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Nuptials Gone Awry, Empire in Decay: Crisis, *Lo Cursi*, and the Rhetorical Inventory of Blackness in Quevedo's "Boda de negros"

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Abstract: At the turn of the seventeenth century, many of Spain's major cities had large sub-Saharan African populations. In the literature of the Spanish baroque period, black Africans—either enslaved or free—appeared as both central and marginal characters. Francisco de Quevedo y Villegas's poem "Boda de negros" (1643) concerns itself with the poetic representation of this black population. I propose in this article that Quevedo utilizes "Boda de negros" as a response to Spain's imperial crisis and deterioration during the second half of the seventeenth century. The terms "crisis" and "lo cursi," as I will employ them throughout this essay, will serve as key words to exemplify how Quevedo denounces, yet at the same time complicates subversively, his black African protagonists' misuse and misrepresentation of traditional Spanish wedding customs. At the conclusion of this study, I ask the following question: are black Africans ever capable of possessing good taste?

Keywords: Quevedo and Race, *Lo Cursi*, Blacks in Early Modern Spain, Crisis, Empire, Weddings

Resumen: A partir del siglo XVII, casi todas las ciudades principales en España tenían grandes poblaciones de comunidades africanas subsaharianas. Esclavizada o manumitida, el retrato literario-cultural de tal población negroafricana solía aparecer en la literatura barroca española como personajes centrales tanto como marginales. Francisco de Quevedo y Villegas en su poema "Boda de negros" (1643) se ocupa de la representación poética de esta población negroafricana que llegaba a la península ibérica desde África subsahariana y los virreinos imperiales en las Américas. Propongo en este ensayo que Quevedo utiliza su "Boda de negros" como una plataforma para responder y revelar el deterioro imperial español, supuestamente catalizado por un grupo de negros concertando un matrimonio en Madrid. Los términos "crisis" y "lo cursi," a lo largo de este estudio, sirven como palabras claves para ejemplificar cómo Quevedo denuncia de modo grotesco—pero a la misma vez complica subversivamente—el mal uso de las costumbres matrimoniales de negroafricanos. Al concluir, pregunto: ¿pueden los negros asumir un papel que posea buen gusto?

Palabras clave: Quevedo y raza, lo cursi, negros en España, crisis, imperio, bodas

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Francisco de Quevedo y Villegas's *romance* "Boda de negros" (1643) is a *mise-en-scène* of people playing with customs out of their reach.¹ The poem inventories a surplus of ornate inanimate objects, foodstuffs, and other material goods employed to describe that which is animate and living: a group of black Africans celebrating a wedding on the steps of the San Pedro el Viejo Church in Madrid. The critical reception bestowed on Quevedo's poetic representation of these Africans has caught the attention of a wide array of Hispanists and Latin Americanists from diverse historical and literary backgrounds. Within the past thirty years, readings of "Boda de negros" have remained diametrically opposed in intellectual focus and scope. As early as the 1970s, scholars have responded to the poem's harsh satirical ridicule of black Africans that ultimately cast them into literary shadows of inferior darkness (Cobb; De Costa-Willis; Johnson).² Classical and philological approaches to Quevedo (Arellano; Clamurro; Iffland),³ on the one hand, overlook the critical value that "Boda de negros" offers as a key text in Quevedo's poetic corpus. Meanwhile, studies that examine literary representations of black Africans in early modern Spain (Barranco; Branche; Fra-Molinero; Martín Casares; Martínez Góngora; McCaw),⁴ on the other hand, indict "Boda de negros" for its inhumanely obscene depiction of blacks' cultural sensibilities, or, perhaps, lack thereof.

"Boda de negros" is a satire written in burlesque style. To satirize black Africans *vis-à-vis* nuptials and weddings, Quevedo employs *conceptista* coordinates—characterized by their conceptual intricacies, illuminating wordplay, and scathing wit—in order to burlesque blacks' cultural and racial difference.⁵ The phenomenon of intertextuality, a mechanism of the baroque text's production and manipulation of mythological and refined literary references, also operates as a salient feature exemplified by Quevedo's satiric use of the ridiculous wedding trope. Quevedo's intertextual examples abound, as evidenced by his borrowing of satiric elements from the following satires of matrimony: the *sonetos* "Casamiento ridículo" (518), "Boda de matadores y mataduras" (574), "A un hombre llamado Diego, que casaron con una mala mujer llamada Juana" (615), the *canción* "Epitalamio en las bodas de una vejisíma viuda" (625), and the *baile* "Bodas de pordioses" (872).

The recurring motif of the weddings of black people has a rich literary history and thus lends itself to the intertextual relation between Quevedo's "Boda de negros" and a series of

other satiric burlesque texts featuring black people at weddings. I list, for example, the following works: Simón Aguado's *Entremés de los negros* (1602), Francisco de Avellaneda's *Baile entremesado de negros* (1663), and the anonymous *Nueva relación y curioso romance, en que se refiere la celebridad, galanteo y acaso de una boda de negros*. Additional theatrical pieces worth mentioning are *Mojiganga de la negra*, *Entremés del negro*, *Entremés segundo del negro*, and the *romance* "Por una negra señora" (attributed to Luis de Góngora). According to Aurelia Martín Casares and Margarita G. Barranco in their co-authored study "Popular Literary Depictions of Black African Weddings" (2008), each of the aforementioned texts "provides extremely interesting information on the construction of stereotypes in the dominant xenophobic ideology" (109). Focusing on racialized stereotypes, the two critics insist:

Quevedo brings together the stereotypes that existed in contemporary literature to represent Africans, opposing black to white and bad to good, a dichotomy whose aim was to glorify Europeans. (110)

Martín Casares and Barranco rightfully note the dehumanizing consequences of negatively portraying black Africans as abject, ugly creatures at the expense of celebrating European beauty and refinement.

