of patriarchy is himself erased from the tale's social microcosm through his own death. Matilde provides minimal information regarding family relations in the intervening period between Laurela's murder and Bernardo's demise. The circumstances of his death remain a mystery, which is somewhat unsatisfactory for the reader, since it is left unconnected to any of the events in the novella. The reader can only infer its effects: an emancipatory outcome of family bonding for Laurela's widowed mother and siblings. Once this particular patriarchal authority-figure has died, only women remain to rule the family unit, but they remove themselves (particularly the mother) from any decision-making position by entering the convent.

Matilde concludes the tale by reporting that Laurela's mother and sisters recounted it to her, 'para que sirva a las damas de desengaño, para no fiarse de los bien fingidos engaños de los cautelosos amantes' (*DA* 331). Given that the source is Laurela's mother and sisters, this implies the awareness, on their parts, of Bernardo's amorous pursuit of Estefanía. The moral of the story could easily have been that mothers should make a stand against the hypocritical double standard displayed by their husbands, such as Bernardo, who are prepared knowingly to commit adultery and yet kill the daughter who is unintentionally guilty of a similar offence. By bringing in this unexpected source at this point in the story, Matilde shifts the spotlight back to the mother and her daughters. Esteban is instigator of the downward spiral of disaster, but Bernardo is not morally compelled to punish his daughter; his thirst for personal vengeance determines Laurela's fate. One deduces that, but for the father's dominance, Laurela's mother and sisters could have preserved both their lives and tranquil existence, either by marrying Laurela to Enrique (her compassionate suitor) or by accompanying her to a convent. The female community is helpless to act in the face of the unscrupulous father figure.

The absence of commentary on the centrality of Laurela's family situation to her demise indicates the misunderstanding inherent in the frame audience's textual response. Furthermore, the monastic bonding of mother and daughters – Leonor with her surviving daughters – is overlooked in the frame commentary. However, the reader later realises that their flight to the convent is a harbinger of events, also involving mothers and their

[64] Williamsen, 'Engendering Interpretation', p. 646.

daughters, which are yet to come in the frame narrative; in Boyer's words, 'this reunion of mother and daughter will take on mythic overtones at the end of the frame'.[65]

Mothers in Zayas's Frame Narrative

In Zayas's prose, it is fruitful to note subtle differences between mother-daughter relationships in the principal narrative levels, namely, between those of the novellas and frame narrative. As her novellas and frame evidently share common themes and social milieu, distinctions between the two are nuanced. Ángela Morales suggests that the reader 'percibirá como más *real* la historia marco y los personajes que intervienen en él, ya que espacialmente se sitúan a medio camino entre el lector y las historias insertadas'.[66] On this relatively 'real' narrative plane, an alternative treatment of the maternal theme emerges: to a far greater degree than in the interpolated novellas, mothers are salient protagonists of the encompassing frame tale. In other words, mothers are more present in the 'real' world of the frame narrative than in the 'story' world of the tales told by the frame protagonists.[67] This may be a sort of balancing act by Zayas, of presence versus absence, compensating for the patriarchal dominance in the 'story' world. I have already discussed the limited potency of mothers' roles in *El prevenido engañado* and in *El imposible vencido*. Analyses of *El jardín engañoso* and *Amar sólo por vencer* demonstrate the relative capabilities of widowed mothers to exert influence over their daughters' lives. I will now turn to explore mothers' roles in the frame narrative.

Zayas opens her *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares* by describing the localised Madrid setting of these storytelling celebrations: Lisis's friends decide to arrange these festivities in order to alleviate her love-sickness, 'porque Lisis con la agradable conversación de sus amigas no sintiese el enfadoso mal' (*NAE* 167). It quickly becomes apparent that several of these 'amigas' are also blood relatives; living in close proximity, 'en una casa, aunque en distintos cuartos', heightens their intimacy (*NAE* 167). Lisis excuses herself from directing the early soirées due to her illness, 'sustituyendo a su madre en su lugar, que era una noble

[65] Boyer, 'Introduction', in *The Disenchantments of Love*, p. 12.
[66] Ángela Morales, 'La tradición del marco de la novela corta y la justificación de la ficción en el Renacimiento', in *Actas del XIV Congreso de la Asociación Internacional de Hispanistas, New York, 16–21 de julio de 2001: II Literatura española siglos XVI y XVII*, ed. by Isaías Lerner, Robert Nival and Alejandro Alonso (Newark: Juan de la Cuesta, 2001), pp. 405–410 (p. 408). Italics are Morales's own.
[67] Similarly, Greer reaches the conclusion that mothers are 'strikingly present at the scene of narration, and significantly absent in the stories actually told'. Greer, *María de Zayas tells Baroque Tales*, p. 91.

y discreta señora, a quien el enemigo común de las vidas quitó su amado esposo' (*NAE* 168).[68] Thus, we are introduced to the first mother-character early in the text, even before the first novella is narrated; furthermore, the mother, Laura, is endowed with a pivotal role in the organisation of the storytelling gatherings, without which the 'story' texts would not exist. By situating the *saraos* in the home of Laura and Lisis, the frame narrative privileges this mother-daughter duo within the women's space.

Laura distributes narrating duties among the soirée's guests and allocates her daughter the task of preparing the musicians. Vollendorf observes that 'the depiction of women as decision-makers in control of storytelling, entertaining, and parenting locates women at the centre of the frame tales and encourages readers to follow this focus through to the novellas proper'.[69] As I have already shown by demonstrating the limited nature of mothers' activities in the novellas, I would modify Vollendorf's contention regarding women's effectiveness in relation to parenting in the novellas. In contrast, within the frame, Laura exerts specific, primary control over the storytelling and entertainment; furthermore, as a widowed mother, she heads the household in terms of parenting. She embodies a challenge to the traditional passivity that Cixous detects as being assigned to women in the family model: 'Ultimately the world of "being" can function while precluding the mother [...] Either woman is passive or she does not exist. What is left of her is unthinkable, unthought'.[70] By emerging as an active mother, Laura does the 'unthinkable'. Although her immediate intention may be to nurse her daughter to health through the entertainment of these storytelling soirées, the novellas' contents also inevitably provide Lisis with examples or lessons from 'real' women's lives; this is somewhat similar to Mme de Chartres' more deliberate provision of a moral education for her own daughter in Lafayette's *La Princesse de Clèves*. As Cox Davis notes, Laura's 'deft matronage' in the frame narrative of the *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares* enables Lisis's evolution from an initial position of abject passivity and objectification, having been rejected by Juan.[71]

Laura designates the order of narration over the five nights, diplomatically opting to alternate male and female involvement from night to night, 'porque los caballeros no se

---

[68] This allusion to what we assume to be the devil echoes Macbeth's reference to 'the common enemy of man' (*Macbeth*, III. 1. 70). As in *Macbeth*, quasi-theological ideas, frequently involving the devil, recur in Zayas's novellas.
[69] Vollendorf, 'The Future of Early Modern Women's Studies', p. 268.
[70] Cixous, p. 64.
[71] Cox Davis, p. 335.

quejasen de que las damas se les alzaban con la preeminencia' (*NAE* 168). In an ironic role reversal, Laura foresees that the men might complain if any priority were given to the ladies. The irony is later explained by patriarchal dominance in the 'story' texts. The reader is aware that, notwithstanding the patriarchy and Laura's perfunctory pandering to her male guests, women are arguably the focal point of the *sarao* and of the novellas themselves. Her own position of honour in relation to the frame-tale characters is confirmed by her role as final storyteller of the *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares*, when she chooses to relate the previously discussed *El jardín engañoso*.

Notably, the fifth night also includes a banquet 'para la cual convidaron a los padres de los caballeros y a las madres de las damas, por ser todas ellas sin padres y ellos sin madres, que la muerte no deja a los mortales los gustos cumplidos' (*NAE* 169). Thus, in having a widowed mother, Lisis is not alone among the female protagonists; curiously, the phenomenon of possessing only a same-sex parent extends to all *sarao* participants. In fact, no woman with a living father or spouse takes part in the *saraos*; this removal from the control of men potentially enhances their creative freedom. The elimination of women's fathers enhances the already strong indicator of the primacy of mother-daughter relationships in the lives of the frame-tale's female protagonists. In Nader's introduction to a volume of fascinating studies on the powerful women of the Mendoza family, she detects a surprising overarching theme: such women 'lived in a dual system, one in which patriarchy coexisted with matriarchy'.[72] In the literary world of Zayas's frame narrative, matriarchy emerges in conjunction with widowhood. Also, novellas such as *El jardín engañoso* and *Amar sólo por vencer* tacitly suggest that widowhood has the potential to encourage the growth of mother-daughter bonding. As the offspring of widows, Lisis and her companions need not replicate the struggles of Leonor (in *El imposible vencido*) or of Laurela (in *Amar sólo por vencer*) against paternally engineered fates, nor must they depend upon male mediation, like Gracia and Serafina (in *El prevenido engañado*), to foster the development of the mother-daughter bond.

At this point, the effect of widowhood on the lives of seventeenth-century women merits brief consideration. Olwen Hufton, when discussing the early modern family in Europe, claims that for wealthy women, 'la muerte de su marido era un nuevo nacimiento'.[73] Along the same lines, Armon argues that widows were subject to less 'social control' than

[72] Nader, p. 3.
[73] Olwen Hufton, 'Mujeres, trabajo y familia', in *Historia de las mujeres: 3. Del Renacimiento a la Edad Moderna*, ed. by Arlette Farge and Natalie Zemon Davis (Madrid: Taurus, 2000), pp. 33–74 (p. 70).

wives: 'In fact, she assumed many responsibilities normally accorded to the male, while shedding the restrictions of a wife. The elite woman became legal head of her household and the executrix of her children's estates'.[74] Montaigne, in his essay 'Of Three Good Women', critically implies the potential advantages of widowhood: 'Do not consider those moist eyes and that piteous voice; consider that bearing, that colouring, and the plumpness of those cheeks under those great veils [...] There are few who do not improve in health, a quality that does not know how to lie'.[75] Of course, if one views widowhood as a liberating experience in early modern women's lives, it is necessary to do so with a degree of caution. For Vives, the ideal widow maintained the memory of her late husband and lived as a perpetual wife: 'La viuda tenga memoria del marido, no con lágrimas ni con señales exteriores, sino con acatamiento y veneración interior, pensando de continuo tenerle presente y que él está siempre atento a lo que ella hace y dice'.[76] He promoted passivity and inaction to protect the widow's chastity when faced with legal disputes; however, he seems to have ultimately recognised the impracticality of his own advice. Instead of encouraging the widow to act as an independent household head, he condoned remarriage to 'un varón que haya pasado media edad, reposado, grave, cuerdo, templado, de mucha experiencia'.[77] Vives clearly feared widows' emancipation; a second husband would have the responsibility of governing and protecting the household.

According to Cavallo and Cerutti's study of seventeenth-century Italy, the widow represented the archetypal ambiguous woman, due to the undefined or nonexistent external controls exercised over her honour and chastity.[78] This posed a patriarchal dilemma, which led to evidence of the caricature of the lusty or merry widow throughout a diversity of European treatises and literary writing.[79] Three well-known stereotypes of widowhood

---

[74] Armon, *Picking Wedlock*, p. 54.
[75] Montaigne, p. 563.
[76] Vives, p. 364. Barbara J. Todd explores a contrasting Protestant treatise on widowhood – namely, William Page's 'The Widdowe Indeed', written about 1620. See Barbara J. Todd, 'The Virtuous Widow in Protestant England', in *Widowhood in Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, ed. by Sandra Cavallo and Lyndan Warner (Harlow: Longman, 1999), pp. 66–83.
[77] Vives, p. 390.
[78] Cavallo and Cerutti, 'Female Honour and the Social Control of Reproduction', p. 79.
[79] Some examples of the early modern literary depiction of the lusty widow are to be found in the plays of Thomas Middleton; such works as *A Trick to Catch the Old One* (1605) and *No Wit, No Help Like a Woman's* (1611) explore and parody cultural assumptions about widow-wooing and the lusty widow fantasy. See Jennifer Panek, *Widows and Suitors in Early Modern English Comedy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004). Furthermore, the twentieth tale in Marguerite de Navarre's *Heptaméron* (1558) contains another portrayal of a lusty widow: in the tale, the Lord of Riant surprises his beloved, a widow, in a passionate embrace with her lowly groomsman. Zayas echoes this scenario, in the episode of the widowed Beatriz, in *El prevenido engañado*. A second sexually voracious widow appears in Zayas's texts: Lucrecia, protagonist of *Tarde llega el desengaño*. Zayas's Lucrecia bears a resemblance to Lope's titular *La viuda valenciana* (1620); he dedicated this play to 'Marcia Leonarda' – probably the recently widowed Marta de

prevailed in Europe: in addition to the merry widow, there were the good or ideal widow and the poor widow – the latter being closest to the reality of many widows' experiences. Whichever form it might take, Zayas's contemporaries regularly experienced widowhood. For example, the Portuguese novella writer Leonor de Meneses (c.1620–64) was a wife for no more than nine years, despite marrying twice.[80] Zayas portrays each of these types of widowhood to varying degrees within her prose; through Laura, the image of the good widow predominates in her texts.[81]

Once the storytelling gets underway, the interpersonal allegiances and rivalries of key participants dominate the intervals between novellas: namely, Lisis's jealousy of Lisarda, whom Juan loves, and, subsequently, the antagonism between Juan and Lisis's new suitor, Diego. In particular, Zayas exploits the symbolism of these young characters' chosen colours and garments. Laura, as a mature woman and a widow, is excluded from this amorous frivolity. On the fourth night, Laura's senior rank becomes evident; we are told that Diego's courtship has been legitimised by both 'el sí de la dama y su madre de que sería su esposa' (*NAE* 409). Her mother's approval of the match seems to guarantee Diego and Lisis's contentment. Concurring with this promise of an optimistic future is the evidence of the fifth and final night: along with unusually warm December weather, Lisis is at last 'libre de sus enfadosas cuartanas, en nombre de voto a la Virgen del Carmen' (*NAE* 483).

On this last night, 'la discreta madre de la bellísima Lisis' recounts the final novella, *El jardín engañoso* (*NAE* 511). Laura begins the novella by addressing her audience in a curious manner: 'No quiero, discreto auditorio, venderos por verdades averiguadas los sucesos de esta historia; si bien todos son de calidad que lo pudieran ser [...] En esto no os obligo a creer más de lo que diere gusto' (*NAE* 512–3). While other narrators strenuously assert the veracity of their tales, Laura clearly experiences no compulsion to do so.[82] In my second chapter, I examined Laura's failure to achieve her aims of narrating this story as

---

Nevares. There are, of course, more recent examples of this stock character, such as 'Widow Quin' in Synge's *The Playboy of the Western World* (1907) and 'la Vieja Pagana' in Lorca's *Yerma* (1934).

[80] Leonor de Meneses remained a widow for twelve years between her marriages. Thus, as an adult woman, she was widowed for longer than she was a wife. See Leonor de Meneses, *El desdeñado más firme*, ed. by Judith A. Whitenack and Gwyn E. Campbell (Potomac, MD: Scripta Humanistica, 1994).

[81] The poverty-stricken widow makes only one foray into her prose (in *La inocencia castigada*), to which I will refer in the next chapter.

[82] Stroud notes that the reliability of Laura's second narrative, *La inocencia castigada*, is also in doubt despite her announcement: 'Todo este caso es tan verdadero como la misma verdad, que ya digo me le contó quien se halló presente' (*DA* 288). As Stroud astutely observes, no character is present throughout the novella – with the exception of Inés, who, in her blindness, could not have provided graphic descriptions of the final scenes. See Stroud, 'Artistry and Irony'.

example and warning; by presenting her audience with Teodosia's androcentric game at her tale's conclusion, Laura misdirects their attention to assess the questionable merits of the male protagonists. Thus, Laura could be deemed to be one of the less conscientious narrators among the group. Moreover, as a widowed mother, she is at a remove from other narrators' ideological concern with relations between the sexes during courtship and marriage, which potentially have the immediacy of reflecting their current or future personal experiences. In the *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares*, her novella is not sharply focussed on the suggestive effects of storytelling; more pressing for her are the practical matters of ensuring her daughter's good health and future happiness, which gives her an interesting narrative angle.

A brief frame-narrative discussion follows Laura's novella, and Zayas's first work concludes with the promise of a 'segunda parte', which is to contain 'el castigo de la ingratitud de don Juan, mudanza de Lisarda y bodas de Lisis'; Lisis and Diego's wedding is scheduled to take place in a matter of days – on 'el día de la Circuncisión', or New Year's Day (*NAE* 534).[83] However, at the start of the *Desengaños amorosos*, Zayas's subsequent prose work, we learn that Lisis's illness has mysteriously resumed. Fear for Lisis's life converts the joviality of the *sarao* into sorrow: 'volvió el alegría de las pasadas noches en llantos y tristeza de su noble madre y queridas amigas, que lo sentían tiernísimamente, y en principal don Diego' (*DA* 116). All who love Lisis share Laura's maternal anguish. Lisis's sickness continues for over one year, during which time her new Moorish slave, Zelima, assists her convalescence.

Noting her regained health, Diego repeats his request for Laura's consent to marry her daughter. Informed of this, 'la sabia dama dio a su madre la respuesta que se podía esperar de su obediente proceder' (*DA* 117–8). At the opening of the *Desengaños amorosos*, Lisis is a model of passive filial obedience. Her only request is for her mother's permission to host a second series of storytelling soirées before the wedding; Laura willingly grants Lisis her permission to hold the festivities: 'Mucho se alegró su madre con la fiesta que quería hacer Lisis' (*DA* 118). These storytelling festivities differ from the previous one insofar as they are organised solely by Lisis; the conception and organisation of these events are entirely her own innovations. Diverging from her mother's inclusive tactic of creating gender equilibrium among the storytellers, Lisis appoints only their female friends as

[83] The association of this wedding-date with the Feast of Christ's Circumcision makes it an ominous choice, perhaps alluding to Diego's future emasculation through the indignity of being forsaken by his betrothed, Lisis.

narrators; thus, at the level of the frame narrative in Zayas's second work, women's importance is heightened. Consequently, male guests are 'mal contentos de que, por no serles concedido el novelar, no podían dar muestra de las intenciones' (*DA* 120).

For the duration of the three nights, Lisis grants Zelima the honour of taking charge of the music and demotes Laura to the ordinary role of storyteller. Although Laura's position as centre-point narrator confers some level of importance on her, Zelima has the comparatively greater honour of relating the first novella. As hostess and bride, Lisis allows herself the 'last word' by telling the final *desengaño*; thus, from her directorial standpoint, Lisis demonstrates increased assertiveness.[84] When Zelima narrates her autobiography, she reveals her 'real' identity as Isabel Fajardo. By narrating her life-story, this frame narrator displays the permeability of the structural boundaries between frame tale and novella. At this point, given the intermingling of Isabel's tale with the frame narrative, I will briefly return to *La esclava de su amante* to unveil its impact on Zayas's development of the frame-tale maternal theme.

* * *

Isabel emphasises the care that her parents devoted to her upbringing: 'Criéme hasta llegar a los doce años entre las caricias y regalos de mis padres; que, claro es que no habiendo tenido otro de su matrimonio, serían muchos' (*DA* 128). She makes reference to her special status within her family as her parents' only child, which consolidates the family unit and strengthens her bond with her parents. By the youthful age of fourteen, she has many suitors. Her father's response to their marital offers is protective: 'enfadado, respondía que me dejasen ser mujer' (*DA* 128); unlike the avaricious fathers of young women in *El imposible vencido* or in *Amar sólo por vencer*, greed does not motivate him to seek, with undue haste, a lucrative marriage for his daughter.[85]

At this point, Isabel's father courageously opts to re-enter military service in order to assist the King – Philip IV – on the outbreak of Catalan revolt in 1640. Isabel suggests the

[84] Lisis unevenly arranges the ten novellas included in the *Desengaños amorosos*: four novellas are narrated on each of the first two nights, and two are narrated on the final night. On the first night of the *saraos*, Zelima narrates the first novella. By narrating the fifth novella, Laura is first to narrate on the second night of the *saraos*. Estefanía is first to narrate on the third and final night. Ultimately, all three of these key, strategically positioned narrators join Lisis in the convent. (Laura distributed the ten novellas of the *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares* evenly over a five-night period.)

[85] At a later stage, Isabel reports that her father considerately rejects marriage offers, 'por conocer la poca voluntad que tenía de casarme' (*DA* 139).

intimacy of the family group by the grief of all three parties upon their impending separation and her father's resultant decision to bring his wife and daughter with him to Zaragoza. The King endows Isabel's father with considerable honours due to his commendable record as a soldier: 'le mandó asistiese al gobierno de un tercio de caballos, con título de maese de campo, honrando primero sus pechos con un hábito de Calatrava' (*DA* 130). It appears that Isabel's father is henceforth occupied with military matters, for he features infrequently in her descriptions of daily life in their new home. The family lodges in the house of a widow, who has a son and daughter, Manuel and Eufrasia; living in close proximity, these mothers and daughters cherish each other's friendship. By scheming to seduce Isabel without the honourable intention of marriage, Manuel endangers the bond between the four women.

This delicate equilibrium is finally ruptured when Manuel rapes Isabel, whose distress leads her to become gravely ill. 'Estando de verme así tan penados mis padres, que lastimaban a quien los veía', Isabel's parents evidently demonstrate concern for their daughter's wellbeing (*DA* 138). Despite their anxiety, only Eufrasia and a maid discover the cause behind Isabel's sickness. The two mothers of the household appear completely ignorant of the events that have transpired between their children, Isabel and Manuel. Eventually, Manuel flees to Sicily, 'sin dar cuenta a su madre y hermana' (*DA* 149). Isabel's transformation into Zelima, the slave, arises from pursuit of her rapist abroad. Like Laurela in *Amar sólo por vencer*, although with an altogether bolder honour mission in mind, she absconds from the family home with stolen belongings – 'mis joyas y las de mi madre, y muchos dineros en plata y en oro' (*DA* 151). Isabel actively seeks redress in the manner of the intrepid Aminta in *La burlada Aminta y venganza del honor* and of Hipólita in *Al fin se paga todo*, both in the *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares*, although her anticipated end is marriage instead of bloodshed. As the victim of rape, Isabel must act autonomously to repair her own honour.

When Isabel's parents discover her departure, their acute grief produces tragic results: the death of her aging father, bringing her mother the additional sorrow of widowhood. The mother is understandably embittered by her daughter's reckless actions, given their fatal consequences. Vague reference to her discovery, through anonymous informants, suggests that she may not be fully aware of Isabel's predicament: 'ya mi madre había sabido lo que pasaba con don Manuel, que en volviendo yo las espaldas, todos habían dicho lo que sabían' (*DA* 152). When she learns of Isabel's involvement with Manuel, she refuses to

search for her daughter, 'diciendo que pues yo había elegido el marido a mi gusto, que Dios me diese más dicha con él que había dado a su casa' (*DA* 152). Felipe, a poor suitor who disguises himself as a servant, later brings Isabel news that her mother has returned, with her husband's body, to their original home in Murcia. Felipe comments admiringly upon her mother's mettle, in implicit contrast with her deceased father: 'pienso que es de diamante, pues no la han acabado las penas que tiene' (*DA* 156). The mother has the impression that the fortune of her daughter, as Manuel's wife, exceeds her own solitary lot: 'Tu madre se consoló algo en tu pérdida, pues le parece que con tu marido vas, que no hay que tenerte lástima; no como ella, que le lleva sin alma' (*DA* 156). She assumes that her daughter has eloped with Manuel, not realising that he refuses to marry her.

Eufrasia's mother departs from the novella's foreground during Isabel's absence from Zaragoza. When Isabel and Manuel return, still unmarried, six years later, they discover that Eufrasia's mother has died and that Eufrasia, recently widowed, has a newborn child. Manuel cruelly disabuses Isabel, destroying her illusions of regaining her honour by marriage, and callously suggests that, 'volviéndoos con vuestra madre, allá entre vuestros naturales busquéis marido que sea menos escrupuloso que yo' (*DA* 163). Felipe murders Manuel for this affront to Isabel's honour. She considers following Manuel's scornful advice by joining her mother in Murcia, 'y de esto me quitaba con imaginar cómo parecería ante ella, habiendo sido causa de la muerte de mi padre y de todas sus penas y trabajos' (*DA* 165). She continues to live under the alias of Zelima until her dramatic disclosure at Lisis's soirée.

At last, mindful of the need for amicable reunion with the mother whom she so disastrously deserted, Isabel elects to solder their union honourably. She asks for Lisis's permission to join Estefanía in the convent, 'para que en estando allí, avise a mi triste madre, que en compañía de tal Esposo ya se holgará hallarme, y yo no tendré vergüenza de parecer en su presencia, y ya que le he dado triste mocedad, darle descansada vejez' (*DA* 167). In Bilinkoff's study of convents founded by widows in Avila, she notes that 'establishing a religious community offered a way of preserving a household, or rather, of fashioning a new kind of household, one that did not fall under the authority of fathers, husbands or sons'.[86] Similarly, for Zayas's literary protagonists, the convent represents a new, all-female household consisting of the spiritual 'mothers', 'daughters', and 'wives' of Christ. There, Isabel will find the 'Esposo' to remove her from disgrace and will

[86] Bilinkoff, p. 187.

unashamedly rekindle the filial relationship with her mother. Lisis immediately offers to assist Isabel in this endeavour; it is not until the end of the final night of storytelling that the pattern of their fates becomes thoroughly interwoven.

* * *

Later during the *Desengaños amorosos*, at the start of the second night, Lisis's mother again takes the narrator's chair. Once more, Laura provides an unusual prologue to her storytelling. Of course, she is not the only narrator to debate the relevance of the *desengaño* theme to her own life or to claim to have never been deceived by men. As Boyer points out, the reader is aware that 'no one can *know* that he or she is deceived [i.e. until after the event], for that constitutes undeception'; thus, narrators' denials with regard to their own experience of *engaño* must be understood ironically.[87] Laura explains to her audience that she cannot use her own positive experience of married life as inspiration for a tale of *desengaño*, claiming that she will instead use her knowledge of others' misfortunes to do so:

> Viví tan dulcemente engañada, el tiempo que fui amada y amé, de que me pudiese dar la amable condición de mi esposo causa para saber y especificar ahora desengaños; que no sé si acertaré a darlos a nadie; mas lo que por ciencia alcanzo, que de experiencia estoy muy ajena, me parece que hoy hay de todo, engañadas y engañados, y pocos o ningunos que acierten a desengañarse. (*DA* 262)

Laura's personal 'experiencia' is cloaked by its representation as knowledge gleaned indirectly from others. Her claim to have been 'dulcemente engañada' in marriage is somewhat paradoxical (*DA* 262).

Given the freedom inherent in Laura's widowed status, questions inevitably arise with regard to the underlying motive behind her favourable, yet unconvincing, representation of matrimony. It is possible to extrapolate that Laura fabricates an inaccurate portrayal of her own married life for her daughter's sake, in order not to discourage her from an oft-delayed but promising marriage to Diego. Once Lisis marries this devoted suitor, she has the possibility of finally forgetting her unrequited love for Juan; thus, in Laura's eyes, Diego represents a 'cure' to overcome her daughter's recurring love-sickness.[88] Her unique mindset is related to her status as the only narrator to have experience of both marriage and

---

[87] Boyer, 'Toward a Baroque Reading of "El verdugo de su esposa"', p. 57. Italics are Boyer's own.

[88] Somewhat counterproductively, Laura names Inés's unscrupulous suitor 'Diego' in *La inocencia castigada*.

motherhood.[89] Maternal responsibility for Lisis's marital prospects may be the factor that detracted from the success of Laura's previous tale, *El jardín engañoso*, restraining her from unequivocally proclaiming the superiority of Constanza's virtue over that of her male counterparts.

Laura's reticent approach contrasts with the frank diatribe of Luisa, the only other widowed frame narrator, against her former husband:

> ¡Si supiérades los penosos desasosiegos que tuve con mi esposo, tan opuesto a mi voluntad, que jamás le conocí agradecido a ella, antes, con muchos desabrimientos en las palabras y un pesado ceño en los ojos, me satisfacía cuando yo más le granjeaba y lisonjeaba con caricias! (*DA* 337)

Thus, Luisa proclaims her own *desengaño* and only elects not to recount her personal marital experience 'porque para sí nadie es buen juez a los ojos ajenos' (*DA* 337). While Laura insistently claims to have been content in marriage, her subsequent comments suggest a thorough awareness of men's fickleness and of their discourtesy in speaking ill of women. Furthermore, she relates *La inocencia castigada* as proof that, 'en cuanto a la crueldad, no hay duda de que está asentada en el corazón del hombre, y esto nace de la dureza de él' (*DA* 264). Both the vehemence of Laura's latter words and the graphic portrayal of Inés's suffering at the hands of her husband and other relatives in her narrative, *La inocencia castigada*, lead the reader to conjecture that Laura's creation of a positive impression of her own marriage does not ring true.

Furthermore, the reader can extricate clues regarding Laura's marital past from the tangled subtext of *La inocencia castigada*. Tangential comments in its initial paragraphs suggest that all is not as it seems, opening up the possibility of reading the novella in several ways. In my second chapter, I discussed Whitenack's interpretation of *La inocencia castigada* as a tale of spousal neglect; here, I return to Laura's textual commentary, which can be interpreted to support Whitenack's view. The marriage of Laura's principal character, Inés, prompts her to remark that husbands provide their wives with abundant affection during the first year of marriage, contending that husbands' neglect later causes their wives' infidelity, leading to dishonour and death.[90] She certainly seems to hide an agenda, where love, marriage, and honour are concerned. She continues with impassioned rhetoric, lambasting men for their belief that enclosure alone will guarantee their wives' fidelity,

---

[89] One of the new narrators in the *Desengaños amorosos* is also a widow – doña Luisa – but she does not seem to have had any children.

[90] This seems to be an outlandish proposition of Laura's: the cause, a lack of 'agasajo' (*DA* 265), appears out of proportion to the effect, dishonour and death. Nonetheless, this is how events later transpired in Flaubert's *Madame Bovary* (1857).

and concludes her diatribe by demanding husbands' reform. As narrator, she explicitly states that these remarks are unrelated to the unfolding predicament of Inés, her principal protagonist: 'No le sucedió por esta parte a doña Inés la desdicha, porque su esposo hacía la estimación de ella que merecía su valor y hermosura' (*DA* 266). Although Inés's husband is frequently absent from home, particularly at crucial points in the novella's development, there is no conclusive evidence that allows us to characterise his conduct as the marital inattentiveness that Laura describes.[91] His crime against Inés later in the tale, having her immured with the help of her relatives, is a private act of vengeance for her involuntary infidelity rather than a case of spousal neglect. Thus, Laura's tirade seems as likely to stem from her own direct experience as from that of the heroine of her narrative.

When the female storytellers make their spectacular entrance on the final night of the *Desengaños amorosos*, Laura and Luisa lead the procession: 'Venían delante Laura y doña Luisa, que, como viudas no pudieron mudar traje, con sus vestidos negros y tocas albísimas, y en sus cabezas dos coronas de laurel' (*DA* 404). Their sombre garb contrasts with the splendour of the unmarried women, endowing them with particular gravity and authority. At the close of the final night's festivities, having related her own tale, Lisis makes a daring announcement:

> Estoy tan cobarde, que, como el que ha cometido algún delito, me acojo a sagrado y tomo por amparo el retiro de un convento, desde donde pienso (como en talanquera) ver lo que sucede a los demás. Y así, con mi querida doña Isabel, a quien pienso acompañar mientras viviere, me voy a salvar de los engaños de los hombres. (*DA* 509)

Then, to the amazement of all who witness this, she leaves the room with Isabel and Estefanía. Nancy Chodorow's psychoanalytical theory offers an explanation for the mutual affection of Lisis's female peers, linking it to their earlier experiences of motherly love:

> Relationships to men are unlikely to provide for women satisfaction of the relational needs that their mothering by women and the social organisation of gender have produced. The less men participate in the domestic sphere, and especially in parenting, the more this will be the case.
>
> [...] While they [women] are likely to become and remain erotically heterosexual, they are encouraged both by men's difficulties with love and by their own relational history with their mothers to look elsewhere for love and emotional gratification.
>
> One way that women fulfil these needs is through the creation and maintenance of important personal relations with other women.[92]

---

[91] Inés and her relatives live in an unnamed city near Seville – probably Córdoba. Her husband is in Seville, collecting money that has arrived for him from the Indies, when she and the Corregidor resolve the deception caused by her neighbour and the prostitute with her borrowed dress. Her husband remains in Seville for the duration of the episode involving Diego's sorcery, being embroiled there in 'algunos pleitos' (*DA* 277).

