

Perfecting the Woman's Body in Early Modern Spain¹

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Like a written text, each representation of the woman's body in Spain's early modern literature can be positioned within a historical and ideological context and read in and of itself as a significant component of the literary production of the period. My contention is that the dominant discourses of the period (the discourse of blood, the medical and religious discourses) fashion a carefully crafted perception of woman and her body, and that this process is tantamount to the writing of a text. Patriarchal ideology, basing its interpretation of woman and her corporeality on the teachings of Aristotle and Galen, writes woman as a monstrous aberration of nature, a being whose body must be contained and controlled. In this way, the patriarchy justifies her marginalization in said society. This perception of woman is subsequently disseminated through religious teachings, medical texts, and laws. In this paper, I seek to explore how the religious discourse produces another version of woman's body through conduct manuals. Written by religious men, these treatises contain guidelines for the behavior of women centering on the betterment of their perceived imperfect condition by specifically targeting their bodies as the site where they are to initiate this improvement. In order to observe how the woman's body is perfected through conduct literature, I will compare *The Education of a Christian Woman* (1523) by Juan Luis Vives to *La perfecta casada* (1583) by Fray Luis de León.

As Georgina Dopico Black reports in *Perfect Wives, Other Women*, sixteenth-century Spain saw an inordinate number of treatises dedicated to prescribing the behavior of women (17). The proliferation of conduct manuals written for women during this period can be attributed to specific social and historical events that explain the heightened production of this genre. One of these is the advent of the humanist movement which occurred in the late fifteenth

century and reached its height of influence during the reign of Charles V (r. 1516–56). Humanism was primarily an intellectual movement that originated in Italy and focused on the study of classical literature. As Merry Wiesner reports in *Women and Gender in Early Modern Europe*, this philosophy was revolutionary and contradicted the beliefs of medieval scholars and thinkers (153). In their new approach to learning, humanists broached the issue of educating women. This raised serious concerns given that woman had a fixed role in society, specifically in the domestic sphere, one that did not include holding a public position. Wiesner explains that since the humanist program was designed to promote a life of eloquence and action, certain humanists were concerned that these abilities would deem a woman unchaste, a serious societal concern of the period. As we shall see in our analysis of the conduct manuals, a woman's chastity was the cornerstone upon which she was valued and figures prominently in both treatises.

Whereas the beginning of Charles V's reign can be characterized by a degree of openness toward foreign ideas, by the end of his sovereignty and throughout the rule of his son, Phillip II (r. 1556–98), the country witnessed a return to a more closed and rigid society. One of the movements that contributed to this closure was the Counter-Reformation. The goal of the Counter-Reformation was to reassert the authority of the Catholic Church, and promoted the institution of marriage as the most acceptable social condition for women. According to Wiesner, the Counter-Reformation also advocated a certain type of Christian existence rooted in celibacy and chastity even for married couples because sexuality, even within the institution of marriage, was still considered sinful. Furthermore, writers during this period had their own ideas of the ideal wife, and for this reason, wrote manuals instructing married women on how they should conduct themselves in their married state (29).

The importance of studying conduct literature is discussed by Nancy Armstrong and Leonard Tennenhouse in *The Ideology of Conduct*. In their collection of essays, they elucidate the significance of exploring and analyzing conduct manuals as a means to understand historical events and the social practices that emerge at different moments in history. Moreover, they propose that conduct manuals operate from the premise that "men and women can be produced" (40-1) and believe that the study of conduct manuals provides an excellent example of the manifestation of ideology. As we shall see,

chastity and a woman's enclosure through marriage and within the domestic sphere will figure prominently in the texts by Vives and Fray Luis as they are significant components of sixteenth-century Spanish patriarchal ideology.

Like Tennenhouse and Armstrong, Michel Foucault believes that bodies can be produced through mechanisms of control exercised by the ruling class in any given society. As we have posited, the function of the conduct manual is to reinforce the axiological aims of patriarchy during Spain's early modern period by providing a perfected and socially acceptable ideal of woman. Basing my argument on Foucault's conceptualization of docile bodies as he delineates it in *Discipline and Punish*, I will demonstrate that the conduct manual endeavors to manipulate, shape and train the woman's body so that in the place of a deficient, monstrous being it becomes a compliant, chaste, hard-working disciplined entity that obeys the norms of patriarchal society.