As George Mariscal convincingly argues in *Contradictory Subjects: Quevedo, Cervantes, and Seventeenth-Century Spanish Culture* (1991), "[i]t is incumbent on us to understand Quevedo's poetry as a discursive site where multiple and competing forms of subjectivity take place" (101). To echo Mariscal, my treatment of "Boda de negros" will illuminate the poem's effective staging of larger social ills such as financial and

sociocultural crises plaguing Spain at the time of the poet's death in 1645.⁶

Quevedo's profoundly pessimistic outlook on Spanish society and its waning empire contextualizes how the poem situates his grotesque representations of the chromatic, cultural, and ideological Blackness of his protagonists, thereby using it as a negative lens through which to blame their cultural-racial difference for the financial ruin and political crises of imperial Spain. "Boda de negros" is a textual platform that responds to early modern imperial Spanish crisis.⁷ Quevedo's subversive complication of the word *crisis* informs his ideological construction and ideation of Blackness as a perceived sociocultural and political inadequacy in "Boda de negros." The poet ultimately marginalizes his black characters in the poem due to what their Blackness symbolizes: a form of imperial and social crisis inflicted upon Spain.⁸

In the act of representing a scornful "Boda de negros," Quevedo also addresses the monetary and social crises of a Spanish Empire whose ills are all too familiar. The poem inflects these two particular kinds of crises through social etiquette and cultural practices—as in nuptials gone awry—as well as financial loss and ruin—as empire in decay. As a result, this study will also concern itself with the relationship between imperial and material crises with inflections of a future-directed nod to nineteenth- and twentieth-century manifestations of *lo cursi* [tackiness; datedness]. *Lo cursi* contributes to Quevedo's cultural critique of material and imperial crises by satirizing black Africans' poorly imitated performance of Spanish wedding ceremonies, traditions, and the financial commerce needed to finance them. Furthermore, the question of matrimony is linked first and foremost to the tradition of burlesque weddings. The satirical point in

Quevedo's staging of *lo cursi* thus provides an additional way to interpret the moralist's conflict with Habsburg Spain. In what follows, I will devote three sections to elucidate my reading of Quevedo's "Boda de negros" as a text that interrogates Spanish imperial crisis and culturally inadequate blacks. The first section will define my treatment of *lo cursi* throughout "Boda de negros." The second section will analyze Quevedo's hyperbolic enumeration of black grotesque forms—which I call his "rhetorical inventory" of Blackness—in order to illustrate material crisis and *cursi* behavior. The final section will furnish close readings of the poet's transformation of food and zoographical images of animals into grotesque metaphors that further illuminate the poem's black characters' misuse and misrepresentation—through bad imitation—of Spanish matrimony.

To Be (*Cursi*), or not to Be (*Cursi*): That Is the Question!

The title "Boda de negros" is a witty word-play. According to Gonzalo Correas, it is a saying that means: "[d]ícese por batahola y grita, holgándose sin entenderse" (Correas 541). Quevedo turns the title into a rhetorical exercise that embodies double meaning [*la dilogía*] and deautomatization of the proverb. A close examination of the title inaugurates a didactic and rhetorical moment for Quevedo's audience: the *romance* will prepare you for the residual effects of Spanish imperial crisis, where even nuptials and the financial grandeur of weddings are no longer sacred. A group of black Africans—as a result of the Spanish empire's avaricious hunger and lust for sub-Saharan African slaves referred to as *oro negro*, or "Black Gold"⁹—misuse and misrepresent the sanctity of marriage due to their tacky

behavior indicative of chaos, ruckus, and loud shouting. In addition, such negative connotations persist today, where the phrase "boda de negros" refers to a social function full of boisterous banter. At the poem's start, Quevedo warns his audience of what is in store for them: an early modern culture of *lo cursi* [bad taste; tackiness], or *cursilería*.

To avoid anachronistic application, I acknowledge *lo cursi*'s origins as a term defining the cultural phenomena of nineteenth-and-twentieth-century Spain that recurs as a historical sign of the uneven processes of modernity characteristic of this time period. In *The Culture of Cursilería: Bad Taste, Kitsch, and Class in Modern Spain* (2002) Noël Valis explains: "lo cursi can be found in all kinds of literary texts" (17). She adds, "[lo cursi] is not, however, primarily literary by nature, but rather cultural and socio-historical" (17). The cultural and socio-historical possibilities evidenced in *lo cursi* underscore its manifestation as *estilo* specifically as a form of disempowered desire, frustrated in its aspiration to a higher order of things in life; Quevedo exploits a desire that belongs to the blacks in the poem yet (Valis 32). And to that end, *lo cursi* thus emerges as a trope of black performance in the midst of imperial crisis. What I find particularly productive about the application of *lo cursi* to "Boda de negros" is what Valis defines as

an internalized marker of inadequacy and insecurity in periods when class distinctions were evolving or breaking down, or when advances in modernization stimulated social transformations. (19)

Valis's nuanced reading will allow me to examine Quevedo's objectification of blacks imitating Spanish cultural customs and material consumption at a wedding ceremony—

an objectification that rehearses blacks' performance of Spanish weddings vows.

Moving along from the title to the body of the text, an anonymous voice announces

Vi debe haber tres días,
en las gradas de San Pedro,
una tenebrosa boda,
porque era toda de Negros.
(Quevedo, "Boda de negros" vv. 1-4)

Here the narrator initiates a speech act reminiscent of the *cronistas* who wrote about the so-called New World. Similarly, the "I" [Yo] of "Boda de negros" reports his/her "discoveries" about black people and their cultural Blackness that will be perceived as *cursi* in relation to their bodily constitution, customs, and cultural sensibilities.

The opening three quatrains illustrate the ideation of Blackness as marginal, yet entirely *cursi*, in the following way:

Vi, debe haber tres días,
en las gradas de San Pedro,
una tenebrosa boda,
porque era toda de negros.

Parecía matrimonio
concertado en el infierno:
negro esposo y negra esposa,
y negro acompañamiento.

Sospecho yo que acostados
parecerán sus dos cuerpos,
junto el uno con el otro,
algodones y tintero.
(Quevedo, "Bodas de negros" vv. 1-12)

These opening lines illustrate Quevedo's concise and complex Baroque rhetorical posturing that relies upon metaphor. His numerous *conceptismos* therefore demand

the audience to derive meaning out of a coded language filled with riddles. As a result, Quevedo then uses a rich lexicon that both connotes and denotes Blackness as abject and marginal.

