Fluid Boundaries: Cultural Production, Oral Discourse, and African and Afro-Descended Subaltern Agency in the Early Modern Spanish American Caribbean

By

Monica Styles

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

(Spanish)

at the

University of Wisconsin-Madison

2018

Date of final oral examination: 5/11/2018

This dissertation is approved by the following members of the Final Oral Committee:

Víctor Goldgel-Carballo, Associate Professor, Spanish and Portuguese

Margarita Zamora, Professor Emerita, Spanish and Portuguese

Steven Hutchinson, Professor, Spanish and Portuguese

Ivy Corfis, Professor, Spanish and Portuguese

Pablo Gómez, Assistant Professor, Medical History and Bioethics and History

Table of Contents

Abstract

This dissertation argues blacks contribute meaning to dominant narratives in early modern Caribbean texts through dialogue and corporeal signs. Chapter 1 shows black subaltern resistance to the dominant narratives in Las Casas's life story and Zurara's chronicle in *Historia de las Indias* cause the European authors to doubt the morality of their political projects; black subalternity also foreshadows race mixture in the future. In a similar process, black subaltern agents actively engage with Europeans in Jesuit missionary Alonso de Sandoval's *De Instauranda Aethiopum Salute* through his reading of documents pertaining to missionary activity and his personal experiences in Cartagena de Indias. Both Las Casas and Sandoval express anxiety concerning race mixture. Chapter 2 reveals mixed-race subjects' power comes to the fore in Thomas Gage's travel narrative. Mulattos complicate Gage's argument in favor of the Western Design and decide the success, or failure, of European political projects in the Caribbean. The Afro in the previous narratives had been relatively distinguishable from the European author. Chapter 3 analyses how *Infortunios de Alonso Ramírez* tells the tale of a Creole who establishes his white identity by repeating an ambiguous testimony of racial purity. The impossibility of partitioning the European author culturally, physically and racially from non-white subalterns in *Infortunios* would become a considerable cause for anxiety in Cuba in Cirilo Villaverde's *Cecilia Valdés* as demonstrated in Chapter 4.

Introduction. Theorizing Literary Production from the Boundary, or the In-Between Space

"What we call *significance*, then, is precisely this unlimited and unbounded generating process, this unceasing operation of the drives toward, in, and through language...This heterogenous process...is a structuring and de-structuring *practice*, a passage to the outer *boundaries* of the subject and society." Julia Kristeva, *Revoluation in Poetic Language*

It is the express purpose of this dissertation to speak truth to the power of traditional scholarship that has not sufficiently acknowledged the viewpoints of African and Afro-descended subjects. Blacks, overtly recognized as such in Iberia and Spanish America because of the dark color of their skin, have left traces of their lived experiences in early modern Caribbean literature. Their subalternity is ceaselesslessly conjured on the boundaries of and within colonial spaces. The spaces where blacks' experiences appear in European texts are liminal dialogues in which limits between racial groups exist, but are also negotiated and shaped. The fluid boundary is a point of focus that responds to the following question: how are culture, racial identity and political power produced through the expansion of multivocal spaces in which Europeans and black subalterns come into contact?

The origins of the black presence in colonial literature can be traced to Bartolomé de las Casas's intervention in debates surrounding the importation of black African slaves to Hispaniola in the early sixteenth century. A comparison between indigenous/European and African *bozal*/European group relationships helps to uncover the revolutionary aspects of Las Casas's comprehension of black agency and also the limits. During the sixteenth century, cultural production in the colony was mainly a process occurring as a result of relations between Europeans and indigenous groups. However, that Europeans smuggled *bozal* slaves to Hispaniola, as recorded by Las Casas in the multi-volume work *Historia de las Indias*, is evidence that *bozales* exert some agency in Spanish American cultural production. Besides his

eye witness testimony, Las Casas's colonial project shifts when he comes into contact with *bozal* resistance in Gomez Eanes de Zurura's chronicle.[1] Las Casas's reading of Gomez Eanes de Zurara's history is an opening into a more complex political world within Africa in which language (knowledge of Arabic) and social status enables some to avoid enslavement. European anxiety concerning black African subalterns, who rebel against European control and seem impossible to incorporate into a European populace, is subsumed under the cloak of the fantastic narrative of plagues in Las Casas's eyewitness account.

By the seventeenth century, the African presence was widespread in the Caribbean. Along with it, mixed-race subjects became a fixture of Caribbean society. Evidence of this expansion is present in Alonso de Sandoval's *De Instauranda Aethiopum Salute*. The text indicates that cultural production results from semiotic interactions in which regular contact between Africans and Europeans caused African representations to reflect a more whole human subjectivity. Africans were cultural translators who catalyzed both contact with extra semiotic matter and the related cultural transformation undergone when this matter crosses the margins of the cultural semiosphere (Lotman "Semiosphere" 210). *Ladino* Africans' oral narratives modify European religious discourse, undercutting European hegemony. *Bozales* are an ever present *chora* that disturbs Europeans' thetic position simply through the possibility of their speech redistributing the signifying order.[2] African subjects' place in the production of texts as sources for European intellectuals accumulates potency that limits the capacity of dominant colonial

---

[1] The anthology *Black Africans in Renaissance Europe* edited by T. F. Earle and Kate Lowe is one of few studies on black Africans in Renaissance Europe that discusses the consequences of the introduction of a considerable sub-Saharan African population in Renaissance Europe in the one hundred and fifty years preceding the so-called discovery of the Americas. Lowe's introduction underscores black Africans and Europeans were differentiated between because black skin and African ancestry "allowed the process of cultural differentiation to be set in train (7)." Another important study on Black Africans in Spain and Portugal is Saunders' *A Social History of Black Slaves and Freedmen in Portugal, 1441-1555*.

[2] See Julia Kristeva *Revolution in Poetic Language* 54-56) for a discussion of the disruption of the establishment of subjecthood or positionalty and the *chora*.

social constructs to conceptualize their inferiority.

Black African power managed to counter European hegemony which, like the black subalterns' subjectivity, is also partial. Though black Africans and their descendents' representations are mediated by European writers, Europeans' exptectations were often subverted and black Africans' actions contributed to how they were representated textually (Smith "Beyond the Mediation" 268-269). Black cultural power had accumulated throughout the centuries and was not only evident in the aftermath of the Haitian revolution. Although there is no documented engagement of Afro-descended writers in the composition of literary products in Spanish America until Juan Francisco Manzano, the poet Plácido and Martín Morúa Delgado the nineteenth century, the history of the African presence in textual representations by Bartolomé de las Casas in the sixteenth century and Alonso Sandoval, Thomas Gage and Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora in the seventeenth century speak to Afro-descended subjects' power to alter colonial projects and the creation of a proto-literary tradition that moved between European cultures and those originating in Africa. Thomas Gage and Don Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora's writings in the seventeenth century continue to observe the expansion of the porous space between racial groups that gives way to the chaotic and uncontrolled frontier of nineteenth century Cuba on the brink of independence.

By the nineteenth century, a period when the presence of Afro-descended peoples takes precedence in literature, Creole writers like Cirilo Villaverde conspicuously grappled with the implications of a racially and culturally mixed population on the formation of the nation. Kristeva writes of the frontier as "a mental activity able to open a psyche to the to the creative process." Cuban national identity in process is "that unstable articulation of identity and loss leading to a new and plural identity ("'Nous Deux' or a (Hi)story of Intertextuality" 9.)" While

Villaverde and his compatriots envisioned blackness as a clear threat to white power, black subaltern agency could not be as easily subsumed or imagined away, nor could writers depict black people only in moments when they believed they served as examples to strengthen broader colonial projects. Blackness is inherent to Cuban identity that loses "purity" or "whiteness" because of its new multiracial identity. The oral testimony of the free and enslaved black community becomes a source of truth that, when ignored, pushes the protagonists toward their tragic ends. The centrality of black speech in *Cecilia Valdés* is symptomatic of black political, cultural and social power and whites' reticence to form alliances with black people in order to achieve independence. As the colonial period wanes, black historical figures assert more and more political influence in the independence movement much like Villaverde's wet nurse, tailor, and musician among other narrative agents portrayed in *Cecilia Valdés*.

The early modern period foregrounds the modern period when Afro-descended subaltern oral traditions would come to the fore in Caribbean culture. Dating from the sixteenth century Afro-descendants dialogued with Europeans in literature and the historical archive in the Caribbean region, altering the messages communicated.[3] Dialogues between subjects occured on the page and in the lived realities that extend beyond what is recorded in hegemonic texts. Spatial theory allows this analysis to move beyond the limitations set by the lettered city concerning non-whites' lived realities. Space can be thought of as literal, such as the geographic complex of islands that forms the Caribbean, the streets of cities like Havana or Mexico City, or the many locations where subjects meet such as in churches, streets, plantations, homes and pirate ships. Space is also a social construct produced through verbal and agreed upon signs that

[3] I have chosen to spell black with a lower case b however there is debate in the English language over whether or not the term should be capitalized when it is used to refer to skin color. See Tharps, Lori. L. "The Case for Black with a Capital B." *The New York Times* Nov. 18, 2014. https://www.nytimes.com/2014/11/19/opinion/the-case-for-black-with-a-capital-b.html?_r=0.

requires the engagement and input of various actors who occupy many varying positions and identities. The in-between space, an interstitial meeting place where mobile European, African and indigenous agents interact to shape Spanish American customs, beliefs, rituals, cultural practices and politics in the early modern Caribbean, is a central focal point that unites the texts studied.

Cultural production is not a binary process, nor does it occur without considering the body (Lefebvre 39). The physical embodiment of agents within the texts, even those whose speech is not recorded, exerts agency within the spaces they inhabit. The in-between space is a silenced social location or identity that exists despite political constraints that create and deny subjects (Lefebvre 51). One example is the lived experience of enslaved black Africans in Hispaniola which Bartolomé de las Casas recounted in *Historia de las Indias*. Though they do not speak, their subaltern presence nonetheless signals an alternative reality to suppression within colonization. As Africans and their descendants learned the language of the colonizer, they began to appropriate and reinterpret European ideological discourse. One example is the slave woman, a *ladina morerna*, in Alonso de Sandoval's narrative who employed Christian dogma to criticize her mistress and elevate her own moral status. The in-between space also takes shape in Thomas Gage's travel narrative when he discusses non-European social actors who he assumed would aid the English in the invasion of Santo Domingo in 1655. Another is perhaps written between the lines in Alonso Ramírez's oral testimony concerning his racial idenitty and is undoubtedly present in the depictions of non-whites Ramírez encounters.

Contacts link and merge racially codified groups when they meet in literal and metaphorical spaces that both separate and unite diverse identities and ethnicities. When I refer to in-between groups, or the spaces they inhabit, I do not intend to negate the social reality of

stratification between distinct and named "races" because stratification and fluid boundaries are phenomena that coexist. Relatively fluid dominant racial categories based on religious identities and legitimacy, at birth or gained through marriage or other legal and discursive stratagems, would harden by the modern period.[4] In the case of black Africans, skin color was the defining racial feature. In her introduction to the anthology *Black Africans in Renaissance Europe* Kate Lowe states, "it does however seem clear that African ancestry and possession of a black skin led directly to all sorts of differentiation, prejudice and discrimination, and most of the contributors have signalled their interest in these historical forms of differentiation (evinced for whatever reason and with whatever attempt at justification) between Africans and Europeans (Lowe 7)." Though blacks experienced significant discrimination because of their sking color, lived experiences and resistance to subordination is often depicted in literature. Even if they could not tell their version of the story with words, their mere embodied presence, organized the spaces in which they were in contact with Europeans and the texts European authors are producing.

In order to understand the functioning of space, place -a specific location inhabited by subjects within space- must also be considered. Place can be thought of as a type of object that defines space, giving it a geometric personality together with functioning as a center of value (Tuan 17-18). Yi-Fu Tuan cites Kant's "On the first ground of the distinction of regions in space" in which the social organization of space based on the intention and the coordinates of the human body is discussed:

[4] Race can be understood as a way that human beings categorize difference (Loury). When someone is seen as "different" their humanity may be reduced and they acquire a social taint (Goffman). Many authors have written about historical understandinsg of "race" beginning in the Medieval period in Iberia that served as the basis for racial discourses in the Americas. Race would not be understood in terms of biology until the 18th and 19th Centuries however there are references to many aspects of identity that include religious identity (Christians are "pure" and Jews and Muslims are impure or have a "race.") Throughout the early modern period racial discourse is shifting and by the 19th Century phenotype is becoming more important, though it is still does not override one's lineage or legitimacy of birth. See Boyarin, Shell, Martínez, Sicroff.

> Even our judgments about the cosmic regions are subordinated to the concept we have of regions in general, insofar as they are determined in relation to the sides of the body...similarly, our geographical knowledge, and even our commonest knowledge of the position of places, would be of no aid to us if we could not, by reference to the sides of our bodies, assign to regions the things so ordered and the whole system of mutually relative positions (Tuan 36).

Space and place cannot be imagined without accounting for subjects' conceptions of their own social position in relation to other people and objects. The writers studied in this dissertation continually describe and construct colonial spaces based on their relationships with Europeans and ethnic others. Tuan further explains the inescapable effect of the human body on space:

> The human being, by his mere presence, imposes a schema on space. Most of the time he is not aware of it...Cultures differ greatly in the elaboration of spatial schemata...Yet, despite the large outward differences, the vocabularies of spatial organization and value have certain common terms. These common terms are ultimately derived from the structure and values of the human body (36-37).

Writers ascribe significance to the bodies and physical markings of the people they encounter in order to know their own place in relation to their subordinates. At least as early as the Medieval period European writing has grappled with the human body's mutability. The human body was conceptualized often as a "site of unravelling and invention (Cohen xviii)." The porosity of the human body beyond the flesh and into the material world will continue to vex European authors as the identities of colonial subjects seemingly shift depending on various social situations and the discourses they construct to legitimize social mobility. Europeans' bids to fix social positions are often frustrated by non-whites' social and literal mobility through the landscape and urban

spaces. One example studied here occurs when Thomas Gage meets Lewis, an escaped slave from Seville, in Guadalupe. Lewis, a mulatto, is initially difficult to place because he has assimilated to the indigenous community.[5] Gage perhaps misinterprets Lewis's intentions, assuming he would be friendly with the Jesuits, because Gage ranks Lewis's Christian identity above Lewis's loyalty to his new family.

Lewis is an agent whose mobility, physicality and speech depicted in literature echoes his active role in Caribbean culture both within and outside the text. The majority of research concerning cultural production in colonial Spanish America has emphasized European and white *criollo* men's agency.[6] Though "race" as a biological category is anachronous in the period, racialized discourses in which European and non-European ethnicities are conceptualized as separate and distinct proliferated in order to deny authority to colonized subjects. Despite their marginalization, black people, are not lacking in agency:

> Blackness (or whiteness) was not a proxy for a specific social stratum, cultural background, or communal identity, and it did not carry the same kinds of racialized connotations it would assume decades later throughout most of the Atlantic. And yet, a particular Caribbean type of blackness unmistakably molds the [Caribbean] world...(Gómez *The Experiential Caribbean* 10).

Canonical theoretical works such as Angel Rama's *Ciudad letrada* organize ethnic groups into separate social spheres, or rings, locating European elite males in the center of power while

---

[5] María Cristina Navarrette discusses the working relationships between *cimarrones* living in *palenques* and indigenous communities in Cartagena de Indias. Though close ties were not the norm, incidences of violence were not the norm either (38). Lewis, acting alone and residing further from an urban center, had more incentive to integrate with the indigenous population.

[6] The *Diccionario de la Real Academia Española* defines "criollo" as the following: "Dicho de un hijo y, en general, de un descendiente de padres europeos: Nacido en los antiguos territorios españoles de América y en algunas colonias europeas de dicho continente.

pushing non-whites to the outer spheres furthest from power (45-46). Rama rationalizes the lettered city's power over the production of culture through alphabetic literacy:

> A través del orden de los signos…la *ciudad letrada* articuló su relación con el poder, al que sirvió mediante leyes, reglamentos, proclamas, cédulas, propaganda y mediante la ideologización destinada a sustentarlo y justificarlo…Por encima de todo, inspiró la distancia respecto al común de la sociedad. Fue la distancia entre la letra rígida y la fluida palabra hablada, que hizo de la *ciudad letrada* una *ciudad escrituraria*, reservada a una estricta minoría (Rama 81).

Eurocentric understandings of cultural production in a text highlight European writers' authority while tending to ignore the agency recordings of oral speech and embodied presences transmit. Although the circle of lettered writers is opened wider in the period of modernization in the 19th century, negative myths about the lower classes continued to exist, "...comenzará a desarrollarse un espíritu crítico que buscará abarcar las demandas de los estratos bajos, fundamentalmente urbanos, de la sociedad, aunque ambicionando, obsesivamente, infiltrarse en el poder central pues en definitiva se lo siguió viendo como el dispensador de derechos, jerarquías y bienes (Rama 124)." The purpose of Rama's account was not to consider the coexistence of in-between racial and cultural groups in order to understand their lived experiences. Later scholarship has shifted to understand these "invisible" social spaces.[7]

---

[7] In the prologue to the 2009 edition of *Ciudad letrada*, Eduardo Subirats and Erna von der Walde explain Rama's role as an intellectual in the period in which Latin American dictatorships consolidated power (it was published in 1984). *Ciudad letrada* was composed to "desentrañar el papel fundamental que le correspondió al letrado como sujeto colonizador en este orden de las cosas. La noción de 'ciudad letrada' que atraviesa el texto se construye acumulativamente a través de la reflexión del proceso histórico de inscripción de la letra, de sus sútiles mecanismos de inclusión y exclusión, de su capacidad ordenadora, clasificadora y reguladora (15)." The lettered, *criollo*, is defined as an intellectual who plays a part in constructing the colonial system. His study is fundamental to colonial literary studies, however in the thirty years that have passed since the first publication of the *Lettered City*, scholarship such as mine studies the interactions between elite writers and other sectors of society in order to open the lettered city to include a broader understanding of cultural production. Cirilo Villaverde is one example of a lettered author who uses the city, as theorized by Rama, to formulate a project for Cuban modernization. For

Much has been studied pertaining to the parts played by racially and culturally non-European and ambiguous people in the production of literary culture. Guaman Poma de Ayala, Diego Muñoz Camargo and Inca Garcilaso are examples of canonical indigenous and *mestizo* writers who succeeded in moving between two worlds, actively participating in cultural production through European literary forms while also communicating indigenous forms of literacy, including pictographic traditions and oral cultures. Opening up conceptions of literacy to include orality and visual cultures, Cummins and Rappaport have argued, is a means by which scholars can account for the work of indigenous peoples who have sustained engagement with literacy, participating intellectually in the formation of colonial Latin America (4-5). Agency is traditionally understood to be exercised by the writer, however, scholarship on the role of non-whites makes use of alternative methods in order to account for non-whites' authority. Even in cases when non-whites are writing, alternative methodologies are often required in order to account for when their narratives do not follow canonical codes.

Interdisciplinary approaches, including historical and archival analysis, are useful. Though their multifaceted lives are often obscured in literature, the historical archive contains documents that prove otherwise. One document of note not covered in this thesis was written by Juan Garrido, one of the first conquistadors who served in Puerto Rico and Cuba with Velázquez and was rumored to be the first to plant corn in Mexico. His letter to the King of Spain requested a salary or allotment of Indian slaves for his role in the pacification of Mexico (Restall "Black Conquistadors" 171-172). Much has been documented about political and religious communities

---

Villaverde, the city is not the classical civilized *polis,* but more in harmony with the Latin America described by Rama, meaning the city/dream of order that serves to perpetuate power and conserve the socio-economic and cultural structure that this power guaranteed (Schulman 281). As I will sustain, the work of the writer to create and maintain order is not the only reading gleaned in the works composed by *criollo* authors because subaltern influences, through the corporeal and oral testimony of both real and fictional Africans and Afro-descendants, alter the texts' cultural and political significance.

such as *cabildos* (town councils), confraternities and *palenques* where the enslaved and free bonded and organized along ethnic lines based on place of origin before and after enslavement (McKnight 2003; Landers 1997; Von Germeten 2013). Africans, especially in the Caribbean, were agents of change who made choices and concessions which can be seen in Spain's difficulties in the seventeenth century to maintain the colonies against French, English and Dutch competition (Landers "Africans in the Spanish Colonies" 84). Africans and their descendants are not props in European power struggles because black agents molded political projects ranging from the transatlantic slave trade, European imperial conflicts, organizing group identity amongst Africans and Afro-descendants in the New World context and later debates concerning national identity.

Combining literary theory and the concept of the boundary elaborated in the following pages is another interdisciplinary approach that provides recourse for assembling the black experience. As previously discussed, boundaries mark the limits between agents acting in a given society. According to Norwegian social anthropologist Frederick Barth, an ethnic group is a population that is biologically self-perpetuating; shares fundamental cultural values; makes up a field of communication and interactions; and has a membership which identifies itself and is identified by others, as constituting a category distinguishable from other categories of the same order (10-11). Barth contends agents of a cultural group may change by crossing boundaries and assimilating to a previously existing social group. Their integration allows the boundary to always be maintained. Notwithstanding, social actors may also assimilate to the dominant group to varying degrees. By doing so they may incorporate new cultural practices and thereby alter the composition of the dominant group from their marginal position whether this process is acknowledged or not.

Besides clearly Afro-descended actors in the Spanish Caribbean, ethnically ambiguous people like Lewis, Cecilia Valdés, and perhaps even Alonso Ramírez, pass into different racial groups either completely or in limited ways. Dominant narratives stretch themselves to accommodate these figures, often failing to fully explain their racial and cultural fluidity. The distinction between groups with African origins and those without in the early modern Caribbean and later has not always been clearly defined because dialogic struggles over how to classify subjects who do not fit complicate canonical social hierarchies. No one person, not even the writer, determines every aspect of any given texts' significance. For example, even in the fictionalization of black discourse in *Cecilia Valdés*, the voices communicate the lived realities of enslaved black people and free people in the urban environment in Havana. As I argue, free mulattas, and even black slaves like María de la Regla, employ *blanqueamiento* for their own purposes that alter the original dominant discourse intended to empower whites. The alternative *blanqueamiento* they adhere to creates tension as hierarchies are not always clear or maintained as a result of their ambitions.

Processes of interaction between various ethnic groups on the margins are critical to studying cultural change and should be applied when studying the influence of the subaltern African presence on Spanish American culture and society. Juri Lotman explains that the boundary is not simply maintained through the dichotomization of in-group members and out-group members as Barth suggests. In "Tesis para el estudio semiótico de las culturas" Lotman envisions culture to be an enclosed and organized space that forms through infractions from outside (8). Though his theorization of culture is a bit too neat and orderly to fully comprehend subalterns' impact on cultural formation, he nevertheless is the first theorist to address the boundary. He alludes to cultural change that includes those who do not fit with the organized and

"domesticated" culture created by dominant groups. Even if the original group, or the colonizers, continues to practice their culture and outsiders (black people) assimilate, practices from all of the cultures involved inevitably undergo transculturation. In the *Contrapunteo del tabaco y el azúcar* Fernando Ortiz theorizes culture in Cuba is the product of a variety of ethnic groups as they meet in the same position in space. As a result of these relationships, more than one culture is expressed in any given moment (87). These points of contact occur between European, indigenous and African cultures and later Asian cultures. Within this porous field new practices and groups of people are developing. At the same time, fluctuations in the meaning of identity categories and how subalterns inform hegemonic discourses does not imply the destruction of a culture, but rather cultural shift. Understanding that cultures always have a horizon that goes beyond the original allows us to recognize when culture changes as a result of contact with outsiders.

Alterity is another key theoretical tool for understanding relations between subjects of differing racial groups that are central to cultural change.[8] As Gayatri Spivak has argued in "Who Claims Alterity?,":

[8] Alterity is a conceptual tool that I will use to analyze the relationships between cultural agents as they interact on the micro level within the boundaries. Alterity refers to the ethical relationship in which the self is constituted by the fear for the other that occurs through contact. As social actors come into relation they create unfixed totalities (or for my purposes unfixed cultures). "The concrete whole is the datum along with its horizon. The totality thus remains open. It is the integration of aspects that confirm one another. When they infirm one another, the totality does not explode; each breaking open immediately reconstitutes, in another direction, the process of the totalization of aspects (Lévinas *Alterity and Transcendence* 44)." Alterity allows for loving relations between differing subjectivities in spite of unequal power relations because of the inherent human tendency toward saintliness and the desire for justice, both of which are valued in all human cultures (*Alterity and Transcendence* 104-107). In the Spanish American context, relations of violence and inequality undoubtedly came into being that must be accounted for and not brushed aside under the guise of ideologies of *mestizo* harmony popular today in many Latin American countries. But destruction and loss are not the only results of conquest.

> I propose the persistent establishment and reestablishment, the repeated consolidating in undoing…attending to provisional resolutions of oppositions as between secular and nonsecular, national and subaltern, national and international, cultural and socio/political by teasing out their complicity. Such a strategy of strategies must speak 'from within' the emancipatory master narratives even while taking a distance from them (280-281).

Even when subalterns are not the agents who write, their words and even very corporeity in the text exude an authority to tell of experiences on the margins of colonial institutions. Even if they are mediated or fictionalized, their speech and corporeal depiction are a filter through which the lived experiences of Afro-descended subjects, who are by no means voiceless, discuss social truths despite elite mediation.

The power of speech is not only a topic of import for early modern studies and Caribbean studies. In an interview after Donald Trump's victory in the 2016 United States Presidential election Judith Butler spoke on the topic of who can speak and speaking truth to power:

> To speak truth to power is not fundamentally an individual act. To speak truth to power means that one appropriates power in speaking as one does. And that the structures of power can be taken over or redeployed in the service of "talking back." So we may think of the speaking subject as an individual who speaks, it is an anonymous and shifting position that potentially includes any number of people. Before we ask what it means to speak truth to power, we have to ask who can speak. *Sometimes the very presence of those who are supposed to remain mute in public discourse breaks through that structure.* When the undocumented assemble, or when those who have suffered eviction assemble, or those who suffer unemployment or drastic cuts in their retirement, they assert

> themselves into the imagery and the discourse that gives us a sense of who the people are, or should be. Of course, they make specific demands, but assembly is also a way of making a demand with the body, a corporeal claim to public space and a public demand to political powers. So in a way, we have first to break into discourse before we can speak truth to power. We have to break open the constraints on political representation in order to expose its violence and oppose its exclusions (Butler http://www.versobooks.com/blogs/3025-trump-fascism-and-the-construction-of-the people-an-interview-with-judith-butler) (My emphasis).

The agency of the various actors such as *bozales*, *ladinos*, mulattos, Asians considered "black" in the period, free people and the enslaved often manifests as a form of talking back through speech and physical presence in the colonial period. There is a process occurring over many centuries in which black people break into discourse and slowly, but increasingly, come to speak truth to power. Black agency in the texts I study comes in many forms; subalterns turn up in unexpected ways, crossing thresholds between social spaces that elites have deemed off limits, and in the process, propagating discourses that question and transform dominant narratives and the political projects designed by the elite class.

In varying ways, black people influence literary production and regional politics. Influence is defined as a means to produce or have an effect upon. The implication in my use of the term is that a force that brings about a change (in nature or behavior) in the writings of Europeans is established by the mere presence of subaltern Africans and their descendants. African and Afro-descended subaltern agency is born out in representations and discussions of race mixture, which transpires both culturally and through sexual reproduction. Although whites

may also affect a text through their appearance in a work or their engagement with the writer, their agency does not generally add perspectives that go beyond Eurocentric norms with the same nuance and insight as non-white actors who have few other methods available to communicate. The appearance of non-whites, race mixture, and the subsequent discourse surrounding categorization in society, provide material evidence of the multifaceted ways in which non-white subalterns inform Caribbean culture that would otherwise be ignored. Often flying under the radar, black people's presence penetrates elite institutions to question the purity of European identity and hegemony.[9]

Subaltern studies also proposes useful theoretical methods to begin to piece together the partial and varying subjectivities of dominated subjects in the Caribbean region and the ways in which European hegemony was weakened when racial categories could not always be strictly applied. Founded by Ranajit Guha in 1982, subaltern studies is an intellectual movement originating in South Asia that sustains a critique of the disciplinary practice of history writing. In *A Rule of Property*, Guha argues the production of colonial difference is not just an aberrant outlier but rather is at the heart of the emergence of Western modernity because establishing difference is intrinsic to the formation of modern forms of social knowledge (Chatterjee "Editor's Introduction" *The Small Voice of History* 10). Guha elaborates his conception of subaltern historiography in the editorial statement of the first volume of *Subaltern Studies*. For Guha, modern historiography in India has been dominated by two elitisms, the colonialist and the nationalist, both of which the new series aimed to critique.

By turning away from traditional approaches, subaltern scholars emphasize the autonomy

[9] The issue of "purity" arose in the Medieval period in the Iberian peninsula as Christians developed a sense of identity based on Christian beliefs that were passed down through lineages. Those who were not Christian (Muslims, Jews and Pagans) were believed to have a stain or race that was passed down to their offspring (Boyarin, Sicroff, Kamen). Their very humanity came under doubt in Christian ideology (Shell).

of peasant consciousness rather than elitisms (Chatterjee 12). For Guha, "the study of colonialism opens up in entirely new ways to bring into relief the manifold diversities that it has been beyond the oversimplified elitist interpretation to cope with (Guha "Introduction to the *Subaltern Studies Reader*" in *The Small Voice of History* 328). Despite attempts by elites to establish hegemony, the state also has to negotiate with civil society (331). Marginalized subjectivities can be uncovered when history is written, and rewritten, from their perspectives. I contend a similar process of rereading and rewriting history through literary analysis applies to the study of Afro-descended subalterns in the Caribbean colonial context as well. From the outset of Spanish colonization, Europeans wrote about the subalterns they encountered in order to categorize them, while subaltern lived experiences can also be pieced together by studying orality and the African presence as it is depicted in these works.

Chapter 1. Bartolomé de las Casas, Alonso de Sandoval and Their African Interlocutors

I. Origins of the Semiotic Boundary

What is the role, if any, that sub-Saharan Africans perform in cultural production in Bartolomé de Las Casas's *Historia de las Indias* and Alonso de Sandoval's *De Instauranda Aethiopum Salute*? Black Africans and their descendants have exercised power in the production of culture in the Caribbean dating from the beginning of colonization. Bartolomé de las Casas and Alonso de Sandoval are two of the most important writers to engage in debates concerning early modern blacks. Though they did not write, *bozales* and *ladino* Africans nonetheless dialogued both orally and through embodied signs. I propose that neither text could have been written without contemplating and reproducing these encounters. Las Casas conspicuously wove humanist intellectualism and Christian theology with the oral discourse and performance of indigenous rituals in order to tell the truth of Conquest. As a result of contact with indigenous cultural practices, Las Casas shifts his colonial vision to defend and recognize Amerindian subaltern humanity. One famous example is Hatuey's sermon, an oral performance that hybridizes indigenous practices with Christian beliefs. Complex depictions of the humanity of figures of African descent, whether they be *bozales* or *ladinos*, akin to Hatuey do not appear in the text, therefore piecing together a framework of African subalternity in Las Casas's work is much more difficult task. Despite their marginality, a fragmentary image of African subalternity surfaces in their corporeal resistance to enslavement on Hispaniola. Perhaps Las Casas was in a transitionary stage in his intellectual development in which he was beginning to recognize African humanity; however, to conclude that Las Casas envisioned African humanity on par with that of Europeans or Amerindians is a stretch.

Though Las Casas is repentent for his involvement in the early stages of black African slavery in Hispaniola, he ultimately fears blacks' violent rejection of enslavement and cannot imagine their incorporation into colonial society as equals to Europeans and Amerindians. Las Casas's anxiety concerning the impossibility of assimilating blacks and the continued importations of slaves from the African continent is lived by Alonso de Sandoval in Cartagena de Indias. During the seventeenth century, African subalterns' role in the colony was considered with increasing complexity as the transatlantic slave trade expanded, and more were acculturated to Christian Hispanic cultural norms. Sandoval documented African subjects through oral discourse as well as by studying African cultures, much like Las Casas represented the Amerindian subaltern. I argue that the Hispanic baroque mentality in which Sandoval lived and worked underpinned his project to evangelize the African population in order to buttress colonial social control. Paradoxically, though most Africans in the Americas were enslaved, they acquired a high level of fluency in Spanish. For example, *ladino* black African subalterns, along with other people Sandoval designates "black" such as the Beduins, reject Jesuit evangelization by formulating hybrid discourses. Black orality and corporeality introducte semiotic meaning into each text confounding and redefining the hegemonic discourses.

Fray Bartolomé de Las Casas (1474-1566) began *Historia de las Indias* in 1527 in order to tell a "true" history of Discovery and Conquest. According to Christian doctrine, Discovery was an act of God that was necessary in order for Providence to come to fruition. Las Casas intended to record the first sixty years of Spanish colonization and each volume was to be divided into six volumes, each covering a span of ten years respectively but only the first three books were written. In the prologue, Las Casas justifies his historical vision based on his reading of Josephus. Josephus, a first century Roman Jewish scholar, wished to shed light on the Jewish

experience which had been ignored by previous historians as well as to correct what he considered false information. Following in the vein of Josephus's historical project, and perhaps covertly defending his own suspected *converso* ancestry. Las Casas maintains that the Spanish need a true history of Discovery and Conquest. Las Casas renounced the project in 1559, leaving what he had completed in the Colegio de San Gregorio de Valladolid.

Before renouncing the abuses of Indian labor by *encomiendas* and *repartimientos,* Las Casas was himself an *encomendero* in possession of Amerindian laborers. Las Casas's reading, as well as his personal experiences as eyewitness to the abuses of the Amerindian community, precede his questioning of the *encomienda* system and advocacy for reform. Las Casas recounts his autobiographical experiences and intellectual reflection as he interprets how he came to be a force for change. Famously in the *Brevísima relación de la destrucción de las Indias,* published in 1552 after the failure of the New Laws (1542) to protect Amerindian communities from Spanish abuses, Las Casas wrote about massacres he had witnessed throughout the Spanish colonies. Las Casas made use of his own exposure to these atrocities while also employing historical documents in the process of editing the work, the most well-known being the journal of Christopher Columbus's first transatlantic voyage.[10] At least three narrative voices participate in narrating Las Casas's intellectual change: the testimonial first person singular, the second person plural and the omniscient third person (Zamora "Intellectual Legacy of Bartolomé de las Casas"114). Las Casas takes up a deeper existential position in reaction to his past. By rereading the text through the postcolonial lens of subalternity, which requires scholars listen to the voices present in the text, as suggested by Spivak, indigenous complicity in the production of Las Casas's discourse can be teased out. His subjective position as author and intermediary between

[10] See Margarita Zamora's *Reading Columbus* (40-43) concerning Las Casas's transcription of the *Diario* and "Relación del tercer viaje" and the active role taken by Las Casas in the transformation of Columbus's original text.

Spanish Christian colonizers and non-Christian and non-European others is narrated less conspicuously. Scholars must look at ideology within a text to link knowledge with consciousness; the work must be read for its silences, what it doesn't say, as well as the deviation from the ideal (Spivak "Can the Subaltern Speak?" 256). In Las Casas's writing, the relationship between Europeans and Amerindians is an ethical one in which the humanity of the Indian subaltern is recognized and given greater reign to rearticulate European cultural signifiers through indigenous traditions. The barrier crossing that occurs on a philosophical level, as Las Casas's subjectivity comes into being through his encounter with the other, furnishes a lens for studying how the dividing lines between religio-racial groups open up into new spaces of coexistence.[11] The transculturated, or in-between, character of Spanish American Caribbean culture, in excess of anything Las Casas had imagined by the time he had stopped writing, congeals when indigenous and European cosmographies that co-construct the narrative are examined.

Las Casas incorporates indigenous subjects into his definition of Christian and human when he narrates Hatuey's rebellion. Hatuey's rule, enforced by systems of oral transmission, is voiced in the narration when Hatuey foretells the colonizers' intention to come to Cuba where his people were hiding. Hatuey calls a meeting in order to give a speech that Las Casas refers to as a "*sermón*":

> Ya sabéis cuáles los cristianos nos han parado, tomándonos nuestras tierras, quitando nuestros señoríos, cautivando nuestras personas, tomando nuestras mujeres e hijos, matando nuestros padres, hermanos, parientes y vecinos; tal rey, tal señor de tal provincia

[11] Daniel Boyarin links *limpieza de sangre* in Spain to New World debates over how to bring in the colonized while also needing to maintain barriers and standards (83-84). Discourses of race were originated in Christian ideology in Spain concerning evangelization of Jews and Muslims that coincided with concerns over maintaining religious and cultural purity.

> y de tal pueblo mataron; todas las gentes súbditas y vasallos que tenían, los destruyeron y acabaron; y si nosotros no nos hubiéramos huído, saliendo de nuestra tierra y venido a ésta, también fuéramos muertos por ellos y acabados. ¿Vosotros sabéis por qué todas estas persecuciones nos causan o para qué fín lo hacen? Respondieron todos "Hácenlo porque son crueles y malos." Respondió el señor, "Yo os diré por qué lo hacen, y esto es, porque tienen un señor grande a quien mucho quieren y aman, y esto yo os lo mostraré." Tenía luego allí encubierta una cestilla hecha de palma, que en su lengua llamaban haba, llena o parte della, con oro y dice: "Véis aquí su señor, a quien sirven y quieren mucho y por lo que andan (83)."

Classification of Hatuey's oral speech as a "*sermón*" carries with it specific meaning in the early modern period. Covarrubias defines a *sermón* in the following manner:

> comunmente tomamos esta palabra sermón, por los razonamientos santos que la Iglesia Católica aconsubre en los oficios divinos, para que los predicatores del Evangelio, nos le declaren, y nos reprehendan nuestros vicios y pecados. En Griego se llama el sermó --- Homelia Sermo nario, el libro que contiene en si sermones sermonar, no es viado, y assi dezimos predicar.

Las Casas compares Hatuey's ritual performance to that of a preacher of the Gospel who deploys oral speech to apprehend the vices and sins of his congregation. Las Casas transforms Hatuey into a character whose intentions parallel those of Las Casas the preacher and historian. Las Casas takes his place in the literary canon as a Latin American author who locates himself within indigenous tradition through Hatuey.

Las Casas identifies with Hatuey much as Martí and other Latin American writers would centuries later when Martí wrote that the blood of such indigenous Calibans flowed through his

veins:

> 'Con Guaicaipuro, con Paramaconi [héroes de las tierras venezolanas, probablemente de origen caribe], con Anacaona, con Hatuey [héroes de las Antillas, de origen arauco] hemos de estar, y no con las llamas que los quemaron, ni con las cuerdas que los ataron, ni con los aceros que los degollaron, ni con los perros que los mordieron.' El rechazo de Martí al etnocidio que Europa realizó en América es *total*, y no menos total su identificación con los pueblos americanos que le ofrecieron heroica resistencia al invasor, y en quienes Martí veía los antecesoress naturales de los independentistas latinoamericanos (Fernández Retamar 41).

Santa Arias submits that Las Casas established himself within the other culture in his ethnographic writing on the Indian ("Las Casas's Others" 166). Besides paralleling Hatuey's actions with his own, Las Casas provides a space for Hatuey to claim the authority to interpret Christian doctrine. Hatuey's ritual borrows from and reinterprets the meaning of Christian customs and beliefs. With this authority, Hatuey employs eyewitness experience with the Spanish narrative to formulate his argument. According to Hatuey, the Spanish are cruel because they are in the service of their lord: Gold. He orders his people to hold celebrations and dances in honor of the Spanish God in order to avoid a violent confrontation in the future. After the dances have finished, Hatuey further commands his people: "'Mirad, con todo esto que he dicho, no guardemos a este señor de los cristianos en ninguna parte porque, aunque lo tengamos en las tripas, nos lo han de sacar; por eso, echémoslo en este río, debajo del agua, y no sabrán dónde está." Las Casas concludes with his own narrative voice, "Y así lo hicieron, que allí lo ahogaron o echaron. Esto fue después por los indios dicho, y entre nosotros publicado (84)." Indigenous

oral performance alters Christian doctrine by replacing the Christian God with gold, the object held to be most valuable to the Christians based on their violent actions, undertaken in order to gain its possession.

Although Hatuey's words are a translation enmarked by Las Casas's perspective, the indigenous presence is also complicit in cultural production. Indigenous oral tradition is archieved and retold in Hatuey's sermon, serving as one of the sources from which Las Casas selected to craft his story. The fusion of cultural practices permitted by the polysemous transmission of the oral production causes Las Casas to (re)present the face in Lévinas's terms, or in this case the voice, of the indigenous other. Embodied by Hatuey as a being in possession of knowledge similar to himself, a learned Dominican priest, the indigenous other becomes the Europeanized self who demonstrates Las Casas's envisioning of his own identity as a Dominican friar. By integrating Hatuey's words into Las Casas's own project to write and preach historical truth, Las Casas recognizes Hatuey's humanity is equal to his own.[12] While Las Casas's original goal was to level a critique of the negative effects of Spanish cruelty on evangelization, which caused Hatuey and his people to misrepresent, or better yet reinterpret, the Spanish God as gold, a hybrid message overflows Las Casas's original plan.

Hatuey's inclusion and transcultural agency create a cultural product that problematizes the Christian worldview by not assimilating to Christian norms.[13] Las Casas's undertaking of

---

[12] Las Casas uses the word *sermón* to refer to indigenous oral religious speeches in *La apologética* as well. The *totones* or *totonacas* are an indigenous ethnic group in Nueva España. They dedicated a temple to the goddess "la gran diosa de los cielos" that was manned at all times by two elder *sacerdotes*. These *sacerdotes*, or priests, wrote histories with images that were given to the most important religious figures who were like Popes. These Popes were then charged with telling these histories to the towns "*en sus sermones* (*Apologética* Vol I 642)." Classifying the oral speeches of indigenous leaders in this manner further reveals Las Casas's analogous views of his own work as a priest and historian with indigenous intellectual traditions.

[13] Andre Saint-Lu and Ricardo Terga have studied Las Casas's attempt to peacefully evangelize the indigenous population of La Verapaz in Guatemala. Although Las Casas achieves some initial success in the late 1530s and early 1540s, conversion and pacification of the indigenous population is always unstable. There are also threats of Spanish slave raids such as one in 1547 that enslaved seven hundred Indians (Terga 12).

Amerindian assimilation is based in Christian doctrine which is a break with humanist historians' traditional lay perspective. Humanism in Las Casas's history shifts as the emphasis of the project becomes a defense of Providentialist history that unites the religious with the political (Cortijo Ocaña 224-226). Similar to the Hebrew other, the Amerindian is a subject with whom Las Casas is not only in relation but a subject Las Casas has incorporated into his own self-identification. The analogous relationship between Josephus's views of Hebrew history and Las Casas's perspective on Spanish colonial history authorizes Las Casas's work through the philosophical relation between Spanish "I" and Hebrew "Other." Las Casas envisions his project from the position of the subaltern like Josephus who wrote as the Hebrew other about his own culture (Josephus ii).

A definition of the Christian concept, *el prójimo,* serves to contextualize Las Casas's belief in the absorbtion of Amerindians into Christentom that lies at the root of the Hatuey narrative. *El prójimo* is the central ethical concept in the Bible pertaining to the association between the self and other, particularly in the New Testament but also in the Old Testament. In the Old Testament book, Leviticus 19:18[14], God tells Moses, "Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against anyone among your people but love your neighbor as yourself." The New Testament reinterprets the Old Testament law, which Christ corrected when he altered the Jewish interpretation of the commandment that ordered that one should love one's neighbor and hate one's enemy. In Matthew 5: 43-45 in the "Sermon on the Mount" Christ's message is that one should love one's enemies and pray for those who persecute them.[15] These statements did not account for the interrelation between those of different ethnic groups however.

El prójimo, as it relates to the relationship between ethnic others, appears in Luke 10: 25,

[14] Leviticus 19:18 https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Leviticus+19%3A18.
[15] "Love for enemies."https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew%205:43-45.

29-30, 33-37 in the "Parable of the Good Samaritan." A Jewish man who had been injured by robbers is found by the Samaritan. A priest and a Levite had already passed by the injured man before the Samaritan travels the same path and decides to nurse the stranger back to health, knowing that there is great hatred between Jews and Samaritans. Christ clarifies that the Samaritan was the one who proved to be a neighbor to the man.[16] O'Gorman has argued that *el prójimo* in Las Casas's *Apologética* claims equality between humans, which nullifies Sepulveda's claims that the Indian is inferior to the European (O'Gorman "La apologética historia, su génesis y elaboración su estructura y su sentido" lxvi.). According to Sepulveda, citing Aristotle, there are natural slaves and the Indian is one type. Sepulveda argues indigenous inferiority is proven because human (i.e. European) customs dominate those of the inhuman or the barbaric (i.e. non-European). The Indian is an "hombrecillo" in whom "apenas se pueden encontrar restos de la humanidad" (Sepulveda 20-35). Las Casas applies the biblical concept of *el prójimo* in order to argue against those like Sepulveda who do not recognize full indigenous humanity .

Only through peaceful assimilation can the Amerindian, as a fellow subject, be evangelized according to Las Casas. In the "Prólogo" to the *Historia* Las Casas writes about Spanish ignorance with regard to the ends of discovery intended by Providence:

> No hay, ni nunca hubo generación ni linaje, ni pueblo, ni lengua en todas las gentes criadas…de donde, mayormente después de la Encarnación y Pasión del Redentor, no se haya de coger y componer aquella multitud grande que ninguno puede numerar, que San Juan vio…que es el número de los predestinados, que por otro nombre lo llama San Pablo cuerpo mísito de Jesuscristo e Iglesia o varón perfecto, y por consiguiente, que también a

[16] "The Parable of the Good Samaritan."https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+10%3A25-37&version=ESV

> estas gentes había de disponer la divina Providencia en lo natural, haciéndolas capaces de doctrina y gracia…(Vol. I, 12).

The integrationist plan at the heart of the Lascasian Christian vision for Amerindians recognizes all peoples contain certain members who are predestined to receive the doctrine and, therefore, are in possession of the mental faculty to do so. All lineages (i.e. races) form a part of the body of Christ, metaphorized as the perfect man, and the Church. Though Amerindians are seen as human, Las Casas is also perhaps signaling there should be a certain social order formed through lineage. Lineages were imagined to create hierarchies that promote fixity of raced identities (Martínez *Genealogical Fictions* 26). Either way, Las Casas recognizes that the Amerindian is a member of the human race requiring evangelization. Brunsetter demonstrates that Las Casas challenges arguments like those of López de Gómara, Sepulveda and others that the indigenous other is inferior and devoid of rights; but he also sets assimilation to the Christian community, which requires the destruction of the previous culture, as the barometer of equality. The project to incorporate the indigenous community, based in the concept of the *prójimo* and the universal capacity of humans to receive Christian doctrine, does not predict for or rationalize the implications of indigenous agency. Therefore, the vision proposed by Predestination clouds Las Casas from considering the possibility that the Indian may not assimilate (Brunsetter 411-430). Hatuey's humanity, symbolized by his synchretized performance of Christian dogma, overcomes the destructive nature of equating Amerindians with Europeans because "beneath the plasticity of the face [figure] that *appears*, the face [visage] is already missed. It is frozen in art itself, despite the artist's possible attempt to disfigure the 'something' that starts again, figurative, in presence (Lévinas *Alterity and Transcendence* 126)." Despite this misrecognition, a hybrid process

nonetheless appears in the text, as a result of the image of the indigenous "face" or subaltern agency that permeates the text and Las Casas's colonial vision. Indigenous subalternity embodied by Hatuey becomes a fixture of Spanish American culture as Las Casas writes.

Applying semiotic theory is a method that sheds light on how cultural change is not a project to assimilate but rather an undertaking that involves various vectors of influence which enter and leave along the edges of a cultural system. In *The Darker Side of the Renaissance* Walter Mignolo theorizes colonial semiosis, or colonial discourse, in order to move beyond Eurocentric modes of discourse and representation that linked speech to the written word and thereby denied the existence of alternative means of communication such as oral discourse (Mignolo 29-50). Juri Lotman's theory of the semiosphere explains that semiosis is not a system that can maintain clear boundaries between modes of communication, as theorized by European humanists. By linking speech to the written word, humanists ignore other modes of communication. One example of alternative knowledge production is in the circulation of medical and bodily knowledge amongst black medical practitioners in the early modern Caribbean through both oral and literate methods of learning and sharing knowledge (Gómez 77). Alternate modes of transmitting knowledge, such as orality or the corporeity of certain persons, do in fact gain cultural authority.

