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Dorotea's Displacement: Performing the Possible in Early Modern Spain

CHRISTINE GARST-SANTOS

And doubtless it sometimes happened that leaving the position occupied in the beginning could be the means of finding, somewhere else, another position that was longed for...

JOSÉ ANTONIO MARAVALL

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.

JUDITH BUTLER

BY THE BEGINNING OF the seventeenth century, it was obvious to those both inside and outside of Spain's borders that the country was experiencing a profound change; and not for the better, by most accounts: there were a series of national bankruptcies, rampant inflation, a decreasing population, plague, the loss of the Invincible Armada, and revolts from various corners of the Empire.¹ Politicians, moralists, *arbitristas* (economic reformers; literally, projectors/project planners), and novelists were all putting pen to paper in order to discuss, analyze, and prescribe what they perceived to be Spain's state of crisis and decline.² One of the most famous fictional texts to come out of this conflictive period is Miguel de Cervantes's *Don Quijote de la*

¹ For comprehensive histories of sixteenth and seventeenth-century Spain, see Elliott, *Imperial Spain*; and Domínguez Ortiz.

² For classic discussions on Spain's self-perception of crisis, see Maravall, *La cultura del Barroco* (especially Chapter 1: "La conciencia coetánea de crisis y las tensiones sociales del siglo XVII"); and Elliott, *Spain and Its World* (especially Chapter 11: "Self-perception and Decline in Early Seventeenth-Century Spain").

Mancha. The two-part novel is a keen representation of the economic, social, and psychological displacement that was experienced by early modern Spanish subjects as a result of what José Antonio Maravall termed “the diphasic schema of a social crisis” (“From the Renaissance” 2). The phenomenon of displacement—conceptualized here as the movement away from a normative subject position to another, alternative subject position—could and did occur (both by coercion and choice) as people reacted to and dealt with the crisis and the absolutist State’s increasingly restrictive response to the expansive tendencies of the sixteenth century. Indeed, Cervantes’s novel is a sustained exploration of the displacement of Alonso Quijano as he attempts to distance himself from the restrictive subject position of *hidalgo* and create an alternative space in which he can construct himself as an individual. In other words, the normative role of *hidalgo* available to Alonso Quijano within the dominant discourses of Habsburg Spain (primarily, through blood and lineage) had ceased to produce what Judith Butler terms “a livable life,” a life in which the physical and psychic survival—or both—of the subject is possible.³ Although Quijano is the wandering subject par excellence, he is not the only character in the text with the dream of distancing himself from an unviable subject position, with the fantasy of being something or someone else.

Much like the famous *hidalgo*, Dorotea, the dishonored farmer’s daughter whom we first meet in part one, chapter twenty-eight of Cervantes’s novel, also seeks to fulfill her dream of escaping an unliv-

3 I base my conceptualization of a “livable life” on Butler’s work in *Undoing Gender*. In this text, Butler deals extensively with the concepts of performance and viability. Seeking to respond to critics who have charged that gender performance is not political and/or that gender performativity, especially drag or gender parody, is only playful and fun (read, inconsequential to serious theoretical consideration), Butler explores not only the political effects but also the ethical obligations involved in gender performance. In an imagined back-and-forth, she states, “So what if new forms of gender are possible, how does this affect the ways that we live and the concrete needs of the human community? [...] I would respond that it is not a question merely of producing a new future for genders that do not yet exist. [...] It is a question of developing, within the law, within psychiatry, within social and literary theory, a new legitimating lexicon for the gender complexity that we have always been living. [...] 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 gender and their desire 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” (219).

able subject position. Dorotea herself signals her displacement, which is to say the undesirable change in her subjectivity, when she describes her post-Fernando life as “la vida que *ya* aborrezco” (1.28:287; my emphasis). In *Undoing Gender*, Butler notes that once viability is no longer possible within the prevailing social norms, “then it follows that my sense of survival depends upon escaping the clutch of those norms by which recognition is conferred. It may well be that my sense of social belonging is impaired by the distance I take, but surely that estrangement is preferable to gaining a sense of intelligibility by virtue of norms that will only do me in from another direction” (3). Displacement, the chosen and/or coerced estrangement from a recognized subject position, is a survival strategy used by a marginalized subject in order to maintain a sense of self. As a literary concept, displacement can inform our understanding of the material and discursive conditions that both undid Dorotea and enabled her to construct an emergent form of the female individual.⁴ Indeed, Dorotea’s presence throughout nineteen chapters of the first part of *Don Quijote* provides for a well-developed female character who shares a similar fantasy with the protagonist: she wishes to be something other than the ruined maiden that we find wandering in the Sierra Morena.

Dorotea’s dislocation from chaste maiden to ruined woman allows us to trace the material conditions and the discursive norms that were operating to construct the seventeenth-century female Spanish subject. Furthermore, a sustained analysis of her gender performances permits us to see the breaking points of those norms: the moments where they fail to constitute an intelligible subject, which is to say a subject who is recognized by dominant social norms. Unlike Alonso Quijano, Dorotea ultimately succeeds in locating a new subject position for herself due to

4 In my conceptualization of “self,” “individual,” or “subject,” I draw on the work of Juan Carlos Rodríguez. In his introduction to *Theory and the History of Ideological Production*, he posits: “The ‘serf/subject’ coupling, we emphasized, does not suppose the transition from man-in-chains to man-in-himself, unencumbered and undetermined. On the contrary, such a coupling can only signify the transition from one set of social relations to another (*serf* is only a term that indicates the special—and necessary—inscription of individuals in class relations characteristic of feudalism; *subject* is only a term that indicates the special—and similarly necessary—inscription of individuals in class relations characteristic of capitalism, both in its early phase and in its later phases)” (21-22).

her ability to perform the possible: to select, combine, and recombine available discourses in an innovative manner that is non-threatening and, therefore, recognizable, to the established social order. Her eventual success will depend partly on her ability to construct a viable identity from what normative codes had already labeled as an unchaste castoff—and partly on her audience's ability (and willingness) to recognize her current performance.⁵

Following the theoretical framework for tracking the emergence of the individualized subject proposed by George Mariscal in *Contradictory Subjects: Quevedo, Cervantes, and Seventeenth-Century Spanish Culture*, I argue that Dorotea, like Alonso Quijano, employs a variety of early modern discourses so as to constitute a possible subject position for herself. By possible I mean that it allows her to avoid further physical and psychic harm and that it allows others to consider her life as viable within the sociohistorical structure of the text. Although Mariscal traces the multiple, and often contradictory, discourses implicated in the construction of the aristocratic *male* subject, my study continues the work of scholars such as Anne J. Cruz and Rosilie Hernández-Pecoraro by focusing on the discourses surrounding gender and the female subject.⁶ I posit that Dorotea's success hinges on her decision to select and

5 As I conceptualize performativity, the audience—be it the listener within the text or the reader of the text—plays a major role in the possibility of the subject. Ultimately, it is the audience who rejects or accepts a performance as viable, thereby opening up or closing off that subject position not only for the performing subject but for themselves, too. Of course, this conceptualization posits an ethical obligation on the part of the audience. In *Witnessing: Beyond Recognition*, Kelly Oliver explains: “Our experience of ourselves as subjects is maintained in the tension between our subject positions and our subjectivity. Subject positions, although mobile, are constituted in our social interactions and our positions within our culture and context. They are determined by history and circumstance. Subject positions are our relations to the finite world of human history and relations—what we might call politics. Subjectivity, on the other hand, is experienced as the sense of agency and response-ability [sic] that are constituted in the infinite encounter with otherness, which is fundamentally ethical” (17). Because subject positions and subjectivity are socially constituted, “[w]e are obligated to respond to our environment and other people in ways that open up rather than close off the possibility of response” (15).