Lines 5 through 8 articulate an accumulation of double meanings, or *dilogía*. To stereotype blacks and their lack of refinement, Quevedo utilizes musical tropes such as "concertado" and "negro acompañamiento" to signal the strumming of percussive instruments that accompany a singer's voice. The classical reference "el infierno" from line 6, for instance, analogizes Blackness to Hell and the diabolic. It resonates with the light/dark binary found in the language of *chiaroscuro* from art history, as well as with the Good/Evil dichotomy found in Christianity. *Infierno* moreover functions as a hyperbolic reiteration that links the color black to infernal values (e.g., Pluto's remark from *La hora de todos* that "dios dado a los diablos, con una cara afeitada con hollín y pez," Introduction).¹⁰

Quevedo marginalizes Blackness through grotesque imagery. Philip Thomson characterizes the grotesque as simultaneously conveying the notion of the laughable and the horrifying, as expressed by way of hyperbole.¹¹ If, as M.M. Bakhtin maintains, "[e]xaggeration, hyperbolism, excessiveness are generally considered fundamental attributes of the grotesque style" (*Rabelais* 303), then the narrator of "Boda de negros" inaugurates grotesque imagery through words that qualitatively—"tenebrosa"—and quantitatively—"toda"—overshadow the presence of the blacks at the wedding. If, as Bakhtin argues, the grotesque is an expression of social and cultural rebellion against order, then the black body in "Boda de negros" reaffirms its messiness against the strictures of what Norbert Elias defines as the *civilizing process*. The poem's black

characters are precisely the ones portrayed as lacking control over their bodies. Poised as forces of darkness in the doorway of the cathedral, the threat of invasion by the blacks can only be viewed with revulsion, as it represents a sacrilegious violation of the sanctity of the San Pedro Cathedral.

Line 12—“algodones y tintero”—explains Quevedo’s metaphorical allusion to material culture and slavery. The plural form of “algodones,” as explained in the *Diccionario de Autoridades*, refers to material fabrics such as silk and wool. Metonymically, “tintero” [inkwell] analogizes the color of ink to black skin. “Tintero,” I argue, highlights Quevedo’s knowledge of imperial Spain’s deep investment in sub-Saharan African slave trading. The poet satirizes Blackness, through the motif of ink, by way of alluding to the proverb “sobre negro no hay tintura” as stated in Sebastián de Covarrubias’s 1611 *Tesoro de la lengua castellana o española* (1471). Together, the refrain and line 12 call into question an issue of ontology as perpetrated through what is most difficult to correct: the bad temperament [*mal genio*], ugly condition [*natura; natural; naturaleza*], and distasteful ways customarily aligned with people of African ancestry. Quevedo’s usage of cotton [*algodón*] and ink [*tinta*] addresses larger issues related to material culture—the production and importation of goods produced under specific market relations, for example, that then are assigned value within a system of exchange—and its role in transatlantic slavery. Printing houses such as the one owned by the Cromberger family of Seville had black slaves work with inks and fabrics for its printing tasks.¹² Quevedo’s symbolic triangulation between black bodies, cotton, and ink demonstrates the poet’s critical and shrewd ability to liken Blackness to the imperial legacy of transatlantic European imperial mercantilism and

commerce. Quevedo’s burlesque wit in line 12 ultimately allows him to acknowledge the exemplarity encoded in Covarrubias’s above-cited proverb, thus establishing a rhetorical foreshadowing of how the blacks in “Boda de negros” embody *lo cursi* and its culture of *cursilería*.

Empire, Black Bodies, and Bad Taste

“Boda de negros” enumerates grotesque forms. I define this grotesque enumeration as Quevedo’s *rhetorical inventory* of Blackness. The rhetorical inventory of Blackness revolves around the poet’s myriad references to *porous* Black bodies through the corporeal motifs of the anus and buttocks, genitalia, the belly, mouth, and nose. Recalling Bakhtin and Georges Bataille, the first explicit reference to grotesque Black body parts appears in the fourth quatrain:

Hundíase de estornudos
la calle por do volvieron,
que una boda semejante
hace dar más que un pimiento.
(vv. 13-16)

Estornudos in this passage symbolize disdain for blacks and operates as a trope that imitates scatological sounds.¹³ Although the word *nariz* is not mentioned here in the quote, I am convinced that the line “Hundíase de estornudos” allows Quevedo to not only launch a comical jab at the physiognomy of black peoples’ faces and noses, but also to establish a descriptive somatic judgment call: that black people have big broad noses with wide nostrils.¹⁴ In Quevedo’s prose text *La hora de todos*, a black man justifies his people’s bondage because of their gargantuan, puffy heads and snout-like noses:

cabezas de borlilla y pelo en borujones, narices despachurradas y hocicos góticos. Muchos blancos pudieran ser esclavos por estas tres cosas; y fuera más justo que lo fueran en todas partes los naricísimos, que traen las caras con proas y se suenan un peje espada, que nosotros, que traemos los catarros a gatas y somos contrasayones. (179)

Elongated noses fuel both Quevedo's xenophobic ideology of Counter-Reformation Spain as well as his grotesque scrutiny of black Africans' anatomy. The poet's hyperbolic representation of the black body also aligns black people with lower life forms and uncouth bodily functions. A particularly striking metaphor relates how, as the group passes by, the street is drowned in sneezes as a reaction to their unbearable body odor.¹⁵ This would reflect the "customary sidewalk jeer" [*estornudo*] with which "whites showed contempt for Negroes" (Branche 76).

In lines 21 through 24, Quevedo employs the motif of smoke, or *humos*, in order to censure blacks who misbehave by acting "White" and "uppity":

Con humos van de vengarse
(que siempre van de humos llenos)
de los que, por afrentarlos,
hacen los labios traseros. (vv. 21-24)

In this quote, the rhetorical device antanac-lasis suggests that *humos* refer to an individual's pretense, pride, and vanity. Blacks who aspire to be culturally "White" rupture the framework of a racist logic that homogenizes black people as static monolithic creatures. Furthermore, the *Real Academia Española's* entry on *cursi* qualifies Quevedo's claim against so-called "uppity" blacks and their *humos* by emphasizing the absence of their presumed sociocultural elegance and

finery that, instead, translates as ridiculous and distasteful to those belonging to an established *élite*.

Quevedo's rhetorical jab at arrogant blacks strategically reflects *lo cursi* through cultural and social crises, for the very conditions that produce *lo cursi* occur in moments of social and commercial uncertainty. *Humos* calls attention to black people who act out of place, for they seek revenge (i.e., "van de vengarse"). From whom may this group of blacks want repayment and of what kind? Whom might they want to avenge? Although Quevedo furnishes his readers with no concrete answer to these questions, I would argue that the historical archive of Atlantic slavery reminds us that black Africans—both enslaved and free—were not always passive and submissive. Quevedo's uncanny image of "vengeful" blacks informs historical "truth," specifically with respect to those black slaves who escaped from and retaliated against their abusive masters. Albeit a century before Quevedo writes "Boda de negros," a variety of sixteenth-century court records and municipal ordinances document the troublesome activities of fugitive and rebellious slaves for Peninsular Spanish masters.¹⁶