Alternative discourses often are composed on the limits of cultural semiospheres. A cultural semiosphere, or system of signs, has limits that cannot be represented concretely, but rather the perimeter is porous. Signs and meanings outside of the semiosphere may enter through the margins and change the closed structure of signs. Therefore, contact between semiospheres does not simply lead to processes of assimilation to previously existing systems, but rather alters the former system in a transcultural process resulting from multiple vectors of influence and

signification. Lotman explains:

> The border of semiotic space is the most important functional and structural position, giving substance to its semiotic mechanism. The border is a bilingual mechanism, translating external communications into the internal language of the semiosphere and vice versa. Thus, with the help of the boundary, is the semiosphere able to establish contact with non-semiotic and extra-semiotic spaces…The function of any border or film…comes down to a limitation of penetration, filtering and the transformative processing of the external to the internal ("Semiosphere" 210).

The outcome of cultural contact is a new system of meaning as the signs' message must be interpreted and analyzed anew. The history and cultural significance of the signs within systems of meaning produced by both written and oral discourses must be accounted for. Lotman theorizes that the mechanisms of translation lie within the semiosphere; when the material assimilated comes from outside, there must be a person with the knowledge to interpret sign meanings from both inside and outside (211). In the colonial context, this person is a subject who in some way inhabits both the semiosphere and spaces often excluded.

Colonial semiosis occurs on the extremity of the dominant semiosphere as signs must be interpreted not only by dominant agents but also by those acting on or near the edges of the semiosphere. These agents are often subaltern actors whose knowledge of oral discourse penetrates the production of written texts such as Las Casas's as they co-construct colonial order (Yannakakis 2). Beverly defines subalternity as a condition of subordination brought on by colonization or other forms of dominance.[17] European and indigenous actors' joint involvement

[17] Subalterns are subaltern because they cannot be represented adequately by the academy (Beverly *Subalternity and Representation* 2*).* This does not imply subalterns do not exist, rather that their subjectivity is not properly

in the interpretation of signs is one example of how subaltern agency overcomes certain limits. Las Casas struggles to describe Hatuey's performance during the sermon because meaning comes from outside the Eurocentric semiosphere to which he is accustomed. Las Casas translated indigenous signifiers when he describes the basket which is made of palm leaves called *haba* in Taino. Las Casas does not seem to grasp the indigenous symbolism of these objects. The word *haba* is mentioned by Fernández de Oviedo when he describes "unas cestas con sus tapadoras ligeras que acá se llaman *havas.*" The *habas* are not just any type of basket since they are used to hold the possessions of dead principal Indians. *Habas* may also be made from woven sugar cane stalks (De Stefano 89). The *haba* used by Hatuey therefore most likely symbolizes the death and burial of the Christian God or gold that replaces the bodies of Indians usually buried in these baskets.

Hatuey's sermon is an act that complicates Las Casas's argument in favor of Amerindian assimilation. Seemingly opposed literacies blend together as Hatuey's discourse simultaneously understands, alters and represents Christian imagery in unexpected ways by representing the death of the Christian God. The edges of the social and cultural frontier between what is European and what is indigenous is not clearly defined. Nor are clear answers provided for how to interpret the meaning of the signs that appear. The resulting blended cultural space in the text makes Las Casas's work more than a record of Conquest from a dominant European perspective written for his European readers. The text opens a colonial semiotic field that allows for blended cultural production specific to the Spanish American context. Las Casas's defense of the

---

acknowledged. Rather than interpret the power relationships between subalterns and dominant groups with the traditional tools (study of alphabetic writing as evidence of intellectual culture) which deny subalterns' ability to produce change, many subalterns can be understood through their positioning, often as liminal figures, who engage with cultural production through orality and embodiment that decenter canonical forms of knowledge. When information in a text, coming from a subaltern source, does not fit with the dominant message, that signals that somehow the subaltern subjectivity escapes the barriers placed on their knowledge and experience erected by the academy.

Amerindian subject becomes an act of cultural production open to the transculturation of European and indigenous signs. Cultural hybridity also signals that perhaps Las Casas ultimately questioned the *encomienda* system, not simply as the result of his own intellectual efforts, but his literary collaboration with the indigenous subaltern.[18]

[18] Many critics have studied the nature of the Amerindian in Bartolomé de las Casas's writing. Pagden (*The Fall of Natural Man)*, Adorno ("Los debates sobre la naturaleza del indio) and others situate Las Casas's depiction of the Amerindian in the context of the debates of the period concerning the right of the Spanish Crown to rule in the Indies as well as the tendency of Hispanic writing to rationalize the world in terms of absolute oppositions (Avalle Arce). Las Casas responds to Sepulveda who argues against the ability of the Amerindian to rule himself by also classifying the Amerindian. However, he subverts the discourse of the Amerindian's detractors by arguing for their inherently gentle and rational nature.

II. Africans in the Margin

Bartolomé de las Casas dedicated sections of *Historia de las Indias* to a discussion of black Africans' position in Spanish America in the context of the emerging transatlantic slave trade. The first *bozales* were brought to Hispaniola in 1502 however black African slavery already existed in Spain. Las Casas was hardly the first European to consider the economic and social benefits of the African slave trade. Las Casas wrote the "Relación de remedios que parecen necesarios para que el mal y daño que han las indias cesen," the first detailed American project for social planification in 1516-17, in support of the importation of black slaves (Ortiz *Contrapunteo del tobaco y el azúcar* 314). Part of the social plan organized by Las Casas is his request made to the Crown to send twenty black slaves from Spain to Hispaniola to relieve Indian laborers. The historiography pertaining to the role Las Casas played in initiating the African slave trade in the Americas had overestimated his part without considering that, in the sixteenth century, everyone was a slaver, including the Catholic Kings. Not even the church had fought slavery and, as long as the slaves had been baptized, the conscience of whites remained at peace (Ortiz "La leyenda negra contra Fray Bartolomé" 147-160). Black Africans, much like Hatuey, are incorporated into the text to some degree and inform cultural production and political power; albeit black people are much more marginalized. A comparison between Hatuey and representations of unacculturated African subalterns in *Historia* serves to address the unresolved question of why Las Casas considered *bozales* unassimilable to European Christian culture, and implicitly not fully human.

Las Casas had never imagined African slavery in the Americas would become the abhorrent institution that became the Transatlantic slave trade because slavery at the time had been codified to allow slaves, including black people, to gain freedom through marriage to a free

person or initiation into the priesthood in the *Siete partidas* (Brady 44-45). While Las Casas did not envision the horrors of black slavery in the colony and in fact most likely assumed there may have been ways out of bondage for some, it cannot be said that he desired a place in the colony for the African subaltern other than as a slave. Creole abolitionists in the nineteenth century like Cirilo Villaverde did not originate this inability to imagine the incorporation of black people into European society. Like Villaverde, Las Casas's relation communicates Europeans' fear of black subjecthood.[19]Though "race" would not develop into a biological discourse until the 18th and 19th Centuries and was not the defining marker of one's social position, a correlation between having sub-Saharan ancestry and one's status as a slave had been marked early on in the colonial period. Christianity was conflated with ethnicity and sub-Saharan Africans were not generally understood to be Christians despite the existence of black Christians. For example, the presence of black slaves forced the Portuguese to reassess values and beliefs concerning honor and just war. Thomas Aquinas theorized just war as the necessity for right authority gained by engaging in war in the name of God; therefore whether a war is just or not depends on the beliefs of the enemy. Although the enemy of another faith should not be attacked initially, non-believers should not impede Christianity's spread either. The rationale behind just war had to be altered in order to defend African slavery since the ideology of crusade used against Muslims did not apply. An "ideology of expansion" develops as Christianity comes to be imagined as an ethnic category to the Portuguese who use this designation to justify extending their beliefs to other peoples.

A series of papal bulls were granted in support of these attitudes such as the 1452 Bull

[19] Long standing Iberian tradition linked blacks with servitude and Islam; blackness was associated with Islam in the Peninsula because of the prevalence of black slaves in the Muslim regions. Black skin was also seen in negative terms (Martínez, María Elena. "The Black Blood of New Spain: Limpieza de Sangre, Racial Violence, and Gendered Power in Early Colonial Mexico (486)."

Dum diversas which granted Dom Alfonso V the right to attack, conquer and subdue enemies of Christianity which included a right to reduce them to perpetual servitude (A. J. R. Russel-Wood. "Iberian Expansion and the Issue of Black Slavery" 22-28). How blackness had become linked to an ethnicity has not been fully clarified. A possible explanation is that black people in the Americas synchretized African belief systems with Christian dogma early on which can be seen in inquisitorial records (McKnight "'En su tierra lo aprendió'" 65).[20] Any sort of synchretism of Christian beliefs with practices of other cultures was interpreted by Europeans to be a sign of blasphemy and an un-Christian character that had to be punished which further justified black enslavement.

Las Casas wrote in the aftermath of religious discourse having adjusted in order to condone the continued enslavement of sub-Saharan Africans. In third person narrative, looking back on his previous self, Las Casas narrates his ignorance of the future importations of black *bozales* (who were most likely not Christians upon their arrival to Hispaniola) who had been captured unjustly by the Portuguese in wars between African tribes. Las Casas regrets "nosotros somos causa de todos los pecados que los unos y los otros cometen, sin los nuestros que en comprarlos cometemos (475)." African subjectivity in the colonial context caused Las Casas to feel anxious for the colonial project and to change his position concerning black African slavery. In response Las Casas reversed himself on his call for the importation of black African slaves:

> Este aviso de que se diese licencia para traer esclavos negros a estas tierras dio primero el clérigo Casas, no advirtiendo la injusticia con que los portugueses los toman y hacen esclavos; el cual, después de que cayó en ello, no lo diera por cuanto había en el mundo,

[20] See Thornton, Soloudre-La France, Palmié and others on the transculturation of African religious practices and Chritianity. Africans reorganized themselves in *cofradías* that blended African and Christian practices.

> porque siempre los tuvo por injusta y tiránicamente hechos esclavos, porque la misma razón es dellos que de los indios (Vol. III, Chapter 102, 371).

Las Casas perceived the black African subject was treated unjustly for the same reasons as the indigenous population. The extent to which black African humanity is recognized shifts in these pages. Las Casas the writer, in relation with "el clérigo Casas," accounted for the errors of the past, allowing for a multiple and changing colonial subjectivity within Las Casas to begin to take shape. "El clérigo Casas" most likely assumed black slaves would be enslaved justly (because they were Muslim) to avoid the wrongful enslavement of Amerindians.

In the context of the colony, the rules of enslavement changed for black people and for Amerindians, a process Las Casas witnessed along with black resistance to these injustices. In order to account for how the African presence effectively alters Las Casas's cultural production, alternative theoretical tools that go beyond the interaction between writing and orality are imperative. Margaret Olsen sustains the argument that:

> Analysis that bases itself solely on the interrelation between writing and orality as systems of representation is equally insufficient. Rather, a critical perspective that fully seeks to contemplate race and ethnicity in the Spanish American colonies will need to address coexisting systems of meaning as they are expressed on the body, on space and on objects. Further, it is essential to evaluate not only how meaning is created in the material world, but also how it is subsequently represented by colonial authorities on the written page ("Africans and Textual Marronage in Colonial Latin America" 229).

The exploitation of black Africans for labor began to be questioned when their presence was no

long a matter of debate but had become a reality upon which Las Casas must meditate. Black Africans were not malleable to Europeans' needs because they actively subverted European systems of meaning in their daily lives. Often black African subjectivity, that fleed and killed Spaniards in order to escape captivity, is subsumed under Spanish fears in the texts. The African subaltern in *Historia de las Indias* is the uncanny anxiety the European colonizer felt resulting from the threat posed by the subaltern, or the civil society of the subject population that always exists in a colonial state (Guha *Not at Home in Empire* 485-486). Like the Indian state under the Raj discussed by Ranajit Guha, the Spanish colony was a dominance without hegemony because it was a government that ruled without consent.

Though Las Casas discerned that Africans were enslaved unjustly, Las Casas never arrived at a point in the (re)presentation of the African in which he saw African subaltern as the "prójimo" who could and should be assimilated and whose subjectivity was equally complex and multiple as his own.[21] I agree with Comas and Clayton who astutely and very rightly correct the erroneous belief that Las Casas is to blame for slavery in the Americas. Las Casas rectified his past involvement in defense of the slave trade and he based his argument in favor of slavery on whether the slaves, whatever color they may be, were taken in just wars. But I have not found evidence in Las Casas's writing that he was in the vanguard of the fight against all racist ideas. The question of why black people were never given the same attention as Amerindians has not yet been answered (Hanke 92). If Divine Providence, as Las Casas argues in the "Prólogo" of the

[21] In contrast to Las Casas's anxiety, some Spaniards possibly envision towns and communities in the Caribbean that would include both free and enslaved acculturated blacks from Spain and Portugal. In 1528 two judges of the *audiencia*, Licenciados Zuazo and Espinosa, solicited the crown to approve a plan to sponsor new settlements in Hispaniola that would include at least fifty married *vecinos* and their wives; half would be Spaniards and the other half blacks and all should be brought from Spain (Altman, Ida "Towns and the Forging of the Spanish Caribbean" 38).

Historia, necessitates that certain people among all peoples are predestined to be evangelized, why didn't Las Casas include sub-Saharan Africans in his colonial vision of assimilation through evangelization? And why didn't Las Casas envision at least the inclusion of acculturated black people from Iberia?

African subalterns cannot be excluded from Las Casas's vision for the colony's future, even if he can only imagine their existence in society leading to violence and tragedy. Their presence speaks volumes in Las Casas's silences because he still grapples with the inevitability that black Africans would form a part of colonial society as more than subservient slaves. Black Africans pushed back against dominant power by means of the porous extension between races decipherable in various colonial texts. The narration of the black presence causes Las Casas to begin to conflate the Amerindian experience with the African experience (Clayton 426). Contact with African subalterns allowed him to observe the horrors of black African slavery and Las Casas soon realized black slaves would not be used to alleviate the Indians as had been agreed upon during negotiations with the *encomenderos* in Santo Domingo. Las Casas notes in *Historia* that the Spanish planned to bring 4,000 more slaves to the Indies, but black slaves had not lessened the Amerindians' suffering and nothing good had come from the slave trade. He maintained it would be better to bring Spanish laborers to the Indies to marry with the indigenous population (Vol. III, 370-372). Interestingly, Las Casas never specified if all of the immigrants should be of European descent or if any could be black. Bearing witness to the colonial slave trade did not relieve the indigenous population all of which leads Las Casas to alter his colonial project to envision the importation of Spanish laborers who, by marrying the indigenous population, would inevitably create a *mestizo* population to serve as laborers in the colony presaging 20th century national projects organized by writers like José Vasconcelos in Mexico

and Gilberto Freyre in Brazil and Fernando Ortiz in Cuba that advanced national racial models that preserved racial hierarchies by elevating *mestizaje* as the demographic ideal.[22]

Though *mestizos* were denigrated, juridical practice allowed for their absorbtion as whites, a privilege black people were seldom allowed. The Spanish crown considered Amerindians pure because they had not been "contaminated" by condemned sects therefore Iberian theologians and jurists defended both native purity and Spanish-Indian mixture. The Curse of Ham, on the other hand, was deployed regularly against dark-skinned Africans which limited their full redemption (Martínez "Black Blood in Mexico" 484-485). Divergent interpretations of indigenous and black African racial-religious impurity signal that early modern racism must also be considered when explaining black African subalternity and Las Casas's inability to imagine a place for black Africans in the colony alongside Europeans and the Amerindian population, even if skin color was not the defining marker of difference that it has come to be in modern racial discourse.

James Sweet points out that race has been applied in varied ways from culture to culture, but skin color, especially “blackness”, was a marker of difference that was consistently tied to mental and physical inferiority that became the basis of racism. Within Islamic culture, black Africans were denigrated as well because of their appearance. Muslims who introduced black African slavery to the Iberian peninsula justified African enslavement in ways that Sweet insists must be classified as racist. More than their association with Islam, black African otherness, marked by skin color, was justified by the Curse of Ham. Muslim authors described black skin as a curse that emanated from the biblical story of Ham early on. Wahb ibn Munnabih, a Persian writer, wrote in the eighth century, “Ham, the son of Noah, was a white man, fair of face. God-

[22] See Jerome Branche "Introduction" in *Colonialism and Race in Luso-Hispanic LIterature* for his discussion of these writers' conceptualization of the hybrid racial models in Latin Amerca in the twentieth century.

Mighty and Exalted is He- changed his color and the color of his descendants because of the curse of his father." By the eleventh century Iraqi writer Ibn Butlan wrote, "The blacker they are, the uglier they are, the more pointed their teeth are, the less use they are and the more it is to be feared they will harm you (Sweet "The Idea of Race" 2-3)." Muslim antecedents that linked black skin with cultural and racial inferiority would be conflated with Muslim traits by the Spanish and Portuguese (Sweet "The Iberian Roots of Racist Thought"145). Blackness was a characteristic adapted by both Muslims and Christians to justify the inferiority of peoples they enslaved. Las Casas and Zurura's fragmented images of the faces of African subjects reflect the internalized racist belief in black people's cultural and racial inferiority in the Iberian *habitus*. Alterity as theorized by Lévinas does not allow for the recognition of the face of the Other when the irrationality of racism intervenes in the process to occlude the humanity of African subalterns from the vision of the author.

I advance that the early modern cultural imaginary of black inferiority demonstrates why Las Casas's plan to absorb the Amerindian into the Christian community is never extended to black Africans. In general, Europeans believed Africans were an inferior caste (Helminen 28). Although biological concepts of race and the inferiority of the African subject did not develop until the nineteenth century, even in the fifteenth century the racism that would characterize American slavery had already been well established in attitudes and social norms in Spain and Portugal (Sweet "The Iberian Roots of Racist Thought"143). Mourão explains:

> Strong evidence of how close to 'racialization' the terms of the relationships between whites and non-whites were already at this time is the 'legalized inferiority' that began to take shape in the later fifteenth century. Kate Lowe points out in *The Black African Presence in Renaissance Europe* that Portugal came up, from early on, with specific

> legislation to address the high numbers of black African slaves in the country...As her argument suggests, legislating 'cultural differentiation' probably attempted to clarify what must have been, at least in part, an elusive concept for Portuguese and other Europeans…There were many gradations of 'white' just as there were many varieties of 'black,' and classification of these often subtle differences could be challenging (11) (Mourão 102).

Europeans labeled conquered groups in terms of skin color, locating black Africans on the lowest levels. Anti-black racism is not just a product of nineteenth century positivism as discursive precursors to scientific explanations for black inferiority had been developed much earlier and not just in Europe. To argue skin color was not a factor in how people were classified in the early modern period is akin to present day assertions of color blindness when in fact phenotype cannot be ignored when an individual's life experiences and place in society is accounted for.

Race is defined by Glenn Loury to be a cognitive category used to classify people in order to navigate through the world (15). Racial classification is not biological but rather a cognitive act in which subjects look for distinctions in the social field in order to refine their own actions (18). Furthermore, race is:

> a cluster of inheritable bodily markings carried by a largely endogamous groups of individuals, markings that can be observed by others with ease, that can be changed or misrepresented only with great difficulty, and that have come to be invested in a particular society at a given historical moment with social meaning (20-21).

Covarrubias's definition of "negro" is useful to enter the mindset of early modern Spaniards and to tease out the racial schemas that proliferated. Covarrubias's definition of "Negro," or black,

has strong racial undercurrents. “Negro, uno de los dos estremos de los colores, opuesto a blanco, Latine niger. Negro, el Etiope de color negra.” Covarrubias associates blackness with skin color that is the opposite of the color “blanco” or “white.” *Etíopes* are sub-Saharan Africans whose difference is ultimately characterized by their dark skin color rather than other markers such as religious affiliation with Islam. Interestingly, the feminine adjective, “negra,” is immediately linked to skin color and vocal intonation more so than the masculine adjective, “la muger negra. Proverbio, Callar como negra en baño. En el baño entra todos sin luz, y assi no se pueden distinguir quales son negros, o blancos, si ellos no se descubren hablando.” Not only are black people distinguished from whites because of skin color, but also because of speech patterns which can “discover” their true racial identity.

Religion is the most important factor in racial classification, based on blood lineage, in the Medieval and early modern periods, however evidence of a nascent modern understanding of race taking shape in the early modern period surfaces in the literature. That black people were not associated with Christian Spaniards simply because of shared religious beliefs is found in Álvar Nuñez Cabeza de Vaca's travel narrative, *Naufragios* (1542). On the journey Cabeza de Vaca lived alongside men of black African origin such as Estebanillo who was called “el negro." Despite his skin color, Estebanillo was still categorized as being among the “Christians” or Spaniards who were marked as separate from the Indians (132). The same categorization of black African subalterns occured in the narration when a companion of Cabeza de Vaca, Doroteo Teodoro, along with a nameless “negro,” leave with the Indians and both, referred to as “Cristianos,” are never seen or heard from again (110-111). Cabeza de Vaca’s designation of these men as “black” distinguishes them from their European counterparts because of their skin color despite their assimilation to Spanish Christian norms.

A similar pattern that includes black people who have assimilated, but are still othered because of their dark skin color, is present in the epic poem "Espejo de paciencia" (1608) by Silvestre de Balboa Troya. The poem recounts bishop Juan de las Cabezas's imprisonment in Cuba by a French pirate, Don Gilberto, and his rescue by the Creole slave, Salvador. Salvador's blackness is secondary to his valor as a fighter and his blackness is used as another weapon to injure the Frenchman's pride, "Andaba Don Gilberto ya cansado,/ Y ofendido de un negro con vergüenza:/ Que las más veces vemos que un pecado/ Al hombre trae a lo que nunca piensa:/ Y viéndole el buen negro desmayado,/ Sin que perdiese punto en su defensa,/ Hízose afuera y le apuntó derecho/ Metiéndole la lanza por el pecho (vv 946-952)." Salvador is lauded for his valor not because of, but rather despite, his blackness. Salvador's Hispanized blackness supports Spanish moral authority in comparison with their European enemies whose defeat is even more shameful at the hands of a black slave. Also of note, Salvador's valor is not conflated with the representation of all black people but rather he is an aberration to the norm.

Black skin had become an intrinsic part of the meaning of the word "black" in the early modern period. Writers contributed to creating race based hierarchies that belittled black people and defined a white racial category populated by European Christians by othering non-European and non-Christian groups (Mourão 102-109). Europeans generally referred to themselves by ethnic or religious affiliation explicitly. Implicitly, references to sub-Saharan Africans' blackness separated them from Europeans who were symbolized by whiteness was defined by describing the difference of "blacks."[23] Las Casas's thinking does not progress beyond a general

[23] In Spain, blackness became a marker of racial difference and inferiority through discourses of *limpieza de sangre*, a racial ideology that affirms the development of racial categories based on skin color in Spain. These categories were developed in the historical context of the *Reconquista* and the conversion of Jews and Muslims to Christianity. Although many Jews and Muslims did convert, their faith was still questioned by the Inquisition. Christianity became linked to family

characterization of the African population to include the direct speech or the representation of a clear named figure of African descent in rebellion. Las Casas also never suggests that European laborers intermarry with the black African population to solve the colony's labor demands as he does with the Indian community. The characterization of the mass of black slaves is associated with sickness and plague that cannot be incorporated into the society of the island because its function is destructive. These beliefs will continue to resonate throughout the colonial period, coming to a head in Creole anxiety concerning the place of the mixed race population and free black people in the burgeoning Cuban nation in *Cecilia Valdés*.[24]

Victor Stoichita writes in "The Image of the Black in Spanish Art: Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries" in the anthology *The Image of the Black in Western Art* that black subjects were represented textually and in literature before being represented visually in Spain. Attitudes towards black people in the period in these illustrations tended to reflect ancient demonization of black Africans resulting from their enslavement. Alonso de Sandoval was one of the first Spanish writers to question black people's demonization. Sandoval was preceded in

---

lineage and whether any one had any Jewish or Muslim ancestors, as well as to whether they had ever been tried or connected to heresy through common knowledge of local townspeople and neighbors. Discourse concerning religious beliefs came to advance the idea that religion can be transmitted through blood lines. Blood "purity" had to be confirmed through archival records as well as public knowledge. *Limpieza de sangre* would grow to be more and more essentialist to the point that there would be no limits on how far back *probanzas* or proof of lineage would be required. *Limpieza de sangre* is a notion that would be transplanted to the Americas and would shift to exclude blacks from racial purity. By the Seventeenth century black blood would be synonymous with impurity (Martínez *Genealogical Fictions* 268-272).

[24] Historian Guadalupe García elaborates on European anxities about the conditions of the free black population in the city of Havana in the 16th and 17th Centuries. There was already a free and mobile black population in Havana by the 1570s that had achieved economic success. They were able to acquire land and slaves as well as to leave wills and property as *vecinos* of Havana. Though *vecino* designation "implies inclusion, black residents inherited the restrictions that had been reserved for Amerindians under encomienta; even negros horros were required to account for their movements through the city (33-34)." By 1557 a series of laws were proposed to segregate free blacks and the remaining Amerindian population. However the proposal to expell free blacks failed because free blacks served to protect the city from invasion by pirates (36).

the sixteenth century by Bartolomé de Albornoz's *Arte de los contratos* (1573) and Fray Tomás de Mercado's *Suma de tratos y contratos* (1587). These works, along with discourses emphasizing the Virgen's predilection for black people, provide some contrast to the typically negative imagery depicting black skin (192-196). However, the underlying imagery of black people in the period foregrounds black Africans' deviance from the norm and inferiority. Las Casas appears to evaluate black humanity according to the varying descriptions Stoichita elaborates when he both grasps black African humanity to some extent and also subsumes black humanity under a fantastic narrative. For example, Las Casas attempted to comprehend black people's motivations when they escaped; he attributed their choice to the lowered life expectancies for black people after they were introduced into the sugar plantations. The extreme workload and the potions made from the sugar from the cane consumed by the Africans were causing them to become sick and die, which had not been a problem in Iberian slavery:

> Por esto se huyen cuando pueden a cuadrillas, y se levantan y hacen muertes y crueldades en los españoles, por salir de su cautiverio, cuantas la oportunidad poder les ofrece, y así no viven muy seguros los chicos pueblos desta isla, que es otra plaga que vino sobre ella (Las Casas *Historia* Vol. 3, 475).

The question of why Las Casas does not equate black humanity with European and indigenous humanity remains to be answered. Perhaps Las Casas had begun down the path to a second conversion to fully grasp African agency. This seems to be the case from his reading of Gómez Eanes de Zurura's chronicle.

Las Casas's references to Portuguese chronicler Gómes Eanes Zurara's work, the text that most influenced Las Casas's changing views on the nature of black African slavery, uncovers

their agency. The narration details how three captured Moroccans were able to promise many black slaves as ransom in exchange for their own freedom because they were the children of high-ranking figures in the area. Las Casas cites their voices in depersonalized third person indirect discourse rather than direct discourse, “Idos y venidos otros y otros, que mandaba ir el infante, entre otros fue enviado un Antón González, porque entre los cautivos que habían traído trajeron tres que *prometieron dar muchos esclavos negros por su rescate* (Las Casas *Historia de las indias* Vol. I, 128) (The emphasis is mine)." The African leaders (we do not know who they are because the chroniclers do not include their names) succeed in transmitting aspects of the indigenous social and political system, in which they occupy positions of power, despite the overarching discursive homogenization of black Africans. Their agency is based in material value that the Portuguese seek -black Africans. African political power is also transmitted in the word “promitieron”, which implies extra textual oral production in the indirect discourse of their promise to their captors, despite Las Casas’s failure to explain how the Africans were able to communicate meaning to their Portuguese captors. According to Zurara, one of the Africans was able to communicate with the Portuguese because he was fluent in Arabic (Rout 7). These Africans who speak Arabic are subaltern agents of the "place of in-betweenness" theorized by Guha. They are the heterogeneous buffer group in a social stratification grid (Spivak "Can the Subaltern Speak?" 253-256). Beneath the layers of silence, African oral discursive power and linguistic knowledge can be rediscovered and shown to contour the production of the dominant discourse. Though their social position distinguishes them from other captured Africans who cannot promise a wealth of black bodies to the Portuguese, the less powerful Africans' lamentations are also inserted into the narrative. In fact, these cries displace the heroic history of Henry the Navigator intended by Gómes Eanes de Zurara (Jennings 17). Las Casas cites Zurara’s

discourse and thereby retransmits the captives' horrified exclamations:

> …unos tenían las caras bajas, llenas de lágrimas, mirando unos contra los otros, gimiendo dolorosamente, mirando a los altos cielos, firmando en ellos sus ojos, bramando muy alto, como pidiendo socorro al Padre de la Naturaleza; otros herían sus rostros con las palmas, echándose tendidos en medio del suelo; otros hacían sus lamentaciones en manera de canto, según costumbre de su tierra; y puesto que las palabras de su lenguaje, de los nuestros no pudiesen ser entendidas, bien se conocía su tristeza, la cual, para más se acrecentar, sobrevinieron los que tenían cargo de los partir (132).

Although the captives look one another in the face and speak, the European observer's view is limited to the image of the lowered face, covered by tears, or the face looking to the heavens. Las Casas and Gómez Eanes de Zurura never approach African subalterns directly as equals, however the newly enslaved *bozales'* feelings in this moment are not completely ignored in the text. Though the authors do not understand their language or their religion, the musicality of their cries transmits their sadness.

This example, again, demonstrates the development of Las Casas's philosophical project in relation to the black African presence as partial and incomplete as a result of not being confronted with African "faces" but just the sounds and the fragmented images of their eyes, tears and hands damaging their faces in despair. Contact with African subalterns is most likely limited during the early period of the slave trade when black Africans were just beginning to be imported to the Iberian Peninsula to work as slaves. The number of black Africans coming into contact with Europeans were still limited enough, as well as black African appropriation of European languages and cultures, that the black African presence is not able to activate enough

agential power in order to be represented clearly in any particular figure like Hatuey. Zurara's underlying rhetorical message continues to praise the Infante Enrique by emphasizing the value of Euro-Christian culture for the captives, which dismisses the prisoners' native culture and "it anticipates proslavery justifications that appear in later centuries (Branche *Colonialism and Race in Luso-Hispanic Literature* 41). Nevertheless, the Africans' tears are unsettling to both Gómes Eanes de Zurura, the crowd of commoners and his reader, Las Casas. Their agency is demonstrated when Las Casas refers to their political motivations in the context of the slave trade and European imperial expansion alongside those of the Spanish and the Portuguese slavers:

> "ítem, como los mismos [negros] ven que con tanta ansia los buscan y quieren, unos a otros se hacen injustas guerras, y por otras vías ilícitas se hurtan y venden a los portugueses, por manera que nosotros somos causa de todos los pecados que los unos y los otros cometen, sin los nuestros que en comprarlos cometemos (Las Casas *Historia* Vol. 3, 475).

Las Casas paraphrases textual evidence from Gómes Eanes de Zurura's chronicle pertaining to the political and social circumstances in which Africans engage in warfare amongst themselves to provide European slavers with the cargo they wish to purchase. Though the onus of agency in the circumstances of the slave trade is placed on the European slavers, Las Casas incidentally acknowledges that black Africans are not just sitting ducks because they provide slaves in reaction to the social reality and the demands of Europeans. Las Casas's narrative also humanizes the actions of the African slavers who he believes do not act out of greed like the Europeans.

The African subaltern presence is an important component of the narrations which adds

complexity and depth to the narration as Las Casas's ouvre is enhanced and authorized. Though blackness or skin color is not an indelible marker of difference since the high ranking black Moroccans achieve freedom while lower status black people are enslaved, the slaves' blackness is nonetheless becoming a prominent method of marking the people the slavers wish to capture. Though those who are enslaved are lumped together as a black mass, they still counter the dominant narrative. The African's agitated response to captivity seems to speak truth to counter narratives that black enslavement was just. As Butler notes, "before we ask what it means to speak truth to power, we have to ask who can speak. Sometimes the very presence of those who are supposed to remain mute in public discourse breaks through that structure ("Trump, fascism, and the construction of 'the people': An interview with Judith Butler"). African subalterns ultimately influence cultural transformation as authors question the development of colonial society as a result of cross-racial encounters. Margaret Olsen's theory of "textual marronage" searches for subaltern expression embedded in the colonial archive. According to Olsen, the African subaltern produces meaning contrary to or beyond the semiotic limits of imperialist language, which unveils the fragmentary and limited nature of colonial discourse (Olsen "Textual Marronage" 230). African textual marronage in the sounds produced, and their corporeality in the text, caused Las Casas to rethink his previous arguments in favor of black African slavery through exposure to the horrors of the trade in Zurara's chronicle and his own experience in Hispaniola. The addition of black people's lived experiences forces Las Casas to begin to come face to face with the African subaltern. An aperture to a boundary space, on the edges of European and African cultures, is created in which multiple ethnic realities are in contact and alter one another, authoring a text representative of a hybrid culture particular to Spanish America.

Though the colonized and enslaved are not free, neither is the colonizer, as Ranajit Guha theorizes in "Not at Home in Empire." The colonizer must act out his role in order to maintain power. Guha cites George Orwell's essay "On Shooting an Elephant" in which Orwell is forced to kill an elephant before a crowd of natives, even though it has stopped its rampage, in order to maintain a semblance of control. In doing so he has lost power because he acts in response to the crowd that watches (Guha 491). Like the brown faces that observe Orwell, Zurura and Las Casas also lose power in the face of the other as they are forced into positions they do not wish to occupy. Zurura is disturbed by the Africans' response but must continue to play his part as chronicler of these horrors. Las Casas, for his part, is trapped by the outcome of the slave trade that he cannot stop even though he deliberately writes that he acted in error by supporting the importations at first.

Through extra literary (oral and corporal) means, black Africans assume power in the cultural field that forces dominant actors to attempt to rectify social boundaries and hierarchies organizing groups. European writers do not exist in a vacuum apart from non-whites and neither do their narratives. Bourdieu's theory of the field of cultural production describes how the writer is defined in a given culture through a struggle. Who is considered a writer is debated based on historical definitions:

> There is no other criterion of membership of a field than the objective fact of producing effects within it. One of the difficulties of orthodox defenses against heretical transformation of the field by a redefinition of the tacit or explicit terms of entry is the fact that polemics imply a form of recognition; adversaries whom one would prefer to destroy by ignoring them cannot be combated without consecrating them (Bourdieu *The Field of Cultural Production* 42).

Even though African subalterns are not operating on an equal playing field with European authors in the process of composing a text, African subalternity has an effect on the final product. A paradoxical message is presented by African agents, who slowly begin to open pathways for the inclusion of subaltern subjectivities; and the hegemonic writers, who continually rationalize discourses that defend the inhumanity of sub-Saharan Africans in order to maintain political power.

In the case of Las Casas, a fantastic discourse is written into the text that tamps down on African agency. Tzvetan Todorov defines the fantastic as "la vacilación experimentada por un ser que no conoce más que las leyes naturales, frente a un acontecimiento aparentemente sobrenatural (*Introducción a la literatura fantástica* 19)." This vacillation is exposed in the relation concerning the plagues on Hispaniola towards the end of Vol. III. The plagues are an indirect reference to how the *bozales* alter power relations on the island when they rebel against the colonial project even though Las Casas cannot reference the 1522 rebellion because it occurred after the events narrated (Benítez Rojo 277-278). The indirect and fantastical characterization of Africans is a rhetorical tool that anticipates the greater threat black people would pose to white power on the island colony in the near future. In this way Las Casas also premonitions the dangers the mulatto other will pose to social and political order (Buscaglia-Salgado *Undoing Empire* xix). The dominant discourse reacts by seeking new methods to impose its vision all the while failing because African discourse cannot be denied completely and will continue, through greater contact, to take part in interracial cultural production.

Simultaneously as Gómes Eanes de Zurara and Las Casas work to justify their respective colonial projects, the African presence inscribed in the text causes dissonance in both writers' narratives. They alter their writing in order to adjust for African subalternity ultimately coming

to respect African humanity on some level *a posteriori* to the events narrated. To what extent Gomez Eanes de Zurara and Bartolomé de las Casas were conscious of their shifting belief systems cannot be proven. Ultimately, Las Casas's thought concerning African enslavement is altered after his experience with the institution on the island and his reading of Gomes Eanes de Zurara's chronicle. I maintain the fantastic discourse also provides insight into African subaltern agency despite the fact that their assimilation is not considered by Las Casas. Subalterns' position on the island must be accounted for despite Las Casas's desires because of the growing numbers of African importations. Las Casas may regret the introduction of slaves, but there is no turning back from their arrival and the subsequent alteration of colonial culture and society.

III. Broadening the Boundary. African Oral and Embodied Discourse in *De Instauranda Aethiopum Salute*

Alonso de Sandoval's *De Instauranda Aethiopum Salute,* published in Seville in 1628, is shaped by the expanding porous cultural space that unites Europeans and black Africans as the transatlantic slave trade intensifies.[25] Various agents influence the production of textual culture in *De Instauranda Aethiopum Salute*, even if power remains asymmetrical in terms of the proliferation of European cultural norms preserved in the text, and the limited capacity non-Europeans have to inform cultural production. In any case, new practices and meaning are inscribed into the hegemonic cultural product that account for reality outside what the canonical project may attempt to establish. Contact with the other depends upon an ethical relation without which the cultural production cannot come into being. Like Las Casas, Sandoval ascertains the black African condition through reading and personal experience. Intellectual endeavours undo boundaries that would limit Europeans' ability to identify with black people. Physical boundaries between groups are also overcome in the literal space of the urban center in Cartagena de Indias. Texts and urban spaces are the setting for encounters between colonial agents of all races who alter one another's sense of identity along with the ontology of the cultural field.

Sandoval's treatise, *De Instauranda Aethiupum Salute*, is noteworthy because cultural exchange amongst Europeans and Afro-descended peoples is depicted with greater complexity than in the previous century. The black African subaltern's accumulating centrality to colonial Caribbean culture is evident in Alonso de Sandoval's study of the cultures and lived experiences

---

[25] Born in 1577 in Seville, Spain, Sandoval arrived to Lima with his family when he was seven years old. Having studied in the San Pablo Jesuit College, he officially joined the Company of Jesus in 1593 and was sent to Cartagena de Indias in 1605. And in 1624 he was made head administrator of the Cartagena Jesuit College. Although most of his colleagues supported his work with black Africans, Sandoval did have a few conflicts with his superiors in the Company of Jesus much like Thomas Gage, who will be discussed at great length in the following chapter. He attempted to attain the fourth level of Jesuit vows, which allow a Jesuit to directly obey papal directives, failed and died in an epidemic in Cartagena de Indias in 1652 (Von Germeten ix-x).

of Africans in Africa, those who have arrived as *bozales,* and those who have been acculturated as *ladinos*. Sandoval acknowledges black African humanity in *De Instauranda Aethiopum Salute* setting forth in the first lines that black African subalterns are considered "*prójimo*[s]," or neighbours, whose spiritual health must be procured. African *prójimos* are not categorized as equal to Europeans however. According to Sandoval black Africans are a "nación, que…en el teatro del mundo hace tan baja figura (6)." Unlike Las Casas, Sandoval's project does not narrate a philosophical change in his position on slavery. Rather, Sandoval inserts his chronicle into the common discourse of the time in support of black slavery in Cartagena de Indias, although he does intend to modify the institution in order to save the slaves' souls. However, Sandoval is pushed beyond the issue of African subalterns' assimilability to discuss the pragmatics of the reality in which the African presence is increasing and their place in society must be considered. Sandoval explains his plan when he describes Jesuits' mission in Cartagena de Indias to awaken:

> y avive el apetito de acudir al desamparo de los etíopes, nación, que anque en el teatro del mundo hace tan baja figura, tiene muy señalado lugar en el de Dios…Y así (como es tradición común de la Iglesia) los quiso traer el Verbo encarnado a sus pies en las primicias de la gentilidad, cuando con feliz principio trajo los tres Reyes Magos, queriendo el niño desnudo mostrar que la vestidura que le ajusta y da gusto es tejida de diversos colores, y entretejida de blanco y negro, trayendo negros a su presencia, para que viendo sus ministros el estambre de aquella divina urdimbre…no se desdeñasen de echar los hilos a aquella traza, ni desechasen los negros por ser negros; pues esta variedad es la que hace esta vestidura a la medida y gusto de Cristo Señor Nuestro (6).

Sandoval likens the relationship between black subjects or "*etíopes*" and whites to the woven

clothing the Three Kings brought to the naked infant Christ. The robe is made from diverse colors, black and white, which symbolize blacks' assimilation into the Catholic religion despite their skin color. Victor Stoichita proposes that the image of the black and white threads woven together disrupts Manichean oppositions between white and black. Black and white integration in the image is evidence that Sandoval does propose equality between racial opposites (193-195). Though the image alludes to integration, differences between "races" in terms of pigmentation are not expunged. A visual contrast between the threads representing whites and those representing blacks is maintained while a reference to black inferiority is made:

> Y si los hilos que yo aquí tejiere, por lo que de mí se les pegare, no fueran para poner en la vestidura de Cristo, contentarme he con que hagan tela para limpiar los pies de la Iglesia, que son los negros (6).

The teleology of blacks in the Christian community, as described in the "Prologue," demands a clear categorization of “blackness” and how it differentiates from and is subjugated to “whiteness.” The human races are divided in the metaphor of the body and blacks are the lowest of all racial groups since they are considered the feet. Their incorporation into Christianity does not concede equality to blacks nor is their religious-racial difference fully expunged.

Christian doctrine in early modern Spain incorporated Islamic understanding of humanity as a siblinghood that included the Peoples of the Book (Jews and Christians). Muslim courts, for example, ruled on the basis of the *Koran* that "others" who were Peoples of the Book could not be put to the sword, legally, for not converting to Islam while "others" who were pagan could be (Shell 306-307). Spanish Christendom did not maintain the level of tolerance seen in Muslim

Spain, as those who are not Christian, or part of human siblinghood, came to be seen as animals who may as well be treated as such (Shell 307). That Sandoval considered *etíopes* a part of the human siblinghood demonstrates his progressive stance at the time. There still appears to be a limit to the extent to which he envisions their equality with Europeans; and this limitation demonstrates that race is not simply based on religious difference; but modern racial discourse based in physical difference and skin color.

Also of interest is Sandoval's insistence on using the term *etíope* to refer to black Africans while also struggling to define exactly who fits into this category. According to Sandoval, he "*negros etíopes*" originate from a region in Ethiopia called Guinea while their geographical placement is further south than Africans in the north, an ethnic and geographic designation described by Ptolomeo as beginning in the strait of Gibraltar and running until the Red Sea and stopping in Ethiopia (Sandoval 13). Sandoval reiterates his illustration of ethnic categories in Africa to explain the many types of Africans. Simultaneously, Sandoval's discourse also attempts to define North Africans, some of whom are geographically located close to Spain on the Strait of Gibraltar, as separate from the *etíopes*, who are defined as black, along with other ethnic groups around the world also specified by Sandoval. That Sandoval does not make a clear distinction between north Africans and Spaniards is most likely symptomatic of the permeable nature of the Mediterranean world with the North African world. Barbara Fuchs has observed in maurophile literature a tendency towards "identificatory *jouissance"* beyond the crown's anti-Morisco rhetoric during the early modern period (*Exotic Nation* 76). Besides a shared culture, Spanish Catholics and Muslim North Africans were difficult to distinguish between in many instances based on skin color resulting from the multiethnic and heterogeneous nature of the Iberian world.

Spaniards continued to identify with Moorish or *Morisco* cultural practices through *Romancero* poetry, style of dress, and performing Moorishness through the Iberian joust known as *juegos de caña*. The Moorish presence in Iberia later spread to the New World. David Wheat has studied galley slaves in the Caribbean between 1578 and 1635, a period when enslaveability was measured not just by skin color but also religion, political loyalty and foreign status (Wheat 328). A heterogeneous group of enslaved and captive men from North Africa (nominally part of the Ottoman Empire), the Ottoman Empire (the imperial center) along with Afro-Iberians and sub-Saharan Africans could be found aboard Cartagena's earliest galleys as demonstrated by the geographical origins ascribed to 73 "Moorish" and "Turkish" Galley slaves in Cartagena de Indias (1578-1583) and Havana (1593-1596). The geographical origins of the galley slaves were carefully documented; of 18 slaves listed who originated in present-day Algeria, five were described as "Moors", and two are listed as "black" while another is described as "mulatto" (Wheat 332- 333). These figures substantiate Sandoval's muteness on North African difference. Unless their "Moorish", "black" or "mulatto" ethnicity is stated, for early modern Spaniards, North Africans and Spaniards are implicitly marked as relatively similar, and white, while others are distinguished as black *etíopes* or black Moors in bodily presentation. Again, the shifting nature of racial discourse towards modern racial ideology based largely on pigmentation and legitimacy is evidenced.

Sandoval seems to seek to designate racial differences between a group that would be commonly recognized as "white" (Europeans and North Africans) by the nineteenth century and blacks (*etíopes*) through the spatial metaphor of the human body. He differentiates between "us" and "them" in the image in which members of the we-group are close to each other and the out-group or "they" are distant (Tuan 50). Sandoval creates a discursive distance at the same time

that distinctions between ethnic groups are also impossible to define in any fixed manner, especially when religion is considered, since Moors and Christians could be both black or white. The descriptions disclose the dislocation of the discursive limits concerning "racial" groups. "Race" is a concept that originates in designating those who are not a part of the Christian community as well as nobility and blood lineage. However, elements of racial stigma related to bodily presentation, and pigmentation, are beginning to enter into racial discourse. Although Sandoval intends his writing to weave an image in which black African subalterns are assimilated into humanity as the lowest category, the “feet,” of the body of the Christian congregation, Sandoval perhaps inadvertently portrays African subalterns with complexity in a variety of contexts ranging from positions of power as kings in Africa to the lowliest of slaves in the colony.

Unavoidably, any complex representation of black Africans provides a space for their voices and agency to alter the message of the text. African agency surfaced in Sandoval's study of the many cultures known by Europeans to inhabit the sub-Saharan continent. Sandoval realized it was necessary to understand sub-Saharan African culture in order to convert unacculturated slaves. For this reason, he dedicated the first part of *De Instauranda Aethiopum Salute* to an anthropological and historical study of the entire continent, as well as other groups in India and Asia whom he also considered to be black. The study extends a place for the representation of complex black African subjects who, like Hatuey, interpret Christian beliefs in their own way, both cannibalizing Christian imagery and effectuating cultural change. One example occurs when Sandoval relates how Fray Alejo de Meneses, Archbishop of Goa, undertook an evangelical mission on the Island of Socotora (Socotra), located off the coast of present day Yemen. Fray Meneses believed the natives had been converted by Saint Thomé but

had forgotten how to practice “true” Christianity. A sheikh serves as an intermediary for Fray Alejo de Meneses and his men who threaten to behead the Beduins if they do not willingly obey. In response, the Beduins send an envoy to reject the invaders' demands. The oldest man among them speaks:

> Bien sabes tú, jeque, que eres nuestro príncipe, y nosotros tus criados y vasallos de tu padre; nosotros bien sabemos para lo que tú nos llamas, que es para que obedezcamos a estos frailes y nos sujetemos a su ley, lo cual ningún biduino ha de hacer; y si por eso nos quieres mandar cortar las cabezas, bien puedes hacerlo luégo…mas espantámonos mucho de ti, que habiendo trece años que vives entre nosotros y conoces nuestras costumbres y naturales, te persuades que habemos de hacer lo que estos frailes hacen y trocar nuestra ley por la suya, o que los habemos de oír y tratar. Vén acá, jeque, si tú con vivir entre nosotros y ser nuestro príncipe, y casado con mujer biduina, no puedes ni tus antepasados pudieron hacer nunca un solo biduino moro, teniendo nostros en nuestra ley muchas cosas conformes a la tuya, ¿cómo piensas que éstos con las cabezas raídas nos podrán con sus razones hacer cristianas (244)?

The Beduins offer their necks because they would prefer to die rather than give up their customs. They have remained steadfast in their traditions and rejected Islam in the past, and they will continue to practice their religion, refusing Christian doctrine. Their case is an example of how blackness is not synonymous with Islamic faith, as they reject both Muslim and Christian invasion. In response, the Beduins are not killed and the friars continue to attempt to reason with them. The blurring of agencies is portrayed as the African presence becomes a common factor that allows Europeans to be presented with a more complete depiction of subalterns that have been designated black.

