

PEDRO DE URDEMALAS: CONTESTING THE SPANISH HAPSBURG DISCOURSE OF BLOOD

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By the conclusion of Cervantes's *Pedro de Urdemalas*, the two main characters have seemingly found their rightful place in society. Belica, the beautiful gypsy dancer, is revealed to be Isabel, the long lost daughter of the queen's brother, while the eponymous protagonist, who led a picaresque youth, assumes the name of a famous actor, Nicolás de los Ríos, and joins a theater troupe. Blood, therefore, determines each character's social position. Belica, proven to have noble blood, is, upon familial recognition, made a princess. Meanwhile, the common-born Pedro, of unknown parentage, can only realize his dreams of being emperor on theater stages. The plot follows the endeavors of both characters to improve their respective social positions. Since at the end of the play the two protagonists are matched with their socially appropriate stations, which in turn are determined by bloodlines, the play foregrounds the issue of blood or lineage as a determining factor of identity. Through the representation of Belica's and Pedro's travails, the play establishes a dialogue with other writings of the time, royal and local histories, that explicitly were concerned with the subject of family lineage. Because it engages contemporary issues that were important, the play is not only a literary text but also a form of historical and cultural discourse. But, rather than confirming a dominant discourse of lineage, which views blood as the foundation of social as well as political legitimacy, the play responds critically to that prevailing ideology and offers an alternative discourse that advocates social relations which employ criteria of skill and knowledge over those of blood.

Although Michel Foucault derives his ideas regarding relations of power primarily from his reading of French history, his concepts also apply to power relationships that manifested themselves south of the Pyrenees. Foucault's ideas of sovereign power, which is represented by discourses of blood, and of *anatomo-politics*, characterized, in turn, by an employment of disciplinary procedures, provide a framework from which to better apprehend the play's response to forms of social control that ultimately effected identity within the Iberian Peninsula. By comparing that response to those of other writings that particularly concern the discourse of blood, I intend to elucidate the play's ideological critique of sovereign power and the cultural dialogue that the play thus establishes with those discourses.

Foucault employs the terms *sovereign power* and *anatomo-politics* to refer to what he views as two forms of power that have shaped social relations within Western Europe. He states that while sovereign power was the dominant form during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the disciplinary procedures that characterized *anatomo-politics* had already started to develop in "universities, secondary

schools, barracks, [and] workshops” (Foucault 140). It was not until the nineteenth century that *anatomo-politics*, together with another form of power, *bio-politics*, which administered the social body through regulatory controls, supplanted the sovereign form of power (139-40).

Under *sovereign power*, family lineage, or consanguinity, provided the foundation for both social structure and power relations. Society was based on a hierarchical system of castes, or classes, in which each class derived its identity, and thus relation to other classes, from ancestry and bloodlines. Identity was determined by blood. Depending on one’s bloodline, one could be a pauper or a king. Thus blood rendered meaning in that it symbolized one’s place in the social hierarchy. Value was ascribed to one’s ancestry. For instance, those who demonstrated a shared genealogy with those of the higher classes, or the sovereign, were judged as having a more valuable bloodline. Likewise, the value of one’s family lineage decreased if it came from those of lower classes. Movement from one class to another was minimized, if not prohibited, while movement within classes was usually only accomplished through marriage alliances. Sovereign power, then, was socially conservative in that it sought to maintain intact the social hierarchy upon which differentiations were based.

A sovereign is, *prima facie*, ruler because of his birth. The sovereign governs in accordance with a juridical system whose laws are designed to safeguard the life and power of the sovereign. As the person with the most valuable blood, the sovereign occupied the center of political life. He was the reason for the law and its institutions. In order to maintain the law and the social system of castes, the sovereign exercised his power through a deduction mechanism (Foucault 89). In other words, anyone who threatened the life of, or transgressed the laws of the sovereign was subject to the sovereign’s right to kill. While a sovereign could seize and appropriate a subject’s wealth, or enforce other forms of punishment, his ultimate response to any transgression of the law was his right to either take life or let live (Foucault 136). Under the sovereign ruler, “law cannot help but be armed, and its arm, *par excellence*, is death; to those who transgress it, it replies, at least as a last resort, with that absolute menace” (Foucault 144). The juridical system of the sovereign also invoked powers other than those exhibited against a subject who broke the law. He reserved the right to impose taxes in order to defend himself and his system, just as he could require his subjects to possibly shed their blood fighting his enemies.

The sovereign, or monarch, made himself acceptable to his subjects by portraying himself as a legitimate deliverer of peace and justice (Foucault 87). The institutions of the monarchy, according to Foucault, presented themselves as the agents who introduced law and order into the “dense, entangled, conflicting powers” that had developed during the Middle Ages:

Faced with a myriad of clashing forces, [the monarchical institutions] functioned as a principle of right that transcended all the heterogeneous claims, manifesting the triple distinction of forming a unitary regime, of identifying its will with the law, and of acting through mechanisms of interdiction and sanction. (87)

Foucault's description of a monarchy's self-representation is based on the discursive practices of the Bourbon monarchy of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century France. Yet, with regard to Spain, the description is more appropriate to the Catholic monarchs, Fernando and Isabel, who by the turn of the sixteenth century had already united the two kingdoms of Aragon and Castile by transcending all other claims to those thrones, and by establishing that one family would rule both kingdoms.