Quevedo's rhetorical inventory of Blackness in "Boda de negros" mocks poorly imitated and misrepresented customs and practices performed by his black protagonists. As a moralist, he takes great issue with people and body parts out of place, social pretense, and deceptive artificiality. "Con humos" also invokes the idea of "vender humos," where its definition, according to Covarrubias, applies to those

[c]on artificio dan a entender son privados de los príncipes y señores y venden favor a los negociantes

y pretendientes, *siendo mentira y humo cuanto ofrecen*. (1078, emphasis mine)

The text's distaste for blacks' social pretense associates *lo cursi* with a poetic construction of Blackness that Covarrubias links to smoke and prevarication. The rhetorical value of "con humos," functioning as a reading of *lo cursi* that proves wonderfully elastic, also signals dark skin color, thus privileging the word's literal meaning: "un vapor negro y espeso, que exhala del fuego no bien encendido" (Covarrubias 1078). On a somatic level, the darkness and thickness of smoke tropes the anatomical defects of the Black body: human flatulence, or the grotesque act of passing gas, which then critiques the *flatulent* nature and style of black Africans for a turgid emptiness that ultimately shows *cursi* inadequacy.

Cosmetics [*afeites*] represent a compensatory remedy for *cursi* inadequacy. The poem, in particular, scrutinizes black women's grotesque misuse of makeup:

[i]ba afeitada la novia
todo el tapetado gesto
con hollín y con carbón,
y con tinta de sombreros. (vv. 25-28)

Similar to Luis de Góngora's black female protagonists Juana and Clara from the *letrilla* "En la fiesta del Santísimo Sacramento" (1609), who apply makeup incorrectly, the bride of "Boda de negros" also gets it all wrong in the cosmetics department.¹⁷ As the passage illustrates, she is a foolish disaster and a monstrosity. Not only does her misapplication of makeup symbolize gross excess and stupidity, it moreover encapsulates a geometric economy of hyperbole. "Covarrubias's definition of *afeite*," as elucidated by Georgina Dopico Black,

"registers the extent to which *La perfecta casada* was considered the authoritative text on matters of cosmetic" (234). Privileging the antic cosmetic patristic treatises, especially Fray Luis de León's *La perfecta casada*, Covarrubias claims that cosmetic face painting

[e]s vana pretensión por más diligencias que hagan y, pensando engañar, se engañan, porque es cosa muy conocida y aborrecida, especialmente que el afeite causa un mal olor y pone asco[.] *Es una mentira muy conocida y una hipocresía mal disimulada*. (50, emphasis mine)

Quevedo's cosmeticized image of the black bride's painted face echoes Covarrubias's critique of women's indulgence in the cosmetic arts. The so-called "vana protección" [vain pretense] that Covarrubias identifies in *afeites* then assumes a bodily inscription on the bride's behavior and social etiquette. The italicized portion of the above-cited sentence provides another meaning of *cursi* practices in the poem. If the bride's application of makeup embodies pretense and folly, then her face also articulates a *cursi* image: one that resembles beef jerky or cured meat. Line 26, "todo el tapetado gesto," suggests that the bride's face and facial expressions are so black and begrimed that they are indistinguishable. The metaphor *tapetado*—defined by Covarrubias as: "el cuero envesado dado color negro" (1460)—signals the larger comical depiction of blacks in the genre of satirical burlesque poetry in which Quevedo participates. Consequently, "[c]on hollín y con carbón" (v. 27), referring to soot and coal exacerbates the bride's monstrosity through uncleanliness, thus over emphasizing her black affect and effect. Line 28, "[y] con tinta de sombreros," finally signals the bride's lack of financial

resources to afford good-quality cosmetics. The textual economy describing the black bride's disfigured face and lack of finances nods to the presence of *lo cursi* in the quote. Ultimately, the ideological agenda behind her misuse of cosmetic adornments fuels the black woman's tacky behavior based on inadequate and unfit imitations of how a wealthy white Spanish lady may adorn her betrothed body.

The presence of *lo cursi*, as manifested through Quevedo's rhetorical litany of objects, appears in the black bride and groom's lack of economic resources and finances:

Tan pobres son que una blanca
no se halla entre todos ellos,
y por tener un cornado
casaron a este moreno. (vv. 29-32)

Through the economy and exchanges of old valueless coins, Quevedo informs us of the bride and groom's financial status. They are bankrupt just like late seventeenth-century Spain. The "blanca" of the passage represents an old coin of miniscule value that was in circulation during the reign of Queen Isabella and King Ferdinand. The representation of *lo cursi*, as I intend on arguing henceforth, is predicated on a larger critical discourse and narrative focusing on the practice of writing about debt. The rhetorical value embedded within line 29, "tan pobres son que una blanca," signals seventeenth-century Spanish imperial economic crisis and decay. Over thirty years prior to the composition of "Boda de negros" in 1643, Quevedo published his *España defendida y los tiempos de ahora* (1609)—addressed to Philip III—and dedicated his *Epístola satírica y censoria* (1625), among a series of other writings, to the Count-Duke of Olivares in praise and defense of the *Capítulos de reforma* (1623). As Elvira Vilches explains in *New*

World Gold: Cultural Anxiety and Monetary Disorder in Early Modern Spain (2010),

[t]he *Epístola* discusses the dying splendor of Castile by defending traditional Spanish customs against those adopted from the Moors and especially the extravagant behavior stimulated by American gold. (287)

Vilches further notes:

Quevedo calls for intellectuals [in the *Epístola*] to defend Spain from both national and foreign slanders, while he rebukes those Spaniards who forget about national traditions and prefer foreign customs, ideas, and commodities. (288)

With this context in mind, the monetary disorder and the ills of Spanish empire seep into Quevedo's description of the pauper bride and groom who can, in fact, pretend to buy their way into a nuptial agreement with a measly cornado.¹⁸

Covarrubias defines the *cornado* as:

una moneda muy baja de ley, la cual mandó batir el sobredicho rey Alonso el Onceno para remediar la falta de dinero que había el año mil y treientos y treinta y uno, de que se siguió gran carestía y falta de mantenimientos, cesando el trato y comercio por haber adulterado la moneda. (609)

During the seventeenth century, the *cornado* was out of use, valuing almost a third of a *blanca*. Through hyperbole, Quevedo sustains his negative ideological claims about the economic status and social conditions of black Africans in Spain through the black bride and groom of the poem. The satiric

use of *cornudo* in the text functions as Quevedo's xenophobic description of the bride and groom's morose union. As Covarrubias illustrates, adultery is closely intertwined with the coin's commercial history and circulation. Quevedo further alludes to the symbol of the adulterer through the word *cornudo*. On *cornudo* Covarrubias writes:

Es el marido cuya mujer le hace traición, juntándose con otro y cometiendo adulterio. Esto puede ser de dos maneras: la una cuando el marido está inorante dello, y no da ocasión ni lugar a que pueda ser; y por este tal se dijo que el cornudo es el postrero que lo sabe, y compárase al ciervo, que no embargante tenga cuernos, no se deja tratar ni domesticar. (612)

The above passage represents only a small portion of the lexicographer's treatment of the term. Covarrubias situates the *cornudo* within classical and early modern Spanish visual culture and letters. What is remarkable, yet equally detrimental, is Quevedo's adaptation of the *cornudo* to draw his audience a portrait of the diabolic and malignant nature of black Africans. With these hidden negative references, those individuals from Quevedo's audience who are well versed and educated in the etymology and history of *cornudo* are savvy enough to delineate the teleological progression of Quevedo's conservative ideological conceits.