More sophisticated depictions of black African subjects are a catalyst for the African presence to accumulate authority in the production of a hybrid Afro-European culture. This is ostensible when the friars inquire about Saint Thomé's preaching on the island. The Beduins adore a cross which leads the Friars to insist that they must be Christians. However the Beduins deny that they have ever been Christians and explain the cross's origin is based in their ancestral traditions. Although Sandoval demonizes the Beduins at the conclusion of the exchange, which ends with the priests' violent expulsion, the Beduins are successful in assuming ultimate agency because they insist on alternate methods of deciphering symbols (247). What is of critical importance to Beduin agency is not whether they intended to alter the text so much as the ultimate effect on the cultural import of European material culture. The basis of cultural and political power is not simply rooted only in the text but rather the text is a reflection of real life power struggles. Black Africans' lived experiences are conveyed in the text's multivocality generated by African representations that record oral discourse.

The outcome is the composition of a culturally hybrid text that communicates a message beyond the original dominant ideology intended by the European writer, similar to the processes that occur from such contact with Indians in *Historia de las Indias.* This development is also undertaken in another exemplary dialogue between Sandoval and a *ladina* slave woman. The African woman, like Hatuey, appropriates and reinterprets Christian discourse to legitimate her flight:

> ...siempre mis confesores me han dado licencia para que reciba al Señor, más jamás lo he hecho, porque mi señora me lo ha estorbado, quitándome la cédula que par ello

> me daban, pareciéndole no era capaz de recibir a Dios. Hoy es ida a esta grande solemnidad, y como ha de tardar, vengo escondida a recibirle siquiera esta vez (198)...

The *ladinai* locates her mistress's discourse outside the logic of Christian theological precedents because she has attempted to impede God's will. This woman is a rather tame case, as blacks in the early modern Caribbean and Cartagena de Indias were known to enjoy social mobility and relative freedom that shocked visitors. Jesuit accounts from Panama reported that of the 12,000 blacks in the city in the 1640s, less than a quarter had received Communion; even more revelatory, black men and women could not be stopped by their masters from gathering behind the butcher shops where they "got naked" and gambled goods stolen from their masters (Gómez 33). Sandoval's slave woman is not simply a prop that justifies African evangelization for his Jesuit readers. Although she remains nameless, like other blacks in the Caribbean, the woman escapes institutional limits placed on her.

The archival record contains examples of women of color who adapted Christian doctrine to their needs. One case is that of an escaped slave woman named Isabel Criolla who learned about the nuanced limits to her mistress's power in the Spanish Americas based in Christian doctrine; she most likely had acquired knowledge of the significance of the *Siete Partidas*, laws that abridged the power of abusive masters. After Isabel was captured she denounced her mistress to a scribe at the request of Gregorio Álvarez de Zepeda, the *alcalde* of the Holy Brotherhood of Mompox, who was charged with seeking out the maroons (Block18-49). Isabel Criolla's recodification of her position as insider to Christian doctrine is an example of her abilityt to escape total codification. (Olsen *Slavery and Salvation* 124). Like Isabel Criolla, Sandoval's enslaved *ladina*'s appropriation of the Spanish language allows her to alter Christian discourse and insert herself into its trajectory as a necessary participant in Divine Providence.

IV. Alonso de Sandoval's Spanish Baroque Imaginary and Racial Anxiety

The preceding examples supply heterogeneous representations of African subalterns that affirm black Africans' mobility in Cartagena de Indias. Margaret Olsen proposes Alonso de Sandoval's chronicle is a baroque text that attempts to make sense of this evolving heterogeneity (Olsen *Slavery and Salvation* 22-23). Encapsulated by the Spanish Gold Age, the baroque period, beginning towards the end of the sixteenth century and spanning the seventeenth century, questions the harmony and idealization of the Renaissance. José Antonio Maravall places the baroque period between 1600-1670/1680. However, Maravall allows the possibility that "certain advanced phenomena of baroque significance appeared some years previously, in the later times of Michelangelesque Mannerism and, in Spain, with the construction of the Escorial (4)." José Antonio Maravall defines the baroque as a culture created in reaction to social crisis felt all over Europe. The baroque, however, extends to geographies beyond continental Europe, as the early modern Caribbean baroque invoked by Sandoval is a corollary to Conquest and European anxieties concerning the black African population and racial admixture. The baroque is not just a literary style but also a concept of epoch. All of the fields of culture develop in the same situation "as a result of the same conditions, responding to the same vital necessities…each factor thus ends up being altered, dependent on the epoch as a complex to which all the observed changes must be referred (Maravall 6)." Although baroque culture would later become a tool of the popular culture used as a type of social protest (Maravall 153), it was originally a reactionary attempt by the Absolutist state and elites to rein in social mobility.

The Jesuit order, to which *De Instauranda Aethiopum Salute* is addressed, became an expression of the baroque mentality (Maravall 71-77). The Spanish baroque is a culture of reaction against ideological and social mobility in Spain and Europe that threatened to break

down hierarchies established by feudal estates and Church authority. Be that as it may, the Absolutist state, according to Beverly, is not as powerful as Maravall posits; the state is an imaginary in the Lacanian sense because the state projects desire that systematically misconstrues the real. Despite the limits on baroque artistic manifestations to exert social control, Jesuits like Sandoval insisted that the "suspect new genres of Renaissance vernacular literature, many of which had been placed on the index of prohibited books in the wake of the Council of Trent, could be recuperated and mobilized in the service of Catholic orthodoxy and the defence of Spain's overseas empire (Beverly 224)." Within the baroque tradition, literature was a tool to create order in an increasingly chaotic world. *El Criticón* is an example of baroque writing that attempted to rationalize and unify the complex and disparate sections of Spanish society that color Sandoval's social and cultural *habitus*. Written by the Jesuit Baltazar Gracián y Morales, *El Criticón* is a *conceptista* novel that follows the journey of Critilo and Andrenio through a world of shifting monsters and seemingly contrary oppositions of thought and representation. *Conceptismo* was created by Gracián in order to give a theoretical meaning to the *cultismo* of Góngora. *Cultismo* is a literary style that plays with words and meanings and extends them to a point of excess that is incomprehensible.

Sandoval refashioned the Spanish baroque to account for the conditions of contact between Africans and Spaniards.[26] The baroque mentality in which Sandoval operated translated to his support of the spread of Christian doctrine in Cartagena de Indias in order to indoctrinate *bozales* in the hopes of achieving Divine Providence. Rather than endeavour to maintain social hierarchies between the Monarchy, the elite class and the masses in Iberia, Sandoval writes to

[26] A free colored population also thrived in Cartagena de Indias in the neighborhood known as *Gethsemení*, a haven for free women of color. Despite colonial institutions' imposition of order by enforcing Catholicism, cultural and religious boundaries as well as race and gender hierarchies, the city simmered with illegal activity that signals subaltern agency (Von Germeten *Violent Delights* 5).

establish a scheme of rank between the Spanish and black Africans. In order to create social order in the colony, justification of black Africans' enslavement was rationalized; Alonso de Sandoval developed a plan for their assimilation into colonial society through evangelization, much like Las Casas had argued for the Indian subject. In the context of Cartagena de Indias, Africans had become the largest population of racial others whose position in the colonial world Spanish colonizers wished to clearly define and regiment. The social place of enslaved Africans, however, was complicated once they were indoctrinated and had achieved fluency in Spanish or been ladinoized.[27]

Sandoval's racial anxiety is not unlike that expressed in *El Criticón*. Blackness in opposition to whiteness was one of the many concepts Gracián struggled to reconcile. Race was becoming increasingly not only a religious and cultural marker as the concept, stretched to address anxiety concerning the social place of the enslaved black population that was evidenced earlier in Las Casas's *Historia*. The ontological understanding of blackness in *El Criticón* was based on a monstrous depiction of blackness in opposition to whiteness while, simultaneously, black alterity is presented in unity with whiteness. The paradoxical understanding of blackness and whiteness as unified and radically opposed neither allows for a clear overlap nor separation of both. One example occurs when Critilo and Andrenio come across a carriage pulled by snakes, driven by a fox, carrying a monster made of various shifting oppositions, or what Gaylord calls morally tainted mixes that reflect the baroque concept of the world upside down in

[27] Besides Divine Providence, the Spanish had reason to evangelize and acculturate *bozales* because of the threat of *cimarrones* and the formation of *palenques* in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in Cartagena. *Cimarrones* exert power in the government of Cartagena de Indias in this period for example by informing the decisions made by the *cabildo* that formed agreements to control and punish captive fugitives. For this reason, there were already *cimarrón* enclaves. One that was especially important was the Barranca de Malambo that in 1570 disrupted the transportation of goods and threatened to block the arrival of food to the city (Navarette Peláez 27-28).

which traditional social order is in upheaval (126). The passage from *El Criticón* is the following:

> Venía dentro un monstruo, digo, muchos en uno, porque ya era blanco, ya negro; ya mozo, ya viejo; ya pequeño, ya grande; ya hombre, ya mujer; ya persona, y ya fiera; tanto, que dijo Critilo si sería éste el celebrado Proteo. Luego que llegó a ellos, se apeó con más cortesías que un francés novicio, primera especie de engaño, y con más cumplimientos que una despedida aragonesa…(79-80).

The monster is a being made up human and animal elements, part male and part female, of various ages and sizes. Critilo wonders if he is "Proteo" or Proteus, a Greek sea God capable of assuming different forms (Merriam-Webster.com). The noun *proteo* refers to someone who changes opinion and affect frequently (http://lema.rae.es/drae/srv/search?key=proteo). Blackness, which is perceived as separate is also, upon consideration, always part of whiteness in the image, just as man and woman, old and young, human and beast are also binaries that are unified in the image of the monster(s). The relationship between binary racial categories, species and genders is never easily fixed or separated. Though Gracián attempts to reduce all heterotopia to homotopia, a linguistic surplus of ethnic and sexual deviants who obstinately refuse to be integrated persists (Smith 92). Categories that have been decided upon through language are in reality an artifice that does not reflect mobility between identificatory categories.

By the seventeenth century, the porous social and cultural space that links Europeans with non-Europeans had been broadened. Alonso de Sandoval discussed the overlaps between Europeans and black Africans in Caribbean cultural and social spaces that he witnessed. An example from *De Instauranda Aethipopum Salute* is provided when Sandoval discusses the

appearance of children born of black African parents with European features such as blond hair and golden colored skin. Whether these children are albino or mixed-race is unclear; to Sandoval and others they are a marvel and a monstrosity because they embody the seemingly impossible blending of black African and European physical attributes. In response, Sandoval undertakes to organize these people as social subjects while maintaining distinctions according to Spanish baroque rhetoric pertaining to blackness. Sandoval records one case he witnessed in Cartagena de Indias in which the offspring of a black slave couple was born with European or Spanish phenotypic characteristics. Sandoval describes a boy named Francisco, born to black parents, who was considered a marvel in the region for his white features:

> Lo que por mis ojos vie en esta ciudad de Cartagena de las Indias fue un niño llamado Francisco, de edad de siete años, de nación angola, natural del pueblo de Quilombo, cuyos padres eran negros atezados, pero él blanco sin comparación, que en blancura le sobrepujara, rubio y de extremadas facciones españoladas, que era asombro y pasmo a toda la ciudad, que como a cosa maravillosa se le traían de uns partes a otras por toda ella (Sandoval 23).

Sandoval's account of Francisco's Afro-European appearance continues to elaborate on Francisco's extremely curly blond hair and his stereotypically black African nose. Sandoval also recounts another case of three girls he observed in Mompox in 1621 who exhibited both black African and European characteristics. They were the legitimate daughters of Martín, a black man from Angola, and his wife, María, who was also Angolan; though their white mistress suspected that her own husband may have fathered the children. Another case Sandoval witnessed involved two brothers, children of black Creole parents, whose appearance shocked locals because one was black and the other was an orange color (23-24). The commentary that follows refers to

similar monstrous beings discussed by ancient scholars in order to account for such births outside of the possibility of interracial sexual reproduction.

In order to rationalize and explain the provenance of these "monstrous" children, Sandoval refers to philosophical discussions of the origin of blackness and his own interpretation of Aristotle in *On the Generation of Animals* [3]. Aristotle posits reproduction is not based on reason but on the vegetative soul since plant generation occurs even though plants do not have reason like humans:

> Y si se advierte en un manzano o en otro cualquier árbol frutal, o en una parra, veremos los racimos de ésta con tanta variedad de colores en sus uvas, y las manzanas de aquél, unas verdes, otras coloradas, unas pequeñas, otras grandes...lo cual aunque al parecer tiene demostración de verdad, no convence, porque Aristóteles a mi ver sólo atribuye esta virtud al ánima vegetativa de aquellas cosas que por su naturaleza son incapaces de racionalidad (Sandoval 25).

Sandoval credits classical philosophers who have attributed physical differences to regional temperatures to some degree, but laments that they do not account for how Spaniards can have children in sub-Saharan Africa who are still white while black Africans may produce black children in colder regions such as Europe. Sandoval agrees that there is some fundament in all of the arguments proposed by philosophers including maternal imagination or maternal impression (24); maternal impression is the belief that the mother's gaze at the time of her child's conception could shape the child's physical characteristics. This idea is found in Thomas Lupton's *A thousand notable things, of sundry sortes* (1579), among other contemporary sources, which cites the tale of a Spanish woman who gave birth to a black baby. She was exonerated of the

charge of adultery with a Moor when it was discovered that a picture of a black man hung in her bedchamber (Loomba 4). Though Sandoval credits alternative philosophical interpretations, the most correct explanation, in Sandoval's view, noted by Saint Ambrosio, is that blackness is a punishment from God that originates in the curse of Ham (26-27). The curse of Ham serves as the backbone to European colonial projects by designating blackness an inherent marker of moral degradation that justifies black African subservience.

De Instauranda Aethiopum Salute locates the cause of blackness in sin, however Sandoval's discourse is complicated by black African subalterns who question European moral superiority. African subjects gradually expropriate the text through the cultural mixing that results from the inscription of African difference in the narrative and the literal racial mixing discussed by Sandoval. Throughout Sandoval's discussion of the origin of blackness, he struggles to produce a discourse to explain the origins of blackness and its varying degrees and why some children may be born with physical characteristics their parents do not exhibit themselves. Most likely, Sandoval's difficulty is rooted in the New World experience and the baroque reality he witnesses. Renée Soulodre maintains that the baroque in Nueva Granada is a process of becoming minor, or being gradually expropriated by the subaltern, because the baroque is a means of representing the hybrid as a hidden inscription of difference within the fictional sameness of official culture (215). Iberian baroque discursive rules do not operate as they had on the peninsula, causing a hybrid social and cultural code to crystallize.

Applying Aristotelian thought does not allow Sandoval and his contemporaries to sufficiently comprehend racial mixing in the context of the colony. Greater contact between whites and blacks had increased cases of miscegenation. Archival records from Havana and Cartagena de Indias from the late sixteenth century *penas de cámara*, or lists of fines collected

for petty crimes, are one possible source of evidence to examine sexual relationships between women of color and Iberian men. These records are limited because they often do not specify whether the accused had practiced unlicensed prostitution or if they were involved in extra-marital affairs viewed as improper by authorities. In one case, however, two women with names suggesting Portuguese and Upper Guinean origins were fined jointly and a "Juana *negra*" was fined along with a man for interracial sexual relationships. Another list of dozens of fines issued in Cartagena de Indias during the 1570s offers slightly greater detail. Though details are not often recorded, a handful of individuals are explicitly accused of *amancebamieinto* (Wheat "*Nharas* and *Morenas Horras* 139-140). This information, though lacking in detail, signals that extramarital affairs between women of color and Iberian men were frowned upon, and often perhaps punished, but these unions were not necessarily unheard of.

The *Lazarillo de* Tormes (1554) contains evidence of racial mixing in Iberia even earlier.[28] Lazarillo's mother engages in a relationship with a black Moorish slave, Zaide, and gives birth to a child as a result. The child, still a toddler, to the amusement of Lazarillo, does not recognize Zaide is his father and flees because he is frightened by his black skin color:

> Y acuérdome que, estando el negro de mi padrastro trebajando con el mozuelo, como el niño vía a mí madre y a mí blancos, y a él no, huía dél, con miedo, para mi madre, y señalando con el dedo, decía: <<¡Madre, coco!>> Respondió él riendo: <<¡Hideputa!>>

[28] Although the *Lazarillo* was composed fifty years before the baroque period begins and has been considered a reflection of Renaissance optimism by critics such as José García López and Marcel Bataillon, Mancing argues that the *Lazarillo* is more complex than a surface reading of the text for the jokes (431). The construction of the narration deliberately makes reading for the pessimism more difficult but it is there. Keeping the underlying pessimism of the *Lazarillo* in mind, and the novel's picaresque characteristics, it can be considered an early manifestation of baroque narrative.

> Yo, aunque bien mochacho, noté aquella palabra de mi hermanico, y dije entre mí: <<¡Cuántos debe de haber en el mundo que huyen de otros porque no se veen a sí mesmos!>> (66-67).

While Lazarillo is aware that his brother and others run from difference because they do not see themselves in the other, ironically Lazarillo does not recognize this behavior in himself as he attempts to narrate his brother's racial difference.[29] By not recognizing their mutual fear and rejection of Zaide, Lazarillo attempts to disavow the existence of a fluid racial frontier between the black Moor and himself, the Christian Spaniard. Lazarillo wishes to elucidate his racial difference from Zaide and his half-brother, though his ties to both evidence contacts with non-whites in everyday life that diminish the Christian purity to which picaresque commoners ascribe. Despite his best efforts, Lazarillo and his mother are pulled into relation with the African subalterns and the biological cultural change, though not understood in terms of biology at the time, that culminated in the birth of Lazarillo's brother. Lazarillo's account of his brother's fear of Zaide echoes canonical Spanish social classifications of racial others. Society demanded that the mulatto child form a part of the family, the Spanish nation, but at the same time this society and family asked that he accept his difference with respect to the majority, a difference judged as a moral blemish (Fra Molinero 25). Similarly to the Spanish national view of itself as white, and separate from blackness, Lazarillo believes he is different from his brother because he is white. Zaide and the *hermanico*'s racial alterity is not based solely on religious difference, which is only marked by Zaide being a Moor, but more on skin color.

[29] Howard Mancing has analyzed the relationship between Self and Other in the brother's fear of Zaide as a reflection of the relationship between the reader and Lázaro. The reader similarly rejects the cynical reading of the *Lazarillo* because they do not want to recognize Lázaro's acceptance of evil as an adult ("The Deceptiveness of *Lazarillo de Tormes*"431).

Lazarillo strives to prove his racial difference, and superiority, by emphasizing his brother is in fact black like Zaide while Lazarillo and their mother are both white. The *pícaro* expresses discomfort and shame surrounding these familial relations as he, like his half-brother, flees from the idea of being related to blackness and Muslim culture.[30] Despite these rhetorical constructions of alterity, the limits in the relationships between blacks (Moors) and whites (Christians) are not clearly defined in the *Lazarillo.* Though Moorish cultural practices are not illustrated in this episode, Fuchs theorizes that Moorish alterity in early modern Spain is produced within a *habitus* of maurophilia. Even today scholars tend to accept a neat model that separates Moors and Christians on a strict boundary. "Yet a culture profoundly marked by Andalusi forms survived in sixteenth century Spain, long after the fall of Granada, and stood as an often unacknowledged challenge to the official narrative of supersession (Fuchs *Exotic Nation* 11)." This frontier in which Christian Spaniards express cultural appreciation for Moorish culture in literature, dress and architecture also extends to the expanding definition of race based on physical differences. Though Lazarillo wishes to adhere to the hegemonic narrative of Christian differentiation, underlying identification with Moorishness and blackness through his family cannot be expunged from his autobiography.

Lazarillo's personal beliefs are an extension of early modern Spanish social and political norms that actively function to separate Lazarillo's mother from her black lover. Although there were no laws against this pairing, it can be surmised that interracial relationships between blacks and whites were not ideal. Laws commenting on blacks' marriages, whether slaves or not, during the period mandated that blacks marry blacks ("Recopilación de las leyes de indias, Part VII, Ley

[30] The case of Zaide forms a part of a polysemic vision created by the narrator to explain Lázaro's choices as an adult which culminate in "el caso (Francisco Rico 30-35). Although Lázaro would like to distance himself from his black step-father and mulatto brother, it is impossible for the adult Lázaro to explain his situation without including these experiences.

V, 1680). Guaman Poma de Ayala famously reiterates this idea in the *Primer corónica y buen gobierno* when he writes, "Que un padre, cura dotrinante pueda tener sólo un negro esclabo cazado con su negra esclaba. El dicho negro le cirua de traelle leña y caualleriza y cirua toda la casa. Y la dicha negra cocinera, panadera, lauandera y cirua toda la casa (588)." The preferred social order could not be conceived of if enslaved blacks were not happily married within their own racial group because they would otherwise be tempted to commit crimes. This mentality explains why Lazarillo's mother and stepfather were forced apart after Zaide's petty theft of food and goods for the family is discovered by the authorities. Lazarillo exposed Zaide's transgressions, claiming childish innocence is the culprit of his actions. However, his shame and desire to distance himself from his black family members also spurred on his confession.

Lazarillo's treachery could never undo the change undergone in the family structure as a result of the interracial relationship and birth of his mulatto brother. The story of Lazarillo's half brother remains incomplete in the tale, leaving the reader to wonder: what happened to this nameless brother and how did he create a place for himself in Spanish society? And to what extent does this fictionalized character reflect the lives of other mixed-race Spaniards who were the products of such relations between white Christians and black Moorish slaves? When Lazarillo left to serve his first master, the blind man, ultimately it is the mixed half-brother who remained in the heart of the family with their mother. Even if Lazarillo and dominant social constraints disrupted the familial union between Lazarillo's mother and Zaide, the birth of Lazarillo's brother signified an irrevocable cultural and social change.

Iberian negation of racial crossing is transferred to the New World stage in Cartagena de Indias. Both Renaissance Spain and other geographic regions in the Americas had been opened to a new racialized cultural reality based less on religious lineage and more on phenotypic

appearance. Iberian baroque discursive rules do not always serve to maintain hegemonic order in the American context and new rules were being formulated. Or as Kristeva statest in her discussion of Husserl's *hyl*e or "matter" of meaning which is always arey there in language "no heterogeneity vis-á-vis predicative articulation is possible which is not already the projection of the subject's positionality (*Revolution in Poetic Language* 32)." Marginalized subjects' are inherently interior to baroque reality and are not then incorporated and simply erased within the logic of baroque semiotics. Renée Soulodre-La France maintains the baroque in Nueva Granada is a process of becoming minor, or being gradually expropriated by the subaltern, because the baroque depicts what is hybrid as a hidden inscription of difference within the fictional sameness of official culture (215). *De Instauranda Aethiopum Salute*'s ideological narrative struggles with the African subaltern presence which gradually expropriates the text through cultural mixing. This is the result of the inscription of African difference being normalized by black agents who reinterpret Christian doctrine and the literal racial mixing discussed by Sandoval. By depicting black Africa as disordered because of its heterogeneity, Sandoval justified colonization and evangelization (Dennis 5).[31] In the context of the colony, however, the presence of racial diversification is a mark of disorder, becoming even more jumbled through racial mixing and greater rates of contact between subjects of varying ethnic origins. Five thousand slaves were already living in Cartagena de Indias during the time Alonso de Sandoval was writing, along with five thousand new slaves distributed annually throughout the colonies. “En Cartagena de Indias convergían tantas gentes diversas que inevitablemente comenzaron nuevos procesos de mestizaje, no sólo biológico, sino de los símbolos inherentes a cada cultura (Dennis 6).” Racial

mixing and cultural *mestizaje* disrupt the colonial project because these processes impede the imposition of Spanish Christian cultural norms and easy categorization of peoples.

Ida Altman posits in "Marriage, Family, and Ethnicity in the Early Spanish Caribbean," that race mixing between blacks and whites must have occurred, if not directly through whites and blacks engaging in sexual relationships, through blacks mixing with indigenous communities whose members more typically would become Spaniards' sexual partners. Royal and ecclesiastical policies pertaining to marriage and family responded to the significant role family structure and marriage played in colonization and the achievement of social status and economic prosperity. Colonial social structures shaped new societies as Europeans and Africans arrived in the Caribbean. As well as official policies that sought to regulate marriage, property rights and conversion, European family life was inevitably disrupted as men left to look for slaves or participated in Conquest. Even though Spanish women did arrive and become heads of households in the early period (16th century) they were outnumbered by indigenous and African women and, as a result, families became increasingly multicultural (Altman 226-228). Archival evidence used by Altman reflects some degree of racial mixing taking place between Indians and Spaniards but does not explicitly discuss racial mixing with Africans besides the statistical evidence of Africans in Spanish households and *estancias,* and gender ratios between male and female Africans. But she appears to assume some amount of mixing occurred based on references to Africans, Indians and Spaniards living and working in close proximity (247). What is important to take away from Altman's study is that Spanish American contact between Europeans and Africans created a new social space in which racial admixture was occurring more frequently than in Spain.

Throughout the colonial period church law allowed slaves to marry other slaves or free persons and prohibited forced separations of husband and wife. But breaking up slave couples and sexual relations between white males and married African women happened often despite such laws. Whether African women were married or had partners did not matter in many cases because female slaves were expected to service sexual labor for their masters in one form or another as mothers to their property, concubines and as prostitutes (Elbourne 28). Mörner's study of racial mixture in Latin America comments on the regularity of concubinage and casual intercourse throughout three centuries in the colony. These illegitimate sexual relationships indicate race mixture occurred despite the efforts of dominant legal codes to impede interracial reproduction. By the nineteenth century there would be greater numbers of legal marriages between subjects of different races than there had been in previous centuries (25-66). In fact, it would also seem that legal marriages between free women of color and Iberian men were not uncommon during the early modern period in the Caribbean, seeing as juridical procedure had altered by the eighteenth century to require parental approval in order to cut down on marriages between Iberian men and free women of color (Wheat "*Nharas* and *Morenas Horras*" 137). There is also evidence from documents such as a 1603 complaint by Havana's governor to the Spanish Crown that his soldiers were dishonoring their uniforms and had publicly been "*amançebados*" with slaves and *mulatas* in spite of their owners' wishes (Wheat "*Nharas* and *Morenas Horras*" 141). Since extra-legal racial mixing was not unheard of, it seems odd that Sandoval would go to such extents to rationalize blackness and the possibilities for racial mixture outside of the logic of interracial sexual relationships and marriage. Like Las Casas and the other writers covered in this thesis, Sandoval's anxiety concerning racial mixing extends from the larger issue of social control. The text's inability to adequately address and hem in racial

hybridity within the confines of hegemonic discourse signals the social, political and cultural authority non-whites wielded throughout the early modern and later colonial periods.

Black African subalterns obtained a place in cultural production because their oral discourse and embodied experiences are core threads in the narrative. African subalterns exercise cultural power because they impact the developing social structure of the colony by calling into question the praxis of hegemonic discourses. African subalterns push back against hegemonic discourses in their lived experience, pressuring European writers to rationalize the African subaltern's s subjugation through recourse to fantastic discourse in Las Casas, and through the baroque in Sandoval. In both cases, the writers alter their vision of the African subaltern and her place in the political and social structures of the colony. Contact with African subjects in textual representations like the chronicle of the Portuguese chronicler Gómez Eanes de Zurura, as well as his own personal experience, anticipates Las Casas's decision to retract earlier calls to import blacks to relieve the suffering and deaths of the Amerindians. The “face” of the other, or the human presence of that other, and knowledge of the history of the slave trade, prophesy Las Casas's intellectual realization that black Africans are in fact not captured in just wars. Sandoval’s writing focuses mainly on the place of black African subalterns in the colony because by the early seventeenth century the black African population had increased and not engaging with the nuances of their oral testimonies was not an option.

Both authors grapple with the implications of African subalterns' social and cultural inclusion. Despite hegemonic narratives that silence them, limitations placed on subalterns' speech and physical flight cannot be enforced at all times. Fray Bartolomé de las Casas does not write explicitly about racial mixing, however he fears African subalterns will destroy the island. His lacking discussion of the possibility of intermarriage between blacks and whites signals the

European author's concern that clear distinctions between blacks and whites may break down in the future when miscegenation should occur. These fears become a reality in Sandoval's text which shows that African subalterns' authority to disrupt social categories through biological mixing is becoming more prevalent, complicating discourses that would define distinct racial groups. The historical record of mixing through concubinage, extra-legal means, and even legal marriages until the eighteenth century evidences the increasing frequency of these relationships despite canonical attempts to limit such unions. Free women of color in circum-Caribbean port cities like Cartagena de Indias were often recognized as *vecinas* and legitimate spouses for Iberian men thereby achieving a level of social mobility that is unprecedented compared to the later colonial period (Wheat 150). Accumulating cases of legal racially mixed marriages over the span of the early modern colonial period is evidence of introduction of a racially ambiguous population that would complicate dominant racial categories and hierarchies. I will study the continued emergence of hybrid Afro-descended agents who ally themselves, or not, with European and indigenous groups in order to carve out spaces in which they are relatively free in the following chapter on Thomas Gage's travel narrative. Gage's project, the Western Design, the failed English invasion of 1655, was organized based on the belief that the English could take advantage of social disorder in order to gain control of the Spanish colonies. I propose that because Gage did not consider the repercussions of heterogeneity and hybridity for the English colonial project, and non-whites' own political projects that required shifting alliances with any European power, be it Catholic or Protestant, the English invasion ended in failure.

Chapter 2. Multiethnic Political Projects and Textual Marronage in Thomas Gage's *A New Survey*

I. Contextualizing and Authorizing Thomas Gage

The possibility for non-white social and cultural agency in Bartolomé de las Casas and Alonso de Sandoval's narratives begins to limit the outcomes of European political projects in the Caribbean. Multiethnic, indigenous and Afro-descended actors' ability to rebel against colonial power is on full display in Thomas Gage's *A New Survey of the West Indies or, The English American his travel by Sea and Land* (1648). The subalterns Gage encounters are maroons, pirates, guides, and participants in literal rebellions. Non-white agency documented throughout Gage's travels predicts the failure of Western Design, Oliver Cromwell's military invasion of the Spanish colonies in 1655. Ultimately Gage's failed mission to take Santo Domingo is considered a humiliating defeat even though Jamaica was later seized as a consolation prize (Taylor ix-x). The foundered English invasion hinged on the support of multi-ethnics that never materialized. Afro-descended subjects' political power is displayed since the Western Design's defeat signals that, without non-white allies, Europeans struggle to impose their will over the population.

The Black Legend, a racial ideology spread in Northern Europe to criticize Spanish imperial power, is a core concept Gage deploys to justify English invasion. Gage believed non-whites would ally with the English because Spanish abuses had caused tension. Blackening the Spanish in the narrative creates a contradictory logic in Gage's postulation that the population would come to the aid of the English. How can Gage assume divisions between the Spanish, the *criollos* and the mulatto population while also linking all three groups through their ties to the

African continent? And why would subjects of African descent give credence to the English before they would trust the Spanish with whom they are more closely tied culturally and racially through their mutual connection to the African continent? Considering these questions, this chapter focuses on the ways in which multiracial groups, and especially mulattos, layer alternative explanations for subalterns' political motives and allegiances onto the hegemonic narrative. An in-between space in which mulattos, and other increasingly ethnically inscrutable subjects enervate hierarchies and inform cultural formation through orality materializes in Gage's narrative.

At the time *A New Survey* was published, the English considered Gage's travel narrative the first authentic account of the Spanish American colonies because it was written from the vantage point of a fellow Englishman. Gage's report continues in the vein of Bartolomé de las Casas and Alonso de Sandoval's chronicles by advancing knowledge pertaining to the weight of the importation of black African *bozales* to the Spanish colonies. As early as the sixteenth century in Hispaniola, the black African population was also increasingly *ladino* and had altered the development of colonial society, not only demographically, but also through voiced and embodied articulations that inform the construction of the texts. African subaltern presences in the text, though originating outside literary circles, are a manifestation of resistance to European colonial projects and reinterpretations of Christian doctrinal ideology. These interjections predate Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora's transcription of *Infortunios de Alonso Ramírez* in which the oral testimony of a racially ambiguous native of Puerto Rico takes precedence in the creation of a Christian autobiographical narrative.

Historian Jane Landers describes Africans as agents of change in the Spanish colonies who made choices and concessions that enabled them to weaken canonical hierarchies that were

impossible to enforce in practice. This was especially so in the Caribbean where the fluidity of ethnic categories made rigid social stratification difficult to enforce and certain groups exercised relative political and demographic leverage, despite hegemonic efforts to limit their social mobility:

> It was a moment when demographic determinants, frontier conditions, and external threats to Spanish sovereignty combined to create leverage and opportunities for certain groups. Africans, heavily concentrated in the coastal circum-Caribbean, were embroiled in the imperial contests played out there and, like Europeans and natives, they carefully evaluated their positions and acted in what they perceived to be their own best interests (Landers 84).

As I have argued in the previous chapter, primary literary sources corroborate Landers' historical evidence that multiethnic subjects in the colony cultivated a certain degree of political power. Ethnic others are neither easily erased from discourse nor assimilated in Thomas Gage's travel narrative. Even if the dominant reading misidentifies the other, a hybrid process of textual production occurs as a result of the author's engagement with the other. Spivak elaborates in her theorization of the subaltern that a continuing establishment of strategies that speak from within master narratives, while also taking a distance from them, allows the breakdown of the barriers between dominant forces and subalterns, allowing seemingly silent agents to be better understood ("Can the Subaltern Speak?" 280-281). Despite African and Afro-descended subjects' exclusion from the lettered city, they nonetheless impact the production of texts and European thought processes. Runaway *bozal* slaves in *Historia de las Indias* usher in the "uncanny" in Las

Casas's narrative of the plagues of black ants that consume the soliman (Benítez Rojo *La isla que se repite* 94-97). The ants symbolize the author's fears for the island and the destructive agency African subalterns exert to subvert colonial power. Likewise, reading Zurura's chronicle of the first Portuguese slave raids that incorporates the newly enslaved *bozales*' tears as they arrive in Lisbon is a transformative intellectual episode that alters Las Casas's views on the nascent transatlantic slave trade.

Perceiving subaltern agency is a practice that may be undertaken by the literary scholar. Since I work from the vantage point of the twenty-first century, I must go beyond what may seem apparent in the text.[32] Teasing out fragments of subaltern speech is one method rereading the archive in order to better interpret human experience in the past and present. McKnight and Garofalo rationalize in *Afro-Latino Voices. Narratives from the Early Modern Ibero-Atlantic World, 1550-1812*, the voice in the text is the Afro-Latino's words and thoughts. Scholars must question:

> How is it, then, that Afro-Latino voices speak in these texts? To hear these voices through the static of circumstance and mediation, we invite you to bear in mind two sets of issues. First, consider conceptions of voice, speech, and utterance that will help you identify those ways in which speakers have exercised control over their narratives, despite the molding of their exact words into bureaucratic formulas. Second, seek to understand the types of mediation that have affected the voice in these narratives, to better identify the lines between which you might read the voices (McKnight and Garofalo xviii).

[32]Bourdieu explains the work of the literary critic is not one of cause and effect, but goes back and forth. The critic puts into words the object of the creative project, helping to achieve its full potential ("Intellectual field and creative project" 100).

Three mulattos who dialogue with Gage will be discussed for their impact on *A New Survey*: Lewis, the escaped slave resettled with the indigenous population of Guadalupe, the Dutch Corsair, Diego el Mulatto, who captures Gage's ship during his return voyage, and Miguel Dalva, Gage's guide and companion during his travels. In each case Gage assumes he fully understands his mulatto interlocutor's motivations and believes that conflict with the Spanish is at the root of their rebelliousness. We must ask how Gage's mediation as a former Jesuit and a promoter of the Western Design is transformed in dialogue with these voices.

Gage's anecdotes, the consequence of his acquaintance with subalterns, assume Spanish American mulattos would not be obedient to the Spanish Crown in the event of an English invasion. Gage did not perceive the capacity of the multiethnic populace to rebel against his own colonial project. Before the Haitian Revolution of 1791, that black slaves were capable of a mass revolt seemed unfathomable to whites. Michel-Rolph Trouillot illustrates white colonizers' misperceptions of the black population's motivations leading up to the Haitian Revolution through a letter written by French colonist, La Barre, to reassure his wife months before the insurrection began. La Barre believed "there is no movement among our Negroes...they don't even think of it. They are very tranquil and obedient (Trouillot 72)." Subaltern presences in the texts should have provided Europeans with insight into the possibility that they would rebel against colonial oppression, but such a reality was incomprehensible to whites who created versions of subaltern subjecthood that were commensurate with their own goals and desires. Europeans, including Gage, seem to force realities into their beliefs even when reality does not fit with their expectations (Trouillot 73). While rereading the text, despite Gage's denial of Afro-descendents' motivations, that Gage's sense of power is confounded because of subaltern agency becomes more apparent.

Non-whites utilize oral narratives and embodied performances to engage with Europeans to open spaces and places on the edges of society where they can be relatively independent. Conceptions of space are based on systems of verbal, intellectually agreed upon, signs. We must break out of binary conceptions of space and society and also consider the body in this dynamic (Lefebvre 39-40). These spaces and places, created through dialogic interactions, are not just literal locations but rather they become metaphorical devices to describe the social construction of hierarchies and mobility within these locations. A thriving unofficial culture can be studied in their dialogues even if the canon did not recognize its legitimacy during the early modern period. Bourdieu theorizes the intellectual field that arises from an intellectual's relations with other intellectuals in which they all claim cultural legitimacy that depends on the position each occupies in the intellectual field. Although legitimacy is obtained through relations with the University, which in the last resort decides the signs of consecration, there is a plurality of social forces in any society made up of more than those that have been legitimized (Bourdieu 111). Although Bourdieu stresses the overarching agency of official culture in the hands intellectual society:

> within the intellectual field as a structured system, all individuals and all social groups that are specifically and permanently devoted to the *manipulation of cultural goods*...maintain not only competitive relationships but relationships of functional complementarity, in such a way that each of the agents or systems of agents which make up the intellectual field derives a greater or smaller proportion of its characteristics from the position it occupies in this system of positions and oppositions (109) (My emphasis).

The mulattos whose oral and embodied presences I study form a part of the official intellectual field by structuring the narration through Gage's written contribution as he interprets, or misinterprets, their intentions.

These embodied performances are instances of what Olsen theorizes as textual marronage, which is the meaning beyond the semiotic limits of imperialist language that uncovers the fragmented and limited nature of colonial discourse. Through marronage African subjects undertake processes of flight from oppression while expressing a desire for group preservation (Olsen "Africans and Textual Marronage" 230). Marronage is an escape from dominant practices to form places on the margins of official discourse as well as the colony where subalterns can live more freely. Knowing for certain to what extent Afro-descended subjects are cognizant of the textual production in which they appear cannot be determined. But the text is a material object, or cultural product, that captures their influence in the formation of power structures. What I interpret to be subtle rejections of Gage's understanding of non-whites' feelings towards the Spanish Empire hint that relationships between the Spanish and the non-white population are more complex than simple animosity. That non-whites do not join with the English during the invasion, but rather tend to support the Spanish in limited ways during the fighting, or make their own way during the conflict, underlies the probability that non-whites like Miguel Dalva are not as friendly towards Gage as he supposes.

Before turning to Gage's text and the 1654-1655 offensive, it is of use to recount some significant biographical details of interest for my study. Gage's conversion from Catholic to Protestant is consequential because it sets up the political context for the military expedition that is later decided when Afro-descended actors do not adhere to the objectives of the dominant narrative. I propose in my analysis of Gage's narration of the mulatto, Lewis, that Gage

intertwines a narrative of contempt for the Jesuits, with whom he travelled at the time, with Lewis's own testimony. Gage's conversion is embedded while he narrates Lewis's tale as, implicitly, Gage satirizes the Jesuits and his Dominican self who "were desirous that the happy end and conclusion might be their glory" while they wait for the mulatto, Lewis, and his family as if they were [the Jesuits'] "prey (40)." Gage's distaste for the Jesuits is apparent because he had testified against former friends after his return to England. Gage belittles the Jesuits in his text in his depiction of their belief that the worst that could come from their mission:

> could be but to be Butchered, sacrificed and eaten up; and that for such a purpose they had come out of Spain to be Crowned with the Crown of Martyrdom for confessing and preaching Jesus Christ. While we were hot in this solemn consultation...our people running to and fro to save their lives, leaving their Clothes, and hasting to the cock-boats filling them so fast and so full some sunk with all the people in them (40-41)."

While Gage makes light of the Jesuits' devotion as they flee from the martyrdom they profess to accept in order to evangelize, he assumes that the work of conversion can be done better by the Protestant English. At the close of the section, the Jesuits' misinformed intervention collapses, foreshadowing the failed Western Design since none of these European factions would be able to accumulate support from non-whites. Like Lewis, the Africans and Afro-descendents studied are evidence that their objective is always the maintenance of the highest level of freedom possible despite their tyrannized condition.

Gage's hatred for the Jesuits seems to cloud his judgement concerning blacks' and multiethnics' motives. Gage's wish to condemn the Jesuits prepares an opening for Lewis's subaltern tale to enter the text. Also of note in Gage's biographical history is information that

allows the reader to better appreciate Gage's place in the lands he traverses, as well as his political objectives as he argues in favor of the Western Design. His own split English/American sensibilities arising from his time spent in Spain during his youth and the Spanish colonies must be accounted for as well. Gage's altered views resulting from his conversion color his portrait of the Spanish as corrupt through the lens of the Black Legend, a northern European discourse to malign Spanish imperial interests. While decentering the Spanish from European identity, Gage's depictions of Afro-descended figures, composed largely by documenting blacks' oral testimony and corporeal presence, form the backbone of Gage's narrative.

Thomas Gage was born in 1602 or 1603 in England to a prominent Catholic family. He spent his formative years abroad in Spain where he studied at the Jesuit College of San Gregorio in Valladolid. At the time, English Catholic families commonly sent their children to Spain to be educated in order to evade persecution at home.[33] He would later take the order of the Dominicans and the name Tomás de Santamaría upon his return to England (Tejera "Spanish English Relationship" 203). The journal detailing Gage's experiences travelling and working as a Dominican missionary from 1625-1637 was written after his return to England. By the time Gage decided to compile the narrative, he had already converted to Puritanism. None of the critics of Gage's life and writing have been able to decisively pinpoint a moment or cause for Gage's changed religious affiliation.[34] However, the religious-political context of the period aids

[33] In 1570 Pope Pius V declared Elizabeth I a usurper and she was excommunicated. Her subjects were released from allegiance to her, which put the Papists, like Gage's family, in a difficult position in England. Gage's parents, John and Margaret, were almost executed for harbouring Jesuits in their home (Newton 22).

[34] Thompson surmises that, added to his conflicts with Catholic doctrine, the perceived wrongs done to him by his Catholic family and friends are a factor. (Thompson xxxv-xxxvii). Tejera adds to Thompson's insinuation that Gage may have been humiliated at St. Omer, however this cannot be proven. What critics can attest to is the correlation between Gage's exit from St. Omer and the beginning of his "internal problems" (Tejera *Thomas Gage: su personalidad y su obra* 44). Based on documentary evidence, Gage's familial conflicts most likely played a decisive role in his decision to convert.

in clarifying Gage's decision to convert to Protestantism since conversion undoubtedly was a politically savvy move that enabled him to gain Oliver Cromwell's favor.

Tejera argues that Gage had to apostatize from his Catholic faith in order to find his place in the Anglo-Saxon world and, as a result, his father disowned him. Gage himself describes his conversion, professing that he had already resolved to apostate by the time of his return to England, maintaining his new faith in secret while he continued to associate with his Catholic friends and community for two more years. After that time Gage insists he planned to testify against Jesuits he knew. Gage's conversion occurs in a series of steps; at first he became an Anglican and when Cromwell and the Puritans succeeded, he became Presbyterian (Tejera "Spanish English Relationship" 203). Gage benefitted from this second conversion when he was given a Rectory, during which time he wrote his travel narrative (Tejera "Introduction" 15-17). The blending of religious and political motivations for writing are found in the introductory letter to *A New Survey* which was addressed "To the Reader." The letter reports Gage's political objectives as well as the unique vision his narrative provides for his English countrymen:

> The Divine Providence hath hitherto so ordered my life, that for the greatest part thereof I have lived (as it were) in exile from my native Countrey: which happened, partly, by reason of my Education in the Romish Religion, and that in foreign Universities; and partly, by my entrance into Monastical Orders.

Gage continues that he spent twelve years in New Spain, a difficult journey that had not been permitted to any but the Spanish. Gage asserts his obligation to write of the time he spent in New Spain and his return home in order to disseminate his true knowledge of the "Gospel's Purity" which:

> gave me reason to conceive, That these great mercies were not appointed me by the Heavenly Powers, to the end I should bury my Talent in the earth, or hide my light under a bushel, but that I should impart what I there saw and Knew to the use and benefit of my English countrey-men: And which the rather I held myself obliged unto, because in a manner nothing hath been written of these hundred years last past...In doing whereof I shall offer no collections, but such as shall arise from mine own observations, which will differ from what formerly hath hereupon been written...to my countrymen I therefore offer a New World...(Gage *A New Survey* 2-3).

Similarly to Las Casas, Gage's narrative gains discursive ascendency on the basis of his eyewitness perspective.[35] Having witnessed the events and people about which his writing revolves, Gage authorizes his text through personal contacts with the New World and the indigenous and African others who populate these unknown regions. His text therefore gains significance from the interlocution of subalterns he represents in the text, though that is certainly not Gage's intention.

Shifting ethnic and racial identifications and religious conversion also supply Gage's text with authority. Gage becomes "Hispanic" through the influence of the Jesuits in Valladolid and his association with the Dominicans; he even changes his name to the Spanish Tomás de Santamaría. Through his Hispanization and his native fluency in Castilian, Gage is able to blend

[35] At the time that Gage wrote, only Spanish subjects were permitted to enter the Spanish colonies. The Treaty of Tordesillas (1494), enacted by Pope Alexander VI, divided the world in two to solve the problem of Spanish-Portuguese rivalry. The dividing line between the territories of the Portuguese Empire and that of the Spanish was now set at 45 degrees west. Spain claimed the New World in its entirety. However, this dividing line unintentionally gave the Portuguese sovereignty in Brazil. Both nations were encouraged to believe they had religious authority to all of the territories where there was no settled Christian government and that they were privy to a monopoly on trade in these territories. Notwithstanding, these pretensions were never universally accepted in other parts of Europe (Latimer 7-8). Thomas Gage's narrative lends support to other European nations that assert rights to American lands.

in with the Spanish during the journey. However, he maintains his identification with England and, as he writes in "To the Reader," he does not relate so much with the Spanish but with his English "country-men" who he hopes will benefit from his knowledge. Gage's religious conversion lends another narrative voice to *A New Survey* as his converted self reflects on his past, much like the layered narrative voices in Las Casas's *Historia de las Indias*. In order to legitimize his conversion, Gage likens his previous self and religious beliefs to a racially blackened existence. Gage's 1642 sermon, "The Tyrrany of Satan," depicts his moral impurity, clarifies his decision to profess his allegiance to the Protestant sect and the comingling of religion with his political strivings. The sermon was intended to demonstrate the authenticity of his conversion, which he would later solidify through marriage, an act which effectively made a reconversion to Catholicism and the priesthood impossible (Tejera *Gage: su personalidad y su obra 88-98)*. Gage addresses Isaac Pennington, Lord Major of London, as well as the sheriffs and alderman of London. The sermon is a definitive statement on Gage's conversion and his analysis of his previous life as a Catholic, which he likens to the enslavement of the Hebrews by the Egyptians as he writes:

> "Blessed and praised be thy name, O Heavenly Father, that hast vouchsafed this day to lighten me in the horrid darkness of my sins, that has visited me in my Aegyptian slavery, and hast brought me out of that thraldome of Popery, into a land of Milke and Hony, abounding with the sweetness of thy Grace and Mercies (Gage "Tyrrany of Satan" 3).

Gage correlates his life as a Catholic with slavery in Egypt, a reference that alludes to a blackening of his self during the period during which he lived amongst the "black" Spanish and their even blacker subjects in the New World. Gage quotes Luke 22.31, 32 to begin the sermon, "And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, Behold Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you

as wheat. But I have prayed for thee that thy Faith faile not. And when thou art Converted, strengthen thy Brethren (Gage "Tyranny of Satan" 1). For Gage, "race" is aligned with both his religious failing when he practiced Catholicism and the darker skin color of much of the population he lived alongside in the colonies. Gage blames his misguided beliefs and former "blackness" on the devil who desires to sift men like wheat, to separate them from the elect and chosen people of the Lord, the laws of God, and the doctrine of the Church. Though his skin color was not black, association with Catholicism and the Spanish in the Americas blackened him spiritually, a process that is not wholly distinct from racial coding based on phenotype. And, as I will discuss shortly, the Black Legend no doubt postulates that the Spanish are in fact black.

