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Whitaker R. Jordan
University of Kentucky, whitakerjordan@gmail.com

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Whitaker R. Jordan, Student
Dr. Moisés R. Castillo, Major Professor
Dr. Haralambos Symeonidis, Director of Graduate Studies

DISSertation

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of Kentucky

By
Whitaker Roy Jordan
Lexington, Kentucky

Director: Dr. Moisés R. Castillo, Associate Professor of Hispanic Studies
Lexington, Kentucky
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STAGING THESEUS: THE MYTHOLOGICAL IMAGE OF THE PRINCE IN THE
COMEDIA OF THE SPANISH GOLDEN AGE

This dissertation uses the seventeenth-century Spanish plays which employ an
array of mythological stories of Theseus to analyze the Early Modern ideology of the
Prince. The consideration of the different rulers in these plays highlights different aspects
of these sovereigns such as their honor, prudence, valor, and self-control. Many of these
princes fall well short of the ideal explained in the comedia and in the writings of the
arbitristas. By employing the hylomorphic theory in which everything can exist in either
its matter or its form, it is shown that in order to have the form of a prince, rulers must act
in certain ways to reach that ideal or perfect state. Many princes in the plays, however, at
least at certain times, only have the matter of a prince and fall short of the form. By
drawing from mythological theories which describe the need for a mediation or an
alleviation of an irresolvable contradiction within a society, it is shown that despite the
imperfections of the flawed princes that are put on stage, these plays still defend and
glorify the monarchical system in which they were created as well as the specific
imperfect princes.

The six plays examined here in which Theseus is a primary protagonist are El
laberinto de Creta, Las mujeres sin hombres, and El vellocino de oro by Lope de Vega;
Los tres mayores prodigios by Calderón de la Barca; El labyrinto de Creta by Juan
Bautista Diamante; and Amor es más laberinto by Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz and Juan de
Guevara. These plays span a large portion of the seventeenth century and although the
authors wrote some of them for the corrales, they created others to be performed before
the court.

KEYWORDS: Theseus, Comedia, Prince, Mythology, Spanish Golden Age

By

Whitaker Roy Jordan

Dr. Moisés R. Castillo
Director of Dissertation

Dr. Haralambos Symeonidis
Director of Graduate Studies

April 23, 2014
Dedicated to the memory of
Elijah Jonathan Jordan
They shall mount up with wings like eagles
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Chapter One

Introduction

The stories about the gods and heroes of ancient Greece and Rome have captivated the minds of people ever since they were first told. They not only remained as stories, but they also entered into a wider array of cultural products such as the art, architecture, and theater of Antiquity, and beyond. One of these princes and heroes, Theseus, appears in six comedias from Spanish Golden Age. These plays were written by a total of five different authors, and they recount different myths and invent new episodes. Some were performed before the corrales and some before the king himself.¹ These plays present various depictions of Theseus and the many other princes who appear on stage, sometimes as models of the perfect prince and at other times as monarchs who do not meet these lofty standards. This introduction establishes the framework that will inform the present analysis of the image of the prince in the Spanish comedia of the seventeenth century, particularly in the six plays in which Theseus appears.

The Prince

Monarchs frequently intervene in the dramatic action of the comedia. In fact, Quintero explains,

¹ The corrales were public theaters open to all levels of society. Plays performed in the corrales were seen by commoners and noblemen alike. At times even the king was present. The court created their own private theaters as well, some for particular events and others more permanent.
It is recognized that the theatre of seventeenth-century Spain was obsessively concerned with dramatizing kingship; in the hands of playwrights such as Lope, Calderón, Tirso de Molina, and Bances Candamo, among others, theatre became a particular manifestation of the \textit{speculum principis} tradition. That is, the comedia provided a singularly suggestive space for dramatizing lessons in kingship, lessons that often echoed the criticism and advice that appeared in political treatises written by arbitristas and respected political theorists such as Diego de Saavedra Fajardo and Juan de Mariana. (82)

As the prince is so obviously an “obsession” in the \textit{comedia}, many scholars have written about the role of the prince in the Spanish drama of the seventeenth century as well as the use of the \textit{comedia} in regards to the monarchy. In their most basic forms, the two opposing arguments can be summarized as: 1) the \textit{comedia} serves as propaganda for the monarchy and therefore presents kings in a positive light; and 2) the \textit{comedia} can be subversive, questioning and even attacking the monarchy, and therefore presents kings in a negative light.\footnote{This debate continues to rage as is shown by the recent edition of the \textit{Bulletin of the Comediantes} 65.1 (2013). As Bass notes in her introduction to the edition, “Maravall’s thesis that seventeenth-century Spain’s most important popular form of entertainment served the interests of a top-down monarchical-seigniorial order has been the point of departure for countless investigations into the historical and ideological workings of individual plays, groups of plays, and the comedia as a whole” (1). Portugal adds, “el historiador español es un punto de referencia ineludible para entender las nuevas líneas de reflexión de la crítica contemporánea” (70).} These statements are merely quick summations of these theories which necessarily entail much more complex arguments with many variations and nuances.
Two of the major proponents for the *comedia*-as-propaganda theory are Maravall and Díez Borque. To begin with, Maravall explains that the *comedia* “no se pretendía sólo distraer a un público al que tantos pasquines y libelos trataban de soliviantar, sino de robustecer la ideología colectiva y fortalecer el establecido sistema de distribución de poderes sociales que debió considerarse amenazado” (*Teatro* 36). This perceived threat was that the “pueblo […] se salía de los cuadros tradicionales del orden social, o por lo menos, parecía amenazar seriamente con ello” (29).³ In order to combat these changes that supposedly threatened seventeenth-century Spanish society, Maravall and Díez Borque both speak of the importance of honor in the *comedia*.⁴ Díez Borque also adamantly describes the “intocabilidad del Rey” (*Sociología* 131) as he is the source of honor (297): “La monarquía es la condición *sine qua non* de la existencia social, la apoyatura en la cual descansa la sociedad, por esto—como apunta Ribbans—, la posición

³ According to Thacker, one tool that Maravall mentions that often appears in the *comedia* is the phrase “soy quién soy” when a character is debating what he should do. Maravall argues that this formula brings the character back from his personal feelings and realigns him with the “cuadros tradicionales” of his social role. According to Thacker, however, the use of the phrase in the dramas does not align with Maravall’s interpretation.

⁴ Maravall says, “La ampliación social del valor nobiliario que significa el honor es la manifestación quizá más palmaria de ese programa de participación en las virtudes y valores de la sociedad aristocrática que el teatro del XVII propone a algunos nuevos grupos sociales” (*Teatro* 86). Díez Borque says, “Cada estamento tiene su forma característica de honor, asignado a cada individuo como miembro del grupo estamental a que pertenece. Como dice Maravall: el honor es el principio de una sociedad estamental con predominio de los estamentos privilegiados y Wilson señala la íntima relación entre código del honor y clase social: The code of honour is intimately related with class structure. The King, as the head of society, is the embodiment and fount of honour” (*Sociología* 297).
Thus, part of the ideology that the *comedia* was sharing was that in order to preserve the social order, the members should adhere to the demands of honor and thereby not attack the position of the king.

Both Maravall and Díez Borque insist that the *comedia* is not a mirror of the normal, ordinary life of the seventeenth century. Instead it presents extreme situations that will, according to their theories, better spread the ideological propaganda of the ruling elite. In spite of their perception of the *comedia* as having specific ideological

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5 López-Peláez notes, “Otra prueba de que esto es así lo constituye el hecho de que, tanto en las comedias españolas del Siglo de Oro como en los casos que se conocen, la defensa del honor cede ante la figura del rey, por razones obvias de salvaguarda del sistema” (98).

6 Putting Maravall’s arguments into their historical context, Wheeler notes, “Maravall’s arguments are largely the product of a broader political and intellectual climate in which dissident historical voices actively sought to discredit the official discourse of the immediate post Civil War period. […] Maravall’s readings of Golden Age drama often correspond more closely to stage and screen versions produced in the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s than to the play-texts themselves. Imperial monarchs, for example, perform a much more prominent and less ambiguous role in cinematic adaptations than they do in the comedias on which they are ostensibly based” (18). Therefore, according to Wheeler, the importance that Maravall finds in the figure of the king is largely based on the importance placed on that character by “the conservative imperialist discourse” (19) during the Franco regime. Also during that time period, Adorno and Horkheimer and others in the Frankfort school would have influenced the concept of the “deterministic model of mass cultural consumption” (22). Wheeler does not, however, reject the propaganda model but rather suggests the need to nuance it (36).

7 Díez Borque says, “Estamos, en verdad, ante situaciones *atípicas* […] situaciones <<extraordinarias>>” (Introducción, 21, emphasis original). Maravall says, “*la comedia no es un testimonio directo de la época, no es una reproducción realista de un ambiente, retrato de una sociedad. Por el contrario, el autor nos hace ver que en ella, los personajes son presentados siempre deformados, desrealizados, en cierta medida sublimados, para por esa vía hacerlos servir más eficazmente a sus objetivos: mantener enérgicamente la distribución establecida de roles, valores y virtudes*” (“enfoque” 520). MacKay, however, accuses Maravall and his followers of forgetting this idea by equating literature to history: “I know that in practice the proviso is discarded both by the author and his readers, who do end up identifying literature and society” (46). She also faults him for examining classes and institutions instead of looking at real people (46). Furthermore, she echoes the common criticism of his overarching statements saying that they are “sweeping assessments and careless historical generalizations” (55).
objectives, this genre was still extremely popular. Díez Borque says that it was the
“dueño y señor absoluto de la diversión pública” (Introducción 33). Summarizing these
different ideas, Maravall explains,

no puede tomarse esa literatura, esto es, el género tal vez famoso de nuestra literatura llamada clásica, la «comedia» barroca, como una imagen fiel de la sociedad. Lo que sí advertimos inmediatamente, al considerar nuestro teatro del siglo XVII, es que se revela como un producto literario fuertemente condicionado por su base social.8 Pero, es más, se trata de una creación literaria que nace y se desarrolla con muy definidas finalidades sociales.9 Este es el aspecto de la cuestión que a nosotros nos interesa. Dicho en términos modernos, pero que estimamos se ajustan bien al caso, el teatro español, sobre todo después de la revolución lopesca, aparece como manifestación de una gran campaña de

8 López-Peláez states, “el honor permite, como veremos, no sólo la tan ansiada integración del sujeto en la sociedad sino la conformación de una identidad (individual y colectiva) aparentemente cohesionada, si bien al precio de la aniquilación de la conciencia ética y de la sumisión al poder (político, social, religioso) establecido” (22).
9 Burningham focuses on the layers in between the playwright and the audience—the autor de comedias and specifically the actors—and opines that any “finalidad social” which the playwright may have intended could easily have been sidetracked to another purpose or goal: “as an instrument of political and social control, live theater is a rather inefficient tool, because live actors are notoriously unreliable, which is to say, a playwright who is counting on a jongleuresque actor to faithfully deliver a piece of essential propaganda might discover that Hamlet truly knows what he is talking about when he says: ‘And let those that play your clowns speak no more than is set down for them, for there be of them that will themselves laugh to set on some quantity of barren spectators to laugh too, though in the mean time some necessary question of the play be then to be consider’d’ (3.2.38-43). In short, while Maravall may very well be right when he argues that the Spanish Baroque is essentially ‘una cultura dirigida,’ he nonetheless overestimates the capacity (read, inclination) of jongleuresque actors to take direction. And this is a professional resistance not easily overcome” (150).
propaganda social, destinada a difundir y fortalecer una sociedad
determinada, en su complejo de intereses y valores y en la imagen de los
hombres y del mundo que de ella deriva. (Teatro 21-22)

Some of the proponents of the contrasting theory that the comedia questions the
monarchy and seeks to destabilize it are McKendrick, Lauer, and Forcione.10 This idea is
not new to these scholars. In fact, in his own research, Díez Borque found the premise
that the comedia attacks the king in Schevill’s The Dramatic art of Lope de Vega which
was published in 1918. Díez Borque writes that the comedia, particularly that of Lope,
defends the state para mantener por contraste la perfección del poder absoluto como valor
aceptado. Pensando así como pienso estoy en desacuerdo con Schevill que
defiende algo para mí insostenible: el que la comedia de Lope muestra:

a surprisingly frank criticism of the abuses and injustices inherent
in sovereign power.

Ocasión sobrada vamos a tener de comprobar que esto no es así. (130)

10 Pérez de León suggests that much of the English criticism to Maravall is based on the
review that Elliott wrote for the English translation. Based on that review,
“Posteriormente, críticos como Melveena McKendrick (2000) y Alban K. Forcione
(2009), entre otros, tomarán el testigo de Elliott, confirmando precisamente la
ambigüedad ideológica implícita en el estilo de algunos de los textos de la comedia
nueva. En el caso de ciertas comedias de Lope de Vega, encontrarán elementos para el
cuestionamiento de las políticas de corte. Concretamente, la crítica inglesa expondrá su
visión particular sobre la subversión implícita en algunas de las obras del autor de
Fuenteovejuna sobre monarcas, argumentando, mediante ejemplos concretos, en contra
de la visión general de presencia de una cultura dirigida en la estética de la comedia
nueva” (76).
After Maravall and Diez Borque had discredited these ideas, however, others—such as McKendrick, Lauer, and Forcione—arose to give them new life.  

Looking at some of the tyrant kings in the *comedia*, Lauer affirms that although the norm is a defense of the monarchy, there are considerable divergences. Directly contradicting Diez Borque, he claims that the image of the sacred and inviolable king is one of the biggest myths of contemporary criticism (65). He continues,

Desde hace ya mucho tiempo se ha opinado que el rey de la comedia española es un ser intocable y exento de la ley y el castigo. Además, la comedia en su totalidad ha sido estudiada frecuentemente como una estructura única y cerrada carente de espontaneidad y sustentando el régimen con tesón. No obstante, la evidencia trasmitida por los dramaturgos contradice no pocas veces esta perspectiva tradicional.

Espero haberles mostrado muy brevemente que la imagen del príncipe

11 Bass concludes her essay by saying that many scholars now find Maravall’s most global statements to be lacking as the *comedia* has a great number of complexities within it. These scholars reject the propagandistic theory. These scholars do, however, “recognize Maravall’s awareness of conflict and contradiction within the social and political world whose traditional hierarchies and order the theater supposedly scaffolded. What they [scholars] ask for, and what they offer, is a more nuanced, fuller accounting of how this cultural form, itself at times a site of conflict, traced society’s fault lines, dramatized its tensions, and exposed its contradictions” (10). Lauer, for example, focuses on the set of plays involving tyrants to locate some of these nuances.

12 According to Pérez de León, speaking of the exceptions to the rule, “A pesar de todo, ni estas últimas [las excepciones] son la mayoría, ni tampoco su oposición al pensamiento de las corrientes oligárquicas ha sido suficientemente probada en todos los casos. La situación del crítico del teatro del Barroco español ha sido por tanto la del que se enfrenta [a] la extraña ‘misión desmesurada’ de buscar en obras de este periodo detalles de modernidad y ejemplos de ‘subversión a la propaganda oligárquica’ propuesta por Maravall” (97).

13 Here he uses “myth” to mean “error.” See below for a discussion of what a myth entails.
According to Lauer, then, in addition to including some defense of the monarch, the *comedia* also includes considerable counterexamples and resistance to the prince, particularly when the king is a tyrant, acting according to his own impulses and not serving the state as he should.

Secondly, instead of seeing all the plays as defense of the king, Forcione attempts to identify a “countercurrent” (1) in them. He questions the Maravallian theory of *comedia* by saying that the “celebratory monarchism and conformist propaganda, should in fact be understood as ‘spaces of debate,’ compeling their audiences to reflect critically on the foundations and implications of established political doctrines and commonplaces” (20). For example, speaking of *El Rey Don Pedro en Madrid o El Infanzón de Illescas*, Forcione explains, “One can say that the play is crafted in a monarchist design, and yet to go on to categorize it as monarchist propaganda, as Maravall has done in his influential studies of the Golden Age theater, is to miss the point that its royal triumph exacts a considerable price and that in fact that price lingers as an alluring alternative beyond the fall of the final curtain” (101).

Finally, McKendrick is perhaps the most fully anti-Maravallian.¹⁴ Whereas Lauer finds divergences from the norm and Forcione points out certain “spaces of debate”

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¹⁴ Bass notes, “To be sure, readers of this journal will largely be familiar with critiques to Maravall’s thesis by scholars in the field, perhaps most well known among them, Melveena McKendrick’s *Playing the King: Lope de Vega and the Limits of Conformity* (2000)” (2).
within the *comedia’s* “resplendent and triumphant epiphany of the majesty” (105),\(^{15}\) McKendrick seeks to deny that the *comedia* played a large role in spreading propaganda which defended the monarch. She states,

> The theatre’s immense popularity was due precisely to the fact that, at the level of plot and stage business at least, it was a product of the collective will. It gave its very varied audience exactly what it wanted to see. It certainly was not feeding it an uncongenial diet composed of alien values, although it almost equally certainly played a part in the consolidation, even the propagation in one or two cases, of familiar values. [...] It was a process of natural propagation, not propaganda, and this is a vital distinction which has to be made. (6)

The one exception that she allows to this denial of the *comedia’s* being the state’s instrument of propaganda is court theater:

> No one, I think, would deny that the *spectacle* of theatre at court played a political role, above all under Philip IV when the court theatre played a significant ceremonial part in the conscious theatricalization of power that characterized his reign; aesthetically it was an attempt to achieve the sublime in the service of the state, its political purpose to celebrate the splendor of monarchy and promote belief in the greatness and prosperity of Spain. (9)

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\(^{15}\) Bass explains, “But along with other scholars, they would insist—indeed, have insisted—that any discussion of its dominant values must also remain alert to the question marks and fissures it reveals” (12).
According to McKendrick, Calderón’s court theater was a way to not only celebrate but also to educate the figure of the Crown (31). Outside of the court theater, however, McKendrick asserts that the Crown was not celebrated. Instead it was constantly attacked: “By making unruliness, inadequacy, ineffectiveness normative in his depiction of princes, Lope inevitably conveys his perception of monarchy as a highly problematic institution in practical terms” (112). McKendrick summarizes her theory of the *comedia* as anti-monarchical by declaring,

> There is little glorification of princes in them [Lope’s king-plays] and no endorsement of absolutism. There is no suggestion that pieties should be left unchallenged for all that pieties are shown to have a necessary place in the scheme of things. What there is, is a systematic campaign of demystification and a concerned and penetrating dialogue about the relationship between men and the institution of monarchy, between social and symbolic systems. In Lope’s theatre art is by no means the servant of king. Kings, rather, serve art in order that art might engage with one of the great public issues of the day. (213)  

Therefore, whereas Maravall and Díez Borque see the *comedia* as a celebration and defense of the image of the prince, Lauer, Forcione, and McKendrick view it as an attack on—or at the very least a subversive questioning of—it.  

16 Bass claims, “None of the authors would dispute the *comedia*’s fundamental allegiance to God and king nor its general thrust towards social cohesion” (12). In the previous shorter quote and this lengthier quote, however, McKendrick seems to be challenging exactly that allegiance to the king and the integration of people into that society.  

17 Just as the prince is an “obsession” in the *comedia* and appears in a great number of them, the viewpoints and interpretations of his performance have also varied greatly, and
continue to have adherents that follow these different perspectives, and they all use the same plays in order to demonstrate the veracity of their opinions.¹⁸ In order to be able to approach this question more fully, the concepts of hylomorphism and mythology will be instrumental in untangling this web of princes who learn and the discussions of propaganda, propagation, and ideology.

It has been a widely discussed topic among literary critics. Maravall and Díez Borque are just the tip of the iceberg of people who have followed to some extent the theory that the comedia serves as propaganda. On the other hand, McKendrick, Lauer, and Forcione are also just the beginning of a long list of critics who have begun to question this theory as the pendulum swings back. Both sides have antecedents from many decades ago such as the aforementioned Schevill who thinks that the comedia questions the king or Vossler who would agree more with Maravall (Lauer 65). See the Bulletin of the Comediantes 65.1 for more nuances within these arguments. See below for more on these approaches as regards to mythological comedias.

¹⁸ Two scholars who have recently put forth contrasting viewpoints are Pérez de León and Bergman. Pérez de León affirms, “Aún cuando se hayan cuestionado sólidamente algunos de los argumentos que Maravall propone en su ensayo, todavía no se ha podido negar en su totalidad que la cultura del Barroco español estuviera predominantemente dirigida por la corte” (77). He continues by adding, “la presentación del argumento de la cultura dirigida por la corte ha obligado ciertamente a los críticos a tomar posiciones al respecto. El hecho de que todavía no se haya encontrado la evidencia de una serie sustancial de obras literarias que cuestionen esta postura es llamativo. Además, con la excepción [de] Cervantes y de ciertos moralistas religiosos, pocos autores contemporáneos al siglo diecisiete aportaron abiertamente una crítica racional y reformista sobre las directrices monopolizantes de la estética de la comedia nueva liderada por Lope de Vega” (77-78). On the other hand, Bergman, while looking at the criminality of the time, warns against keeping a strict count of subversive versus propagandistic elements or characters: “However, they more likely served as indictments of the laxity and corruption in law enforcement that historians have demonstrated were endemic to early modern Spain. Moreover, if comedia scholars spend too much time with a figurative scorecard, trying to see who is winning, subversives or oppressors, we may fail to detect some surprising interactions between theatrically fictionalized criminality and real-life lawbreaking” (109). He does, however, conclude that with the presence of so many popular law-breaking characters in the comedia, it is impossible to view this genre as a “top-down socially ordering force in early modern Spain” (123): “A theater that relished the unraveling of order, in both criminality and ineffective policing, could not have succeeded as a ‘gran campaña de propaganda social’” (124). Thus, Pérez de León claims that the evidence to discredit Maravall is lacking, but Bergman affirms that there is plenty of it available.
Hylomorphism

In order to be able to approach this debate in which the different sides seem to prove opposite conclusions with the same sources, this analysis will use the hylomorphic theory to analyze the image of the prince.\(^{19}\) This theory was first proposed by Aristotle\(^ {20}\), continued to be known and used in the Baroque period including by the authors that are the focus of this project, and remains an object of study and a theory in the twenty-first century. Ever since Aristotle first put forth his theory of hylomorphism, it has had an elaborate and perhaps confusing vocabulary which has also led to many opposing interpretations through history.

In his *Metaphysics*, among other works, Aristotle presents some of the basic tenets of the theory and gives several examples. Upon beginning his ontological line of questioning, he states, “Indeed the question that was, is, and always will be asked, and always will cause difficulty—that is, the questions ‘What is being?’—is the question ‘What is substance?’” (1028 b2)\(^ {21}\) In his examination of what makes up different substances, Aristotle’s key concepts are matter and form, or potentiality and actuality. Aristotle relates these two pairs of concepts in that matter and potentiality are synonyms

\(^{19}\) Johnston says, “Hylomorphism provides some philosophical apparatus that enables us to get to the base of some of our unreflective thoughts about complex wholes” (663). This issue has proved complex, and it is hoped that hylomorphism will “enable us” to understand it better.

\(^{20}\) The Real Academia Española defines “hilemorfismo” as “Teoría ideada por Aristóteles y seguida por la mayoría de los escolásticos, según la cual todo cuerpo se halla constituido por dos principios esenciales, que son la materia y la forma” (rae.es).

\(^{21}\) Williams states that “No one has equalled [sic] him [Aristotle] in divining the questions to be asked nor in fecundity of responses, themselves as much questions as answers” (II 521).
and form and actuality are synonyms as well. In the hylomorphic theory, a being can exist as matter/potentiality and as form/actuality. Matter is the basic or beginning state in which something exists. As matter, it is not complete, perfect, or fully developed. It has the potential to be something else. Once that being reaches its fully developed, complete, or perfect state, however, it has reached its form. It is actually what it is. In order to illustrate the difference between matter and form, Aristotle uses several examples including a house, a syllable, and a statue. Lumber and bricks have the potential to be a house but are in and of themselves only the matter of a house. Only once the house is built, people are living in it, and it is performing the functions of a house can it be said to be the form of a house (1043 a14). Similarly, the sounds [b] and [a] have the potential to be a syllable and are therefore the matter of a syllable. Once they come together to create the syllable [ba], they have reached the form of the syllable (1041 b12-25). Finally, a lump of bronze (matter) has the potential to be a statue or a “bronzen sphere.” Once it has been shaped by the artist, it achieves its form and in actuality is a statue or sphere (1035a5-10).

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22 A few quotes which relate these concepts include: “the matter (by which I mean that which is not a this in actuality, but is a this potentially)” (1042 a26), and later, “there is on the one hand matter and on the other hand shape, and the one is potentially while the other is actually [….] The difficulty has thus disappeared, since the one is matter and the other form” (1045 a20-a30). Several scholars have also commented on this relationship such as Bostock (251), Williams (II 513, 519), and Yu (58, 62). Additionally, Witt declares, “While the first point, that the relationship between matter and form should be understood in terms of potentiality and actuality is universally accepted (because Aristotle says so), it is very difficult to explain Aristotle's meaning” (“Hylomorphism” 142).

23 Another recapitulation of this idea is, “Now it is unmistakable that the twinning of matter with potency, born of such instances as the acorn and the oak, remains most at home with the lumber and the house, the bronze and the statue” (Williams, “II” 514).
The first cause of the varying understandings of hylomorphism is the way in which Aristotle described it. As Williams puts it, “As things are, the Aristotelian notion [of form and matter] in particular has probably affected more human beings than any other philosophic concept. Few doctrines are easier to explain in a textbook paragraph; almost none is harder to understand in detail and principle” (“I” 291). The difficulties start with different ways in which Aristotle uses substance and continues with his different meanings of matter and form and their relations to other terms. In Aristotle’s writings, it is sometimes difficult to determine whether he is referring to primary or secondary substances, or even something completely different such as being the substance of something (Bostock 44). Furthermore, Yu states, “The theory of matter and form presented in Meta. vii, viii, and ix, however, is far from simple. The concepts of matter and form, and the discussions of their relations, are so varied and even contradictory that commentators remain perplexed over what exactly these concepts mean and what their relation is” (49).

A second reason why Hylomorphism can be difficult to follow is because it has undergone many permutations throughout its long history. Lüthy and Newman speak of “the very longevity of hylomorphism” and the “transformations” that the terms “matter” and “form” have undergone (217). Aristotle first developed the theory in the fourth century B.C. His works later had various Latin translators (222). Hylomorphism continued through the Middle Ages as is exemplified by Thomas Aquinas’s use of the theory in his explanations of the body and soul (Barnes 503, 511, 518). As Flynn points

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24 Barnes states, “It is at just this point that hylomorphism has come in for a lot of criticism lately. The criticism, expressed in various ways, is that hylomorphism is fundamentally ambiguous” (502).
out, it was used throughout the Renaissance and Baroque period (see below). Lüthy and Newman indicate that this theory was discussed, both in terms of rejecting or embracing it, during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and beyond.25 Articles and books are still being published which attempt to explain what Aristotle was trying to say in his original work, and the theory even now has defenders and detractors still publishing their own theories of hylomorphism.26 Lüthy and Newman ask the questions, “which of the sub-meanings of ‘matter’ and ‘form’ were dismissed, which ones survived, which were strengthened, and on what grounds?” (226). With this long history of translations, reinterpretations, acceptances, and rejections, it can at times be difficult to know exactly what is being discussed.27

Among the many periods in which this theory was employed are included the Renaissance and the Early Modern eras in Spain. In fact, the theory of hylomorphism would have been familiar to any cultured Spaniard as their religious education would have involved the study of Thomas Aquinas and his neo-Aristotelian concept of the hylomorphic relation between the soul and the body and the former’s perfecting the

25 Lüthy and Newman mention the 1625 *Cursus physicus* by the philosopher Jean-Rodolphe Le Fèvre (215), Kant’s *Critique of Pure Reason* (“Kantian epistemology makes the outright claim that the concepts of ‘matter’ and ‘form’ ‘underly all other reflection’ and are ‘inseparably bound up with all employment of the understanding’” (218).), and Kuhn’s “Preface” to his *Essential Tension* (1977) (215-16) all as examples which prove the survival of Aristotelian hylomorphism.

26 One example is “Hylomorphism” by Johnston in which he comments on the utility of the theory even now stating, “Myself, I think that Hylomorphism captures one aspect of the implied ontology of our conceptual scheme, and may be useful in the development of a fundamental ontology; especially so in culling some of the many categories spoken of in contemporary philosophy” (663). In his article he addresses other theories which contradict his own (660).

27 When trying to explain what Aristotle meant, Witt realizes that with so many interpretations her ideas will contradict others: “some of the interpretations of Aristotle put forward in this book are controversial” (*Substance* 5).
latter. More specifically, “The union of matter and form may be called a *topos* in Spanish literature” (Flynn, “Hylomorphism” 43n). Flynn lists several works that include ideas of hylomorphism. The Marqués de Santillana, for example, in his *Proemio y carta que el marqués de Santillana envió al condestable de Portugal con las obras suyas* says, “la materia busca la forma e lo imperfecto la perfección” (Flynn, “Hylomorphism” 43n). Additionally, Fernando de Rojas includes it in the first *auto* of *La Celestina* when Sempronio says, “¿No has leído el filósofo, do dice: «Así como la materia apetece a la forma, así la mujer al varón»?” (Rojas 66). Also, Saavedra Fajardo includes it in his *Idea de un príncipe político-cristiano*: “La segunda obligación natural de los padres es la enseñanza de sus hijos ...... Parte tiene el padre en la materia humana del hijo, no en la forma, que es el alma producida de Dios; y si no asistiere a la regeneración desta por medio de la dotrina, no será perfecto padre” (qtd. in Flynn, “Hylomorphism” 43n). Flynn also mentions that Fray Luis de Granada, Cano, Báñez, Molina, and Suárez all included the basic tenets of the theory in their writings.

Although Flynn mentions the presence of hylomorphism in all of the aforementioned writings, he analyzes its use in two authors in particular: Lope de Vega and Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz. The specific work by Lope de Vega that he examines is *El caballero de Olmedo.* Flynn explores the first fifty lines of the *comedia* and describes it

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28 Covarrubias in part defines *forma* as “Es todo aquello que da ser a la cosa. Lat. *forma.* Tratar en forma desta dicción sería cosa disforme, y así lo dejo para los lógicos y físicos, que tratan *ex professo* de materia y forma” (920). He describes *materia* as, “Es nombre latino, *materia vel materies, ex qua aliquid fit.* Lo demás dejemos para los filósofos” (1254).
29 Although he studies the presence of hylomorphism in *El caballero de Olmedo*, Flynn mentions that Lope uses it in *Fuenteovejuna* as well, though Flores humorously mixes up
as “an extended hylomorphic trope” (34). According to Flynn, “There are fifty verses in this series, all of them based on el alma, and since the form of a human being is called the soul, the entire paradox may be called hylomorphic. Don Alonso is a human being whose soul is his substantial form” (41).\(^3\) In addition to the theory’s presence in the writings of Lope, Flynn indicates that Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz also frequently employs this trope in her writings: “The Scholastic concept which appears most often in the writings of Sor Juana is hylomorphism. The term itself does not appear, but word plays on body-soul, and form-matter, appear so often and in such a way that their meaning is unmistakable” (“Revision” 516). She uses it when writing of two separate princes—“the infant son of the Viceroy” and “In a loa praising the birthday of Charles II” (516)—and additionally uses it in a poem about the doctrine of the Assumption of Mary, in her Loa del auto sacramental San Hermenegildo, at least twice in the auto El divino Narciso, in her Primero sueño, and also in her Loa a los Años de Fray Diego Velázquez (517-18).

Clearly, Aristotle’s theory of hylomorphism was well known to the authors of the Spanish Golden Age, including some, if not all, of the playwrights that are the focus of this dissertation. This theory was also directly applied to princes.

With the many ways that Aristotle’s theory has been used, it is important to explain how these terms are used in this dissertation. First, the concepts of matter and form are integral to this analysis. Matter or potentiality make up what could be a perfect prince whereas form or actuality represent what is an ideal prince. Not all princes are

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\(^3\) See also, Dunn, Peter N. “‘Materia la mujer, el hombre forma’: Notes on the Development of a Lopean topos.” This article includes many plays by Lope which include the “relationship between matter and form” (199).
always acting according to the standards of perfection for rulers. They can fall short in a variety of ways which are discussed below, and when a prince does not conform to the ideal, then he is only the matter of a prince. When a prince does follow the pattern of the flawless ruler, then he is the form of a prince.  

Next, although a prince can be so either in potentiality or in actuality, there are different ways to go between the two. Witt describes the two methods as “process and end” and “capacity and exercise.” Yu describes similar concepts, but his terms are “generated” and “functional” unity. Witt explains the contrast that exists between matter and form in relation to capacity and exercise with the example of sight: “For we say both of that which sees potentially and of that which sees actually, that it is seeing” (“Hylomorphism” 147). Witt then continues with her explanation of process and end using the example of corn: “unripe corn is potentially corn, when it ripens it is actually corn. This example invites us to think of, not a capacity and its exercise, but a continuum of directed development. Unripe corn is corn potentially—it is in process towards its end which is being corn actually. Mature corn is corn actually—it is in its end” (147). Yu, for his part, explains this idea stating, “At the beginning of Meta. ix.1 (104b34-5) Aristotle mentions that potential/actual being is being in respect of function as well as being in respect of potentiality and fulfillment. When we look at the function of an organism that is already mature, there indeed emerges a kind of substantial potentiality/actuality

31 Another way to see form and actuality is with Aristotle’s term “Essence.” Yu explains, “Form as primary substance is said to be identical to essence. ‘By form I mean the essence of each thing and its primary substance’ (vii.7, 1032b1-2); and ‘By form I mean essence.’ (vii.10, 1035b34-5) The discussion of form is at the same time a discussion of essence. It is well-known that it is Aristotle’s standard practice to use ‘form’ and ‘essence’ interchangeably” (84). Thus, when a prince is completely fulfilling his essential characteristics, he has reached his form or is a prince in actuality.
relation which is different from that in substantial generation” (169). Therefore, there are two distinctions between potentiality and actuality. In regards to the prince, when first growing up, he is still in the process of directed development. A prince must learn, grow, and develop in order to become a perfect leader. Once he has developed, however, he still does not always adhere to the precepts of the perfect prince. Just as a man can shut his eyes and be a potentially seeing being, so also a prince can shut off some quality which would then prevent him from fully functioning as a prince or from fully exercising his capabilities. Whether the prince is still developing or he is not functioning as one, he would lack his form and only have the matter of a prince.

Finally, several scholars write about the concept of unity in Aristotelian hylomorphism. Aristotle originally contrasts the idea of unity with that of a heap. There can be a heap of lumber and bricks, and they do not amount to anything besides that. On the other hand, when they are united together to build a house, something else is added (1040 b5): “However, things that are compounded in such a way that the whole is a unity, not like a heap but like a syllable” (1041 b9). Aristotle further explains,

And the syllable is not just its elements—BA is not the same as B and A—nor is flesh just fire and earth. For on dissolution the flesh and the syllable no longer exist, but the letters exist, and so do the fire and the earth. So the syllable, then, is not only its elements (vowel and consonant) but something else besides [….] It would seem, then, that this something else does exist, and that it is not an element, and that it is the cause of this thing here being flesh and that thing there being a syllable. And similarly in
other cases. And this is the substance of each thing, because it is the primary cause of its being. (1041 b12-25)

In elaborating on this concept which he calls the “principle of unity,” Johnston asks, “what principle unifies those parts into the whole that is the complex item. The principle had better not be merely another part” (652). Johnston also clarifies that although simpler parts may be the matter for something more complex, they can also be the form for something less complex: “When an item's parts are themselves complex, they in their turn will have their own principles of unity (forms) and genuine parts (matter), and so on and so forth, either ad infinitum, or terminating in indefinables or ‘simples.’ This is the familiar layering of hylomorphic structure” (658). Thus, the perfect prince will be able to unite all of the necessary qualities of a prince in actuality; however, each of these qualities has its own aspects which it also unites together in order to be complete. For example, one of the several qualities that a prince should have is prudence. Prudence, however, consists of several aspects such as prudence in planning for the future and prudence in learning from the past.

Therefore, in this dissertation, hylomorphism is used primarily in regards to the prince. A prince can exist either as the matter/potentiality of a prince or as the form/actuality of a prince. The differences between the two are 1) whether the prince is still in the process of developing or generating towards the end of becoming a prince, or 2) having already developed, he is not exercising his capabilities or functioning as a prince. Finally, there are many characteristics which make up a perfect prince. If he will be a prince in actuality, he must not be each of these characteristics individually but must rather unite them all together so that they fortify one another.
Jodi Campbell writes, “If theater served as a means of promoting the status quo and maintaining the social hierarchy, it stands to reason that it would present a consistently positive picture of kings and their power” (10). Those who interpret the *comedia* as possibly subversive follow this line of thinking and take any negative portrayal as an attack on the image of the king. What this dissertation seeks to prove, however, using the hylomorphic theory, is that negative portrayals do not necessarily constitute an attack on the monarchy. The prince is more than his matter, and in the plays, the prospect of the form of the prince is present. Because of the prince’s ability to achieve his form, he is still defended.

Another similar application of hylomorphism is not in the person governing but in the type of government. There are many possible ways of organizing a government, but they would only have the matter of a government; however, theoretically only one way is the perfect way which would be the form of government. Thus, although political theorists in early modern Spain such as Mariana and Mártir Rizo list several different methods—government by one such as a monarchy or a tyranny, government by a select few such as an oligarchy, or government by everyone such as a democracy, for example—they agree that the ideal method of governing is the monarchy, particularly when the prince is one in actuality. Mártir Rizo says that the monarchy is first with the others descending from it by inferior levels, and Mariana dedicates his entire second chapter to the argument that the monarchy is superior to all other types of government. In early modern Spain, therefore, the form of government was the monarchy and any other method was an imperfect approach (Mariana 69-85, Mártir Rizo 15-16).
The concept of there being a difference in what exists and what should exist—that which exists in potentiality or in actuality—is highly applicable to the *comedia*. Diez Borque describes theatrical works of the Golden Age as a tension between “what is” and “what should be,” but they conclude with the situation working out to reach what it should be:

Vienen a coincidir infinidad de obras en organizarse como *amplificatio*, como variedades en *ritornello*, de un problema nacido del contraste entre *lo que es*, *lo que debe ser* y lo que, con frecuencia, *aparenta ser*:

estructura teatral maniquea de muy fácil comprensión por todos, al menos en su entramado básico. Así, frente a tantas piezas en que encontramos damas de criadas, amores confundidos, personalidades cambiadas, tenemos en esta a Federico y Casandra que, debiendo profesarse amor de madrastra y alnado, se quieren como amantes.\(^3\) En ambos casos se impone un desenlace obligado que recupere el *deber ser* para restablecer el equilibrio y tranquilizar al espectador. (Introducción 19)

Although the *comedia* as a genre depicts the extraordinary and frequently has dramatic situations in which what appears on stage goes against what normally happens, these atypical instances resolve themselves and the situations recover to what they should be (20). In other words, a prince may not be what he should be during the course of a play, but by the end of the play, he arrives at what he should be.

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\(^3\) Here Diez Borque is referring to the *comedia* *El castigo sin venganza* by Lope.
Mythology

In addition to hylomorphism, several other key concepts will also help in the analysis of whether or not the *comedia* was a propagandistic tool of the monarchy. These ideas center on myth and mythology but include other terms such as ideology, ontology, and worldview. Giving an overview of all of the different theories of mythology is far beyond the scope of this paper and has been done many other times. The present study will draw from many of these studies and after giving a brief description of mythology, will focus on its importance and function.

Often nowadays the word “myth” has a negative connotation; however, as Dundes puts it, “there is nothing pejorative about the term *myth*. The term *mythos* means word or story. It is only the modern usage of the word *myth* as ‘error’ that has led to the notion of myth as something negative” (Introduction 1). In contrast, according to Lincoln, a myth is distinct from other narratives based on “the claims that are made by their narrators and the way in which those claims are received by their audience(s)” (24). For a narrative to be a myth, the narrators would claim that it is true, this claim would be seen as credible by the audience, and the narrative would have “*authority*” (24, emphasis original). Although somewhat more explicit than definitions such as “sacred narrative” (Dundes,

33 A few book-length studies on mythology and different theories of mythology include Frazer’s *The Golden Bough*, Campbell’s *The Masks of God*, Csapo’s *Theories of Mythology*, Lévi-Strauss’s *The Raw and the Cooked*, Schilbrack’s anthology *Thinking Through Myths: philosophical perspectives*, Dundes’s anthology *Sacred Narrative: Readings in the Theory of Myth* (which includes chapters by Malinowski, Jung, Eliade, and Kirk, among others), and Dundes’s *Interpreting Folklore*.

34 The other categories which Lincoln defines are “Fables”, of which no claims of truth are made, “Legends” which have truth claims that are not credible, and “History” which has credible truth claims. “Myth” has truth claims which are credible, but the distinction between “Myth” and “History” lies in the “*authority*” of the narrative in a society (24).
Introduction 1), Lincoln’s explanation leaves room for a wide range of stories to fall within the realm of myth, some of which may be objectively true and others of which may be riddled with falsehoods. The critical characteristic of myth in Lincoln’s definition, though, is its authority.

Many scholars have attempted to describe the importance of myths to a society, and they have come up with various ways of approaching it. Caillois explains, “el mito pertenece por definición a lo colectivo, justifica, sostiene e inspira la existencia y la acción de una comunidad, de un pueblo, de un gremio o de una sociedad secreta” (167, emphasis original). One of the functions of myth that Campbell mentions “is the enforcement of a moral order: the shaping of the individual to the requirements of his geographically and historically conditioned social group” (4-5) and another, which is the “most critical function of a mythology, then, is to foster the centering and unfolding of the individual in integrity, in accord with $d$) himself (the microcosm), $c$) his culture (the mesocosm), $b$) the universe (the macrocosm), and $a$) that awesome ultimate mystery which is both beyond and within himself and all things” (6). Gaster affirms, “A myth is, or once was, used; a tale is, and always was, merely told” (123, emphasis original).

Malinowski considers myth a type of social charter: “it expresses, enhances, and codifies belief; it safeguards and enforces morality […]. Myth is thus a vital ingredient of human civilization; it is not an idle tale but a hard-worked active force; it is not an intellectual explanation or an artistic imagery, but a pragmatic charter of primitive faith and moral wisdom” (199). Kirk explains that “Myths often have some serious underlying purpose beyond that of telling a story” (Myth 41). All of these different scholars have sought to describe the importance of mythology in a society. Myths are not just told. They have a
purpose, a meaning, or a function in their society. Without this importance attached to them, they would not be considered myths but rather simply stories.

One way in which myths work that is referred to by several scholars is explained thoroughly by Lévi-Strauss. For Lévi-Strauss, myths arise within a culture as “a kind of logical tool” (“Structural” 434) to create a “mediation” between two contradictory or “conflicting terms” (439). 35 A few examples of these contradictions that myth can mediate are life and death (437), sky and earth, herbivorous and carnivorous animals, and nature and culture (441). In regards to these oppositions, Lévi-Strauss affirms, “the purpose of myth is to provide a logical model capable of overcoming a contradiction (an impossible achievement if, as it happens, the contradiction is real)” (443). Thus, the problem or contradiction in a society has no true solution; 36 instead, the myth creates a mediation between the terms that “replaces the original problem” (434) or “shift[s] the difficulty elsewhere” (Raw 5).

As can be seen from the above, mythology arises within a society to address problems that it has. 37 These myths are a society’s answers to these issues, and the people of any given culture will be able to use them to shape their worldview. As Honko declares, “Myths function as examples, as models….they offer both a cognitive basis for and practical models of behavior. From this point of view myths can be characterised as ontological: they are incorporated and integrated into a coherent view of the world, and

35 “[M]ythical thought always works from the awareness of oppositions towards their progressive mediation” (Lévi-Strauss, “Structural” 440).
36 Lévi-Strauss says, “the problem obviously cannot be solved” (434).
37 These problems do not necessarily have to be explicitly known to the society nor do the myths have to specifically state that they are addressing a particular problem: Lévi-Strauss “admits that in most cases the authors or reproducers of myths will be unconscious of the kind of meaning he, Lévi-Strauss, attributes to them” (Kirk, Myth 44).
they describe very important aspects of life and the universe” (51, emphasis original).

This shaping of a civilization’s ontology, worldview, or ideology is what the scholars are getting at in the above discussion of the importance of a myth in a society.

Several theorists have commented on how mythology constructs ideology. 38

While Barthes seems to consider mythology very negatively referring to “the ideological abuse” (11) which it presents, he relates mythology to ideology: “mythology: it is a part both of semiology inasmuch as it is a formal science, and of ideology inasmuch as it is an historical science: it studies ideas-in-form” (112). Also, the previously mentioned authority of mythology described by Lincoln provides ontological explanations:

Having offered such a definition of Myth, it is necessary, of course, to define authority, on which the definition of Myth hangs. In part I have in mind something similar to what Malinowski meant when he described myth as a form of social charter and what Clifford Geertz meant in his characterization of religion as being simultaneously a ‘model of’ and a ‘model for’ reality. That is to say, a narrative possessed of authority is one for which successful claims are made not only to the status of truth, but what is more, to the status of paradigmatic truth. In this sense the authority of myth is somewhat akin to that of charters, models, templates, and blueprints, but one can go beyond this formulation and recognize that it is also (and perhaps more important) akin to that of revolutionary

38 Similarly, Dundes not only examines mythology but also studies folklore in an effort to understand the ideology of a culture: “I believe the folklorist can, by analyzing folklore, discover general patterns of culture….Ultimately I suppose I am interested in the study of worldview” (Interpreting x).
slogans and ancestral invocations, in that through the recitation of myth one may effectively mobilize a social grouping. Thus, myth is not just a coding device in which important information is conveyed, on the basis of which actors can then construct society. It is also a discursive act through which actors evoke the sentiments out of which society is actively constructed. (24-5)

Thus, mythology gives an explanation of how the world is and the audience’s place in it. Although some have the negative view characterized by Barthes of the ideological abuses of mythology, having a worldview is not necessarily harmful.

In fact, in his essay “Ideology as a Cultural System” Geertz indicates that the concept of ideology has been unnecessarily reduced by some theorists who seem to have “an unduly Machiavellian view of ideology as a form of higher cunning and, consequently, to a neglect of its broader, less dramatic social functions” (12). He continues by explaining more of what ideology can be and can do using concepts that are remarkably similar to those that are used by Lévi-Strauss when describing mythology. Geertz comments, “No social arrangement is or can be completely successful in coping with the functional problems it inevitably faces. All are riddled with insoluble antinomies […]. Social friction is as pervasive as is mechanical friction—and as irremovable” (13). In an effort to address these irresolvable social, psychological, and cultural conflicts or strains, an ideology will seek to find some type of answer: “And it is, in turn, the attempt of ideologies to render otherwise incomprehensible social situations meaningful, to so construe them as to make it possible to act purposefully within them, that accounts both for the ideologies’ highly figurative nature and for the intensity with which, once
accepted, they are held” (25-26). These functions strikingly parallel the uses of myth as described by Lévi-Strauss. They both arise from some irreconcilable contradiction within a society or entity, try to give some sort of answer to it, and have authority over those who adhere to them.

A myth, therefore, has the authority to provide an explanation to what is seen as an irresolvable contradiction within a society. By offering this mediation, a myth helps the society construct its ontology, worldview, or ideology. These stories can arise from popular culture or be carefully constructed by a select few. Myths were created and told in Antiquity, and they continue to be invented and related to people today. The myths of the gods and heroes of Ancient Greece such as Hercules or Theseus were used in certain ways in those time periods, but as Seznec explains, their use evolved over time. New myths have also arisen about new characters and regarding new perceived contradictions. In fifth-century Athens, for example, the myths of Theseus and the Amazons had been changed from previous versions and at that time period related to issues surrounding giving and receiving wives and also Athenian civilization contrasted to Persian barbarity. A few centuries later, the Roman emperors created their own myths about Persian barbarity but related it to their Parthian enemies instead (Spawforth, “Persian-Wars tradition”). By the time that this and other myths reached seventeenth century Spain, the stories had not only been modified, but the issues that they addressed had been amended as well.

In speaking of present-day myths, Flood explains,

40 See Dowden, “Amazons.”
In the modern context, then, a political myth can be defined as an ideologically marked account of past, present, or predicted political events. By ideologically marked, I mean that the narrative discourse carries the imprint of the assumptions, values, and goals associated with a specific ideology or identifiable family of ideologies, and that it therefore conveys an explicit or implicit invitation to assent to a particular ideological stand-point and potentially to act in accordance with it. (179).

Expanding upon this description, in addition to political myths of the present offering invitations to agree with and conform to a certain worldview, the myths that can be seen in the seventeenth-century comedia also fit within an ontological viewpoint and invite their audiences to share it. Flood mentions the future, present, and past as different accounts that can be mythologized, and the myths of Antiquity can also be newly mythologized and invested with a fresh meaning through the mediation of a contemporary contradiction.

Several scholars have looked at the comedia’s ability to mythologize by extending an invitation to share its ontological underpinnings. Greenberg, for example, demonstrates that the staging of historical events in the Golden Age comedia could smooth over rough areas and fill in gaps thereby mythologizing the past event and investing it with an “ideological explanation of the present” (37). Maravall and Díez Borque also speak of the collective nature of the comedia and its mythic characteristics. Maravall says, that the comedia could “contribuir a socializar un sistema de convenciones” (Teatro 32). He continues by later adding, “Hay efectivamente en el teatro barroco español un fondo comunitario […] En una reciente obra sobre la materia, Ch. V. Aubrun considera, no obstante, que el teatro español tiene tal carácter comunitario que en él se funden público,
actores y autor en la común adhesión a una ideología, tal vez mejor, a una mitología activa” (36-7). Diez Borque says, “El teatro identifica, con gran frecuencia como comprobaremos, gloria del Rey y gloria de Dios, lo que da un carácter mítico al poder, imponiendo una religión de la obediencia que se corresponde con esta mítica de la realeza y que el teatro defiende desde el escenario” (Sociología 132). Even McKendrick speaks of the propagation of values within seventeenth-century Spanish society (6). These scholars have recognized that the plays of seventeenth-century Spain can act like mythology because they use ideologically marked stories as invitations to share the worldview that they express.

Therefore, the comedia is able to take a wide variety of stories from the past, the present, a predicted future, fiction, or the mythology of Antiquity and can reinterpret them investing them with a new meaning. This new mythologization of the myths of ancient Greece and Rome can be seen in the plays which are the focus of this dissertation. The playwrights created new versions of the myths to better fit their time period, not only in the plots and themes, but also in the contradictions which they

41 Although plays from ancient Greece and Rome included these characters and some of them had even been translated into Spanish, the Spanish playwrights generally used other sources, primarily Ovid, whom they could read in the original Latin or could read in Spanish in several different translations (Lida de Malkiel 372). Other plays from Antiquity include several key Greek heroes that appear in this dissertation. For example, Villegas translated Euripides’s Hippolytus which depicts part of Theseus’s life (See Seaford, “Hippolytus”), and Euripides’s tragedy Medea (in which Jason appears) was translated into Spanish by Pedro Simón Abril and printed in 1570 and 1599 (377). In antiquity Séneca also had written a tragedy entitled Medea. This myth had been told in Spanish since at least Alfonso X’s General Estoria (Biglieri). A few plays involving Hercules that were written in Greek or Latin were Heracles by Euripides, Hercules furens by Seneca (Welles 195), and Hercules Oetaeus by Seneca which tells the story of Nessus’s kidnapping of Deineira (Kidd 102-03). A new version of this final story appears in Los tres mayores prodigios by Calderón.
attempted to mediate. The prince in Golden-Age Spain would ideally provide order instead of chaos, civilization instead of barbarity, protection instead of wanton violence, and glory instead of ignominy. The prince had to constantly strive against these negative forces in order to bring about positive outcomes. He was stuck between these oppositions and the perfect prince would be able to successfully navigate the treacherous road himself and lead his people safely along it as well. The perfect prince, however, is very difficult to find.

The plays from the seventeenth-century Spanish dominions all necessarily have some mythological underpinnings, meaning that they all come from some ontology or worldview as not having a worldview is impossible. These plays invite the audience to participate in the mythology or ideology that they present. The popularity of the comedia and its collective nature show that this worldview was not a completely foreign ideology which was being forcibly imposed upon an unsuspecting audience by a tyrannical group of playwrights. Instead, the plays demonstrate the perhaps unconscious attempts to mediate the contradictions that were found in the prevailing ontology of the time.

This Dissertation: Chapters and Dramas

This study will approach the analysis of the image of the prince thematically based on several princely characteristics. Although these characteristics may not be exclusive to monarchs, they are vital to them. Each chapter will begin with an introduction of the virtue explaining its conception in the Golden Age of Spain. Although some characteristics are well studied, others have not been examined as thoroughly by modern scholars. In order to practically demonstrate the presence of each quality in the
Comedia in general, the chapters will continue with several examples from various playwrights. Furthermore, the theories of Early Modern scholars are included in the form of the political treatises of the arbitristas. Having firmly established each of these princely virtues in the comedia and the theories of seventeenth-century Spain, the chapters will proceed with the actual analysis of the six plays which are the focus of this dissertation.

The first chapter explores a prince’s honor. In the comedia, this quality should motivate all his actions and decisions. As Castro says, a character should protect and

42 These examples and other plays that are quoted or referred to throughout this dissertation were chosen to try to provide a variety of plays and authors which demonstrate the characteristics that are discussed. Two plays that are repeatedly used in combination as one of the examples is El príncipe perfecto parts I and II by Lope de Vega because in these plays Lope includes a great range of qualities and tries to be as thorough as possible. The other comedias that are used as examples come from a variety of authors and decades of the seventeenth century. They are varied in their subject matter as well ranging from historical to mythological to foreign to fictitious.

43 Throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, these arbitristas, political theorists who published a wide range of works, had to deal with the theme of Machiavelli’s theories laid out in The Prince. Some harshly criticize some of his ideas, but others are more accepting of them (Maravall, “Maquiavelo”). The most offensive portions of his theories to most of the Spanish arbitristas would have been statements which attack religion. Chapter 18 in particular contains statements such as “those princes who have done great things have held good faith of little account, and have known how to circumvent the intellect of men by craft, and in the end have overcome those who have relied on their word” (68). Regardless of their position in regards to Machiavelli, many scholars have found a relationship between the comedia and these political theorists of the day. As Carreño-Rodríguez says, the comedia is in dialogue “con otros géneros (tratados políticos, emblemática, poesía tradicional, etc.), reflexionando sobre la personalidad del príncipe ideal y sobre el arte de gobernar” (1). He also relates the political empresas to the comedia (42, 199). Speaking of Lope, McKendrick says, “the ambivalence detectable in his depiction of kingship closely resembles, interestingly enough, the grave, if diplomatically expressed, unease of political theorists such as Rivadeneyra and Mariana” (34). Finally, Monod states, “The values of the arbitristas percolated to wider audiences through the stage” (131). The primary arbitristas referred to in this dissertation are Juan de Mariana, Pedro de Rivadeneyra, Juan Pablo Martir Rizo, Diego de Saavedra Fajardo, Francisco de Quevedo Villegas, Baltasar Gracián y Morales, and Andrés Mendo.
defend it as he would his own life. In fact, it is “la razón de la existencia humana”
(“Algunas observaciones” 19). The comedia also used the concept of honor as a type of
“superstructure” into which the playwrights could fill in all kinds of different variables to
adjust the plot, heighten the dramatic tension by disturbing the balance of power, and to
create the dramatic tension to keep the audiences’ interest (Kidd 64-6744). Many scholars
have examined the presence of honor and honra in the comedia, and some have shown its
direct relationship with the king. The ruler, as the source of honor for all of his subjects,
should keep his own pure. In the comedia and in the arbitristas, the ideal prince will keep
his honor unblemished and be able to distribute it to his subjects. Although at times the
mythological princes of the plays in which Theseus appears do not conform to this
principle, it is still what they strive for.

The second chapter looks at a prince’s prudence. Whereas his honor motivates
him to act, his prudence should help him develop a plan and put into practice these
actions. In order to make wise choices and successfully carry out his intentions, the ideal
prince will be guided by discretion. There have been some studies on prudence in specific
plays such as La vida es sueño by Calderón where a prince begins by lacking prudence
but develops it during the play. The comedia and arbitristas indicate that the perfect
prince will follow the mandates of prudence, and the plays in which Theseus appears also
confirm this notion while demonstrating that even the great and heroic mythological
princes at times acted imprudently.

44 In addition to his book on Lope’s and Calderón’s plays about Theseus, Kidd also wrote
an article called “The Performance of Desire: Acting and Being in Lope de Vega’s El
laberinto de Creta” which focuses only on Lope’s version but contains similar
information. All citations of Kidd come from his book unless otherwise indicated.
The third chapter examines a prince’s valor. A prince may very well be motivated to act and know what course of action he should take, but only if he has sufficient valor will he carry out his designs. This characteristic has also been studied infrequently by modern scholarship, although its role is sometimes noted in studies of various plays. As the *comedia* and the *arbitristas* indicate, fortitude can be made manifest in a variety of ways, and the flawless king will possess all aspects of this virtue. In the plays in which Theseus appears, these great heroes of antiquity frequently, though not always, demonstrate immense courage as they undertake their daring exploits that have established their fame through the centuries.