Foucault terms disciplined bodies as *docile bodies*. According to this notion, the process by which the human body is made more effective through discipline is what Foucault describes as "docility" and he defines a docile body as a body "that may be subjected, used, transformed and improved" (136). This description aptly fits the disciplining of woman's body as it occurs through prescriptive literature. Her body, deemed a natural defect, is made subject to man's control by the use of various writings and discourses that construct her as an inferior being. Then, through conduct literature, her body is transformed from an imperfect being into a perfect being, a being that is more "aligned with nature" and useful to man's purpose. Enclosure is often a component of the disciplinary program according to Foucault, and is also essential in the disciplinary treatment that both Juan Luis Vives and Fray Luis de León propose for women. Foucault explains that another result of discipline on the body is the elimination of power from the body (138). The paradox, then, of a disciplined body is that although it is a stronger, more useful body, it is ultimately a powerless body by virtue of being rendered subject to another's power. As we shall see, this is precisely what occurs when a woman's body is disciplined by the conduct manual during Spain's early modern period.

Although sixty years separate the publication of their texts, Juan Luis Vives and Fray Luis de León have similar goals in setting forth

prescriptions for the behavior of women in their respective conduct manuals. It is important to note that both authors endeavor to produce a perfected vision of woman through their instructions, instructions that are intended to remedy woman's natural deficiencies. Further, they incorporate religious, medical and philosophical discourses to give validity to their texts. While both authors ostensibly address their manuals to a single woman they are intended to be read by a wider audience. In my analysis of these texts, I will delineate how Vives constructs the perfect unmarried body and how Fray Luis produces the perfected wife's body. It is important to note that while they have similar intentions, there are significant differences between the manuals directly related to the fact that Vives writes his text during the reign of Charles V and Fray Luis during Philip II's rule.

The Education of a Christian Woman (1523) by Juan Luis Vives is divided into three books and contains guidelines for unmarried women, married women and widows. It is interesting to note that the books dedicated to young, unmarried women and married women are the lengthiest, perhaps because these were considered critical stages in a woman's life in terms of being able to directly control her formation. Juan Luis Vives wrote his manual presumably for Princess Mary, daughter of Henry VIII and Catherine of Aragon, and dedicated it to her mother, the queen. It was originally written in Latin but was soon translated into English by Thomas Hyrde. Eventually it was translated into Spanish because Giovanni Giustiniani, who first translated it into Castilian, believed that all Spanish women should read this book (Vives 30). As Charles Fantazzi informs us in the introduction to his translation of the manual, Vives's treatise was received remarkably well, especially by English Catholics and Protestants. By placing a great deal of importance on the education of the woman, he explains that it "laid the groundwork for the Elizabethan age of the cultured woman" (3). Furthermore, *The Instruction of a Christian Woman* was printed for sixty years (33).

In the preface, Vives explains his purpose for writing this manual. First, he commends certain philosophers for having spoken and written extensively on the subject of a woman's chastity. However, in his opinion, they have not given women adequate instruction on how to live their lives accordingly. Secondly, after describing the contents of each book in his text, he expresses his opinion that "all of the books should be read by every class of woman" (46). We know that

this is impossible since not “every class of woman” could read during this period. Finally, he summarizes the sole purpose of educating a woman: “A woman’s only care is chastity; therefore when this has been thoroughly elucidated, she may be considered to have received sufficient instruction” (47). It is evident from this passage that a woman’s chastity, or moral purity, is the ultimate objective in her education according to Vives. We must also note that the chastity of the aristocratic woman, the ideal woman created in this text, is the most important element in preserving the purity of the nobleman’s bloodline. Thus, Vives’s purpose for writing his treatise centers on instructing the aristocratic woman how to maintain her chastity for the benefit of the man who owns her.

