

## Desire and Power: The Tactile Gaze in Mirabella's Execution

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“The observ'd of all observers”  
*Hamlet*

Voyeurism and the phallic gaze are essential components of the characters' psychosexual makeup, as well as in the dramatic configuration of Juan de Flores' sentimental romance *Grisel y Mirabella*. Some critics have noted the importance of Mirabella's deadly glance as the matrix of both desire and death (Grieve 1987, 64. Cull, 1998). The Galeno-Platonic and Aristotelian extramission-intromission optic theories are fundamental for interpreting Mirabella's arrows of love that her “*peligrosa vista*” emits to hurt and kill the knights that are exposed to her choric visual field. Moreover, during Torrellas' sadistic martyrization by the queen and her entourage of ladies, the executrices usurp the phallic gaze in order to objectify and *rape* the misogynist through visual economies.<sup>1</sup> With the mechanism of appropriating the male glance, the ladies subvert and reverse the patriarchal authority, thus undermining both the social system and the “patriarchal” gaze.<sup>2</sup> By coercing Torrellas to behold them while they exert their power over his mutilated body, the queen and her ladies render him a passive object of their basest passions, sexualizing him and turning him into a *virginized* martyr through the articulation of their subversive optical power. Meanwhile, in Mirabella's ritualistic immolation, which will be the focus of this study, the *fetishization* of her seminude body by the titillating gaze shows the extent to which the priapic eyes touch, dominate, and penetrate the sexualized victim.<sup>3</sup> In Mirabella's execution scene, scopophilia (the erotic pleasure derived by looking at others as objects) constitutes a sophisticated mechanism of apotropaic punishment.

Critics have interpreted Mirabella's physical display before and during her execution in different ways. Lillian von der Walde Moheno notes the eroticism in Mirabella's exposure in her “camisa” (nightgown). The imagery of the “camisa” represents

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<sup>1</sup> Both Jorge Checa and Robert Folger forcefully suggest a (symbolic) rape from the ruthless ladies. Cf. Checa, (1988): “una violación llevada al límite.” And Folger (2009, 101): “the scene suggests sexual debasement and rape: the courtly lover's haunting fantasy of being a mere victim of sexual violence..., a potential rapist, comes true.”

<sup>2</sup> The usurpation of the phallic gaze (though in different words) has been noted by other scholars of *Grisel*. See for example, Folger (2009, 102): “At the end of *Grisel y Mirabella*, Flores presents us with the vision of a ‘courtly’ society from which the courtly lover has been excised and in which ‘unruly women’ have appropriated the Phallus. This appropriation is figured by the fetishistic ‘relics’ of Torrellas's body. Torrellas's quest, for a position of ‘having’ the phallus through the desire of the other, is thwarted by desire and passion, which convert him into an object of passion... leading to a loss of masculinity, an effeminate, and ultimately annihilation.” See my study “The Gendered Gaze: Torrellas' Sadistic ‘Martyrdom’ in *Grisel y Mirabella*.” Currently under review.

<sup>3</sup> This study will mostly be concerned with the male gaze. Some detractors of Laura Mulvey's theory of vision in cinematography reproach her lack of attention to the female gaze in the matrix of scopophilic discourse, and, as in Mulvey's film theory, in Flores' *Grisel y Mirabella*, it deserves the attention of critics. However, because our scene studied here deals with a seminude lady exposed by the State to the public gaze in order to punish her sexual transgression, I have decided to center my attention to the male gaze in detriment to the female gaze, which I study carefully in my essay “The Gendered Gaze...” based on the final scene of *Grisel*.

an authorial intrusion in Flores' diegetic world. By portraying Mirabella seminude, Flores becomes the first and most visible voyeur of his sentimental romance.<sup>4</sup> Other critics have emphasized the *spectacularization* of her execution, while others have noted the equivalency between marriage and death, as pointed out by the Auctor-narrator, all of which are essential to understanding the scene (Deyermond, 1993. Walde Moheno, 1996). However, critics have neglected the phenomenology of optic theories in the story and have not recognized the centrality that vision plays in the development of the dramatic plot and the effect that the gaze has in individual characters who look and/or are looked at. The Other's glance conditions the way in which characters interact with each other and reify each other by paradoxically objectivizing and being objectivized through the wielding of their own gaze. This study intends to fill the epistemological gap: it aims to show how the (phallic) gaze formulates relations of power and desire by fetishizing and sexualizing Mirabella's body as an object of masculine lust. Mirabella's execution is staged in a ritualistic and *spectacular* fashion in front of a wide viewership in order to punish her sexual transgression by exposing her to the public's sight, which serves as the State's mechanism to police and suppress sexual misconduct and erotic desire.

In his monograph on Spanish medieval literature *Orígenes de la novela*, Menéndez Pelayo praised the dramatic representation of Grisel and Mirabella's farewell dialogic interaction as they behold the punitive pyre prepared for the hapless princess.<sup>5</sup> As Mirabella is about to be flung into the flames, Menéndez Pelayo notes: "El desventurado amante se precipita en las llamas para no presenciar el suplicio de su amada" (1905, cccxxxv). The celebrated philologist hits the mark. Grisel's self-sacrificing heroism reflects his tacit desire not to be present during Mirabella's execution. I would tweak Menéndez Pelayo's cogent observation and say that Grisel hurls himself into the fire in order not to *behold* Mirabella die. Grisel's presence in the ceremonial execution undermines the "Ley de Escocia," which stipulates that the guiltier party ought to be executed at the stake and the less "guilty" be exiled for life. Since the judges filed against Mirabella, Grisel should have been sent away while the complex preparation for Mirabella's ceremonial execution was underway. Or at least, their sanctions should have been simultaneous. Infringing his own laws, the king hauls Grisel to the scaffold from which Mirabella will be cast into the fire. Grisel's presence is both coerced and punitive. Making him *watch* Mirabella's death is a retaliatory mechanism to enhance his psychological torture: "que por más crecer su pena y doblar en su pena, mandaron que *viése* la muerte de Mirabella."<sup>6</sup> Neither the king nor the reader expects the "colpo di scena" that

<sup>4</sup> It is not the only time that Flores depicts himself as the wielder of the voyeuristic gaze. In fact, during the lovemaking scene of Pánfilo and Fiometa in his other sentimental romance, *Grimalte y Gradissa*, Flores describes himself as an active voyeur in the sexual scene. His active looking of the sexual episode represents his desire to possess the objects of his gaze and to participate in the actual lovemaking, rendering himself into the subject of both hetero- and homoerotic desire. Cf. my study, "Flores as Voyeur: Voyeurism and Exhibitionism in *Grimalte y Gradissa*." Currently under review.