The final chapter considers the self-control of the prince. Without this characteristic, a monarch would not be able to carry out his exploits. The model prince should not let his passions or other people rule him and he should also keep all of his virtues in balance. In hylomorphic terms, this is the principle of unity which Aristotle finds to be “the primary cause of its being” (1041 b25). By maintaining the proper balance of all the other characteristics and uniting them together, a prince can in actuality reach his essence. By keeping them in consort and by ruling himself, he will be better able to rule others. Several studies of different plays have noted the importance of a prince’s emotions, though the working together of the other princely virtues has not been examined in detail. The *comedia* and the *arbitristas* both indicate the importance placed on this quality in Early Modern times, and the plays in which Theseus appears also prove its importance. Positive results are achieved when the princes maintain control, but things can become complicated very quickly when a prince fails to rule himself.
These characteristics of a prince as well as Greco-roman mythology can be seen in the humanists of the time. Torres states, “Humanism of course is another complex label, but more easily assimilated when considered as an activity rather than as an abstract concept. It involved primarily the rediscovery and study of ancient Greek and Roman texts, their restoration and integration and the assimilation of the ideas and values that they contained” (9). According to Iglesias and Álvarez, the secularization of cultural patrimony permitted men of letters, or humanists, to participate in the growth of the knowledge of literature and the ancients. This led to the production of the manuals of mythology which provided an easy resource for artists and authors to use to inform their projects (84, 98). Because of the work of the humanists, the stories and important characteristics of Antiquity filtered through to the general populace. The filters that they passed through include such things as the moralization and allegorization of the myths as the original stories did not fully conform to the ideology of the time. In spite of the disparities that arose over the centuries, distance, and cultures, Antiquity was still held in high regard.

As can be seen, these characteristics have existed for millennia and have a long history of development and change. Kidd, for example, notes that the mythological comedias took source material that did not match up with the worldview of the day and tried to adjust it to make it better fit with early modern Spanish ideals. One primary cause of “this tension between national imperatives and ancient traditions” (64) was the Spanish

45 Similar to how Circe was able to enchant Odysseus, according to Sánchez Aguilar the myths of the ancients became an enchantment to all of Europe during the Renaissance as it became very fashionable to include reference to it or have it be the principle subject matter of whatever was being produced (21).
honor code, but the Greco-Roman sources were resistant to being put into that mold (92). Kidd notes that these two separate ideologies, that of the ancients and that of the early modern Spaniards, provoked the playwrights to try to deal with these incompatibilities in different ways. The classical heroes were not bound by the Spanish honor code, but when they appear in the comedia, they follow it (94, 112).

Although the classical heroes did not adhere to the Spanish conception of honor, a different type of honor was important to them. The antecedents of Golden Age Spanish honor actually go as far back as Homer: “Los orígenes de la noción que identificaremos con el ‘honor’ en la España y la Inglaterra modernas pueden ser rastreados hasta más de ochocientos años antes de nuestra era: concretamente en los siglos IX-VIII a. de C, en los comienzos de la cultura homérica” (López-Peláez 33). López-Peláez explains, Será la sociedad aristocrática presentada por Homero en sus narraciones la que desarrolle el concepto de aretè, tal y como nos indica Werner Jaeger en su obra seminal Paideia (1934), concepto que podemos identificar, de manera algo remota si acaso, con nuestra ‘virtud’. […] De manera general, y siguiendo a Jaeger, aretè es la ‘expresión del más alto ideal caballeresco unido a una conducta cortesana y selecta y el heroísmo guerrero.’ (33) López-Peláez relates the honor of antiquity more to the internal aspects of a person and separates it from reputation and fame whereas the honor of early modern Spain depended

46 “This inherent resistance of myth to complete adaptation reveals the ideological rift underlying so many of the comedias mitológicas” (Kidd 120).
47 Comparing the Greeks to the Persians, Lefkowitz states, “As Herodotus makes clear, by contrasting the attitude of the Greeks towards abductions with that of the barbarians, Greeks, in responding to or avenging a case of rape, are not interested in whether or not the women gave their consent so much as with the question of honor. The Greek attitude toward women is both more strictly moralistic and more protective” (54)
on a person’s reputation and his ability to defend the chastity of women under his protection. Some of the stages which it passed through from Homer to Lope de Vega include Aristotle who added a moral component of public or social virtue (38-39), the influence of the Germanic Visigoths who infused it with a chivalric aspect privileging the noble warriors (60), the Christianization of the idea by Thomas Aquinas (286), and the pressure from non-Christian cultures in the Peninsula during the Middle Ages as noted by Castro (Larson 7-8).

In addition to honor having developed from ancient times, the other princely virtues have as well. López-Peláez notes,

Otro concepto íntimamente relacionado con el origen clásico del honor moderno, y difícilmente separable de la areté, es el de agathós, o más concretamente los conceptos relacionados de kalos kai agathós (o kalos kagathos). En Homero, el agathós significaba comportamiento valeroso e inteligente, adecuado a la función que uno desempeña, de modo que ser agathós era sinónimo de mostrar un comportamiento apropiado al estatus elevado, ser valeroso en el combate y seguir una conducta inteligente y

48 Larson notes that the reputation aspect of honor was much less important in Antiquity during a person’s life: “‘Fame,’ on the other hand, at least as that term was understood by the ancients and by most Europeans up until the Renaissance, is the recognition granted by posterity. It is, in other words, ‘glory,’ and because the person who enjoys it is no longer living, it has nothing to do with the relations between people.” (Larson 4-5)

49 One way to accomplish this Christianization of the ancient myths was euhemerism. According to this theory, the gods and heroes were not supernatural, but instead were regular people. Danae was not impregnated by a golden shower, but rather someone paid a huge sum of money to have her. For more on the euhemeristic tradition, see Sánchez Aguilar (17-19). An example from one of the plays in this dissertation is in the Loa for Amor es más Laberinto. Here it is explained that the Roman god Jano was actually just an ancient ruler; later generations, however, revered and eventually deified and began worshipping him (707).
Thus, the germ of honor was found in the concept of *areté*, and the concept of *agathós* encompassed the ideas of prudence, valor, and appropriately measured conduct. Although the basis for the concepts of honor, prudence, valor, and self-control were present in Antiquity, these concepts evolved over time and when the Golden Age playwrights tried to depict Greco-roman mythology on the Spanish stage, the two ideologies clashed.

As can be seen, the four qualities of honor, prudence, valor, and self-control follow a natural progression each building upon the last. Honor motivates action, prudence determines the correct approach, valor gives the prince the courage to do so, and self-control helps the prince stay on course and fulfill his plan.\(^50\) Although there are many other ways that could be used to organize a study of the prince in the seventeenth century Spanish *comedia*, this thematic approach is used here to analyze the six plays in which the Greek mythological prince and hero Theseus is a protagonist: three by Lope de Vega, *El laberinto de Creta*, *Las mujeres sin hombres*, and *El vellocino de oro*; *Los tres mayores prodigios* by Calderón de la Barca; *El labrinto de Creta* by Juan Bautista Diamante; and *Amor es más laberinto* by Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz and Juan de Guevara.

One difference between this dissertation and other scholarly works which study ancient mythology in the *comedia* or use it to interpret the *comedia* is that frequently these studies—like those of McKendrick, Forcione, and Lauer—seek to advance a

\(^{50}\) One example of this progression comes from *Amor es más laberinto* by Sor Juana and de Guevara and occurs in the third act. Minos is motivated by his honor to defend his country from the Athenians. He prudently consults with Baco on how to best defend the island. The time comes for him to show his valor by protecting his kingdom, but his loses his self-control and is unable to stay the course and successfully fulfill his plan.
subversive interpretation of the *comedia*. A few examples are De Armas’s interpretations of *La estrella de Sevilla* or *Los tres mayores prodigios* (“Mysteries” and *return*), DiPuccio’s analysis of *Amor es más laberinto* (182-201), Fothergill-Payne’s study of *El laberinto de Creta*, and O’Connor, who, when speaking of Calderón’s mythological plays including *Los tres mayores prodigios*, states, “In fact, these plays reveal a demythologizing stance” (*Myth 152*). In her analyses of *Los tres mayores prodigios*, Rose actually begins by interpreting it as a celebration of the monarchy in one article, but she reverses her position in a later article. These studies see the *comedia* as a questioning or a subversion of the prince. In contrast, here Greco-Roman mythology and specifically myths in which Theseus appears are used in an analysis which seeks to demonstrate that the *comedia* defended and glorified the prince.

As referred to previously, after introducing the princely characteristic which is the focus of that chapter and describing its presence in the *comedia* and the *arbitristas*, the analysis will continue by examining the plays in which Theseus appears. The first play in each chapter is *El laberinto de Creta* by Lope. According to Morley and Bruerton, this play was written between “1610-15 (probably 1612-15)” and published in *Parte XVI* of

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51 In this study, Fothergill-Payne uses *El laberinto de Creta* to help interpret *La prueba de los ingenios*. Her analysis on both plays centers on women’s possibly loving women as a result of various disguises and confusion as she tries to show a subversion of a “traditional ‘truth’” (61).

52 An exception to this type of interpretation is Vélez-Sainz’s analysis of *El laurel de Apolo* which does follow a Maravallian interpretation and comments that the only differences between the play and the ancient source only further glorify the princely figures (236).

53 For ancient sources which mention Theseus and more modern sources that Lope may have used, see Martínez Berbel (134-42). The edition used for this dissertation is from the *Biblioteca de Autores Españoles: Obras de Lope de Vega*. 

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his *comedias* in 1621 (211). 54 This play which was written for the *corrales* is based on the oft-shown myth of Theseus and the Minotaur in the Labyrinth, but it includes many other details as well. 56 In this play, Lope seems especially concerned with how these Cretan and Greek heroes are able to maintain their honor when the original sources seem to indicate that the seventeenth-century Spanish conception of honor held no sway over these ancient heroes. 57

The second play in each chapter is *Las mujeres sin hombres* by Lope. 58 Although some place it earlier, according to Morley and Bruerton, this play was written between “1613-18,” and it was published with *El laberinto de Creta* in Parte XVI of his *comedias* in 1621 (223). In this play which was written for the *corrales*, Teseo is joined by the well known heroes Hércules and Jasón as well as other rulers. The Greek heroes go to the Amazonian city of Themiscyra and lay siege to it. If the Greeks are going to truly conquer in this play, however, they must use their prudence instead of their valor and discover how to defeat the Amazons without using their weapons in order to maintain

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54 Sánchez Aguilar dates the play in the spring of 1617 based on a letter Lope wrote. He also notes the successive adaptations of the myth from Ovid, who focused on Scylla, to Bustamante, who gave equal time to Scylla and Theseus, to Lope, who focused on Theseus (103-06).
55 Martínez Berbel affirms, “En definitiva, estamos ante una comedia de corral, en la que al público se le ofrece lo que pide y espera” (203).
56 For more on the Greco-roman origins of this myth, see Hanffmann and Dietrich; Stewart; Kearns, “Ardrogeos;” Arafat, “Theseus;” Rose, Robertson, and Dietrich, “Ariadne;” Catling; Rose, Parke, Robertson, and Dietrich; Spawforth, “Athens;” and Dietrich.
57 In Swansey’s opinion, Teseo is presented in this play as a “rascal” and not as the mythological hero that he is (134).
58 The edition used for this dissertation is from the *Biblioteca de Autores Españoles: Obras de Lope de Vega*. 

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their honor.59 According to McGaha, this is the only one of all eight of Lope’s mythological plays that does not use Ovid as its source (157).60

The third play in each chapter is *El vellocino de oro* by Lope.61 This play has proved somewhat more difficult to date because of Lope’s having written multiple versions of the play. The first three-act *comedia* was probably performed in June, 1614, and was therefore written prior to that (Profeti 20). The extant version of the play has a *loa* and two acts. It was performed for the king and his court in 1622 and was published in his *Parte XIX* in 1624 (49). According to Morley and Bruerton, Lope most likely cut out parts of the 1614 version, added several lines that referred specifically to Felipe IV as the 1622 version was performed in celebration of his birthday, and added a *loa* to the beginning. Morley and Bruerton claim that as this is the only certain instance when Lope used the same title for two plays that are essentially the same, this fact shows that he only made some minor adjustments in the play instead of rewriting it. There are many cases in

59 Another play which involves the Amazons’ from the city of Themiscyra fighting with men but ending up marrying them is Solís’s *De las amazonas*. Amazons also appear in Tirso de Molina’s *Amazonas en las Indias* and Lope’s *Las grandezas de Alejandro* and *Las justas de Tebas y reina de las amazonas* (Cabrero Aramburo). See below for Bautista Diamante’s *El labyrinto de Creta* which also includes Amazons.

60 McGaha continues by saying, “Lope took the outline of the plot from Boccaccio, then filled in the details with a reading of Mexía’s *Silva* and, perhaps, Bustamonte’s translation of Justinus. He changes the name of the Amazon queen to Antiopía and includes the participation of Hercules and Jason—whom Boccaccio had not even mentioned—as secondary figures. He changes the name of Orithya, Antiopía’s sister and rival to Deyanira, the woman whom Hercules ultimately married [as seen in *Los tres mayores prodigios*; see below], according to Ovid. The play’s first scene contains a fleeting reference to the fact that the campaign against the Amazons was one of the labors of Hercules, but Lope never mentions that Hercules was sent to obtain the Amazon queen’s girdle” (161). See also Sánchez Aguilar for more on the sources (87-88).

61 For the ancient sources of this play and the more modern sources that Lope may have used, see Martínez Berbel (278-90). The edition used for this dissertation is the critical edition published by Profeti.
which Lope does use the same plot over again, but in each of these other instances, he also uses a different title (245). Thus, this play existed in one version for the corrales and in another for the court.\textsuperscript{62} Both accounts, however, tell the story of Jason and the Argonauts who sail to Colchis and fulfill their quest for the Golden Fleece with Medea’s help.\textsuperscript{63} In the play, Jasón and Teseo are the focus and the other Argonauts are scarcely mentioned.\textsuperscript{64}

The fourth play in each chapter is \textit{Los tres mayores prodigios} by Calderón.\textsuperscript{65}

Whereas \textit{El vellocino de oro} was rewritten for Felipe IV’s birthday, this Calderonian play was written for the king and his court to celebrate St. John’s night in 1636 (De Armas, \textit{The return} 149). Calderón experimented with aspects such as staging and special effects.

\textsuperscript{62} According to Sánchez Aguilar, “La fiesta de cumpleaños de Felipe IV debía celebrarse en los primeros días de abril de 1622, pero se retrasó más de un mes porque requería arduos preparativos. […] Tras los constantes retrasos, la fiesta comenzó por fin el 15 de mayo” (155). \textit{El vellocino de oro}, however, was not presented until the 16\textsuperscript{th} or 17\textsuperscript{th}, nor did it reach its conclusion. Supposedly, as the play was presented during the late afternoon and into the evening, one of the torches that was helping light the scenery fell over catching everything on fire. Everyone ran away, and the play was not concluded. This supposedly happened while Helena was reciting an amorous sonnet (156-57) that began with “Hiedras que, destos álamos esposas” (v. 1507). As the total number of lines in the play is 2,222, the royal audience would have missed just under the final third of the play. Many scholars, including Sánchez Aguilar, mention the unsubstantiated rumor of the day that linked the conde de Villamediana to the cause of the fire so that he could carry off the queen in his arms as he had fallen in love with her (157).

\textsuperscript{63} See Arafat, “Argonauts;” and Braund.

\textsuperscript{64} Teseo is much less important in this play than in any of the others. For a discussion of his secondary role, see Martínez Berbel (347). Another play in which Jasón is a character is \textit{Los encantos de Medea} by Rojas Zorrilla which tells of how Medea and Jasón’s relationship ended because he is planning on marrying someone else. Tragically, Medea takes revenge by killing the people in Jasón’s family which includes her own two children that were fathered by Jasón.

\textsuperscript{65} The edition used for this dissertation is from his \textit{Obras completas} edited by Valbuena Briones. The \textit{Loa} for this play is not included in this volume, however, so the edition used for that is the one published in the seventeenth century that can be found online at Biblioteca Virtual Miguel de Cervantes.
in this play by using three different stages which came together at the end and three
different troupes performed it (Myth 136).66 This play combines three different myths
into one play by connecting Theseus’s defeat of the Minotaur and Jason’s conquering of
the Golden Fleece to the myth of Hercules’s search for the Centaur Nessus who had taken
his wife Deyanira.67 As is fitting for the night of St. John, this play ends with a huge fire.

The fifth play in each chapter is El labyrinto de Creta by Bautista Diamante.68
According to the title under which it was published in 1667, it was represented before the
king, in this case Carlos II. This play combines the mythological stories of Theseus’s
battle with the Amazons with his fight with the Minotaur. In this version, Teseo returns
from his glorious conquest of the barbaric Amazons accompanied by the Amazonian
queen. They are planning on marrying one another, but Teseo is immediately sent to
Crete to be fed to the Minotaur and Hipolita secretly follows him. This play depicts much

66 The three troupes were Tomás Fernández’s, Pedro de la Rosa’s, and Antonio del
Prado’s (Rose, “arte” 244).
67 For more on the Greco-roman source material of Hercules, see Schachter. English
spellings of mythical characters and places come from the Oxford Classical Dictionary
in which this article is found with the exception of Hercules/Heracles. The Oxford Classical
Dictionary uses the Greek spelling of Heracles, but this dissertation uses the Roman
spelling of Hercules because all of the plays use the Roman spelling. With the exception
of gods such as Bacchus/Dionysius, other names like Theseus and Minos do not
demonstrate such variation. Following the example of scholars such as Kidd, when
referring to a specific character from one of the plays, the Spanish name of that character
will be used. Otherwise, when referring to the Greco-roman mythological hero, the
English name will be used. Place names are also in English. Direct quotes are not
changed. As a example, Kidd comments that “the myth of Theseus” appears in Ovid’s
Metamorphoses (88), but that in Lope’s El laberinto de Creta, “Teseo is the first victim
to arrive in Crete” (91).
68 As no modern edition is available, the edition used for this dissertation is the one
published in 1667. It is available in microfilm or can be found online at Biblioteca Virtual
Miguel de Cervantes.
more magic and enchantments than the others, but with the help of Ariadna and Fedra, Teseo and Hipolita are able to kill the Minotaur.

The final play in each chapter is *Amor es más laberinto* by Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz and Juan de Guevara. Valbuena Briones notes that the authors were using not only the classical sources, but also imitated Calderón or took ideas from his version in several aspects such as the *gracioso* Atún’s name (“Calderón” 86-88). It was written shortly before being staged in early January, 1689, as a celebration of the birthday of the new viceroy of New Spain Gaspar de Silva, conde de Galve. Sor Juana wrote the first and third act while Juan de Guevara wrote the second (Hernández-Araico, “Festejos”). In this retelling of Theseus’s encounter with the Minotaur, the physical Labyrinth takes a back

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69 Some may object to the inclusion of this play by two Mexicans in a dissertation that focuses on Spanish plays, but the works of Sor Juana are often included in compilations or studies of Golden Age works. Laguerre explains, “Al hablar del ciclo teatral español incluimos la producción de Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, ya que, más que mejicana, su obra es española por su ideología y por sus motivos” (183). Additionally, according to Paz, “El teatro de sor Juana fue, casi seguramente, representado en España. No es imposible que también haya sido llevado a la escena en Lima y en otras ciudades de la América española. La difusión de su obra fue extraordinaria: no sólo fue editada y leída en España, sino que tuvo lectores y admiradores fervientes en Perú y en otras partes. […] En 1709 se celebró en Manila, como en todos los dominios de la corona española, el nacimiento del primer hijo de Felipe V. Los festejos, fastuosos y prolongados, duraron nueve días […] después de una semana de toros y bailes se llevó a la escena *Amor es más laberinto*” (441). The edition used for this dissertation is from Sor Juana’s *Obras completas*.

70 Of all the playwrights in this dissertation, de Guevara is probably the least well known. Some (DiPuccio, Francisco Fernández del Castillo) have thought that he is the cousin of Sor Juana, but Paz says that this supposition is not credible. Paz continues, “El presbítero Juan de Guevara nació en México—se ignora la fecha—y murió hacia 1692. En su tiempo fue un poeta conocido y estimado. Exaltado gongorista, fue premiado varias veces en los certámenes poéticos de esos años” (438n).

71 According to Hernández-Araico, this play would have had “una recepción muy exclusiva, de los virreyes y de la nobleza más poderosa en torno a su corte virreinal. El espectáculo mitológico musical se ofrecía como representación simbólica, alusiva de alguna manera a esos receptores patrocinadores” (“Festejos”).

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seat to other metaphorical labyrinths and Teseo even escapes into the physical one in this play.\textsuperscript{72}

As far as this research has revealed, these six plays form the corpus of \textit{comedias} in which the Greek hero Theseus appears as a principal protagonist.\textsuperscript{73} His name is mentioned in passing in many others and he appears in some \textit{autos sacramentales}, but not in other \textit{comedias}.\textsuperscript{74} There are a variety of reasons as to why the playwrights would

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\textsuperscript{72} Hernández-Araico notes that this play is similar to the typical \textit{comedias de capa y espada} but that it has a mythological setting (“Festejos”). DiPuccio comments, “\textit{Amor} is a \textit{comedia de enredo} (play of complication) complete with mistaken identities, masked balls, misinterpreted signs, and confusing messages. True to its title, \textit{Amor} creates emotional, visual, and linguistic enigmas just as challenging and unsettling as the Minotaur’s labyrinth” (182). Both she and Swansey interpret this play in a subversive manner. Swansey, for example, says, “Sor Juana’s contribution to the metamorphosis of the labyrinth fable is to write the epitaph for Theseus, whose glories meet a parodic end” (138).

\textsuperscript{73} According to Morley and Tyler, the only other character named Teseo in all of Lope’s theater is not the Greek hero and only appears on stage in \textit{Los torneos de Aragón} without speaking (193). In this play, his name is mentioned only once by the Duque Arnaldo who is being commanded by the king of France to marry the king’s daughter. Teseo is the final name of a list of five people whom the duque commands to follow him (Lope, \textit{torneos} 4). Other studies mention no other plays. To give just a few examples, when analyzing \textit{El laberinto de Creta} by Lope, Menéndez y Pelayo mentions no other adaptations of the myth of the Labyrinth, and in Swansey’s study of the Labyrinth in the Golden Age, he even leaves out Bautista Diamante’s \textit{comedia} although he does include two \textit{autos sacramentales}. Swansey seems to ignore Bautista Diamante’s purposely as he quotes Menéndez y Pelayo about Sor Juana and de Guevara’s version, a quote which is directly followed by a mention of Bautista Diamante’s (Swansey 136n, Menéndez y Pelayo 210-11). Speaking of adaptations of the story of Theseus and the Labyrinth, Valbuena Briones only mentions the same four as does Menéndez y Pelayo (Calderón 84). Some of the plays with Theseus also have other Greek heroes. As noted above, these other heroes appear in other plays, but Theseus is not a protagonist in them.

\textsuperscript{74} One \textit{auto} in which Theseus appears is \textit{El laberinto de Creta} by Tirso de Molina. According to Swansey, “Tirso is not interested in representing the original love story of Ariadne and Theseus. Instead, he chooses to bring love to fruition as that of Christ towards mankind. In \textit{El laberinto}, therefore, Theseus has come to save Ariadne, who symbolizes humanity. […] Theseus/Christ saves Ariadne/Humanity through the thread that symbolizes the participation of mankind in redemption” (130). Towards the end of the auto, Teseo explains that his name is related to Theseo which comes from the Greek
choose Greco-roman mythology in general as their subject matter and Theseus more specifically. First, heroes such as Hercules, Jason, and Theseus were held in high regard in Golden Age Spain. They were revered and respected as models to follow.

Secondly, even though the authors of antiquity depict these heroes “in an ambiguous fashion” (Kidd 93), as do the writers of the seventeenth century, these heroes loomed large in the minds of Golden Age Spaniards. As Tanner demonstrates in The last descendant of Aeneas, during the Renaissance and Baroque time periods, particularly in Hapsburg Spain, it was important to be connected to mythological heroes. One connection was that the kings of Spain were the sovereigns of the Order of the Golden Fleece. Thirdly, as will become clearer in the chapter on the prudent prince, the people

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*theos* which means God (1314). A second *auto* is Calderón’s *El laberinto del mundo* of which Swansey says, “Every labyrinth demands interpretation, an in the case of *El laberinto del mundo* (1636) as metaphor for uncontrolled passions. […] In *El laberinto del mundo*, Calderón underlines the conception of life as a trap” (131). Although Swansey gives the year 1636, Valbuena gives 1677 for this play in which Theos, not Teseo, is the name of the character. Similarly to how Teseo appears in *El vellocino de oro* by Lope, he, Orfeo, and Hércules are included at Jasón’s side in Calderón’s *auto El divino Jasón* which is based on the story of the Golden Fleece. Lope, however, does not include Orfeo or Hércules. Finally, there are a couple plays outside the temporal scope of this project. Colburn mentions that there is an eighteenth-century translation of Racine’s *Phèdre* which tells the tragedy of Theseus, Phaedra, and Hippolytus (156), and Soons studies the two-part opera with 12 scenes entitled *O labirinto de Creta* written in 1736 by António José da Silva, o Judeu (4). Also, the book Óperas y zarzuelas del siglo XVIII contains, among others, *Las hazañas de Teseo y Servir por merecer* and *Laberinto de la razón de amor* (Catálogo 379-80).

75 Speaking of the use of mythology in *Amazonas en las Indias* by Tirso, Pérez-Pisonero states, “La confluencia de mitología e historia, además de añadir grandiosidad épica a la hazaña histórica de Gonzalo […]” (166).

76 Torres notes that the classical past provided a “bedrock” of authority or a sense of legitimacy to many areas such as literary models. One example that she gives is Garcilaso’s third eclogue (9-12).

77 Torres mentions this same idea saying, “The imperial ambitions of the Catholic monarchs Ferdinand and Isabella, and their heir Charles I, were promoted through acceptance in Spain of a dubious genealogical history that connected Spanish royalty to
of Spain could conceive of themselves as being in a similar position to that of the people of Greece. Fifth-century Greeks used the mythology of the civilized Theseus against the barbaric Amazons or Centaurs to symbolize their civilized victory over other barbaric cultures, particularly the Persians. Similarly, the Spaniards could connect their civilizing efforts to this mythological story as well. Thus, the importance of these mythological heroes and their perceived similarity to the contemporary Spanish predicament are some reasons as to why these playwrights would choose to write about Greco-roman myths.

To conclude these introductory remarks, there are several reasons for which these six particular plays were chosen for this dissertation. First, the fact that they all have Theseus provides unity to this project. Secondly, Theseus was a great mythological ruler and warrior. Although in some respects Hercules may be considered greater, he was more of a warrior against barbarity as opposed to Theseus who did more establishing and upholding of civilization, especially in the city-state of Athens. Thus, Theseus is a more...

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the Trojan empire and to Hercules” (8). Iglesias and Álvarez note that several powerful families throughout the Renaissance considered some of the Greco-roman heroes as the “auctores gentis” (84).

78 In fact, Robert Tate “considers Hercules to be the most important of these myths, since this hero is said to have saved Spain from the tyranny of Geryon and is thus taken as the founder of Spanish monarchy. It is well known that Charles V picked as an emblem of his empire the columns of Hercules” (de Armas, return 161). See also Rose, “arte” (245-46).

79 duBois writes, “Herakles, who in archaic art is often shown clothed in the lion’s skin, his head emerging from the beast’s mouth, had affinities with the monsters he encountered. His violent history served as a model of colonization, mythically recounting his adventures as he moved from the western to the eastern boundaries of the world, exterminating creatures who stood in the way of the civilizing presence of the Greeks. He was the cleanser, the hero who could not really be tolerated within the city because of his bestiality, his crudity, his violence. Theseus, on the other hand, was a man of the polis, a beautiful, graceful youth. Martin Nilsson remarks that he was ‘the Athenian youth educated in the palaestra…’; while Herakles killed ferocious beasts, Theseus conquered highwaymen and robbers, ‘enemies of a peaceful and civilized life.’ […] Theseus, hero of
appropriate model for rulers than other mythological heroes. Thirdly, these plays are very “prince dense” meaning that many princes enter into the action of each one. Since these dramas have a large number of princes in them, they provide a larger sample of princes to observe. Also, as these princes are on different and at times opposing sides, they can be contrasted to one another. Fourthly, in these plays and the myths which inspired them, Theseus is contrasted to Minos who tyrannically tries to feed people to a monster and is also contrasted to the barbaric Amazons. Fifthly, the princes in these plays are active as opposed to static. In many comedias, the king will only act as a deus ex machina to solve the problems that others have. In these plays, on the other hand, the princes make up the important characters and are intricately involved in the issues that arise. Sixthly, there has not been a monograph that included all of the Golden Age comedias that tell of the mythological stories of Theseus as this one does. A few studies mention several of them, such as a short essay by Menéndez y Pelayo on Lope’s El laberinto de Creta which briefly speaks of the other three plays that tell the same story (i.e. El labyrinto de Creta by Bautista Diamante, the second act of Los tres mayores prodigios by Calderón, and Amor es más laberinto by Sor Juana and de Guevara) and Soons’s article which mentions Calderón’s, Bautista Diamante’s, Sor Juana and de Guevara’s, and O Judeu’s (this final one from the eighteenth century). Seventhly, these plays were written for different the polis rather than of the colony” (57-9). O’Connor also mentions that Hercules has a dual nature: part greatest hero of Greece, part brutish disposition (Myth 144). Theseus, on the other hand, was known for his “dotes de legislador” (Martínez Berbel 129).

80 This lack of research is perhaps partially because Menéndez y Pelayo is critical of all of these plays and has an extremely negative view of some of them. Of Lope’s he says, “Es obra bien escrita, y, sin duda, por eso la contó Lope entre las cinco predilectas suyas; pero en conjunto me parece inferior, no sólo al Adonis, sino al Jasón, que veremos luego, y al Perseo” (208). Of Calderón’s he says, “No ha de buscarse en este capricho
audiences. Some were written for the corrales, some for the court, and one for both.

When considering the role of the comedia in society as a defender of the monarchy, it is important to note similarities and differences between the plays given their audiences.

Finally, the use of plays which retell Greco-Roman myths underlines the importance of the new mythology that the playwrights were infusing into their dramas. Just as the fifth-century Athenians were retelling myths to give them new meanings, so also were the seventeenth-century Spaniards. For these reasons, while including other dramas, the writings of arbitristas, and other works of the Golden Age, this dissertation concentrates on these six plays in its attempt to shed light on the image of the prince in the comedia using the theories of hylomorphism and mythology.

dramático, compuesto de acciones inconexas, entre las cuales no existe más que un lazo artificial, otra cosa que lo que el autor quiso poner, es decir, sonoros versos y mucho lujo de decoraciones y pompas teatrales. [...] el desarrollo es tan superficial, que Schmidt llega a compararle con las piezas de los teatros de muñecos” (210). Of Sor Juana and de Guevara’s and of Diamante’s he says that the former is a “pieza muy endeble, no sólo por culpa del argumento mitológico, sino por vicio de culteranismo, por mala contextura dramática y, sobre todo, por estar afeada con un infelícísimo acto segundo, que no es de la monja, sino de su colaborador, el licenciado D. Juan de Guevara. En el primer acto, que es lo menos malo de la comedia, pueden elogiarse algunos toques valientes y calderonianos, así en el relato de Teseo como en el discurso del Embajador de Atenas. Todavía está escrita con peor gusto que la pieza de sor Juana, El labyrinto de Creta, fiesta de la zarzuela representada a Su Majestad (Carlos II), por D. Juan Bautista Diamante, inserta en la Parte décimaséptima de Comedias varias nunca impresas, compuestas por los mejores ingenios de España” (210-211). With these types of reviews, it is perhaps not surprising that there has been so little study of these plays. Some have been partially revindicated such as Amor es más laberinto when Laguerre claims, “Efectivamente, la comedia es divertida, suelta, ágil y graciosa, sobre todo cuando interviene Atún, y los versos son artisticos; pero, repetimos, no es ahí donde, según nuestro parecer, radica su valor; es en la reflexión, en el planteamiento de este problema de conciencia” (189). Even so, many critics have still censured the second act of this play that was written by de Guevara until Paz affirmed that it was not inferior to the other two (Valbuena Briones “Calderón” 86, Paz 438). It is hoped that this dissertation will be able to show some of the greatness and value of these plays that have been ignored for so long. They are not the incomprehensible puppet shows that Menéndez y Pelayo makes them out to be.

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Chapter Two

The Honorable Prince

Introduction and Background

Of the four characteristics of the prince that are the focus of this dissertation—honor, prudence, valor, and self-control—the one that provides much of the motivation for the actions of many characters is their honor. In the *comedia*, a life without honor is meaningless, and a character who has lost it would consider death (Castro, “observaciones” 23). The writers of the *comedias* all followed a similar ideology in which a character’s honor was one of his most valuable possessions. Honor is not a characteristic limited to the prince, and some critics have seen it as a tool that could be used to bring the lower classes into the system so that they would continue to support the king. Even though a *villano* may or may not take his honor into consideration, a prince is supposed to have honor and be able to distribute it to his subjects. Not all of the princes in these plays, however, are perfect beacons of honor and a blow to the *fama* of a prince is a serious wound indeed which he must address; nevertheless, although the leader may not have the full form of a prince, the plays still uphold these rulers as they defend their honor and thereby defend the entire society and the foundation of the kingdom.

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1 Castro would say that it is “sin duda el bien más alto” (“observaciones” 23) and calls it “fundamentalísimo” (50).
2 Maravall, for example, says “*El y yo* [Díez Borque y Maravall] estamos completamente de acuerdo en hacer depender la amplia campaña propagandística a que se entrega la comedia, de un objetivo socio-político muy específico: la captación de voluntades en amplias masas de individuos a favor del sistema” (Un enfoque 521)
Many experts have noted, examined, and commented on the vast role of *honor*, *honra*, and the many other related concepts in the *Comedia* of the Spanish Golden Age.³ These ideas are the motivating force behind the actions of the characters guiding them to follow certain courses and leading them down very specific paths. In an effort to clarify the terms used and the way in which they are employed in this chapter, it is necessary to lay out a few definitions and explanations of these ever-present concepts of not only the *Comedia* but of the epoch.⁴

First, the characters in the dramas written by a variety of authors make a clear distinction between what has actually happened and what other people think about a character. Although sometimes the terminology may be confusing, the difference between reality and appearances is fundamental in distinguishing between what Castro, in his *De la edad conflictiva*, calls *honor* and *honra*.⁵ *Honor* according to Castro is an objective “dimensión de vida, individualmente singularizada” (54). It is the reality of the situation. *Honra*, on the other hand, Castro defines as the “reflejo de la opinión” (21) and

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³ Some of these literary critics include Menéndez y Pelayo, Américo Castro, Maravall, Díez Borque, Coenen, Larson, and Ziomek.
⁴ Murillo Ferrol, for example, says, “Mas, sea cualquiera la valoración que nos merezca, semejante idea del honor fué un ingrediente efectivo en la mentalidad de la época, a juzgar por su unánime aceptación en el teatro y fuera de él” (310).
⁵ Although Castro makes this distinction, not everyone does. Some even demonstrate the interchangeability of the terms. For a study about the lack of distinction between *honor* and *honra*, see Poesse who says: “no se puede negar que hay dos conceptos generales, el honor innato y el honor conferido, con todas sus variaciones, ramificaciones y distinciones sútiles, pero sí hay duda de que ‘honor’ no tenga más que la primera acepción (‘honor innato’) y ‘honra’, la segunda (‘honor conferido’)” (296), and also “Los poetas no distinguen en ningún grado perceptible entre ‘honor’ y ‘honra’ con respecto al concepto ‘honor’-‘honra’” (303). Covarrubias says, “HONOR. Vale lo mismo que honra” (1067) and “HONRA. Responde al nombre latino honor; vale reverencia, cortesía que se hace a la virtud, a la potestad, algunas veces se hace al dinero” (1068).
“la trascendencia social de la ‘opinión’, el monstruo anónimo e invisible” (24).6 These two ideas are intimately connected as many times if someone’s honor is compromised, others will discover this lack and will subsequently have a lower opinion of that character which destroys his honra. A character’s honra, however, can easily suffer without an actual affront to his honor. Castro recognizes this intimate relationship and calls honra “la vivencia del honor” (48). He also makes it clear that honra is the motivating force for characters as it is honra that “es destacada en ciertos casos decisivos como la razón activa de existir el personaje” (48).7

The plays of the Golden Age offer ample examples which substantiate this conception demonstrating the view of honor in general as having two sides: honor and honra. First, in El castigo sin venganza by Lope de Vega, for example, el duque de Ferrara has lost his honor because his wife has been unfaithful to him by having relations with her stepson. This situation, however, has not become public knowledge yet, and the duque, therefore, tries to keep the information secret so that he will not lose his honra: “siendo enterrar la deshonra / como no haberla tenido” (vv. 2753-54). If no one knows that he has lost his honor, then his honra—or his reputación, fama, or opinión—can remain intact. Secondly, in La vida es sueño by Calderón, Clotaldo has lost his honor because his daughter Rosaura, whom he thinks is his son, “vengarse / viene de un agravio” (vv. 440-41). Clotaldo even questions whether or not it could be his descendent and possess his noble blood. Having lost his honor, Clotaldo tries to keep his reputation, 

6 In his “Entremés del Retablo de las maravillas,” Cervantes would call this monster “la negra honrilla” (229). Also, in Lazarillo de Tormes, people are said to “padecen, por la negra que llaman honra” (180).
7 See also Kidd who discusses this honor/honra concept as well as the similar idea of honor vertical (inner worth) and honor horizontal (public reputation) (Stages 64-68).
or his *honra*, safe by first hiding the fact that Rosaura has been dishonored and later by not revealing that she is his daughter until he sees that she will recover her *honor* by marrying the man who made her lose it, Astolfo. Not until the play is closing does Clotaldo declare, “Que yo hasta verla / casada, noble y honradamente, / no la quise descubrir” (vv. 3268-70). By this means, Clotaldo is able to hide his lack of *honor* and keep his *honra* intact. Thirdly, in *Primero es la honra* by Agustín Moreto, although Porcia is to be married to Federico, the king of Sicily is ignoring his own wife and has fallen hopelessly in love with Porcia. He sends her father the almirante and Federico to Messina to defend his kingdom from the Neapolitans, and while they are away is able to enter Porcia’s house. Demonstrating the difference between what is and what others think, Porcia begs the king,

> Pierda mi honor mi desdicha,
> y mi opinión no se pierda,
> porque al triunfar de mi honra,
> que mis criados lo sepan,
> no puede ser circunstancia
> que dé á su gusto más fuerza. (41)

She shows here that although she may lose her *honor*, it is possible for her to keep her *opinión* and *honra*. Although the words may have been somewhat loosely used during the time period, these examples demonstrate a clear difference between what actually is—which Castro calls *honor*—and what the opinion, fame, or reputation others hold of that

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8 Clotaldo says, “mas si el rey, / en sus rigores constante, / le da muerte, morirá / sin saber que soy su padre” (vv. 465-68).
person—which is what Castro refers to as *honra*. When a distinction must be made here, Castro’s use of the words is followed.

Second, having distinguished between these two sides of the general concept of a person’s honor, it is now necessary to differentiate among the different aspects of *honor* and the ways in which they can come into conflict with each other. One of the clearest examples of the different aspects of a character’s honor occurs in Tirso de Molina’s *Amazonas en las Indias*. At the beginning of the third act of this play, Gonzalo Pizarro has retired to his private residence and removed himself from the battles in Peru. He is enjoying his peaceful solitude when Trigueros, having escaped from the Amazons, shows up and tells him that the new viceroy Blasco Núñez Vela wants to kill him. Despite this threat, Gonzalo asks why the viceroy would want to do this and says that he will not leave his blessed life to fight as long as he does not lose three things:

¿Por qué, si no le he ofendido?

Ni de la vida dichosa

que ha feriado a mi sosiego

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9 A couple examples of the imprecision of these terms in the *Comedia* include *La Estrella de Sevilla* and *Las mocedades del Cid*. In the former, Busto speaks of his fame and the opinion others have of him and uses the word *honor*: “y puesta / en buena opinión su fama, / está a pique de perderla; / que el honor es cristal puro, / que con un soplo se quiebra” (vv. 740-44). In the second play, the characters use the word *honor* extremely frequently, *opinión* a fair amount, and *honra* only a couple times. These words, however, are used to refer to the same events. For example, the Conde Lozano, also called the Conde de Orgaz, slaps Diego Laínez, el Cid’s father. In response, Diego says, “pués que yo sin honra quedo, / y él lleva, altivo y gallardo, / añadido al que tenía / el honor que me ha quitado” (vv. 256-59). When Diego arrives at his house afterwards, he says, “no tengo honor,” (v. 336) but el Cid thinks, “De honra son estos enojos” (v. 339). Finally, Ximena in an aside says, “Bolveré por mi opinión… / Ya sé el cómo. ¡Estoy mortal! / ¡Ay, honor, quénto me cuestas!” (vv. 2055-57). These examples demonstrate the fluidity of these terms, but not the concepts, in the *Comedia*.
esta alegre soledad
en su dulce amenidad
podrá el apetito ciego
(que ambición el cuerdo llama)
sacarme gozoso en ella
no obligándome a perdella
mi ley, mi rey y mi fama. (vv. 2180-89)

The three aspects of his honor which he would have to defend are his ley, which is his religious faith, his rey, or his king and the king’s interests, and his fama, which he uses to refer to his need to defend his possessions and family (Castillo Indios).10

Although Gonzalo feels secure and unthreatened with regards to his faith, king, and familial holdings, he soon learns that not even one of the three is secure. Some of his fellow soldiers, the capitán Almendras and general Caravajal, come to Gonzalo’s retreat and attempt to arouse him to take up arms. Repeating these three aspects of honor, Gonzalo tells them,

Tres cosas solas podrían
forzarme a olvidar la quieta
felicidad destos campos
donde mi paz se conserva,
que son: el celo debido
a la ley que en esta tierra

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10 Pérez-Pisonero also mentions the confluence of these three aspects earlier in the play when Gonzalo refuses to marry the Amazon Menalipe: “el discurso del ‘deber ser’ y, junto con él, el arquetipo del caballero cristiano: fe, lealtad al rey y fama personal” (166).
(por nosotros dilatada)
a un Dios eterno confiesa,
el defender con la vida
a mi rey hasta perderla,
y el no permitir desdoros
que mi honor y fama ofendan. (vv. 2328-39)

In this argument, Gonzalo again reinforces the three important areas of faith, or religious zeal, the defense of his king, and affronts to his honor, referring to his family and possessions.

Caravajal, however, responds with three decisive reasons encompassing these three aspects of Gonzalo’s honor. Caravajal first explains that the new viceroy Blasco Núñez is enforcing new laws which will keep the Indians from learning of Christ. The Indians still seek their “guacas,”11 and taking them out of the encomiendas would destroy faith in Jesus Christ. He then describes the way in which the viceroy is wasting vast amounts of the royal treasury and defrauding the king of his money. Finally, the general tells Gonzalo that Blasco Núñez has imprisoned Gonzalo’s innocent fiancée Francisca Pizarro aboard a ship which seriously jeopardizes the integrity of his possessions and family by leaving her “expuesta / entre marineros libres” (vv. 2425-26). Gonzalo, realizing that his honor is being attacked on all three fronts, responds, “¿Yo sin honra, mi Francisca / ocasionada a la afrenta? / ¿La ley de Dios profanada, / a riesgo del rey la

11 According to the Real Academia Española, “guaca” comes from the Quechua word waca and means “dios de la casa.” As seen in the play, there are multiple guacas.
hacienda?” (vv. 2456-59), takes leave of his peaceful life and land, and goes to battle to save all three parts of his honor: his *ley, rey*, and *fama*.

In a similar expression of all three aspects of honor, Calderón’s motto was “Por mi Dios, por mi Rey y por mi Dama” (Martel, Alpern, and Mades 607), and the level of importance in a character’s life seems to follow that order. In Rojas Zorrilla’s *Del rey abajo, ninguno*, for example, García thinks the king has dishonored him and at first struggles with what he must do. In an aside he says,

(El Rey es, ¡válgame el Cielo!,
y que le conozco sabe.
Honor y lealtad, ¿qué haremos?
¡Qué contradicción implica
la lealtad con el remedio!) (vv. 1529-23)

The two aspects of his honor that are combating each other are his “Honor y lealtad,” or his family and his loyalty to the king. García concludes that his personal honor and reputation are less important than his king and he is therefore unable to avenge himself. His only option is to surrender the affront to an even higher power, God: “que de vuestros desaciertos / no puedo tomar venganza, / sino remitirla al Cielo” (vv. 1561-63).

This conflict between a character’s familial honor and loyalty to his king occurs in a wide variety of plays from the epoch, and in general, the character’s loyalty to his king is the more powerful.12 The third aspect of a person’s honor, his faith in God,

12 According to Castillo and Eggington, “The impossibility of a sustained conflict between king and honor in the Baroque theater is a central theme in a number of works. To the extent that the theme is introduced within a given play’s plot, it serves as a shock
although the highest power, does not generally play an important part in the dramas as the playwrights do not cause it to enter into combat with the other aspects of honor. One exception to this rule occurs in *El burlador de Sevilla*. In this play, don Juan has been seducing women and dishonoring men since before the play began.\(^\text{13}\) He is not killed because he has dishonored these men and women, however. He is killed because he does not fulfill his oath that he made in God’s name and therefore challenges God’s authority:

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Aminta       Jura a Dios que te maldiga
            Si no la cumplies.

D. Juan      Si acaso
            La palabra y la fe mia
            Te faltare, ruego a Dios
            Que a traicion y alevosia
            Me de muerte un hombre… (muerto:
            Que, vivo, ¡Dios no permita!) (vv. 2073-79)
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Only after and because of this direct affront to God, is don Juan punished and killed by being dragged down into a tomb and to his death without having confessed. Despite this exception where a conflict arises in regards to a person’s faith, this aspect of honor does not cause much dramatic intrigue. The other two aspects of honor—honor of the family

\(^\text{13}\) When don Juan’s uncle don Pedro discovers him in the palace in Naples at the beginning of the play, he indicates that don Juan had seduced at least one noble woman before by asking him, “Di, vil, ¿no bastó emprender, / Con ira y con fuerza estraña, / Tan gran traicion en España / Con otra noble mujer, / Sino en Nápoles tambien [sic], / Y en el Palacio real, / Con mujer tan principal? (vv. 77-83)
and loyalty to the king—do conflict with each other, and although the characters have intense internal battles, loyalty to the king generally takes precedence.

One vital reason for a character to remain loyal to the king before avenging an affront on the honor of his family was that the king was the source of honor for his subjects. Among the many examples in the comedia which emphasize this concept of the fountain of honor is the anonymous *La Estrella de Sevilla*. Busto declares, “es el rey el que da honor” (v. 1046). Segismundo repeats this idea in Calderón’s *La vida es sueño* reasoning, “más a un príncipe le toca / el dar honor, que quitarle” (vv. 2983-84). Finally, *Las mocedades del Cid* reiterates this idea in a couple different parts. El Cid tells his brothers, “el Rey que me honra a mí, / honra tiene para todos” (320-21) and later describes the idea when he returns victorious from his battle with don Martín Gonçáles, the giant from Aragon, and tells the king,

\[
\text{Honra, valor, fuerça y vida,} \\
\text{todo es tuyo, gran Fernando,} \\
\text{pues siempre de la cabeza} \\
\text{baxa el vigor a la mano. (vv. 1795-98)}
\]

Therefore, a conflict of honor involving loyalty to a ruler and the reputation of one of his subjects creates one of the most difficult dilemmas in the comedia because if the king as the head is dishonored, it affects all of his subjects as members of the body.

\[14\] See Castro, “observaciones” 30-34. He says, for example, “la facultad real de conceder nobleza y autoridad convierte al rey en creador de hombres honrados. Este carácter especial del rey, de fuente suprema de honor y del más hon[ó]rable de los hombres, se encuentra en la base del sistema social sobre el que se funda la concepción de la honra” (31).
In order to demonstrate more completely the ways in which the different aspects of honor—personal honor, loyalty to the king, and faith in God—motivate people of the comedia, four plays—*El príncipe constante*, *El príncipe perfecto*, *La Estrella de Sevilla*, and *Primero es la honra*—will serve as examples. First, *El príncipe constante* by Calderón exhibits the clashing of loyalty to the king and faith in God as well as the battle between personal honor and loyalty to the king. At the beginning of this play, the infantes Fernando and Enrique disembark in Fez on a military expedition. Fernando captures Muley, the general of Fez, but later the Portuguese are surrounded by the rest of the army of Fez in addition to the army of Marruecos, or Morocco. Fernando is taken captive and the price of his redemption is to be the city of Ceuta. Fernando, however, being constant in his faith, does not allow the Christian city of Ceuta to be handed back over to the Moors and prefers to remain a slave and eventually die. The king of Fez attempts to use the loyalty that all subjects owe their king and that slaves owe their master in order to get Fernando to give him the city. Fernando, however, refuses to do so because “En lo justo / dice el cielo que obedezca” (vv. 1459-60). In this instance, Fernando puts his religious faith before his obedience to his ruler.

The argument may come up that since the king of Fez is a Moor, Fernando would not care at all about loyalty to that king. This line of thinking, however, is contradicted by

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15 The king says, “Y para que el rescate / con más puntualidad al rey se trate, / vuelve tú, que Fernando / en mi poder se quedará aguardando / que vengas a libralle. / Pero dile a Duarte, que en llevalle / será su intento vano, / si a Ceuta no me entrega por su mano” (vv. 935-42).

16 The portuguese prince declares, “Porque decir: Dése a Ceuta, / es decir: Hasta eso haced / prodigiosas diligencias. / Que un Rey católico y justo, / ¿cómo fuera, cómo fuera / posible entregar a un moro / una ciudad que le cuesta / su sangre, pues fue el primero / que con sola una rodela / y una espada enarboló / las quinas en sus almenas? (vv. 1284-94)
everything else that Fernando does to serve his new king—kissing his feet (v. 1436) and taking care of the king’s horses (v. 1477), for example—and both by the advice he gives to Muley and the actions he will take to support this general of Fez. As Fernando had freed Muley before the Portuguese were surrounded by two armies, Muley is bound by his honor to help his friend and plans on freeing Fernando and the other Christians in Fez (vv. 1720-69). The king sees them talking, and in order to make sure that Muley continues serving him, he puts his general personally in charge of guarding Fernando.17 Muley struggles with whether or not to remain loyal to his king or to follow the demands of his honor and help his friend to whom he owes his life: “el amistad y el honor / hoy en batalla se ven” (vv. 1834-35). Fernando, however, does not struggle with the decision at all:

Muley, amor y amistad. [sic]

en grado inferior se ven
con la lealtad y el honor.

Nadie iguala con el Rey,
él solo es igual contigo:
y así mi consejo es
que a él le sirvas y me faltes.

Tu amigo soy: y porque
esté seguro tu honor
yo me guardare también;

17 The king tells him, “Muley, que tú / le guardes, y a cargo esté / tuyo: a ti no ha de torcerte / ni el temor ni el interés. / Alcaide eres del infante, / procura el guardarle bien / porque en cualquier ocasión / tú me has de dar cuenta dél” (vv. 1818-25).
y aunque otro llegue a ofrecerme
libertad, no aceptaré
la vida, porque tu honor
conmigo seguro esté. (vv. 1850-63)

Not only is Fernando encouraging Muley to obey the king when it will cost him his life, but he will guard himself and not even try to escape to help preserve the general’s loyalty to the king. *El principe constante* underlines the superiority in the *Comedia* of loyalty to the king even if it goes against one’s own personal honor with regards to life debts and friends reaffirming the king’s place in society.

Secondly, in both *El principe perfecto I* and *II*, the Portuguese prince Juan who becomes a king after one act shows the importance of defending the honor of the country as well as remaining faithful to his religion. First, in the *Primera parte*, the Ethiopian king Benoi from the kingdom of Gelofe comes to Portugal and the Rey Juan assists him as he becomes a Christian saying that they should do that before any other thing. Secondly, don Juan de Sosa, the king’s most trusted friend and courtier, during his mission to Castilla praises the piety of his king to Fernando and Isabel saying,

Y es Rey de tan alto extremo
En cosas de religión,
Que admira tan alto celo.
Contáronle un cierto día
Que en una casa de juego
Se blasfemaba el divino
Nombre de Dios; y sintiendo
Este agravio de su honor,
Mandó que pusiesen luego
Fuego á la casa, y ardió
Hasta los mismos cimientos. (100)

The king took his faith seriously and defended it as part of his honor. Lastly, in the second part, the perfect prince who is now the king advises his son the prince in regards to religious matters:

Y si la salud no os falta,
No oigais en la cama misa;
Que no es cortesía cristiana
Que baje del cielo Dios,
Y le espereis en la cama. (119-20)

He then asks his son,
Rey.  Pues ¿qué ventaja
Hará Dios á un Rey?
Príncipe.    Señor,
En infinita distancia
No se admite proporcion. (120)

Matters of his ley were clearly important to the perfect prince.

Additionally, these plays demonstrate the significance of upholding the honor of his subjects.18 In the first part, the Rey Juan’s confidant don Juan de Sosa pledges to

18 Coenen says, “Los reyes, en suma, actúan como defensores del código de honor más que del código legal; aunque se esfuerzan a veces para conciliarlos” (385).
marry doña Leonor of Castilla. After receiving his promise and a signed document with the promise, doña Leonor allows him to act as her husband by giving herself to him. Juan de Sosa, however, after having taken advantage of her, returns to Portugal thinking of another woman and rejects doña Leonor on different occasions. When doña Leonor brings her grievance to the king—“Está mi honor agraviado” (107)—the king has Juan de Sosa fulfill his “justas obligaciones” (113) by marrying doña Leonor and restoring her honor. Through these actions, the “príncipe perfecto” shows that princes should uphold the honor of their subjects.

Finally, a series of episodes in the second part reinforces several of these concepts about honor. Prince Alfonso’s subject, tutor, and friend Lope de Sosa takes the prince to see the beautiful doña Leonor. Although he is the beloved of Lope, the prince falls in love with her as well, but is melancholic because he does not think that he can do anything about it (124). Although Tristán’s advice is for the prince to kill Lope, to send him to Ceuta to be killed by Moors or to send him to the Indies, Alfonso asks his father for advice (127). Once the king understands what is happening, he advises his son to preserve the honor of his subject:

    Sosa, aunque es vuestro criado,
    Es honrado caballero:
    Antes de hacelle traicion,
    Dejaos morir, que es lo ménos;
    Porque no habeis de manchar
    La blancura que os ha puesto
    La real naturaleza,

    Sosa, aunque es vuestro criado,
    Es honrado caballero:
    Antes de hacelle traicion,
    Dejaos morir, que es lo ménos;
    Porque no habeis de manchar
    La blancura que os ha puesto
    La real naturaleza,
Sino antes morir sufriendo.
Para con vos esto basta.
Armiño soís de mi pecho:
No mancheis tanta blancura
Por un delito tan feo. (129)

When Lope finds out, in a demonstration of loyalty and deference to the prince, Lope renounces doña Leonor. In the end, however, the prince marries the Castilian infanta and Lope marries doña Leonor (136-37). In this series of events, therefore, it is shown that the perfect prince upholds the honor of his subjects, but that his subjects also yield before the prince.

Thirdly, in La Estrella de Sevilla, loyalty to the king and personal honor come into conflict for two men, Busto Tavera and Sancho Ortiz de las Roelas. Busto must choose between remaining loyal to the king and permitting the king to get away with entering into his house. Busto, forgetting his earlier advice to Sancho, puts his own honor before his ruler and confronts him by hanging the servant Natilde at his door. Sancho, on the other hand, though he has difficulty making the decision, follows

19 Although people have read this play in different ways, Castillo argues that this play is not subversive but rather upholds the monarchical system: “no sólo no pone a la monarquía en mancha, sino que sanea sus debilidades fortaleciendo la institución absolutista” (“La tragedia,” 60).
20 When Sancho begins wondering, “Y cuando el Rey con violencia / quisiere torcer la ley…”, Busto forcefully asserts, “Sancho Ortiz, el Rey es Rey; / callar y tener paciencia” (vv. 659-62).
21 Sancho, arguing with himself, comes to the conclusion that his only choice is to serve his king as he is the foundation of society and the source of honor: “Mi loco amor se mitigue; / que, aunque me cueste disgusto, / acudir al Rey es justo: / Busto muera, Busto muera, / pues ya no hay quien decir quiera: / <<viva Busto, viva Busto>>. / Perdóname,
Busto’s advice and in order to follow the order of the king, puts to death the traitor to the crown although by doing so he loses his friend whom he calls his brother as well as his future wife. As a consequence of their actions, Busto is punished for treason by being killed whereas Sancho is honored for obeying his king and not subverting the system in which the honor of everyone depends on the king: “Corra tu honor por mi cuenta” (v. 663).