Book I, titled *Which Treats of Unmarried Young Women*, forms the basis of my analysis. In it, Vives disciplines the body of the woman by controlling each stage of her early life beginning with the moment she is born. First, he provides recommendations for the female infant’s diet and uses the beliefs of Fabius Quintilian (c. AD 35-100) to support his notion that the Christian woman’s formation should begin at birth. This initial monitoring of the feminine body begins with the feeding of the infant girl which, Vives believes, should be with her mother’s breast milk. He continues by discussing the importance of selecting an appropriate wet nurse for an infant girl in the event that the mother cannot breastfeed her own child. He stipulates that it is imperative that this type of care be taken with the infant girl; however, the same is not necessary for a male infant because he will learn morals “outside the home” (54). By Vives’s allusion to natural discourse, we are able to observe his implication that the moral education of the woman is meant to take place within the domestic space while man’s will take place in the public sphere.

Vives also provides instructions for the young woman’s early childhood. He insists that during this stage there are measures parents must take to guarantee the chastity of their daughters. For instance, when a young girl begins to speak and to walk, her play should be monitored. Her playmates will be limited to young girls her age and he specifies that a female adult, preferably her mother or an older woman, will supervise her physical and mental activities. Further, he prohibits the young girl from having any contact with men, and does not distinguish between her father and other males; he simply makes the following recommendation: “Any male should be excluded, and

the girl should not be accustomed to find pleasure in the company of men. For by nature, our affection is more lasting toward those with whom we have passed our time in childhood amusements” (55). According to Vives, then, if a young girl is not exposed to male company, she will not “naturally” feel affection for men when she is older because men will not have formed part of her childhood. In this way, she will not be drawn to them in a sexual way, and this will guarantee her chastity. Besides controlling her physical activities, we see that Vives wishes to control what enters a young girl’s mind as well as to regulate her speech.

Further, Vives introduces another element to her playtime. In the following quote, he explains how engaging in specific play activities will prepare a young girl for her future as a domestic woman:

But even then, in the form of play, let her exercise herself in things that will be of benefit to her later. Let her be edified by chaste tales, and take dolls away from her, which are a kind of image of idolatry and teach girls the desire for adornments and finery. I would be more in favor of those toys made of tin or lead that represent household objects, which are so common here in Belgium. (57)

Thus, he believes that as a child she should amuse herself with “chaste” stories which he does not define and household objects that will prepare her for her domestic obligations as a man’s wife. As we will see, his mention of adornment anticipates his strict regulation of a young woman’s outward appearance later in the book. Furthermore, in the following quote, he addresses the formal education of the young girl: “At the age when the girl seems ready to learn letters and gain some practical knowledge, let her begin by learning things that contribute to the cultivation of the mind and the care and management of the home” (58). According to Vives, then, the moment the young girl is exposed to any type of formal learning, it should be directed toward learning how to manage her “rightful” place in society, the domestic space.

In the next stage of a young woman’s life, puberty, Vives mandates what a young woman’s diet will consist of, and extols the benefits of fasting before she marries. He explains that fasting frequently will “extinguish the fires of youth.” Further, when she is not fasting, he offers the following instructions for her sustenance:

Let her nourishment be light, plain, and not highly seasoned, and it must be remembered that our first parent was expelled from paradise because of the food she ate and that many young girls who are accustomed to delicacies have sought them outside the home when they no longer had them at home, to the detriment of their chastity. (87)

Thus, he believes that by controlling the type of food that enters her body he will control its condition of purity. The religious discourse alluding to Eve's eating the apple in the Garden of Eden and her subsequent fall from grace underscores the fact that woman during this period was still held responsible for original sin. The use of the Bible as authority serves to reinforce his argument that the food a woman consumes directly affects her chastity. He also dictates that a young woman should only drink water. Vives's precise orders for the food and drink of the young girl serve the purpose of controlling the "flames of the flesh" and preventing the sinfulness that was typically associated with a woman's sexuality. In order to give validity to his views on food and drink, Vives quotes a letter written by St. Jerome, citing Galen (AD129–210) and his views on food and its relation to the human body and health. Through St. Jerome's recommendations of what food a young woman should consume, Vives reinforces his own views and seeks to control what enters the young woman's body in order that her perceived innate sexuality will not emerge.