6 There have been several notable studies of Cervantes's female subjects and their use of discourse since Mariscal's influential book was published in 1991. The three that have most informed my own work are Anne J. Cruz's “Redressing Dorotea”; Rosilie Hernández-Pecoraro's “*Don Quijote's* Dorotea: Portrait of a Female Subject”; and Emilia Navarro's “Manual Control: ‘Regulatory Fictions’ and Their Discontents.” Cruz's influential study, originally published in

recombine two diverse discourses of the period: the popular conduct manuals for women and the economic treatises that were appearing in an attempt to remedy the ills of seventeenth-century Spain. Whereas her selection of conduct manuals—full of male-authored prescriptions for performing normative feminine subject positions—is perhaps an inevitable choice, her selection of economic discourses is more inventive. The pairing of the two is ingenious: just as “virtue” in the form of the dignity of one’s works was being used to contest the traditional values of blood and lineage in the normative discourses for men, this debate also had consequences for women—both historical and literary. Throughout her various performances, Dorotea’s combined iterations of the contradictory discourses of blood, lineage, virtue, and gender that were found in the conduct manuals and the economic treatises allow her to resist her triple-marginalization as a woman, as a non-virgin, and as a rich peasant. Her subjectivity, however, is not without Cervantine (Baroque) contradiction and paradox. In order to perform a possible life, Dorotea must be able to act, but she may only act within the parameters of her historical epoch. Her subjectivity (or sense of agency) is proscribed by her material conditions.

My analysis of the self-determining subject draws heavily upon Butler’s theory of performativity, in combination with a historicist theoretical approach. For Butler (as much as for Cervantine scholars like Maravall, Mariscal, and Rodríguez, all of whom are concerned with the material conditions of *Don Quijote’s* Spain), the free subject, as in the romanticized self-determining individual, does not exist prior to discourse or ideology.⁷ Rather, the subject is constituted through an endless iterative performance, which is to say, through a continuous repetition of available norms that are maintained by material conditions and social regulations. Gender, like any subject position, turns out to be

2000, was later expanded and republished in 2005 as “Dorotea’s Revenge: Sex and Speech Acts in *Don Quijote*, Part I.” All citations of Cruz come from the revised 2005 version, “Dorotea’s Revenge.” Two more related studies on Dorotea’s use of narrative include Mindy Badiá’s “Dorotea’s Autobiographies: Authority and Ambiguity in *Don Quijote*” and Alberto Villamandos’s “De Dorotea a Micomicona.”

7 For a brief comparison of Butler, Mariscal, and Rodríguez on their views of the “free subject,” see Butler, *Undoing Gender*; Mariscal, *Contradictory Subjects*; and Rodríguez, *Theory and History of Ideological Production*.

an enduring illusion that is perpetually constituted by bodily gestures, movements, speech, and other modes of representation. Given that performance is conditioned by the historical period in which it occurs, subjectivity should be understood in relation to the (re)combinations permitted by its ideological framework. In other words, if the subject is the result of a dynamic process of selection from amongst the competing—and often contradictory—discourses of a given sociohistorical context, then subjectivity comes from one's ability to use these inherited discourses. In *Undoing Gender*, Butler clarifies her notion of the subject and subjectivity as follows:

If I am someone who cannot *be* without *doing*, then the conditions of my doing are, in part, the conditions of my existence. If my doing is dependent on what is done to me or, rather, the ways in which I am done by norms, then the possibility of my persistence as an "I" depends on my being able to do something with what is done to me. [...] If I have any agency, it is opened up by the fact that I am constituted by a social world I never chose. That my agency is riven with paradox does not mean it is impossible. It means only that paradox is the condition of its possibility. (3)

Butlerian theory, therefore, agrees with the central tenets of the more materialist readings proposed by critics such as Maravall, Mariscal, and Rodríguez. First, the doing subject is both constituted and confined by the intersection of multiple discursive norms, norms that themselves come from a configuration of the interests and investments of various historical groups. Second, and in spite of these systems of exclusion (or, more precisely, because of them), there also emerge resistant or contestatory subject positions. And third, subjectivity is paradoxical in that the subject both does and is done—or undone—by norms.⁸ The com-

8 I am aware that a common critique of Butler is that she does not sufficiently consider the historical context of the discourses that are in play at any given moment. Butler herself has noted this charge, stating, "I confess, however, that I am not a very good materialist. Every time I try to write about the body, the writing ends up being about language" (198). Of course, materiality extends beyond the body and refers also to other productive forces such as socioeconomic relationships. My goal here is to link Butler's performance theory to the historical context of Spain's early modern economic transition in order to explore the appearance of the free female "I."

bination of these two theoretical approaches—performative and historicist—reveals that Dorotea, like her literary male counterparts, also desires to take control of her own life. In her performance of self, she appeals to a mix of traditional (feudal) and contestatory (mercantilist) discourses in order to construct an alternative female subject position that she considers viable. Drawing upon discourses that were intended to restrict women to limited social spaces and economic roles, Dorotea ironically cites these restrictive codes to enhance her social mobility and to justify her wandering.

In the reader's first encounter with Dorotea in the episode of the Sierra Morena, she is already a dishonored woman according to the discursive codes of sixteenth-century Spain (1.28:274). Dressed in drag as a shepherd, she tells her male audience—which consists of the curate, the barber, and Cardenio—of how she was publicly courted and eventually seduced by the treacherous Don Fernando, although not before she had secured his word that he be her “legítimo esposo” (1.28:282). Her situation, her attentive audience learns, was further complicated when the nobleman broke his clandestine marriage promise, left town, and decided to marry Luscinda, a beautiful noblewoman in a neighboring city. In that vulnerable moment of unviable subjectivity (no longer a virgin but also not Fernando's publicly recognized wife), Dorotea made the decision to *do something* with what had been *done to her*, and she donned male clothing and left in pursuit of Fernando.

By her own admission, however, Dorotea relates that her first attempt to construct an alternative subject position as a shepherd has been a failure. In seeking to distance herself from the unlivable subject position of *mujer engañada*, her initial performance as a male shepherd trespasses the intelligible limits of normative subjectivity. Much like Alonso Quijano's performance as the anachronistic Don Quijote, Dorotea's drag performance is censured through a series of corporal punishments by the men she encounters when she is forced to abandon her search for Fernando and flee to the Sierra Morena. Both her servant and her new master eventually condemn Dorotea's fraudulent gender performance through their violent attempts to rape her. Although she successfully fights off both assaults, she is at the point of despair when

she is discovered by Don Quijote's friends. Indeed, the sole reason that we hear Dorotea's story is because the farm girl turned shepherd is once more betrayed by the embodied norms of femininity. Her gender identity is again revealed when, hidden behind a rock, the three men secretly watch the shepherd as "he" takes off "his" cap and shakes free "his" abundant golden tresses (1.28:275-76). The knight's friends correctly read her gender performance as artifice and the despairing *labradora* acknowledges to her three spectators that "toda mi industria [...] ha sido de ningún provecho" (1.28:288). However, captivated by her beauty and intrigued by her disguise, they entreat Dorotea to relate just how she finds herself in such a place and position. Dorotea's failed cross-dressing performance, therefore, highlights the paradoxical nature of agency: it is at the moment when we fail to perform the norm that we are either incited or invited to perform again. Dorotea's newfound audience invites her to perform again, to narrate her self once more precisely because her performance fails when she is undone by the norms that construct the female body.⁹

Her second gender performance for Don Quijote's friends reveals yet another paradox of agency: it is often the very norms that undo us as subjects in the first place that we must later use to construct an alternative subject position. From the very beginning of her Sierra Morena performance, Dorotea appeals to the discursive codes that have undone her: virtue (she is no longer virgin and not yet a wife) and lineage (she is a peasant in a world where nobility matters). She constructs a mobile subjectivity that allows her to claim multiple subject positions, all sustained through a complex weave of dominant and emergent discourses. Using both the traditional and contestatory discourses surrounding these subjectivities, the jilted farmer's daughter now creates a multiple female subject position that is nonetheless intelligible within the dominant historical structure. Her self-introduction reveals both

9 This encounter also highlights the relational nature of agency put forth by Oliver: subjectivity requires an ethical obligation on the part of the audience. In this passage, Cervantes provides us with two very different responses to Dorotea's otherness. Her servant and her master respond with violence and effectively close off the possibility of further response on Dorotea's part. On the other hand, the curate, the barber, and Cardenio respond with curiosity and good will, thereby opening up the possibility of Dorotea's continued subjectivity.

an awareness and a criticism of her socioeconomic status in early modern Spain. She begins by stating:

[De un duque en Andalucía] son vasallos mis padres, humildes en linaje, pero tan ricos, que si los bienes de su naturaleza igualaran a los de su fortuna, ni ellos tuvieran más que desear ni yo temiera verme en la desdicha en que me veo, porque quizá nace mi poca ventura de la que no tuvieron ellos en no haber nacido ilustres. Bien es verdad que no son tan bajos que puedan afrentarse de su estado, ni tan altos que a mí me quiten la imaginación que tengo de que de su humildad viene mi desgracia. Ellos, en fin, son labradores, gente llana, sin mezcla de alguna raza malsonante y, como suele decirse, cristianos viejos ranciosos, pero tan ricos, que su riqueza y magnífico trato les va poco a poco adquiriendo nombre de hidalgos, y aun de caballeros. (1.28:278)

In her opening lines, Dorotea recognizes the discourses of blood and lineage as the principal institutions in the construction of self, and positions herself as a migrant subject in terms of both: she is an Old Christian peasant, but rich and socially mobile due to the emergent virtue of hard work. She allies herself with both the traditional discourse of blood (she is an Old Christian) and the contestatory discourse of works-versus-lineage when she identifies with the incipient class of rich farmer-laborers currently challenging the social hierarchy by steadily acquiring titles and their associated social benefits. At this point, Dorotea chooses to focus on her ethno-religious and class (estate) identities, only obliquely referring to her gender status when she mentions her "*desdicha*" and "*desgracia*" (1.28:278). Her definition allows her to migrate back and forth between dominant and emergent identities, a strategy that makes it difficult for her audience (and the reader) to associate her with any one category and, therefore, to easily judge and dismiss her. The slippage in her definition becomes most acute later when she addresses normative definitions of gender, namely, femininity as chastity.

Throughout her long narration (she speaks for twelve pages straight), Dorotea uses the contestatory concept of “mercantilist” virtue to displace the traditional concepts of virtue-as-lineage (nobility through birth) and chastity (sexual purity). In the incipient mercantilist discourse, “virtue” signifies “works” or “economic productivity” rather than the traditional meanings; that is, nobility for men and sexual purity for women.¹⁰ Dorotea’s Sierra Morena performance struggles to construct a multiple subject position—a position that allows her simultaneously to be a peasant *and* noble, a non-virgin *and* virtuous—from the singular identity categories available to her. Backed by her dominant position of blood and her contestatory position of mercantilist or works-based virtue, Dorotea takes critical aim at the conservative discourses of lineage and chastity when she asserts that it is mostly her lack of nobility that has contributed to her disgrace and her necessity to become unchastely mobile (in terms of class, geography, and gender). Her rhetorical strategy reveals the inextricable links between mobility (in all its modalities), virtue, gender, and class in early modern Spain.¹¹ In her attempt to explain and defend her chastity, Dorotea must also explain and defend her mobility.

I suggest that Dorotea is very well aware that mobility in any form is seen as a threat to the existing social order and, therefore, she knows that “those who engage in this sort of life are not viewed as recommendable subjects” within traditional discourses (Maravall, “Diphasic” 17). Mobility by men of the lower estates and by women in general was condemned as vice. For men, mobility was legally censured as a life of crime

10 Dorotea’s performance of “virtue” is quite complex as there were multiple discourses that employed the term. The traditional discourse of lineage defined virtue as nobility, especially for males. The traditional discourse of femininity defined virtue as chastity or sexual purity. The contestatory or mercantilist discourses of class and femininity challenged these meanings and sought to replace them with a definition of virtue as industriousness or economic productivity regardless of gender.

11 Maravall has exhaustively shown that the expansionist tendencies of the sixteenth century awakened aspirations of social mobility in several different forms. In “From the Renaissance to the Baroque: The Diphasic Schema of a Social Crisis,” he focuses on three modalities: “*horizontal mobility*, whether territorial or change of position; [...] *professional mobility*, or change of occupations; and [...] *ascendant vertical mobility*, or change of rank” (16; original emphasis). He explains, “The first—horizontal mobility—is discovered at the base of all the others, and perhaps the Middle Ages, which so tenaciously tried to discredit it, recognized that to hinder it was an efficacious means to close the door to the others” (16).

(vagabondage) and socially censured as the loss of virtue in terms of honor/status. For women, mobility was morally and socially denounced as a life of sexual promiscuity and loss of honor. For both genders, within traditional discourses, mobility indicated a loss of virtue and, therefore, an unviable subject position. In an attempt to explain and ameliorate her mobility, Dorotea simultaneously invokes the traditional discourse of virtue-as-chastity *and* the contestatory discourse of virtue-as-works. In order to effect this discursive duality, Dorotea must gamble on a spirited rhetorical move: she needs to double-down on her lost virginity in order to allegorize her role of jilted maiden as that of a decaying Spain. In telling her tale, she merges her personal story of lost virtue (in the sense of chastity) with that of the lost virtue of the nation (in the sense of industriousness). Her daring strategy seeks to create a dual subject position that will allow her both a domestic and a national role: if she succeeds and is recognized as Fernando's wife, she can act to increase not only the wealth of the *domus* but that of the *polis*, too. By linking her virtue in the traditional/feudal sense (lost chastity) to the nation's virtue in the mercantilist sense (lost works), she can charge that Don Fernando—and those depraved nobles like him—are ultimately responsible for both.

Beginning with the first line of her narration, Dorotea sets up her argument by aligning herself with the contestatory discourse of virtue espoused by the *arbitristas*, distinguishing her family's economic identity ("labradores [...] pero [...] ricos") from that of Fernando's ("los que llaman 'grandes' en España"), and by offering herself as the exemplar to fill the economic and moral gap left by Spain's failing nobility (1.28:278). Dorotea's narration seeks to highlight the social good that this new class of productive peasants is providing to the nation, an argument that also is prevalent in the economic treatises of the day.¹² Given that the nobility—and many of those seeking entrance into their ranks—viewed any type of manual labor as an affront to, and indeed a

12 For two valuable overviews of the incipient mercantilist discourse found in these treatises, see Lehfelddt; and Hernández-Pecoraro, "Cervantes's *Quixote*." Both studies examine numerous primary sources from the period and show that the *arbitristas* were actively involved in the construction of critical discourses and representations of gender (masculinity in the case of Lehfelddt and femininity in the case of Hernández-Pecoraro).

negation of, blood and lineage, many *arbitristas* were writing to change this opinion in favor of individual industriousness and the creation of national industry.¹³ In an often-cited opinion shared by many of the economic reformers of the day, Martín González de Cellorigo criticizes the “idleness” (*ociosidad*) of Spaniards, directly linking their unwillingness to do manual labor with the decline of the republic:

It is obvious that the reason why our kingdom is in trouble, why royal revenues have fallen, why the vassals have been ruined and the republic finished off, is the abusive and depraved tradition that has been introduced in this kingdom that holds that whoever does not live off of rents is not noble, and that all other forms of income, whether from agriculture or commerce or any other equally good and just trade, prevent one from being noble [...]. (qtd. in Cowans 139)

In an effort to save the waning nation, the *arbitristas* often recommended a reconceptualization of labor and nobility in order to cure the leisure-fever that had swept the land. In “Cervantes’s *Quixote* and the *Arbitrista* Reform Project,” Hernández-Pecoraro reiterates this finding: “the remedy proposed by economists such as [Mateo] López Bravo for Spain’s deplorable situation is for the population at large—including those who possess or aspire a title—to value manual labor once more” (175). Hernández-Pecoraro also quotes López Bravo as “irritably” instructing: “Hay cosas que repito muchas veces para que las oiga una: las artes mecánicas deben ser honradas; la mayor deshonra es la ociosidad” (175). Due to famine and plague, many economic treatises spe-

¹³ One simply needs to peruse a small sampling of titles of the *arbitrios* or economic treatises in order to observe the antipathy of the reformers toward the current vogue of idleness (*ociosidad*) in Spain: *Los bienes del honesto trabajo y daños de la ociosidad en ocho discursos* (1614) by Pedro de Guzmán; *Noticia general para la estimación de las artes* (1600) by Gaspar Gutiérrez de los Ríos, which ends with an “Exortación a la honra y favor de los que trabajan contra los ociosos, para las personas de todos estados”; *Discurso sobre el acrecentamiento de la labor de la tierra* (1607) and *Discurso contra la ociosidad* (1608) by Pedro de Valencia, both of which can be found in his *Obras completas* (see volume 4.1). For an insightful summary of Valencia’s socioeconomic writings, see Magnier.