<sup>5</sup> Like Menéndez Pelayo, Michael Gerli (1989) also notes the beauty of the scene, saying: "few passages in medieval Castilian prose are as novel or as moving as Mirabella's expression of grief when she sees Grisel consumed by the flames intended for her." Gerli is right. It is her act of seeing his ashes that provokes such an expressive and violent overflow of aesthetic lyricism that seeks, as critics note, to move the readers to pathos and tears.

<sup>6</sup> Flores, (1983, 81). Emphasis mine. From now on, all quotes will be drawn from this edition. Commenting on this episode, H. Th. Oostendorp misreads both the text and the intentions (1962, 80). He believes that the king exonerated Grisel from his exile and that Grisel, somehow, appeared as a *deus ex machina* from within

razes the king's malevolent scheme. By offering himself as a surrogate victim, Grisel commits the ultimate act of defiance toward the king and his (bendable) laws, deciding to die the death he wants to die and not the one the king despotically prepared for him.<sup>7</sup>

After Torrellas' victory in the feminist debate, then, Mirabella is conducted to the sacrificing pyre in a very *spectacular* and ritualistic way. Both *spectacle* and *rite* are essential elements in Mirabella's execution. Alberto Prieto-Calixto notes the "espectacularidad," with which the king displays Mirabella in front of fifteen thousand ladies and the entire kingdom.<sup>8</sup> The word "spectacle" envelops a wide array of meanings that convey Mirabella's *passionate* execution accurately. According to the Online Etymology Dictionary, the word *spectacle* in the mid-fourteenth century meant: "Specially prepared or arranged display," and in the thirteenth century in Old French it meant: "Sight, spectacle, Roman games." But the word "spectacle" (espectáculo, in modern Spanish) comes from the Latin *spectaculum*: "A public show, spectacle, place from which shows are seen." In turn, the noun derives from the Latin verb *spectare*: "To view, watch, behold."<sup>9</sup> Mirabella's ceremony can only be described as a *spectaculum* for people to *spectare* both the State's punitive mechanism and the display of Mirabella's seminude body because being an object of the public gaze constitutes an integral part of her punishment.

Prieto-Calixto also points out the importance of vision in the execution. Availing himself with Foucauldian punitive theories, Prieto-Calixto argues that the spectacularity and the rituality of the scene are related to dialectics of punishment and control exerted by the State in order for *spectators* to remember ("memory," which is directly linked to vision)<sup>10</sup> the punishments applied to the "culprit" and to *know* who exerts the punishment. As Foucault notes, public torture is part of institutionalized rituals, and in these ritualistic spectacles torture and pain ought to be "duly observed." Through optical means, the spectator must inscribe within his memory that the State has the power over the individual because "public torture and execution must be *spectacular*, it must be *seen* by all almost as its *triumph*" (Foucault 1975, 34). In a recent article studying *imago agens* (active image) in *Celestina*, Amaranta Saguar García argues that in the Middle Ages graphic imagery functioned like powerful *imago agens*, which caused a great impression on the viewers that made it easy to retain in the memory: "Death is an excellent resource for creating *imagines*

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the spectators to cast himself into fire, replacing Mirabella. Oostendorp does not realize that Grisel's presence is coerced by the king's intentions to make him suffer by seeing Mirabella be burned.

<sup>7</sup> Mercedes Roffé (1996, 194) interprets Grisel's suicide as an action that has the effect of an "ordalía," a trial by ordeal.

<sup>8</sup> Prieto-Calixto (2002): "Junto con el poder, el ritual constituye una parte integrante y decisiva del tormento.... En *Grisel y Mirabella* el aspect ritual alcanza una inusitada importancia. Destaca la espectacularidad del aparato judicial en la obra.

<sup>9</sup> Link: [http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?allowed\\_in\\_frame=0&search=spectacle](http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?allowed_in_frame=0&search=spectacle).

<sup>10</sup> Availing herself with Mary J. Carruther's theories of memory, Haywood (2008, 8) notes the inherent connection between memory and sight. See also, James F. Burke, (2000, 29). Let us remember that while Grimalte is watching Fiometa and Pánfilo in Flores' other novela *Grimalte y Gradissa* (2008, 143), he is bringing into his memory imagery that he either has or wants to live with Gradissa: "Pero sus desenbulturas eran bien dificultosas de hurtar. Yo, a lo menos, contento me hacía el mirarlos que tanto vencido estava en dulçor de sus amores, trayendo a la memoria los míos que los amores dellos me davan sentible pena, tales eran sus gentilezas que no sabía cuál de aquellas más loasse."

*agentes.*”<sup>11</sup> Besides death, “sex and violence” were other powerful images that grafted long-lasting imagery in the memory. Mirabella’s execution has all three elements: violence, death and sensuality. Thus making an event spectacular and memorable, as Foucault and Sagar García suggest, implants unforgettable mental images that serve a very precise purpose in the spectators. Examining the executing procession, Prieto-Calixto cogently avers:

Las quince mil doncellas, las infinitas gentes, toda la multitud de hombre y mujeres ‘aiuntados’ para observar el espectáculo de la ejecución de Mirabella, dan cuenta de la importancia de un ritual que ha de desplegar toda su magnificencia en público (2002). Mirabella’s death is conceived of as a *ritualistic* spectacle imposed upon a surrogate victim in order to uphold social order. It is, above all, an apotropaic ceremony to avoid contagion and social entropy (Let us remember the king’s words to his woeful wife: “. In some ways, Mirabella incarnates a scapegoat sacrificed, in Girard’s phenomenological theories of violence, with the purpose of restoring harmony and reinforcing the social fabric (Girard 1977).