The sins of the Devil are connected not only to Gage's spiritual life but also authorize his text and the political project that arises through its production. Gage's time spent as a Catholic missionary parallels the corrupted political landscape of the Spanish colonies and the moralizing role the English intended to play in Conquest. The Spanish colonies were as corrupted by the Devil as Gage had been during his tenure there as described in *A New Survey*. The embodiment of that devil takes the form of blacks that were in revolt against colonial power and mulattas who tempted white men to leave their wives, interrupting the reproduction of the dominant racial group as well as encouraging extramarital relationships and the birth of illegitimate offspring:

> Nay a Blackmore or Tauny young maid and slave will make hard shift but she will be in fashion with her Neckchain and Bracelets of Pearls, and her Ear-bobs of some considerable Jewels. The attire of this baser sort of people of blackmores and mulatta's...is so light, and their carriage so enticing, that many Spaniards even of the better sort...disdain their Wives for them (Gage 124).

Gage's narrative tone criticizes women of color for their sexuality which is linked to their black physical appearance. Like the mulattas illustrated in *Cecilia Valdés* in nineteenth century Cuba, mulattas in the seventeenth century were already stereotyped by white writers as demonic beings who entice white men in the early modern period. By turning formerly good husbands into depraved brutes, black women disrupt colonial order.[36] Their sexuality is a tool that aroused desire and anxiety.

Gage's Catholic identity during his travels, like the mulattas' sexual power, is a sign of decadence from Gage's perspective. Scanned through the lens of "textual marronage," the mulattas insistence on dressing in European attire and adorning themselves with objects of wealth is an embodied cultural practice that allows them to assert agency on the margins of European society and to even attempt social mobility by acculturating to some European norms. In this moment in the text, Gage's narrative of a past corrupt self that has converted and acknowledges his wrongs has created an opening for scholars of the twenty-first century to see into the subaltern reality of raced others who did not have easy access to the lettered city. The rupture in Spanish hegemony caused by the mulattas' presence does not signify what Gage believes, weakness in the Spanish empire the English can take advantage of, but rather a racialized alteration of white hegemony that will limit the Western Design. Michael Taussig perhaps best theorizes this fragmentation of power and the core identity of European colonial spaces that become cites where in-between agents imitate or even come to embody markers associated with the hegemonic culture as the mulattas do through dress. Knowing who is the imitator and who is the imitated (Taussig 78). Their behavior, foreshadowing nineteenth century

[36] Black and mixed race women's sexuality was also feared in the early modern period because of their association with colonial "love magic." Ruth Behar argues black women used methods such as serving their husbands foods containing bodily fluids in order to gain control and rebel against colonial sexual and racial hierarchies while others see such practices as simple attempts to gain some economic profit and for sexual pleasure (Von Germeten *Violent Delights, Violent Ends* 14-15).

free women of color depicted in *Cecilia Valdés*, signals that mulattas are not necessarily rebelling against colonialism, but rather could intend to carve out a more empowered position within existing colonial dynamics.

Another example of the in-between space exposed in *A New Survey* is an anecdote in Chapter XXV concerning a fight between the Virrey (Viceroy), the Conde de Galve, and the Archbishop that inspires a rebellion in the population. A man named Tirol, who had imprisoned the Archbishop on the request of the Viceroy before sending him to Spain, visits the Viceroy and is greeted by a mob of blacks, mulattos and *mestizos*. In the meantime Tirol is defenceless while the urban elite do not come out to calm the uprising (136-143). This revolt was one of many that occurred during the seventeenth century, including a rebellion of blacks in the Vera Cruz district and the 1692 Riot in Mexico later narrated by don Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora (Irving 111). Gage chalks the mob violence up to the Spanish empire's racial tensions between Spaniards, Creoles, blacks, mulattos and Indians, and poor governance on the part of the Spanish. He never considers the racial aspect of the insurrection that is directed not against a religious group so much as against European hegemony of any sort. Gage's incomprehension could perhaps relate back to Feerick's study of the changing meaning of "race" from its base in blood and religious lineage to more modern conceptions in which antagonism between whites and non-whites is a locus of difference. Writers themselves, it seems, did not fully understand this shifting racial geography and what factors played into how subalterns understood their allegiances to identity categories.

Ironically, Gage does not appear to consider that perhaps non-whites might find greater affinity with the Spanish, who he himself darkens racially, than with the English. Gage's converted self acknowledges Spanish closeness to non-whites when he vilifies the Spanish

through the employ of an ideological view that Julián Juderías coined "the Black Legend" in 1914. The "Black Legend" refers to the concept that the world regarded Spain through a distorted prism. Gibson defines the Black Legend as "the accumulated tradition of propaganda and Hispanophobia according to which Spanish imperialism is regarded as cruel, bigoted, exploitative, and self-righteous in excess of reality (Keen 708)." Northern European countries used Bartolomé de las Casas's *Brevísima relación de la destrucción de las Indias* as a source to create and spread the bad reputation that Spain already had acquired in Europe (Keen 712). It would be a misconception to conclude Las Casas's *Brevíssima relación* is the cause or origin of the Black Legend. As has been shown by Afanasiev, English editions of the *Brevísima relación* starting in 1583, as well as another in 1656, coincide with episodes of Anglo-Spanish tension or with the internal political crises caused by the danger of the Stuart restoration and with it the "papist" menace (Keen 717). The Black Legend owes its origins to three events: the expulsion of the Moors and Jews from Spain, the "Discovery" of America and the domination and exploitation of Indians and African slaves (Greer et al 2-6). Though Spaniards identified as Europeans, other European groups saw Spain through an orientalist lens.

Translations of the *Brevíssima relación* to English together with English pamphlets emphasized Spaniards' blackness because they were believed to be mixed with sub-Saharan Africans through the Moorish invaders. As Fuchs argues, "it is important to recover the essentializing 'blackness' of this cultural mythology: critics typically read it metaphorically, as a figure for Spain's cruelty and greed in the New World, yet it often refers in unambiguous terms to Spain's racial difference, its *essential* Moorishness (Fuchs "The Spanish Race" 94)." Northern Europe's orientalist gaze included Spain as part of the East or Africa (Fuchs "The Spanish Race" 97-98). Gage's narrative supports the image of the Spanish found in Las Casas's *Brevíssima*

relación and extended by the rhetoric of the Black Legend by creating a more updated version for the English reader (Pastor 196). Thomas Gage's travel narrative is just one of many pamphlets, plays, novels and other literary works designed to perpetuate Spanish alterity. Lopez de Gómara, Las Casas and Acosta's histories had been translated into English by the time that Gage wrote. Tejera, in her "Introducción" to the Spanish translation *Viajes por la Nueva España y Guatemala,* reflects on the connections between Las Casas's writing and Gage's:

> No puede sustraerse Gage, en su dedicatoria, de mencionar al padre Las Casas que, con sus escritos, había testificado suficientemente sobre el terrible comportamiento de los españoles. Esta influencia lascasiana -consciente o inconsciente- va a influir constantemente en su vida y en su obra, ya que en ningún momento de su trayectoria, tanto religiosa como política, se olvida Thomas de la línia dominicana, ni de su celo y, por otra, apóstol de los indios (27).

Gage's reading of Spanish histories of Conquest through Las Casas and others, as well as the discursive tradition of the Black Legend, is a decisive factor in the evolution of his text and his political project. Spanish othering, enacted by the Black Legend, distances the Spanish from white purity exemplified by Protestant England, while also portraying the Spanish, and anyone of African descent, as inferior. Though religion is a core category that overlaps with phenotypic difference in constructing racial identities, the belief in Spanish blackness, or the idea of the African element hidden within white appearing Spaniards, is what drives the Black Legend. Though Las Casas did not to invent the Black Legend, his anxiety concerning blackness in Hispaniola is also rooted in a belief in the destructive and violent tendencies of the black population that whites did not believe could be assimilated. Ultimately, elite Creole angst that the

black population would infiltrate power structures by passing for white in the modern period has antecedents in Las Casas's writing as well as the Black Legend.

II. Authority and Textual Marronage. The Jesuits and Lewis's Ambivalent Allegiances

Gage's encounters with three mulattos definitively mark the production of the text. Gage assumes multiracial actors, along with the Creole[37] population, would come to the aid of the English in the event of an invasion because of the brutality of Spanish rule. Be that as it may, the illusory social relationships Gage trusted would privilege English Protestant rule over that of the Catholic Spanish appears dubious as multiethnics negotiated with both dominant forces. Their subalternity leverages agency on the narrative through their bodily presence and oral narratives, or textual marronage, even if Gage may not have fully comprehended their motivations. Their presence is imperative to discerning not only how the text is a Spanish American cultural artefact of the lived realities of the multiethnic population, but also the political outcome of Gage's plan to conquer the Spanish American colonies. In a memorandum composed in 1654 titled "Some Brief and True Observations Concerning the west-Indies, humbly presented to his highness, Oliver, lord protector of the Commonwealth of England, Scotland and Ireland" Gage postulates the English empire should and could push for an invasion of Spanish territories in Mexico and Guatemala on the basis that non-whites would welcome the English as a preferred alternative to Spanish abuses (Gage "Some Brief and True Observations..." xiv-xvi).

Gage assured Cromwell the English would obtain reinforcements from the non-white population, including white Creoles', "Fifthly, For the Mulattos and Negros opposing, there is no feare, for if any armes were committed to them, soone might the masters fear toe bee overpowered by their slaves and servants (Gage "Some Brief and True Observations..." 60)." The Creoles, or "Criolians" as Gage calls them, opposed the Spanish and the *mestizos*; black people

[37] My use of the term “Creole” refers to the Spanish term “criollo,” “Dicho de un hijo y, en general, de un descendiente de padres europeos: Nacido en los antiguos territorios españoles de América y en algunas colonias europeas de dicho continente. (Diccionario del Real Academia Española).

and mulattos were against the Spanish and the *mestizos*; and all were against the Indians. According to Gage tensions run high between the various racial groups to the point that "...if at the first arrival any nation shall proclaime liberty to Mulattos, Negros and Indians, for such a liberty they would joyne with them against the Spaniards, as I have often heard them say, when there I lived (60)." Gage's rationale is based on having heard the non-white population say that they would join with another nation against the Spaniards. The fragmented nature of Gage's colonial discourse is due to his not understanding that non-whites' views of the Spanish colonizer, though negative, do not imply their support for a Protestant invasion. Mulattos adapted to fit various cultures and racial groups at different points in their lives.

No concrete evidence such as citations or paraphrasing non-whites' speech is provided to back up Gage's claims. Multiracial people who appear in the *A New Survey* may provide answers to why Cromwell's Western Design ended in disaster. Critics of Gage's narrative have attempted to explain the failure of the Western Design by emphasizing European agency in the context of European political contests between Protestant England and Catholic Spain (See Tejera 1981, 1991, 1992; Thompson 1958; Arciniegas 1946). Arciniegas concludes the attack on Santo Domingo was lost because of divisiveness amongst the English as the two generals, Venables and Penn, "were at cross-purposes. Penn smiled every time Venables made a blunder, and Venables made a blunder every time he gave an order or mapped a campaign (Arciniegas 212)." Venables himself in his narrative of events endeavored to reduce his culpability by blaming Penn and others for creating conflict on top of Penn's refusal to send food and weapons to aid the soldiers on land. Only in passing does Venables mention the threat the mulattoes, who were known to attack men who straggled, posed (Firth 36). Others cite the English soldiers' lacking preparation for battle and the surprising inactivity of the fleet (Wright viii-x). S.A.G. Taylor

argues that the Western Design failed because Gage did not realize the inherent strength of the Spanish position in the New World and the setbacks that would confront any European power that attempted to conquer their mainland colonies (Taylor 5). Although Gage is the writer occupying a position of power to create the written discourse in favour of Protestantism and Cromwell's Western Design, as I advance in the first chapter, European writers did not work in isolation from their non-European interlocutors. Nor were European political projects decided without the involvement of non-whites.

Lewis, an escaped slave who has carved out a life for himself in Guadalupe, is an instance when mulattos' authorial power participates in narrative production. I explore "textual marronage" as an analytical tool to uncover how mulattos like Lewis create meaning in excess of that intended by Gage through speech. Margaret Olsen defines "textual marronage" as the meaning contrary to or beyond the semiotic limits of imperialist language that reveals the fragmentary and limited nature of colonial discourse (229-230). Lewis's tale begins with his birth in Seville, escape from an abusive master and his arrival to the Indies where he had lived in an indigenous community during twelve years prior to meeting Gage and his Dominican and Jesuit companions. Lewis goes about "remembering" the cruelties he suffered and the choices he made in order to escape:

> This *Mulatto* was a Christian, born in Seville in Spain, and had been slave there formerly to a rich Merchant...Some twelve years before, he had run away from his Master by reason of hard and slavish usage, and having got to *Cales*, offering his service to a Gentleman then bound for America, the Gentleman fearing not that his true Master should ever have more notice of him from a New World, took him a Ship board with him as his slave...[Lewis had] [r]esolved rather to die amongst the Indians (which he

> knew might be his hardest fortune) then ever more to live in slavery under Spaniards (38).

Resembling the narratives respecting African slaves by Las Casas and Sandoval's narrative of the escaped slave woman, Lewis exercises agency by taking flight from abusive masters. Lewis's racial identity is described based on his Christianity and his black African appearance. In Medieval Spain race or "caste" was maintained, or not, due to a common genetic line that was shaped through intermarriage among members (Gilman 113). *Conversos* in Spanish society could pass as *cristianos viejos* while also identifying covertly with Jewishness. However, passing between the frontiers of identities in the colony is not only a question of religious identification but also complicated more by physical appearance. Lewis's racial description is evidence of a process of cultural change occurring in the early modern period in which racial systems altered. Religious affiliation and blood lineage would be replaced by a modern racial system based more on physical appearance and color. Jean Feerick, studying Renaissance English plays, argues early modern concern for difference of skin color was already embedded within entrenched social hierarchies:

> Again and again, the difference of skin colour emerges in the context of a contestation of social hierarchies expressing a hereditary order. Does it matter that we have de-emphasized the rank of these figures in order to argue that their skin colour is the more constitutive site of their identity? Surely the plays qualify such reading by directing our attention to the intersections of these axes of social identity -colour and blood- and by dramatizing their intricate relation. The persistent proximity of these markers of difference, I suggest, is a symptom of an important cultural transition, one that records the fracturing of one racial system and the rise of another (Feerick 6).

The racial discourse surrounding Lewis is not simply based on blood lineage and religion, but rather phenotypic variation also plays a significant role in how he is identified and identifies. Though Lewis was indelibly culturally Spanish because he spoke his native language "very perfectly," shocking Gage and his companions, and he is knowledgeable in Catholicism and identified as Christian by his interlocutors, his fluid appearance also marked him has distinctly not European but allowed him to integrate with his Amerindian community as his body was tattooed and tanned according to their norms. The only thing that inscribed his alterity from other Amerindians was his curly hair and native fluency in Spanish. In order to be sure that he would not be captured, Lewis had assimilated to the indigenous culture by marrying a woman from the island, with whom he had three children, and learned the native language.

Lewis's strategy records his more detailed awareness of Hispanic culture along with indigenous culture than the black Africans presented in earlier texts. By placing oneself in the position of Lewis and really *listening* to his lived experience as he tells it, an image of the mulatto's power to define what is Spanish American comes into focus. He is a heterogeneous other who, as Spivak theorizes, forces us to break out of constructing a homogeneous other by referring to the Same/the Self ("Can the Subaltern Speak?" 259). Lewis's Hispanic cultural origins do not prevent him from creating a new heritage with his Amerindian family and community. He is a subaltern whose individuality breaks the norms of the black/white binary; Lewis is a Calibán who speaks just for himself and not necessarily for all Calibans (Luis "Revisiting the Past" 132). The scope of the indigenous locale allows him to hide and evade contact with Europeans. Thereby, Lewis exerts individual hybrid agency by altering hegemonic racial hierarchies to his advantage. The violence that ensues attests to Lewis's embodied and discursive agency because he is not simply a slave to the Europeans or denigrated by living with

the Amerindians. He has chosen his lifestyle on the periphery in order to escape enslavement. Lewis defends his marginal existence through his knowledge of Spanish and Amerindian languages that permit him to learn the Jesuits' plans and to, most likely, inform his Amerindian companions.

Lewis is characterized in the Jesuits' discourse (and that of Gage the Dominican missionary) as a man in need of religious intervention. Gage, the Protestant narrator, ironically criticizes Gage, the Dominican narrator, and the Jesuits for assuming Lewis's allegiance without grasping his own religious difference from the mulatto. In part, Gage narrates Lewis's story to highlight Jesuit bafoonery. In 1650 Gage testified against a family friend, Father Wright, which plays a part in Wright's execution (Tejera 18-19). Father Wright was arrested and tried along with Father Dade, the Provincial of the Dominicans in England." A Duell Between a Jesuite and a Dominican" (1651) tells the tale of Gage's meeting with these two men in prison. This encounter is the third stage in two other duels Gage narrates, the first occurring in Paris when the Jesuits where founded by Ignatius Loyala and were judged at Court by the Dominicans; the second takes place in Madrid when a Jesuit and a Dominican tell tales of dreams to discredit one another before the Crown. The Dominican priest dreamed of hell where the Jesuits were kept in a well filled with fire and brimstone because otherwise they would take over (Gage "A Duell Between a Jesuite and a Dominican" 4-6). The argument between Gage and the prisoners, Wright and Dade, is the third and definitive duel. Dade, the Dominican, is a man who had "formerly owned me, (when a Dominican) for his inferior, and had exercised authority over me." Gage expresses bitterness towards Dade, however he is the lesser of two evils. Wright, on the other hand, is depicted as a murderous individual who strove to kill Gage and would wage war on the Commonwealth (7). The roots of Gage's anti-Jesuitism have been traced to a letter his

father addressed to him that condemned his decision to become a Dominican and not a Jesuit. However, Gage explains that by that time he was already an enemy of the Jesuits.[38]

We get a strong sense of Gage's disdain for the Jesuits in of *A New Survey*. Gage's descriptions of Wright and of Jesuits in general place them in conflict with not only Protestants but also other Catholic sects like the Dominicans. Other sects regard Jesuit ambition to be the cause of their disdain all over the world and for that reason their reconciliation to the other orders is impossible. Although Gage condemns the Dominicans for their Catholicism, he does not despise them to such an extent as the Jesuits. This is apparent in the narration about Lewis as Gage's intent in narrating the incident is to exemplify the absurdity of Jesuit ambition and pride. Gage, writing about his past as a Dominican missionary, characterizes himself during his journey, along with the Jesuits, as a buffoon type in his blindness to Lewis's distrust of the Jesuits. Gage, the Protestant narrator, seems to mock the Jesuits' tears and assumption that Lewis would have reunited with their group and that the Amerindians had forced him to disclose information that lead to the attack. What is perplexing about this scene is Gage's contradictory insinuation that the Jesuits are silly to believe they can convert Lewis. Why would subjects of African descent like Lewis trust the English before they would trust the Jesuits? And why does Gage differentiate relations between Jesuits and multiethnics in this example from the relations between non-white subalterns and any colonizing European groups?

The historical record provides counterevidence to Gage's suppositions. Jesuits' had engaged with issues pertaining to the black African population since the early seventeenth

[38] Tejera does not explain how this information is known. In *Thomas Gage: su personalidad y su obra*, Tejera wonders if Gage had experienced some sort of humiliation at school from a colleague. But again, this is purely supposition and is never confirmed. What is clear is that beginning with Gage's exit from St. Omer, his "problemas internos" begin as the break with his family occurred at this time. After his father disinherited him, Gage decided to go to the West Indies to earn what he had lost (44-47).

century. As I have noted in my discussion of Alonso de Sandoval, Jesuit missionaries were the first to dedicate themselves to the conversion of *Etíopes* (sub-Saharan Africans), not Dominicans like Las Casas who recognized the evils of African enslavement without acknowledging the full humanity of Africans or calling for their conversion and inclusion in the Christian community. Although the Jesuits supported the institution of slavery, through contact and the missionary role they played they began to appreciate African humanity. Jean-Pierre Tardieu remarks on Sandoval's admiration for West African social structures. When Bini, the ancient state situated in present day Nigeria, is described Sandoval "semble avoir été frappé par l'hygiène tant corporelle qu'urbaine qui caractérise les habitants de cette cité (Tardieu 167-168)." Textual marronage is woven into texts like Sandoval's and, despite his support of African slavery, African subaltern humanity is palpable in the depiction of cities and societies on the African continent. Far from being the enemies of black people and mulattos, amongst the various European religious groups, the Jesuits were in fact the most in tune, albeit imperfectly, to their realities.

Lewis's autobiographical testimony is integral to Gage's argument concerning the Jesuits. The text is the material repository of multiracials, like Lewis, whose agency in cultural production through semiotic interactions (representations, performances and oral discourse) between groups bears out glimpses of Afro-descendants' subjectivity. Their alterity does not exclude them from the intellectual work of Europeans because, when presented with enough force and frequency, the other confronts the European writers who must recognize their humanity. Lévinas theorizes that the “I” may recognize the face of the other and transcend the brutality of social systems. Alterity is the fear of violence against the other; as a result, there is a subjection to obedience to protect the other that precedes the hearing of the order, that comes from the proximity to the "face," or the presence, of the other (*Alterity and Transcendence* 30-

33). Gage envisions his mulatto informant to be a colonial subject who may be evangelized, thereby appreciating a Eurocentric aspect of his humanity. Gage and the Jesuits believe they are sheltering Lewis from the barbarity of the Amerindians. However, Lewis's humanity is likewise denigrated to components such as his hair, which signals his African descent, and his linguistic knowledge, which uncovers his Hispanic cultural origins. Gage, the Protestant narrator, has not come to recognize the complete humanity of Lewis either, which damages his political goals.

Seeing the Other in texts and in real life experience may catalyze comprehension of some of his or her human qualities. Alterity, as understood by Lévinas, refers to the ethical relationship in which the self is constituted by the fear for the other that occurs through contact. As social actors come into relation they create unfixed totalities (or for my purposes unfixed subjectivities or cultural and racial identities). Alterity allows for loving relations between differing subjectivities in spite of unequal power relations because of the inherent human tendency toward saintliness and the desire for justice, both of which are valued in all human cultures (Lévinas *Alterity and Transcendence* 104-107). In spurts Lewis is presented as complex almost to the point of being fantastical because of his perfect Spanish and having learned the indigenous languages. I contend these moments of partial recognition grant opportunities for his subaltern agency to be better appreciated:

> In twelve years that he has thus continued amongst them he had learned their language...[the Jesuits] imagined the truth that he could not come thither but with some Spaniard: so entering into discourse with and finding him to speak Spanish, they got the whole truth from him (38-39).

The European author assumes the Spaniards' actions have guided Lewis to his present home, rather than his own plans to escape through temporary agreements with various Spanish masters. Lewis's honesty is also supposed because he gives his testimony in Spanish, thereby taking on an identity that appears more European, and perhaps more trustworthy, to Gage. Rama argues that it was the distance between the "letra rígida" and "la fluida palabra hablada" that reserved the lettered city for a strict minority of literate Europeans (81). However, this distance is not an insuperable chiasma when understood as a form of alterity. The points of contact between the lettered and the oral worlds overlap to create an in-between social and cultural space where cultural and political power is dispersed between Gage and and Lewis. In the scope of this place a site where hierarchical boundaries are eroded and political power is diffused, in praxis and in the cultural products, exists. The other's political power is proof of his humanity for the contemporary critic despite being acknowledged in a fragmented form by the colonial writer.

Gage undertakes to codify the non-white subject as a willing accomplice against the Spanish. However, against all of his best efforts to maintain a position of power in the production of the text, the narration provides various images of the multiethnic populace on the verge of rebellion against any European colonizer. Afro-descendants derive their power from contact with, and avoidance of, Europeans. In the previous chapter I advanced that interactions between European writes like Las Casas and black Africans in the context of transatlantic slavery in Hispaniola, and through texts such as Gómes Eanes de Zurura's chronicle, allowed African subalterns to impact Europeans' understanding of history, whether European and African subjects were completely aware of this process or not. African subjects' reactions to enslavement enable their bodily presence to enter the text as the *bozales* are depicted in action fleeing the *trapiches* in groups or making war amongst themselves in Africa in order to provide Europeans

with slaves. Because of their political engagement, Africans become complex agents in the textual depictions as they react to the conditions of colonialism.

Perhaps if they had spent more time with Lewis, Gage as well as the Jesuits would have progressed further towards a more complex understanding of Lewis's subalternity, seeing and hearing more information, including the possibility that he may have had other plans. Though Lewis is unaware of Gage's written project, he nonetheless serves to predict the ultimate downfall of the Western Design and the lived realities in which subalterns form limited and changing alliances. In the first stages of their meeting, Gage intends to piece together an image of Lewis. Though Lewis's humanity is minimized on the surface of Gage's representation, this misrecognition does not account for the textual marronage Lewis engages in on the page. Through a rereading of the narration, one may understand that Gage's misapprehension of Lewis's humanity creates tension that ends in violence as the brutality of the dominant ideology threatens to erase the subaltern's agency. Subaltern violence generates enough force momentarily to evade complete erasure in the historical moment.

The dominant discourse is not capable of altering itself or resorting to violent means to punish the other, but rather it is the other who takes control of the discourse through violence as an escape like the *cimarrones* illustrated by Las Casas in Hispaniola. Historical knowledge of the *cimarrón* population provides context for the social and cultural reality in which Lewis lived. The *cimarrón* problem was not felt equally amongst all of the colonizers. *Cimarronaje* was considered a threat by Spanish officiales, however they, along with members of the clergy, tended to take a more conciliatory approach to the problem while local *hacendados*, or landholders, and politicians backed a hard line approach with military expeditions (Landers 86). *Cimarrones* tended to engage with Spaniards and Indians in trade and only used violence in self-

defence. Gage's representation of this working relationship between races vacillates because his political program made it advantageous to not explain this strange friendship. Gage believes that all of the black population, including free blacks and slaves as well as *cimarrones*, are always in rebellion, a political situation that would facilitate the English and Dutch upon arrival. Northern European invaders believed they would be allowed to live freely in peace (Pastor 210). The problem of the *cimarrón* population had actually been controlled by the Spanish Crown by the early seventeenth century. In 1611 slave importations stopped to limit the incidence of rebellions. "La suspensión de las importaciones ayudó a resolver el problema del cimarronaje e impulso del mestizaje, que no era únicamente un proceso biológico, sino de fusión cultural (Pastor 212)." Despite the general control of the *cimarrón* community, whose association with the Crown could not be described as one in continuous revolt but more of an economic and political negotiation involving trade, it seems Gage concluded otherwise for the purpose of campaigning for the Western Design. Perhaps he was blinded by his political ambition; or he simply mistook the cues provided by subalterns.

III. The Dutch Corsair and Juan Dalva's Discursive Power

Power is wielded as discourse and violence in the hands of an Afro-descended subject in the portrayal of the Dutch corsair who raids Gage's ship during his return journey to England. In the previous section I proposed multiethnics would not perceive much of a difference between Catholics and Protestants despite the rivalry between the two sects. The Dutch corsair's affiliations provide more evidence of the increasingly crucial modern distinction between whites and non-whites in the early modern period. In this section of Gage's journey, the dominated subject's positionality switches from an Afro-descendant to a European subject when Gage recounts his distress as his freedom is taken away momentarily. The confrontation with the Dutch corsair leaves Gage facing death in the metaphorical social sense because he is dehumanized like a slave. Despite the Dutch corsair's command in this situation, Gage attempts to formulate an alternate reality in which he continues to occupy a dominant position when he assumes that he can negotiate with his captor. Gage recounts their conversation after dinner:

> ...I conferred with the Captain alone, and told him that I was no Spaniard, but an English man born...But all this was of little consequence to him, who had already taken possession of mine and all other goods in the ship: he told me I must suffer with those amongst whom I was found, and that I might as well claim all the goods in the ship for mine (430).

Gage again misinterprets colonized subjects' feelings towards the Spanish, believing in a generalized animosity that would favor himself as an English traveller. When this plan fails, not only does Gage's plot to regain control of his encounter with the Dutch corsair malfunction,

Gage's depiction of English superiority as an accepted norm among mixed-race colonials is unwittingly discredited.

Historical documentation introduces political dynamics Gage seems unaware of not only in the narrative time of his travels, but also leading up to the Western Design's failure. The Dutch corsair would later ally himself with the Spanish in 1638, offering to guard the coasts against the Dutch or any other ships (Restall 2000). The representation of this mulatto in the narrative, as well as the historical record, displays the mulatto's willingness to ally himself with the Spanish, or any European empire, should such a connection enable him to maintain his freedom through his service. In "Black Conquistadors: Armed Africans in Early Spanish America" Matthew Restall perceives a paradigm of Afro-descended resistance to colonial rule beginning with Juan Garrido, the conquistador who fought for Cortés during the conquest of Mexico. There was a second Diego el Mulatto in the 1640s who conducted raids in Mexico and a third in the 1670s (189-195). These men were able to use their military activities to gain freedom, but never full equality with Spaniards. Many created counter-societies with Indians or maroons to counter European impingement on their autonomy.

The Dutch Corsair's mobility is also framed by a surge in non-European and black African social mobility in Cuba. As a consequence of the 1600 the slave ship *Luanda*'s arrival to Havana, bringing 195 black slaves, an unprecedented demographic shift took place. Once excised from the body politic, non-Europeans were visible in all aspects of urban life:

> Artisans took advantage of the unique opportunities that port cities afforded, and *coartación*, or the right of slaves to purchase their own freedom, also contributed to the growth of both the free population of African descent as well as the enslaved population;

> the practice of *coartación* also prompted authorities into a hypervigilance where demographic trends, new mobilities, and visibility were concerned (García 57).

The black population in Cuba threatened authorities through their presence in numbers on the island as maintaining power in the hands of the white elite was becoming ever more challenging. The Dutch Corsair gained his freedom by fleeing Cuba, however mulattoes and other Afro-descended individuals were able to achieve freedom through legal means. The demographic shift, considered in conjunction with Restall's work, underlies white elites' anxiety and provides a backdrop for the failure of the Western Design because there is no evidence that Afro-descendants supported any European group.

Goslinga attests to Afro-descendants' wavering loyalties in the Dutch Caribbean world. The Dutch had undertaken previous "Great Designs" to capture Spanish territories such as the 1621 attempt to capture Havana. The Spanish feared the *cimarrones* would join the Dutch during these attempts (Goslinga 141-142). Political alliances realigned depending on mulattos' goals and extenuating circumstances, exemplifying how racial discourses were not simply based on religious impurity (i.e. who was not Christian) for these groups as was the case for Spaniards in Spain in the aftermath of the Reconquista. In contrast to Reformation age political conflicts within nations like the Netherlands and England, where Protestants and Catholics were at odds, multiethnics do not appear to exhibit loyalty to any European ethnic group or take clear sides in Eurocentric religious conflicts between Catholics and Protestants. Despite the fact that the Dutch corsair was in revolt against Spanish colonial power and had united with the Dutch, most likely his allegiance was not gained because they were an alternative to Catholic Spain. The Dutch corsair presumably formed alliances in order to negotiate a space in which he could be free from European oppression like Lewis's choice to live in an indigenous community in Guadalupe. The

repercussions of Gage's inability to recognize the desire for freedom as the ultimate goal of these multiethnic subalterns would be an important factor in the Western Designs' collapse.

Further evidence that elucidates Gage's miscalculation is the history of English relations with mixed-ace people in the Caribbean. The English had enjoyed past success rallying the assistance of blacks and multiethnics during raids on the Spanish silver routes running from the Potosí mine in the Andes to the Pacific coast and eventually Panama City. Alliances with Afro-descendants were "interracial utopian dreams" that could be found in the narratives of Sir Francis Drake's exploits, especially when he had co-opted disgruntled maroon and Amerindian groups to help raid Spanish holdings which culminated in the capture of the mule train carrying silver across Panama in 1572-1573. In 1571 Sir Francis Drake attacked the crossing of the Panamanian Isthmus at *Nombre de Dios*, the most vulnerable point of the Spanish silver route. Although Drake's raid occurred after the silver had already departed, the mission was considered a success because he made connections with *cimarrones* to take control of a mule train in 1573. These stories, revived in the era of the Western Design, would have been familiar to Gage:

> For more than two generations, the English public had read about Drake's exploits in Hackluyt's volumes and periodic reprints. In 1653 a new tract entitled *Sir Francis Drake Revived* was published, recounting Drake's fortuitous Panama landing in the midst of a siege of Nombre de Dios by armed maroons, who introduced his men to friendly Indians off the coast near Tolu and eventually assisted him in intercepting the silver train. When Gage spoke of Drake's exploits, he remembered not only his sacking of the great port of Cartagena, but especially his confederation with the 'Blackmores' from Nombre de Dios (Block 115).

Non-whites commonly worked with the English during the sixteenth century and Drake's raid is one famous example. Drake obtained the aid of indigenous and runaway African enemies of the Spaniards on limited negotiated terms; these were temporary compromises agreed upon in order to fight off the Spanish (Lane 41). Between 1570 and 1577 there were at least thirteen English expeditions to the Caribbean that openly adopted the search for plunder the French were undertaking.

Most likely maroons and Amerindians chose to work with British pirates because they were offered a share of the booty, not because they approved of English Protestantism more than their Spanish rulers' Catholicism. Francis Drake's raid did not represent a shift away from Spanish colonial power to English Protestant dominance. The quantity of silver secured during the raid amounted to no more than 5 per cent of the annual shipment, however the moral effect of this deed was to have enormous repercussions in both Spain and England. Despite the moral victory Drake achieved, other raiders would follow unsuccessfully in Drake's footsteps, and the Spanish later suppressed the *cimarrones* to counteract these raids (Latimer 17). Drake's last expedition to the Caribbean failed and he died from dysentery in Portobelo. After Drake's death, the West Indies were "effectively out of range of a large-scale Elizabethan expeditionary force (Latimer 20)." Though the historical evidence shows shifting political relations between the English and non-whites, Gage does not seem to be aware of the complexity of the relationships multiethnics formed with Europeans.

Incomprehension of the mulatto, who was stereotyped as a figure in constant revolt against Spanish power in Gage's writing, perhaps can be further explained through the historical context of the representation of the multiracial populace of Mexico City illustrated in Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora's *Alboroto y motín de México*, which details the events of the 1692 uprising.

The elite Creole writer also envisions non-whites and poor Creoles to be a general threat to power. During the 1692 riot, lower (non-European) classes escaped anonymity to attack not only the Spanish colonial order but also the Creole (*criollo*) nation in formation (Rivera Ayala 6). As seen from the Creole perspective, at this time identifying with the Spanish in opposition to blacks, mulattos and Indians, Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora describes the Spanish soldiers' restrained violence. Swords prepared as they observe the scene in suspense:

> ...los negros, los mulatos y todo lo que ese plebe gritando: '¡Muera el virrey y cuantos lo defendieren!', y los indios: ¡Mueran los españoles y gachupines (son los venidos de España) que nos comen nuestro maíz!' y exhortándose unos a otros a tener valor, supuesto que ya no había otro Cortés que los sujetase, se arrojaban a la plaza a acompañar a los otros a tirar piedras (Sigüenza y Góngora "Alboroto y motín de México")

These events occur more than forty years after those narrated by Gage, however Sigüenza y Góngora's impressions of multiethnics supply evidence that the tensions between Spanish colonial power and African and indigenous communities, upon which Gage had hoped the Western Design could capitalize, existed. Nonetheless, these incidents do not buttress Gage's argument that non-whites would certainly support the English.

Although Sigüenza y Góngora portrays a certain "Americanism" that distinguished Creoles from Spaniards in other works such as *Parayso Occidental*, the chronicle of the foundation of the Mexican *Convento de Jesús Maria*, and *Teatro de virtudes políticas que constituyen a un príncipe*, there is no dominant or consistent view demonstrated throughout his literary corpus (Ross 184). Rather, Sigüenza y Góngora's narration concerning the riot is one

particular moment that displays Creoles' cultural and identificatory bonds with the Spanish because he envisions Cortés's retreat from Mexico city during the *Noche triste* as a model for his own place in the complex web of Europeans, indigenous peoples and black Africans and their descendants in colonial Mexico City:

> La identificación total del criollo con el español llama la atención, especialmente si pensamos que en otros libros Sigüenza frecuentemente expresaba un americanismo muy desarrollado. Sin embargo para relatar esta narrativa todas las clases europeas se unen frente al enemigo amenazador y numeroso (Ross 184).

Rather than conquer with arms as Cortés had, Sigüenza y Góngora deploys letters to save the archive and the history of the conquistadors through writing (Ross 184-185). Creole tensions with the Spanish, that also arise within Sigüenza y Góngora's subjectivity in *Alboroto y motín de México*, are more compounded than Gage had accounted for in *A New Survey*. In consideration of the unpredictable and temporary alliances made between European colonizers and multiethnics, as well as the "white" Creole population on display in Sigüenza y Góngora's writing, the reader cannot simply assume their lack of allegiance to the Spanish crown in the event of an English. Even *cimarrones*, the population that could be described as most resistant to Spanish colonial power, never formed definitive alliances with English pirates like Drake, as previously mentioned.

Gage's bond with his mulatto guide, Miguel Dalva, contributes further evidence of the tenuous relationships between mulattos and Europeans, be they Spanish or English, Catholic or Protestant. Miguel Dalva's laugh suggests cognitive dissonance in Gage’s belief in his superiority. On the way to the port during Gage’s return journey they cross the river Lempa in

Guatemala. According to a local legend, wanted people who cross from one side to the other are free from punishment:

> This river [Lempa] is privileged in this manner, that if a man commit any haineus crime or murther on this side of Guatemala, and San Salvador, or on the other side of St. Miguel, or Nicaragua, if he can flie to get over this River, he is free as long as he liveth on the other side, and no Justice on that side whither he is escaped can question or trouble him for the murther committed. So likewise for Debts he cannot be arrested (Gage *A New Survey* 417).

Gage, trusting the story, repeats it to Miguel Dalva, “My Blackmoor did much laugh at this my concept, and warranted me that all would do well (Gage *A New Survey* 417)." Gage interprets this guffaw to be benevolent, like that of a friend who knows he has not committed a crime. However, the subaltern's true thoughts on the matter are unclear. Gage's control becomes indeterminate when the possibility that Dalva may not laugh with him but *at* him is taken into consideration. Perhaps Miguel's snickers communicate a carnivalesque narrative that escapes that proposed by Gage.

In *Rabelais and His World* Mikhail Bakhtin illustrates laughter's significance in the Medieval carnivalesque tradition that seeps into the grotesque of the early modern period. Parody and all other forms of grotesque realism degrade, bring down to earth and transform their subject into flesh. "The people's laughter which characterized all the forms of grotesque realism from immemorial times was linked with the bodily lower stratum. Laughter degrades and materializes (20)." Miguel Dalva's laugh is a sonic presence that allows us to glimpse another aspect of his subjectivity like the mulatta's conversations during the dance to celebrate the festival de los reyes

in Cirilo Villaverde's *Cecilia Valdés* which will be discussed in the final chapter. The laughter could be interpreted as a type of flight enacted by Dalva from the dominant narration which offers another version unbeknownst to Gage. Talking back to Gage as an equal and proposing an alternative viewpoint is not imperative at this moment. If one is going to oppose the oppressor, it is wise to choose the most advantageous moments and the issues that are most worth debating. Another interpretation of Dalva's laughter could be bitterness at his own condition and that of slaves who can never be sure of their freedom even if they cross the river Lempa. Dalva's sounds are suggestive of semiotic excess in rebellion against Gage's power just as much as that of the Spanish. If compared to the Mexican populace in revolt against the Spanish and Creole hegemony in Sigüenza y Góngora's *Alboroto y motín de México*, Dalva's laugh could question the hierarchical power structure that makes him "my blackmoor" to Gage because his inner world is not really known to Gage or in his possession.

Lewis, the Dutch Corsair, and Miguel Dalva are three examples in Thomas Gage's travel narrative in which mulatto subalternity signals an incongruity between the Western Design and non-whites' own political objectives. Their role in the plot functions as a prolepses for non-whites' lacking loyalty to the English during the Western Design in the narratology of the plot. Through their dialogues with Gage and his companions they share their stories while also negotiating for power. Mulattos' locations in the text, beginning and concluding the body of Gage's American travels, as well as Miguel's presence serving as a gateway through dangerous territory, reflect their importance in the structural organization of the text and the cultural reality of the Caribbean. The Caribbean margin is an entrance and departure point for travellers who wish to gain access to the Spanish American colonies. As travellers pass through, it becomes a juncture where power relations between multiethnics and Europeans are negotiated. Gage's

encounters are not simply passing contacts because they expose possible fault lines in Gage's political project. Though one must note Afro-descendants' limited access to literary culture, the effect of their presence on the literature cannot be shrugged off. Narrative authority is diffused during these encounters which contributes insight into why Afro-descendants do not simply come to the aid of the English indiscriminately during the invasion. Their oral narratives and embodied performances documented in *A New Survey* enable subalterns to accrue cultural power as evidenced by their ability to alter the social and political reality of the colony.

Mulatto subjects in *A New Survey* by Thomas Gage provide us with the opportunity to better understand the workings of contacts and alliances between the multiethnic populace of the Spanish American colonies. A complex image of the multiracial cultural reality in the Spanish Caribbean, the in-between space where the boundaries and power divisions between white colonizers and non-whites is blurred, is portrayed in the historical and literary record. Religious affiliation, though central to the canonical discourse, is not of utmost importance to how multiethnics form political alliances and how they themselves appear to identify. Phenotype and the physical characteristics that define "blackness" are becoming more important to how non-whites form alliances with Europeans, be they Catholic or Protestant. Multiracial Afro-descended agents exert power over the production of the texts in the historical record through their presence and their choices. Their shaky allegiances often shed light on their fight against European dominance and also how they blended in with European political projects, as the Dutch Corsair did, by joining with the Dutch. Mulattos were not only creating spaces outside of hegemony for themselves, but encountering opportunities to obtain freedom within dominant power structures.

Infortunios de Alonso Ramírez, which will be considered in the following chapter, is another travel account that takes these exemplary subalterns' fluidity, within and on the margins of racial groups, to a new level of ambiguity. Subjects of impure European ancestry have come to populate the *criollo* or Creole populace by the end of the seventeenth century. Ramírez's testimony is a tool to gain access to white identity by proving his legitimacy and making recourse to traditional Spanish discourses of religious purity through blood lineage, and therefore greater freedeom. That Ramírez is a *criollo* is accepted as a given by the critical field. A close reading of his narrative through subaltern theory allows for a renewed questioning of what can be proven, or not, about Ramírez's lineage and social mobility in the later seventeenth century.

Chapter 3. Racial Ambiguity and the Discursive Construction of Creole Identity in *Infortunios de Alonso Ramírez*

I. Creoles and In-Between Identities in the Lettered City

The possibility that a homology that integrates more racial identities than presumed under the cloak of "whiteness" in Alonso Ramírez's testimony is considered in the following analysis. I propose that the variety of perspectives is representative of the progressively uncertain nature of Creole or *criollo*[39] identity in seventeenth century Spanish America. Proving one's purity based on *cristiano viejo* blood lineage remains a core axis upon which race and identity turn. At the same time, phenotype and physical characteristics associated with whiteness, racial markers that will take center stage in the modern period, are gaining significance. Lived experiences and connections with obviously non-white agents like Alonso Ramírez's slave, Pedro, as well as his time in the motley crew of the English pirate ship, followed by his return voyage with his non-white companions, tangle Ramírez's varying racial and cultural identifications. As Joanne Rappaport proposes in *The Disappearing Mestizo,* classificatory practices in the colonial period were not based only on phenotype or parentage, but were created by many cultural and social cues. None of the racial categories was stable or homogenous, "nor were their boundaries fixed and clearly delimited, even though they sometimes constituted named entities (9)." The possibility for someone considered *criollo* to be much more racially enigmatic than the dominant European narratives would allow deserves greater attention. Ramírez's experiences in the Caribbean world and beyond raise the question: Is Alonso Ramírez really so different from Diego el Mulato and other racially ambiguous/non-white colonial subjects depicted by Thomas

[39] The term "criollo" or Creole refers to people born in the Americas. A more detailed definition of "criollo" will be provided in the chapter.

Gage? In this chapter I advance the idea that subaltern agency in *Infortunios de Alonso Ramírez* opens a lacuna in which it is probable that the meaning of the *criollo* racial category is broadened.

While scholarship has focused on the veracity of Ramírez's life and travels, Ramírez's racial background and how his testimony convinced officials to accept him as a white Creole in has not been questioned much by critics. Scholars have studied in depth the historical underpinning of Alonso Ramírez's oral depiction of his travels to the outer reaches of the Spanish Empire in *Infortunios de Alonso Ramírez*. By the 1980s most had agreed on *Infortunios'* historicity as proven by the documentation of people, places and events named in the autobiography. Cummins and Soons's "Introduction" to their edition of *Infortunios de Alonso Ramírez* confirms Alonso Ramírez's existence, his birth in Puerto Rico and his voyage to Havana in 1675 when he was twelve-years-old. Archival documents confirm key events recounted in the testimony: Ramírez married in Mexico and was widowed within a year; he determined to emigrate to the Philippine Islands where he was captured by English pirates in 1687; Ramírez was later released from captivity along with his comrades.[40] Ramírez sells his slave, leaves behind his companions, and enters into the good graces of the viceroy.[41] *Infortunios* concludes having painted an image of the ideal of social cohesion amongst whites that reinforces dominant discourses of power and racial purity. Most critics tend to corroborate Ramírez's "pure" or Spanish Catholic identity as delineated by the dominant narrative and Ramírez's marriage

[40] Martínez-San Miguel questions the extent to which Ramírez can be considered an outcast when this self-imposed exile takes him to the center of Spanish imperial trade in the Pacific. Perhaps this "exile" is another irony in the text studied by Fornet.

[41] *Infortunios* closes with Ramírez travelling to Veracruz in the company of don Juan Enríquez Barroto, captain of the artillery of the Real Armada de Barlovento who excused him of expenses (215). The historian William G. Bryan has found evidence of Ramírez's integration in Sigüenza y Góngora's *Trofeo de la justicia española en el castigo de la alevosía francesa* in which he mentions a don Alonso Ramírez among the captains in charge of the musketeers (Taiano 2011, 203).

record.[42] Buscaglia-Salgado has done the painstaking and important work of authenticating Alonso Ramírez's marriage lincense, pointing out Ramírez's marriage license documents his race as "*español*" and not *casta* and concluding "la incógnita en cuanto a su nombre verdadero, si no la de sus posibles identidades múltiples, había sido resuelta. Igualmente fue resuelto el asunto de su extracción social, ya que era considerado oficialmente español y no casta ("Introducción" 22)." Buscaglia-Salgado leaves open Ramírez's possible multiple identities, while accepting Ramírez's legal classification as the endpoint in understanding Ramírez's "Spanish" identity.

The question of his "possible multiple identities" could still be investigated further. Though Ramírez is accepted in early modern colonial society as Spanish, much still remains to resolve concerning the question of Ramírez's identity, including his seeming racial fluidity in terms of his Christian beliefs, that comingle with indigenous practices in his repeated praise of the Virgen de Guadalupe, along with his picaresque lineage. Racial discourse in the early modern period was in the early stages of incorporating modern conceptions of phenotype or skin color in defining identity and social rank while blood lineage and religious affiliation, which were constantly debated by colonial actors, were stretched to fit the American demographic landscape. "Christianity was a central locus for the early modern shift from religion as a primary basis for political and social identity to that of race (or rather, what we would now call race) (Block 2)." Jean Feerick relates the early modern belief that climactic conditions altered bodies and were transplanted to offspring. Generation was not static or fixed because blood could and would absorb alterations when in contact with new environments and cultures (Feerick 18-19). Early moderns understood race to be rather fuid while the very concept of race was likewise fluid;

[42] Those who do question Ramírez's whiteness are Serafín González, who calls him a "mestizo," as well as others who refer to Ramírez's race in more ambiguous terms. Arrom refers to Ramírez as a "joven puertorriqueño" (23); Chang Rodriguez in "la transgresión del picaresco" refers to him as "el hombre común" (96-97). Besides González, who does not provide evidence for her designation, others do not necessarily question Ramírez's whiteness or "Spanish" identity.

one's racial status could change based on geographic location among other factors. In the context of shifting racial discourses, on the verge of modern definitions based on phenotype and legitimacy, rather than only gaining privileged status through religious affiliation traced through lineage, or his Christianity traced through his mother, Alonso Ramírez could prove his purity and achieve improved social standing because of his "white" or European appearance as well.