[92] Nancy Chodorow, 'The Psychodynamics of the Family', in *The Second Wave: A Reader in Feminist Theory*, ed. by Linda Nicholson (New York: Routledge, 1997), pp. 181–197 (p. 188).

According to Chodorow's psychoanalytical explanation, the fluid and processual nature of female personality arises from the mother's relationship with her daughter. Fathers' absences account for women's formation of vital relationships with each other; in the case of the young women of the frame narrative, paternal absence is marked by virtue of their mothers' widowhood. Of course, drawing parallels between Zayas's novellas and psychoanalytical theory can appear to be an anachronistic exercise; I attribute any similarities to the author's poetic insight. The behaviour of Lisis and Isabel, consolidating inter-personal relations with other women, is consistent with Chodorow's theory; their friendship develops from earlier mother-daughter bonds and expresses women's particular relational capacities.

'Ignorante de su intención' and 'confusa', Laura is initially left bewildered by Lisis's actions (*DA* 510); evidently, her daughter has displayed disregard for her wishes. As the crowd diminishes, departing guests congratulate Laura on the 'divino entendimiento de su hija' (*DA* 510); the next day, Lisis, Isabel, and Estefanía go to the convent. Nonetheless, Laura shows remarkably little resentment towards Lisis; instead, she reacts so as to ensure she is not separated from her beloved child:

> Y en poniendo Laura la hacienda en orden, que les rentase lo que habían menester, se fue con ellas, por no apartarse de su amada Lisis, avisando a su madre de doña Isabel, que como supo dónde estaba su hija, se vino también con ella, tomando el hábito de religiosa (*DA* 510)

We hypothesise that, because Laura's husband has died, Lisis assumes special importance for her. Marianne Hirsch illuminates unexpected points of intersection between French and American psychoanalysis in relation to this theme. For example, in 'And the One Doesn't Stir Without the Other', similar to Chorodow, Irigaray stresses the continuous plurality and mutual connectedness of mother and daughter. Addressing the mother, Irigaray states: 'I look like you, you look like me. I look at myself in you, you look at yourself in me. You're already big, I'm still little. But I came out of you, and here, in front of your very eyes, I am another living you'.[93]

While Lisis enjoys an affectionate relationship with her female peers, Laura becomes determined to preserve that which is, for her, a highly significant, fluid and intense relationship. Laura does not berate her daughter for the spontaneous act; instigating their reunion, she too appears to have also been inspired by 'divino entendimiento'. She ensures that mother and daughter are reunited on a permanent basis with the stability of financial security. Moreover, she also detects the importance of effectuating the union of Isabel

[93] Luce Irigaray, 'And the One Doesn't Stir Without the Other', *Signs*, 7 (Autumn 1981), 60–67 (p. 61).

with her mother. The reader is explicitly told that both Isabel and her mother take monastic vows; in contrast, we receive no such information with regard to Laura, while 'Lisis se quedó seglar' (*DA* 510). For Laura and Lisis, the convent's attraction, as a sanctuary for mothers, daughters and friends, is only indirectly connected to its religious paradigm.[94]

Ordóñez aptly concludes that, in Zayas's stories, the women's entry into the convent is based on the creation of a gynocentric community, which allocates a place for mothers among its membership:

> The choice to enter a convent is based not only on a female decision to save the body and soul from victimisation by men, but in many cases it signals a more positive move toward the formation of another kind of bonding (or "economy"). Repeatedly, pairs of women – mothers and daughters or sisters – retire to the convent together, so underscoring the emergence of female bonding or matrilineal alternatives to patriarchal coding in text and social context.[95]

Mothers and daughters make up the membership of this community, which is founded upon female bonding. Through both the natural cause of death and the voluntary rejection of marriage-partners, the women succeed in eliminating paternal figures permanently, and the convent is shaped into a maternal space or *matria*.[96] In Raymond's words, the mothers and daughters live a Gyn/affective existence – 'beyond hetero-relations' – and are no longer victims.[97] Simultaneously, this represents a verisimilar ending: Ángela de Acevedo – Zayas's contemporary, a Portuguese dramatist, and lady-in-waiting to Queen Isabel de Borbón – apparently spent her remaining years, when widowed, in a Benedictine convent with her daughter. I have already contrasted the frame-narrative development with the multiple marriages that frequently solve the dramatic conflict of the *comedia*. Following Arnold G. Reichenberger's analysis, order must be restored in the Spanish drama, and, to this end, 'it is often of no importance that a *dama* gets *her* man, the one she loves, as long as she gets *a* man and is thereby placed in the socially accepted *estado* of married woman'.[98] In Zayas's frame tale, by marrying 'un caballero forastero, muy rico', Lisarda

---

[94] Interestingly, in the frame narrative, monasticism is far from being an exclusive 'solution' for virgins. Of the four women who newly enter the convent, two are mothers and one has been the victim of rape; we assume that Lisis is the only virgin.

[95] Ordóñez, p. 8.

[96] Sandra M. Gilbert made use of this term, *matria*, to locate Elizabeth Barrett Browning within a female poetic tradition that imagined resurrecting and restoring the dead and forgotten *madre*. Of course, the real Spanish term for 'motherland' is *madre patria*, which preserves a patriarchal etymology. Zayas portrays the convent as an all-female *matria*, from which the Law of the *padre* is exorcised. Sandra M. Gilbert, 'From *Patria* to *Matria*: Elizabeth Barrett Browning's Risorgimento', *PMLA*, 99 (1984) 2, 194–211 (p. 209).

[97] Raymond, p. 188.

[98] Arnold G. Reichenberger, 'The Uniqueness of the *comedia*', *Hispanic Review*, 27 (1959), 303–316 (p. 310). Italics are Reichenberger's own.

cements her exclusion from this alternative economy of mothers, daughters, and friends (*DA* 510).[99]

We can also contrast Zayas's denouement with that of the frame narrative of a later collection of novellas, Carvajal's *Navidades de Madrid*. At Carvajal's *sarao*, two widows occupy central roles alongside their children: Lucrecia and her son, Antonio; and Juana and her daughter, Leonor. Carvajal had direct experience of widowhood, albeit probably under more financially precarious circumstances than those of her protagonists, having nine children (six daughters) to support.[100] By the end of her text's storytelling festivities, the widows have arranged several marriage pairings, including that of Antonio and Leonor; through their activities, the mothers separate themselves from their offspring definitively.[101] In Zayas's creative enterprise, monasticism goes some way towards supplanting the role of matrimony in familial organisation. As a locus, the convent serves as a multivalent literary device; one of its functions is to foster mother-daughter bonding.

The formation of a monastic community of mothers and daughters may be placed within the wider European context of historical events: namely, Protestant Reformers' dissolution of convents, which began in sixteenth-century England. Raymond demonstrates that, according to the emerging Protestant perspective, convents were seen as destructive to the family. Specifically, the strident attack on female monasticism 'was accompanied by contentions that nuns broke up family bonds, were unwilling to engage in the natural duties of marriage and motherhood, and wanted to escape the bonds of marriage only so as to lead loose lives'.[102] The literary example of Lisis, Isabel, and their mothers goes against the current of each of these claims. Laura and Isabel's mother, for example, have already experienced marriage and motherhood. By joining their daughters in the convent, family bonds are strengthened; had Lisis or Isabel married, in contrast, the bond with their

---

[99] The reasoning behind Lisarda's abandonment of Juan goes unexplained. Wealth is a possible motive, given that her husband is distinguished as being 'muy rico'. Alternatively, she may experience a belated sense of loyalty to her cousin Lisis or realise Juan's fickleness; ironically, she punishes him by imitating his inconstant behaviour. A third possibility involves René Girard's theory of triangular desire. Girard explains the concept: in addition to the straight line between subject and desired object, 'the mediator is there, above that line, radiating toward both the subject and the object'. Lisis may be the mediator of Lisarda's desire for Juan; Lisis's decisive quenching of her unrequited passion for Juan may also indirectly extinguish Lisarda's desire for him. René Girard, *Deceit, Desire and the Novel: Self and Other in Literary Structure*, trans. by Yvonne Freccero (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1965), p. 2.

[100] Noël M. Valis, 'The Spanish Storyteller: Mariana de Caravajal', in *Women Writers of the Seventeenth Century*, ed. by Katharina M. Wilson and Frank J. Warnke (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1989), pp. 251–282.

[101] Following the traditional pattern of the *comedia*, Carvajal's novellas and frame narrative have optimistic matrimonial conclusions; Zayas provides a more varied range of conclusions.

[102] Raymond, p. 104.

mothers would have been broken. Zayas locates the convent as a haven for female relatives and friends, and its religious dimension is diluted significantly. By the time that the *sarao* must draw to a close, the monastic option has come to the fore, representing, in Cixous's terminology, a kind of *sortie* or 'way out' of the patriarchal system for this mother-daughter community. While it does not approach the Reformers' view of 'loose lives', the social function is not a negligible aspect of its existence, according to Zayas's presentation. Zayas conveniently avoids the overt transgression of Catholic orthodoxy and portrays monasticism's potential role as a seal for *sarao* participants' familial and Gyn/affective bonds.

* * *

Lisarda's position in relation to the motherhood theme warrants brief analysis. We assume that she has a widowed mother, following the pattern of other female guests, although the text provides no confirmation regarding her mother's presence. At the end of the *Desengaños amorosos*, the reader learns that Lisarda's eventual decision to marry is in stark contrast with that of the frame community of women (including several ladies and their mothers) who participate in a monastic exodus. Thus, she chooses marriage over the companionship of her mother and her peers. Additionally, the conspicuous omission of motherhood from her first novella, *Aventurarse perdiendo*, serves as a reminder of her separation from the other female protagonists within the frame narrative.[103] We recall Gardiner's claim that, in women's writing, heroines 'begin as narcissistic extensions of the author'.[104] As 'author' of *Aventurarse perdiendo*, first novella of the *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares*, Lisarda creates Jacinta – a motherless heroine – from representations of herself. Discussing *King Lear*, Kahn states that 'the absence of the mother points to her hidden presence'.[105] Although there are few similarities between Lisarda's tale and Shakespeare's play, Kahn's inference as to the importance of the absent maternal figure, even after death, can also be applied to *Aventurarse perdiendo*. Thus, we can trace the hidden presence of the maternal figure – in Kahn's terms, 'the maternal subtext' – in Lisarda's novella.[106]

---

[103] During the *Desengaños amorosos*, Lisarda narrates *La más infame venganza*, in which mothers are largely absent. Octavia's father dies while serving in battle, 'y su madre a pocos meses murió también de pena de haber perdido su amado esposo' (*DA* 179). With regard to Camila, victim of the titular *infame venganza*, we are told nothing of her mother; she appears to be an orphan when she marries Carlos.
[104] Gardiner, p. 357.
[105] Kahn, p. 36.
[106] Kahn, p. 35.

In *Aventurarse perdiendo*, Jacinta places special emphasis on her motherless state in the early stages of recounting her life-story to her listener, Fabio, in Montserrat. She sketches a background of familial neglect:

> Faltó mi madre al mejor tiempo, que no fue pequeña falta, pues su compañía, gobierno y vigilancia fuera más importante a mi honestidad que no los descuidos de mi padre, que le tuvo en mirar por mí y darme estado (yerro notable de los que aguardan a que sus hijas le tomen sin su gusto). Quería el mío a mi hermano tiernísimamente, y esto era sólo su desvelo, sin que se le diese yo en cosa ninguna, no sé qué era su pensamiento, pues había hacienda bastante para todo lo que deseara y quisiera emprender. (*NAE* 179–180)

Interestingly, when Jacinta lists the mother's functions, she prioritises maternal 'compañía' over her guidance and watchfulness. Greer highlights Jacinta's vulnerability, as a consequence of maternal loss: 'Her mother is dead and her father unconcerned with her well-being. Although we tend to focus on the attendant lack of parental guidance and control, Zayas makes it clear that the emotional vacuum is also important'.[107] Her mother's death occurs 'al mejor tiempo', which the reader deduces to mean that it coincides with reaching a marriageable age. Chodorow's psychoanalytical theory stresses the complex, ongoing importance of the mother's role for girls:

> A girl usually turns to her father as an object of primary interest from the exclusivity of the relationship to her mother, but this libidinal turning to her father does not substitute for her attachment to her mother. Instead, a girl retains her preoedipal tie to her mother (an intense tie involved with issues of primary identification, primary love, dependence, and separation) and builds oedipal attachments to both her mother and her father upon it.[108]

Although such psychoanalytical theories are, of course, the product of an era far from Zayas's own, she appears to concur intuitively with the basics of Chodorow's emphasis upon the primacy of women's relational ties. Thus, Jacinta's loss of her mother is traumatic due to the enduring nature of her filial attachment. Furthermore, also similar to Chodorow, Zayas emphasises the father's relative distance and separateness from his daughter.[109]

Jacinta's ill-fated love for Félix and, later, for Celio can be interpreted in terms of her deep-seated need to fill the maternal void. Like Jacinta, the protagonist of her novella,

---

[107] Margaret Rich Greer, 'The M(Other) Plot: Psychoanalytical Theory and Narrative Structure in María de Zayas', in *María de Zayas: The Dynamics of Discourse*, ed. by Amy R. Williamsen and Judith A. Whitenack (London: Associated University Presses, 1995), pp. 90–116 (p. 103).

[108] Chodorow, pp. 182–3.

[109] Much like *Aventurarse perdiendo*, the subsequent tale, *La burlada Aminta y venganza del honor*, opens with the death of the female protagonist's mother. Given that the information is reported in the third person, Aminta's indirectly narrated misfortune is less salient than Jacinta's in the previous tale. When Aminta's mother dies, this maternal loss aggrieves her dying father, 'viéndola quedar sin madre que la gobernase y enseñase' (*NAE* 214). Aminta's father deems the maternal loss to be to his daughter's detriment, which is in turn amplified by his own death. Like Jacinta in *Aventurarse perdiendo*, Aminta's loss marks the beginning of several catastrophes.

Lisarda also pursues heterosexual love in lieu of the motherly bond.[110] However, as Greer states, the tale concludes with Jacinta's formation of 'an emotional – or physical – safe haven in which a substitute female family is reconstituted' in the convent.[111] In other words, the convent functions symbolically as a safer version of the family home. Lisarda's novella charts Jacinta's progression, in terms of human bonding, from her mother, through men, and back to women's companionship. The tale begins after the death of Jacinta's mother and concludes in the female-populated realm of the convent. In Zayas's spatial strategy, the convent replicates the security of the home's maternal care.

* * *

"Anticipating" the observations of Irigaray, Zayas breaks the silence surrounding mother-daughter relations in literature. Under varying circumstances and with widely differing degrees of influence, mothers are assigned a prominent position in her prose. The fatherlessness of female participants at the *saraos* is a narrative device that foregrounds mother-daughter relations. In particular, Laura's centrality to Zayas's frame narrative supplements the thwarted roles of mothers in the novellas, which frame characters narrate. She acts as chief organiser of the first soirées, clearly aspiring to nurture her lovesick daughter back to health; her hopes for her child's recovery and contentment are pinned on marriage to Diego. Laura's commentary in her narratives (*El jardín engañoso* and *La inocencia castigada*) betrays her maternal stance in relation to the courtship disputes that engulf the younger storytellers. When Isabel has recounted the autobiographical *La esclava de su amante*, she seeks to renew her neglected relationship with her mother through their reunion in the convent. Likewise, when Lisis chooses the convent, Laura imitates her daughter's actions and follows suit with Isabel's mother; this highlights Laura's maternal desire to preserve the mother-daughter bond with 'su amada Lisis' (*DA* 510).

My next chapter develops the foregoing discussion and examines distinct facets of Zayas's maternal theme. These include relationships among female protagonists that could be described as 'surrogate motherhood'. In the male-dominated literature of Zayas's time, it is striking that she regularly portrays the mother, and the mother-daughter relationship, as

---

[110] Furthermore, exacerbating Jacinta's filial loss, her peers (Adriana and Guiomar) enjoy maternal succour; this situation mirrors the tense relationship of Lisarda, whose mother is not mentioned or named specifically in the text, with Lisis, whose mother plays a prominent role during the *saraos*.

[111] Greer, *María de Zayas Tells Baroque Tales*, p. 134.

an important balancing measure in terms of gender relations. Nonetheless, these relationships need to be supplemented and strengthened, as my next chapter will discuss.

Chapter 5

Other "Mothers": Surrogates and the Mother of God

'No hay más que decir, sino que causó a todos tanta lástima,
que lloraban como si fuera hija de cada uno' (*DA* 287).

'Y de lo que más me admiro es del ánimo de las mujeres de esta edad,
que sin tener el favor y amparo de la Madre de Dios,
se atreven a fiarse del corazón de los hombres' (*DA* 460).

As the previous chapter demonstrated, the limited influence that mothers wield in the *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares* further diminishes in Zayas's second collection of novellas. When parents or husbands are frequently absent, powerless or disinclined to protect, endangered women must obtain succour elsewhere. Under the oppressive circumstances present in the *Desengaños amorosos* and, at times, in the *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares*, the vulnerable party requires solace, protection and consolation: one woman takes care of another. This is unlike sisterhood, which implies some level of equality among women. Maternal acts of benevolent Gyn/affection emerge from unexpected sources, both secular and divine, particularly in the novellas of the *Desengaños amorosos*. Thus, Zayas juxtaposes weak, secular motherhood with stronger manifestations, which have pronounced monastic and religious undercurrents. In the tales under discussion here, the maternal, protective role is occupied by a surrogate mother or by her supernatural variant: the Virgin Mary, as Mother of God. These mother-surrogates are at a remove from the patriarchal family, investing them with more power than the natural mothers of my previous chapter.

Firstly, I will examine one tale from each of Zayas's prose collections, *El desengaño amando y premio de la virtud* and *La inocencia castigada*. Despite the increasing pervasiveness of *desengaño* and violence in the novellas, Zayas surprises the reader with sources of optimism and hope through women's motherly acts of charity and succour. Then, focusing solely on the *Desengaños amorosos*, I will analyse the intercessions and protective mothering of Mary, as Mother of God. To this end, I will provide an extended study of *La perseguida triunfante*, which represents the culmination of Mary's role in the novellas, and will place it within the context of its literary tradition; this novella has

received relatively little critical attention, particularly in relation to the other tales.[1] The importance of this religious mother-figure grows incrementally as the *saraos* progress towards their monastic conclusion with the women's exodus to the convent. Parallel to this tendency, the convent plays a central role in the restoration of order in the novellas mentioned.[2]

Surrogate Motherhood in Zayas's Novellas

In *Eve's Orphans: Mothers and Daughters in Medieval English Literature*, Nikki Stiller initially deduces that, in the period of literature being discussed, 'mothers are conspicuously absent'; she later amends this claim by concluding that, 'if we look hard enough and close enough, through all the barriers of class, male authorship, and paternal domination, we begin to glimpse our mothers at last in an occasional reference, a fleeting portrait, or in a whole series of substitutes and surrogates: a hidden gallery in a closed-off wing'.[3] Following this Medieval English tendency, we catch sight of substitute and surrogate mothers within the distinctive context of Zayas's Spanish novellas of the Golden Age. It is worthwhile to consider Fray Luis de León's *La perfecta casada* (1583), which was widely circulated among Zayas's contemporaries. Josemi Lorenzo Arribas studies the subtext hidden behind its denigration of *celestinas*, which has a wider actual target:

> Esta circulación de autoridad femenina entre mujeres de distintas generaciones, práctica frecuente en todas las épocas y también en el siglo XVI, es un ejemplo más de la efectiva existencia del "entremujeres", espacio donde el patriarcado no se significa y donde las mujeres se rigen por otros códigos que no son los impuestos por el sistema sexo-género, que aquí no son significativos.[4]

In contrast, Zayas fully exploits the dramatic capabilities and 'autoridad femenina' of surrogate mother-figures; likewise, she explores the potential of Mary, as Mother of God and divine symbol of feminine power.

---

[1] Noteworthy exceptions are: Greer's *María de Zayas Tells Baroque Tales*, Grieve's 'Embroidering with Saintly Threads', and Sandra M. Foa's *Feminismo y forma narrativa: Estudio del tema y las técnicas de María de Zayas y Sotomayor* (Valencia: Albatros, 1979).

[2] As I have already noted, Reichenberger's study of the Spanish *comedia* makes frequent reference to order, suggesting that it 'follows the pattern from order disturbed to order restored'. Reichenberger, p. 307.

[3] Nikki Stiller, *Eve's Orphans: Mothers and Daughters in Medieval English Literature* (London: Greenwood Press, 1980), pp. 6, 7–8.

[4] Josemi Lorenzo Arribas, 'Fray Luis de León. Un misógino progresista en la "querella de las mujeres". Relectura de *La perfecta casada*', in *Feminismo y misoginia en la literatura española: Fuentes literarias para la historia de las mujeres*, ed. by Cristina Segura Graíño (Madrid: Narcea, 2001), pp. 59–79 (p. 72).

Now, I will demonstrate how novellas such as *El desengaño amando y premio de la virtud* and *La inocencia castigada* make vital contributions to the development of 'mothering' in Zayas's works. Central female protagonists in both tales notably lack the support or protection of male and, more particularly, female relatives. Although the beneficial female relationships that emerge in these narratives do not stem from mutual obligations of consanguinity, they come to exceed the remit of friendship. Significantly, in these two novellas, female narrators choose to underscore the concatenation of women's individual, voluntary acts of charity. The 'mothers' in their novellas intervene to prevent other women from becoming martyrs, albeit of a secular kind, within contexts of increasingly extreme violence.

Filis narrates *El desengaño amando y premio de la virtud*, sixth novella of the *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares*. Juana is prominent in both episodes of the tale's bipartite structure and, although she has no children of her own, she acts as a surrogate mother to Clara's daughters. Throughout the novella, Juana's role evolves in such a manner that the predictable, false dichotomies of chaste or fallen woman are rendered redundant. One could borrow the term 'madre espiritual' from Faliu-Lacourt to describe this protagonist's relationship with Clara's daughters, linking the motif of surrogate motherhood with that of Mary as Mother, which will be explored later in this chapter.[5]

Initially, setting her novella in Toledo, Filis explores the relationship between Juana and Fernando, with whom Juana falls in love despite his evident inclination towards a lifestyle of mischief and vice. As an orphan, Juana lacks parental guidance. Moreover, she is at what Filis interestingly deems to be a vulnerable or 'dangerous age':

> Sus padres, habiendo pasado de esta a mejor vida, la habían dejado encomendada a sólo su valor, que en Toledo no tenía deudos por ser forasteros. Era doña Juana de veinte años, edad peligrosa para la perdición de una mujer, por estar entonces la belleza, vanidad y locura aconsejadas con la voluntad, causa para que no escuchando la razón ni al entendimiento se dejen cautivar de deseos livianos. (*NAE* 374)

The outcome of these combined factors is that Juana falls victim to Fernando's seduction; she commences an amorous affair with him in the mistaken expectation that they will eventually marry. The liaison continues for six months, during which time Fernando dupes Juana into believing that his reluctance to displease his mother causes him to delay the marriage.

---

[5] Faliu-Lacourt, p. 50.

A salient feature of Juana's predicament is her vulnerable solitude; within the novella, not a single relative is mentioned throughout her life-trajectory. The *novela cortesana*, with its short format, allows for this kind of narrowing of the familial and social ambience in a way to which the extended novel form would not lend itself. Juana's plight is worsened once her friend, Lucrecia, is introduced into the narrative. Lucrecia disloyally pursues her friend's lover, gradually gaining victory over Juana through the collective effect of her wealth, knowledge of demonic arts, and Fernando's inconstant nature. Numerous and varied magical practitioners appear in Zayas's novellas, particularly in the *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares*, reflecting the fascination of her age with social forms of the supernatural in the shape of witches, magicians, and apparitions.[6] In desperation, Juana also has recourse to magic, by employing the supernatural services of a student in Alcalá.[7] The student's magic is beyond his complete control, and a heaven-sent apparition rebukes Juana's sinful behaviour. Terrified by this admonition, having spent two years as Fernando's mistress, Juana definitively ends their relationship in order to save her soul. She enlists Fernando's financial assistance to negotiate her entry as a nun into 'la Concepción', the spiritual home that she elects 'para librarme de los trabajos y desdichas de este mundo' (*NAE* 389).[8] Once Juana dons the nun's habit, her joy is palpable: 'la más contenta que en su vida estuvo' (*NAE* 390).

From her monastic safe-haven, she witnesses Fernando's spiralling gambling debts. His mother, knowing him to be free of his responsibilities to Juana, encourages him to marry Clara, a beautiful and virtuous woman whom both mother and son think to possess wealth. In fact, this prosperity is an illusion created by Clara's father: 'No tenía más hijas que a doña Clara, y para ella, según decían, gran cantidad de dinero, si bien en eso había más engaño que verdad, porque el tal mercader se había perdido, aunque para casar su hija conforme sus merecimientos, disimulaba su pérdida' (*NAE* 391). He seems to be her only relative; no mention is made of Clara's mother. Her father abandons her after she marries Fernando; he embarks for the Indies, leaving her amid 'dos mil millares de disgustos, porque [...] don Fernando se había casado con ella sólo por el interés' (*NAE* 391).

---

[6] This was not merely a Spanish phenomenon; in Shakespeare's plays, witches (*Macbeth*), sorcerers (*The Tempest*), and ghostly apparitions (*Hamlet*) play important roles.

[7] When Juana's first spell misfires, she learns that she cannot win Fernando in wedlock. The student provides her with an incantation (Juana's second spell) to conjure the return of a former suitor as an alternative marriage partner. Unbeknownst to Juana, the suitor has died; his tormented ghost delivers a warning, leaving her in no doubt as to the greatness of God's power. Unlike Macbeth's witches or Hamlet's father's ghost, Zayas's supernatural apparition has an unambiguously virtuous role.

[8] In this and similar usages of 'trabajos', Zayas clearly means to suggest mental anguish or travails, as opposed to physical labour.

Although her father ensures that she has gained an apparently suitable marriage, Clara must bear her new family's wrath once his ruse becomes obvious. She is left as vulnerable to Fernando's oscillating loyalties as Juana formerly had been. This coincidence intertwines the women's fates, and evolves into an intimate connection between them.

Fernando's mother initially provides some protection for Clara, but this source of maternal succour vanishes upon the former's untimely death. To ensure the welfare of their two daughters, Clara manages the family estate, with the practical assistance of only one maid; Fernando provides them with no support. After four years of marriage, she is obliged to sell her finery in the face of diminishing resources and Fernando's gambling. The witchcraft of the omnipresent Lucrecia seems to exacerbate Fernando's neglect of his wife and offspring. Fernando and Lucrecia flee together when legal troubles seem likely to stem from their overtly unlawful liaison: 'ya había perdido de todo punto la memoria de su mujer e hijas' (*NAE* 393); not only has Fernando forgotten his wife, but also his paternal responsibilities. In the following year and a half, Clara's humble lifestyle is reduced to pauperism; she dismisses the maid and earns money by sewing to support her daughters: 'ya llegó a no tener criada, sino puesta en traje humilde, de más de trabajar de día y de noche para sustentarse a sí y sus dos niñas, a servirse su casa e ir ella misma a llevar y traer la labor a una tienda' (*NAE* 393). Due to the relatively elevated social position of impoverished women like Clara, there was a very limited range of remunerative possibilities open to them. In her overview of the Spanish novella genre, Bourland notes its inclusion of portrayals of women, such as Clara, who ably manage the household under dire circumstances:

> The novelas give us occasional interesting glimpses of older women, competent persons who cooperate with their husbands in the management of their affairs, direct the family if he is an invalid, or, in the event of his death, administer the estate as executrix and even increase its value, the better to dower their daughters. If left without property, they are frugal and industrious in the conduct of their households, and not above eking out a meagre income or entirely supporting themselves and their children by sewing and embroidery.[9]

Despite her plight as an abandoned wife, Clara's virtue means that she refuses to accept gifts offered by her tenacious admirer, Sancho, a Marquis. She resolutely remains loyal to her faithless husband, rebuking Sancho: 'Yo tengo marido, él mirará por mí y por sus hijas; y si no lo hiciere, con morir, ni yo puedo hacer más ni él me puede pedir mayor fineza' (*NAE* 396–7).

---

[9] Bourland, *The Short Story in Spain*, p. 35. In widowhood, Fabia of *El jardín engañoso* is another such capable head of household.

Clara has news of Fernando and Lucrecia in Seville and determines to go there to beseech him to return with her to Toledo; at this point in the tale, Juana reappears. Clara's mother-in-law has been twice described as her *escudo*; Juana now assumes this protective role.[10] Her reemergence coincides with a pivotal stage of the novella: Clara's journey will decide her fate, as well as those of Fernando and Lucrecia. Juana's existence in the convent, 'ya profesa y con muy buena renta, la más contenta del mundo', is in stark contrast with Clara's humble living (*NAE* 397). Material benefits enhance the spiritual rewards that Juana enjoys, having renounced her sinful status as Fernando's mistress. She appears to have taken a keen interest in Clara's vicissitudes; she knows that Clara needs assistance and a haven for her daughters, aged four and five, in order to undertake this important trip. She summons Clara, citing 'lo que le pesaba de sus trabajos y en lo que estimaba la virtud y prudencia con que los llevaba', and magnanimously offers to 'mother' Clara's two daughters indefinitely in the convent: 'Para siempre las recebía por suyas, y como a tales en siendo de edad, las daría el dote para que fuesen religiosas en su compañía; y que creyese que esto no lo hacía por amor que tuviese a su padre, sino por lástima que la tenía' (*NAE* 397). Compassion is not necessarily Juana's only motive; through her generous gesture, she gains two daughters 'por suyas' in an experience that approximates motherhood, which would not otherwise have been socially sanctioned due to her unmarried status. Juana claims that she is not moved by love for Fernando to seek closeness to his progeny and, by default, to him; nonetheless, there appears to be an arm's-length transaction of surrogate marriage as well as of surrogate motherhood.

Clara immediately accepts Juana's offer and brings her daughters to the convent. It seems that she intends to leave her daughters with Juana, a stranger, for a lengthy interlude; this decision apparently costs the previously devoted Clara surprisingly little vacillation. The narrator leaves us in no doubt regarding Juana's role as the girls' surrogate mother: Clara sets out on her journey, 'dejando a doña Juana muy contenta con sus *nuevas hijas*' (*NAE* 398; italics are my own). This is what Stiller terms 'mothering performed by women other than natural mothers'.[11] Juana's payment of four hundred silver *reales* seals the transaction; she receives 'nuevas hijas' in return. The money proves invaluable to Clara in her ensuing three-month search for Fernando and in her repayment of the family's debts.

[10] Quoting from the text, the references are: 'la madre de don Fernando, viendo su inocencia y virtud, volvía por ella y le servía de escudo'; 'En este tiempo murió su madre de don Fernando, perdiendo en ella doña Clara su escudo y defensa' (*NAE* 392).
[11] Stiller, p. 9.

This surrogacy arrangement is seen as a positive development for the parties concerned in the novella.

On account of Juana's succour, Clara succeeds in her mission to win back her husband by finding the adulterous pair and by ultimately overcoming Lucrecia's magic.[12] However, Lucrecia gains vengeance by piercing and burning the waxen figure of a man, which leads to the fatal sickness of Fernando, before stabbing herself to death. By the time that the married couple return to Toledo, Fernando is gravely ill. During these last two months of his life, Fernando is an exemplary, loving husband. There is no mention of their daughters, and they do not seem to be reunited with their father before his death. From the convent, Juana again provides assistance, this time to the dying Fernando: 'desde el monasterio le enviaba la comida' (*NAE* 406). In this charitable nurturing of Fernando, Juana extends her surrogate role within Clara's family. Deserted or betrayed by her friend, lover and family, Juana unexpectedly assumes the role of saviour to each member of Clara's family.