Lastly, in Primero es la honra by Moreto, personal familial honor comes into conflict with loyalty to and defense of the king. The king of Sicily, although married, has been ignoring his wife for three years and pursuing Porcia, the daughter of his almirante. Porcia is to be married to Federico, but when the almirante, with the help of the queen, asks permission, the king sends Federico and the almirante to protect Messina which leaves Porcia at home with only servants. Federico’s servant Terrezno lets the king into the house for a chain, and Porcia tells the king that as long as it is done secretly so that she can preserve her honra, she will let him come in later because it seems as if that

Estrella hermosa; / que no es pequeño castigo / perderte y ser tu enemigo. / ¿Qué he de hacer? ¿Puedo otra cosa?” (1755-64)

22 Castillo says, “No obstante, el autor se aplica en mostrar dramáticamente cómo la elección de Busto por el honor individual es dañina para el sistema y por ende imposible cuando entra en colisión con la lealtad al rey; al tiempo que sanciona favorablemente la decisión de Sancho que implica obediencia ciega al monarca novato, poniendo de manifiesto que el rey es la fuente de honor como valor social” (“tragedia” 70).

23 This play is an example of the maturation process of the king. A king is not born ready to rule, but must go through a “process of maturation” (Castillo and Eggington 426).

24 La vida es sueño is another example of this conflict. Clotaldo is willing to serve his king and follow the king’s orders by allowing his child (Clotaldo thinks that it is his son, but it is actually his daughter Rosaura) to be killed for finding the Segismundo’s tower: “Pues ocultarle / al rey, no puedo, conforme / a la ley del homenaje” (vv. 430-32). He puts his loyalty to the king above his honor and his child: “Pero, ¿qué dudo? / La lealtad del rey ¿no es antes / que la vida y el honor?” (vv. 435-37) Fortunately for Clotaldo and Rosaura, Basilio has decided to let everyone know about Segismundo, so it is no longer necessary to keep secret his confinement and Rosaura is not killed (vv. 870-79).
is the only way to stop his out-of-control passions. Porcia, however, goes to the queen for help, and when the almirante and Federico return, the king decides to take Porcia by force. The almirante realizes that he is about to lose his fama but is unable to do anything against his king. He concludes that there is only one option available to him:

Porcia de todo este mal,
aunque inocente, es la causa:
muriendo Porcia, no hay riesgo.
patria y honor se restauran.
¡Muera, pues!; pero ¿qué digo?

He enters into where Porcia is and stabs her to protect his reputation. Everyone thinks she is dead, but Porcia does survive and the queen keeps her disguised in a nearby village. Later in a visit to the court, Porcia is able to speak with her father without his knowing who she is. The almirante remains convinced that what he did was right:

Pero cuando considero

el peligro de mi honor,
tanto en mi furor me enciendo,
que no sólo arrepentido
no estoy de haberla muerto;
mas si la volviera á ver
viva con aquel empeño,
otra vez á puñaladas
la volviera a matar. (65)

When he explains why he stabbed his own daughter instead of doing anything against the
king, Porcia understands and says that if the situation were to arise again, she would
make use the knife herself:

Porcia   Si esto es cierto,
        no sólo hicisteis muy bien;
        mas si no lo hubierais hecho,
        yo misma las puñaladas
        me diera, ¡viven los cielos!
        antes que perder mi honor.

Almirante  ¿Qué dices? ¿Tú hicieras eso?
Porcia    No solamente lo hiciera,
        mas lo haré si llega el tiempo
        de repetirse el peligro (66).

Porcia and her father both recognize that they can take no action against their ruler. Their
loyalty to the king comes before their own family and their own life. The play, however,
does end well with the king’s recognizing his error and amending it. As in La Estrella de
Sevilla, the monarch goes through a learning process, but at the end of the play his position is reaffirmed and society has regained its balance. The king will be faithful to his wife and he orders that Porcia marry Federico.25

The golden age plays are not alone in their defense of honor and the importance of loyalty to the king above familial honor or a character’s desires. Many of the arbitristas mention the same ideas. In Saavedra Fajardo’s Empresas, for example, he explains that “La reputación en los vasallos les obliga a procurarla en el príncipe, porque de su grandeza pende la dellos” (396), “No se desdeñe la majestad de honrar mucho a los súbditos y a los extranjeros, porque no se menoscaba el honor de los príncipes aunque honren largamente. Bien así como no se disminuye la luz de el hacha que se comunica a otras y las enciende” (397)26, and “Dar honras, poder de Dios o de aquellos que están más cerca de Él” (398). Saavedra Fajardo indicates that not only does the honor of his subjects depend on that of the king, but also that honoring others is one of the greatest acts of a king and it imitates the actions of God.

Secondly, Mendo also alludes to the conception of honor’s deriving from the king. In his seventeenth document, Mendo writes, “La sombra de vn mal Principe es como sombra de nogal, dañosa à los que se ponen debajo del, y à las plantas, y flores, que con las qualidades que reciben se marchitan. Amparo y sombra de sus Vasallos es vn Rey, pero en desniuelandose de la regla de la justicia y equidad, es perniciosa à la

25 In contrast, upon analyzing this play, Thacker interprets it in the reverse manner stating, “Anyone witnessing a performance of Primero es la honra will, if anything, be encouraged to think that Porcia cannot win and virtue does not pay. Even the formulaic happy ending cannot hide the major fault lines in the social system” (165).

26 Rivadeneyra also comments on this idea saying that a prince should give out honors according to his subjects’ virtue and deeds (112).
quietud, vidas, honras, y haciendas” (88). Here, the honor of the king’s subjects depends on what he does. In his thirty-fifth document, he describes how the honor that a prince gives will encourage his subjects to great deeds: “En no adelantando, à los que han merecido las honras con sus hazañas, afanes, y fatigas: que juventud sacudirá el ocio para dedicarse al trabajo?” (170) The king is the source of the honor, and by distributing it wisely, he can stir his subjects to shake off their laziness and dedicate themselves to work.

Thirdly, Mariana often speaks of the “honeros” that a king should give to all his subjects: “los ricos” (465), “los militares” (484), “los pequeños,” “los grandes” (464), “los ciudadanos” (482), and, to sum up, “con la virtud y el mérito está abierto á todos los hombres el camino de los mas altos honores” (464). According to Mariana, the king gives out many honors to all his subjects in order to encourage them to greatness for the kingdom. Mariana, therefore, as well as other arbitristas, conceived of the king as the giver of honor for the society.

Finally, the arbitristas also refer to the conception of honor as being connected to the chastity of the women whom a man must protect as it appears in the comedia. Mariana, for example, tells a story of Escedaso who had two beautiful daughters. He was hospitable to two passers-by, but they later returned when he was not at home and did not return the kindness that was paid them: “los mozos abusaron dellas mancillando su honor y su virtud” (571-72). Escedaso was dishonored in the way the characters of the comedia are. Also, Mártir Rizo relates the story of the Sabines, how they lost their honor when the women were carried away by the Romans, and how they plotted their vengeance: “los hombres han puesto parte de su felicidad en el honor como prenda de la mayor
estimación que tiene la vida. […] La honra está siempre unida con la vida, que es todo el bien de los hombres; el deshonor es compañero de la muerte, porque no vive quien está sin honra” (178). Here Mártir Rizo speaks of honor and its relation to the ability to protect one’s women and the idea that a life without honor is no life at all. Additionally, Rivadeneyra mentions the idea that it is important for a king to protect the honor (or chastity) of his female subjects saying, “El [verdadero rey] tiene gran respeto a la honra de las mujeres honestas; el [tirano] triunfa de la honestidad de ellas” (119). Thus, the arbitristas included passages which emphasize the importance of honor to a prince and also describe honor in similar ways to how it appears in the comedia.

The Plays with Theseus

In the six dramatic works that are the focus of this dissertation, the princes are often moved by their own honor and the honor of their subjects or rulers. Some of these plays were written for the corrales whereas others were written for the court, but they all demonstrate the same premise. Although a monarch may only have the matter of a prince with regards to his honor, he is still defended, upheld, and praised by the comedia.

1. El laberinto de Creta by Lope de Vega

The first of these works, El laberinto de Creta by Lope de Vega, depicts Teseo’s victory over the Minotauro along with the cause of the tribute—the war between Athens and Crete—as well as how all of the characters regained their honor after Teseo took
Ariadna and Fedra from Crete. This play, as do many others, shows the importance of what others think with regards to one’s honor. The princes look out for their *honra* and must defend their *fama*. Minos’s predicament would not have been nearly as devastating to him had Pasife’s actions not become public knowledge: “porque cuando es secreto el adulterio, / no viene a ser con tanto vituperio” (60). Later when Fedra tries to convince Teseo to remain in Athens, he asks her what others would say of him. He does not want his reputation sullied before Hércules, Jasón, and the other Greeks and must therefore protect his “fama” which “es la causa tan honrosa” (90).

As a part of defending their own honor, the various princes in this play must defend the honor of their wives, daughters, or future wives. Minos, although king of Crete and victorious in battle over Athens, seems to have trouble in this drama protecting the women under his care. First, while Minos is laying siege to Athens, his wife back in Crete has a child. He does not find out about this until after his victory and only then does he impose harsh conditions on the Athenians. Polineces arrives with news from Crete, but

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27 Martínez Berbel notes that Bustamante’s version of *Metamorphoses* introduces several changes, some of which Lope follows. In Bustamante’s version, Scylla is much more violent and determined in the slaughter of her father, Teseo’s trip to the Labyrinth is much closer temporally, and Fedra and Ariadna both come to help Teseo. Lope includes these differences from Ovid that Bustamante introduced, but he did not include this final one: in Bustamante, Teseo dishonors Ariadna by changing her from a “donzella” into a “dueña” whereas in Lope, Ariadna maintains her honor (138-41).

28 Teseo is a duque but is still a prince in the broad sense etimologically from Latin. Martínez Berbel actually calls him both “el duque Teseo” (153) and “el príncipe ateniense” (152). He also mentions that Theseus is called a duke towards the end of the Middle Ages in Boccaccio (156n); however, this does not imply any loss of his prerogatives that he would have as the prince or king that he is in the original sources (see Arafat, “Theseus”). He is still the “representante máximo de Atenas” (156) or its “regidor máximo” (181). See also Sánchez Aguilar (108-09). Additionally, in *Las mujeres sin hombres*, even though Teseo is a “duque,” he is also called a “príncipe” (400-02)
when he hesitates to answer the king’s questions about the queen, Minos asks, “¿Es muerta?” to which the messenger responds, “¡Pluguiera al cielo!” Minos cannot think of what could be “mayor mal que muerta,” but understands when Polineces tells him of his now very public dishonor. Pasife fell in love with a bull which some think was Júpiter as that god disguised himself as a bull in the escapade with Europa. Polineces sums up Minos’s disgrace by saying,

Pasife, en fin, ha parido,
si es de Júpiter, un monstruo
medio toro y medio humano
y es tan público y notorio,
que vienen de varias partes
a verle por espantoso
prodigio en naturaleza (58).

Minos has been dishonored, but even before he leaves Athens, he begins to think of ways of defending the honor that he has lost. As having his honra sullied is much worse than his honor, Minos tries to come up with a way that will hide the cause of his stain. He cannot simply avenge himself by killing the Minotauro, though: “Matara el Minotauro; pero temo / la ira del gran Júpiter si es suyo” (64). He therefore enlists the help of the greatest architect of the time, Dédalo:

Pues ¿cómo haré una fábrica

29 Traditionally, in Greco-Roman mythology, the bull was not Jupiter (Zeus) but rather a gift from Neptune (Poseidon) which Minos refused to sacrifice as he had promised. Europa, however, is related to Minos: she is his mother (Rose 183; Rose, Parke, Robertson, and Dietrich).
Dédalo had been working on designs since he received the king’s order while he was still in Athens, so by the time Minos arrived, he was able to present him with his plan of the Labyrinth. When Minos sees it, he orders the construction to begin immediately so that he can more quickly hide his deshonra. Minos had lost his honor because of the actions of his wife, but he strove to rectify that situation.

Unfortunately for Minos, as one source of his dishonor was removed—Teseo was able to kill the Minotauro—another arose. As a king and as a father, Minos should protect his daughters the princesses; however, they are stolen away from him during the night and this new dishonor again changes his response to the situation. After Teseo had defeated the Minotauro with the help of Ariadna, she and her sister Fedra fled Crete with Teseo so that he could defend them from the anger of their father. At first, Minos only learns that the Minotauro has been slain and has no knowledge of his daughters’ flight. Although angry, he shows no sign of wanting to chase after Teseo: “Bien hizo en huirse el griego / y no probar mi furor” (76). The Cretan king then sends for his daughters, but “No hay en palacio señal / de estar tus hijas en él” (77). Only after he discovers that he has lost his honor again does he change his plan and decide that he must pursue Teseo to cleanse this new affront to his honor (77).

When Minos meets Teseo at the end of the play, the king is intent on recovering his daughters and his honor. Teseo has married Fedra, so half of Minos’s honor has been restored; however, Minos will not relent until he regains all of his lost honor and
continues to demand Ariadna (96-7). Only once she has been discovered disguised on the island of Lesbos and given to Oranteo in marriage can Minos be satisfied as his honor has been restored: “Dale la mano a Oranteo, / y en paz haremos las fiestas” (98). Minos, although he lacks honor during much of the play, is still obeyed as a prince and by the end he recovers his honor as a prince should.

The second prince who defends his own honor is Oranteo. For Oranteo to maintain his honor, he must protect his relationship with Ariadna and have her become his wife. This goal is threatened on two different occasions, and Oranteo responds to both of them. First, when Oranteo discovers that Minos has promised Ariadna to his general Feniso, his answer is “Ven, porque demos luego / voz a la fama” (66). He is able to protect his honor and convince Minos to give Ariadna to him. When he joyfully though cautiously enters Crete, however, he finds out that Teseo has taken his love. Oranteo must take “venganza” (77) for this offense and challenges Teseo (82). Oranteo discovers

30 Although Kidd had directly compared Minos’s breaking of his word to Cila to Teseo’s breaking of his to Ariadna, Martínez Berbel goes into great detail explaining the differences and why Teseo’s is so minor in comparison to Minos’s that he does not receive any punishment (171-75). Both Martínez Berbel and Sánchez Aguilar comment on these differences. Minos broke his word to Cila by not marrying her and taking her to Crete, but he had never planned on doing so. Teseo, on the other hand, had told Ariadna that he would marry her, but instead abandoned her on Oranteo’s island of Lesbos. The difference is that Teseo did not dishonor Ariadna and that he decided to marry Fedra because of love. As Sánchez Aguilar comments, “Lope siempre pensó que los yerros de amor son dignos de perdón: era una teoría moral que le convenía a su propia vida. Otra cosa distinta es engatusar a una mujer por razones de conveniencia económica o política: el que obra así merece un castigo. Y eso es lo que marca la diferencia entre el destino de Teseo y el de Minos: mientras que el griego queda impune porque se equivocó por culpa del amor, al cretense es condenado a la deshonra de convertirse en un marido engañado porque mintió y traicionó a Cila con el propósito de conquistar Atenas” (116).
that Ariadna is actually on his island, \(^{31}\) and therefore when Teseo arrives, he has already recovered his honor:

\[ 
\text{Bien sé que Ariadna bella} \\
\text{dejaste en aquestas islas;} \\
y como tú no la tengas, \\
\text{cesa la ocasión de hacer} \\
\text{contigo batalla o guerra. (96)} 
\]

Similarly to Minos, Oranteo was often bereaved of his honor but was still the prince of Lesbos and treated as such. He also defended his honor and at the end of the play recovered it completely and married Ariadna. \(^{32}\)

The third prince, Teseo, had his honor questioned in a different way. It was not Teseo’s possessions or his family that was questioned, but his reputation, his *fama*, or his *honra*. Oranteo challenges “al bárbaro Teseo” and in his challenge he insults him and calls into question his *honra*:

\[ 
\text{dile que de sus armas ofendido} \\
\text{el Príncipe de Lesbos, Oranteo,} \\
\text{le reta de traidor y mal nacido,} \\
y que serlo de Júpiter no creo; \\
\text{dile que fue cobarde y atrevido,} 
\]

\(^{31}\) It is actually Ariadna herself who tells Oranteo this news. She is pretending to be a statue of Minerva, and when Oranteo and Lauro are about to take the “statue” because it looks like Ariadna, she speaks up and says, “La que buscas, Oranteo, / en estas islas está; / y muy presto se verá / que aquí la dejó Teseo / de celos de su mujer” (94).

\(^{32}\) In the original myth, Theseus leaves Ariadna on the island of Naxos instead of Lesbos. This change that Lope introduces makes the recovery of honor of Minos and Oranteo much easier (Martínez Berbel 155-156).
no vencedor del Minotauro feo,
sino engañoso Ulises, que inoportuno
quitó la vida al hijo de Neptuno;
y dile que si teme que la guerra
pueda ser de peligro sospechosa,
que no sea en la mía, ni en su tierra,
sino en el campo de la mar undosa (82).

Teseo realizes that he must respond to this affront to his reputation and immediately
departs for Lesbos with the Athenian army. In doing so, however, he also continues to
protect his familial honor. Whereas Minos lost his honor when he was away and Pasife
gave birth to a “torihombre” (73) and Oranteo lost his when he was away and Ariadna
forgot him and escaped with Teseo, the Athenian prince is able to avoid this trap. Fedra
pleads with him to not leave, but he must to defend his reputation; however, he takes
Fedra with him and thereby avoids the pitfall that his absence could have caused.33

The final prince is really no prince at all. Following the tradition of the shepherds
of Lesbos, Teseo’s servant Fineo is selected as king for the next year. Although he is a
king in name, Fineo does not act like a king in regards to his honor. Instead of defending
his honor by protecting his own women, he also runs away when a threat arises and must
ask permission of others and seek help in order to marry the woman he desires. He

33 The arbitristas mention the importance of a prince’s presence for his kingdom. Mendo,
for example, in his Documento LVIII, says “Conuiene visitar las Prouincias de su Reyno,
porque su presencia alienta à los Vasallos” (48), and in the next documento, “Con la
presencia del Principe, es mayor la observancia de las leyes; que se cumplen con mas
tibieza, quando asiste en mas remota distancia. Atrae la piedra iman vn yerro, y este à
otro, y muchos se van encadenando, pero remitese la virtud con la distancia, y poco a
poco se pierde la fuerza (Asi lo muestra este emblema.)” (53).
requests the true princes that they “Denme a Doriclea a mí” (98). As Fineo is not a true prince, he is not able to defend his own honor as the real princes of the drama do.

Although *El laberinto de Creta* strongly reinforces that maintenance of one’s personal familial honor, it also underlines the necessity of loyalty to the king. The first example occurs in the opening scenes of the play. Minos has just conquered Athens\(^{34}\) because the daughter of the king Niso helped him. Whereas in Ovid this help consisted in simply cutting a lock of hair that through prophecy protected the city, in Lope Cila’s actions were much more drastic and represented a larger attack on the monarchy:

> Por ti, al tiempo que dormía
> mi padre (crueldad sangrienta),
> corté el cuello y vertí sangre,
> la misma que dió a mis venas.
> Las llaves te di, y entraste
> la ciudad, de quien saqueas

---

\(^{34}\) In Ovid, after losing his son to the Athenians, Minos does not directly attack Athens, but rather attacks their ally Megara of which Nisos is king. Athens comes to their defense, but Minos is victorious. He then demands a tribute of Athenian lives (Ovid, Book VIII; in the Latin, it is vv. 1-182; in the English translation by Martin, it is vv. 1-251; see also Kearns, “Nisus (1);” Salmon; and Rose, Parke, Robertson, and Dietrich). In Lope’s version, the issue of what Minos is attacking is somewhat confused. Although Niso is still the king and Cila still the rebellious daughter, Minos conquers the “altos muros” of Athens: “Rey Minos, a quien se humillan / los altos muros de Creta, / como agora a tu victoria / los imposibles de Atenas” (56). Since Lope combines Megara and Athens, Neso is the king and Teseo is called a “duque” throughout. Teseo still acts as the sovereign in making decisions about whom to send to Crete and mustering the army to attack Lesbos, and in that sense he is a prince. Martínez Berbel frequently insists that the myth of Minos and Scylla in Megara is completely unrelated to Minos’s conquest of Athens; however, even Covarrubias explains how Minos attacked them both because they had killed his son. When he had defeated them at Megara, Athens had to send the tribute (1284-85).
más oro que ve el aurora

donde con marfil se peina. (57)

Minos is shocked and appalled by this action and determines to abandon Cila and leave her in Greece because of her attack on a prince:

Nunca entendí que mataras
al Rey; que por ese modo
antes lo perdiera todo
que tu intento ejecutaras. (57)

Despite the fact that Cila had given victory and vengeance to Minos and without her they would have not been achieved, Minos completely rejects her because of her attack on the system of honor which places loyalty to the king above one’s own interests.

A second example of putting one’s prince’s interests above one’s own is given by Teseo who after the battle at Athens must recognize Minos as ruler. Albante, a fellow Athenian, declares, “Aquí tienes, señor, a tus vasallos” (60). Despite the harsh treatment that they receive and the exorbitant tribute that Minos imposes, Teseo tells him, “Serás obedecido como mandas” (60) and continues to do so even when it will cost him his life. Teseo tells the conqueror, “no me he puesto en defensa / por la lealtad que te digo,” and later, “Voy contento de saber / que por tales medios quieras / encubrir tu deshonor” (67).

Teseo supports the ruler who conquered his city and follows his command, especially as by doing so Minos is trying to protect his honor.

Although Minos is a king, he also acquiesces before his ruler, the pagan god Júpiter. Although it is not known for sure, in Lope’s version many people think that the Minotauro is Júpiter’s son. In ancient sources, the bull was a gift from Poseidon that
Minos was supposed to have sacrificed (Rose, Parke, Robertson, and Dietrich). By changing the identity of the perpetrator of dishonor to Júpiter, Lope makes Minos’s possibilities of vengeance much different. As in Del rey abajo, ninguno where García will not take any action against the king, in El laberinto de Creta Minos cannot respond against what he thinks are the unjust actions of one unworthy to be king of the gods:

hazaña infame del lascivo Júpiter,
deidad indigna de tan alto nombre,
pues tiene acciones y bajezas de hombre.
Si cuando yerra un rey dicen que tiene
indignamente el cetro, no conviene
que tenga el de los cielos dios lascivo
que, en toro, transformado, me ha quitado
la honrosa vida del honor sagrado (60).

Pasife has fled, and Minos cannot seek vengeance from the pagan king of the gods nor even lay a hand on the Minotauro: “Matara el Minotauro; pero temo / la ira del gran Júpiter si es suyo” (64). Even when the pagan god dishonors Minos, the Cretan king remains loyal to him and does not seek vengeance.

The princes of this play not only defend their own honor and faithfully serve their king, but they also defend the honor of the society. As in El mejor alcalde, el rey and so many other dramas from the Golden Age, the prince acts as the guarantor of the honor of society helping others to preserve it.³⁵ In El laberinto de Creta Teseo and Oranteo both

³⁵ In Lope’s well-known play El mejor alcalde, el rey, don Tello takes Elvira from Sancho. To have his problem resolved, this honorable Galician from a poor family goes
help Minos recover his honor at different times of the play. First, although Minos is afraid to take vengeance by killing the Minotauro and thus remove the evidence of his deshonra, Teseo is able to kill the monster and thereby help restore the reputation of the Cretan king. Second, when Oranteo learns that Ariadna is on his island and he no longer needs to fight Teseo to protect his own honor, he still offers to help Minos recover his. Minos calls Oranteo “¡Oh, valerosa defensa / de mi honor!” (95) The princes in this play act in such a way as to not only defend their own honor, but also defend the entire society for being dishonored.

*El laberinto de Creta* shows that a king does not have to be a perfect prince to be praised and defended. Both Minos and Oranteo—though the latter to a lesser extent—suffer from a loss of fama. This imperfection, however, does not prevent them from being kings that are obeyed, served, and extolled. Cila’s violent attack against a prince is thoroughly condemned and Teseo is entirely willing to “dar pasto a una fiera” (65) and lose his life because it is the command of the ruler who conquered Athens. Despite their flaws, this play still reinforces and defends the monarchy.

2. *Las mujeres sin hombres* by Lope de Vega

Secondly, also by Lope de Vega, *Las mujeres sin hombres* tells of the exploits of Hércules, Teseo, and Jasón as they siege the Amazonian city of Themiscyra. These three Greek princes square off against three Amazonian princesses: Antiopía, Deyanira, and Menalipe. All of these leaders have great fama but also have to deal with challenges to it.

to the king. In order to preserve the honor of one of his subjects and punish don Tello for his disobedience, the king orders don Tello to marry Elvira and then has his head chopped off so that she and Sancho can marry.
The characters’ reputación, opinión, nombre, and honra are brought up throughout the play, and although at times it may receive a temporary setback demonstrating the fallibility of the princes, they end up choosing to side with their honor and finding a solution that allows them to preserve it.

One conflict that arises occurs when love clashes with honor. Of the many people who fall in love in the play, the most prominent relationship in the drama is that of Teseo and Antiopía. The Amazonian princess falls in love with Teseo just from hearing the captured Fineo describe him. When Fineo describes her to the Greek prince, Teseo declares that he would have liked to have been captured and later offers to serve as the Greek ambassador. Once in the city and her rivals are dealt with, Antiopía and Teseo are able to enjoy their time together and declare their love for one another. In their love for one another, they forget their obligations and their honor.

They are forced to remember their honor, however, when the other Greek captains grow restless after a month of waiting for Teseo and decide to press the attack without him once Deyanira comes to guide them. Menalipe chastises her queen for not protecting her people and her city reminding her that she needs to defend the “reputación” (415) of the Amazons. Antiopía would punish her except “a no haber visto / que amor y honor te obligan de manera, / que de darte la muerte me resisto!” Teseo and Antiopía go to the wall, and there Teseo is insulted as well and reminded of his duty. Jasón tells him that he “vives / por deshonra de tu patria” (416). Hércules goes as far as saying, “ponte una

36 In many instances during the play Teseo is referred to as a duke such as when Fineo and “el duque Teseo” are received by the Amazons as ambassadors (399). Teseo, however, is also not just a duke; he is also a prince. Fearing that the Amazons may have traitorously killed his companion, Hércules says of Teseo: “Pues si a traición un príncipe tan grave / Temiscira mató” (402).
rueca, Teseo; / ¿para qué quieres espada?” (417). Teseo manages to get a little more time in his embassy to try to convince Antiopía to give up the city, but by this time, both Teseo and Antiopía are too dedicated to their honor. Antiopía tells him, “tu amor, Teseo, muy nuevo, / y muy antiguo mi honor” and “con honra quiero morir.” Teseo, remembering that “pues por defender mujeres / me infamaron de mujer” (418), decides that “quiero defender mi honor” (419). In the relationship between Teseo and Antiopía, “ganó la palma / honor” in order that “no pierda su honor mi nombre” (420). Although for a while the Greek prince and the Amazonian princess forget their duty, they are eventually reminded of their honor and chose their reputation over their relationship.

Another honor conflict of the play is how the Greeks can gain honor by conquering the Amazons, but also not lose honor by fighting against women. If they are able to gain victory over the cruel Amazons, then their honor will increase as Teseo indicates when he says,

porque discurre la fama
de la crueldad de esta gente,
loca, bárbara, insolente,
a quien Amazonas llama,
que, según es su fiera,
aun piensan que esta victoria
no ha de hacer menos la gloria
del laurel de su cabeza. (380)

37 This instance is not the only time when Lope uses the “rueca” to insult the manhood of someone. In Fuenteovejuna, Laurencia tells the men, “Poneos ruecas en la cinta. / ¿Para qué os ceñís estoques?” (vv. 1774-75)
Additionally, although at first the only Greek princes were Hércules, Teseo, and Jasón, in the second act another prince joins them. Tindaro, the prince of Thessaly, and his men combine their forces with the Greeks already laying siege to the city because they want to share in the *honra* that will be gained “en esta empresa famosa” (395). A victory in this conquest will convey more glory, fame, renown, and *honra* to the Greek soldiers.

That victory, however, is difficult to obtain because fighting women is not an honorable deed. Despite Teseo’s praise of the campaign, he also indicates that it is “indigna de su valor, / pues contra mujeres viene” (380). Although Hércules desires to subjugate the barbarous city to the civilization of the Greeks, he realizes that doing so by the sword can cause him to lose his honor. He tells Teseo, “intentemos / vencer a estas mujeres sin espada: / no perdamos honor” and then tells Jasón, “Si tú, Jasón, mi pensamiento abonas, / nunca en mujer infamaré la mano” (389). Even the average soldier knows that a conquest of women by the sword is shameful: Pileo says, “es vergüenza / sacar armas tan honradas / contra ejército de ninfas” (417). This conflict between trying to gain honor by defeating the Amazons and trying to preserve their honor by not defeating them in battle sets up a difficult quandary for the Greek princes to solve.

These two conflicts—the first between honor and love and the second between victory and a dishonorable attack on women—despite their seemingly diametric opposition, do have a solution which the Greeks and the Amazons are eventually able to find. Different Amazonian women allude to the future solution at times when they discuss in terms of the hylomorphic theory what the matter and form of woman is. Antiopía first brings this up in her soliloquy about her interior desire for men but her exterior show of extreme animosity towards them. The queen declares, “la mujer apetece
Menalipe later expresses the same idea when she is seeking to sneak into Teseo’s room the first night he is serving as ambassador in Themiscyra: “porque una mujer sin hombre / materia sin forma es” (403). Just as many of the princes in these plays are not perfect princes or are not always at the level of their form, so also according to the Amazonian warrior princesses are women imperfect if they are not married.

The solution is also foreshadowed in a prophecy that Marte gives to the Greek princes and in a song that the Amazons perform for Teseo immediately after his arrival to their city. When the Greeks, demonstrating the importance and high value of their ley, seek guidance from Marte and Hércules asks him “¿será la espada o el arte / el fin que la guerra espera?” (397), this pagan god tells them,

Cuando, griegos valerosos,

el mayor poder del suelo
venza esos pechos famosos,
bajarán del tercer cielo
ramos de oliva amorosos;
y entonces, con los leones
harán las mansas corderas
vida en perpetuas uniones. (397)

As Montano figures out, the greatest power of which Marte speaks is love, and the perpetual unions are marriage. Another sign that indicates what the solution will be is found in the Amazonian song performed for Teseo which says,

El ejemplo nos dieron
Both sides are aware, therefore, of what a possible outcome could be.

Although the princes are aware of this possibility, they all resist that option. Teseo and Antiopía forsake each other after having spent a month together because of the defamation that they receive from their fellow countrymen. Nevertheless, despite their objections, all of the princes succumb to “el mayor poder del suelo.” Teseo returns to Antiopía’s side to protect her after the Greeks are in the city and despoiling it. When Hércules sees Deyanira, he exclaims,

Que me has llevado
parte del alma tras ti,
y si sois todas ansí,
Teseo está disculpado (413).

When Deyanira later interposes herself between Hércules and Teseo, Hércules does not advance to fight because he is stopped by her beauty. Jasón, the final Greek to fall to the power of love who had previously mocked the others for having done so, is overcome by Menalipe’s fame and her beauty:

no sé cómo te pedí
que tus armas me rindieras,
si pretendo que supieras
que ya estoy rendido a ti.
Fuera de lo que tu fama
All of the Greek princes, therefore, are overcome by love for the Amazons.

The Amazons also fall prey to the power of love. Antiopía can hardly bring herself to defend her city because of her love for Teseo. After Deyanira goes to the Greek camp to help them, she tells Hércules, “mi amor, más quiero que en Grecia / digan que voy por tu esclava, / que ser reina en Temiscira” (418). Finally, Menalipe, the Amazon who had defended herself most against falling for the Greeks, is also conquered and tells Jasón, “Tú solo / mereces justa afición” (423) and that she would not be able to flee from him even if she wanted to (424). With all of the Greek princes and the Amazonian princesses having succumbed to love, they now only need to find a solution that will not also cause their dishonor.

The answer that all of the characters so desire but resist so much is finally suggested by Hércules, but he only suggests it after the Greeks had taken down part of the wall and are inside the city, thereby well on their way to victory. Teseo declares that he is trying to keep the Greeks from staining their honor since they have already come so far:

No quiera Marte que emprenda
vuestró deshonor, si bien
he causado vuestras quejas;
sólo os pido, pues ya estáis
en la ciudad, que a la Reina
Hércules then offers his solution that is “justo y conveniente a todos” (425) so that the city will not be completely destroyed by his forces:

yo haré que cese el rigor
como la Reina conceda
que pueda cualquier soldado
llevar la mujer que quiera,
como ella no se resista
y su persona aborrezca,
que en tal caso no es razón
que ninguno las ofenda;
con esto irán nuestras naves
honradas de aquesta empresa,
los soldados bien pagados,
y las mujeres contentas. (426)

With this solution the Greeks can depart in their ships that are “honradas,” and the Amazons can be honorably married and “contentas.” This solution pleases everyone and the Greeks and Amazons are reconciled—Hércules with Deyanira, Teseo with Antiopía, and Jasón with Menalipe.

_Las mujeres sin hombres_, therefore, depicts the difficulty of maintaining one’s honor when it enters into conflict with something else; however, the perfect prince will choose the side of honor and defend it before all else. Although Teseo and Antiopía in particular are mocked for not defending their honor and therefore seem to fall short of the
ideal, they and the other princes make sure that in the end, they preserve their reputation and are celebrated for doing so. This play includes outright ridicule of some princes, but these same princes are also praised and defended. The play concludes with a victory of the civilized Greek monarchy gloriously bringing in more subjects to its kingdom.

3. *El vellocino de oro* by Lope de Vega

In the third play by Lope, Jasón and Teseo successfully complete the conquest of the Golden Fleece in *El vellocino de oro*. Although this play was originally written for the *corrales*, Lope later made some adjustments to it when he presented it at the belated celebration of Felipe IV’s seventeenth birthday.38 In the drama performed for the rulers and later published in his *Partes*, Lope includes several princes and princesses that all demonstrate the importance and the role of different aspects of honor.

To begin with, although it does not provide much dramatic tension, the aspect of honor that relates to the characters’ *ley* is represented in several parts. In this play, although the mythological characters invoke and make sacrifices to mythological pagan gods, they also speak of Dios, thereby seemingly having some knowledge of Christian

38 Profeti writes, “Prima dell’allestimento del 1622 e della pubblicazione del ’24, si hanno testimonianze dell’esistenza di una commedia del Fénix intitolata *El vellocino de oro*, che Pedro de Valdés, in un documento del 28 maggio 1614, si impegna a rappresentare a Toledo: ‘Pedro de Valdés, autor de comedias, vecino de la ciudad de Valladolid, estante al presente en esta ciudad de Toledo, otorgo y conozco que me obligo a Diego de Soto y compañía, vecinos desta ciudad, a cuyo cargo está la casa de las comedias desta ciudad [...] de hacer los seis autos de la fiesta del Corpus y otava y tres comedias que son: *El vellocino de oro, La humildad y la soberbia y Los enredos de Laura***” (20).
principles.\textsuperscript{39} Despite the difficult escape over the sea on the back of a ram with golden fur, Friso and Helenia eventually arrive in Colchis. Once they arrive, however, the nymph Doriclea instructs them to go to the temple of Marte and sacrifice the ram to that god (vv. 511-30). The two exiled siblings offer the sacrifice and receive encouragement from Marte who also warns them, however, that their troubles have not completely ended yet: “aun tiene rayos tu enemiga estrella” (v. 652). Friso and Helenia demonstrate the importance of their \textit{ley} with the sacrifice of the beautiful animal.

Later, when Jasón is speaking with Oeta, king of Colchis, about his intent to gain victory in the conquest of the fleece of that animal, the king says that in order to ensure the triumph, they will make a sacrifice to Marte. Jasón responds, “El sacrificio es muy justo, / que el mejor principio es Dios” (vv. 1345-46). Although the difference between the pagan gods and the Christian God is blurred here, the adherence to the \textit{ley} is not. King Oeta and Jasón both recognize the importance of their faith.

The next aspect of honor, the deference to one’s \textit{rey} in any circumstance as the king is the source of honor for others, also emerges in several situations. When Jasón describes to Fineo his reasons for undertaking the conquest, he quotes his uncle Pelias, the man who ruled after Jasón’s father died, and says, “Adquiere nombre que a todos / nos dé honor” (vv. 1099-100). Pelias is describing here that the prince is the source of honor for everyone else. If Jasón can increase his reputation, “nombre,” or \textit{honra}, everyone in the kingdom will receive honor. Others can have honor because the prince has obtained it. Jasón also realizes, however, that he cannot go against his monarch, and

\textsuperscript{39} Friso, for example, invokes Neptuno and offers the Fleece to Marte, but also says, “Contra quien ayuda Dios, / cánsase la envidia necia” (vv. 487-88).
therefore when Pelias asks that he undertake the quest, he agrees not only to preserve his honor but also to preserve the honor of his king: “no quise que conociera / ni en mi valor cobardía, / ni en sus intentos bajeza” (vv. 1120-22).

Showing that the same principles apply to females and that a subject should not contradict a princess, Helenia cedes before the will of Medea in a situation that mirrors Lope de Sosa and the prince Alfonso in El príncipe perfecto II. Although disguised as a serrana, Helenia is actually a princess herself but is living as a foreigner and subject in Colchis. She has fallen in love with prince Fineo, the nephew of Oeta who is in love with his cousin Medea. Even though Helenia wants to marry Fineo, she is willing to give him up if her desire comes into conflict with that of her princess Medea: “Que no le querré después / que sepa que vos le amáis” (vv. 1471-72). Fortunately for Helenia, Medea actually has fallen for Jasón and encourages Helenia to pursue Fineo. The princess, however, similarly to the prince, is inviolable.

In addition to upholding one’s ley and rey, the princes in El vellocino de oro also defend their personal and familial honor, or fama. Jasón and Medea’s love for each other provokes conflicts of honor as do the lesser emphasized loves between Teseo and Fenisa and other Greek soldiers and ladies of Colchis. Before the arrival of the Greeks in the Argos, Fineo was unsuccessfully pursuing a defiant, disdainful, and unwilling Medea. Although she rejects the advances of her “Aborrecido amante” (v. 718), Fineo continues to base his honor on her. When he recognizes that Medea has fallen for the Greek prince, jealousy overcomes him and he strongly desires for the dragon and the fire-breathing bulls to “haced a Jasón pedazos” (v. 1333). When he sees them speaking to each other in the garden, he exclaims, “¿Qué aguardo? ¡Matarle quiero!” (v. 1750), and Jasón is only
able to avoid the fight because of an enchantment by Medea. Fineo later explains what is driving him to these actions: “mi honor se determina / a quitalle la vida” (vv. 1938-39).

Whereas Fineo’s honor was tied to Medea, the king Oeta and other subjects of his were also affronted when the Greeks left their shores with much more than the Golden Fleece. After helping Jasón, Medea flees with Fenisa—Teseo’s beloved—as well as many other ladies of Colchis. Fineo first challenges the Greeks:

Toma esta lanza, en señal
de que en tierra y mar te reto
de traidor, y desafío
todos tus cobardes griegos. (vv. 2121-24)

He then explains to his countrymen what has happened and they join him in defense of their honor:

Rey    Sobrino mío, ¿qué es esto?
Fineo Que a Medea y a Fenisa
llevan Jasón y Teseo.
No queda dama en tu casa
[…]
Rey    ¡Armas, vasallos, al arma!
Vamos por tierra tras ellos;
que bien sabemos adónde
tomarán sus naves puerto.

40 Although Helenia says that what Medea is doing is “contra su honor” (v. 1888) Medea only does it “con licencia de mi honor” (v. 1430) as she will be marrying Jasón.
Toca trompetas y cajas,
fórmense escuadrones luego:
¡vamos contra Grecia, amigos! (vv. 2146-49, 2167-73)

They do not have to overtake the Greeks by land, however, as Friso promises to make ships for them imitating the design of the *Argos*. If successful, Fineo promises that he will marry Helenia, Friso’s sister, thereby restoring Friso’s honor. The second act—and in this version the entire play—ends, therefore, with all of the people of Colchis as well as the foreigners who arrived on the golden ram in arms in the defense of their honor. Although they are desirous to defend their honor, the play ends with the honor of the princes having been stained by the Greeks and not having been avenged. The princes in this play strive to defend their honor, and despite the imperfection of many of these princes in regards to their honor, they are still celebrated.

The version of *El vellocino de oro* that survives and was performed at Aranjuez for the celebration of Felipe IV’s birthday is composed of a Loa and only two acts; however, the original Lopean version was in existence by 1614—or eight years before it was performed for the king—and almost certainly had three acts. The Aranjuez adaptation was a reworking with more spectacular effects that the *corrales* would not have been able to accommodate. Lope also added a Loa and inserted several verses into the first two acts to celebrate the king, but also abbreviated the *comedia* (Profeti 20-21).41

41 Profeti writes, “Il testo in possesso di Pedro de Valdés poteva essere lo stesso *Vellocino de oro* citato nella seconda lista di commedie di Lope che Appare nel *Peregrino en su patria* del 1618. Questo Vellocino, presumibilmente in tre atti, doveva essere diverso da quello oggi conservato, se non altro perché la sua destinazione al corral non poteva prevedere macchine sceniche elaborate. Che la facies testuale fosse diversa da quella che oggi conosciamo è suggerito dall’analisi metrica di Morley Bruerton, che concludono:
Although the text of the version performed in Toledo in 1614 is not known today, by looking at references within the text that point to what will happen and by comparing it to the similarly structured *El laberinto de Creta*, it is possible to see what the third act contained and how it was strongly linked to the honor of Friso and the men of Colchis.\(^4\)

To begin, the text itself describes what it will tell but that is actually missing from the two-act version. The play repeatedly says that it will return to the story of Friso and Helenia and that they will regain what they had lost when their stepmother sent them away. First, the nymph Doriclea tells the siblings, “Pero vivid confiados / de que saldréis con vitoria” (vv. 495-96), “que ha de ser vuestra pena / para más descanso y gloria” (vv. 499-500), “tendrán vuestros males fin” (v. 525), and “bajará vuestro consuelo / y cesará vuestro llanto” (vv. 529-30). Reaching Colchis, however, is not the victory as Marte reminds the siblings that they still have a star against them though they will eventually make it back to their homeland (vv. 571-72, 652). They are still seeking to regain what they have lost. Helenia and Friso disguise themselves and are known as Silvia and

\(^{4}\) Using ideas that he found in McGaha’s “Lope’s *El vellocino,*” Kidd also points out that the first two acts are similar to *El Perseo* and that *El vellocino de oro* ends quite abruptly. It is possible to compare *El vellocino de oro* not only to *El laberinto de Creta*, but also to *El Perseo*, and the results are very similar (87). Also, Martínez Berbel notes several times the abrupt ending of *El vellocino de oro* and it lack of resolution of all of the conflicts of honor that result from this ending so as to have more focus on the praise of the king. He does not mention, however, the possibility that the third act had been cut off and that it could have contained this resolution (334).
Lisardo. When Helenia later delivers a message to Jasón on behalf of Medea, she begs Jasón,

Helenia  Si os veis, Jasón, por dicha
en Grecia rey con la real Medea,
doleos de mi desdicha,
porque Lisardo lo que ha sido sea,
Lisardo, aquel mi hermano.

Jasón  En fe de que lo haré, te doy la mano. (vv. 1569-74)

Jasón here gives his word that he will help Friso and Helenia yet leaves without having done anything for them. After Jasón, Teseo, and the other Greeks flee Colchis taking all the women, the men of Colchis, specifically the rulers, determine to pursue them by land. Friso, however, offers to build a boat as long as king Oeta agrees to help him regain his kingdom:

pero si pasas, te quiero
suplicar que de Atamante
me restaures en el reino,
que mi madrasta me quita
porque me dicen que es muerto. (vv. 2184-88)

Since his father Atamante has died, Friso would like to reclaim his kingdom and recover what he lost from his stepmother. The king of Colchis agrees and Fineo promises to marry Helenia if the venture is successful. Based on the evidence in the text, it seems as if the third act should tell how the princes of Colchis regain their honor and how Friso and Helenia regain their honor and kingdom.
Although the recovery of the honor of these princes does not seem to be related to *El vellocino de oro*, it is very much a part of the story in the baroque theater. Another play of Lope’s, *El laberinto de Creta*, follows a very similar trajectory. The first act tells the background and sets up the situation. In *El laberinto de Creta*, Minos conquers a city and orders Athens to pay a tribute of human lives which sets up the confrontation between Teseo and the minotaur. In *El vellocino de oro*, the first act tells how Friso and Helenia arrive in Colchis, sacrifice the ram, and give up the Golden Fleece which sets up the confrontation of Jasón and the monsters guarding it. In the second act, the heroes defeat their obstacles and steal away the women. The third act of *El laberinto de Creta* no longer focuses on the exploits of Teseo in the labyrinth. It instead focuses on how those who lost their honor because of Teseo’s actions, namely Minos and Oranteo, regain it.43 This seems to be exactly where Lope was headed in *El vellocino de oro* in its original version; however, as the focus of the play performed at Aranjuez was to praise the king and tell the background story of the Order of the Golden Fleece,44 the additional material that Lope includes in the original third act about how the people who have lost their honor are able to regain it is removed as it does not directly deal with the Order. It is

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43 Martínez Berbel points this fact out as well saying that the restoration of the honor of the characters who had lost it is the “función principal de este tercer acto” (178).
44 Although Saavedra Fajardo says that the Order only referred to the fleece laid out by Gideon, he does mention the Greek myth as a mistaken background: “Por esto en la presente Empresa ponemos sobre el ara, en vez del rayo, el Tusón que introdujo Filipe el Bueno, duque de Borgoña, no por insinia (como muchos piensan) del fabuloso vellocino de Colcos, sino de aquella piel o vellón de Gedeón, recogido en él, por señal de vitoria, el rocío del cielo, cuando se mostraba seca la tierra” (250-1). Mendo, on the other hand, in his Documento XLVII mentions both the biblical and the mythical story as sources for the Order and that the mythical source despite the fact that he confuses the protagonist of the myth and says that “Vlyses, y sus compañeros los Argonautas” recovered the Fleece instead of Jason—was a foreshadowing of the discovery of the New World (36-7). See Arafat, “Argonauts.”
instead replaced with the Loa and the extra material praising Felipe IV. The princes of Colchis as well as Friso are left in limbo at the end of the play. They have lost their honor and are therefore incomplete princes. They are willing to defend it, however, and are depicted as in the process of planning their next move. The third act most likely included a reconciliation between the Greek princes and the princes of Colchis as the Greeks have honorably married the women of Colchis, possibly achieved between the acts, along with the restitution of Friso to his kingdom and the marriage of Helenia and Fineo thereby restoring the honor of the two characters from the beginning of the play about whom so much was said but nothing was done.

Although the princes in this play are not all perfect princes, the play does reinforce and glorify the monarchy in several different ways. The play performed for the king’s birthday, for example, included direct praise to Felipe IV. The introductory Loa begins with praise for the king and queen—“el Sol y Luna de España. / ¡Qué gloria los campos baña! / ¡Qué resplandor! ¡Qué alegría!” (vv. 8-10)—which continues throughout as first Fama and Envidia speak followed by Poesía and Música. Fama, for instance, was able to speak upon seeing Alexander the Great and Caesar, but upon looking upon Felipe IV, Fama cannot adequately articulate the majesty:

Pero aunque tantas parecen
mis lenguas, hoy enmudecen,
viendo con tanto valor
un Alejandro mayor,
pues dos mundos le obedecen. (vv. 46-50)
The Spanish King is greater than the greatest from antiquity, and the same goes for the queen (vv. 51-5). Envidia also is unable to praise the rulers enough:

No es alabaros mi intento;
que si tanta perfección
fiara a mi entendimiento,
cayera, como Faetón,
al mar de mi atrevimiento. (vv. 101-05)

The Loa, therefore, directly praises and glorifies the Spanish princes.

Additionally, when Friso and Helenia enter the temple of Marte, this pagan god also praises the Hapsburg dynasty. His temple is the home of Fama, and as such includes portraits of the *nueve de la Fama*.45 After describing these nine princes, however, Marte continues on to a tenth, Carlos V:

Décimo destos que la Fama nombra,
manda poner sobre esta basa y plinto,
con la ferocidad que al Cita asombra,

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45 According to Profeti, “Lope elabora varie liste di uomini famosi” In his *Fiesta de Denia* he includes Gideon and Godfrey instead of Moses and Bernardo del Carpio. He elaborates other lists in his “Soneto 24” in *Rimas* and his “Canto XX” in *Hermosura de Angélica*. In *El vellocino de oro*, the Nine Worthies are Joshua, David, “Mosé (v. 590: ‘el gran defensor de los hebreos’)”, Alexander the Great, Hector, Caesar, Charlemagne, King Arthur, Bernardo del Carpio (97n). Profeti interprets “el gran defensor de los hebreos” to be Moses as opposed to other possibilities such as Gideon, Judas Maccabeus, or Joshua. Cervantes also references the *nueve de la Fama* and the editor Allen gives this list: “Los nueve de la Fama fueron tres judíos: Josué, David y Judas Macabeo; tres gentiles: Alejandro, Héctor y Julio César, y tres cristianos: el rey Artús, Carlomagno y Godofredo de Buillón” (126n). Sánchez Aguilar also interprets “el gran defensor de los hebreos” to be Moses instead of Judas Macabeus. He also notes that Lope left out the French Godfrey of Bouillon to include the Spanish Bernardo del Carpio from whom Lope claimed descent (167-68).
al Marte de la tierra, a Carlos Quinto;
la reina de las aves hará sombra
de suerte a España en término sucinto,
que, dando envidia a las demás naciones,
penetren los dos polos sus pendones.

El vellocino, que hoy me sacrificas,
de tanto honor le haré que ilustre el pecho
de los reyes de España, entre las ricas
piedras que el fuego esmaltarán deshecho. (vv. 613-24)

After glorifying the founder of the Spanish Hapsburg dynasty, Marte continues by also praising the Felipes and their role as the sovereigns of the Order of the Golden Fleece:

La venturosa edad que está esperando
dorado el siglo de mayor tesoro,
de tres Filipos le verá adornando
el católico pecho entre aspas de oro;
yo, en tanto, a un árbol le pondré, formando
para custodia de mayor decoro,
dos toros y un dragón, linces de fuego,
a cuyas armas su riqueza entregó.

Y ojalá que llegara a la dichosa
del gran Felipe cuarto el vellocino. (vv. 629-38)
In this scene where Friso offers the Golden Fleece to Marte, Lope again glorifies the monarchy through Marte’s words.46

Furthermore, when Jasón retrieves the Fleece, he also praises the Spanish kings. Although he was not in the temple when Marte spoke to Friso, Jasón also knows that the princes of Spain will wear the Golden Fleece:

¡Cayeron, Teseo amigo!
¡Vitoria, vitoria, griegos!
Quito el vellocino de oro:
¡oh prenda, oh joya, oh trofeo
que estimo, después que sé
que has de coronar los cuellos
de los monarcas de España,
cuando esté mayor su imperio!
Y entre ellos al gran Felipe,
cuarto en nombre, aunque primero
en soberano valor
y en divino entendimiento.
¡Oh, si quisieran los hados
que aquellos felices tiempos
viera yo, cuando enlazara
con felice casamiento
la flor de lis de Borbón

46 See also Martínez Berbel (307-10).
de Felipe cuarto el pecho! (vv. 2049-66)

Lope again praises his rulers for whom the play was performed, this time through Jasón.

Finally, whereas the previous examples were direct glorification and praise of the monarchs, the play also reinforces the monarchy and defends imperfect princes in another way. At the end of the play, Friso needs to regain what he has lost and asks king Oeta to help restore him to his kingdom. The king agrees and Fineo promises to marry Friso’s sister Helenia which would ensure her, and therefore Friso’s, honor. Although this restoration does not take place in the abbreviated version that remains, it is promised. Friso, therefore, despite being an imperfect prince, is defended and his place within society is reinforced.

Overall, in the El vellocino de oro performed for the king and published for the general public, Lope de Vega dramatically and emphatically praises the king directly. He also, however, reinforces the monarchy through other means as well such as Helenia’s deference to Medea and Fineo’s promise to Friso which both are based on the role that honor plays in the lives of princes and their subjects. The princes honor their ley, they submit to their rey, and they defend their fama so as to extend it to everyone within the kingdom. This drama is able to defend the monarchy through the use of honor even though the princes in the play do not all have their honor intact.

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47 As Friso puts it, “Juntó consejeros sabios, / todos pienso que lo eran, / mas la voluntad de un rey / fue siempre la ley primera” (vv. 387-90).
4. *Los tres mayores prodigios* by Calderón de la Barca

The forth play, *Los tres mayores prodigios* by Calderón tells of Jasón and Teseo’s attempt to help restore the honor of their friend Hércules who despite cleansing his honor cannot recover from the blow to his honra. In order to rescue Deyanira from the centaur Neso, Jasón travels throughout Asia, Teseo throughout Europe, and Hércules throughout Africa. Calderón included many special effects in the play (1547), and it required three different theater troupes on three different stages to perform it. According to Valbuena Briones, “*Los tres mayores prodigios* constituyó una fiesta que se representó ante S. M. Felipe IV, en la noche de San Juan de 1636, en el patio del Real Palacio del Buen Retiro” (1548). Thus, Calderón wrote it specifically for the king. He also included a reference to the king’s being the source of honor for society. In the second act which tells Teseo’s part of the story, Ariadna tells Minos that he comes “a honrar tu patria.” Lidoro, the chief guard of the Minotauro, also receives honor from Minos just by being able to arrive at his feet: “Si merezco este honor, dame tus plantas” (1565). Although this play is a celebration of and for the king, the princes in this play do not all defend their honor as well as they should.

The first area in which some princes succeed and others fall short is in their ley. The most rebellious prince in regards to adherence to religion is actually the princess Medea.\(^{48}\) When Friso arrives in Colchis on the back of the golden ram having promised to sacrifice it to Marte, the king supports him in this effort and his son the prince Absinto goes even farther. He tells Friso,

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\(^{48}\) According to Valbuena Briones, “*Calderón ha dado énfasis a la caracterización de los personajes femeninos. Cada uno de ellos viene a representar una falta sicológica. Medea, la soberbia*” (1548).
entra en él [el templo], llega a su altar;
que pues yo a mi cargo tomo
hoy apadrinarte, atento
a tu gran valor heroico,
a todo he de acompañarte. (1549)

Whereas Friso, Absinto, and the king all prove themselves to be religious, Medea is just the opposite and asks why the Golden Fleece was not sacrificed to her: “¿…te atreves (¡rabio de enojo) / a sacrificar a Marte, / haciéndome a mí este oprobio?” (1549) Even after hearing the story of the vow that Friso had made, she still thinks that the Fleece should be hers as above her “no hay deidad que mayor sea” (1551). She then calls out three in particular and directly challenges Marte, Venus, and Amor. This “soberbia” is met with punishment because although Medea had never submitted her will to anyone, especially any man, she falls in love with Jasón as soon as he arrives:

Pues no me pidas albricias,
porque voy pensando, Astrea,
que Venus, Marte y Amor
de otra manera se vengan;
pues ya Marte en mis sentidos
ha introducido otra guerra;
Amor le ha prestado fuego
para sus máquinas; quieran
los dioses que no haga Venus
desdichada mi belleza. (1555)
Medea is therefore conquered by the very gods that she claimed to be able to resist.

Other princes in the play follow more closely the path of Friso than that of Medea. Minos, for example thinking that the Minotauro is from the gods, only hides his dishonor instead of avenging the offense by killing the monster (1564). Additionally, Hércules had made a vow to Júpiter to sacrifice to him on the Monte Oeta when he had avenged himself of Neso’s actions. Although Floro, the prince of Africa, offers to host him in his palace, Hércules tells him that he must fulfill his vow and he would like “antes de entrar / en las cortes populosas, / cumplir el voto” (1585). The princes in this play, therefore, obey their religion with the exception of Medea whom the gods conquer.

This drama also demonstrates the need for a prince to be the guarantor of the honor of society and the safeguard of the honor of others. The entire framing of the comedia is based on this premise. Hércules has been dishonored because Neso has stolen his wife Deyanira from him. In order to help his friend, Jasón embarks in the Argos to search the entirety of Asia in a year to see if he can avenge his friend (1553). Teseo, for his part, searches the entire European continent on behalf of his friend. He tells Ariadna and Fedra that “ajena ofensa me trae” and that his plan is “he de andar Europa entera, / hasta que otro amigo y yo / demos a Africa la vuelta” (1562). The two princes, therefore, were not only concerned about their own honor, but also looked out for the honor of others.

49 Speaking of this play, O’Connor notes “A primary obligation of all noble males is to protect all females from the predatory practices of ignoble men” (“Politics” 173). This duty is even more accentuated for princes.

50 Although it is not included in the edition by Valbuena Briones, the Loa for this play introduces the scene as Hércules explains to Teseo and Jasón his grievance and they all agree to try to find and rescue Deyanira.
Teseo has the opportunity to assist even more people with the preservation of their honor. In Crete, a man with his hands tied behind his back comes running up to Teseo and his servant Pantuflo.\(^{51}\) Flavio, the bound man, begs for their help and tells them that his honor is at stake as well as his life: “honor y vida / me importa que no me prendan / los que me siguen” (1563). Teseo helps the man, but Pantuflo, showing that he is definitely unworthy of being a prince, does not aid Flavio. Teseo later has another opportunity to preserve the honor of the society. Lidoro decides that he has waited long enough for Ariadna to respond to his advances and since everything he has tried has failed, “hoy la violencia la logre” (1571). He is willing to allow “que agravios consigan / lo que no puedan favores” (1572). Fortunately for Ariadna, however, Teseo arrives and saves her by killing Lidoro. By removing this threat, Teseo preserves Ariadna’s honor, and through hers, Minos’s as well. Teseo made an effort to maintain the honor of the entire society and not just his own.