It is here, at the juncture of monarchical self-representation, where Foucault's model does not exactly fit the history of Spain. However, it still proves productive at the moment of analyzing a Cervantine drama, and the period during which it was written, early seventeenth-century Spain, under the rule of the Hapsburgs. While the French kings presented themselves as bearers of *pax et justitia* within the boundaries of France, the Hapsburgs employed the added distinction of being conveyors of eternal peace and heavenly justice. The Hapsburgs saw their ancestry as the reason they were entitled to be the family to finally prepare earth for the second coming of Jesus Christ by conquering Jerusalem and ridding the world of non-believers. Through genealogies, royal chronicles, and even archeological finds, the Hapsburgs, in particular Philip II of Spain and his descendents, sought to solidify their claims to an ancestry that included emperors from medieval and Roman times, patriarchs of the Bible, and semi-mythical figures from classical literature, such as Aeneas. The Hapsburgs synthesized the Christian eschatological conviction that the retaking of Jerusalem was a necessary preliminary to Christ's second coming to earth, with the Roman belief that the emperor was the appointed figure of the gods to implement divine history (Tanner 2). By claiming to descend from biblical and classical bloodlines, the Spanish Hapsburgs portrayed themselves as God's chosen family to bring about the divine plan of Christ's arrival.

Under the relationships of power that characterize an *anatomo-politics*, blood no longer holds its dominant position. Power relations are no longer defined by differentiations of caste or lineage. Norms and regulations become the prominent mechanisms around which individuals are ordered, not blood. Rather than seeking to contain subjects by the threat of death that a sovereign exercises, an *anatomo-politics* seeks to optimize the usefulness and docility of the human body by disciplinary procedures (Foucault 139). Such procedures include observation, judgment and examination. The deduction mechanism, by which the sovereign exercised his power, is not the principal way an *anatomo-politics* functions. An *anatomo-politics* employs procedures that measure, distribute, or order, the human body according to norms. For instance, one's ability to enter in, and advance within, educational institutions depends on the assessment of an examination, not on whether one has a certain ancestry.

Both of the respective discourses of the *anatomo-politics* and sovereign power are employed in the play. However, as the latter system is the target of the play's criticism, it occupies more space in my analysis of *Pedro de Urdemalas*. Thus, it is my contention that it is the Hapsburgs' particular strain of the discourse of blood, with its reliance on eschatological arguments, that Cervantes's play engages, by

placing in doubt their legitimacy and effectiveness. The play, moreover, ends by countering the Hapsburgs' discourse of blood with one that employs knowledge as the criteria of judgment rather than ancestry.

Previous criticism on *Pedro de Urdemalas* has not focused on relationships of power. In his study of Cervantes's theater, Joaquín Casaldueño views *Pedro de Urdemalas* as entertaining, and as one that is filled with jokes designed to provoke laughter. The hilarity of such scenes in the play, according to Casaldueño, stems from the playwright's conformity to the teachings of the Catholic Church, and from the concomitant deviation from those same teachings exhibited by the targets of the jokes (173). In the denouement, a superior state of humanity conquers nature. Belica reaches such a state when she regains her status of nobility, and leaves behind the Gypsies to whom she had been relegated since birth. Likewise, Pedro, as actor, will use his art to perfect nature. Thus, for Casaldueño, the play is based on the Christian and baroque concept that man must overcome nature and invent a new world (183). Alban Forcione, in "The Triumph of Proteus: *Pedro de Urdemalas*," also maintains that Pedro's actions represent a triumph of the artist. Like Casaldueño, he approaches the work from a viewpoint that takes into account contemporary Catholic thinking. Forcione sees the protagonist as someone whose imagination creates aesthetic pleasures through the deception of others, and effectively overcomes the banality and practicality of the everyday world. Pedro, while not a practitioner or advocate of a Christian asceticism, is part of "God's universal comedy" that celebrates the variety found on earth (331). Pedro's perspective on the world maintains a distance that is akin to God's (335). Social differences of this world, when seen from such a vantage point, vanish; and, for Forcione, are rendered insignificant by the end of the play. Pedro's aiding Belica to realize her dream of becoming a princess, and his helping a king to dance and forget his worldly worries, are manifestations of his aesthetic triumph in which the world mirrors the stage. Worldly differences hold no greater truth than what is represented on a stage. Similarly, Darío Fernández-Morera, in "Algunos aspectos del universo cervantino en la comedia *Pedro de Urdemalas*," writes that Pedro is a figure with almost omnipotent ability to create illusions and transformations. For Fernández-Morera, the Cervantine element of the play is the mixing of elements that provoke laughter and tears. While Pedro's artistry triumphs, left unresolved is the potential conflict of king and queen that Belica's transformation has intensified.

In, "Dos perfiles paralelos de Pedro de Urdemalas," which outlines the literary history of the figure of Pedro de Urdemalas, Fernando García Salinero writes that most writers of Spain employed the character as a crafty rogue who uses his wiles and wits to deceive unsuspecting targets. Cervantes and the anonymous author of the book, *Viaje a Turquía*, however, present Pedro in a more positive light. In the case of Cervantes's creation, García Salinero maintains that Pedro sets out to correct vices, and performs no deed that could be considered unlawful. Ángel Estévez Molinero, in "La (re)escritura cervantina de Pedro de Urdemalas," concurs with García Salinero's opinion that the protagonist of Cervantes's play

represents a deviation from the folkloric and literary portrayals of the figure of Pedro de Urdemalas as found in Spanish culture of the time. Estévez Molinero concludes that Cervantes's Pedro is not only a rogue, but also one who can change his own destiny and affect that of others. Cervantes presents theater as a world in which his principal character has the freedom to transform his being. Edward Nagy, in "La picaresca y la profecía dentro de la visión estética y social cervantina en la comedia *Pedro de Urdemalas*," writes that Cervantes's play undoes the characteristic familial determinism of the picaresque and presents a character who, unlike the misanthropic figures of other picaresque works, seeks fame in all levels of society and who is ready to work to gain such notoriety as an actor. Cervantes's Pedro, in the world of theater, overcomes class differences and establishes himself as equal to Isabel.