John T. Cull observes that rituals, as advanced by Northrop Frye, can help us interpret Flores’ *Grisel*. Cull also notes: “the procession to execute the death sentence is also shrouded in ritual” (1998). Cull goes so far as to claim that the ritualistic process is more important than the actual violence and cruelty of the scene. I differ from his opinion, for the ritualistic process is only a sophisticated form of violence. The very act of exposing her to the public sight constitutes a greater punishment than death itself. For *Grisel* and Mirabella, the act of seeing each other die represents a more severe punishment than dying. Mirabella confesses her fears of *seeing* *Grisel* die: “y tú, quedándome vivo que yo tu muerte no vea” (62). Just before *Grisel* casts himself to the flames, he exclaims: “¡Oh, qué maldad sería si viese en vos la pena de mi culpa!” (84). Mirabella claims to have died by watching *Grisel*’s death, so her suicide will be her second death: “no sé con qué te pague tan gran cargo, salvo si no cumplo en que muera dos veces: una en te ver morir, y otra, en matar a mí misma” (85). Throughout Mirabella’s apostrophic lament, there is a preponderance of the verb “ver”, which underscores the importance of visual topoi in the consciousness of the princess.<sup>12</sup> The ritualistic process that places Mirabella in the limelight of the public gaze is an integral part of the punishment. Because the king recognizes the torturing powers of sight, he coerces *Grisel* to watch Mirabella’s execution, and, (un)consciously, the king (and unwillingly *Grisel*) increases Mirabella’s psychological torture by making her *visually* aware that she is dying under the doleful sight of her lover. Sight alters the (self)-consciousness of those who look and those who are looked at alike.

Mirabella’s execution exhibits other elements of rituals. In some rituals, the observers are active participants in the ceremony. Because being publicly exposed to the scopophilic gaze constitutes an essential part of her punishment, in this scene, the voyeur

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<sup>11</sup> Sagar García (2015). Sagar García adds: “On the one hand, its biological consequences — decomposition— and some of its causes —illness, murder, execution, old age, etc.—have a strong visual impact.”

<sup>12</sup> Mirabella exclaims in tears before her lover’s burned body: “Ante mis ojos te veo muerto y apenas lo puedo creer; mas como los sueños muchas veces me engañan, deseo esto sea de aquellos soñados sueños, ¡ya querría tomar alguna esperanza con alguna falsa imaginación que vivo te me representases” (84). And then, “¡oh, atribulada yo, que tanta pena me da el deseo de verte! Pues, ¿qué es de ti, tan alejado de mí, sin esperanza de jamás verte?” (85).

represents a punitive apparatus of the State.<sup>13</sup> The king summons his subjects to watch his daughter being exhibited seminude in order to punish her sexual trespass, while reminding each and every one of the viewers to beware of his implacable justice. The voyeur self-delusionally believes to be satisfying his scopophilic desires, but the reality is that they are mere gazing *objects* used by the judicial system to inflict pain and shame upon the princess. The viewers' role in the process is paradoxical and contradictory.

While Mirabella is shamed by the complex interaction of gazes that collide on her nudity, the voyeur can watch uninhibited—despite their asymmetric spatial and social position in relation to the princess—because they serve the *privileged* punitive function of gazing-objects. Christian Metz differentiates between private (unauthorized) and public (authorized) voyeurism.<sup>14</sup> Although these are not fixed categories, as the lines are often blurred, it helps to differentiate between the *publicness* vis-à-vis *privateness*, as well as the explicit royal authorization behind the princess' punishment. In Mirabella's case, voyeurism is both *publicly* authorized and imposed upon all Peeping Toms. The spectators' eyes embody a paradox as passive-active wielders of the gaze. They are passive in that they are mere mediators between the king's institutionalized desires and Mirabella's sexual transgression. That is, the king punishes Mirabella through his subjects' phallic gaze, but they are also active in that they look and fulfill their voyeuristic desires. They are simultaneously subjects of the king and of their basest passions. They both obey the king and their natural instinct to gawk. Ritualistically, the voyeur is also active and passive; they participate, but it is a controlled participation that hinges upon a tacit agreement of an everlasting condition of non-possessing the fetishized object. Both death and their irreconcilable social asymmetry stand in the way of their desire and their goal to fulfill their desire.

The viewer can be an active participant so long as the only active bodily sense is vision. Only the king, the queen (and Mirabella, provided that her touch is passive, i.e., as long as she is touched) can use the sense of active physical touch. For common viewers, however, it is only through vision that they can touch, feel, taste, see and even smell. Mirabella, on the other hand, is physically and psychologically constrained within the limits of the physical space she occupies on the scaffold. Neither her body nor her eye beams can move beyond their limits of their physicality and their thingness.

Because Mirabella is utterly overpowered by the Other's gaze, the only person or object she can *actively* see is herself but only through introspective means. Her eyes can only see inwardly and perhaps downwardly so that she experiences herself as *thingness* exposed both to the objectivizing and objectivized gaze. The moment she attempts to exert

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<sup>13</sup> Barbara Matulka points at Fiometa being carried on a cart at the end of Flores' *Grimalte y Gradissa* in order to punish her through being exposed to Pamphilo's gaze. It is, according to Matulka a double punishment. Fiometa is being exposed in the eyes of her ex lover, while Pamphilo is being punished through his sight. He is forced to see the vision of demons tormenting Fiometa, while she suffers more by being exposed than by being tormented. Cf. Matulka (1931, 302): "This episode in the *Lancelot* novel may therefore clarify the purpose of Juan de Flores in introducing it into the punishment of Fiometa. Making her ride in an infernal chariot would humiliate her more than all the tortures that were being inflicted on her. It was a fitting culmination for Fiometa's infamy and Pamphilo's rueful castigation."

<sup>14</sup> In a study on shame and desire in cinematographic theory, Tarja Laine (2007, 49) notes the way in which private vis-à-vis public scopophilia affects individuals: "According to Christian Metz, there exist two types of voyeurism: private (unauthorized) and public (authorized), of which the first type is dominant in film experience. Public voyeurism is discursive interaction based on a mutual agreement as, for example, in the peep show."

her active sight upon another, her sight is immediately repelled and possessed by the uncanny amount of eyes conditioning and fashioning her sense of selfhood. As soon as the princess attempts to penetrate into the eyes of a voyeur, she must feel a sense of self-*anagnorisis*, but it is a self-recognition always conditioned by her self-referential thingness, which elicits a keen sense of shame in the princess: “y con él estando, olvidado el temor, desechó la vergüenza” (83). Shame and voyeurism (or unwilling exhibitionism) are intricately connected.<sup>15</sup> For Sartre, the looker being looked at feels shame “of recognizing [himself] in this degraded, fixed, and dependent being which [he is] for the Other” (Spearing 1993, 10). But let us remember that Mirabella is unable to look both because she feels objectified and because she feels shame, so her eyes are forced to look inward or downward, never straight or upward.