In addition to dictating the food and drink of a young woman, Vives seeks to control the operations of her body by mandating the following with regards to her rest. First, he specifies that the bed upon which a young woman sleeps "will be clean rather than luxurious so that she may sleep peacefully, not sensuously" (90), and advises the length of time she will sleep: "The sleep of a virgin should not be long, but not less that what is good for her health, to safeguard which we are of the opinion that young girls are healthier if they follow the austerity we recommend rather than sensual delight, which is manifested in its devotees by weakness and pallor" (91). Again, we see a reference to a woman's potential sexuality, which is precisely what he strives to prevent before it manifests itself in her body. We also witness a purported concern for her health in his prescription for a certain amount of rest and "austerity." Vives prohibits the young woman's contact with "every physical stimulus that excites our

internal organs, such as unguents, perfumes, conversations, and the sight of men,” explaining that these stimuli are harmful to her (90). Like food, Vives wishes to control all stimuli affecting a young girl’s senses. Moreover, by confining her body and limiting her access to sensory experiences, her chastity will be ensured, according to Vives.

In terms of a young woman’s mental activities, Vives advocates keeping her mind occupied preferably by reading. He states that reading is the best pastime after her daily chores are completed, emphasizing that even if she tires of reading, she cannot remain idle (59). He believes that the mind should always be active and that being so allows it to thrive. He warns that the inactivity of the mind can lead a young woman into “lust and shameful conduct and worse crimes than these since they have nothing better to occupy themselves” (91–2). Again, we see that keeping the mind busy serves the same purpose as controlling her diet; it maintains a woman’s chastity and prevents the manifestation of her sexuality. Furthermore, he reveals the notion that an educated woman is dangerous but that the education he has in mind for women as well as for everyone else is “sober and chaste” and one that “forms our character and renders us better” (64). Thus, he proposes that woman should be educated as to the rules that will make her morally upstanding according to male standards. It is important to note that Vives’s definition of a woman’s education relates to the maintenance of her chastity.

In Vives’s discussion of the mind and its importance to the young woman’s development, he explicitly links the mind to the body by connecting it to his definition of virginity. In the following passage, he defines virginity for the first time in his manual:

I define virginity as integrity of the mind, which extends also to the body, an integrity free of all corruption and contamination. No way of life is more like that led in heaven. For there where the law of the flesh is abrogated we will be as angels, feeling no sexual urges, where no man or woman will be given in marriage. (80)

In this quote, he clearly privileges the mind over the body as he predicts how life in heaven will be, and how he perhaps would like it on earth, since he wants to prevent sexual urges and the laws of the flesh to rule a woman’s existence. Instead, his desire is for the mind

to govern the body and to remain pure, and in this way, ensure the purity of the body. Thus, the mind is the most important instrument in protecting the young woman's body.

Although Vives favors the mind over the body, he addresses the outward appearance of a young woman's body. He specifically focuses on the subject of wearing make-up and vehemently forbids it. In the following excerpt, he tells the young woman she should only make herself desirable to Christ and specifies how she should make herself attractive to Him, her only spouse: "You have one spouse, Christ; to please him, adorn your soul with virtue, and he, the most beautiful of men, will kiss you. But if you are looking for a husband and you wish to win him over by painting yourself, I shall first show you how foolish it is and then how impious" (94–5). This passage could also serve as an example of how desirability was regulated in early modern society, because it directs a young woman not to wear make-up in her attempts to find a husband. Furthermore, he provides the following image of how the use of make-up has detrimental effects on the woman's body. It is important to note that damage is not limited to the face or skin, but that the entire body is affected by the use of cosmetics:

All their comeliness and charm is attributed to art, not to nature. And what is more, young skin becomes wrinkled more quickly, the whole appearance of the face begins to look old, the breath reeks, the teeth become rotten, and a foul odor is emitted by the whole body, from the white lead, mercury, and especially from depilatories, soaps, and ointments, with which they prepare their face like a wooden tablet for the next day's painting. (95)

In addition to saying that a woman lacks piety if she wears make-up, he also states that she lacks virtue (98). Moreover, he specifies that a woman's attire should be clean rather than expensive (90–1). Once again, we see that Vives links the purity of the mind with the purity of the body.

