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Dorotea, Ruy Pérez, and Zoraida: Modeling the Art of Paradoxy in a Binary World

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> [A]n openness to paradox engenders a sense of communion between self and other in a common quest for truth. But that quest pursues a necessarily elusive and unfolding truth – about an evolving yet "real" self, other, society, or world.
> --Charles Presberg

Throughout Cervantes's *Don Quijote*, dress and language play an important role in establishing a character's identity for both other characters and the reader. Beginning with the very first page of the novel, the narrator's description of Alonso Quijano's wardrobe, along with other amusing quotidian behaviors, establishes the protagonist's status as an impoverished, Old Christian, rural *hidalgo*. Furthermore, Quijano's performance as Don Quijote hinges on his sartorial trappings, and his first transformative act is to clean up the ancestral armor and, quite literally, "suit up" for his new role. Once astride Rocinante, the reader is treated to Quijote's fanciful musings in archaic Spanish on the description of his first sally, which some wise chronicler most surely will record. Of course, the studied care with which he changes from his "true" identity to an anachronistic other is a cause for laughter on the part of everyone from the narrator, to the characters who encounter the knight-errant, to the reader. However, as even a brief review of early modern Spanish sumptuary laws or the edicts prohibiting the Moriscos's use of Arabic and Moorish cultural expressions suggest, embodied signs such as speech and dress were considered legitimate albeit problematic markers of one's essential identity within the context of Inquisitorial Spain.[1]

Therefore, when Ruy Pérez de Viedma, the Old Christian Captain who is returning from captivity in Algiers, arrives at Juan Palomeque's famous inn along with Zoraida, his Algerian Christian redemptrix, we can imagine the curious stares that the exotic couple's appearances elicit from those already present. Dorotea, "que siempre fue agraciada, comedida y discreta," nevertheless immediately steps forward to welcome the newcomers (389). Although she, too, is clearly struck by the couple's Algerian attire, she invites the veiled stranger to share a room with her and the other women. Following Dorotea's invitation, the narrator or Second Author interjects with a description of Zoraida's response to Dorotea that highlights the Algerian woman's difference in dress, language, manners,

[1] The 24.1 (Spring 2004) volume of *Cervantes* is a special issue on "Clothing and Identity in Cervantes." Gridley Mckim-Smith and Marcia L. Welles's "Material Girls – and Boys: Dressing Up in Cervantes" and Darcy Donahue's "Dressing Up and Dressing Down: Clothing and Class Identity in the *Novelas ejemplares*" review general sumptuary laws and Morisco prohibitions. See also Saúl Martínez Bermejo's "Beyond Luxury: Sumptuary Legislation in 17th-Century Castile," which explores sixteenth-century laws as well. For classic discussions of the edicts against Moorish dress and customs, see Mercedes García-Arenal's *Los moriscos,* Antonio Domínguez Ortiz and Bernard Vincent's *Historia de los moriscos: Vida y tragedia de una minoría*. For a more recent study, see Matthew Carr's *Blood and Faith: The Purging of Muslim Spain*. For an illustrated exploration of dress in *Don Quijote*, see Carmen Bernis' *El traje y los tipos sociales in El Quijote*.

and religion.[2] He states: "[n]o respondió nada a esto la embozada, ni hizo otra cosa que levantarse de donde sentado se había, y puestas entrambas manos cruzadas sobre el pecho, inclinada la cabeza, dobló el cuerpo en señal de que lo agradecía. Por su silencio imaginaron que, *sin duda alguna*, debía de ser mora, y que no sabía hablar cristiano" (389; my emphasis). Despite the fact that the Second Author assures us that there is "no doubt" in the reading of Zoraida's clothing, gestures, and silence, I have always found it striking that Dorotea does not preclude other, more ambiguous readings.[3] In fact, unable to interpret Zoraida's embodied performance – to identify her as either Christian or Moor based on a reading of her corporeal signs – it is at this point in the text that Dorotea turns to the Captive with her deceptively simple question: "¿[E]sta señora es cristiana o mora?" (390).[4]

Starting from Dorotea's notorious question, I offer a focused examination of the arrival scene at the inn. Although several critics explore her question in relation to "The Captive's Tale" (I.39-41), my reading concentrates on the couple's arrival in Chapter 37, or what we might call the "Preamble" to "The Captive's Tale." My goals for this essay are three-fold. First, I seek to re-contextualize Dorotea's question within her own story of displacement and the text's historical context of absolutist interpretive practices. I argue that her either/or question actually invites the Captive to move beyond the binary – precisely because she ignores the assertions of the Second Author. Second, I explore Ruy Perez's initial response, positing that he sets up the rhetoric of paradoxy that he will use throughout his longer retelling of their tale. Finally, I examine Zoraida's own brief yet critical introduction as an exemplar in *discordia concors*. Taken together, Dorotea's question, Viedma's response, and Zoraida's interjection allow Cervantes and his readers to go straight to the ontological puzzle at the heart of the Moorish question: is Zoraida a Muslim or a Christian – a dangerous other or a recognizable Spanish subject – and how do we *know*? Is it possible to read racial, ethnic, and religious truth on the body? The Second Author assures us – "sin duda alguna" – that we can, but the fact that Dorotea feels compelled to ask, to allow Ruy Pérez and Zoraida to speak and, therefore, to interpret their appearances on their own terms, suggests that identity difference was not readily

[2] The multiplicity of narrative voices in *Don Quijote* has long delighted and perplexed readers. The Second Author makes his notable entrance in the last lines of chapter 8 of *Don Quijote*, Part I, when we are told by the "supernarrator" (to use James Parr's terminology), that "el autor desta historia" ran out of archival material mid-battle, but that "el segundo autor desta obra … no se desesperó de hallar el fin desta apacible historia," which in fact he did (I.8:83). Thus, the Second Author adds his voice to that of 1) the supernarrator, 2) the author of this history, and 3) the historians who wrote the archival material in the first place.

[3] The Second Author opens chapter 9, narrating in the first-person how he found Cide Hamete's original manuscript in the Alcaná of Toledo and then enlisted the help of a "morisco aljamiado" to translate it for him (I.9:86). A few lines later, the Second Author levels a common normative criticism against Don Quijote's Arab historian, noting that "los de aquella nación" tend to be liars (I.9:88). From the moment he takes control of the narrative, his snarky commentary on Spain's Moorish minority earns him the title of "spokesman for the ruling Old Christian Establishment," as Carroll Johnson argues in "Phantom Pre-texts and Fictional Authors" (197).