Madeline H. Caviness (2001, 19) notes that during the Classical period the averted eyes were a sign of defeat, which brings us back to Foucault’s observation that the public executions represented a “triumph” of the State over the individual. Mirabella’s shame, however, is the outer manifestation of her defeat, for she possessed a keen awareness of her superior social and political authority over the subjects of the kingdom,<sup>16</sup> just like it represents a triumph for the king, for he too possessed a strong sense of entitlement as the champion and embodiment of “justice.” In his only direct dialectical intervention in the romance, the king tells the queen after she pleads for the princess’ life: “Pues sola justicia es mi vitoria y lo más loable en mi estado” (80). The king’s “vitoria,” then, translated into Mirabella’s defeat, which is both perceived and expressed through visual economies. Mirabella *perceives* in the Other’s gaze that she is no longer a hegemonic princess but an abject object of the public gaze being sexualized and visually cannibalized, which as we will see later, looks forward to the lions’ ingesting her flesh.<sup>17</sup>

The shift between the end of the feminist debate—where Mirabella is found guilty—and the scene of the execution is abrupt. The narrator justifies the diegetic lacunae with the ineffability of the tragedy: “y después que el día fue llegado que Mirabella muriese, ¿quién podría escribir las cosas de gran magnificencia que para su muerte estaban ordenadas?” (81). The narrator, whose aloofness in the dramatic action of the story is systematic (saved in the moments of highest tragedy), declares himself emotionally incompetent to convey the spectacularity of the mournful scene. His alleged ineffability, which Waley also notes in *Grimalte y Gradissa*,<sup>18</sup> is deceptive, for he is laconic in words but not in imagery. Just after these words, he points out the tragic irony of the execution by contrasting the tragic rituality of the scene to the festive banquets of Mirabella’s never-

<sup>15</sup> Cf. My study, “Voyeurism and Shame: The Pleasure of Looking and the Pleasure of Being Looked at in *La Celestina*.” Currently under review.

<sup>16</sup> Let us remember when Mirabella reminds Grisel of her higher social status so that she could command him, and he had to obey on pain of death: “Y porque yo era cierta, que según mi estado, que, aunque tú me Amaras, la vergüenza te causara no me lo osar decir. Mas yo, como señora, así como quien te pude mandar, te mandé que fueses mío; lo cual contradézir no podiste, y ante te diera la muerte sí rehusaras mi ruego” (1983, 61).

<sup>17</sup> In her study on clothes and nude bodies, Anne Hollander (1993, 84) reminds us: “Occasions for nakedness often have to do with sex, and so among those for whom sex was associated with shame, a sense of the shamefulness of nudity could arise.” Mirabella, of course, is aware of her seminudity, which elicits her sense of shamefulness and defeat.

<sup>18</sup> Waley (1969). Commenting on Fiometa’s torture by the devils at the end of *Grimalte*, Waley says: “the tortures she undergoes are not actually described, Flores having recourse to the technique of the *indécible*: ‘por ser increíbles cosas de creher lo callo,’ ‘por no dart anta pena para los leyedores no quiero contar.’”

to-come royal wedding: “y todas muy conformes a tristeza según que el caso lo requería a unas fiestas tan tristes como el día de sus bodas se le pensaban hacer alegres” (81).<sup>19</sup> Flores conveys the bathetic irony employing multiple dichotomies: fiestas tan tristes (of her execution)-fiestas de bodas; triste-alegre; the now-the “día de su boda.” Alan Deyermond alludes to Nicole Loraux’s *Tragic Ways of Killing a Woman*, to note the equivalence between sacrifice and marriage,<sup>20</sup> but the analogy only intensifies when we realize that the man who was supposed to hand her over to a future husband casts her out to the sacrificial pyre in the very presence of his (and her) subjects.

Save for the mourning description, the punitive apparatus is described both as a spectacle and as a festive parade. Like a royal festivity, the entire population of the kingdom is present to witness her death, and the *scapegoat* victim is paraded on a chariot (“carro”) like a beauty queen, which reminds the reader of Gracisla’s coronation in *La Coronación de la señora Gracisla*, which Joseph Gwara forcefully identified as the work of Flores.<sup>21</sup> The carnivalesque spectacles of Gracisla’s coronation are such that “fue hun caso maravilloso de mirar” (43). Cupid’s execution in Flores’ other novel *Triunfo de Amor* exhibits most elements of Mirabella’s, including the literalization of the motif of being burned by the fire of love.<sup>22</sup> Just like *Grisel*, in *Triunfo*, the topos of parading the culprit on a cart as he is about to be flaunted to the flames before all the living and the “dead” spectators reminds us of the power of the gaze as a punishing mechanism.<sup>23</sup> The theme of the carts and vision returns in Flores’ *Grimalte y Gradissa* when Fiometa is being divinely tormented at the dénouement of the novel. The recurrence of culprits being paraded in “carros” exposed to the sight of people throughout Flores’ fiction underscores the punitive powers of the Other’s gaze. In *Grisel y Mirabella*, the spectacularization of the parade is also a “caso maravilloso de mirar”:

Que entre las cosas de piedad que allí fueron juntadas, eran quince mil doncellas vestidas de luto, las cuales, con llantos diversos y mucha tristeza, ayudaban a las

<sup>19</sup> For an exhaustive study on irony, see Ivy A. Corfis (1997). And Grieve (1987, 59).

<sup>20</sup> Loraux says: death is a natural metaphor of marriage... [... Tragedy] turns the metaphor round: virgins in tragedy leave for the abode of the dead just as they might their father's home for the home of their husband” (Deyermond, 1993). Cf. Francisco Márquez Villanueva (1987), who studies the carnivalesque motifs in *Libro de Buen Amor*’s episode of Don Carnal and Doña Cuaresma. Professor Villanueva notes: “No hay que olvidar que el banquete carnavalesco lleva siempre consigo una latencia nupcial y procreadora.”

<sup>21</sup> After the parading festivities, which Flores represents like a visual orgy for its colors, its majesty and its aesthetic pleasure, Gracisla is taken home “en unos carros de oro, de los cuales tiravan doze coseres con cordeles de oro tirado, y sus vestidos y el tocado era tan gallán y rico que quyen no le viese no podría dar razón que tal podía ser” (Flores 1979, 44).

<sup>22</sup> In a debate between the god of Love and the necromancer Medea that mirrors that of Torrellas and Brazaida, where Cupid is being tried for killing those who follow his *leyes*, Cupid, like Mirabella, was found guilty. The lovers, who had already died for love but resuscitated to avenge themselves against the god of Love, afford him the opportunity to choose his own death. Cupid responds that he wants to deprive all lovers of their fiery passion, and out of all fires of passion he will create a big fire in which he will burn himself: “y la pena de todos quiero atraerla a mí junta, con la qual se levantara una tan enamorada llama, que con el fuego de todos los amantes yo muera; porque esta muerte enamorada, en bibas llamas de amor, me conviene” (Flores 1981, 112).