After Fernando's death, Clara faces dire financial circumstances, although she does not seek aid from Juana, 'considerando que harto hacía en tenerle y sustentarle sus hijas' (*NAE* 406). When the devoted Sancho discovers that Clara cannot afford to pay for Fernando's funeral, 'no pudo sufrir el enamorado mozo tal cosa' (*NAE* 407). Immediately after the burial, Sancho makes a speech that culminates in his request for the widowed Clara's hand in marriage. Clara gratefully accepts Sancho's offer, despite the fact that it appears somewhat hastily timed; her eager acceptance is made verisimilar by the pressing nature of her impoverished predicament, which may also account for her earlier willingness to leave her daughters with Juana. Once they are married, the reader awaits the fulfilment of Sancho's promise to act as stepfather to Clara's daughters; insofar as this occurs, he gives dowries to the two girls. They opt to remain with Juana, who continues to act as their surrogate mother, as opposed to forming a new family unit with their mother and stepfather: 'Quisieron quedarse monjas con doña Juana' (*NAE* 408).[13]

---

[12] Without being recognised, Clara works as Lucrecia and Fernando's servant for over one year. During this time, she corresponds with Juana, 'escribiendo cada ordinario a doña Juana los sucesos de su vida, y ella animándola con sus cartas y consuelos para que no desmayase ni la dejase hasta ver el fin' (*NAE* 402). Thus, even during this period of physical separation, Clara's contact with Juana is a source of succour.

[13] The two girls are aged four and five respectively when Juana approaches Clara with her offer of succour. Clara spends three months searching for Fernando and more than one year as maid of Fernando and Lucrecia. Fernando dies after two months of sickness, and Clara remarries soon after his funeral. In its twenty-fifth and final session, the Council of Trent stipulated that a minimum age of sixteen was required for taking solemn vows and for the bishop's formal examination of a postulant's desire to become a nun (Chapters XV & XVII). However, Perry notes that young postulants often took their vows after a childhood spent in the convent, and letters of payment show that parents paid dowries to convents for girls as young as four years.

Clara detaches herself from her former family surprisingly easily. She and Sancho have 'hermosos hijos que sucedieron en el estado de su padre' (*NAE* 408). Thanks to Juana's intervention, Clara reaps the reward of an improved married life; it is as if her turbulent first marriage and its offspring had never existed. Juana, the charitable stranger, remains unobtrusively in the foreground until the conclusion of the tale: in the first part of the tale, Juana exemplifies 'el desengaño amando', and her subsequent acts contribute to Clara's titular 'premio de la virtud'. The convent provides a place for surrogate motherhood, while 'real', physical motherhood goes on in parallel outside.

* * *

Clara's abject poverty upon her first husband's desertion and Juana's dishonour and subsequent recourse to the convent are portents of women's increasingly desperate plights in the *Desengaños amorosos*.[14] Turning to the latter collection of novellas, a comparable instance of a female stranger's charity occurs towards the end of the fifth *desengaño*, *La inocencia castigada*, which Laura narrates. As in the case of Juana's benevolence towards Clara's daughters in *El desengaño amando y premio de la virtud*, the maternal relationship involves women who are in no way related by blood.

At the start of the tale, Laura omits any description, however concise, of Inés's childhood or parentage. The novella begins *in medias res* with Inés, 'cuya edad aún no llegaba a diez y ocho años', on the brink of marriage (*DA* 265). The reader is left to deduce that both of Inés's parents must be deceased, given that the final matrimonial decision is left to her brother, Francisco, and his wife. Furthermore, Inés appears to live with the couple, given the influence that her sister-in-law is permitted to exert over her. As I noted in my second chapter, Laura informs us that Inés welcomes the marriage as an opportunity to escape 'la

---

Thus, it is plausible for the futures of Clara's two daughters as nuns by Juana's side to have been determined at such a young age. See Francesca Medioli, 'To Take or Not to Take the Veil: Selected Italian Case Histories, the Renaissance and After', in *Women in Italian Renaissance Culture and Society*, ed. by Letizia Panizza (Oxford: Legenda, 2000), pp. 122–137 (p. 129); Perry, *Gender and Disorder in Early Modern Seville*, p. 91.

[14] A fate very similar to Clara's awaits Ana in *El traidor contra su sangre*. She too experiences grave poverty during marriage and motherhood. Unlike Clara, Ana does not come to enjoy contentment through an advantageous second marriage; instead, in keeping with the theme of uxoricide in the *Desengaños amorosos*, her husband beheads her.

rigurosa condición de su cuñada' (*DA* 265).[15] In the first paragraph of the tale, Inés is married, with only a brief explanatory sketch as its preface.

In my third chapter on women's inter-class relationships, I discussed Inés's fateful dealings with her neighbour and a prostitute, early in her married life. Due to the malevolence and greed of Inés's cunning neighbour, Diego is led to believe that he is conducting an affair with the married Inés; in fact, a prostitute wearing Inés's dress receives his nocturnal visits. The effects of the women's deception are far-reaching as Diego is encouraged to continue his pursuit of Inés, believing that he really did seduce her.

As I have shown, Diego employs a sorcerer to render Inés unable to resist his sexual advances; with the Moorish magician's assistance, he learns to lure a semi-conscious Inés to his lodgings by night. Magic is a crucial plot device in both novellas discussed in this section. Lust motivates Diego's employment of magic in *La inocencia castigada* and Lucrecia's sorcery in the previously discussed *El desengaño amando y premio de la virtud*, and the magicians share similar magical arsenals of waxen, human figures.[16] The Moorish sorcery in *La inocencia castigada* is followed by the fulfilment of Diego's desires: sexual intercourse with Inés. Lucrecia's voodoo has effects of considerable, even fatal magnitude.[17] Neither necromancer appears to be an imposter, and, in each case, legal officials (namely, an *Asistente* and a Corregidor) intervene to test the efficacy of the magic and to declare its veracity.

In *La inocencia castigada*, we see that, despite the Corregidor's declaration of Inés's innocence, Francisco and his wife cast doubt upon it. They conspire with Inés's husband and reveal an unrelenting desire for personal vengeance, plotting to immure Inés in a tiny space. Inés's torment lasts for six years, 'sin que ninguno de sus tres verdugos tuviese piedad de ella, ni se enterneciese de ella' (*DA* 284). Instead of demonstrating tenderness or mercy, Inés's relatives perpetrate her misery. She is reduced to the dependence of a child; by bringing her food to prolong the agony, her sister-in-law enacts a grotesque parody of

---

[15] Hagiographic undertones link this novella with the next section of this chapter. After marriage, Inés finds herself, 'por salir de un cautiverio, puesta en otro *martirio*' (*DA* 265; italics are my own). The grotesque description of Inés, after she is freed from the wall, strengthens the link between this tale and graphic hagiographic portrayals of female martyrdom. (See Grieve's 'Embroidering with Saintly Threads'.)

[16] See Susan Paun de García, 'Magia y poder en María de Zayas', *Cuadernos de ALDEEU*, 8 (1992), 43–54 (p. 49).

[17] Lucrecia demonstrates her power through her ability to bring about Fernando's demise. Those who hear the tale at the *sarao* are oblivious to the serious consequences and implications of Lucrecia's magical powers. They extract amusement from the account of her spell, which involves a rooster wearing blinders, considering it a 'gracioso suceso' (*NAE* 408).

motherly nurturing. One recalls Clara's penury and spousal neglect in *El desengaño amando y premio de la virtud*; given the increasing violence in the *Desengaños amorosos*, it is fitting that tales such as *La inocencia castigada* portray women's suffering during marriage in more grievous and graphic forms.

Inés's saviour is a newly introduced female character who lives on the other side of the wall in which Inés is trapped. We are told that the woman is a penniless widow, who has been given these lodgings by her kindly former mistress. From her bed, the servant overhears Inés's pitiful lamentations. 'Movida a lástima', the woman raises her voice to speak to Inés and fearlessly offers to assist her 'aunque aventure y arriesgue la vida' (*DA* 285). In her first words, the widowed servant declares her intention to release Inés, even at the risk of her own safety. Her 'temores' have become 'compasiones', which immediately lead her to promise to take direct action to remedy Inés's suffering: 'Dime qué podré hacer, y no me ocultes nada, que yo no excusaré trabajo por sacarte del que padeces' (*DA* 285). This immediate and heart-felt declaration of allegiance is striking, given that she and Inés are complete strangers; a protective bond forms between the women from their very first encounter. This 'buena viuda' is the first female character of *La inocencia castigada* to demonstrate any benevolence or tenderness towards Inés (*DA* 284). It is noteworthy that, similar to Juana, who became a nun in *El desengaño amando y premio de la virtud*, Inés's widowed saviour is disconnected from the world of men. The positive nature of the women's relationship is evident from the regular application of the epithet 'buena' to Inés's saviour, as well as to the latter's former mistress: 'esta buena viuda' (*DA* 284), 'la buena mujer' (*DA* 286), and 'la buena dueña' (*DA* 287).

Inés's helper fulfils her promise by going with her former mistress to see the Archbishop. As Kristen Routt observes, this 'solidaridad entre mujeres' is vital to Inés's survival.[18] When the women return, accompanied by religious and secular authorities, they ensure that the three culprits are caught and that Inés is freed from her domestic prison. Thus, succour comes from outside Inés's family – not from within; it is particularly remarkable that the human catalyst for her rescue is a lowly former servant and not someone of a higher station in life. They find Inés in a pitiful physical state of blindness and degradation:

> Sus hermosos cabellos, que cuando entró allí eran como hebras de oro, blancos como la misma nieve, enredados y llenos de animalejos, que de no peinarlos se crían en tanta cantidad, que por encima hervoreaban; el color, de la color de la muerte; tan flaca y consumida, que se le señalaban los huesos, como si el pellejo que estaba encima fuera un delgado cendal; desde los

[18] Kristen Routt, 'El cuerpo femenino y la creación literaria en *La inocencia castigada* de María de Zayas', *Romance Languages Annual*, 7 (1995), 616–620, para. 22 of 25.

> ojos hasta la barba, dos surcos cayados de las lágrimas, que se le escondía en ellos un bramante grueso; los vestidos hechos ceniza, que se le veían las más partes de su cuerpo; descalza de pie y pierna, que de los excrementos de su cuerpo, como no tenía dónde echarlos, no sólo se habían consumido, mas la propia carne comida hasta los muslos de llagas y gusanos, de que estaba lleno el hediondo lugar. No hay más que decir, sino que causó a todos tanta lástima, que lloraban como si fuera hija de cada uno. (*DA* 287)

In this physically corrupted state, Inés manifests the cruelty of her sister-in-law and male relatives. Cruz draws parallels between Inés's immurement and a horrific return to the womb: 'Huérfana de madre, Inés debe darse a luz ella misma'.[19] Thus, she suggests that Zayas erases 'las huellas maternas' from her novella. The latter analysis of the tale fails to note the vital presence of Inés's widowed helper, who acts as a surrogate mother-figure. Inés is unable to free herself from the wall – or, following Cruz's analogy, to bring about her own 'birth' – without the involvement of a 'mother'. She must rely on a stranger to adopt the maternal role. The horrific spectacle provokes motherly, empathetic reactions in all onlookers; once Inés evacuates her uterine prison, she becomes the daughter of all who care for her – 'hija de cada uno' (*DA* 287).

Gorfkle suggests that, 'in Zayas's tales, we find important examples of the "ideal" mother, competing against the oedipal one'.[20] In *La inocencia castigada*, while Inés's sister-in-law plays the role of terrifying mother and oedipal rival through her grotesque nurture of Inés in her immurement, Inés's neighbours help her to return to good health.[21] While the perpetrators of Inés's abuse are chained, imprisoned, and put to death, the two women lovingly care for Inés:

> La señora que dio el aviso, junto con la buena dueña que lo descubrió, que estaban presentes a todo, rompiendo la pared por la parte que estaba doña Inés, por no pasarla por la calle, la llevaron a su casa, y haciendo la noble señora prevenir una regalada cama, puso a doña Inés en ella, llamando médicos y cirujanos para curarla, haciéndole tomar sustancias, porque era tanta su flaqueza, que temían no se muriese. (*DA* 287–8)

They tend to Inés's pressing physical needs, having provided for her spiritual necessities through the Archbishop's blessing. They bring the weakened Inés to share their home in order to nurse her to good health and to save her from becoming a public spectacle in the street. Ultimately, only the restoration of her sight evades these caring women – 'con tanto cuidado miró la señora por ella, que sanó; sólo de la vista, que ésa no fue posible restaurársela' – and the blind Inés enters the convent 'ya sana y restituida a su hermosura' (*DA* 288). In restoring Inés's beauty, Zayas questions the dominant perceived correlation

---

[19] Cruz, 'La búsqueda de la madre', p. 63 & 61.
[20] Gorfkle, 'Seduction and Hysteria', p. 23.
[21] Similarly, *Amar sólo por vencer* represents the types of 'ideal' and 'devouring mother' through the figures of Laurela's mother and aunt respectively.

between the sexual impurity of the raped woman and physical monstrosity, illustrating her innocence.[22]

During this monastic retreat, Inés's material comforts and contentment mirror Juana's. For Inés, the convent is a refuge in her blindness as well as a safe haven from the treachery of the world; finally, she has found a protected space in which to dwell in society. Zayas's motivation in failing to restore Inés's sight continues to puzzle her critics and readers. If we contrast moral and physical blindness, we see that almost all protagonists in the tale experience moral blindness – particularly Inés's family members – with the important exception of Inés and her allies. Thus, it appears that the physical punishment of the loss of sight would be more appropriate for anyone but Inés: for poetic justice, the rest of the world should instead be blind. Is Inés victimised, yet again? If we view the denouement positively, we see that, with the help of two female strangers, Inés is 'reborn' free from the tutelage of her relatives; blindness serves as a cruel reminder of Inés's narrow escape from death and of her 'resurrection'.[23] The optimism of Laura, narrator of *La inocencia castigada*, at its conclusion implies that Inés finds solace in a female monastic community, although this alternative convent existence is not textually represented by Zayas. The monastic resolution of this tale coincides with the pessimistic view of matrimony inherent in the *Desengaños amorosos*; heroines who, like Inés, attain physical wellbeing and fulfilment conclude their lives behind convent walls.

The contrasting, albeit positive, denouements in *El desengaño amando y premio de la virtud* and in *La inocencia castigada* depend upon unexpected aid from unlikely female sources of succour. These tales display relationships among women who are initially linked merely by coincidence; despite this, they charitably assist female protagonists in the resolution of their dire predicaments, even acting as surrogate mothers. Clara regains her husband's devotion as a result of Juana's assistance, catalysing a chain of events culminating in an advantageous second marriage; importantly, Juana forms a surrogate family with Clara's daughters in the convent. In the case of Inés, her female helper's intervention saves her from a prolonged and painful death, leading her to forge a peaceful existence in a monastic community. Through these cases of women's benevolence, Zayas highlights the redemptive potential of such voluntary female alliances and acts of charity in

[22] See Parker Aronson, p. 538. Similarly, in *La más infame venganza*, despite the monstrous bodily effects of Camila's poisoning as punishment for her rape, her facial beauty is unaffected and conveys her innocence.
[23] From a more pessimistic perspective, Routt interprets Inés's blindness as 'una cicatriz de su tortura por el mundo patriarcal'. Routt, para. 24 of 25.

predicaments involving both sexes' treachery and familial abandonment. Alongside motherhood, the convent plays a significant role in the fates of women in these novellas, which leads to my next topic of discussion: the maternal role of Mary, as Mother of God.

Mary's Role as Protective "Mother"

From the aforementioned novellas, I move to examine tales of the *Desengaños amorosos* that develop within a strong religious paradigm. In this section, I will analyse stories that contain key scenes involving the miraculous intercession of Mary, whose agency enables Zayas to explore a supernatural variant on the surrogate-motherhood theme. She assigns an overt role to both the heavenly and the human form of Mary in the novellas, portraying her interaction with protagonists. This discussion adds a third facet to Zayas's depiction of women; put simply, these are the good, the bad, and the supernatural. In the previous chapter, I contrasted her literary perspective on monasticism with that of the Protestant Reformers. Through her narrators' veneration of Mary, she also differs from the Reformers, who, to borrow Raymond's words, 'smashed devotion to the mother goddess, Mary'.[24] While granting Mary her indisputable place as the mother of Jesus, Protestants regarded additional exaltation as tantamount to Mariolatry, her elevation to a status approaching Christ's. Although adhering to Catholic orthodoxy by referring to Mary as Mother of God, Zayas is really interested in Mary as the mother of women in an abusive patriarchal age.

In 431, the Council of Ephesus proclaimed Mary's status as the Mother of God or *Theotokos*.[25] Haffner highlights the importance of the particular belief that Mary is Mother of God: 'In the hierarchy of Mariological truths, Mary's being the Mother of God is the pivotal basis for her role in the economy of salvation'.[26] When Mary Jacobus likened Mary to a surrogate mother, she intimated the potential breadth of her motherhood's

---

[24] Raymond, p. 104. Nonetheless, Luther insisted on the importance of Mary's divine maternity and held to her perpetual virginity; in fact, among the Reformers, Lutherans were the keenest in their devotion to her. In contrast, in Henry VIII's England, there was a wholesale destruction of her images, such as the statue of Our Lady of Walsingham. By the seventeenth century, the Catholic and Protestant Churches had come to view Mary as a major point of division, with the Protestant Church arguing that reverence for Mary detracted from the worship that was due to God alone. Paul Haffner, *The Mystery of Mary* (Leominster: Gracewing, 2004), pp. 6 & 122–3; Warner, *Alone of All Her Sex*, p. 96 & 296.

[25] David Van Biema, 'Hail, Mary', *Time*, 13 March 2005; Warner, *Alone of All Her Sex*, p. 65.

[26] Haffner, p. 107.

scope.[27] Santa Teresa de Jesús, in the first chapter of her *Libro de la vida* (c. 1565), describes her personal experience of a relationship of surrogacy with the Virgin Mary after her own mother's death:

> Acuérdome que cuando murió mi madre, quedé yo de edad de doce años poco menos. Como yo comencé a entender lo que había perdido, afligida fuime a una imagen de nuestra Señora, y supliquéla fuese mi madre con muchas lágrimas. Paréceme que aunque se hizo con simpleza, que me ha valido; porque conocidamente he hallado a esta Virgen soberana en cuanto me he encomendado a ella, y en fin me ha tornado a sí.[28]

In keeping with popular belief, Zayas's novellas portray Mary's involvement in maternal relationships with protagonists, the most important of which is with a woman. The practice of Marianism was particularly strong in the thirteenth century, when the *Cantigas de Santa María* of King Alfonso X (1221–84) sang praises to an 'active and heroic Mary [...] not to a remote and passive saint, but to a thoughtful, clever, and innovative Virgin who directly intervened in earthly affairs to rescue an assortment of human beings'.[29] Francisco Mundi Pedret and Anabel Sáiz Ripoll describe the thirteenth century as 'el siglo mariano por excelencia', a time for the portrayal, in Emily Dickinson's words, of 'Strong Madonnas'.[30]

Isabel of Castile's identification with Mary is worthy of consideration. This was part of the construction of her political legitimacy as a female monarch, exploiting Mary's redemptive role. With the birth of Isabel's first son, Juan, in 1478, the provision of an indisputable male heir was seen to herald a Golden Age for Spain: 'Here the parallels with the Virgin were obvious. Mary had offered the world the ultimate redemption: the son of God'.[31] Parallels were drawn between Isabel's purity and the Immaculate Conception, a doctrine that received enthusiastic devotion in Spain during the late Middle Ages and Renaissance. Isabel was a patron of this doctrine, of which her endorsement of the Conceptionists was striking evidence. As Lehfeldt demonstrates, her religious association

---

[27] Mary Jacobus, *First Things: The Maternal Imaginary in Literature, Art, and Psychoanalysis* (London: Routledge, 1995), p. 34.

[28] Santa Teresa de Jesús, *Libro de la vida*, ed. by Dámaso Chicharro (Madrid: Cátedra, 2001), p. 122. In the first and second chapters, Santa Teresa outlines the habits that her mother passed on to her. Her mother's spirituality and Marian devotion are evident through her care to have her children 'rezar y ponernos en ser devotos de nuestra Señora y de algunos santos' (p. 120). Famously, Santa Teresa also inherited her love of *libros de caballerías* from her mother.

[29] Perry, *Gender and Disorder in Early Modern Seville*, p. 38.

[30] Francisco Mundi Pedret and Anabel Sáiz Ripoll, *Las prosificaciones de las cantigas de Alfonso X el Sabio* (Barcelona: PPU, 1987), p. 26. The Dickinson quotation is taken from an 1863 poem (number 722), "Sweet Mountains – Ye tell me no lie", describing the act of contrition of a 'Wayward Nun' to Mary. See Benjamin Goluboff, '"If Madonna Be": Emily Dickinson and Roman Catholicism', *The New England Quarterly*, 73 (2000) 3, 355–385 (p. 378).

[31] Elizabeth A. Lehfeldt, 'Ruling Sexuality: The Political Legitimacy of Isabel of Castile', *Renaissance Quarterly*, 53 (2000), 31–56 (p. 50). Lehfeldt ('Ruling Sexuality', p. 53) also outlines Isabel of Castile's progressive identification with the apocalyptic woman, which I later discuss in this chapter.

with the Immaculate Conception bolstered her womanly political rule. Through personal devotion and support of the Franciscan Order, Isabel and Ferdinand contributed considerably to the intensification of belief in the Immaculate Conception in Spain. It was a divisive point of contention among Catholics, with Dominicans and Franciscans defending opposing viewpoints.[32] References to Mary as ideal model are noticeably absent from Fray Luis de León's *La perfecta casada*, perhaps in part because of her potency as symbol of 'autoridad femenina'.[33]

Regarding Zayas, the final words in the manuscript of *La traición en la amistad*, before her name, read: 'Alabado sea el santísimo sacramento y la limpia y pura concepción de la Virgen, sin mancilla concebida, sin mancha de pecado original'. Should the handwriting not be Zayas's own, the Marian invocation could still have been copied from her autograph, which would represent an unequivocal defence of the Immaculate Conception on Zayas's part.[34] Undercurrents in her prose – praise for Isabel and Ferdinand's reign and the promotion of the Conceptionist order – harmonise with her favourable portrayal of Mary's maternal role. Zayas harks back to Medieval Marian representations, portraying a powerful and maternal Mary.

Mary makes an initial, ephemeral appearance in the very first novella of the *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares*, Lisarda's *Aventurarse perdiendo*, but she does not play a significant role until Zayas's second prose work. In *Aventurarse perdiendo*, as I noted in my first chapter, Jacinta recounts her life-story to Fabio against the sacred, pastoral backdrop of Montserrat. In her preface, Lisarda foregrounds the Marian dedication of the shrine:

> Por entre las ásperas peñas de Monserrat, suma y grandeza del poder de Dios y milagrosa admiración de las excelencias de su divina Madre, donde se ven en divinos misterios efectos de sus misericordias, pues sustentan en el aire la punta de un empinado monte, a quien han desamparado los demás sin más ayuda que la que le da el cielo, que no es la de menos consideración el milagroso y sagrado templo tan adornado de riquezas como de maravillas;

---

[32] The Franciscan-Dominican difference centred on whether Mary was actually conceived without sin (the Franciscan viewpoint) or purged of it while in the womb (the Dominican opinion). For discussion of the Immaculacy debate in Spain, see Suzanne L. Stratton, *The Immaculate Conception in Spanish Art* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

[33] Lorenzo Arribas, p. 72. The only Marian poem that can be confidently attributed to Fray Luis is "Virgen, que el sol más pura", which he wrote during his imprisonment by the Inquisition between 1571 and 1576, ostensibly marking a subtle shift from his Christ-centred spirituality to a Marian-centred one. William J. Nowak convincingly argues for an ironic reading of the poem instead of accepting it simply as an expression of Marian piety. William J. Nowak, 'Virgin Rhetoric: Fray Luis de León and Marian Piety in *Virgen, que le sol más pura*', *Hispanic Review*, 73 (Autumn 2005) 4, 491–509.

[34] See Valerie Hegstrom, 'Introduction', in *La traición en la amistad* (London: Associated University Presses, 1999), pp. 13–29.

> tantos son los milagros que hay en él, y el mayor de todos aquel verdadero retrato de la Serenísima Reina de los Ángeles y Señora nuestra. (*NAE* 173)

Thus, Lisarda highlights the power that is associated with Mary; the awe-inspiring landscape vividly conveys her miraculous capabilities, 'efectos de sus misericordias'. Fabio visits this holy locale as Mary's devoted pilgrim, only to discover Jacinta there. As Deborah Compte observes, 'for Fabio it represents a distinctive female locus, presided over by the Virgin Mary'.[35] Jacinta's travails have led her to the surrounding wilderness; heeding Montserrat's spiritual link with Mary, she too beseeches blessings from its 'santa imagen' (*NAE* 207). However, the reader must wait until the second collection of tales, the *Desengaños amorosos*, for more specific references to this 'divina Madre' and for accounts of her 'divinos misterios' (*NAE* 173).

In this and later Marian references throughout Zayas's novellas, the author's lexical choices warrant our attention. Her narrators' preferred title, as I will demonstrate, is increasingly that of 'Madre de Dios'. In this manner, the idea of maternal protection is evoked (and invoked, by those who beseech her succour). Although the Mary whom Zayas portrays is the miraculous composite of virgin and mother, her maternal strength receives far greater emphasis than her virginal status, linking her with the earthly surrogate mothers of my first section. Thus, by weaving a thread of Marianism through the novellas, Zayas also supplies the reader with an artistic representation of spiritual surrogate motherhood.

Next, I will discuss Mary's protective "mothering" of her steadfast follower, an endangered woman, in Zayas's penultimate novella, *La perseguida triunfante*. Mary's role in this lengthy hagiographic tale is extensive, and she repeatedly comes to the aid of its principal female protagonist, Beatriz. It is the only novella in which Mary takes on human form, appearing in the guise of a beautiful woman; in so doing, she adopts a maternal, protective stance towards Beatriz. I pay particular attention to this intricate novella, which has received remarkably little attention from other literary critics to date. Thus, Mary's import magnifies towards the end of Zayas's second prose work, in tandem with the growing prominence of the convent as women's sanctuary, heralding the monastic retreat of key protagonists at the close of Lisis's *sarao*.

---

[35] Compte, 'A Cry in the Wilderness', p. 247.

Zayas introduces the idea of Mary as protectress in *El verdugo de su esposa* and *El traidor contra su sangre*, novellas three and eight of the *Desengaños amorosos* respectively. Mary saves men in each of these tales, albeit by highly mystical and indirect means; we are informed that 'la Virgen María, Madre de Dios y Señora nuestra' protects Juan's safety and that 'Dios, por intercesión de su Madre Santísima' aids Enrique's recovery (*DA* 217 & 385). Ironically, even these representatives of the patriarchy require Marian assistance. In each case, the men become *frailes* in thanksgiving, pointing to the religious vocations that are to be inspired in Zayas's most Marian-influenced tale, *La perseguida triunfante*. This all combines to promote monastic life to the guests at the *sarao*, a message that is apparently well received by Lisis and by her female companions. In *La perseguida triunfante*, as I will now demonstrate, Mary's intervention is direct, and her loving behaviour is that of a surrogate mother towards an endangered woman.

* * *

La perseguida triunfante contains Zayas's most sustained literary exploration of Mary's intercession. As a hagiographic tale, it illustrates the Baroque impulse toward the miraculous.[36] As I will reveal, the heroine's plight and need for succour arise as a result of a false accusation of adultery. A mysterious maternal figure comes to her aid at frequent intervals; identification of this female saviour is left until the final episode of the tale, although textual clues allow the astute reader the satisfaction of independently intuiting the lady's Marian identity. It is widely agreed that Timoneda's twenty-first (and penultimate) *patraña* is Zayas's principal source.[37] To highlight her innovative use of this material and development of Mary's protective role, I will make frequent reference to *El patrañuelo*, which was first published in 1567, and to earlier literary works that share a common *topos*.

In the frame-narrative discussion preceding the novella, Isabel's dialogue with Estefanía makes apparent that the presence of the latter narrator strikes particular anticipatory fear into her male listeners. Isabel opines: 'me parece que [estos caballeros] os han temido después de que os sentasteis a desengañar, admirándoos deidad, y que no sólo los castigaréis con las palabras, mas los secutareis con las obras' (*DA* 408). Considered by the

[36] Baroque hagiography produced lives of the saints for popular consumption (for example, the *Flos Sanctorum*) to celebrate the supernatural destinies of Christian heroes and heroines, affirming their power to transform society. Drama, rather than historical events, was used to heighten the exemplary quality of the saints' lives. Anthony M. Stevens-Arroyo, 'The Evolution of Marian Devotionalism within Christianity and the Ibero-Mediterranean Polity', *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 37 (1998) 1, 50–73 (p. 62).
[37] Place, *María de Zayas*, p. 52.

men as no less than a 'deidad', this divine image alludes to Estefanía's unique status as the only narrator at the *sarao* who is already a nun. In the 'Introducción', she is described as Lisis's cousin; having been granted permission to leave the convent temporarily to recover from 'unas peligrosas cuartanas', she awaits Lisis's wedding before making her return (*DA* 119).[38] The fears of the male audience members are not unfounded; Estefanía has already demonstrated her anti-masculinist proclivity in an impassioned outburst, after Laura finished narrating *La inocencia castigada*. In response to Laura's novella, Estefanía exclaimed:

> ¡Ay, divino Esposo mío! Y si vos, todas las veces que os ofendemos, nos castigarais así, ¿qué fuera de nosotros? Mas soy necia en hacer comparación de vos, piadoso Dios, a los esposos del mundo. Jamás me arrepentí cuanto ha que me consagré a vos de ser esposa vuestra; y hoy menos lo hago ni lo haré, pues aunque os agraviase, que a la más mínima lágrima me habéis de perdonar y recibirme con los brazos abiertos. (*DA* 289)

Estefanía's remarks draw a stark contrast beween the cruel patriarchal world depicted in Zayas's novellas and the image that they present of spiritual life in the convent: the unforgiving, male-dominated secular world versus a spousal relationship with God, the most tender and merciful bridegroom, in the convent. Her rhetoric encourages other women to follow her example by choosing the monastic life; her tale will further illustrate the wisdom of her pro-monastic stance.

Estefanía's importance as a narrator is heightened by the key placing of her novella as the first of the final night; only one tale follows Estefanía's – that of the *sarao* hostess, Lisis. The men's anxiety is justified upon Estefanía's announcement of her intention to illustrate male perfidy by scrutinising the highest echelons of aristocratic society: 'también hay reinas desdichadas y reyes y príncipes crueles' (*DA* 408); she proposes that even a queen is not free from persecution. She describes men's fruitless romantic pursuit of her fellow nuns, presenting their disdain as an example to her fellow sex.[39] She admits that 'no hablaré con experiencia, sino por ciencia, porque me sacrifiqué desde muy niña a Esposo que jamás me ha engañado ni engañará' (*DA* 409). Estefanía's novella is a fiction woven

---

[38] Estefanía's freedom of movement outside the convent seems somewhat implausible, especially given the Council of Trent's *clausura* regulations (twenty-fifth session, Chapter V), and is obviously designed to serve Zayas's literary purpose of having a nun narrate at the *sarao*. Also, the implication that her fellow nuns could freely interact with men goes against rules of *clausura*; see my next note. Conceptionist nuns observed strict enclosure. There is nothing in the Cistercian model that requires it, and Lehfeldt suggests that the Conceptionists' change of Rule to that of Saint Clare may have been partly due to its clear guidelines on enclosure. Zayas's literary convents appear to have avoided monastic reform; by reducing the stringency of *clausura*, Zayas portrays the convent as a refuge for women and removes any prison-like connotations. See also my discussion of Jacinta's actions in the convent (in *Aventurarse perdiendo*) in my first chapter. Lehfeldt, *Religious Women in Golden Age Spain*, p. 164.

[39] Should her novella not castigate men sufficiently for their deceptive activities, Estefanía humorously offers the services of her monastic sisters: introducing men to nuns 'será como echarlos a los leones' (*DA* 410). Ironically, Estefanía casts nuns as vengeful lionesses who have men as their prey.

of other fictions, notwithstanding her claims to the contrary, and it will now be useful to discuss Timoneda's tale, his own sources, and their relation to Marian tradition.

