

“Mis ojos por tus ojos mueren:”
María de Zayas’s Subversion of the Male Gaze
in “El prevenido engañado”

Bryan Betancur
CUNY-Bronx Community College

Contemporary visual artist Barbara Kruger is famous for manipulating popular media to criticize the ways in which patriarchal power structures dictate social beliefs and behaviors. The artist edits photographs taken from various media and juxtaposes short textual commentaries meant to engage questions of authority and sexual difference (Kruger 56). An untitled work commonly identified by its superposed text, *Your Gaze Hits the Side of My Face* (Fig. 1), is representative of Kruger’s aesthetic. In *Gaze*, Kruger describes the act of looking as violence against a woman. The gender of the victim in the accusatory phrase is clear, as the text is laid over a photograph of a woman’s face. Kate Linker argues that since the photograph is of a stone sculpture, the underlying message is that the gaze immobilizes the woman (62). The superposed text seems to support this interpretation, as the dichotomy of the possessive pronouns “your” and “my” separate an active, violent agent from an apparently passive recipient. The observed woman does not face the gazer, suggesting that the forces that watch over and constrain her are meant to remain out of her consciousness.

In short, Kruger's piece references the "male gaze," the depersonalized and pervasive power structure that has long defined and propagated gender roles in a manner that subordinates women (Rogers 205). Kruger's work highlights the extent to which insidious popular media propagates patriarchal mechanisms of surveillance and control. By modifying such images, Kruger seeks to draw attention to the ways in which women are presented as passive objects of the male gaze and to unsettle the normalizing effects of such representation (Linker 28, 61). In *Gaze*, the vertical presentation of the words forces an assumed male viewer to construct the phrase's meaning in fragments. He first confronts the violence of his visual behavior ("Your gaze hits"), and then finishes the phrase and looks at the image, which reveals that his aggression

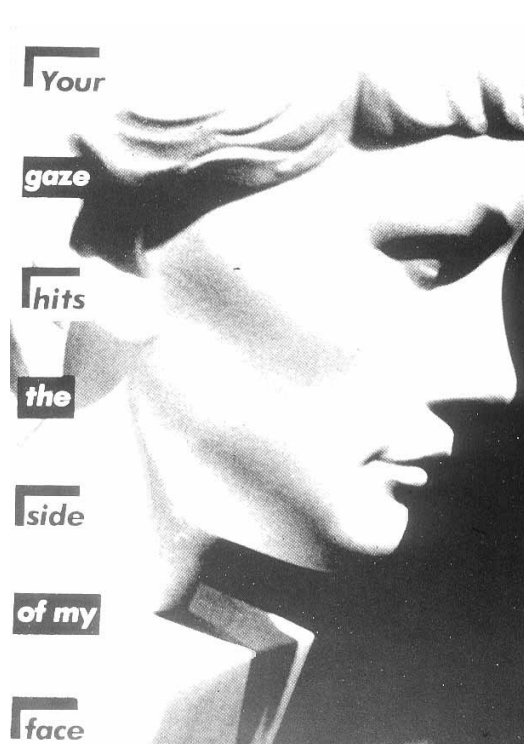


Fig. 1
Barbara Kruger, *Untitled (Your Gaze Hits the Side of My Face)*, 1981

specifically affects a woman. Kruger turns the gaze back on the viewer, thus neutralizing its victimizing power insofar as the glance no longer goes unnoticed. The hegemonic gaze itself becomes an object of surveillance and scrutiny. Kruger's use of discourse in works such as *Gaze* thus promotes a revision of the sex roles disseminated in popular representation (Linker 63).

Kruger's adaptation of popular media to question the gender constructs and power structures implicit in the male gaze provides a viable framework from which to consider María de Zayas's novellas. Like Kruger's visual art, Zayas's short stories also bring awareness to and attempt to undermine the

deleterious effects of the male gaze within the parameters of conventional representation. As Margaret Greer has posited, Zayas continually questions the notion of active and passive social roles in her depictions of women who look upon men as sexual aggressors themselves or who act as “mock-passive lures” to attract male attention (112). Much like Kruger, Zayas weaves these complex interplays of visual behavior within recognizable literary structures. That is, the writer employs the popular literary forms, themes, and motifs of her era, yet her stories do not follow the trajectory of traditional plots that depict women as passive, sexualized objects of male desire. Zayas's two volumes of short stories, *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares* (1637) and *Desengaños amorosos* (1647), feature an underlying frame narrative in the tradition of Boccaccio's *Decameron*, as well as poetic forms (sonnets, ballads) and dramatic devices (love, intrigue, jealousy) that by the seventeenth century had become mainstays in Spanish literature. Lisa Vollendorf notes that Zayas's novellas had “all the amorous intrigue of a supermarket novel and all the literary mastery of fine baroque prose” (15), which undoubtedly contributed to the works' notable commercial success during the writer's lifetime (LaGreca 565). At the same time, however, the novellas depart from the social and literary norm in their depictions of autonomous and assertive female characters who beguile the men who seek to control them rather than submit meekly to their desires. This is particularly true of the stories in *Novelas*, which generally lauds female cleverness and contains fewer of the graphic depictions of violence against women that characterize the later *Desengaños*. The *Novelas* thus provide especially useful examples of Zayas's appropriation of the dominant literary discourses of her day to question the ways in which her society treated women.