<sup>23</sup> In a scene that seems to be copied from one text to the other, where Cupid, like Mirabella, is about to be executed for analogous reasons, the “auctor” describes the tragic scene: “pues así ellos triunfosos y mansamente andando, en medio de muy armada hueste salió el Amor, de todos acompañado, encima de un *triumfal carro*, muy ricamente guarnido” (Flores 1981, 129). Emphasis mine.

tristes lágrimas de la madre, y desconsolada Reina, que, con ella y con todas las otras damas, ninguna consolación fallaban a sus dolores. Y, después desto, traían un *carro* en el cual iba Mirabella con cuatro obispos que el cargo de su ánima tomaban. Y luego allí Grisel que, por más crecer y doblar en su pena, mandaron que *viese* la muerte de Mirabella. Y el Rey con infinitas gentes cubiertas de luto iba al fin de todos, según costumbre de aquel reino. Y salieron fuera de la ciudad donde Mirabella había de morir quemada, porque las leyes de la tierra eran: quien por fuego de amor se vence, en fuego muera (81, emphasis mine).

There is a disjunctive between the emotionally charged tragedy of the execution and its festive—semi carnivalesque<sup>24</sup>—representation. Flores situates this tragic-festive scene of Mirabella somewhere between the cheerful celebration of Gracisla's coronation and the infernal punishments of Fiometa in the hands of demons. In these three novels, Flores deploys with marked acuity the spectacularity within the entire spectrum of *carnivalesque* dialectics. In Mirabella's immolation, the display of festive elements functions as a mnemonic tool to inscribe in the canaille's memory *imagines agentes* that will remind them of the consequences of transgressing inveterate patriarchal norms. Unlike *Libro de Buen Amor*, in *Grisel* death is not allegorized (Gilman 1974, 210) or romanticized like Leriano's pathetic death in *Cárcel de amor*. Rather, it is displayed and staged in order to be observed for axiological purposes.

The parade-like ceremony exhibits imagery of Christ's Passion. Keith Whinnom points out that medieval readers and writers turned to Jesus' *Passio* for literary analogies and imagery to redeploy in their own literature (Whinnom, 1997). Scholars of Flores have found many traces of Christological images in his fictional works. Mirabella is a Christ-like symbol in her *Via Crucis*, while the queen-mother becomes the Virgin Mary being consoled by the mourning fifteenth thousand "doncellas," who represent Christ's followers. Brazaida, the androgynist Homeric heroine—who defended Mirabella in the trial—could be read as a parodic figure of the repentant prostitute Mary Magdalene. The father, like Saint Joseph, does not appear on the procession because the customs of his land order that he be "al fin de todos." The "infinitas gentes"—the voyeurs—become the Romans and the nonbelieving mob. Finally, the four bishops represent the Jewish Rabbis who betrayed Jesus. This is perhaps an allegory that Flores did not intend to stage, but the imagery does lend itself for such allegorical exegesis. Throughout the novel, Mirabella is portrayed as Christ-like figure who is willing to sacrifice her own life for the sake of others—Grisel. Her divine beauty and her uncanny ability to kill men attest to her unnatural "holiness."

Beyond the anagogical exegesis, the role of the four bishops is deceptively fixed. Their factual function is to tend to the princess' soul and to help her bear, in Alejo Venega's

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<sup>24</sup> I use Bakhtin's literary concept of "carnivalesque," as advanced in his influential monograph *Rabelais and his World*, rather loosely. Bakhtin identified four main components in carnivalesque epistemology, which I will outline as follows: 1) Familiarity and free interaction among people, 2) Eccentric behavior, 3) Carnivalesque misalliances, and 4) the laxity of religious and civic rules without penal consequences. Mirabella's execution only tangentially concurs with Bakhtin's delineation of carnival theory. In Flores' scene, we do not perceive "eccentric behavior" from anyone, and we do not see "carnivalesque misalliances." There is, however, implied familiarity and free interaction between people, and laxity of religious and civic rules, as well as an invitation to "desire" a woman that is not their own. Hence, we can see a form of "controlled carnivalesque" representation in the scene of Mirabella's execution.



words, the “agonía del tránsito de la muerte,” a highly ritualized element of medieval Christian eschatology. Their role in the scene is solely testimonial. Laura Vivanco (2004, 78-79) argues that Mirabella’s shameful *Via Crucis* resonates with Álvaro de Luna’s public procession before his beheading in Valladolid. The passive bishops, who were also present in Luna’s public execution, color the scene as a religious procession. Along with Mirabella’s divine-like features and Christ-like portrayal, the four bishops reinforce the vibe of the sacred festivities, but Mirabella’s seminudity—which mirrors Christ’s before and during the crucifixion in medieval artistic representations—before the sacrificial pyre distorts (and even erases) all similarities with the solemnity of a religious procession, unless we compare it to martyrological narratives, where nakedness is often the most visible component (Caviness, 2001). Instead, the narrator transforms Mirabella’s body into a sexualized object standing on a platform for the sake of male scopophilia.

After a brief plea for Mirabella’s life by the queen, where she offers herself as a surrogate victim for her daughter, the princess is prepared for her death. The narrator asserts:

Luego, por mandado del Rey, fue por fuerza quitada Mirabella de los brazos de su madre, la cual en una rica camisa despojaron para recibir la muerte, veyendo arder ante sí las encendidas llamas del fuego que la esperaban (83).

The “camisa” is a symbol of Mirabella’s hymen, which is penetrated from every possible angle. The king, who is able to achieve his incestuous fantasies by fetishizing her daughter’s body through visual means, wields the legal authority to command Mirabella’s death. He pries Mirabella out of the queen’s arms to cast her into the fire. The narrator does not explicitly declare who stripped Mirabella of her clothes. He uses the passive voice to create dramatic suspense. Mirabella’s object-body becomes the target of all scopophilic gazes, which are able to see through her delicate “camisa” with their lion-like eyes “as mute accomplices of desire” from where voyeurs achieve a “morbid gratification” (Gerli, 2011, 100). The fetishistic exposition of the princess’ body is both an implied invitation for the reader to look at and an explicit license for all spectators to pry (and prey) on her seminudity and sensuality. The exposed princess is depicted “veyendo arder ante sí las encendidas llamas del fuego.” The image of the flames serves both an ocular exteriorization of her passion for Grisel and as a cinematographic source of manmade illumination if the reader imagines—given the lack of precise description—a gloomy dusk (like the one often portrayed in artistic depictions of the crucifixion).