Edward H. Friedman analyzes the structure of *Pedro de Urdemalas* and notes how it deviates from that of the typical Lopean model. Instead of having a single principal action that connects the main plot and episodes, as in the Lopean-type *comedias*, Cervantes's *Pedro de Urdemalas* is based on two distinct lives, that of the protagonist and that of Belica. The development and progression of each does not depend upon the other. What connects the two are not formal characteristics of drama that, for instance, blend component parts into one unified action, but rather a concept or theme. In this case the theme is the formation of identity. Once each character has discovered their identity the play concludes. Both Pedro's and Belica's story constitute an analogue of the theme of the play.

In *El teatro de Cervantes*, Stanislav Zimic disagrees with those critics that see Cervantes's play as comical. Instead, Zimic classifies it as a biting satire that targeted hypocrisy. The adventures of Pedro reveal a society thoroughly corrupted, from the lowest to the highest (royal) levels, in local government and in the king's palace. The play portrays a society that values any appearance over substance as long as that appearance is considered "respectable", such as having a certain bloodline (283). It is only in the space of theater, according to Zimic, that Pedro can realize his genius in an attempt to benefit society, as well as gain personal fame, through the instruction and entertainment that the actor's art provides. Ellen M. Anderson explores how Cervantes transforms traditional fixed categories of gender, genre and genius into flexible areas of experience in two of his works, *El coloquio de los perros*, and *Pedro de Urdemalas*. Anderson views Pedro as adopting a feminine position as it is most often women in Cervantes's works who disguise themselves in order to attain their goals, and who tell their life story. In contrast to the ideal figure of Golden Age drama and narrative, the male hidalgo, women, (as well as Moslems, peasants, and gypsies) may employ disguise without forsaking their identity because of the marginal position they occupy in society. Thus, from a marginal feminine position, Pedro will employ his genius in a type of theater that combines elements of both narrative and theatrical genres, and that serves society as a medium of instruction and entertainment, rather than chicanery or sorcery.

Jesús G. Maestro, in his study *La escena imaginaria*, maintains that critics of Cervantes's *comedias* must take into account not only Cervantes's dispute with the Lopean model, but also his contradictory

attitude toward classical precepts of theater and his own attempt to renovate the theater of his time. Thus, in the case of *Pedro de Urdemalas*, the protagonist neither adheres to classical precepts of decorum nor is his personality determined by an exterior moral order. But, neither does Pedro fully overcome the limits set by the Lopean *comedia* nor those prescribed by the classical canon. Although he will be able to play various roles, he still remains an actor, and he continues to show characteristics of someone born in a lower social class. Pedro, according to Maestro, proves to be cowardly and fickle as he abandons others in the midst of projects he himself planned and initiated.

My approach to Cervantes's *Pedro de Urdemalas* starts from Friedman's view that the structure of the play, which only seemingly lacks form, is actually unified through the theme of identity; and from other critics' demonstration that Pedro differs substantially from other literary and folkloric creations. Within the framework of the Foucauldian paradigms of power, the Cervantine Pedro de Urdemalas and Belica become indices of a cultural response to social constraints of the time. While Belica conforms to, and ultimately advances under, sovereign power, Pedro represents a break with the Hapsburg discourse of blood.

The Hapsburg version of a discourse of blood would seem to be of little relevance to a reading of Cervantes's *Pedro de Urdemalas*, if, as at least one critic claims, the play takes place during the medieval epoch, before the installation of the Hapsburgs in Spain. Armando Cotarelo y Valledor states that because Rosamiro, the king's brother-in-law, never appears onstage and combats the Moorish enemy at "las fronteras" (2501), the play takes place during the Reconquest of the Middle Ages. For Cotarelo y Vallador, *las fronteras* refers to territory within the Iberian Peninsula (394). However, other points in the play suggest another possibility in regard to a chronological frame, and indicate a different geographical setting as well. Not only has Pedro patrolled the Spanish coastline to defend it against Moslem pirates (688), he has also been to America, or as he refers to the continent, "las Indias" (621). Since the colonization of the Indies occurred after the defeat of the last Moorish kingdom in the Peninsula, the frontier to which Marcelo refers when he relates that Rosamiro is off fighting the Moors is more likely one of the Spanish garrisons in North Africa. While Spain had already established outposts in North Africa before the arrival of the Hapsburgs as rulers in Spain, the bulk of the military campaigns took place during their reign. The possibility, if not probability, then, exists that the play employs a chronological reference more in step with Spanish overseas military adventures in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries than with the Castilian medieval re-conquest of the Peninsula. The likelihood that the play's timeframe was possibly made to coincide with a Hapsburg reign permits a critical approach that views the play as cultural discourse on contemporary issues, that in effect concerned the discourse of blood. Indeed, the play establishes the presence of the Hapsburg discourse of blood through the plot's denouement, and the references its characters make in narrating and commenting on their past and present circumstances.