cifically singled out agriculture or farming for praise. In his *Memorial*, González de Cellorigo insists that “[Farming] is so honorable and noble that there is no office or occupation that equals it” (qtd. in Cowans 139). In a similar sentiment, Gaspar Gutiérrez de los Ríos dedicates an entire chapter (*Libro IV*) of his *Noticia general para la estimación de las artes* to argue for a reestimation of the honor acquired through agriculture: “Pero de todas las cosas y artes, en que se adquiere algún provecho, ninguna hay mejor que la agricultura, ninguna hay más dulce, ni más abundante, ni más digna de un hombre libre” (230/260).¹⁴ Later, he goes on to lament:

A tanto pues ha llegado el menosprecio del trabajo, y descomedimiento de la ociosidad, que ya algunos hombres de bajos principios les parece que para ganar nobleza e hidalguía sus hijos, importa mucho que sean ociosos: de que han resultado y resultan los grandes daños que vemos. ¿Qué es esto Dios? ¿No es lastimosa cosa que tengan mayor lugar en la república los que la destruyen, que aquellos que la hacen y conservan? (256/286)

Dorotea echoes these mercantilist assertions of the reformers, making it pointedly clear in her self-introduction to Don Quijote's friends that she belongs to the “honorable and noble” class of farmer-laborers who are working diligently to restore the republic. The cause of her dislocation, on the contrary, is the youngest son of an Andalusian Duke, one of these leisured noblemen who lives off the rents of his land rather than farm it himself.¹⁵ Dorotea goes on to explain:

14 Citations from Gutiérrez de los Ríos and Pedro de Guzmán come from accessible digitized editions at the Hathi Trust Digital Library (scanned from the original at the Universidad Complutense de Madrid). I have given two page numbers for all citations: the first refers to the original text; the second refers to the digitized PDF. I have modernized the Spanish from the original.

15 On this view of Don Fernando as a *noble ocioso*, I disagree with Francisco Márquez Villanueva. Although the critic fervently shows that it is solely Dorotea's artful rhetoric that proves the peasant girl's social worth and persuades Fernando to raise her up as his lawful wife, he cannot accept that Fernando might be unworthy of “la energía y la despierta inteligencia” of Dorotea (27). He states, “No estamos, en aquellas páginas cervantinas, ante un ataque contra la irresponsabilidad moral de la nobleza ociosa, reservado para los Duques de la Segunda Parte,

Es, pues, el caso que, pasando *mi vida en tantas ocupaciones* y en un encerramiento tal, que al de un monasterio pudiera compararse, [...] los [ojos] del amor, *o los de la ociosidad, por mejor decir*, [...] *me vieron*, puestos en la solicitud de don Fernando que éste es el nombre del hijo menor del duque que os he contado. (I.28:279; my emphasis)

Dorotea performs as the diligent *doncella*, while she represents Fernando as the *noble desocupado*. Her performance appeals to the contestatory discourse of virtue-as-works in order to construct a more capacious subject position for herself. Ironically, however, in the conduct manuals of the period, this very same discourse is used to do precisely the opposite: to again exclude women from the public sphere and reinscribe them within the domestic.

The ideological debate of virtue as the dignity of one's works against the conservative values of blood and lineage, common in early modern economic treatises and picaresque literature, also made its way into the conduct manuals for women, didactic texts that were written to interpellate a normative female subject. Just as the appearance of a moneyed class—urban or rural—precipitated reformulations in the social codes for men, it also affected women's roles. For women, however, these reformulations occurred within the domestic rather than the public sphere. As the moralists prescribed the role and the place of women in early modern Spain, they often presented contradictory arguments that registered the conflictive encounter of traditional feudal discourses with contestatory mercantilist discourses. In particular, in their well-known conduct manuals for women (read, wives), Juan Luis Vives, *La formación de la mujer christiana* (1523), and Fray Luis de León, *La perfecta casada* (1584), maintain the classical conception of woman as the weaker sex and do-

pues si don Fernando abusa de su poderío, también se someterá más tarde a sus obligaciones de hombre de honor y de cristiano" (32). On the contrary, I believe that we do witness an attack in Dorotea's tale on the moral, social, and economic irresponsibility caused by an idle nobility in general, and Don Fernando in particular. In "Dorotea's Revenge," Cruz also finds it difficult "to accept [Márquez Villanueva's] approving opinion of Fernando" and provides a convincing argument as to the nobleman's "amoral cunning and uncontrolled passion" (622).

mestic helpmate while exploring the possibility that she might be able to overcome this weakness for the good of both the domestic unit and her own self-fulfillment.¹⁶ Both Vives and Fray Luis assert that women do possess the intellectual capacity to learn—and indeed should be instructed in a variety of fields—only to insist that this knowledge cannot transcend the domestic sphere without tarnishing female chastity. The goal of their conduct manuals is not that women self-fashion their own independent identities but rather that they forego the new mercantilist possibilities for identity and agency by becoming the domestic steward whom the moralists themselves seek to fashion.¹⁷ Nonetheless, both Vives and Fray Luis posit a nascent form of female agency and individualism, even if they only wish to outline this new female subjectivity so as to reinscribe it within the normative domestic sphere.¹⁸ As shown below, Dorotea represents the female subject whom Vives and Fray Luis fear and seek to contain: a woman who understands that, while the conduct manuals may offer a very limited set of norms for self-fashioning, anyone can manipulate the norms in order to remake themselves, and they can do so in limitless combinations and recombinations.

16 Georgina Dopico Black's lucid exploration of the subject position of wife in early modern Spain, *Perfect Wives, Other Women*, is helpful here in understanding the contradictory role that conduct manual literature played in shaping female self-representation. She explains: "On one hand, there is little question that the conduct manuals for wives form part of the broader prescriptive tradition associated with an early modern subjectivity, with the ability, in other words, to fashion and, more importantly, refashion the Self. On the other hand, however, the manuals for wives generally repudiate all forms of wifely mutability; the greatest threat of makeup, for example, [...] is precisely that it empowers women with the ability to remake themselves as something 'other' than what they truly are [...]. The wife of the conduct manuals is, in this respect, walking a precariously fine line between subjectivity and surveillance: she is at once exhorted to perfect herself and immediately censured for the agency she displays in doing so" (14-15).

17 See also Greenblatt.

18 For an interesting analysis of both the strengths and weaknesses of the contributions of Vives and Fray Luis to the "woman question," see Martí. In his essay, "El oficio de mujer en las obras de Juan Luis Vives y Fray Luis de León," Martí posits that both authors hold beliefs that distance their works from the most "irrational points of patriarchal thought" (375), such as the view that all women are equally sinful and incapable of learning. As Martí indicates, however, this more liberal approach does not change the fact that they do so in an attempt to reinforce the traditional role of woman as wife and mother (380). For another informative study of conduct manual literature, see Navarro.