The fourth tale in the *Novelas*, “El prevenido engañado,” particularly lends itself to an analysis of the dynamic relationship between gender, gaze, and power in the Zayan corpus. The story contains over 180 instances of the noun *ojo* and the verbs *ver* and *mirar* interspersed in a rich tapestry of clashing visual behavior and conflicted amorous relationships. The reader follows the novella's protagonist, Fadrique, on a journey of doomed romantic encounters in which the women he tries to woo prove increasingly devious and uncontainable. Despite Fadrique's voyeuristic surveillance, the protagonist proves incapable of turning the social prerogatives implicit in the male gaze into a position of authority from which to dictate female sexual behavior. On the contrary, the tables are slowly turned on Fadrique until he himself becomes the object of an

immobilizing female gaze. Ultimately, the disempowering of the hegemonic gaze that takes place in “Prevenido” subverts the gender stereotyping of conventional literary representation and points to underlying fissures in the social structures that attempted to impose hegemonic power in Early Modern Spain.

The novella begins in Granada, where Fadrique hopes to win the love of Serafina, a noblewoman in love with another man. Not one to be dissuaded by the inconvenience of a competing suitor, the wealthy protagonist ingratiates himself with Serafina’s maids, who arrange to have their mistress stand at her balcony so that Fadrique may court her from the street below. The suitor arrives at the prearranged hour and recites a sonnet:

Que muera yo, tirana, por tus ojos,
y que gusten tus ojos de matarme;
que quiera con tus ojos consolarme,
y que me den tus ojos mil enojos.
Que rinda yo a tus ojos por despojos
mis ojos, y ellos en lugar de alegrarme,
las flores me conviertan en abrojos.
Que me maten tus ojos con desdenes,
con rigores, con celos, con tibiezas,
cuando mis ojos por tus ojos mueren.
¡Ay, dulce ingrata, que en los ojos tienes
tan grande ingratitud como belleza,
contra unos ojos que a tus ojos quieren! (Zayas 148)

At first glance, the poem is unremarkable. Fadrique repeatedly associates the beloved’s eyes with actions—*matar*, *dar enojos*, *convertir en abrojos*—that indicate strength and authority, while his own eyes appear in the context of powerlessness and death: “mis ojos por tus ojos mueren.” Allusions to the ineffable power of a woman’s eyes and to her tyrannous hold over her suitor’s life were veritable poetic clichés when Zayas penned the *Novelas*. However, it is precisely within the commonplace and popular that Zayas, like Kruger, carves a space for awareness and critique. The presence of a poem with twelve references to eyes at the outset of a tale that centers on characters’ ability to see and keep hidden from view is not coincidental. The reader does not know it yet, but the sonnet foreshadows usurpation of the male gaze’s power. By tale’s end multiple women’s eyes

will give Fadrique "mil enojos," leading the male gaze to lose its authority, and, albeit briefly, die.

Despite Fadrique's appearance of control, the hegemonic gaze suffers its initial blow that evening. All signs point to male surveillance and containment of female behavior. Fadrique is the only character who speaks, suggesting that he dominates speech and the authority it entails. He also stands below Serafina's balcony, a space that grants the protagonist access to the intimacy of the noblewoman's home from the street below. The balcony will be a recurring locus in the novella, and its continued presence reflects the propensity of the public sphere to penetrate private space in Early Modern Spain. By the seventeenth century, the centuries-old project of securing religious and sociopolitical homogeneity had created a culture of surveillance that implicitly encouraged subjects to spy on each other and report illicit behavior (Brownlee 2). As populations grew and the potential for anonymity increased—particularly in the kingdom's cities—the need for surveillance became a pressing concern for a Crown that found its repressive attempts to construct a rigidly hierarchical state continually frustrated (García Santo-Tomás 20, 132). The scene outside Serafina's window, in which masculine discourse meant to manipulate behavior penetrates a woman's privacy, thus serves as a metaphor of Spain's hegemonic project. As his sonnet forebodes, however, Fadrique may very well lose to his beloved the power implicit in his sight and language. Accordingly, Serafina is not at her balcony; on the contrary, "desde aquella noche se negó ... a los ojos de don Fadrique" (Zayas 148-49). The woman's ability to hide from view negates the patriarchal prerogative to constrain private behavior.