[4] I use the term "embodied performance" to mean any act that one performs with the body that conveys identity, such as speech, dress, gestures, etc. My understanding of the term is based on Judith Butler's formulation of "performative acts." As Butler explains, "Embodiment clearly manifests a set of strategies or what Sartre would perhaps have called a style of being … This style is never fully self-styled, for living styles have a history, and that history conditions and limits possibilities. Consider gender [or any identity], for instance, as *a corporeal style*, an "act," as it were, which is both intentional and performative, where "performative" itself carries the double-meaning of "dramatic" and "non-referential" ("Performative Acts" 902).

discernible on the body, despite the insistence of hegemonic discourse to the contrary. Asked against the normative reading of the Second Author, Dorotea's question sets up a discourse that will counter the rigidity of thought and language championed by Spain's inquisitorial hermeneutic.[5]

Many scholars suggest that Dorotea's either/or question seeks to silence Zoraida's difference or encourages the Captive to dispose of alternative identity possibilities. For Diane Sieber, Christina Lee, and to some extent Michael Gerli, Dorotea is unable "to understand the complexities of alterity" (Sieber 128). For this reason, her question prompts Ruy Pérez to tell a tale that erases Zoraida's Moorishness. They read this erasure as an unfortunate consequence of Zoraida's non-violent assimilation into Spanish society. For Israel Burshatin, Dorotea's question and the Captive's response conspire to deliberately and malevolently erase the Moors from Spanish identity all together. These readings, however, decontextualize Dorotea from both her own story and the larger historical debate on the readability of bodies and the place of non-orthodox subjects in the Spanish body politic.

In order to understand the motivation for Dorotea's question, we must remember that Dorotea herself is an example of an early modern subject who has struggled to create her own viable identity, finding herself in a marginalized subject position when she was forcibly displaced from her original status as chaste virgin.[6] Neither fully a legitimate wife nor a ruined maiden (note the parallel binary identity she shares with Zoraida here: *¿mora o cristiana*? *¿arruinada o casta*?), the somewhere-in-between farmer's daughter sets off in drag on the back roads of Spain in order to construct a new subject position that accounts for the complexity of her own lived experience. And ultimately, she succeeds when she is recognized at the inn as Don Fernando's *honesta esposa*. Consequently, more than anyone else present upon Zoraida's arrival – save, perhaps, for Don Quijote – Dorotea knows that appearances can be deceiving – that bodies can be inscrutable – and thus *invites* the Captive to undeceive those present with his own exegesis of Zoraida's embodied performance. Read in the context of her personal subjective displacement, Dorotea's question serves as a link between what is often read as two unrelated tales.[7]

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[5] I borrow the term "inquisitorial hermeneutic" from Georgina Dopico-Black. In *Perfect Wives, Other Women*, Dopico-Black uses the term as shorthand to represent the interpretive framework of early modern Spain that was set in place by the long-term presence of the Inquisition. It refers "not only to the specific reading practices of the Inquisition, practices that were very often exercised on bodies, but, more generally, … to the ideas, anxieties, and even epistemology either fostered or reflected by its institutional presence" (xvi, 12). Within this inquisitorial hermeneutic, Dopico-Black argues that the female body serves "as a kind of transcoder of and for various types of cultural anxieties, a site on which concerns over the interpretation and misinterpretation of [racial, religious, and cultural] signs … were at different times projected, materialized, codified, negotiated, and even contested" (4).

[6] For three in-depth studies of Dorotea's own *elección de vida*, see Anne J. Cruz's "Dorotea's Revenge: Sex and Speech Acts in *Don Quijote*, Part I," Christine Garst-Santos's "Dorotea's Displacement: Performing the Possible in Early Modern Spain," and Rosilie Hernández-Pecoraro's "Don Quijote's Dorotea: Portrait of a Female Subject."

[7] The presence and purpose of the intercalated tales has been debated since they were first published, as we know from the characters' and Cide Hamete's comments in Part II. This is certainly true of "The Captive's Tale," which has been published as a stand-alone text. See David McCrory's bilingual edition, *The Captive's Tale / La historia del cautivo*. Intriguingly in II.44, Cide Hamete complains that readers will pass over these "*graves*" and "*entretenidas*" "*novelas sueltas*," "*sin advertir la gala y artificio que en sí contienen*" (II.44:877).

As readers know, before the Captive has a chance to relate "el discurso de su vida" (I.38:398), Don Quijote delivers his famous "Discourse on Arms and Letters," which introduces "the questions of shifting identity which will lie at the center of Viedma's narrative" (Sieber 129). However, the question of identity instabilities is an elemental theme not only of the Captive's tale, but of all the stories that are concluded at the inn. The famous speech, therefore, serves to highlight the *shared* thematic of the many stories that flow together at the inn: the knight's tale, the Dorotea/Don Fernando tale, and the Zoraida/Ruy Pérez tale. At the beginning of his speech, Don Quijote invites his listeners to ponder

> ¿cuál de los vivientes habrá en el mundo que ahora por la puerta de este castillo entrara, y de la suerte que estamos nos viere, que juzgue y crea que nosotros somos quien somos? ¿Quién podrá decir que esta señora que está a mi lado [Dorotea] es la gran reina que todos sabemos, y que yo soy aquel Caballero de la Triste Figura que anda por ahí en boca de la fama? (I.37:392)

Not only does the knight's speech establish the mutual theme of identity instability, but it also hints at the important roles that performance space (or context) and audience recognition play in the very possibility of all of the subjects at the inn. That is to say, his introduction reveals the extent to which we are all done by discourse. On a ludic level, Alonso Quijano is the Knight of the Rueful Figure and Dorotea is Micomicona, the great African queen, only because those present at the inn have agreed to accept their performances as such. On a much more serious level, however, Dorotea is also Don Fernando's legally recognized wife only because those present have authorized that performance, too. Therefore, all of these characters "are who they are" thanks to the capacious discursive norms of Juan Palomeque's inn. As Don Quijote very cogently indicates, should new guests arrive, their lack of knowledge on the agreed upon discursive norms would hinder a "proper" reading of his and Dorotea's "true" subject positions. With his introduction, Don Quijote subtly exposes the contingent and dialogic nature of identity construction, revealing that not only can identity shift but that the norms that we use to construct identity are not stable – they can be changed and modified, agreed upon and codified, by the discursive community or audience.