The denouement apparently confirms the sovereign power and its discourse in regard to social differentiation based on ancestry. Pedro, of unknown, and thus lowly origin, accepts work in a profession appropriate for any non-aristocrat. Belica, once a gypsy dancer, is recognized as the legitimate niece of the queen. In his closing speech to Belica, Pedro recognizes that the law of blood, which legitimizes the social hierarchy, is maintained.

Yo, farsante, seré rey
cuando le haya en la comedia,
y tú, oyente, ya eres media
reina por valor y ley. (3040-43)

Each character, then, finds by play's end an identity that they search for throughout the play, and each identity is socially acceptable as it does not transgress, but rather conforms to the law. Able to prove her parentage, Belica, who is named Isabel at the end of the play, is legally considered a member of nobility. Pedro, who cannot, nor does not seem to wish to know who his parents are, remains within the lower social class of commoners.

Sovereign power and discourse of blood not only demonstrate a presence through the destiny of the two main characters, but also through the recognition that the king has a principal role in matters of justice. As seen from the perspective of at least one character in the play, the king's image resembles that of a Foucauldian sovereign who portrays himself as a ruler who establishes "justice as a way of suspending the private settling of lawsuits" (87). Thus, when Pedro robs two chickens, the owner of the birds seeks retribution from the royally appointed representative of the king, a *corregidor*: "Aún bien que hay aquí teniente, / corregidor y justicia" (2780-81).

Justice is not the only function of the king in this play. There are references to the king's martial role in society, which also aligns him with the Hapsburg version of the discourse of blood: the image of defender and crusader of the Catholic Church. The king has sustained a long and continuous war with Moslems, there are many captives taken as a result of the war against them, and the coastal areas of the kingdom, which suffer raids from Moslem corsairs, who form groups of armed guards to defend the coast.

Cervantes's *comedia* also connects the king to the Hapsburg belief in an ancestral right to prepare the world for the second coming of the Christian Lord through its reference to a militant order of knights, the Order of the Golden Fleece. When Belica first appears onstage with Inés, who is a gypsy by birth, near the beginning of the play, she immediately makes known that she desires to follow the greater destiny of a countess, than that of a gypsy dancer. Inés, stunned by her friend's presumption, only sees

negative consequences coming from such “fantasías,” and responds to Belica’s refusal to accept their way of life with a rhetorical question that reveals her incredulity.

¿Pues qué? ¿El donaire y la gala,
el rumbo, el cer de tuzón,
derribando por el zuelo
el gitanesco blazón,
levantado hasta el cielo
por nuestra honezta intención? (vv. 1092-97)

For Inés, then, one’s rank of nobility is demonstrated not only by one’s comportment, but also by one’s association with the Order of the Golden Fleece, “el cer de tuzón.” Inés’s reference to the chivalric order is consistent with the play’s construction of the king as a Hapsburg, and with its theme concerning the role of blood in the formation of identity.

The originator and first sovereign of the order, Philip the Good, Duke of Burgundy, had founded it upon the belief that he, his ancestors and descendents were divinely elected to regain Jerusalem and the Holy Land from the Turks for Christendom (Tanner 151-52). The meanings of the fleece, as Marie Tanner explains in her recent study on Hapsburg iconography, are key to understanding the Hapsburg image of a universe in which the emperor, or the king of Spain in the case of Philip II and his descendents, had a preeminent function: “to unify the eastern and western hemispheres” in an effort to “yield the terrestrial rule of Rome back to Christ” (2).

The myth of Jason and the Argonauts’ capture of the Golden Fleece played an important role in the Hapsburg worldview. According to the legend, on their return home the Argonauts destroyed the city of Troy because its leaders had refused to pay homage to the gods. In his fourth *Eclogue*, Virgil interprets the Argonaut myth as the beginning of the fulfillment of a divine plan that, from the destruction of Troy and Aeneas’s founding of Rome, to the establishment of the Roman Empire under Augustus Cesar, would bring worldwide peace (Tanner 18-19).

Maintaining an eschatological frame but realigning the myth to fit their own interpretation, early Christians read the same story of the Golden Fleece as a prefiguration of the second coming of Jesus Christ to earth. According to classical myth, the constellation of Aries commemorated the apotheosis of Phrixus, who, saved by a ram, sacrificed it and shore its golden fleece. By the time of Charlemagne, both the golden fleece and the constellation of Aries came to be identified with the apocalyptic lamb of the vision of Saint John (Tanner 149). In 1429, when he founded the Order of the Golden Fleece, Philip the Good claimed sole right to lead a crusade to retake Jerusalem and prepare the way for Christ’s arrival and

humanity's salvation. Philip based his claim to such a role on the belief that he was a direct descendent of Aeneas.

In sixteenth-century Spain, Philip II, great-great grandson of Philip the Good, continued the tradition of establishing the legitimacy of his family's claims to rule an earthly empire on behalf of the Catholic Faith in order to prepare it for the Messiah. Hapsburg court chronicles proclaimed that the family's piety was due to their holy ancestry. By asserting that Philip II descended from Biblical kings, such as David, court chroniclers and genealogists attempted to demonstrate that their king held legitimate claim to both secular and sacred power and that, as the embodiment of the union of such powers, Philip II was an essential element to the arrival of the Messiah (Tanner 217). Nearly a century before Philip II's reign, emperor Maximilian I, Philip's great grandfather, justified his assertion that he was saved by an angel bearing the Eucharist, by claiming a blood relation to Christ. Chronicles whose publication Maximilian had commissioned purported that a branch of the Hapsburg family tree stemmed from an ancestor shared by Jesus (Tanner 103). By patronizing productions of *Autos Sacramentales* for the religious celebration of the Feast of *Corpus Cristi*, Philip II sought to publicly reinforce the idea that Hapsburg piety derived from a preeminent ancestry (Tanner 215).