Although Teseo did so much to assist in the preservation of the honor of others, in one instance he seems to have departed of the ideal when his own honor was involved. After saving Ariadna and Fedra from the bear, Ariadna has Dédalo provide Teseo with the means of escape from the Laberinto. She does this as a repayment for what he had done for her. While Teseo is escaping, he again saves Ariadna, this time from Lidoro. By this point the soldiers are rapidly approaching, and Teseo is forced to choose between Ariadna and Fedra. He can only save one, and he is torn between his love for Fedra and his duty to his honor. Ariadna saved him from the Minotauro, so he feels honor-bound to

\(^{51}\) In Calderón’s adaptation, Teseo is not even an Athenian citizen; however, he is imprisoned and presented to Minos as one to be fed to the Minotauro. Athens must provide 300 people each year to feed the beast.
now rescue her. Teseo had, however, already rescued her a second time, so theoretically, it was Ariadna’s turn to save him again. Despite the possibility that he had already satisfied the demands of his honor by saving her from Lidoro, Teseo still feels the pressure of his honor:

Dices bien: primero son
precisas obligaciones,
que las pasiones del gusto:
librarte mi honor dispone. (1573)

Teseo in the end, however, chooses his love over his honor:

¿Qué dudo? Que aunque me noten
de ingrato, he de ser amante.
Todo el pundonor perdone;
que las pasiones de amor
son soberanas pasiones. (1573)

Teseo, therefore, despite the fact that in this play he is highly praised, although he may have been excused, still feels as though he is choosing against his honor and thus acting imperfectly when his own honor is at stake.

Other princes in the play attempt to defend their honor as well. After Jasón steals the Golden Fleece, Friso and Absinto try to get it back or at least avenge Marte by chasing Medea since it was her enchantments that gave the victory to Jasón. They had offered the Fleece, and to preserve their honor, they needed to preserve the integrity of

52 Additionally, by taking Ariadna, he would have been putting himself in the same dishonorable position that Hércules is in. Hércules suffers because his wife had been abducted, and Teseo could him since Lidoro was abducting Ariadna.
the sacrifice. Minos also chased after someone fleeing from his country to preserve his honor. Ariadna had persuaded him to chase after Teseo so that they could gain vengeance over him. These two attempts, however, ended in disappointment for those that undertook them. Jasón and Teseo receive all of the honor and glory from the original victory that is represented on stage as well as for the victory that they gain offstage over these princes seeking to redress an offense (1587). The princes who try to protect their own honor in this play, therefore, run into grave difficulties and are defeated by their passions in the case of Teseo and by other princes in the case of Friso, Absinto, and Minos.

Hércules, too, has great difficulty with his vengeance and its relationship to his honra. Although he is eventually able to kill the centaur Neso who had offended him, he feels as if his reputation has suffered too much for him to retain his place among his fellow princes. Even before Hércules has found Neso and while he is trying to find out where the Centaur went, the Greek hero cannot stand to hear other people talk about how another being has his wife (1576-77). After he kills Neso, he knows that Deyanira is innocent and has done nothing to dishonor him. His honor is therefore intact; however, he cannot convince himself that his honra is still unharmed because he knows that “importa la satisfacción ajena / a veces más que la propia” (1584). Even though everyone praises Hércules, he still is unconvinced of his honra, and in the end this doubt brings about his death.

In Los tres mayores prodigios, therefore, Calderón defends the monarchy through the use of honor and its origin in the king. The play was written for Felipe IV for a celebration, yet many of the princes were imperfect. Even many of the characters who tried to maintain their honor had difficulty doing so or found it impossible. Despite the
imperfections found in the honor of the princes, however, these rulers are still praised.
Hércules is still called “el más noble caudillo” by Jasón and “el mejor varón” by Teseo (1587) and the play glorifies “de Hércules las alabanzas” (1589). Teseo is also confirmed despite is choice of love over what he thought was the duty to his honor as he was able to defeat Minos and bring Ariadna along as his slave.

5. *El labyrinto de Creta* by Juan Bautista Diamante

Fifth, in *El labyrinto de Creta*, Bautista Diamante retells the tale of Teseo’s encounter with the Minotauro introducing several innovations. This is the only play in which Teseo’s father Egeo appears, and he plays an important role.53 Also, this is the only play in which Teseo does not choose Fedra over Ariadna because he had already chosen a beautiful Amazon, Hipolita. These innovations, however, do not extend to the topic of the characters’ honor which is still a strong force which motivates the characters to certain actions. Some of the characters seek to increase their honor while others are simply trying to erase their dishonor.

In this drama, both Egeo king of Athens and Minos king of Crete are suffering from being dishonored. Although Minos’s dishonor is only alluded to briefly and not focused on as it is in Lope’s version, Pasife has brought shame to her husband and sullied his reputation. While speaking to her sister about her reason for wanting to save the two foreigners, Ariadna mentions the cruelty that

en estos dos infelices

se cbe la fiera, infame
memoria del torpe afecto
de Pasife nuestra madre. (185)

Minos’s honor has been wounded by the infamous acts of his wife. In a situation similar to Lope’s version, however, Minos cannot remove the evidence of his dishonor because the pagan gods have decreed that as long as the Minotauro is safe, so will be the kingdom (174). Secondly, Egeo enters the action under the shadow of dishonor. Although his son returns victoriously from Scitia, Egeo is forced to bring up his disgrace as the time is drawing near to send victims to Crete to be eaten by the Minotauro. Egeo and everyone else are reminded of his failures and his defeat even amidst the celebration of Teseo’s homecoming:

aquel
tributo vil que los dioses
impusieron en Atenas,
para que Creta logre,
aunque preciso le corra
el passo a mis presunciones,
viendo que es padrón infame
que a tus aplausos se opone,
y mas quando se apresura
el tiempo que corresponde. (172)
Egeo clearly feels the heavy burden that this infamy puts on him. Thus, both of the kings in this drama have been dishonored, one by his wife’s actions and the other by not being able to defend his kingdom.

The princes in this play, however, do not simply sit back and accept the current state of their honor. They attempt to increase their honor or cleanse any stains that they may have suffered. First, as the play is beginning Teseo is returning from a quest that he undertook to augment “las glorias de mi nombre” (168) and provide himself with “laureles.” Having returned to Athens with new vassals for Egeo, Teseo is greeted with many “aplausos,” and he understands that marrying Hipolita will grant him even more honor: “con vos se honren / mis brazos” (171). With his victory—though he himself says that he has been conquered by his love for the Amazonian queen Hipolita in a situation strongly reminiscent of Las mujeres sin hombres—Teseo has not only gained a reputation among men but he has even earned “la estimación de los Dioses” (166).

The second enterprise that Teseo undertakes is the Labyrinth, and both he and Hipolita share the same desire for their honor to increase through this undertaking. Although Teseo is chosen by lot and the Athenian citizens insist that he go, Teseo declares that it is not for any of these reasons that he sets off for Crete, “sino por honrosa palma / de mi valor, que a la muerte / desprecia amenazas” (176). Teseo also desires that

Vea el Cielo en mí que borro
todas las viles estampas
del temor, quando valiente
con presunción, a tan ardua
emressa me sacrifican
Teseo is not only willing to embark on this mission, but he is eager to do so in order to gain more honor. For her part, Hipolita shares that same sentiment. Although she clearly has a romantic reason for following Teseo to Crete, her reasons do not stop there. Moreover, even though she secretly has a ship prepared to surreptitiously duplicate the journey, she does not want it to remain secret forever. When she goes to free Teseo, she would like people to know: “Dígalo mi fama” (177).

Although he has been dishonored, now that his son is being sent to the Minotauro, Egeo is driven to purify his fame and throw off the yoke of the Cretan king. As Teseo is embarking, he tells the Athenian citizens, “Vil patria, / que mi muerte pretendiste, / quede a llorar la infamia” (177). These words begin to stir up the people into a desire to help Egeo save Teseo. Egeo then arouses their fervor even more and as the first act is ending, all of the citizens join Egeo in saying, “Arda Creta, al arma, al arma” (177). When they eventually arrive in Crete, Egeo makes it clear that they are there to expunge his offense so that he can regain his honor: “Arma, Atenienses famos[os], / en venganza de mi ofensa” and soon afterwards, “Romped las puertas / del Labyrinto, y el monstruo / oy a mis venganzas muera” (189). Thus, through the death of the Minotauro—which was achieved by Teseo and Hipolita with daggers and enchantments from Ariadna and Fedra—Egeo is able to not only put an end to the vile tribute but also to conquer his oppressor, changing completely his dishonor to glory.

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54 In fact, Egeo notices when she is leaving (177).
55 Although Bautista Diamante generally uses the spelling “Laberynto,” here at the end he switches to “Labyrinto.”
A question may arise as to how Ariadna and Fedra were able to help Teseo and Hipolita since by doing so they were assisting in an attack on the Minotauro which was the surety of the realm. Minos himself asks them this question, “Pues como, traidoras hijas?” The answer derives from a prophecy that had been given to the infantas early after Minos had ordered them to give up their imitation of Diana and marry their suitors so that he could have heirs. A nymph of Diana tells them of her goddess’s wrath towards Minos and that now all the gods would punish Crete by having the Minotauro die and thereby removing the protection of their kingdom. Ariadna and Fedra will marry as their father wishes, but Diana’s vengeance will bring “la ruyna de Creta” (176). When Ariadna and Fedra later meet each other as they go to help the prisoners about to be fed to the Minotauro, they recall the nymph’s words and realize that by assisting Teseo and Hipolita they are also helping fulfill the prophecy and bringing about the downfall of Crete. In answer to Minos’s question, therefore, Hipolita is able to respond for them that “Delitos de piedad llevan / muy consigo las disculpas” (189) which accentuates the role of a people’s faith and adherence to religion as an important part of their honor.

Despite the fact that this play depicts two princes who are very flawed in regards to their honor in comparison with others who gain more and more fame, these two kings, Egeo and Minos, are both defended and the monarchical system is upheld. Egeo, although he has spent years suffering from the dishonor of his defeat and continually being reminded of it through the humiliating tribute that he must pay to Crete, he is still able to stimulate his people to follow him and help him save his son by appealing to their fama as well. If they were to help their king purge his dishonor, they would also be able to rid themselves of the “infamia” of which Teseo accuses them. As the king is the
fountain of honor, by helping their ruler, they are also helping themselves. Their entire
society is healed when Egeo recovers his honor.

When Egeo delivers his city from Crete and conquers the island, Minos’s
reputation is seriously wounded. Now that the Minotauro is dead, Minos is unable to
protect his city and has great difficulty even defending his own person:

| Minos       | Dónde, ay infeliz, podrá
|             | estar libre de mis penas? |
| Teseo       | Solo aquí, donde será
|             | tu enemigo tu defensa. (189) |

Teseo helps him because of the assistance provided to him by Ariadna and Fedra. When
Egeo has conquered the city and Minos is at the mercy of his enemy, this king seems to
have reached a low point; however, that is precisely when he is lifted back up. Egeo gives
the kingdom to his son Teseo who in turn restores it to Minos. The conquered king ends
up being defended and reinforced in his position as ruler of Crete.

6. *Amor es más laberinto* by Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz and Juan de Guevara

Finally, Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz and Juan de Guevara wrote *Amor es más
laberinto* to celebrate the arrival to Mexico of the new viceroy. The loa which precedes
the play includes many direct references to the new viceroy and his wife and celebrates
their glory. The loa is based upon a comparison between the conde de Galve and the
Roman god Jano as a new age is beginning with the reign of a new “príncipe.”

56 The count who is becoming a viceroy is referred to as a prince on several occasions in
the Loa: “nuestro excelso, preclaro / Príncipe,” “el querer hacer festejo / digno a Príncipe
is clearly written as a glorification of the ruler, and the *comedia* that goes with it was also written to celebrate his glorious arrival. In spite of the express purpose of exalting the monarchy, many of the princes of the play are sometimes found to be lacking in their honor.

In this play the various princes represented all defend their reputations against each other. In this adaptation of the myth of the Labyrinth, Baco and Lidoro are pursuing Ariadna and Fedra, respectively. Ariadna is responsive to the attention of Baco, but Fedra is clear with Lidoro that she will do nothing to encourage his love. When Teseo shows up, both of the infantas fall for him. No one can figure out who anyone is or who anyone really loves, and in all the confusion, the princes defend their honor against whomever they perceive as a threat. Although the focus of the play falls heaviest on their reputations, the characters’ *ley, rey*, and *fama* are all demonstrated as being important.

First, when Teseo is asked to tell all of his great deeds that he has accomplished in his life, he shows that part of his duty as a prince was to rid the land of brigands, especially the impious ones. He took it upon himself to make sure that the irreverence of Creonte was put to a stop by ensuring that the dead received a proper burial:

\begin{quote}
A la gran Tebas libré

de la opresión de aquel fiero

Creonte, cuya impiedad,
\end{quote}

*tan alto* (708), and “¡Que de Príncipe tanto / los años nobles / no han de ser sólo frutos, / sino sazones!” (709)

\(^{57}\) In this play Baco is only a prince and not the pagan god of wine. The drama, however, does make several allusions to the fact that this god was also named Baco. Sor Juana most likely chose this name as traditionally, according to Rose, after Theseus abandons Ariadne on the island of Naxos, Dionysius/Bacchus finds and marries her (265). His servant’s name is appropriately Racimo.
opuesta a todos los fueros
humanos, no consentía
dar sepultura a los muertos. (721-22)

Teseo also put a stop to Procusto who, depending on the size of his victims, would kill them by either stretching them out or cutting them short:

Maté también a Escirón
y a Procusto, bandoleros
tan sin piedad, que el segundo
en un inhuman lecho

hizo potro de tormento (722).

These two examples from the list that Teseo gives to the king of Crete demonstrate that as a prince, Teseo considered it a necessity to rid the land of impiety and thereby hold fast to his ley.

Second, the characters of this play also show that loyalty to the prince was important as well. The first instance that this arises is when the Athenian ambassador brings Teseo before Minos. The king tries to honor Licas, the ambassador, but Licas does not want to receive any of the honors that Minos offers:

Excusadas
son tus Mercedes, Señor,
con quien no puede aceptarlas:
que estando el Príncipe aquí,
no era razón que gozara
Minos understands and even agrees with Licas. The ambassador here is demonstrating again that honor is based on the prince. Therefore, since Teseo has come as a prisoner and is not honored, he cannot receive honors either.

This precept is demonstrated later by Baco both as a prince and as a civilian. Although Baco is not from Crete, by being there and courting Minos’s daughter, he still needs to observe the king’s wishes even when it conflicts with his own fame. As Baco is on the way to attend a duel to protect his honor, Minos finds him and asks for his counsel on how to best defend Crete from the eminent Athenian invasion. In an aside, Baco explains his reasoning in this manner:

¿Qué dirá Lidoro de mi tardanza? Mas fuerza es seguir al Rey ahora: pues aunque quede mal puesta mi opinión, sabrá después volver mi valor por ella.) (757)
Baco lays aside his own *honra* because he must maintain his loyalty to the king. Later, Baco is treated as the prince when Tebandro finds him standing over a dead body. Tebandro does not arrest him because Baco is a prince. Once the evidence mounts up against Baco, the only thing that Tebandro can do is go inform the king (759-60).

Third, whereas *Amor es más laberinto* does show the importance of the characters’ *ley* and their *rey*, as the title indicates, this play is about the love that the princes have and how they must defend their honor to sustain that love. At the beginning of the play, Baco is successfully pursuing Ariadna, but Lidoro is having no luck in his pursuit of Fedra. When Teseo arrives, both of the infantas turn their affections toward him, but the other princes do not know this. Teseo, as in the majority of the other dramas, chooses Fedra although Ariadna tries to win him. Baco and Lidoro overhear the infantas or each other speaking about their love for someone else, and many incorrect conclusions are drawn. They know, however, that they must defend their honor against a threat.

The first time that one of the princes sees an offense is when Baco overhears Ariadna say, “cuando al galán de Fedra / de manera me rendí” (729). Baco, assuming that she is speaking of Lidoro and not Teseo, decides that he must avenge himself. He follows the poorly-thought-out plan of his lackey Racimo and begins to court Fedra. When Lidoro sees them conversing and hears what they are saying, he too is affronted: “A un agravio / tan grande, sólo el acero / reconviene” (731). Baco and Lidoro both think that the other is causing his dishonor, and because of this belief, they draw their swords and match their actions to their desires for vengeance. When the king enters and puts a stop to the fight, the two princes must delay the restitution of their honor.
After Teseo has defeated the Minotauro, the infantas host a masked dance for their father and both of them send Teseo something to wear so that they will know who he is. This celebration also ends with many people confused as to who is who. In the garden near the Laberinto after the sarao, Teseo and Baco speak with the women they think are their beloveds, but eventually Teseo discovers otherwise: “Que es Fedra ha dicho / esta voz; pues ¿a qué aguardo? / ¡Muera el traidor enemigo!” (752) He and Baco fight, but when people begin to bring lights, Teseo escapes into the Laberinto. Lidoro shows up and also fights against Baco. Baco thinks that it has been Lidoro the entire time, and thinks that in order to preserve his honor, “En Lidoro he de vengar / los celos que aquí averiguo” (753).

The way Baco decides to avenge himself is to have his servant Racimo deliver a letter to Lidoro challenging him to a duel. Racimo gives the letter to Atún, Teseo’s servant, and Atún ends up delivering it to both Teseo and Lidoro. As it was addressed to “Príncipe,” both princes think that Baco is challenging them. When Minos keeps Baco from attending his own duel, Teseo and Lidoro think that the other is Baco and fight in order to defend their honor from the grievance that Baco has caused them. Teseo is able to defeat Lidoro and decides that he must escape before he is caught (758-59).

The final time in which these mistaken identities bring out violence occurs when Teseo and Baco are both trying to escape, Teseo because he killed someone and Baco because he has been accused of killing. They bring along their beloveds, except they have the wrong women. Teseo thinks that he has Fedra when he is actually taking

58 The facts that he was standing over the body and that he was known to have fought with him as well as the note that was found at the scene of the crime all led the guards to think that he was guilty (759-60).
Ariadna to his escape ship, and Baco mistakenly has Fedra. When they come across each other and slowly figure out who the other people are, Fedra calls out to Teseo for protection—¡Teseo, Señor, esposo, / mira que aqueste traidor / robada te lleva a Fedra!” (768)—and Teseo and Baco again must defend their honor since another man is taking his beloved. All throughout this play, therefore, the affronted princes are defending their honor from the threats that present themselves.

They are, however, not the only ones who must protect their honor. When Minos discovers that men are secretly carrying his daughters away from Crete, he demands to know who is robbing him of his honor: “Decid: ¿quién son los villanos / que dejándome la vida / todo el honor me han robado?” (770) When he finds out that it is Teseo and Baco, condemns all four of them to save his reputation:

Todos perderéis la vida,

..................................

y así, que muráis ordena

el enojo a que me incito;

y pues tenéis un delito,

llevad una misma pena. (771)

They are saved, however, when the Athenian army arrives and conquers the city. Teseo defends Minos, and for saving his life, he asks for Fedra in marriage. As this will also satisfy the demands of his honor, Minos agrees and also permits Baco to marry Ariadna to fully purge all of the dishonor that he was facing: “No prosigas. / –Déle la mano, Aríadna / a Baco. –Y tú, agradecida, / a Teseo” (773). In the end, therefore, although he
faced severe dishonor, Minos was confirmed in his position and honorably married his daughters to their suitors.

In *El amor es más laberinto*, therefore, Teseo demonstrates the importance of adherence to the *ley*, and Licas and Baco show the need to put loyalty to one’s prince before one’s own desires. The three foreign princes and the king of Crete display the need for a prince to maintain his honor. All of these princes at one point or another are bereft of their honor and must seek redress. They must rectify the situation by seeking vengeance from the person who brought about their dishonor. Although the princes in the play are imperfect, they are confirmed as princes and Minos, although conquered, retains his kingdom and regains his honor.

Conclusion

In conclusion, these plays which were written over the course of the seventeenth century by different authors and for different audiences treat honor in a similar way. The ideology of honor in these dramas follows the general aspects laid out in the *comedia* and is also reflected in the *arbitristas* of the time period. The prince, as the fountain of honor for his realm, needs to maintain his own honor and in addition needs to give honor to his subjects. Both the plays that were written for the *vulgo* as well as those that were written for the *palacio*, however, included princes that did not align perfectly with the ideal. The princes at times only have the matter of the prince and do not conform to their form. Despite this imperfection in the princes, the dramas were able to glorify the monarchy and defend the mythology of honor.
Chapter Three
The Prudent Prince

Introduction and Background

Whereas a prince’s honor provided the motivation for many of his actions, his prudence was his guide to know not only what he should do but also how he should do it. An imprudent ruler could hurt his lands, but a discreet and wise one could bring prosperity to them. The princes in the comedia often showed great prudence; however, sometimes they would set aside their discretion and follow unwise courses of action. These poor decisions and imprudent acts can bring negative consequences to the princes and their subjects. Notwithstanding the flaws in the discernment of these princes, the comedias in which they appear continue to support the monarchy and defend the prince.

Although prudence was a vital characteristic of the early-modern king and was treated extensively by scholars of the time, modern scholarship has not paid nearly as much attention to this topic. Within the study of Early Modern Spanish literature, several people have looked at the role of prudence in La vida es sueño by Calderón de la Barca such as de Armas and Carreño-Rodríguez. Expanding to other national theaters in the seventeenth century, Langis investigates prudence within Shakespearean drama, and Poirier examines the virtue of prudence within Corneille. These and other forays into the theme, however, are drastically outnumbered by the number of studies that have been conducted which investigate honor in the Golden Age comedia.

Being prudent, discreet, or wise was something that the playwrights of the Golden Age, however, considered of utmost importance for a prince, and many of the plays
included some details about what a prudent prince is and how he acts. There are several areas in which a prince can demonstrate his prudence or lack thereof. Although not all of the dramas included each of these facets of prudence, these abilities appear repeatedly in the theater of the Golden Age. In these dramas a wise ruler will create good laws, discreetly judge people who break the laws, and be able to implement what he knows to culturally advance his society and civilization.

Although some arbitristas, for example Rivadeneyra, consider prudence and justice to be two separate virtues and the creation of laws and judgment of cases under them could fall within the heading of justice, in this chapter these tasks are included with prudence based on the way they are considered. A perfect prince would of course be just and always do the correct thing, but at times it is difficult to know what the correct or best option is. Prudence enters this discussion because it is what gives the princes their ability to know what laws to make and how to judge cases. If they did not even know what the correct course of action was, then they would not have the opportunity to be just. Although now politicians separate political functions into the legislative, executive, and judicial branches, the early modern king could legislate his own laws, make sure they

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1 Covarrubias defines prudence as one of the cardinal virtues and adds that prudent means “el hombre sabio y reportado, que pesa todas las cosas con much acuerdo” (1380). Additionally, he explains, “discreto, el hombre cuerdo y de buen seso, que sabe ponderar las cosas y dar a cada una su lugar” (717).
2 Rivadeneyra, distinguishing between the two virtues of prudence and justice, says, “se nos ofrece más resplandeciente que las demás, y como el lucero de la mañana entre las estrellas, la virtud de la justicia, que da con igualdad a cada uno lo que es suyo; y es tan propia de los principes y tan necesaria para la conservación de sus Estados, que el Espíritu Santo dice por Salomón que con la justicia se establece el reino” (110) and speaking later about the separate virtue of “prudencia” says that it is the master of all the other virtues that a prince should have (147).
3 Poirier states, “la Justice, vertu royale, qui est toujours précédée et introduite par la Prudence ” (327).
were executed, and judge people when they were not. All of these tasks involve the use of his mind, and imprudent princes are less effective in these tasks because they do not know the proper course of action to follow.

Cervantes’s *Don Quijote de la Mancha II* provides an explicit example of these acts which involve justice also definitively being well within the range of prudence. Sancho Panza is made a governor of what he thinks is an island and everyone around him is amazed at his prudence. The way he shows that he is wise is through making laws—“*Las constituciones del gran gobernador Sancho Panza*” (416)—and through judging cases. After one such case, the majordomo says, “tengo para mí que el mismo Licurgo, que dio leyes a los lacedemonios, no pudiera dar mejor sentencia que la que el gran Panza ha dado. Y acábase con esto la audiencia desta mañana, y yo daré orden como el señor gobernador coma muy a su gusto” (411). The majordomo here directly compares the giving of laws and the judging cases. Furthermore, he connects both of these activities to discretion: “Cumplió su palabra el mayordomo, pareciéndole ser cargo de conciencia matar de hambre a tan discreto gobernador” (411). Therefore, these two activities of justice—the prince’s promulgating effective laws and judging difficult cases with aplomb—are also ways in which a prince can demonstrate his wisdom.

In order for a prince to be prudent in the first area, the creation of effective laws, he must follow several different precepts. The number of decrees and the quality of edicts that he passes will both demonstrate his prudence. A wise prince does not make an excessive amount of laws, nor does he pass laws that will result in the detriment of his kingdom. Similarly, a prince must take care in the amount of tribute that he demands from his realms as one that is too heavy can severely cripple his territory. A discreet ruler
will also set an example for his subjects by being the first to obey the laws so that others will follow his lead. An imprudent prince will pass too many decrees and will make harmful laws. He will also not follow his own laws. The perfect prince will let prudence guide him in these legislative tasks in order to be an effective ruler.

Second, when cases come before a prince, these trials are opportunities for the prince to demonstrate his discretion. Sancho Panza for example, when taken to his “island” of Barataria, is told by his majordomo, “–Es costumbre antigua en esta ínsula, señor gobernador, que el que viene a tomar posesión desta famosa ínsula está obligado a responder a una pregunta que se le hiciere, que sea algo intricada y dificultosa, de cuya respuesta el pueblo toma y toca el pulso del ingenio de su nuevo gobernador, y así, o se alegra o se entristece con su venida” (360). Several cases are brought before the new governor, and to the amazement of those present, Sancho is able to pass wise judgment on these cases. Additionally, after Solomon had asked God for wisdom so that he would be able to rule Israel well, one of the principal ways in which Solomon’s prudence was made manifest was by determining which of two women was the true mother of the baby that they both claimed as their own. Solomon was able to judge the case correctly because he was wise (Santa Biblia, 1 Reyes 2-3). This biblical narration was frequently used in Early Modern Spain as a proverbial example of prudence. Therefore, being able to understand a case and discover what has happened are key factors when kings are faced with judicial tasks, and in order to successfully complete this task, a prince must use his prudence.

4 It is not that a king is bound by the law; he is, however, able to set a good example. Rivadeneyra argues that he is free from the law as he is the sovereign ruler, but that he should observe it by his own free will (165).
In addition to creating laws and judging cases, a prince is further able to demonstrate his wisdom by the cultural advancement of his society. This issue can be a difficult one to navigate because of different connotations and views of the terms involved. Lévi-Strauss in *Myth and Meaning*, for example, describes some of the misconceptions that have been made in regards to varying stages of cultural development, attainment, or advancement: “The way of thinking among people we call, usually and wrongly, ‘primitive’ – let’s describe them rather as ‘without writing,’ because I think that is really the discriminatory factor between them and us – has been interpreted in two different fashions, both of which in my opinion are equally wrong” (15). The first interpretation that Lévi-Strauss mentions is one in which it is thought that people without writing think in a “coarser quality… [which is] determined by the basic needs of life” (15). Lévi-Strauss, however, points out that in many cases, people without writing were able to think extensively about subjects that went well beyond their next meal or where they were going to sleep. The second is an understanding of the thought of those without writing as always having “emotional and mystical representations” (16). These cultures, however, have also followed philosophical or scientific modes of thought. Lévi-Strauss argues that the thinking of those without writing is “not…an inferior kind of thought, but a fundamentally different kind of thought” (16) and he stresses that “what I have tried to emphasize is that actually the thought of people without writing is, or can be in many instances, on the one hand, disinterested – and this is a difference in relation to Malinowski – and, on the other hand, intellectual – a difference in relation to Lévy-Bruhl” (16).5

5 Disinterested is used in the sense that it is not always focused on survival but also has
Therefore, although “savages,” primitives, barbarians, uncivilized people, or cultures without writing may not have access to some technological advances, that lack does not imply a lesser intelligence. They may not be aware of some of the variables which makes it more difficult to solve the problem, but they would still be capable of finding the answer. One practical example of this situation occurred in what is now Mexico. Todorov relates,

El propio Sahagún cuenta más tarde: ‘Los españoles y los otros religiosos que supieron esto, reíanse mucho y hacían burla, teniendo muy por averiguado que nadie sería poderoso para poder enseñar gramática a gente tan inhábil; pero trabajando con ellos dos o tres años, vinieron a entender todas las materias del arte de la gramática, [a] hablar latín y entenderlo, y a escribir en latín, y aun a hacer versos heroicos. (X, 27 en Sahagún; 231 en Todorov)

After learning the variables, the uncivilized barbarians were able to do the same things as the culturally advanced Spaniards.

What “savages” are capable of doing and the perception of them, however, is very different. Just as in many cases the gracioso of a comedia is foolish and unintelligent as shown by, among other things, his mispronunciation of words, the perception and

the need to understand the world, and intellectual in the sense that it is not always emotional or mystical.

6 This is a very common trait of the gracioso in the comedia. For example, in Del rey abajo, ninguno when García and Bras (whose very name is a mispronunciation of Blas) meet the king, Bras, the “mayoral de sus porqueros” (v. 410), mispronounces a word that García had just said. Speaking to the king, García begins, “ Vuestra persona, / aunque vuestro nombre ignore, / me aficiona” (vv. 418-20). Bras continues, “Es como un oro; / a mí también me inficiona” (vv. 420-21). Furthermore, in Cervantes’s Entremés del
representation of barbarians, uncultured, and uncivilized people paints them as imprudent. In fact, in *El mejor acalde, el rey*, the gracioso is compared to the uncivilized American Indians: “¿Tiene mayor salvaje el indio suelo?” (v. 177). As is seen from the quote from Sahagún above, the perception of those who lacked Western culture also impugned upon them a lack of discretion. As the RAE states, “civilización” is an “Estadio cultural propio de las sociedades humanas más avanzadas por el nivel de su ciencia, artes, ideas y costumbres.”

These advancements encompass a wide range of things that can make a culture more civilized. Lévi-Strauss’s term, for example, introduces the distinction between cultures with and without writing. In his *The fall of natural man*, Pagden describes several other factors that were thought to describe a civilization by using the ideas of Francisco de Vitoria who in turn was basing his ideas on Aristotle. Vitoria is considering the American Indians and comparing them to other civilizations to see if they have reason:

> But the Indians, Vitoria concluded, clearly do have the use of reason, pro suo modo. They possess, that is, a certain rational order (ordo) in their affairs’, an ordo which is similar to that observed by other men and which finds expression in the following things: ‘they have properly organised cities, a recognisable form of marriage, magistrates, rulers, laws, industry

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*Retablo de las maravillas*, Benito Repollo adds to the humor through his poor understanding or mispronunciation of words such as “ciceronianca” instead of “ciceroniania” (219) and “Antona” or “Antoño” instead of “ante omnia” (221). In fact, in *Los tres mayores prodigios*, the adjectives “bárbaro” and “irracional” are directly connected (1564).
(opificia), commerce, all of which require the use of reason. 

Item, they have a form of religion. (68)

The cultures that lack these advancements and have fallen behind, so to speak, are represented as needing a civilizing influence so that they can reach a higher level of prudence, wisdom, or discretion. Other examples of things that a prudent and civilized prince will do which are seen in the arbitristas include consulting advisors, being courteous, educating themselves and their descendants, and preventing flattery.

Writing, cities, marriages, law, commerce, and industry are positive examples of what a civilization possesses. A barbaric culture or uncivilized person could not only lack all or some of these qualities, but may also have other characteristics which cast him in that role. Cannibalism, which Columbus at least thinks that he has discovered on his first voyage, would automatically categorize a people as uncivilized and barbarian.

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8 Pagden also points out the difference between the first Indians which the Spaniards found with the great empires of the mainland. The tribes in the Caribbean “lived, for the most part, in loose-knit communities with no real leaders, no technology, no personal property and frequently no clothes.” Cortés and Pizarro, however, later revealed, “the existence of highly developed native American cultures” (58).

9 Again in Del rey abajo, ninguno, and speaking about the gracioso, Bras is called a “bestia” (v. 416) and the king sees in him “simplesdad” (v. 417). García, apologizing to the king, tells him, “Rústico entretenimiento / será para vos mi gente” (vv. 462-63). It is clear that Bras is being presented as a less prudent figure.

10 A prudent prince will consult others and obtain the opinions, viewpoints, and advice of wise counselors to help him make good decisions. Only a foolish prince will seek to stand on his own. The source of the advice is also important as is shown be Solomon’s son Rehoboam who rejected the counsel of his father’s older advisors and followed that of his young friends thereby losing the majority of the kingdom (Santa Biblia, I Reyes 9). Gracián refers specifically to the beginning of the decline of Israel because of this imprudence (357).

11 On November 4th during his first voyage, for example, Columbus writes, “Entendió también que lejos de allí había hombres de un ojo y otros con hocicos de perros que comían los hombres y que en tomando uno lo degollaban y le bebían su sangre y le cortaban su natura” (95). Later, however, in his Carta a Luis de Santangel Columbus
Similarly, and in some cases in combination with cannibalism, human sacrifice was considered a horror by the civilized European peoples and an indication of barbarity (Pagden 80). For Vitoria, these actions demonstrated a lack of reason and went against a civilized community because it was an “anti-social behaviour” (83).

The distinction of civilization and barbarity goes back to the Greeks. As Gracián states, “Nace bárbaro el hombre; redímese de bestia cultivándose. Hace personas la cultura, y más cuanto mayor. En fe de ella pudo Grecia llamar bárbaro a todo el restante universo” (227). After explaining its etymology, Covarrubias defines bárbaro as:

De aquí nació el llamar bárbaros a todos los extranjeros de la Grecia, adonde residía la monarquía y el imperio. Después que se pasó a los romanos, también ellos llamaron a los demás bárbaros, fuera de los griegos; finalmente a todos los que hablan con toscedad y grosería llamamos bárbaros, y a los que son inorantes [sic] sin letras, a los de malas costumbres y mal morigerados, a los esquivos que no admiten la comunicación de los demás hombres de razón, que viven sin ella, llevados de sus apetitos, y finalmente los que son despiadados y crueles. (291)

As research has shown, several Greek mythological figures represent symbolically the antithesis of several of these civilizing categories. First, anthropophagi appears in Greek mythology in the Odyssey when the Cyclops Polyphemus cooks and eats several of Odysseus’s men. Although it is a somewhat different characterization of him than other writes, “Así que de monstruos no he hallado ni noticia, salvo de una isla que es aquí en la segunda a la entrada de las Indias, que es poblada de una gente que tienen en todas las islas por muy feroces, los cuales comen carne humana” (235).

12 The term refers to “foreigners, whom the Greeks called barbaroi from the sound of their language, the ‘bar-bar’ of twittering birds” (Tyrrell 9). See also Wiedemann.
myths, in this story Homer depicts Polyphemus as a “savage” creature as he opposes the prudent and wily Odysseus (Rose 27, 244; Seaford, “Cyclopes”). More important for this study and the plays analyzed here, however, the Amazons and the Centaurs symbolize the uncivilized in their repudiation of marriage and commerce. As will be demonstrated in the following pages, they represented the uncivilized for the classical Greeks and for the Spaniards of the seventeenth century.

Both Tyrrell’s *Amazons, a study in Athenian mythmaking* and duBois’s *Centaurs and Amazons* investigate the existence and use of these mythological beings in classical Greece, especially the fifth century B.C. in the imperialistic Athens. duBois uses the following schematic to help explain the myths:

- Greek/barbarian
- Male/female
- Human/animal

The sum of these polarities yields the norm, the Greek male human being, and the others, on the opposite side of the series of polarities, are grouped together by analogy. Barbarian is like female is like animal. (4)

Thus, in the myths of the Greeks, their civilization was opposed by the barbaric female Amazons on one hand and the barbaric animal Centaurs on the other.\(^\text{13}\)

These two oppositions to the civilization of the Greeks were erected like boundaries for them. duBois asserts, “In the myths of the Greeks, the Amazons and the Centaurs were creatures at the boundaries of difference. Speculation about them constitutes part of the Greeks’ thinking about sexual, cultural, and species boundaries.

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\(^{13}\) See also Lefkowitz, 1-13.
The Centaurs were beings on the threshold between human and equine nature; they marked the limit between animal and human being” (27). Similarly, Tyrrell describes how this boundary kept moving as the known world and civilization expanded:

As the known world expanded, Amazons were moved outward from Ionia to Phrygia and from the Thermodon River to Lake Maeotis and the Caucasus Mountains. The edge of the \textit{oikoumenē} (inhabited world) is literally and metaphorically the frontier between civilization and savagery. Less a place than an idea, it expresses spatially the breakdown of differences, of the categories used to define culture and to distinguish it from bestiality below and divinity above. (56)

Centaurs and Amazons, thus, lived outside of and in opposition to the civilization of the Greeks.

The Amazons appeared in several different myths going all the way back to the Trojan War. In some versions, the Amazons come to the defense of Troy and their queen Penthesilea is killed by Achilles, but he falls in love with her as she dies (March, “Penthesilea”). Bellerophon is another Greek hero said to have fought the Amazons (duBois 32; March, “Bellerophon”). In Heracles’ Ninth Labor, he goes on an expedition to Themiscyra in order to obtain the girdle of the Amazon queen. Although sometimes he is said to have gone alone (duBois 33), most often he is accompanied by other heroes (Tyrrell 2).\textsuperscript{14} Theseus’s part in the Amazon myth has many versions. According to some,

\textsuperscript{14} Telamon is consistently mentioned whereas the Argonauts and Peleus were added later (Tyrrell 2). Theseus is also involved in some instances.
he travels with Heracles,\footnote{Possibly because “Heracles’ hold on the Amazon was too strong to be undermined by a local upstart [Theseus]” (4).} but in others he is accompanied by his friend Pirithous and the charioteer Phorbas. Either way, he takes the Amazonian queen back to Athens to be his wife.\footnote{The name of the Amazon varies in different retellings: “In antiquity there was uncertainty over the Amazon’s name, a sign of the myth’s youth; truly ancient myths have a fixed nomenclature. Vase painting of the myth give Antiope, and this was the name common in the fifth century B.C. Hippolyte prevailed in the fourth century; Melanippe and Glauce also appear” (Tyrrell 5, emphasis original).} The rest of the Amazons then invade Attica and Athens but are defeated by the Athenians. When later Theseus takes his new Greek wife Phaedra through whom he can have citizen sons, “the Amazon breaks in on the wedding feast, but is killed by Heracles” (4-6). Tyrrell and duBois also point out a couple women who lived within Greek civilization but who rejected it and became Amazons. Clytemnestra kills her husband Agamemnon (Tyrrell xvi, 104; duBois 103); and Deianira, although trying to save her marriage, acts outside of its bounds, accepts the advice of a rival, and as a result kills her husband Hercules (xvii, 104; duBois 103). The reason that Clytemnestra and Deianira become Amazons is that they reject the civilizing institution of marriage. In many of the other myths about Amazons, the particular actions that they take and their society in general reject marriage. The Amazons invade Athens because they do not want their queen to marry Theseus, and later that queen interrupts Theseus’s wedding ceremony with Phaedra (duBois 34).

For fifth century Athens, the Amazons were a complete reversal of their civilization. It began with their rejection of marriage. Tyrrell explains, “The cultural ideal, the adult male warrior, depended upon the imperative that boys become warriors and fathers, and girls become wives and mothers of sons. The genesis of the Amazon
myth is the reversal of that imperative: Amazons go to war and refuse to become mothers of sons” (xiii-xiv). The institution of marriage was a vital part of Greek culture, yet the Amazons rejected it. They were still sexual because they wanted female babies, yet they did not submit to marriage and they rejected male babies. The Greeks considered this conduct completely barbaric, and thought that “the bestiality of women’s condition is civilized by marriage” (xvi). Another example of how Amazonian customs reversed Greek culture was their worship. They were said to worship Ares, Cybele, Artemis of Ephesus, and the Thracian Artemis Tauropolos. Ares is understandable as the Amazons are given to war. The other three goddesses, however, “were deities of fertility, the wild, and wild beasts. […] They were regarded by the Greeks as foreign and barbaric” (86). Furthermore, the chosen weapons of the Amazons were also a reversal of Greek weaponry. The Greeks fought with heavy hoplite armor, but the Amazons are varyingly depicted in light armor, wicker or moon-shaped shields, on horses, or with bows all of which were manifestations of “foreignness” (12, 50-51). In all of these key aspects, the Amazons consisted of a complete reversal of Greek civilization.

17 A prime example of this civilizing influence is described by Herodotus when he explains how the Sauromatians descended from the Amazons and the Scythians: “Here they [the Amazons] steal horses and live by plundering. The Scythians first fight with them, but after they find out their sex, they send their youngest men to court them, retreating whenever the Amazons turn to attack. Eventually a Scythian happens upon an Amazon alone, and then she does not repel his advances, they have intercourse. The couple agrees to meet on the next day and to bring a friend; in this way ‘the Scythians tame the rest of the Amazons” (qtd. in Tyrrell 40-1, emphasis added).

18 Covarrubias mentions a few of these qualities as well as the reversal of eating habits. Instead of eating bread like the Greeks, the Amazons ate meat or even lizards (149-50). In regards to their diet, Tyrrell says, “Aeschylus calls the Amazons ‘manless and man-eating,’ a reference not to their diet but to their savage state as meat-eaters, as opposed to civilized Greeks, who eat bread” (21).
The Centaurs were also considered by the Greeks to be creatures that existed on the boundaries and outside of civilization. The beginnings of their race were based upon an attack on the civilizing institution of marriage: “Ixion married Dia, daughter of Eioneus, but instead of giving his father-in-law the bride-price, Ixion set for him a trap of burning coals” (duBois 27). Ixion attempted to find someone to absolve him of this terrible crime but was unable to until finally Zeus accepted him. “But Ixion, true to his anti-marriage character, attempted to seduce Zeus’ sister and wife Hera. He instead had intercourse with Nephele—cloud—an *eidolon* of Hera, and begat either the first Centaur, or Centauros, who subsequently, after intercourse with a mare, became the father of the Centaurs” (28). The Centaurs continued this precedent set for them. Nessus, for example, abducted Hercules’s wife Deianira. Also, when Theseus’s friend Pirithous invited the Centaurs to his wedding celebration to Hippodamia, the Centaurs got drunk and tried to kidnap the bride and the other Lapith women.\footnote{This episode is often connected with the Amazons’ resistance to the marriage of their queen to Theseus and their attack to prevent that ceremony or with the queen’s attack during the ceremony of Theseus and Phaedra (duBois 40; Tyrrell 6).} In the earliest versions of the Centaur myth which involved Hercules and his attempts to stay with them, “Centaurs consistently violated relations of *xenia*, guest-friendship” (28). One unique exception to this pattern was Chiron who traced his ancestry not to Ixion but to Cronus and Philyra. He was the tutor to many Greek heroes such as Hercules and Achilles, was the only immortal Centaur, and was also the only Centaur to be married. With this exception, the rest of the Centaurs were considered “Anti-culture personified, […] violent, uncivilized beasts”\footnote{One other possible exception would be Pholus, but he still ate raw meat (Griffiths).} (29).
Commerce is one example of civilization, but the Centaurs rejected the exchange of gifts, goods, women, and hospitality. They consistently threaten marriage as is made manifest in the examples of Ixion, Nessus, and the attempted capture of Hippodamia. The Centaurs’ “promiscuous sexuality” (duBois 27) represented an “overly masculine, violently bestial alternative,” or even a “hyper-masculine” (31) alternative, to the culture of the Greeks. Nessus, for example, “in laying his hands on her, broke into the circle of human exchange of women and caused disaster to the house of Herakles. His intervention leads to the death of both the violated woman and her husband” (98). The Centaurs’ disruption of marriage is a specific example of their general trend to impede “orderly exchange” (29). The Centaurs were antagonistic towards “the forms of exchange typical of Greek civilization” (28). Similarly to the Amazons, the Centaurs are “Barbarians [who] are anti-culture, incapable of engaging in exchange” (68).

In fifth-century Athens, the Amazons and Centaurs were frequently used in monumental and other forms of art to represent the Persians. After the Greeks had defeated the Persians under Darius in 490 on the plain of Marathon and those under Xerxes in 480-479 on land and sea, Athens began the Delian League (Tyrrell 9). duBois notes that “Again and again, the battle between Lapiths and Centaurs, the battle between Greeks and Amazons, appear together in the mythic programs of the classical city” (54). The repetition of these scenes is not casual but instead an allegorical representation of the Greek victory over the invading Persians under Darius and Xerxes. Direct representation

21 See also Griffiths; Rose and March, “Deianira;” Rose, Robertson, and Griffiths; and Schachter.
22 Covarrubias in part describes Centaurs thus: “Cerca de los griegos, centauros vale tanto como ladrones, gente fiera inhumana” (501). See also Griffiths.
of the Persians was extremely rare, and “On most works of art of the fifth century, however, the Persians were shown allegorically, very often through the figures of Centaurs and Amazons” (54). Tyrrell also recognizes the link that connected the Amazons to the Persians: “invading Persians from the East were equated with Amazons” (5). He also notes that Amazons were often depicted wearing Persian trousers, but even more telling is the use of the bow: “The bow was reviled from Homeric times as a coward’s weapon because with it one could kill from a safe distance. On the other hand, it was a menacing feature of Persian warfare. […] the bow is ambivalent. It denotes a mode of fighting that is both beneath a Greek and terrifying to him—a suitable weapon for an Amazon, a woman yet a redoubtable foe” (50-51). As Tyrrell states, “These sculptures convey a consistent message: the Athenians possess a land worthy of divine strife and are a people who have overcome the forces of barbarism under the special protection of their goddess, the delight of her father, Zeus” (20). Therefore, the Amazons and Centaurs were representations of barbarians and were antagonistic to civilized Greek culture. In this way, the prudence of Greek civilization was mythically compared to

Some prominent Athenian examples of this type of art include the Parthenon, the Stoa Poikile (or Painted Porch), and the Theseum (Theseus’s sanctuary in which the Athenians put what they claimed were his bones) (Tyrrell 10-11). The Stoa Poikile was actually one of the few exceptions on which the Persians were directly represented. It showed the Battle of Marathon as well as the Amazon invasion of Attica, equating the two (duBois 54; Tyrrell 11).

A couple examples of the intimidation which the bow causes are seen in the Battle of Marathon and the Battle of Thermopylae: “The Athenians at Marathon ran under the weight of their armor to engage the enemy before they could let loose their missiles. Their fusillade before the battle of Thermopylae, it was said, would shut out the sun. So striking was the bow that the Greeks made it the Persian weapon par excellence, even though the Persians themselves relied on the spear. Faced with archers, unless supported by their own long-range troops, hoplites were vulnerable and thrown on the defensive” (Tyrrell 50-51).
imprudent reversals of it and shown to be more advanced. According to duBois, “the Persian War itself simply exemplifies a general principle of the cosmos, the superiority of the Greeks to barbarians” (55) as is also seen in the advantages of Greek culture over the anti-culture Amazons and Centaurs.  

The analysis below of the mythological plays of the seventeenth century will show that this conception of the barbarity of the Amazons and Centaurs continued into the Spanish Golden Age. Just as the ancient Greeks had connected their fight against the barbaric Persians with their mythical heroes’ fight against the Amazons, the Spaniards continued that tradition by putting themselves solidly on the side of the Greek civilization warring against barbarity. In the myths of Greece and the mythological plays of Spain, the prudent, and therefore civilized, Greek/Spanish warriors, heroes, and princes were fighting against barbarity in the form of Amazons and Centaurs.

25 Another interesting aspect of the myth of the Amazons is why it developed and how it gained importance. A couple reasons put forth by Tyrrell are to 1) counterbalance the victory of Athena over Poseidon in the naming of the city, and 2) to alleviate the fears of fathers who had to give away their daughters in marriage. In regards to the former, Tyrrell, using the art in and on the Parthenon, states, “the violence and chaos of her [Athena’s] liminality—that is, the notion that the daughter would use her own productivity, protected by her own military might, to found her own household and city [Athens]—had been excised in the death of her surrogates, the Amazons” (125-26). Although Athena was able to defeat Poseidon and found Athens, “Athena’s success in the contest with Poseidon as depicted in the west pediment was meant to be balanced by the defeat of the Amazons shown in the metope” (126). In regards to the latter reason, Tyrrell states, “The desideratum of every Greek household was self-sufficiency. None could achieve it because every house had to give out its own daughters in marriage in order to receive others for its sons. The moment of separation, long foreseen and painful, was built into the social fabric” (127). By portraying the results of daughters who do not marry, it is shown why daughters must be given away by their fathers.

26 Other comedias provide corroborating evidence. In Tirso de Molina’s Amazonas en las Indias, the civilized Spaniards arrive in the New World and find Amazons living there. One of the Amazons in the play tells Gonzalo Pizarro that her Amazonian ancestors were “bárbaras” and had become “viudas por sus manos mesmas” (216). Furthermore, in Lope
Many of the comedias of the Golden Age include descriptions of prudent or imprudent princes, and these dramas demonstrate the characteristics of discretion outlined above. Lope’s *El príncipe perfecto* I and II, for example, begins with don Juan de Sosa’s praise of the prudence of his prince: “¡Dichoso el reino que goza / Príncipe tan noble y cuerdo!” (93). The two plays contain many instances in which the prince and later king Juan must demonstrate his wisdom. First, when his father Alfonso decides not to go to Jerusalem but instead return and resume his place as king, the prince honors his father by relinquishing the throne to him. The king describes this act as prudent saying, “Tiene Juan / Divino el entendimiento” (99) and calling him “Hijo discreto” (100). Later when don Juan de Sosa is describing his prince and now King Juan to the Catholic Kings, he describes his prudence in relation to how he judges cases:

De suerte, que es la prudencia

De los extremos el medio:

En mercedes y castigos

Mucho se parece al cielo (100).

Throughout both of the plays, the king is constantly hearing and judging with wisdom different cases that his subjects bring before him. He also inspires the observance of his

de Vega’s *Fuenteovejuna*, during Laurencia’s speech to the men which provokes them into attacking the comendador, she says that they are barbarians and therefore they are not Spanish: “bárbaros sois, no españoles” (v. 1771). She later says that the Amazons are the “eterno espanto del orbe” (v. 1795).

27 One example is the case of the son who hit his father. The king, because of his prudence, is able to discover that the son was actually illegitimate and the wife had been unfaithful to her husband. He sends the son to the New World thereby punishing the wife but not revealing the dishonor to anyone (125-6). The Prior tells the king that he had figured out “Cosas que sólo pudiera / Penetrar tu entendimiento” (125), and the mother says that the king “Sentencia diste / Digna de un Rey tan discreto” (126).
laws in his subjects because he himself “Guarda las leyes que hace / Como si fuese sujeto / A las leyes el que es Rey” (100). In Part II, king Juan, the perfect prince, takes special interest in the education of his son Alfonso who is now the prince. Lope de Sosa describes in detail the subjects that they are covering which include Aristotle. The king recognizes the importance of a prince’s education so that the prince will grow in wisdom and be able to rule prudently (119). Finally, when the prince seeks advice from his father and explains to him his situation, he pretends that it involves someone else instead of himself. The king, however, realizes what is going on and because of his astuteness is able to discover the truth. The situation involves the prince’s honor and that of a friend and subject. The king’s advice is that the prince allow Lope de Sosa to marry doña Leonor thereby not disrupting the exchange of women (127-29). These plays show that El príncipe perfecto must be prudent in that he has good laws which he observes, he judges cases with discretion, he is intelligent and understands what is going on around him, he advances civilization even on other continents, and he permits exchange and commerce.

A second example of a play in which prudence plays a key role in the development of the characters and the plot is Calderón’s La vida es sueño. Following the reasoning of de Armas, Basilio claims to be a wise ruler because of his knowledge of astrology; however, astrology is not the path to wisdom. The king acts imprudently

28 Another study which investigates the use of prudence in La vida es sueño was done by Carreño-Rodríguez in his book Alegorías del poder: crisis imperial y comedia nueva (192-98).
29 de Armas writes, “Thus, according to Socrates, Basilio's search for the divine in the stars and constellations would not lead him to philosophy. Indeed, in Estrella's praise of Basilio as 'Sabio Tales' (1. 579) one may detect veiled criticism. T. E. May explains: ‘Practically all that is known of Thales is that he was so taken up with the stars that he fell into a hole in the ground.’ Basilio's gaze is not that of a philosopher-king and his
when he bases his actions solely on the interpretation of the horoscope and his wife’s viper dream.\(^{30}\) He believes Segismundo to be under the effects of the planet Saturn, and instead of attempting to lessen their influence, he aggravates the situation.\(^{31}\) He later sets up a test for Segismundo that he knows the prince will fail, possibly because he has doubts about his legitimacy and also to prove to others that he himself is wise and followed the correct course of action by banishing his son to the tower.\(^{32}\) Basilio, therefore, is an example of an imprudent ruler. Segismundo, on the other hand, begins lacking discretion but is able to progress over the course of the play. Prudence must be learned through experience, and Segismundo has been separated from any opportunity to astrologizing will bring about his fall as it did Thales's” (905). See also Carreño-Rodríguez (193).

\(^{30}\) de Armas states, “His reaction to the child is of such violence and cruelty because he may be looking at him with suspicion and hatred. Basilio believes that Segismundo, the viper that killed Clorilene, may not be his own son: he is an alien and murderous element intruding into Basilio's grief over his wife's untimely death. The prince's illegitimacy would add a further parallel between him and Rosaura, since the latter was born of Violante and an absent and unknown father, whom the audience knows to be Clotaldo. Basilio's wisdom can thus be brought into question. One may suspect that he does not imprison his son merely for reasons of state. His uncharacteristic and violent actions may be the result of personal suspicions, and these could have influenced his interpretation of the horoscope” (907).

\(^{31}\) de Armas affirms, “Basilio, casting a horoscope at the birth of his son, realizes that he has not escaped the malefic influence of the seventh planet” (905). The seventh planet is Saturn. Additionally, “The King knows that the stars cannot force the will, and yet he has imprisoned Segismundo. A magus who deals with the occult forces in nature would have attempted to utilize correspondences, affinities, and oppositions in order to effect changes in temperament” (908). See also Carreño-Rodríguez (195).

\(^{32}\) de Armas asserts, “As for [prudencia], Robert D. F. Pring-Mill asserts that it would be impossible for Segismundo to possess it, since according to Thomas Aquinas, ‘la prudencia no es jamás innata’. It is acquired through experience. Again, a sabio such as Basilio should have been aware of this. The years of incarceration deny Segismundo that prudence he needs for his test” (909). Therefore, “The test he gives his son is an impossible one. Rather than helping to transform his son's cruel saturnine inclination and his violent martial temperament, Basilio has fostered them. […] Basilio could not but foretell the unhappy conclusion of the test to which he subjects Segismundo” (910). See also Carreño-Rodríguez (195).
gain that experience. After his time in the palace, however, and with the help of Clotaldo, Segismundo has gained that much need experience. He is also joined by Astrea/Rosaura. Astraesa is the Roman goddess of justice, and with her at his side, Segismundo proceeds even more prudently. Basilio recognizes Segismundo as his son, and Segismundo reaffirms the relationship of Astolfo and Rosaura.

In this play, Basilio is proved to be imprudent by trusting his own knowledge of astrology. He seeks to prove himself instead of taking counsel with others and also neglects the education of his son the prince. Segismundo, on the other hand, shows that princes must learn prudence. Although at first he desires to follow his Centaur-like instincts and take Rosaura by force, he is later able to temper them and affirms the relationship of Rosaura and Astolfo instead of interrupting it. Instead of following his “gusto,” Segismundo has learned how to be just and pardons his father but punishes the inciter of the rebellion.

Finally, Calderón’s play Las tres justicias en una also demonstrates the importance of prudence in a prince. This play is full of confusion and deception, and king Pedro must discover the truth behind the façades. At the beginning the younger don Lope spares the life of don Mendo and doña Violante (677-8). Don Mendo, upon arriving at

33 de Armas writes, “Returned to the tower, the prince has time to reconsider the palace experience with the aid of Clotaldo. Past events form the basis of his future prudence. Furthermore, he is joined in his uprising by Rosaura, who had assumed the name Astrea at Court, an appellation that connects her with the classical goddess Astraea” (910). See also Carreño-Rodríguez (196).

34 Although Carreño-Rodríguez writes that Segismundo is “renunciando al amor de la mujer que ama, restituye el honor de Rosaura casándola con Astolfo” (197), Segismundo does not love but only lusts after Rosaura. Therefore, when he renounces this lust he is renouncing the barbaric, animalistic nature of the “fieras” which once dominated him and which constantly dominates the Centaurs.
Zaragoza is named the Justicia mayor of the kingdom and is glad that he is able to fulfill the request of don Lope (padre) who had begged the king to spare the life of don Lope his son (682). Later, when don Lope (padre) interposes himself during a fight between the younger don Lope and his opponent don Guillén, the opponent cedes before his authority but the younger don Lope strikes don Lope (padre). Everyone is offended by this act and all of the witnesses begin to pursue the son (697). The father then goes to the king but this time he asks for justice instead of grace (698).