However foolish Fadrique appears when he reads a sonnet to no one, the male gaze's omnipresence nonetheless preserves the protagonist's honor. Fadrique continues to watch over Serafina's house, until one fateful night when he sees her sneak out and furtively follows her into a run-down stable. Hidden from view, the voyeuristic nobleman beholds in amazement as his beloved gives birth and promptly abandons her newborn child. Fadrique's shock quickly gives way to relief: his stalking has not dictated Serafina's behavior as desired, but he nonetheless avoids the dishonor of marrying a woman who has just given birth to another man's child. The nobleman leaves Granada to seek love elsewhere, while a repentant Serafina enters a convent to live a life of penitence as punishment for her sins.

To better understand Zayas's systematic weakening of the male gaze, the tale's visual terminology can be divided into two broad categories. On the one hand, there are instances in which verbs such as *ver* and *mirar* reveal what a character physically sees (e.g. "vio ... salir una mujer," Zayas 150). On the other hand, there are also moments when Zayas employs verbs of sight figuratively (e.g. "se vio libre de tal embarazo," 150) or to indicate that a character cannot see something (e.g. "no la pudo ver en muchos días," 149). In this early part of the story, Fadrique is associated with many more visual references that would fit the first category than Serafina. Indeed, the noblewoman's physical visual behavior is limited to hiding from view: "se negó... a los ojos de Fadrique." The remaining allusions to sight with which she is associated are largely metaphoric, rendering her role in the episode one of introspection—a passive "interior vision," as it were. This unbalanced configuration of visual references along gender lines reveals that Serafina cannot hide from Fadrique's voyeuristic gaze and highlights the patriarchy's power to penetrate the private sphere. Fadrique's words—now in the form of a letter—do eventually hold power over Serafina, for once the noblewoman learns that Fadrique "[ha] visto desengaños" (Zayas 152), she flees in fear to a convent. The male gaze eventually preserves a patriarchal structuring of space: the man moves freely to another city where he may begin monitoring a new object of desire, while the woman remains confined under the watchful eye of a principal agent of hegemony, the Church.

Fadrique travels to Seville, where he falls in love with the widow Beatriz. Zayas's language throughout this episode further expands the complex interplay between gender and surveillance. The overall number of visual references increases dramatically from seventeen in Granada to fifty-six, suggesting that the port city is a place to see and be seen. As in the Granada episode, the male gaze has the lexical upper hand in terms of literal visual behavior, while the protagonist's beloved retains a passive and elusive (i.e., hiding from sight) role. This does not mean, however, that Fadrique controls Beatriz any more than he managed to restrain Serafina. In Granada, the male gaze uncovered female behavior that violated the social order, but it failed to spot and prevent transgressions from occurring in the first place. The same holds true in Seville, where a widow's shocking sexual exploits further expose the shortcomings of the male gaze.

Beatriz dictates Fadrique's visual access to her from the outset of their relationship. At times she parallels Serafina's refusal to stand at her

balcony, yet while Serafina's decision to stay inside the night of Fadrique's sonnet represented her most active foray into the contest of amorous glances, Beatriz goes to her balcony with greater frequency and generally does more to keep watch over her suitor. The characters' initial interaction proves particularly telling:

[L]a bellísima doña Beatriz (que al bajar del coche vio con el cuidado con el que la miró don Fadrique), pareciéndole forastero ..., con cuidado, luego que dejó el manto, ocupó la ventana, y viéndose ahora saludar con tanta cortesía, habiendo visto que mientras hablaban la miraban, hizo otra no menos cumplida. (Zayas 153-54)

Beatriz is associated with as many instances of active visual behavior as Fadrique in this brief encounter. On a lexical level, Zayas sets the sights of both sexes on equal ground for the first time in the novella. The woman does not simply show awareness of the male gaze and hide from it; on the contrary, she confronts it with a glance of her own.