After she establishes her economic identity as the daughter of rich Andalusian peasants, Dorotea begins to construct her gender identity as the perfect wife, linking her daily activities overseeing her father's estate to the roles laid out for wives in the manuals of Vives and Fray Luis. In this section of her narration, she continues to evade the problematic issue of her inability to guard her chastity as a *doncella* and concentrates on establishing her ability to manage a household as the exemplary *mujer casada*:

Y del mismo modo que yo era señora de sus ánimos, así lo era de su hacienda: por mi se recibían y despedían los criados; la razón y cuenta de lo que se sembraba y cogía pasaba por mi mano; los molinos de aceite, los lagares del vino, el número del ganado mayor y menor, el de las colmenas; finalmente, de todo aquello que un tan rico labrador como mi padre puede tener y tiene, tenía yo la cuenta, y era la *mayordoma y señora*, con tanta solicitud mía y con tanto gusto suyo, que buenamente no acertaré a encarecerlo. (1.28:278; my emphasis)

In this passage, Dorotea ignores the technicality that she is not Fernando's legally recognized wife and, therefore, is socially recognized only as a *doncella engañada*. Her maintenance of a sense of self depends upon her ability to escape the norms by which recognition is conferred; namely, *honestidad* or sexual chastity. To this end, Dorotea employs a type of strategic discursive wandering throughout the remainder of her performance before the curate, the barber, and Cardenio. She both evades and returns to the traditional role of chaste maiden and the incipient role of perfect wife (or productive individual). For the moment, she positions herself as *already* the perfect wife according the norms put forth in the conduct manuals. This mobile positioning is calculated to align with the contestatory lessons of the conduct manuals, as described by Fray Luis, who especially focuses on female perfection as works-versus-virginity. Of course, in *La perfecta casada*, Fray Luis does not suggest that female chastity is no longer an important element of feminine subjectivity. On the contrary, he tells us that he does not

dwell upon chastity here because without it a woman cannot be a wife or, indeed, even a woman. Assuming, then, that sexual virtue is innate to the subjectivity of *wife*, the moralist instructs his reader that the first act of self-fashioning by the *perfect* wife should be to enhance her capacity for home economics. He explains:

la primera [obra a que está obligada la casada] es que ha de engendrar en el corazón de su marido una gran confianza [...]. [A] mi parecer, el Espíritu Sancto no trata aquí [de la honestidad], y la razón por que no la trata es justísima [...]. [S]u intento es componernos aquí una casada perfecta, y el ser honesta una mujer no se cuenta ni debe contar entre las partes de que esta perfección se compone, sino antes es [...] como el ser y la substancia de la casada; porque, si no tiene esto, no es ya mujer, sino alevosa ramera[.] (38, 40)

After a brief departure to enumerate the reasons why chastity does not count in the pursuit of wifely self-fashioning, Fray Luis does arrive a few pages later at his explanation of how the married woman can “inspire great confidence in the heart of her husband”:

[L]a primera parte y la primera obra con que la mujer casada se perficiona, es con hacer a su marido confiado y seguro que, teniéndola a ella, para tener su casa bastada y rica no tiene necesidad de correr la mar, ni de ir a la guerra, ni de dar sus dineros a logro, [...] sino que, con labrar él sus heredades, cogiendo su fructo, y con tenerla a ella por guarda y por beneficiadora de lo cogido, tiene riqueza bastante. (44)

Mimicing Fray Luis, Dorotea's performance “does not deal here with chastity.” Rather, like him, her intent here is to present herself as the *perfect* wife, which means that her chastity is an essential element of her subjectivity that can be passed over in silence. Dorotea's performance of wifely perfection highlights her proven record of achievement as the *mayordoma* of her father's estate. According to the precept established by Fray Luis, Dorotea has achieved wifely perfection.

Dorotea performs as wife when she resourcefully self-fashions as Fray Luis's ideal household manager and manual laborer, displaying women's virtue *as works*. Due to the great wealth of her parents, her status as an only child, and her well-established ability to run a household, Don Fernando has no need to continue his own fruitless wanderings. He can join Dorotea, his morally if not legally recognized wife, in the productive activities of tilling the land and increasing his wealth.

Dorotea's performance here, therefore, is focused on repeating the emergent norms of femininity found in Fray Luis's interpellation of the perfect wife. Significantly, his message, in turn, is a repetition of the argument put forth by the *arbitristas*, which Fray Luis then shapes for his female readers and the domestic sphere. His manual instructs women in the ways of frugality and conservation, the management of servants, industriousness, the avoidance of idleness (*ocio*), and resourcefulness (or what twenty-first century readers would term "self-actualization" or "empowerment," which is to say the belief in one's own abilities). Dorotea mimics this code when she enumerates her lucrative management of the servants, the fields, the livestock, the mills, and the presses. Given Fernando's class status, the success or failure of her performance has implications that reach beyond Dorotea's immediate subject position. Her success as Fray Luis's perfect wife can "inspire confidence" not only in the heart of Don Fernando but also that of the republic. As a leisured *segundón*, Fernando will not inherit his father's property and, according to Dorotea's account, he is not presently employed in any useful activity.¹⁹ Based on his status as second son, Hernández-Pecoraro explains that "Fernando cannot aspire to be in command of his family's estate and will always depend on the good will of his father and older brother for sustenance" ("*Don Quijote's* Dorotea" 22). An alliance with Dorotea would change that. Therefore, while Dorotea is not yet recognized as Fernando's wife by the normative and legal discourses of sixteenth-century Spain, she seeks to perform as such not only in a general, exemplary sense, but to perform as the perfect wife *for a noble-*

19 Cruz points out that Dorotea's account of Fernando's character and activities is corroborated first by the shepherds who have encountered Cardenio at the end of part one, chapter twenty-three and then by Cardenio himself in part one, chapter twenty-four (622).

man like *Fernando*. Her performance willfully avoids her *honestidad* and offers an image of wifely perfection based on works and not virginity. She thereby contests the normative definition of women's virtue as fully dependent upon their chastity, a change that is good for both Dorotea and the nation.

Ultimately, however, Dorotea must deal with the discursive trespass created by her lost virginity outside the limits of a legally-sanctioned and socially-recognized marriage. Due to the clandestine nature of her marriage to *Fernando*, Dorotea initially seeks to distance herself from the role of *doncella engañada* by asserting her identity as *perfecta casada*. She now continues her strategic discursive wandering by moving away from her performance of virtue-as-works in order to return to the traditional norms of women's virtue as sexual chastity. In this section of her story, Dorotea embraces the normative discourse of femininity that undid her as a subject at the beginning of her tale. She performs these norms here so as to prove that when she was not employed as the *already* perfect wife in the administration of her parent's estate, she was the perfect maiden *preparing* for her role as wife. Her performance here mimics the teaching of Vives in *La formación de la mujer cristiana*. In this manual, Vives divides his work into three books, with the first dedicated to the conduct of the *doncella*, and the remaining two to *casadas* and *viudas*. Despite this tripartite subject position, the text constructs female subjectivity as a whole as existing only in relation to a husband. As the structure shows, a woman's life is divided into three phases: 1) maidenhood, the time in which she has known no man but prepares for a husband; 2) marriage, the time in which she is her husband's domestic helpmate; and 3) widowhood, the time in which she mourns her husband. By weaving the norms of chaste maiden into her performance of the perfect wife, Dorotea establishes a multiple subject position that is and has been crafted around the needs not only of the men in her life (as per the moralists) but also of the nation (as per the *arbitristas*).

In his chapter titled "Los primeros ejercicios [de la doncella]," Vives admonishes parents:

La lectura es, ciertamente, lo mejor y lo que aconsejo más que las restantes actividades; pero cuando la joven se encuentre ya cansada de tanto leer, *yo no la puedo ver ociosa* [...]. San Jerónimo quiere que [la mujer] aprenda a hilar la lana, sujetar la rueca, colocar el canastillo en el regazo, hacer rodar el huso y hacer correr los hilos con el pulgar [...]. Porque el arte de labrar la lana fue siempre un ejercicio y una destreza propia de la mujer honesta. (46-47; my emphasis)

Echoing the words of Vives as she addresses her audience, Dorotea presents herself to her audience as the dutiful Christian virgin, preparing herself for the sacred role of wife. She states that, as opposed to the wasted leisure time of Don Fernando, she spent her free time “en ejercicios que son a las doncellas tan lícitos como necesarios, como son los que ofrece la aguja y la almohadilla, y la rueca muchas veces” (1.28:279). If she took a break from these activities from time to time, it was only to refresh her spirits “al [...] leer algún libro devoto, o a tocar una harpa” (1.28:279). In addition to her earlier highlights of her role as perfect domestic administrator, Dorotea now goes directly to the heart of the matter and reports that she also obsessively guarded her chastity. She assures her male audience that, at the time of Fernando’s unsolicited attentions, she spent her life “en tantas ocupaciones y en un encierro tal, que al de un monasterio pudiera compararse” (1.28:279). When she left the house, it was to go to mass, accompanied by her mother and servants, always “tan cubierta y recatada, que apenas vían mis ojos más tierra de aquella donde ponía los pies” (1.28:279). As she begins to reveal the details of her case, Dorotea simultaneously self-fashioning as Vives’s *doncella honesta* and Fray Luis’s *mujer perfecta*. Her insistence on her chastity as maiden (despite her sexual encounter with Fernando) *and* the dignity of her works as wife (despite her lack of a sanctioned marriage) posits a subject position that is both non-virgin and non-wife yet nonetheless virtuous. Her multifaceted subject position challenges the traditional value system that idolized the virginal state of the female body and held women responsible for the actions of men. At the same time, her refusal to relinquish either role—*doncella*

honesta or *perfecta casada*—also allows her to avoid culpability and to align herself with the norms of the very value system that she is critiquing: she was the perfect virgin until the moment that she became Fernando's perfect wife. Both the lack and the culpability are all his. She declares:

Ésta, pues, era la vida que yo tenía en casa de mis padres, la cual si tan particularmente he contado no ha sido por ostentación ni por dar a entender que soy rica, sino *porque se advierta cuán sin culpa me he venido de aquel buen estado que he dicho al infelice en que ahora me hallo*. [...] Mas por acabar presto con el cuento, que no le tiene, de mis desdichas, quiero pasar en silencio las diligencias que don Fernando hizo para declararme su voluntad: sobornó toda la gente de mi casa, dio y ofreció dádivas y mercedes a mis parientes; *los días eran todos de fiesta y de regocijo en mi calle, las noches no dejaban dormir a nadie las músicas*[.] (1.28:279-80; my emphasis)

Dorotea asserts that the true cause of her lack of virginity was the *ociosidad* of Don Fernando. Unwilling to employ himself in more fruitful tasks, the nobleman spent his days and nights engaged in the undoing of Dorotea. In her study of *arbitrista* reform projects, Hernández-Pecoraro finds that leisure was often spoken of as an illness that led to the pillage of the republic and societal decay. She observes that Gutiérrez de los Ríos, one of the many *arbitristas* who extolled the contestatory virtue of work, “argued that the malady of unproductive *ocio* had corrupted the republic, making the ‘body’ sick, and allowing for those who do not generate any matter of substance to prey on and belittle those who do” (“Cervantes’s *Quixote*” 180). Pedro de Guzmán goes even further in his *Los bienes del honesto trabajo y daños de la ociosidad en ocho discursos*, with an entire discourse dedicated to the social ills that spring from unchecked leisure (“Discurso II”). In a section titled “La ociosidad, es causa del vicio de la lujuria, y destruidora de Imperios,” Guzmán could be speaking directly to the case of Don Fernando when he admonishes: “Entre los demás vicios, singularmente el de la lujuria anda anexo al de la ociosidad. *La fornicación* (dice San Juan Chrisostomo) *es vicio par-*

ticular de los ociosos: y el mismo en otra parte, El vicio de la lujuria fácilmente nace del ocio, y desocupación, porque la definición del amor es esta: Pasión del ánimo ocioso" (77/115). Thus, in Dorotea's retelling of the tale, the perfect *doncella-casada* ingeniously displaces both blame and lack by privileging the contestatory norms of virtue-as-works, which ironically allows her to preserve her virtue-as-chastity, too. By echoing the reformers' treatises, she makes it clear that it is *Fernando's* lack (of industriousness) and not hers (of virginity) that is to blame for her displacement and unchaste mobility. The traumatized Dorotea evades the suspicion that traditionally accompanied the declaration of innocence by a dishonored woman by appealing to the incipient discourse of works-versus-lineage that was circulating in both masculine economic spaces and the feminine domestic sphere. Likewise, she simultaneously authorizes her innocence by downplaying her agency at this moment, self-fashioning as the helpless victim of Fernando's pernicious idleness. This move reinforces her allegory of woman as nation by replicating the contestatory discourse of the *arbitristas* that portrayed the nation as feminine victim, undone by idle and immoral noblemen.

Before her sympathetic audience of Cardenio, the curate, and the barber, Dorotea insists that, in spite of having vigorously guarded her chastity, Don Fernando, the youngest son of her parents' lord, saw her, fell hopelessly in love with her, and pursued her tirelessly, having nothing better to do with his time. In a remarkably revolutionary moment in the development of the individualized female subject, the peasant girl reveals that it was only by pure virtue (read, chastity) and will-power that she rejected the nobleman, because she cannot deny that she quite enjoyed his elegance and poise, and she was not at all put off by his initial solicitations. On the contrary, she admits to her audience that "me daba un no sé qué de contento verme tan querida y estimada de un tan principal caballero, y no me pesaba ver en sus papeles mis alabanzas" (I.28:280). Her acknowledgement is revolutionary not only because she gives voice to female desire, but also because she reveals a consciousness of the fact that the alliance would allow her to ascend socially (*medrar*). However, contrary to other critics' reading of Dorotea, I do not wish to suggest that she is an ambitious gold digger

that somehow provoked or permitted her own sexual assault.²⁰ I only wish to indicate that Dorotea was conscious of her class standing and valued her own person as equal to that of Don Fernando; both her class-consciousness and her self-esteem are indicative of the emergent discourses that accompanied the transition from feudalism to early capitalism. Even more revolutionary, this acknowledgment indicates a level of self-control and prudence that the authors of the conduct manuals considered impossible for women. By her own admission, Dorotea was attracted to Fernando and interested in the social possibilities that he represented; however, she also makes clear that she understood the falsity of his motives and accepted the sound advice of her parents. In this way, she reveals herself to be more measured and virtuous (both in the sense of chastity and industriousness) than the nobleman himself. She is truly *una hija de sus obras* (2.32:800), proving once again that it was Fernando's lack that disrupted the social order, not hers. The *segundón*, pushed by his "lascivo apetito" and softened by his life of leisure, was unable to control his desires and opted to take by force what Dorotea would not give him by choice (1.28:281).

In a disturbing account of her sexual assault, Dorotea seeks to provide her audience with a detailed psychological profile.²¹ Dorotea relates that when she found herself scandalously alone in her room with Fernando, after a brief fainting spell, she mastered her panic and

20 Several critics have read Dorotea's acknowledgment of class difference as ambition, vanity, and narcissism. For a concise summary and colorful rebuttal of critics' readings of Dorotea as a calculated social climber, see Márquez Villanueva. In refuting these critics' charges of Dorotea's coldhearted social climbing, Márquez Villanueva astutely notes that Dorotea constructs this narrative after the fact, as an "apologia pro vita sua" (2920). While he means to explicate Dorotea's love-struck surrender to Don Fernando, I would suggest that this after-the-fact apologia is not an effort to explain her heat-of-the-moment capitulation to Fernando but rather an indication of her awareness of self as subject. Her apologia reveals an ability to manipulate existing discourses (in this case, those of blood, class, and virtue) so as to do something with what had already been done to her. For another sustained analysis of the interpretation of Dorotea by critics, see also Cruz, "Dorotea's Revenge."

21 Cruz examines this profile in detail, stating: "In that it demonstrates his ability to flesh out the moral and psychological tensions prevalent in women's relations with men, Cervantes' depiction of Dorotea's inner feelings is one of his greatest achievements as an author. So far as I know, Dorotea's uncompromisingly honest confession of her mixed emotions when ardently pursued by Fernando reveals a profound self-knowledge never before articulated by any feminine character in Spanish letters" ("Dorotea's Revenge" 624).

employed good judgment while she tried to reason with her aggressor. First, the young farm girl appealed to the discursive codes of lineage, trying to persuade the nobleman to stop his madness and to consider how his parents and his peers would view such an unequal marriage. When this strategy failed, Dorotea abandoned traditional discursive norms and turned to the contestatory discourse of virtue-as-works in an effort to assert her own rights as an individual: “Tu vasalla soy, pero no tu esclava; ni tiene ni debe tener imperio la nobleza de tu sangre para deshonorar y tener en poco la humildad de la mía; y en tanto me estimo yo, villana y labradora, como tú, señor y caballero. [...] Todo esto he dicho porque no es pensar que de mí alcance cosa alguna el que no fuere mi legítimo esposo” (1.28:282). As she relates, throughout her attempt to reason with Fernando, the beautiful peasant insisted not only on her right to maintain her chastity for her legitimate future husband, but more generally on her right to live a life of her own choosing, regardless of her class standing.²² Though he was unwilling to give up his pursuit, Don Fernando could not ignore Dorotea’s logic nor her promise to fight him off by any means. Beyond virtue and conscious only of his desired end, the nobleman ended the struggle by swearing to be her lawful husband before an image of the Virgin as witness. Once again, Dorotea’s audience observes an unprecedented development in female subjectivity when she relates how she considered and evaluated her limited options. She recounts that she consoled herself with Fernando’s offer by reasoning that:

‘Sí, que no seré yo la primera que por vía de matrimonio haya subido de humilde a grande estado [...]. Pues si no hago ni mundo

22 In this sense, Dorotea’s life, like that of Alonso Quijano, is an “*elección de vida*.” In *El autor que compró su propio libro*, Rodríguez discusses Quijano’s anachronistic or paradoxical “*elección de vida*” as follows: “Don Quijote ha dado *dos pasos atrás* [...] *para dar un paso decisivo hacia delante*: elegir su propia vida libremente. Una ‘elección’ de vida que hubiera sido absolutamente imposible cien años antes, algo que sólo es posible ahora, en el mundo de la libertad del primer capitalismo, precisamente el que ha hundido (o está hundiendo) a los hidalgos” (122). Ultimately, Dorotea, too, will take two steps back in order to take one meaningful step forward. In her case, she will not choose an anachronistic role but rather an ironic one, that of Fernando’s wife. Both Dorotea and Don Quijote construct their own livable lives by using the very norms that undid them at the start of their stories.

ni uso nuevo, bien es acudir a esta honra que la suerte me ofrece, puesto que en éste no dure más la voluntad que me muestra de cuanto dure el cumplimiento de su deseo; que, en fin, para con Dios seré su esposa. Y si quiero con desdenes despedille, en término le veo que, no usando el que debe, usará el de la fuerza, y vendré a quedar deshonorada y sin disculpa [...]. [P]orque ¿qué razones serán bastantes para persuadir a mis padres, y a otros, que este caballero entró en mi aposento sin consentimiento mío?' (I.28:283)

Dorotea knew that Fernando was going to take what he desired by force or by consent; which is to say, she could either fight him off physically and be dishonored regardless of whether or not she escaped his advances, or she could accept his clandestine marriage offer and act within the constraints of her social norms, thereby avoiding her undoing as subject.

The peasant's daughter relates that she was fully aware that, according to the traditional discursive codes of gender (*honestidad*), she was already a dishonored woman by the simple presence of the nobleman in her room. Whether his offer was motivated by love or necessity (Dorotea did not deceive herself into believing that his offer would stand once his desire had been sated), she knew that her only option was to do *something* with what was being done to her. Paradoxically, her acceptance of Fernando's clandestine marriage offer was precisely what gave her agency and permitted her, however limitedly, to deal with the actions of the other. Dorotea assures her audience that she did not simply accept the word of her unrestrained suitor. Showing a presence of mind that belied both her age and her gender (according to the moralists), Dorotea accepted his offer, but only after she made him repeat his promise before her servant and sign a written statement. These details indicate a keen awareness of legal discourse on her part, providing Dorotea with an earthly witness and physical documentation that she will later be able to use to her own advantage.²³ Her acceptance

23 For an incisive discussion of the social functions of clandestine marriage and the juridical discourses at play in the Dorotea-Fernando episode (i.e., the *Fuero Juzgo* and the decrees of the Council of Trent), see Cruz, "Dorotea's Revenge." Cruz begins her analysis by stating: "Cervantes utilizes the notion of clandestine marriage not merely as a literary device

of Fernando's offer provided her the only possible means of avoiding total objectification: with his vow, she could relocate from virgin to wife, thereby creating a discursive space in which she—as wife—could continue to exist as subject.

Furthermore, as she reenacts her tale in the Sierra Morena, this extracted promise assures her male audience that, although her plan has gone poorly, Dorotea-as-wife has the authority to pursue Don Fernando and to attempt to make him fulfill his obligations as husband. As Fray Luis insists to his would-be perfect wives:

[M]uchas veces la mujer cristiana y fiel, al marido que es infiel le gana y hace su semejante. Y así, no han de pensar que pedirles esta virtud es pedirles lo que no pueden hacer, *porque si alguno puede con el marido, es la mujer sola*. Y si la caridad cristiana obliga al bien del estraño, ¿cómo puede pensar la mujer que no está obligada a ganar y a mejorar su marido? (224; my emphasis)

According to both traditional and emergent codes of gender, Dorotea not only has the right but the obligation to follow after her husband and to convince him that *he also* should do good works and live rightly. Dorotea's longed-for encounter with her husband does not occur until eight chapters after we are introduced to the rich and beautiful peasant. Throughout these chapters, she establishes herself as both chaste maiden and perfect wife—as well as a discreet reader—and enjoys a male audience that is fully convinced of her feminine virtues (both traditional and emergent). As prophesized by Solomon and explicated by Fray Luis, Dorotea—like the perfect wife in Proverbs—is worthy to be publicly praised based on “los [...] fructos [...] de sus manos, esto es, de sus obras” (Fray Luis 258). Her male audience esteems her as chaste, prudent, and industrious, pledging their assistance in seeing that Dorotea's desire be realized and that she be recognized as Fernando's wife. Cardenio, in particular, pronounces her story to be true and declares: “pues siendo

to advance the plot, but as the focus of [Dorotea's and Luscinda's] rhetorical strategies and the self-fashioning of their female psyche. In the process, he also reveals the character flaws of the two male figures” (620).

verdad, como creo que lo es, lo que aquí habéis contado, [...] yo os juro por la fe de caballero y de cristiano de no desampararos hasta veros en poder de don Fernando” (I.29:290). Thus, at the end of her second performance, Don Quijote’s friends, as ethical witnesses, give faith to her lived experiences and foster her emergent subjectivity by validating her autobiography as true and her constructed identity as possible. In her encounter with Don Fernando, however, Dorotea unites and employs all of these contradictory discourses in order to realize a new end: that of returning the nobleman to *his* place as the perfect husband. In other words, while Dorotea’s performance before Don Quijote’s friends interpellates her as subject; her performance before Don Fernando interpellates him as subject as well.

Although Dorotea emphasizes a combination of chastity and industry in her autobiographical performance, at the inn she will add the religious discourse of conjugal love to her initial combination of chastity and works. Her itinerant discursive strategy again reveals Dorotea’s perceptiveness of self and others: she recognizes not only her own multiple subject positions but those of her audience as well. She uses this knowledge to select the discourse—or discourses—that best suit the needs of each situation. When she encounters her errant husband, her performance is constituted by a complex web of subjectivities, alternating between “I am” and “you are” (“*yo soy*” and “*tú eres*”):

Yo soy aquella labradora humilde a quien tú, por tu bondad o por tu gusto, quisiste levantar a la alteza de poder llamarse tuya; soy la que, encerrada en los límites de la honestidad, vivió vida contenta hasta que a las voces de tus importunidades y, al parecer, justos y amorosos sentimientos abrió las puertas de su recato y te entregó las llaves de su libertad, dádiva de ti tan mal agradecida cual lo muestra bien claro haber sido forzoso hallarme en el lugar donde me hallas y verte yo a ti de la manera que te veo. (I.36:378)

In her address to Fernando, Dorotea again underlines her humble state and the nobility of her suitor-husband; an act that calls upon the traditional subjectivities of each, and reminds the nobleman of his so-

cial obligations according to the discourses of blood and lineage. In addition, Dorotea repeats her previous declarations of sexual purity (*honestidad*) and reminds him of his earlier “feelings of love,” feelings that led her to “open the doors of her chastity and modesty.” Her address cleverly suggests a freedom of choice on both sides: Don Fernando first chose Dorotea as his wife, and Dorotea metaphorically chose to open the door to him (a material luxury that she did not have in their fated encounter). Her insistence on the love that exists between the two will distress twenty-first century readers less if we recall the young peasant woman’s historical context. According to early modern gender norms and moral authorities such as Vives and Fray Luis, the virtue of conjugal love formed part of the “holy trinity” of wifely virtues, which Vives names as chastity, great love for one’s husband, and household administration.²⁴ Dorotea authorizes her speech by following the holy instructions given by Vives in the section of his manual dedicated to *casadas*:

Mujer honesta, prepárate ya desde un principio de *unir a ti en el amor* a quien Dios unió mediante el sacramento. [...] Por encima de todas estas particularidades se encuentra aquel primer principio de las leyes conyugales y no sé si tal vez, el único: ‘Serán dos en una sola carne.’ Este es el quicio del matrimonio, el vínculo de esta sagrada sociedad. [...] Este precepto es muy parecido a aquél que Cristo tantas veces declaró que era el único que dejaba a sus discípulos, ‘*que se amaran los unos a los otros.*’ Es sapientísimo Hacedor de los afectos humanos no ignoraba que, cualquier sociedad que caminase con el cortejo de ese componente, en absoluto estaría necesitada de otras leyes, edictos, estatutos, pactos o convenios[.] (200-02; my emphasis)

24 Vives constructs his entire treatise on married women around these three virtues, declaring: “Entre las virtudes propias de la mujer casada, conviene que tenga dos de máxima importancia [...]. Estas virtudes son la castidad y un gran amor al marido” (205). He spends the majority of the treatise explicating these two virtues. The third virtue, “la pericia en gobernar la casa,” is addressed only toward the end of his treatise and is treated in only one chapter, “Capítulo X” (301). Sixty years later, Fray Luis will expand on this final theme, dedicating almost his entire treatise to the relationship between domestic labor and feminine virtue.

By situating the beginning of her story in an affective context of the protagonists' choosing, Dorotea validates their clandestine marriage with both religious and legal discourses and obligates Fernando to fulfill the duties of the sacrament in which he willingly participated. Although for Vives the responsibility for cultivating and maintaining marital bliss pertains solely to the wife, sixty years later Fray Luis does address the gender norms expected of the husband. In *La perfecta casada*, the husband's reciprocal charge is clear:

Porque, aunque es verdad que la naturaleza y estado pone obligación en la casada, como decimos, de mirar por su casa y de alegrar y descuidar continuamente a su marido, de la cual ninguna mala condición dél la desobliga, pero no por eso han de pensar ellos que tienen licencia para serles leones y para hacerlas esclavas; antes, como en todo lo demás es la cabeza el hombre, así *todo este trato amoroso y honroso ha de tener principio del marido* [...]. Y esto Sant Pablo, o en Sant Pablo Jesucristo, lo manda así, [...] diciendo (*I Cor.*, 13): '*Vosotros los maridos, amad a vuestras mujeres* [...].' (62, 64; my emphasis).

Dorotea uses the religious discourse of love found in the conduct manuals for wives to achieve her own desire: she avoids the dishonor attached to the questionable beginning of her marriage, and she interpellates Don Fernando as her husband. If their story began with the "just and amorous sentiments" of the nobleman, then he has no other recourse but to finish what he started. Dorotea reiterates this theme several lines later in her speech to Fernando, this time combining moral and theological codes of love with the juridical norms of late sixteenth-century marriage. Basing her argument on the clandestine promise that Fernando made before earthly and heavenly witnesses, Dorotea reasons:

Tú quisiste que yo fuese tuya, y quisístelo de manera que aunque ahora quieras que no lo sea no será posible que tú dejes de ser mío. [...] Tú no puedes ser de la hermosa Luscinda, porque eres mío, ni

ella puede ser tuya porque es de Cardenio; y más fácil será, si en ello miras, reducir tu voluntad a querer a quien te adora, que no encaminar la que te aborrece a que bien te quiera. (I.36:378-79)

The young peasant woman emphasizes the manner in which Fernando wanted her as his—which was through a sacred and legal pledge, regardless of its clandestine nature—in order to insist on the impossibility of his freedom to marry Luscinda. Toward the end of this discussion, she also notes that this impossibility is not a hardship but rather a blessing, given that it is she, Dorotea, who adores Fernando and not Luscinda, a fact that both facilitates and seals their marriage deal. Love, therefore, becomes a discursive strategy that Dorotea uses to perform her role as Don Fernando's true and only wife.

Although this is a conciliatory strategy, Dorotea also employs a more contestatory tactic in her bid to interpellate Fernando as her husband. Here, she proclaims her chastity (traditional virtue) and presents the efficacy of her works (emergent virtue) as proof of her own nobility or of a social status equal to that of her noble husband. In a complex, and at times contradictory, combination of traditional and emergent social, religious, and legal codes, Dorotea concludes her case:

Y si te parece que has de aniquilar tu sangre por mezclarla con la mía, considera que pocas o ninguna nobleza hay en el mundo que no haya corrido por este camino, y que la que se toma de las mujeres no es la que hace el caso en las ilustres descendencias, *cuanto más que la verdadera nobleza consiste en la virtud, y si ésta a ti te falta negándome lo que tan justamente me debes, yo quedaré con más ventajas de noble que las que tú tienes*. En fin, señor, lo que últimamente te digo es que, quieras o no quieras, yo soy tu esposa: testigos son tus palabras, [...] testigo será la firma que hiciste, y testigo el cielo, a quien tú llamaste por testigo de lo que me prometías. (I.36:379; my emphasis)

Possessing a clear understanding of her partner's subjectivities, Dorotea appeals to the traditional social codes of blood and lineage

(Fernando is an Old Christian noble) in order to remind him of his social and religious obligations and to persuade him to fulfill them. She also employs legal codes pertaining to nobility and the male blood line to reassure him that her own lack of nobility—according to the traditional social structure and its discourses—cannot change or negate his nobility. In a typical performative move, however, Dorotea immediately displaces this argument (and her lack, both of nobility and chastity) with the contestatory code of virtue-as-work (and, therefore, Fernando's lack of nobility and virtue). According to these incipient discursive norms, if the nobleman does not uphold his part of the contract, Dorotea, due to her *works* will be more noble than Fernando, as he can only claim *lineage* (they both can claim blood). According to this new social order, what counts as nobility is good works (and not only in the sense of a moral good), and it is now up to Fernando to demonstrate *his* worth.

In a final move, Dorotea ends her appeal on a legal note. If her wifely love does not move him, or if he does not value his own nobility, there is a simple and undeniable juridical reason that both assures her chastity and his sacred and legal role as her husband: Dorotea is—and was at the time of their sexual encounter—Fernando's wife, and she has not only heavenly and earthly witnesses, but his signature to prove it. As Cruz astutely observes: "In a genial stroke of rhetorical irony and feminine vindication, Dorotea singles out her agency through her statement, '*yo soy tu esposa*,' at the same time that [...] her spoken words abidingly unite the couple into one indissoluble being" (629-30). Paradoxically, it is the patriarchal role of wife that opens a space for Dorotea's subjectivity and grants her the right to pursue Fernando and to make use of the privileges inherent in the subject position of wife. Dorotea's final performance as the perfect wife is once again endorsed by all those present, including the curate, who counsels Fernando on Dorotea's behalf to acquiesce and recognize her as both his wife and his social equal. The *labradora's* superb performance narrows Fernando's options to one: "en fin, [...] se ablandó y se dejó vencer de la verdad" (1.36:382).

In the end, Dorotea's performance of the discourses that were circulating in the economic, legal, and moral treatises of the day succeeds in

constructing a viable subject position for the *doncella engañada*. In fact, her performance is sufficient to enable her to threaten Don Fernando with an intolerable subject position should he refuse her. Throughout her performances in the Sierra Morena and at Juan Palomeque's inn, Dorotea deftly selects, combines, and recombines available discourses in order to resist her marginalized status as both a deceived woman and a member of the emergent middle class, the rich peasants who were buying their way into Spain's titled class. A key component of her success is her self-fashioning as a member of this new productive class that *arbitristas* such as Cellerigo, Gutiérrez de los Ríos, and Guzmán were advocating as Spain's salvation from economic and political ruin. In this way, Dorotea embraces a symbolic national role and illustrates a strategy to redeem the nation's idle noblemen. Her genius is that she manages the redemption of both self and nation without replicating the conduct manuals' traditional limitations on women. By suggesting that it is this new productive class that will reform Spain, Dorotea constructs a female subjectivity that is based more on the contestatory virtue of works than the traditional virtue of chastity. This new model of feminine virtue allows women limited mobility in multiple modalities and is recognized by both the noblemen and the clergy present at the inn: Dorotea is ultimately celebrated for her wit, her words, and her works rather than her virginity.

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