The king demonstrates his prudence by realizing that the Lopes may not be father and son and also realizes that he needs to hear the other side of the case (701). In order to discover the truth behind this mystery, he visits the mother doña Blanca. She confesses that don Mendo had promised her younger sister Laura his hand in marriage, but after having slept with her, he leaves for France and marries another. Laura dies in childbirth and doña Blanca raises the child as her own and as the son of her husband don Lope (padre). Thus, the king discovers that the younger don Lope is actually the son of don Mendo (705-6). The king now faces a new dilemma: he must publicly punish the younger Lope’s public crime of striking his father while also secretly punishing the secret crimes of don Mendo—dishonoring Laura—and doña Blanca—tricking her husband (707). He wisely finds a way to accomplish all three punishments, one public and two private, with one act. He publicly has the younger don Lope executed, and makes sure that doña Blanca and don Mendo see what has happened. Don Lope reads the sentence that the king had given:

Quien al que tuvo por padre
ofende, agravia e injuria,
muera, y véale morir
quien un limpio honor deslustra,
para que lloré su muerte
también quien de engaños usa
juntando de tres delitos
las tres justicias en una. (709)

Both don Mendo and doña Blanca realize that they are being punished for their crimes and admit as much in asides, and the king has shown himself to be just and prudent (709).

Therefore, in the *comedia* of the Golden Age, a perfect prince will be prudent in several ways as shown in these dramas. First, a wise king will not seek false knowledge (Basilio) but will seek the true knowledge which is found in God (Juan, Alfonso, and Segismundo).35 Next, he will not neglect his education or that of his son (Basilio) but instead will further it and make sure to increase his knowledge (Juan, Alfonso, and Segismundo). Third, he will not trust his own wisdom (Basilio) but will seek the advice of others (Segismundo and Alfonso). Furthermore, he will submit voluntarily to the law (Juan) and will be careful to uphold the law. When judging cases, it is important to hear both sides (Pedro), to judge wisely (Juan, Segismundo, and Pedro), and to show clemency and justice (Juan, Segismundo, Pedro). It is also important that the punishment match the crime (Pedro). Additionally, a king will understand what is taking place in his kingdom (Juan, Pedro) and seek to enhance his territories’ civilization (Juan). Finally, as opposed to the uncivilized Amazons and Centaurs, a prudent prince will uphold the

35 To be clear as to which king or prince appears in which drama, Juan and his son Alfonso (and his father Alfonso) appear in *El príncipe perfecto I* and *II*, Basilio and Segismundo appear in *La vida es sueño*, and Pedro appears in *Las tres justicias en una*. 
institution of marriage so that his family and society in general will continue since no house can be completely self-sustaining without giving away daughters and bringing other women in (Juan, Alfonso, Segismundo, and Pedro). These comedias, therefore, paint a picture of many of the attributes that make up a prudent prince.

The arbitristas also had much to say in regards to the prudence of rulers, and much of their advice is similar to what is seen in the comedia. For the arbitristas, prudence is vital to a prince as it can be a guide (Quevedo 379) and an anchor for a prince’s territories: “Áncora es la prudencia de los Estados, aguja de marear del príncipe. Si en él faltare esta virtud, falta el alma del gobierno” (Saavedra Fajardo 185). It is so important that Rivadeneyra says that the other virtues depend on it: “Pero la guía y maestra de todas las virtudes morales del príncipe cristiano debe ser la prudencia, que es la que rige y da tasa y medida a todas las demás. Esta prudencia, dice Cicerón, es arte de la vida, como la medicina lo es de la salud” (147). Although Gracián divides prudence into two categories—“Adécuase esta capital prenda de otras dos, fondo de juicio y elevación de ingenio, que forman un prodigio si se juntan[...] Es el juicio trono de la prudencia, es el ingenio esfera de la agudeza” (26)—, the arbitristas actually detail many ways in which a prince should be prudent.

First, a prince is not born intelligent but rather needs an education in order to be able to know things. As Saavedra Fajardo indicates, “Los príncipes nacieron poderosos, pero no enseñados” (190). Many of the arbitristas speak of the importance of the education of the prince and even go into some detail.36 One important subject, for

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36 Some of these writers include Mariana, Mendo, Rivadeneyra, Mártir Rizo, and Saavedra Fajardo.
example, is history as it can provide positive examples that a prince should follow and negative ones that he should avoid. Mártil Rizo, for example, wrote *Vida de Rómulo* since Romulus’s history is such a good example for princes. Among the other things that a prince must study and learn is himself. Gracían focuses intensely on this trait and declares, “El primer paso del saber es saberse” (111) and later “Es efecto grande de la prudencia la reflexión sobre sí” (139). A prince must also know other people such as his subjects and his enemies (Rivadeneyra 161-63). Saavedra Fajardo warns that a prince must not base his opinion of others only on what he hears or on first appearances as the pearl, after all, is found within a rough shell (211). A prince should furthermore know what is going on within his kingdom and “mirar atentamente” (Rivadeneyra 161) everything that is happening. Mendo explains this idea more saying, “Es la prudencia vigilante centinela, que en la cabeza, como atalaya, atiende à todo lo que pasa en el campo enemigo de los vicios; preuiene sus emboscadas: auisa de los riesgos: toca à la arma en los peligros” (49). Although knowing this information is good, it is not sufficient to make a prince prudent until it is applied. It is good to notice things, but that is not enough as Gracián explains by indicating that a prince should proceed with wisdom, or be “juicioso” (164). By proceeding from knowledge to the application of knowledge, a prince will be able to promote advancements in his kingdom and prevent negative occurrences.\(^\text{37}\)

\(^{37}\) The idea of using prudence to prevent (or “prevenir”) bad things is common among the *arbitristas* as well with references to this idea from Gracián, Mendo, Saavedra Fajardo, and Rivadeneyra.
Next, some of the positive advancements that discretion can cause have to do with the laws that a prince passes. Several *arbitristas* of the Golden Age mentioned the precepts of establishing good laws, having only few laws, and assuring the observance of the laws as being important to a nation. Rivadeneyra, for example, instructs princes, no hacer muchas leyes, porque los súbditos se cansan con la multiplicación de las leyes, y los jueces son remisos en ejecutarlas, si no les viene algún interés de ello; y el príncipe pierde la reputación cuando sus leyes no son obedecidas; y por eso conviene que las leyes sean pocas y muy miradas, y que sean guardadas con gran rigor, y para mover a los súbditos a la observancia de ellas, que el mismo príncipe, que es libre y legislador, por su voluntad se sujete a su misma ley, y con su ejemplo incite a los otros a guardarlas. (165)

Mariana concurs with this assessment concluding, “Las leyes no debieran, pues, de ser muchas en guisa que sea embarazo su mesma multitud; ni menos difíciles de entender aun por ingenios desaventajados” (566). Two of Mendo’s “Documentos” are “DOCUMENTO LV. Haga obseruar las Leyes, que son las mas firmes murallas de los Pueblos” (32) and “DOCUMENTO LVI. No multiplique Leyes, y mande atajar pleitos, que son redes, y lazos de los subditos” (38). Mendo also asserts that in order assure the observance of the laws, a ruler should be present in his kingdom.  

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38 Mariana equates the passing of laws to prudence and civilization: “De la escuela de Aristóteles salió Alejandro tan aventajado varon como es de suponer fuese el que ató al yugo de su imperio á todo el mundo y dió leyes y principados á inúmeras naciones, convirtiéndolas de bárbaras en cultas” (284).

39 Mendo says, “Con la presencia del Príncipe, es mayor la observancia de las leyes; que se cumplen con mas tibieza, quando asiste en mas remota distancia. Atrae la piedra iman
being present, a prudent King will also obey the law himself, not because he is subject to
the law but instead because his example will encourage his subjects to also obey as
Rivadeneyra mentions in the above quote. Mariana concurs stating, “Tienen mas eficacia
en los hombres los ejemplos que las leyes, y suele considerarse como una especie de
obsequio imitar las costumbres de los príncipes, ahora sean buenas, ahora malas” (184).
Quevedo goes as far as saying,

La primera virtud de un rey es la obediencia. Ella, como sabidora de lo
que vale la templanza y moderación, dispone con suavidad el mandar en el
sumo poder. No es la obediencia mortificación de los monarcas; que
noblemente reconocen las grandes almas vasallaje a la razón, y a la piedad
y a las leyes. Quien a éstas manda sin haberlas obedecido, antes martiriza
que gobierna. (479)

Similar to passing laws that his subjects must obey, a monarch must also exact
taxes or “tributos” that his subjects must pay. The arbitristas are insistent, however, that
a prince should not overly burden his kingdom with these “tributos.” According to Martir
Rizo, a prince should not “oprimir a los vasallos con excesivos tributos, porque éstos son
la cosa más aborrecible del pueblo; por esto se debe atender con sumo cuidado cómo será
menor este daño forzoso” (70). In his emblem “LXVII. Poda, no corta” Saavedra Fajardo
uses the theme of “tributos” to decisively compare kings and tyrants:

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40 Rivadeneyra links prudence to the levying of taxes by saying, “Los romanos, que
fueron prudentes, no tenían sino un cuestor que era cobrador y depositario de sus rentas
en cada provincia” (123).
No corta el labrador por el tronco el árbol, aunque haya menester hacer leña para sus usos domésticos, sino le poda las ramas, y no todas, antes, las deja de suerte que puedan volver a brotar, para que, vestido y poblado de nuevo, le rinda el año siguiente el mismo beneficio: consideración que no cae en el arrendador. Porque, no teniendo amor a la heredad, trata solamente de disfrutalla en el tiempo que la goza, aunque después quede inútil a su dueño. Esta diferencia hay entre el señor natural y el tirano en la imposición de los tributos. Éste, como violento poseedor, que teme perder presto el reino, procura desfrutalle mientras se le deja gozar la violencia, y no repara en arrancalle tan de raíz las plumas, que no puedan renacer. [...] Pero el príncipe natural considera la justificación de la causa, la cantidad y el tiempo que pide la necesidad, y la proporción de las haciendas y de las personas en el repartimiento de los tributos, y trata su reino, no como cuerpo que ha de fenecer con sus días, sino como quien ha de durar en sus sucesores, reconociendo que los príncipes son mortales y eterno el reino. Y esperando dél continuados frutos cada año, le conserva como seguro depósito de sus riquezas, de que se pueda valer en mayores necesidades. (467)

Además, Mendo proporciona varios metales para explicar cómo un príncipe debe imponer impuestos. Un príncipe es un pastor que cuida de los ovejas (sus sujetos), “no enflaqueciéndoles con tiranas exacciones, atendiendo más a las conueniencias dellos, que
à las propias suyas” (Documento XI, 55). He later compares them to what a bee takes from a flower:

mas no por eso se emprobencen, si se ajustan los tributos à las fuerzas de cada vno, y no se multiplican, sino los precisos para los gastos inexactables con que el bien publico se conserve. Las auejas (que miras aquí) cojen del romero flores, y plantas, el jugo, para componer sus panales, sin quitar la sustancia, i hazer daño à las mismas flores, de que se aprovechan. Asi se han de imponer, y coger los tributos. (Documento XL, 4)

Although it is necessary to charge taxes or “tributos,” a prince should make sure that he is not overloading his kingdom with them or the source will run dry. Instead of being rigorous, he should be generous and seek to increase his kingdom instead of his wallet.

Next, when the laws are not observed, a prince must act as judge. In order to be able to judge wisely, a prince must be patient and listen to both sides of a case or argument. Quevedo calls his chapter on patience the most important one (496), and Gracián affirms, “Hombre detenido, evidencia de prudente” (278). Gracián continues by saying that a prince should be patient by not being persuaded by the first thing he hears: “Cásanse algunos con la primera información, de suerte que las demás son concubinas; y, como se adelante siempre la mentira, no queda lugar después para la verdad: ni la

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41 Rivadeneyra furthers this metaphor saying, “dejando las otras razones y semejanzas que tiene el buen príncipe con el buen pastor, una es muy principal, esta de que vamos hablando, de las cargas y tributos que se imponen a la república; porque así como el pastor trasquila y no desuel a su ganado […] así el buen príncipe, de tal suerte debe cargar a su pueblo (cuando lo pide la necesidad) que le trasquile y no le desuelle” (121).

42 Mendoza’s “Documento XXXVIII” is “liberal con sus Vasallos, y ellos le franquearán sus bienes” (182), and in his next Documento he states, “No ha de ser el cuidado del Príncipe, aumentar su Fisco, sino su Reyno” (3).
voluntad con el primer objeto, ni el entendimiento con la primera proposición se han de llenar, que es cortedad de fondo” (279-80).43 After patiently hearing both sides, a prudent ruler will be sure to judge everyone equally, defending the poor (Mendo, Documento XXII 112) and not letting the powerful break through the law as a larger animal easily breaks through a spider web (Martir Rizo 58, 161). A prince should not consider the person when deciding how to punish but should instead consider the crime and make sure that the punishment is commensurate with the offense.44 As Mendo states, “No corta luego el Medico la parte del cuerpo, que tiene alguna llaga; primero aplica remedios más suaues, hasta que el daño necesita del último, y se corta la parte dañada, porque las sanas no reciban detrimiento” (Documento XXX 150). He adds that repeated crimes should be punished severely. Although punishment and justice are necessary in a prince’s court, the arbitristas also point out that it is good to show clemency and mercy.45 A prudent prince, therefore, can demonstrate his wisdom by being patient and listening to the different sides of a case, by equally distributing justice among everyone both great and small, by disciplining proportionately to the crime, and by at times showing mercy.

43 Quevedo uses the phrase “oír las partes” (450).
44 Mendo writes, “DOCUMENTO XXXII. La pena se ha de proporcionar à la culpa” (156).
45 Mendo writes, “DOCUMENTO XXIX. No siempre se ha de executar todo el rigor de las leyes que en el Tribunal del Príncipe se debe meditar en ocasiones” (146). Saavedra Fajardo adds, “no es mejor gobernador el que más castiga, sino el que excusa con prudencia y valor que no se dé causa a los castigos. Bien así como no acreditan al médico las muchas muertes, no al cirujano que se corten muchos brazos y piernas” (152). Finally, Rivadeneyra states, “No hay cosa que haga al hombre más semejante a Dios—como dijo Cicerón—que el perdonar y dar la vida a los hombres” (138).
Furthermore, a discreet prince will show prudence in his dealings with others. Although a ruler should be courteous, he should by no means accept flattery and adulation from others. Instead of accepting flattery about how good he is, a prince should recognize that he alone cannot do everything and should seek the advice of wise counselors. As Rivadeneyra explains, “La verdadera prudencia no solamente enseña a hacer por sí lo que toca a cada uno por razón de su oficio, sino también a aprovecharse de los otros y pedirles consejo; lo cual es señal de ánimo dócil y blando, y amigo de ser enseñado; y esta blandura y docilidad es parte de la prudencia” (148). Saavedra Fajardo, in order to avoid the common error of “es vil quien le aconseja,” encourages the use of kings for counselors if that is possible although he realizes that it is generally impractical since a kingdom will only have one king (378). Thus, a wise prince will realize that he will benefit from the counsel of others but not their flattery, and in his dealings with them he will remain courteous.

Finally, the arbitristas speak of how a prince must show prudence in his dealings with his kingdom in general in order to promote its civilization and progress. First, a discerning ruler will promote the commerce of his territories. Rivadeneyra’s eleventh chapter is called “QUE EL PRÍNCIPE DEBE PROCURAR QUE SU REINO SEA RICO Y

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46 Gracián asserts, “Es la cortesía la principal parte de la cultura, especie de hechizo; y así concilia la gracia de todos, así como la descortesía el desprecio y enfado universal” (238).
47 Quevedo says, “La voz de la adulación, que con tiranía reina en los oídos de los príncipes, esforzada en su inadvertencia, suele halagarlos con decir que bien pueden echarse a dormir (quiere decir, descuidarse) con los ministros. Este es engaño, no consejo” (398).
48 Mendo states, “No puede el Príncipe por sí solo disponer todas las cosas de su Reyno; la variedad, muchedumbre, y grauedad dellas excede la capacidad del entendimiento mas despejado” (Documento LXV 25) and in a jab at Machiavelli adds, “Necio error el del impio Machauello, y del Bodino, que se atreuieron à dezir, no auia de vsar el Príncipe de Consejeros, porque eran mas de embarazo, que de ayuda” (Documento LXV 27).
ABUNDANTE, Y QUE LOS LABRADORES Y MERCADERES SEAN FAVORECIDOS’ (124), and says that “Una de las mayores alabanzas que solían dar los romanos a alguno de sus ciudadanos (aunque fuese caballero y principal), era decir que era buen hombre y buen labrador” (125). Mendo concurs affirming that “Con el Comercio se conserva la abundancia” (Documento XLII 13). Additionally, a prudent prince will uphold the institution of marriage to help advance his civilization.49 Saavedra Fajardo describes the negatives of when it is not upheld:

La mayor enfermedad de la república es la incontinencia [424] y lascivia. Dellas nacen las sediciones, las mudanzas de reinos y las ruinas de príncipes, porque tocan en la honra de muchos, y las castiga Dios severamente. Por muchos siglos cubrió de cenizas a España una dishonestidad. Por ella cayeron tantas plagas en Egipto, y padeció David grandes trabajos en su persona y en las de sus descendientes, perseguidos y muertos casi todos a cuchillo. (423)

Mariana adds that a prudent prince “enfrena el libertinaje” (259). A wise ruler, therefore, will seek to advance his civilization by defending commerce and marriage.

Thus, the arbitristas detail many ways in which a prince should be prudent. He must learn, have knowledge of many things and people, and be able to apply that knowledge. A wise ruler will show discernment in legislative and judiciary tasks. He will

49 This defense of marriage is the opposite of especially the Centaurs, who are too lascivious and rob women, and the Amazons, who reject marriage. Although the “exchange of women” (Lévi-Strauss) is included in the same paragraph as the exchange of goods, this inclusion does not signify that women are goods to be exchanged. In the society of Early Modern Spain, however, the patriarch of a family was in charge of caring for the women which included finding a spouse for them so that the males in his family would be given wives from other families.
also consult others for advice and not for praise. He will finally uphold his civilization by promoting commerce and defending marriage, the basic building block of society.\textsuperscript{50}

The Plays with Theseus

Having now described above what it means to be a prudent prince and shown the ways in which a prince can demonstrate his prudence, it is now possible to proceed to the six dramatic works that are the focus of this dissertation. The playwrights of these mythological plays include numerous commentaries on the prudence of the prince through the many princes, princesses, and graciosos that appear on stage in them. Although the perfect prince will be wise in all matters, some rulers in these dramas fall short of that ideal. These flawed sovereigns, however, are still defended, upheld, and fortified in their positions and serve to fortify the mythology of the prince in Golden Age Spain.

1. \textit{El laberinto de Creta} by Lope de Vega

The first of these dramas is \textit{El laberinto de Creta} by Lope de Vega. The princes in this play—Minos, Teseo, Oranteo, the princesses Ariadna and Fedra, and the gracioso Fineo—demonstrate varying levels of prudence in an array of areas. The first type is simply knowledge: knowing what is happening and knowing how to accomplish certain feats. When Teseo seems doomed to be eaten by the Minotaur, the princess Ariadna is able to think of a solution. Because of her intelligence, she is able to tell Teseo,
hallé el remedio mejor.

Yo te daré de oro un hilo,
que a las puertas has de atar,
por donde puedas tornar
siguiendo aquel mismo estilo.

Que no te podrás perder
si con él vienes siguiendo
la puerta, ya que al horrendo
monstruo acabes de vencer.

Para el cual has de llevar
tres panes, con tal veneno,
que de su sentido ajeno,
caiga en el mismo lugar.

Entonces, con una maza
que te daré, larga y fuerte,
en sangre, dándole muerte,
bañarás la inculta plaza. (70)

Ariadna, because of her prudence, is able to discover the means of saving Teseo from the Minotaur. Minos also shows discretion by advancing his society and having Dédalo construct the ingenious labyrinth. This edifice becomes as famous as the Minotaur:

Minos      La fábrica es excelente.

Ariadna      Es imposible que en Grecia
            haya un edificio igual.
Fedra      Ya por naciones diversas
va discurriendo la fama
con alas plumas nuevas. (66)

In this way, Minos is able to promote the civilization of his society.

Although Minos showed prudence by having great monuments constructed, he also demonstrated a lack of wisdom in the area of “tributos.” At first, Minos was planning on imposing a tribute that would have been in line with what the arbitristas advise. Feniso, Minos’s captain, praises him saying, “Ese tributo / será de esta empresa el fruto” (58). When Minos discovers what has happened in his absence and that Pasife has given birth to the Minotaur, he suddenly decides to change the tribute. He does not take the matter patiently, does not make sure that what he calls a punishment is proportionate with what the Athenians have done, and he does not levy a tax that will ensure that the source does not run dry. Instead acts vengefully and abruptly telling the Athenians, “quiero que me deis cada año / diez hombres de Vosotros, que devore / y coma aqueste monstruo de Pasife” (60). The Athenian Albante says, “y que venganza nos diera / a no ser por nuestro daño” (60) and calls it a “tributo feo” (61). Fineo calls it a “fiero tributo” and “tributo tan importuno” (60). Fineo signals that Minos is cutting down the entire tree instead of just pruning back some branches by saying, “¡Vive el cielo, que no quede / hombre en Atenas!” (61) Summing up the imprudence of Minos by imposing this “tributo,” Fineo says, “Necio está Minos” (61). Minos should have followed his first idea of applying “medias iguales” (58) instead of acting vengefully, monstrously, and disproportionately.
Having been assigned this unwise “tributo,” the Athenians do their best to act judiciously in spite of it. Albante suggests that “se echasen comunes suertes / y se hiciese igual empleo” (61). Teseo confirms this idea and adds, “todos tendrán esperanza, / y será la ley igual” (61). This plan does not appear to work out well for Teseo, however, as his name is the one that is drawn. Nevertheless, Teseo confirms the law setting an example by obeying it himself and not letting the law catch only those who do not have power in its web. Instead he strengthens the law by letting even the most powerful, Teseo himself, be caught in it.\(^51\) Teseo even laments the predicament in which other republics that are not so just find themselves:

![La ley con él se tuerza!](image)

Teseo, therefore, demonstrates great prudence by confirming the law by obeying it himself and by not nullifying it when the rich and powerful are involved.\(^52\)

Another area in which Teseo shows prudence where other princes lack it is by being present where he needs to be. Before the beginning of the play, Minos has left his island to gain vengeance over Athens. Minos recognizes that his kingdom needs him.

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\(^{51}\) Fineo asks, “¿Cómo permiten que un hombre / tan valiente y principal / vaya a dar pasto a una fiera?” (65) Teseo answers him by saying, “Porque es república justa, / y no ha de hacer cosa injusta / cuando más valor tuviera” (65).

\(^{52}\) Kidd sees this as a possible example of subversion in the comedia which goes against Maravall’s theories. Martínez Berbel, however, explains how it actually upholds the system by focusing of the secondary characters whom Lope is able to mold more. In this case, Teseo’s servant Fineo clearly espouses the conservative point of view that aligns with Maravall’s theories (162-64).
there: “Con esto pienso volver / a la patria que mi ausencia / siente con tanto rigor” (58).

Minos had left his wife Pasifé and because of that action, she is dishonored: “Puso los ojos Pasifé / en un blanco y rubio toro” (59). Oranteo later returns to his own island of Lesbos, but he abandons Ariadna in Crete. When Ariadna realizes that she made a mistake by letting her love for Oranteo cease, she blames his absence: “Delito de ausencia fue / el agravio de Oranteo” (86). Teseo, however, understands the danger that being absent can provoke and therefore decides to bring his wife Fedra with him:

Fedra, dejar no puedo
el ir a Lesbos; pero haré una cosa
en que a lo justo excedo,
que es llevarte conmigo, dulce esposa,
y ofrecer los despojos
de aquel mancebo a tus hermosos ojos. (91)

Although some princes show their imprudence by being absent, Teseo prudently brings his wife with him and is thereby able to remain present with her.

In *El laberinto de Creta*, being present often relates to being where your wife or your love is. The theme of love, marriage, and lasciviousness (which is closely related to the important idea of honor in the Golden Age drama) plays an important role in the development of this play. On the one hand, some characters seem to act like the Centaurs whose hyper-masculinity destroys civilizations through their attack on marriage. First, Júpiter, whom the characters believe is the ruler of the heavens, proves himself to be unfit for such a title:

Pasifé
pariese un medio humano y medio toro,
hazaña infame del lascivo Júpiter,
deidad indigna de tan alto nombre,
pues tiene acciones y bajezas de hombre.
Si cuando yerra un rey dicen que tiene
indignamente el cetro, no conviene
que tenga el de los cielos dios lascivo
que, en toro, transformado, me ha quitado
la honrosa vida del honor sagrado (60).

Because of Júpiter’s actions, he has hurt the kingdom of Crete and instead of a glorious return after conquering his foes, Minos declares, “Echad esas banderas por el suelo, / como conviene a un capitán sin honra” (63).

A second character who seems to follow this mold is Teseo. When Ariadna promises to save him, she also insists that “palabra nos has de dar / de llevarnos a tu tierra” (70) referring to herself and her sister Fedra. Thus, when Teseo triumphs over the Minotaur, he takes Ariadna and Fedra with him away from their father and Ariadna’s lover. He then abandons Ariadna on the island of Lesbos. These actions definitely seem to indicate that Teseo is acting against the norms of the institution of marriage. When fully analyzed, however, although these actions may not have been the best option, what Teseo accomplishes does reinforce the marriages of the civilization. He marries Fedra, and he does not hurt Ariadna’s chances of getting married by dishonoring her but even leaves her on the island of her lover Oranteo. Thus when Minos comes, Teseo is able to tell him, “Pues, ¿qué es lo que ahora intentas / si con Fedra estoy casado / y traigo
When Ariadna is revealed, both Minos and Oranteo cease to have any quarrels and they prepare “las fiestas” (98). Thus, although Teseo seemed to be acting against civilized marriage, his actions in the end upheld it, and Minos gives his blessing to Teseo and Fedra’s marriage and Oranteo and Ariadna’s marriage.

Although Minos in the third act strives to ensure that his daughters have not been dishonorably robbed by a destroyer of culture, he does not always follow the most prudent path in the giving away of his daughters. Although he knows that Oranteo desires to have Ariadna as his wife, Minos decides to give her to Feniso instead (66). Minos has taken Ariadna away from Oranteo, but the prince of Lesbos will defend his right to receive Ariadna in marriage. When he brings his army to bear and is ready to attack Crete, Minos realizes that he had made a mistake and sends Oranteo a letter “en que se ofrece a darme / la bella Ariadna en casamiento” (72). Minos also strives to make sure that both of his daughters are safe, honored, and avenged despite being forcibly taken away from their home.

A final example of the prudence or lack thereof of a prince occurs when the gracioso Fineo is made the king of the shepherds (88, 93). When Ariadna who is disguised as the shepherd Montano and further disguised as the statue of Minerva picks Fineo and Doriclea to be the king and queen for one year, all of the other shepherds eagerly await his new laws. Fineo, however, being the gracioso and not a true prince, lacks the prudence to promulgate good laws and after some of them is even told “Mandad cosas buenas” (93). Instead of doing that, however, he passes laws such as:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FINEO</th>
<th>Mando</th>
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<tr>
<td>que callen todos los necios,</td>
<td></td>
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y que les den tantos precios
cuantos ganaren callando.

FABIO Eso es pedir imposibles.

[...]

FINEO mando que mujer ninguna
pueda dinero pedir.

Doriclea Pues ¿con qué la han de servir?
Fineo ¡Reina, no seáis importuna;
que os quebraré la cabeza!

[...]

mando al fin que pierdan todos
cuantos jugaren conmigo:

[...]

mando que tenga un soneto
treinta versos. (93-94)

Fineo thus provides a comic example of how a prince who is not prudent will pass all
sorts of discombobulated laws.

In *El laberinto de Creta*, the assortment of princes show varying levels of
adherence to the precepts of prudence. Ariadna shows great ingenuity. Minos, although
he errs in his harsh and vengeful “tributo” and at times disrespect for marriage, does
promote the monumental architecture of his civilization and does in the end defend the
institution of marriage. Although some princes abandoned their people that needed them,
Teseo provided a good example by being with Fedra. He also showed that the law should
be the same for all men and not oppressive to those without power. He may not have followed the ideal course in regards to marriage, but he does in the end confirm the honorable exchange of wives even with people that were going to feed him to a monster. Only Júpiter, the mythological ruler of the heavens, is left as a lascivious destroyer of marriage, and Minos calls into question his right to have such a high post. Finally, Fineo gives an example that prudent princes should avoid with his wide array of foolish laws.

2. *Las mujeres sin hombres* by Lope de Vega

The second play, *Las mujeres sin hombres* by Lope de Vega, pits the civilized Greek culture against the uncivilized Amazons. The Greek heroes—Hércules, Teseo, and Jasón—travel to Themiscyra with their armies to bring civilization to the barbaric Amazon city and its heroes—Antiopía, Deyanira, and Menalipe. Just as the ancient Greeks had connected their fight against the barbaric Persians with their mythical heroes’ fight against the Amazons, the Spaniards continued that tradition by putting themselves solidly on the side of the Greek civilization warring against the uncivilized Amazons. Although both groups in Lope’s play *Las mujeres sin hombres* have some level of discreción, the Amazons seem to need the civilizing influence of the Greeks to reach their potential.

Both the Greeks and the Amazons have attained some level of knowledge and have attained some advancements to their societies such as the ability to construct certain structures.

53 The connection of foes to the Persians or Amazons had a long tradition. According to Spawforth, “Roman emperors from Augustus on equated Persia with Parthia in presenting eastern policy and warfare, along the way fuelling subject-Greek memories of the Persian wars, a favourite theme of the Second Sophistic.” (“Persian-Wars tradition”).
things. The Greeks, for example, are all called “discretos, valientes hombres” (392). Although there is not much detail about what they have done that proves them prudent, Jasón has invented the ship:

que las naves en que vengo
es una nueva invención
del valeroso Jasón,
que por compañero tengo.

De tablas y árboles hechas,
sirven de casas sin pies,
que cortan el mar que ves
como voladoras flechas. (380)

Teseo, meanwhile, in a reference to the myth of the Labyrinth, is said to have used his mind to help fight the Minotaur: “Aquí viene el gran Teseo, / el que, con industria y armas, / mató al Minotauro” (392). The Amazons, on the other hand, although they are completely taken aback by the houses floating on the water, have been able to intelligently construct their wall which protects their city as Jasón attests to: “Muro formado / con bravo ingenio y mano artificiosa” (388). The Amazons also teach their young daughters both “letras y armas, porque son / en letras y armas extremo” (382). They do, therefore, both have at least some level of cultural advancement and intelligence.

54 Hipólita says, “Si el mar / los pudo en la tierra echar, / ¿no es justo darme temor?” (386)
In order to have a well-run kingdom, the Amazons choose a queen based upon whoever is “la más sabia” (382), and they actually first enter the drama making this decision. Antiopía, Deyanira, and Menalipe are all contenders, but particularly the first two. In their discussion, however, Menalipe must remind them to not use force but rather reason to determine who will be queen: “Deja, Antiopía, la espada, / y averiguén las razones / vuestras justas pretensiones” (382). She also later tells both of them “Acabad ya de ser necias” (283). The Amazons eventually select Antiopía to be their queen, and Deyanira acknowledges that Antiopía is full of “erudición” and that “En mí venció la razón” (384). Thus, although the contenders left the realm of prudence during the contest to see who would become queen, they state that they have chosen the wisest one to rule them and advance their city.

Although the Amazons demonstrate some level of intelligence and have chosen the wisest one to be their monarch, they are still represented as barbarians. Just as in Greek mythology the Amazons were barbarians and hostile to civilization, the Amazons in this drama fall into the same mold. This barbarity is one of the reasons that the Greek heroes have come to Themiscyra. Although they speak of the honor that they wish to gain, Teseo also refers to their barbaric and cruel nature:

Si es aquesta Temiscira,

55 Lope de Vega, in his dedication to this comedia even states that these women were able to found a “concertada república” (377).
56 Antiopía and Deyanira are the two primary contenders, but Menalipe also says, “Si a tales términos viene, / querré entrar entre vosotras” (384).
57 Although here Deyanira admits defeat based upon who is “la más sabia,” she later will tell Hércules that it was the richest who was elected: “el reino que me quitó / Antiopía, porque yo / con menos oro me hallaba” (413). If this is actually the case, that could be a further argument against the prudence of the Amazons as they do not obey their own law and could elect an imprudent queen.
y lava el pie de este monte
caudaloso Tremedonte,
desde sus riberas mira,
porque discurre la fama
de la crueldad de esta gente,
loca, bárbara, insolente,
a quien Amazonas llama,
que, según es su fiera,
aun piensan que esta victoria
no ha de hacer menos la gloria
del laurel de su cabeza. (380)

Teseo here explains that the prudent, civilized Greeks have come to conquer the “loca, bárbara, insolente” city of the Amazons. As already mentioned, they do lack some of the advancements of the Greeks, namely the ship. Additionally, Lope presents them as lacking several other things that the civilized Greeks have.

One characteristic that the Greeks have and which the Amazons lack is courtesy. This comes up during the first interaction between Greeks and Amazons. Hipólita has captured the gracioso Fineo, and when he comes before the queen, he asks for her feet so that he may kiss them. She, however, is completely taken aback by this common courtesy seen so often on the seventeenth-century stage and orders him to stop:

Fineo    Dame esos pies,
Minerva divina, Palas,
hermosa Venus.
Another situation arises later when Teseo arrives as an ambassador. After having been introduced to everyone and speaking for awhile, all of the Amazon leaders have fallen for the Greek hero. The principal characteristic that Antiopía finds surprising and calls attention to, however, is his courtesy: “Qué cortés cosa es el hombre! / ¡Ah! ¡Mal haya la primera / que nos privó de este bien” (401). The Greeks, therefore, are depicted as being prudent because they are courteous whereas the less discreet Amazons lack common courtesy.

A second difference which clearly distinguishes the Amazon princesses from the Greek princes is their consultation of others. On the one hand, the Greek princes all consult one another and they consult Marte, the god of war, in order to make a better decision about how to proceed and what actions to take (397). On the other hand, the Amazons appear to delay the consultation of counselors and reject it. When Teseo comes as an ambassador to Themiscyra to discuss peace, the queen tells him that she needs to consult, “mi senado” (400). Teseo must therefore spend the night in the palace. Antiopía’s true motive is revealed later, however, when she tells Hipólita, “Por ver al Duque esta noche / le dilaté la respuesta” (402). After a month has passed, Antiopia has still not received any advice or decision from these Amazons. Additionally, instead of
listening to Deyanira’s advice when she is giving laws and when Teseo arrives, she has her put in prison instead. Deyanira ironically remarks, “que ansí / medra quien consejos da” (412). Thus, the Amazons seem to fall short of the civilized Greeks in the area of prudently seeking counsel as well.

In a couple aspects of justice, the play provides examples of the Amazons giving laws and enforcing them, but there are no corresponding Greek actions. First, in regards to giving laws, when Antiopía begins her rule, she promulgates several new laws. Although some of these laws are received well by her peers and now subjects, others further demonstrate of the lack of prudence of the Amazons by not following the precepts that the arbitristas have given. First, although she does pass some good laws, others are not exemplary. Her first one is that for speaking about men, the Amazons will be fined. Deyanira responds by saying that it is “gran rigor” and, “Hablar sólo de un hombre honestamente, / no me parece digno de castigo” (384). Hipólita later confirms the opinion that this law is too rigorous when she tells Fineo,

la privación levanta
todo mortal apetito,
y que, por leves, nos mandan
apenas hablar en hombres (393).

Deyanira’s warning, however, is not heeded and Antiopía further forbids the possession of a portrait of a man. The queen later does not pay attention to Deyanira when she tries to point out that one of her laws is contradictory. Additionally, Antiopía establishes too many laws. Deyanira asserts, “Muchas leyes has dado, y muy cansadas” (386). Because of the multiplication of laws, they will not be followed as well as they might if there were
fewer. The wisest of the Amazons, therefore, shows a lack of wisdom in the decrees that she establishes.

Secondly, in regards to the enforcement of the laws, the Amazons demonstrate that they are not up to the level of a fully civilized culture. Antiopía begins well by punishing the noble Deyanira for speaking about men showing her subjects that the laws are for everyone, even the powerful. She later, however, ignores the law herself and becomes the chief lawbreaker: “Antiopía, enamorada / del Duque contra las leyes” (412). She invites Teseo in and spends as much time as possible with him. The queen does not enforce the statutes that she had passed on others, either: “Hable quien quisiere ya: / rompan las leyes, no tenga / temor, pues yo le perdi” (402). A prudent ruler will reinforce his laws by ensuring that they are obeyed and obeying them himself; however, Antiopía neither observes her own laws nor has others keep them.

Whereas the Amazons show a lack of prudence in these areas of justice, Teseo demonstrates his by understanding the situation that he is in and the people by whom he is surrounded. The first night that he is in the Amazon’s city, after being shown his room, he refuses to disarm himself and checks out the room. He explains to Fineo,

   porque fiar de mujer
   no fue de discretos hombres,
   y más mujeres sin hombres,
   que es animal de otro ser. (407)

Accordingly, Teseo is being an “hombre discreto” by not trusting these women. He is able to make this decision because he understands who they are and he knows his enemies.
The final way, and the most central to the plot of the drama, in which the Greeks are depicted as being more prudent than the Amazons is through their acceptance of the civilized institution of marriage. Hércules provides an early example of their defense of this custom when it is said that he “mató el robador Centauro” (380). This is a reference to the Greek myth in which Hercules killed the Centaur Nessus who had robbed his wife Deianira.58 It is also the Greek princes who desire to end the conflict by marrying the Amazons instead of conquering the city by force. Upon hearing Marte’s prophecy, for example, Hércules declares, “cesen trofeos, / y comiencen himeneos” (398). It is also Hércules who suggests “un medio que sea / justo y conveniente a todos” (425). His solution is to bring the uncivilized Amazons into the civilization of the Greeks through the institution of marriage:59

yo haré que cese el rigor

como la Reina conceda

que pueda cualquier soldado

llevar la mujer que quiera,

como ella no se resista

y su persona aborrezca,

que en tal caso no es razón

que ninguno las ofenda;

58 Such a simple designation (“robador”), reinforces the argument that the Centaurs’ and Amazons’ disruption of and hostility toward the institution of marriage is contrary to civilization since here the Centaur is simply referred to as a thief, the same as if he had interrupted the exchange of goods or commerce.
59 In this way they are able to “tame” the barbaric Amazons as did the Sythians mentioned above which gave birth to the Sauromatians (Tyrrell 40-1).
Hércules and the other Greek princes, at least in the Lopean version of the myth, are not looking to despoil or dishonor the women but rather to marry them and bring them the prudent influence of civilization.

The Amazons, in contrast, are part of a culture that rejects marriage. As Montano explains to the Greeks, the Amazons “una noche, a un mismo tiempo, / todos mataron juntos, / maridos, hijos y deudos” (381). Also, as already mentioned, Antiopía begins her reign by strengthening the laws against men. Despite this strong front, however, the Amazons realize that they are missing something and throughout the play they talk about their need of men to be able to reach their full potential. Antiopía tells herself that she is cercada de pensamientos;
que como quiero a los hombres,
cuando infamo más sus nombres,
envidio más sus contentos.

Sean mil veces bien venidos;
que ya confieso que son amados del corazón
y en la lengua aborrecidos. (389)

The Amazons also speak of men and women in terms of the hylomorphic theory of matter and form. Antiopía declares, “la mujer apetece / al hombre como a la forma, / la
materia” (389), and Menalipe provides confirmation saying, “porque una mujer sin hombre / materia sin forma es” (403). The Amazons are saying that in order to be complete and reach their potential, they need to find husbands: “no puede en mujer / haber perfección ni ser / si no le viene del hombre” (421).

The Amazons’ barbaric rejection of marriage, however, comes to an end as the play is drawing to a close. The Amazonian leaders had all expressed an interest in the Greeks but had struggled to resist it in keeping with their uncivilized customs. An example of this change is expressed when Deyanira tells Hércules, “más quiero que en Grecia / digan que voy por tu esclava, / que ser reina en Temiscira” (418). The barbaric Amazons who had reversed the entire Greek civilization now choose to integrate themselves into the prudent culture of their enemies by marrying the heroes—Hércules and Deyanira, Teseo and Antiopía, and Menalipe and Jasón (426). By entering the culture of the Greeks, they are thus able to become prudent and reach perfection.

Although a play ending in a marriage is a very common occurrence in the Golden Age comedia, these marriages are unique because they demonstrate the victory of civilized customs over barbarity and the spreading of culture to other places.

Therefore, in Las mujeres sin hombres, the Greek leaders are presented as civilized and discreet. They have invented the ship, understand the situations that they are in and their enemies, show courtesy, consult others, and form part of a civilized culture that practices customs such as marriage. The Amazonian leaders, on the other hand,

60 The gracioso Fineo provides an exception because he seems to not want to marry the very insistent Hipólita. Early on, Hipólita asks him if he is married, and his response is, “Busqué / una mujer que no hablara, / y no la hallé en todo el mundo” (393). At the end, however, Hipólita is the “coneja” and Fineo the “gazapo” (426).
although they show some discernment, are also depicted as being barbaric and therefore lacking prudence. They are not courteous, do not consult others, create ineffective laws, do not enforce those laws, and reject civilized customs such as marriage. In this play the queen and other Amazonian princesses are flawed, and the Greek princes are also ridiculed. Teseo for example is derided by the other Greek princes: “por defender mujeres / me infamaron de mujer” (418). Despite these imperfections, however, the Greek and Amazonian leaders are still upheld and defended. The play ends with a confirmation of the Greek society and a glorification of all of the princes and princesses as they chose to marry the one that they think is the best.

3. *El vellocino de oro* by Lope de Vega

The third play, *El vellocino de oro*, is also by Lope de Vega. In this play, Friso and Helenia are thrown into the sea by their stepmother Erifile when their father king Atamante is away, arrive in Colchis on the back of a golden ram and offer its fleece to Marte.61 In Colchis, Oeta is the king, his daughter Medea is princess, and his nephew Fineo is a prince. Teseo and Jasón later arrive in Colchis in their ships to obtain the Golden Fleece. This wide array of princes and princesses that appear or are mentioned in the drama all display varying levels of prudence, some of them coming close to the ideal and others falling well short.

The first area in which different characters show prudence is through their intelligence and knowledge. Many of the princes in the play are called “prudente” or “discreto.” Helenia refers to Jasón as “discreto” (v. 1500), and her brother Friso calls

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61 For the myth, see Kearns, “Helle;” and Kearns, “Athamas.”
their father Atamante “sabio” (v. 367). Although Medea is trying to relieve herself of the advances of Fineo, she still recognizes him as “sabio” (v. 776). Fineo, for his part, recognizes that Friso, despite being disguised as a shepherd, still has “discreción” (v. 989). Even people who do not have any bearing on the plot are praised for their prudence. In the speech that Marte gives describing the “Nueve de la Fama,” César is not only praised for his military victories but also for his abilities in writing (v. 606). Lastly, Lope includes several lines which glorify the reigning Spanish monarch Felipe IV and praise his “divino entendimiento” (v. 2060). These few examples are representative of the praise that these princes and princesses receive for their intelligence.

One example of using this intelligence is the ship, “la mayor cosa y más nueva / que imaginaron los hombres” (vv. 1128-29). In this play, Jasón and Teseo are together when they first discover how to cross the seas. According to Jasón, they were in a forest when a bird’s nest fell into some water and began floating. Then a feather stuck into the nest and was able to guide the nest with the help of the wind. After seeing these things, the Greek princes were able to have a ship built. In fact, it is partly because of this invention that Jasón was able to conquer the Golden Fleece, and Júpiter is so thankful that he creates several constellations to commemorate the event. Upon arriving at Colchis, the inhabitants are shocked and amazed at this new invention. After Jasón, Teseo, and the other Greeks leave with all of the women, however, Friso says that although at first it was an incredible invention, he is now able to duplicate it:

\[
\text{yo haré de mi propio ingenio}
\]

\[
\text{naves en que a Grecia pases,}
\]

\[
\text{porque retratadas tengo}
\]
las de Jasón pieza a pieza,
cuerda a cuerda, lienzo a lienzo.
Todo lo he visto y notado (vv. 2178-83).

Therefore, because of their intelligence, the Greek princes as well as Friso are able to construct the ship.

Additionally, Friso and Fineo are able to show their prudence by understanding the people around them, which in this case is each other. Fineo recognizes that Friso is more than a simple shepherd:

Pastor, si galán pastor
lo puede ser deste valle,
de tu discreción y talle
me prometo igual valor:
vente a la corte conmigo.

Fineo is able to gain a valuable ally because he had recognized the Friso was more than the shepherd he was disguised as. For his part, Friso understands that Fineo’s secret has to do with love:

Fineo Si te llevo, es porque sólo
has de saber un secreto.
Friso ¿Es de negocios de amor?
Fineo ¿Tan presto lo has conocido?

These princes are able to understand the people around them because of their intelligence.

In addition to this intelligence which helped them build ships and know those around them, a second area in which the princes in this drama show prudence is in their
dealing with the people around them. They first of all are courteous to those around them. Medea, at least in this play and according to herself, treats Fineo with “cortesía” despite his excesses in trying to win her over (v. 791). Later, Fineo welcomes the Greeks to Colchis, and Jasón gratefully recognizes the courteousness of Fineo: “Tu cortesía y nobleza / obligan, Príncipe ilustre, / a que Jasón te agradezca” (v. 1066-68). This courteousness is a sign of their prudence. A second way in which they show prudence in their dealings with others is through not receiving the adulation of others. When Medea calls Helenia who at this point is disguised as a *serrana*, Helenia praises her greatly upon arriving. Medea, however, refuses to allow her to continue because that would not be a discreet thing to do: “Álzate, que son agravios / las lisonjas a discretos” (vv. 1453-54). Thus, various princes and princesses in this drama are depicted as being prudent through their courteousness and through their rejection of flattery.

The third area in which the princes in this drama show their prudence is through their maintenance of society and civilized customs. First, whereas the Centaurs in the myths of ancient Greece were characterized as barbaric for breaking the relations of friendship between host and guest, Oeta the king of Colchis welcomes in Jasón and even volunteers to offer a sacrifice on his behalf:

Jasón, nuestro huésped eres;

vamos a hacer sacrificio

a Marte, piadoso oficio,

para que Vitoria esperes;

que habiendo descansado

trataremos de la empresa. (vv. 1337-42).
Second, the princes uphold their societies through marriage. Although he had been enamored by Medea, Fineo promises that he will marry Helenia. Also, the king Oeta tries to make sure that the women in his country are not taken advantage of. Finally, the Greek princes are very clear about the fact that they are interested in honorable marriage and continuing the society within the bounds of this civilized institution. In the first conversation that Jasón and Teseo have with someone from the kingdom of Colchis, Jasón tells Fineo that he will marry Medea (vv. 1163-70). Later when Teseo and Jasón notice the attention that they are receiving from Medea and Fenisa, Teseo tells Jasón that unless there is some betrayal, “pienso que a Grecia volvemos / casados” (vv. 1297-98). In order to make sure that she is not deceived, Medea has Jasón swear to marry her:

Juro las deidades todas,
cuantas el supremo cielo
resplandecientes adornan,
y prometo al dios de amor,
y a la soberana diosa
que engendró del mar la espuma,
qued si salen vencedoras
estas manos de la empresa,
jamás se rindan a otra,
aunque me diesen con ella
cuanto la tierra atesora,
cuanto los dos polos miden,
desde donde el sol se postra
The Greeks are intent not on despoiling but rather on marrying and Venus herself blesses their union through a message that Amor delivers:

Amor os corona, y quiere
mi madre, la Hermosa Venus,
que por amantes dichosos
tengáis lugar en su templo,
y asistir a vuestras bodas
con Lucina y Himeneo,
para daros sucesión
que dure siglos eternos. (vv. 2207-14)

These examples of the defense of society through the upholding of the customs of host relations and of marriage also show that these princes are determined to uphold civilization.62

Although the different princes have shown their wisdom in a variety of ways—intelligence and knowledge, their dealing with others, and their defense of culture—they are not always depicted as being perfect in their wisdom. The first example of a negative portrayal of a prince has to do with the consultation of advisors. Several princes do well

62 Although the princes of Colchis do well as hosts, the Greeks do not act as perfect guests. Instead of receiving permission to marry the women of Colchis, they steal them away. In the extant version, the play ends with Amor blessing the marriages. Thus, although the Greeks steal the women, they do not dishonor them. In the original version of the play which would have had a third jornada, this final act most likely showed the reconciliation of the princes of Greece and Colchis and a reaffirmation of the host-guest relations.
in this area such as Fineo who brings Friso to court so that he can provide insight (v. 991) and Medea who brings Helenia into her confidence (v. 1437). One prince, however, is specifically singled out for his inability to receive advice from others. All of Atamante’s counselors agreed with whatever he said because they did not dare to contradict the wishes of their king:

Atamante, con los años
que todas las cosas truecan,
puso el dolor en olvido,
sombra de memorias muertas.
Juntó consejeros sabios,
todos pienso que lo eran,
mas la voluntad de un rey
fue siempre la ley primera.
Dijo que quería casarse,
todos convienen que acierta;
que pretensiones y aumentos
abonan cuanto se yerra. (vv. 383-94)

Thus, although Atamante was attempting to seek advice, he was unable to receive any. His desires were too strong for any of the counselors to object to them, and his decision was already made. Atamante, therefore, represents a king who is unwise in his consultation of others.

A second way in which a prince shows imprudence in *El vellocino de oro* is through a misjudgment of Fineo. After Jasón and Teseo have escaped with Medea and
Fenisa, Fineo is distraught and before Oeta wrongly accuses Helenia and Friso of being a part of the conspiracy: “Perdidos somos: aquí / tienes, señor, los que fueron / testigos desta desdicha” (vv. 2161-63). The prince Fineo had already imprudently judged others before finding out what had happened. Fortunately the king shows a bit more prudence and does not immediately imprison them. He is able to listen to the other side. Helenia tells Fineo that he has been deceived and that she and her brother had nothing to do with the Greeks: “Engañado te han los celos, / que yo y mi hermano, señor, ninguna cosa sabemos” (vv. 2164-66).

The final way in which a prince demonstrates a lack of wisdom is when Fineo acts foolishly in regards to his love for Medea and Helenia’s love for him. In trying to explain his love for Medea to Helenia, he tells her, “Obliga mucho un desprecio” (v. 1866). Medea has been rejecting him, but this “desprecio” had only caused his love to grow more. Helenia, however, points out the foolishness of this notion and responds that disdain will only increase love “En los necios” (v. 1867). As their conversation proceeds, Helenia gives him a portrait of herself. Fineo, however, cannot get himself to let go of his love for Medea, and Helenia tells him to give the portrait back. Although he apologizes, Helenia says that they have both acted foolishly and have been tricked: “Tan necia y burlada quedo / como ya tu amor lo queda” (1900-01). Fineo is clearly being “necio” not using discretion when it comes to his pursuit of a woman.

In El vellocino de oro, therefore, many of the princes are depicted as being wise and prudent. They are intelligent and know how to build ships and know how to understand those around them. They show prudence in their dealings with others through their courtesy and their rejection of adulation. They fortify civilization by upholding
marriage and guest relations. In spite of all of the praise of the prudence of different princes, some of these same princes are shown as acting imprudent. Adamente does not allow his counselors to speak freely to him, and Fineo judges rashly and incorrectly as well as acting like a fool in his love for Medea. Even with these faults, however, these princes are still held in respect by the other characters. Although Atamante never appears on stage, his throne is defended and his son Friso will succeed him as king (vv. 2184-88). Fineo is defended even more strongly. His position as a prince of Colchis is confirmed by the king, by Friso, and by Helenia whom he promises to marry.  

This play contains direct praise for prudence of many of the princes in the play and even for the prince watching the play, Felipe IV. Even the princes that are depicted as not possessing perfect prudence are defended and upheld by the play.

4. *Los tres mayores prodigios* by Calderón de la Barca

The fourth drama, *Los tres mayores prodigios* by Calderón, combines several myths into one. Hércules, Teseo, and Jasón are searching the world for the Centaur Neso. In the first act which occurs in Asia, Jasón conquers the Golden Fleece and defeats Friso in an “Academia” hosted by Medea. In the second act which takes place in Europe, Teseo kills the Minotaur and also Lidoro who had stolen his horse and was trying to kidnap Ariadna. Finally, in the third act which is set in Africa, Hércules kills the Centaur Neso who had stolen his wife Deyanira. This figure of the Centaur as a being that is hostile to civilization and its institutions of gift giving and marriage that was depicted in Classical

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63 Although the third act of the original is not extant, it is probable that in this third act Friso is restored to his kingdom and Fineo and Helenia marry which would even further solidify their positions.
Athens are present in this seventeenth-century Spanish drama as well. The Greek heroes in this play demonstrate their prudence in their struggle against the barbaric customs of the Centaurs and in several other ways that are common to the arbitristas and other comedias.

The first area in which they show their prudence is through their knowledge and understanding. In the second act, the labyrinth is described as an intricate and famous monument (1564), and the princess Ariadna is able to recognize that Teseo is a noble foreigner (1561). Additionally, similar to other plays in which he appears, Jasón has invented the ship in this one, and it is credited to him as discretion. When the people of Colchis first see it, they struggle to comprehend it and varyingly describe it as a mountain, cloud, bird, and fish. They also at first struggled to know where the sound of a trumpet was coming from and the king Aetes and the prince Absinto do not understand that it is coming from the water. Of all the leaders, the princess Medea is the one who shows the most understanding in this scene as she knows that the sound came from the water and her description of the ship is more accurate than the others (1552-53). Medea is also called “sabia” and “docta” for all of her knowledge of enchantments and nature (1554, 87)64 and is able to prove it one last time when she tells everyone that Hércules is dying because he is wearing skins that are soaked in the blood of the hydra (1588). Therefore, while several princes and princesses demonstrate their prudence and Medea is described as a wise princess, others in comparison are not as knowledgeable.

64 For more on the Greco-roman mythical Medea and her knowledge of the supernatural, see Arafat, “Medea.”
The lack of intelligence in two of the princes is perhaps nowhere clearer than in the “Academia” that Medea hosts for Friso and Jasón. In this intellectual challenge, Medea gives her “banda” to Friso and then asks that Jasón give her his “banda.” The question which Medea asks them is, “¿cuál de los dos ahora fuera / (responded) el que estuviera / favorecido de mí” (1558). Friso and Jasón both think that they are the favored ones, Friso because he received a favor from Medea, and Jasón because he gave her one.

A portion of their exchange includes,

Jasón. Si es bajeza el recibir
y es ilustre acción el dar,
en eso puedo fundar
que me quiso preferir;
pues al llegar yo a advertir
que he dado, y tú has recibido,
verme a mí airosa ha querido,
y a ti no; luego ya en esto
al que deja más bien puesto,
deja más favorecido.

Friso. Recibir del superior
no es desaire; antes arguyo
que ya, como esclavo suyo,
me viste de su color.

Jasón. Eso me está a mí mejor;
que si te viste este día
como a suyo, en tal porfía
venci, pues si esta libre
a ti te hace de Medea,
a Medea la hace mía. (1559)

As the argument continues, both Jasón and Friso grow angry and they almost come to blows instead of just having a mental duel. Medea must remind them, “Duelos del ingenio, no / el acero” (1559). Medea also mentions the Golden Fleece, and Jasón completely abandons the intellectual duel for something that he is more capable at:

Pues porque veas que yo
mejor que argumento lidio,
yá que esto no es conquistar
el dorado vellojino,
lo será ir por él, y verle
hoy a tus plantas rendido,
quitándoselo animoso
des su roble a Marte mismo (1559).

Medea had given these two princes an intellectual challenge. Jasón demonstrates that he is more prudent than Friso, but despite this advantage, he cannot stay and argue his point. He is not smart enough to let his words suffice but must resort to his sword. Both of these princes, though Friso to a greater extent, are shown to be intellectually imperfect.65

65 Even the gracioso of the first act, Sabañón, appears to have the same answer as Friso and says, “mejor es tomar que dar” (1558).
Another area in which the rulers show a range of abilities is in their consultation of others. First, Ariadna provides a positive example when she is wanting to free Teseo from the Minotaur. She has Dédalo come speak with her and tell her how Teseo can be freed. Although she does not know what to do, she does know who to ask and therefore is able to demonstrate her prudence (1567). On the other hand, some princes demonstrate a lack of prudence by listening to the wrong advice or not paying any attention to the people who can counsel them. Friso tells how he and his sister were exiled from their homeland because their father the king in addition to the entire kingdom believed the lie invented by their stepmother that the princes were the cause of a terrible harvest (1549). Another example of a prince’s imprudence when it comes to counsel is Hércules’s ignoring what everyone says to him. Hércules thinks that his reputation is in shambles because his wife Deyanira had been captured. He has now, however, recovered her and killed the kidnapper thus avenging the dishonor. The princes around him such as Teseo, Jasón, and Floro, an African prince from the area around Mount Oeta, are unanimous in their reaffirmation of Hércules. Floro tells him, “¡Felice mil veces sea, / Hércules, el día en que cobras / tanta dicha!” (1584) Hércules, however, does not pay any attention to what he is being told and instead is wrapped up in his own thoughts of his dishonor. If he had paid attention to what he was being told, the tragic ending may have been avoided. Therefore, in this play one princess consults a counselor and saves two lives, another king consults the wrong people and exiles two innocent people, and a third prince does not heed the advice he is given and he and his wife both die. The advice that a prince can

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66 Ariadna saves both Teseo and his servant Pantufllo. Atamas exiles his children Friso and Heles, the latter of which dies on the way to Colchis by falling into the sea. Hércules
receive is shown to be very important in this play, and a prudent prince will seek out good counsel.