The narrator neglects to inform us of the bride and groom's names and social status until half way into the poem. We are told:

Él se llamaba Tomé
y ella Francisca del Puerto;
ella esclava, y él es clavo
que quiere hincársele en medio.
(Quevedo, "Boda de negros" vv. 33-36)

The description of the bride and groom attests to a larger discussion of race, transatlantic slavery, and the discursive acts of naming peoples of African descent in the Old and New Worlds. An individual's name makes an ontological statement about their origins. And while names such as Tomé and Francisca del Puerto are hackneyed, they also allude to sexual dalliances, conquest, and Spain's imperial cultural history. Borrowed from the linguistic register of *habla de negros*, "tomé" sounds like the third-person singular conjugation, *toma*, from the verb "tomar" [to take]. The groom's name (Tomé) plays off of the verb *tomar*, thus fitting in nicely with his wife-to-be's surname: del Puerto. From the bride's surname, its metaphorical reference to "puerto" signals a woman's vagina. The *Diccionario de Autoridades* continues the vaginal reference as follows: "Puerto se llama también la boca de la madre [útero] en las mujeres." In its literal meaning, "puerto" is the place where ships enter and dock. Although a recycled cliché, the bride's name—Francisca del Puerto—symbolizes the transatlantic African slave trade and its larger historical connection to early modern Spanish shipbuilding and imperial naval culture.

Beneath Quevedo's use of *calambur* and hyperbaton in the verse "ella esclava, / y él es clavo," he fully arms an apparatus consisting of material *things* that objectify Blackness and black people. Gendered woman, Francisca has already been domesticated and cast into a subordinate position. And as a woman, her vulnerable porous body succumbs to violent male penetration. In addition, by default, her racial difference as a *black* woman (namely because the category of race is not mutually exclusive from gender) codes Francisca as enslaved.

Gender difference in the poem analogizes iron objects to black male masculinity. Quevedo objectifies Tomé with the figure of

an iron nail [*clavo*], thereby signifying the male member. While the poet uses *clavo* in a vulgar way, he also establishes a racialized discourse that mythologizes black male genitalia through a hyper-masculinized and hyper-sexualized register. Tomé, the *es/clavo*, is dominant and priapic. In turn, his partner Francisca is his passive, libidinal victim. She represents a commodity within a commodity: (1) as a slave, she has undergone the process of commodification and (2) as Tomé's wife, her next status a "married woman" will then initiate her into larger processes of commodification. Wanting to "nail her in between her legs" ["que quiere hincársele en medio" (v. 36)], Quevedo creates a black stud who fulfills somatically the constitution of the nail's fierce ability to violently penetrate the vagina.

Quevedo's treatment of "es/clavo" signals the institution of slavery and the act of branding black bodies that it perpetrates. Covarrubias's etymological explanation of the word *esclavo* is undoubtedly interconnected with the idea of a hieroglyphics of the flesh (i.e., iron branding). Here we learn that:

Algunos quieren se haya dicho del hierro que les ponen a los fugitivos y díscolos en ambos carrillos, de la S y del clavo; pero yo entiendo ser dos letras S y I, que parece clavo, y cada una es iniciativa de dición, y vale tanto, como *sine iure*; porque el esclavo no es suyo, sino de su señor y así le es prohibido cualquier acto libre. Y de aquí resultó el nombre de esclavo, como el nombre espurio de las dos letras S P, que valen tanto como *sine patre*. (Covarrubias 811)

The most frequent Spanish identifying mark of slavery was illustrated with the letter "S" intersected with the image of a nail [*clavo*]. Could it be, perhaps, that Covarrubias saw

this form of branding firsthand? His entry personalizes the definition of *esclavo* by stating what *he* understands: "yo entiendo ser dos letras S y I." This type of branding, as described by Covarrubias, was practiced in the provinces Andalusia, Cataluña, the Canary Islands, Extremadura, Madrid, and Valencia. In the Canary Islands, for example, branding centers called *herrerías* existed where slaves' bodies were singed with flaming hot branding irons.¹⁹ In light of material culture and transatlantic slavery, iron brandings singeing black flesh renders black bodies synonymous with quantifiable value and negotiable trade. As hieroglyphics of the flesh, branding tools and the scars they inscribe on the black body commercially objectify black subjects.

Once we learn the names of the bride and groom and their social status as slaves, we go on to learn about the affect and effect of their Black wedding:

Llegaron al negro patio
donde está el negro aposento,
en donde la negra boda
ha de tener negro efecto. (vv. 37-40)

Instead of evoking Blackness through the figures of metaphor and metonymy, Quevedo now applies the word *negro* in its most literal sense through hyperbolic ends. Every space the wedding occupies is figuratively and literally black. In both theory and practice, the ceremonies and celebrations of a wedding are supposed to be beautiful and happy, ultimately birthing new beginnings. Line 40, "ha de tener *negro efecto*," implies that the so-called "Boda de negros" will not succeed whatsoever due to its enumerated grotesque forms.

A cogent example of such grotesque symbolism manifests in Quevedo's animal and insect imagery used to dehumanize his

black characters. At one point, Francisca del Puerto is called “caballeriza” [stable] (as in “Era una caballeriza” v. 41). Why call her a *caballeriza* and not a *mujercilla*? While *mujercilla* is also a pejorative term, it would refute the anti-black ideology stereotypes recurring in the poem. Indicative of a triple *entendre*, calling Francisca “una caballeriza” both animalizes and masculinizes her, while simultaneously associating her with prostitution, domestic slavery, and a horse-like phenotype and temperament.²⁰

Lines 43 through 44 illustrate the ultimate confirmation of the blacks’ status as human and social parasites. Referred to as “pulgas,” “perrengues,” and “perros,” the satirical objective here animalizes the blacks at the wedding while simultaneously emphasizing their status as slaves. The insult of dog was commonly applied to black slaves whereas flea corresponds to the parasitic insect. As defined by the *Diccionario de Autoridades*, *perrengue* is a word given to a person who is easily incensed or irritated. In sum, the accumulation of Quevedo’s *conceptismos* in these lines illuminate the poet’s skill at conveying an animalized racial stereotype that labels blacks as lacking reason through their bad taste and disposition.