Don Quijote's introduction and, by connection, all of the stories concluded at the inn suggest a powerfully transformative model of relational subjectivity: if the audience can be shown new and ethical ways to read an othered subject's corporeal signs as *different* but not *dangerous*, then that othered subject stands the chance of being possible. In all of the encounters at Juan Palomeque's inn, but especially in the encounter between Spanish Christians and Moorish others, Cervantes adopts the "rhetorical posture of 'learned ignorance' and Socratic wisdom" modeled in the dialogue of Plato's *Parmenides* (Presberg 25). As Presberg meticulously shows in his study of paradoxy in *Don Quijote*, the art of paradoxical discourse "consists of avoiding the … impulse to dogmatism" when confronting the unknown or the unrecognizable by "simultaneously arguing both sides of a question. Truth is shown to reside not so much between as beyond extremes, each of which is both enlightening and deficient, both partially true and partially false" (12). By adopting the rhetorical posture of paradoxy when we encounter difference, we can ensure

what philosopher Kelly Oliver describes as an ethical vigilance in our interpretations of others and an openness to the infinite possibility of subjectivity.[8] As Presberg explains,

> the rhetoric of paradoxy … pursues truth in the form of a continuing, progressive, adventurous quest. It constitutes a rhetorical "way" that leads to the discovery that the infinite intelligibility of truth is what guarantees its incomprehensibility for the finite mind, but also what guarantees that mind the continued possibility of novel, truthful findings, infinite in number, from a potentially infinite number of perspectives within that mind's temporal sphere of existence. (39)

In this light, Dorotea – who feigns ignorance so as to ask the ironic question that undermines the narrator's objectification of Zoraida – models the ethical address required by Zoraida in order to once again become a speaking subject, as well as the vigilance necessary to dispute the Second Author. In turn, Ruy's contradictory answer to Dorotea's question models the rhetorical paradoxy necessary for the interpretive vigilance that will move us beyond the dogmatic recognition of Zoraida as *either* a Christian *or* a Moor.[9]

Although Zoraida speaks solely eleven words throughout her stay, her performance as an Algerian Spanish Christian is nevertheless recognized as possible by the characters at the inn. In this way, Dorotea, Ruy Pérez, and Don Quijote's friends become fellow voices in a long history of both historical and literary voices who actively worked against the objectification of the *nuevos cristianos convertidos de moros* in the debate over national identity.[10] We know from a variety of historical sources that there were advocates on both sides of the Morisco debate regarding all aspects of embodied performances by the Christian converts from Islam.[11] Spain's general audience – ranging from the influential

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[8] In *Witnessing: Beyond Recognition*, Kelly Oliver elaborates a dialogical or relational model of subjectivity that she calls "witnessing." Precisely because the process of witnessing takes two – one who narrates and one who listens/responds – the listener is implicated in her response to the performance of the other. In order to be an ethical witness to the other, "[v]igilance in self-elaboration, self-analysis, self-interpretation is also necessary. That is to say, vigilance in elaborating, analyzing, and interpreting the process through which *we* become who *we* are, the process through which *we* become subjects and othereds, vigilance in interpreting the dialogic nature of the self and our investments in others" ("Beyond Recognition" 39). Without a self-critical vigilance, our interactions with others run the risk of repeating the dynamic of domination "where what is recognized is always only something familiar to the subject" (*Witnessing* 9).

[9] In "¿Ortodoxia cervantina?," Moisés Castillo argues that Cervantes creates ideological contradiction by using multiple voices to both defend and critique *the terms* of Christian orthodoxy (i.e., *moro, cristiano*). Drawing on the work of Khadidja Djadri, Castillo notes that, like Dorotea, Cervantes often dissimulates as a critical strategy: "Aunque Cervantes conoce muy bien la realidad particular y distingue cada una de las comunidades que conviven en Argel, utiliza el término 'moro' indistintamente para referirse al musulmán, sea éste turco, moro, morisco, árabe e incluso renegado" (234, n3).

[10] The assertion that Cervantes consciously used parts of the *Quijote* to weigh in on the pro-Morisco side of the debate was notably analyzed in 1975 by Francisco Márquez Villanueva in *Personajes y temas del Quijote*. Recently, this pro-Morisco reading has received renewed interest by several prominent Cervantes scholars (Anderson, Gerli, Johnson, López-Baralt, Vollendorf). Many of these authors convincingly argue that Cervantes – like the rest of Spain – would have been familiar with the Morisco question after the second Alpujarras Revolt of 1568.

[11] Pedro de Valencia and Martín González de Cellorigo both wrote in favor of alternative solutions to the expulsion. Jaime de Bleda and Juan de Ribera are two well-known expulsion apologists. For in-depth studies on the rhetoric surrounding the expulsion, see James B. Tueller's *Good and Faithful Christians: Moriscos and Catholicism in Early Modern Spain* and Trevor J. Dadson's *Tolerance and Coexistence in Early Modern Spain: Old Christians and Moriscos in the Campo de Calatrava*. For several shorter studies, see also

poderosos of the King's Council to the *estado llano* – was divided as to whether or not speaking Arabic and using Andalusi dress and customs was an acceptable performance of Christian and, therefore, Spanish subjectivity. Not coincidently, the Old Christian Captive and his Algerian New Christian traveling companion make their appearance on Spanish soil in 1589, at the height of Spain's polemical debate on the place of the Moriscos within the Spanish nation.[12]

Returning now to the arrival scene, Cervantes draws on the discourses from both sides of the political spectrum with regard to the couple's embodied performances. The Second Author, in his description of the Captive and Zoraida, wastes no time in supplying a normative reading of the couple. He reports:

> En su traje mostraba ser cristiano recién venido de tierra de moros, porque venía vestido con una casaca de paño azul, corta de faldas, con medias mangas y sin cuello; los calzones eran asimismo de lienzo azul, con bonete de la misma color; traía unos borceguíes datilados y un alfanje morisco, puesto en un tahalí que le atravesaba el pecho. Entró luego tras él, encima de un jumento, una mujer a la morisca vestida, cubierto el rostro, con una toca en la cabeza; traía un bonetillo de brocado, y vestida una almalafa, que desde los hombros a los pies la cubría. (I.37:388-89)