A third way that the princes in this drama show their prudence is through their hospitality and acceptance of guests. The barbaric and uncivilized Centaurs rejected the relations that exist between a host and guest, but prudent and civilized princes will honor these obligations. In this play, the princes do show this hospitality. Aetes, the king of Colchis, and his son prince Absinto both welcome the foreigners that arrive on their island. When Friso arrives on the back of a ram, the king and prince welcome him in and even assist with his sacrifices. Friso is able to tell Medea, “el grande Rey, tu padre, / y tu hermano generoso / me han albergado” (1550). When Jasón later arrives, the King welcomes him warmly along with the princes Absinto and Friso:

Rey. Levanta, Jasón, del suelo,
y a mis nobles brazos llega
que de tan heroico huésped
ya son merecida deuda.
No solo en mi patria quiero
que te hospedes y detengas;
pero contra tu enemigo,
si acaso en ella le encuentras,
armas y favor te ofrezco.

Abs. En hora felice vengas,
donde mi valor te sirva

and Deyanira both throw themselves into a fire.
en todo cuanto se ofrezca.

Friso. Yo, porque en fin las fortunas
las amistades conciertan,
y, peregrinos del mar,
son parecidas las nuestras,
mi vida ofrezco a tus plantas. (1555)

Even at the end of the first act when Jasón has taken the Golden Fleece, the princes are more concerned with the traitor Medea than with their guest (1560-61).

In Colchis, guests were welcomed warmly by the king. In Africa, too, the prince Floro was hospitable to Hércules, Jasón, and Teseo when they came to his country. Floro tells Hércules, “quiero / ver mi corte venturosa / con tales huéspedes” (1584) and even offers to provide all of the animals for the sacrifices that Hércules vowed to make (1585).

In Europe, however, on the island of Crete, king Minos is not given the opportunity to be hospitable to Teseo. His captain Lidoro, instead of welcoming the strangers in and providing for their needs, captures them and offers them to the Minotaur because he did not want to receive blame for losing other prisoners (1563-64). Thus this play shows that the prudent princes offer hospitality whereas the uncivilized, Centaur-like captain Lidoro breaks this bond.67

A fourth way that the princes of Los tres mayores prodigios could demonstrate their prudence is through judging correctly. In this instance, however, Hércules show his

67 Lidoro is Centaur-like in that he rejects these guest relations as well as stealing Teseo’s horse and trying to kidnap Ariadna. Furthermore, it is ironic that this character should be the one to call Pasifae barbaric saying that her love for a bull that produced a creature that was half human and half animal was “bárbaro” and an “írracional amor” (1564) as he is the one that acts barbaric and becomes like the half-man, half animal Centaur. See below.
lack of discernment by judging harshly and foolishly. After rescuing Deyanira but before anyone realizes that she is still alive, he thinks that it would be a good idea to disguise her to protect himself from dishonor. Deyanira, however, understands that this judgment is not the correct course of action: “es necia, es injusta, es loca, / esta determinación / que contra ti mismo tomas” (1584). Hércules does listen to this counsel and is therefore able to avoid putting it into practice, but he does think foolishly in considering it.

Finally, and the area that is most central to the development of the plot, some princes of this play demonstrate their lack of discretion through their actions which convert them into Centaurs. Just as Tyrrell demonstrated that Clytemnestra was an Amazon because of her actions, several characters in this play become Centaurs. Hernández Araico argues that Teseo and Jasón are the characters that become like Neso through their actions of taking the princesses Fedra and Medea, respectively, from their homelands (qtd. in Kidd 112); however, their actions do not provoke such a dishonor or merit such a comparison as the two princes marry the women they take with them and therefore uphold their honor and the system.

In the play, the most obvious Centaur is the one that appears in the last act and the most subtle one appears in the first. In the final act the Centaur Neso finally appears onstage. After Jasón searched Asia in the first act and Teseo searched Europe in the second, Hércules finally comes upon the creature that stole his wife and that has been running away for an entire year. Neso is literally a Centaur in that he has the physical body of one being half horse and half man. He is also figuratively and characteristically a Centaur because he is acting in a hyper-masculine fashion and destroying the institution of marriage by robbing another man’s wife. This barbaric creature does not accept the
civilized customs of exchange and marriage but simply kidnaps the woman he desires (1578-82).

In the second act, at first Teseo himself says that he is like a noble Centaur. Teseo is riding on his horse which “me hace Centauro noble, / sujeto a ley y obediencia” (1562). Teseo, however, is similar to Chiron, the tutor of several Greek heroes, the only Centaur to have a wife, and the one exception to the norm of anti-marriage Centaurs. Teseo, however, is not the only Centaur in the second act. When Lidoro and his men capture Teseo and his servant Pantuflo, Lidoro takes Teseo’s horse for himself: “aquel caballo también / suyo, mi despojo sea” (1565). Lidoro thus violently takes from Teseo and abruptly converts himself into a Centaur. This captain also acts like a Centaur in regards to marriage. Although Ariadna has been rejecting his advances, he eventually wearies of this and takes matters into his own hands. He at first tells her, “estoy del todo ya desesperado, / a morir o vencer determinado” (1566). This desperation turns into action in an attempt to conquer when he determines to use Teseo’s horse to help him kidnap Ariadna: “Ese caballo, despojo / de aquel infelice hombre, / […] me ha de valer” (1571-68)

68 A further similarity between the two characters of Teseo and Hércules is that both of them are compared by themselves to inhuman creatures. Teseo calls himself a Centaur, though he would be the Chiron exception. Hércules tells the rustics of the mountain, “mirad que no soy tan fiero / monstruo como dice el traje, / tan bruto, como os parezco: / humano soy, hombre soy” (1575).

69 In her analysis of El pintor de su deshonra by Calderón, Welles notes a similar metaphorical relationship between a man who steals a woman and the Centaur Nessus. In fact, a painting of Hercules, Nessus, and Deianira even appears in the play. Welles uses this painting to help interpret the play: “The plot analogies are evident: the bride Serafina/Deianeira is abducted by Alvaro/Nessus, who is killed by the husband Juan/Hercules” (189). She also relates the robbing of women to other exchanges and notes that “If marriage involves a gift, rape is theft: Alvaro, violator of the marriage rules, is called a ladrón pirata” (190).
Ariadna is able to defend herself until Teseo arrives, and the Greek hero is able to kill Lidoro.

This second act has many parallels to the third in which Hércules kills a literal Centaur. Lidoro, the figurative Centaur who has stolen a horse, now is stealing Ariadna and is alone with her, the same as Neso stole Deyanira and was alone with her. Teseo kills the Centaur-like Lidoro just as Hércules kills the Centaur Neso. The difference, however, is in how the heroes respond. Hércules is married to Deyanira and his honor depends on her. Teseo, on the other hand, is not yet married. If he were to choose Ariadna, then he would be in the same position as Hércules having had his woman captured by a Centaur. By choosing Fedra, however, Teseo is able to avoid this dishonor.

The first act depicts much more subtly the figure of the Centaur. Whereas in the third act there is a literal Centaur who characteristically violates the institution of marriage and in the second act there is a figurative Centaur who acts the part by stealing a horse and trying to steal a woman, in the first act the Centaur-like character does not try to take anything but simply does not understand the customs and rules of exchange. In the “Academia” that Medea holds, Jasón and Friso must determine who was favored in the exchange of “bandas.” Friso is like a Centaur because he does not comprehend the civilized custom of the “orderly exchange” of gifts and goods. In *Los tres mayores prodigios*, therefore, Calderón depicts characters that become progressively more like Centaurs and therefore increasingly more hostile toward civilization and its customs of commerce and marriage.

In *Los tres mayores prodigios*, therefore, Calderón includes several areas in which a prince can show his prudence. The leaders in this play, however, do not all show the
same level of discernment and even the heroes fall well short. Jasón is incapable of finishing the “Academia” with his intellectual prowess but must resort to his sword, and Hércules misjudges his situation with Deyanira and does not listen to anyone’s advice. Though other princes are supported, the three Greek heroes are especially glorified as they have accomplished the three greatest feats of the world and have been able to defeat any enemies that pursued them after escaping the initial danger on the island of Colchis and the island of Crete (1587). One doubt may arise with Hércules having thrown himself into a fire, but he will be like a “fénix” (1589). In fact, according to mythological sources, after Hercules burns himself on a pyre, he becomes a god on Olympus and marries the goddess Hebe (Rose 219; Parker, “Hebe”).

5. El labyrinto de Creta by Juan Bautista Diamante

In the fifth drama, El labyrinto de Creta by Juan Bautista Diamante, Teseo returns from his expedition to the Amazonian territory with Hipolita, their queen. They want to marry, but Teseo is then sent to Crete to be fed to the Minotaur. Hipolita is distraught and determines to follow him there, but the rough seas capsize her boat. Once on shore, they both claim to be Teseo and are therefore both fed to the Minotaur. Over the course of the play, the prudence of the various princes is tested especially in regard to the area of justice. Additionally, although Hipolita is the actual Amazon, Minos’s daughters make themselves Amazons as well through their desire not to marry. The princes in this play are depicted as being at various points on the scale of wisdom.

To begin with, the three princesses are all Amazonian, either by cultural background or by choice. Hipolita is the queen of the Amazons in Scythia where for
“tantos años” (168) the women have ruled. Teseo goes to Scythia in order to “enmendar el desorden / a mi parecer injusto” (168). He is able to make Hipolita his prisoner in battle, and “Restituidos quedaron / contra su observado orden, / los hombres a su dominio” (171). Hipolita travels with Teseo to Athens to “jurarte el feudo” unto his father Egeo as well as to be married to the Athenian prince. Teseo and Hipolita, therefore, have brought the ordered civilization of Athens, represented by their marriage, all the way to the remote areas of Scythia.

The two Cretan princesses, on the other hand, have not grown up in an Amazonian society. They rather have chosen to be Amazons:

pues vsando de Diana

los exercicios honestos,

los [los príncipes Polidoro y Licomedes] desayran, despreciando
todo lo que huele a Venus. (173)

They have rejected all suitors and prefer to dedicate themselves to the goddess Diana for whom the Amazons began one of the wonders of the ancient world, her temple in Ephesus. Since they think that the princes Polidoro and Licomedes “Atreuidos, ò grosseros, / con pretensions indignas, / perturban nuestros intentos” (175), their father Minos must intervene. In order to preserve his kingdom and the civilization of Crete, he needs an heir:

Hijas, ya es fuerça aduertiros,

que si hasta aqui vuestro empleo

fue decente, ya es injusto;

pues quando sin heredero
me veo, y en las dos miro
los naturales opuestos,
al estado que procuro (175).

The two princesses, fixed in their Amazonian ways, at first do not even answer their father. They eventually, however, reluctantly agree to obey him and their destiny as prophesied by a nymph from Diana’s temple (176). Therefore, although in this play there are Amazons based on their culture and Amazons based on their decision to dedicate themselves to Diana and not marry, these princesses are brought out of the “desorden” of barbarity and into the order of civilization through their marriages.

The princes of El labyrino de Creta are given the opportunity to demonstrate their prudence in a variety of ways having to do with justice. The first example occurs within the realm of assuring the obedience of laws. The Athenians have a law that whomever is chosen by lot will be sent to Crete to be fed to the Minotaur. Having just returned from a triumphant campaign in Scythia, Teseo is designated as the next one to be sent to Crete. Despite being a prince and having the power to free himself from the law, Teseo subordinated himself to it an permits himself to be sent to Crete to fulfill the law (176). Once there, he goes straight to Minos and tells him to fulfill his law. Hipolita also claims to be Teseo, but the Athenian prince will not be deterred from discharging his duty to the law (182-83). Although Egeo or Teseo could have freed Teseo from having to go the Crete to be fed to the Minotaur, they strengthen the law by enforcing it and subjecting themselves to it.

Secondly, two other examples of a prince having the opportunity to show prudence through justice is Minos’s punishment of the Athenians for killing his son and
Minos’s judgment of who the real Teseo is and punishing that person. To begin with, although the Athenians had killed Minos’s son Androgeo, the punishment which Minos imposed upon them is disproportionate to their crime. The Athenians must provide “doncellas” and “varones, / que han de ser pasto inocente / del Minotauro disforme” (172). This overly vengeful and rigorous punishment is not in line with what a prudent prince would do. Additionally, when Hipolita and Teseo arrive in Crete, they both claim to be Teseo and try to free the other from the death that awaits the Athenian prince. Minos, who should be a wise ruler and be able to judge difficult cases, is incapable of discovering which one is the Athenian prince and which one is the Amazonian queen and has both of them imprisoned. In the end, because of his lack of intelligence in being able to determine who the real Teseo is, Minos condemns both of them to be fed to the Minotaur (184-85). Minos here shows a complete lack of wisdom in the judging of cases and proves to be incapable of fulfilling the king’s role when it comes to justice.

Despite this imprudence in Minos, however, the Cretan king is confirmed in his throne by a prudent act of Teseo. A prudent prince will not only punish but will also show clemency, and Teseo is given this opportunity. Egeo arrives with the Athenian army and is able to conquer Crete. During the battle, Teseo is the only one who provides help or shelter to Minos and his daughters. Minos asks where he can find freedom from his troubles, and Teseo responds, “Solo aqui, donde sera / tu enemigo tu defensa” (189). Happy at finding Teseo and his future daughter-in-law Hipolita still alive and well, Egeo gives them the kingdom of Crete. Teseo, however, further defends and upholds the monarchy of Crete by telling his father,

Y yo le dare,
señor, con vuestra licencia
a Minos, pues aunque suya
fue la crueldad, la clemencia
fue de sus piadosas hijas
bellas Ariadna, y Fedra. (189)

Teseo is able to demonstrate his wisdom through this action because a prudent prince at times grants clemency.

Thus, in *El laberinto de Creta* the civilized and prudent princes are glorified and even the flawed princes are defended strongly. The Amazonian women—Hipolita, Ariadna, and Fedra—are all brought into the order of the civilized Greek society through their weddings: “no resta, / sino bodas, y más bodas” (189). Teseo and Egeo wisely uphold the law and because they have done so, all of Athens joins Egeo and frees their city from bondage to Crete. On the other hand, Minos shows in several ways that he falls well short of the ideal of how prudent a prince can and should be. In spite of the shortcomings of the Cretan king, however, Teseo defends the monarch and wisely shows mercy reinstalling him as the ruler of Crete.

6. *Amor es más laberinto* by Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz and Juan de Guevara

The final *comedia, Amor es más laberinto* by Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz and Juan de Guevara, also includes several kings, princes, and princesses who display a range of abilities when it comes to prudence. At times the princes here do show great wisdom, but at others they are easily deceived. For much of the second and third act, for example, everyone is confused as to the identities of those around them and no one knows who any
of the other princes actually is. This play shows the different levels of prudence among
the princes in regards to their knowledge and understanding, their consultation of others,
their laws and justice, and their promotion of civilization by eliminating barbarity.

To begin with, in the first act Ariadna demonstrates that a princess can have great
prudence by discovering the means of freeing Teseo from certain death at the hands, or
hooves, of the Minotaur:

    Es sutil,
    porque con un hilo sólo,
    ha de triunfar y vivir;
    pues en la lid,
    sabrá al fiero monstruo soberbio rendir. (729)

The Cretan princess is able to come up with this idea because of her prudence. This same
princess, however, as well as Fedra and all of the princes in the drama are all unable to
determine who is who and do not know the people around them. First, in a masquerade
everyone is covering their faces and even the signs that they were supposed to be using to
tell each other apart get mixed up. During the “sarao” Fedra makes plans to meet with
Teseo in the garden that evening, and Ariadna makes plans with Baco to do the same
though she thought it was Teseo. They end up meeting with the wrong people thinking it
is the other. Teseo eventually discovers that another man is speaking with Fedra and
attacks Baco. When lights are brought out, however, he and his servant Atún hide in the
Labyrinth and the third prince, Lidoro, wonders who had been fighting with Baco while
Baco thinks he had fought Lidoro (732-54).
The third act continues this chaos of identities. Baco tries to challenge Lidoro to a duel because he thinks that Lidoro was trying to take Ariadna from him. His challenge is delivered to Teseo and then also to Lidoro. Teseo and Lidoro meet in the designated place and both think the other is Baco. Teseo ends up killing Lidoro in the duel, but everyone thinks that Baco has killed him as they see him there and he had signed the challenge. Thus, Teseo thinks Baco is dead and everyone else thinks that Teseo is dead, neither of which is true. Baco and Teseo also continue to be confused by the dark over which princess is Fedra and which is Ariadna. They take the wrong princess in their attempt to escape from Crete to a ship, and only when Atún shows up asking for Teseo do they even begin to discover who is with them. Ariadna is the last to find out that she is not with Teseo but rather Baco (754-70). Despite all of the supposed knowledge that these princes and princesses should have and despite the fact that they should be able to know who the people around them actually are, they are thoroughly confused for the vast majority of two thirds of the play. All of these mix-ups as to the identities of the princes demonstrate their flawed knowledge.

A second area in which the princes can show their prudence is through their consultation of others. In this drama, two princes take two different strategies. Baco listens to his servant Racimo for advise, and Mínos consults the prince Baco. The “remedio” that Racimo advises for Baco is “Que tú enamores a Fedra, / con que quedarás vengado” (730). Baco realizes that Racimo is not a good source for advise, and yet he follows it anyway:

Hacerlo quiero al instante;
que aunque tus locuras toco,
This plan of course backfires, and Baco later regrets ever having tried it in the first place calling it a “necia industria” (765). On the other hand and in line with what the *arbitristas* recommend, Minos consults a prince instead of a servant and *gracioso*.\(^70\) When he finds out that the Athenians are coming to attack his kingdom, he realizes that Baco would be a good person to consult because the king knows of “vuestra prudencia” (757). Minos echoes many of the *arbitristas* when he tells Baco,

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Mas venid, verés las cartas,} \\
\text{para que mejor con ellas} \\
\text{confiramos lo que hacerse} \\
\text{debe, que aquestas materias} \\
\text{se han de resolver despacio,} \\
\text{y ejecutarse de prisa. (757)}
\end{align*}
\]

Minos, therefore, chooses his counselor much more wisely than Baco does. Also, whereas Baco puts his plan into action immediately, Minos, on the other hand, does not act hastily but instead decides with patience what should be done. Minos demonstrates better what the perfect prince should do when consulting advisors while Baco provides a good example of what to avoid.

\(^{70}\) Although he thinks that it is unlikely to happen, Saavedra Fajardo suggests that a prince use other princes as his counselors (378).
Minos is not always a perfect prince himself, however. In many ways he is praised for his prudence, and as seen he shows that he can be very wise. Ariadna recognizes that he has learned a lot over the course of his life and praises his “prudencia de las canas” (718). Furthermore, when Teseo is first brought before the king, the Athenian prince praises Minos for his great lawmaking ability and calls him the “glorioso Legislador” (720). Teseo also already knows that Minos will be the lawgiver of the underworld and reign there after his death. Despite these great praises for things that he had done well, Minos also makes some mistakes. First, his punishment of the Athenians is depicted as cruel, excessive, and vengeful in this drama as in others. Minos is delighted that included in the “siete doncellas gallardas / y siete nobles mancebos” (717) the prince of Athens is being sent since Minos lost his own son the prince of Crete. Teseo, however, is not enough to satisfy the wrath of the king:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Teseo} & \quad \text{Sirva mi altivez, mi sangre,} \\
& \quad \text{mis blasones, mis trofeos,} \\
& \quad \text{de que quedes de tu enojo} \\
& \quad \text{dignamente satisfecho,} \\
& \quad \text{y quede libre mi Patria} \\
& \quad \text{de tan doloroso peso} \\
& \quad \text{como este infeliz tributo;} \\
& \quad \text{que yo moriré contento,} \\
& \quad \text{si con mi muerte la libro}
\end{align*}
\]

\[71\] Sor Juana is the only playwright in this study that refers to this portion of Greek mythology. See Rose, Parke, Robertson, and Dietrich.
Minos shows early on that he is a vengeful judge, and this resurfaces later when he discovers Baco and Teseo escorting Ariadna and Fedra to ships and away from Crete. Being overcome by his anger and thirst to avenge his honor, he orders, “Todos perderéis la vida” (771) referring to the two princes and as well as his own daughters. Although Minos is called a prudent and glorious legislator who will judge the underworld, his judgments while still alive are taken hastily and vengefully instead of calmly and prudently.72

Whereas Minos shows great holes in his prudence, Teseo, aside from being thoroughly confused as to who everyone is, demonstrates remarkable prudence in several areas. In addition to being courteous despite being sentenced to be fed to the Minotaur (727), Teseo has also struggled throughout his life to protect civilization and advance it in the face of barbarism. When Minos asks him to list his achievements, many of them are directly linked to this effort. Teseo conquered the Amazons with Hércules (721), killed “a Escirón / y a Procusto, bandoleros / tan sin piedad” (722), and defeated the Centaurs who were interrupting the wedding of Piritoo by trying to steal the bride. Sinis “bárbaramente” pulled trees to the ground, tied people to them, and then let the trees rip them apart, but

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72 Hernández-Araico notes that Minos possibly represented the viceroy who was leaving New Spain (the Conde de Monclova) as the new one (the Conde de Galve) was coming in. This former viceroy is compared to Minos who is a “figura de un gobernante duramente vengativo” (“Festejos”).
Teseo put an end to his barbarity. Finally, he explains how he made Thebes act like a civilized city and bury the dead:

A la gran Tebas libré
de la opresión de aquel fiero
Creonte, cuya impiedad,
opuesta a todos los fueros
humanos, no consentía
dar sepultura a los muertos. (721-22)

Teseo brought civilization in each of these cases by having cities obey the “fueros,” by killing bandits, or by upholding the marital custom of society against the hostile Amazons and Centaurs. He describes his life in terms of this struggle and shows how he advanced wisdom and knowledge through the elimination of barbarians and extension of civilization.

Lastly, Teseo also shows prudence in his judgment of Minos.\textsuperscript{73} Similarly to the situation in \textit{El laberinto de Creta}, the Athenian soldiers attack Crete and Minos is left with nowhere to turn. In his desperation Minos cries out, “¿No hay nadie que me socorra?” (772) Despite having just previously been sentenced to death by this same man, Teseo protects the king and keeps the Athenian general Licas from killing him. This clemency that Teseo prudently shows is rewarded as he is pardoned for anything that he may have done and the king offers him, “¿Pues qué aguardas? Pide todo el reino” (773). Teseo allows Minos to keep his kingdom, but he does request that Fedra be given to him.

\textsuperscript{73} Hernández-Araico comments that Teseo could have been a representation of the new viceroy of New Spain and that “el perdón ejemplar de Teseo, reflejo heroico del entrante virrey Conde de Galve” (“Festejos”).
in marriage. Through this action he is also able to open the door for the pardon and marriage of Ariadna and Baco. Teseo’s prudent mercy was able to save people’s lives and provide for the continuation of society and civilization.

In *Amor es más laberinto*, therefore, the princes are depicted as almost constantly being confused, occasionally unwisely consulting the wrong people, and at times harshly and vengefully passing judgments. Despite these flaws, these princes are still glorified. Minos is shown to be a poor judge, and yet he will judge the underworld and is confirmed in his kingdom even when Athens conquers it. Baco consults his servant and does not know who his love is for more than half of the play and yet is promised Ariadna in marriage. The princes in this play may not be perfect, but they are glorified.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the *arbitristas* of the time period described what a prudent prince should do, and the playwrights often depicted princes acting in those situations. In the six mythological plays that include Teseo, Lope (three plays), Calderón, Bautista Diamante, and Sor Juana and de Guevara (collaborating for one play) often depict the princes as acting contrary to how a prudent prince should. The princes lack knowledge, consult the wrong people, pass bad laws or too many laws, do not enforce them, judge poorly when they try to enforce them, and lack civilization. At other times, however, these same princes are shown as being exceedingly prudent and following exactly the advise that the *arbitristas* gave to the early modern kings. At these different times, the princes are either the matter or the form of a prince. While those that reach their form are praised, those that only have the matter of a prince in regard to their prudence are defended and
glorified as well. Minos is always confirmed as the king of Crete no matter what excesses he had previously done, and the Greek heroes always spread civilization where there had previously reigned barbarity in the form of Amazons, Centaurs, or other people hostile towards an ordered republic. The ideology of these plays and of the time confirmed these rulers in their positions.
Introduction and Background

One of the most commonly depicted characteristics of the prince in the comedia is his valor. A prince could be extremely motivated by his honor and know precisely the correct course of action to take, but if that prince lacks courage, he will do nothing. Many of the princes of the theater of Golden Age Spain are brave and do not hesitate to confront the necessary risks that face them. Others, however, are portrayed negatively because they are cowards or at least not as courageous as the monarchs that they are fighting. Although the ideal for a prince is to be valiant, some kings are only kings in matter but not in form. The perception of playwrights and the audiences in Early Modern Spain, however, conditioned them to see a monarchy as the form of government. Thus, even when a sovereign demonstrates a lack of valor, the monarchical system and many times that specific monarch is glorified and defended.

In the comedia of the seventeenth century, it was vital that a prince have courage, and he could demonstrate this valor in several different ways. The prince was the guarantor of his entire society, and if he lacked bravery in the face of a threat to himself, one of his subjects, or his entire kingdom, then everyone could suffer. In order to uphold the people he ruled, the prince had to have the courage to defend them. Though this mental aspect is the necessary first step, a leader would also have to translate these thoughts into action and the actions into success. The ability to attain victory provoked by the bravery is also an integral aspect of fortitude. Describing the necessity of valor—or using his word “fortaleza”—Riva deneyra says that it “es el sello y guarda de todas [las
otras virtudes], y las tiene debajo de su amparo y defensa, y sin ella quedan desarmadas y desnudas” (167-68). Without the willingness and ability to take action in adversity, a prince would not be able to accomplish much of anything. On the other hand, when a prince has this important quality, he is able to undertake great feats and accomplish them.

The first area in which a prince needs to demonstrate his bravery is in war and peace. When his territories are threatened by another country or nation, then a king needs to have the willingness and ability to protect his people and his lands from this foreign invasion. If he lacks the courage to defend his people and his lands, the invading force will take them from him either by destroying them or taking them over. A prince should not, however, strive to always be at war. He should instead strive to have peace in his lands. In order to protect his lands and provide peace for his subjects, a prince must sometimes fight to defend them. If a monarch is valiant, he will be successful both in war and in peace.

In addition to being valiant at the national level, a prince must also be brave at the personal level and when faced with an individual trial. These physical threats can come in the form of other people that he must fight, animals that he must subdue, or other challenges. Though not a prince, don Quijote prided himself on his valor and showed it by not backing down from other “knights,” enchantments, or monsters and by pitting himself against the lion to become el Caballero de los leones (Cervantes, II 147-53). The perfect prince will have this courage and be able to resist pressures put on him individually by others.

When a prince is being challenged individually or when he must engage in war or strive for peace, he has the opportunity to display his valor. These are not, however, the
only times when a prince can exercise this virtue or put his bravery into practice. A monarch should train himself so that he will be ready when these trying times come. So that he will be ready, the valiant prince will engage in physical activities that will prepare him for battle. One of the most frequent pursuits is the hunt, but others include sports or practice with weapons such as fencing or archery. The valiant prince is not only courageous in times of difficulty, but rather he often exercises his bravery through other endeavors.

These different aspects of valor can be seen in many of the plays of the Golden Age as well as in the writings of the arbitristas. Although they generally do not all appear together in the same work, many different authors refer to the courage of a prince in different writings. A few comedias which have several positive examples of a valiant prince and even some examples of a prince who lacks valor are Las grandezas de Alejandro, El príncipe perfecto I and II, and El mejor Par de los doze.

In Las grandezas de Alejandro, Lope de Vega presents one of the greatest conquerors in history and shows how his valor was necessary to become so great. At the beginning of the play Alejandro’s father Filipo is still alive and his valor is shown in his past victories and future aspirations. He has conquered land by force, and he has eliminated obstacles through peaceful means which is also a valorous act. After Filipo is murdered by Pausanias, Alejandro becomes king of Macedonia and continues in the

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1 Filipo is able to make the king of Epiro his ally by offering him his daughter in marriage (336).
2 Pausanias is killed immediately as he tries to escape: “Ya queda el temerario mozo muerto, / atravesado de diversas lanzas” (342). This regicide is punished and condemned. The characters are shocked that “tan temerario atrevimiento / pudo caber en pensamiento humano” (342). This act by Pausanias opens the kingdom to Alejandro, but it is a deplorable act that is denounced even by Alejandro.
same valiant vein as his father. Alejandro, however, takes it much farther and wants to conquer Asia and even the entire world. As demonstrations of his valor, Alejandro is always not simply with his army, but he is leading his army. He is the first one to set foot in Asia (355) and leads his soldiers across a river to fight Menón’s army (365), for example. He also rejoices in overwhelming numbers against him and gives the first prisoner a reward and his freedom for the good news of the massive amounts of enemies that are coming to face him and that far outnumber his own soldiers (356-59). This prisoner was Ariobarzano, the son of Darío, king of Persia, and after being treated so well by Alejandro, decides to kill his father. He is prevented from doing so, however, because Alejandro sends Dario a message warning him of the attempt on his life that will be coming because Alejandro does not want the victory taken away from him (359, 366-67).

Alejandro continuously shows his courage in the face of war in general and individual battles; he also demonstrates his bravery when up against other challenges. As mentioned above, he does not fear crossing a river because “estas aguas son / pequeñas para mi fuego” (365). Additionally, he conquers the Gordian knot by cutting it as “que tanto monta, soldados, / cortar como desatar” (370). Finally, instead of shrinking back from what a friend who is his doctor gives him that could have been poison, he does not fear it. By drinking, he proves his valor and the loyalty of his friend (374-75). Throughout the play, Alejandro’s valor and ability to put it into action are proven again and again.

While Alejandro shows his courage and fortitude at every opportunity, Darío, though a great and valorous ruler, demonstrates that he is not Alejandro’s equal. On the

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3 Alejandro brings his army to Asia to conquer it: “Ya sale toda mi gente; / Asia, tiembla” (355). He would like, however, to conquer the entire world: “A ser solo señor del mundo aspiro” (385).
positive side, Darío is not afraid of battle and joins his soldiers to help in the fight. When things are turning out poorly, he even tries to encourage his soldiers to continue. On the other hand, when he sees everyone flee, this king runs away from the battle as well. Darío loses the battle which shows that his capabilities are not equal to Alejandro’s, and he ends up as Alejandro’s slave hidden away “en Babilonia, / entre mujeres hilando” (389). This once great ruler has been dethroned by a more valorous leader.

A pair of other plays by Lope de Vega, *El príncipe perfecto I* and *II*, display a wide array of areas in which a prince must show his fortitude. First, a ruler must show bravery in the face of individual dangers. In *El príncipe perfecto I*, the prince Juan while guarding the door for his friend, fights four men by himself. He is able to kill one and make the other three flee because of his great courage and skill (94-5). In *El príncipe perfecto II*, Juan finds out that Octavio has been hired to kill him. Juan meets Octavio alone in the countryside to face him man to man; however, Octavio refuses to fight him because “viendo tu gran valor / Te he cobrado tanto amor” (132). In addition to these individual dangers that the king faces, he also shows his bravery in war. The first part includes a description of his bravery in a previous battle:

> **En la batalla de Toro**
> Fue divino su valor…
> En fin, salió vencedor.
> **En África tiembla el moro,**
> Desde que le vió en Arcila
> Acometer la muralla. (95)
Though brave in war, Juan also shows his courage in peace: “Príncipe, que en paz y en guerra / Te llama perfecto el mundo” (113). Juan shows his valor when fighting individually and in war, but he also does so when facing other types of dangers. Towards the end of the first part, Juan is visited by the ghost of the man he had killed. Instead of being afraid, Juan confronts the ghost and tells him “no has de hallar temor / En este pecho” (109). Also in the first part, when a bull gets loose and everyone else is running away in terror, the king unsheathes his sword and kills the bull although he is only on foot (105). Juan and his son Alfonso also show that training and practicing are important when it comes to valor. Juan “ejercit[a] varias armas” and

Gusta mucho de la caza,

Ya con aves, ya con perros,

Al jabalí por el monte,

Y á la garza por el viento. (I 101)

In the second part, a portion of Alfonso’s training includes practicing with the sword (119), and Alfonso organizes for himself “Un partido de pelota” (133). The princes are able to hone their abilities to be better able to implement their valor through these activities. Thus, in El príncipe perfecto, an ideal prince is valiant when facing other people as an individual or in front of an army and when facing natural or supernatural dangers, and he also prepares himself to put his valor into action to obtain a positive result.

One final play which demonstrates different aspects and various degrees of valor is El mejor Par de los doze by Juan Matos Fragoso and Agustín Moreto. In this play the rey de Fez has invaded France and the emperador Carlos Magno must defend his
kingdom with the help of his Twelve Peers.\(^4\) Both of these kings show their courage by leading their armies into battle, but the French emperor and his armies win both battles. His soldiers praise his bravery saying, “La espalda a tu valor boluiò corrido / à reforçar su Exercito rompido” and “Los mismos elementos son testigos / de tu valor” (1). The Moorish king is valiant, but he is not able to translate that valor into the success that the French emperor enjoys.\(^5\) He not only loses both battles and thereby loses the war, but he also is defeated individually by Reynaldos in each of the battles. In the second battle, the rey de Fez tells Reynaldos, “A tu valor / ya me confieso rendido” (19). Although the king does not want to surrender his sword to someone who is not his equal, he is convinced to do so when Reynaldos tells him, “el valor sangre me ha dado / para igualarme contigo” (19). Despite having been defeated in battle and in individual combat, the Rey de Fez says, “que no es ser menos valiente, / ser vno mas desdichado” (19). He is still valiant, but he has not been able to translate this valor into victory. Carlos is therefore the more perfect prince of the two.

In this *comedia*, two of the Peers provide a sharp contrast of the differences in valor. Reynaldos begins the play as one of the doce Pares and in the two battles it is due to his fighting that the French are able to defeat the Moors. He also defeats the rey de Fez

\(^4\) Although the emperor Carlos and the Rey de Fez are the two primary sovereigns in this play, several of the Peers are analyzed as well as they reveal aspects of valor that also apply to the perfect prince.

\(^5\) In *El Nuevo Mundo descubierto por Cristóbal Colón*, the Moorish king of Granada in the first act also is on the losing side of a battle. Unlike the rey de Fez in *El mejor Par de los doze*, however, the king of Granada is depicted as a coward. Instead of helping his city militarily, he passes his time with women in his garden. He is rebuked by one of his subjects who tells him, “O te rinde o te defiende, / porque aguardar que te maten / no es hazaña de rey noble, / sino de esclavo cobarde; / deja el Albaicín, que riges, / y tus jardines infames; / deja el ámbar y las flores, / juega el freno embraza el ante” (vv. 339-46).
in singular combat (2-4, 13-4, 19). Florante, on the other hand, becomes one of the doce Pares when the emperor is deceived by the brothers Florante and Galalon into thinking that Reynaldos has betrayed him. Florante demonstrates his lack of courage by fleeing from the battle that he is supposed to be leading and having no desire whatsoever of fighting against Reynaldos. The difference in their courage is so great that Florante flees because his leadership is causing the loss of the battle. He lays his sword at Reynaldos’s feet and gives him the royal standard without hesitation; however, Reynaldos is able to completely turn around that same defeat and make it a victory (12-3). Florante’s cowardice is only revealed to Carlos at the end of the play when Carlos gives him the opportunity to fight Reynaldos to prove himself. Instead of taking this opportunity, he confesses his deception. Carlos exiles Florante and Galalon and returns all of Reynaldos privileges to him. The comparison between Reynaldos and Florante underlines the differences that can be so manifest between two people both in individual fights and in large pitched battles.

In these plays, the dramatists show that the ideal prince will be valiant in several areas. He will first face other people when he is alone as Juan did when he fought four men by himself. He will also be brave in battle and lead his armies into war as the emperador Carlos and the rey de Fez did. Additionally, when confronted by a non-human threat such as animals (Juan and the bull), nature (Alejandro and the river), or the supernatural (Juan and the ghost), the prince will maintain his courage and deal with the problem at hand. At times, two princes will courageously face off against each other either with their armies or man to man and although both may be very valiant, only one can be victorious. The prince that triumphs is the more perfect of the two as can be seen
in the comparison between Alejandro, who rules one of the greatest empires of history, and Darío, who flees to Babylon where he hides among women. In order to be able to translate that valor into victory, it is important that a prince train to become more effective by participating in activities such as hunting, practicing with weapons, and other sports and athletic endeavors. The playwrights of the Spanish Golden Age demonstrate time and again that the ideal sovereign does not back down from challenges but rather meets them courageously and conquers them.

These dramatists were not the only Spaniards of the Early Modern Era to write about the fortitude of a prince, however. The arbitristas also considered bravery an important quality in a prince and at times described it at length. Spain may have been going through a period of “crisis” or “decline” in its military might and its ability to gain victory throughout Europe, America and elsewhere, but, or perhaps because of this ineffectiveness, the arbitristas commented frequently on what they thought were the ideal characteristics of valor in a prince.6 Similarly to the playwrights, the arbitristas understood valor as able to be manifested in a variety of ways.

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6 For a discussion of the “decline” or according to Kamen what is more accurately a “crisis,” see Kamen, 241, 244, 253-54, 274-75. According to Kamen, although Spain had gained a large amount of territory, it had gained much of its European territories through inheritance instead of conquest and thus lacked the resources to maintain its lands. This incapacity led to “an undeniable collapse of empire” (275). Militarily, Spain had obtained many victories during the centuries leading up to the seventeenth. They completed the “Reconquista” of the Iberian Peninsula in 1492 (35), seized much of Southern Italy under Fernando and the Gran Capitán (6-8), conquered vast territories in the Americas during the sixteenth century including the Aztec and Incan Empires (95-96), Carlos V won the victory at Mühlberg in 1547 (74), the Spanish fleet defeated Turks at Lepanto in 1571 (138), and Felipe II annexed the Portuguese Empire in 1580 (132-33). Although during this period of expansion there were defeats, and after this period there were victories, Spain began losing more battles and started to lose its territories.
First, the valor of a prince can affect the entire nation when it comes to war and peace. Many arbitristas speak of the need of a prince to possess the courage to defend his people and lands. The whole country could suffer if the prince is too cowardly to go to war to defend the citizens of his kingdom. As Rivadeneyra says, “Y aunque en todas las acciones del príncipe debe resplandecer la fortaleza, pero en ninguna cosa más que en la guerra, que es la propia materia de ella” (184). Similarly, Gracián asserts, “Es la potencia militar base de la reputación, que un príncipe desarmado es un león muerto a quien hasta las liebres le insultan” (342). Mariana indicates that the ideal prince “no retrocede ante ningun peligro, no excusa trabajo alguno por la salud de la patria; es fuerte en la guerra, templado en la paz” (260). Several arbitristas also affirm that the presence of a king in battle will help sway the outcome in his favor. As Lope had pointed out in Las grandezas de Alejandro, Saavedra Fajardo also maintains that Alexander the Great encouraged his troops by being the first to enter danger (587). Quevedo further indicates that “Los ojos del príncipe es la más poderosa arma” (389), and “Rey que pelea y trabaja delante de los suyos, obligalos a ser valientes; el que los ve pelear, los multiplica, y de uno hace dos” (390). Additionally, after having gone through the troubles of war, a good prince will be able to obtain some benefit to strengthen himself and his people: “Vencido el león, supo Hércules gozar de la vitoria, vistiéndose de su piel para sujetar mejor otros monstruos. Así los despojos de un vencimiento arman y dejan más poderoso al vencedor. Y así deben los principes usar de las vitorias, aumentando sus fuerzas con las rendidas, y adelantando la grandeza de sus estados con los puestos ocupados” (646). According to the arbitristas, therefore, the ideal prince will not shun war when it becomes necessary, will be valiant during it, and be able to receive advantages from the experience.
Although a king should be brave in battle, the perfect prince should not have to display this valor very often. According to Rivadeneyra, “Pues para hablar de la fortaleza, la primera cosa que el príncipe cristiano debe hacer es persuadirse que aunque la paz es el blanco a que su gobierno debe mirar; pero que muchas veces no se puede alcanzar ni conservar buena paz sin buena guerra. La cual es tan necesaria para defender la república y tener paz” (184). At times war may be necessary to defend the kingdom, but as Mendo states, war is not a blessing to a nation; peace is: “Apenas ay mal, que no sea menor que el de la guerra” (23), or according to Quevedo, “Con el rey ha de nacer la paz” (461).

When at risk of facing an enemy, a prince should attempt to prevent whatever he can: “prevenir los males y sangrarse antes que venga la enfermedad: que es más excelente género de medicina que el curarla después de venida” (Rivadeneyra 163). A prince should attempt all other means at his disposal before recurring to war (Mendo 23), and if he must, he should remember that “La guerra se dirige à la Paz, y puede tolerarse los trabajos de la vna, por asegurar las felicidades de la otra” (48). Mendo also comments on several of the motivations both before and after wars saying, “No se emprenden las guerras para executar venganzas, sino para asegurar la paz, y la quietud: y así en consiguiendo la victoria, se ha de vsar della con templanza, perdonando à los rendidos, que es acción, que haze el triunfo glorioso” (36) and “En cesando la pelea, cesa la ira” (37). An important part of valor, therefore, is not only to be able to “sustentar la guerra,” but princes should also be “hábiles para conservar la paz” (Saavedra Fajardo 660).

In addition to being valiant on the national scale and dealing with war and peace, a prince should also be courageous in handling more intimate challenges. Describing what a prince should aim for, Gracián states, “Todo grande hombre fue siempre muy
galante, y todo galante, héroe; porque o supongo o comunico la bizarría de corazón y de condición” (92). Rivadeneyra, using ideas that he found in Cicero, describes valor or “fortaleza” as consisting of two parts: “La primera, en menosprecio de todas las cosas exteriores, persuadiéndose el hombre que no se debe maravillar, ni desear, ni apetecer en esta vida cosa alguna, sino la virtud, y que por ella ha de pelear con los hombres y consigo mismo, y resistir a los golpes de la fortuna” (174) and “La segunda es que, teniendo este ánimo que digo, haga el hombre cosas grandes y arduas y llenas de trabajos y de peligros de la vida: y esto no por su antojo o ambición, sino por el bien público” (174). He sums up these ideas by using Aristotle: “Aristóteles enseña que la virtud de la fortaleza tiene dos partes principales, que son—como dije—acometer y sufrir” (174). The idea of suffering is not a pleasant one, but it is necessary for a prince as Saavedra Fajardo explains:

Cuanto más oprimido el aire en el clarín, sale con mayor armonía y diferencias de voces. Así sucede a la virtud, la cual nunca más clara y sonora que cuando la mano le quiere cerrar los puntos. El valor se extingue, si el viento de alguna fortuna adversa no le aviva. Despierto el ingenio con ella, busca medios con que mejoralla. La felicidad nace, como la rosa, de las espinas y trabajos. (228)

Therefore, a prince must prove his valor when faced with individual difficulties in addition to national threats.
Although some *arbitristas* assert that valor is innate, they also speak of training and exercising it to be more capable of achieving positive results.\(^7\) One of the most commonly cited examples of this training is hunting. In describing the upbringing of Romulus and Remus, Mártir Rizo speaks of the importance of hunting by explaining that their adopted father “Faustulo los encaminó en el ejercicio que era más digno de su decoro y propio de la grandeza real. Industriándolos en la caza, no digo en el vano entretenimiento de las aves, sino en el de las fieras, arte que imita a la guerra y donde los cuerpos se hacen robustos y los ánimos más constantes” (147).\(^8\) Mariana agrees that

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\(^7\) Saavedra Fajardo, for example, states, “Nace el valor, no se adquiere; calidad intrínseca es del alma, que se infunde con ella y obra luego” (17). In the *comedias*, Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz and Juan de Guevara include this same idea: “no puede adquirirse / el valor, como los reinos” (721).

\(^8\) When Mártir Rizo speaks of “el vano entretenimiento de las aves” (147), he seems to be referring to the “caza menor,” one of the three types of hunting. These three are the “caza mayor,” “caza menor,” and “altanería.” All three are seen in *Don Quijote de la Mancha II*. When don Quijote and Sancho Panza first come upon the duke and duchess, these two nobles are out hunting with their falcons practicing “altanería” or “cetrería” (252-57, capítulo XXX). Later the duke and duchess take don Quijote and Sancho Panza on a hunting expedition for wild boar which is “caza mayor” or “caza de montería” (286-93). During this hunt, the duke explains to Sancho the importance of this type of hunt: “el ejercicio de la caza de monte es el más conveniente y necesario para los reyes y príncipes que otro alguno. La caza es una imagen de la guerra: hay estratagemas, astucias, insidias para vencer a su salvo al enemigo; padécense en ella fríos grandísimos y calores intolerables, menoscábase el ocio y el sueño, corrobóranse las fuerzas, agilítese los miembros del que la usa, y, en resolución, es ejercicio que se puede hacer sin perjuicio de nadie y con gusto de muchos; y lo mejor que él tiene es que no es para todos, como lo es el de los otros géneros de caza, excepto el de la volatería, que también es sólo para reyes y grandes señores” (288). Finally, when don Quijote and Sancho meet the group of young people who were acting as if they were shepherds, don Quijote gets caught in a net that the youths had spread in order to catch birds—“simples pajarillos” (464)—which is an example of “caza menor” (462-68, capítulo LVIII) or Mártir Rizo’s “vano entretenimiento de las aves.” According to the RAE, caza mayor is “caza de jabalíes, lobos, ciervos u otros animales semejantes,” caza menor is “caza de liebres, conejos, perdices, palomas u otros animales semejantes,” and cetrería is “caza de aves y algunos cuadrúpedos que se hacía con halcones, azores y otros pájaros que perseguían la presa hasta herirla o matarla.” In his *El libro de los estados*, don Juan Manuel speaks of the great benefits of hunting and its relationship to war. He describes the need of hunting in
hunting is important for princes: “Aprendan á perseguir las fieras en campo abierto y á trepar á los montes, fatigando el cuerpo con hambre, con sed y con trabajo” (276). In addition to hunting, the arbitristas mention other activities to help the prince be prepared to implement his valor. Mariana advises that princes “Jueguen tambien á la pelota y otros juegos” (276) and that they do other activities which will strengthen them “IMPORTA ejercitar el cuerpo del príncipe, robustecer con un trabajo frecuente su salud y fuerzas, alimentar en él la firmeza y la audacia, hacerle perder con todo linaje de pugnas el miedo á los peligros” (281). Mendo, combining national and individual concerns as well as valor and prudence, observes that it is important for soldiers to practice with weapons as well as for the prince to do so: “Para la felicidad de vn Reyno, y de quien le rige, han de florecer armas, y letras; porque conservan vnas, lo que ganan otras. Exercitese el Principe en ambas, y fomente en sus Vasallos entrambos exercicios” (95). Thus, in order for a prince to be prepared when the time comes to put his valor into practice, it is important for him to train himself in different ways such as the hunt, sports, and practicing with weapons.

The arbitristas, therefore, write about many of the same ideas as the playwrights do when commenting on the valor of a prince. The arbitristas consider it important that princes have courage both in a large battle and in an individual fight. Fighting, however, should not be entered into lightly and it was better for the nation to prevent war and seek peace. A prince should also remember that valor is not only attacking but also persevering, or suffering, through difficult times. In order to be ready to successfully

the raising of princes and the many ways in which hunting prepares them for war (199, 244-45). See also Libro de la caça by don Juan Manuel and Libro de la montería by Alfonso XI.
navigate these difficult times, to maintain peace, or to gain victory over an enemy—either national or personal—the *arbitristas* comment on the importance of preparation and training for those times. A brave prince will not shrink back from dangers of any kind nor will he shrink back from the work to be ready for the dangers.

The Plays with Theseus

Having now laid a foundation to be able to discuss valor, it is possible to continue on into an analysis of the six mythological *comedias* which are the center of this dissertation. In each of these plays, several princes, which include Theseus as well as many others, are often met with challenges in which they must show their valor. Many times these princes are in direct conflict with one another, and in these confrontations, it is possible to examine the comparative courage of the rulers. The princes are not the only ones who are met with difficulties, however, and when the *graciosos* are with their masters during a dangerous period, for example, it is often abundantly and humorously clear that the servant does not have the fortitude of the prince. With the prevalent direct opposition of princes in these plays, there are some which come out on the losing end of the altercations. Although the form of the perfect prince is to have valor and come out victorious because of this bravery, some of the princes fail to do so and are thereby only princes in matter. Even these imperfect princes, however, are still defended as the playwrights and their audiences conform to the worldview that the monarchy is the form of government and other systems are simply the matter.
1. *El laberinto de Creta* by Lope de Vega

In the first play, *El laberinto de Creta* by Lope de Vega, several princes prepare for war, enter battle, and engage in single combat proving their valor. The play in fact begins and ends with the conclusion of two different confrontations between nations, and another almost breaks out in the middle of the play. The valor shown by the princes Teseo, Minos, Oranteo, and the general Feniso are complemented by the valor shown by the princesses Ariadna and Fedra but contrasted comically by the cowardice of the *gracioso* Fineo. Though much braver than Fineo, the fortitude of the different princes is not always perfect. In this play, however, Lope confirms these princes in their reigns.

First, the play begins with Minos having just achieved victory over the king Neso and the Athenians. In ancient sources, Minos did not attack Athens directly, but rather their ally Megara of which Nisus was king. The myth of Minos, Nisus, and Scylla is related to the myth of Theseus and the Minotaur because since Minos had defeated their ally, Athens submitted to Crete and sent them the human tribute to be fed to the Minotaur (Rose 265; Rose, Parke, Robertson, and B. C. Dietrich; Kearns, “Nisus (1)”). Lope, however, seems to simplify things and makes Neso the king of Athens. Thus, Minos and his army attack Athens directly and are able to conquer it after a three year siege.

Through this victory, it seems at first glance that Minos has proven himself more capable than Neso or Teseo at implementing his valor.

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9 Cila, the daughter of Neso, tells Minos that the walls of Athens (and not the walls of Megara) are subject to him as were already the walls of Crete: “Rey Minos, a quien se humillan / los altos muros de Creta, / como agora a tu victoria / los imposibles de Atenas” (56). This is also what Pérez de Moya had done previously in his *Philosophia Secreta* which was first published in 1585 (Martínez Berbel 141-42). Martínez Berbel actually calls the king, “el ateniense Niso” (142). See also 154-56.

10 Minos says, “tres vueltas el sol ha dado / desde el Aries a los Peces” (55) indicating that three years had passed during the siege.
During the assault on Athens, both Minos and Teseo were able to distinguish themselves for their valor. Cila falls in love with Minos because she sees him valiantly attacking Athens at the front of his men. She tells him that she noticed him when “te vi gallardo a caballo / armado de todas piezas” (56). Because of his valor, Minos was able to get the attention of the woman who would open the city for him. Teseo also proved himself during the fighting. The Cretan general Feniso mentions this Athenian in particular when remembering the difficulty they had in taking the city: “el gallardo Teseo, / y otros griegos generosos, / la guardaban” (56). In this battle that had ended before the play began, both princes had proven themselves to be courageous, but as Minos’s army had won (due to the intervention of Cila; see below), he seems to be a better prince because he was able to gain the victory. This victory, however, is called into question in three ways: Minos’s motive for undertaking the attack, his manner of gaining victory, and his method of taking advantage of that victory.

Although Minos fought valiantly and was able to gain victory, his reason for attacking Athens could be questioned. The motive behind Minos’s attack is to avenge the death of his son as he himself tells his general at the opening of the comedia:

he tenido, Feniso,
con la victoria de Niso
la venganza de Androgeo.
Matáronme los de Atenas
mi hijo, (55)

As mentioned above, however, Mendo claims that wars should be fought for the sake of peace and not for the sake of vengeance (36). It could be said that Minos is defending his
nation, his sovereignty, and his own family, but Minos himself says that the war had been
to exact revenge on Athens and therefore reveals his own imperfections.

Additionally, the manner in which Minos gained victory calls into question his
valor. Minos was able to conquer Athens, but he did so at the expense of his reputation.
Cila, the princess of Athens, had fallen in love with Minos and promised to hand the city
over to him. Minos had agreed to this and would in turn take her back to Crete to be his
wife. Cila, however, went too far in her method of delivering the city: “Mató Cila,
paticida, / al Rey, su padre” (55). Minos had been hoping to gain victory, but “no
pensaba yo / que fuera con tal crueldad” (55), and he had wanted to “vencella sin
infamarme” (57). In describing why he will leave Cila, he tells Feniso, “los reyes
queremos / de la victoria, el valor, / por traidor o por leal” (55). In achieving victory in
such a traitorous and ignoble manner, however, Minos in forfeiting some of the valor that
he could have gained from the victory.

Minos lastly demonstrates that he is not able to take advantage of his valor
effectively. Instead of being like Hercules who was able to take advantage of his victory
over the Nemean Lion by using its skin as armor to further his cause in future battles,
Minos squandered his victory and although he could have gotten fruit from it, he instead
threw away this opportunity. Minos and Feniso discuss an advantageous conclusion to
the war:

Minos     Llamad a los principales
de Atenas, porque tratemos
que en libertad las dejemos,
pero con medias iguales:
After Minos finds out about the Minotaur and his unfaithful wife, however, he abandons this beneficial course of action and instead embarks on one that will destroy his new territory and weaken his kingdom: “quiero que me des cada año / diez hombres de Vosotros, que devore / y coma aqueste monstruo de Pasife.” (60). This “fiero tributo” (60) will cost Minos soldiers and will hinder what Athens could otherwise supply to him, because with it, “no quede / hombre en Atenas” (61). Minos is not able to take advantage of the valor that he had shown in battle. Thus, although this Cretan king was valiant in the war and succeeded in conquering Athens, he also fell short of the ideal before, during, and after this war which took place before the beginning of the *comedia*.12

A second prince that proves his valor in at least some instances is Teseo. As mentioned above, he proved his fortitude in the defense of the Athenian walls, but he had also carried out several other exploits before the beginning of the play. His servant Fineo tells Ariadna of a few of his “tan espantosas hazañas” (67) including the conquest of the Golden Fleece with Jasón in which they robbed Medea, the victory over the Centaurs in the wedding of Hipodamia, and his descent into Hades with Hércules. Teseo has clearly

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11 According to Kamen, this problem of depopulation of Castile was one of the more serious issues that the nation was facing. As there were not enough people, production went down and not enough soldiers could be put on the battlefields (244).

12 In the other *comedias* that tell this myth, Minos is given the same vengeful motivation for attacking Athens. The exact way he conquers it is not mentioned in the other plays, but the cruel tribute is. In all except possibly *El laberinto de Creta* where the Minotaur is the safeguard of the kingdom, this tribute does not help strengthen the victor and seems to be a waste of valor.
proven his valor both in battle and against more intimate challenges and word of his courage and ability to achieve victory had already spread throughout the world as Ariadna recognizes the stories.

Although here Ariadna and Fedra are the ones who recognize that Teseo has already proven his valor in many different exploits, they too show that they are brave in helping Teseo in the adventure around which the *comedia* revolves, the Minotaur and the Labyrinth. Ariadna and Fedra know that it is dangerous to help the Athenian, and Ariadna confesses this to Teseo saying that their father Minos will want to take vengeance out on them. In spite of this danger and with the assurance that Teseo will take them safely to Athens, Ariadna provides Teseo with what he will need in order to be able to conquer the Minotaur.

Even before he received the help of the princesses, Teseo demonstrates his valor when he is sent to Crete to “dar pasto a una fiera” (65). Instead of shirking his duty or trying to escape his fate, he faces the danger without hesitating. After arriving in Crete, Teseo received the welcome and much needed help from the princesses who reveal to him how it is possible to defeat the Minotaur and give him the necessary tools. Ariadna tells him,

    Yo te daré de oro un hilo,
    que a las puertas has de atar,
    por donde puedas tornar
    siguiendo aquel mismo estilo.

    .........................
    has de llevar
tres panes, con tal veneno,
que de su sentido ajeno,
[el Minotauro] caiga en el mismo lugar.

Entonces, con una maza
que te daré, larga y fuerte,
en sangre, dándole muerte,
bañarás la inculta plaza. (70)

With this advice and the objects, Teseo is able to boldly enter the Labyrinth in order to individually face this monster. When he meets his enemy, he encourages himself and is “animoso” (75) when he attacks instead of cautious and fearful. After Teseo has victoriously left the Labyrinth, Feniso exclaims, “ya es Teseo vencedor” (76) and says that he has accomplished an “hecho de tanto valor” (76). Without his valor, Teseo would not have defeated the Minotaur.