Another factor to consider in discussing Ramírez's identity is ambiguity within Spanish identity itself. Official documents like marriage records provide significant evidence pertaining to individuals' recognized racial classifications. Though racial categories were slippery, scholars like Buscaglia-Salgado continue to not account for this sufficiently in their conclusions about Ramírez's ethnicity. Other scholars accept Ramírez's "Spanish" identity as a given based on the language of the text. Even if this is so, the deployment of the term "Spanish" most likely transmits an orientalist view of the Spanish in this instance as Fuchs would most likely concur. The first time "Spanish" is used in reference to Ramírez is telling since it occurs during his time in captivity when the pirates have sacked Pulau Condón and entreat him to join them in consuming the flesh of a dead native (158). Ramírez states, "a la debida repulsa que yo le hice me dijo que siendo *español*, y por el consiguente cobarde, bien podía para igualarlo a ellos en el valor no ser melindroso. No me instó más por responder a un brindis (158)." An insult from an English cannibal communicates several layers of racial discourse; both the Black Legend, the barbaric image of Spanish imperialism circulating amongst the English even before Las Casas's *Brevíssima* (Keen 712), and a counter argument are packed into the depiction of the English pirate.[43] The multiple import of "Spanish" adds another level of racial ambiguity surrounding Ramírez's identity even if the English use of "Spanish" is not proof of Ramírez's white or

[43] Chang-Rodríguez reads the pirates' slur, "español" and "cobarde," as evidence of Ramírez's negative self-identification that supports the feeling of Spanish defeat in her colonial territories (Chang-Rodríguez 103, 1982).

Christian identity any more than Ramírez's insistence. However, insight into how Spaniards were viewed by their European enemies is conveyed. The Black Legend, as argued by Barbara Fuchs, couples Spain with blackness through Islam and geographical proximity to Africa (*Exotic Nation* 94). Translations of Las Casas's *Brevíssima* that circulated in northern Europe emphasized Spaniards' blackness as the result of mixing with black Africans. The orientalist gaze of northern Europeans included Spain as part of the East or Africa (97-98). An English pirate's pronunciation of Ramírez's "Spanish" ethnicity is therefore most likely an insult that does not necessarily signify his Christian or European ancestry, but rather relays English projections of blackness onto Spaniards.

There may also be more than one layer of apology within the Englishman's insult that supports Ramírez's own position as a Creole in relation to the Spanish. The pirates again slander Ramírez calling him "español", "cobarde" and "gallina" because he refuses to join their cause (168). Since the pirates had recently stolen chickens from black people in Madagascar, this snub could refer to the pilfered livestock, lowering Ramírez's status below that of a black *moro* because he is equated with their animal property. Perhaps, the previous allusion to Spaniards' Moorish ancestry is also a subtle defense of Ramírez's own impurity. If all Spaniards are in some way hybrid because of Spain's Moorish past (and cultural present) is Ramírez not just as pure as any true Spaniard? That Ramírez is Spanish is not a given, and even if it were, his purity could still not be proven considering that, within Spanish identity, there exists a hybrid relationship with Moorish culture.

Racial purity is further complicated in the New World context, as demonstrated by Ramírez's narrative, in which physical difference is remarked on in order to formulate racial hierarchies. Scholars have studied the constructed nature of Ramírez's ethnicity and race in the

text in which Ramírez's Spanish identity is developed in opposition to other ethnic groups. Fornet notes that Ramírez claims his Spanish ethnicity because, unlike his companions, Ramírez was born in a Spanish colony and is white and Catholic (Fornet 207). As well as making recourse to official documents, Boyer has remarked that Ramírez establishes his Spanish identity through elaborating his difference from other groups such as English pirates and indigenous subalterns (Boyer 35). Taiano includes Africans and Amerindians as others along with the English and indigenous subjects previously studied to configure Ramírez's white European identity as she posits that what differentiates Ramírez from his black, indigenous, and Sangley[44] companions is his white skin:

> Ramírez sabe que enmascarar las creencias religiosas es factible si las apariencias físicas lo permiten, por ello el puertorriqueño trata de recalcar sus características fisionómicas para alejar cualquier inquietud sobre la fe de sus antepasados. La única ventaja que Ramírez tiene en relación a sus compañeros indios, sangleyes y negros es su aspecto, atributo que explota al máximo en su relación. Sus compañeros de desventura no pueden ocultar 'la mancha de sangre', su fisionomía los traiciona (Taiano 9-10).

Taiano, Boyer and Fornet do begin to touch on the emphasis placed on distinguishing Ramírez from those who are not Spanish and Catholic, which occurs because Ramírez's racial difference from non-whites is not a given. Keeping Thomas Gage in mind, notable differentiability between the English and the Spanish is not always evident either, seeing as Gage passed for a Spaniard in the Americas based on his native fluency in Spanish even though he was born to English parents. As Taiano has explained, Ramírez cannot prove his purity except through the appearance of whiteness in contrast to his companions and others he meets.

---

[44] See footnote 55 for a definition of Sangley.

Other than his whiteness, Ramírez's Spanish identity is formulated through the traditional narrative of blood purity employed by Christian Spaniards. Ramírez's inconclusive Spanish ethnic classification is the result of the ironic interplay of the dominant rhetorical position in *Infortunios* supported by Sigüenza y Góngora, who also accepts Ramírez's story legitimizing his rights as a Spanish Catholic. Be that as it may, Ramírez and Sigüenza y Góngora both fail to fully occlude certain moments in which Ramírez's "Spanishness" or Catholic lineage is cast into doubt. Dating from the Medieval period, picaresque narratives and their *converso* authors repeated this narrative for their protagonists and themselves. Many *conversos* had in fact claimed *hidalguía* which lead to the fusing of *converso* with *hidalgía*. Fernando de Rojas's family is one example of how *conversos* gained legitimacy from a *probanza* that certified the social truth that they had assimilated and lived as Christian (Gilman 138-151). The point of this comparison is that Ramírez and other picaresque marginal subjects rumored to have *converso* origins frequently gained legitimacy through such *probanzas* and other juridical documentation. These documents do not undo any evidence of their varied identities within the archive. And in Ramírez's case, his *criollo* circumstances along with the increasing significance of phenotype only serve to further complicate his racial background.

Another example through which the uncertainty of Ramírez's Spanish identity can be read arises when Ramírez refers to the people of Puerto Rico, his homeland, as "*naturales* (123)." This is also how Ramírez describes the inhabitants of the Philippine islands to the pirates when he is probed for information at the beginning of his captivity. Ramírez provides the pirates with false information, "Era mi intento el que, si así lo hiciesen, los cogiesen desprevenidos, no solo *los naturales* de ella sino *los españoles* que asisten de presidio en aquella isla, y los apresasen (151) (My emphasis)." From Ramírez's standpoint, the *naturales* are distinct from the

Spanish in the Philippines and most likely this holds true for the explanation of his Puerto Rican heritage. Covarrubias defines "natural" in the following manner, "Todo aquello q es conforme a la naturalez de cada uno. Hijo Natural, el que no es legítimo, ni tampoco bastardo. Natural de Toledo, el que nació y tiene su parentela en Toledo. Natural se opone a artificial." Following this definition, Ramírez can be understood to be a native, born in Puerto Rico. His parentage as well is linked to Puerto Rico along with his illegitimacy in the meaning of "natural" which alludes to illegitimatacy. Beyond the geographic location of his birth in Puerto Rico, little is known of his ethnic origins. Ramírez does not know the place of his father's birth besides hearsay that he is Andalusian while he knows that his mother was in fact born in Puerto Rico (124). He goes on to laud her Christian virtue while he makes no reference to her ethnicity beyond her birth place.

Perhaps the most convincing evidence of Ramírez's cryptic ethnic and racial heritage is the episode when he encounters the Yucatecs after the shipwreck. Ramírez hears them speak Castilian and, recognizing his fellow countrymen, embraces them. His acknowledgement is not reciprocated because the Yucatecs suspect Ramírez and his companions are pirates (202). These suspicions are not foolish because pirates were known to avoid disciplinary problems onboard by taking and keeping no unwilling person (Rediker 71). Their sense of community on board and advanced state of group identification is also signified by the black flag (81). Boyer highlights the mystery of why the Yucatecs do not trust Ramírez upon his return to Mexico aboard a ship of multiethnics, capturing the attention of those he meets:

> If what was at stake in Alonso's self-exile is the broader question of subjectivity, it is telling -and certainly no accident- that in the moment of his return, the distinction between Caribbean pirates and Alonso and his crew is illegible to the Yucatecs in chapter

> IV....His concern over being misread by the Amerindians continues through the crew's overland journey to larger urban centers (Boyer 39).

Ramírez sends Juan González (the other "Spaniard") ahead to inform the natives of the towns they would pass through that they were lost men in need of shelter (Boyer 39). The racial ambiguity amongst his companions, from which even he cannot easily disentangle himself, seems to strike fear in the local population. Though Ramírez is not a slave of any *criollo*, he still faces possible exclusion and oppression if he cannot prove his kinship with Creoles. There is no further physical description of the Yucatecs in this moment and Ramírez does not know they are Catholic until later. Language -their use of Spanish- is how he learns he has arrived in the Spanish colonies. The race/religion of the Indian slaves is secondary to their mutual, but unreciprocated, identification through language. But how can this misrecognition be explained? Why don't the Indians know immediately Ramírez's race and Catholicism as Gage and the Jesuits immediately know Lewis is an escaped mulatto and Catholic? Ramírez's oral testimony is told and retold to push back against doubts concerning his origins. Although the Viceroy and Sigüenza y Góngora ultimately believe his story, the doubts and the necessity of repeating his tale point to Ramírez's ambiguity.

Ramírez is a special case at a time when pressure from the racially mixed *plebe* comes to a head in the seventeenth century during the 1692 Corn Riot, which Sigüenza y Góngora recorded in *Alboroto y motín*, an autobiographical narrative of the multiracial uprising that took place in Mexico City. Sigüenza y Góngora relates the events of the riot in a letter written to a friend, Andres de Pez, three years after *Infortunios* was first published. Sigüenza describes the Spanish soldiers' defensive stance. Swords at the ready, they prepare to attack while the blacks, mulattos and Indians form a violent mob:

> pero los negros, los mulatos y todo lo que ese plebe gritando: '¡Muera el virrey y cuantos lo defendieren!', y los indios: ¡Mueran los españoles y gachupines (son los venidos de España) que nos comen nuestro maíz!' y exhortándose unos a otros a tener valor, supuesto que ya no había otro Cortés que los sujetase, se arrojaban a la plaza a acompañar a los otros a tirar piedras.

The hegemonic façade evokes the various non-European bands' savagery. Blacks, mulattos and Indians' political objectives are downplayed as they are described as a superstitious people, proven by the discovery of little pitchers, dolls made in the image of Spaniards stabbed with knives with signs of blood on their necks and beheaded along with bowls that smelled of *pulque*, a fermented drink made from the *maguey* plant (Leonard *Seis obras* 116-117). The items were found under the Alvarado bridge. The historical relevance of the bridge, where Cortés left México in defeat, adds ideological content to the episode. Subalterns, wary of colonization, honor Cortés's loss to the *Mexica* and most likely envision the rebellion in 1690 as a continuation of the battle against the *conquistadores*.

While subalterns symbolically encapsulate their actions within the historical framework of resistance to colonization in New Spain, Sigüenza y Góngora's assessment places the blame for the violence on non-whites. Typical of elite histories, Sigüenza y Góngora portrays the Indians as the rioters who are encouraged by the *castas*.[45] The indigenous view, on the other

[45] The various *castas* and indigenous groups do not live separately as intended when the Republic of Indians was legislated into existence. The Spaniards believed that with the conquest of Tenochtitlan, the superiority of Spain over the inferior indigenous community had been determined. But within indigenous communities a more complex identity than that recognized by colonial authorities existed. Although Africans were an enemy the Spaniards already knew, the emergence of *castas* represented a new fear. Castas become social climbers. By the 16th Century, in the capital of New Spain, those in power feared blacks, indians, mixed bloods and poor Spaniards would cause chaos (Cope 3-9). The *casta* system was created to strengthen

hand, presents the unjust shortage of corn (Cope 126-132). When Sigüenza y Góngora replies to General Pez's questions about how the *plebe* acted during the time of floods and the infestation of the wheat crop with the fungus *chiahuitxtle,* he responds "bien y mal; bien por ser compuesta de indios, negros, criollos y bozales de diferentes naciones, chinos, mulatos, moriscos, mestizos, zambaigos etc (Leonard *Seis Obras* 113)." Sigüenza y Góngora snarkily refers to the "good" behavior of the *castas* during the rebellion which minimizes their right to self governance and their rationale for supporting the organized opposition to viceregal authority. Their alliance with the *indias*, whose plotting against whites is speculated by Sigüenza y Góngora, is nonetheless an embodied, and spoken, force that is necessary for the rebellion to take shape. The mob states their anger that the whites are eating their corn. A more advanced explanation of their reasoning is not self-evident in the text, however the partial consciousness of the subaltern, theorized by Spivak, can be examined. And from there we can imagine the political context that could clarify the mob's rationale.

When the looting begins Sigüenza illustrates the position of all races and *castas* who take up arms. Mulattos, blacks, *chinos*, *mestizos*, *lobos* and "vilísimos españoles, así gachupines como criollos (127)" are amongst those who partake in the insurgency. Their alliances, and mutual disdain for the viceregal power structure, had begun to congeal their group identity as American and not European, or even necessarily "white", in opposition to members of the elite like Sigüenza y Góngora and those born in Spain. Their group identification is not based on Medieval and early modern racial ideologies of blood lineage but the shared experience of oppression by

---

boundaries between Spaniards and darker peoples; the intention was that the "cream" would rise to the top so that those in power would be white (24). In practice, the *casta* system did not create the ordered society intended by the colonizer.

Spanish imperial power. An in-between space *within* the words of the text is sustained through the actions, religious objects and oral discourse of multi-racial subalterns. Citing Chomsky's theory of sociolinguistics amongst other authors, Lefebvre posits space is a mental concept that has not been connected in the literature on social space where language becomes practice. "The fact is that Chomsky unhesitatingly postulates a mental space endowed with specific properties - with orientations and symmetries. He completely ignores the yawning gap that separates this linguistic mental space from that social space wherein language becomes practice (Lefebvre 5)." Lefebvre is critical of Kristeva, Derrida and Roland Barthes's conceptions of mental space as well because, like Chomsky, they promote a basic understanding of the philosophico-epistemological notion of space by fetishizing the mental realm while not accounting for the social and physical ones (Lefebvre 5). How mental conceptions of social space are elaborated into real life spaces are perhaps not fully comprehensible through literary studies. However, we do see that social categories are being organized even in the chaos of the mob through the fragmented language exhibited by the Indias and in Sigüenza y Góngora's own lumping together of the various non-white groups. Multiethnics are joining together in ways that would gain more social, cultural and political sway by the modern period.

The racial violence in the *trapiches* Las Casas witnessed, and its increase predicted in *Historia de las Indias*, had matured by the seventeenth century. Gage commented on another rebellious response to Spanish corruption in an anecdote in Chapter XXV in which a dispute between the Viceroy and the Archbishop is retold (136-143). This revolt was one of many that occurred during the seventeenth century besides the rebellion of blacks in the Vera Cruz district and the 1692 Riot later narrated by don Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora in *Alboroto y motín* (Irving 111). Incidents such as these are a microcosm of the eruption of the in-between racial

groups or *castas* that pressure white power by creating alternatives to the highly structured society imposed from above. In their writings, elite whites respond by expressing their anxieties and concerns along with plans to curb insurrection.

Though the subaltern is muted in the text, this gap provides clues to subalterns like Ramírez's heterogeneous and always incomplete subjectivity. Spivak explains "what the work cannot say" in "Can the Subaltern Speak?" There is a subaltern consciousness that can be traced in the ideology of the text:

> Although the notion 'what it refuses to say' might be careless for a literary work, something like a collective ideological *refusal* can be diagnosed for the codifying legal practice of imperialism. This would open the field for a political-economic and multidisciplinary ideological reinscription of the terrain...When we come to the concomitant question of the consciousness of the subaltern, the notion of what the work *cannot* say becomes important. In the semiosis of the social text, elaborations of insurgency stand in the place of 'the utterance' (256).

As groups clash a logic is established despite the façade of chaos proposed by the canonical narrative. Though the text presents the reader with an incomplete subjectivity of the other, the growth of a potent multiracial general public unfolds between cites of dominant white power and oppressed non-white groups as the limits of imperial reach are uncovered. Studies of the historical and literary archive help to flesh out the contours of subaltern subjectivity by contrasting a wider cross section of experiences with what is often only an individual moment or personal episode narrated in a text. The uprisings of the multiracial population also undergird why Ramírez must prove his whiteness in order to achieve social mobility and not be lumped in

with the untrustworthy mob that is uniting against hegemony. Though non-whites are pushing back and exerting their own group identity, whiteness remains a social cloak that allows unparalleled autonomy compared to non-white identities.

Douglass Cope catalogues the struggle for power in New Spain as the Crown endeavoured to limit blacks and mulattoes' mobility as early as the sixteenth century. The need for alternate sources of labor lead to the importation of *bozales* as indigenous communities resisted absorption into the Spanish community. In 1611 a public demonstration of mulattoes and blacks sowed fears that uprisings would occur and led to the implementation of laws to restrict their freedom. Added to the hegemonic fears of blacks and mulattoes is the use of poor Spanish labor that diminished the distance between whites and *castas*. A new dichotomy based on culture and economics rather than racial indexes appeared (Cope 9-22). "Alboroto y motín" can be interpreted in this historical context as an impulse to cover-up the dynamism of these burgeoning masses that would limit imperial control towards the end of the seventeenth century. Written discourses on violence in the colony tend to suggest a means to control insurgency without overtly discussing the logic of that movement. However, the multiethnic mob's rationale is still present in the sounds and embodiment of subalterns in the text (Rabasa 146). Though these events are depicted a few years after Ramírez's return to Mexico City, Sigüenza y Góngora and the Viceroy nonetheless trust Ramírez's narrative because Ramírez effectively utilizes hegemonic discourse to his advantage to depict himself as a "pure" Christian. Nevertheless, a narrative of Ramírez's probably impurity is also woven throughout the Janus-faced text.

Ramírez's subaltern expression of agency may also be considered a form of "textual marronage." Textual marronage is the meaning beyond the semiotic limits of imperialist language that uncovers the fragmented and limited nature of colonial discourse. Through

marronage African subalterns undertook processes of flight from oppression while expressing a desire for group preservation (Olsen "Africans and Textual Marronage" 230). Hybridity is a form of marronage through which multiple possible meanings are presented even though hegemonic discourse creates the illusion of unitary discourse (Olsen "Africans and Textual Marronage" 234). The recurring references to the Virgen de Guadalupe for example, a hybrid religious figure, is one clear example of how Ramírez blends indigenous and Catholic belief systems, a practice Creole writers like Mier would later put to use during the period of Independence from Spain. Another sign of Ramírez's cultural links with non-whites appears in the blood motif, which I will discuss in more detail. The blood of a tortured companion, confused with the blood of a dog, blurs the bounds not only between human and animal but also between racial groups as Ramírez suffers along with his native companion. The Creole would like to distinguish his identity as white and separate from non-whites much like Lazarillo de Tormes does when he discusses his mulatto brother. But there is a relation with other racial groups apparent in the oral narrative as the subaltern's fragmentary representation exists in relation with the textually more complete imagining of Ramírez's white identity.

Ramírez's wits and oral testimony procure social mobility despite being born poor and illegitimate. As with the protagonist of the *Lazarillo*, within the bounds of interracial contacts, hints to the impure racial status of those who would presume to be Spanish Christians like Alonso Ramírez are unearthed in *Infortunios*. Ramírez is a representative of the lived reality of the *criollo* masses in relation with non-whites with whom he engages with as much as, or even more than, white elites like Sigüenza y Góngora. His story is an example of the possibility of occupying positions of sovereignty from the margin so long as his bonds with non-white racial groups are not overtly displayed, unlike the ties between poor whites and the *castas* sketched in

"Alboroto y motín." Ramírez insists that, as the title of the work states, "navegando por sí solo, y sin derrota" he was able to travel around the world on his own (119). The narration codifies Ramírez as a solitary traveller, silencing knowledge of communal relationships he must have had with the men he also refers to as his "compañeros" throughout the text in order to obtain social advantages accessible to *criollos*.

Narrative holes concerning Ramírez's comrades signal that perhaps an alternative form of agency to that imagined simply as acts of resistance to power comes to the fore in *Infortunios*.[46] Ramírez's narrative sketches an in-between reality lived by *criollos* themselves that is plural and not necessarily white or traditionally Catholic. Although it cannot be proven that Alonso Ramírez is not in fact white with complete certainty, as I will discuss further on, neither can Ramírez's purity be proven. Barriers to sites of privilege were giving way to interaction and mutual support between groups to overthrow the viceregal authority at the time Ramírez lived. I evince the penetrability of "white criollo" identity is manifest in the language employed in texts like *Infortunios* as well as the texts I have studied in previous chapters. Literary analysts must attempt a thorough reading of these writings by accounting for a global representation of colonial lives in the marginalized interjections of non-whites, and even evidence of affinity with non-whites, in the discourses of those considered white. The white Creole in a sense becomes Creoleness theorized by contemporary Caribbean scholars because Europeans, Africans and Asians adapt to the New World and the cultural confrontations of these peoples within the same

[46] The New Social History based in arguments by Gutman concerning the agency of man rather than the study of what has been done to man is critiqued by Walter Johnson. He proposes looking at the "condition" of enslaved humanity. We know slaves are human and there isn't a need for scholars to continue to prove slave humanity. Studies of how slaves flourish and how they love themselves and not just how they suffer is necessary to understand slave agency. See Johnson, Walter. "On Agency." *Journal of Social History*. Fall 2003.

space, resulting in a mixed culture called Creole (Benabé et al 93). Though this Creole within the *criollo* will not be conceptualized until much later, antecedents to the cultural reality conceptualized by the *Creolité* literary movement can be seen in the in-between social space Ramírez and Sigüenza y Góngora inhabit.

II. Alonso Ramírez, Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora and the Shaping of Creole Identity

Alonso Ramírez's testimony accomplished his aspiration to attain the recognition of his Creole identity by the colonial administration. At the denouement of *Infortunios de Alonso Ramírez*, Ramírez found himself in the heart of the viceroyal city, attended by the Viceroy, the Count of Galve, where his story was consecrated through the text that sets it as a true and paradigmatic peripeteia (Moraña "Máscaras" 114). He received commendation and promises to recover what he lost.[47] Scholars have settled the debate concerning the historicity of Carlos de Sigüenza's text documenting the oral narrative. Cummins and Soons argue the account is historically authentic, however Sigüenza y Góngora probably added some features such as geographical and nautical details of his own accord (5). Buscaglia-Salgado also proves the historicity of the text when in 2009 he published the document that recorded Alonso Ramírez's marriage to Francisca Xaviera Ribera de Poblete in the Catedral Metropolitana de la Ciudad de México on Sunday, November 8th, 1682 (Buscaglia-Salgado 2011). In view of the documentary evidence of Ramírez's existence corroborating *Infortunios*, recent research has returned to the question of where the text can be situated in terms of literary genre and the picaresque tradition.[48]

Infortunios is a heterogenous text that melds various literary styles that together manifest the baroque nature of creole identity. Among the critics who have asserted arguments concerning genre is Arrom, who attests *Infortunios* is written in the style of travel writing fashionable at the time. Via the prolongation of Alonso's peregrination, Sigüenza y Góngora sets forth a "criollo"

[47] Sigüenza y Góngora explains that "movido por compasión, intercede en favor del infortunado marino con el objeto de encontrarle trabajo y recompensarlo por la pérdida de su buque (Ross 594).
[48] Aníbal González is one of the few scholars who argue that *Infortunios* cannot be corroborated with historical documentation, much like picaresque novels (193). However, the historical documentation provided by scholars like Cummins and Soons as well as Buscaglia-Salgado undoubtedly furnishes evidence to the contrary of González's views on the historicity of the text.

novel about travel and adventure (Arrom 30-34). Arrom's argument aligns with and extends Chang-Rodríguez's contention that *Infortunios* is a "*carta relación*" that emerges in other writing like Guaman Poma's *Nueva corónica i buen gobierno*, or Columbus's *Diario* y *relación*. Chang-Rodríguez links *Infortunios*'s composition to the social, cultural and political fields that were regulated by colonialism. Although Alonso Ramírez's life was narrated as an autobiography by Sigüenza y Góngora, and is an offshoot of the picaresque genre, *Infortunios* is more in line with the *Carta relación* and subverts the picaresque (Ross 1982, 87-92). *Infortunios* is produced in the colonial context and is therefore more than another peg in the European and Iberian literary tradition. By overturning or altering European literary genres, Sigüenza y Góngora formulates what Mabel Moraña has called a "*criollo* discourse" that should be set apart from European traditions.

Before further defining "*criollo* discourse", it is relevant ask who are the people whose lives and experiences are reproduced through this multiform literary production? The historical trajectory of the employment of "criollo" in Hispanoamerican literature uncovers another matrix of the term first employed by José Acosta in 1590 to refer to those born of Spaniards in America. There also appears to be a clear distinction between racial groups in how the term is applied, though Arrom argues the essential meaning of *criollo* is rooted in having been born in the Americas, not from indigenous parentage, rather than skin pigmentation (172). First racial designation based on whether an individual is of African, indigenous or European descent is noted. Later, within each group, *criollo* classification is used to distinguish those born on American soil. Arrom cites Inca Garcilaso who advances a fascinating alternative origin for the term that he claims was first employed by blacks to honor those born in Guinea:

> "[criollo] es nombre que...inventaron los negros...quiere decir entre ellos negro nacido en Indias; inventáronlo para diferenciar los que van de acá, nacidos en Guinea, de los que nacen allá, porque se tiene por más honrados y de más calidad...Los españoles, por la semejanza, han introducido este nombre en su lenguaje para nombrar los nacidos allá. De manera que al español y al guineo nacidos allá, les llaman criollos y criollas (172).

Whether the term originated amongst Europeans or Africans, that both do not account for those of racially mixed ancestry is of note. *Criollos*'s terminological significance ironically produces a rhetoric of racial purity within groups who only differentiate amongst themselves based on birthplace. The term, in effect, supports social stratification based on race.

According to Benítez Rojo, in the Caribbean context *criollo* is a cultural signifier that applies to those of indigenous, European, African and Asian descent who speak the official language of the colony (*La isla que se repite* 318 Footnote 12). However in the colonial context, as Kimberles López has confirmed through Ramírez's travels, *criollo* identity was defined in contrast to Spanish peninsulars. (It can be assumed that López refers to those of Spanish descent born in American lands). Benítez Rojo also acknowledges this detail in his discussion of contraband carried to Europe by French, English, Dutch, German and Italian merchants. In the case of Hispaniola, white *criollos* come to reject the black population and, according to Benítez Rojo, African cultural influence is suppressed. However, processes of African influence in cultural development are complex and vary throughout the Caribbean region (Benítez Rojo *La isla que se repite* 24). In general, differences between *criollos* and Spaniards are greater than those between the English and the French in Europe (López "Identity and Alterity in the Emergence of a Creole Discourse: Siguenza y Gongora's Infortunios de Alonso Ramírez").

Those identified as *criollo* were understood to be European in descent, however their birth on American soil came to be seen as a sign of possible illegitimacy and therefore racial impurity.

By the eighteenth century, known as the century of illegitimacy, Amerindians, Spaniards and Africans intermingled and racial boundaries were crossed outside of marriage. Towards the later eighteenth century "a significant group of *mestizos* and *mulattos* were almost white, and many no longer fit the colonial stereotype that linked racial mixture with illegitimacy (Twinam 7-13)." As noted by Mörner, these mobile groups posed a threat to the social order established by Creoles as petitions for *gracias al sacar* to become white flood the colonial bureaucracy (Twinam 13). Twinam's wording exaggerates the number of petitions, as the total, including all *audiencias* between 1720 and 1820, is 244. But the numbers do demonstrate some evidence of Creoles' dubious racial purity. It is quite probable that many Creoles were in fact born of Spanish parents, but it cannot be assumed this is the case for all. Documents such as the *gracias al sacar* and writing like Sigüenza y Góngora's transcription of Ramírez's narrative formulated Creole discourses that might hide possible non-white illegitimate origins in order to gain authority.

Like heterogeneous *criollo* discourses that mended together various literary traditions, Creole identity came to integrate more racial identities than presumed under the cloak of "whiteness." Along with Sigüenza y Góngora and Ramírez's "white" subjectivities as Creoles must also be considered the issue of their relationships with agents who have been marked as non-white. These interactions, as well as Ramírez's tenebrous origins, define what it means to be Creole. The formation of a "white" racial category occurs in the colonial context as Spaniards born in the Americas shift their picaresque narratives of ethnic purity to provide proof of their whiteness in relation to indigenous and black African *casta* groups as well as Protestant interlopers in Spanish imperial territories. Creoleness evolved in a hybrid fashion that

incorporated more than European or Spanish norms and practices. Many Creols were also no doubt the offspring of racial mixing with non-whites. According to Elizabeth Kuznesof, race was not a naturalized category during the colonial period despite legal documents such as the *Recopilación de las leyes* that codified restraints placed on certain groups. Although the Spanishness of Creole society in social, cultural and religious terms is rarely questioned, Kuznesof elaborates an argument for why this standard must be questioned. Studies show that indigenous and African cultures have survived into the colonial period, which intimates a need to rethink Creole society. Culture is negotiated, therefore, scholars must investigate how indigenous and African cultural norms have been parlayed into hegemonic norms (154-155). Beyond cultural heterogeneity, admixture to the Creole racial group had already begun by the sixteenth century. Despite the fact that more than 80% of the Spanish population was male, Creoles continued to populate the territories.

Kuznesof continues that the preservation of the Creole body politic could not be possible except for the preponderance of exogamous sexual reproduction dating from the period of conquest (156-157). Kuznesof's study of marriage records reinforces the probability that many Creoles were in fact mixed-race based on evidence that the ethnicity of the bride was often not reported or recorded as the same as her husband (163). Patterns of racial designation in marriage records signal the malleability of race depending on gender, and the great possibility that non-whites, including those of black African descent and their offspring, managed to acquire Creole status.[49] A woman's race was particularly sticky in comparison with that of a man's because her's,

[49] Kuznesof argues that biracial matrimonies between Spanish men and *mestiza* women allowed African admixtures to enter the "Spanish" population. She does not explain how African elements influenced this population and in what way said elements played a part in the formation of culture (Poot-Herrera 178). Though there is no systematic study of colonial Spanish Caribbean demography prior to the 18th Century, we do know that during the late 16th and early 17th Centuries Africans often outnumbered Iberian residents in Panama, Española, Cartagena and perhaps Havana. Sexual relationships and marriages between Iberian men and free women of color were common but by the 18th

excepting the case of African slave women and their children, was defined by the racial designation of her male partner at the time of marriage. Since racial classifications were negotiated within hegemonic discourse in legal documents such as marriage records, Creoles' bloodlines became unclear even to themselves:

> ...individuals' knowledge of their own bloodlines tended to be shallow, with little knowledge even of grandparents. Thus the possibility of race actually being based on even pseudo-objective criteria was remote. It came down to a matter of continuous argument and negotiation (Kuznesof 168).

Race in the colonial period was a social grouping determined by gender and marriage practices that obscured ancestry beyond the origins of one's parents. Alonso Ramírez's shifty picaresque ancestry in *Infortunios* is one case of a contested and negotiated construction of Creole "whiteness" as examined by Kuznesof's study. Hidden in Ramírez's language is most likely his own lacking knowledge of the extent of his racial/religious impurity along with judicious strategems to downplay his affiliation with various identities.

One's purity of blood could be altered by the monarch and nobility while possession of Jewish, Moorish or illegitimate ancestry was not considered permanent in the colony (Twinam 42). But this did not deter cases in which illegitimate births were hidden from the public or efforts made to obscure illegitimate births. "Public awareness that an unwed woman was having an affair with her fiancé, or that she had borne a child, or even that the couple were living together, was not always immediate. Colonial architecture could cooperate to hide incriminating evidence (78)." The births of illegitimate children were often covered by the practice of

---

Century such marriages came to require parental approval in order to cut down on their preponderance (Wheat "*Nharas* and *Morenas Horras*").

sheltering orphans and homeless children of "vague antecedents (78)." As adults, some who were illegitimate, made attempts to pass such as Don Joseph Antonio Betancourt, a Venezuelan, who in 1784 forwarded a request to the *Cámara*. He had been abandoned by his father after his mother's private pregnancy and was later adopted by his foster family. An offer for a promotion led him to hide the defect of his birth by "skirting the barrier of birth entirely...he began to collect the necessary testimony for his 1784 legitimation petition (Twinam193)." Illegitimate Creoles sought out *gracias al sacar* not only to seek official legitimate status but also because the limits to their ability to pass were met at some point in their lives, impeding their social mobility. Ramírez's testimony precedes the period discussed by Twinam in *Public Lives, Private Secrets* and he is not elite, but his narrative shares the common purpose of legitimating a Creole of ambiguous origins. Legally proving legitimacy would become more of a central concern amongst elites, a matter that would only continue to increase by the nineteenth century.

Creole identity, or rather legitimation, is a factor informing narrative composition in colonial works such as *Infortunios*. Creole identity is described as varying and layered with seemingly hidden or changing meaning. According to Moraña, the Creole discourse constructed in *Infortunios* is a "género híbrido" that blends history and fiction as Sigüenza y Góngora transforms Ramírez's tale into a first person narrative as if it were his own voice. The application of the authorial/narrative/protagonistic/pseudo-autobiographical "I" signifies the ontological constitution of what can be called Creole discourse. In the seventeenth century *criollos* were already elaborating forms of identity and vindication that differentiated them from the Spanish as a social sector (Moraña "Máscara autobiográfica" 108). Along with blending history and fiction, *Infortunios* hybridizes oral and written narrative while the picaresque blends with the New World context of travel and *cartas de relación*. As a result, even multiple Creole discourses are

produced as a lower class experience often seems to clash with elite political positions. One example, as has been discussed, is Ramírez's claims to Spanish identity and racial purity while he also implicitly critiqued the very idea that Spaniards could themselves be pure.

Hidden between these identities is a polyphony of enunciations from past history and present. Multiple voices are projected which culminates in a "florecimiento barroco y de identidades confusas (Ross "Cuestiones de género en Infortunios" 593-594). One example of the many voices occurs as Sigüenza y Góngora's transcription blends his own perspectives and knowledge as an marginalized Creole scholar with Ramírez's original tale. Don Carlos was born in 1645 in Mexico City and is a nephew of Luís de Góngora. Similar to Gage, don Carlos began his early career in 1622 when he entered a Jesuit school where he studied philosophy, literature, and theology. Later, his ties with the religious order were severed and whether he was expelled or not remains unproven.[50] Few of his works were published in his lifetime, however his collection of Mexican antiquities and other material serve as a noteworthy resource to later scholars of Nahuatl literature and culture (Leonard 1-27). Don Carlos managed to cultivate an advantageous rapport with the Viceroy of New Spain from 1688 to 1696, the Count of Galve, who sent him on the mission to Pensacola, as well as with the Archbishop Aguiar y Seijas who supplied him with money to give alms to poor women.[51]

Despite his reputation as the preeminent scholar of seventeenth century New Spain, Sigüenza y Góngora had not always been recognized for his work during his lifetime as a result of his Creole status. The publication of the *Libra astronómica* is one example. *Libra astronómica*

---

[50] Irving Leonard comments on the uncertainty behind why Sigüenza y Góngora left the "colegio in *Don Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora: A Mexican Savant of the Seventeenth Century*." "Whatever the solution is, we find the simple announcement in Roble's Diary: 'August 9, 1667 (Tuesday), after seven o'clock in the evening, Don Carlos de Sigüenza departed from the Jesuit Order having been in it seven and a half years (9-10).

[51] After rumors of French activities in the area, the viceroy and the crown took immediate action for the protection of the unoccupied frontier on the north (Leonard *Don Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora* 141-152).

was composed in response to criticism from German intellectual, Father Kino, after the circulation of don Carlos's pamphlet, *Manifiesto filosófico contra los cometas*. Sigüenza y Góngora advanced the argument that comets do not indicate the coming of calamitous events sent by God. He wrote *Libra astronómica y filosófica* to continue an intellectual "duel" with Father Kino, who had written a response dedicated to Viceroy Paredes, *Exposición Astronómica del Cometa*, in which Kino openly opposed Sigüenza y Góngora's *Manifiesto*. In it Kino contends comets are malignant stars without referencing empirical evidence. Rather than employ quantitative data, the pamphlet makes recourse to imaginative reason (Lorente Medina 53). In his response, Sigüenza y Góngora modifies his status as an outsider to European thinkers. Throughout the debate with Kino, Sigüenza y Góngora hoped to achieve admission into elite intellectual circles based in Europe.

Although his scholarship over the preceding fifteen years had been denied publication, Sigüenza y Góngora discursively relocated his work from the intellectual periphery to the core as he entreated his readers to appreciate his work's relevance. Sigüenza y Góngora's pamphlet shed light on an issue, the fear of comets, from a geographic location and linguistic perspective at the edges of the Metropole. *Manifiesto* contributesd a frame of reference to the study of comets that cannot be obtained by those working in Europe:

> Carecemos hasta ahora de quien tan metódica, astronómica y filosóficamente, como aquí se ve, haya llenado en ella este especioso asunto, y juzgando ocioso buscar de aquí adelante lo que autores extranjeros publicaron en sus propios idiomas o en el latino en esta materia, teniendo en este libro lo que hasta aquí nos faltaba (244).

In order to reorient his readers to a Spanish American perspective, Sigüenza y Góngora includes information previously lacking in the work of these "foreign" authors like Father Kino in Spanish rather than Latin or other European vernaculars. Sigüenza y Góngora espouses European knowledge had not properly observed the comet of 1689, causing turmoil to ensue:

> Hacer esto en este tiempo me pareció preciso para desvanecer el terror pánico con que se han alborotado cuantos han visto el cometa, con que por las mañanas de la mayor parte del mes de diciembre del año pasado de 1689 se hermoseó el cielo...Con que no hay que esperar de él [cometa] observaciones algunas, y con especialidad de la Europa, donde apenas podría verse, así por su grande declinación austral como por el crepúsculo. En los reinos del Perú, Chile, Buenos Aires y Paraguay, y en lo habitado de estos paralelos allá en las Indias si se pudo hacer algo, verémoslo de buena gana, si se publicare (*Seis obras* 244).

Unlike European authors, don Carlos defends his position attesting that his American perspective is a more suitable approach to examining the comet of 1689 and clarifying its nature. Yet Sigüenza y Góngora's efforts ultimately were not recognized by his European counterparts. Father Kino never replied to the response, a snub that led Sigüenza y Góngora to believe he was not treated with respect as a scholar because he had not studied in Europe (Leonard 64-72). Europe's rejection of Creole scholarship was a rebuff that marked don Carlos and united him with uneducated Creole's like Alonso Ramírez. Sigüenza y Góngora's exclusion from power would continue. Despite Sigüenza y Góngora's involvement in the affairs of the Viceregal government, such as the response to the Corn Riot of 1692, after the mission to Pensacola his suggestions were ignored in favor of those of General Pez, and he was plagued by sickness until his death (Leonard 180). Repeated failed attempts to achieve authority within European

institutions mark Sigüenza y Góngora's life and the broader Creole experience. political isolation.

This exclusion is felt in *Infortunios* as Sigüenza y Góngora partakes in Ramírez's attempts to gain access to colonial power. In the letter to the Conde de Galve, Sigüenza y Góngroa explicitly references the favor *Libra astronómica* had received from the Viceroy and his hope that *Infortunios* would receive an equal reception:

> Si suele ser consecuencia de la temeridad ya dicha, y es raro el error a que la falta disculpa, sobrábanme para presumir acogerme al agrado de vuestra excelencia estos motivos a no contrapesar en mí, para que mi yerro sea inculpable, cuantos aprecios le ha merecido a su comprensión, delicada sobre discreta, la *Libra astronómica y filosófica*, que a la sombra del patrocinio de vuestra excelencia en este mismo año entregué a los moldes. Y si al relatarlos en compendio quien fue el paciente le dio vuestra excelencia gratos oídos, ahora que en relación más difusa se los represento a los ojos, ¿cómo podré dejar de asegurarme atención igual (Buscaglia-Salgado *Infortunios* 114)?

Libra astronómica had obtained the favor of the Conde de Galve despite the rebuff of Father Kino. Sigüenza y Góngora now hoped his transcription of *Infortunios* would create the same opportunity to receive the good will of the Conde de Galve.[52] *Libra astronómica* and *Infortunios* were allotted a position of authority within the institutions of hegemonic power in the colony. These cases when Creoles escape total marginalization are indicators of their agency in the literary tradition.

[52] Zinni proposes that the relation and the sponsorship of the viceroy are symbolic forms of social improvement for Alonso Ramírez even though he seems to return having not achieved any sort of social improvement. "'Infortunios de Alonso Ramírez' de Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora: Aproximaciones a una geografía poscolonial."

Infortunios begins with a letter composed by Sigüenza y Góngora, addressed to don Gaspar de Sandoval Cerda y Mendoza, conde de Galve. After discussing his *Libra astronómica y filosófica*, Sigüenza y Góngora requests the same privilege for Alonso Ramírez and himself again:[53]

> Alentado, pues, con lo que de ésta veo cada día prácticamente y con el seguro de que jamás se cierran las puertas del palacio de vuestra excelencia a los descalidos, en nombre de quien me dio el asunto para escribirla consagro a las aras de la benignidad de vuestra excelencia esta peregrinación lastimosa, confiado desde luego, por lo que me toca, en la crisis altísima que sabe hacer con espanto mío de la hidrografía y geografía del mundo, tendría patrocinio y merecimiento, etc. (5-6).

Similar to the *relaciones* of discovery and conquest, *Infortunios* is a historiographical document, solicited by the Crown, concerning the New World and the actions of Spaniards in those territories. A *relación* is used to construct a *probanza* of merits and services (Invernizzi Santa Cruz 7).[54] Ramírez's political project successfully gained favor despite his doubly marginal position as a native of Puerto Rico and a poor Creole. Incorporated by the system to which he had fought to gain access, Ramírez's life parodies the rewards granted to archetypical heroes that, after their descent into hell and their successive tests and fights against supernatural powers, are reabsorbed into their communities in a ritual of purification that ends celebrating the dominant values (Moraña "Máscara autobiográfica..." 114). The discourse lauds the hegemonic ideology and integrates with the dominant message all while elaborating alternative plans. Other

---

[53] *Libra astronómica y filosófica* was written to debate claims made by European scholars, especially Father Eusebio Kino, that comets where bad omens that fortold misfortunes in politics and human affairs such as the death of kings or wars. His work was a contribution to the scholarship that promoted a Creole patriotism against Europeans like Kino as well as a politics of the Creole social elite against that of the Indians, Blacks and other castes (Bauer 704).
[54] *El diccionario del real academia española* defines a *probanza* as an "averiguación o prueba que jurídicamente se hace de algo, or "cosa o conjunto de cosas que acreditan una verdad o un hecho." http://dle.rae.es/?id=UED2T9C.

expectations encouraged by the *criollo* sector are hidden as another regimen of privileges is installed (Moraña "Máscara autobiográfica..." 115). The alternative plans corroborated by the discourse can only be understood by reading between the lines to get beyond canonical discourse.

The narrators occupy many positions in the social hierarchy of New Spain, often times occluding the nature of Ramírez's agency. Ross cites Raúl Crisafío who argues the book begins to speak *for* the protagonist more than about him (21). Ross goes further when she claims Ramírez is virtually silenced in the text because "lo borra totalmente como individuo excepto por su representación narrativa" as Ramírez's *testimonio* is subsumed under the force of the written word of Sigüenza y Góngora:

> Si leemos la Dedicatoria y Aprobación cuidadosamente, veremos que en ningún momento se aduce que se trata de reproducir las palabras de Alonso, sino solamente de glosarlas en una 'relación más difusa'; la diferencia entre lo que el pobre náufrago Ramírez dijo y lo que el erudito y culto Sigüenza escribió, no se problematiza de modo alguno por cuanto resulta a todos totalmente evidente (594-595).

These arguments negate Ramírez's oral testimony's sway over the ideological position developed in the text. I concur more with Moraña (1990) and Martínez-San Miguel who contend the many subjective positions occupied by the narrative voice, and united in the *criollo* discourse, include both Sigüenza y Góngora and Ramírez in the production of a narrative that elides easy classification. The account recognizes a marginality that is exogenous or peripheral in relation to societal sectors that benefit from the established power structure (Moraña "Máscara autobiografica..." 109). Massmann corroborates the discursive multiplicity that takes on an

ambiguous position as the subject born in the Americas is in relation with a clear subaltern (pirate and Indian) that is used to denounce his marginality, ask for rights and legitimate his position with respect to metropolitan power (109). I agree with Moraña and Martínez-San Miguel that Ramírez's lower class Creole identity is not extinguished in the narrative as Ramírez's attempts to center his position by erasing his impure origins.

I add the possibility that indigenous and Asian others, as well as Africans, may not always serve to denounce marginality but may also transmit alternative messages about Creole identity. Massman proposes that subjecthood, in a state of subalternity, can only be understood in part or as excess to the totality of the text. And even if he is truly Spanish, Ramírez's relation with these groups adds more layers to the shifting in-between *criollo* discursive position. The ambiguity produced from contact with the other allows the *criollo* to denounce his marginality, ask for certain rights and to legitimize his social and political positioning with respect to the metropolitan power (Massman 109-115). I do not imply that stratification of racial classifications is done away with seeing as dominant categories exist to enforce the power of elite subjects. If Ramírez had not convinced the viceroy and Sigüenza y Góngora that he is Creole, his story would not have been written down. But, as Massman argues and I have discussed already, Ramírez is not obviously Creole. His experience being mistrusted by the Yucatecs upon returning to Mexico, Ramírez's Spanishness, proclaimed as a slur by his English captors and his own personal affinity for his multiracial companions are three examples of how his discourse reveals his own complex Creole subjectivity. Ramírez's fluid racial identity points to the continuance of other discursive planes in which the subordinate hidden in Ramírez's consciousness, one Ramírez would intend to quiet at least enough to gain favor, most likely experiences another reality that has not been noted in official records. Spivak refers to this as the

impossibility of institutional validation for the words of the subaltern ("In Response: Looking Back, Looking Forward" 228). The logical gaps around Ramírez's probable multiethnic subaltern consciousness expose the porosity of social and racial hierarchies if subalterns successfully elide this aspect of their being.

Elites were growing wary and anxious of racially impure agents altering power relationships. Ramírez's shifty and impure Creole identity is a rather unique case in which whiteness was obtained, however it is an indicator of an increasingly racially ambiguous society in which passing would become more of a norm by the nineteenth century. Although "duplicitous complicity" exists between Ramírez, Sigüenza y Góngora and the Censor, Ayerra when they coordinated the publication of *Infortunios*, after the 1692 revolt, lettered Creoles like Sigüenza y Góngora feared viceregal order and class privilege would be undone (Buscaglia-Salgado *Infortunios* 4). The authorial "I" that had seen an equal value in *Infortunios* for the testimony of Ramírez, and had allowed the lower class Ramírez space to narrate *Infortunios*, had closed off substantially. In "Alboroto y motín de México de 1692" Sigüenza y Góngora's narration displays the complete identification of the lettered Creole with the Spanish through his identification with Cortés as the Spanish conquering figure:

> La identificación total del criollo con español llama la atención, especialmente si pensamos que en otros libros Sigüenza frecuentemente expresaba un americanismo y muy desarrollado. Sin embargo para relatar esta narrativa todas las clases europeas se unen frente al enemigo amenazador y numeroso (Ross "Alboroto y motín"184).

The vilification of multiracials in *Alboroto y motín* provides insight into the in-between space in society that appeared in a specific moment in 1690 when *Infortunios* was written and published

just before the 1692 motín. The "enemigo amenazador" is not the Protestant English demonized in *Infortunios*, but the multiracial populace noted by Thomas Gage in the first half of the seventeenth century.