In his study on tactile vision, the Andalusian filmmaker José Val del Omar examines the tangibility of vision through sophisticated techniques of illumination. Val del Omar argues that when the eyes behold an object, the eye beams touch it and feel it through a palpable “vibración luminosa” in order to “cogerlo, dominarlo, asimilarlo” (1959). Some textures and fabrics, contends the Andalusian filmmaker, enhance the palpability of the object, and he asserts that the feminine instinct uses weaving techniques and illumination to manipulate the perception of sizes of their breasts: “los tejidos de raso y seda, mediante la luz, acentúan los encantos femeninos, y la mujer los emplea *para ser palpada por quienes la miran*” (1959). Val del Omar argues that the secret lies in knowing how to convert lighting into sensible fingers that touch and feel the object that the eyes apprehend. Flores emphasizes Mirabella’s “rica camisa,” which suggests thin, soft and delicate fabric

that accentuates her “delicadas carnes” (86), unwillingly enticing the metaphorical fingers of the voyeurs’ eyes to touch and to penetrate, in a similar way Grisel touched and penetrated her sexually. The “rica camisa” that barely veils her delicate silhouette becomes the dominant fetishized object because the narrator centers it at the focal point that attracts the tactile sight of men and invites to be caressed through ocular means and an act of imagination (Gerli, 2011, Hollander, 1993).

The narrator does not need to take off Mirabella’s *camisa* in order for the viewer to *undress* her with his/her eyes and imagination. As the common expression says, men (and women) are capable of undressing her with their eyes by the literal up and down motion of the salacious sight. The illumination provided by the fire would help with the perceptual denudation, for the flames could have made Mirabella’s *rica camisa* transparent, offering a perfect figure to the phallic gaze. As Seneca says of those flamboyant exhibitionists who wore transparent togas (“*perlucentem togam*”) in an active effort to be gazed (“*inritant illos et in se advertunt; volunt vel reprehendi, dum conspici*” Epistle 114, 21), Mirabella’s father exhibits her in a *perlucente* nightgown in order for her to be seen (*conspici*) and for the gazer to satisfy their desire. Barbara Matulka identified the characterization of the king with the folkloric motif of the “padre incestuoso.” Hence given the contiguity between violence and sexuality, it would not be strange if the king experienced a sexual arousal while watching Mirabella’s nudity on the verge of her sacrifice.<sup>25</sup>

In her essay on voyeurism in Diego Sánchez de Badajoz, Barbara Weissberger (1996) advances a thesis that Sánchez de Badajoz “deliberadamente estimula el ‘voyeurismo’ pecaminoso de sus espectadores.” The same argument can be articulated in *Grisel*, wherein the public functions as spectators of a dramatic “play” in which the main protagonists are Eros and its nemesis Thanatos, embodied in Mirabella’s body. In Mirabella’s body, death and eroticism conflate to form a perverse pair, and the viewers have an open invitation to partake in the dramatic representation, where they are paradoxically both inside and outside of the diegetic plot. Whereas Weissberger refers only to the explicit diegetic public of Badajoz’s play, Flores’ onlookers are simultaneously actors and spectators of the staged drama of Mirabella’s tragic life. Through the mechanism of identification with the spectators, Flores *compels* his readers to become active voyeurs, turning her *rica camisa* and her *delicadas carnes* into the epicenter of the choric visual field. Sensuality, psychological torture, pity, hatred, sadism, shame, death and visual rape converge in the very physical space of Mirabella’s platform (Sauer 2013). There is also a sense of death in the spectators’ gaze, for they become paralyzed and hypnotized by Mirabella’s seminude body.

Robert S. Sturges argues that death is always attached to the wielder of the gaze. As the observer gazes, he subjects himself to the object it apprehends and possesses. It is an optic paradox, but by analyzing Mirabella’s scene through this lens, both the subject and the object of the gaze seem to *cosify* each other. The active gaze of the voyeur *cosifies* the object, while *cosifying* himself by fixing his eyes on the object, thus creating a kind of

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<sup>25</sup> Galtung (1994, 41). Galtung asserts that during tortures, “both torturer and victim experience some sexual arousal, even without any explicitly sexual element in the torture.” If torturers and victims can have erections even without elements of eroticism, the fact that the torture offers many elements of sexuality only increases the chances of erection and sexual arousal. Cf. Girard (1977, 148): “the presence of violence will invariably awaken desire.... The *logos phobou* is ultimately the wordless language by which mimetic desire and violence communicate with one another.”

ontological suspension on the gazer. Sturges quotes McGowan: “even when a manifestation of the gaze does not make death evident directly..., it nonetheless carries the association insofar as the gaze itself marks the point in the image at which the subject is completely subjected to it” (2010). In essence, McGowan presses deeper into Freud’s psychoanalytical optic hypothesis in his “Medusa’s Head,” where Freud postulates that terror petrifies those who gaze at Medusa’s head. Nevertheless, McGowan’s idea brings us back to Mirabella’s defining characteristic: her deadly gaze.

The main reason Mirabella finds herself in that tragic predicament is because of her father’s decision to imprison her, and her father felt compelled to do so because Mirabella was killing his knights by issuing forth arrows of love from her “*peligrosa vista*.” Sturges and McGowan’s hypothesis brings us back to Mirabella snaring and objectifying those who entered into her choric visual field. Only in her subdued present, however, it is not Mirabella’s dangerous sight that is snaring and objectifying the voyeurs. Rather, those who are voyeuristically gazing at her are symbolically dying ensnared on her “*fina camisa*” and “*delicadas carnes*.” If we go back to Freud’s hypothesis, Mirabella’s beauty serves the same function as Medusa’s head, in that those who gaze at her are symbolically petrified. Flores offers us an ironic and tragic paradox. Whereas before Mirabella killed men with her beautiful glance, now the male gaze is attracted like, in Grimalte’s words, “*palomilla que en la lumbre del candil viene a morir*” (Waley 1969) burned and killed by the sensuality of her “*delicadas carnes*” that can be seen through the “*fina camisa*” and that puts us back to the realm of allegory and metaphor, undoing the leitmotif of what Patricia Grieve and Alan Deyermond call: The conversion of images into reality.