Although Teseo fought bravely in battle and courageously enters the Labyrinth and defeats the Minotaur, like Minos he also shows that his valor could be lacking. As Teseo is returning to Athens, he and those with him come ashore on Lesbos, the island of Oranteo (78). Although he had previously given his word to Ariadna to wed her (70), during the voyage he has fallen in love with Fedra. When he tells Fineo of his plan to abandon Ariadna on the island, however, Fineo tries to appeal to his sense of valor to prevent him from doing this: “Que desamparar mujeres, / no es de hombres de tu valor” (78). He further tells him, “pero dejar a Ariadna, / esa bajeza, señor, / indigna de tu valor” (79). These arguments do not convince the Athenian prince, and he leaves Ariadna alone in a foreign country except for his servant Fineo who has just run off. Although
Ariadna later says that Teseo has given her a “justo castigo” (86), his fortitude has been called into question.

The third prince in the play, Oranteo, does not appear as often, but when he does he proves himself to be full of valor and knows how to take advantage of the outcomes. At first, Oranteo and Ariadna love each other and would like to marry one another (61). After the victory of Athens, however, Minos plans to marry his daughter to his general Feniso (62). He makes these plans in spite of knowing about the desires of Oranteo and Ariadna. When Oranteo learns of these plans, he realizes that he will have to fight in order to recover his love: “Ven, porque demos luego / voz a la fama, lienzo al mar, a Marte / materia, a amor más fuego” (66). He returns to his country, organizes his army, and sets out for Crete. When Minos sees this coming attack, however, he decides to give Ariadna to Oranteo in marriage. Having obtained this desired result through his valor but without actually having to fight, Oranteo does not press the issue, but seeks peace and therefore is able to take advantage of his valor: “a Creta he vuelto alegre de casarme. / La blanda paz, que no la guerra intento” (72). Through these actions Oranteo proves that he is valiant in war and in peace.

By giving his daughter Ariadna to Oranteo, Minos must take her away from Feniso. His general, however, “está consolado / de que le case con Fedra” (76). Minos thus plans on having Oranteo and Feniso as his sons-in-law and even calls them his “yernos” (76). These two princes discuss the future rule of Crete, and both have the requisite valor to defend it and rule it well. Minos wants them to reign together, but Oranteo and Feniso would prefer to have either the entire kingdom or none of it. Feniso claims that he is courageous enough to rule it alone asserting, “tengo bastante brio / para
gobernar a Creta” (77) to which Oranteo replies, “Y yo para los gobiernos / del mundo, que se sujeta / a mi valor” (77). Thus, both Oranteo and Feniso profess to have this necessary quality of a prince, though the play does not give either of them the opportunity as Minos is still alive.

Minos, Teseo, and Oranteo, therefore, all show that they have valor in the aforementioned varying cases even though they may lack the ideal portion of it or misdirect it at times. In the final act of the play, they all have the opportunity to demonstrate their fortitude during the same event. After the princesses Ariadna and Fedra choose to leave Crete with Teseo, Minos and Oranteo come to the conclusion that they must deal with this affront and both make plans to assault Teseo to regain the princesses—Minos as they are his daughters and Oranteo because Ariadna is his future wife (77). All three princes are thus involved in this one potential war pitted against each other.

In order to make sure that the fight takes place, Oranteo sends a message to Teseo through an ambassador challenging him to a naval battle so that he can recover his love. While he is waiting for a response, Oranteo does not idly wait around. Instead, he dedicates himself to the hunt explaining “las fieras seguiré por la montaña, / guerra también, pues es imagen de ella” (83). For his part, once Teseo receives the challenge, he immediately responds by preparing his own troops to not just meet in the neutral sea but to instead take the battle all the way to Oranteo’s island of Lesbos. Teseo decides to go to Oranteo’s land because it will prove his valor more: “en la propia suya / pretendo yo que mi valor se arguya” (90). To round out the battle, Minos and Feniso are preparing their troops and travelling to Athens when the seas become rough and they must come ashore
on Lesbos. Thus, Oranteo is preparing for battle by hunting on Lesbos, Minos and his army come ashore on the same island, and Teseo arrives to attack both of them and defend his cause.

It is necessary for Teseo to defend himself because Minos and Oranteo think that he has dishonorably stolen Ariadna and Fedra when in fact he has not: “te daré a entender que he sido / sólo robador de Fedra, / como de propia mujer” (96). Although fighting is one way to demonstrate valor, another is having peace when the reason for war ceases. Oranteo, knowing that Teseo does not have Ariadna but that she is on his island, shows his valor by explaining, “y como tú no la tengas, / cesa la ocasión de hacer / contigo batalla o guerra” (96). Although Teseo was at peace with Oranteo, Minos still needed to see his daughter safe and sound: “Si cesare de tu parte, / no pienses, traidor, que cesa / de la mía” (96). As Oranteo and Minos were allies, they would join forces in battle (97). The war is averted, however, when Ariadna does show up. Because she has been found, the cause for the war has been removed. Minos is pleased and declares, “notablemente me alegra. / Dale la mano a Oranteo, / y en paz haremos las fiestas” (98). Repeating the idea of being able to now enjoy peace, Teseo says, “Aquí cesa / la enemistad” (98). Therefore, the princes are all able to demonstrate their valor by letting go of the war and being able to enjoy the peace that follows their successful display of courage.

Lastly, Teseo’s servant Fineo who is the graciosos in this play also demonstrates how a prince should behave when it comes to facing challenges with fortitude, but he does so primarily in a negative fashion as a model to avoid rather than follow. Fineo is chosen as the king of the shepherds for one year, and is thus not a true prince nor does he
act like one. Whereas Teseo is ready to bravely face the Minotaur, Fineo shows that he is afraid of the risks that this monster poses:

¡Oh, Pasife del infierno,
como hiciste un torihombre,
no hiciéras un hombriciervo!
Que los ciervos son cobardes,
y aunque armados, van huyendo (73).

Furthermore, whereas Teseo, Minos (and his general Feniso), and Oranteo all come to Lesbos ready for battle, Fineo proves that he does not have the courage to fight as these other princes do. Fineo is among the shepherds who when they see that Teseo is coming to bring battle to Oranteo “Huyendo algunos pastores, / desamparan sus aldeas” (96). Therefore, Fineo proves that he is not a true prince as he lacks the bravery to face the individual challenge of the Minotaur and the trial of war against Teseo.

In *El laberinto de Creta*, therefore, Lope presents several princes who must compete against one another to try to prove their valor as well as one servant who pretends to be a prince but who lacks the princely characteristic of valor. Fineo comically shows the opposite of what a prince should be, but the princes in the play do not always show the positive side of the spectrum. Although Minos wins the war and is able to capture Athens, his motive for doing so, the method of achieving victory, and the benefit that he got out of the victory all call into question the valor of the Cretan king. Teseo, for his part, is on the losing side of the first battle, and although he does defeat the Minotaur in single combat, he casts a dubious shadow over his valor by abandoning Ariadna in a foreign land. Although these princes demonstrate that they do not always have the form
of a prince and they fall short of the ideal ruler, Lope still confirms them as princes and celebrates their lives. Teseo is an undeniable hero of antiquity, the glorious conqueror of the Minotaur, and the valiant ruler of Athens. Minos continues his rule in Crete. All of the princes come together to fight, but the play ends with peace between them and all of them ready to celebrate. This play shows that a prince can have the matter of the perfect valiant prince instead of the form, but he will is still defended and celebrated.

2. *Las mujeres sin hombres* by Lope de Vega

The second play, *Las mujeres sin hombres*, is also by Lope de Vega. In this play, the major conflicts occur between the Greek heroes Hércules, Jasón, Teseo, and later Tíndaro against the Amazons Antiopía, Deyanira, and Menalipe. All of these princes and princesses show a great deal of courage at different times and in different situations such as exploits undertaken before the play, large-scale battles, individual fights, and the attainment of peace through valor. Teseo and Antiopía, however, have their bravery strongly questioned and even insulted during the play. In spite of the doubts that are hurled at them, these two along with the other heroes are upheld and celebrated in this drama.

First, the Greek heroes Hércules, Jasón, and Teseo had already accomplished great deeds before the play begins through which they have already proven their valor. Hércules, for example,

\[ \text{ha puesto el mundo a sus pies} \]
\[ \text{con tanta facilidad;} \]
\[ \text{después que venció leones} \]
e hidras, si sus nombres sabes,
las estinfálidas aves,
gigantes y geriones,
a Busiris y a Diomedes,
a los hijos de Crisauro,
mató el robador Centauro;
y porque admirado quedes,
tuvo en sus hombros el mundo,
las dos columnas que baña
y puso en Cádiz de España
la furia del mar profundo. (380)\(^\text{13}\)

Also, Jasón has already accomplished great things: “robó las manzanas\(^\text{14}\) / y el vellocino
de oro; / mató la sierpe encantada” (392). Finally, although Lope mentions more deeds in
other plays, in this one he still includes the Minotaur: “Aquí viene el gran Teseo, / el que,
con industria y armas, / mató al Minotauro” (392). All of these Greek heroes are
“valientes hombres” and “cualquiera basta / para conquistar el mundo” (392). The
princes, therefore, have already proven that they are mighty warriors and valiant rulers.

For their part, Lope does not include any exploits that the Amazons that appear in
play have done, though a previous Amazon, Pantasilea, fought courageously in the
Trojan war: “¿Quién en la Guerra de Troya / hizo más valientes hechos / que las fuertes
Amazonas?” (396). Although these particular Amazons do not have any legends about

\(^{13}\) Some of these deeds correspond to the 12 Labors of Hercules. In his fifth Labor, for
example, Hercules defeated the Stymphalian birds (Schachter).

\(^{14}\) Hercules actually robbed the apples of the Hesperides in one of his Labors (Schachter).
them that are mentioned in the comedia, they have been training for battle their entire lives so that when the time comes, they will be able to put their valor into action. When a girl is born, “la enseñan, naciendo, / letras y armas, porque son / en letras y armas extremo” (382). Furthermore, once Antiopía is named the new queen, she gives her laws of which several have to do with the training that the Amazons must undergo. She first mentions that they should not combine the training of swords and bows in one place: “Mando que en la palestra de la esgrima, / adonde ejercitamos las espadas, / sólo se entre con ellas, no con arcos” (385). Another of her laws places a premium on being able to use weapons well so that their valor can be used effectively. If any Amazon “no supiere las armas diestramente, / en llegando a veinte años sea llevada / por las públicas calles en castigo” (385). These Amazons were well trained for war and therefore had a reputation for “su fiereza” (380).

In this comedia, the already proven Greeks face off against the well prepared Amazons in a war which Teseo describes as being undertaken “porque discurre la fama / de la crueldad de esta gente, / loca, bárbara, insolente” (380) though he does not mention toward whom the cruelty is directed. Although they all at first seem eager to attempt this feat, two of them get distracted. When Teseo goes to the Amazons’ city as an ambassador, he and the queen Antiopía fall in love with one another and spend a month together not even considering the dispute between the Greeks and Amazons. Teseo is supposedly awaiting an answer from the senate, but the other Greek princes think he has lost his manhood and has become a coward. Jasón tells him that he has become the “deshonra de tu patria” (416), and Hércules instructs him to “ponte una rueca” and also
warns him that “Nunca tuvo Circe a Ulises / tan olvidado y sin armas” (417). Antiopía is insulted as well for her lack of courage in defending her city. Menalipe exclaims,

¿Cómo estás de esa suerte entre las flores
deste jardín, que a los de Chipre iguala,
cuando con mil trompetas y atambores
el griego Alcides nuestro muro escala?
¿Es justo que ahora estés diciendo amores,
cuando no sólo la campaña tala,
mas ya parte del muro desmantela
a quien con sus engaños desvela?

…………………..

Saca la espada y tu ciudad defiende,
o deja a la más digna la corona;
que así conserva, quien reinar pretende
cetro, reputación, vida y persona (415).\(^\text{15}\)

Although they are both valiant leaders, Teseo and Antiopía are also ridiculed in this play by their companions for their lack of valor.

After receiving all of this ridicule and after the Greeks had initiated a first assault of the walls (which is when Antiopía and Teseo receive these insults), these two leaders end up parting ways and rejoining their respective armies to join the battle. The Greeks had begun the \textit{comedia} with Hércules, Jasón, and Teseo as the three princes on their side, and the Amazons had begun with Antiopia, Deyanira, and Menalipe. By the time the

\(^{15}\) This accusation of spending time in the garden among flowers is the same one that was leveled at the king of Granada in \textit{El Nuevo Mundo descubierto por Cristóbal Colón}. 

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battle is actually initiated a month after Teseo had been sent as an ambassador, another Greek prince, Tindaro, had joined Hércules and his companions (395). Additionally, after being sent to prison by her queen, Deyanira escapes and also joins the Greek forces (412). Deyanira is able to tell the Greeks how to enter the city, and with this information, Hércules decides that they should go ahead and begin the attack even though Teseo has not yet returned (412-13). With this initial assault, Teseo and Antiopía finally seem to recover their fortitude and rejoin their armies (419-21). When the battle recommences, all of the princes and princesses display their courage through their abilities in the battle.

While the valor of the rulers can be seen in this large confrontation, they also demonstrate their courage when facing individual dangers, many of which occur in the battle, though some instances take place prior. As the play is opening, for example, the Greek heroes have discovered what they think is a wild animal in a cave. Hércules and Jasón both want to enter into the cave alone to attack this “fiera” though it turns out to be unnecessary as it is simply a man in hiding (379). Second, when the Amazons are trying to decide who will be their next queen, although they are supposed to choose the wisest, Antiopía, Deyanira, and Menalipe all are more than willing to let the matter be decided by single combat and think that they would be able to triumph over the others (382-84). The first individual fight that actually takes place is Menalipe against one of the Greek soldiers whom she is able to capture and bring to the city (390). Next, Antiopía shows her valor by going out to the Greek army and challenging “al que es mayor de vosotros” (396) that he “salga cuerpo a cuerpo / a hacer batalla conmigo” (396). She even goes as far as taunting each of the three Greek princes in an attempt to provoke them and is clearly ready to prove her valor against any comier. None of the Greeks go out to meet
her, not because they are cowards but rather because they had decided, “intentemos /
vencer a estas mujeres sin espada” (389). When Teseo’s embassy takes too long,
however, it does come to swords and the Greeks attack the cruel Amazons.

During the battle, many people face off in one-on-one fights and demonstrate
their courage. Menalipe and Jasón, for example fight one another until Jasón confesses,

   no sé cómo te pedí
   que tus armas me rindieras,
   si pretendo que supieras
   que ya estoy rendido a ti. (423)

During the course of the battle, the Greeks manage to get into the city and are clearly
winning the fight. At this point, Teseo decides to try to spare the rest of the Amazons and
begins fighting against the prince Tíndaro. When Hércules comes, neither he nor Teseo
back down at all but are ready to fight each other. Teseo declares, “Soy Teseo, y tan
valiente / como tú” (424). Seeing this approaching conflict, Deyanira shows her valor by
interposing herself between the two in order to prevent the fight. Jasón also comes and
puts himself between the swords. All of the Greek princes and princesses have shown
their valor in individual combat and are decidedly very courageous when it comes to
fighting “cuerpo a cuerpo.”

When Teseo demonstrates his bravery by facing Tíndaro and then Hercules and
interposes himself between the two armies, he is trying to bring peace. The Greeks and
Amazons have all shown their valor in war, but the Greek forces have proven too much
for the Amazons and are now in the city and destroying it. Teseo tells Hércules, “sólo os
pido, pues ya estáis / en la ciudad, que a la Reina / guardéis el justo decoro” (425). In
trying to reach peace and also achieve a benefit from the victory, Hércules offers Antiopía “un medio que sea / justo y conveniente a todos” (425). Hércules tells her that there will be peace and an end to the “rigor” if the Greeks can choose a wife from among the Amazons. When Antiopía agrees to this proposition, “ya la Amistad / en estas paces comienza” (426) and they all pair off. The princes and princesses have all shown valor and they all are able to take advantage of that by receiving a benefit after the war has ended and peace has begun.

In *Las mujeres sin hombres*, therefore, the Greek princes and the Amazon princesses all show great valor. Two of them, however, are at one point strongly ridiculed for their lack of this princely virtue. Teseo and Antiopía have ensconced themselves for a month in a garden instead of spending time with their fellow soldiers. For this absence, they are both highly criticized by their fellow princes and princesses. Menalipe even suggests that Antiopía give up the crown. This criticism, however, does not mean that they should surrender their rules or have them taken away. The *comedia* goes on to

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16 McGaha’s analysis of the play—that Lope shows a subversive attitude toward the norms of his society (167) and that “*Las mujeres sin hombres* reveals Lope’s genuine sensitivity to the feminist viewpoint” (164)—seems to ignore the fact that the Greeks were already defeating the Amazons and were destroying their city. Theseus sees that the Greeks have won and tries to protect his love, and Hércules agrees to end the battle as long as the Amazons meet his conditions of surrender. McGaha, however, declares, “Hercules appears as an exponent of traditional *macho* ideology, and Theseus is ultimately transformed into an enlightened feminist. The play builds to a powerful climax in the middle of act 3 when both Teseo and Antiopía first choose honor over love and then almost simultaneously realize the error of their decision. While Boccaccio had presented Theseus as correctly reasserting the role of the dominant male in the business of government and warfare, Lope’s Theseus ultimately sides with the Amazons against his countrymen, thus acknowledging their claims to equality with men. The war of the sexes ends in a truce in which neither side can claim victory. The Amazons freely and with dignity choose to accept the Greeks as their husbands” (162). The Amazons may still have dignity, but the Greeks win the battle and conquer the “*mujeres sin hombres*” who will now no longer be so. Also, Teseo and Antiopía do not question giving up their love for their honor. Instead, they find a solution that embraces both.
defend and uphold these princes. It is actually Teseo who brings about a successful and felicitous end to the war by valiantly interposing himself between both armies. For her part, Antiopía is the one who officially brings the conflict to a close by accepting the terms that Hércules has suggested, and it is to her that Hércules and Jasón must tell their desires to marry Deyanira and Menalipe, respectively (426). Although the princes in this drama are imperfect, they are still glorified and celebrated.

3. *El vellocino de oro* by Lope de Vega

The third *comedia*, *El vellocino de oro* by Lope de Vega, tells of Jasón’s heroic conquest of the Golden Fleece. In this *comedia*, many leaders have opportunities to demonstrate their valor or at least propose valorous deeds that do not take place in the form of the play that has survived to this day. The play performed for Felipe IV has a loa followed by two acts whereas the original form of the play likely had three. It seems as if Lope eliminated the third act so as to keep the focus on the Golden Fleece, the symbol of the Order of the Golden Fleece of which Felipe IV was head. This play is also unique in that it mentions many other princes—historical, mythological, and contemporary—besides the ones who appear as participants in the drama and how they have become famous through their courageous feats. In this play Lope clearly demonstrates that the ideal prince should be valiant even if at times he may appear to lack the needed courage or display what to some appears to be cowardice.

One group of princes in this play are the Greeks who come to Colchis to capture the Golden Fleece. Though others join them in this endeavor, the princes who form this

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group are Jasón, a prince in Greece, and Teseo, the “honor y gloria de Tebas” (v. 1124). One reason that they have chosen to undertake this journey is to prove their valor. Pelias has told Jasón that he should embark on this quest, and Jasón does so because “no quise que conociera / ni en mi valor cobardía / ni en sus intentos bajeza” (vv. 1120-21).18

Simply beginning this feat of crossing the seas and wanting to face the dangers ahead demonstrate that Jasón and Teseo are not lacking in bravery as Fineo attests to when he calls their exploit a “¡Notable hazaña la tuya!” (v. 1171) and as Marte confirms when he tells Jasón, “verte con tal valor fuerte y discreto, / pudo mudar el celestial decreto” (vv. 1981-88)

The Greeks may have begun to show their valor by undertaking the quest, but they cement it by carrying it out and facing the dangers that accompany it. The Rey de Colcos explains in detail the dangers to Jasón upon their meeting saying that not only does a fierce dragon guard it but also two fire-breathing bulls (vv. 1208-35). When Jasón commences the fight, he begins with the dragon and is able to kill it. He then sows the ground with its teeth and is able to defeat the four soldiers that spring from the ground by letting them fight amongst themselves (vv. 2031-40). After that, Jasón is able to defeat the two bulls and take the Fleece from the laurel tree where it had been hanging (vv. 2049-51). By conquering these incredible beasts, Jasón demonstrates his courage and proves that he is a valiant prince.

These Greek princes and those of Colchis do not, however, act alone when their valor is tested. They are helped by a second group of leaders, the princesses in Colchis. Medea and Fenisa are the two princesses of Colchis who fall in love with the Greeks and

18 For more on the myth, see Hunter.
then help them in their exploits, and Helenia came to Colchis with her brother Friso on the back of a the ram and then falls in love with Fineo, prince of Colchis. Even before the Greeks arrive Medea is already showing her valor and developing the skills to be able to effectively put it into practice by hunting (v. 665). Then, when they do arrive, she does not fear lending her aid to Jasón. The Greek prince even recognizes her aid as he is fighting the beasts:

¡Fieras, aquí moriréis,
que me da favor y esfuerzo
la nueva Elena, que a Grecia,
no a Troya, en mis naves llevo!
¿Qué resistís su poder,
si yo con alma no puedo (vv. 2041-46).

Helenia, for her part, does not hesitate to help Oeta, Fineo, and especially her brother Friso. Helenia wants to reclaim their kingdom “de su madrastra fiera” (346) and therefore recruits the help of others so that she and her brother will be able to do so. She also will assist with the effort to restore the honor of the king and prince after the Greeks stole so many ladies. The princes are not the only ones in this comedia that prove their valor because the princesses are also constantly showing their own fortitude.

The third group of rulers are the princes in Colchis. This group is made up of Oeta, Rey de Colcos; his nephew Fineo, the prince of Colchis; and Friso, who is the son of Atamante who reigns a kingdom in the east, but he had to flee because of his stepmother. These three princes demonstrate their valor in several ways, but are also in the center of the conflict against the Greeks. The valor of these characters and its
effectiveness are dramatically affected by the lack of a third act in this play. Over the course of the extant version of the play, they demonstrate great valor early on but seem to be unable to defend themselves against the Greeks. They do, however, challenge them and call them “cobardes griegos” (v. 2098).

The first way in which these princes show their valor and hone their skills is through hunting. Before being thrown into the sea by his stepmother Erifile when his father was absent, Friso had tried to win her over by proving his bravery through his hunting exploits:

Yo, en la caza divertido,
le presentaba las fieras
pero nunca con ninguna
pude aplacar su fiera.(vv. 411-14)

Fineo also trains himself by hunting (v. 652). By training themselves in this way, they are ready to meet the challenges that come when the image of war is traded for the real thing. Battles and wars are the second way in which these rulers prove their valor. Although the play ends before they have the opportunity, Oeta, Fineo, and Friso prepare themselves to restore their honor by fighting the Greeks (or probably meeting them for battle but joining with them once they verify that they have not been dishonored) and after that to restore Friso to his kingdom. They do not have the chance to show their valor in this way, but they are not without military victories. Friso, for example, after training himself through hunting,

seguí animoso la guerra,

o para que me matasen,
o agradarla con mi ausencia.

Dábame el cielo vitorias

como si yo las pidiera (415-19).

Friso, therefore, is the only prince in Colchis who is shown as a conqueror. He, Fineo, and Oeta, however, are overcome by Jasón and Teseo who not only take the Golden Fleece but also escape with many of the women. The Greek princes, therefore, demonstrate in this case that they are able to more effectively use their valor than the princes in Colchis who seem less capable as leaders.

This perception of the Greek princes as more proficient at translating their valor into victories, however, is challenged during the version of the play that remains and would likely have been equalized in the third act of the original. When Fineo discovers that the Greeks are fleeing, he challenges the Greeks as a whole to battle and Jasón in particular to single combat:

¡Aguardad, griegos infames;

aguardad, cobardes griegos;

y tú, que el alma me levas,

aguarda, vil extranjero!

¿Tú eres noble? ¡Mientes, mientes

mil veces

..............................

Toma esta lanza, en señal

de que en tierra y mar te reto

de traidor, y desafío
todos tus cobardes griegos. (vv. 2097-103, 2121-24)

In this challenge, Fineo declares his own valor and calls into question that of Jasón and the other Greeks. He seems to have a point as the Greeks are fleeing in their ship and do not respond to his challenge. The king Oeta also desires to show his valor at the end of the *comedia* and says, “Toca trompetas y cajas, / fórmense escuadrones luego: / ¡vamos contra Grecia, amigos!” (vv. 2171-73) Friso contributes to the effort as well by declaring that he will build ships of their own so that they will not have to go by land to Greece but can all sail after them (vv. 2178-79). Additionally, these princes also discuss the war they will fight after they have gained victory over the Greeks. Oeta and Fineo will help Friso recover his kingdom as his father Atamante has now died (vv. 2184-90). Although the original third act likely would have included these displays of valor, the version that remains leaves these princes defeated and with words that are not backed up by deeds.

The final group of princes that show great courage in *El vellocino de oro* do not have a part in the play but are mentioned during it. The inclusion of references to so many other princes who have gained their fame by being great warriors makes this play unique. Other plays include some, but this play not only lists the “Nueve de la Fama” and their exploits, but also another mythological hero and several recent Spanish monarchs and even the one who was currently reigning. Although Lope gives different lists of the nine great warriors of history in other works—three pagans, three Israelites, and three Christians—in this play they are Joshua, David, Moses, Alexander the Great, Hector, Julius Caesar, Charlemagne, King Arthur, and Bernardo del Carpio (vv. 581-612, Profeti 97n). All of these heroes had achieved great military victories and for this they are included in the temple of Marte in this play. Lope was not content with just nine warriors,
however. He adds a tenth: “al Marte de la tierra, a Carlos Quinto” (v. 616). Lope also mentions Felipe II and III. The inclusion of all of these great warriors along with the Greek heroes in this play constantly bring to mind the importance of valor in a prince.

Additionally, Lope includes several passages about the valor of the monarch before whom the play was performed, Felipe IV. Fama indicates that this ruler is greater than at least two of these great warriors by saying,

Yo vi a Alejandro, y hablé

de Alejandro, aunque señor
de toda la tierra fue,
y a César, cuyo valor
sobre Roma puso el pie.

Pero aunque tantas parecen
mis lenguas, hoy enmudecen,
viendo con tanto valor
un Alejandro mayor,
pues dos mundos le obedecen. (vv. 41-50)

Marte continues to praise the valor of Felipe IV by saying,

Y ojalá que llegara a la dichosa
del gran Felipe cuarto el vellocino;
que destos animales la espantosa
furia domara su valor divino;
que del bridón rigiendo la espumosa
boca, y vibrando el temple diamantino,
los deshiciera con valor profundo,
que en años diez y siete asombra el mundo.

No me permite Júpiter que cuente
los grandes hechos deste gran Monarca,
mas que le ponga en el lugar decente
que libra del olvido y de la parca. (vv. 637-48)

If any doubt still existed, Jasón further praises the valor of this king when he takes the Golden Fleece from the laurel:

¡oh prenda, oh joya, oh trofeo
que estimo, después que sé
que has de coronar los cuellos
de los monarcas de España,
cuando esté mayor su imperio!

Y entre ellos al gran Felipe,
cuarto en nombre, aunque primero
en soberano valor
y en divino entendimiento. (vv. 2052-60)

In these passages Lope explicitly glorifies the courage of Felipe IV and compares him to the brave princes that are in the play.

In *El vellocino de oro*, therefore, Lope constantly brings up the valor of a wide variety of princes and includes several princes that display great courage. The princes that appear on stage, however, all seem at some point to not act in a perfectly valorous manner. Teseo and Jasón flee from Colchis and are called “cobardes.” Fineo, Friso, and
Oeta cannot protect the women that they should defend and in this version of the play offer up only words instead of actions to avenge the loss. Although they are not perfect models of valor, they are still praised during the course of the play, particularly Jasón. At the end of the drama, Amor tells Jasón and Medea that they will have a place in the temple of Venus and celebrates Jasón’s victory:

    Heroico griego Jasón,
    por cuyo valiente esfuerzo,
    con aplauso de los dioses
    en los balcones del cielo,
    y con envidia y disculpa
    de los hombres semideos,
    se ha dado glorioso fin
    a tan alto vencimiento (2195-202)

The valor of Jasón is praised even though he fled from Colchis. Lope also makes his feat more glorious by mentioning that the ship and the ram will be constellations, but even more importantly, the Golden Fleece will be worn by the kings of Spain. The kings of Spain are presented as bastions of bravery comparable to the “Nueve de la fama” and the mythological heroes. Even though these mythological princes may lack the ideal form of valor, they are still defended and praised in the play and the implication is that even though the kings of Spain may fall short—though according to Lope they clearly do not—they would still be heroic and worthy to be praised.
4. *Los tres mayores prodigios* by Calderón de la Barca

The forth play, *Los tres mayores prodigios* by Calderón, tells three myths but combines them into one drama by having Jasón and Teseo help Hércules search for the Centaur Neso. Although Jasón and Teseo do not find Neso, they do encounter other adventures of their own in which they must show their valor in order to come out victorious. During the play the Greeks train, face natural dangers, single combat, and war. These three Greeks are not the only princes nor are they the only ones that have the opportunity to display their valor. The princesses often side with the Greeks and against the other princes. These other princes show varying degrees of valor and abilities. Finally, Calderón includes several *graciosos* who contrast sharply with the princes in their excessive lack of valor. *Los tres mayores prodigios* shows that the form of a prince is to have valor but that some do not completely conform to this ideal.

The first way in which the princes of this play show their valor is by training it so that when the time comes they will be able to use it more successfully. Besides the hunt in which Hércules, Teseo, and Jasón are engaged in pursuit of the Centaur Neso who stole Hércules’s wife Deyanira, Jasón also takes time to hunt other wild animals to be better prepared when he meets Neso or other dangers (1557). A prince of Africa is also engaged in a hunt when he finds Hércules. Floro introduces himself saying, “aquestas selvas umbrosas / discurso; a caza de fieras / ando” (1581). An important factor in valor is being prepared to employ it, and these princes would be ready when the time comes.

Another way through which the princes display their courage in this play is by facing dangers from nature, both the elements and living creatures. When hunting, they deal with the elements and animals, but at other times, the princes come up against these
difficulties without necessarily seeking them out in a hunt. The first example of princes’
facing a natural danger is when Friso and Jasón brave the sea. When Friso arrives in
Colchis, for example, Absinto praises his “gran valor heroico” (1549) for crossing the sea
on the back of a ram. His sister the princess Heles had apparently not had the valor of
Friso and did not make it to Colchis (1550), but both Heles and Friso had shown some
temerity before mounting the ram and instead of facing dangers they had fearfully fled
them:

a mí y a mi hermana solos
nos dejaron, compañeros
de las fieras y los troncos;
y de aquellas acosados,
y no amparados de estotros,
aun la tierra nos faltó;
pues huyendo temerosos
dimos con el mar, adonde
era el riesgo notorio. (1550)

Friso, however, did manage to overcome the danger of the sea and upon arriving in
Colchis, he had “vencido el mar proceloso” (1550). Jasón, on the other hand, did not use
a ram to brave the deep but rather built the first ship. For this feat, Medea says that he has
“valor” (1554). Jasón and Friso, therefore, showed their bravery “venciendo el monstruo
fiero / del mar” (1557).

In addition to the elements, the princes in the drama also face the natural dangers
of beasts and monsters. Whereas Jasón, Teseo, and Hércules all show their fortitude by
fighting at least one of these creatures, Absinto is terrified of the unknown “creature” that is approaching the shores of Colchis and tells everyone to flee (1551-52). Although Absinto shows that a prince at times may lack valor, the other princes face dangers without fear. In the first act, Jasón is provoked into attempting to obtain the Golden Fleece by something that Medea said, but before he can get to the fleece, he must defeat the defenses that Marte set up: “una serpiente / y dos toros de metal, / escupiendo viva llama” (1551). Before Jasón decides to take this challenge, one of his men, the gracios Sabañón, is given the opportunity when he wakes up in the wrong place at the wrong time. He has arrived “usada” instead of “osadamente” (1556). At first, when all he hears about is the prize of the Golden Fleece, he says that he will take it. When the salvaje later mentions the “escamada sierpe” and the “toros de metal, / que el fuego y el humo echan” (1556), Sabañón creates excuses to not have to fight them but to escape from the situation. As he is fleeing from the danger, the salvaje says, “¡Qué cobardía tan necia!” but Sabañón says, “¡Qué discreta cobardía!” (1556). When Jasón’s actions are compared to Sabañón’s, the difference is striking. Whereas Sabañón did everything he could to not fight, Jasón eagerly undertakes the quest and the fight with the serpent and bulls: “solo entraré / mi valor vaya conmigo” (1560). Although Medea did help Jasón, the Greek did not appear to need the help:

Aunque hubieras sido,
verde serpiente, tan fiera
que guarda el profundo abismo,
a mi mano hubieras muerto. (1560)
The difference between Sabañón and Jasón serves to highlight even more the valor of the prince and show that Jasón is full of courage.

Teseo also faces beasts and monsters and is accompanied by his servant Pantuflo. The second act begins with Ariadna and Fedra fleeing from a bear as they would not be able to defend themselves from it, but Teseo and Pantuflo come at that point. Teseo encourages the princesses saying, “No temáis, deidades bellas, / ningún peligro; pues yo / estoy en defensa vuestra” (1561). Pantuflo, on the other hand, shows his cowardice by telling the princesses, “temed, muy en hora buena; / que muy bien hacéis, supuesto / que estoy en vuestra defensa” (1561). Teseo is able to kill the bear and for this act Ariadna recognizes his “valor” (1561) and Fedra calls him “valiente” (1562). After being deceived and captured by Lidoro, Teseo and Pantuflo are awaiting their turn to be fed to the Minotaur when Dédalo gives him the thread, a powdery poison to disorient the beast, and a dagger. In the Labyrinth, Teseo bravely seeks out the Minotaur whereas Pantuflo becomes frightened and looses the golden thread. While trying to find it, Pantuflo says,

Que sean tan descorteses
estos muertos que no saquen
una luz, oyendo ruido
en la vecindad! Mal hacen. (1570)

While Pantuflo is scared and lamenting his situation, Teseo is able to kill the Minotaur: “Venci el horror, el prodigio / mayor del mundo, y más grave” (1570). Although he had been too afraid to participate in fighting the Minotaur, Pantuflo does still take credit for the victory:

Libio. ¿Qué es esto? ¿Quién esta puerta
osa derribar?

Teseo. Quien sale
del oscuro laberinto
hoy victorioso y triunfante.

Pant. Triunfante yo, y victorioso,
salgo también. (1571)

Pantuflo also says that they both killed it instead of just Teseo: “¿No parece que hemos muerto / alguna cosa importante?” (1571). In the defeat of the bear and the Minotaur, Teseo is able to prove his valor whereas the gracioso Pantuflo proves his cowardice. The prince is again shown as having the courage that others lack.

In the third act, Hércules finally catches up with the Centaur Neso who had stolen his wife. Jasón (in Asia where he receives the valiant offer of aid from Aetes, king of Colchis, Friso, and Absinto), Teseo (in Europe), and Hércules (in Africa) all show their valor by seeking out this thief, but Hércules is able to find him in his section of the globe. When he finally finds Neso, however, he does not immediately kill him. Although he has the valor to fight the Centaur, Hércules is worried because Neso holds a knife up to Deyanira and threatens to kill her if Hércules shoots. Deyanira tries to encourage him to recover his valor and tells him to “Venga con valiente brio / tu agravio” and later, “Pues ¿cómo tienes valor / de verme en tantos desvelos / en otros brazos?” (1580). Hércules recognizes that he has lost his valor, but not because of the Centaur: “Tu vida sola [the life of Deyanira] / acobardara mis flechas” (1581). Hércules does eventually overcome this fear, however, and shoots an arrow at the fleeing Centaur which kills the monster
(1581). Although Hércules had hesitated, he was not afraid of the Centaur and he is able
to put his courage into practice and defeat the Centaur.

A third way in which princes can show their valor is through single combat.
Instead of facing nature or creatures, the princes now square off with other people. In the
first act, two princes almost fight each other and show that they do not lack the fortitude
to do so. Medea had invited Jasón and Friso to her “Academia” that she was hosting, but
instead of using their minds, they want to resort to their swords. Medea has to tell them
“Duelos del ingenio, no / el acero los lidió” (1559). They are both courageous enough,
however, to face each other in a duel.

In the second act, Teseo and Pantuflo must face off against several different
people. The first occurs when Lidoro deceives them and traitorously captures them.
Having been relieved of their weapons, Teseo and Pantuflo have very different reactions
each showing their valor or lack thereof, respectively:

Teseo. ¡Cobardes, traidores!
Pant. ¿Cómo

    los hablas de esa manera?
    Señores, príncipes, reyes…

                    ………………………………

Teseo. Las armas me habéis quitado;
    que a mirarme yo con ellas…
Pant. Las mías poco importaba
    tenerlas o no tenerlas. (1564)
In the second situation in which Teseo and Pantuflo come across a man that they must fight, Teseo again shows his valor while Pantuflo shows his cowardice. Exiting the Labyrinth, a guard begins to call for others, but Teseo attacks him. Pantuflo, on the other hand, encourages from the side: “Dale, / que en estando muerto, yo / le daré también” (1571). In the final situation, Teseo and Pantuflo come upon Lidoro who is attempting to abduct Ariadna. Although they do not know it, Ariadna has taken his sword from him. When Teseo arrives, however, he sees that Lidoro is capturing her and therefore goes to her defense while Pantuflo again shows his fear:

Teseo. Como vengo a darte muerte
    donde quiera que te tope.

Pant. ¿Dónde iré yo que no halle
    siempre peligros mayores?

Teseo. Muere manchando la yerba
    con tu vil púrpura inorme.

    Dale Teseo de puñaladas, y cae dentro.

Lid. ¡Ay de mí!, que me has hallado
    sin armas.

Pant. Siempre así tope
    yo a quien haya de matar. (1572)

In these examples, the immense contrast between Teseo and Pantuflo proves again and again that the prince should be valorous.

A further way in which a prince can show his valor is through war. Although no wars occur on stage, the audience hears about a great number of different battles in which
some princes were victorious and others were defeated. Both Aetes, king of Colchis, and Minos, king of Crete, have become mighty kings through their victories in battle. Minos, for example, is “lleno de victorias” (1562), has subjected Athens, and receives a tribute each year from Athens of three hundred men (1564). When these kings and the princes with them go to battle against the Greek princes, however, they cannot put their valor to use as effectively as Jasón and Teseo. As the drama is drawing to a close, Jasón and Teseo join Hércules in Africa with the spoils of the wars that they have won. Although they both at first fled the dangers of the countries that they were in, they are also both victorious when they meet in battle: Jasón has defeated the princes of Colchis, and Teseo has conquered and subdued Minos in particular and his army in general (1587). The ability of the various princes to translate their valor into victory is clearly unequal, and the prince who obtains the triumph is the more perfect one.

In *Los tres mayores prodigios*, the princes are not the only people with the opportunity to show their valor. It has been demonstrated above that the graciosos lack the bravery of their princes, but other people prove that they are not princes through their cowardice as well. First, Lidoro is the officer in charge of bringing the prisoners from Athens to Crete and as such should act valorously. Instead, he repeatedly acts in an underhanded way. He deceives strangers and captures them in order to feed them to the Minotaur because he was not able to recapture the ones that escaped. He later attempts to abduct a woman and flee with her to other jurisdictions so as not to be pursued by Minos. Second, the Centaur Neso is like Lidoro in that he abducts a woman and flees with her. He, however, goes even further and instead of facing Hércules in combat uses Deyanira
as a shield to try to escape from danger. These two enemies of the Greek princes clearly show that they are not princes through their lack of valor.

Finally, in addition to the courageous princes in this play, the princesses also have several opportunities to show their valor. To begin with, Medea is so full of valor that it becomes rash “soberbia” (1553). She is not afraid to challenge even the gods, though she does succumb to love after she has done so. When Absinto and others are afraid of the soldiers that come pouring out of Jasón’s ship, she tells everyone, “No temáis, que yo sola le haré guerra” (1553). She takes up her bow and arrows and is ready to put her valor into action: “me he de valer de la fuerza” (1553). Medea also helps Jasón using her enchantments by first casting a spell on the serpent and the two bulls and later is able to escape with Jasón by “hacer que todos confusos / peleen contra sí mismos” (1560). Medea’s pride and her enchantments to keep the animals and people from fighting her and Jasón help her to demonstrate her valor though she does not have to lift a sword against anyone.

Two other princesses, Ariadna and Fedra, show a mix of valor and cowardice. They begin the play fleeing from a bear (1561), and when Teseo asks for their testimony to prove that he was not a prisoner, they do not have the courage to speak up in his favor and Ariadna even says, “Pues nosotras, ¿cuándo os vimos?” (1566). After Teseo is taken away, Ariadna and Fedra struggle with how to respond, but it is Ariadna who reverses her previous lie by helping Teseo to escape:

Fedra. En vano ayudarte inento.

Ariad. Yo he de ayudarle atrevida.

Fedra. Temer yo tan afligida…
When Teseo is later presented with the decision of which one to save from the threats of their father, neither is willing to face the situation. Teseo offers to let them take his horse, but they would be unable to control it. As he must go, only one of the princesses can join him, but neither makes the offer that Teseo does to let the other one escape (1573). The princesses Ariadna and Fedra, therefore, both demonstrate their cowardice instead of displaying bravery.

The final princess is Deyanira, the wife of Hércules. She had been captured by the Centaur Neso, but during her captivity she shows her courage by constantly resisting his advances. She is willing to die rather than succumb to Neso:

> pues sabes que mi espíritu atrevido
> dispuso (cosa es cierta)
> primero que ofendida, verme muerta;
> a cuyo fin, con hechos inhumanos,
> me diera yo la muerte con mis manos,
> con mi aliento me ahogara,
> o al Etmo desde aquí me despeñara. (1579)

Deyanira fortunately does not have to reach this extreme to protect herself from the Centaur. Later, when Hércules catches up with them and the Centaur is using her as a shield, she still does not fear death but encourages Hércules to avenge himself: “¿Qué dudas, esposo mío, / si ves a quien te ofendió? / ¿Qué importa que muera yo?” (1580)
Although the decision to commit suicide at the end of the play along with Hércules could possibly be questioned, Deyanira does not back down from danger.¹⁹

Thus, in *Los tres mayores prodigios*, Calderón sets the princes against several other characters to emphasize their valor. The *graciosos* Sabañón and Pantuflo act in the opposite manner of the princes Jasón and Teseo, and the Centaur Neso and the centauresque Lidoro pale in comparison to Hércules and Teseo. The princesses in this drama are also not on the same level as the princes as Medea is overly proud (Valbuena 1548), Heles does not overcome the sea, and Ariadna and Fedra avoid danger and flee difficulties on several different occasions. The princes themselves also show a variety of levels of courage. Friso is scared by the wild animals before crossing the sea, and Absinto wants to flee when he sees something crossing it. The effectiveness of their valor can also be seen as they fight one another. Jasón is able to defeat Absinto, Friso, and the armies of Colchis while Teseo is able to conquer Ariadna, Minos, and the Cretans. Calderón includes an immense spectrum of valor in this play beginning with the cowards who are not princes and going to the successfully valiant leaders. Even though many of the princes can be questioned for their temporary lack of valor, this fault does not imply a lack of the ability to be a prince. They are still princes in matter if not in form, and they are still praised in the play. The reason that Teseo and Jasón are worthy is because they have conquered mighty enemies.

¹⁹ According to some people, suicide can be considered extremely courageous. Others, however, consider suicide to always be a cowardly act possibly because instead of facing the problem and dealing with it, the person is trying to escape from and avoid it.
5. *El labyrinto de Creta* by Juan Bautista Diamante

The fifth play, *El labyrinto de Creta* by Juan Bautista Diamante, combines the myth of the Amazons with the myth of the Minotaur using the Athenian prince Teseo as the link between the two. By combining these two myths, Bautista Diamante is able to begin and end the play with two separate wars in which the rulers can show their valor. For the most part, the princes prove that they are courageous, but in war, there are winners and losers. The princes who are on the losing sides of the wars are not as effective in battle and also at times seem to fear what is happening instead of bravely meeting the perils. Although some of the princes may not at times conform to the ideal, all of them are defended and upheld in this play.

The play begins with the war that Teseo had undertaken against the Amazons in order to right what he considered the injustice that the men were facing in that land. Teseo had already proven himself in battle and had received “aplausos, victorias, / y triunfos” (168), but this time he travels to Scythia to fight the Amazons. Hipolita, the queen of the Amazons, is also ready for the battle and brings out the “bellos esquadrones” of her “fuertes Amaçones” (168). They are both clearly ready for the war, but they first meet each other in between the two armies. Although they begin by speaking, they proceed to a one-on-one fight in which Teseo proves his effectiveness. As he defeats her, however, he also saves her: “pues si la ofende este braço, / este braço la socorre” (170). Hipolita, “Viendome su prisionera / yo sin que el serlo me enoge” (171), allows Teseo to right the injustice in the land and also comes to Athens to swear fealty to Minos and marry Teseo (171). Both Teseo and Hipolita show their courage by being ready for the
war and for the individual battle, but in this instance, Teseo proves to be more effective
and thereby more perfect.

The other myth that the drama includes is centered in Crete were Ariadna and
Fedra are princesses. At first, they spurn Venus and follow Diana in that they do not want
to marry and they do hunt as much as they can. These two princesses are obviously not
afraid of wild animals and show their courage by hunting. They are not the only ones to
go hunting, though. Two princes have come to the island in order to pursue the
princesses, but in order to chase their loves, they also have to hunt animals so that they
can find Ariadna and Fedra. The princes at first do not have much luck in attracting their
true quarry:

    pues usando de Diana
    los exercicios honestos,
    los desayran, despreciando
todo lo que huele a Venus. (173)

Both the princesses of Crete and the princes of Sciro and Arcadia, therefore, although
they have very different motives, all show their valor and train their skills by
participating in the hunt.

The two princesses inspire these same princes to brave deeds in more than just the
hunt. When Hipolita’s ship crashes and she and Irene are thrown into the sea, Ariadna
and Fedra call for someone to help the two unknown strangers in danger:

    Ariad. No ay quien los libre?
    Fed.   No ay quien los ampare?
    Pol.   Violentas
By risking themselves in the wild waters in order to save the other people, Polidoro and Licomedes prove their courage and win the gratitude of the princesses.

Having now made it to land on Crete, Hipolita and Teseo will both face the Minotaur because of the confusion of Minos. Even before they left Athens, however, both Hipolita and Teseo show their fortitude at the possibility of facing this monster. When Teseo’s name is chosen, for example, he says,

Vea el Cielo en mi que borro
todas las viles estampas
del temor, quando valiente
con presuncion, a tan ardua
empressa me sacrifican
los anhelos de mas fama. (176)

Teseo is determined to release Athens from this vile tribute, or he will not return. Hipolita also takes control of her fear and chooses to follow him in order to try to save him:

Vea el cielo en mi, que firme
y alta, quando contrastan
riesgos, y amor mi fineza,
los temores auassalla,
pues por librar a Teseo,
They both quickly prepare ships and set sail despite the dangers awaiting them.

Once on Crete, they continue steadfast in their purpose. They both try to save the other from being fed to the Minotaur by offering themselves instead, but in his confusion, Minos sends both of them to the beast. With the help of Ariadna and Fedra (see below) they are able to get free of the enchantment that was freezing them in place:

Tes. Que es esto? ya
de las prisiones violentas
suelta el alma se recobra
de sentidos, y potencias.

Hip. Pues no arriesguemos la dicha,
el valor ossado emprenda
la victoria. (189)

They come upon the Minotaur who is sleeping because of the spell of Ariadna and Fedra. Teseo and Hipolita do not think that they need this extra assistance, but upon hearing the warning from the Cretan princesses, Teseo says,

No porque el valor te encuentra
indefenso te doy muerte,
sino porque assi lo ordena
al auiso generoso,
de mi piadosa defensa. (189)

Therefore, Teseo and Hipolita display their courage in Athens, Teseo boldly declaring his plan to defeat the Minotaur and both of them quickly preparing to depart. Then, having
arrived in Crete, they continue to demonstrate their fortitude by remaining steadfast in their purpose until slaying the Minotaur.

Teseo and Hipolita are able to defeat the Minotaur because they receive the help of the two Cretan princesses. Deciding to give that help, however, is a difficult step to take because of the dangers involved. In this version of the Minotaur myth, the monster is still the offspring “del torpe afecto / de Pasife” (185), but he also has some unique characteristics. In this version, as long as the Minotaur lives, the kingdom of Crete will remain safe:

Si los alientos vitales
del monstruo, son la defensa
del imperio, al acabarse
la vida que la defienda,
fuerça es que Creta se acabe. (185)

The two princesses, despite the risks to their land and the anger of their father that could result, decide to help Teseo and Hipolita out of “piedad” (185). They are able to help because they have been taught the secret of the enchantments and as Fedra explains, “nuestras / vozes las suyas deshaze / el encanto” (186). Therefore, despite the risk to themselves, Fedra and Ariadna are “resueltas a que se acaben / crueldades en compassiones, / y rigores en piedades” (185) and show their courage by deciding to help the two condemned prisoners.

The play began with the war between Athens and the Amazons with Teseo as the general of the Athenian army, and it ends with the war between Athens and Crete with his father Egeo as the general. This is the only play in which Egeo appears, and in this
play, he leads his troops against Crete in an attempt to avenge his son Teseo and to prevent Athens from having to send anyone else to the Minotaur. Egeo appears to lead his army from the front and courageously assaults the city of Minos and more particularly the labyrinth of the Minotaur. Minos, on the other hand, although he had previously gained victories including one over Athens, in this instance displays a lack of courage. Instead of meeting the enemy, he encourages everyone to retreat and take refuge in the labyrinth. Minos, Licomedes, and Polidoro all retreat, and Minos is so desperate that he cries out, “Donde, ay infeliz, podré / estar libre de mis penas?” (189) He cannot defend himself and seems to lack all fortitude. Teseo, however, steps up and becomes his defense before his father. Thus, Egeo, Teseo, and the Athenians show their bravery and conquer the apparently less valorous Minos along with the two other princes who happen to be there.

Although the play ends with the defeat and humbling of a great king, the majority of the *comedia* includes many depictions of the immense valor of princes and even those who are beaten are upheld and defended. Minos may have succumbed to Egeo, but he is restored to his kingdom by Teseo with Egeo’s permission: “Y yo le dare [el reino], / señor, con vuestra licencia / a Minos” (189). Thus, even though the Minotaur was the safeguard of the kingdom and this safeguard has now been killed, the nation is restored to Minos who will continue his rule. The princes are also rewarded for their valor which they showed by throwing themselves into the sea to save Hipolita and Irene and win the favor of the princesses as the play ends with “bodas, y mas bodas” (189). Thus, even the rulers who are defeated—Minos, the two princes, and Hipolita—are still all rewarded in the end. All of the princes show their valor at some point during the play, and the ideal
prince will clearly be brave and come out victorious, but in this play, even the imperfect princes are still glorified.

6. *Amor es más laberinto* by Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz and Juan de Guevara

The sixth and final play, *Amor es más laberinto* by Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz and Juan de Guevara, retells the myth of Teseo and the Minotaur with less emphasis on the Minotaur than any of the other plays as it brings out the dangers of other labyrinths. In this play the princes and princesses show their valor through individual fights, war, and in saving others from danger. In these individual battles and in the wars, different princes face off against each other and appear either more or less valiant depending on the results. Even though one prince may still be more courageous than another, the princes are still defended and fortified in their positions.

First, the play mentions several conquests that occurred before the play which show the fortitude of Minos and Teseo. Minos, for example, had laid siege to Athens for three years and had finally conquered it. Because of his valor in war, he now receives seven young men and seven young women each year (717). Teseo, for his part, is asked to recount all of his victories to Minos, and because of his great valor, it turns out to be quite a long list. He begins by explaining that he considers valor even more important than being a prince:

\[
\text{Poco te he dicho en decir que soy príncipe, pues pienso...}
\]

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20 This tribute can be called into question as not a good way to take advantage of the victory. Also, in mythological sources, Minos attacked Megara instead of assaulting Athens directly. Therefore, by attacking the enemy directly he seems to gain valor.
que es más que decir monarca
decirte que soy Teseo.

Que entre ser príncipe y ser
soldado, aunque a todos menos
les parezca lo segundo,
a lo segundo me atengo (720-21). 21

Among the many triumphs that Teseo lists are his victory over the Amazons, the bull at Marathon, the people of Thebes who refused to bury the dead, the bandits along the road to Athens such as Sinis and Procusto, the Centaurs at the wedding of his friend Pirítuo, and his descent into and return from Hades 22 (721-22). In these victories, Teseo proves his valor in war, in individual combat, in planned activities, and in unexpected circumstances. Teseo is clearly a valiant prince based on all his past achievements, and Minos as well has shown that he has courage.

When the play begins, however, Teseo is Minos’s prisoner and condemned to be fed to the Minotaur. Minos is thrilled with this development, 23 but when the princesses see Teseo and notice his “presencia tan gallarda” (720), they both decide that they want

21 Laguerre comments on this last statement: “Consciente de su hombría, Teseo tiene más, mucho más en cuenta el valor que el nacimiento; es decir, para él significan mucho más sus hazañas que ser hijo del rey de Atenas. Es su heroísmo vital y militante lo que estimula el amor de las dos princesas de Creta” (188).
22 Teseo explains, “bajando al Abismo, quise, / a pesar del Cancerbero, / robar a Plutón su esposa, / que, aunque no logré el intento, / no perdí por eso el lauro: / que en los casos tan inciertos, / conseguir, toca a la dicha, / pero intentar, al esfuerzo” (722). See Rose, Robertson, and Griffiths.
23 Minos says, “hizo que la suerte airada / en el Príncipe cayese; / porque en iguales balanzas, / sí fue Príncipe el difunto, / lo sea el que satisfaga / también por su infeliz muerte, / y no quede Atenas vana / de tener Príncipe, cuando / por su causa, en Creta falta” (718).
to help him despite the danger that could result and the anger that they would provoke in their father. Ariadna realizes that Fedra wants to try to save Teseo, but she is determined to beat her to it: “Porqué / lo libraré yo primero” (725). Later, when Fedra is speaking with the Athenian prince, she tells him,

no desconfiéis,

que en este tiempo se puede

algún camino ofrecer

para salvar vuestra vida,

y yo lo procuraré (726).

They are both determined, therefore, to help the prince in spite of the dangers inherent in taking that course of action.24

Another way in which the princes show their valor is through single combat with one another. As there are only two princesses and there are three princes, drama definitely unfolds. Each of the princes fight the other two, and Teseo and Baco get a second chance to fight one another. At the end of the first act, Lidoro sees Baco flirting with his beloved Fedra and says, “A un agravio / tan grande, sólo el acero / reconviene” (731). They are both willing to fight one another and only put their swords away when the king enters. At the end of the second act, Teseo realizes that someone else is speaking to his beloved Fedra, and he declares, “Que es Fedra ha dicho / esta voz; pues ¿a qué aguardo? / ¡Muera el traidor enemigo!” (752) Teseo and Baco then set upon each other. When Teseo sees lights coming out, he hides in the labyrinth as he is supposed to already

24 Teseo is also aware of the dangers and tries to protect Ariadna (who is the one who did end up helping him) when he leaves by taking Fedra with him and hoping to remove suspicions from Ariadna (763).
be dead. Towards the beginning of the third act, the last pair fight each other. Although both Teseo and Lidoro think that the other is Baco, they draw swords and duel one another until Teseo is able to kill Lidoro. Before his victory, however, they both compliment the valor of the other:

Lidoro ¡Qué valor!

Teseo ¡Destreza rara!

Lidoro Valiente sois.

Teseo Tengo honor.

Lidoro A no tener mi valor,

pienso que el vuestro envidiara.

Teseo No tenéis que envidiar, cierto;

que un Hércules en vos veo. (758)

The final individual fight between princes occurs when Teseo and Baco again fight one another, this time when Teseo discovers that Baco is escorting his beloved Fedra to the ships.\(^{25}\) They attack one another, but stop when the guards come out and they switch targets to both assault the guards (768-69). All three of the princes, therefore, show great valor in being ready and willing to defend themselves against other opponents, though Teseo manages to defeat and kill Lidoro.

The death of Lidoro poses a difficult and intriguing question. Why does this prince die? In trying to answer this question, DiPuccio comments, “the demise of the apparently innocent protagonist is really an example of poetic justice. Few, if any,

\(^{25}\) In this play full of mixed-up identities, Teseo thinks he is escorting Fedra and Baco thinks he is escorting Ariadna. The princesses are of the same opinion. When Teseo’s servant Atún shows up, things become at least slightly more clear and the princes realize they do not have the correct princess and fight to make sure that they do (768).
innocent men die in the comedia” (197). In this case, however, DiPuccio says, “the assassination of Lidoro subverts one of the moral cornerstones of Spanish Golden Age drama” because “Lidoro dies without purpose or justification” (197). According to DiPuccio, “While Lidoro's death may be morally objectionable, it is structurally and thematically necessary. In terms of plot, Lidoro is an inconvenient detail that must be eliminated if Teseo and Fedra are going to end up together” (198).