III. Narratives of (Im)purity and the Spanish Literary Tradition

Narrative voices demonstrate the cloud of uncertainty that surrounds those who subscribe to a Creole identity as inter-group contacts along porous racial, cultural and social boundaries persist. Racial discourse is transforming from Medieval and early modern conceptions of purity based on the conflation of Christian religious and cultural practices and lineage to communicate modern conceptions that equate race more with phenotypical markers. What defines a Creole, like any identity category, is not natural to any being. Creole racial group formation comes into focus in the artificial nature of Ramírez's "pure" Creole (Spanish) identity. Racial identification is created through occurrences in a social setting. Ethnic categories or "schemas" are broad divisions that are triggered by specific stimuli; ethnic schemas may crowd out other interpretive schemas during social organization (Brubaker et at 44). The implications of these ethnic schemas, according to the sociologists Brubaker, Loveman and Stamatov is that "race, ethnicity, and nationality exist only in and through our perceptions, interpretations, representations, classifications, categorizations, and identifications. They are not things *in* the world, but perspectives *on* the world -not ontological but epistemological realities (45)." Brubaker et al's understanding of raced identities in social contexts elucidates the formation of Creole identity as it is represented, classified, categorized and identified in *Infortunios.*

Subjects like Ramírez may alter their autobiographical histories to fit into schemas that signify whiteness along with presenting phenotypic markers of whiteness, leaving out other information or playing down the significance of details that complicate the preferred narrative. Ramírez's conceptualization of race is based in the early modern mentality of Spain and the New World. Furthermore he seems to attempt to fit his enigmatic lineage within the socially acceptable discourse of the period: he appears white or European physically, accepts the

Christian religion and proved aristocratic status through his mother (even though his family rejects him). Logistical contradictions are swept under the rug so long as people like Ramírez perform hegemonic cultural practices. However, social anxiety about the encroachment of racially impure, and black, subalterns, remains very much at the surface of the literary tradition. As discussed in earlier chapters, Bartolomé de las Casas, Alonso de Sandoval and Thomas Gage have all deliberated elite fears that the non-white population would revolt against European hegemony.

Ramírez's testimony additionally fits within Spanish baroque failure to comprehend and contain racially divergent groups in Spain and the New World context. The baroque literary work *El criticón* explores the seemingly contradictory binary relationship between whiteness and blackness that takes on a particular meaning in the context of seventeenth century Spain and especially Andalusia. Although the baroque ventures to reconcile opposites, this does not occur smoothly in *El criticón* since blackness is represented as monstrous in opposition to whiteness while simultaneously in unity with whiteness. In Crisi X, "El mal paso del salteo," Critilo and Andrenio travel to Andalusia after a fire in Artemia's home. Seville is described as a place where the people are consumed by gold and are neither white nor black (128). Black African slaves were common in Seville and all of Andalusia at this time according to literary and historical documentation:

> No sólo en Sevilla, sino en toda Andalucía, principalmente en los puertos y en los lugares fronterizos con Portugal, se encontraban eslcavos a cada paso. En 1599, el alemán Diego Cuelbis recorrió casi toda España, anotando cuanto de curioso halló en su camino; al entrar, procedente de Portugal, en Ayamonte advierte: 'Hay aquí muchos esclavos y principalmente hembras negras y morenas, que vienen de las Indias y Isla de Santo

> Thomás, muy hermosas y amorosas, de manera que los vecinos de esta villa se casan muchas veces con ellas (22). (Domínguez Ortiz 380).

Interracial relationships between white Spaniards and black Africans produced a mixed-race population that could not be easily identified as white or black. There was a multidirectional process in which people from different continents travelled and reproduced in the Americas and in Spain. That racial impurity is stereotyped as an essential constituent of Andalusian ethnic composition in the *Criticón* further highlights the commonality of subalterns who could pass for European, even if they had black and/or Moorish ancestry.

The baroque unease with habitual racial and cultural assimilation of black subjects is an organizational basis upon which Ramírez and Sigüenza y Góngora construct Ramírez's racial schema. Racial unease bleeds into the picaresque tradition reproduced in *Infortunios* as well. Aníbal González, Raquel Chang-Rodríguez and Julie Greer Johnson have studied the extent to which the picaresque has influenced *Infortunios*, concluding that it in fact does despite transgressing the European literary tradition. The origins of the text and the *pícaro* are organized by the scripts and their narrators' impossible task. *Infortunios* shares narrative characteristics with the picaresque such as the autobiographical and episodic nature of the narrative; the chronological order; references to genealogy; service to various masters; the *pícaro*'s hunger; and the open denouement (Chang Rodríguez 1982, 91-92). González justifies his argument:

> El discurso picaresco se vincula entonces con el de textos posteriores, como el *Quijote*, en el hecho de que tiende a escamotear sus orígenes; pero si en el *Quiojte* esta infinita regresión a un origen inalcanzable se logra a través de un juego de espejos intertextual...en la picaresca la regresión se logra a través de las indiscreciones de un

> "yo" hipercrítico que termina por desautorizar su propio discurso. En última instancia, el "yo" picaresco nos remite a "los otros"...sin los cuales (y contra los cuales) el pícaro no existe (198).

The concern with genealogy in the picaresque tradition is linked to racial discourse and the desire to paint an image of one's purity of blood and whiteness despite evidence to the contrary. The intertextual relationship between Lazaro's autobiography and his black family member is One example is how Lazarillo's ambiguous whiteness is demonstrated by his relationship with his black African step-father, Zaide, and his mulatto step-brother, both of whom Lazarillo attempts to separate from his own whiteness. The *Lazarillo* affirms the existence of black African slavery in Spain during the early modern period and also the integration of black Africans into the white Spanish population.

The undertaking to whiten the *pícaro* also occurs in Mateo de Alemán's *Guzmán de Alfarache*. Guzman's words do more to expose the possible embellishment of his father's, and his own, whiteness, than to provide proof of purity. One case is the maurophilia that arises when his father cheats a noble Moorish woman during his captivity in *Argel*. According to the narrative, this episode is a great wrongdoing for which Guzmán's father deserved punishment (115). His father's treachery leads the reader to not trust his words, which ironically Guzmán employs to claim his father was white stating, "Lo que le vi el tiempo que lo conocí, te puedo decir. Era blanco, rubio, colorado, rizo, y creo de naturaleza, tenía los ojos grandes, turquesados. Traía copete y sienes ensortijadas (121)." His father wore a *copete* or tupe as well as other types of make up associated with women and feminized men (121 footnote). As the social meaning of these wares connotes, these items were used to hide the truth of one's origins. Perhaps Guzmán de Alfarache's father's seemingly ambiguous racial identification (it is possible he was *converso*)

and origins in Andalusia signal traces of Guzman's own mixed identity which he attempts to subsume under a white identity.

The tale of the *muleto* likewise implies Guzmán's own awareness of his mixed origins seeing that the outcome can be read as a metaphor for Guzmán's impurity that occurred against his will and for which he asks pardon. At a *venta* where Guzmán eats, the *mesonero* had allowed his cattle to mix, which was prohibited by law. The *mesonero* slaughtered and served a little mule to his guests, including Guzmán, in order to hide his transgression of the law. Guzmán becomes ill and apologizes to the reader for eating the meat claiming he did not know it was mixed (170). The psychoanalytic process of denying but also displaying Guzmán's racial impurity is metaphorized in the story because eating the meat is symbolic of Guzman's (un)known impurity. Conceivably Guzmán's impurity, along with a wider social maurophilia, is also alluded to in the tale of Ozmín and Daraja, an aristocratic Moorish couple who convert to Christianity. The message communicated in the tale is an apology for Guzmán's impurity because Moorish figures can be assimilated to the Christian kingdom. Even if he is impure, this does not detract from Guzmán's Spanishness as these Moorish characters are able to achieve assimilation (Fuchs *Exotic Nation* 135).

In these examples from the picaresque tradition there arises a common tendency to simultaneously enumerate the *pícaro*'s genealogy in order to prove racial purity while ironically eroding narrative veracity to disclose and justify the *pícaro's* racial impurity as a central characteristic of Spanishness. In *The Spain of Fernando de Rojas* Stephen Gilman, referencing unpublished work by Américo Castro, discusses the ironical relationships of the *converso* situation of Fernando de Rojas and the authors of the *Lazarillo*, *Guzmán de Alfarache* and other picaresque works. For Castro, the irony of these narratives is a way of being with others (18-20).

I have discussed Bartolomé de las Casas's intellectual identification with the Amerindian through Hatuey. Alonso Ramírez, I argue, also operates from within other identities during his time as a captive. Early modern authors seem to formulate a cultural connection based on their shared hidden religio-racial identities. Both Iberians and *criollos* subscribe to irony as crypto Jewish authors' identities are constructed in relation with indigenous, African and Asian subalterns.

Like Lazarillo and Guzmán, Ramírez also delineates a genealogical fiction of racial purity that is improbable when historical information and the literary tradition are employed to contextualize the narrative. Ramírez describes his father in the following manner, "Llamóse mi padre Lucas de Villanueva, y aunque ignoro el lugar de su nacimiento, cónstame porque varias veces se lo oía que era andaluz (32)." Ramírez's illegitimacy and his father's origins in Andalusia ironically signal Ramírez's impurity much like in Guzmán de Alfarache's narrative. Although his father is Andalusian and his surname is Villanueva, Ramírez underscores his mother's surname, Ramírez, which he takes instead of his father's.[55] "Y sé muy bien haber nacido mi madre en la misma ciudad de Puerto Rico, y es su nombre Ana Ramírez, a cuya cristiandad le debí en mi niñez lo que los pobres solo le pueden dar a sus hijos, que son consejos para inclinarlos a la virtud (Buscaglia Salgado *Infortunios* 124). Even though the surname, Villanueva, and his Andalusian paternal origins are typical of the peninsulars who came to the Caribbean, both signifiers also:

> make us suspicious of the religious and ethnic background of the Villanueva. In fact, theirs was the sort of last name that was commonly adopted by converts to Christianity.

[55] Buscaglia-Salgado supposes that Alonso never knew his father because he uses the phrase "se le oía decir." Citing AGI, *Contratación*, 5789, L.2. fols. 22-24, Buscaglia-Salgado has found that an Alonso de Villanueva y Segarra was named sargeant major of San Juan on August 17th, 1651. He was born in 1616 and served in the *galeras* of the Marqués de Santa Cruz, as a soldier under Diego de Acevedo and in 1650 he had attended the galeones of the Carrera de Indias. He lived in Puerto Rico where he died in 1664 when Alonso Ramírez was about a year old (*Infortunios* Footnote 38).

> In 1545 one Francisco de Villanueva, a resident of Moguer, was denied a license to go to the Indies as a merchant under suspicion that he had lied to the authorities, trying to hide the fact that he was the son of a man who had been accused of heresy and burned a the stake by the Inquisition (Buscaglia-Salgado *Undoing Empire* 147-148).

Ramírez confirms his Christian identity through his mother's lineage, which is passed down along with advice to incline him towards virtue. All the same, the connection to a pure lineage is undermined by his father's lineage as noted by Buscaglia-Salgado. Ramírez's illegitimacy is also flagged when he is rejected by relatives from his mother's family in New Spain.

These ironic shifts in the narrative that comingle Ramírez's legitimacy with markers of his probable illegitimate lineage do not necessarily prove his impurity; however, the text should be considered alongside archival records to understand the complexity of Ramírez's identity. In the narrative, the import of Ramírez's religious beliefs shifts to indicate probable impurity when he discloses his belief in the Virgen de Guadalupe, a culturally hybrid figure. The Virgen de Guadalupe is an indigenous syncretism of the Virgen with the indigenous goddess, Tonantzin. According to indigenous, and later Creole, discourse a picture of the Virgen in Guadalupe performed miracles (Florescano 398-400). Ramírez appropriates this *mestizo* religious belief for his narration in which his image of the Virgen had worked a miracle on his behalf. The only way Ramírez can explain the pirates' sudden decision to free their captives, giving them a frigate, an astrolabe, a compass, a book with cosmographic information, a container of water and rice, salt, gun powder, artillery, medicine and other objects, is his constant veneration of the Virgen (172-173). Ramírez's faith in the Virgen de Guadalupe nonetheless proves his Catholicism while also complicating his purity because incorporating signs from another religious system into his

practice of Catholicism is a mark of cultural *mestizaje* and possibly ethnic admixture as well.[56] The image's irony leads the reader to doubt Ramírez's supposed Catholicism (Fornet 209). Another explanation could be Ramírez's complicity with the pirates, but Ramírez wishes to disprovet his possible interpretation.

Referencing his Catholicism is not sufficient for Ramírez to prove his racial purity, which is evidence of the increasing importance of phenotype or rather the embodied presentation of European or white characteristics. Taiano explains that whiteness is not the same for all Creoles. Alonso Ramírez portrays a particular lived experience of *criollo* identity since he had corroborated with foreign pirates and probably wanted to hide what Taiano believes are his *converso* origins and his illegitimacy. Being both born out of wedlock and not *cristiano viejo* would have excluded him from the privileges of whiteness (Taiano 1-2). What sets Alonso Ramírez apart from his non-white companions is his phenotypic presentation of whiteness which allows him to occlude the "mancha" or stain of his adulterated bloodlines and obtain the protection of the King of Spain (Taiano 9-10). Faced with the evidence of his impurity, Ramírez creates a binary white/not white distinction between himself and his companions to fortify his presentation of legitimacy. The narration of tortures and abuse of his friend, Juan de Casas, who like Ramírez claims Spanish origin, is an attempt to create this binary. Ramírez insists he does not revolt against the pirates because he does not trust his racially non-white companions:

> Sufría yo todas estas cosas porque por el amor que tenía a mi vida no podía más [que hacerlo], y advirtiendo [que] había días enteros que [ellos] los pasaban borrachos, sentía

[56] Martínez connects the early modern peninsular concept of *limpieza de sangre* with colonial racial discourse in 17th century Mexico. Scholars have not studied the links between peninsular discourses of *limpieza de sangre* and racialized rhetoric transformed in Latin America. In the American context, *limpieza de sangre* also came to be applied to indigenous actors and blacks in order to control access to social institutions in *probanzas*. Natives (and blacks) however influence the process of discourse formation because they also create arguments to prove their rights to land by transforming *limpieza de sangre* for their own purposes (Martínez *Genealogical Fictions* 1-21).

> no tener bastantes compañeros de quien valerme para matarlos y, alzándome con la fragata, irme a Manila. Pero también puede ser que no me fiara de ellos aunque los tuviera, por no haber otro español entre ellos sino Juan de Casas (Buscaglia-Salgado *Infortunios* 177).

Contradicting Ramírez's reliance on his companions after their separation from the pirates, Ramírez claims he cannot trust them enough to escape, preferring whatever tortures he suffers to what could happen if he were not in the hands of Europeans. Though Ramírez's central argument overtly exhibits a predilection for his whiteness, intimacy with his black and other non-white companions throughout his tribulations is another variable that erodes his efforts to shape the narrative of his unsullied background.

IV. Creole-African Connections

Although Ramírez purports to a white Creole identity, as he narrates his origins he simultaneously screens and projects the possibility that his ancestry may be more ethnically blended. Depending on not only with whom he must cohabit, but also the power dynamics of the ethnic and racial origins of the people he comes into contact with, Ramírez's bonds to religious, ethnic and racial groups fluctuates. Ramírez dodges ties to non-whites while also adjusting to those links when necessary for survival; his shifting identities and alliances typify the in-between social and cultural space inhabited by Creoles and the subsequent discourses they mold. Thinly veiled references to impurity appear in the text when they benefit Ramírez in his encounters with non-whites, approximating Sigüenza y Góngora's objective to transcribe Ramírez's oral testimony to support Creole legitimacy by noting his Christianity and his links to Creoles and Spaniards. Concurrently, vignettes of racial otherness contribute to the reader's appreciation that non-whites often penetrate the boundaries between the elite white class and lower, more likely non-white, class. One example of other marginalized identifications is cast as Ramírez encounters members of the mixed crew such as Francisco de la Cruz, a "sangley mestizo."[57] Ramírez recounts how the pirates torture Francisco who is tied with a rope and lifted above the ground by a cord that passes through a pole. His body is allowed to fall quickly without touching the ground which causes the rope to cut the skin and muscle to the bone (Buscaglia-Salgado *Infortunios* Footnote 174). Ramírez and his men are made to believe Francisco de la Cruz has died when they are later shown the blood of a dog and told it belongs to the tortured man. The torture is meant to dehumanize but the opposite effect results since Ramírez and the other

[57] Buscaglia-Salgado explains in footnote 173, page 154 to his edition of *Infortunios* that a Sangley *mestizo* is a mix of Chinese (Sangley) and Malayo.

captives are perhaps even humanized more in contrast to their captors through their identification with the tortured man of color.

Their humanization through the intermingling of sentiments and blood may signal, and justify, Alonso Ramírez and the *criollo* community he represents' underlying impurity. The blood appears the same, symbolizing the absurdity of attempting to create distinctions based on "blood purity." Blood is not a clear marker of purity and differentiation between races within human communities, let alone between the human and the animal. In "The Animal That Therefore I Am" Derridá questions the binary relationship between the human and the animal:

> crossing borders or the ends of man I come or surrender to the animal -to the animal in itself, to the animal in me and the animal at unease with itself, to the man about which Nietzsche said (I no longer remember where) something to the effect that it was an as yet undetermined animal, an animal lacking in itself.

The dog blood signals boundary crossing not only between the human and the animal, but also racial limits. Although Ramírez claims to be a European Creole through his mother's Christian lineage, his identity and racial purity is complicated as he narrates the torture because Ramírez and his men gain solidarity during the ideal. Flesh torn and blood splattering, Francisco's suffering is a form of textual marronage that alters the mentality of the dominant writer who feels empathy for the subaltern. This scene recalls Bartolomé de las Casas's identification with Hatuey who pontificates during his sermon and burial of the Christians' God/gold in *Historia de las Indias*.

Lévinas' definition of alterity sets forth the ethical relationship in which the self is constituted by the fear for the other that occurs through contact. As the subaltern suffers, all

social actors involved enter into a correspondence to create a new cultural reality. In this case, a Creole community that includes non-white subjectivities is established. Lévinas delineates this process as contact between totalities. "When they infirm one another, the totality does not explode" but rather "each [breaks] open immediately [which] reconstitutes, in another direction, the process of the totalization of aspects (Lévinas *Alterity and Transcendence* 44)." This new union through alterity is demonstrated when Alonso and his men react to the torture. As they observe blood on the deck and are told it is one of their men they are horrified and only later do they discover it was the blood of a dog. The Creole narrator finds himself relating to the racial other while distancing himself from the English, his fellow Europeans. Another instance of Ramírez's ties to non-whites that signal his identification with subaltern humanity occurs in his depictions of non-whites of black African descent. One case is his relationship with Pedro, Ramírez's slave whom he must have acquired in Mozambique. Having been able to accrue the wealth required to purchase a slave may point to Ramírez's true place on the pirate ship as another member of the motley crew. Ramírez's identity and racial purity is complicated as he narrates his shared experiences with Pedro:

> The fact that the former prisoner of British buccaneers has no qualms about taking a tribe of Indians captive and owning a slave, "Pedro, negro de Mozambique [y] esclavo mio" (48), has not gone unnoticed by critics (see Chang-Rodriguez 1982, 107; Cummins and Soons 1984, 17), and is one of numerous ideological ambiguities in Infortunios; it can be explained in part, however, by the paradoxical position of the Creole, who considers himself to be of a superior race, while at the same time being considered inferior by European Spaniards (López).

On one level, Ramírez constructs his testimony to create a racial binary with himself on one end and his black slave on the other. However, throughout the tale his minority experience, rooted in his *criollo* identity, congeals as a result of his encounters much like Lazarillo cannot really break away from Zaide and his half-brother. Ramírez's group identity alternates between a European identity to a more fluid one as he forms a part of the motley crew of captives.

In *Outlaws of the Atlantic: Sailors, Pirates, and Motley Crews in the Age of Sail*, Marcus Rediker defines the motley crew as multiethnic, organized gangs of workers or a squad of people performing similar or different tasks contributing to a single goal (91). In the eighteenth century these crews would play a role in resisting oppression along with slaves. In England, the motley crew supplied an image of revolution from below that terrified both Tories and moderate patriots (110). The ship is a space in which lower class and non-whites subjects worked together to resist dominant power. The English pirates' depiction in contrast with the *moros* is one example of a challenge to the European representation of Moorish barbarity because they are portrayed as civilized merchants. In Chapter Three the narrative comments on how the English pirates pass by India and arrive near Pulau Aur, on the peninsula of Malaca (Malaysia?). The pirates capture ships carrying satin, elephants, and other precious cargo and many of the black Moors are killed. "Matan a aquellos moros a sangre fría y dándoles a los que quedaron las pequeñas lanchas que ellos mismos traían para que se fuesen (Buscaglia-Salgado *Infortunios* 165)." There is a similarity between the torture and killing of Ramírez's companion through the motif of blood and the violence inflicted on the black Moors. The English pirates murder their non-white captives who are referred to simply and unemotionally as "moros negros." Yet their deaths, in "cold blood," humanize them with respect to the English. The meaning of the blood is in excess of that intended by the dominant discourse since the blood's visual appearance signifies the humanity,

and consequently, the existence of black African subalterns' consciousness on par with other races.

Besides humanizing the Moors and the subsequent dehumanization of their killers, the marginal discourse divides Creole identity from Spanish peninsular identity. In this cultural field, Afro-descended subjects sustain the spread of extra semiotic meaning into the text despite the design of hegemonic discourses to maintain hierarchies and, therefore, the supremacy of a "white" lettered class. Besides Ramírez, others who most likely purport to be Christian and white are also undermined by cues to their social experiences that coincide with those who are not able to construct a white identity because of their non-white physical presentation. That non-white characteristics are layered onto depictions of Spaniards as well in the Black Legend has been discussed previously. Not only are the English blackened, but so are the Spanish who are, according to Ramírez, the instigators of English immorality since the worst amongst them is Miguel, a *sevillano*. Ramírez believes the English pirates are cruel because the *sevillano* is guilty of the most extreme violence:

> Ilación es, y necesaria, de cuanto aquí se ha dicho poder competir estos piratas en crueldad y abominaciones con cuantos en la primera plana de este ejercicio tienen sus nombres. Pero creo el que no hubieran sido tan malos como para nosotros lo fueron si no estuviera con ellos un español que se preciaba de sevillano y se llamaba Miguel. No hubo trabajo intolerable en que nos pusiesen, no hubo ocasión alguna en que nos maltratasen, no hubo hambre que padeciésemos, no riesgo de la vida en que peligrásemos, que no viniese por su mano y su dirección, haciendo [él] gala de mostrarse impío y abandonando lo católico en que nació por vivir pirata y morir hereje (179).

If the *sevillano* is the most cruel, what does that imply about the Spanish? This argument questions the dominant narrative that the English are brutal colonizers in comparison, inserting a critique from the perspective of Creoles like Ramírez and Sigüenza y Góngora who are bitter that they are treated as inferiors to their European counterparts. Ralph Bauer suggests Miguel is homologous with the quasi-piratical Peninsular officials Ramírez meets after returning to New Spain. These men are like pirates because they enrich themselves at the expense of the colonials during their tenure in imperial office ("Sigüenza y Góngora and the Piracy of Knowledge" 174). The *sevillano*'s roots in Andalusia likewise connote Spanish corruption and Alonso Ramírez's own sullied background through his father's possible Andalusian beginnings. As I have already mentioned, the fact of being *sevillano* marks racial and moral contamination in the *Criticón* because Seville is a city where the people are consumed by gold and they are neither white nor black (128).

Criollo racial untaintedness is not safe from questioning either. In order to underscore this point, I now return to the incident when Ramírez is called "Spanish" by the pirates. After pillaging on the coast of Singapore and resting in Cygnet Bay in present day Australia, the English pirates make their way to Madagascar where they rob the blacks of many chickens, goats and cows. Ramírez concentrates his narration on characterizing his Spanishness and his refusal to join the pirates willingly despite appearances that he may have. As already remarked, Ramírez is called Spanish, not because he is recognized as European or necessarily white, but because he is a coward like the stolen chickens because he will not eat human flesh. When they meet with an English slave ship that comes into port, Ramírez and his men are instructed to tell the English they are voluntary mariners who receive pay (Buscaglia-Salgado *Infortunios* 168). Ramírez includes this detail to emphasize to the Viceroy the opposite; that he has been a loyal Spanish

Catholic who has never given in to the temptation to join with the English who are blackened by their cruelty. Ramírez's suspicious insistence on proving his Spanish Catholicism is authentic in this episode is illustrated when Ramírez begs his English captors not to leave him with the blacks of Madagascar in the following lines:

> Trataron de dejarme, a mí y a los pocos [de mis] compañeros que habían quedado, en aquella isla. Pero, considerando la barbaridad de los negros moros que allí vivían, hincado de rodillas y besándoles los pies con gran rendimiento, después de reconvenirles con lo mucho que les había servido y ofreciéndome a asistirles en su viaje como si fuese esclavo, conseguí el que me llevasen consigo...tratándome de español cobarde y gallina, y por eso indigno de estar en su compañía [aun]que me honrara y valiera mucho, no me instaron más (Buscaglia-Salgado *Infortunios* 168).

Ramírez parodies the behavior of a deferential slave while he is in the hands of the English, a role which he claims to prefer over the fate of living amongst blacks even though they are free. Whether as slave amongst the English or left to be absorbed into the black African space of Madagascar, Ramírez is unavoidably linked to blackness. And throughout the various inversions of racial agency played on in the deployment of the Black Legend, both in the mouths of the English and deployed by a *criollo* against Spanish colonizers, the very idea that anyone is unstained is satirized.

Though he fears the blacks' barbarity and the tortures he could experience amongst them, again his pleas are ironic since the tortures he has undergone at the hands of the English. Though the Black Legend is now wielded against the English, who are overtly and implicitly likened to barbarous black Africans, there is also irony in Ramírez's own claims to purity based on his

enslaved condition. Ramírez's underlying subalternity seems to be conveyed in Ramírez's association with enslavement. Muslim cosmology in Iberia had fostered associations between sub-Saharan Africans and servility before the arrival of Christopher Columbus to the Americas in 1492. The myth of the curse of Ham justified the increasing debasement of black Africans. According to the tale, the son of Ham had been linked to Sub-Saharan Africans who were destined to perpetual servitude. Because sources of labor had to be found outside of those living under Islamic rule, captives had been taken from north of the Mediterranean and south of the Sahara until the late Middle Ages. But when Europe became politically stable and military organization increased after the eleventh century, the nations of Africa became an easier target for exploitation (Sweet "Iberian Roots of Racist Thought" 149). Although his phenotype is not black, and race would not be associated with biology until the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Ramírez is treated as if he were inferior by the pirates because of his state of enslavement. Ramírez's state of enslavement most likely indicates Ramírez's probable ambiguity in the eyes of the English.[58] Ramírez's begging and his desperate situation heave upon him certain characteristics normally assigned to blacks that undeniably seem to call into question Ramírez's whiteness or religious and cultural purity. The resulting possibility that he could fall into a lower social category of slave signals his tenuous social classification as Creole. Buscaglia-Salgado discusses how this scene reflects the Spaniard's worst fear - being turned over to the black *moro*, "that blend formed by the figures that had historically been their civilizational

[58] Immanuel Kant developed a racist anthropology based on skin color in the late 18th century. According to Kant, all races of man were created by God however the characteristics or "germs" of each depended on climate. Once the process toward racial disposition determined by climate had begun, it was irreversible. Race corresponded to intellectual ability and limitation. Kant theorized equality is only for whites. Jews are also not fully human because they are motivated by a desire for material benefit. Kant reinvigorated earlier religious hostility toward Jews and contributed to modern racial theory (Sussman 27-29).

nemesis (*Undoing Empire* 165-166)." No matter which option he chooses, Ramírez cannot escape his associations with blackness and illegitimacy.

Ramírez's Creole identity amplifies "mulataje" proposed by Buscaglia-Salgado in *Undoing Empire*. Hispaniola and Puerto Rico had become floating fortifications against the threat of English, French and Dutch pirates by the seventeenth century. It is Ramírez's job to stay and defend the colony but he chooses to leave to improve his lot. The population had been left on its own by the Crown, creating a power vacuum in which a culture of contraband emerged as a runaway population at the margins elaborated a culture of ethnic heterogeneity and amalgam (Buscaglia-Salgado *Undoing Empire* 129). Ramírez acted for his individual benefit rather than choose sides based on loyalty. Though Ramírez is critical of the English pirates he appears more concerned with getting his booty than his position within the Spanish imperial networks (Martínez-San Miguel *Coloniality of Diasporas* 27-28). Creole identity is a tool Ramírez deployed for his own personal benefit. By travelling to geographical regions like Asia and Africa and succeeding in assimilating to Creole society, Ramírez found a pathway within colonial institutions to gain leeway for himself as an ethnically ambigous subject to enjoy social mobility.

As mentioned earlier, Ramírez's ordeal in Madagascar sublimates the blackness of Puerto Rico, Spain and Ramírez himself when he is treated as if he were black by the Pirates.[59] In Guadalupe, Ramírez's possible subaltern blackness is also transferred from his experiences onto his person when his companions reject the plan to join with French pirates. His indubitably non-white shipmates fear the French will enslave them because they are darker skinned. They choose to evade contact with other Europeans much like Lewis in Gage's chronicle:

[59] Benítez Rojo originated the idea of the repeating island to describe political, economic and cultural systems that repeat throughout the Caribbean region. Sidney Mintz first explained the socioeconomic structures shared by the nations that make up the Caribbean. Benítez Rojo extends this idea to the plantation system that originated during the colonial period (*La isla que se repite* i-xiii).

> Opusiéronse a este dictamen mío con grande esfuerzo, siendo el motivo el que a ellos, por su color [de piel] y por no ser españoles, los harían esclavos, y que les sería menos sensible el que yo con mis manos los echase al mar que ponerse [ellos] en las islas de extranjeros para experimentar sus rigores (Buscaglia-Salgado *Infortunios* 185).

Besides his Spanishness, what distinguished Alonso Ramírez from his fellow travellers was his light pigmentation which allowed him to pass for white. The description of these darker skinned fellow shipmates does not furnish details to explain their difference other than their "color." One must wonder why Ramírez emphasizes that his companions have darker skin rather than simply state that they are not Spanish or not Catholic. Certainly phenotype is becoming an increasingly important factor in determining racial classification. The distinction between being darker skinned and appearing Spanish signals that perhaps one can be both darker skinned and Spanish, much like the mulatto, Lewis, in Gage's text or Lazarillo's half-brother most likely would have identified. Even if Ramírez could prove he is "Spanish" definitively, there is considerable uncertainty in the very ethnic category "Spanish" in *Infortunios*. And even if being "Spanish" could be proven a "white" ethnicity, despite the evident racial difference between Ramírez and his companions, his closeness to them is not deterred by their pigmentation. “Sintiendo más sus desconsuelos que los míos (185),” he reacts as a result of identifying more with his companions' distress than with his own white Catholic and Spanish identity.

Dating from the early modern period, European discourse has attempted to create a binary distinction between black African and white European identities. Notwithstanding, these rhetorical endeavors seem to give way in praxis. Locating black Africans on the lowest levels of society, the definition of *negro* found in Sebastián de Covarrubias's *Tesoro de la lengua española* (1611) demonstrates this tendency to create binary distinctions. Though the definition

intends to clarify who is white and who is black, it also references the possibility that this task may require more than visual markers or recognition of language usage. “Negro, uno de los dos estremos de los colores, opuesto a blanco, Latine niger. Negro, el Etiope de color negra.” The definition couples blackness with skin color, in complete opposition to whiteness or the color “blanco” or “white.” *Etíopes* are Sub-Saharan Africans whose difference is ultimately characterized by their dark pigmentation and not simply associations with Islam. Alonso de Sandoval depicts *etíopes* similarly because of their blackness as the "feet" of the body of the Christian congregation (Sandoval 13). Whether they have converted or not, for Sandoval black Africans are still differentiated from the general Christian siblinghood based on phenotype. The early modern definition of black in the former and later texts bleeds into Alonso Ramírez's attempts to dissociate himself from his darker ship mates. Blackness and whiteness are categories separated by skin color and other cultural factors like language and religion, but deciphering who fits into which color category is not always an unequivocal task.

This is perhaps nowhere more true than the Caribbean, which can be thought of as a space, both geographical and social, where boundaries are maintained but also break down as multiethnic groups come together in ways unimaginable and, often times, unintelligible to hegemonic discourses. One still must present as "white" in order to gain wealth and opportunity as is possible for Ramírez. In order to do so, he composes a narrative of whiteness that impedes the transmission of information that could communicate any part of a subaltern identity that Ramírez may have ascribed to such as an impure lineage in terms of religious beliefs. Despite this, my close reading of the text elucidates the multiplicity of meanings hidden in the ways in which Ramírez identifies himself, and is identified by others, in which unvoiced aspects of Ramírez's experience may be discussed. Though Alonso Ramírez is *criollo*, this racial

identification is muddled throughout his oral narrative. His shared experience of social and political exclusion along with Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora marks the construction of the *criollo* discourse. The genealogical fiction of purity in the picaresque components of the tale uncover illegitimacy, a hybrid practice of Catholicism and indigenous belief systems and a possible union with blackness that are all disavowed. The implications of Ramírez's possible blackness are further teased out during the narration of his travails with the pirates.

The following chapter on Cirilo Villaverde's *Cecilia Valdés* revels in the instability of cues that define who is white and who is black in nineteenth century Cuba. Although Cecilia's racial impurity is appreciated by many, it is not the result of her appearance or religious lineage but public knowledge. Cecilia's official racial classification, defined in terms of modern conceptions of biological reproduction and separations between whites and blacks does not fully impede her penetration of the gaps between Creole society nor the multiracial sectors inhabiting the streets, shops and mulatto dances depicted. The mulatta's menacing mobility drives the narration which exposes elite *criollo* apprehension toward black segments of society. Resulting from non-whites' mobility within dominant power structures, racial limits are crossed and spaces for mixed subjects to weaken hierarchies imposed by rigid ethnic categories are generated.

Chapter 4. *Black Voices, Creole Writing and Cuban Identity in* Cecilia Valdés

I. Black Voices Within Creole Narratives

By the end of the nineteenth century, racial discourse had evolved toward emphasizing concern with phenotype rather than religion. Legitimacy remained a core factor in determining one's place in the social hierarchy, since elite ancestry proven through marriage rather than Christian lineage. Blackness could not always be easily determined and did not necessarily mark a person's social place indelibly, however once black ancestry was a social fact, as in the case of Cecilia Valdés, removing the stigma of blackness was often quite difficult. Towards the conclusion of Cirilo Villaverde's novel, Cecilia had become Leonardo Gamboa's mistress. Leonardo was not any elite Creole, but also her half-brother, an incestuous relationship that neither Cecilia nor Leonardo are aware of despite the accumulating evidence. Cecilia would soon be jilted when Leonardo takes his place in elite Creole society by marrying another Creole, Isabel Ilincheta. Cecilia could have readily sought the affections of a lower status Creole and gained recognition as a Creole woman of lower status but she strove for much more when she aspired to marry Leonardo Gamboa. Despite her attempts to disrupt Leonardo and Isabel's wedding, the results do not solidify her recognition or elite status. The hegemonic rendering of the mulatta type denounces Cecilia and Pimienta for their spiteful violence when they conspire to interrupt Leonardo's wedding.

When Pimienta murders Leonardo instead of Isabel, as Cecilia had requested, Cecilia is implicated in the plot and enclosed in the space of a prison where she meets her mother, Rosario, just before Rosario's death. The prison is a social space founded not only on prohibition but also the unsaid in society (Lefebvre 35). The oppression experienced by both women paradoxically

marshals their anagnorisis in prison and, though the novel does not discuss Cecilia's future, it is probable that her offspring, a child she had with Leonardo, will continue the family tradition. Black women and mulattas in *Cecilia Valdés* form cross-racial sexual alliances with whites that alter the demographic character of the Cuban people. Both Cecilia and her mother justify their aspirations to improve their own social position by practicing *blanqueamiento* or whitening by seeking relationships with elite white men. As much as blacks were limited politically and socially, *blanqueamiento* demanded they assimilate to a white nation, allowing them to also occupy positions of power within the system so long as they did not specifically address the needs of blacks. The question I hope to discuss, but cannot provide answers to, relates back to Lefebvre's theoretical approach to conceptualizing social and physical spaces that have not been properly connected to the mental spaces in the work of contemporary philosophers and literary theorists: what is the relationship between lived realities and the social spaces constructed in the novel? I posit that, whatever these overlaps may be, the social spaces or lived realities of blacks shift from the margins to the center of Creole culture, cementing blackness as a key component of Caribbean cultural production.

Fictional Afro-descended characters operate much like their real-life counterparts who work within systems of power to improve their lot. Villaverde's characters' use of hegemonic ideology to their advantage foreshadows black social and political mobility within hegemonic ideologies of *mestizaje* or "myths of racial democracy" in the 1920s and 1930s in Cuba and other parts of Latin America. Myths of racial democracy advanced in the early twentieth century meant white elites could not openly exclude blacks and other marginalized groups from various areas of national life (De la Fuente 46). Racial democracy could not be achieved without continuing cross-racial political alliances formed during the wars of independence (De la Fuente

66). *Blanqueamiento*, a precursor to these ideologies, also provides an opportunity for blacks and other non-white groups to advance their personal gains despite social exclusion. Black women's attempts to *blanquear*, or whiten themselves, are not successful in the ways that they had hoped in *Cecilia Valdés*. Like Rosario, Cecilia's transgression of the boundaries set by the lettered city never leads to full recognition. Be that as it may, it must not be forgotten that cultural production is the result of social practices and clashes over representation (Beverly *Subalternity and Representation* 14). The irony that Creole authors prefer blackness as a cultural marker to justify independence from Spain tellingly signals that black culture is essential to "white" Cuban culture and identity. Despite the mediation of white Creoles to exclude and silence blacks, when blacks are represented in *Cecilia Valdés* they speak truth to power, adding another level of competing and overlapping significance to the text's political, social and cultural vision.

Black speech, as in earlier periods, informs literary practice both in conformity with and running counter to canonical discourses. Doris Sommer looks to María de la Regla and her husband, Dionisio, as examples of black power in the novel because they exude authority despite being marginalized because of their race and status as enslaved people (Sommer 229). When María de la Regla speaks, she is aware of not only the dangers but also her audience's tendency to ignore her words. Notwithstanding, María de la Regla gives voice to dominated black women's desire to "talk back." Critical race theorist bell hooks describes this form of expression as empowerment that breaks free from attempts to silence women and especially black women. Even as a writer, hooks felt that somehow she was still not able to claim that title:

> Part of myself was still held captive by domineering forces of history, of familial life that had charted a map of silence, of right speech. I had not completely let go of the fear of saying the wrong thing, of being punished. Somewhere in the deep recesses of my mind, I

> believed I could avoid both responsibility and punishment if I did not declare myself a writer (hooks *Talking Back* 8).

This struggle to overcome the fear of punishment for speaking applies to María de la Regla. What is of note for the moment is that her speech fits the patterns of black women's lived experiences and cross-racial relationships with whites. There are negative consequences for whites who censor blacks like María de la Regla as the tragedy of *Cecilia Valdés*, incest between Leonardo and his half-sister, Cecilia, and his murder at the hands of Pimienta, occur because the truth María tells, that Cándido Gamboa is Cecilia's biological father, is stifled.

Misrecognizing or ignoring subalterns is a tricky business that can cause social disruption and even the metaphorical death of "white" Creole Cuba. Even though Villaverde wishes to maintain a racially stratified Cuba, the author and his narrator also accommodate non-whites' agency by communicating the Creole nightmare that *mulattas* such as Cecilia could be misrecognized as subjects of incestuous desire. "Incest fantasies are a form of disavowal: having chosen love stories that cross the lines of color and race and so seem to articulate the equal human status of whites, blacks, and mulattoes, the Creole writers shy away as if in the face of an unspeakable horror (Fischer 128)." This nightmare is not unlike Bartolomé de las Casas's fears at the inception of the transatlantic slave trade that black slaves would destroy the island. Cecilia is the subject of the literal incestuous desire of Leonardo, and the sexual appetite of her father to which the narration alludes. Meanwhile Rosario, her mother, is the subject of the metaphorical incestuous desire of Cándido, a representative of a social sphere that imagines itself to be separate but is really related to the mulatto underworld with which it coexists.

When considering these narrative undercurrents, the seemingly ordered narration is

weakened as the lived realities of social actors of all races and social classes overlap. In the wake of independence movements and a growing divide between *peninsulares* and *criollos* (Creoles), slaves, free blacks and mulattos exercised more power, visibility and social mobility in Cuban society than in Caribbean contexts covered in earlier chapters. The burgeoning agency of blacks and their descendants in the work of Bartolomé de las Casas, Alonso de Sandoval, Thomas Gage and Alonso Ramirez's testimony comes to the fore in this foundational Cuban novel. Cecilia and the cast of characters Villaverde draws through the imagery of his words are marginal but active members of society. The streets of Havana, the mulatto dances and even the plantation, *la tinaja*, provide apertures for the voices of the mixed race and black populace to fill in the dimensions of the in-between "silenced" spaces in *criollo* literary discourse.

Cecilia Valdés' white Creole writer/narrator may wish to produce a hegemonic text that defines Cuban national identity according to the political objectives of the Creole independence movement, however the views of black sectors of Cuban society, which are inextricably tied to Creole national identity, have considerable leverage to communicate a message beyond the one desired by the narrator. Cuban literature ironically prioritizes blackness to distinguish its authors from the Spanish colonial overlords. Citing William Luis's argument that, although the Del Monte circle's texts emphasized blackness in Cuban culture, white *criollo* authors were more concerned with their own political project than with representing blackness *per se* (Luis 27-30), Nelson maintains that white Creoles may have used blackness as an aesthetic tool to upset colonial power (Nelson 58). Racial hierarchies that prioritize white Creoles over those of African descent are very much ingrained in nineteenth century Cuba as depicted in Cirilo Villaverde's *Cecilia Valdés, o la loma del Ángel*. Evidence of this preference appears when the omniscient narrator describes Chepilla, daughter of an African mother and a Spanish father, as "mulatta

como de 40 años de edad, de estatura mediana, llena de carnes, aunque conservaba el talle estrecho, los hombros redondos y desnudos, la cabeza hermosa, la nariz algo gruesa, la boca expresiva y el cabello espeso y muy crespo (Villaverde 63)." The narrator says of Chepilla, called Seña Josefa, "Tenía el color cetrino que resulta de la mezcla de hembra negra y varón indio; pero lo crespo del pelo y el óvalo del rostro no admitían la probabilidad de semejante maridage, sino el de madre negra y padre blanco (66)." Chepilla's racial characterization almost seems artificial as the narrator appears to know the exact composition of her racial ancestry which is teased out axiomatically. Her black mother is hidden, aging, her hair turning white, in a corner of Chepilla's small home. She is an "escuálida, imagen de la muerte (67)." Voiceless and afraid, Chepilla's nameless mother disappears behind a door in the back of the house.

Although this scene is not narrated in the minority voice, there is nonetheless an alternative significance to whitening expressed by Cecilia's African great-grandmother. One must wonder why she reacts with horror and fear at the sight of Gamboa. She does not utter a word, but her flight, like that of the black slaves in *Historia de las Indias*, injects an alternate discourse in which the arrival of a white man to her home, the father of her granddaughter, is not welcome. In *Historia de las Indias*, Bartolomé de las Casas relates the unarticulated experiences of the first generation of Africans in Hispaniola. Africans fled enslavement "a cuadrillas, y se levantan y hacen muertes y crueldades en los españoles, por salir de su cautiverio, cuantas la oportunidad poder les ofrece" (Las Casas *Historia* Vol. 3, 475)." As I have argued in my chapter on Las Casas, Las Casas the author recognizes the reasoning of the black slaves' flight from the *trapiches* as well as the political activity of Sub-Saharan Africans on the African continent in response to the trade.

Perhaps Cecilia's great-grandmother has learned from experience that the whitening of the black population does not lead to racial harmony, but to greater tension. Whatever fears or doubts Chepilla's mother may have, they have not been transferred to her daughter who has sustained the family tradition of interracial mixing with white men. Chepilla's daughter, Charo, is mentally fragile during Gamboa's visit; her pale face gives the appearance that she is already dead:

> tenía los ojos hundidos y cerrados los párpados, cuyas pestañas eran tan largas que daban sombra a las mejillas. La cabeza era lo único que tenía fuera de las sábanas, y eso casi enterrada en la almohada, la cual desaparecía bajo una mata de pelo negro, undoso y esparcido por todas partes en el mayor desorden. De en medio de aquel fondo negro se destacaba el rostro ovalado, pálido de cera, de la enferma, con la barba aguda, la frente cuadrada y alta, la boca pequeña, los labios belfos, y la nariz bastante bien hecha para mujer de raza mezclada, como sin duda era aquella de que ahora se trata (67).

Although she is whiter and she has had a child with a wealthy white man, Charo is now ravaged by mental illness. Charo's situation supports the argument that *blanqueamiento* does not create a more ordered society even if racial mixing is generating a more European appearing population. Charo and her child have been rejected by her white lover who wishes to block them from gaining any of the privilege that comes with ties to an elite family. Gamboa states that he had hoped Cecilia would be able to pass for white and marry well as a result of taking the name Valdés at the *Casa cuna*. And he continues to provide Chepilla with money for Cecilia's care during his visits to her small home. These actions have been taken in secret in the futile hope of maintaining a separation between his white Creole family and his illegitimate mulatto family.

Gamboa's extended family is analogous to how blackness in terms of race and culture can be considered the backbone of creoleness.

By the nineteenth century, hints of blackness amongst the Creole population are harder to hide. Cecilia is no different than the elite writer, Villaverde, because he is also racially indefinite in origin, even if he presents as white. I have advanced a similar argument concerning Alonso Ramírez's racial identity in the seventeenth century. While proving that Alonso Ramírez himself is in part black is impossible, that he is only European is not certain either despite his legal classification as "Spanish." The racial overlap between whiteness and blackness in the subaltern aspects of Ramírez's testimony is hinted at even if he wishes to prove otherwise. Villaverde, like Ramírez, aims to distance himself from blackness while inevitably demonstrating how black African influence is woven in to Cuban culture and Creole ancestry. For example, the author wishes to keep the threat that blacks like María de la Regla and Dionisio pose as sources of information at bay:

> To keep the danger in focus, Villaverde does not confuse his authorial self with an omniscient informant, as Avellaneda does. Her narrator and the slave protagonist share information so equally that the colored line between extradiegetic and interdiegetic voices blurs; it blurs enough that Sab signs his name to the end of her book. Villaverde plays at the same game, but perversely. His signature appears at the beginning on the initial title page, through his own initials (and credentials?), C.V., which also begin to spell Cecilia Valdés. He is Cecilia, deluded like her, unwilling but obliged to divorce desire from destiny, more white than black but as Leonardo Gamboa remarks about his own privileged color, it is definitely Cuban in its indefinite origins: ' My mother really is a Creole, and I can't vouch for her purity of blood' (38) (Sommer 229).

The dividing line between the author and the black informants dissolves as black voices circulate knowledge that disrupts white hegemony. This narrative mechanism is not purely fiction but endemic to the makeup of Cuban culture and the racial ancestry of all Cubans. Black voices weave the Creole author's fictive tale, mimicking the crossed blood lines that inextricably constitute the genealogies shared by all Cubans.

Critics have also looked to Juan Francisco Manzano's autobiography as a literary source to understand Afro-descended subjectivity and the role of the author. Manzano's writing makes use of the tropes of voicelessness and his own embodiment in order to contribute to the production of culture in Cuba. Afro-descendants in nineteenth century Cuba are not the first examples of black subjects to intervene in colonial literature. Nor is acting as a writer the only mechanism through which Afro-descendants participate in written productions. Juan Francisco Manzano's autobiography is nonethless a crucial intervention in this oral and performed literary tradition in which the African subject is incorporated into the rationality of language proposed by fiction before he was defined as a modern citizen (Ramos 227). As in works composed by Europeans, the enslaved subaltern is capable of speech. Along with the oral narrative, Africans' bodies become the center of Manzano's testimony as he himself operates as a voyeur in his writing (Ramos 228). The author as observer trope repeats when Afro-descended authors write about black subalterns as well as Europeans.