Moreover, Hapsburg devotion was not limited to the Eucharist. Philip II also worshipped the cross in an attempt to show his family's divine status. He upheld his family's claims to divine origin with new "evidence" meant to identify piety as an ancestral virtue of the Hapsburgs (Tanner 183). The discovery of the remains of martyrs from the time of Justinian provoked genealogies that established a dynastic bloodline between Philip and Constantine (Tanner 191-97). The latter's vision of the cross was said to be the reason of his subsequent victory in battle that led to the reunification of the Roman empire under Christian domination (Tanner 31). In demonstration of familial piety, Philip made the cross the Spanish Hapsburg's scepter, and "In Hoc Signo Vincas" the family's motto, which had been Constantine's (Tanner 202). Thus, associated with Constantine and the Christian cross, Philip II portrayed himself as the ruler to reunite the Holy Lands and Rome.

The eschatological belief that a Spanish Hapsburg would capture Jerusalem and thus initiate the second coming did not end with the death of Philip II in 1598. In his *Praerogativa Hispanie* (1602), Jacobus Valdesius sustained Philip III's right to rule a Christian empire by claiming he, like his ancestors, was divinely anointed for such a deed (Tanner 304n40). Indeed, because descent of the male line was considered to run from Adam through Priam to Clovis and to Philip, only Spanish Hapsburg kings could lay a legitimate claim to the Golden Fleece and its sovereign's prerogative to unite all the ancestral lands of Christendom (Tanner 158).

The discourse of lineage played a legitimizing role in the realms of the Hapsburgs and flourished during the reigns of Philip II and III in Spain. Instead of portraying the king and his family as chosen to rule and carry out a divine plan, however, Cervantes's play, as Stanislav Zimic points out, presents a king

who does not correspond to the ideal of protector of the realm. Rather than stationing himself at the battlefield with the troops and Rosamiro, the king spends his time on holiday, feasting and hunting. During the entire play, the king remains within the confines of the monastery, the adjoining village and his court, never once mentioning the fact that his kingdom is at war. In contrast to Rosamiro, there seems to be no personal commitment on the part of the king to fight the enemy, the Moors. According to Zimic, the king forsakes certain public duties because he fails to conquer his own passions (275).

While I agree with Zimic that the king neglects certain responsibilities, the behavior of the king forms only one element of the play's profound critique of the Hapsburg discourse of blood. First, while the duties that the king neglects do concern military matters, they also affect domestic issues of state. Secondly, the play censures the reliance on bloodline as the preeminent, if not sole, factor in the choice of ruler, as well as the supposed divine plan of the Hapsburg that called on them to unite Christendom. By highlighting that the attempt to carry out such a plan engenders negative consequences, and by insinuating that the behavior of the members of the royal family will lead to a dismal future, the play undermines the argument that a royal clan is entitled to rule because its ancestry is of divine origin.

Although his presence at the frontier in battle against Moslems contrasts with the king's absence from the military site, Rosamiro's participation in the war also is the first indication that the king's defense of his realm, and thus of the faith, is inept. Indeed, the king, while not personally on the front lines, has engaged the country fully in a war with Moslems that has disastrous consequences. Rosamiro already has spent well over a decade, if not nearly two, at the front. He arrived there just after the birth of Belica, his daughter, and has remained there up to the timeframe of the play when Belica is a young woman. As his friend Marcelo tells the queen, upon hearing the news of the recent birth of the child and the resultant death of the child's mother, Félix Alba, Rosamiro departed two hours later "a las fronteras" (2501). Rosamiro, who in his battle with the Moors has had some success, "apoca / con su lanza la morisma" (2501-02), nevertheless has been at the front since Belica's birth. There is no indication, after such a long period of time, of any strategic victory, imminent or otherwise.

There are other signs in the play that the military efforts are not effective. Pedro, in one of the jobs he held before the play's timeframe, had the duty of patrolling the Spanish coast in watch of Moslem invaders (688). The protagonist's fear of being taken captive by Moslem invaders, while he is patrolling the coast as a military guard, implies that the threat of attack still remains on peninsular territory. Additionally, the kingdom is suffering through its victims of war. Pedro confirms the existence of prisoners in Algiers when he bases his success of his chicken ruse on his appeal to the peasant's sympathy for captives in North Africa. Dressed in the garb of a student, Pedro asks the peasant to give to the cause of liberating Spanish prisoners from their Moslem captors (2719). The peasant, from whom Pedro steals two chickens, refuses to donate his livestock. Although the captives are fictional within the scheme of the play, since they are part of Pedro's deception, the fact that the peasant recognizes the

existence of Christian prisoners demonstrates that captivity in North Africa was, if not a common, at least a well-known phenomenon. The play, then, presents circumstances of warfare that contradict the Hapsburg divine ideal of defending the faith. The royal strategy fails to protect the faithful at home, as well as those abroad.