Besides his instructions for the physical appearance of the body, Vives prescribes silence and enclosure within the domestic sphere. According to him, St. Paul, dictated that women be silent; furthermore, he quotes the supposed words of St. Paul in his address to the Corinthians regarding the silence of women: "The apostle Paul, vessel

of election, imparting holy precepts to the church of Corinth, said, 'Let your wives be silent in church, for it is not permitted them to speak, but to be subject, as the law commands. If they wish to learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home'" (72). He applies this rule of silence and enclosure within the home to "good" women and young, unmarried women so that their chastity will not be jeopardized.

Finally, Vives equates chastity, a single quality in women, with all the qualities that man must possess. It is interesting to note that man's requisites are external while the most valuable of woman's lies in the condition of her body. Further, he enumerates all the positive qualities that woman can potentially possess; we must note that many of those attributes are normally associated with the members of the privileged classes of early modern Spanish society:

You may take away from a woman her beauty, lineage, wealth, charm, eloquence, intelligence, knowledge of the skills suited to a woman, but if you add chastity, you have given her everything in full measure. Conversely, you may lavish all those things upon her with all abundance and call her unchaste, and with this one word you have removed all. She is left naked and loathsome. (86)

Thus, a single element determines whether a woman is worthy or not in society: the appearance of chastity. Furthermore, Vives reminds woman of this and admonishes the women that cannot fulfill this single obligation that they have. It is noteworthy that he states that no one will take a woman's chastity if she does not allow it. However, as we know, woman did not have any privileges of ownership over her own body; it was the property of man. Thus, he equates the value of a single quality, chastity, with an entire list of qualities. This fact bears witness to the immense value and weight that chastity possessed during this period and Vives's success in transmitting the importance of this value in Spain's early modern society.

Like Juan Luis Vives before him, Fray Luis de León writes a treatise, *La perfecta casada*, which prescribes the behavior of the married woman. Although Fray Luis addresses it to his niece, María Varela Osorio, and writes it purportedly on the eve of her marriage, it is understood that it is also addressed to a wider audience (xiv). Like *The Education of a Christian Woman*, *La perfecta casada* contains

many references to the natural imperfections of woman and offers precepts on how to overcome these perceived defects by striving to become a perfect, virtuous wife. Fray Luis bases his treatise on the Bible, specifically the book of Proverbs, and uses the supposed words of King Solomon to provide instruction to the married woman. His manual is divided into twenty chapters and each chapter has as its theme an excerpt from the book of Proverbs, as pronounced by Solomon, which serves as the organizing principle for the chapter. This structure is supported by Fray Luis's comments about the life of farming and proposes that women from all classes should emulate the farmer's wife. This is in striking contrast to Vives, who dedicates his manual to a queen. Furthermore, like *The Education of a Christian Woman*, *La perfecta casada* enjoyed wide popularity and was accessible by many due to being originally written in Castilian. Its continued publication, well into the twentieth century, underscores its relevance to our discussion.

The purpose of his treatise, according to Fray Luis de León, is to advise his niece on the state of matrimony. He declares that, although he is not a married man himself, he is authorized to give advice to married women because he has received instruction by the Holy Spirit through the Holy Scriptures. In the following excerpt, taken from the dedication of the manual, he explains his purpose in writing his treatise:

así yo, en esta jornada que tiene vuesa merced comenzada, le enseñaré, no lo que me enseñó a mí la experiencia pasada, porque es ajena de mi profesión, sino lo que he aprendido en las Sagradas Letras, que es enseñanza del Espíritu Santo. En las cuales, como en una tienda común, y como en un mercado público y general para el uso y provecho general de todos los hombres, pone la piedad y sabiduría divina copiosamente todo aquello que es necesario y conviene a cada un estado; señaladamente en éste de las casadas se reeve, y descende tanto a lo particular dél, que llega hasta, entrándose por sus casas, ponerles la aguja en la mano, y ceñirles la rueca, y menearles el huso entre los dedos. (5)