Significantly, this initial visual exchange occurs while both characters are in the street. Beatriz confronts Fadrique in public, a space that the patriarchy deemed the exclusive domain of men due to its connection with discourse, militarism, and the state (Duncan 128). Moral and political authorities alike demanded that women remain within enclosed domestic spaces, away from the public sphere that was man's prerogative to occupy. The theologian Fray Luis de León thus affirmed in his marital treatise *La perfecta casada* (1583) that a woman was "por natural oficio guarda de su casa" and belonged at home: "como son los hombres para lo público, así las mujeres para ... el encerrarse y cubrirse" (158). In opposition to these proscriptions, Beatriz's romantic incursions into the public arena demonstrate that she abuses the greater freedom of movement afforded to widows, whose duty to secure their family's economic stability often meant leaving their homes more than society otherwise deemed acceptable (Romero-Díaz 130). Moralists of the period exhorted women like Beatriz to remain examples of virtuous chastity. As the humanist Juan Luis Vives pronounced in his treatise on the education of women, *De institutione feminae christianae* (1524): "A woman widowed of her husband should not think she is exempt from the laws of human marriage and may do whatever she pleases" (318). Despite such moralist censure, Beatriz continually violates social decorum and blurs the gender roles attributed to public and private space. Thus when she refuses to stand at her window

later in the episode, she does so to punish Fadrique for behavior she witnessed away from home: “no había salido aquel día al balcón, enojada de que le había visto en la iglesia hablar con una dama” (Zayas 155). Whereas Serafina acquiesces to the prying gaze of the Church by entering a convent, Beatriz uses a religious space to conduct her own surveillance. If the male gaze can penetrate female private space, so, too, can Beatriz straddle both spheres to watch over Fadrique.

The remainder of the episode channels Fadrique’s sonnet, as it showcases the female gaze’s ability to *rendir* and *matar*. During one of the nobleman’s nightly vigils outside Beatriz’s house, the protagonist sneaks into the garden and watches the widow undress through a window. Fadrique becomes a textbook voyeur: he furtively trespasses Beatriz’s privacy to spy on her, an act that creates a distinction between himself as an active subject and the widow as a passive, victimized locus of desire. As Yolanda Gamboa notes regarding Zayas’s novellas, the house often serves as a means for monitoring female sexuality, thereby functioning as a veritable public space (196). Indeed, as Beatriz passes before Fadrique’s eyes, both the characters in the frame narrative as well as the reader become co-participants in the violation of the widow’s privacy. Much like Kruger’s *Gaze*, Zayas uses language—in this case, a detailed description of the unsuspecting “angélica figura” (160)—to call attention to the male gaze’s power to victimize.

Like the visual artist, Zayas shines a spotlight on objectifying visual behavior and then undermines its power. Fadrique shadows Beatriz into nearby stables, only to discover the widow’s sexual relationship with a black man. Serafina may have transgressed patriarchal gender expectations in her secret relationship with another noble, but Beatriz unabashedly violates sex, class, and racial boundaries in a show of power unmatched by any character thus far. Her lover’s frail state and pleas that Beatriz spare his life reveal that the woman’s voracious sexuality has led to his demise. The widow’s words confirm her agency in the affair: “abre los ojos, mira que está aquí Beatriz” (Zayas 161). This is the first time Zayas employs verbs of sight as commands, and they are uttered by a woman who has established sexual dominance over a man and shown little concern for the spatial and corporal limitations placed upon her gender. Fadrique, who has just tried to capture Beatriz’s sexuality within his voyeuristic gaze, must watch in silent horror. Zayas represents Fadrique’s spying in this scene with multiple visual references, and both the sheer quantity of verbs employed and the conventional view of the male gaze as

an agent of control would suggest that the protagonist holds power over the widow. Once again, however, male surveillance uncovers the results of female sexual behavior but fails to prevent it from occurring. The scene aligns with Enrique García Santo-Tomás's observation that depictions of clandestine behavior in urban plots function as vehicles for questioning the patriarchy's ability to exercise social control (31, 140, 166). Beatriz's consciousness and exploitation of multiple male gazes have further debilitated the hegemonic project of surveillance that Fadrique embodies.

The protagonist next travels to Madrid, the home of the Court and thus the seat of patriarchal hegemony itself. Not surprisingly, the greatest number of visual references in the novella appear while Fadrique visits the capital. The protagonist meets a new love interest, Violante, and, as if to accentuate the omnipresence of the hegemonic gaze in Madrid, Zayas also introduces a second set of lovers, Fadrique's cousin Juan and Violante's cousin Ana. The ability of Ana and Juan to see and remain hidden from view prove as important to the plot as Fadrique's own experiences with Violante. Indeed, references to male visual behavior appear in the third person plural for the first time in the tale as the reader follows the dual amorous pursuits of the protagonist and his cousin. Doubling the male gaze, however, does not increase the power that the men exert over their female counterparts. In previous episodes, the male gaze yielded information only after female characters had consummated illicit relationships, yet it produced knowledge nonetheless. In Madrid, shared male surveillance cannot ascertain the actions or thoughts of Ana or Violante. Fadrique and Juan monitor Ana's house hoping for a glance at their beloveds, but to no avail: "ni a la ventana era posible verlas [...] no fue posible verlas ni a ellas, ni aún una sombra que pareciese mujer" (Zayas 174).