Mirabella’s final words to Grisel heighten the dramatic effect of the gaze. Mirabella interprets as an irony that Grisel *watches* her die of love after so many men died of love for her: “*mas sólo este loor te queda: que vees morir aquella por quien tantos de amor murieron y... para que con la vida te goces y en los tiempos de las adversidades se conozcan y se vean los corazones fuertes*” (83, emphasis mine). Mirabella perceives the tragic irony in the idea of dying of love, but the real irony is that after hurting and killing nearly all knights with her deadly gaze, now she is exposed, hurt and introjected by a communal and patriarchal gaze. After his brief codified response or “idealistic paradigm that none of the people around them can comprehend,” (Brownlee 1990, 205), Grisel jumps into the pyre to avoid *seeing* the sacrifice of his beloved. Having witnessed her lover’s self-immolation, Mirabella wants to follow him into the flames, but Brazaida and the ladies prevent her from committing suicide. Instead, persuading the king that it was an ordeal by trial (*ordalía*), as Mercedes Roffé noted, brought about by divine intervention to prevent the death of an innocent, the queen pleads for Mirabella’s life. The king masks his tyranny by consulting it with his advisors and complies with her pleas. Despite her promise to kill herself as soon as she is able, her parents and relatives do not believe that she will fulfill her promise (Brownlee 1990, 206).

The princess is spared, then, but she can neither escape from the phallic gaze nor from Flores’ penchant for deviant voyeurism. Flores disrobes Mirabella to cast her into the pyre, but even after she was pardoned, she is never robed again. The narrator directs the gaze of the reader from an image of a seminude princess to another one that mirrors the first. Hence after the king’s pardoning, Mirabella is taken to the castle and placed under watch. But like Grisel, Mirabella is a paragon of faithfulness and truthfulness:

Y una noche, la postrimera de sus días, no pudiendo el amor y muerte de Grisel sufrir, por dar fin a sus congojas la dio a su vida. La cual esperó tiempo que los que la guardaban durmiesen; y como ella *vido* el tiempo dispuesto y en la propia libertad, fuese *en camisa* a una ventana que *miraba* sobre un corral donde el Rey tenía unos leones, y entre ellos se dejó caer. Los cuales no usaron con ella de aquella obediencia que a la sangre real debían, según en tal caso los suelen loar, mas antes *miraron* a su hambre que a la realeza de Mirabella, a quien ninguna medida *cataron*; y muy presto fue dellos despedazada, y de las *delicadas carnes* cada uno contentó el apetito (86, emphasis mine).

The symbols of consumption and the topoi of vision pervade the entire paragraph. Just like the voyeurs were a punitive mechanism during the execution, the king deploys guards to police and *observe* the lovelorn princess. Mirabella is under the surveillance of many guardians who serve as visual metonyms to the king. The guardians' eyes are a replacement (or displacement) of the king's eyes, which stresses his omnipresence and omnipotence on individuals' lives.

The shocking part of the scene is not that the princess sees the (male) guardians while she is nearly stark naked in her bedchamber. What is really appalling is that "*los que la guardaban*" could *see* her seminude on her bed without feeling sexual arousal while they observe her sleeping (or rather, pretending to be sleeping). Mirabella's spatial economy (the private bedroom) is both violated and inhabited by the titillating male gaze. This intimate space brings us back to Metz's idea of the "private (unauthorized) public (authorized)" voyeurism. Unlike the spatial economy of the execution, voyeurism is unauthorized in her private space, but who could control the innate instincts to gawk when the king himself has appointed them to "watch" the princess? Like the voyeurs of the execution, the guards are State-sponsored voyeurs, defiling the *hortus conclusus*. Mirabella's intimate chamber is a symbol and an extension of her body (Sauer, 2013). As Stallybrass points out, both "the body enclosed" and the locked house were preconditions of a *doncella encerrada* (1986). The king himself converts his daughter into an open maiden, a public girl, thus damaging her physical and sexual integrity and his own repute.

Mirabella's violation of privacy is not her choice. The king, with the apparent endorsement of the queen, imposes those gazing guards upon the princess, both as a punitive and a protective resolve. This shows the level of objectification that the king and the queen impose upon Mirabella. Perhaps because she had lost both her virginity and her "honra," the king treats his daughter more like a prostitute than like a princess by populating her private bedchamber with phallic gazes, and it harkens back to the king treating her more like a criminal than like his daughter by incarcerating her in an isolated and dark cell. The king's doltish judgment to populate Mirabella's private chamber with priapic eyes also calls into question his earlier decision of concealing his daughter from the choric visual field of lovesick men. His actions are rather contradictory and inconsistent with fatherly conduct.

Beyond their will to gaze, the custodians also serve a dual purpose: they report back to the king, and they are supposed to protect Mirabella from her self-destructive drives. As Alexander Murray and other critics of suicidology point out, privacy and secrecy are preconditions for unwarranted suicides. Mirabella waits for her wardens to fall asleep in order not to be *seen* and stopped. When she sees ("*vido*") that they are sleeping, she comes

out (of bed) wearing only her nightgown (“camisa”, perhaps the same one she was wearing during the execution) and hurls herself down the tower. This form of suicide (minus the lions) is analogous to that of Melibea, as María Rosa Lida observes, and the downward descend serves as a symbol of her moral and social fall, or even her fall from fickle Fortune’s wheel, which represented an anxiety in the Spanish Middle Ages, as Gilman notes (1955).

The lions’ consumption of Mirabella’s body has been amply studied and interpreted, so I will just borrow Marina S. Brownlee’s commentary in order to connect it with the voracious gaze of the male voyeur. Brownlee asserts:

The lion is not indigenous to Scotland, but there as elsewhere it is the emblem of regal authority. For this reason, it is very appropriate that she is destroyed by her father’s identity. It is, moreover, significant that these lions are anthropomorphically endowed with erotic sensibilities (1990, 206).

Like men, lions are endowed with erotic sensibilities, and they are the only creatures, aside from Grisel, that can both see Mirabella and touch her *erotically*. Unlike men, however, lions do not feel the sexual titillation when seeing her nudity and devouring her “delicadas carnes.” The scene of the lions in *Grisel* is redolent of the scene of the dogs at the end of *Grimalte y Gradissa* where Grimalte sets his dogs on the animalized Pánfilo to make him break his vow never to speak again, and the rabid dogs bite and eat his flesh, until the inhuman antihero stops his dogs’ attacks.<sup>26</sup> In *Grisel*, however, the lions are fraught with symbolism, as Brownlee points out. In *Grimalte*, the dogs are ordinary beasts that simply obey their inborn instincts. Like lions, men’s gazes have the power of touching her and devouring her with their voyeuristic gaze. In his *Faerie Queene*, Edmund Spenser uses the cannibalistic-gaze topos to showcase the metaphorical ability of men to devour the “dainty flesh” with their eyes, which echoes Flores’ “delicadas carnes”: “Some with their eyes the daintest morsels chose.”<sup>27</sup>

When Mirabella is exposed to the public sight, men are no better than the lions that would eat her flesh. Men’s lion-like gaze is capable of, in Val del Omar’s words, “cogerla, dominarla y asimilarla.” The word “asimilarla,” which has some echoes of Freud’s theory of object introjection, as articulated in his seminal study “Mourning and Melancholia,” is a powerful statement, but it has its epistemological basis on Aristotle’s optic theory of intromission, where the *species* or *phantasma* that resemble the real object enter into the eye’s orifice in order to enable vision.<sup>28</sup> In commenting Torrellas’ execution, Robert Folger

<sup>26</sup> Grimalte unrepentantly confesses and describes the scene: “yo enoiado de su callar, por ver si el dolor algo le haria dezir, por fuerça solte los perros, dándoles mas favor y sforçandolos fuerte contra ell, como si fuera animal salvaje” (Brownlee 1990, 187).