Estefanía's tale revolves around a false accusation of adultery, which echoes pivotal events in Timoneda's work. His twenty-first *patraña* explores the vicissitudes of Geroncia, an English queen. After her brother-in-law's attempts at seduction fail, he wrathfully accuses her of attempted adultery, for which her husband condemns her to death. A Marquis saves Geroncia and brings her to the safety of his court in France. The tranquillity is shortlived, however, as Geroncia is incriminated for the murder of the Marquis's son; this is the second false charge to be brought against her. Her accuser (and the 'real' murderer) is Fabricio, the Marquis's brother, whose lustful advances she has rejected. An episode takes place on a deserted island, where she discovers herbs with healing properties. She heals each of her accusers, who have coincidentally suffered illnesses, and is exonerated by their confessions. At the tale's conclusion, both Geroncia and her husband dwell in monasteries, and her reformed brother-in-law marries a Hungarian princess. Although there are disparities between Timoneda's story and Zayas's much lengthier novella, the fabricated accusation of adultery and subsequent plot outline are essentially similar. Zayas raises, to a much higher pitch, the actual and threatened level of violence that is directed against the heroine, and the extremity of violence allows our author to use the convent 'solution' as a plausible one. Leading to the monastic ending, in a major addition to Timoneda's tale, Mary regularly intervenes to provide the heroine with supernatural protection, and the primary role of maternal succour seasons the feminist flavour of Zayas's tale.

Timoneda consciously constructed his *patrañas* from borrowed materials, being aware that his readers would, in turn, modify the tales.[40] As María Pilar Cuartero Sancho notes in her introduction to Timoneda's *Patrañuelo*, 'Son, no cabe duda, más de una las fuentes manejadas por el escritor valenciano, y grande el número de posibilidades para éstas, dado el caudal de obras que acogen asuntos narrativos semejantes al de esta patraña'.[41] The allegation of adultery against an innocent wife is a recurring *topos* in literature of the Golden Age and earlier, not only of Spain but also throughout much of Europe. This popular medieval and Renaissance literary theme is widely known as that of the

[40] See María Soledad Carrasco Urgoiti, 'Los libros de cuentos', in *La novela española en el siglo XVI*, ed. by María Soledad Carrasco Urgoiti, Francisco López Estrada and Félix Carrasco (Madrid: Iberoamericana, 2001), pp. 89–99 (p. 94).

[41] María Pilar Cuartero Sancho, 'Introducción', in *El patrañuelo* (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1990), pp. 9–37 (pp. 34–35).

Calumniated or Persecuted Wife.[42] A biblical version, which may be the original source for the motif, appears in the story of Susanna and the Elders (Daniel 13), in which the innocent Susanna, accused of adultery by two lecherous elders, is tried and eventually rescued by the prophet Daniel.[43] In contrast, Place suggests that the tale is of oriental origin;[44] a similar tale entitled 'The Jewish Kazi and His Pious Wife' appeared in the *Thousand and One Nights*. Whether or not the latter was the case, Zayas's Marian-influenced version of the tale possesses decidedly Catholic as well as maternal characteristics.

Timoneda's twenty-first *patraña* may have been indirectly based on a miracle from the *Cantigas de Santa María*.[45] Alfonso X commissioned this collection of 420 Galician-Portuguese poems in praise of Mary in the late thirteenth century. The fifth *cantiga*, 'Esta é como Santa Maria ajudou a Emperadriz de Roma a sofre-las grandes coitas per que passou', recounts in verse form a plot that is similar to that of Timoneda. Twenty-four of the *cantigas* were translated into Spanish in prose form, this 'Empress of Rome' story being among their number. Eoff argues persuasively in favour of Gautier de Coinci's 'De l'empeeris qui garda sa chasteé contre mout de temptations', a lengthy story from his *Miracles de Nostre Dame*, which appeared in Spanish prose translation in the fourteenth century, as Timoneda's source.[46] The outline of Gautier's 'Empress of Rome' story

---

[42] Richard W. Tyler refers, by extension, to the plot's Spanish versions as the 'Reina Sevilla' legend, in homage to a late fourteenth-century manuscript. French by origin, it is chronologically the first Spanish version of the *Macario/Reine Sibille* story, in which the calumniated woman is described as Charlemagne's wife. See Richard W. Tyler, 'Algunas versiones de la leyenda de la "Reina Sevilla" en la primera mitad del siglo de oro', in *Actas del II Congreso de la Asociación Internacional de Hispanistas*, dir. by Jaime Sánchez Romeralo y Norbert Polussen (Nimegen, Holland: Instituto Español de la Universidad de Nimega, 1967), pp. 635–641.

[43] *The Anchor Bible: Daniel, Esther and Jeremiah: The Additions, A New translation with Introduction and Commentary by Carey A. Moore* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1977).

[44] Place, *María de Zayas*, p. 49.

[45] This contention is seconded by a combination of source studies: María del Pino Valero Cuadra cites the *Historia del emperador Ottas y la infanta Florencia* among literary explorations of the Calumiated Wife theme, noting its similarity to both Alfonso's *cantiga* and to Timoneda's *patraña*. Valli contends that the *emperador Ottas* story is Timoneda's main source. Menéndez Pelayo cites as one of Timoneda's sources 'la narración poética francesa *Florence de Rome*, que ya a fines del siglo XIV o principios del XV había recibido vestidura castellana en el *Cuento muy fermoso del emperador Ottas et de la infanta Florencia su hija et del buen caballero Esmere*'. See Marcelino Menéndez y Pelayo, *Orígenes de la novela*, ed. by D. Enrique Sánchez Reyes, 4 vols (Santander: Aldus, 1943), III, 81; María del Pino Valero Cuadra, *La leyenda de la Doncella Carcayona: Estudio y edición crítica* (Alicante: Publicaciones de la Universidad de Alicante, 2000), pp. 80–1; Giorgio Valli, 'Las fuentes italianas de la patraña IX de Timoneda', *Revista de la filología española*, 30 (1946), 369–381 (p. 372).

[46] Eoff, cited in John J. Reynolds, *Juan Timoneda* (Boston: Twayne, 1975), p. 72. Gautier, a Benedictine monk, compiled this verse anthology between 1218 and his death in 1236. His Empress of Rome story has a prominent placement in the anthology, at the head of the second part, and is of considerable length (3980 lines). See Nancy B. Black, 'Woman as Savior: Mary and the Empress of Rome in Gautier de Coinci's *Miracles*', *Romanic Review*, 88 (1997) 4, 503–17; Gautier de Coinci, *Les Miracles de Nostre Dame*, ed. by V. Frederic Koenig, 4 vols (Geneva: Droz, 1955–70), III (1966), 303–459.

closely resembles the fifth *cantiga* of Alfonso X. Among Timoneda's possible sources, Cuartero Sancho emphasises the role of the *Gesta Romanorum*: namely, the one hundred and fiftieth tale in Dick's edition.[47] The plot of this 'Empress of Rome' tale is indeed very similar to Timoneda's and to the others already mentioned, albeit without the Marian focus of Gautier or of Alfonso's stories *per se*.

The 'Empress of Rome' legend has left its imprint on Medieval literature throughout Europe – Middle English literature, for example. Ruth Wilson Tryon includes one version in her collection of 'Miracles of Our Lady' in Middle English verse, which she has taken from a manuscript of the early fifteenth century.[48] The legend makes repeated reference to 'oure lady' as the Empress's saviour. She contends that the miracle is based on a similar legend in Latin ('The Chaste Empress'), which John of Garland composed circa 1248. Surviving English versions of *Octavian*, an Old French romance composed in the mid-thirteenth century, recount a similar story that begins with yet another Empress of Rome.[49] One can also trace a thematic connection to the story of the Marian-devoted Custance, daughter of the Emperor of Rome, in Chaucer's *Man of Law's Tale* (c. 1387); Chaucer, too, describes Mary's intervention in his *Tale*.

More generally, the well-known legend of Genoveva de Brabante belongs to the same family of analogous plots.[50] Several versions of this enduringly popular story circulated in Spanish *pliegos sueltos*, and it has continued to make perennial appearances in eclectic literatures with remarkable longevity. While the story may have been familiar to Zayas, it is exceptional among tales of this *topos* for its continuing exposure to readers. In brief, the legend recounts the false accusation of adultery brought by Golo, the *mayordomo*, against Geneviève, wife of Count Palatine Siegfried of Trier. The latter executes this act of calumny as revenge for Geneviève's rejection of his advances during her husband's absence. In its *romance* form, the legend glorifies Geneviève's exemplary sanctity, and an angelic visitation ameliorates her travails:

---

[47] *Gesta Romanorum*, ed. by Wilhelm Dick (Erlangen & Leipzig: A Deichert'sche Verlagsbucch. Nachf. [Georg Boehme], 1890). The *Gesta* is a collection of moral anecdotes, which were written in Latin in the late thirteenth or early fourteenth century.

[48] Ruth Wilson Tryon, 'Miracles of Our Lady in Middle English Verse', *PMLA*, 38 (1923) 2, 308–388.

[49] The motif of the Calumniated Wife was popular in English literature. It makes a further appearance in the romance of *Sir Triamour*, and a variant arises in the *Erl of Tolous* romance, both of which date from the late fourteenth centry. The texts of these Middle English romances can be accessed through the excellent *TEAMS Middle English Texts* database: <http://www.lib.rochester.edu/camelot/teams/tmsmenu.htm>.

[50] Of Francis James Child's three families of tales involving unjustly accused wives, the Oliva-Sibilla family is the most relevant here. The English romances of *Octavian* and *Sir Triamour* belong to the same family also. 'Sir Aldingar' (59), in *The Scottish and English Popular Ballads*, ed. by Francis James Child, 5 vols (Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 1965), II, 33–48.

> Que por la celeste esfera
> Bajó un ángel que en sus manos
> Trae la imagen perfecta
> De Jesús crucificado.[51]

The story has a prounounced religious influence, although there is no Marian intervention. Geneviève dies soon after her exoneration, and her son and spouse live out the rest of their lives in a religious order. Allusions to the Geneviève legend have appeared in such relatively recent and diverse texts as Marcel Proust's *Du Côté de chez Swann* (1913), Alejo Carpentier's *Los pasos perdidos* (1953), Simone de Beauvoir's *Le Deuxième Sexe* (1949) and *Mémoires d'une jeune Fille rangée* (1958).[52] In *Le Deuxième Sexe*, de Beauvoir highlights the effect of these stories on young female readers:

> Souvent les jeunes beautés promises à un glorieux avenir commencent par apparaître dans un rôle de victime ; les histoires de Geneviève de Brabant, de Grisélidis, ne sont pas aussi innocentes qu'il semble; amour et souffrance s'y entrelacent d'une manière troublante ; c'est en tombant au fond de l'abjection que la femme s'assure les plus délicieux triomphes ; qu'il s'agisse de Dieu ou d'un homme la fillette apprend qu'en consentant aux plus profondes démissions elle deviendra toute-puissante : elle se complaît à un masochisme qui lui promet de suprêmes conquêtes.[53]

This passage bears a resemblance to Kristeva's discussion of the *Mater Dolorosa*, a Marian devotion that reached its peak in the fourteenth century. Kristeva notes that 'Marian pain is in no way connected with tragic outburst: joy and even a kind of triumph follow upon tears, as if the conviction that death does not exist were an irrational but unshakeable maternal certainty, on which the principle of resurrection had to rest'.[54] The foregoing overview conveys the vibrant legendary and Marian tradition that serves as backdrop to Zayas's novella, *La perseguida triunfante*, compounding its intensely literary character. Even today, her readers' interpretation of this novella may be affected by their familiarity with the *topos* of the falsely accused wife. While this goes against the impression of lived experience created by the *Desengaños amorosos*, the result is that the reader's ear is attuned to hearing Zayas's variations on a familiar theme.

---

[51] *Romancero General II*, ed. by Agustín Durán, Biblioteca de Autores Españoles, 16 (Madrid: Atlas, 1945), 1309–1310, pp. 329–332 (p. 331). See also René de Cerisiers, *Innocency Acknowledg'd in the Life and Death of S. Genovefa, Countesse Palatin of Trevers, Translated into English* (Ghent: Printed by Iohn vanden Kerchoue, 1645).

[52] Carpentier's protagonist, Rosario, laboriously digests the *Historia de Genoveva de Brabante*, with a resolute belief in the truth of fiction. In Proust's novel, the Geneviève allusions are twofold: the young protagonist describes in detail a magic lantern that projects scenes from the legends onto his bedroom wall; later, genealogy reveals that the Duchesse de Guermantes descends from Geneviève of Brabant. See Alejo Carpentier, *Los pasos perdidos* (Barcelona: Barral, 1974), p. 101; Marcel Proust, *Swann's Way: Book One of Remembrance of Things Past*, trans. by C. K. Scott Moncrieff (London: Penguin, 1957).

[53] Simone de Beauvoir, *Le Deuxième Sexe*, 2 vols (Paris: Gallimard, 1949), II, 40. In de Beauvoir's *Mémoires*, she describes her strictly supervised childhood reading, which included the Geneviève legend among permissible works, and her playful imitation of such persecuted wives: 'je me perdais dans les forêts sauvages jusqu'au jour où mon innocence éclatait'. Simone de Beauvoir, *Mémoires d'une jeune Fille rangée* (Paris: Gallimard, 1958), pp. 59–60.

[54] Kristeva, 'Stabat Mater', in *The Kristeva Reader*, p. 175.

Unlike Timoneda's *patraña*, most of these pre-Zayas literary works assign a prominent role to Mary; this important feature is shared with Zayas's *La perseguida triunfante*. She infuses her tale with a strong gynocentric flavour, placing Marian protection in the narrative foreground. She extracts maternal and Marian *topoi* from her source-material, further enhancing Mary's role in her version of the oft-related tale through multiple apparitions of this holy figure.[55] Thus, the primacy of Mary's role as surrogate mother in Zayas's novella suggests that artistic instinct led our author to seek out the maternal in Marian literary tradition.

Moving briefly from literary tradition to history, the plausibility of Zayas's novella as a so-called *caso verdadero* warrants consideration. It is set in Hungary during an unspecified period when Ladislao inherits the throne from his father, 'llamado asimismo Ladislao como el padre' (*DA* 411). Ladislao is a translation of a Slavic name (Ladislas, László or Vladislav), which has the etymological meaning of "glorious ruler". A famous bearer was Ladislas I, who ruled as King of Hungary for eighteen years: 1077–1095. He was exceptionally beloved of his subjects and was venerated long before he was canonised in 1192.[56] Saint Ladislas belonged to the Árpád dynasty, whose family tradition recognised the inheritance principle of *senioratus*; Yllera notes that the Hungarian crown was inherited by this dynasty from 1001 to 1301, which is consistent with Zayas's opening remarks: 'que entonces venía el reino de padres a hijos, no como ahora, por votos de los potentados' (*DA* 411, note 2). In the novella, Estefanía includes sparse but plausible historical references; no two consecutive Hungarian kings shared the name 'Ladislao', suggesting the imaginative, literary origins of its plot.[57] Zayas carefully chose a royal name from Medieval Hungary for her fictitious monarch, selecting one that had positive,

---

[55] For example, as Kathy M. Krause observes, Gautier's representation of the Virgin throughout his *Miracles de Nostre Dame* stresses the maternal aspect of her benevolent actions. Kathy M. Krause, 'Virgin, Saint, and Sinners: Women in Gautier de Coinci's *Miracles de Nostre Dame*', in *Reassessing the Heroine in Medieval French Literature*, ed. by Kathy M. Krause (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2001), pp. 26–52 (p. 28).

[56] Macartney notes that he was outstanding among Hungary's kings, 'a true paladin and gentle knight, a protector of his faith and his people, and of the poor and defenceless'. C. A. Macartney, *Hungary: A Short History* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1962), p. 20. Historical details in this paragraph are taken from Macartney.

[57] Zayas's references to Hungary conjure images of another historical and saintly personage: Elizabeth of Hungary. Like the fictitious heroine, Elizabeth was a holy, married woman. Jo Ann McNamara describes Elizabeth's as a life of 'voluntary poverty'; between 1221 and 1231, she was not only generous with alms but stressed her personal identification with the poor by serving them herself, entering their houses, and sharing their lives. Jo Ann McNamara, 'The Need to Give: Suffering and Female Sanctity in the Middle Ages', in *Images of Sainthood in Medieval Europe*, ed. by Renate Blumenfeld-Kosinski and Timea Szell (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991), pp. 199–221 (p. 208).

even saintly, connotations. However, as one would expect from Zayas's novellas, a female protagonist occupies the narrative foreground: Ladislao's wife.

Zayas's Ladislao appears to be the epitome of perfect kingship and is popular among his subjects. Estefanía notifies the reader of her intention to recount his only mistake, demonstrating considerable compassion towards her protagonist: 'Hay lances, aunque mentirosos, con tantas apariencias de verdad, y más si los apoyan celos, que tienen más disculpa que castigo' (*DA* 411). In common with the overarching theme of the *Desengaños amorosos*, Ladislao's error in judgement relates to the mistreatment of his wife. Marriage negotiations occur in the tale's introductory episode: Ladislao has selected Beatriz, the daughter of the King of England, to be his spouse. Zayas's geographical loci display the influence of Timoneda's *patraña*, which has England as its main setting and Hungary as a secondary location.[58] Beatriz's merits are such that she seems like a living saint: 'era de las más perfectísimas damas, en hermosura, entendimiento, virtud y santidad, que en todos aquellos reinos se hallaba en aquella sazón' (*DA* 411). Zayas's selection of this name for her saintly heroine indicates that she may have borne the thirteenth-century *Cantigas de Santa María* of Alfonso el Sabio in mind during the composition of her novella; in both its verse and prose forms, the Empress of Rome is named Beatriz.

In Zayas's novella, Ladislao sends his younger brother, Federico, to marry Beatriz as his proxy. Federico is morally Ladislao's inferior and becomes infatuated with Beatriz; his overwhelming, illicit passion propels the action of the tale. His status as younger brother and secondary heir fosters rivalry and triangular desire. Little information is provided regarding Beatriz's family; there is only passing reference to 'los reyes de Inglaterra' in relation to the marriage arrangements and royal celebrations (*DA* 412). Once Beatriz's suffering commences, it becomes evident that the maternal role would lie vacant but for miraculous intervention. Estefanía prefaced her story by citing the existence of 'reinas desdichadas y reyes y príncipes crueles' (*DA* 408). It soon becomes evident that Beatriz's destiny is to be a 'reina desdichada', and that the main cause of her misfortune is not her husband, the king, but her brother-in-law, the *infante*.

[58] Lope de Vega's early *comedia*, *Los pleitos de Inglaterra*, centres on a queen's unjust punishment and eventual vindication for adultery; Hugo A. Rennert convincingly contends that Lope remodelled the play into *La corona de Hungría* in 1633. In selecting the setting for her novella, which is based on a similar premise, Zayas may have borne these *comedias* in mind. Hugo A. Rennert, 'Lope de Vega's *comedias* "Los pleitos de Inglaterra" and "La corona de Hungría', *MLR*, 13 (1918) 4, 455–464.

Esteeming his new wife, Ladislao considers 'no era Beatriz mujer, sino deidad, o espíritu angélico, tal era la virtud, santidad y hermosura de la bella reina' (*DA* 414). Thus, in the opening paragraphs of the *desengaño*, 'santidad' is repeatedly cited as one of Beatriz's distinguishing qualities. She stands out among Zayas's women of virtue for tremendous spiritual goodness, and the tale contains hagiographic undertones from the outset. Similarly, Timoneda conveys the remarkable virtue of his heroine, Geroncia, as that of 'una mujer de muy santa vida'.[59] Aware of her predicament, Beatriz resolves not to provide Federico with opportunities to disclose his love and prays for his enlightenment. She repeats this pattern of having recourse to prayer throughout her travails.[60] After a year of marriage, Ladislao has to depart to engage in warfare, assigning Beatriz and Federico joint governance of the kingdom.[61] At this key juncture immediately prior to her husband's departure, Beatriz remains silent 'por no inquietar con nuevos cuidados el corazón de su esposo' (*DA* 415).

In arranging political matters with Federico, Beatriz's modesty and propriety are such that she is more like a 'deidad' than a fallible human being (*DA* 416). Ultimately, she orders craftsmen to construct a sumptuous cage in the palace grounds and locks the unsuspecting Federico inside. Beatriz's relief is palpable, 'dando gracias a Dios de tenerle donde pudiese vivir segura de sus traiciones y quimeras' (*DA* 424). This is a relatively humane 'imprisonment', in contrast with women's cruel enclosure in other novellas, the immured Inés of *La inocencia castigada* being the obvious example. Zayas adheres to the plot outline of Timoneda's *patraña*, in which the brother-in-law's importuning also culminates in his temporary imprisonment, although she greatly expands upon the central conflict between the queen and her brother-in-law. After a year, Ladislao returns, and Beatriz frees Federico to receive his brother.

Beatriz's fears are realised when Federico vengefully alleges that she imprisoned him due to his refusal to yield to her 'liviano y lascivo amor' (*DA* 427). He weaves an intricate web of lies, urging Ladislao to condemn his wife to death as punishment for attempting to offend his honour. He besmirches Beatriz's saintly reputation, opening it to ridicule: 'Ésta es la santa, la virtuosa, la cuerda y honesta Beatriz, que tanto amáis y estimáis' (*DA* 427).

---

[59] Joan Timoneda, *El Patrañuelo*, ed. by María Pilar Cuartero Sancho (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1990), p. 239.

[60] For example, there are references to Beatriz's prayers during Ladislao's absence: 'pidiendo a Dios la amparase y defendiese de él [Federico]', 'pedía a Dios trajése presto al rey' (*DA* 419 & 423).

[61] In Timoneda's story, the married couple are separated due to the king's pilgrimage to Jerusalem; regardless of the slightly differing premise, Timoneda's crucial conflict, which surrounds the queen's defencelessness against her brother-in-law's adulterous advances, is identical to that of Zayas's novella.

Estefanía interrupts her narrative to condemn Ladislao's unjust readiness to accept Federico's testimony, without allowing Beatriz the privilege of a defence:

> Gran falta en un rey, que si ha de guardar justicia, si da un oído a la acusación, ha de dar otro a la defensa de ella. Mas era el acusador su hermano, y la acusada su esposa; el traidor un hombre, y la comprendida en ella, una mujer, que aunque más inocente esté, ninguno cree su inocencia, y más un marido, que con este nombre se califica de enemigo. (*DA* 428)

Estefanía's virulent misandry casts husbands in the role of 'enemigo' of womankind; her 'marido'/'enemigo' comparison is apposite within the context of the *Desengaños amorosos*. She halts her narrative to appeal to the men of the *sarao* for an admission of guilt: 'Cierto, señores caballeros, que aquí no hay disculpa en apoyo de los hombres, ni razón que os acredite, ni aun vosotros mismos, que tantas halláis contra las mujeres, la hallaréis en vuestro favor' (*DA* 430). Despite the esteem in which the Hungarian nobility had previously held Beatriz, the gentlemen side with Federico as the more powerful party. Ladislao's thoughts are portrayed through the evocative image of a battle, in which the vulnerable woman is easily vanquished: 'batallando en él el honor y el amor, el agravio y la terneza, su hermano y su esposa, que al cabo de la lid, ella, como más flaca o más desdichada, quedó vencida' (*DA* 428–9). He strikes 'la santa y hermosísima reina', spilling her 'inocente sangre' (*DA* 429). In this foreign kingdom, all ordinary sources of succour fail Beatriz, as her husband, brother-in-law, and subjects effectively conspire to take her life.

Henceforth, Beatriz's physical danger increases dramatically. Ladislao orders four huntsmen to gouge out her eyes and to leave her to die in the wilderness as punishment for her alleged crime. Bidding a tearful farewell to her maids, Beatriz appears resigned to her unwarranted suffering, 'diciendo que pues Dios quería que padeciese así, que no la llorasen, que ella estaba muy conforme con su voluntad' (*DA* 429). The huntsmen follow Ladislao's instructions and abandon the blinded Beatriz, taking her jewels and leaving her only her ornate dress. Expecting imminent death, Beatriz prays: 'no hacía más de llamar a Dios, y su divina y piadosa Madre, tuviesen misericordia de su alma, que ya del cuerpo no hacía caso, ofreciéndoles aquel martirio' (*DA* 431). Amid Estefanía's many references to Beatriz's supplications to God, this reference to his 'piadosa Madre' marks a subtle departure, albeit a crucial one.[62]

[62] Similarly, facing death, Timoneda's heroine beseeches 'a Dios y a la Virgen sin mancilla', God and Mary Immaculate, for succour. His *patraña* underplays the protector's role and, in this instance, references her sinless state instead of her maternity. Timoneda, p. 242.

The punishment of blindness and the subsequent need for restoration of sight are among Zayas's additions to the formulaic plot. Beatriz's harsh bodily suffering increases the reader's sense of compassion and horror. This is the second of Zayas's novellas in which a woman suffers physical blindness. As I have already outlined, the immured Inés in *La inocencia castigada* recovers her health, with the exception of her sight, through the maternal agency of neighbouring women. In *La perseguida triunfante*, a woman mysteriously appears and restores Beatriz's sight with miraculous curative power; this has symbolic potential, suggesting that Beatriz's enlightenment and heightened insight are to ensue as parallel phenomena to the recovery of her sight. Beatriz's 'santidad' alone is not sufficient protection. Implicitly, there is the suggestion that, but for the arrival of Beatriz's wondrous rescuer, she would have suffered the permanent and unjustifiable loss of her sight, in the manner of her forerunner, Inés. In Estefanía's commentary, she links the state of being deceived with the affliction of blindness: 'Cegar y engañar parece así, en el modo, que es todo uno, pues el que está engañado se dice que está ciego de su engaño. Luego, hasta en sacarle los ojos, cumplieron éstos con el oficio de hombres contra esta mujer, como hacen ahora con todas' (*DA* 430–1). Instead of blindness, Timoneda's heroine must repeatedly avoid the dual threats of murder and of sexual violation. As novellas such as *La esclava de su amante* prove, Zayas has no qualms regarding the depiction of rape in her novellas; another motive lies behind her focus on Beatriz's eyes: the connotative, metaphorical implications of sight, insight, and moral blindness.

The mysterious stranger consoles Beatriz through spiritual insight into God's plan: 'aunque Dios ha permitido darte este martirio, aún no es llegado tu fin, y te faltan otros que padecer; que a los que Su Divina Majestad ama, regala así' (*DA* 431). Once healed, Beatriz marvels at the woman's awe-inspiring and peculiarly familiar appearance; she does not yet divine the woman's identity: 'vio junto a sí una mujer muy hermosa, y con ser, a su parecer, muy moza, tan grave y venerable, que obligaba a tenerla respeto. Y parecióle asimismo que la había visto otras veces, mas no que pudiese acordarse en dónde' (*DA* 431). The woman tenderly heals, feeds, and comforts Beatriz; these loving actions bespeak her maternal attitude. Taking Beatriz by the hand, the woman then leads her to a spring; there, she embraces Beatriz, instructs her to trust in God through imminent travails, and departs. Bereft of the lady's kindness and company, Beatriz weeps uncontrollably and washes away her bloodstains in the fountain, symbolic cleansing activities that follow the remarkable encounter. A Duke on a hunting expedition discovers Beatriz and, inspired by chaste affection ('como si fuera su hermana' [*DA* 434]), invites her to be his and the

Duchess's guest. He reveals to her than she is no longer in Hungary, but in Germany. Beatriz uses the name 'Rosismunda' to conceal her identity; her geographical movement and use of an alias recall other novellas, such as Isabel's *La esclava de su amante*.[63] Both she and Isabel resourcefully undertake journeys, spatial and developmental, occupying 'liminal' or 'threshold' stages until the tales' denouements, due to their sullied honour.[64]

Temporarily distancing herself from her heroine, Estefanía returns her narrator's gaze to Hungary, where Ladislao has come to rue his hasty act of vengeance, especially when Beatriz's ladies-in-waiting proclaim her virtue. Against his wishes, Federico sets out in search of Beatriz, secretly intending to rape and to murder her. Failing to discover her whereabouts, Federico instead encounters 'un hombre vestido a modo de escolástico, de horrible rostro, y que parecía de hasta cuarenta años' (*DA* 436). The stranger claims to possess magical skills and mysterious insight into events. Henceforth, Estefanía's narration refers to Federico's ally merely as 'el doctor' and, until its denouement, sheds no further light on his cloaked identity (*DA* 436). His sudden appearance and supernatural power offer parallels to those of Beatriz's protector, although his ugly visage contrasts with the lady's beauty. Estefanía mirrors her characterisation of Beatriz and Federico as polar opposites through their assistants, who represent archetypes of good and evil. Zayas brings unity to her tale, in spite of its length and episodic structure, through a religious undercurrent, namely, in the form of regular appearances and miracles by Beatriz's protector and by Federico's malevolent doctor.[65] The men form a secret pact of allegiance with a dual purpose: the concealment of Federico's lies and his eventual inheritance of the throne upon Ladislao's death. The doctor gives Federico a ring that endows him with the power to convince Ladislao of his every word. With the magical ring, Federico convinces Ladislao that wild beasts have killed his wife, suggesting that, 'si no estuviera culpada, el Cielo la hubiera defendido, que es amparo de inocentes' (*DA* 439). Ironically, this is precisely the miracle that has occurred: thanks to the mysterious woman's protection, the innocent Beatriz's life has been saved.

---

[63] The crossing of national borders and a false identity (as Clariquea) also ensue for Timoneda's heroine, Geroncia. Her escape from the forest is immediately followed by an episode similar to that of a later calamity (involving an infanticide) in Zayas's tale.

[64] Here, I borrow Turner's anthropological concepts, which Edwards applies to his theory of female heroism. Liminars are typically relatively powerless (e.g. women), occupying an ambiguous position in society; their associated grouping of unhierarchical 'communitas' is perceived as threatening by those concerned with maintenance of the *status quo*. Lee R. Edwards, 'The Labors of Psyche: Toward a Theory of Female Heroism', *Critical Inquiry*, 6 (Autumn 1979) 1, 33–49.

[65] Bourland pinpointed multiplicity of incident, frequent shifting of scene and loosely constructed plots, complete with digressions and extraneous episodes, as typical features of the novella as it developed in Spain. In this regard, *La perseguida triunfante* is a typical example of this Spanish genre. Bourland, *The Short Story in Spain*, p. 19.

Estefanía informs us that news of the scandalous events in Hungary has reached Beatriz's royal parents in England. Once their ambassadors are informed that Ladislao rightfully punished Beatriz, they desist from pursuing the matter. They do not use their political influence to come to their daughter's defence, accepting Ladislao's spousal authority. In so doing, 'se excusaron las guerras que sobre esto se pudiera causar' (*DA* 440); evidently, preservation of the diplomatic *status quo* between the two kingdoms takes precedence. Beatriz cannot rely upon her family for succour, which heightens the singular importance of her newfound protector's maternal role.

When the doctor announces to Federico that it is time for them to begin 'la guerra contra Beatriz', the two men leave the Hungarian court for the household of Beatriz's host, the German Duke (*DA* 440). The doctor utilises magic to incriminate her in a plot against the Duke's life. The doctor's supernatural abilities are evidently crucial to the continuation of Federico's vendetta against Beatriz. The Duke is compassionate towards her, but his wife clamours for the alleged traitor's death and plans to poison her. Thus, the Duchess joins the sizeable body of female would-be executioners in Zayas's *Desengaños amorosos*.[66] In her turmoil, Beatriz finds consolation by remembering her helper's words of warning. Beatriz again finds herself assailed by powerful enemies, despite her innocence and the high esteem in which she is held.

The merciful Duke, 'guiado por Dios, que no quería que Beatriz muriese', orders his servants to bring her by night to the spot where he originally found her (*DA* 444). In the wilderness once more, Beatriz fears being devoured by wild beasts or being raped by bandits. Her second encounter with the mysterious maternal figure occurs in this inhospitable terrain. As a miraculous portent, Beatriz realises that her humble garments have transformed into 'los ricos vestidos que había sacado de Hungría, cuando la llevaron por mandado del rey, su esposo, a sacar los ojos' (*DA* 444). In Kaminsky's study of clothing in the *desengaños*, she notes the symbolic impact of Beatriz's regal clothing on this tale:

> Zayas draws attention to the fact that the gown ought logically to have been irretrievably lost, highlighting the supernatural aspect of the tale. As the story progresses, the restoration of Beatriz's gown becomes more closely attached to the intercession of her mysterious friend, and finally the appearance of the woman and the restoration of the gown coincide [...] It is not until

[66] Timoneda's *patraña* is much shorter in length than Zayas's novella. Therefore, Zayas adds new episodes into her version of the tale, as well as expanding those taken from Timoneda. Beatriz's sojourn in the Duke's palace is one such new, inserted episode, with its previously encountered topic of one woman's cruelty towards another.