Zayas compounds the male gaze's failings in yet another scene that inverts the socially determined gender constructs associated with space. As a favor to his cousin, Fadrique agrees to substitute Ana in her bed and lie next to her husband so that she may spend the night with Juan. Zayas's diction in this scene zeroes in on the protagonist's emasculation. This is the first time in the novella that verbs of sight depict passive rather than active behavior in a man. What's more, the highest concentration of figurative iterations of visual verbs in the tale occur while Fadrique thinks he lies with another man. Metaphoric uses of visual language earlier in the plot intimated a predominantly passive role for Serafina. The tables are turned in Ana's house as Fadrique's gaze turns inward to his fear rather

than outward to his right to command the women in the domestic space he has just penetrated. Instead of asserting his sexual dominance in his beloved's bed, he experiences the humiliation that arises from a complete lack of power (O'Brien 16).

When Fadrique learns that he actually spent the night with Violante, the revelation of the cousins' trickery leaves him speechless: "no hablaba palabra, ni la hallaba a propósito, viéndolas a ellas celebrar con risas el suceso, contando Violante el cuidado con que le había hecho estar" (178). Throughout the Early Modern period, religious and social authorities discouraged women from speaking in the presence of men. Vives advised women to remain "retiring and silent with her eyes cast down so that ... none will hear her" (72), while Fray Luis insisted that few situations called for female speech: "el abrir su boca en sabiduría ... es no la abrir sino cuando la necesidad lo pide, que es lo mismo que abrirla templadamente y pocas veces, porque son pocas las que lo pide la necesidad" (154). Violante not only speaks openly before a man, she brags about how she has emasculated him in the bedroom. Her usurpation of the authority implicit in the right to speak sets the tone for the authoritative control she will yield over Fadrique. The protagonist attempts to secure his beloved's hand in marriage, but Violante repeatedly rejects his proposals. Moreover, she dictates when Fadrique can see her and even takes on another lover.

The affair finally ends when Fadrique surprises Violante with her new paramour and beats her in an outpouring of uncontrolled rage. The nobleman's abusive actions reveal the extent to which conventional gender roles have been inverted. Fadrique, once praised in Granada because "se gobernaba con tanto acuerdo, que todos se admiraban de su entendimiento" (Zayas 147), now loses self-control and becomes uncontrollably emotional. That is, he behaves in a manner that moralists of the period would have deemed typically feminine. Vives, for instance, asserted that women's judgment was "always influenced by some emotion and [therefore] less consistent, tossed about by the storms of passion" (211). Whereas men's presumably less irritable character rendered their decisions moderate and prudent, women had to be particularly careful to control the passions that "take hold of [their] weak minds with greater violence and drag them along, since they offer less resistance" (212-13). Zayas's novella thoroughly subverts this vein of sexist stereotyping, as it is a woman who speaks, reasons, and maintains control over her emotions, while a man is silenced, fooled, and driven to violence by unchecked passion. As Fadrique flees in fear from a space over which society has

granted him absolute control (the home), the failings of the male gaze's hegemonic aims become patent.

Fadrique decides to end his frustrated sexual odyssey and return home, yet promptly succumbs to romantic desire once again on his way through Barcelona. For the first time in the novella, Zayas will associate more instances of active visual behavior with a woman, the Duchess, than with Fadrique. In sharp contrast to previous episodes, the initial reference to sight in Barcelona depicts a woman watching over an unsuspecting man: "estaba la hermosa duquesa en un balcón, y como viese a aquel caminante pasar ... llamó a un criado, y le mandó que fuese tras él" (Zayas 181). In Granada and Madrid, a woman's absence from her balcony frustrated Fadrique's surveillance and rendered that particular domestic space a site of disrupted hegemonic control. With the Duchess, the balcony becomes a locus of female agency and male powerlessness by virtue of a woman's presence. The noblewoman spies Fadrique, desires him, and declares her amorous intentions, all before the protagonist even realizes he has fallen under her gaze. Fadrique's sonnet to Serafina at the start of the tale represented a man's attempt to control a woman's sexual behavior via his speech without having to enter her home. As an appropriate inverse to that scenario, the Duchess's command that the servant bring Fadrique to her now depicts a woman's use of language to dictate what happens in the street without leaving her house. The crescendo of role reversals nears its zenith as the female gaze surveils, objectifies, and controls male behavior.