Struck by the remarkable appearances of the newcomers, Dorotea and the others curiously watch as the Captive speaks: "Pidió en entrando un aposento, y como le dijeron que en la venta no le había, mostró recibir pesadumbre y, llegándose a la que en el traje parecía mora, la apeó en sus brazos" (I.37:389). At this point in the story, the only action that has taken place is that the Captive and Zoraida have arrived at the inn and the Captive has requested a room. The Second Author, however, has already offered tentative ethno-religious readings of their embodied performances. Based solely on their clothing and Viedma's request *en cristiano*, the Captain is quickly identified as a Christian captive – "en su traje *mostraba ser cristiano* recién venido de tierra de moros" (I.37:388; my emphasis) – and Zoraida as a Muslim – "la que en el traje *parecía mora*" (I.37:389; my emphasis). Moments later, when Zoraida fails to respond to Dorotea's invitation, the Second Author rests his case, declaring, "[p]or su silencio imaginaron que, *sin duda alguna*, debía de ser mora, y que no sabía hablar cristiano (I.37:389; my emphasis). His findings are in keeping with the

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Mercedes García-Arenal's edited volume, *The Expulsion of the Moriscos from Spain: A Mediterranean Diaspora*.

[12] Cervantes scholars (Brownlee, Case, Gerli, McCrory) tend to agree with the work of Luis A. Murillo in "Cervantes' Tale of the Captive Captain" (1975), which places both the writing and the setting of "The Captive's Tale" in 1589. It is worth noting that, in his 1947 edition of *Don Quijote*, Francisco Rodríguez Marín credits the dating of "The Captive's Tale" to 1589 to Don Diego Clemencín in his 1833 edition (Tomo III, 171n16). Additionally, the couple's arrival coincides with the sensational discoveries of the Arabic Christian forgeries of an ancient parchment, relics, and lead books in Granada. The highly contested *pergamino* or prophetic parchment written in ancient Arabic and Latin was found during the demolition of the old minaret in Granada in 1588. The *Libros plúmbeos* were discovered in the hills of the Sacro Monte from 1590-1595. There are several recent studies on these fascinating, paradoxical documents. See, for example, *From Muslim to Christian Granada: Inventing a City's Past in Early Modern Spain* by A. Katie Harris and *Los Plomos del Sacromonte. Invención y tesoro*, edited by Manuel Barrios Aguilera and Mercedes García-Arenal.

inquisitorial hermeneutic that identified Andalusi and North African corporeal signs [being/matter] with Muslim loyalties and identities [potentiality/spirit].

These normative reading practices had been repeatedly reinforced through royal decrees throughout the sixteenth century. However, the most recent and contentious was the 1567 decree by Felipe II. The King, tired of the slow process of assimilation, proclaimed the incendiary decree in Granada that sought to enforce earlier pragmatics. Reversing the spotty policies of evangelization and conversion that had been in place throughout the first half of the sixteenth century, the repressive 1567 decree enforced a host of previous prohibitions on Andalusi socio-cultural products and practices, such as food, clothing, and language. Reflecting on this significant decision in 1600, the early modern Spanish chronicler, Luis del Mármol Carvajal, reports in his *Historia del rebelión y castigo de los moriscos del Reino de Granada* that the King,

> cansado de oir las quejas que de ordinario le iban de los nuevamente convertidos de aquel reyno, diciendole que eran Moros, y se trataban como Moros, y que la principal causa para no ser Christianos eran el habito y la lengua morisca, y las otras, costumbres y cerimonias que tenian de tiempo de Moros, habia tomado resolucion de mandar que lo dexasen todo. (147-148/183-184) [13]

The King, responding to the complaints of the anti-Morisco camp, decided to issue the new decree that would force the new Christians to give up their traditional style of dress, language, and customs. Summing up his Majesty's viewpoint, Carvajal states, "su intencion era que [los moriscos] fuesen buenos Christianos: y no solo que lo fuesen, *mas que tambien lo pareciesen*" (163/199; my emphasis). In the inquisitorial hermeneutic of anti-Morisco discourse, there was little existential difference between *seeming* and *being* a Muslim. Social customs of dress and language were simply embodied signs of one's previous – and continuing – ethno-religious identity. The narrator's hurried attempt to arrive at a definitive reading of Viedma's and Zoraida's essential identities exposes the dominant interpretive framework that maintained that difference was readily discernible on the surface of the body.

However, the full citation of Dorotea's query to Ruy Pérez refutes the narrator's attempts to objectify and silence Zoraida: "¿Esta señora es mora o cristiana? *Porque el traje y el silencio nos hace pensar que es lo que no querríamos que fuese*" (I.37:390; my emphasis). Her question incorporates the same corporeal signs just used by the Second Author (speech and dress), but rather than a declarative statement, Dorotea uses a question combined with a hypothetical conditional-subjunctive structure. In other words, she is unwilling to commit to the normative reading on offer and counters with an alternative reading that allows for movement or slippage between Zoraida's corporeal signs [indicative actuality] and the audience's interpretation of those signs [subjunctive potentiality]. Her words illustrate the cosmological paradoxy inherent in the human subject. As Charles Presberg explains, the human subject "not only joins actuality and potentiality such as is found in other creatures, but … also joins the contraries of matter and spirit. Thus, for Renaissance and Baroque writers alike, 'man' represents the most paradoxical of all

[13] Citations from Luis del Mármol Carvajal come from accessible digitized editions at the Hathi Trust Digital Library (scanned from the original at the Biblioteca de Montserrat). I have given two page numbers for all citations: the first refers to the original text; the second refers to the digitized PDF.

cosmological paradoxes: an ensouled body and an embodied soul" (77). Furthermore, the entire arrival scene at the inn links back to Dorotea's own uncomfortable first encounter with the priest, the barber, and Cardenio earlier in the novel.