In this passage, there are several elements that will establish the tone of the manual. First, Fray Luis utilizes the Bible as his primary source

to instruct the married woman for he believes that everything each person needs to know about his or her state is accessible in the Bible by all much like a public marketplace. Secondly, he asserts that for the married woman, the conditions of her state are so clearly defined, it is as if the Holy Spirit literally enters her home and prepares her for domestic labor by placing in her hands the tools she will need to carry out her tasks. These are the needle, the distaff, and the spindle. As we shall see, Fray Luis's use of images is instrumental in training the married woman for her designated role in society. His allusion to the fact that every person has a set condition, or state, anticipates his use of natural discourse throughout the manual. Finally, like the figure he uses of the Holy Spirit entering the woman's house, Fray Luis will construct the perfect, married woman through specific images he expects her to mirror. In the dedicatory address, we see the first one he employs. This figure is that of King Solomon's mother as described by her son in the biblical book of Proverbs. As Fray Luis states, she is the epitome of the perfect, virtuous woman (9).

Fray Luis emphasizes that God is at the center of a woman's formation and that woman's goal should be to please God, first and foremost. In the following excerpt, he tells woman that she should strive to be a perfect married woman in order to be pleasing to God: "Pues asiente vuesa merced en su corazón con entera firmeza que el ser amiga de Dios es ser buena casada, y que el bien de su alma está en ser perfecta en su estado, y que el trabajar en ello y el desvelarse es ofrecer a Dios un sacrificio aceptísimo de si misma" (15). Thus, we see that the goal for woman should be to please God and she will attain this goal if she is perfect in her state of a married woman. Unlike Vives, Fray Luis does not discipline her body to ensure her chastity. As a married woman, he states that she should already be chaste. His purpose, then, is to complete her perfection. Thus, a significant difference between the manuals is the definition each author gives of women's education.

Throughout his manual, Fray Luis uses natural discourse to demonstrate to woman that her rightful place is in the man's home. Through this strategy, he provides evidence that, according to nature, her God-given role is a domestic one. Furthermore, by juxtaposing woman's nature with man's he creates a polarization between man and woman where man is a superior being to woman for his "natural" knowledge and reason. For this reason, he declares man the owner of

the public sphere. Fray Luis uses the male/female binomial to show woman that because man is outside the home doing what is natural to his state, it is woman's duty to guard his home. Furthermore, he contends that man naturally possesses reason while woman is different by nature. In the following passage, woman is compared with an animal, the ox, as Fray Luis expounds upon her "nature" and her duty as a wife: "Por donde dice bien un poeta, que los fundamentos de la casa son la mujer y el buey; el buey para que are, y la mujer para que guarde. Por manera que su misma naturaleza hace que sea de la mujer este oficio, y la obliga a esta virtud parte de su perfección, como a parte principal y de importancia" (39). By his use of natural order, Fray Luis objectifies woman as he positions her in a specific enclosure, her husband's home, where domesticity becomes her assigned objective. Moreover, her job is to watch over her husband's house like the ox works the land that belongs to him. Upon aligning woman with an animal, he dehumanizes her and objectifies her so that man can domesticate her and use her labor for his own benefit. At the same time, he says that this is part of her "perfection" as a wife.

Virtue is extremely important in the construction of the perfect wife as it is the means by which she will overcome her innate weaknesses. In the following passage, Fray Luis explains that since woman, by nature, is weak, the only way she can triumph over this aspect of her nature is by surrounding herself with a squadron of virtues. By his use of the word squadron, we see, once again, Fray Luis's use of imagery to direct a married woman's behavior:

Porque como la mujer sea de su natural flaca y deleznable más que ninguno otro animal, y de su costumbre e ingenio una cosa quebradiza y melindrosa [. . .] para que tanta flaqueza salga con victoria de contienda tan dificultosa y tan larga, menester es que la que ha de ser buena casada esté cercada de un tan noble escuadrón de virtudes, como son las virtudes que habemos dicho, y las que en sí abraza la propiedad de aquel hombre. (26-7)