Grotesque Banquet, Gastronomy Begrimed

The banquet scene in “Boda de negros” begins at a table where all guests are seated. The table is set with black objects and black foods: “donde también les pusieron negros manteles y platos, negra sopa y manjar negro” (vv. 45-48). The “manjar negro” parodies the traditional *manjar blanco*, which during Quevedo’s time consisted of a stew made of shredded hen breast mixed

with sugar, milk, and rice flour. The episode proceeds with a blessing of the meal by “un negro veintidoseno, con un rostro de azabache y manos de terciopelo” (vv. 50-53). With limited information about this man blessing the table and the meal on it, key words such as *azabache* and *terciopelo* render his body more legible. *Azabache* [jet] both captures and eroticizes the image of dark shiny skin, whereas *terciopelo* [velvet] perverts the luxuriousness of the fabric in order to facetiously animalize and denigrate the minister. Quevedo’s use of *terciopelo*, moreover, analogizes the black body with the texture of animal fur, thereby morphing the minister, and his “manos de terciopelo,” into a furry animal or beast.

As the wedding scene develops, Quevedo begrimes foodstuffs and culinary objects from the grotesque banquet in order to burlesque and satirize the inefficacy of the blacks’ wedding. He achieves this over the course of five stanzas:

Diéronles el vino, tinto;
pan, entre mulato y prieto;
carbonada hubo, por ser
tizones los que comieron.

Hubo jetas en la mesa
y en la boca de los dueños,
y hongos, por ser la boda
de hongos, según sospecho.

Trujeron muchas morcillas,
y hubo algunos que, de miedo,
no las comieron, pensando
se comían a sí mismos.

Cuál, por morder del mondongo,
se atarazaba algún dedo,
pues sólo diferenciaban
en la uña de lo negro.
Mas cuando llegó el tocino,
hubo grandes sentimientos,
y pringados con pringadas
un rato se enternecieron. (vv. 53-72)

The gesture of gifting bread alludes to the phrase “pan de boda,” an expression meaning “wedding gift.” The portrayal of a hyperbolic excess of black foods (i.e., “pan, entre mulato y prieto; / carbonada hubo”) constructs the wedding and its attendees as literally black and burnt.

Quevedo’s satiric attack involves a culinary diatribe where the blacks consume and use pork flesh and pork products. According to Covarrubias, *jetas* are: “[una] especie de hongo; por alusión llamamos jeta el hocico del negro y del puerco” (Covarrubias 1126). He adds:

Llamamos los labios hinchados de los negros, por la semejanza que tienen con las setas o hongos que nacen en el campo. La cual calidad es en ellos tan natural como el color y como la torcedura de los cabellos que llaman pasillas. Bien los describe Petronio Árbitro, cuando para disimularse ciertos mancebos se querían teñir las caras por parecer negros. Todas estas son señales ordinarias en los negros; tener los labios gruesos, los cabellos retorcidillos y las frentes con muchas rayas, y ultra desto tienes las narices anchas y chatas. De la palabra jeta o seta, verás *verbo* Hongo. (1125-26)

Quevedo inserts his audience into a vast material and visual economy that ultimately recites a corporeal inventory of visible signs inscribed upon black bodies. As the definition suggests, *jetas* in the context of early modern Spanish philology not only theorizes the black body, but also disfigures it through the racialized signs of lips and hair that then codify a visual economy between black Africans’ faces and pigs’ snouts. The poet’s burlesque manipulation of *jetas* evokes the Castilian proverb “No se hace la boda de hongos,” suggesting that meat must be served and that the wedding

is lousy and ill prepared. The blacks at the wedding are dirt poor, namely in light of the fact that the wedding “es una boda de hongos.” In the end, the bride and groom of this *boda de negros* turned *boda de hongos* lack the necessary economic means to display visually economic prosperity, for they are poor as the useless *blanca* coin previously mentioned.

The introduction of *morcillas* [black pudding or blood sausage] in line 61 sustains Quevedo’s grotesque depiction of the wedding participants’ dark skin. In its masculine nominal form, *morcillo* functions dilogically as an allusion made to a horse or mare that is completely black in color. However, as the text indicates, the wedding guests are afraid to eat the *morcillas* as stated in lines 62 through 64: “y hubo algunos que, de miedo, / no las comieron, pensando / se comían a sí mismos.” The pun of the joke satirizes their ignorance and inability to properly assimilate into Castilian culture and culinary aesthetics. After all, as the pun of the joke suggests: who in their right mind would bring food (*las morcillas*) to not eat it and then ultimately be convinced that they are cannibalizing themselves?

The folly of mistaking black body parts for food crystallizes in lines 65 through 68:

Cuál, por morder del mondongo,
se atarazaba algún dedo,
pues sólo diferenciaban
en la uña de lo negro.

In particular, line 68 shows Quevedo’s sharp wit as he renders the dirty fingernail and the *mondongo* indistinguishable; they are one and the same. The biting and mutilation of black fingers also promotes a grotesque imagery alluding to cannibalism:

Trujeron muchas morcillas,
y hubo algunos que, de miedo,
no las comieron, pensando

se comían a sí mismos.
 Cuál, por morder el mondongo,
 se atarzaba algún dedo,
 pues sólo diferenciaban
 en la uña de lo negro. (vv. 61-68)

The image gleaned from the above quote transports us into an ideation of the grotesque that is purely uncanny. Its reiteration of *morcillas*, *mondongo*, fingers, and fingernails embody a repository of filth that consequently aligns the sociocultural category of Blackness with scatology.