During that scene, Dorotea is caught with her hair down, dressed as a boy shepherd washing "his" stunningly white and lovely feet. When she is informed by the priest that, "Lo que vuestro traje, señora, nos niega, vuestros cabellos nos descubren" (I.28:276), she realizes that her only option is to account for these corporeal contradictions (which, ironically, the priest refers to as "señas claras" that her person has suffered some terrible misfortune). In her defense, she states, "porque no ande vacilando mi honra en vuestras intenciones, habiéndome ya conocido por mujer y viéndome moza, sola y en este traje, cosas todas juntas y cada una por sí que pueden echar por tierra cualquier honesto crédito, *os habré de decir lo que quisiera callar, si pudiera*" (I.28:277; my emphasis). Much like Zoraida and her encounter scene at the inn, Dorotea, too, is compelled to account for her dress and her silence in order to establish a legible – and therefore acceptable – identity. In her response, she acknowledges the misreading that her clothing could encourage and once again uses a hypothetical subjunctive to indicate her reluctance to produce a fixed reading based on those signs. Clearly, Dorotea knows that according to normative reading practices, corporeal markers reveal one's essential identity (thus her concern for her "honest reputation" as she stands there in drag lacking both an intact hymen and a husband), but she also knows that bodily signs are mutable, and that bodily mutability often leads to interpretive instability and paradox. It is this knowledge, therefore, that motivates Dorotea to ask the *ethical* question that will create a space in which Zoraida – both through her own performance and the exegesis of Ruy Pérez – can fashion her own livable life.[14] Based on Viedma's response to Dorotea's question, he shares her knowledge of bodily mutability and interpretive instability. Explicitly affirming the body/soul paradox that Dorotea implied with her question, the Captive famously asserts, "Mora es en el traje y en el cuerpo; pero en el alma es muy grande cristiana, porque tiene grandísimos deseos de serlo" (I.37:390).

In contrast to the Second Author, the responses of both Dorotea and the Captive call to mind the historical counter-argument of the pro-Morisco camp. Specifically, the rhetorical paradoxy in their comments echoes an earlier argument made by Francisco Núñez Muley, the influential Granadan New Christian who was elected by the natives of Granada to argue against Felipe II's 1567 decree. One of Núñez Muley's sustained discursive strategies throughout his memorandum is to highlight the concordant discord of the physical universe (cosmological paradoxy) in order to break the link between religious and cultural identities favored by Spain's inquisitorial hermeneutic. Although I am not suggesting that Cervantes was familiar with Núnez Muley's memorandum, there clearly was a contestatory discursive community that called on this strain of paradoxy in challenging the *doxa* that physical bodies represented stable, ineffable truths. In a passage that deserves to be treated at length, he reasons:

[14] In *Undoing Gender* Judith Butler defines "a livable life" as a life in which the physical and psychic survival – or both – of the subject is possible. She explains, "The conception of politics at work here is centrally concerned with the question of survival, of how to create a world in which those who understand their [identity] to be nonnormative can live and thrive not only without the threat of violence from the outside but without the pervasive sense of their own unreality, which can lead to suicide or a suicidal life. […] The thought of a possible life is only an indulgence for those who already know themselves to be possible. For those who are still looking to become possible, possibility is a necessity" (219).

> Y continuando las çilimonias y manera de moros en el dicho traxe y calçado: en esto, señor, veo […] que sus rrelaçiones no son bastantes ni líçitas; porque el ábito y traxe y calçado no se puede dezir de moros, ny es de moros. Puédese dezir ques traxe del rreyno y prouinçia, como en todos los rreynos de Castilla y los otros rreynos y prouinçias tienen los traxes diferentes unos de otros, y todos cristianos; […] ni se puede afundar, pues los cristianos de la santa casa de Jeresulon […] como se an bisto en esta çibdad (los) que se vinieron a ella en ábitos y tocados como los de aliende, y no en castellano, y son cristianos. Y dello, y por esto, y por lo que dicho tengo, *la cristiandad no va en el áuito ni el calçado que agora calçan, ni la seta de los moros también*. (my emphasis 211)

Throughout this passage, Nuñez Muley distinguishes the difference between Christianity and the embodied signs of regional culture by evoking recognized Christian communities abroad and highlighting their difference from Castilian customs – a distinction that was erased in the normative discourse of the prelates to whom he responds. In discussing the efficacy of cosmological paradoxy, Presberg notes that it "is predicated upon the assumption that the temporal order represents an imperfect manifestation of the transcendent (the One, God, Truth, Being). Further, as part of its imperfection, that temporal order remains unstable and in motion, resulting in a *discordia concors*, or a perennially unfolding admixture of contraries (*coincidentia oppositorum*)" (76). Precisely because the temporal order is perennially unfolding, so, too, is truth and meaning. In the passages of the memorandum that treat language and clothing, the Granadan nobleman shows Christianity to be a religion of nonexclusive contraries rather than the unified whole being advocated by the King and his Council.[15] Ultimately, the Granadan nobleman advocates for a mobile Spanish national identity beyond the either/or binary, one that permits Andalusi cultural practices to coincide with the religious beliefs of Catholicism but does not fuse religion and ethnicity. He envisions a national subject position that allows the new converts to be "different from the others, yet all Christians" (Núñez Muley qtd in Barletta 70). In Zoraida's and Ruy Pérez's performances at the inn, the couple literally and metaphorically seeks to marry these contrary (yet complementary) subject positions.

Given that Dorotea has already proven to those gathered at the inn that corporeal signs do not intrinsically reflect an inner identity, she seems to have no difficulty in taking Viedma at his word: his female companion may look like a Moor on the surface, but in her soul she is a Christian. Willing to accept the simultaneity of Zoraida's Algerian corporeal signs and her Christian beliefs, Dorotea welcomes her into the circle of gathered Spaniards and encourages the newcomer to remove her veil: "Dorotea la tomó [a Zoraida] por la mano y la llevó a sentar junto a sí y le rogó que se quitase el embozo" (I.37:390). Once the beautiful Algerian Christian unveils herself, Fernando continues the process of uncovering Zoraida when he asks Ruy Pérez her name. When she hears the Captive provide her Arabic name, "Lela Zoraida," she accurately deduces Don Fernando's question and is clearly

[15] Presberg notes that Christianity itself "inserted a fully paradoxical view of the world into Western consciousness" (17). He lists: "one God as a trinity of persons; Christ as both God and man; Christ, the King of Kings born in a stable as a child, later 'enthroned' upon a donkey in Jerusalem, and then crucified in the manner of a slave; Mary as both virgin and mother; the need to die in order to live; the last shall be first; and so on" (17).