The unexpected return of the Duchess's husband puts an end to Fadrique's pleasurable afternoon but only amplifies his hostess's agency and guile. The adulterous wife locks her lover in a wardrobe and proceeds to play a trick on both him and her husband. She challenges the latter to a verbal game in which he must write down items made of iron, and his omission of the word *key* allows her to showcase her own verbal mastery. The Duchess details her illicit encounter with Fadrique, including locking him in the wardrobe, under the pretext of giving her husband a clue about the item he forgot to jot down. Her actions echo Violante's earlier deceit of Fadrique insofar as both women use language to nonplus the protagonist and leave him frozen in fear. However, the Duchess's brazen trickery surpasses Violante's playful deception by exposing both Fadrique and herself to the very real danger that her husband could open the wardrobe and find her lover inside. The Duchess's recklessness invariably trumps whatever conception the reader may have formed of Violante's autonomy throughout the Madrid episode. Not one to stand before her husband

“retiring and silent with her eyes cast down” (Vives 72), she appropriates the male right to speech and boldly confesses her adultery.

Studies that detail the complex place of female bodies in Zayas’s novellas shed light on the extent to which the Duchess’s display of agency transcends verbal deception and achieves an outright dismantling of the male prerogative to control women’s bodies. Nieves Romero-Díaz asserts that as Zayas’s female characters use their bodies to seek personal sexual gratification, they become metaphors of the body politic and point to underlying fissures in the traditional order (133, 138). In a similar vein, Vollendorf posits that Zayas reifies the Spanish Crown’s struggle to maintain hegemonic cultural values in her male character’s efforts to control women’s bodies (27, 50). For Vollendorf, the Spanish writer makes manifest a “rigorously politicized treatment of sex and the body” (23) in a spatial discourse that alternately replicates and subverts cultural practices meant to contain women (128). In “Prevenido,” this spatial discourse becomes patent in Fadrique’s journey, which traces an incremental penetration of women’s privacy—a street below Serafina’s balcony, a garden with access to Beatriz’s living room, Ana’s bed. Paradoxically, these incursions do not result in increased male authority. On the contrary, the farther the male gaze advances, the more formidable female agency it encounters, culminating with the nobleman trapped in a piece of domestic furniture. Fadrique cannot see while locked in the wardrobe, and he must remain silent and still to avoid arousing suspicion. His speech, movement, and ability to monitor female behavior are simultaneously stifled; in short, the Duchess vanquishes the very tenets of male power. Fadrique’s emasculation and the noblewoman’s power channel the patriarchy’s inability to fully contain the body politic.

The Duchess’s use of the wardrobe as a kind of holding cell for her lover creates an interior space in her house (i.e. within another interior space) outside of which she surveils, speaks, and moves without restriction, enjoying a freedom akin to what Fadrique previously experienced in the streets outside Serafina, Beatriz, and Ana’s homes. In the latter cases, each woman managed to furtively violate social norms inside a private space that largely remained out of reach to the hegemonic gaze. Fadrique, on the other hand, is deprived of such freedom and remains immobile under the Duchess’s gaze in the veritable miniature house into which she has forced him. Gamboa suggests that the numerous representations of houses in Zayas’s novellas belie a preoccupation with the complex interrelation between vision and the construction of space and

gender in the writer's social milieu. Gamboa argues that the house ostensibly "creates" women to the extent that social and cultural values associated with the home have traditionally distinguished it from public space and marked it as feminine (195). In "Prevenido," a progressive clouding of the boundaries between public and private—and of the concomitant sex roles associated with each sphere—culminates in the Duchess trapping Fadrique in an enclosed space within which he is powerless and outside of which she has total authority. Rather than propagate conventional spatial and gender constructs, the home becomes a site of nullifying hegemonic social structures. The patriarchal state, as embodied in Fadrique, falls prey to its own project of surveillance and repression. The male gaze and its concomitant privileges briefly cease to exist, and the ominous words of Fadrique's sonnet come to fruition: "mis ojos por tus ojos mueren."

To the extent that the patriarchy dictates what women can and cannot do with their bodies, Serafina, Beatriz, and Violante all violate gender expectations by seeking sexual satisfaction outside the confines of marriage. Each then endures some degree of punishment, either through loss of liberty (Serafina), the death of a beloved (Beatriz), or physical mistreatment (Violante). The Duchess is the only married woman with whom Fadrique has a romantic encounter, making hers the gravest transgression of any female character in the novella. Moralists of the period effusively condemned adultery and harped on the grave nature of its social ramifications. Vives, for instance, insisted that a married woman needed to demonstrate greater chastity than her unmarried counterpart because violating the bonds of marriage had the potential to "destroy civil society" (180-81). Instead of reprisal, however, the Duchess wins money from her husband for her display of wit in the word game. Eavan O'Brien posits that the literary history of the *mujer esquiva* demanded that the "social games" that female characters such as Ana and Violante carry out inevitably come to an end (18). Although Ana and Violante may follow the more typical trajectory of fictional heroines who resist marriage, the Duchess's own "social games" show no evidence of stopping. From the perspective of the power dynamics at play throughout "Prevenido," the Duchess cannot be judged and condemned like Fadrique's previous lovers because by this point in the tale the male gaze responsible for enacting retribution has been disempowered. As she does throughout the novella, Zayas deploys conventional representation in order to subvert it and point to rifts in the hegemonic cultural values meant to safeguard "civil society."