These three phenomena, a long and continuous war, a poorly formed coastal defense, and Spaniards being taken captive to North Africa, were also historical circumstances at the turn of the seventeenth century. Their presence represents the play's critical engagement with the Hapsburg version of the discourse of blood that portrayed the family as the military guardian for Christianity. Beginning in the late fifteenth century, the Spanish Crown maintained a string of presidios, or military garrisons, along the northern coast of Africa. By the time of the publication of Cervantes's play in 1615, many of the North African presidios had witnessed war with the Moslem populations that surrounded them for a century or more. While intended to prevent corsair attacks against Spanish towns on the Peninsula and against Spanish shipping, the presidios, according to Ellen G. Friedman, had the opposite effect. She notes "the presidios [in North Africa] actually exacerbated the problem for which they meant to provide a solution, that of a large number of Spaniards being taken captive by North African Moslems" (48). Yet, while the presidios were indeed a source of captives to be ransomed for Moslems, the greatest number of seizures occurred on the Spanish mainland (31). Moslem corsairs had taken captives, particularly military personnel, before the seventeenth century. However, after 1609, the year that the Spanish monarchy embarked on its campaign to expulse the Morisco population from Spain, the number of Spaniards kidnapped, especially civilians from coastal towns, increased (13). For Friedman, the direct cause of the rise was the expulsion of the Moriscos, which "presented a far greater danger than had the presence of the Moriscos in Spain" (28).

Rather than investing in its own coastal defenses, the Spanish monarchy invested more resources in its North African presidios. However, the cost to maintain a presidio in North Africa was nearly six times as great as the expense of a coastal garrison on the Peninsula (Ellen Friedman 44). Because of its far-flung empire and its limited resources, the Spanish monarchy had overextended its reach, and could not cover the high costs of the overseas presidios (50). In the first decade of the seventeenth century, living conditions of the soldiers in the presidios worsened to the point that numbers of them fled to live with the Moslems (44-46). The Spanish crown not only did not have enough material wealth to adequately manage its security concerns, it spent what resources it did have on policies, such as the expulsion of the Moriscos and the maintenance of North African presidios, that ultimately worsened and endangered the daily lives of much of the Spanish population.

The play's references to Rosamiro's time spent at the front and to the captives in Algiers indirectly echo the Spanish crown's inability to adequately invest in troops and supplies. However, those same references, as well as Pedro's to his work as a coastal guard, also point to the attempt to dedicate,

insufficient though it might have been, a certain amount of men and great expense in the defense of Spain. The king of this play, then, finances and executes a policy that is consistent with the Hapsburg ancestral goal of commencing the second Eden, and belies the notion that he is completely derelict in his inherited duty to defend the Faith. The target of the play's critique is not only, then, military tactics that prove ineffectual and yield misery. The drama also takes a critical view of the grand strategy of continual warfare against the infidel that funneled limited resources towards an illusory goal of worldwide religious purity, and that discouraged productive means of creation of wealth.

With regard to the creation of wealth, the characters who have produced it with their own labor, as opposed to deceit or seizure, are peasants: the peasant with two chickens, Martín Crespo, and the widow's deceased husband. Yet, the wealth of all three is squandered. Pedro, in his effort to deceive the peasant out of his chickens, robs him of what amounts to his livelihood. Crespo is eager to rule as village mayor, the widow to save her and her relatives' souls. Crespo bribes the necessary officials to be appointed mayor. The miserly widow easily falls victim to Pedro's scheme. She gives him a considerable amount of her fortune, as she believes her money will, as Pedro, disguised as a blind reciter of prayers, has told her, buy her extended family eternal salvation.

Unlike the peasant who attempts to generate more wealth through market exchange, Crespo and the widow do not employ their wealth in a productive enterprise nor in true acts of charity. Instead they waste it in a system that consumes wealth and engenders illusions. They transfer their wealth into the hands of others, and do not create greater economic wealth and opportunity. Crespo's selection as mayor, in the end, suggests a group of electors or an appointing governing body bent on self-aggrandizement through non-productive and corrupt means. Before becoming mayor, Crespo already had the reputation of being "la persona más necia" (252), and his actions as mayor do not disprove the negative superlative. He only confirms he is unqualified. His manner of deciding local court cases by pulling statements out of a hat exemplifies the completely arbitrary and thoughtless judgments of Crespo's term as mayor. Likewise, the widow's attempt to buy entrance to heaven falls short. Her belief in the exchange of money for salvation contradicts the image of an upright Christian. The fictive quality of Crespo's and the widow's circumstances connects them to those of the king and of the country in general. As the royal design of dedicating the country's resources to combating the Moslem enemy leaves the country in a weakened position in terms of generating wealth and providing security, so Crespo's and the widow's investment of their fortune is shown to be "infrutuosa."

Although there are economically productive peasants in the play, the discourse of blood employed in the play labels as unproductive those of the lower classes. When the widow's squire remarks that the youth of his day are lazy and useless, he limits his criticism to young people who would be servants, that is, those of the lower classes:

Es vagamunda esta era;
no hay moza que servir quiera,
ni mozo que por su yerro
no se ande a la flor del berro,
él sandio, y ella altanera. (1149-52)

The squire's admonition to youth that they be servants actually discourages the creation of wealth because such jobs are unproductive. They are part of a chain of consumption, rather than of production. Their labor does not engender greater wealth. Thus, the squire's speech forms part of the discourse of blood that is more concerned with maintaining the social hierarchy of blood, rather than with the economic conditions of those less privileged.