distressed by Viedma's response. "[L]lena de congoja y donaire," she quickly corrects him and provides her own self-definition (I.37.391). With five simple words, she corrects Ruy Pérez and renames herself *en cristiano*: "¡No, no Zoraida: María, María!" (I.37:391). The Second Author notes that the emotion and self-assurance with which she changes an Algerian (and therefore Muslim) sign, Zoraida, to a Spanish (and therefore Christian) one, María, moves some of her audience to tears. The reader is told that the women, especially, identify with her, and Luscinda verbally acknowledges the Algerian woman's elected subject position by reassuringly repeating, "Sí, sí, María, María" (I.37:391). In the last words that Zoraida speaks at the inn, she reiterates her desired subject position in a mix of Spanish and Arabic, affirming, "Sí, sí, María, María: Zoraida *macange*!" (I.37:391). The Second Author tells us that the Arabic "macange" means "no" in Spanish, however, Rodríguez Marín states in a footnote that a more accurate translation would be "it/that is not" (148n23).[16]

Zoraida is a presence throughout ten chapters of Part I, first appearing at the inn in Chapter 37 and departing with Ruy Pérez and her newfound friends in Chapter 47. She speaks only upon her arrival, and only the eleven words relayed above. Given the centrality of this brief yet critical performance to an understanding of Zoraida, several recent studies have also analyzed this scene. Both Mohja Kahf and Ibtissam Bouachrine focus on her use of the Arabic word "macange," which gives us a more nuanced interpretation of Zoraida's understanding of her own subjectivity. In *Western Representations of the Muslim Woman*, Kahf argues that: "*ma kan chey* in Arabic means more than simply 'no' or 'not Zoraida at all;' it suggests that Zoraida never existed, that Zoraida has never been anything: it is a denial of history, echoing the Spanish state policies that strove mightily to make it seem as if the Moors had never existed, had never been in Spain at all" (85). Arguing against this interpretation by Kahf, Bouachrine, in "Zoraida, the Other Author of the Quijote," cautions that

> Zoraida's rejection of her name, "Zoraida macange!" can be understood differently in the context of Western Mediterranean Arabic. In North African Arabic, "makayn(a)š(i)," simply means "is not here" or "there is not" for now. It is not a "categorical negative," for in North African Arabic the "categorical negative" would have been conveyed through the omission of the suffix "š(i)" (Brustad 306). In other words, Zoraida's macange is closer to the Spanish "no está," in the sense that it connects it to a specific location. (no pag)

Although Kahf and Bouachrine differ in their interpretations of the performance, I find it thought provoking that each plausible reading represents a pole in the cosmological paradox between permanence [*ser* – Zoraida, she does not exist] and temporality [*estar* – Zoraida, she is not here for now]; that is, the cosmological paradox of *being* and *becoming*.[17] Furthermore, if performance and witnessing negotiate which subject positions are available and to whom, I find it fascinating that – in all three translations – Zoraida speaks of her Algerian subject position in the third-person: it/that/she is not or does not

[16] The complete footnote reads, "En efecto, *macange* = arábigo *má kan Chey*, significa <*ce n'est pas*>, según Paul Ravaisse, *Les mots arabes et hispanomorisques du* <*Don Quichotte*>, apud *Revue de Linguistique et de Philologie comparée*, tomos XL-XLVII (1907-1914)" (148n23).
[17] For a detailed explanation of the North African dialectical variant, see Bouachrine's footnote 7.

exist; it/that/she is not here. Zoraida verbally represents subject positions as other than or outside her own sense of self as an "I" at that moment, freely migrating between the subject position of Zoraida, the Moorish lady in Algeria, for another, María, the *cristiana arábiga* in Spain that is beyond recognition (either temporarily or permanently).

Interestingly, this scene at the inn is also the first time that Zoraida opts for the Castilian form of the Virgin's name, "María," over the Arabic form, "Marién," which she had used in all of her previous written communications with Ruy Pérez in Algeria. I believe that Zoraida's spatially determined use of the Castilian signifier here strengthens Bouachrine's argument for a temporal/spatial identification of absence, while simultaneously shoring up a wholly insoluble identity. That is to say, Zoraida is clearly aware of the Christian reading/meaning of María and the Muslim reading/meaning of Marién, and she has used both at different times and in different spaces. Does her use of the Castilian indicate her awareness of the need to conform her understanding and love of "Lela Marién" with Spain's dominant discourse? Is she both María and Marién, which in dominant discourse means that she is neither? Additionally, her brief performance explicitly alternates between negation/absence and affirmation/presence, disclosing this ontological paradox of being (*sí, María*) and non-being (*no, Zoraida*) in which she is and is not both a Christian and a Moor, both María and Zoraida. Indeed, even her choice of language – both Castilian and Arabic – undermines our ability to categorically determine her subjectivity. Similar to Dorotea's earlier subjunctive posturing, Zoraida's ambiguous verbal performance also resists closure and the dominant either/or binary with every well-chosen word.

Revealingly, all eleven words that the newly-arrived Algerian woman speaks in *Don Quijote* are performative utterances; she seeks to enact her own livable life, to constitute a self. Indeed, the naming scene at the inn calls to mind Don Quijote's own efforts to name himself earlier in the novel. Drawing on J. L. Austin's speech act theory, Charles Oriel offers an insightful analysis of Don Quijote's discursive construction of subjectivity that also is helpful in understanding Zoraida's attempt to perform an *elected* Christian subjectivity. In defining the concept of "performative utterance," Oriel reminds us that: "Performatives … do not describe, but rather, enact or effect realities" (59). Furthermore, these utterances "depend upon certain contextual factors already being in place, especially social institutions and conventions; otherwise, they will be hollow or void" (59). Zoraida's words, in an attempt to "enact reality," are intended to bring about an *elección de vida* not unlike the prior performatives enacted by Dorotea and Don Quijote.