The embarrassing episode in the Duchess's house sets the stage for the protagonist's inglorious return to Granada. Fadrique's arrival bears all the marks of exemplary manliness: he receives a hero's welcome, marries Serafina's beautiful daughter Gracia, and serves on the city council. Beneath the surface, however, the male gaze never recovers from the blow it receives in Barcelona. Fadrique does not consummate his marriage, opting instead to test his wife's naivety by telling her that "la vida de los casados" involves watching over him through the night bedecked in armor (Zayas 186). Rather than prove his virility in the conjugal bed, Fadrique hands his wife a lance and sleeps alone. The transfer of the phallic object finalizes the emasculation that began in Granada outside the balcony of Gracia's mother years earlier. When Fadrique travels back to Madrid to conduct business on behalf of the city council, he returns to the seat of patriarchy literally and figuratively bereft of his manhood. Accordingly, the configuration of visual language in the novella's final episode confirms that the male gaze no longer yields the authority it presumed to possess at the tale's outset. The references to sight associated with a female character once again outnumber those related to Fadrique, and the significant events in the episode, such as the protagonist's cuckolding, occur while he cannot see or control what happens in his own home. Fittingly, the male gaze suffers a definitive blow to its honor while the protagonist is in Madrid. The project of reinvigorated hegemony, reified in Fadrique's journey throughout Spain, has failed.

In describing the function of the ambivalent language in Kruger's *Gaze*, I spoke only of a presumed male spectator. But what of a female viewer? A female observer could identify with the woman in the photograph and read the pronoun "my" as affirming that she, too, is subjected to invisible forces that victimize and attempt to constrain her. This interpretation underscores the artist's attempts to cast a spotlight on the male gaze and turn it into an object of surveillance itself. Conversely, the undefined "your" in the text could also suggest to a female spectator that her own gaze participates in the violence inflicted on her counterpart in the photo. The gazer-gazed relationship operant with a male viewer supposes a division of active and passive roles according to gender. This dynamic becomes more intriguing with a female spectator, who at first glance seems to face an inescapable opposition: she either shares in victimhood or becomes an instrument of victimization herself. Both scenarios imply female inaction—falling prey to an immobilizing gaze in the first and failing to act on behalf of the victim in the second. Linker

notes that Kruger commonly deploys binomials such as active/passive to demonstrate that such oppositions are avenues through which the patriarchy imposes its authority by subjecting only half of society to the privileged (i.e. active or "male") position (62). Kruger invites the female viewer to do more than become aware of the hegemonic gaze. The ambiguity of the superposed text suggests that the latter also serves as an agent of violence unless she acts against the social structures that disseminate unjust sex roles. "Kruger's mission," Linker affirms, "is to erode the impassivity engendered by the imposition of social norms" (28). Works such as *Gaze* thus have the double objective of creating consciousness of harmful social powers and spurring a call to action to counteract them.

The female spectator's experience before *Gaze* gives us insight into Zayas's own experience and literary project. Multiple scholars find in Zayas's novellas evidence of a woman who held feminist sentiments while also upholding the values of the privileged class to which she belonged and which sought to control female behavior. Greer calls Zayas "an aristocratic, protofeminist writer, torn between gender and class identity," who attempted to reconcile support of female autonomy with her espousal of the very aristocratic ideology that prescribed repression of women (60-61). Similarly, Romero-Díaz argues that Zayas's work reveals a contradictory feminist discourse brought about by a discordant clash between the writer's awareness of the social limitations placed on her gender and her acceptance of her class's dominant ideology, which creates and propagates those restrictions in the first place (102, 104). Mar Martínez Góngora focuses on the changing socioeconomic realities of the Early Modern period and affirms that, although Zayas condemns abuse of women, she also defends the nobility's traditional social values—which invariably included the subjection of women—in the face of a rising mercantile class (237-38, 248). Taken together, these analyses place Zayas in a position that parallels that of a woman beholding Kruger's *Gaze*: both realize that social forces seek to monitor and control their behavior, and both understand that failing to act legitimizes and propagates these sexist structures.