Thus, by surrounding herself with an arsenal of virtues, woman will not only conquer her innate shortcomings but will also enclose man's property with said virtue, and in this way, protect it. It is important to note that the distinction is not made between the house or the woman

in the mention of man's property. Moreover, Fray Luis believes that the path to attain this virtue is by leading a certain type of life, the life of the cultivation of land. He begins by explaining that there are three types of lives to lead: farming, trade and leisure. Interestingly, these occupations represent the different stratifications of the social hierarchy in Spanish society during this period. Of these three, the one that he advocates is farming because it teaches virtue (57–8). Furthermore, the wife of the farmer is the perfect model for the married woman because:

esta casada es el perfecto dechado [sic] de todas las casadas, y la medida con quien, así las mayores como las de menores estados, se ha de ajustar quanto a cada una le fuere posible; y es como el padrón desta virtud, al cual la que más se avecina es más perfecta. Y bastante prueba dello es que el Espíritu Sancto, que nos hizo y nos conosce, queriendo enseñar a la casada su estado, la pinta desta manera. (56)

Thus, he believes that the farmer's wife should be the measure against which women of all class positions adjust as much as possible for it is the path to virtue and perfection. His basis for this assertion is that the Holy Spirit portrays the farmer's wife in this manner in its desire to demonstrate to the married woman the place assigned to her by patriarchal society. Through the abovementioned representation of the farmer's wife, Fray Luis also prescribes a regimen of domestic labor that the married woman must follow diligently. She must be the first to rise in her household for her family to follow her example. Aligning the image of her house with a body, he says that she is the soul of this home, that she directs the activity of the household and that without her direction, the inhabitants of her house will not be able to move on their own accord: "De manera que ha de madrugar la casada, para que madrugue su familia. Porque ha de entender que su casa es un cuerpo, y que ella es el ama dél; y que como los miembros no se mueven si no son movidos del alma, así sus criadas, si no las menea ella y las levanta y mueve a sus obras, no se sabrán menear" (74). He continues to train the woman in the life of the farmer's wife by providing her with a military image of how she should govern her household like a captain would his squadron (81). Moreover, he appeals to the women belonging to the nobility to arm themselves with the domestic tools of

the farmer's wife, if only for a short period of time, and to surround themselves with domestic work in order to dominate sleep, one of the vices associated with their way of life (64).

Fray Luis also mandates the physical space woman's body will occupy. He utilizes natural discourse to explain to her that physical enclosure is part of her destined role while it is the opposite for man: "Como son los hombres para lo público, así las mujeres para el encerramiento; y como es de los hombres el hablar y el salir a luz, así dellas el encerrarse [sic] y encubrirse. Aun en la iglesia, adonde la necesidad de la religión las lleva y el servicio de Dios, quiere S[an] Pablo que estén así cubiertas, que apenas los hombres las vean" (166-7). Through the words of St. Paul, he tells her that even when she is in public, she should avoid being seen by men. This coincides with Solomon's instructions that specify that woman should only roam within her home. Furthermore, Fray Luis elaborates on this concept and states that the field of her career is her house and that her feet were not meant to step into the country or in the streets: "*Rodeó, dice, los rincones de su casa; para que se entienda que su andar ha de ser en su casa, y que ha de estar presente siempre en todos los rincones della; y que, porque ha de estar siempre allí presente, por eso no ha de andar fuera nunca; y que, porque sus pies son para rodear sus rincones, entienda que no los tiene para rodear los campos y las calles*" (165). Through the teachings of St. Paul and King Solomon, then, Fray Luis establishes the physical boundaries for woman's body: her home.