The question is not whether there is an intellectual overlap between the writer and the various narrative voices but how these many authors compose the narrative. Javier Jiménez posits moral and ethical pluralities are generated within the hegemonic account because literary dialogism between genres characterizes Villaverde's novel. Jiménez cites Josefa's tale of Narcisa as an example of how local knowledge of Cuban *mulato* society denounces the abuses of rich

criollos while the *mulato* language and voice enter the narrative (59-62). Jiménez writes off the mulatto language as marginal, as Cecilia is ultimately an accessory to the Creole narrative that centers on Leonardo rather than the title character (64). According to Jiménez, Leonardo takes center stage as the novel progresses since the reader follows his time at *la tinaja* and his decision to marry Isabel while he is also tempted by the *mulata*, Cecilia. Even if this were the case, as Sommer indicates, Leonardo, the *criollo*, is mostly white, but also racially indeterminate and gender fluid. The narrative covertly follows the subaltern mulatto experience within the *criollo* as Leonardo's characterization takes on stereotypically mulatta attributes; he is the narcissistic and sexually driven Narcissa of Josefa's tale who cannot control his attraction to the malevolent Cecilia. Besides the crossing of gender norms, racial barriers are also transgressed. The social hierarchies that separate "whites" from "blacks" are not clear because what is "white" is in fact to some degree "black."

The cultural power of black voices in the text should not be written off as controlled and silenced within Creole literature because their versions of the story are a narrative motor that drives the plot. In *Cecilia Valdés* the characters are a fictionalized extension of a chorus of African and Afro-descended people, both free and enslaved, that can be traced from Las Casas's references to African voices, enslaved Africans in colonial Cartagena de Indias and free Beduins in their homeland, to locations throughout the Caribbean, Latin America and Asia. Scholars of the later colonial period have noted that fictional black characters have exerted an agential role in the formation of literary discourse concerning the nature of Cuban culture, race and nationality. Although blacks' voices are subaltern in the limited nature of their presentation to the reader, they are agents in the construction of political discourse in nineteenth century literature (Sommer 1994, Luis 1990). Sommer notes that characters in *Cecilia Valdés* such as María de la Regla and

Dionisio interject an alternative record of events obfuscated by whites like Cándido and his wife, Rosa. Similarly, Nelson describes the involvement of blackness in Creole writing as an "exclusionary inclusion" because black voices are managed within the official discourse (57-58). The *criollo* author and narrator continue to repudiate the threat to white supremacy by silencing black informants. Even though the voices that narrate *Cecilia Valdés* are fictionalized by a white writer, this does not denote the writer's complete control of the narrative. Disavowal of the black voice, like the truth of Cecilia's origins, cannot take place without black subalternity disrupting the silence.

II. Cirilo Villaverde, *Los Delmontinos* and the Politics of *Blanqueamiento*

Perhaps the most significant influence on Villaverde's style, the Delmontino literary salon was the intellectual hub of nineteenth century Cuban literary studies where many of the most important writers of the period like Cirilo Villaverde, Ramón de Palma, Anselmo Suárez y Romero, José Antonio Echevarría, José Victoriano Betancourt, Manuel González del Valle, as well as black authors like Plácido and Juan Francisco Manzano collaborated (Otero 724-726). As well as being a member of the Del Monte *terturlia*, which I will discuss at greater length, Villaverde was politically active in the *Conspiración de Narciso López* in 1848 for which he was jailed.[60] His work on behalf of the independence movement led to his exile in 1849 when he escaped prison and fled to Florida. Villaverde would spend the rest of his life in the United States except for two trips to Cuba over short period of time (Sánchez 32). Esteban Rodríguez Herrera surmises that during his exile in the United States, Villaverde most likely was exposed to antislavery narratives like *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, published in 1852, that played a part in Villaverde's decision to combat slavery as well as his time with the Del Monte group (Rodríguez Herrera "Estudio crítico a Cecilia Valdés" 140). The biographical context of Villaverde's life intertwines with his writing as his position on abolition shifts during his time in exile. Villaverde's anxiety concerning the blackness of the Cuban population would never be resolved.Villaverde's novel both projects and limits black voices in the vein of the literary and political movments he participated in during his lifetime.

Del Monte's position that slavery should continue, while the slave trade should be ended,

[60] Villaverde fue condenado por las autoridades españolas a muerte. Conmutaron esta condena a la cadena perpetua. Luego Villaverde pudo escapar de la prisión (Sánchez, Julio C. 31).

is the initial context of the edition of *Cecilia Valdés* completed in 1837.[61] The final version presents both the Creole ideal of the whitened mulatto and the fear that this subject cannot be controlled, much less fully integrated into Cuban society. The end result of *blanqueamiento*, the formation of an almost white mulatta like Cecilia Valdés, must not be able to fully enter into Creole social circles if white political power is to be maintained.[62] *Blanqueamiento* is another vector of anti-slavery narratives that created "a permanent space for blacks in a literature of foundation" as the margins of literary discourse were broadened (Luis *Literary Bondage* 1-2). Luis comments on the historical context of *Cecilia Valdés* and the black population in Cuba to explain the origins of the Creole objective to create an ideal whitened society while blacks, especially free blacks and mulattos in Havana, pushed back against white power. The novel directly links to historical events by representing members of the black bourgeoisie who were suppressed during the Ladder Conspiracy in 1844 (Luis *Literary Bondage* 16).[63] Though Villaverde favors projects to whiten the population, his novel also expresses the abject meaning exposed by the mobile Afro-descended class when he addresses the real-life history of black resistance.

Luis's study applies historical evidence to back up his interpretation of the novel. For example, historical documentation indicates that the inclusion of Francisco Uribe, a well-known

---

[61] This version, published in the literary review *La siempreviva*, describes the life of a young mulatta Villaverde knew between the years 1826 and 1827 in Havana. A longer version was published in 1839 with more chapters but the antislavery theme present in the final version had not yet become a theme in this work (Lamore 13-16). The definitive version, published in 1882 while Villaverde was in exile in New York, condemns the slave trade, and even slavery as an institution, without calling for a complete end to it, in the depictions of the abuses committed against blacks on the Gamboa's sugar plantation *La tinaja*.

[62] *Blanqueamiento* of the black race results from fears the Cuban nation will turn into a black nation like Haiti. The resulting mythification of blacks and the mystification of the mulatto in fiction is constructed to create a national identity that is more "white." But the myth of the "mixed" nation fails to account for divisions in the population (Rosell 16).

[63] Widespread rumors that Cuba would become another Haiti when Leopoldo O'Donnell became the captain general (1843-1848). After previous slave uprisings, another ocurred at the Santísima Trinidad sugar mill where a slave told her master, Esteban Santa Cruz de Oviedo, that another was planned for December 25, 1843. O'Donnell used this rumor to terrorize the slave and free black populations, repression that came to be known as the Ladder Conspiracy (Luis, William *Literary Bondage* 16).

mulatto tailor to wealthy whites, is political because he was later accused of participating in the Ladder Conspiracy and sentenced to death. This is also the case with the mulatto musicians referred to like Brindis de Salas who was also implicated in the Ladder Conspiracy and exiled. Martín Morúa Delgado was critical of Uribe's persecution believing he had been:

> subjected to imprisonment and suffering by the obstinate government, which did not have any other origin than in the systematic persecution declared by all the representative classes of the colony against the black and mixed class for the crime of possessing large sums of money, accumulated by the strength of their own personal labor (Luis 112-113).

Luis convincingly shows that anti-slavery discourse in novels like *Cecilia Valdés* communicates more than white Creole understandings of Cuban history, society and culture. White Creole dominance is threatened by free mulattos and blacks who had begun to amass wealth through the practice of professions in the city; free blacks and mulattos competed with their white counterparts for social and political power. Anti-slavery novels do not intentionally incorporate blacks in Cuban society as equals; rather, there is a duelling quality to the relationship between the dominant white discourse and the counter-narratives presented by blacks. Although Luis argues the view of anti-slavery novels is sympathetic to blacks, this sentiment does not extend to a full acceptance of blacks by white society.

Luis's point is exemplified by José Antonio Saco's conviction that all separatism implies revolution and revolution ruin; independence can only be imagined after passing through a period of careful social reform. Saco strategized Cuba's future furthering the argument that an immediate revolution against Spain would lead to an incontrollable pull against the *sacarocracia*'s power. Members of the Creole elite hoped to whiten or *blanquear* Cuban society

of the African elements that had grown along with the increase in sugar production at the end of the eighteenth century after the Haitian revolution (Otero 723-724). Part of the plan for social reform required the whitening of the population in order to avoid becoming another Haiti.[64] Only much later would it be possible for the elite class to imagine a homogeneous and free Cuba (Otero 723-724). Like Saco, Francisco Arango y Parreño and Domingo del Monte utilized *blanqueamiento* in order to construct plans to modernize Cuba. In his work *Humanismo y humanitarismo* (1848) Del Monte wrote:

> De acuerdo con el proyecto socioeconómico y cultural de los ilustrados reformistas, la inmigración blanca, nunca interrumpida y paralela a la trata africana, estaba destinada eventualmente a desplazar al sujeto africano, tanto en la producción económica como en la reproducción biológica (Gomariz 55).

Blanqueamiento intended to replace, over time, the enslaved black labor force with white immigrants. The Crown attempted to evade *criollo* designs to alter the composition of the nascent Cuban nation because an elevated slave population worked to neutralize the white Creole push for independence (Gomariz 57). As noted by Ada Ferrer, the insurgents' blackness during the Ten Years' War (1870-1878) was interpreted as a threat to white power amongst the rebels. Spain's tactic to encourage whites to desert out of fears of black leadership caused material hardships for the insurgent army. Spain also argued that these troubles were evidence of the insurgents' moral decay since a moral Cuba could not look like Haiti (i.e. it could not be black).

---

[64] In contrast to the usual ideology of the period in favor of racial whitening the demonized the mixed-race population, Alexander von Humboldt imagined the mulatto population as a positive development in *Ensayo político sobre la isla de Cuba* (Domínguez 154). Perhaps Humboldt's differing view from the *criollos* writers is due to his German nationality and that he travelled and wrote for the Crown. His work has been commissioned as part of the Spanish Monarchy's enlightened project to reformulate the Empire and strengthen Spanish dominance in the Americas (Domínguez 144). The mulatto population could be used in favor the Spanish Monarchy to maintain control over the rebellious *criollo* population that feared the black population would rise up against their own power in the event of independence from Spain.

Creole's came to accredit insinuations publicized by Spanish propaganda that the rebel movement was composed of multiracials. Critics seized on angst over the preponderance of non-white rebels to upend the wisdom of revolution and independence (Ferrer 43-50). Creole intellectuals created discourses to counteract fears of a blackened nation by planning a future Cuba populated by whites educated according to European cultural norms. Part of this plan required at least an end to the slave trade to stem the growing black population. Still, Creoles like Arango y Parreño and Del Monte did not intend to end slavery completely. The enslaved black subject would be maintained where convenient in the countryside while the population of free blacks and mulattos in the cities would be whitened. White Creoles angled to control blacks' sexual reproduction so that white males could engage in relationships with black and mulatta women, as Gamboa and his son, Leonardo, do in the *Cecilia Valdés* (Gomariz 58). Nevertheless, whites cannot refrain from identifying with their black interlocutors as fellow humans to the extent that they had in the early modern period. That white characters double for mulattos in *Cecilia Valdés* is one way in which *blanqueamiento* is disempowered by racial mixing in practice. Leonardo is the physical double of Pimienta, who stands in for a fitting with Uribe when Leonardo is not present.

Doubling in the novel points to the trajectory of black cultural and racial development in the nineteenth century in which blackness is embedded not only in literary works but also in Creoles themselves as the subaltern within. Villaverde notes his affinity for African cultural markers in *Excursión a Vueltabajo*. One instance occurs when the narrator arrives to a *taberna*, along with a poor muleteer, where he notices vessels hanging from the ceiling by rods that he assumes are for serving *la sambumbia*, a fermented drink popular in Havana. The narrator interjects his belief that the drink was "discovered" by Africans (Villaverde *Excursión a*

Vueltabajo 18). In this passage the narrator also defends a black man, who resembles an *orisha*, from the muleteer, who is later killed by maroons. The narrator's loyalty to the *orisha* seems to signal how African cultural practices had become essential to Cuban culture among the masses along with underlying dangers to whites when blackness is protected or favored over what is European. The events narrated are a metaphor for Cuban nationalism that requires alliances with blacks in order for the nation to exist (Benítez Rojo "Cirilo Villaverde, Fundador" 770-773). This is a theme that will repeat in Cecilia Valdés in Creoles' doomed attraction to mulattas. Black African cultural production attests to the intrinsic links between whites and blacks which had become normalized in Cuba, no matter if the elite writer experiences discomfort as a result.

A discussion of the overlap between race and culture in Cuba is useful before continuing. Citing Moreno Fraginals, González Echeverría elaborates the slave trade's impact on Cuban culture during the nineteenth century. The relationship between religion and race is not rooted in blood lineage as in Spanish racial discourse during the early modern period but syncretic practices that blend Christianity with African rituals. That religious beliefs became syncretized when slaves came together in the *batey* where they created their own belief system is one case. "La religión con dioses blancos y dioses negros, con rezos católicos al compás de los tambores. La ciudad habría de darle, mucho más tarde, la forma definitiva a ese sincretismo (González Echeverría "Fiestas Cubanas" 60)." For this reason, the *fiesta* is a fundamental expression of the process of hybridization and is prominent in the work of canonical writers like Villaverde, Ortiz and Carpentier (González Echeverría "Fiestas Cubanas" 60). The dances became a motif Cuban authors returned to in order to understand cultural hybridization as blacks and whites mingled in these spaces more freely than in everyday life.

In *Space and Place* Yi-Fu Tuan theorizes the functioning of music and dance in social spaces to disrupt linear historical time. Music can upset one's awareness of directional time and space. "Rhythmic sound that synchronizes with body movement cancels one's sense of purposeful action, of moving through historical space and time towards a goal (128)." Music is a powerful tool that in black social spaces upsets the normal flow of daily life that insists on the maintenance of hierarchies and "progress":

> Dancing, which is always accompanied by music or a beat of some kind, dramatically abrogates historical time and oriented space. When people move forward, sideways, and even back ward with ease. Music and dance free people from the demands of purposeful goaldirected life, allowing them to live briefly in what Erwin Straus calls 'resentic' unoriented space (128-129).

In order to combat the blending of cultures and races symbolically and literally hybridized in black social rituals, writers discussed educational reform as a means to cleanse Cuban culture of African influences. Del Monte cites Luz's "Informe sobre el Instituto Cubano" in his plan to educate Cuban society in order to eventually achieve liberation from Spain. Cuba must reform "desde la infancia las costumbres del pueblo, peculiarmente contaminadas por la atmósfera de esclavitud en que nacemos, vivimos y morimos (*Humanismo y humanitarismo* 68)." Del Monte refers to customs but does not detail what these are; assimilating Cubans to European intellectual norms is his objective, as he argues Cubans must be taught science and living languages as well as training in *oficios* to reform young delinquents and soldiers (82-88). One of Villaverde's later essays is more explicit in stating that it is imperative to "limpiar a Cuba de la raza africana

(108)." Although Del Monte and other elites may have wished to clean African cultural influence from Cuban society, this was impracticable.[65] African culture had become ingrained in Cuban literature and society as manifested in Villaverde's *costumbrista* illustrations of the dances and the streets of Havana.[66] Much of the socio-historical discourse comes from the slaves as well as the free black and mulatto population. Like the reader and the white characters, Villaverde's narrator resists the truth told by slaves even though he defers to them because they narrate the truth (Sommer 1994). I wonder to what extent Villaverde was conscious of yielding to slaves' (and free blacks') speech since his politics advocated for *blanqueamiento* and the resulting erasure of blackness from Cuban culture.

Whether Villaverde was aware or not, blacks' articulations take on agency apart from his objectives (See Sommer, Lasarte Valcarcel, Ramos, Gelpi). As Ramos posits, there is a knowledge that escapes the control of the author that relies on the hybrid and conflicted tension between narrative authority and the readers (Lasarte Valcarcel 22). The readers are charged with searching for the subaltern in these narrative conflicts. Sommer refers to subaltern agency when she references what Gayatri Spivak and Diana Fuss, among others, have termed "strategic essentialism." Doubt is cast on the outsider's ability to know, without allowing this incapacity to drift into "the comforting, unmanageable mists of ambiguity....[as] some texts decline the intimately possessive knowledge that passes for love (Sommer 219)." The subaltern is unknowable but also ingrained in Cuban culture, overpowering attempts by whites to purify their own origins and culture. Subalterns' physicality makes definitive differentiations between whites and blacks impossible to anchor in reality even if they can be theorized since they do not reflect

[65] After the period of Independence, white intellectuals like Jorge Mañach continue to advocate for a whitening of blacks. White politicians in the first half of the 20th Century silence discourse on race in order to avoid divisions, however, both popular and intellectual sectors of the black population continue to speak out on the need to discuss race openly (De la Fuente 108-110).

[66] See Morúa Delgado 52 on the *contradanza*.

the multiracial experience ingrained of Cuban culture and racial lineage. Like in earlier periods and in other parts of the Caribbean and Spanish America, one's racial classification was based on public knowledge of one's origins and one's ability to prove one's purity through discourse. In the case of Villaverde and other contemporary elite *criollo* writers, the issue is not simply proving one's purity based largely on proof of one's Catholic lineage, as it was for Alonso Ramírez, but marking the parameters of white Cubans' associations with Afro-descended Cubans.

Dissimilarities between races are not easily proven as there are mulattos who can pass for white, such as Cecilia Valdés, as well as people who have been absorbed into *criollo* status through generations of mixing and passing even though they present characteristics of someone with African descent. Pancho Solfa, one of Leonardo's school friends, is a case in point of the latter. Leonardo jokes about the probability that Pancho Solfa is an Afro-descendant when he explains "derecho patrio" to Solfa and other classmates:

> Pues no he saludado esa materia siquiera...Sólo sé que, según el derecho patrio, hay personas y hay cosas; que muchas de éstas, aunque hablan y piensan, no tienen los mismos derechos que aquéllas. Por ejemplo, Pancho, ya que te gustan los símiles, tú a los ojos del Derecho no eres persona, sino cosa.

Leonardo, on some level, knows Pancho is Afro-desdended, elaborating, "Ya. No eres esclavo, pero alguno de tus progenitores lo fue sin duda y tanto vale. Tu pelo al menos es sospechoso (Villaverde *Cecilia Valdés* 135)." Leonardo sees in Pancho's features that one of Pancho's ancestors was "without doubt" a slave, and therefore black. Leonardo's observation about his friend's blackness is made in jest, however a certain truth about Creole ambiguity is also conveyed. Frederick Barth theorizes that boundaries mark differences between agents. Social

groups, by definition, are biologically self-perpetuating, share fundamental cultural values, make up a field of communication and interactions and have a membership which identifies itself and is identified by others as constituting a category distinguishable from other categories (10-11). The boundaries between whites and blacks are always maintained, but Solfa indicates how someone from an outside group (not white) could assimilate to the dominant (white) group somewhere in his ancestry.

Perhaps one of Solfa's ancestors was able to pass for white and now Solfa himself, identifying as a white *criollo*, is not consciously aware of his lineage. Hair, as in the case of the mulatto, Lewis, Thomas Gage encountered in Guadalupe, is the definitive indication of blackness. In *El engaño de las razas* Fernando Ortiz explains that hair has been considered a signal of racial distinction or difference because of its texture, color, abundance and insertion. Cubans have been socialized the believe that curly hair in *pasas* gives away black ethnic origins (Mutis 83-84). Likewise, even earlier, Gage and his Jesuit companions recognized Lewis's African ancestry by his curly hair while in every other physical aspect Lewis had managed to take on the appearance of the indigenous population. As with Lewis, racial fluidity is a political force that gives non-whites agency to counter racial hierarchies and white power. Racial fluidity debilitates whites' efforts to cordon off non-whites from establishing "whiteness" or any other racial identity or position of power. Even though Pancho Solfa possesses racially ambiguous black phenotypic markers, his family ties to white Creole elites allow for his blackness to be brushed aside. Pancho Solfa's friends seem unbothered by his blackness, however, as has been mentioned, Creole elites labored to extract and erase blackness from Cuban culture and the population.

III. Overlapping Spaces/Overlapping Races

On some level, mutual love between blacks and whites is expressed through the blending of European and African cultures, religious practices and races. But Creole's still wished to maintain their white status, at least in appearance, which required them to publicly distance themselves from blacks and black culture. The geography of insurgency reveals the centrality of race and slavery to the shaping of grievances and to understanding Cuba's anticolonial endeavor. Historical sites like Yara, where the slave population was low, were epicenters where rebellion flourished, while areas where there were plantations, and therefore a denser slave population, were not (Ferrer 15-18). Closeness between whites and blacks in locations where the black population thrived provided blacks with opportunities to exert greater agency in the outcomes of political projects like the Creole independence movement. For this reason, Creoles were less willing to undertake rebellion in regions where the black population was prominent.

The double bind of negotiating between the need to account for non-whites and their place in Cuba, at the same time that Creoles wished to maintain their elite position, impeded the independence movement. Non-whites' desire for greater rights was viewed as a threat to Creoles. Ada Ferrer cites white insurgents' inability to come to terms with the prospect of a black Cuba and denunciation of the movement in 1871 after surrendering to Spanish authority, stating:

> The insurrection no longer exists as such; its political idea has disappeared to be replaced with the irrational idea of destruction; and if the struggle is further prolonged, it is with aims and in a form that men of heart and conscience cannot accept...The blacks are poised to take control of the situation, if they do not completely dominate it already in the insurgent camp (Ferrer 51).

Black participation in Cuban insurgency in the second half of the nineteenth century affected the discourse and praxis of nationhood. Mulattos and blacks predicted a nation where whites and blacks would mix more while whites fought against this burgeoning black Cuban nation. The landscape of the rebellion changed over the span of the ten-year conflict. After the *Grito de Yara* in 1868, the end of Spanish rule in Cuba was called for and the leader of the rebellion, Céspedes, freed his slaves in order to achieve this goal. While white leaders signed the Pact of Zanjón formally ending the war, the rebellion continued under the leaderships of non-whites such as Antonio Maceo, a self-described man of color, with whom the Spanish were forced to negotiate. Maceo had repudiated the peace deal arguing that without abolition the rebellion would continue (Ferrer 16). The war became a battle over Cuban nationality and the borders between different racial groups in the nation. Whites were not willing to push for an independent Cuban nation at this time since white supremacy on the island would have been compromised.

Whites' fears of a multiracial Cuba in the historical archive play out in *Cecilia Valdés* as Cecilia and other characters exert subaltern power in Cuban society, pushing up against the social and political boundaries that limit but do not completely cut them off from Creoles. Cándido attempts to obey contemporary norms concerning racial mixing by having his daughter baptised "Valdés" in secret. In fact, these were not just norms since in 1805 civil legislation was passed in order to regulate interracial marriages between whites and known mulattos or people of African descent (Kutzinski 19-20). Even earlier, the Royal Pragmatic on Marriage was passed in 1776 and was extended to the colonies in 1778 making parental approval a prerequisite for marriage. This law most likely cut down on interracial unions (Wheat *"Nharas and Morenas Horras"* 137). Considering Cándido's elite status and the legal precedents set for marriages between Iberian men and free women of color, and the fact that he was already married to Rosa,

Cándido could only offer to maintain Rosario as a concubine. Perhaps in Cándido's mind, although Rosario accuses him of being a thief in her violent and disturbing reaction to his silencing of her and her child, he is in fact managing the situation as best he can, not just for himself but also for Rosario and Cecilia.

Chepilla, Rosario's mother, informs Cándido of his miscalculation of Rosario's will to be recognized. "El señor parece que no la conoce entodavía. Ella no oye razones. Es la más voluntariosa y cabecidura que ha nacido. Además, dende ese lance no está en su cabal juicio y razón." Rosario, like her mother before her, endangers white power. Her feminine sexuality becomes the driving force behind racial mixing that ultimately makes the white Cuba Cándido wishes to maintain an impossibility. Though Cándido has already been drawn into Rosario's sexual forcefield, he tries to reason with Chepilla, and himself, that his plan to hide his relationship with Rosario will keep the stereotypically crazy, fiery mulatta subdued. Cándido rationalizes "ella es joven y robusta, y todavía la naturaleza triunfará de todos sus males y penas (Villaverde 64-65)." With these words Cándido ignores Rosario's demands for recognition and seems to have convinced himself that he, as a member of the Spanish elite, can maintain his position of power.

Cándido's clandestine relationship and his anxieties concerning his mulatta daughter are and extension of the elite class's affinity and distaste for blacks and other non-white groups. Ángel Rama coined the term lettered city to describe the organization of the hierarchy of the Spanish colony that located white, literate elites at the center of colonial society. Other social spheres were theorized to exist conveniently outside of the lettered city in concentric circles of power (Rama 45-46). Although social hierarchies empowering a group of educated European elite male *criollos* to dominate the production of culture on a large scale, Cecilia and

Villerverde's mulatto cast of characters exist alongside and within elites in the lettered city, producing culture through oral discourse. Rappaport and Cummins have expanded on Rama's work to understand better the role of indigenous peoples in the Lettered City. Guaman Poma, Inca Garcilaso and Muños Camargo are canonical figures who move between the worlds of the lettered city and indigenous communities (Rappaport and Cummins 3-4). Rappaport and Cummins rethink the role of the critic in order to account for a broader understanding of literacy beyond the Creole definition that lends primacy to written texts. "Our task, then is to present the traces of this sustained engagement with literacy, so as to understand the nature of the intellectual participation of indigenous peoples in the social formation of colonial Latin America (5)." Indigenous and mestizo writers composed texts that were often excluded from the canon because they were deemed unliterary. In order to trace black engagement, the question of how to appreciate this interaction must be thought of differently from that of the indigenous population. Blacks' embodiement and speech allow us to engage with their lived realities.

The discomfort fictional characters cause their own authors signals the psychological effects black subjects' actions enjoy on *criollos* in real life besides what is projected on the page. Cecilia's ability to disrupt the hierarchy of urban spaces is central to the fears of the Delmontino group and Villaverde. As a result of the forced opening up of the hegemonic space by the non-white population, the apparatus of the lettered city continually attempted to deny non-whites access to this sphere (Branche 66). A literal wall was constructed in Havana to mark the relationships between whites and non-whites spatially. Elites hoped physical exclusions would allow the city to constitute its own whiteness and distinguish blackness from the norm at the same time. Distinctions are marked by the wall even in the twenty first century as references to the "*intramuro*" and "*extramuro*" spaces in the city are rooted in citizens' perceptions of these

historical processes (García *Beyond the Walled City 5*). Cándido is a figure whose goals reflect whites' desire to build walls because he attempts to deny access to Cecilia and the non-white sphere that she represents. By the turn of the nineteenth century, colonial administrative plans to divide and organize the city had little effect as elites took to the *extramuro* spaces for recreation and *extramuros* also had access to *intramuro* spaces such as the plaza which was a cauldron of racial mixture (García 84-85). Both white elites and blacks are guilty of moving into spaces that were not constructed for their use. Cecilia, the mulatta, is a figure who moves between the intramuros and the extramuros:

> Cecilia, the protagonist for whom the novel is entitled, resides in a markedly different space than the intramuros and extramuros. She is the *mulata* who belongs to neither area but travels freely between the colonial center and the urban periphery. She represents a third and liminal space akin to the parallel cities of Havana's *intramuros* and *extramuros* (García 108).

Cándido cannot deny Cecilia entrance to any social space whether it be his own home or the social space of the blacks and mulattos during the dance. Cecilia is symbolic of the in-between space that the colonial administration could not suppress fully.

As I have mentioned, Cecilia is an extension of her mother, who Cándido wished to hide from his social circles. Cándido's words, "todavía la naturaleza triunfará," prophesy how Rosario's desire to transgress social norms and the prohibition placed on interracial marriages will continue to function despite her silencing. The mulatto dance scene voices Rosario's truth through Cecilia, whose resemblance to her mother is noted by the party goers. One of the women comments that Cecilia is "el mismo retrato de su madre, que santa gloria haya." The women

continue to discuss Rosario's fate, "¿Qué murió la madre de esa niña?" asks one of the women, referring to Cecilia. Although one corroborates the story that Rosario died in Paula, the hospital, another one alludes to the truth, "Lo digo porque no se sabe de cierto si la madre de la niña está vive o muere; lo único que está bien averiguado es que la abuela oculta a la nieta el nombre de su padre, aunque es preciso ser ciega para no verlo o conocerlo (Villaverde 105)." The discussion between the mulattas adds information thereby establishing a more rounded understanding of Rosario's subaltern experience. We find out that Cecilia is the double of Rosario, enabling her mother to continue to move freely through white and mulatto spheres in spite of Cándido's attempts to negate her existence. The other mulattas become involved in the production of knowledge concerning the family secret because their conversation is the narrator's source.

Rosario still lives on through their memory as well as through Cecilia. From the moment that Cecilia is introduced to the reader, she is characterized by her easy movement through social spaces which disrupts Cándido's attempts to censor his transgressions with Rosario. Nancy Morejón proposes that Cecilia Valdés represents the weakest level of Cuban society because she is trapped in her own social networks as a result of conforming to *blanqueamiento:*

> Su lucha se resume en querer alejarse, cuanto antes, de su ancestro africano -esclavo-. En aquella pirámide, todos aspiraban a traspasar sus estamentos, conmoviendo -pobre de ellos- sus bases aceradas, hasta engrosar los filamentos más altos, los superiores, accionando mediante fraudes suculentos entre los que tenía especial eficacia el demonio del sexo...Cecilia no quiere ser Cecilia. Atrapada en sus propias redes es, por ellos, el eslabón más débil de la pirámide (Morejón 17).

Cecilia wishes to whiten herself through marriage but she cannot marry a wealthy white man because of her African ancestry. She would have to marry a white man of lesser status than Leonardo, or another nearly white mulatto, in order for her not to digress racially. Marriage to José Dolores Pimienta was out of the question because that alliance would prevent Cecilia from passing for white.

I argue that although Cecilia is never able to occupy a position of complete power, it cannot be denied that Cecilia's movement through social networks confirms her relative social freedom. Her innate ability to create fear and unease in everyone else around her in the streets of Havana signals the disruptive agency white embodiment wields:

> Entre tanto la chica crecía gallarda y lozana, sin cuidarse de las investigaciones y murmuraciones de que era objeto, y sin caer en la cuenta de que su vida callejera, que a ella le parecía muy natural, inspiraba sospechas y temores si no compasión a algunas viejas; que sus gracias nacientes y el descuido y libertad con que vivía alimentaban esperanzas de bastardo linaje en mancebos corazones, que latían al verla atravesar la plazuela del Cristo (Villaverde 76).

Cecilia's unorthodox presence incites fear and whispered conversation. The narrator's description of other's responses to Cecilia's free movement between spaces illustrates how Cecilia's very existence questions the supposed order of the urban space imagined by the lettered city both figuratively and literally. The muffled conversations surrounding Cecilia's behavior reference white anxiety concerning how to manage an increasingly unruly black and mulatto population. Although the maturing black and mulatto consciousness of their place in society, and their role in the anti-slavery movement, had been systematically denied by white abolitionists, as well as

many historical and literary critics since, it is clear that Afro-descendants were not simply waiting for white intellectuals to grant them access to political power and economic autonomy (Beckles 4). Sibylle Fischer also discusses Creole abolitionists' anxiety and the silences that result (*Modernity Disavowed* 21). Fischer questions how we can account for the silences in the dominant abolitionist discourse.

Muting voices within the lettered city is incomplete because the balance of power continuously shifts to reflect blacks' centrality. Elites turned to *blanqueamiento* in order to reinforce white political power. Many continued to argue for the maintenance of slavery as an institution while also pushing for independence. In order to demand autonomy from Spain, Creoles endeavoured to manage a non-white population that could not be maintained in a completely separate, peripheral sphere to the lettered city. Ada Ferrer describes the anxiety black insurgents' participation in uprisings against Spanish rule elicited:

> the mobilization of free and enslaved Cubans of color helped radicalize Cuban nationalism and made the rebellions militarily viable. Black participation was even celebrated in the nationalist prose of the period. But black mobilization -in the beginning because its only precedent lay in slave rebellion and later because it was accompanied by significant black leadership- also created anxieties among insurgents and fed the forces of counterinsurgency (10).

Ferrer's analysis of the historical relationship between blacks and an uneasy Creole population notes Creoles' desire to maintain the white dominated society. In order to do so, voices that fought to be heard had to be disavowed. But disavowal was not a truly effective method of suppression. This is the case when María de la Regla speaks to Adela and Carmen about Cecilia's

ancestry. Both girls immediately deny Gamboa could be Cecilia Valdés's father, "Eso no puede ser. Te engañaron tus ojos. Papá no ha tenido que ver nunca con mulatas y gente sucia (Villaverde 522)." Their denial does not void the truth nor does it stop María de la Regla from gaining their trust based on her maternal connection to Adela as her wet nurse.

Ironically, Cecilia's own white half-sisters had already seen her in the street years earlier and invited her into her father's home where they interrogated Cecilia, along with their mother, about the identities of Cecilia's mother and father. Cándido, who was also in the room, ignored Cecilia, told the girls to leave her alone and summarily left the scene (Villaverde 76). In spite of Cándido's attempts to avoid Cecilia's penetration into his home, he was powerless to keep her from having contact with his children and his wife. And their disavowal of Cecilia's connection to their family years later is not the definitive silencing of the truth. María de Regla later communicated the truth to Cándido's girls despite her justified fear that her masters would punish her for doing so. Whether this was Villaverde's intention or not, the discrepancy between the theorization of an ordered and divided city that has silenced the voices of those who do not occupy the lettered city, and the reality of the tensions caused by marginal spaces that really are not silent, is exposed.

Cecilia moves through white spaces that are off limits, actually becoming socially white, though temporarily, when she leaves the dance in Leonardo's carriage. Aponte, the carriage driver, asks a stranger who is entering to tell Cecilia that the carriage is waiting for her and refers to her as "niña," a term that was only used to refer to white women. The stranger is not confused in the least by Aponte's use of the term and the message is easily communicated to Cecilia (Villaverde 119). Another striking moment when Cecilia is able to pass for white occurs when she pushes Isabel Ilincheta as Isabel talks to Leonardo. Isabela confuses Cecilia for Adela,

Cecilia's white half-sister. A reader familiar with *Cecilia Valdés* will recall the uncanny similarity between Cecilia and Adela. It is doubtful that as a darker skinned mulatta Cecilia could have gotten away with such disrespectful treatment of a white woman. Later in the narration even María de la Regla looks at Cecilia and mistakes her for Adela when she visits her after the death of Chepilla. María has to take a moment to correct herself saying, "¡Ah Ese niñe no ñama Adel, ñama Sesil (Villaverde 574)."

José Dolores Pimienta notes their similarity when he sees Adela and her sisters in Uribe's shop. Adela lets her hair down and Pimienta is amazed by her resemblance to Cecilia, "mero espectador hasta entonces como los demás, hizo una exclamación de asombro, murmuró el nombre de la <<Virgencita de bronce>> y se lanzó sobre el ratero, o más bien sobre la presa, que se llevaba en triunfo (Villaverde 200)." Uribe observes Pimienta's reaction to Adela and comments, "Se parecen mucho. No pueden negar que son hermanos (Villaverde 201)." Once again, the mulattos discuss, out of earshot, that Cecilia Valdés is another one of Gamboa's children. What is important to take away from these scenes of passing is that, as a result of her ability to move between racial identities, Cecilia becomes the center of power struggles. Cecilia's ambiguous whiteness allows Villaverde as a writer to reveal the poorly hidden growing mulatto class that exists between and among the concentric circles of the lettered city. This in-between mulatto class can be thought of as the difference that "exists and persists...is a social space, a space of difference, in which classes exist in some sense in a state of virtuality, not as something given but as something *to be done* (Bourdieu 20-21)." The mulattos are more cognizant of the relationships between important social actors of various races than the white characters. Black culture is developing in such a way that the prospect of black oral narrative overwhelming the

centrality of white discourse is very much a threat whether whites are aware of it or not. In narrating these spaces, Villaverde's anxieties rise to the surface.

Mulatto social circles foster Cecilia's mobility as she becomes the catalyst of the meeting of various groups. The dance, one such mulatto social space, takes place in a temporal moment during eighteen days of religious and profane carnivalesque celebrations that caused the elite sphere to give way to an "erotic sphere" or the hybrid environment of the dance. Cecilia's passing becomes exaggerated in the open environment of the carnival.[67] The narrator distinguishes between the old fashioned minuet that is played first and the "danza cubana", described as a "modificación tan especial y peregrina de la danza española, que apenas deja descubrir su origen," that follows (104). The description of the dance perfectly matches the ambiguity of the scene. Cecilia dances with a white feather as she passes through the mulatto habitus which further causes her origin, like that of the "danza cubana," to be barely discernable. Cecilia's easy movement between white and mulatto during the dance is representative not only of the pleasure aroused in this sphere but also the anxieties of white elites. Mulattas like Cecilia are capable of overcoming the duality between ritual life represented by the dance and the everyday in which white social spaces remain relatively separate. Although white Creoles in attendance attempt to maintain their distance by sitting away from the people of color, they participate in the transgressive implications of the moment and succumb to the lures of the African rhythms and movements. The Creole men, including Leonardo, cannot resist Cecilia and Nemesia, her mulatta friend, when they come to sit after dancing (Villaverde 110). The music is a cultural marker that narrates this racial hybridity. The Dance facilitates textual space for the

[67] In the Bakhtinian sense, this mulatto space is now circular movement that can be considered an erotic sphere that reveals the space between ritual collective and everyday individual life that slave holding societies attempt to differentiate between (Bakhtin *Dialogic Imagination* 214).

young lovers to dialogue; cultures also connect in a "creative site where Spanish genres like the *contradanza* were refashioned and darkened to become the Cuban national dance, the *danza* (Guevara 124)."

Cecilia's dancing coincides with the secret conversation between mulattas who recount her ancestry, including her true connections to white Creoles, already mentioned. One named seña Caridad asks Mercedes de Ayala to reveal the identity of the gentleman who fathered Cecilia and now stalks her around the city:

> Como sé lo que es una curiosidad no satisfecha, *seña* Caridad, voy a sacarla de dudas, -dijo la Ayala acercándose-. Creo que hablo con una mujer de secreto, y por eso le digo todo lo que hay en el asunto....Sepa que el hombre es...-y poniéndole ambas manos en los hombros a la curiosa, le comunicó en secreto el nombre del individuo (Villaverde *Cecilia Valdés* 105-106).

Although the identity of the man in question, Gamboa, is not revealed to the reader at this time, the knowledge that he is a white gentleman, and his involvement with Cecilia's mother, is not hidden. This man wishes to keep the details of his relationship to Cecilia a secret, but he remains a part of her life and cannot regulate her movements. Her origin is very much a hidden secret. Mulatto cultural markers are only permitted to overlap with the lettered sphere openly in this carnivalesque temporal moment. Although social differences are marked in the wider colonial world, as well as within the dance, as whites and mulattos inhabit separate positions in the house, these divisions break down as closeness, through contact, leads to liking.[68]

[68] Within the field of social psychology, Zajonc's study "Attitudinal Effects of Mere Exposure" provides evidence that an individual's repeated exposure to a stimulus causes his or her attitude towards it to improve. All that is necessary is for the individual to perceive the stimulus (1).

Other locations in which the mulatto *habitus* functions as an opening for cultural and racial hybridity, like the dance, are disavowed by the lettered city. One is Uribe's shop, where the owner is portrayed as an agent of cultural hybridization amongst the elite class whose affinity for mulattos is expressed through their mutual enjoyment of fashion. Uribe is undeniably mixed race, a "favorito en aquella éopca de la juventud elegante de la Habana. Aunque quisiera, no hubiera podido negar la raza negra mezclada con la blanca, a que debía su origen (Villaverde 198)." Uribe functions as a locus of popular culture among the youth of Havana as a result of his skill as a tailor and his access to fabrics and styles from Europe and other parts of the world.[69] But unlike Cecilia, Uribe is not a controversial figure (at least in the novel, seeing as the historical archive portrays a very different biographical narrative of Uribe due to his alleged involvement in the Ladder Conspiracy) because he remains in his designated social place by marrying a mulatta.

[69] Popular culture refers to how Bakhtin conceptualizes the distinction between "offical" and "popular" culture. The official feast is distinguished from the carnival celebrated as temporary liberation from the prevailing truth of the established order (Bakhtin *Rabelais and His World* 10). The dances and the mulatto space, I argue, are a form of carnival in which the marked suspension of (almost) all hierarchical ranks, privileges, norms and prohibitions occurs.

IV. Appropriating *Blanqueamiento*. Creole Discourse and Black Women's Empowerment

María de la Regla is a slave and wet nurse for Cándido Gamboa and his legitimate wife, Rosa, at the time Cecilia and Adela, their legitimate daughter, are born. María is sent to live on the plantation, *La tinaja*, after Rosa discovers that María has been feeding both Adela and María's own daughter, Dolores, against Rosa's wishes. María de la Regla had also been contracted in secret by Cándido during that time to serve as Cecilia's wet nurse, however Rosa was never made aware of this development. María de la Regla's involvement in the censored history between Cándido and Rosario often functions to reveal tensions between and within segregated groups. María de la Regla's kinship with Adela and Cecilia unearths the strains on institutionally defined separations that were much more real than the nightmarish creole fantasy would acknowledge. Despite her position even further from the lettered city than the mulattas who occupy the in-between space of the dance, María de la Regla is the mother figure who connects all of the characters (González "American Theriomorphia" 447). Although María de la Regla is isolated on the sugar plantation, like Rosario, her voice cannot be extinguished if the story of Cecilia's origins is to be told.

As a result of being their wet nurse, María de la Regla has an unbreakable motherly bond with all three girls. Adela tries to reason that María de la Regla does not know for certain that Cándido is Cecilia's father, however she is eventually moved by María de la Regla's story. Adela and the narrator venture to censor the information María de la Regla provides but she cannot be ignored completely (Sommer 242). After talking to Adela during her visit to the plantation, María is able to get Adela's support for her reutrn to the city. Ángel Rama, referring more to the Southern Cone than to the Caribbean, posits that in the period of modernization literature records oral traditions in the countryside in works such as *Martín Fierro*. Rather than

amplifying orality, literature becomes "una sepultura donde es inmovilizada, fijada y detenida para siempre...(Rama 141)." In Cuba, and other Caribbean regions, this does not appear to be the case, as black speech is not burried and controlled in the narration of María de la Regla and others' voices.

María's movement, as well as her presence as mother to many of the characters of the younger generation, is evidence that although the lettered city attempts to distance María de Regla from the center of power, she has managed to penetrate into that sphere. It is a form of textual marronage characteristic of the Caribbean through which African subalterns have continuously gained agency. One such example is discussed in Alonso de Sandoval's narrative when a *ladina* slave disobeyed her mistress's orders and visited him in order to receive communion (Sandoval 198). Similarly to María de la Regla, the slave woman is a cultural intermediary who used Christian rhetoric to argue on behalf of African humanity in the face of oppression. María de la Regla is also a *ladina* who knows social mores and can purify her own image through oral narrative in order to achieve greater freedom. María de la Regla's location as intermediary and mother who connects her “daughters,” as well as her role in hiding and uncovering Cecilia’s origins, can only occur in the fluid space that exists between, and within, the lettered city and the peripheral non-white spheres.

Oral and written genres come together when black women express themselves through discourses of *blanqueamiento* which function as an escape hatch for women of color to upset the status quo. However, their pushback against official discourse does not allow them to gain access to power in the ways that they hope. Following their family tradition, Chepilla educates Cecilia to choose only white suitors. According to Chepilla, Cecilia is better born than her fiend, Nemesia, whose father is mulatto, because Cecilia's father is a white gentleman. Nemesia on the

other hand will marry a mulatto if she even marries at all. "Tú, al contrario, eres casi blanca y puedes aspirar a casarte con un blanco...Y has de saber que blanco, aunque pobre, sirve para marido; negro o mulato, ni el buey de oro. Hablo por experiencia (Villaverde 86)." Chepilla's silence concerning the outcomes of her three marriages should signal, again, the pitfalls that come along with her advice. Her fetishization of whiteness does not account for the social improvements mulattos have acquired. Although Chepilla looks down on mulattas who are darker and marry other mulattos, the mulatta, Mercedes Ayala, throws a dance in her home that evidences the wealth she has managed to acquire by forming relationships with other mulattos and whites in the city.[70]

These ties decenter white male authority as free blacks and mulattos, though marginal, disturb the racial hierarchies the elite Creole class relies on to maintain their status and the subordination of Afro-descended people (Monteleone 91). Monteleone begins to argue that incest is a stabilizing factor because it reacts to improve the loss of Creole identity caused by *blanqueamiento* or *mestizaje*, however she never justifies her conclusions. The incest is not exposed to the lovers and their extra marital relationship goes unimpeded, culminating in Leonardo's murder. Creole family structure is not reproduced, as Monteleone writes later, "la desestabilización del patriarcado por medio de familias racialmente segregadas conduce al incesto, lo cual inicia la destrucción de la familia burguesa (98)." The novel links *blanqueamiento* and incest in the mentality of the white elite that fears the weakening of

[70] Despite systemic attempts to limit the power of the free black population like the *Escalera* crackdown, as the Nelson article suggests, in the 19th Century and continuing into the 20th C the black sector of society is important in politics and society. Even white Creoles look to blackness on some level as a means of distinguishing Cuba from Peninsular hegemony. Art and literature like *Cecilia Valdés* represents Cuba through a *costumbrista* style developed to differentiate Cuba from the European tradition by including blackness. However this is an exclusionary inclusion as black voices are silenced. "Blackness, then, becomes an identifying marker of Cuban national literature. As the central and key feature in these national texts, it also disguises the various political intentions of authors behind the suggestion of a common and ostensibly abolitionist concern for blackness (Nelson 57)."

segregation and racial hierarchies. However, even though the relationship between Cecilia and Leonardo is incestuous and ends in tragedy, their example is not a reflection of all instances of mixing. The majority of free mulattos seem to exert their pride in their place in society and are not necessarily trying to pass into white elite circles. This place was not fully subservient in light of the frequent triggering of white anxiety concerning their activities. Free blacks and mulattos formed a social class in Cuba that was persecuted by "las clases representativas de la colonia...por el delito de poseer grandes capitales, acumulados á fuerza de trabajo personal" in the arts and other trades (Morúa Delgado 36). Despite mistreatment, one could even assert free blacks who are proud of their racial condition combat European power with greater success because they obtain capital through their own skills and difference.

Chepilla fails where Mercedes Ayala and her friends do not because she relies too heavily on European discourse and the impossible dream of achieving racial purity. Chepilla's advice to her granddaughter indicates that mulattos used the discourses originally formulated by whites for their own interests in order to cross into social environs that would exclude blacks from power. *Blanqueamiento* becomes a justification for women of color to engage in sexual relationships with white men. People of color, as I have argued in the case of early modern subalterns like Sandoval's *ladina* and Alonso Ramírez, use hegemonic discourse to justify their social position in order to obtain the power that whiteness holds. *Blanqueamiento* substitutes Christian rhetoric that dominated racial and cultural ideologies in earlier centuries. Rather than prove Christian lineage, or conversion, in the case of the *ladina* slave, black women attempt to gain social purity by literally whitening their offspring. Even María de la Regla endeavors to improve her situation

by sleeping with white men.[71] When the Gamboas visit their *ingenio*, María de la Regla approaches Adela to tell her side of the story and plead to be allowed to return to the city. Adela accuses her of loving (white) men for money. María de la Regla responds:

> No, niñita, no me haga su merced esa injusticia. Yo no podía querer; no me salía de adentro el querer a nadie. No se quiere más que una vez en la vida...Tampoco quería dinero para echar lujo, lo quería para libertarme. Resistí, Resistí...; pero la juventud, el deseo de mejorar de suerte, de salir de este infierno...Entre todos mis pretendientes, el carpintero vizcaíno que estaba aquí a mi llegada, creí que me cumpliría la palabra de libertarme; y en mal hora le fui infiel a Dionisio. Entonces nació Tirso, ese cuervo que todavía me ha de sacar los ojos (Villaverde *Cecilia Valdés* 513).

The fictionalization of the black woman's' experiences both emphasizes black female sexuality as a tool deployed by black women to obtain a privileged position but also asserts this depiction is a cruel stereotype. In María de Regla's case, she had hoped giving in to the *vizcayano* would allow her to gain her freedom but she was tricked. Both Chepilla and María de la Regla advance their social position by constructing oral narratives that justify their sexual relationships with white men. Chepilla is mistress of her own home, on the rarity of which the narrator comments. And María de Regla, although failed in obtaining her freedom through the *vizcayano*, later uses her closeness to Adela to talk her way into procuring her to return to the city. Her female role as wet nurse empowers María de la Regla because she is a mother figure, and confidant, to her white "daughter," Adela who is more than willing to support her cause.