> much later in the tale that the restoration of the gown is given the acceptable explanation of divine intervention.[67]

The miraculously restored dress is a physical manifestation of powerful intercession on Beatriz's behalf. To Beatriz's amazement and horror, Federico appears in the desolate spot. When Federico arrogantly declares that 'aun el Cielo no es poderoso para librarte', her beautiful rescuer reappears (*DA* 445). Defying Federico's blasphemy, she takes Beatriz's hand, removing her from his grasp; instead of his female victim, he now holds a ferocious lion. The lion savagely attacks Federico until his magician-friend and servants unsheathe their swords.

Beatriz shows gratitude towards her defender, who encourages her with 'amorosas caricias' (*DA* 446). Their loving interaction bears the hallmark of a relationship of surrogacy. Beatriz again suffers considerable distress upon the woman's departure, showing the strength of her emotional attachment to this protective figure. When the retinue of a German Emperor passes, his six-year-old son spontaneously displays 'tan grande amor como si toda su vida se hubiera criado en su compañía' (*DA* 448). The boy is disconsolate when it is time for him to be separated from Beatriz, and, to mollify him, the Emperor and Empress invite her to receive shelter at their palace. Thinking this to be the will of 'Dios y su guardadora', Beatriz agrees (*DA* 448); although she does not know her protector's identity, she senses an association with God. This is the second aristocratic family with whom Beatriz temporarily finds sanctuary. In this episode, Beatriz adopts the false name of 'Florinda'; with each new identity, Beatriz is 'reborn' with *tabula rasa* effect.[68] The family welcomes her and entrusts her with the care of their young heir, to whom she is devoted: 'Queríanla tanto por esto los Emperadores, que no es posible ponderarlo, y ella amaba al príncipe más que si fuera su hijo' (*DA* 449).

Once more, Estefanía redirects her narrator's gaze to Federico; while Beatriz resides contentedly with the Emperor's family, he recovers from injuries incurred during the lion's mauling. The doctor cannot solve the mystery of Beatriz's guardian and intimates that his foe's abilities exceed his own: 'tenemos fuerte enemigo, porque no puedo, por más que lo

---

[67] Kaminsky, 'Dress and Redress', p. 384.

[68] The floral connotations of the false names ('Rosismunda' and 'Florinda') that Beatriz takes at different stages of the novella recall other Calumniated Wife plots. I have already noted that Charlemagne is married to 'Sibille' or 'Sevilla' in a family of different versions of the story. In a related Franco-Italian *chanson de geste*, which is widely known as *Macaire* or *Macario*, Charlemagne's falsely accused wife is called 'Blanchefleur' or 'Blançiflor'. For a study of versions of the *Reine Sibille/Macario* story, see Leslie Zarker Morgan, 'The *Reine Sibille/Macario* Story and the Charlemagne Cycle throughout Europe: A Re-Examination of the Franco-Italian *Macario*', *Italica*, 78 (Spring 2001) 1, 1–17.

procuro, alcanzar qué deidad defiende esta mujer, que no valen nada mis artes y astucias contra ella' (*DA* 449). The doctor formulates a plan to engineer Beatriz's death indirectly: following his instructions, Federico enters the bedroom that Beatriz shares with the Emperor's child so as to put a sleep-inducing herb under a pillow, thus allowing him to kill the child and to place the dagger in Beatriz's hand. Implicated by circumstantial evidence, a death penalty would ensue for Beatriz.

The tender vision that Federico witnesses of the sleeping Beatriz and her charge is evocative of figures from Roman mythology: '[Federico] vio dos ángeles; humanémoslo más: vio a Venus y a Cupido dormidos' (*DA* 451). Zayas uses mention of this myth to provoke horror and disgust by associating it with infanticide. It is particularly meaningful that Federico detects a similarity between the sleeping pair and Venus and Cupid; the mother-son bond between these mythological characters analogously implies that maternal affection links Beatriz to the boy. Beatriz acts as the child's surrogate mother, but, on this occasion, the relationship is threatened by abusive patriarchy. Federico executes the infanticide as planned, destroying the intimate image.

Beatriz awakens to the grieving of the boy's devoted parents: 'empezaron, como gente sin juicio, a dar voces, mesando la Emperatriz sus cabellos y el Emperador sus barbas' (*DA* 452). The Emperor's orders are that Beatriz should be brought to the spot where they found her, there to be beheaded publicly, her head and hand to be placed at the roadside with a notice publicising her crime.[69] Each episode within the tale appears cyclical and returns Beatriz to her prior location and to a preordained trajectory, which, as we shall see, ultimately leads back to Hungary. Subsequent to fervent prayer, Beatriz sees her lovely protector emerge from the crowd; the woman unties Beatriz and leads her away by the hand. Mirroring the miracle that occurred after Beatriz's escape from the ducal household, her regal Hungarian garments are again amazingly recovered. The woman leaves Beatriz at a remote cave and refuses to reveal her identity until a later stage; she reveals an intimate knowledge of God's wishes for Beatriz, suggesting that a hermit's existence in this isolated spot is in accord with His will. There, Beatriz finds every necessity to lead a simple, pious life, including religious books such as a Book of Hours to Our Lady and a book of saints' lives. She devotes herself to the task of giving thanks to God 'junto con su Santa Madre, de haberla sacado de entre los tráfagos y engaños del mundo' (*DA* 455). The

[69] A similar episode takes place in Timoneda's story. Even the minor details of the proposed roadside notice are taken from Timoneda's *patraña*, in which, along with a sign detailing the crime, the murder weapon is to be placed at the city gates. Ironically, the knife later falls on and wounds Fabricio, the 'real' murderer.

narrator, Estefanía, then returns her gaze to Beatriz's executioners, from whose astonished viewpoint Beatriz has vanished before their very eyes. News then arrives that the young Prince has miraculously come back to life to vindicate his beloved Florinda's innocence.[70]

Beatriz's rustic retreat continues for eight years; her contentment is marred only by a wish to see 'su amada amiga y defensora', until one day she awakes to hear the familiar voice address her (*DA* 457). The mysterious visitor reveals that, unknown to Beatriz, she has been watching over her. The break of day coincides with a major epiphany for Beatriz: the woman reveals that she is 'la Madre de Dios' (*DA* 457). Timoneda's *patraña* does not contain any such miraculous apparitions; despite his heroine's virtue and recourse to prayer, her good fortune does not explicitly stem from supernatural succour. Beatriz is awe-struck by the divine sight:

> En diciendo esto, como ya era la voluntad de Dios y suya que la conocieran, al punto, en el diáfano manto azul, que aunque de este color, más era sol que manto, en los coturnos de la plateada luna, en la corona de estrellas, en el clarísimo resplandor de su divino y sagrado rostro, en los angélicos espíritus que la cercaban, conoció Beatriz aquella soberana Reina de los Ángeles, Madre de Dios y Señora nuestra. Que, puestos los ojos en ella, así como estaba de hinojos, se quedó inmóvil y elevada, gran rato absorta en tan gloriosa vista. (*DA* 457–8)

Mary appears to Beatriz without her Son; here, to an extent, she usurps or circumvents God's privileges. Thus, Zayas is adhering less to theology than to the tradition of folktales and miracles stories that chronicle Mary's assistance to devotees.[71] Estefanía conveys Beatriz's religious rapture: communing with her holy 'Madre', she is rendered 'inmóvil', 'elevada', and 'absorta'. Kenneth A. Stackhouse notes that, for Zayas's contemporaries, the revelation of this protector's divine identity would have endowed the tale with moral verisimilitude: 'Zayas's tendency to limit diabolical magic on the one hand and her association of supernatural events with the Virgin on the other concur with the beliefs of her contemporaries. Therefore her stories would not likely incur the disbelief of those readers whose main concern with verisimilitude is moral'.[72] While successfully rendering her readers dumbfounded, she does not neglect the necessity for plausibility; in her extensive treatment of supernatural themes, Zayas is careful to coincide with popular belief, while at the same time pursuing an "aesthetic of violence" that distinguishes the *Desengaños amorosos*.

---

[70] Timoneda's text does not directly bear the imprint of any otherworldly influences nor does it contain any unequivocally miraculous events. Violent acts, such as the horrific infanticide, once inflicted, are irreversible. As Geroncia's punishment for this 'real' death, she is sent to 'la isla Desafortunada' to die of hunger (Timoneda, p. 244).

[71] Warner, *Alone of All Her Sex*, p. 323.

[72] Kenneth A. Stackhouse, 'Verisimilitude, Magic and the Supernatural in the *Novelas* of María de Zayas y Sotomayor', *Hispanófila*, 62 (January 1982), 65–76 (p. 70).

In my first chapter, I discussed Estefanía's blue scapular and white Conceptionist habit; after several novellas' references to this religious community, founded by Beatriz de Silva in 1484, it comes as no surprise that the principal frame protagonists – Lisis, Isabel and their mothers – ultimately join Estefanía in a Conceptionist convent. According to written accounts of Beatriz de Silva's vision, she was lady-in-waiting to Isabel of Portugal (1428–1496) at the Castilian Court in Tordesillas during this time. Jealousy led the queen to lock Beatriz in a trunk for three days; miraculously, she was discovered alive:

> Estando así encerrada, vio a la Virgen sin mancilla Nuestra Señora, que le apareció vestida del hábito de la Concepción que traen ahora las monjas, consolándola y esforzándola con esfuerzo muy grande; por lo cual y por otro aparecimiento semejante que asimismo Nuestra Señora le hizo otra vez, ordenó después ella el hábito según lo había visto.[73]

Like Beatriz de Silva, Estefanía's protagonist suffers horrific, unjust treatment at a foreign court, culminating in a Marian miracle. On Zayas's part, it is surely no mere coincidence that a similar mystical apparition should appear before her fictitious protagonist of *La perseguida triunfante*, who is also named Beatriz. It is psychologically verisimilar that Estefanía would extract some familiar details from the life of the foundress of her own religious community as part of the *sarao* storytelling process. By imbuing this hagiographic narrative with biographical references derived from Beatriz de Silva's miraculous vision, Zayas adds to her text's frequent Conceptionist allusions.

Francisco Pacheco laid down rules for the artistic treatment of the Immaculate Conception in his treatise, *Arte de la pintura*; although this work was published posthumously in 1649, his theories were known throughout Spain during his lifetime.[74] Among his directives for 'Pintura de la Purísima Concepción de Nuestra Señora', he specified: 'Hase de pintar con túnica blanca y manto azul, que así apareció esta Señora a doña Beatriz de Silva, portuguesa, que se recogió después en Santo Domingo el Real de Toledo a fundar la religión de la Concepción Purísima, que confirmó el Papa Julio II, año de 1511'.[75] Most of Pacheco's Marian instructions were taken up by Spanish artists of the seventeenth century, when the painted *Inmaculada*, which Zayas's text descriptively imitates, reached its

---

[73] Gutiérrez (citing Beatriz's *Vida*), p. 75. Isabel of Castile's parents were Juan II and Isabel of Portugal, King and Queen of Castile; it is open to conjecture whether her vital support for Beatriz's religious endeavour to found the Conceptionist Order was, to some extent, motivated by an attempt to atone for her mother's reprehensible act.

[74] Robert S. Stone, 'Time Will Darken Them: Caravels and Galleons in Zurbarán's Immaculate Conception', *Journal of Iberian and Latin American Studies*, 13 (2007) 1, 41–71 (p. 49). Pacheco was Velázquez's teacher and father-in-law; also, from 1618, he held an official post as the Inquisition's municipal art inspector in Seville. With regard to the Immaculate Conception, Stratton contends that the iconography had been fixed by the end of the sixteenth century and was to remain constant after 1700. Stratton, p. 140.

[75] Francisco Pacheco, *El arte de la pintura*, ed. by Bonaventura Bassegoda i Hugas (Madrid: Cátedra, 1990), p. 576.

apogee.[76] Compressed within the novella's Marian image (complete with 'sol', 'plateada luna', and 'corona de estrellas') is a Scriptural passage: 'And a great sign appeared in heaven, a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars, and she is with child' (Revelation 12.1–2). This apocalyptic woman 'gave birth to a son, a man, who is destined to rule all the nations with a rod of iron' (Revelation 12.5).[77] Pacheco too conflated the image of the apocalyptic woman and that of the Immaculate Conception in his artistic treatise.

At this climactic point of the Marian vision in *La perseguida triunfante*, Estefanía interrupts her narration to extrapolate that not even Beatriz's considerable virtues were sufficient to protect her against the lascivious Federico; she necessitated nothing less than 'todo el favor y amparo de la Madre de Dios' to guarantee her salvation (*DA* 458). Addressing the *sarao* participants, Estefanía uses the extreme example of Beatriz's misadventures to state plainly women's folly in placing their trust in men, only to be deceived and to have their reputations tarnished by them. She urges women to defend their honour resolutely as they do not possess Beatriz's singular merits or divine maternal protection: 'pues si siendo buena tuvo necesidad de que la Madre de Dios la defendiese de un hombre, vosotras, en guerra de tantos y sin su favor, ¿cómo os pensáis defender?' (*DA* 459). Continuing her fulmination against male treachery, she includes a telling reference to Alfonso el Sabio:

> Y de lo que más me admiro es del ánimo de las mujeres de esta edad, que sin tener el favor y amparo de la Madre de Dios, se atreven a fiarse del corazón de los hombres, bosques de espesura, que así los llamó el rey don Alonso el Sabio, en lo verdadero, y el dios Momo en lo fabuloso, donde no hay sino leones de crueldades, lobos de engaños, osos de malicias y serpientes de iras, que siempre las están despedazando el honor y las vidas, hartando su hambre y sed rabiosa en sus delicadas carnes, que bien delicada es la vida y bien débil el honor. (*DA* 460)[78]

This echoes Laura's acknowledgement of Alfonso at the close of her *La inocencia castigada*: 'Y como dijo el rey don Alonso el Sabio, que el corazón del hombre es bosque de espesura, que nadie le puede hallar senda, donde la crueldad, bestia fiera y indomable, tiene su morada y habitación' (*DA* 288).

---

[76] Zurbarán painted the *Inmaculada* at least fourteen times in his career; only Murillo and José Antolínez have left more portraits of the Immaculate Conception, the latter painting more than twenty-five *Inmaculadas*. Stone, p. 42; Stratton, p. 121.

[77] See *The Anchor Bible: Revelation; Introduction, Translation and Commentary by J. Massyngberde Ford* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1975).

[78] Brownlee notes the shifting, polysemous use of the lion motif in this tale. Estefanía compares her monastic sisters with lionesses due to their capacity for gaining vengeance on men. In a literal manifestation of Estefanía's figurative claim, Beatriz metamorphoses into a lion to defend herself from male sexual violence. By naming men 'leones de crueldades' (above), she uses the metaphor in a feminist way (*DA* 460). Of course, the 'cruel lions' in Zayas's texts can be women too: Laura condemns Inés's sister-in-law as 'rigurosa leona' in *La inocencia castigada* (*DA* 288). Brownlee, *The Cultural Labyrinth of María de Zayas*, p. 127.

Critical research has yet to unearth any such declaration by Alfonso el Sabio. Nonetheless, these passing references to Alfonso X support the theory that Zayas was familiar with his *cantigas*, which may inform the pronounced Marian aspect of her novella. Also, lexical links between Zayas's *La perseguida triunfante* and Alfonso's *cantiga* are in evidence. At the discursive level, Zayas highlights Mary's maternal role by repeatedly referring to her as 'Madre de Dios' and its variants. In so doing, she is adhering to the linguistic pattern of the *cantigas*. Alfonso's prose and verse forms of the legend also make reference to her as 'la Madre de Dios'.[79]

In the final episode of *La perseguida triunfante*, Mary instructs Beatriz that it is God's will to allow her to restore her own reputation and also to save Federico from damnation. She provides Beatriz with a *disfraz varonil* and magical herbs to cure victims of a plague that is rife in Hungary. A pre-condition for the remedy is that the patient must make a full confession of his sins. A similar episode takes place in Timoneda's *patraña*; confession and prayer are also integral to Geroncia's healing rites, although Mary has no explicit role in these scenes. Timoneda omits the crucial scene of divine apparition, which occurs in the "Empress of Rome" stories of Gautier de Coinci and of Alfonso X, and also in Zayas's novella, prior to the discovery of the magical herb. Black contends that, in Gautier's *Miracles*, with Mary's permission, the heroine forms an analogue to her, since both have the power to redeem sinners from damnation and to perform miraculous remedies. Black's comments are relevant also to Zayas's novella, in which Mary endows Beatriz with her own curative powers by giving her the herb; "mother" and "daughter" share these supernatural capabilities. Mary saves Beatriz, and the latter, in turn, saves others; the predominant themes of salvation and rescue unify the surrogate mother with her adopted daughter. Thus, Beatriz is elevated from the status of a good, chaste woman to that of 'a saint in the making'; she is 'queen of the earth just as Mary is Queen of Heaven'.[80] The healing plant is symbolic of women's capacity to give life in the mothering role; the maternal influence on Beatriz's deeds is evident.

---

[79] Mary is named 'Madre de Dios' or 'Madre de Deus' (instead of her usual title, 'Santa Maria') in the key scene when Beatriz receives the gift of healing herbs in her sleep. Mundi Pedret and Sáiz Ripoll, pp. 258–9; Alfonso X, el Sabio, *Cantigas de Santa María*, ed. by Walter Mettmann, 3 vols (Madrid: Castalia, 1986–1989), I (1986), 5. 127, 134.

[80] Krause uses the first soubriquet to describe the Empress of Rome in Gautier de Coinci's version of the plot, while Stiller describes her in an English version of the same miracle. Krause, p. 40; Stiller, p. 117.

With a blessing, Beatriz's 'gloriosa defensora' sends her back to Hungary on this final mission; at their farewell, the profundity of Beatriz's sorrow is underlined, and the strength of Beatriz's love for the maternal figure is striking:

> Ella arrodillada, con muchas lágrimas, por apartarse de aquella celestial Señora, le besó los pies con tal sentimiento, que no se quisiera quitar jamás de ellos, pidiéndole que siempre la amparase [...] Y dejándola así, arrodillada, [la Santísima Virgen] se desapareció, quedando la santa reina tan enternecida de que se hubiese partido de ella, que no acertaba a levantarse, ni quitar la boca del lugar adonde había tenido sus gloriosos pies. Y así estuvo un buen espacio. (*DA* 461)

The epithet 'santa' has been frequently applied to Beatriz, and her constant virtue, despite false accusations and tribulations, is such that she merits this title; years of penitence have completed Beatriz's trajectory of spiritual testing and cleansing. Mary's parting words emphasise the maternal nature of her relationship with the saintly queen: 'Anda, hija, con la bendición de Dios y mía' (*DA* 461). Mary is not above bringing illness upon Federico, the heroine's main enemy, in order that he might save himself by repenting. In Hungary, Beatriz's reputation as 'el médico milagroso' spreads, and Ladislao sends for this miracle healer to cure Federico (*DA* 461). Beatriz appears before Ladislao, Federico, and the malevolent doctor, who has remained vigilant on Federico's behalf throughout the novella. Unrecognised in her male disguise, Beatriz rebukes the latter's 'falsa mágica' as inferior to God's and demands a full confession from Federico (*DA* 462). When Federico reluctantly reveals his crimes against Beatriz, Ladislao laments his wrongful conduct against his wife, whom he describes, in hagiographic terms, as a 'santa mártir' (*DA* 465).

In a dramatic anagnorisis, Beatriz reveals her identity to her wrongdoers. Her attire transforms miraculously before the assembled crowd: once again, she wears the regal garments that she wore on leaving the Hungarian court, and she is even adorned by the jewels that had been stolen by the brutal men who gouged her eyes. The reappearance of Beatriz's original apparel intensifies the cyclical, episodic progression of the tale and acts as an emblem of Beatriz's constant virtue. Kaminsky explores the symbolic significance of Beatriz's dress and jewels:

> It [the gown] represents a soul worthy of the Virgin's friendship. The jewels themselves, on the other hand, are adornment, albeit valuable. She loses them easily, as she does her good name. Beatriz's honour, the exterior manifestation of her chastity, made visible in the image of the jewels, is only recovered when the world, in the person of her husband, acknowledges her innocence.[81]

Beatriz's beauty is unaffected by her years of ascetic travails, 'sin que el sol, ni el aire, aunque estuvo ocho años en la cueva, la hubiese ajado un minuto de su belleza' (*DA* 465). Krause notes that, in Gautier's version of the tale, the Empress of Rome loses her physical

[81] Kaminsky, 'Dress and Redress', p. 384.

beauty, becoming saintly 'by rejecting her female humanity, by losing even the physical characteristics that marked her as a woman'.[82] In this final episode, Zayas emphasises and embraces Beatriz's perennial femininity; similar to Mary when she takes a human form, Beatriz's beauty is compatible with holiness. In tandem with these miracles, onlookers witness the apparition of 'la Madre de Dios, Reina de los Ángeles y Señora nuestra', who, in a protective gesture, places her hand on Beatriz's shoulder (*DA* 465). Only then does Federico's doctor detect the identity of Beatriz's guardian; vanquished, the demonic figure vanishes, leaving dense smoke in his wake. Through Marian intervention, Beatriz emerges victorious over her tormentors and defeats the devil.

Ladislao and Federico kneel and beg Beatriz's forgiveness. By reporting the men's acts of repentance, Estefanía attenuates their vilification in her tale. In this novella, Mary's role allows Zayas to reach new descriptive heights of unjustifiable suffering in her characterisation of Beatriz; thus, Zayas can repeatedly bring her heroine to the brink and then, through the miraculous intercession of Mary, as Mother of God, draw her back from it. Although this narrative procedure may appear to belong to the fantastical realm of fairy tales, it is conducted within an adult framework of marital failure, sexual lust, and political corruption. By the joyous denouement, Beatriz has attained spiritual purity and regained her public reputation and safety, and her protectress can make her exit from the tale.

Contrary to her husband's wishes, Beatriz announces that she will not return to married life: 'al Esposo celestial y al reino de la gloria sólo aspiraba' (*DA* 466). Gautier de Coinci's version of the tale in his *Miracles* has a similar conclusion.[83] Gautier directs his hagiographic verse to the abbesses of Notre Dame de Soissons and Fontevrault; the narrative, which promotes monasticism and flight from secular life, and its accompanying treatise on chastity ("De la chasteé as nonains") would undoubtedly have appealed to these abbesses.[84] Krause detects that there is a misogynistic tone to Gautier's moralising: throughout the tale, 'Gautier takes every opportunity, every narratively motivated chance, to stress woman's weakness, her tendency towards sin, particularly sexual sin, while

---

[82] Krause, p. 46.

[83] Likewise, the Empress does not return to her husband in Alfonso's *cantiga*; Timoneda's *patraña* ends similarly. This was not uniformly the conclusion of tales involving an unjustly accused wife. Christine de Pizan's later "Florence of Rome" story, in *Le livre de la cité des dames* (1405), ends with the couple's return to married life. Christine de Pizan, *The Book of the City of Ladies*, trans. by Earl Jeffrey Richards (New York: Persea Books, 1982), pp. 176–8.

[84] Black notes the apposite nature of Gautier's selection of the latter monastery due to the unusual prominence that it assigned to women's roles.

highlighting the empress's remarkable virtue and moral strength'.[85] Zayas removes any traces of misogyny from her depiction of Beatriz in the novella, and, when the latter opts to become a "bride of Christ", she is effectively forging a lasting link with the Holy Family and preserving her bond with her beloved protectress and "mother". Her ladies-in-waiting wish to follow her example by becoming nuns: 'sin querer hacer noche en palacio, llevando consigo todas sus damas que quisieron ser sus compañeras, se fue a un convento, donde tomaron todas el hábito de religiosas, dándole licencia el rey para ello, donde vivió santamente hasta que fue de mucha edad' (*DA* 466). Thus, because of Mary's interventions, a female monastic community is created, anticipating that which forms at the end of the frame narrative.

Grieve contends that 'Zayas creates a revisionist text that subverts hagiography's patriarchal discourse' and 'dismantles the very foundation of hagiography'.[86] However, it is entirely in keeping with hagiographic tradition for the virtuous Beatriz to become a nun after surviving the victimisation of men; Grieve overstates the subversiveness of Zayas's use of religious discourse. Only in terms of Beatriz's overt rejection of marriage, in general, and of her husband, in particular – and of Lisis's later imitation of this act by breaking her marriage engagement to Diego – can this denouement be considered in any way subversive. As Greer notes, progression in Zayas's prose is 'from the house of the father to the house of God, which, in terms of psychic attachment, is a conditional return to the house of the mother'.[87] The tale's hagiographic tone and monastic conclusion are harbingers of female frame protagonists' later choice to live together in a gynocentric community – the convent.

The final information that Estefanía imparts is a confirmation of Beatriz's saintliness; while Federico undergoes a startlingly radical change in character, Beatriz's virtue has been unwavering since her marriage at the outset of the tale. Ladislao sends news of Beatriz to England and asks permission for the marriage of Beatriz's younger sister, Isabela, to Federico.[88] After the wedding festivities, Ladislao imitates Beatriz by taking 'el

---

[85] Krause, p. 42.
[86] Grieve, p. 89 & 104. Brownlee also disagrees with Grieve on this point (*The Cultural Labyrinth of María de Zayas*, p. 126).
[87] Greer, *María de Zayas Tells Baroque Tales*, p. 147.
[88] By choosing the name of 'Isabela' for Beatriz's sister, Zayas indirectly alludes to the historical personage of Beatriz de Silva. As I outlined previously, Beatriz's Conceptionist nuns received considerable support from Queen Isabel of Castile. At the close of Zayas's novella, the newly wed Isabela and Federico rule the kingdom of Hungary, restoring peaceable national relations between England and Hungary. Perhaps this is a veiled allusion to another politically propitious marriage – that of Isabel of Castile and Ferdinand of Aragon.

hábito del glorioso san Benito' and delivers his kingdom to the now-reformed Federico's rule (*DA* 467). Inspired by Beatriz's piety, her husband also opts to live 'santamente' within monastic walls (*DA* 467). Timoneda's tale ends similarly: at Geroncia's request, 'se encerraron cada uno en un monesterio, a do acabaron sus vidas muy santamente', leaving her brother-in-law to rule.[89] In this story, Zayas demonstrates evenhandedness by demonstrating the willingness of both sexes to sacrifice secular liberty for the sake of religious devotion. Already in the *Desengaños amorosos*, prior to Ladislao's monastic move, other male protagonists have adopted spiritual homes: Juan and Enrique become monks in *El verdugo de su esposa* and in *El traidor contra su sangre* respectively, saving their souls through a monastic vocation.

Estefanía concludes the narration of her tale with assurances regarding its authenticity. She claims that, after Ladislao's death, Beatriz wrote her autobiography: 'antes de su muerte, escribió ella misma su vida, como aquí se ha dicho con nombre de desengaño' (*DA* 467). Her novella is unusual in that it cites the medium of writing as its source, while Zayas's narrators typically use oral transmission as guarantee of 'truth' to listeners at the *sarao*. Posthumously, Beatriz is considered a saint in Italy, which is where Estefanía discovered her story: 'en toda Italia es tenida por santa, donde vi su vida manuscrita, estando allá con mis padres' (*DA* 467).[90] Notably, Zayas empowers Beatriz to tell her own story, which Estefanía, in turn, recounts to the frame audience, saying that 'escribió ella misma su vida'. Pilar Alcalde notes Beatriz's emancipation as internal author: 'Se convierte Beatriz por tanto en la "autora" de este relato, el suyo propio. El otorgar la autoría del relato a una mujer permite ofrecer una autonomía y un poder inusual en la mujer'.[91] Likewise, Ordóñez highlights the link between women's power and their appropriation of discourse: 'Only by recuperating and writing her own text can woman become subject and mistress of her own fate'.[92] One can witness in Estefanía's monastic vocation the repercussions of Beatriz's autobiographical writing; the female-authored text

---

[89] Timoneda, p. 247.

[90] Likewise, Laura alleges to have discovered the tale of *El jardín engañoso* in written format: 'cuando murió [Teodosia], le hallaron escrita de su mano esta maravilla' (*NAE* 534).

[91] Pilar Alcalde, *Estrategias temáticas y narrativas en la novela feminizada de María de Zayas* (Newark: Juan de la Cuesta, 2005), p. 65.

[92] Boyer makes the similar point that 'the only way women can escape enslavement to the male hegemony, indeed the only way women can survive, the *Disenchantments* seems to say, is through telling their own stories, through control over discourse, and through finding their own feminine space – the convent'. Boyer, 'The "Other" Woman', p. 66; Ordóñez, p. 7.

may have exerted so profound an effect on Estefanía that it inspired her to take the veil in direct imitation of the 'santa' who wielded the pen.[93]

The reference to Italy as the location where Estefanía found Beatriz's manuscript is somewhat enigmatic. The tale's extensive geographical movement and recurring political intrigue encompass the nations of Hungary, Germany, and England. The novella has a Spanish narrator and audience; it may be inspired by the life of the Portuguese Beatriz de Silva, founder of the Conceptionist Order, to which Zayas frequently alludes. Casual mention of Italy indirectly links Zayas's novella to the aforementioned literary tradition of 'Empress of Rome' stories, which dates as far back as the thirteenth century. Furthermore, one can posit the possibility of further Italian influence on this novella. I have noted in this work's introduction that, despite the paucity of biographical information relating to Zayas, it is plausible to hypothesise that she may have spent time in Naples. Estefanía's words, 'estando allá [en Italia] con mis padres', may bear the autobiographical imprint of the author's own Neapolitan sojourn (*DA* 467).[94]

Estefanía apparently absorbs the *ciencia* of Beatriz's example; instead of being disenchanted through personal experience, she transmits this learning to her peers. To reiterate her introductory, defining words, she admits that 'no hablaré con experiencia, sino por ciencia, porque me sacrifiqué desde muy niña a Esposo que jamás me ha engañado ni engañará' (*DA* 409). Grieve explores the *ciencia/experiencia* motif in the *Desengaños amorosos*, which 'comes full circle, then, from Isabel, who had to experience deceit before learning her lesson, to Beatriz, the titular "perseguida triunfante", who experiences and then translates it into learning, to Lisis, who writes and learns without having to experience the deceit of men. Lisis relies totally on the *ciencia* provided by women'.[95] The motifs of a foiled diabolical pact and fraternal rivalry remind the reader of *El jardín engañoso*, final tale of the *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares*. By analogy, Estefanía's novella is a fitting

[93] This is based on the assumption that Estefanía's visit to Italy with her parents would have taken place prior to her enclosure in the convent.

[94] A century after Beatriz de Silva founded her Order, the blue scapular in honour of the Immaculate Conception spread to Italy. After experiencing a vision of Mary and the Infant Jesus, Suor Orsola Benincasa (1547–1618) founded a hermitage-convent that stood on a hill overlooking Naples for her Order of Theatine nuns. Zayas may have been in Naples during the final years of Suor Orsola's life, which would have provided her with an opportunity to familiarise herself with this famed, pious figure and with devotion to the Immaculate Conception. James Clifton, 'Mattia Preti's Frescoes for the City Gates of Naples', *The Art Bulletin*, 76 (September 1994) 3, 479–501 (p. 488); Marians of the Immaculate Conception, 'A History of the Scapular of the Immaculate Conception', <http://www.padrimariani.org/en/laity/conf_history.html> [accessed 19 March 2007].

[95] Grieve, p. 102. Lisis demonstrates that she has learned from other women's *ciencia* when she opts not to marry. While she has not experienced marital disenchantment, she has suffered the amorous disappointment of being forsaken by Juan.

near-finale of the *Desengaños amorosos*. In Lisis's closing speech, prior to announcing her departure for the convent, she specifically indicates the learning that she has gleaned from other women's experience, which was presented in the ten foregoing novellas. Beatriz is among the women whom she cites as proof that protection of the highest level is needed for women at the secular level: 'Beatriz hubo menester todo el favor de la Madre de Dios para salvar la vida, acosada de tantos trabajos, y esto no todas le merecemos' (*DA* 508). Thus, through the *ciencia* of hagiography, Zayas brings about the bonding of women at the end of the *sarao*.