According to Fray Luis, a woman should not be heard. In the following passage, he tells woman that nature made her to guard the home and in this way it obligates her to close her mouth. He explains that this is the reason nature limited her understanding, her reason and her words:

Porque así como la naturaleza-como dijimos y diremos-hizo a las mujeres para que encerradas guardasen la casa, así las obligó a que cerrasen la boca [. . .] por donde así como a la mujer buena y honesta la naturaleza no la hizo para el estudio de las ciencias, ni para los negocios de dificultades, sino para un solo oficio simple y doméstico, así les limitó el entender y, por consiguiente, les tasó las palabras y las razones. (158)

Although most of the training that Fray Luis prescribes for the married woman lies in physical labor, like Vives he makes recommendations for a woman's outward appearance, specifically informing the married woman what is pleasing to God in terms of her dress:

Y llega hasta aquí la clemencia de Dios y la dulce manera de su providencia y gobierno, que descende a tratar de su vestido de la casada, y de cómo ha de aderezar y asear su persona. Y condensiendo en algo con su natural, aunque no le place el exceso, tampoco se agrada del desaliño y mal aseó; y así dice: Púrpura y *holanda es su vestido*. (107)

It is understood that by *púrpura* and *holanda* he does not mean that a woman will dress in royal purple and fine linen. He means that the woman should take great care in how she clothes her body. Further, he explains that what God desires is for women to dress their bodies as they would an altar; thus, he implies that a woman's dressing and adornment should have a virtuous intent (108). In addition, he criticizes the ornate fashion of the period and emphasizes the specificity with which Solomon has made his recommendations for the woman's dress and adornment: "Dice *púrpura y holandá*, mas no dice los bordados que se usan agora, ni los recamados, ni el oro tirado en hilos delgados. Dice *vestidos*, mas no dice diamantes ni rubíes. Pone lo que se puede tejer y labrar en casa, pero no las perlas que se asconden en el abismo del mar. Concede ropas, pero no permite rizos ni encrespos ni afeites" (108-9). In the last line of the quote, we see that he initiates his discussion of make-up by women. Further, he uses the words of Aristotle to bolster his argument that women should not engage in the use of cosmetics (115).

Fray Luis's most extensive instruction is given on the subject of using make-up and declares that the use of it is tantamount to adultery. He uses the supposed words of Tertullian to describe how the work of God, the woman's face, becomes the work of the devil once woman applies make-up to her face. Fray Luis advocates for woman to wash her face in a certain manner and he explains this process in detail:

Tiendan las manos y reciban en ellas el agua sacada de la tinaja [. . .] y llévenle al rostro, y tomen parte della en la

boca, y laven las encías, y tornen los dedos por los ojos
 y llévenlos por los oídos y detrás de los oídos también, y
 hasta que todo el rostro quede limpio no cesen; y después,
 dejando el agua, límpiense con un paño áspero, y queden
 así más hermosas que el sol. (148-9)

Thus, the goal is to appear natural, without any artificial, unnatural paint on one's face. The method is to scrub every part of one's face, including the interior of one's mouth and ears, and to finish with a harsh cloth in order to appear more beautiful than the sun.

As we have seen, Fray Luis de León disciplines the body of the woman through physical labor, imagery, the Bible and natural discourse. It is important to observe that although he and Juan Luis Vives write their respective manuals at different historical moments, there are striking parallels between the bodies they produce. Both authors reproduce bodies that are voiceless, enclosed and hidden from the public view, in short, bodies that pose no threat to the social order. In effect, they are powerless and this underscores the fact that while the manuals may have been written against the backdrop of different historical and social situations, the subordination of woman remained an important ideological objective and her body was clearly a vital instrument of social control and domination.

In his article, "Patriarchal Territories," Peter Stallybrass discusses the production of woman according to specific ideological goals of the ruling class, stating that the "signs" of a "normative Woman" are "the enclosed body, the closed mouth, the locked house" (127). As we have witnessed, these are precisely the symbols of a disciplined body according to the precepts of the conduct literature we have examined. Thus, the literary significance of studying this genre is that it contains important information germane to our discussion of woman, her body, and her marginalized position in society, and contributes to the understanding of a tradition of judging woman on the basis of the condition of her body. Tracing the origins of this judgment affords us the tools with which to debunk the myths and objectification that have arisen as a result of emergent social practices intent on marginalizing woman due to the perception of her body and allows us to move beyond the monstrous portrayal of woman.

Note

1. This paper is an excerpt from my master's thesis, *Representations of the Woman's Body in Spain's Golden Age Literature*.

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