<sup>27</sup> Quoted by A. C. Spearing (1993, 45). Spearing adds: “in Spenser’s *Serena* episode the division of the male subject into a swarm of savages, and the identification of that subject’s desire as not just carnal but cannibalistic, produce a distancing and sharply diagnostic effect” (47). The cannibalistic gaze, however, as Spenser and Spearing note, is only by *some* men (the majority, I would say) that devour the princess with their gaze. Others would have had contrasting reactions and emotions.

<sup>28</sup> In optical epistemology, “Species” were thought of as reduced reproductions of the actual object or being, which entered into the eyes to enable vision. Cf. Stewart (2003, 17): “[Robert] Bacon espouses an idea of Arabic provenance according to which ‘species’ emanate from all things, including the eyes. These ocular species have an important function: they actually ‘ennoble’ the medium, so that it will be commensurate with

allots to the cannibalistic ladies the introjection and devouring of Torrellas' body, but symbolically the scopophilic gaze "introjects, or devours, the desired object" which, in this scene, is Mirabella's body.<sup>29</sup>

Lions may be capable of anthropomorphic eroticism, but like Grimalte's dogs, they consume Mirabella's flesh instinctually and without sexual malice (the lions "*miraron* a su hambre [más] que a la realeza de Mirabella"). Men, on the other hand, "consume" Mirabella's *delicadas carnes* in order to satisfy their aberrant voyeuristic appetite and their basest desires. The eating of human flesh is linked directly to Torrellas' cannibalistic murder, whom, as I note elsewhere, is eaten both visually and literally while he *watches* his own flesh being consumed by the voracious ladies as *contrapasso*. Antonio Pérez-Romero interprets Melibea's suicide as a subversive act undertaken to undermine her biased patriarchal social system. I, on the other hand, contend that she kills herself in order to escape from the State-sponsored phallic gaze and to go seek the pure and sublimated gaze of Grisel in the afterworld.<sup>30</sup> Mirabella feels (and is) trapped within a network of priapic eye beams, which ironically reverses the courtly love codification when all men were "forzado[s] de ser preso[s] de su amor" (54). Mirabella went from binding men with her beautiful glance to being bound by their deviant scopophilia. The only way out of her physical and metaphorical confinement is through death, which could be interpreted as poetic justice since the knights who were "presos de su amor" were *only* liberated by death, and those who would have been imprisoned by her fascinating gaze and beauty are liberated by her untimely death (Cvitanovic 1973, 291).

In conclusion, Mirabella's execution is represented as a ritualistic spectacle. The forlorn princess, like Christ to the cross, is paraded to the pyre in order for her to see and to be seen. Although it is a weak and passive look, like that of Torrellas before and during his "martyrdom," Mirabella is allowed (and even encouraged) to look. Mirabella can both see and speak. The real intention of her *exhibition* to the public gaze is for her to be seen, to be touched visually and to be assimilated for apotropaic purposes. As Val del Omar argues, with the help of proper illumination and clothing (her "fina camisa" and the illumination provided by the flames), the male gaze can touch, dominate and introject the

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the nobility of the eye. This, as we will see, is an interesting scientific counterpart to the poetic notion of the ennobling gaze of the beloved."

<sup>29</sup> Folger (2009, 102) asserts: "The connection between Freudian melancholy, in which the 'I' introjects, or devours, a desired object, and anthropophagy has been traced by Agamben. The finale of *Grisel y Mirabella*, then, is a cruel literalization of Torrellas's desire to be a 'love object' and a usurpation (destruction *and* appropriation) of male subjectivity by the ladies of the court."

<sup>30</sup> Whereas Pérez-Romero's interpretation is acceptable and shared by other critics who want to interpret any form of female violence as a rejection of established social norms, at least consciously, that is not Mirabella's intention. Mirabella, as we can see throughout the tale, accepts—without suggesting that she agrees with them—all forms of social norms and male-made laws. Unlike the reader and Brazaida, Mirabella never questions the validity and justness of the so-called "Ley de Escocia." Instead, Mirabella commits suicide because she wants to *see* her lover (and not be seen by the voyeuristic gaze). Just after Grisel jumps into the pyre that had been prepared for her, Mirabella apostrophizes to her lover's burned body: "Y así que no pienses, amado Grisel, que no te siga, mas *espérame* que las estrechas sendas me *enseñen* y entre los muchos muertos no trabaje en *buscarte*. ¡Oh, Grisel!, ¿es cierto que ya no vives? Ante mis *ojos te veo* muerto y apenas lo puedo creer.... ¡Oh, atribulada yo, que tanta pena me da el deseo de *verte*! Pues, ¿qué es de ti, tan alejado de mí, sin esperanza de jamás *verte*?" (85, emphasis mine). Mirabella wants to see Grisel, and, as we have seen throughout the novel, Mirabella is both unrepentant regarding her desires and assertive in getting exactly what (or whom) she wants. Grisel, then, defies royal commands by substituting the princess in the flames; Mirabella follows her assertive desire, defying divine punishment.

object that the eyes apprehend. In this way, the phallic gaze, like the lions, can touch and devour Mirabella's "delicadas carnes," like the ladies devoured Torrellas' flesh. The male gaze, however, constitutes an essential part of Mirabella's punishment, for it serves a dual purpose: It serves as deterrent for other (noble) ladies to engage in illicit sexual acts, and it also reverses the relations of courtly love power articulated by the sensual female gaze. Because Mirabella killed nearly all knights with her lethal gaze, now *nearly* all men symbolically kill her by means of introjection, and they possess her by means of their scopophilic gaze. Mirabella's *fina camisa* only invites and enables the touching, the visual penetration and the sensual devouring of her *delicadas carnes*.

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