Given the limited influence of mothers in Zayas's novellas, their position as maternal protectors must be occupied either by surrogate mothers or by their supernatural variant, Mary, as the Mother of God. In each of Zayas's prose collections, surrogate mothers unexpectedly take on nurturing roles, offering succour to ailing female protagonists. Thus, Zayas alludes to the beneficial potency of spontaneously formed women's communities. Portraying these women's compassionate acts of charity, Zayas sounds a note of optimism for the reader. In Estefanía's *La perseguida triunfante*, Beatriz and her companions gratefully lead holy lives in monastic sanctuary, after Mary repeatedly saves her from danger, and the convent walls protect them from the dangers of the secular world. On the final night of the *saraos*, this spiritual surrogate mother grows to considerable stature, symbolically foreshadowing the frame-tale women's choice of monastic life in a Conceptionist convent. By forsaking marriage in favour of monasticism, Beatriz serves as a ready model for Lisis to imitate in the frame narrative. Thus, the Gyn/affective agency of the surrogate mother has repercussions throughout Zayas's novellas and beyond, in the frame narrative. To conclude, I will now reconsider the nature of Zayas's frame ending.

Conclusion

A Gynocentric Ending: 'No es trágico fin'

'Ya, ilustrísimo Fabio, por cumplir lo que pedistes de que no diese trágico fin a esta historia, la hermosa Lisis queda en clausura, temerosa de que algún desengaño la desengañe, no escarmentada de desdichas propias. No es trágico fin, sino el más felice que se pudo dar, pues codiciosa y deseada de muchos, no se sujetó a ninguno. Si os duran los deseos de verla, buscadla con intento casto, que con ello la hallaréis tan vuestra y con la voluntad tan firme y honesta, como tiene prometido, y tan servidora vuestra como siempre, y como vos merecéis; y hasta en conocerlo ninguna le hace ventaja' (*DA* 510–1).

Thus, Zayas's second prose work, the *Desengaños amorosos*, reaches its conclusion: in the closing paragraph, the narrator unexpectedly addresses Fabio, an inscribed reader, at the extradiegetic level. Within the *novela cortesana* genre, we can draw a parallel between Zayas's Fabio and Lope de Vega's titular Marcia Leonarda, whom his narrator addresses in the novellas, albeit with far greater frequency. This is the first clear indication of the extradiegetic Fabio's existence.[1]

Zayas's narrator offers Fabio an open-ended invitation to seek out Lisis 'con intento casto' in the convent (*DA* 511). Written in the style of an oral address, its implication contrasts with that of the conclusion to Zayas's extant *comedia*, *La traición en la amistad*, in which she uses the same technique. In the respective forms of Fenisa and Lisis, Zayas moves complex, multidimensional women to the forefront of both her dramatic and prose works. León, the play's *gracioso*, jocosely invites the men in the audience to court Fenisa:

> Señores míos, Fenisa,
> cual ven sin amantes queda.
> Si alguno la quiere, avise
> para que su casa sepa.[2]

His humorous remark serves to belittle the seductress, Fenisa, and also to foretell the probability that she will find more *amantes* after the play's conclusion. During the *comedia*, Fenisa's position deteriorates from that of having female friends and being sought after by several suitors to that of being abandoned by both friends and lovers. In contrast, Lisis convalesces from sickness and recovers from the disappointment of unrequited love, reaching the empowered status whereby she can reject unwanted marital

---

[1] Creating the effect of symmetry, another 'Fabio' performed the role of listener to Jacinta's meta-metadiegetic narrative in the very first novella, *Aventurarse perdiendo* (*NAE*). A 'Fabio' also appears in love ballads performed by Lisis during the first *sarao*.

[2] Zayas, *La traición en la amistad*, III. 2911.

prospects;[3] instead of marrying, she forms emotional bonds and secures her future with the companionship of several other women. At this point, Lisis's 'story' concludes on a promising and socially acceptable note.

It appears that, in creating a happy conclusion for the work, the narrator complies with Fabio's request. This is all the more striking since, in an opposing trend, instances of women's contentment, as portrayed by Zayas's twenty novellas, become remarkably sparse as the narration progresses. The 'solution' to the frame conflict is unlike the multiple marriages that are typical of the *comedia*, in which the restoration of honour is more important than bringing about satisfying lives for protagonists after the concluding dramatic events. In contrast, through the frame narrative, Zayas raises and answers the question of happiness for Lisis, her relatives and friends. The prelude to the framing 'fin [...] más felice que se pudo dar' has been the subject of my study (*DA* 510). The examination of Zayas's prose as gynocentric texts represents a new contribution to the study of her works. While this is far from being the only lens through which Zayas's works may be viewed, the foregoing study demonstrates the consistent importance of women's interrelationships throughout the author's novellas and frame. In particular, my approach supplements previous critics' studies of patriarchal relationships in the family and of courtship and marriage in Zayas's texts.

Applying Raymond's terminology, I have traced the frame tale's celebration and triumphant reaffirmation of Gyn/affection and of sisterly bonds in their varying degrees. The monastic sanctuary is essential to the strengthening of the bonds among these women. The relationship between frame narrative and novellas is integral to forming a comprehensive study of women's interaction in these works. In the enclosed novellas, women's friendships increasingly come to the fore, although the bonds are too weak to safeguard women against the values of patriarchy and the honour code. Parallel to the growing momentum of women's alliances throughout Zayas's prose works, there is an expansion of woman's perfidy against her own sex, often involving a devious manipulation of the honour code, with increasingly calamitous effects. Particularly grave consequences ensue when women disloyally sever the bonds of their consanguinity.

---

[3] The closing paragraph implies that Lisis, 'codiciosa y deseada de muchos' (*DA* 510–1), had more suitors than just Diego. It is not a personal rejection of Diego; she rejects all men.

The novellas show that the threat posed by women can equal or even surpass that embodied by male protagonists. Broadening my analysis to women's class-based interaction yielded similar results, with serving-women actively seeking personal benefits and the downfall of their more privileged counterparts. These picaresque protagonists add vital impetus to the accumulating perils that secular Spanish society poses for the highly born woman who is the focal point of Zayas's novellas. Notwithstanding the nostalgic tone of Zayas's prose and the absence of a programme for systemic change in the class structure, fleeting examples of cross-class collusion and carnivalesque intervals paint an image of surprisingly permeable class boundaries. While retaining the established class system, which she portrays as being less rigid in structure than today's reader might initially expect, the possibility of harmonious class relations remains.

Through Zayas's novellas and frame narrative, she explores maternal genealogies, rupturing the silence that surrounds mother-daughter relations in literature. While obstacles (in particular, the patriarchal dominance of husbands) hamper maternal acts in the novellas, Laura's management of the framing events presents a clear contrast, filling the void left by these mothers. Through a monastic reunion, Isabel restores her relationship with her mother; furthermore, Laura joins Lisis to preserve her own mother-daughter bond. In lieu of mothers' limited influence in the novellas, surrogate mothers fulfil the nurturing role, offering succour to ailing female protagonists. Mary's divine intercession, in human form, is of particular import among Zayas's surrogate maternal figures. By the final *sarao*'s end, Mary has become an important secondary protagonist, foreshadowing the frame-tale women's choice of a monastic life within the Conceptionist Order.

Through glimpses of Gyn/affection in women's friendship, sisterhood, and motherhood in all its forms, Zayas inspires optimism in Lisis and her companions (Laura and Isabel, in particular) and also in the reader. In this complex literary depiction of seventeenth-century society, *desengaño* surrounds not only hetero-relations but also the potential for perfidy among women. The monastic undercurrent of later tales suggests the convent's benefits as an escape from these evident dangers, serving as a ready model for Lisis and her frame-narrative companions. Ironically, Zayas's narrator presents Fabio, the inscribed male reader, with a gynocentric community in response to his request for a 'happy ending'. The shared fate of these frame-narrative women is socially acceptable, verisimilar, and logical, as one for which the reader has been prepared by the foregoing novellas. The reader is

inclined to agree with the narrator that, in the context of the *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares* and the *Desengaños amorosos*, this conclusion is 'el más felice que se pudo dar' (*DA* 510).

Bibliography

El Abencerraje (Novela y romancero), ed. by Francisco López Estrada, 13th edition (Madrid: Cátedra, 2002).

Ágreda, María de Jesús de: *Correspondencia con Felipe IV: Religión y razón de estado* (Madrid: Castalia, 1991).

Alarcón, M. Carmen: 'El teatro en los conventos femeninos de Sevilla durante el Siglo de Oro: un *festejo cómico* de 1678', in *Memoria de la palabra: Actas del VI congreso de la asociación internacional siglo de oro, Burgos – La Rioja, 15-19 de julio 2002*, ed. by María Luisa Lobato and Francisco Domínguez Matito (Madrid: Iberoamericana, 2004), pp. 183–192.

Alborg, Juan Luis: *Historia de la literatura española*, 5 vols (Madrid: Editorial Gredos, 1966–96), II (1967).

Alcalde, Pilar: 'La hermandad entre mujeres como espacio para la autoridad textual en el teatro de María de Zayas y Ana Caro', *Revista de estudios hispánicos*, 29 (2002) 1–2, 233–243.

—: *Estrategias temáticas y narrativas en la novela feminizada de María de Zayas* (Newark: Juan de la Cuesta, 2005).

Alcolea, Santiago: *Velázquez* (Barcelona: Ediciones polígrafa, 1998).

Alemán, Mateo: *Guzmán de Alfarache*, ed. by Francisco Rico (Barcelona: Planeta, 1983).

Alfonso X, el Sabio: *Cantigas de Santa María*, ed. by Walter Mettmann, 3 vols (Madrid: Castalia, 1986–1989).

Alsop, Daniel T.: 'Morality and Feminism in Zayas's *El prevenido engañado*', *Romance Languages Annual*, 8 (1996), 363–367.

Álvarez-Amell, Diana: 'El objeto del cuerpo femenino en el "quinto desengaño" de María de Zayas', in *Actas Irvine – 92: II, La mujer y su representación en las literaturas hispánicas*, ed. by Juan Villegas (Asociación Internacional de Hispanistas: University of California, 1994), pp. 25–33.

Álvarez Posadilla, Juan: *Comentarios a Las Leyes de Toro, según su espíritu y el de la legislación de España, en que se tratan las cuestiones prácticas, arreglando sus decisiones a las leyes y resoluciones más modernas que en el día rigen* (Madrid: Antonio Martínez, 1826).

Álvarez y Baena, José A.: 'Doña María de Zayas y Sotomayor', in *Hijos de Madrid, ilustres en santidad, dignidades, armas, ciencias y artes. Diccionario histórico por orden alfabético de sus nombres*, IV (Madrid: Benito Cano, 1791), pp. 48–49.

Amezúa y Mayo, Agustín G. de: Prologue of *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares de Doña María de Zayas y Sotomayor*, ed. by Agustín G. de Amezúa y Mayo (Madrid: Aldus, 1948), pp. vii–xlv.

—: Prologue of *Desengaños amorosos: Parte segunda del sarao y entretenimiento honesto de Doña María de Zayas y Sotomayor*, ed. by Agustín G. de Amezúa y Mayo (Madrid: Aldus, 1950), pp. vii–xxiv.

—: *Formación y elementos de la novela cortesana: Discursos leídos ante la Real Academia Española* (Madrid: Real Academia Española, 1929).

The Anchor Bible: II Samuel, A New Translation with Introduction, Notes and Commentary by P. Kyle McCarter, Jr. (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1984).

The Anchor Bible: Daniel, Esther and Jeremiah: The Additions, A New translation with Introduction and Commentary by Carey A. Moore (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1977).

The Anchor Bible: Revelation; Introduction, Translation and Commentary by J. Massyngberde Ford (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1975).

Andrist, Debra D.: 'Male versus Female Friendship in *Don Quijote*', *Cervantes*, 3 (1983) 2, 149–159.

Arenal, Electa: 'The Convent as Catalyst for Autonomy: Two Hispanic Nuns of the Seventeenth Century', in *Women in Hispanic Literature: Icons and Fallen Idols*, ed. by Beth Miller (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), pp. 147–183.

Arenal, Electa and Stacey Schlau: *Untold Sisters: Hispanic Nuns in Their Own Words*, translations by Amanda Powell (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1989).

Aristotle: *The Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. by J. A. K. Thompson, rev. edn, rev. by Hugh Tredennick (London: Penguin, 2004).

Armon, Shifra: *Picking Wedlock: Women and the Courtship Novel in Spain* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2002).

—: 'The Romance of Courtesy: Mariana de Caravajal's *Navidades de Madrid y noches entretenidas*', *Revista canadiense de estudios hispánicos*, 19 (Winter 1995) 2, 241–261.

Armstrong, Nancy: 'The Rise of Feminine Authority in the Novel', *Novel: A Forum on Fiction*, 15 (Winter 1982) 2, 127–145.

Avendaño, Nadia: 'La violencia masculina en los *Desengaños amorosos* de María de Zayas', *The South Carolina Modern Language Review*, 5 (2006) 1, 38–53.

Ayala Mallory, Nina: *Bartolomé Esteban Murillo* (Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 1983).

Bakhtin, Mikhail: *Rabelais and his World*, trans. by Helene Iswolsky (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984).

—: *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays by M. M. Bakhtin*, ed. by Michael Holquist, trans. by Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981).

Bal, Mieke: *Narratology: Introduction to the Theory of Narrative*, 2nd edn (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997).

Ballesteros, José R.: 'El imperio desde el centro: La interpretación de María de Zayas del tema indiano en Cervantes', *Romance Quarterly*, 53 (Spring 2006) 2, 113–128.

Bandello, Matteo: *Novelle*, ed. by Guiseppe Guido Ferrero (Torino: Unione Tipografico-Editrice Torinese, 1974).

Barahona, Renato: *Sex Crimes, Honour, and the Law in Early Modern Spain: Vizcaya, 1528–1735* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003).

Barbeito Carneiro, María Isabel: *Mujeres y literatura del Siglo de Oro: Espacios profanos y espacios conventuales* (Madrid: Safekat, 2007).

—: 'El Madrid Inmaculista', *Anales del Instituto de Estudios Madrileños*, 44 (2004), 471–496.

—: 'Feminist Attitudes and Expression in Golden Age Spain: From Teresa de Jesús to María de Guevara', trans. by H. Patsy Boyer, in *Recovering Spain's Feminist Tradition*, ed. by Lisa Vollendorf (New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 2001), pp. 48–68.

—: 'Mujeres peninsulares entre Portugal y España', *Península: Revista de Estudios Ibéricos*, 0 (2003), 209–224.

—: 'Recreación dramática de tres santas portuguesas', *Via Spiritus*, 10 (2003), 183–212.

Barry, Peter: *Beginning Theory: An Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory*, 2nd edn (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002).

Barthes, Roland: *S/Z*, trans. by Richard Miller, ed. by Richard Howard (London: Jonathan Cape, 1974).

Beauvoir, Simone de: *The Second Sex*, trans. & ed. by H. M. Parshley (London: Vintage, 1997).

—: *Le deuxième sexe*, 2 vols (Paris: Gallimard, 1949).

—: *Memoirs of a Dutiful Daughter*, trans. by James Kirkup (London: Penguin, 1963).

—: *Mémoires d'une jeune Fille rangée* (Paris: Gallimard, 1958).

Bennassar, Bartolomé: *La España del Siglo de Oro* (Barcelona: Editorial Crítica, 2001).

Bennett, Andrew and Nicholas Royle: *Introduction to Literature, Criticism and Theory*, 2nd edn (Harlow: Prentice Hall, 1999).

Beverley, John R.: 'On the Concept of the Spanish Literary Baroque', in *Culture and Control in Counter-Reformation Spain*, ed. by Anne J. Cruz and Mary Elizabeth Perry (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1992), pp. 216–230.

Bilinkoff, Jodi: 'Elite Widows and Religious Expression in Early Modern Spain', in *Widowhood in Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, ed. by Sandra Cavallo and Lyndan Warner (Harlow: Longman, 1999), pp. 181–192.

Biscaia, Alava et Guipuscoa Cantabriae veteris pars [procede de: "Atlas Major" de J. Blaeu, Amsterdam, 1662], Biblioteca Nacional de España, Sala Goya, Mr/33/445.

Black, Nancy B.: 'Woman as Savior: The Virgin Mary and the Empress of Rome in Gautier de Coinci's *Miracles*', *Romanic Review*, 88 (1997) 4, 503–17.

Blanqué, Andrea: 'María de Zayas o la versión de "las noveleras"', *Nueva revista de filología hispánica*, 39 (1991) 2, 921–50.

Boccaccio, Giovanni: *The Decameron*, trans. by G. H. McWilliam, 2nd edn (London: Penguin, 2003).

Booth, Wayne: *The Rhetoric of Fiction*, 2nd edn (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983).

Borges, Jorge Luis: 'Partial Magic in the *Quixote*', in *Labyrinths: Selected Stories and Other Writings*, ed. by Donald A. Yates and James E. Irby (London: Penguin, 2000), pp. 228–231.

Bosse, Monika: 'El sarao de María de Zayas y Sotomayor: Una razón (femenina) de contar el amor', in *La creatividad femenina en el mundo barroco hispánico: María de Zayas, Isabel Rebeca Correa, Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz*, ed. by Monika Bosse, Barbara Potthast and André Stoll, 2 vols (Kassel: Edition Reichenberger, 1999), I, 239–299.

Bourland, Caroline B.: *The Short Story in Spain in the Seventeenth Century* (Portland: Southworth Press, 1927).

—: 'Boccaccio and the *Decameron* in Castilian and Catalan Literature', *Revue hispanique*, 12 (1905), 1–232.

Boyden, James M.: *The Courtier and the King: Ruy Gómez de Silva, Philip II, and the Court of Spain* (Berkeley: University of California Press, c.1995) <http://ark.cdlib.org/ark:/13030/ft5489p002/> [accessed 30 August 2007].

Boyer, H. Patsy: 'The "Other" Woman in Cervantes's *Persiles* and Zayas's Novelas', *Cervantes*, 10 (1990) 1, 59–68.

—: 'Toward a Baroque Reading of "El verdugo de su esposa"', in *María de Zayas: The Dynamics of Discourse*, ed. by Amy R. Williamsen and Judith A. Whitenack (London: Associated University Presses, 1995), pp. 52–71.

—: 'Introduction', in *The Enchantments of Love: Amorous and Exemplary Novels* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), pp. xi–xxxi.

—: 'Introduction', in *The Disenchantments of Love: A Translation of the Desengaños amorosos* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1997), pp. 1–26.

—: 'La vision artística de María de Zayas', in *Estudios sobre el siglo de oro en homenaje a Raymond R. MacCurdy*, ed. by Ángel González, Tamara Holzapfel and Alfred Rodríguez (Madrid: Cátedra, 1983), pp. 253–263.

Brant, Herbert J.: 'The Queer Use of Communal Women in Borges' "El muerto" and "La intrusa"', Proceedings of XIX Latin American Studies Association Congress, held in Washington DC in September 1995 <http://lanic.utexas.edu/project/lasa95/brant.html> [accessed 6 September 2007].

Brantôme, Pierre de: *The Lives of Gallant Ladies*, trans. by Alec Brown (London: Panther, 1961).

Brown, Jonathan: *Painting in Spain: 1500–1700* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998).

Brown, Judith C.: 'Lesbian Sexuality in Medieval and Early Modern Europe', in *Hidden from History: Reclaiming the Gay and Lesbian Past*, ed. by Martin Bauml Duberman, Martha Vicinus and George Chauncey Jr. (London: Penguin, 1989), pp. 67–75.

Brown, Kenneth: 'María de Zayas y Sotomayor: Escribiendo poesía en Barcelona en época de Guerra (1643)', *Dicenda*, 11 (1993), 355–360.

Brownlee, Marina S.: *The Cultural Labyrinth of María de Zayas* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000).

—: 'Genealogies in Crisis: María de Zayas in Seventeenth-Century Spain', in *Generation and Degeneration: Tropes of Reproduction in Literature and History from Antiquity to Early Modern Europe*, ed. by Valeria Finucci and Kevin Brownlee (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001), pp. 189–208.

—: 'Postmodernism and the Baroque in María de Zayas', in *Cultural Authority in Golden Age Spain*, ed. by Marina S. Brownlee and Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), pp. 107–127.

—: 'Elusive Subjectivity in María de Zayas', *Journal of Interdisciplinary Literary Studies*, 6 (1994) 2, 163–183.

—: *The Poetics of Literary Theory: Lope de Vega's 'Novelas a Marcia Leonarda' and Their Cervantine Context* (Madrid: Porrúa Turanzas, 1981).

Burshatin, Israel: 'Interrogating Hermaphroditism in Sixteenth-Century Spain', in *Hispanisms and Homosexualities*, ed. by Sylvia Molloy and Robert McKee Irwin (Durham: Duke University Press, 1998), pp. 3–18.

Calderón de la Barca, Pedro: *El príncipe constante*, ed. by Fernando Cantalapiedra and Alfredo Rodríguez López-Vázquez (Madrid: Cátedra, 1996).

—: *La vida es sueño*, ed. by José María Valverde (Barcelona: Planeta, 1981).

—: *El médico de su honra*, ed. by D. W. Cruickshank (Madrid: Castalia, 1981).

Campbell, Gwyn E.: '(En)gendering Fenisa in María de Zayas's *La traición en la amistad*', *Romance Languages Annual*, 10 (1998) 2, 482–487.

Cardillac-Hermosilla, Yvette: 'La magia en las novelas de María de Zayas', in *La creatividad femenina en el mundo barroco hispánico: María de Zayas, Isabel Rebeca Correa, Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz*, ed. by Monika Bosse, Barbara Potthast and André Stoll, 2 vols (Kassel: Edition Reichenberger, 1999), I, 351–377.

Caro, Ana: *Valor, agravio y mujer*, ed. by Lola Luna (Madrid: Castalia, 1993).

—: *El conde Partinuplés*, in *Women's Acts: Plays by Women Dramatists of Spain's Golden Age*, ed. by Teresa Scott Soufas (Lexington: The University Press, 1997), pp. 137–162.

Carpentier, Alejo: *Los pasos perdidos* (Barcelona: Barral, 1974).

Carrasco Urgoiti, María Soledad: 'Los libros de cuentos', in *La novela española en el siglo XVI*, ed. by María Soledad Carrasco Urgoiti, Francisco López Estrada and Félix Carrasco (Madrid: Iberoamericana, 2001), pp. 89–99.

Carvajal y Saavedra, Mariana: *Navidades de Madrid y noches entretenidas, en ocho novelas*, ed. by Catherine Soriano (Madrid: Clásicos madrileños, 1993).

Castiglione, Baldesar: *The Book of the Courtier*, trans. by George Bull (London: Penguin, 1967).

Castillo Solórzano, Alonso de: *La garduña de Sevilla y anzuelo de las bolsas. Novelistas posteriores a Cervantes*, ed. by Cayetano Rosell y López, 2 vols, Biblioteca de Autores Españoles, 18, 33 (Madrid: M. Rivadeneyra, 1851–4), II, 169–234.

Cátedra, Pedro M. and Anastasio Rojo: *Bibliotecas y lecturas de mujeres: siglo XVI* (Salamanca: Instituto de Historia del Libro y de la Lectura, 2004).

Cavallo, Sandra and Lyndan Warner: *Widowhood in Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (Harlow: Longman, 1999).

Cavallo, Sandra and Simona Cerutti: 'Female Honour and the Social Control of Reproduction in Piedmont between 1600 and 1800', in *Sex and Gender in Historical Perspective*, ed. by Edward Muir and Guido Ruggiero, trans. by Margaret A. Gallucci, Mary M. Gallucci and Carole C. Gallucci (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990), pp. 73–109.

Les Cent Nouvelles nouvelles, ed. by Roger Dubuis (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2005).

Cerisiers, René de: *Innocency Acknowledg'd in the Life and Death of S. Genovefa, Countesse Palatin of Trevers, Trans. into English* (Ghent: Printed by Iohn vanden Kerchoue, 1645).

Cervantes, Miguel de: *El Ingenioso Hidalgo Don Quijote de la Mancha I*, ed. by John Jay Allen, 20th edition (Madrid: Cátedra, 2000).

—: *Segunda Parte del Ingenioso Caballero Don Quijote de la Mancha II*, ed. by John Jay Allen, 18th edition (Madrid: Cátedra, 1997).

—: *Novelas ejemplares*, ed. by Francisco Alonso (Madrid: Biblioteca Edaf, 1999).

Charnon-Deutsch, Lou: 'The Sexual Economy in the Narratives of María de Zayas', in *María de Zayas: The Dynamics of Discourse*, ed. by Amy R. Williamsen and Judith A. Whitenack (London: Associated University Presses, 1995), pp. 117–132.

Chaucer, Geoffrey: *The Canterbury Tales*, trans. by Nevill Coghill, rev. edn (London: Penguin, 1977).

Chevalier, Maxime: *Lectura y lectores en la España de los siglos XVI y XVII* (Madrid: Turner, 1976).

Chittenden, Jean S.: 'The Characters and Plots of Tirso's *Comedias*', ed. by Matthew D. Stroud <http://www.trinity.edu/mstroud/tirso/> [accessed 13 September 2008].

Chodorow, Nancy: 'The Psychodynamics of the Family', in *The Second Wave: A Reader in Feminist Theory*, ed. by Linda Nicholson (New York: Routledge, 1997), pp. 181–197.

Cicero: *On the Good Life*, trans. by Michael Grant (London: Penguin, 1971).

Cixous, Hélène and Catherine Clément: *The Newly Born Woman*, trans. by Betsy Wing (London: I. B. Tauris, 1996).

Clamurro, William H.: 'Ideological Contradiction and Imperial Decline: Toward a Reading of Zayas's *Desengaños amorosos*', *South Central Review*, 5 (1988) 2, 43–50.

—: 'Madness and Narrative Form in "Estragos que causa el vicio"', in *María de Zayas: The Dynamics of Discourse*, ed. by Amy R. Williamsen and Judith A. Whitenack (London: Associated University Presses, 1995), pp. 219–233.

Clifton, James: 'Mattia Preti's Frescoes for the City Gates of Naples', *The Art Bulletin*, 76 (September 1994) 3, 479–501.

Cocozzella, Peter: 'Writer of the Baroque "Novela Ejemplar": María de Zayas y Sotomayor', in *Women Writers of the Seventeenth Century*, ed. by Katharina M. Wilson and Frank J. Warnke (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1989), pp. 189–227.

Colburn, Sara: 'Subjectivity, Sexual Difference, and Fantasy in María de Zayas's *Estragos que causa el vicio*', *Romance Languages Annual*, 8 (1996), 413–416.

Colón, Isabel: '*Ars* e *ingenium* en las novelas de María de Zayas', *Dicenda*, 10 (1991–2), 63–72.

Compte, Deborah: 'A Cry in the Wilderness: Pastoral Female Discourse in María de Zayas', in *Women in the Discourse of Early Modern Spain*, ed. by Joan F. Cammarata (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2003), pp. 235–252.

—: 'The *mora* as Agent of Power and Authority: María de Zayas's "La esclava de su amante", *Hispanic Journal*, 24 (2003) 1–2, 53–64.

Conlon, Raymond: 'The *Burlador* and the *Burlados*: A Sinister Connection', *Bulletin of the Comediantes*, 42 (Summer 1990) 1, 5–22.

Coolidge, Grace E.: 'Choosing Her Own Buttons: The Guardianship of Magdalena de Bobadilla', in *Power and Gender in Renaissance Spain: Eight Women of the Mendoza Family, 1450-1650*, ed. by Helen Nader (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2004), pp. 132–151.

Cortázar, Julio: 'Continuidad de parques', in *Ceremonias* (Barcelona: Biblioteca de Bolsillo, 1983), pp. 11–12.

—: *Rayuela (edición crítica)*, ed. by Julio Ortega and Saúl Yurkievich (Madrid: C.S.I.C., 1991).

The Council of Trent: The canons and decrees of the sacred and ecumenical Council of Trent, ed. and trans. by J. Waterworth (London: Dolman, 1848), in *Hanover Historical Texts Project* <http://history.hanover.edu/texts/trent/trentall.html> [accessed 11 October 2007].

Covarrubias Orozco, Sebastián de: *Tesoro de la lengua castellana o española* (Madrid: Turner, 1979).

Cox Davis, Nina: 'Re-framing Discourse: Women Before their Public in María de Zayas', *Hispanic Review*, 71 (Summer 2003) 3, 325–344.

Cruickshank, D.W.: 'Literature and the Book Trade in Golden-Age Spain', *MLR*, 73 (1978), 799–824.

Cruz, Anne J.: 'Willing Desire: Luisa de Carvajal y Mendoza', in *Power and Gender in Renaissance Spain: Eight Women of the Mendoza Family, 1450-1650*, ed. by Helen Nader (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2004), pp. 177–193.

—: 'La búsqueda de la madre: Psicoanálisis y feminismo en la literatura del Siglo de Oro', in *Historia silenciada de la mujer: La mujer española desde la época medieval hasta la contemporánea*, ed. by Alain Saint-Saëns (Madrid: Editorial Complutense, 1996), pp. 39–64.

Cruz, Sor Juana Inés de la: *The Answer/La Respuesta*, ed. and trans. by Electa Arenal and Amanda Powell (New York: Feminist Press, 1994).

Cuartero Sancho, María Pilar: 'Introducción', in *El Patrañuelo* (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1990), pp. 9–37.

Dadson, Trevor J.: 'Nuevos datos para la biografía de Don Diego de Silva y Mendoza, Conde de Salinas', *Criticón*, 31 (1985), 59–84.

Davis, Robert Con: *The Paternal Romance: Reading God-the-Father in Early Western Culture* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993).

Defourneaux, Marcelin: *Daily Life in the Golden Age*, trans. by Newton Branch (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1970).

Delgado Berlanga, María José: 'Lesbiagrafisis: Exposición y expansion del deseo femenino en *La traición en la amistad* de María de Zayas y Sotomayor', *Romance Languages Annual*, 10 (1998) 2, 534–538.

—: 'Danzando en un hilo mitológico: Formación e inversión del "yo mujer" en la novela de María de Zayas y Sotomayor, *Mal presagio casar lejos*', in *Zayas and Her Sisters, 2: Essays on Novelas by 17th-Century Spanish Women*, ed. by Gwyn E. Campbell and Judith A. Whitenack (New York: Global Publications, Binghampton University, 2001), pp. 111–120.

Dely, Carole: 'Jacques Derrida: The "Perchance" of a Coming of the Otherwoman. The Deconstruction of "Phallogocentrism" from Duel to Duo', *Sens Public*, trans. by Wilson Baldridge <http://www.sens-public.org/article.php3?id_article=312> [accessed 25 October 2006].

Derrida, Jacques: *The Politics of Friendship*, trans. by George Collins (London: Verso, 2005).

Deutscher, Penelope: *How to Read Derrida* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2005).

Díez Borque, José María: 'El feminismo de doña María de Zayas', in *La mujer en el teatro y la novela del siglo XVII: Actas del II coloquio del grupo de estudios sobre teatro español (G.E.S.T.E.), Toulouse 16–17 noviembre 1978* (Toulouse: Institut d'études hispaniques et hispano-américaines, Université de Toulouse-Le Mirail), pp. 60–88.

—: *Historia de la literatura española, Volumen II: Siglos XVII y XVIII* (Madrid: Biblioteca Universitaria Guadiana, 1975).

Diccionario de autoridades, ed. by Real Academia Española, 3 vols (Madrid: F. del Hierro, 1726; repr. Madrid: Gredos, 1984).

Dixon, Victor: 'Lope de Vega y la educación de la mujer', in *Otro Lope no ha de haber: Atti del convegno internazionale su Lope de Vega, 10–13 febbraio 1999* (Florence: Alinea Editrice, 2000), pp. 63–74.

—: 'Juan Pérez de Montalbán's *Para todos*', *Hispanic Review*, 32 (1964), 36–59.

—: 'Introduction', in *El perro del hortelano, Lope de Vega: A Critical Edition* (London: Tamesis Texts, 1981), pp. 9–67.

Dolz-Blackburn, Inés: 'María de Zayas y Sotomayor y sus *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares*', *Explicación de textos literarios*, 14 (1985–6) 2, 73–82.