For Quevedo, food and its relation to the black body have nothing to do with cultural expression. Blacks in “Boda de negros” do not consume dishes indigenous to any specified West or Central African ethnic group. With respect to diet and food, we are both at home and abroad. That is, the blacks depicted in the text retain no sense of culinary history. Quevedo rids their palettes of any sort of lexicon of taste. The only culinary objects savored consist of blackened and burnt throw-away-foodstuffs. Upon the introduction of *tocino* [bacon] and *pringue* [grease or oil splatters], Quevedo enumerates metaphorical associations of swine to blacks:

Mas cuando llegó el tocino,
 hubo grandes sentimientos,
 y pringados con pringadas
 un rato se enternecieron. (vv. 69-72)

Quevedo animalizes and brutalizes his black characters through the sadistic image of melted pig fat being dripped on open wounds as a form of punishment. In direct relation to their wounds lacerated by the lash and singed with burning oil applied thereto, the *pringados* and *pringadas* of the text signal a larger black population in Spain whose bodies ultimately transform

into pork-derived products through Quevedo’s poetics of personification.

After the meal concludes, the last four stanzas of “Boda de negros” treat the scene of the pulpit where a so-called “ministro Guineo” (v. 74) provides a coconut and an iron cauldron for those present to wash their hands. These two objects underscore the minister’s Africanness. To be clear, I am not convinced that Quevedo is pointing to the minister’s “nationality.” *Guineo* instead informs the reader—namely, a seventeenth-century Iberian reader—that he is sub-Saharan African. In the Castilian of Quevedo’s time *coco* referred to the monstrous horrific boogeyman, thus instilling fear and paranoia yet a self-referential interiority.²¹ Quevedo also employs the coconut and iron cauldron to denote “primitive” and “tribal” African customs as well as the ritualistic ceremonies that accompanied them. Each object exemplifies material monstrosities that have entered Spanish society and therefore epitomizes barbarism and savagery frequently associated with Africa. For both the Spaniards of Quevedo’s Spain and those inhabiting the viceroyalties in the Americas, iron cauldrons were linked to infernal jocose and vulgar imagery. Their presence, furthermore, constitutes a material and religious crisis for Counter-Reformation Spain. These perceived “primordial” African items ultimately generate Quevedo’s vocal conservatism, thus highlighting his disapproval of imperial Spain’s current national crisis and its future.

The narrator proceeds by telling his audience:

Por toalla trujo al hombro
 las bayetas de un entierro;
 laváronse, y quedó el agua
 para ensuciar todo un reino. (vv. 77-80)

As a chromatic effect, Blackness represents an apocalyptic end. At this stage in the poem, the chromatic effect of Blackness radiates from the bodies of Francisca and Tomé. It affects the patio from where the reception occurs, ultimately inhabiting a network of stuff ranging from plates, tablecloths, wine, and food. Injurious, yet illustrative of scathing *conceptista* wit, lines 79 and 80 catalyze an egregious xenophobic insult. Deeply rooted in these two lines linger theories and phobias against black Africans' racial difference and their monstrous effect on European society. In this context, race as a critical category in early modern Iberia functions as a discourse that inhabits intersecting axes of relations and as a result inverts conceptions and perceptions of "public" and "private" spaces. The notion of black people corrupting, polluting, and robbing white bodies and spaces has persisted over centuries. And a similar parallel can be linked to anti-Semitism against Jews. Quevedo develops this idea with the figure of what I consider a black disorderly blob: "Negros de ellos se sentaron / sobre unos negros asientos" (vv. 81-82). The poet escalates the cursi inadequacy of the blacks' existence as one mere blob of Blackness. Even their tongues and verses sung are denigrated:

[Y] en voces negras cantaron
también denegridos versos:
'Negra es la ventura
de aquel casado
cuya Novia es Negra
y el dote en Blanco.' (vv. 83-88)

Quevedo's critique of Blackness as grotesque and *cursi* is constructed from a meta-narrative about *how* to critique. In a prophetic gesture, his poetic descriptions of black matrimony forges, in futuristic precedent, a rich body of intellectual thought

that not only attends to the ways in which blacks negotiated new European cultural forms and sensibilities in Spain, but also designs a formative Black experience in Baroque Spanish society.

In sum, "Boda de negros" transforms its black literary characters into material objects that devise a racialized lexicon of the ills of cultural and financial deterioration of Spain at the time. Through the blurring of racial hierarchies—as evidenced by the bride and groom's misrepresentation and misuse of objects and cultural practices associated with white Spanish wedding ceremonies and rituals—we ultimately learn that blacks aspire to be upwardly mobile subjects in early modern Spanish society. Although nuptials have gone awry in "Boda de negros," the text illustrates at its aesthetic and rhetorical cores that the social upward mobility of blacks creates a topsy-turvy world. It paradoxically ruptures a binary opposition where its racist logic suggests that blacks have bad taste while non-blacks, namely whites, possess good taste (as expressed in "el dote en blanco" v. 88). I close my final reading of "Boda de negros" by asking: are black Africans ever capable of possessing good taste?

Notes

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Unless otherwise noted, all textual citations of "Boda de negros" come from José Manuel Blecuá's 1971 edition of *Poesía original completa*. In this edition, "Boda de negros" appears as Núm. 698, where Blecuá documents the *romance's* date

of publication in 1643 in *Romances varios*. In *El Parnaso español*, “Boda de negros” is Núm. 510.

² See Antonio Domínguez Ortiz’s *The Golden Age of Spain, 1516-1659*, a comprehensive and thorough historical study that includes a wealth of background information on black African slavery. While Miriam DeCosta-Willis’s anthology *Blacks in Hispanic Literature: Critical Studies* (1977) stands alone as the first critical study that both chronologically and systematically examines the roles of black Africans in medieval and early modern Spanish literature, Lemuel Johnson’s *The Devil, The Gargoyle, and The Buffoon: The Negro as Metaphor in Western Literature* (1971) and Martha Cobb’s essay “An Inquiry into Race Concepts through Spanish Literature” (1972) have provided rich bibliographical information, as well as a critical lexicon and framework, for entering the study of black Africans in medieval and early modern Spain.

³ See Arellano’s “La poesía burlesca áurea, ejercicio de lectura conceptista y apostillas al romance ‘Boda de negros’ de Quevedo,” Clamurro’s *Language and Ideology*, and Iffland’s *Quevedo and the Grotesque*.

⁴ Following De Costa-Willis’s study comes Baltasar Fra-Molinero’s *La imagen de los negros en el teatro del Siglo de Oro* (1995). Fra-Molinero’s groundbreaking book shines as a comprehensive study that closely examines the representations of blacks in Golden Age Spanish Theater. John Beusterien’s 2006 monograph *An Eye on Race: Perspectives from Theater in Imperial Spain* provides a reading of subaltern studies in order to address the ways in which early modern Spanish audiences and readers alike “see” the racial codification and racial difference of Jews and black Africans on early modern Spanish stages. Jerome Branche, in *Racism and Colonialism in Luso-Hispanic Literature* (2006), presents an even more audacious, yet valid, critical approach to literary representations of blacks by incorporating Critical Race Studies and Postcolonial Theory.