Moreover, the squire marginalizes the youth not only in economic, but also in moral, religious and political terms. He classifies them as untrustworthy, ungodly and disloyal to the king:

Y esta gente infrutuosa,
siempre atenta a mil malicias,
doblada, astuta y mañosa,
ni a la Iglesia da primicias,
ni al rey no le sube en cosa. (1153-58)

Not only, then, are lower class youth unproductive, they are reluctant to obey the dictates of the Church and the Spanish monarchy, the two pillars of the Hapsburg design to retake Jerusalem. By distinguishing himself and the widow from the Gypsies, the squire implicitly tries to associate himself and his master with the king and the Church. The squire incriminates himself and his mistress, the widow, however, on two counts. First, the hypocrisy of a character that calls others presumptuous and useless when he is a servant and his mistress is a miser would most likely have not been lost on contemporary spectators. Secondly, the blind faith that the squire has in the king, whose grand design has produced endless military struggle and economic decline, underscores his shortsightedness or partiality in judging others and their works solely by the attribute of blood.

The youth of the lower classes are not the only target of the discourse of blood. This discourse is used to disparage commoners who do not fully perform their part in the Hapsburg design by refusing to participate in to the effort to rescue the faithful. The peasant with the two chickens, as well as all such villagers (*villanos*) is labeled unholy for what is interpreted as a typical refusal to donate them to the aristocratic (*cortesano*) effort to free Christian captives:

¡Oh miseria desta vida,
a términos reducida,
que vienen los cortesanos
a rogar a los villanos,
gente non santa y perdida! (2757-61)

The tie between his complete reluctance to obey the demands to provide alms and his status as a commoner is made clear:

¡Ya la ruindad y malicia,
la miseria y la codicia
reina solo entre esta gente! (2777-79)

The complaint that the peasant is miserly might seem legitimate in that he will not comply with the request to help rescue fellow Spaniards from foreign captivity. However, besides the fact that the complaint is part of Pedro's ruse to steal the chickens, the play presents the peasant's point of view in such a way that his refusal to participate in the aristocratic plan is not unreasonable or unchristian. The peasant is poor, as his fortune consists of the chickens. He lets Pedro know that they are his only source of income and represent all his fortune, poor that it may be:

¿son, por ventura, mostrencas
mis gallinas, ¡pesiatal!
para no hacerme de pencas
de dar mi pobre caudal?
Rescaten a esos cristianos
los ricos, los cortesanos,
los frailes, los limosneros. (2732-39)

Although small in quantity, the peasant's wealth is the product of his own labor, "que yo no tengo dineros / si no lo ganan mis manos" (2740-41). Yet, unlike those seeking the alms, the generation of his wealth does not depend on a tragic fate of others. The distinction that the peasant draws between him and those who reap from other's suffering, may be a reference to those religious orders that, according to Ellen G. Friedman, economically benefited from commercial trade with Moslem cities of North Africa. In order to gather the necessary funds for ransom, religious orders not only sought alms in Spain, but also bought goods in Spain and sold them for a profit to Moslems in North Africa (121-23).

Friedman writes that one cannot discount the possibility that the religious orders did not directly profit from their efforts to free the captives (125). Thus, one can infer that the peasant takes such a view. Although he refers to the captives as Christians, the peasant sees their plight not strictly as a religious issue, but also as an affair of the privileged and wealthy. Already in an impoverished state, the peasant wants no part of a struggle or its consequences, but rather the chance to continue to make his living without being taxed from all sides. In contrast to the discourse of blood that advocated the continuance of the battle against the infidel, the peasant presents another discourse that is more in line with fair and productive exchange than religious purity.

The peasant's discourse also runs counter to that produced in the histories of Spanish cities that relied on the discourse of blood. These city histories followed certain conventions and reached a publishing zenith in the first half of the seventeenth century (Kagan, *Clio* 92). Two conventional elements that, according to Richard L. Kagan, were nearly always included in the urban histories were family genealogies of local aristocrats, and a declaration of the city's unwavering support of the king's policy of waging war against Moslems and heretics (*Clio* 89-90). In the histories, aristocratic blood is associated with loyalty to the king, while "members of the popular classes . . . by definition, do not form part of the community" (*Clio* 90). As Kagan points out in a more recent article on the history of Spanish cities and their pictorial representation, the wish of municipal leaders, who were often members of the local oligarchy, to form an image of loyalty to the royal, and therefore Christian, cause, can in part "be connected to the desire of the Hapsburg monarchy to portray itself as the champion of Roman Catholicism" (*Urbs* 95). Kagan concludes that municipal leaders not only wanted their particular city portrayed as having a long Christian heritage, but they also wanted no mention of Moslem influence (*Urbs* 95), and they sanctioned the invention of false histories in the effort to appear no less loyal or Christian than other cities:

This desire to construct and, if necessary, to fabricate a fully Christian history also led scholars to elaborate their city's contributions to the success of the Reconquest, the monarchy's efforts to defeat Protestantism, and the church's struggle to impose Christianity on inhabitants of the New World. (*Urbs* 96)

While the city aristocrats wanted their confines to appear encoded as a *ciudad de Dios*, and as a faithful subscriber to the Hapsburg image of defender of Christendom and earnest participant in that royal family's battles, the peasant in Cervantes's play does not appropriately perform in the grand design. Yet, the play does not present him as a frivolous character that wishes to shirk responsibility. It must be remembered that the peasant produces wealth, albeit small in quantity. In contrast to the wealth of those of aristocratic class and of certain religious orders, the peasant's poverty suggests that he has suffered negatively from a policy that endangers the country.