Aside from the obvious connection of choosing a new name for herself (which Don Quijote famously does in the first chapter of the novel), Zoraida's performative utterance echoes another curious speech act by Don Quijote at the end of his first sally in chapter 5. In this scene, the knight's kindly but decidedly uninformed-in-the-ways-of-knight-errantry neighbor, Pedro Alonso, finds Don Quijote badly bruised and lying alongside the road. Pedro's compassionate decision to pick him up and carry him home on the back of his donkey leads Don Quijote to imagine that he is the noble Moor, Abindarráez, from the famous Moorish novel, *El Abencerraje y la hermosa Jarifa*. As the unlikely pair makes their way back to their village, Don Quijote insists on referring to himself as Abindarráez and to Pedro Alonso as Rodrigo de Narváez. The peasant becomes exasperated with Don Quijote's antics and firmly informs him that he is not, in fact, Abindarráez, but "el honrado hidalgo del señor Quijana" (I.5:58). In this intriguing scene of self-actualization,

racial/cultural identity switching, and communal rebuff, Pedro Alonso clearly rejects the knight's discursive performance and re-imposes Don Quijote's former (normative) identity. Don Quijote, of course, famously replies, "Yo sé quién soy" (I.5:58).

Although reductively stated, Oriel notes that: "Perhaps one of Cervantes' greatest novelistic accomplishments in *Don Quijote* is the positing of a more modern subjectivity based on agency and a process of knowledge ("Yo sé quién soy"), rather than an essentialized tautology comprised of blood or honor ("Yo soy quién soy")" (80). Much like Alonso Quijano, Zoraida also rejects the normative model of subjectivity that fixes her as always already a Moor, favoring instead the dialogical, paradoxical mode of thought that considers the individual self to be "fraught with contradiction, subject to temporal processes of change, and continually undergoing construction and reconstruction in human discourse" (Presberg 35). Like Don Quijote, Zoraida sees the self as an evolving quest, leaving behind old subject positions in favor of others more suitable to her current needs and desires. Of course, as Oriel indicates, certain contextual factors must be in place if the utterance is to truly effect reality:

> Under normal circumstances, the act of naming should ideally conform to the first of Auston's [sic] rules for the "happiness" of performative utterances: "There must exist an accepted conventional procedure having a certain conventional effect, that procedure to include the utterance of certain words by certain persons in certain circumstances" (14). The gentleman's self-naming clearly violates nearly every word of this rule. Names, like epitaphs, are normally conferred by the authority of parents, relatives, or – in some cases – by society itself, but invariably by someone other than the one actually named. (67)

In this discussion of the conventions of the performative, the performance is clearly limited by dominant notions of recognition (an authority that confers recognition on another). However, taking into account the work of Judith Butler, Kelly Oliver and others on theories of performativity, we know that *all* subjects seek to enact themselves, regardless of whether or not their performances go against "accepted conventional procedure" or are performed by the *wrong* persons in the *wrong* circumstances. To put it simply, when we perform identity, we often violate the rules. To wit, despite Alonso Quijano's obvious violation of the rules for performative utterances, the *hidalgo* succeeds in remaking himself as Don Quijote de la Mancha. Through his persistently dogged efforts to educate everyone with whom he comes into contact in the ways of knight-errantry, he provides his audience with the necessary contextual framework to authorize his utterance. Although there may indeed be conventional procedures for doing and being, for recognizing the subject, subjectivity can succeed even beyond recognition. In order for Zoraida to realize her self as María/Marién, she, too, must re-educate her audience – with the help of Ruy Pérez and Dorotea – so that they might recognize what is beyond recognition in conventional understanding.

At this point, one might ask *why* a listener would consent to a change in procedure, why they would agree to imagine the possible, rather than simply demanding the norm. The motivating factor is precisely the element of mutual dependency that is inherent to subjectivity itself: the audience's response ultimately opens up or closes off subjective possibility not only for the performing subject but for themselves, too. Subjectivity (and

agency) is always and only born out of our social relationships with others. In the novel, there are several characters who arrive at this realization along the way, be it Don Quijote, Dorotea, or Ruy Pérez, who have critical reasons for being open to subjective possibilities (it is literally a matter of psychic and/or physical survival), or Sancho, the priest, and the barber, or even Sansón Carrasco, who entertain these possibilities for more ludic reasons. Whatever our motivations are, by responding generously to others, we increase our own subjective possibilities. Oliver explains this mutual dependency as follows:

> The possibility of any perception or sensation associated with subjectivity is the result of our *responsiveness* to [others]… [I]nsofar as we *are* by virtue of our environment and by virtue of relationships with other people, we have ethical requirements rooted in the very possibility of subjectivity itself. We are obligated to respond to our environment and other people in ways that open up rather than close off the possibility of response. (*Witnessing* 15)

The stories that culminate at Juan Palomeque's inn can be read as a sustained study on the possibility of subjectivity in relation to one's environment and other people. In the case of Zoraida's attempt to name herself, Cervantes once again offers the reader two opposing witnessing responses: one that expands subjective possibility and one that closes it off. Luscinda, acting as an ethical witness-listener, ignores the rules of recognition mandated by Spain's inquisitorial hermeneutic and verbally acknowledges Zoraida's act of self-creation by calling her María and embracing her. The Second Author, however, upholds dominant discourse and continues to refer to Zoraida only as "*la mora*," ironically even as he acknowledges her rejection of this identity in her own naming performance. Zoraida, therefore, much like our unnamed *hidalgo* and our jilted *labradora*, struggles to escape dominant discursive norms that fix identity as stable and enduring. Unlike Don Quijote and Dorotea, however, Zoraida's performance of recognizable discourses of Christian femininity (she appeals largely to Marian legend and foundational myths) must be brought into speech by her Old Christian companion. Without Dorotea's question and Viedma's longer response in chapters 39-41, Zoraida would remain *la mora* throughout the entire text, solely done by the normative discourse of the Second Author.