Domingo Carvajal, Gemma: 'Tipología de los personajes en la dramaturgia de Guillén de Castro y Bellvís (1569–1631)' (unpublished doctoral dissertation, Universitat de Barcelona, 2006).

Donnell, Sidney: *Feminizing the Enemy: Imperial Spain, Transvestite Drama, and the Crisis of Masculinity* (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2003).

Donovan, Josephine: *Women and the Rise of the Novel, 1405–1726* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999).

Dopico Black, Georgina: *Perfect Wives, Other Women: Adultery and Inquisition in Early Modern Spain* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001).

Dunn, Peter N.: *Castillo Solórzano and the Decline of the Spanish Novel* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1952).

Eagleton, Terry: *Sweet Violence: The Idea of the Tragic* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2003).

—: *Literary Theory: An Introduction*, 2nd edn (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996).

Edwards, Lee R.: 'The Labors of Psyche: Toward a Theory of Female Heroism', *Critical Inquiry*, 6 (Autumn 1979) 1, 33–49.

Elliott, J. H.: *Imperial Spain: 1469–1716* (London: Penguin, 1963).

—: 'Concerto Barocco', *New York Review of Books*, 9 April 1987, pp. 26–9.

El Saffar, Ruth: 'Ana/Lisis/Zayas: Reflections on Courtship and Literary Women in María de Zayas's *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares*', in *María de Zayas: The Dynamics of Discourse*, ed. by Amy R. Williamsen and Judith A. Whitenack (London: Associated University Presses, 1995), pp. 192–216.

—: *Beyond Fiction: The Recovery of the Feminine in the Novels of Cervantes* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984).

—: 'The "I" of the Beholder: Self and Other in Some Golden Age Texts', in *Cultural Authority in Golden Age Spain*, ed. by Marina S. Brownlee and Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1995), pp. 178–205.

Enríquez de Salamanca, Cristina: 'Irony, Parody, and the Grotesque in a Baroque Novella: "Tarde llega el desengaño"', trans. by Susan Fitzgerald Fansler, in *María de Zayas: The Dynamics of Discourse*, ed. by Amy R. Williamsen and Judith A. Whitenack (London: Associated University Presses, 1995), pp. 234–253.

'Erle of Tolous', in *The Middle English Breton Lays*, ed. by Anne Laskaya and Eve Salisbury (Kalamazoo, Michigan: Medieval Institute Publications, 1995), in *TEAMS Texts* <http://www.lib.rochester.edu/camelot/teams/tmsmenu.htm> [accessed 14 June 2007].

Ezquerra Abadía, Ramón: *La conspiración del Duque de Híjar (1648)* (Madrid: [n. pub.], 1934).

Facinger Freidson, Marion: 'The Meaning of Gertrude in "I Promessi Sposi"', *Italica*, 28 (1951) 1, 27–32.

Faliu-Lacourt, Christiane: 'La madre en la comedia', in *La mujer en el teatro y la novela del siglo XVII: Actas del II coloquio del grupo de estudios sobre teatro español (G.E.S.T.E.), Toulouse 16–17 noviembre 1978* (Toulouse: Institut d'études hispaniques et hispano-américaines, Université de Toulouse-Le Mirail), pp. 39–59.

Fariña Busto, María Jesús and Beatriz Suárez Briones: 'Desde/hacia la Otra: Ginoafectividad y homoerotismo femenino en la narrativa de María de Zayas', in *Zayas and Her Sisters, 2: Essays on Novelas by 17th-Century Spanish Women*, ed. by Gwyn E. Campbell and Judith A. Whitenack (New York: Global Publications, Binghampton University, 2001), pp. 121–138.

Fariña Busto, María Jesús: 'María de Zayas y Sotomayor: A propósito de algunos sonetos incluidos en las *Novelas* y *Desengaños amorosos*', *Monographic Review*, 13 (1997), 53–63.

Feijoó, Benito Jerónimo: 'Defensa de las mujeres', in *Obras escogidas del Padre Fray Benito Jerónimo Feijoó y Montenegro*, ed. by Vicente de la Fuente, Biblioteca de Autores Españoles, 56 (Madrid: M. Rivadeneyra, 1863), pp. 50–58.

Felten, Hans: 'La mujer disfrazada: Un tópico literario y su función – Tres ejemplos de Calderón, María de Zayas y Lope de Vega', in *Hacia Calderón: Octavo coloquio anglogermano, Bochum 1987*, published by Hans Flasche (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner, 1988), pp. 77–82.

Ferrer Valls, Teresa: 'Del oratorio al balcón: Escritura de mujeres y espacio dramático', *Insula*, 714 (June 2006), 8–12.

Flores, R. M.: 'Una posible protofábula a *El curioso impertinente* de Cervantes', *Cervantes*, 18 (1998) 1, 134–43.

Foa, Sandra M.: 'María de Zayas: Visión conflictiva y renuncia del mundo', *Cuadernos hispanoamericanos*, 331 (1978), 128–135.

—: 'Humor and Suicide in Zayas and Cervantes', *Anales cervantinos*, 16 (1977), 71–83.

—: *Feminismo y forma narrativa: Estudio del tema y las técnicas de María de Zayas y Sotomayor* (Valencia: Albatros, 1979).

Foucault, Michel: *The Will to Knowledge: The History of Sexuality, Volume 1*, trans. by Robert Hurley (London: Penguin, 1998).

Fox-Lockert, Lucía: *Women Novelists in Spain and Spanish America* (New Jersey: The Scarecrow Press, 1979).

Friedman, Edward H.: 'María de Zayas's *Estragos que causa el vicio* and the Feminist Impasse', *Romance Languages Annual*, 8 (1996), 472–475.

—: 'Constructing Romance: The Deceptive Idealism of María de Zayas's *El jardín engañoso*', in *Zayas and Her Sisters, 2: Essays on Novelas by 17th-Century Spanish Women*, ed. by Gwyn E. Campbell and Judith A. Whitenack (New York: Global Publications, Binghampton University, 2001), pp. 45–61.

—: 'Avenging the Intertext: The Narrative Rhetoric of María de Zayas's *La más infame venganza*', *Cincinnati Romance Review*, 17 (1998), 27–34.

—: 'Enemy Territory: The Frontiers of Gender in María de Zayas's *El traidor contra su sangre* and *Mal presagio casar lejos*', in *Ingeniosa invención: Essays on Golden Age Spanish Literature for Geoffrey L. Stagg in Honour of his Eighty-fifth Birthday*, ed. by Ellen M. Anderson and Amy R. Williamsen (Newark: Juan de la Cuesta, 1999), pp. 41–68.

Frye, Susan and Karen Robertson: 'Introduction', in *Maids and Mistresses, Cousins and Queens: Women's Alliances in Early Modern England*, ed. by Susan Frye and Karen Robertson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 3–17.

Gabriele, John P.: 'El mundo al revés: la construcción de una narrativa femenina en *La traición en la amistad* de María de Zayas y Sotomayor, in *Actas del XIV Congreso de la Asociación Internacional de Hispanistas, New York, 16–21 de julio de 2001: II Literatura española siglos XVI y XVII*, ed. by Isaías Lerner, Robert Nival and Alejandro Alonso (Newark: Juan de la Cuesta, 2001), pp. 239–245.

Galíndez, Jesús de: 'Valor de los Fueros Vascos considerados según las circunstancias históricas que les dieron origen', in *VII Congreso de estudios vascos (7/1948 Biarritz)*, ed. by Jean-Claude Larronde (Donostia: Eusko Ikaskuntza, 2003), pp. 623–638.

Gamboa, Yolanda: 'Architectural Cartography: Social and Gender Mapping in María de Zayas's Seventeenth-Century Spain', *Hispanic Review*, 71 (Spring 2003) 2, 189–203.

Gardiner, Judith Kegan: 'On Female Identity and Writing by Women', *Critical Inquiry*, 8 (Winter 1981) 2, 347–361.

García Lorca, Federico: *La casa de Bernarda Alba*, ed. by H. Ramsden (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1983).

—: *Yerma*, ed. by Robin Warner (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1994).

Garza Carvajal, Federico: *Butterflies Will Burn: Prosecuting Sodomites in Early Modern Spain and Mexico* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2003).

Gautier de Coinci: *Les Miracles de Nostre Dame*, ed. by V. Frederic Koenig, 4 vols (Geneva: Droz, 1955–70).

Genette, Gérard: *Narrative Discourse*, trans. by Jane E. Lewin (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1980).

Gesta Romanorum, ed. by Wilhelm Dick (Erlangen & Leipzig: A Deichert'sche Verlagsbucch. Nachf. [Georg Boehme], 1890) <http://www.slu.edu/colleges/AS/languages/classical/latin/tchmat/readers/gr/gr15.html#text> [accessed 15 March 2007]

Gilbert, Sandra M. and Susan Gubar: *The Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth-Century Literary Imagination* (London: Yale University Press, 1979).

Gilbert, Sandra M.: 'From *Patria* to *Matria*: Elizabeth Barrett Browning's Risorgimento', *PMLA*, 99 (1984) 2, 194–211.

Gilligan, Carol: *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development* (London: Harvard University Press, 1982).

Girard, René: *Deceit, Desire and the Novel: Self and Other in Literary Structure*, trans. by Yvonne Freccero (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1965).

Goluboff, Benjamin: '"If Madonna Be": Emily Dickinson and Roman Catholicism', *The New England Quarterly*, 73 (2000) 3, 355–385.

Goodman, Lizbeth: 'Supply and Demand: Women's Short Stories', in *Imagining Women: Cultural Representation and Gender*, ed. by Frances Bonner and others (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1992), pp. 79–93.

Gorfkle, Laura J.: 'Reconstituting the Feminine: Travesty and Masquerade in María de Zayas's "Amar sólo por vencer"', in *María de Zayas: The Dynamics of Discourse*, ed. by Amy R. Williamsen and Judith A. Whitenack (London: Associated University Presses, 1995), pp. 75–89.

—: 'Female Communities, Female Friendships and Social Control in María de Zayas's *La traición en la amistad*: A Historical Perspective', *Romance Languages Annual*, 10 (1998), 615–20.

—: 'Seduction and Hysteria in María de Zayas's *Desengaños amorosos*', *Hispanófila*, 115 (1995), 11–28.

Gossy, Mary S. 'Skirting the Question: Lesbians and María de Zayas', in *Hispanisms and Homosexualities*, ed. by Sylvia Molloy and Robert McKee Irwin (Durham: Duke University Press, 1998), pp. 19–28.

Goytisolo, Juan: 'El mundo erótico de María de Zayas', in *Disidencias* (Barcelona: Editorial Seix Barral, 1977), pp. 63–115.

Grant, Helen F.: 'The World Upside-Down', in *Studies in Spanish Literature of the Golden Age Presented to Edward M. Wilson*, ed. by R. O. Jones (London: Tamesis Books, 1973), pp. 103–130.

Green, Anne: *Privileged Anonymity: The Writings of Madame de Lafayette* (Oxford: Legenda, 1996).

Greer, Margaret Rich: 'The M(Other) Plot: Psychoanalytical Theory and Narrative Structure in María de Zayas', in *María de Zayas: The Dynamics of Discourse*, ed. by Amy R. Williamsen and Judith A. Whitenack (London: Associated University Presses, 1995), pp. 90–116.

—: *María de Zayas Tells Baroque Tales of Love and the Cruelty of Men* (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000).

—: 'María de Zayas: The Said and the Unsaid', *Laberinto*, 3 (2000–1) <http://www.gc.maricopa.edu/laberinto/2002/greer.htm> [accessed 18 July 2007].

—: 'Who's Telling this Story Anyhow? Framing Tales East and West: Panchatantra to Boccaccio to Zayas', in *Echoes and Inscriptions: Comparative Approaches to Early Modern Spanish Literatures*, ed. by Barbara A. Simerka and Christopher B. Weimer (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2000), pp. 33–45.

—: 'María de Zayas and the Female Eunuch', *Journal of Spanish Cultural Studies*, 2 (March 2001) 1, 41–53.

Grieve, Patricia E.: 'Embroidering with Saintly Threads: María de Zayas Challenges Cervantes and the Church', *Renaissance Quarterly*, 44 (1991) 1, 86–106.

Griswold, Susan C.: 'Topoi and Rhetorical Distance: The "Feminism" of María de Zayas', *Revista de estudios hispánicos*, 14 (1980) 2, 97–116.

Guevara, María de: *Warnings to the Kings and Advice on Restoring Spain: A Bilingual Edition*, ed. and trans. by Nieves Romero-Díaz (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007).

Guillén, Felisa: 'El marco narrativo como espacio utópico en los *Desengaños amorosos* de María de Zayas', *Revista de literatura*, 60 (1998), 527–535.

Gutiérrez, Enrique: *Santa Beatriz de Silva y origen de la Orden de la Inmaculada Concepción*, 2nd edn (Burgos: Aldecoa, 1976).

Haffner, Paul: *The Mystery of Mary* (Leominster: Gracewing, 2004).

Hegstrom Oakey, Valerie: 'The Fallacy of False Dichotomy in María de Zayas's *La traición en la amistad*', *Bulletin of the Comediantes*, 46 (Summer 1994) 1, 59–70.

—: 'Introduction', in *La traición en la amistad* (London: Associated University Presses, 1999), pp. 13–29.

Heiple, Daniel L.: 'Life as Dream and the Philosophy of Disillusionment', in *The Prince in the Tower: Perceptions of 'La vida es sueño'*, ed. by Frederick A. de Armas (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 1993), pp. 118–131.

—: 'Profeminist Reactions to Huarte's Misogyny in Lope de Vega's *La prueba de los ingenios* and María de Zayas's *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares*', in *The Perception of Women in Spanish Theatre of the Golden Age*, ed. by Anita K. Stoll and Dawn L. Smith (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 1991), pp. 121–134.

Hernández Pecoraro, Rosilie: '*La fuerza del amor* or the Power of Self-Love: Zayas's Response to Cervantes's *La fuerza de la sangre*', *Hispanic Review*, 70 (Winter 2002) 1, 39–57.

Hirsch, Marianne: 'Mothers and Daughters', *Signs*, 7 (Autumn 1981) 1, 200–222.

Historia de la Monja Alférez, Catalina de Erauso, escrita por ella misma, ed. by Ángel Esteban (Madrid: Cátedra, 2002).

The Satires and Epistles of Horace and the Satires of Persius, trans. by Niall Rudd (London: Penguin, 2005).

Howard, Donald C.: 'Carnival and Pilgrimage', in <http://lonestar.texas.net/%7Emseifert/carnival.html> [accessed 18 July 2007]

Howe, Elizabeth Teresa: 'Into the Vortex: María de Zayas's *Desengaño cuarto: Tarde llega el desengaño*, *Journal of Hispanic Philology*, 20 (1995–6), 1–3, 77–91.

Huarte de San Juan, Juan: *Examen de ingenios para las ciencias*, ed. by Guillermo Serés (Madrid: Cátedra, 1989).

Hufton, Olwen: 'Mujeres, trabajo y familia', in *Historia de las mujeres: 3. Del Renacimiento a la Edad Moderna*, ed. by Arlette Farge and Natalie Zemon Davis (Madrid: Taurus, 2000), pp. 33–74.

Hurtado y Jiménez de la Serna, Juan and Ángel González-Palencia: *Historia de la literatura española* (Madrid: SAETA, 1949).

Ibsen, Kristine: *Women's Spiritual Autobiography in Colonial Spanish America* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1999).

Irigaray, Luce: *The Irigaray Reader*, ed. by Margaret Whitford (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1991).

—: *This Sex Which is Not One*, trans. by Catherine Porter and Carolyn Burke (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985).

—: 'And the One Doesn't Stir Without the Other', *Signs*, 7 (Autumn 1981), 60–67.

Jacobus, Mary: 'The Difference of View', in *Women Writing and Writing about Women*, ed. by Mary Jacobus (London: Croom Helm, 1979), pp. 10–21.

—: *First Things: The Maternal Imaginary in Literature, Art, and Psychoanalysis* (London: Routledge, 1995).

Jameson, Anna B: *Legends of the Madonna as Represented in the Fine Arts*, 2nd edn (London: Longman, 1857).

Jehenson, Yvonne and Marcia L. Welles: 'María de Zayas's Wounded Women: A Semiotics of Violence', in *Gender, Identity, and Representation in Spain's Golden Age*, ed. by Anita K. Stoll and Dawn L. Smith (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2000), pp. 178–202.

Jehenson, Yvonne: 'Playing Out Desiring Fantasies in María de Zayas's *Amar sólo por vencer*', in *Zayas and Her Sisters, 2: Essays on Novelas by 17th-Century Spanish Women*, ed. by Gwyn E. Campbell and Judith A. Whitenack (New York: Global Publications, Binghampton University, 2001), pp. 97–110.

Jesús, Santa Teresa de: *Libro de la vida*, ed. by Dámaso Chicharro (Madrid: Cátedra, 2001).

Jiménez Corretejer, Zoé: 'La cristiana, la mora, la morisca o la mozárabe: Paradoja barroca e interpretación del arquetipo femenino a través de Cervantes, Mateo Alemán y María de Zayas', *Exégesis: Revista de la Universidad de Puerto Rico*, 14 (2001) 42, 30–33.

Jones, Cyril A.: 'Spanish Honour as Historical Phenomenon, Convention and Artistic Motive', *Hispanic Review*, 33 (1965) 1, 32–39.

Juana Inés de la Cruz, Sor: *A Sor Juana Anthology*, trans. by Alan S. Trueblood, forward by Octavio Paz (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988).

Juaristi, Jon: 'Privilegio y poder', *ABC*, 4 January 2006 <http://www.abc.es/humor/index.asp?ff=20060104&idn=1013441925002> [accessed 18 July 2007].

Kagané, Ludmila: *Bartolomé Esteban Murillo: The 17th Century Master* (Bournemouth: Parkstone, 1995).

Kahiluoto Rudat, Eva M.: 'Ilusión y desengaño: El feminismo barroco de María de Zayas y Sotomayor', *Letras femeninas*, 1 (1975), 27–43.

Kahn, Coppélia: 'The Absent Mother in *King Lear*', in *Rewriting the Renaissance: The Discourses of Sexual Difference in Early Modern Europe*, ed. by Margaret W. Ferguson, Maureen Quilligan and Nancy I. Vickers (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), pp. 33–49.

Kamen, Henry: *Spain 1469–1714: A Society of Conflict*, 2nd edn (London: Longman, 1991).

Kaminsky, Amy Katz: 'Dress and Redress: Clothing in the *Desengaños amorosos* of María de Zayas y Sotomayor', *Romanic Review*, 79 (1988) 2, 377–391.

—: 'María de Zayas and the Invention of a Women's Writing Community', *Revista de estudios hispánicos*, 35 (2001) 3, 487–509.

—: 'Ana Caro Mallén de Soto', in *Spanish Women Writers: A Bio-bibliographical Source Book*, ed. by Linda Gould Levine, Ellen Engelson Marson, Gloria Feiman Waldman (London: Greenwood Press, 1993), pp. 87–97.

Kartchner, Eric J.: 'Fictional Realities of *El prevenido, engañado*', in *Zayas and Her Sisters, 2: Essays on Novelas by 17th-Century Spanish Women*, ed. by Gwyn E. Campbell and Judith A. Whitenack (New York: Global Publications, Binghampton University, 2001), pp. 21–32.

Kerrigan, William: 'Female Friendships and Fraternal Enemies in *As You Like It*', in *Desire in the Renaissance: Psychoanalysis and Literature*, ed. by Valeria Finucci and Regina Schwartz (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), pp. 184–203.

Kim, Yonsoo: 'La recreación cromática de la luz en la novela de María de Zayas: "La inocencia castigada"', *Romance Review*, 12 (2002), 69–78.

King, Willard F.: *Prosa novelística y academias literarias en el siglo XVII* (Madrid: Real Academia Española, 1963).

Klapisch-Zuber, Christiane: 'The "Cruel Mother": Maternity, Widowhood, and Dowry in Florence in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries', in *Feminism and Renaissance Studies*, ed. by Lorna Hutson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 186–202.

Kluge, Sofie: 'Góngora's Heresy: Literary Theory and Criticism in the Golden Age', *MLN*, 122 (2007), 251–271.

Krause, Kathy M.: 'Virgin, Saint, and Sinners: Women in Gautier de Coinci's *Miracles de Nostre Dame*', in *Reassessing the Heroine in Medieval French Literature*, ed. by Kathy M. Krause (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2001), pp. 26–52.

Kristeva, Julia: *The Kristeva Reader*, ed. by Toril Moi (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986).

—: *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art*, ed. by Leon S. Roudiez (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1980).

Lafayette, Madame de: *La Princesse de Clèves et autres romans*, ed. by Bernard Pingaud (Paris: Gallimard, 1972).

—: *The Princesse de Clèves*, trans. by Nancy Mitford (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1962).

Lagreca, Nancy: 'Evil Women and Feminist Sentiment: Baroque Contradictions in María de Zayas's "El prevenido engañado" and "Estragos que causa el vicio"', *Revista canadiense de estudios hispánicos*, 28 (Spring 2004) 3, 565–582.

Laqueur, Thomas: *Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990).

Lara, M. V.: 'De escritoras españolas II: María de Zayas y Sotomayor', *Bulletin of Spanish Studies*, 9 (1932), 31–37.

Larson, Catherine: 'Gender, Reading and Intertextuality: Don Juan's Legacy in María de Zayas's *La traición en la amistad*', *Inti: Revista de literatura hispánica*, 40–1 (1994–5), 129–138.

Lavrin, Asunción: 'Introduction: The Scenario, the Actors, and the Issues', in *Sexuality and Marriage in Colonial Latin America* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1989), pp. 1–43.

Lehfeldt, Elizabeth A.: *Religious Women in Golden Age Spain: The Permeable Cloister* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005).

—: 'Ruling Sexuality: The Political Legitimacy of Isabel of Castile', *Renaissance Quarterly*, 53 (2000), 31–56.

Levisi, Margarita: 'La crueldad en los *Desengaños amorosos* de María de Zayas', in *Estudios literarios de hispanistas norteamericanos dedicados a Helmut Hatzfeld con motivo de su 80 aniversario*, ed. by Josep M. Sola-Solé, Alessandro Crisafulli, and Bruno Damiani (Barcelona: Ediciones Hispam, 1974), pp. 447–456.

Lorenzo Arribas, Josemi: 'Fray Luis de León. Un misógino progresista en la "querella de las mujeres". Relectura de *La perfecta casada*', in *Feminismo y misoginia en la literatura española: Fuentes literarias para la historia de las mujeres*, ed. by Cristina Segura Graíño (Madrid: Narcea, 2001), pp. 59–79.

Lundelius, Ruth: 'Spanish Poet and Dramatist, Ana Caro', in *Women Writers of the Seventeenth Century*, ed. by Katharina M. Wilson and Frank J. Warnke (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1989), pp. 228–250.

Lüthi, Max: *Once Upon a Time: On the Nature of Fairy Tales*, trans. by Lee Chadeayne & Paul Gottwalk (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1976).

Macartney, C. A.: *Hungary: A Short History* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1962).

Macleod, C. W.: 'The Poetry of Ethics: Horace, *Epistles* I', *The Journal of Roman Studies*, 69 (1979), 16–27.

Maravall, José Antonio: *Culture of the Baroque: Analysis of a Historical Structure*, trans. by Terry Cochran (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1986).

Marians of the Immaculate Conception: 'A History of the Scapular of the Immaculate Conception' <http://www.padrimariani.org/en/laity/conf_history.html> [accessed 19 March 2007]

Maroto Camino, Mercedes: 'Spindles for Swords: the Re/Dis-covery of María de Zayas' Presence', *Hispanic Review*, 62 (Autumn 1994) 4, 519–536.

—: 'María de Zayas and Ana Caro: The Space of Woman's Solidarity in the Spanish Golden Age', *Hispanic Review*, 67 (1999), 1–16.

Márquez de la Plata y Ferrándiz, Vicenta María: *Mujeres renacentistas en la corte de Isabel la Católica* (Madrid: Castalia, 2005).

Martín Gaite, Carmen: *Desde la ventana: Enfoque femenino de la literatura española* (Madrid: Espasa Calpe, 1987).

Matos-Nin, Ingrid: 'La importancia del tema sobrenatural en María de Zayas y Sotomayor', *Atenea*, 23 (June 2003) 1, 103–14.

—: 'El concepto del demonio en dos novelas de María de Zayas y Sotomayor', *Tropos*, 29 (Spring 2003), 6–18.

Matulka, Barbara: 'The Feminist Theme in the Drama of the *Siglo de oro*', *Romanic Review*, 26 (1935) 3, 191–231.

Mayberry, Nancy: 'The Mythological and Astrological Subtexts of *La fundadora de la Santa Concepción*', in *A Star-Crossed Golden Age: Myth and the Spanish Comedia*, ed. by Frederick A. de Armas (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 1998), pp. 75–88.

Mazzucchelli, Mario: *The Nun of Monza*, trans. by Evelyn Gendel (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1963).

McGann, M. J.: 'Review: The Poetry of Friendship: Horace, Epistles I', *Phoenix*, 41 (Autumn 1987) 3, 329–331.

McGrady, Donald: 'Were Sercambi's *Novelle* Known from the Middle Ages on? (Notes on Chaucer, Sacchetti, *Cent Nouvelles nouvelles*, Pauli, Timoneda, Zayas)', *Italica*, 57 (Spring 1980) 1, 3–18.

—: 'Masuccio and Alemán: Italian Renaissance and Spanish Baroque', *Comparative Literature*, 18 (Summer 1966) 3, 203–210.

McKendrick, Melveena: *Cervantes* (Boston: Little, Brown & Company, 1980).

—: *Identities in Crisis: Essays on Honour, Gender and Women in the Comedia* (Kassel: Edition Reichenberger, 2002).

—: *Woman and Society in the Spanish Drama of the Golden Age: A Study of the 'mujer varonil'* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1974).

McNamara, Jo Ann: 'The Need to Give: Suffering and Female Sanctity in the Middle Ages', in *Images of Sainthood in Medieval Europe*, ed. by Renate Blumenfeld-Kosinski and Timea Szell (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991), pp. 199–221.

—: *Sisters in Arms: Catholic Nuns through Two Millennia* (London: Harvard University Press, 1996).

Medina, Alberto: 'María de Zayas o la imposibilidad del amor: Causalidad y amor cortés en 'Mal presagio casar lejos'', *Bulletin of Hispanic Studies*, 75 (1998) 4, 411–424.

Medioli, Francesca: 'An unequal law: The enforcement of *clausura* before and after the Council of Trent', in *Women in Renaissance and Early Modern Europe*, ed. by Christine Meek (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2000), pp. 136–152.

—: 'To Take or Not to Take the Veil: Selected Italian Case Histories, the Renaissance and After', in *Women in Italian Renaissance Culture and Society*, ed. by Letizia Panizza (Oxford: Legenda, 2000), pp. 122–137.

Melloni, Alessandra: 'María de Zayas fra comedia e novela', in *Actas del Coloquio 'Teoría y realidad en el teatro español del siglo XVII'. La influencia italiana (Roma, 16 a*

19 de noviembre de 1978), coord. Francisco Ramos Ortega (Rome: Instituto español de cultura y de literatura de Roma, 1981), pp. 485–505.

Menéndez y Pelayo, Marcelino: *Orígenes de la novela*, ed. by D. Enrique Sánchez Reyes, 4 vols (Santander: Aldus, 1943), III.

Meneses, Leonor de: *El desdeñado más firme*, ed. by Judith A. Whitenack and Gwyn E. Campbell (Potomac, MD: Scripta Humanistica, 1994).

Merrim, Stephanie: *Early Modern Women's Writing and Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1999).

Mihaly, Deanna: 'Socially Constructed, Essentially Other: Servants and Slaves in María de Zayas's *Desengaños amorosos*', *Romance Languages Annual*, 10 (1999) 2, 719–725.

Moll, Jaime: 'La primera edición de las *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares* de María de Zayas y Sotomayor, *Dicenda*, 1 (1982b), 177–9.

—: 'Diez años sin licencias para imprimir comedias y novelas en los reinos de Castilla: 1625–1634', *Boletín de la Real Academia Española*, 54 (1974), 97–103.

Montaigne, Michel de: *The Complete Works of Montaigne: Essays, Travel Journal, Letters*, trans. by Donald M. Frame (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1957).

Montero Reguera, José: *El Quijote y la crítica contemporánea* (Madrid: Ediciones del Centro de Estudios Cervantinos, 1997).

Montesa Peydro, Salvador: *Texto y contexto en la narrativa de María de Zayas* (Madrid: Dirección General de la Juventud y Promoción Sociocultural, 1981).

Morales, Ángela: 'La tradición del marco de la novela corta y la justificación de la ficción en el Renacimiento', in *Actas del XIV Congreso de la Asociación Internacional de Hispanistas, New York, 16–21 de julio de 2001: II Literatura española siglos XVI y XVII*, ed. by Isaías Lerner, Robert Nival and Alejandro Alonso (Newark: Juan de la Cuesta, 2001), pp. 405–410.

Morby, Edwin S.: 'The *difunta pleitada* theme in María de Zayas', *Hispanic Review*, 16 (1948), 238–242.

Mujica, Bárbara: *Women Writers of Early Modern Spain: Sophia's Daughters* (London: Yale University Press, 2004).

Mundi Pedret, Francisco and Anabel Sáiz Ripoll: *Las prosificaciones de las cantigas de Alfonso X el Sabio* (Barcelona: PPU, 1987).

Nader, Helen: 'Introduction: The World of the Mendozas', in *Power and Gender in Renaissance Spain: Eight Women of the Mendoza Family, 1450-1650*, ed. by Helen Nader (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2004), pp. 1–26.

Nalle, Sara T.: 'Literacy and Culture in Early Modern Castile', *Past and Present*, 125 (1989), 65–96.

Navarre, Marguerite de: *Heptaméron*, ed. by Simone de Reyff (Paris: Flammarion, 1982).

—: *The Heptameron*, trans. by P. A. Chilton (London: Penguin, 1984).

Navarro Durán, Rosa: 'La "rara belleza" de las damas en las novelas de María de Zayas y de Mariana de Carvajal', in *Belleza escrita en femenino*, ed. by Ángels Carabí and Marata Segarra (Barcelona: Universitat de Barcelona, 1997), pp. 79–86.

Nietzsche, Friedrich: *Thus Spoke Zarathustra: A Book for Everyone and No One*, trans. by R. J. Hollingdale (London: Penguin, 2003).

Nowak, William J.: 'Virgin Rhetoric: Fray Luis de León and Marian Piety in *Virgen, que le sol más pura*', *Hispanic Review*, 73 (Autumn 2005) 4, 491–509.

O'Brien, Eavan: 'Female Friendship Extolled: Exploring the Enduring Appeal of María de Zayas's novellas', *Romance Studies*, 26 (January 2008) 1, 43–59.

'Octavian', in *Four Middle English Romances*, ed. by Harriet Hudson (Kalamazoo, Michigan: Medieval Institute Publications, 1997), in *TEAMS Texts* <http://www.lib.rochester.edu/camelot/teams/tmsmenu.htm> [accessed 14 June 2007].

Olivares, Julián: 'Introducción', in *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares* (Madrid: Cátedra, 2000), pp. 11–135

Olivares, Julián and Elizabeth S. Boyce (eds.): *Tras el espejo la musa escribe: Lírica femenina de los Siglos de Oro* (Madrid: Siglo veintiuno, 1993).

Oltra, José Miguel: 'Zelima o el arte narrativo de María de Zayas', in *Formas breves del relato*, ed. by Yves Rene Fonquerne (Madrid: Publicaciones de la Universidad de Zaragoza, 1986), pp. 177–90.

Ordóñez, Elizabeth J.: 'Woman and her Text in the Works of María de Zayas and Ana Caro', *Revista de estudios hispánicos*, 19 (1985) 1, 3–15.

Pacheco, Francisco: *El arte de la pintura*, ed. by Bonaventura Bassegoda i Hugas (Madrid: Cátedra, 1990).

Painter, William: *The First Tome of the Palace of Pleasure Contayning Store of Goodlye Histories, Tragical Matters, & Other Morall Argumentes, Very Requisite for Delight and Profyte. Chose[n] and Selected out of Diuers Good and Commendable Authors, and Now Once Agayn Corrected and Encreased* (London: In Fleatstrete by Thomas Marshe, 1575).