The peasant's refusal to participate in the royal plan and the portrayal of Spanish cities as strongholds of Christian fervor form a site of countervailing discourses. The play's representation of the royal family's unscrupulous behavior likewise stands in contrast to the Hapsburg's belief in an ancestral right to piety, which they considered allowed them to perform what they saw as God's ordained plan. All three members of the family prove to have less virtue than the ideal. The king, unable to control his passions, is obsessed with Belica, and more so when he learns she is his niece:

El parentesco no afloja
mi deseo; antes, por él
con ahinco más cruel
toda el alma se congoja. (2964-67)

The king's lust causes the queen to imply that he is less than a king. When he tells her, with what could only be cynicism, that being jealous of a gypsy is a "terrible cosa," she replies that she would agree with his assessment of her reaction "a ser vuestra condición / de rey; pero no es así" (2051-52).

But neither the queen nor the newfound princess are paragons of virtue. However understandable the queen's anger towards her husband, her command to arrest Inés and Belica reinforces the idea of arbitrary rule. Pedro's remark to Maldonado attests to the fear the queen's actions instill

que es razón que aquí se tema:
que las iras de los reyes
pasan términos y leyes,
como es su fuerza suprema. (2119-22)

With regard to Belica, there is no indication that her selfishness will cease when she joins the royal family. Her singular ambition to become royalty at the expense of the gypsies who reared and cared for her, suggests that she may be willing to be closer to the king and satisfy his demands. If the king and queen are childless (there is no mention of children), Belica's presence and the king's desire are not only a threat to the queen, but also to any future legitimate offspring. An affair could mean the separation of the king and queen, and possibly mark the end of the king's bloodline. Rather than present a pious family, the play emphasizes royalty inherently prone to destructive behavior.

The argument that one family, from generation to generation through the male line, such as that of the Hapsburgs, is divinely chosen for an eschatological purpose of defeating, if not eliminating, believers of what they consider unholy and unorthodox religions unravels in Cervantes's *Pedro de*

Urdemalas. Squandering assets and effort on a long military struggle that has brought hardship for many, while simultaneously preoccupied with an illicit affair with a relative that only has potential to usher in more conflict, the king and the bloodline he represents are unfit to rule. Just as the king is without issue, so too does he waste his and his kingdom's resources on endeavors that produce no fruit. Sovereign power, whereby power relations are established according to criteria of birth and ancestry, heads towards bankruptcy in *Pedro de Urdemalas*.

Yet, as the queen's detention of Inés and Belica demonstrates, the right of seizure, or detraction, by which the sovereign power operates, still functions. The queen clearly has the power to use the machinery of state in order to enforce her will and have the two female dancers detained. Pedro recognizes that he cannot match the power of a monarchy that can virtually execute its will. When Maldonado is disappointed by Pedro's fleeing before the queen, as the gypsy believed his friend had "ánimo para esperar / un ejército" (2108-09), Pedro tells Maldonado he has other ways with which to confront such power, "otras son las fuerzas mías" (2110). He will abandon his plan to live as a gypsy and take on and dress as another persona, a cleric (2094-95).

At this point in the play, the end of the second act, Pedro apparently reverts to the life of a *pícaro* that he had followed before the timeframe of the play. He remains free, but he has not contested the mechanisms of detraction by which the monarchy maintains its power. Indeed, later in the play, when he is dressed in the costume of a cleric, equivalent to that of a student, Pedro deceives the peasant of his two chickens. Immediately after the scene with the peasant, Pedro decides to become an actor. Although the protagonist may turn his back on the life of outright trickery, the realization of his dreams of becoming an emperor or Pope will be limited to impersonating them onstage. Thus, the transformation of Pedro into an actor does not, by itself, challenge sovereign power.

However, Pedro requests instituting an examination for those in charge of theater productions, *autores*, which in effect is a form of power more appropriate to an *anatomo-politics* than to sovereign power:

Preceda examen primero,
o muestra de compañía,
y no por su fantasía
se haga autor un pandero.
Con esto pondrán la mira
a esmerarse en su ejercicio:
que tanto es bueno el oficio
cuanto es el fin a que aspira. (3080-87)

Unlike the deduction mechanism of sovereign power that relies on seizure, or even death, an examination is a technique of an *anatomo-politics* that encourages certain behavior. Examination controls behavior through the establishment of a norm against which one is measured, or ranked, not through laws that only prohibit. In this instance, the desirable behavior pertains to the dedication of producing acceptable theatrical creations. Pedro's request contests the monarchical model of power that relies on a discourse of blood since an examination offers a framework within which judgments are made, not according to one's ancestry, but according to norms that test knowledge. Thus, someone like Pedro, who is a commoner, but "discreto, / de ingenio claro y sutil" (718-19), would be able to flourish and realize a personal potential prohibited under a regime that is represented by a discourse of blood.

The fact the king grants Pedro's proposal signals his own view that a tribunal that would regulate dramatic production is, in the very least, well advised, if not necessary. However, the king's acknowledgment also forces a question regarding the selection of a king or any who would govern. When a theater producer's abilities and knowledge must be assessed, why should an issue as important as choosing a leader be determined by bloodlines? This is particularly significant when the monarchical model of power endangers the health of the population because it provides little security or incentive for productive enterprise. The actions of the monarch and family expose the myth of a royal bloodline superior and divine. If the theater that Pedro performs will be anything like that of Cervantes's *comedia*, with its talent to reveal the fraudulent state of a realm that relies on the discourse of blood as its *raison d'être*, Pedro will not only benefit himself but his audience, as well.

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