As Oriel observes in the case of Don Quijote, "The subjectivity that was so explicitly self-actualized in chapter 1 comes increasingly and inevitably to depend on the society of others to define itself. Interestingly, and as though to reinforce the need for communal ratification, even the narrator waits until the middle of chapter 2 to start indulging the protagonist by referring to him with his new name" (72). In the case of Zoraida, an *official* "communal ratification" is never fully realized in the text. As we would expect, the maurophobic Second Author refuses to refer to Zoraida by her chosen Christian name – or by any name at all. However, the unwillingness to recognize the Algerian woman's chosen movement from Zoraida to María has not been limited to the text's anti-Morisco spokesman. The tendency to refer to her solely as Zoraida, rather than María or even Zoraida/María, has been shared by almost every literary scholar who has written about her tale (including myself). Rather than reading this reluctance as an unwillingness to view Zoraida's alternative subject position as viable (many critics demonstrate a wholehearted acceptance of the Algerian woman's difference), I suspect that this has to do with a desire to avoid repeating the dynamic of hierarchies, privilege, and domination. As Oliver explains:

> Even if oppressed people are making demands for recognition, insofar as those who are dominant are empowered to confer it, we are thrown back into the hierarchy of domination. This is to say that if the operations of recognition require a recognizer and a recognizee, then we have done no more than replicate the master-slave, subject-other/object hierarchy in this new form. (*Witnessing* 9)

Given that Zoraida's entire performance is a study in paradox – a performance that refuses to be resolved as a single truth – to opt for María feels like the "impulse to dogmatism" that the *Parmenides* warns us against, or an assimilation of difference back into the familiar that the ethics of witnessing seeks to avoid. Intriguingly, the text itself leaves the question of Zoraida/Marién/María's subjectivity as infinitely possible yet unfinished. Even the Captive, when he is recounting their tale *after* Zoraida's self-introduction, refuses to adopt a singular Christian identity for his companion the first time that he names her in his story, stating, "Zoraida, que así se llamaba la que ahora quiere llamarse María" (I.40:416). After this, he continues to call her Zoraida, however, as he will show throughout his tale, this signifier means something different to him than it does to the Second Author.

What we seem to be witnessing in the preamble to the telling of the Captive's tale is a primer in the art of paradoxy:

> As shown rather than preached in Cervantes' narrative, an openness to paradox engenders a sense of communion between self and other in a common quest for truth. But that quest pursues a necessarily elusive and unfolding truth – about an evolving yet "real" self, other, society, or world. *Don Quixote* dramatizes the degree to which that "truth," or the Truth-as-One, lies forever in the future, *infinitely* approachable or knowable in itself, yet surpassing the *limits* of time and history and the *terms* of our consoling fictions. (Presberg 230)

On the one hand, we have Dorotea, Ruy Pérez, and their friends at the inn who willingly embrace paradox and its adventure. On the other, we have the Second Author who continues to insist on an orthodox, univocal reading. In these opening pages of "The Captive's Tale" we are offered a way out of what Carroll Johnson sees as an ideological "struggle for control of the discourse" that is waged throughout the novel (197). In terms of the discursive construction of the subject, the line is drawn between whether or not the subject will be normatively defined by past religious affiliations (blood and lineage), or if she will be allowed to self-define based on her own sense of agency and her unique iteration of embodied signs. Will she be allowed a recognition that is *beyond recognition*, or will recognition require her to assimilate difference back into sameness? Historically, we know which ideology won out, which is why, for me, calling her María now feels like aligning myself with the Second Author. To call her simply María is to assimilate her difference back into sameness rather than to recognize her as a María/Zoraida/Marién who is beyond recognition of the binary.

In a parallel historical example, Núñez Muley bitterly complains about the need of the native Granadans to demand recognition from the dominant culture when he questions the president of the royal court Pedro de Deza:

> ¿qué respeto les fué tenido o tienen los onbres varones si les fué mirado por vestir y calçar en castellano, ansi con la justiçia seglar como con la eclesiástica e con su magt. e con sus prelados? […] e ¿qué voluntad tubieron los prelados para faboresçelles con su magt.? visto que dende treynta y çinco o quarenta años acá an vestido y visten y calçan áuito y calçado castellano, para que Su Magt. les uviera hecho merçedes de livertades, sus pechos y seruiçios, y de dalles liçençia general para traer armas. Pues no emos visto cosa alguna deste favor; paramos cada día peor y más maltratados en todo y por todas vías y modos, ansí por lo que tengo dicho por las justiçias seglares y sus ofiçiales, como por la esclesiástica; y esto es notorio y no tiene neçeçidad de se hazer ynformación dello. (212)

As Núñez Muley makes clear, the dominant Old Christian authorities had the power and the privilege to create the norms of embodied performance (in this case, everyone will wear Castilian clothing), and then to interpret the authenticity of the performance, leaving the othered Granadan New Christians at their mercy for recognition. His plea is a request for a Christian/Spanish/Granadan subject position that is *beyond* recognition and that, therefore, moves us beyond the pathology of recognition.[18] As Oliver describes it, an ethical recognition of others: "requires acknowledging that their experiences are real even though they may be incomprehensible to us … Acknowledging the realness of another's life is not judging its worth, or conferring respect, or understanding or recognizing it, but responding in a way" that guarantees the continued possibility of subjectivity (*Witnessing* 106). Much like Núñez Muley pleads with Deza for the ethical recognition of the Granadan New Christians as possible Spanish subjects, Ruy Pérez also steps in after Dorotea's question and Zoraida's performance to advocate for a "different yet Christian" identity on his companion's behalf.

The tale that Ruy Pérez famously goes on to tell – along with Zoraida's own embodied performance at the inn – is motivated, I suggest, by Dorotea's *solidarity* rather than her demand to negate all traces of Zoraida's difference. This subtle interpretive difference brings our focus back to the physical space and affective context of the performance. Within this very specific context, Dorotea asks her question *against* the Second Author's normative reading of Zoraida's embodied performance of race, ethnicity, and religion. Yet, at the end of Viedma's tale, Zoraida is still very much physically present and *different*. Within the more capacious reading practices of the inn, individual desire or one's "elección de vida" is allowed to exceed the limitations placed upon the body by the dominant social order. This is not to say that the Captive's tale and its preamble are idealistic accounts of cultural reconciliation or a resolution to the Moorish problem. On the contrary, I believe that Cervantes was fully aware of the human cost that was exacted by the rigid reading practices of Spain's inquisitorial hermeneutic. We catch glimpses of these costs throughout the both parts of *Don Quijote*. However, through characters such as Dorotea, Zoraida, and Ruy Pérez, the novel subtly contests these destructive reading practices and, much like Nuñez Muley, tries to loosen the link between culture and religion

[18] Oliver states, "Within the pathology of recognition, subjectivity is conferred by those in power and on those they deem powerless and disempowered. The desire to be seen, to be recognized, is the paradoxical desire created by oppression. It is the desire to become objectified in order to be recognized by the sovereign subject to whom the oppressed is beholden for his or her own self-worth" (*Witnessing* 24).

that would have allowed Zoraida, and countless new converts like her, to be paradoxically *different* rather than heretical or false Christians.

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