Palomo, María del Pilar: *La novela cortesana: Forma y estructura* (Barcelona: Planeta, 1976).

Panek, Jennifer: *Widows and Suitors in Early Modern English Comedy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

Parker Aronson, Stacey L.: 'Monstrous Metamorphoses and Rape in María de Zayas', *Revista canadiense de estudios hispánicos*, 29 (2005) 3, 525–547.

Parkinson, Stephen and Deirdre Jackson: 'Putting the *Cantigas* in Context: Tracing the Sources of Alfonso X's *Cantigas de Santa María*' (Paper presented at International Congress on Medieval Studies, Kalamazoo, 7 May 2005), in *The Oxford Cantigas de Santa Maria Database*, <http://csm.mml.ox.ac.uk/?p=database> [accessed 11 May 2007]

Parrilla, Osvaldo: *Comparación y contraste del erotismo en la ficción de María de Zayas y Carme Riera* (Madrid: Editorial Pliegos, 2003).

Paun de García, Susan: 'Zayas's Ideal of the Masculine: Clothes Make the Man', in *Women in the Discourse of Early Modern Spain*, ed. by Joan F. Cammarata (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2003), pp. 253–271.

—: '*La burlada Aminta*: From Object/Desire to Subject/Vengeance', in *Zayas and Her Sisters, 2: Essays on Novelas by 17th-Century Spanish Women*, ed. by Gwyn E. Campbell and Judith A. Whitenack (New York: Global Publications, Binghampton University, 2001), pp. 3–19.

—: 'Magia y poder en María de Zayas', *Cuadernos de ALDEEU*, 8 (1992), 43–54.

—: '*Traición en la amistad* de María de Zayas', *Anales de literatura española*, 6 (1988), 377–390.

Pérez de Hita, Ginés: *Historia de los bandos de Zegríes y Abencerrajes (Primera parte de las Guerras civiles de Granada)*, ed. by Paula Blanchard-Demouge (Granada: University of Granada, 1999).

Pérez-Erdélyi, Mireya: *La pícara y la dama: La imagen de las mujeres en las novelas picaresco-cortesanas de María de Zayas y Sotomayor y Alonso del Castillo Solórzano* (Miami: Ediciones universal, 1979).

Pérez Galdós, Benito: *Fortunata y Jacinta: Dos historias de casadas (Segunda parte)* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Losada, 1942).

—: *Un voluntario realista* (Madrid: Hernando, 1946).

Perry, Mary Elizabeth: 'Crisis and Disorder in the World of María de Zayas y Sotomayor', in *María de Zayas: The Dynamics of Discourse*, ed. by Amy R. Williamsen and Judith A. Whitenack (London: Associated University Presses, 1995), pp. 23–39.

—: 'From Convent to Battlefield: Cross-Dressing and Gendering the Self in the New World of Imperial Spain', in *Queer Iberia: Sexualities, Cultures and Crossings from the Middle Ages to the Renaissance*, ed. by Josiah Blackmore and Gregory S. Hutcheson (Durham: Duke University Press, 1999), pp. 394–419.

—: 'Magdalens and Jezebels in Counter-Reformation Spain', in *Culture and Control in Counter-Reformation Spain*, ed. by Anne J. Cruz and Mary Elizabeth Perry (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1992), pp. 124–144.

—: *Gender and Disorder in Early Modern Seville* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990).

Pfandl, Ludwig: *Historia de la literatura nacional española en la edad de oro*, trans. by Jorge Rubió Balaguer (Barcelona: Sucesores de Juan Gili, 1933).

Picon Garfield, Evelyn: 'Cortázar por Cortázar', in *Rayuela (edición crítica)*, ed. by Julio Ortega and Saúl Yurkievich (Madrid: C.S.I.C., 1991), pp. 778–789.

Pizan, Christine de: *The Book of the City of Ladies*, trans. by Earl Jeffrey Richards (New York: Persea Books, 1982).

Place, Edwin B.: *María de Zayas, An Outstanding Woman Short-Story Writer of Seventeenth-Century Spain*, University of Colorado Studies, XIII (Boulder: University of Colorado, 1923).

—: *Manual elemental de novelística española*, ed. by Victoriano Suárez (Madrid: Biblioteca española de divulgación científica, 1926).

Plato: *Meno and Other Dialogues: Charmides, Laches, Lysis, Meno*, trans. by Robin Waterfield (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

Pons, Margalida: 'Extrañamiento e identidad en *La fuerza del amor* de María de Zayas', *Romance Languages Annual*, 7 (1995), 590–596.

Poska, Allyson M.: *Women and Authority in Early Modern Spain: The Peasants of Galicia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

—: *Regulating the People: The Catholic Reformation in Seventeenth-Century Spain* (Leiden: Brill, 1998).

Prieto, Char: 'María de Zayas o la forja de la novela de autora en los albores del nuevo milenio', in *Memoria de la palabra: Actas del VI congreso de la asociación internacional siglo de oro, Burgos – La Rioja, 15-19 de julio 2002*, ed. by María Luisa Lobato and Francisco Domínguez Matito (Madrid: Iberoamericana, 2004), pp. 1477–1483.

Proust, Marcel: *Swann's Way: Book One of Remembrance of Things Past*, trans. by C. K. Scott Moncrieff (London: Penguin, 1957).

Quevedo, Francisco de: *Poems to Lisi*, ed. by D. Gareth Walters (Exeter: University of Exeter, 1988).

Rabell, Carmen R.: *Rewriting the Italian Novella in Counter-Reformation Spain* (Woodbridge: Tamesis, 2003).

Radicalesbians, 'The Woman-Identified Woman' (Pittsburgh: Know, c.1970), in *Documents from the Women's Liberation Movement: An On-line Archival Collection'* <http://scriptorium.lib.duke.edu/wlm/womid/> [accessed 3 October 2006].

Raymond, Janice: *A Passion for Friends: Toward a Philosophy of Female Affection* (London: The Women's Press Ltd., 1986).

Reder Gadow, Marion: 'Las voces silenciosas de los claustros de clausura', *Cuadernos de Historia Moderna*, 25 (2000), 279–335.

Reed, Helen H.: 'Mother Love in the Renaissance: The Princess of Éboli's Letters to Her Favorite Son', in *Power and Gender in Renaissance Spain: Eight Women of the Mendoza Family, 1450-1650*, ed. by Helen Nader (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2004), pp. 152–176.

Reichenberger, Arnold G.: 'The Uniqueness of the *comedia*', *Hispanic Review*, 27 (1959), 303–316.

Rennert, Hugo A.: 'Lope de Vega's *comedias* "Los pleitos de Inglaterra" and "La corona de Hungría"', *MLR*, 13 (1918) 4, 455–464.

Reynolds, John J.: *Juan Timoneda* (Boston: Twayne, 1975).

Rhodes, Elizabeth: 'Redressing Ana Caro's *Valor, agravio y mujer*', *Hispanic Review*, 73 (Summer 2005) 3, 309–328.

Rich, Adrienne: *Of Woman Born: Motherhood as Experience and Institution* (London: Virago, 1976).

—: 'Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence (1980)', in *Blood, Bread, and Poetry: Selected Prose, 1979–1985* (Norton: New York, 1986), pp. 23–75.

Riera, Carme and Luisa Cotoner: 'Los personajes femeninos de doña María de Zayas, una aproximación', in *Literatura y vida cotidiana: Actas de las cuartas jornadas de investigación interdisciplinaria*, ed. by Durán, María Ángeles and José Antonio Rey (Zaragoza: Servicio de Publicaciones de la Universidad Autónoma de Madrid y Secretariado de Publicaciones de la Universidad de Zaragoza, 1987), pp. 149–159.

—: 'Zayas o la ficción al servicio de la educación femenina' in *Breve historia feminista de la literatura española (en lengua castellana): IV La literatura escrita por mujer (de la Edad Media al s. XVIII)*, coord. Iris M. Zavala (Barcelona: Anthropos, 1997), pp. 281–303.

Riley, Denise: 'Does a Sex Have a History?', in *Feminism and History*, ed. by Joan Wallach Scott (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), pp. 17–33.

Riley, E. C.: *Cervantes's Theory of the Novel* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962).

Rimmon-Kenan, Shlomith: *Narrative Fiction: Contemporary Poetics* (London: Methuen, 1983).

Rivera, María-Milagros, Cristina Segura, Nieves Baranda and Virginia Trueba: *Por mi alma os digo: La vida escrita por las mujeres, IV*, directed by Anna Caballé (Barcelona: Lumen, 2004).

Rivers, Elias L.: 'María de Zayas como poeta de los celos', in *La creatividad femenina en el mundo barroco hispánico: María de Zayas, Isabel Rebeca Correa, Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz*, ed. by Monika Bosse, Barbara Potthast and André Stoll, 2 vols (Kassel: Edition Reichenberger, 1999), I, 323–333.

Robbins, Jeremy: *The Challenges of Uncertainty: An Introduction to Seventeenth-Century Spanish Literature* (London: Duckworth, 1998).

Rodríguez Cuadros, Evangelina and María Haro Cortés (ed): *Entre la rueca y la pluma: Novela de mujeres en el barroco* (Madrid: Biblioteca Nueva, 1999).

Rodríguez-Garrido, José A.: 'El ingenio en la mujer: *La traición en la amistad* de María de Zayas entre Lope de Vega y Huarte de San Juan', *Bulletin of the Comediantes*, 49 (Winter 1997) 2, 357–373.

Rojas, Fernando de: *La Celestina*, ed. by Dorothy S. Severin (Madrid: Cátedra, 1998).

Rolón-Collazo, Lissette: 'La forma de la novela cortesana según María de Zayas', *Torre de papel*, 4 (1994) 2, 47–60.

Romancero General II, ed. by Agustín Durán, Biblioteca de Autores Españoles, 16 (Madrid: Atlas, 1945), 1309–1310, pp. 329–332.

Romero-Díaz, Nieves: 'En los límites de la representación: la traición de María de Zayas', *Revista canadiense de estudios hispánicos*, 26 (Spring 2002) 3, 475–492.

—: 'Ha nacido una estrella: leyendo a Zayas para la televisión', *Laberinto*, 3 (2000–1) <http://www.gc.maricopa.edu/laberinto/2002/greer.htm> [accessed 18 July 2007].

—: *Nueva nobleza, nueva novela: reescribiendo la cultura urbana del barroco* (Newark: Juan de la Cuesta, 2002).

Rothstein, Marian: 'Clandestine Marriage and *Amadis de Gaule*: The Text, the World, and the Reader', *Sixteenth Century Journal*, 25 (1994) 4, 873–886.

Routt, Kristen: 'El cuerpo femenino y la creación literaria en *La inocencia castigada* de María de Zayas', *Romance Languages Annual*, 7 (1995), 616–620.

Rubiera Mata, María Jesús: 'La narrativa de origen árabe en la literatura del siglo de oro: El caso de María de Zayas', in *La creatividad femenina en el mundo barroco hispánico: María de Zayas, Isabel Rebeca Correa, Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz*, ed. by Monika Bosse, Barbara Potthast and André Stoll, 2 vols (Kassel: Edition Reichenberger, 1999), I, 335–349.

Salstad, M. Louise: 'The Influence of Sacred Oratory on María de Zayas: A Case in Point, *La fuerza del amor*', *MLN*, 113 (1998), 426–432.

Sánchez, Galo: 'Datos jurídicos acerca de la venganza del honor', *Revista de filología española*, 4 (1917), 292–295.

Sánchez Ortega, María Helena: 'Woman as Source of "Evil" in Counter-Reformation Spain', in *Culture and Control in Counter-Reformation Spain*, ed. by Anne J. Cruz

and Mary Elizabeth Perry (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1992), pp. 196–215.

—: 'Sorcery and Eroticism in Love Magic', in *Cultural Encounters: The Impact of the Inquisition in Spain and the New World*, ed. by Mary Elizabeth Perry and Anne J. Cruz (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), pp. 58–92.

Sanhuesa Fonseca, María: 'El mundo del sarao en la narrativa española breve del siglo XVII', in *Memoria de la palabra: Actas del VI congreso de la asociación internacional siglo de oro, Burgos – La Rioja, 15-19 de julio 2002*, ed. by María Luisa Lobato and Francisco Domínguez Matito (Madrid: Iberoamericana, 2004), pp. 1619–1627.

Saslow, James M.: 'Homosexuality in the Renaissance: Behaviour, Identity and Artistic Expression', in *Hidden from History: Reclaiming the Gay and Lesbian Past*, ed. by Martin Bauml Duberman, Martha Vicinus, George Chauncey Jr. (London: Penguin, 1989), pp. 90–105.

Schardong, Rosangela: 'El celoso extremeño: fuente para una novela feminista de Doña María de Zayas y Sotomayor', in *Anales del 2. Congresso Brasileiro de Hispanistas*, 2002, São Paolo <http://www.proceedings.scielo.br/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=MSC0000000012002000200038&lng=es&nrm=iso&tlng=es> [accessed 18 July 2007].

Schwartz, Lía: 'Discursos dominantes y discursos dominados en textos satíricos de María de Zayas', in *La creatividad femenina en el mundo barroco hispánico: María de Zayas, Isabel Rebeca Correa, Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz*, ed. by Monika Bosse, Barbara Potthast and André Stoll, 2 vols (Kassel: Edition Reichenberger, 1999), I, 301–321.

Selden, Raman, Peter Widdowson and Peter Brooker: *A Reader's Guide to Contemporary Literary Theory*, 4th edn (Harlow: Prentice Hall, 1997).

Senabre Sempere, Ricardo: 'La fuente de una novela de Doña María de Zayas y Sotomayor', *Revista de filología española*, 46 (1963), 163–172.

Serrano y Sanz, Manuel: *Apuntes para una biblioteca de escritoras españolas desde el año 1401 al 1833 I–II*, Biblioteca de Autores Españoles, 268–271 (Madrid: Rivadeneyra, 1903–5; repr. Madrid: Atlas, 1975).

Serrano Poncela, Segundo: 'Casamientos engañosos (Doña María de Zayas, Scarron y un proceso de creación literaria)', *Bulletin Hispanique*, 64 (1962), 248–259.

The Oxford Shakespeare: The Complete Works, ed. by Stanley Wells and Gary Taylor (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988).

Shannon, Laurie: *Sovereign Amity: Figures of Friendship in Shakespearean Contexts* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002).

Sherman, Alvin F.: 'María de Zayas and the World of Numbers, Geometric Forms and Carnival', in *Selected Proceedings of the Pennsylvania Foreign Language*

Conference, ed. by Gregorio C. Martín (Pittsburgh: Department of Modern Languages, Duquesne University, 1988–90), pp. 336–341.

Shklovsky, Victor: 'Art as Technique', in *Russian Formalist Criticism: Four Essays*, translation and introduction by Lee T. Lemon and Marion J. Reis (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1965), pp. 3–24.

Las siete partidas del Rey don Alfonso el Sabio, cotejadas con varios codices antiguos por la Real Academia de la Historia, 3 vols (Madrid: Imprenta real, 1807).

'Sir Aldingar' (59), in *The Scottish and English Popular Ballads*, ed. by Francis James Child, 5 vols (Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 1965), II, 33–48.

'Sir Tryamour', in *Four Middle English Romances*, ed. by Harriet Hudson (Kalamazoo, Michigan: Medieval Institute Publications, 1997), in *TEAMS Texts* <http://www.lib.rochester.edu/camelot/teams/tmsmenu.htm> [accessed 14 June 2007].

Smith, Paul Julian: 'Writing Women in Golden Age Spain: Saint Teresa and María de Zayas', *MLN*, 102 (1987) 2, 220–240.

—: 'Writing Women in the Golden Age', in *The Body Hispanic: Gender and Sexuality in Spanish and Spanish American Literature* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), pp. 11–43.

Soledad Arredondo: 'La mirada de Lope de Vega sobre la mujer, en las *Novelas a Marcia Leonarda*', in *Feminismo y misoginia en la literatura española: Fuentes literarias para la historia de las mujeres*, ed. by Cristina Segura Graíño (Madrid: Narcea, 2001), pp. 81–95.

Soufas, Teresa S.: 'María de Zayas's (Un)Conventional Play, *La traición en la amistad*', in *The Golden Age Comedia: Text, Theory and Performance*, ed. by Charles Ganelin and Howard Mancing (West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 1994), pp. 148–164.

—: 'Ana Caro's Re-evaluation of the *Mujer varonil* and her Theatrics in *Valor, agravio y mujer*', in *The Perception of Women in Spanish Theatre of the Golden Age*, ed. by Anita K. Stoll and Dawn L. Smith (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 1991), pp. 85–105.

—: (ed.) *Women's Acts: Plays by Women Dramatists of Spain's Golden Age* (Lexington: The University Press, 1997).

Stackhouse, Kenneth A.: 'Verisimilitude, Magic and the Supernatural in the *Novelas* of María de Zayas y Sotomayor', *Hispanófila*, 62 (January 1982), 65–76.

Stevens-Arroyo, Anthony M.: 'The Evolution of Marian Devotionalism within Christianity and the Ibero-Mediterranean Polity', *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 37 (1998) 1, 50–73.

Stiller, Nikki: *Eve's Orphans: Mothers and Daughters in Medieval English Literature* (London: Greenwood Press, 1980).

Stone, Robert S.: 'Time Will Darken Them: Caravels and Galleons in Zurbarán's Immaculate Conception', *Journal of Iberian and Latin American Studies*, 13 (2007) 1, 41–71.

Stratton, Suzanne L.: *The Immaculate Conception in Spanish Art* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

Stroud, Matthew D.: 'Artistry and Irony in María de Zayas's *La inocencia castigada*', in *Zayas and Her Sisters, 2: Essays on Novelas by 17th-Century Spanish Women*, ed. by Gwyn E. Campbell and Judith A. Whitenack (New York: Global Publications, Binghampton University, 2001), pp. 79–95.

—: 'Love, Friendship and Deceit in *La traición en la amistad*', *Neophilogous*, 69 (1985) 4, 539–547.

—: 'Further Considerations of History and Law in the Wife-Murder *Comedias*', *Hispanic Journal*, 8 (1987), 21–38.

Suárez Briones, Beatriz: 'Voces e ideología en "Estragos que causa el vicio", de María de Zayas', *Monographic Review*, 13 (1997), 39–52.

Sylvania, Lena E. V.: *Doña María de Zayas y Sotomayor: A Contribution to the Study of her Works* (New York: AMS Press, Inc., 1966).

Synge, John Millington: *The Playboy of the Western World*, ed. by Malcolm Kelsall, 2nd edn (London: A & C Black, 1997).

Taddeo, Sara A.: 'Mentís, que no soy mujer mientras empuño este acero: Verdad, engaño and Valor in *La monja alferéz*' in *Looking at the Comedia in the Year of the Quincentennial: Proceedings of the 1992 Symposium on Golden Age drama at the University of Texas, El Paso, March 18–21*, ed. by Barbara Mujica and Sharon D. Voros (Lanham: University Press of America, 1993), pp. 111–120.

Talens, Jenaro: *La escritura como teatralidad: Acerca de Juan Ruiz, Santillana, Cervantes y el marco narrativo en la novela corta castellana del siglo XVII* (Valencia: Universidad de Valencia, 1977).

Taylor, Donald S.: 'The Lineage and Birth of Sir Aldingar', *Journal of American Folklore*, 65 (1952) 256, 139–147.

Taylor, Scott K.: 'Women, Honor, and Violence in a Castilian Town, 1600–1650', *Sixteenth Century Journal*, 35 (2004) 4, 1079–1097.

Templin, E. H.: 'The Mother in the *comedia* of Lope de Vega', *Hispanic Review*, 3 (1935), 219–244.

The Book of the Thousand Nights and a Night, trans. by Richard F. Burton, 10 vols (USA: privately printed by the Burton Club, c1970), V <http://www.wollamshram.ca/1001/> [accessed 15 November 2007].

Ticknor, George: *History of Spanish Literature*, 3 vols (London: Trübner & Co., 1863), II.

Timoneda, Joan: *El Patrañuelo*, ed. by María Pilar Cuartero Sancho (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1990).

Tirso de Molina: *El burlador de Sevilla y convidado de piedra*, ed. by Mercedes Sánchez Sánchez (Madrid: Castalia, 1997).

Todd, Barbara J.: 'The Virtuous Widow in Protestant England', in *Widowhood in Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, ed. by Sandra Cavallo and Lyndan Warner (Harlow: Longman, 1999), pp. 66–83.

Traub, Valerie: 'The (In)Significance of "Lesbian" Desire in Early Modern England', in *Queering the Renaissance*, ed. by Jonathan Goldberg (Durham: Duke University Press, 1994), pp. 62–83.

Tvordi, Jessica: 'Female Alliance and the Construction of Homoeroticism in *As You Like It* and *Twelfth Night*', in *Maids and Mistresses, Cousins and Queens: Women's Alliances in Early Modern England*, ed. by Susan Frye and Karen Robertson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 114–130.

Tyler, Richard W.: 'Algunas versiones de la leyenda de la "Reina Sevilla" en la primera mitad del siglo de oro', in *Actas del II Congreso de la Asociación Internacional de Hispanistas*, dir. by Jaime Sánchez Romeralo y Norbert Polussen (Nimegen, Holland: Instituto Español de la Universidad de Nimega, 1967), pp. 635–641 <http://cvc.cervantes.es/obref/aih/pdf/02/aih_02_1_064.pdf> [accessed 22 February 2007]

Urban, Sylvanus, ed.: 'The Doctrine of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin, and its Relation to Art', *The Gentleman's Magazine*, 39 (January 1853), 47–9.

Valbuena, Olga Lucía: 'Sorceresses, Love Magic, and the Inquisition of Linguistic Sorcery in *Celestina*', *PMLA*, 109 (1994) 2, 207–224.

Valdivieso, Enrique: *Murillo: Sombras de la tierra, luces del cielo* (Madrid: Sílex, 1990).

Valli, Giorgio: 'Las fuentes italianas de la patraña IX de Timoneda', *Revista de la filología española*, 30 (1946), 369–381.

Val Valdivieso, María Isabel del: 'Isabel, *Infanta* and Princess of Castile', in *Isabel la Católica, Queen of Castile: Critical Essays*, ed. by David A. Boruchoff (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), pp. 41–55.

Valero Cuadra, María del Pino: *La leyenda de la Doncella Carcayona: Estudio y edición crítica* (Alicante: Publicaciones de la Universidad de Alicante, 2000).

Valis, Noël M.: 'The Spanish Storyteller: Mariana de Caravajal', in *Women Writers of the Seventeenth Century*, ed. by Katharina M. Wilson and Frank J. Warnke (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1989), pp. 251–282.

Van Biema, David: 'Hail, Mary', *Time*, 13 March 2005 <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1037651,00.html> [accessed 22 October 2007].

Vasileski, Irma V.: *María de Zayas y Sotomayor: Su época y su obra* (Madrid: Colección Plaza Mayor Scholar, 1973).

Vázquez, Juana: 'Un pionero olvidado', *El País*, 26 April 2006 <http://www.elpais.com/articulo/opinion/pionero/olvidado/elpepiopi/20060426elpepiopi_4/Tes> [accessed 21 November 2007]

Vega, Lope de: *Novelas a Marcia Leonarda*, ed. by Antonio Carreño (Madrid: Cátedra, 2002).

—: *El caballero de Olmedo*, ed. by Joseph Pérez, 5th edn (Madrid: Castalia, 1983).

—: *La viuda valenciana*, ed. by Teresa Ferrer Valls (Madrid: Castalia, 2001).

—: *Laurel de Apolo*, ed. by Christian Giaffreda (Florence: Alinea, 2002).

Velasco, Sherry M.: 'María de Zayas and Lesbian Desire in Early Modern Spain', in *Reading and Writing the Ambiente: Queer Sexualities in Latino, Latin American and Spanish Culture*, ed. by Susana Chávez-Silverman and Librada Hernández (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2000), pp. 21–42.

—: 'Contradiction, Control and Utopia in María de Zayas', *Journal of Hispanic Philology*, 19 (1994–5) 1–3, 201–212.

Vives, Juan Luis: *Instrucción de la mujer cristiana*, ed. by Elizabeth Teresa Howe, trans. by Juan Justiniano (Madrid: Fundación Universitaria Española, 1995).

Voigt, Lisa: 'Visual and Oral Art(ifice) in María de Zayas's *Desengaños amorosos*', in *Writing for the Eyes in the Spanish Golden Age*, ed. by Frederick A. de Armas (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2004), pp. 212–234.

Vollendorf, Lisa: *Reclaiming the Body: María de Zayas's Early Modern Feminism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, Department of Romance Languages, 2001).

—: 'Fleshing Out Feminism in Early Modern Spain: María de Zayas's Corporeal Politics', *Revista canadiense de estudios hispánicos*, 32 (1997) 1, 87–108.

—: 'Reading the Body Imperilled: Violence against Women in María de Zayas', *Hispania*, 78 (May 1995) 2, 272–282.

—: 'No Doubt It Will Amaze You: María de Zayas's Early Modern Feminism', in *Recovering Spain's Feminist Tradition*, ed. by Lisa Vollendorf (New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 2001), pp. 103–120.

—: 'Te causará admiración: El feminismo moderno de María de Zayas', in *Literatura y feminismo en España (Siglo XV–XXI)*, ed. by Lisa Vollendorf (Barcelona: Icaria, 2005), pp. 107–124.

—: 'Our Bodies, Our Selves: Vengeance in the Novellas of María de Zayas', *Cincinnati Romance Review*, 16 (1997), 93–100.

—: 'The Future of Early Modern Women's Studies: The Case of Same-Sex Friendship and Desire in Zayas and Carvajal', *Arizona Journal of Hispanic Cultural Studies*, 4 (2000), 265–284.

—: 'The Value of Female Friendship in Seventeenth-Century Spain', *Texas Studies in Literature and Language*, 47 (Winter 2005) 4, 425–445.

Voros, Sharon D.: 'Calderón's Writing Women and Women Writers: The Subversion of the *Exempla*', in *Looking at the Comedia in the Year of the Quincentennial: Proceedings of the 1992 Symposium on Golden Age drama at the University of Texas, El Paso, March 18–21*, ed. by Barbara Mujica and Sharon D. Voros (Lanham: University Press of America, 1993), pp. 121–132.

Vosters, Simon A.: 'Lope de Vega y las damas doctas', in *Actas del tercer congreso internacional de hispanistas celebrado en Mexico, D. F., del 26 al 31 de agosto de 1968*, ed. by Carlos H. Magis (Mexico: El colegio de México, 1970), pp. 909–921.

Wallach Scott, Joan: 'Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis', in *Feminism and History*, ed. by Joan Wallach Scott (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), pp. 152–180.

Warner, Lyndan: 'Widows, Widowers and the Problem of "Second Marriages" in Sixteenth-Century France', in *Widowhood in Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, ed. by Sandra Cavallo and Lyndan Warner (Harlow: Longman, 1999), pp. 84–107.

Warner, Marina: *Alone of All Her Sex: The Myth and Cult of the Virgin Mary* (London: Vintage, 2000).

Welles, Marcia L.: 'María de Zayas y Sotomayor and her *novela cortesana*: A Re-evaluation', *Bulletin of Hispanic Studies*, 55 (1978), 301–310.

—: *Persephone's Girdle: Narratives of Rape in Seventeenth-Century Spanish Literature* (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 2000).

Welles, Marcia L. and Mary S. Gossy: 'María de Zayas y Sotomayor (1590?-1661?/1669?)', in *Spanish Women Writers: A Bio-bibliographical Source Book*, ed. by Linda Gould Levine, Ellen Engelson Marson, Gloria Feiman Waldman (London: Greenwood Press, 1993), pp. 507–519.

Welles, Marcia L. and Helen Brown Levine: 'The Alchemy of Perversion in María de Zayas's *Tarde llega el desengaño*', in *Zayas and Her Sisters, 2: Essays on Novelas by 17th-Century Spanish Women*, ed. by Gwyn E. Campbell and Judith A. Whitenack (New York: Global Publications, Binghampton University, 2001), pp. 63–78.

Whitenack, Judith A.: '"Lo que ha menester": Erotic Enchantment in *La inocencia castigada*', in *María de Zayas: The Dynamics of Discourse*, ed. by Amy R. Williamsen and Judith A. Whitenack (London: Associated University Presses, 1995), pp. 170–191.

Wiesner, Merry E.: *Women and Gender in Early Modern Europe*, 2nd edn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

—: 'Women's Defense of Their Public Role', in *Women in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance: Literary and Historical Perspectives*, ed. by Mary Beth Rose (New York: Syracuse University Press, 1986), pp. 1–27.

Wilkins, Constance: 'Subversion Through Comedy?: Two Plays by Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz and María de Zayas', in *The Perception of Women in Spanish Theatre of the Golden Age*, ed. by Anita K. Stoll and Dawn L. Smith (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 1991), pp. 107–119.

Williamsen, Amy R.: 'Death Becomes Her: Fatal Beauty in María de Zayas's *Mal presagio casar lejos*', *Romance Languages Annual*, 6 (1994), 619–623.

—: 'Engendering Interpretation: Irony as Comic Challenge in María de Zayas', *Romance Languages Annual*, 3 (1991), 642–648.

—: 'Lasting Laughter: Comic Challenges Posed by Zayas and Castellanos', in *Echoes and Inscriptions: Comparative Approaches to Early Modern Spanish Literatures*, ed. by Barbara A. Simerka and Christopher B. Weimer (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2000), pp. 46–58.

—: 'Engendering Early Modern Discourse: Subjectivity and Syntactic Empathy in *Al fin se paga todo*', in *Zayas and Her Sisters, 2: Essays on Novelas by 17th-Century Spanish Women*, ed. by Gwyn E. Campbell and Judith A. Whitenack (New York: Global Publications, Binghampton University, 2001), pp. 33–43.

—: 'Sexual Inversion: Carnival and *La mujer varonil* in *La fénix de Salamanca* and *La tercera de sí misma*', in *The Perception of Women in Spanish Theatre of the Golden Age*, ed. by Anita K. Stoll and Dawn L. Smith (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 1991), pp. 259–271.

Wilson Tryon, Ruth: 'Miracles of Our Lady in Middle English Verse', *PMLA*, 38 (1923) 2, 308–388.

Wood, Jennifer: '*Al fin se paga todo*: An Ironic Example of Zayas's Sense of Justice', *Romance Languages Annual*, 7 (1995), 669–75.

Woolf, Virginia: *A Room of One's Own and Three Guineas*, ed. by Morag Shiach (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992).

Wyszynski, Matthew A.: 'Friendship in María de Zayas's *La traición en la amistad*', *Bulletin of the Comediantes*, 50 (Summer 1998), 1, 21–33.

Yllera, Alicia: 'María de Zayas: ¿Una novela de ruptura? Su concepción de la escritura novelesca, in *La creatividad femenina en el mundo barroco hispánico: María de Zayas, Isabel Rebeca Correa, Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz*, ed. by Monika Bosse, Barbara Potthast and André Stoll, 2 vols (Kassel: Edition Reichenberger, 1999), I, 221–238.

—: 'Las dos versiones del *Castigo de la miseria* de María de Zayas', in *Actas del XIII Congreso de la Asociación Internacional de Hispanistas, Madrid. 6–11 de Julio de*

Appendix 2: Women's Interrelationships in Zayas's *Desengaños amorosos*

	Women's Alliances	Women's Perfidy/ Subversion of Sisterhood	Same-Sex Service	Mother-Daughter Relationships	Other "Mothers"
1. La esclava de su amante	Isabel/Eufrasia Zelima/Leonisa Zelima/Zaida Zelima/Lisis		Isabel/Claudia	Mother/Isabel	
2. La más infame venganza		Camila/Octavia			
3. El verdugo de su esposa		Roseleta/Angeliana			
4. Tarde llega del desengaño			Elena/*la negra*		
5. La inocencia castigada		Inés/sister-in-law	Inés/neighbour/prostitute		*La buena viuda*/Inés
6. Amar sólo por vencer				Leonor/Laurela	
7. Mal presagio casar lejos	Blanca/María Blanca/Marieta				
8. El traidor contra su sangre		Mencía/Clavela			
9. La perseguida triunfante					Mary/Beatriz
10. Estragos que causa el vicio		Magdalena/Florentina	Florentina/maid		