⁵ Arellano provides an excellent philological study of this topic in “La poesía burlesca áurea.”

⁶ Quevedo was released from jail the same year as the composition of “Boda de negros” in 1643.

⁷ Quevedo’s *El Parnaso español* (1648) contains a short sonnet—“A Roma sepultada en sus ruinas”—that conveys the idea of crisis through the motif of *lo deshabitado* [death, depopulation, vacancy] in order to express the failure and ultimate fall of the Roman Empire. For additional texts on the topic of crisis in the Spanish empire, see Henry Kamen *Spain, 1469-1714: A Society in Conflict* (3rd edition, 2005), *Crisis and Change in Early Modern Spain* (1993), and *Golden Age Spain* (1988) and J.H. Elliott, *Imperial Spain, 1469-1712* (1963; 2002) (especially chapters 8-10). Concerning philosophical and rhetorical meditations on crisis refer to Nicholas Spadaccini and Jenaro Talens’s edited volume *Rhetoric and Politics: Baltasar Gracián and the New World Order* (1997). Elvira Vilches’s *New World Gold: Cultural Anxiety and Monetary Order in Early Modern Spain* (2010) furnishes refreshingly insightful readings of monetary crisis and debt (see chapters 5-6).

⁸ Contrary to some widely held assumptions, Blackness has not always been constructed as a sign of inferiority in the Western world. In the context of early modern Iberia, for instance, black Africans occupied positions of authority, sainthood, and power. As illustrated in archival documents, art, and literature constructed by white scribes, painters, and writers, black Africans’ cultural and racial Blackness was, in fact, paradoxical and ultimately contested immediate notions of abject inferiority.

⁹ The image of “Black Gold” reminds me of Sancho Panza’s obsessive quest for governing and slave trading in Part I, Chapter 29 of Cervantes’s *Don Quixote*. Here I reproduce Sancho’s words:

¿Qué se me da a mí que mis vasallos sean negros? ¿Habrà más que cargar con ellos y traerlos a España, donde los podré vender, y adonde me los pagarán de contado, de cuyo dinero podré comprar algún oficio con que vivir descansado todos los días de mi vida? ¡No, sino dormíos, y no tengáis ingenio ni habilidad para disponer de las cosas y para vender treinta o diez mil vasallos

en dácame esas pajas! ¡Par Dios que los he de volar, chico con grande, o como pudiere, y que, por negros que sean, los he de volver blancos o amarillos! ¡Llegaos, que me mamo el dedo! (363)

For additional commentary, see Baltasar Fra-Moliner's article "Sancho Panza y la esclavización de los negros" in *Afro-Hispanic Review* 13.2 (1994): 25-31.

¹⁰ Also in the illustrations found in Alfonso X, El Sabio's *Cantigas a Santa María* (situated between the dates 1257 and 1282) appears the image of the Devil in the form of a black man. In Santa Teresa de Jesús's *Libro de la vida* (1588), she refers to the Devil as "un negrillo."

¹¹ See Thomson's *The Grotesque*, (10-28). James Iffland's two-volume study *Quevedo and the Grotesque* (1978) provides compelling close readings of grotesque imagery in Quevedo's corpus of literary works.

¹² See Chapter VII, "El trabajo," from José Luis Cortéz López's *La esclavitud negra en la España Peninsular del siglo XVI* (1989) for additional historical facts and archival sources on the various kinds of jobs held by black slaves. Also, refer to Clive Griffin's *The Crombergers of Seville: The History of a Printing and Merchant Dynasty* for thorough archival and historical information about the family and its printing empire.

¹³ The motif of sneezes in association with blacks also appears in Quevedo's satirical *letrilla* Núm. 652: "el que solo estornudaba, / ya a mil negros estornuda" (vv. 39-40).

¹⁴ Quevedo attacks not only noses and nostrils, but also pockmarks, moles, wrinkles, and other types of facial disfigurements in countless burlesque and satirical poems as well as prose texts. See Iffland's chapter IV "An 'Anatomy' of Quevedo's Grotesque Image of the Human Body" in *Quevedo and the Grotesque*, Vol. 1.

¹⁵ Branche 76. See page 357 of Ruth Pike's essay "Sevillian Society" for additional information on the "sidewalk jeer." Pike, also citing the word's appearance in Lope de Vega's *comedia Servir a señor discreto* (1610-15), confirms this reading.

¹⁶ Refer to Pike's "Sevillian Society," pages 350-53. According to Pike, *morisco* slaves were also deemed rebellious, if not more problematic than black African slaves. Kathryn Joy McKnight and Leo Garofalo's edited volume *Afro-Latino Voices* offers a rich assortment of archival documents that showcase African-descended slaves standing up against their masters.

¹⁷ For further analysis of this *letrilla*, see Nicholas Jones's essay "Cosmetic Ontologies, Cosmetic Subversions: Articulating Black Beauty and Humanity in Luis de Góngora's 'En la fiesta del Santísimo Sacramento.'" *Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies* 15.1 (2015): 26-54.

¹⁸ Refer to Arellano's "La poesía burlesca áurea."

¹⁹ See the section "Marcas de esclavitud y mecanismos de resistencia" (390-410) from Aurelia Martín Casares's *La esclavitud en Granada del siglo XVI: Género, raza y religión*. To quantify this practice in socio-historical terms, Martín Casares also shares that 2% of slaves in Spain exhibited facial brandings.

²⁰ On the association of facial features and physiognomy with human personality traits, see Aristotle's treatise "Physiognomonics." Numerous early modern Spanish writers insert the word *caballeriza* in order to refer to the "jobs" frequently held by enslaved and free black women. A notable example of *caballeriza* appears in *Lazarillo de Tormes* (1554) where, describing his widowed mother, Lazarillo says

[m]i viuda madre, como sin marido y sin abrigo se viese, determinó arrimarse a los Buenos, por ser uno dellos, y vínose a vivir a la ciudad y alquiló una casilla, y metiose a guisar de comer a ciertos estudiantes, y lavaba la ropa a ciertos mozos de caballos del Comendador de la Magdalena, de manera que fue frecuentando las caballerizas. (*Lazarillo de Tormes*, 15, emphasis mine)

²¹ This echoes the "¡Madre, coco!" utterance from Lazarillo's mixed-raced brother in the Tracado Primero of the *Lazarillo de Tormes* (1554).

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