The diversity of gazes both inside and outside of "Prevenido" represents Zayas's response to the conflicted position in which women find themselves when they become conscious of the forces that oppress them. This essay has analyzed how the complex interplay of gazes throughout "Prevenido" demonstrates that patriarchal forces of social

control cannot contain female behavior and that women have the ability to not just elude the hegemonic gaze but also to turn it into an object of female surveillance. The novella's parallel deployment of common literary tropes and latently subversive content thus make the tale akin to Kruger's *Gaze*. The Spanish writer goes a step further, however, in depicting additional, extradiegetic gazes in the five male and five female characters present in the frame narrative. The *Novelas* thus have a built-in audience of men and women who, like the aforementioned hypothetical viewers of *Gaze*, are forced to confront violent manifestations of patriarchal social control. Of the characters that make up the frame narrative's "auditorio ilustre" (Zayas 144), only Alonso, who narrates "Prevenido," passes judgment on Fadrique's romantic encounters. Alonso repeatedly criticizes "los ignorantes" like Fadrique who "condenan la discreción de las mujeres" (191). He does not condemn Fadrique's intrusive surveillance, however, suggesting that a man who becomes aware of the male gaze's ability to victimize may recognize that women should not be forced into passive social roles but not go as far as to advocate for changing the structures that try to enforce passivity in the first place.

Contrary to Alonso's moralizing, the women in the frame narrative do not respond to the events that unfold in "Prevenido." The parallels between Alonso's defense of female intellect and Zayas's upholding of women's potential to be "tan aptas para los puestos y para las cátedras como los hombres" (18) in the prologue to *Novelas* position the male character as a mouthpiece for the writer's own social views. But why not grant this role to a female character? Does the lack of a female response in the face of male action (i.e. Alonso's commentary) not propagate the same division of active and passive roles along gender lines that "Prevenido" subverts? There are multiple plausible explanations for this seeming contradiction. On the one hand, the lack of a female response within the frame narrative speaks to Zayas's struggle to conform feminist beliefs to class ideology. The presence of a male character defending female intellect intimates a desire for more men to share these sentiments, yet Alonso's failure to criticize Fadrique's surveillance and the lack of critical female voices in the frame narrative underscore an unwillingness to wholly let go of prevailing patriarchal structures. On the other hand, scholars such as Brownlee have asserted that the polysemy in Zayas's writing—the multitude of exemplary and depraved men and women alike that fill the pages of her novellas—is an act of self-protection on the part of a woman

writer who wishes to project a “stern indictment of society while managing to elude the literary censors” (12).

Given the parallels between Kruger's *Gaze* and Zayas's “Prevenido,” it is also possible that the Spanish writer purposefully omits female commentary in the frame story to place the onus of action on the women reading her *Novelas*. Kruger's art seeks to jolt viewers into reflection but does not indicate what kind of action should flow from such introspection; on the contrary, the ambiguity of pieces such as *Gaze* creates a complex web of interpretations that could yield a multitude of reactions. The same holds true of Zayas's novellas, which contain “exaggerated baroque examples [meant] to shock readers into awareness” (LaGreca 566). Nancy LaGreca affirms that Zayas allows her readers to don “the mask of the hegemonic male gaze” only to reveal that what they have been led to believe about gender roles is both unjust and inaccurate, thus forcing them to reflect on and question the ways in which society (mis)treats women (574-75). Zayas does not patently direct her audience to take specific actions, however, which leads LaGreca to describe the Spanish author's novellas as a “general corrective effort aimed to heightening awareness of the injustices men perpetrate against women, while at the same time reinforcing and encouraging women's virtue, intelligence [and] solidarity” (566). Zayas responds to and attempts to counter the aforementioned “impassivity engendered by the imposition of social norms” by using artistic expression as a vehicle for critique and social advocacy. Like Kruger, Zayas manipulates popular culture to create spaces of awareness that push men and women alike to come to terms with their respective roles in maintaining a system of sexist inequality.

While speaking of the social milieu in which Kruger has produced her art, Alexander Alberro argues that the agents of authority with the power to organize society via their commands and prohibitions continually demand order because they recognize and fear that disorder abounds (196). Alberro's comments are applicable to the historical moment in which Zayas wrote *Novelas* as well. The seventeenth century was a trying time for the Spanish Crown. Ethnic and religious “purification” (i.e., the expulsion of *moriscos* and Jews) and inquisitorial censorship failed to keep the once-great ship afloat, and the increasingly tenuous boundaries between classes led the Crown to double down on constraining its subjects within traditional, hierarchical confines. Forced delimitations, however, could not contain the flux that pervaded the Early Modern period (Gamboa 197). The gaze—patriarchal, conservative, rigid—was then and is now

violent, but within this forced order art has lent a voice of resistance. The parallels in social and gender constructs that exist between contemporary society and Early Modern Spain render Kruger's work an apt vehicle for analyzing the complex social message of Zayas's fiction (and, conversely, reveal the baroque nature of the contemporary artist's corpus). Zayas and Kruger subvert the male gaze, presenting it with *mir enojos* and questioning its power.

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