[71] Hollingsworth discusses the laws concerning slave marriage that prohibited the separation of couples like María de la Regla and her husband, Dionisio (33-34).

But achieving whiteness is not a failsafe plan as already stated. Black women's ability to gain power through appropriating European colonial discourse is not a recourse that allows them to completely escape the confines of their marginalization. As Audre Lorde famously stated in the paper "The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House":

> Those of us who stand outside the circle of this society's definition of acceptable women; those of us who have been forged in the crucibles of difference -those of us who are poor, who are lesbians, who are Black, who are old- know that survival is not an academic skill. It is learning how to take our differences and make them strengths. For the master's tools will never dismantle the master's house (2).

Black women adopt *blanqueamiento* to destabilize white male dominated society and succeed in limited ways. I have already stated the limits to María de la Regla's efforts. In the case of Chepilla, and by extension her daughter and granddaughter, the effects of their power moves devastate the mulatta herself along with the master's house as both Cecilia and Charo are imprisoned.

It is not a coincidence that Charo and Cecilia reunite through tragedy in the *hospital de Paula* after Cecilia is condemned to one year as an accomplice in Leonardo's murder. They recognize one another and hug; Charo had regained her sanity briefly before her death (Villaverde 637-638). Their reconciliation perhaps offers some hope for the future of the Cuban nation, and the multiracial Caribbean. Coming face to face with one's hushed origins, symbolized by Cecilia learning that her mother is alive, is the key to consciousness and black political power. In *Talking Back*, feminist theorist bell hooks refers to this process of coming to consciousness as "self-recovery". Self-recovery refers to how oppressed subjects put the pieces of the self,

fragmented by patriarchy and racial oppression, together in order to become whole; the oppressed self develops an awareness of the forces that oppress. hooks writes:

> I was perpetually uncertain about the words "self-recovery," the insistence in them that a wholeness of being -named here the self- is present, possible, that we have experienced it, that it is a state to which we can return. I wanted to know in my heart if this was true for the oppressed, the dominated, the dehumanized, that the conditions for wholeness, that the whole self existed prior to exploitation and oppression, a self that could indeed be restored, recovered (hooks 30).

Whether Cecilia becomes aware of her oppression and her complicit role in upholding the superiority of whiteness (despite her unintentional place as outsider who disrupts social order) cannot be confirmed. However, the knowledge that her mother is alive, and the details of their conversation the Creole writer does not compose, speak to this possibility. Cecilia could have finally learned from her mother that Cándido is her father, allowing her to put together some of the pieces of her history and her place in society.

The myth of Cecilia Valdés is another facet of what Sibylle Fischer refers to as the fantasy, paranoia, identificatory desires and disavowal associated with the Haitian revolution. "But while radical antislavery was a formation that did not consolidate beyond the confines of Haiti, it certainly did leave a deep imprint in the psyche of most of those involved in the slave trade and the plantation economy (Fischer 2)." Cuban elites wished to stifle black political power that had taken shape in Haiti and threatened to also find a home on Cuban shores. Although references to the effects of the Haitian revolution were silenced, the political and social impact of the revolution appeared in other ways in Caribbean literature. Fears of black political and

cultural domination lay at the heart of *blanqueamiento* in nineteenth century Cuba. Mulattos and blacks in Cuba are a political and cultural force that cannot be ignored or denied because "blackness" is intrinsic to Cuban national identity. Black cultural agency is communicated in the text of Cirilo Villaverde's foundational novel in the voices of black and mulatto characters and in the black cultural markers they embody. Cecilia's African grandmother who does not speak, but communicates volumes in her flight from Cándido Gamboa during his visit to their home, is one example. Blackness escapes the control of white Creole elite society, often to the detriment of all involved. Leonardo's attraction to Cecilia and the rhythms of the *contrazanda* draw whites and blacks together despite hegemonic efforts to prohibit such racial and cultural mixtures.

Inscrutable characters in *Cecilia Valdés* are projections of the cultural, social and racial landscape of nineteenth century Cuba where the white and non-white populace is theorized into distinct groups by the hegemonic authority. Villaverde's narrator seeks to recreate easy classifications of racially mixed characters, for example giving Cecilia the epithet "virgen de bronce."[72] She represents a sector of society whose vague phenotype scrambles racial categories, thereby imperilling white Creole dominance. As Morúa Delgado elaborates, Cecilia resembles Adela so much that "no debemos suponer dudosa, por más que según opinión de Pancho Solfa, el amigo y condisípulo de Leonardo, no puede uno aventurarse á jurar pureza de sangre, tratándose de españoles y cubanos (53)." The mulatta's likeness to Adela is not an anomaly in Cuban society, but rather approximates a norm elites would like to disregard. To combat racial ambiguity, Villaverde postulates a social, cultural and political project to muzzle in-between subjects who do not remain in the places intended for those of their imposed identities. Cecilia

[72] Martín Morúa Delgado faults Villaverde's choice of nick name for lacking logic. If Cecilia is white enough to be confused with her double, Adela, a white Creole woman, Cecilia probably would not have a darker coloring that would distinguish her from whites (Morúa Delgado 53).

Valdés is characterized as a boundary breaker who upsets the norm rather than the ideal Cuban citizen. As Ramos illustrates, she "disimula y deshace los bordes y la integridad de las categorías diferenciales duras postuladas por un proyecto de fundación nacional articulado en torno de una compleja tropología de contaminación y pureza (Ramos 225)." Cecilia's racial fluidity allows her to move, despite limits imposed by white supremacy, into her father's home literally as a child and also in the biological extreme symbolized by her incestuous relationship with Leonardo.

In spite of the suppression of the mulatto social sphere, and the fact of Cecilia's origin, or lack thereof, the moments in which the mulatto subaltern is present where she should not be lead to the softening of hierarchies imagined by colonial hegemony. Cecilia and Leonardo's affair symbolizes all Cubans', both black and white, shared cultural and racial histories. This is also alluded to when Cecilia enters Cándido's house at her sisters' request. Ironically, although neither Cándido nor Leonardo are innocent in the initiation and maintenance of love affairs, Cándido attempts to separate Leonardo from Cecilia by claiming to the mayor that Cecilia is seducing Leonardo. The mayor reacts with pleasure to news of another case of a mulatta seducing a white Creole:

> ¡Cuánto me alegro, señor D. Cándido, de oírle! ¡Estoy encantado, sorprendido! ¿Pues no ha de llamarme la atención y complacerme, si desde que presido en este tribunal de justicia, por disposición soberana, ha más de un año, es V. el primero que se acerca a él en queja semejante? No es que no ocurra en la Habana casos iguales, no; ocurren a millares (591).

The mayor revels in the news of another tragic case of a mulatta seducing a white man in Havana during his tenure in office. The narrative tone acquires an overarching posture in favor of

Cándido and Leonardo who become the victims of the "orgullosa y vengativa mulata (636)." However, reading the text from a contemporary standpoint, it is impossible to be satisfied with only this version of events. Especially after delving into blacks' oral discourse in *Cecilia Valdés* and in texts from earlier periods. In-between racially mixed spaces where blacks and whites meet are meant to be kept silent in the literary tradition. In spite of the best efforts of whites, the ambiguous and black subjects who inhabit these spaces nonetheless communicate the truths whites wish could remain buried. Black humanity, though subaltern, cannot be denied as it inhabits Caribbean writers' psyches.

The unstoppable union between Leonardo and Cecilia elucidates how discourses of difference designed by colonial slave society are diluted by a burgeoning multiracial society of Creoles and mulattos. In practice, the racial whitening promoted by elite Creoles could not limit let alone erase blackness from the population and culture rather *blanqueamiento* became a delusion of white supremacy that could not undo hundreds of years of contact and transculturation between blacks and whites. Cecilia is not able to pass for a white Creole long enough to marry Leonardo, but her request of José Pimienta to stop Leonardo and Isabel's wedding symbolically prevents the perpetuation of a pure and legitimate white Creole society. The question of what is to be learned from her paradoxical resistance to the hegemonic discourse of the lettered city remains to be answered. Cecilia's sexual union with Leonardo signals the emergence of a new social sphere that complicates segregating blacks and whites. As a result of interracial relationships like Cecilia and Leonardo's, and their parents' before them, it becomes impossible to distinguish between the actions of the Spanish patriarchal figure represented by Cándido and those of his Creole son.

Black subalterns' reappropriation of the discourses of colonial slave society in *Cecilia Valdés* uncovers a racially hybrid Cuban society that can no longer be controlled by the Spanish colonial state. This is Cuba's modernity; Cuba is a society based on a common thread of heterogeneity and instability that occurs throughout the Caribbean (Palmié 42). In the earlier colonial period Afro-descendants affected European political projects but where not themselves commonly confused for whites. Subjects like Alonso Ramírez, who appeared white and had unclear origins, could solidify a Creole status through performing a picaresque religious discourse without rupturing Creole authority. Phenotype was important, but it was not a fixation in society to the extent that it would become by the time *Cecilia Valdés* was written. Elite whites struggled to maintain a place of pre-eminence by the nineteenth century. Creoles themselves could not without doubt claim purity or superiority while much of the free black population asserted pride through difference.

Conclusion

I am often frustrated by binaries and the tendency on the part of critics to fixate on the whole, rather than what is between or on the edges, or rather the locations where races and peoples overlap and meet. Blind spots remain concerning boundary spaces between institutionally segregated racial groups in the past and in the present. I have ruminated on the black interracial experience for as long as I can remember because I am a person of mixed heritage. Growing up with my white mother and black father, it was always clear to others that I was their child, half black and half white. As an adult in the world on my own I always have to decide how much to share, how to deal with incomprehension of my racial identity, and how to respond to strangers and new acquaintances when they ask, "What are you?" To me, the answer seems obvious, but to North Americans, especially those who are not black, my race and my relationship to them is unclear. In the North American context, there is also a lacking vocabulary for how to describe racial difference that cannot be easily fit into neat boxes on census forms. Spanish American literature has been a gateway for me to better understand myself and also to understand the mixed-race experience. Early modern and modern Caribbean conceptualizations of race allow me to break free from the limitations imposed by the English language's clumsy treatment of this reality.

The fluid boundary conceptualizes multiracial cultural production in literary texts composed by white authors who visited the colonial Spanish American Caribbean as well as white Creoles born there. Boundaries are the limits that mark differences between agents and racial groups acting in a given society.[73] On the margins of cultural production, a multifaceted

[73]See Barth, Frederick. "Introduction." *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries: The Social Organization of Cultural Difference*. United States: Waveland Press, 1998; Lotman, Juri. "On the

process undertaken by members of the elite as well as ethnic and social others, including women, takes place. Subalterns exercise political. Within the boundary, which I also refer to as the in-between space, limits may be overcome or repositioned as subaltern subjects and hegemonic writers participate in the composition of political, social, and cultural discourses and conceptions of racial identity. The porous boundary is a point of focus that responds to the following question: How is cultural and political power produced through the expansion of multivocal spaces in which whites and subaltern racial others come into contact? And how is identity defined through interracial dialogue? I argue that the work of European writers cannot be understood properly without analysing how the oral discourse and subaltern agency of racial others also inform narratives.

Subaltern theory originating in the South Asian Subaltern Studies group has been especially useful to my study.[74] Subordinate group members partially communicate their own lived experiences and conceptualizations of their place in society through their very embodiment in the text as well as oral interjections despite operating from marginal positions. Though these subjects are subaltern in the sense that their subjectivity cannot be fully comprehended in hegemonic texts, the fluid boundary is a point of focus that allows for a more nuanced understanding of their humanity and their place within hegemony. Within boundaries black

---

Semiosphere." Trans. Wilma Clark. *Sign Systems Studies* 33.1, 2005; Mignolo, Walter. *The Darker Side of the Renaissance: Literacy, Territoriality and Colonization*. Second Edition. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2003; Rama, Angel. *La ciudad letrada*. Ediciones del norte, 2002.

[74]See Guha, Ranajit. "Not at Home in Empire." *Critical Inquiry*, Vol 23 No 3, 1997, pp 482-493; Gayatri Spivak. "Can the Subaltern Speak?" Ed. Morris, Rosalind. *Can the Subaltern Speak?: Reflections on the History of an Idea* and "Who Claims Alterity?" *Remaking History*. Ed Barbara Kruger. The New Press, 1998.

people often rely on oral testimony to communicate their lived realities in ways that dominant narratives cannot simply brush aside.

How dialogic dynamics between the hegemonic writer and the subaltern limit or extend the agency of the writing and oral narrator/author is a question that can be better understood through further contextualization and comparison between geographic regions and time periods. The issues discussed can be more thoroughly appreciated by extending the scope of works studied to include more nineteenth and twentieth century narratives in a comparative literary and historical analysis of representations of Afro-descended peoples. For example, the fictionalized voices depicted in *Cecilia Valdés* could be better tied to social reality if studied alongside Miguel Barnet's *Biografía de un cimarrón*, and writing by Afro-descended authors like Juan Francisco Manzano, in a wider variety of literary and historical texts in the Caribbean in *Changó el gran putas* and in Brazil in Mahomma Baquaqua's autobiography. My research will continue to consider what it means for dominant writers to include the subaltern voice. Writers in the colonial period are not attempting to write the subaltern experience, but rather they incorporate subalterns for the information they provide in order to support dominant political projects.

Bibliography

Adorno, Rolena. “Los debates sobre la naturaleza del indio en el siglo xvi: textos y contextos.” *Revista de estudios hispánicos*. vol 19, 1992.

Altman, Ida. “Marriage, Family, and Ethnicity in the Early Spanish Caribbean.” *The William and Mary Quarterly*. vol 70, no 2, 2013.

-"Towns and the Forging of the Spanish Caribbean." *The Early Modern Hispanic World*. Eds. Lynn, Kimberly and Erin Kathleen Rowe. Cambridge University Press, 2017, pp. 23-44.

Anonymous. *Lazarillo de tormes*. Madrid: Editorial Castalia, 1989.

Arciniegas, Germán. “The Island of Cromwell and the Protector, and of Morgan the Pirate.” *Caribbean: Sea of the New World.* Trans. Harriet de Onís. New York: Alfred A Knopf, 1946.

Arias, Santa. “Empowerment Through the Writing of History: Bartolomé de las Casas’s Representation of the Other(s).” *Early Images of the Americas: Transfer and Invention*. Ed. Jerry M. Williams and Robert E. Lewis. University of Arizona Press, 1993.

Aristotle. *On the Generation of Animals*. Trans Peck, A.L. Harvard University Press, 2014.

Arjona, Doris, K. “The English American on the Spanish Galleons.” *Hispania*, Vol 23, No. 4, 1940, 349-356.

Arrom, JJ “Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora: relectura criolla de los ‘infortunios de Alonso Ramírez.” *Thesaurus: Boletin del instituto Caro y Cuervo,* 1987.

-"Criollo: Definición y matices de un concepto." *Hispania.* vol 34 no. 2, 1951.

Avalle-Arce, Juan Bautista. “Las hiperboles del padre Las Casas.” *Dintorno de una epoca dorada*. José Purrua Turranzas, 1978.

Bakhtin, M.M. *The Dialogic Imagination*. Ed. Michael Holquist. University of Texas Press, 1981.

Bakhtin, Mikhail. *Rabelais and His World*. Trans. Helene Iswolsky. The Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1968.

Balboa Troya, Silvestre de. “Espejo de paciencia.” Ed. Mayra Hernández Sánchez. Editorial Letras Cubanas, 2008.

Barth, Frederick. “Introduction.” *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries: The Social Organization of Cultural Difference*. Waveland Press, 1998.

Bauer, Ralph. *The Cultural Geography of Colonial American Literatures: Empire, Travel, Modernity.* Cambridge University Press, 2003.

Becerra, Eduardo. "Señales desde una biblioteca perdida. *Infortunios de Alonso Ramírez:* identidad criolla y cuestión barroca." *Edad de Oro.* vol 24, pp 41-51, 2010.

Beckles, Hilary. “Caribbean Anti-Slavery: The Self-Liberation Ethos of Enslaved Blacks.” *Journal of Caribbean History,* 1988.

Benítez Rojo. "Bartolomé de Las Casas: Entre el infierno y la ficción." *MLN Hispanic Issue*, vol 103 no 2, pp 259-288, 1988.

-*La isla que se repite*: *El Caribe y la perspectiva posmoderna*. Ediciones del Norte, 1996.

Bernabé, Jean, Patrick Chamoiseau and Raphaël Confiant. *Éloge de la Créolité: In Praise of Creolness*. Gallimard, 1989.

Beverly, John. "On the Concept of the Spanish Literary Baroque." *Culture and Control in Counter Reformation Spain*. Eds. Anne J. Cruz and Mary Elizaeth Perry. University of Minneapolis Press, 1992.

-*Subalternity and Representation*: *Arguments in Cultural Theory*. Duke University Press, 1999.

Biblegateway.com

Block, Kristen. *Ordinary Lives in the Early Caribbean*: *Religion, Colonial Competition, and the Politics of Profit.* The University of Georgia Press, 2012.

Bolaños, Álvaro Félix. "Sobre 'Relaciones' e identidades en crisis: el 'otro' lado de ex-cautivo Alonso Ramírez." *Revista de Critica Latinoamericana*. vol 42, pp 132-50, 1995.

Bourdieu, Pierre. *The Field of Cultural Production*. Ed. Randal Johnson. Columbia University Press, 1994.

"Intellectual field and creative project." *Social Science*, vol 8 no 2, pp 89-119, 1969.

-"Physical Space, Social Space and the Habitus." Vilhelm Aubert memorial lecture. Oslo, Norway, Department of Sociology, University of Oslo and Institute for Social Research, 1996.

Boyarin, Jonathan. *The Unconverted Self: Jews, Indians, and the Identity of Christian Europe.* The University of Chicago Press, 2009.

Boyer, Patricio. "Criminality and Subjectivity in Infortunios de Alonso Ramírez." *Hispanic Review*. vol 78 no 1, pp 25-48, 2010.

Brady, Robert L. "The Role of Las Casas in the Emergence of Negro Slavery in the New World." *Revista de Historia de América*. Nos 61-62, pp 43-55, 1966.

Branche, Jerome. *Colonialism and Race in Luso-Hispanic Literature*. University of Missouri Press, 2006.

-"Mulato entre negros (y blancos): Writing, Race, the Antislavery Question, and Juan Francisco Manzano's Autobiografía." *Bulletin of Latin American Research*.Vol 20 No 1, pp 63-87, 2001.

Brunsetter, Daniel R.. "Sepulveda, Las Casas and the Other." *Review of Politics.* vol 72 no 3, pp 409-435, 2010.

Buscaglia-Salgado, Jose. *Undoing Empire: Race and Nation in the Mulatto Caribbean*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010.

-"The Misfortunes of Alonso Ramírez (1690) and the Duplicitous Complicity Between the Narrator, the Writer, and the Censor. " *Dissidences: Hispanic Journal of Theory and Criticism* 1.1 (2005). August 2009.

Cárcel, Ricardo García. *La leyenda negra: historia y opinión*. Alianza Editorial, 1992.

Carroll, Partick J. “Los mexicanos negros, el mestizje y los fundamentos olvidados de la ‘raza cósmica’: una perspectiva regional.” Historia Mexicana 44:3 (1995), pp. 403-38.

Castigliano, Raúl. "Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora o la picaresca a la inversa." *Razón y Fábula*. Vol 25, 1971.

Chang-Rodriguez, Raquel. "Apuntes sobre sociedad y literatura hispanoamericanos en el siglo xviii." *Cuadernos Americanos*. no 4, pp. 131-144.

-“La transgresión de la picaresca en los *Infortunios de Alonso Ramírez*.” *Violencia y subversión en la prosa colonial hispanoamericana*. José Porrúa Turanzas. pp. 85-108, 1982.

Clayton, Lawrence. *Bartolomé de las Casas: A Biography.* Cambridge University Press, 2012.

Cohen, Jeffrey J. *Medieval Identity Machines*. University of Minnesota Press, 2003.

Comas, Juan. “Fray Bartolomé, la esclavitud y el racismo.” *Revista de la Universidad de México*. No 3, 1974.

Corbató, Hermenegildo. "La Emergencia de la Idea de Nacionalidad en el México Colonial." *Revista Iberoamericana*. vol 6 no 12, pp 377-92, 1943.

Cortijo Ocaña, Juan. “Creación de una voz de autoridad en Bartolomé de las Casas: Estudio del Prólogo de la Historia de Indias.” *Revista Iberoamericana*. vol 61 nos 170-171, pp. 219-229, 1995.

Covarrubias, Sebastián de. *Tesoro de la lengua castellana*, *o Española.* http://fondosdigitales.us.es/fondos/libros/765/16/tesoro-de-la-lengua-castellana-o-espanola/.

Cummings, J. S. and Alan Soons. "Introduction." *Infortunios de Alonso Ramírez, natural de la ciudad de San Juan de Puerto Rico*, *padeció*. 1984.

De la Fuente, Alejandro. "Myths of Racial Democracy: Cuba, 1900-1912." *Latin American Research Review*, vol 34 no 3, 1999.

Del Monte, Domingo. *Humanismo y humanitarismo*. Publicaciones de la secretaria de Educación Dirección de cultura. La Habana 1936.

Dennis, Christopher. "El 'negro' en dos textos colombianos y el 'blanqueo' de su alma." Chasqui: revista de literatura latinoamericana. vol 36 no 1, pp 3-17, 2007.

Derridá, Jaques. "The Animal That Therefore I Am (More to Follow)." *Critical Inquiry* vol 28, pp 369-418, 2002.

De Stefano, Luciana. *Los indígenismos en el viaje y descripción de las indias (1539-1553)*. Fondo Editorial de Humanidades y Educación Universidad Central de Venezuela, 2002.

Domínguez Ortiz, Antonio. "La esclavitud en Castilla durante la edad moderna." *Estudios de historia social de España*. Ed. Carmelo Viñas y Mey. CSIC, pp. 369-427, 1952.

Elbourne, Elizabeth. "Introduction: Key Themes and Perspectives." *Sex, Power and Slavery*. Ed. Gwyn Campbell and Elizabeth Elbourne. Ohio University Press, 2014.

Feerick, Jean E. "Introduction: Bloodwork." *Strangers in Blood: Relocating Race in the Renaissance*. University of Toronto Press, 2010.

Fernández Retamar, José. *Todo Calibán*. Ediciones Callejón, 2003.

Fernández Retamar, Roberto and John Beverly. "Against the Black Legend." *Ideologies and Literature: A Journal of Hispanic and Luso-Brazilian Studies*. vol 2 no10, pp. 16-35, 1979.

Ferrer, Ada. *Insurgent Cuba: Race, Nation, and Revolution, 1868-1898*. The University of North Carolina Press, 1999.

Firth, C. H., M.A. *The Narrative of General Venables*. Ed. C. H. Firth, M.A. Longmans, Green, and Co. 1900.

Fischer, Sibylle. *Modernity Disavowed*. Duke University Press, 2004.

Flesler, Daniela. "Contradicción y heterogeneidad en *Infortunios de Alonso Ramírez* deCarlos Sigüenza y Góngora." *Romance Notes*. vol 42 no 2, 2002.

Florescano, Enrique. *Memoria mexicana*. España: S.L. Fondo de Cultura, 2002.

Fornet, Jorge. "Ironía y cuestionamiento ideológico en Infortunios de Alonso Ramírez." *Cuadernos americanos* 9, 1995.

Fra Molinero, Baltasar. "El negro Zaide: marginación social y textaul en el Lazarillo." *Hispania*. vol 76 no 1, pp 20-29, 1993.

Frederick, J. "Without Impediment: Crossing Racial Boundaries in colonial Mexico." *The Americas.* vol 67 no 4, pp 495-515, 2011.

Fuchs, Barbara. *Exotic Nation: Maurophilia and the Construction of Early Modern Spain*. University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009.

-"The Spanish Race." *Rereading the Black Legend.* Eds. Margaret Greer, Walter D. Mignolo and Maureen Quilligan. University of Chicago Press, 2007.

Fuente, Alejandro de la. "La <<raza>> y los silencios de la cubanidad." *En proceso*. http://arch1.cubaencuentro.com/pdfs/20/20af107.pdf. 2009.

Gage, Thomas. "A Duell Between a Jesuite and a Dominican" (1651)

-*New Survey of the West-Indies: or, The English American his Travels by Sea and Land*. London: A. Clark, 1677.

-"Some Brief and True Observations Concerning the West-Indies, humbly presented to his highness, Oliver, lord protector of the Commonwealth of England, Scotland and Ireland."

-"The Tryanny of Satan." London: Tho. Badger, for Humphrey Mosley at the Princes Armes in Paul's Church-yard, 1642.

García, Guadalupe. *Beyond the Walled City*: *Colonial Exclusion in Havana*. University of California Press, 2016.

Garcia Berrio, Antonio. *España e Italia ante el conceptismo.* Consejo superior de investigaciones científicas, 1968.

Gaylord, Kathleen. *The Medieval Bestiary in the Golden Age: Allegory and Emblem in Gracián's El Criticón.* University of Illinois-Urbana Champaign, UMI Dissertations Publishing, 1986.

Gilman, Stephen. *The Spain of Fernando de Rojas: The Intellectual and Social Landscape of La Celestina*. Princeton University Press, 1972.

Gelpi, Juan. “El discurso jerárquico en ‘Cecilia Valdes.'"*Revista de Crítica Literaria Latinoamericana*. vol 17*,* no 34, 1991.

Goffman, Erving. *Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity*. Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1963.

Gomariz, José. "Francisco de Arango y Parreño: El discurso esclavista de la ilustración cubana." *Cuban Studies*. vol 35, 2004.

Gómez, Pablo. *The Experiential Caribbean: Creating Knowledge and Healing in the Early Modern Atlantic*. The University of North Carolina Press, 2017.

González, Aníbal. “Los infortunios de Alonso Ramírez: Picaresca e historia.” *Hispanic Review*. vol 51 no 2, pp 189-202, 1983.

González, Eduardo, “American Theriomorphia: The Presence of Mulatez in Cecilia Valdés.” *Do the Americas Have a Common Literature?* ed. Gustavo Pérez Firmat. Duke University Press, 1990.

González Echeverría, Roberto. "Fiestas Cubanas: Villaverde, Ortiz, Carpentier." *Encuentro de la cultura cubana* vol 20, pp 267-283, 2001.

-*"José Arrom, autor de la* Relación acerca de las antigüedades de los indios *(picaresca e historia)." Relecturas: estudios de literatura cubana.* Monte Avila, 1976.

González Stephan, Beatriz. "Narrativa de la estabilización colonial". *Ideologies and Literatures*. vol 1 no 1, pp 7-52, 1987.

Goslinga, Cornelis. *The Dutch in the Caribbean and on the Wild Coast 1580-1680.* Van Gorcum, 1971.

Gracián y Morales, Baltazar. *El criticón*. Iter Ediciones, 1970.

Greer, Margaret, Walter D. Mignolo and Maureen Quilligan "Introduction." *Rereading the Black Legend: The Discourses of Religious and Racial Difference in the Renaissance Empires*. University of Chicago Press, 2008.

Guevara, G R. "Inexacting Whiteness: blanqueamiento as a gender-specific trope in the nineteenth century." *Cuban Studies*. vol 36 no 1, pp 105-128, 2005.

Guaman Poma de Ayala. *Nueva corónica y buen gobierno*. Det Kongelige Bibliotek. http://www.kb.dk/permalink/2006/poma/info/en/frontpage.htm.

Guha, Ranajit. "Not at Home in Empire." *Critical Inquiry*. vol 23 no 3, pp 482-493, 1997.

Guillén, Claudio. "Towards a Definition of the Picaresque Genre." *Literature as system: Essays Towards the Theory of Literary History.* Ed. Claudio Guillén. Princeton University Press, 1971.

Hanke, Lewis. "Dawn of Conscience in the America: Spanish Experiments and Experiences with Indians in the New World." *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*. vol 107, no 2, pp 83-92, 1963.

Helmenin, Juha Pekka. "Las Casas, los judios, los moros y los negros." *Cuadernos hispanoamericanos*. No 512, pp 23-28, 1993.

Hollingsworth, C. "Cirilio Villaverde and Realism: The Theme of Slavery in Cecilia Valdes." *Caribbean Studies*. vol 15, no 4, pp 29-42, 1976.

hooks, bell. *Talking Back: Thinking Feminist, Thinking Black*. Routledge ,1989.

Invernizzi Santa Cruz, Lucia. "*Naufragios e Infortunios*: Discurso que transforma fracasos en triunfos". *Dispositio*. vol 40, pp 99-111, 1986.

Jennings, Willie James. "Zurara's Tears." *The Christian Imagination: Theology and the Origins of Race.* Yale University Press, 2011.

Jiménez, Javier. "Realism as Master Gendre: The Dialogic Crisis in *Cecilia Valdés*." *Hispanic Review*. vol 84 no 1, pp 47-67, 2016.

Johnson, Julie Greer. "Picaresque Elements in Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora 's *Los Infortunios de alonso Ramírez"*. *Hispania*. vol 64, pp 60-7, 1981.

Josephus, Flavius. *The genuine and complete works of Flavius Josephus.* Ed. Thomas Morton Bates. 1796.

Keen, Benjamin. "The Black Legend Revisited: Assumptions and Realities." *The Hispanic American Historical Review*, Vol 49 No. 4, pp. 703-719, 1969.

Kristeva, Julia."'Nous Deux' or a (Hi)story of Intertextuality," *The Romantic Review.* vol 93 nos 1-2, pp. 7-13, 2002.

-*Revolution in Poetic Language*. Trans. Margaret Waller. Columbia University Press, 1984.

Kutzinski, Vera M. *Sugar's Secrets: Race and the Erotics of Cuban Nationalism*. University Press of Virginia, 1993.

Kuznesof, Elizabeth Anne. "Ethnic and gender influences on Spanish Creole Society in Colonial Spanish America." *Colonial Latin American Review.* vol 4 no 1, pp 153-176, 1995.

Lamore, Jean, "Introducción." En Cirilio Villaverde. *Cecilia Valdés*. Cátedra, 2000.

Landers, Jane. "Africans in the Spanish Colonies." *Historical Archeology,* vol 31 no 1, Diversity and Identity in Colonial Spanish America: Native American, African, and Hispanic Communities during the Middle Period, 1997.

Lane, Kris E. *Pillaging and Empire: Piracy in the Americas, 1500-1750.* Routledge, 1998.

Las Casas, Bartolomé de. *Apologética historia summaria de las gentes destas Indias.* Universidad Nacional autónoma de México, 1967.

-*La brevíssima relación de la destrucción de las Indias*. Ed. Andre Saint-Lu. Spain: Cátedra, 2006.

-*Historia de las Indias*. Ed. André Saint-Lu. Biblioteca ayacucho, 1986.

Latimer, Jon. *Buccaneers of the Caribbean*. Harvard University Press, 2009.

Lefebvre, Henri. *The Production of Space*. Trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith. Blackwell Publishing, 1991.

Lévinas, Emmanuel. *Alterity and Transcendence.* Columbia University Press, 1999.

Leonard, Irving. *Don Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora, a Mexican Savant of the 17th Century.* University of Califormia Press, 1929.

Loomba, Ania and Jonathan Burton. "Introduction." *Race in Early Modern England: A Documentary Companion*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2007.

López, Kimberles. "Identity and Alterity in the Emergence of a Creole Discourse: Sigüenza y Góngora's Infortunios de Alonso Ramírez." *Colonial Latin American Review*. vol 5 no 2, pp 253-276, 1996.

Lord, Audre."The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House." *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches*. Crossing Press, pp. 110-114, 2007. http://collectiveliberation.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/Lorde_The_Masters_Tools.pdf.

Lotman, Juri. "On the Semiosphere." Trans. Wilma Clark. *Sign Systems Studies* 33.1, 2005.

Loury, Glenn C. *The Anatomy of Racial Inequality*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003.

Lowe, Kate and T. F. Earle. *Black Africans in Renaissance Europe.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

Luis, William. *Literary Bondage: Slavery in Cuban Narrative*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1990.

-"Revisiting the Past and Roberto Fernández Retamar's *Calibán*." *Small Axe*, vol 20 no 3, 2016.

Mancing, Howard. "Deceptiveness in the *Lazarillo de Tormes*." PMLA, vol 90, no 3, pp. 426-432, 1975.

Maravall, José Antonio. *Culture of the Baroque*. Trans. Terry Cochran. University of Minnesota Press, 1986.

Martínez, María Elena. *Genealogical Fictions: Limpieza de sangre, Religion and Gender in Colonial Mexico*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008.

- "The Black Blood of New Spain: Limpieza de Sangre, Racial Violence, and Gendered Power in Early Colonial Mexico." *The William and Mary Quarterly*, Third Series. Vol 61 No 3, pp. 479-520, 2004.

Martínez-San Miguel, Yolanda. *Colonialisty of Diasporas: Rethinking Intra-Colonial Migrations in a Pan-Caribbean Context*. Palgrave MacMillan, 2014.

-*From Lack to Excess: "Minor" Readings of Latin American Discourse.* Bucknell Studies in Latin American Literature and Theory, 2008.

Massman, Stephanie. "Casi semejantes: Tribulaciones de la identidad criolla en *Infortunios de Alonso Ramírez* y Cautiverio Feliz." *Atenea*. vol 1, 109-125, 2007.

McKnight, Kathryn. "'En su tierra lo aprendió': An African Curandero's Defense before the Cartagena Inquisition." *Colonial Latin American Review*. vol 12, 63-84, 2003.

Mignolo, Walter. *The Darker Side of the Renaissance: Literacy, Territoriality and Colonization*. Second Edition. University of Michigan Press, 2003.

Monteleon, Karen. "El incesto y el mestizaje en *Cecilia Valdés*." *Revista Iberoamericana*. vol 70 no 206, pp 87-101, 2004.

Moraña, Mabel. *Viaje al silencio: exploraciones del discurso barroco*. Universidad Autónoma de México, 1998.

-"Máscara autobiografica y conciencia criolla en 'Infortunios de Alonso Ramírez." *Dispositio,* 1990.

Morejón, Nancy. *Fundación de la imagen*. La Habana: Editorial letras cubanas, 1988.

Mörner, Magnus. *Race Mixture in the History of Latin America*. Little Brown, 1967.

Morúa Delgado, Martín. *Impresiones literarias. Las novelas del Sr. Villaverde*. Imp. de A. Alvarez y Co. 1892.

Mourão, Manuela. "Whitewash: Nationhood, Empire and the Formation of Portuguese Racial Identity." *Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies*. vol 11 no 1, pp 90-124, 2011.

Mutis, Ana María. "'Enamorado hasta la punta del pelo': Semiótica capilar en 'Cecilia Valdés'." *Revista Hispánica Moderna*. vol 59 nos 1/2, pp 83-95, 2006.

Navarrette Peláez, María Cristina. "Los cimarrones de la provincia de Cartagena de Indias en el siglo XVII: Relaciones, diferencias y políticas de las autoridades." *De la historia negra: Símbolo, cosmovisión y resistencia*. Icultur, 2014: 23-51.

Nelson, Vanesa. "Narrative Intervention and the Black Aesthetic in Cirilo Villaverde's *Cecilia Valdés* and Martín Morúa Delgado's *Sofía*. *Decimonónica* vol 8 no 1, 2011.

Newton, A. P. "Introduction." *The English American: A New Survey of the West Indies, 1648*. Broadway Travellers. Ed. A. P. Newton. London: Routledge and Sons, 1946.

Newton, Norman. *Thomas Gage in Spanish America*. London: Faber and Faber, 1969.

Nofal, Rossana. "La letra y el poder en la colonia: Alboroto y motín de los indios en México." *Cuadernos americanos.* vol 9 no 1, pp 231-235, 1995.

Nuñez Cabeza de Vaca, Álvar. *Naufragios*. Cátedra letras hispánicas, 2000.

O'Gorman, "La apologética historia, su génesis y elaboración su estructura y su sentido." *Apologética historia summaria de las gentes destas Indias.* Universidad Nacional autónoma de México, 1967.

Olsen, Margaret. "Africans and Textual Marronage in Colonial Latin America" *Revista de Estudios Hispánicos*. vol 37 no 2, pp 229-247, 2003.

-*Slavery and Salvation in Colonial Cartagena de Indias.* University Press of Florida,

2004.

Ortiz, Fernando. “La leyenda negra contra fray Bartolomé de las Casas”, *Cuadernos americanos*. no 5, pp. 146-184, 1952.

-*Contrapunteo del tobaco y el azúcar.* Biblioteca Ayacucho, 1987.

Otero, Lisandro. "Delmonte y la cultura de la sacarocracia." *Revista Iberoamericana*. vol 56 nos 152-153, pp 723-731, 1990.

O'Tool, Rachel Sarah. "As Historical Subjects: The African Diaspora in Colonial Latin American History." *History Compass.* Vols 11/12, pp 1094-1110, 2013.

Pagden, Anthony. *The Fall of Natural Man: The American Indian and the Origins of Comparative Ethnology*. Cambridge Iberian and Latin American Studies, 1982.

Palmeri, Frank. "Deconstructing the Animal-Human Binary: Recent Work in Animal Studies." *CLIO: A Journal of Literature, History, and the Philosophy of History*. vol 35 no 3, pp 407-420, 2006.

Palmié, Stephan. *Wizards and Scientists.* Duke University Press, 2002.

Pastor, Rodolfo F. “De moros en la costa a negros de Castilla: Representación y realidad en las crónicas del S. XVII centroamericano.” *Historia Mexicana*. vol 44 no 2, pp. 195-205, 1994.

Pérez Blanco, Lucrecio. "Infortunios de Alonso Ramírez: Una lectura desde la retórica." *Cuadernos Américanos*. vol 9 no 49, pp. 212-230, 1995.

Poitevin, Kimberly. “Inventing Whiteness: Cosmetics, Race, and Women in Early Modern England.” *Journal of Early Modern Cultural Studies.* vol. 11 no.1, 2011, pp. 59-89.

Poot-Herrera, Sara. "Los criollos: nota sobre su identidad y cultura." *Colonial Latin American Review*. vol 4 no 1, pp 177-183, 1995.

Prieto, Antonio. “Estudio crítico.” *El criticón*. Iter Ediciones, S. A. 1970.

Rabasa, José. "Pre-Columbian Pasts and Indian Presents in Méxican History." *Dispositio/n: American Journal of Cultural Histories and Theories*. vol 19 no 46, pp 245-270, 1994.

Rama, Ángel. *La ciudad letrada*. Ediciones del norte, 2002.

Ramos, Julio. “Cuerpo, lengua, subjetividad.” *Revista de crítica literaria Latinoamericana*. vol 19 no 38, pp. 225-237, 1993.

Rappaport, Joann. *The Disappearing Mestizo: Configuring Difference in the Colonial New Kingdom of Granada.* Duke University Press, 2014.

Rappaport, Joann and Tom Cummins. *Beyond the Lettered City: Indigenous Literacies in the Andes*. Duke University Press, 2011.

“Recopilación de leyes del reyno de las indias, 1680.” *Archivo digital de la legislación en el Perú.* https://archive.is/20120629195154/www.congreso.gob.pe/ntley/LeyIndiaP.htm.

Restall, Matthew. “Black Conquistadores: Armed Africans in Early Spanish America.” *The Americas*. vol 57 no 2, pp. 171-205, 2000.

Rico, Francisco. *La novela picaresca y el punto de vista*. Seix Barral Bibliotec a Breve, 1982.

Rivera Ayala, Sergio. “En defensa de la nación criolla: Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora y el Alb oroto y motín de los indios de México.” *Literatura mexicana.* vol 20 no 2, 2009.

Rodríguez Hererra, Esteban. "Estudio crítico a Cecilia Valdés." in *Acerca de Cirilo Villaverde.* Ed. Imeldo Alvarez. Editorial Letras Cubanas, 1982.

Rosell, Sara. "Cecilia Valdés de Villaverde a Arenas: La (re)creación del mito de la mulata." *Afro-Hispanic Review.* vol 18 no 2, pp 15-21, 1999.

Ross, Kathleen. "Alboroto y motín de Méxio: Una noche triste criolla." *Hispanic Review*. vol 56 no 2, pp181-190, 1988.

-*The Baroque Narrative of Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora*. Cambridge University Press, 1993.

Ross, Kathleen. Margarita Leño. "Cuestiones de género en Infortunios de Alonso Ramírez." *Revista Iberoaméricana*. vol 61 nos 172-173, pp 591-603, 1995.

Rout, Leslie P. *African Experience in Spanish America.* Cambridge University Press, 1976.

Russel-Wood, A.J.R. "Iberian Expansion and the Issue of Black Slavery: Changing Portuguese Attitudes, 1440-1770." *The American Historical Review*. vol 83 no. 1, pp 16-42, 1978.

Sacido Romero, Alberto. "La ambigüedad genérica de los Infortunios de Alonso Ramírez como producto de la dialéctica entre discurso oral y discurso escrito." *Bulletin Hispanique*. vol 94, no 1, pp 119-139, 1992.

Saco, José Antonio. *Historia de la esclavitud*. Ediciones Jucar, 1974.

Sánchez, Julio C. *La obra novelística de Cirilo Villaverde*. De orbe novo, 1973.

Sandoval, Alonso de. *Naturaleza, policia sagrada I profana, costumbres I ritos, disciplina I catecismo evangélico de todos etiopes*. Francisco de Lyra, 1622.

Saunders, A.C. de C. M. *A Social History of Black Slaves and Freedmen in Portugal 1441-1555*. Cambridge University Press, 1982.

Sepúlveda, Juan Ginés. *Demócrates Segundo o de las justas causas de la guerra contra los indios*. Ed. Ángel Losada, 1984.

Shell, Marc. "Marranos (Pigs), or from Coexistence to Toleration." *Critical Inquirly*. vol 17 no 2, 1991: 306-335.

Sigüenza y Góngora, Carlos de. *Alboroto y motín de México*. http://www.biblioteca.tv/artman2/publish/1692_316/Alboroto_y_Mot_n_de_M_xico_Carlos_de_Sig_enza_y_G__632.shtml

Smith, Cassander. "Beyond the Mediation: Esteban, Cabeza de Vaca's *Relación*, and a Narrative Negotiation." *Early American Literature*. vol 47 no 2, pp. 267-290, 2012.

Sommer, Doris. "Who Can Tell? Filling in Blanks for Villaverde." *American Literary History*. Vol 6 No 2, pp 213-233, 1994.

Soons, Alan. "Alonso Ramírez, in an enchanted and disenchanted world." *Bulletin of Hispanic Studies*. vol 53 no 3, pp. 201-205, 1976.

Soulodre-La France, Renee. "Slaves, Saints and Statues: Baroque Catholic Imagery and African Sensibilities from Nueva Granada." *Revista Canadiense de Estudios Hispánicos*. vol 33, no 1, pp 215-229, 2008.

Spivak, Gayatri. "Can the Subaltern Speak?" Morris, Rosalind. Ed. *Can the Subaltern Speak?: Reflections on the History of an Idea*. Columbia University Press, 2010.

-Spivak, Gayatri. "In Response: Looking Back, Looking Forward" in Morris, Rosalind. Ed. *Can the Subaltern Speak?: Reflections on the History of an Idea*. Columbia University Press, 2010.

-"Who Claims Alterity?" *Remaking History*. Ed Barbara Kruger. The New Press, 1998.

Stoichka, Victor. "The Image of the Black in Spanish Art: Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries." *The Image of the Black in Western Art* Vol. III: From the "Age of Discovery" to the Age of Abolition. Harvard University Press, 2011.

-"The Idea of Race: Its Changing Meanings and Constructions." In *Schomberg Studies on the Black Experience*. Eds. Colin A. Palmer and Howard Dodson. Michigan State University Press, 2005.

Strong, Frank. "The Causes of Cromwell's West Indian Expedition." *The American Historical Review*. vol 4 no 2, pp. 228-245, 1899.

Sussman, Robert. *The Myth of Race: The Troubling Persistence of an Unscientific Idea*. Harvard University Press, 2014.

Sweet, James. "The Iberian Origins of American Racist Thought." *The William and Mary Quarterly*. Third Series. vol 54 no 1, pp143-166, 1997.

-"The Idea of Race: Its Changing Meanings and Constructions." In *Schomberg Studies on the Black Experience.* Eds. Colin Palmer and Howard Dodson. University of Michigan Press, 2005.

Taiano C, Leonor M. "Casta, etnia y fe en Infortunios de Alonso Ramírez." *Istmo: Revista virtual de estudios literarios y culturales Centroaméricanos*. vol 24, 2012.

Tardieu, Jean Pierre. "Du bon usage de la monstruosité: La Vision de l'Afrique chez Alonso de Sandoval (1627)." *Bulletin Hispanique*. vol 86 nos 1-2, pp. 164-178, 1984.

Taussig, Michael. *Mimesis and Alterity: A Particular History of the Senses*. Psychology Press, 1993.

Taylor, S.A.G. *The Western Design: An Account of Cromwell's Expedition to the Caribbean*. The Institute of Jamaica and the Jamaica Historical Society: Kingston, 1965.

Tejera, Dioni. "Decisiva influencia de Thomas Gage en el 'western design' de Oliver Cromwell." *Spanish and Portuguese Society for English Renaissance Studies.* pp. 329-342, 1992.

-"Thomas Gage." *Letras de Deusto*. vol II no 21, pp. 137-163, 1981.

-*Thomas Gage: su personalidad y su obra*. Consejo Superior de investigaciones científicas, 1982.

Terga, Ricardo. *La Verapaz: colonización y evangelización*. Centro Ak'Kutan, 1982.

Thompson, J.E.S. "Introduction." Ed J.E.S. Thompson. *Thomas Gage's Travels in the New World*. University of Oklahoma Press, 1958.

Thornton, John K. "Traditions, Documents, and the Ife-Benin Relationship." *History in Africa.* vol 15, pp 351-362, 1988.

Tinoco, Manuel González Pallano. "Narrative of the Invasion of La Española, Santo Domingo, which the Epanish Attempted in 1655." *Spanish Narratives of the English attack on Santo Domingo, 1655*. Ed. Wright, Irene Aloha. Offices of the Society, 1926.

Trouillot, Michel-Rolph. *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History.* Boston: Beacon Press, 2015.

Tuan, Yi-Fu. *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience*. University of Minnesota Press, 1977.

Twinam, Ann. *Public Lives, Private Secrets: Gender, Honor, Sexuality and Illegitimacy in Colonial Spanish America*. Stanford University Press, 1999.

Villarga, Analía. "Cannibalism, Consumption and Kinship in Animal Studies." *Animal Turn: Making Animal Meaning.* Eds. Kalof, Linda and Georgina M. Montgomery. Michigan State University Press, 2012.

Villaverde, Cirilo. *Cecilia Valdés o La loma del ángel*. Ed. Jean Lamore. Madrid: Catedra, 1992.

-Villaverde, Cirilo. *Excursión a Vueltabajo*. Consejo nacional de Cuba.

Von Germeten, Nicole. "Introduction." *Treatise on Slavery.* Hackett Publishing Company, 2008.

-Von Germeten, Nicole. *Violent Delights, Violent Ends: Sex, Race and Honor in Colonial Cartagena de Indias*. University of New Mexico Press, 2013.

Waterworth, J. The Council of Trent, The Thirteenth Session, *The Canons and decrees of the sacred an oecumenical Council of Trent.*

Wheat, David. "Mediterranean Slavery, New World Transformations: Galley Slaves in the Spanish Caribbean, 1578–1635." *Slavery and Abolition*. vol 31 no 3, pp 327–344, 2010.

-"*Nharas* and *Morenas Horras*: A Luso-African Model for the Social History of the Spanish Caribbean, c. 1570-1640." *Journal of Early Modern History*, vol 4 no 1, pp 119-150, 2010.

Wright, Irene. *Spanish Narratives of the English attack on Santo Domingo, 1655*. Offices of the Society, 1926.

Yannakakis, Yanna. *The Art of Being In Between*: *Native Intermediaries, Indian Identity, and Local Rule in Colonial Oaxaca*. Duke University Press, 2008.

Zajonc, Robert. "Attitudinal Effects of Mere Exposure." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*. vol 9 no 2, pp 1-27, 1968.

Zamora, Margarita. "Mestizo...Me lo llamo yo a boca llena y me honro con él": Race in Inca Garcilaso's *Royal Commentaries of the Incas* and *General History of Peru.*" *Inca Garcilaso and Contemporary World-Making*. Eds. Sara Castro-Klarén and Christian Fernández. University of Pittsburgh Press, 2016.

-"The Intellectual Legacy of Bartolomé de las Casas." *Hispanic Issues Onlin*e. vol 8, pp 110-126, 2011.

-*Reading Columbus.* University of California Press, 1993.