While it is true that it is structurally necessary and that Lidoro does not seem to do anything that would require poetic justice to warrant his death, Sor Juana does include three instances in which the valor of Lidoro can be questioned and seems to be inferior to that of either Baco or Teseo. First, the opinions that the princesses hold of Baco and Lidoro at the beginning of the play differ drastically. Whereas Ariadna says that Baco’s “presencia gallarda / va en mi pecho a sus finezas / asegurando la paga” (716), Fedra asserts that Lidoro’s “tiernas ansias / tanto más me desobligan, / cuanto obligarme más tratan” (716-17). In the opinion of the princesses, therefore, Baco was valiant while Lidoro was not. Secondly, when Minos hears that the Athenians are coming to attack Crete to avenge their prince, he asks for advice from Baco on how to best defend his city (757). In this matter of war, therefore, Minos finds Baco to be more valuable than Lidoro. Finally, in the duel with Teseo, although they both compliment each other on their valor, Teseo comes out victorious and shows that he is more effective at translating his valor into victory (758). Therefore, although Lidoro seems to die without having done anything to provoke justice, he also seems to be the least courageous of the three princes in a play where they are constantly testing their individual valor against one another.
In addition to all of the single combats that take place during the play, one full scale battle is included and another possible future war is mentioned. The princes of the play realize the dangers of the wars and prepare for them. Minos worries that his subjects may think that this advance preparation is a sign of temerity, but he tells Baco that preparing is not a show of fear but rather a wise thing to do in order to be able to achieve victory: “la prevención, cordura / no recelo parezca” (757). Baco and Minos, therefore, try to prepare for the coming Athenian invasion. Later, when everyone thinks that Baco has killed Lidoro, the prince of Epiro, Baco realizes that the people of that nation may attack his:

o sabiendo los de Epiro

de su Príncipe la muerte,

hallando desprevenidos

a mis Estados, en ellos

se venguen. (760)

He understands that he may need to defend his lands from the invasion and readies a ship to return to fight with his soldiers. Baco and Minos, thus, both show their fortitude by not backing down from war but by planning for it.

When the war arrives in Crete, however, it is a different story. Minos had prepared for the battle, but when the Athenians arrive, he does not defend his city. The Athenians are able to overrun the Cretan soldiers: “Ocupado tu Palacio / todo está ya de enemigas / escuadras” (772). The Athenians so dominate the men following Minos that the general Licas is able to threaten the life of Minos himself in order to avenge Teseo whom he thought had died in the Labyrinth: “para vengar con su muerte / la sangrienta
tirania / de la muerte de Teseo” (772). Although he had prepared for war and had previously defeated the Athenians, in this case, the Cretan king is on the losing side of the battle and appears scared for his life instead of brave.

During the battle, Minos’s life is in danger, but at other times other lives are in jeopardy as well. In several of these occasions, a prince boldly steps forward to defend the person who is in peril. When Minos discovers that Ariadna and Fedra are leaving Crete, he explodes in anger and furiously demands to know with whom they are traveling. The terror of the situation freezes the princesses, but Baco bravely steps forward because he sees “a Arïadna en riesgo tanto” (770). Seeing the courage of Baco, Teseo also shows his bravery by turning himself in as well:

Cuando a la muerte se entrega
   él por su dama, arrojado,
   no será bien que se piense
   de mi ardimiento bizarro,
   que cuando él se llega al riesgo,
   yo del peligro me aparto. (770)

In addition to valorously protecting Fedra, Teseo also protects Minos when his life is in peril. As the Athenians are closing in on the Cretan king, he cries out, “¿No hay nadie que me socorra?” (772) Seeing Minos in danger, Teseo steps forward to protect him: “Sí hay, gran Señor. –Tente, Licas, / que no hay que vengar mi muerte, / cuando me encuentras con vida” (772). Thus, Baco and Teseo show their courage by protecting others who are in danger even when it will put themselves at risk.
The final instance in which the valor of a prince is praised in this play occurs in the loa at the beginning of the play where the playwrights speak directly to the viceroy and praise them for their valor even though they have just recently been appointed. They say that the Roman god Jano is a portrait of excellent qualities such as valor which they also find in the viceroy:

retrato
de las excelsas virtudes
que en Su Excelencia miramos
(de prudencia y de valor,
de majestad y de agrado) (708).

They even see in the new viceroy a “mejor Jano / en Vos” (711), and although Caesar and Scipio were great generals,

en el Templo de la Fama,

por afrenta de los Doce,
sus Césares aventaja,
y excede sus Escipiones (712).

Gaspar de Silva, conde de Galve, even though he has just become the new viceroy of what is now Mexico, is praised in this loa for his incredible valor.

In Amor es más laberinto, therefore, Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz and Juan de Guevara depict several princes and refer to the prince in the audience. These princes are all valorous, but they also show a range of that bravery. Lidoro in particular is unsuccessful in his duel against Teseo and seems to be considered less brave by a couple other characters. Minos as well appears to lack the fortitude of others with his loss of the
battle and the fear he has for his life which he shows when he begs for someone to help him. All of the princes, however, are praised in this play including those who seem imperfect. Although Lidoro is killed, he never backs down and Teseo says that he is equal to Hércules. Minos is also the “glorioso Legislador” (720) and even after his death he will rule and judge in the underworld in part because of his “valor” (720). Even as the play is drawing to a close the princes and princesses are confirmed in their positions instead of being killed as it seems like was about to happen. Minos had condemned Teseo, Fedra, Baco, and Ariadna to death; however, they are all given permission by Minos to marry instead. Minos is about to be killed by the Athenian general who came to avenge Teseo, but Teseo steps in and defends Minos affirming his throne so that Minos will continue to reign in Crete. Although the princes at times may lack the true form of a prince, they are still praised in this play.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the playwrights of the Golden Age comedia and the arbitristas of that same time period all had similar notions about valor in princes. To be a good prince, the ruler should have valor which can be expressed in several ways and which can be honed so that the leader will be better able to implement it. When facing individual dangers or dangers to his country, a valiant prince will not retreat from those dangers or run away scared. Instead, he will rise up, face the challenge, and defeat it. In the mythological plays in which Theseus appears, he and the other princes show great valor in a wide variety of actions. They are clearly braver than their companions and enemies that are not princes. When they face one another, however, different abilities and levels
of fortitude come out, and hardly any one prince shows perfect valor throughout the entire play. Some of these rulers even show great fear that they may lose their lives. The vast majority of these princes, however, are still praised, defended, and upheld in their positions as prince. In *Los tres mayores prodigios* and *Amor es más laberinto*, a prince does die—Hércules in the former and Lidoro in the latter. These heroes, however, are still praised highly during the plays. Hércules will be a “fénix” (*prodigios* 1589) and Lidoro is equal to Hércules, one of the greatest princes of mythology. The princes in these plays are defended despite their faults because in the mindset or ideology of the seventeenth century in Spain, having a prince rule was the best way to organize a country and even if the rulers were imperfect, they were far superior to any other alternative.
Chapter Five

The Self-controlled Prince

Introduction and Background

The previous chapters analyze different aspects that the ideal prince of the Spanish Golden Age should have: honor, prudence, and valor. A prince is not, however, a “heap” of characteristics. A ruler does not have each of these individually. Instead these qualities are intensely connected to one another and depend on each other. This chapter examines the relationship between the different virtues of the perfect prince. Although the form of a prince is for him to have control over himself—keeping in check or balanced his honor, prudence, valor, and passions—at times the princes of the comedia lack this form. Some princes do not fully unify their characteristics as they should, yet the mythological plays in which they appear still glorify these imperfect princes.

In the drama of the Golden Age, the self-control that a prince should have can be seen in several different ways. A prince must be able to maintain his honor, prudence and valor equally as a slip in one will affect the others because of the connection and

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1 Speaking of the difference between things individually and comparing them to things that have been unified, Aristotle writes, “It is clear that even of the things that are commonly thought to be substances the majority are potentialities. This applies both to the parts of animals, since none of them exists when separated (and when they are separated then too they are all as matter), and to earth and fire and air. For none of these is a unity, but as it were a heap, until they are concocted and some unity is formed from them” (1040 b5). In describing the difference between a heap of letters and the unity of a syllable, Aristotle further explains, “And the syllable is not just its elements—BA is not the same as B and A—nor is flesh just fire and earth. For on dissolution the flesh and the syllable no longer exist, but the letters exist, and so do the fire and the earth. So the syllable, then, is not only its elements (vowel and consonant) but something else besides; and flesh is not only fire and earth, or the hot and the cold, but something else besides” (1041 b12-25). See the Introduction and also below for a discussion of the importance of the principle of unity, more information on this principle of unity, and its relation to the prince in the comedia.
interplay among the different virtues. A ruler must also be able to control his emotions instead of succumbing to them. If he lets his passions control him, or if his other characteristics are imbalanced, his efficacy as a monarch will decrease drastically. At times, other characters can exert their influence over a prince using his lack of self-control in one of these areas effectively making the king a puppet and forcing him to do whatever the puppeteer desires. A self-controlled monarch, on the other hand, will be capable of ruling himself as well as the citizens of his kingdom.

The first aspect of self-control is the ability to control one’s emotions or passions. Many characters in the *comedia*, including princes, let a wide range of emotions get the best of them. These emotions can include anger, vengeance, temerity, and sexual desires. When these emotions take over a character, the result is poor decisions and actions on that character’s part. When a prince loses control of his emotions and, for example, fears to confront a foe or lusts after a woman to whom he is not married, then not only is he affected, but the whole nation as well. Only if he is able to conquer his fear or defeat his lust will society be restored to its natural and ideal state. When a prince is in control of his emotions, he will not be tempted to go to the extremes to which his passions could drive him. The excesses provoked by passions must be held in check by the prince in order for him to maintain control of himself and better rule his kingdom.

The second aspect of being in control is keeping one’s honor, prudence, and valor balanced. If for example, a king excelled in wisdom but lacked valor, he would have great laws but be unable to enforce them, driving the kingdom into anarchy. Conversely,

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2 Jodi Campbell says, “The ‘mirror of princes’ genre of political literature, popular in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, taught as one of its principal lessons that kings needed to dominate their personal weaknesses as men in order to fulfill well their duties as monarchs” (2).
if the ruler lacked intelligence but excelled in valor, his reign would dissolve into a tyranny of imposing his whims on society. Honor without valor will not be defended, but honor without knowledge will be misunderstood or will not be able to perceive that it has been deceived. Valor without honor, however, will be directed against the wrong people, and intelligence without honor will be ridiculed or ignored. These characteristics of a prince are all vital to one another. As seen in the previous chapters, an absence in one aspect negatively affects the prince’s ability to rule, yet it also affects his other characteristics. Additionally, if a king puts too much emphasis on only one of these characteristics, the others could suffer. It is therefore important for a monarch to uphold each of these characteristics, not letting any suffer or become overrated, as this negligence would unbalance him and his rule.

Several scholars have written about the ill effects that can result from a prince’s succumbing to his passions though not about the interplay of the other characteristics of the prince and their relation to his emotions. These studies tend to center on other issues and mention the dangers of excessive emotions in relation to those other topics. They also have a propensity to focus on the carnal passions that the ruler finds difficult to control and not the other emotions that could overtake a king. A few scholar with articles which include references to a ruler’s passions include Gómez, Hernández Araico, Ryjik, and Greer. In his article on the image of the king, Jesús Gómez includes among the many possibilities “la pasión adúltera que siente el monarca protagonista de La corona merecida (1603)” (114). Susana Hernández Araico analyzes the passion of the king in Quevedo’s Como ha de ser el privado and the absence of action in relation to it: “como buen

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3 See El viejo celoso by Miguel de Cervantes for an example of a husband who does not have the prudence to recognize his dishonor nor the valor to defend it.
gobernante, reprime su pasión amorosa por su reino. [...] El estatismo de la represión erótica por parte del rey y una dama de la corte logra en Cómo ha de ser el privado una tensa inmovilidad impactante no vista en ninguna otra comedia del Siglo de Oro” (462).4 Ryjik studies Lope’s El último godo and the extramarital passions of the king Rodrigo for Florinda la Cava. Instead of remaining faithful to his wife, Rodrigo is “entregado a las pasiones humanas” (225). Greer examines the parallels found between Ulises and Felipe IV in Calderón’s El mayor encanto amor and points out the poor government of Ulysses who has forgotten his country because of his love for Circe (332).5 One final article discusses several different emotions and how they can influence or control a prince. In his article “El Planeta más impío”: Basilio's Role in “La vida es sueño”, de Armas examines several characters from that play as well as Alejandro from Lope’s Lo que ha de ser. Alejandro allows different emotions to control him including his lust for Casandra and his anger which brings about his death: “Alejandro orders a portrait painted of himself overcoming a lion in order to celebrate his triumph over the stars. But, on seeing the picture on the fatal last day of his sentence, Alejandro is overcome by anger at the lion and seeks to destroy the animal in the portrait. The wound he receives from this action proves to be fatal” (de Armas 903). De Armas also notes that Segismundo is out of balance. The influences of Mars and Saturn are not being tempered by those of other planets which leads the prince to be controlled by his melancholy and anger during the

4 The king in this play realizes his obligations: “he de vencerme a mi,” “mis afectos modero,” and “galantear / no es otra cosa que dar / causa a la murmuración” (qtd. in Hernandez Araico 465).
5 Ulises is valiant and discreet—“el rayo de los troyanos / el discreto y fuerte Ulises” (1519)—, but he surrenders himself to his love and forgets his “fama” (1537) and his country that he should be defending and ruling wisely: “Olvidado de su patria, / en los palacios de Circe / vive el más valiente griego, / si, quien vive amando, vive” (1531).
test that his father arranges for him (908-09). Several scholars, therefore, have looked at how a prince’s emotions can control his actions.

Many of the plays of seventeenth-century Spain demonstrate the importance of the concept of self-control in the *comedia*, and among those plays are *El príncipe perfecto* I and II by Lope de Vega, *El hijo del Sol*, *Faetón* by Calderón, and *La república al revés* by Tirso de Molina. The first pair of these plays, *El príncipe perfecto* which tells the story of the Portuguese king Juan in the first part and that of his son Alfonso in the second, demonstrates that a king must remain in control of himself by controlling his emotions and keeping his characteristics balanced. First, Juan and especially Alfonso are tempted to give in to their desires for women and must refrain these lusts in order to protect their subjects and kingdom. Doña Clara pursues Juan, but he is able to control himself and proposes that she live in a monastery (*primera parte* 114). Alfonso, on the other hand, has fallen madly in love with doña Leonor and must control his ardent desires to dishonorably take her from his good friend Lope de Sosa which he is eventually able to do by directing his desires to his future wife (*segunda parte* 126, 130, 136). Alfonso is resolved to curb his desires to the point “que me dejase / Morir de amor y de celos / Antes que hacerle traicion” (130). Other emotions also try to overtake these princes, but they are both able to combat them. Juan, when everyone else is overcome by fear and flees from a bull, puts aside his fear and kills the animal (*primera parte* 105). For his part,

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6 In an essay describing the four different types of rape or attempted rape that appear in the *comedia*, O’Connor explains, “The fourth manifestation depicts the temptation to rape a vulnerable woman and the positive consequences of rape forsworn. The signal example occurs in *La vida es sueño* [*Life Is a Dream*] when Segismundo rejects the rape of Rosaura in order to restore her lost honor. This sign of having conquered himself translates into a dramatic statement concerning his suitability for kingship, but one not to be governed by a politics of rape” (“Politics” 172). O’Connor here relates the prince’s self-control to his ability to rule.
although Alfonso is extremely sad and melancholic, he tries to diminish the control that this mournfulness could exert over him by, for example, distracting himself with a game of pelota (segunda parte 124, 133). Finally, Juan understands and tries to impart to Alfonso the fact that he needs to keep in balance his various characteristics. Juan maintains his temperance and avoids all extremes. He is able to balance honor/piety and justice: “Es justiciero y piadoso, / Y piadoso justiciero” (primera parte 100). He also balances valor and prudence by encouraging both “Letrados y caballeros” (100). In the second part, Alfonso is reminded that he should not favor one characteristic over another: “Señor, las armas / Nunca embotaron la pluma: / César por ejemplo basta” (119). These plays, therefore, demonstrate that the prince will ideally be able to control his emotions and balance his various characteristics, seeking the middle ground and not the extremes.

In the next play, El hijo del Sol, Faetón by Calderón, explains some of the background of how Faetón comes to burn the earth by not controlling the chariot of the Sun. In addition to the prince Faetón, Admeto is king, Peleo is his son and therefore the prince, and Amaltea is a nymph and like a princess. All of these characters at some point lose control of themselves. The most frequent passion to rule these characters is a carnal passion. Amaltea is guided by her desire for Faetón and therefore helps Peleo set up an ambush to take Tetis. Peleo and Faetón are both controlled by their lust for Tetis, and their “ser, vida, alma y libertad” (1863) belong to her. A prince who is not at liberty to act on his own or control his own decisions is only the matter of a prince, not the form. In addition to being controlled by his carnal desires for Tetis, Faetón allows other emotions to rule him at different times during the drama such as his arrogance, pride, confusion, curiosity, anger, and desire for vengeance. His anger and thirst for vengeance lead him to
fight his adopted brother Peleo and his adopted father Eridano. His curiosity and confusion cause him to seek out his mother Climene when he has heard that bad will come of it. His arrogance and pride force him to not listen to reason but to demand the right to guide the Sun’s chariot. In these excesses of emotions, Faetón also allows his valor get in the way of his prudence and he sees his honor suffer. He cannot maintain his courage either, and he loses control of the Sun’s chariot. This physical loss of control of horses echoes a previous loss by the king Admeto. While hunting, the king loses control of his horse which is dragging him along and about to run over a cliff.7 Having completely lost control, Admeto makes a rash vow which he should not have made and is later forced to offer a woman as a human sacrifice. The physical loss of control as well as

7 This theme of the control of a horse appears often in visual and plastic art as well. These paintings, statues, or bas reliefs are meant to demonstrate the king’s ability to rule, the horse being a metaphor for the nation (Monod 318-320). After Carlos V had won the Battle at Muhlberg, for example, Titian painted an equestrian portrait of him which celebrated his seemingly “infallible power to unite the empire” (Tanner 113). Monod also compares several different kings on horseback in art. The first is Felipe IV’s by Velázquez: “Horse and rider are frozen in harmony, their bodies under absolute control, as they perform a perfect levade, an exercise right out of a riding manual. […] Jonathan Brown has noted how Velázquez turns ‘fact into symbol’ in his work by making a realistic portrait into an icon of rulership and Neostoic self-discipline” (317). Whereas these paintings showed the ideal of a ruler in complete control of the mount—“All these images were meant to impress the public with the unbreakable unity and political fixity of king and people. While around them things might change and battles might rage, the monarch and his equine subject remained in a state of harmonious equilibrium and immobility” (320)—, later Monod mentions Bernini’s equestrian statue of Louis XIV of the late seventeenth century. In this sculpture, “Louis's horse seems to be out of control, turning its head in fright” (321). The king disliked the sculpture so much that he considered destroying it but ended up only having it altered to represent an ancient Roman patriot. After that incident, when Louis XIV “began to commission equestrian statues to decorate public squares throughout his kingdom, Louis chose works in which the horse was under his complete domination. After all, he wanted to proclaim his sovereignty as a stabilizing force, not as a kind of protean energy that would carry France towards an uncertain future” (322). Thus, the ideal for a monarch in art was that he be in control of his horse. In El hijo del Sol, Faetón as well as other plays, however, the princes lose control of their mounts which indicates a shortcoming in their ability to rule the kingdom as well.
the emotional loss of control by a prince or princess is clearly detrimental to his or her
ability to rule not only himself or herself, but also his or her subjects. The entire earth
suffers and is burned when Faetón allows his pride and lust for vengeance control him.
He puts his valor and honor first at the expense of his prudence, and all three suffer
because of that.

The final example of the importance of self-control in the comedia is La república
al revés by Tirso de Molina. This play describes the many errors of the Greek Emperor
Constantino which led to his fall. Although his mother Irene had been ruling for him
during his minority, Constantino now takes the throne amid terrible omens: he drops the
globe that represents his rule and his chief attendee and confidant Leoncio picks it up
(383-85). It is a long process, however, from the omen to the actual loss of the empire.
During this sequence of events, Irene realizes that Constantino is losing control of his life
and his kingdom and foresees what will become of it: “despedazar quiere el freno / para
correr desbocado” and “yo sé que ha de correr / hasta atropellar su Imperio” (393). The
first mistake that Constantino makes is that instead of controlling his emotions, he allows
his lust for Lidora and his anger towards others, especially his senators, to control him.
Through his carnal desires, he also loses control of his kingdom because first Lidora
gains control—“el César rinde / la cerviz de su Imperio / porque es de su amor Circe”
(397)—and then Lidora’s secret lover Clodio takes control—“Tú gobernarás mi Imperio”
(401). Next, Constantino also begins to throw his different characteristics out of balance

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8 The trope of a ruler dropping something just as he begins his rule to indicate his lack of
control over his own body and later his inability to continue governing his realm is also
seen in El último godo by Lope de Vega where Rodrigo drops his scepter and crown
(347).
by privileging valor and violence. He forgets his honor by abandoning his wife and
taking Lidora as a very public lover (398). He abandons prudence by not taking advice
(398-99) and by changing the laws to encourage theft (415-16). He even abandons
religion by changing the law of God in relation to marriage—“de cuatro en cuatro años / remude mujer el hombre” (416)—and by ordering that all the religious images be burned
and forbidding the adoration of saints and Mary, thus becoming a heretic of Catholicism
(417). After having abandoned all attempts at balancing himself, Constantino even loses
control over the one aspect that he had been favoring. He does not pay his army for a year
(419), and then is defeated and captured in battle by the king of Cyprus (427). The
empire is now returned to Constantino’s mother Irene who will rule during the minority
of Constantino and Carola’s son. Completing the destitution of Constantino, Irene orders

9 Constantino thinks that the only way to rule is with “rigor” and is ready to fight the
world: “contra mí, poco el mundo es” (400). Of his many imprudent acts of violence
against others, a few are the imprisonment and attempted murder of his mother (391,
400); the imprisonment of his wife Carola (396); the imprisonment, public ridicule, and
execution of his senators (399, 422); the sending of his wife’s brother to Egypt to be
killed or poisoned in war (390-91); and his plot to have Carola’s father and brother fight
and kill each other (409). In his anger, he even claims that he will be like Nero and burn
his city (400).

10 In addition to being attacked by the king of Cyprus, Constantino is unable to defend
himself with his army because it has revolted against him and declared Leoncio emperor.
Leoncio and that army come against Constantino, but it is the king of Cyprus who
captures the emperor. This act is very much against the norm in the comedia. A vassal
rises up against his emperor. His actions are, however, condemned. Leoncio is not given
a free pass despite all of the poor decisions and evil caused by Constantino. Irene, to
whom the rule of the empire is now returned, declares that at the very least in prison “esté
/ quien a su Emperador fué / traidor” (426). Although Carola saves Leoncio from prison,
he will marry Lidora (428) who if nothing else has proved time and time again that
marriage means nothing to her. In short order, Leoncio and Lidora will surely be
suffering some great dishonor. Attempting to ensure the power of the ruler, Irene says,
“no hay ley / ni razón ninguna hallo / con que despoje un vasallo, / por malo que sea, a su
Rey” (426). Although it is represented in this comedia, the betrayal of a ruler is
condemned.
that his eyes be gouged out.\textsuperscript{11} Since Constantino was unable to control his emotions or keep his characteristics balanced, he becomes a terrible emperor and is eventually stripped of his empire.

In addition to the playwrights’ emphasis on the importance of self-control in a prince, the \textit{arbitristas} of the time also considered it an important characteristic of a prince and a serious character flaw if he lacked it. A prince should have control over himself, should be moderate and temperate, and should keep his characteristics balanced. First of all, a prince should not only be the sovereign ruler over his country, but he should also have complete control over himself and his actions. Mártir Rizo says that a prince should have “esta potestad absoluta sobre sus acciones” (46). By maintaining this control, a prince will be able to stay moderate and avoid the extremes which cause problems.

Mendo mentions the extremes of gluttony (32; Documento VII), avarice (24; Documento VI), and laziness (137; Documento XXVII). Although a ruler should avoid the extreme of sloth, several arbitristas mention that a prince should also take time out of work in order to rest. Saavedra Fajardo, for example, says, “Perdiera el acero su temple y la cuerda su fuerza si siempre el arco estuviese armado. Conveniente es el trabajo. Pero no se puede continuar, si no se interpone el reposo” (503). Mendo repeats this idea in his 79\textsuperscript{th} documento: “De afanes, cuydados, y fatigas hemos texido la tela de la vida del Príncipe; algun aliuio es necesario entre tantos desbelos, y trabajos, para que con la recreacion, y descanso cobre nueuas fuerzas, para proseguirlos” (102).

\textsuperscript{11} This act is also mirrored in \textit{El último godo} by Lope de Vega and is a punishment for those who tried to rule. First, Betisa gouges out Teodofredo’s eyes. Teodofredo’s son Rodrigo then gouges out Betisa’s eyes in revenge once he becomes the king of Spain (346).
While a sovereign should keep control of himself by moderating his actions, the
arbitristas indicate that he should also keep control of himself by tempering his
emotions.\textsuperscript{12} Saavedra Fajardo explains, “Nacen con nosotros los afectos, y la razón llega
después de muchos años, cuando ya los halla apoderados de la voluntad, que los reconoce
por señores, llevada de una falsa apariencia de bien, hasta que la razón, cobrando fuerzas
con el tiempo y la experiencia, reconoce su imperio, y se opone a la tiranía de nuestras
inclinaciones y apetitos” (54). Rivadeneyra describes the vital importance of this control
over one’s emotions:

La virtud de la templanza principalmente enseña a moderar los apetitos
desenfrenados del gusto y del tacto, […] y a poner freno a la
concupiscencia y deshonestidad. […] Esta virtud de la templanza es muy
necesaria e importante en el príncipe para la conservación de sus Estados;
y el que leyere con atención las historias y considerare las caídas de las
republicas y grandes imperios, hallará que los mas, o casi todos, tuvieron
su principio y raíz de la destemplanza y demasiado regalo […] que un
corazón vencido y afeminado con el deleite no tiene fuerza para regirse a
si ni a otros, ni para resistir sus pasiones, ni a los asaltos de los enemigos,
y que hará muchos agravios y violencias (143).

Among the specific “apetitos” such as the aforementioned lust (concupiscencia) that the
arbitristas often remember is anger. Mariana, for example, says, “Lo primero de todo ha
de cuidarse con suma diligencia y desde sus primeros años, que no sea el príncipe
accesible á la ira” (367). A man who cannot control his passions lowers himself from a

\textsuperscript{12} Covarrubias defines templaza as “la moderación en las cosas y las acciones” (1465).
man to a brute (Gracián 23). It is essential that a prince defend himself from excesses of emotions because, as Saavdrea Fajardo indicates, not only will his emotions control him, but other people will through his emotions: “ármese contra sus afectos y contra los que se valen dellas para gobernalle” (54). In order to rule well, therefore, the arbitristas assert that a prince must maintain control of his emotions.

If a prince loses control of his emotions, they will control him instead of his maintaining proper self-control. Additionally, a prince’s excessive passions can throw his characteristics out of balance. Rivadeneyra claims that “faltando esta virtud [la templanza o moderación de apetitos], la prudencia es ciega, la fortaleza se enflaquece, la justicia se corrompe, y cualquier otro bien pierde su lustre y vigor” (143). The arbitristas further demonstrate that each characteristic can affect the others and an imbalance among them can destroy a prince. Several mention the relationship that must exist between “armas” and “letras” indicating the relationship that valor and prudence have. Not only do valor and prudence help maintain each other, but they also support a prince’s honor. Saavedra Fajardo asserts, “no puede haber fama donde no se exercita el valor” (642) and Mártir Rizo mentions the importance of prudence to honor: “los hombres se deben gobernar con prudencia, y particularmente en las [acciones humanas] que son peligrosas y donde la reputación de los reyes y señores corre fortuna” (83). For its part, honor helps to

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13 Mendo, for example, states, “Valgase de letras, y de armas, que conseruan unas, lo que ganan otras” (95; Documento XVIII). In that same Documento he mentions the neccesity of wisdom in relation to valor: “Aun para manejar las armas el finjido Numen de la guerra Marte echó menos las ciencias, y con embidia de las ventajas que le hazia Pallas, comenzó á estudiarlas. No bastan las fuerzas, sino se añade la sabiduria” (97). On the other hand, Gracián verifies the necessity of valor to the maintenance of prudence: “sin valor, es estéril la sabiduría” (198).

14 Poirier also mentions the importance of prudence to the other virtues of the prince saying, “Privé de la Prudence — qui est la Providence quotidienne de l’Homme — il sera
maintain the other virtues of a prince: “El menosprecio de la fama arrastra consigo el menosprecio de las virtudes” (Mariana 182). Honor also supports valor and prudence through the rulers position as fountain of honor and his ability to bestow it upon his subjects: “El honor alimenta las Artes; con la esperanza de emolumentos lucidos se encienden los pechos. Haze à los hombres valerosos y sabios el premio, à que aspiran. […] El don, y honra, que reciben por sus fatigas, les da animo ardiente para las difíciles hazañas” (Mendo 170; Documento XXXV). According to the arbitristas, therefore, a prince cannot be simply honorable, prudent, or valiant. Only in the maintenance and proper balance of all of these virtues will a prince be able to keep control of himself and his nation.

In addition to describing what a prince should do in regards to his self-control, the arbitristas also give several examples. Gracián provides the heroic example of Fernando: “El verdadero Hércules fué el Católico Fernando; con más hazañas que días, ganaba a reino por año, y adquirió por herencia el de Aragón, por dote el de Castilla, por valor el de Granada, por felicidad la India, por industria a Nápoles, por religión a Navarra, y por su grande capacidad todos” (340). Mariana mentions that both Achilles and Alexander the Great were able to balance their honor, valor, and prudence and use them to maintain du même coup privé de la Force, de la Tempérance et de la Justice, puisque c’est elle, la Prudence, qui ouvre à ces vertus les portes de l’Ame, en leur fournissant l’indispensable élément intellectuel qui définit le «juste milieu” (8).

15 Rivadeneyra mentions that a man cannot be only valorous, otherwise it is not valor: “Platón dice que se hallan muchos de grandes fuerzas corporales, que son hombres injustisísimos, profanísimos, disolutísimos e ignorantes; los cuales vicios no caben en el que tiene la virtud de la verdadera fortaleza” (168), nor can a prince rely only on his knowledge: “CAPÍTULO XXXIX: QUE LA REGALADA EDUCACIÓN ES CAUSA QUE LOS HOMBRES NO SEAN FUERTES Y VALIENTES” (179).
Gracián strings together a whole list of rulers who combined both valor and prudence: “Del saber y del valor se adecua un príncipe perfecto: un Moisés, para ser legislador y un caudillo de la República de Dios. Un David valiente, para celar; sabio, para celebrar la honra del Altísimo. Un César, haciendo blasón de la pluma y de la espada. […] Un Filipo II de España, que comenzó valiente y acabó prudente” (336).

Finally, Mártir Rizo, in his *Vida de Rómulo*, demonstrates that Romulus had to balance his different qualities in order to rule well. In describing the interplay of his virtues and his ability to maintain all of them in their proper place, he declares, “Jamás príncipe ha experimentado tantos peligros ni ha llevado más gloria ni mejor ha alcanzado sus victorias. Aquel valor suyo no ha sido sin juicio, ni los designios sin orden. Minerva llevó siempre delante el rostro a este Ulises romano” (205) and also that “Rómulo supo dar y ordenar a sus tiempos todas las cosas” (195). Thus, the *arbitristas* describe the need a prince has for maintaining self-control and give specific examples of princes who have done so.

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16 In regards to Alexander the Great, Mariana states, “De la escuela de Aristóteles salió Alejandro tan aventajado varon como es de suponer fuese el que ató al yugo de su imperio á todo el mundo y dió leyes y principados á innúmeras naciones, convirtiéndolas de bárbaras en cultas. La dotrina del gran filósofo hubo de templar la índole del ínclito discípulo, que era acre y vehemente, y estaba sobremanera inflamada por el amor de la gloria. No sino á la prudencia del maestro debe atribuirse que Alejandro Magno llenase la tierra con la fama de su nombre; ni deben achacarse mas que á la violencia del discípulo los actos de furor y locura de que á las veces se dejaba llevar, siendo mas esclarecido en la guerra que despues de la victoria” (284). In regards to Achilles, as his tutor was Chiron the Centaur (Rose 239; Griffiths), Mariana explains that this double nature is important because “la doble naturaleza del centauro quisieron significar los antiguos la prudencia y fortaleza de que deben estar adornados los principes” (344).
The Plays with Theseus

Having now provided a context within which to analyze the self-control of a prince, it is possible to continue on to the analysis of the six mythological plays which form the basis of this dissertation. In each of these plays, at least one prince loses control over himself and reaches extremes instead of seeking moderation, whether it be from allowing his emotions to overcome him, letting others control him, or permitting his virtues to become unbalanced. The form of a prince is to stay in control of himself and thereby be more in control of his nation; however, the rulers in these comedias at times only conform to the matter of a prince and do not reach the ideal level. Although these princes are imperfect, they are still defended in the plays and the fame of these glorious mythological heroes is unassailable. For the playwrights, the form of government—the monarchy—still remains the standard and even when there are imperfect princes, they still defend the monarchy and the monarchs.

1. *El laberinto de Creta* by Lope de Vega

The first comedia, *El laberinto de Creta* by Lope de Vega, gives several positive and negative examples of princes and princesses in regards to their self-control. Different characters succumb to their emotions of lust or anger, and they allow other people to control them based on their emotions. At different points of the play, the same character will sometimes rule himself and at other times allow other things to rule him. Amid all the absence of self-control, the play offers a couple examples of princes balancing out their different qualities which results in a felicitous end. Even when the princes display
that they cannot control their emotions or actions, however, they are still confirmed in their positions of authority.

The first way in which the characters lose control over themselves is by succumbing to the love that they suddenly feel for someone. This emotion overtakes many characters over the course of the play, the first of which is Cila. When Cila falls in love with Minos, she forfeits control of herself and is willing to do whatever it takes to become his wife: “que Cila pierda el sentido / de loca y de enamorada” (56). She goes too far, however, acting too violently and reaches the extreme of foolishly killing her own father who is the king (55-57). The second character who succumbs to her carnal passions is Pasife who falls in love with a bull. As she was unable to control this desire, she brought about her ruin and the dishonor of her house (59, 63). Thirdly, Teseo allows himself to be controlled by his love on two separate occasions by two different women. He first rashly promises to marry Ariadna after just meeting her (70), and then he breaks his word and abandons Ariadna for her sister Fedra (78-80). His love blinded him to the consequences of his actions (which shows his imprudence) as they related to the honor of the characters surrounding him. Finally, Ariadna recognizes that she forsook Oranteo and allowed herself to be controlled by her lust for Teseo which is why she was later justly abandoned by the Athenian hero. If Ariadna had maintained control of her own feelings, she would not have been left alone in a foreign island and made to disguise herself as a poor shepherd (85-86). All four of these characters—Cila, Pasife, Teseo, and Ariadna—allowed their lusty emotions to determine their actions. This forfeiture of control led to negative consequences in the balance of their virtues and in their lives.
A second way in which a ruler gives up his self-control in this *comedia* is by giving another character the power to determine his fate. This transfer of control occurs when Minos gives his word to Cila that he will marry her if she turns the city over to him. Minos does not give her any guidelines, and Cila is therefore able to control not only how she gives “en un día / ciudad, victoria y venganza” (56) but she is also able to determine his reputation based on how she accomplishes this feat. When she commits patricide and regicide with the same act, she has severely tainted Minos’s victory and therefore his fame. He would have liked to have “vencella sin infamarme” (57), but because he let Cila control his reputation instead of maintaining his authority, he is dishonored.

The third method that a ruler forfeits his self-control in this *comedia* is by yielding to his ire. This acquiescence to anger occurs when Minos receives word from Crete. Polineces at first does not want to tell Minos the news because he knows that it will provoke the king; however, “Siendo fuerza darte enojos / y no pudiendo excusarse / el justo silencio rompo” (59). Polineces then tells Minos that he has been dishonored because his wife begat a son with a bull. Before receiving this news, Minos had been moderate and was going to impose a reasonable tribute upon the conquered city of Athens using “medias iguales” (58) and not *desmesuradas* or *desiguales*. After Minos receives this news from Polineces, however, his “enojos” begin to take over. Instead of remembering his honor and his prudence, he focuses on only his honor. Minos should have dealt with this affront to his honor, but in a way that did not exclude the other virtues of a prince. Instead he reaches the extreme of demanding ten Athenians each year to feed to the Minotaur. Minos will not change this “tributo tan importuno” and refuses to listen to reason as Albante explains saying, “No lo hará, que no le siente / para partido
ninguno” (60). Minos clearly received devastating news, but this does not give him an excuse for going to extremes and being controlled by his anger instead of remaining balanced and tempered.

Although several examples of a prince’s losing self-control appear in El laberinto de Creta, Lope de Vega also includes incidents in which a prince maintains the proper balance of his qualities and stays in control of his emotions and actions. One example is the episode that provides the title for the play: Teseo must enter the labyrinth and face the Minotaur. In order to accomplish this feat, he must rely on his mind and his strength so that he can cleanse the dishonor of Minos. Ariadna provides him with “la industria” (70) explaining to him how to enter and leave the maze. After he has learned how to go about the task, Teseo puts the plan into action. Using intelligence and courage, he is able to eliminate the dishonor that had been plaguing Minos (75). A second example of a character balancing these characteristics is Oranteo’s response to Ariadna’s being taken from him which first occurs when Minos plans to give her to Fineo and later happens when she flees Crete with Teseo. Both times he is able to react appropriately and moderates his actions so that when Ariadna is returned, nothing rash or excessive has occurred. When he first hears that Minos is giving Ariadna to Feniso, he declares, “Ven, porque demos luego / voz a la fama, lienzo al mar, a Marte / materia, a amor más fuego” (66). In order to protect his honor the first time, he uses his valor to muster his army, but he also understands where the limits are and returns peacefully when Minos agrees to give Ariadna to him in marriage (71-72). After Ariadna has fled with Teseo, Oranteo again must react to recuperate his future bride and his honor, and he again does so with a measured and balanced response. He challenges Teseo to meet him, but when he recovers
Ariadna, they do not have to fight (82, 96-98). These examples provided by Oranteo and Teseo demonstrate how a king should react when he is faced with a difficult situation, whether it be danger or an affront to his honor. They both remain dedicated to resolve the issue, balanced in their approach, and in control on themselves.

Therefore, in *El laberinto de Creta*, Lope de Vega includes examples of princes positively responding to the situations in which they find themselves by keeping their self-control. Ideally, the perfect prince will follow these examples, keep control of his emotions, and not allow his qualities to become unbalanced. Some of the princes and princesses in this play, however, do not remain in control of themselves at least during some portions of the action. Many of them succumb to love, and Minos is controlled by his anger and another person. Although Cila and Pasífe are not defended or glorified for their actions in this play, Ariadna and the princes are. Despite their shortcomings, Minos is still the celebrated king of Crete and Teseo is still the glorified hero of Athens. They are fortified in their positions as prince and by the end of the play, their position is on an even more solid foundation than it was at the beginning of the play.

2. *Las mujeres sin hombres* by Lope de Vega

The second play, *Las mujeres sin hombres* by Lope de Vega, includes several princes and princesses who give in to their emotions at different times during the play. The Greeks arrive at the Amazonian city in order to conquer it, but during the course of the siege, the most powerful force on earth—“es mayor / del mundo el poder de amor” (398)—conquers all of the Greek and Amazonian leaders. Although they all succumb to a force other than themselves and thereby lose their self-control and because of that the
balance of their virtues, at the end of the play these imperfect princes and princesses are able to reclaim their qualities and their control and are celebrated for doing so.

The two opposing armies in general start from different places in regards to the balance of their characteristics. Although the Amazons try to remain balanced in different ways, they clearly give more emphasis to their valor. These warrior women have fostered a reputation of violence at the expense of reason:

porque discurre la fama
de la crueldad de esta gente,
loca, bárbara, insolente,
a quien Amazonas llama,
que, según es su fiereza (380).

They still try, however, to promote “armas y letras” as they realize that they cannot rely only on their fortitude. Montano explains to the Greek captains that they teach their daughters “letras y armas, porque son / en letras y armas extremo” (382). Also, upon being crowned queen, Deyanira tells Antiopía, “toma esta silla, y ordena / leyes, pues que vives llena / de valor y erudición” (384). Although they try to give some balance, they still promote weapons over thinking. One example of this is the law that states,

Y mando que si alguna
no supiere las armas diestramente,
en llegando a veinte años sea llevada
por las públicas calles en castigo (385).

There is, however, no similar law which says that if someone is not smart enough then they will be punished. The Amazons, therefore, although they try to keep some balance,
emphasize their valor too much at the expense of prudence and have therefore gained a negative reputation.

The Greek heroes, on the other hand, have demonstrated a balance in the past that has helped them in previous conquests. Teseo, for example, has become famous because “con industria y armas, / mató al Minotauro” (392). Furthermore, Jasón is praised for his “brío, gentileza y gracia / y agudeza en hombre rubio” (392). Having experienced the advantages of a balance among the various virtues, Hércules seeks to apply the same strategy in the conquest of the Amazons: “¡Por vida de Teseo, que intentemos / vencer a estas mujeres sin espada: / no perdamos honor!” (389). He realizes that in order to maintain his honor, they must valiantly conquer using their prudence instead of their weapons. The Greeks, therefore, combine fame, prudence and valor because

Son hombres de quien la fama,

para encubrir sus victorias,

tan sólo un punto se aparta:

discretos, valientes hombres. (392)

Despite the differences between the Amazons and the Greeks, all of them are thrown off balance when they surrender control of themselves to their passions. When they capitulate to their feelings, they become prisoners, they are crazy, they are lost, and they are conquered. First, at the beginning the three Amazonian princesses are all overcome by their desires for Teseo although Deyanira and Menalipe later love other
Greek heroes.\textsuperscript{17} They understand that these feelings can bring about their ruin as Menalipe states to Deyanira:

\begin{quote}
¿Es posible, Deyanira,
que afrentas con tal bajeza
nuestra limpia honestidad
y nuestra opinión, que vuelta
de polo a polo en el mundo? (410)
\end{quote}

They do not care, however, when they have the opportunity to sully their opinion themselves by getting their way with Teseo. Menalipe, explaining that she no longer has control over anything in her own life, declares,

\begin{quote}
Perdida voy por Teseo;
nunca pensé que pudiera
el ver un hombre quitarme
alma, vida, aliento y fuerzas. (401)
\end{quote}

Also, during a time of war when her city is under siege, Deyanira sets off a false alarm just to get a chance to speak with Teseo. The queen Antiopía, however, is the one who is most conquered by her love for Teseo. Deyanira tells Hércules and the other Greeks that Antiopía is no longer the ruler:

\begin{quote}
Antiopía, enamorada
del Duque contra las leyes
(que amor es rey que a los reyes
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{17} Deyanira is willing to give up all control and tells Hércules, “mi amor, más quiero que en Grecia / digan que voy por tu esclava, / que ser reina en Temiscira” (418). Menalipe gives up being an Amazon because of her love for Jasón.
All of the Amazonian princesses, therefore, give up their control over themselves.

The princesses are not, however, the only ones to lose their command. The three Greek heroes also give up the power to direct their own lives. Teseo is the prince that is the most affected by his love. He quickly develops an overwhelming passion for Antiopía, and because of that, “preso de amor está” (411). Teseo no longer has control of himself because he belongs to the Amazonian queen: “Yo soy tuyo” (411). Although Hércules and Jasón are quick to find fault in what Teseo does, they succumb to the same passions as well and even admit that Teseo cannot be blamed. Hércules tells Deyanira,

Que me has llevado

parte del alma tras ti,

y si sois todas ansí,

Teseo está disculpado. (413)

Jasón also surrenders himself to Menalipe: “que ya estoy rendido a ti” (423). The three Greek princes, therefore, like the Amazons, also lose control over themselves because of their passions.

Although losing control of oneself to love is in and of itself something that the prince should avoid, in Las mujeres sin hombres, it becomes clear that it also leads to an unbalance in and disregard for the virtues that a prince should have. This inequity is seen in Hércules, but it is much more pronounced in Teseo and Antiopía. First, Hércules at the beginning says that in order to protect his honor he plans to conquer the city using his mind instead of his sword. When he meets Deyanira, however, and is caught up in his love for her and her wish to avenge herself against Antiopía, he abandons this middle
course and reaches the extreme that he had wanted to avoid: “es vergüenza / sacar armas
tan honradas / contra ejército de ninfas” (417). In his infatuation with Deyanira, he only
thinks of his valor and revenge and he abandons his honor and prudence.

Additionally, Teseo and Antiopía are affected to an even greater extent by their
loss of self-control. They only think of their love and they abandon all thoughts of honor,
valor, and prudence. When Teseo first sees Antiopía, he admits to his servant that he has
lost his reason because of his love: “Por Júpiter, que estoy de amores loco! / ¡Qué lindo
talle! Mas que has dicho, creo” (396). Hércules and Jasón both discuss the honor that
Teseo is giving up because of his love. Hércules says that Teseo perhaps “no ve el honor
que pierde” (412), and Jasón tells Teseo, “pero ya que sé que vives / por deshonra de tu
patria” (416). Teseo has also given up his valor to such an extent that Hércules tells him
that he should give up his sword for a spindle and that he is in an even worse predicament
than Ulysses: “Nunca tuvo Circe a Ulises / tan olvidado y sin armas” (417). Teseo,
therefore, because he is only thinking of his love and how to spend time in Antiopía’s
gardens, has abandoned his prudence, his honor, and his valor.

Similarly, Antiopía has so surrendered herself to her passions for Teseo that she
too does not keep up the virtues that princes and princesses should have. Antiopía later
admits, “fuertes Amazonas / yo vuestra deshonra fui” (422). Menalipe also tries to stir
Antiopía into action by pointing out to her that she has set aside her honor as well as her
duty to valiantly defend her city:

¿Cómo estás de esa suerte entre las flores
deste jardín, que a los de Chipre iguala,
cuando con mil trompetas y atambores
el griego Alcides nuestro muro escala?
………………………………………
Saca la espada y tu ciudad defiende,
o deja a la más digna la corona;
que así conserva, quien reinar pretende
cetro, reputación, vida y persona (415).

Menalipe also tells her that because she has given in to her desires, she has given up her prudence: “que es la mayor prisión estar sin seso” (415). Thus, Antiopía has also lost all of her virtues because she has surrendered herself to her emotions.

Although Teseo and Antiopía both neglect their duties for a month and abandon the characteristics to which they should hold fast, they do eventually correct this imbalance and set aside their overwhelming passions. Although they still desire to be with one another, they begin to think prudently, act valiantly, and defend their honor. After they realize that what they are doing is not wise, Antiopía tells him, “con amor he vivido, / con honra quiero morir” (418), and Teseo responds, “quiero defender mi honor” (419). Having prudently understood that they should defend their honor, they both take up arms and rejoin their armies. Although they are no longer spending time together, they have corrected the abandonment of the princely virtues.

Likewise, although Hércules was overcome by his love and abandoned his honor and prudence to blindly follow Deyanira’s desire for revenge and therefore attacked the city, he also eventually is brought back in balance by his fellow soldiers. Once the Greeks have entered the city, Teseo does not want the fighting and the plundering to reach an
extreme. For this reason, he interposes himself between the Amazons and the Greeks and explains to them,

    No quiera Marte que emprenda
    vuestro deshonor, si bien
    he causado vuestras quejas;
    sólo os pido, pues ya estáis
    en la ciudad, que a la Reina
    guardéis el justo decoro. (425)

Hércules realizes that things are beginning to get out of his control, so he decides that this disorder should be brought back under his command:

    El campo comienza
    a destruir la ciudad:
    tanto el oro desenfrena;
    yo haré que cese el rigor (426).

The Greek leader comes up with a solution that follows the middle path instead of being excessive by suggesting “un medio que sea / justo y conveniente a todos” (425). Hércules by this time has recovered his prudence and his honor and his characteristics are now back in balance as are Antiopía’s and Teseo’s.

    Thus, the princes and princesses had surrendered themselves to love—as Teseo says, “pues enseñado a vencer, / me dejo vencer por ti” (419)—and thought that through this submission they would be able to enjoy love more. While they are overwhelmed by their passions, however, they are not able to benefit from these feelings. Only after they have regained control of their wild emotions and have correctly balanced their virtues
does Hércules’s solution become available to them and they all begin to find spouses. Teseo and Antiopía must conquer their passions and regain their honor, valor, and prudence before they are able to prudently and honorably enjoy the love that their valor has won them.

In *Las mujeres sin hombres*, therefore, the princes and princesses are far from in control of their own lives throughout the play. They surrender themselves to their passions which makes them forget their virtues or privilege one above the others. A prince will ideally maintain control of himself, and in the end, these rulers do reclaim authority over their unruly emotions and confront the issues that are plaguing them in regards to their previously disproportionate qualities. Although this play depicts imperfect princes and princesses, these same sovereigns are still praised and defended, especially once they regain sovereignty over themselves.

3. *El vellocino de oro* by Lope de Vega

The third play, Lope de Vega’s *El vellocino de oro*, demonstrates the interrelatedness of honor, prudence, and valor and shows how each of them fortify the others. Similar to the other plays, in this *comedia* some characters lose control of themselves because of their passions which then derails their virtues. There are also positive examples of how a prince should be in control and balance his honor, prudence, and valor. Even with this variety of abilities among the characters and even within the same character, these rulers are still defended and their positions are reinforced.

First, this play demonstrates the links between the different characteristics that a prince should have. The *Loa* at the beginning of the play explicitly explains how honor
helps support both prudence and valor. In the *Loa*, Envidia is speaking with Fama and explains that the desire for fame is what spurs men to undertake valorous deeds or to develop more prudence:

Lloró Alejandro de envidia
que su padre no dejaba
más tierra que conquistase,
que fue de excederle causa.
Con envidia de Platón
estudió cosas tan raras
Aristóteles, que pudo
merecer más nombre y fama.
Aquesta Envidia soy yo;
porque si yo no animara
los ingenios de los hombres,
las plumas y las espadas,
ni hubiera libros famosos
de tantas ciencias, ni hallarás,
Fama, a quien dar tus laureles. (vv. 146-60)

Thus, if princes did not receive any honor from their exploits, they would be much less likely to undertake them.

Additionally, just as honor helps both prudence and valor, so also prudence supports both honor and valor. Jasón is celebrated and thanked by the gods for his invention of the ship (vv. 2005-08). Because he and Teseo are able to use their prudence
to invent a way to cross the ocean, they are then able to undertake their quest to try to gain honor (vv. 1125-29). Without the prudence to build a ship, they would not have been able to seek the Fleece to gain that fame. Prudence is also able to help Jasón’s valor in the conquest of the Fleece. Jasón is able to exert his valor because he receives assistance from the wisdom of Medea. While speaking of his upcoming task of conquering the Fleece, Jasón says, “Quien sabe hacer invisibles, / bien sabrá darme favor” (vv. 1771-72). Prudence, therefore, is able to support and is vital to both honor and valor.

The final quality, valor, helps sustain the other characteristics of a prince. Jasón makes it very clear several times that valor is needed in order to uphold one’s fame. Pelias had convinced Jasón to undertake the quest for the Golden Fleece by telling him,

Hijo, si en la primavera
de tus años no ejercitas
las armas, ¿qué honor profesas?
Entra por el ocio amor,
tirano de las potencias,
y muere un hombre sin fama,
vida de memorias muertas.
Tú tienes alto valor,
que de nuestra sangre heredas
raro ingenio, salud firme,
pocos años, muchas fuerzas.
Adquiere nombre que a todos
nos dé honor (vv. 1088-1100)
Jasón later repeats this idea to Oeta and tells him that he does not deserve his honor if he
does not show his valor: “Señor, la fama que adoro / no la puedo merecer / teniendo la
espada ociosa” (vv. 1199-1201). Likewise, valor must be used to protect prudence and
uphold the laws that it has established. When Jasón breaks the laws and customs of the
land by not following the code set up between guests and their hosts by stealing his host’s
daughter, Fineo and Oeta realize that they must use their valor to uphold the prudence of
the law and begin readying their army. Fineo describes that he will be forced to use his
valor in order to defend what prudence has established by shouting to the fleeing Jasón,
“Toma esta lanza, en señal / de que en tierra y mar te reto / de traidor” (vv. 2121-23).18
Valor, therefore, is necessary for the maintenance and defense of both honor and
prudence.

As these virtues are all interrelated and support one another, a prince who is able
to balance them is capable of performing great deeds. A couple of princes are praised for
the balance of their virtues. During the exposition of the Nueve de la Fama, for example,
the play briefly mentions the balance of César: “aquél es César, ínclito romano, / que ha
de obrar y escribir tantas historias” (605-06). The play also includes praise for Felipe IV
in which it speaks of his greatness (fame), his understanding (prudence), and his valor:

Y entre ellos [los reyes de España que llevarán el vellocino] al gran Felipe,
cuarto en nombre, aunque primero
en soberano valor

---

18 As previously mentioned in other chapters, the original third act is missing and it is
only possible to speculate on what may have happened. The missing third act probably
showed how the valor of the princes of Colchis was able to restore their honor and reunite
the bonds of guest and host between Jasón and Oeta, thus restoring the order of prudent
law.
In addition to talking about the balance of these monarchs, the play also gives active examples. At different points of the *comedia*, both Jasón and Friso are able to demonstrate the proper balance of their virtues.

According to Marte, Jasón is able to gain honor by undertaking the quest for the Fleece precisely because the gods saw both his valor and his discretion:

\[
\text{Puesto que decretó, Jasón valiente,}
\]
\[
\text{la voluntad del cielo soberano,}
\]
\[
\text{por ser de mi poder belipotente,}
\]
\[
\text{que no fuese esta empresa de hombre humano,}
\]
\[
\text{pués a solos sus hijos se consiente}
\]
\[
\text{en lo que reservó poner la mano,}
\]
\[
\text{verte con tal valor fuerte y discreto,}
\]
\[
\text{pudo mudar el celestial decreto. (vv. 1981-88)}
\]

Had Jasón not been balanced in his virtues, he would not have even been able to begin this quest, and he had to use a balanced approach to accomplish this feat as well. He uses his prudence to arrive in his ship, and he employed his valor and the wisdom of Medea in the fight against the dragon and bulls. Through these feats he was able to gain the honor that had inspired him to undertake the feat in the first place.

Additionally, Friso demonstrates that he can maintain a proper balance of his virtues. Fineo recognizes this trait in him and honors him by bringing this prince who is disguised as a shepherd to the court:

\[
\text{Pastor, si galán pastor}
\]
lo puede ser deste valle,
de tu discreción y talle
me prometo igual valor:

vente a la corte conmigo. (vv. 987-91)

Later, when Oeta and Fineo are wanting to seek revenge and restore their honor by chasing down Jasón and the other Greeks, Friso demonstrates his prudence, valor, and honor by offering to build the ships (which he can do because of his prudence\(^19\)) which will be used to fight the Greeks (valor) in order to restore the honor of the princes of Colchis and that of his sister.\(^20\)

One negative example included in this play of a king who did not maintain the proper balance of his virtues is Friso’s father Atamante who in his old age was able to maintain his prudence but set aside his valor:

sabio, aunque no venturoso,
el rey Atamante reina,
depuesta la blanca espada
de mil gloriosas empresas. (vv. 366-69)

Although in his youth he had demonstrated great valor, he now has abandoned his sword.\(^21\) Because he has unbalanced his characteristics, even the one he privileges is not what it should be as he does not truly seek counsel and foolishly marries a woman who

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\(^{19}\) Friso says, “yo haré de mi propio ingenio / naves en que a Grecia pases” (vv. 2178-79).

\(^{20}\) If he is successful, Fineo will marry his sister Helenia (vv. 2192-93) and she will no longer appear “necia y burlada” (v. 1900).

\(^{21}\) An opposite example of someone vainly privileging valor at the expense of all other characteristics does not necessarily involve a prince but rather the soldiers that spring up from the teeth of the dragon. After they spring forth from the ground in which they were sown, the only thing they do is fight amongst themselves and die (vv. 2031-40).
“Ganole el alma” (v. 403). Having become master of the situation and won control over her husband, Erifile is able to do as she desires and throws her stepchildren into the sea (vv. 435-38). Because he was not able to maintain the proper balance of his virtues and keep his self-control, Atamante was stripped of his heir.

In addition to this example of what happens when a prince’s qualities are left to atrophy, the comedia includes other examples to avoid which shows that succumbing to one’s passions will cause him to lose self-control and will skew his qualities. Medea, for example, is taken captive by her love for Jasón which leads her to forget her honor and betray her country. Although she had thought herself safe from the tricks of love, she now admits her love and its power over her by telling Fenisa, “¡Ay, Fenisa, con qué prisa / entré a ser de amor esclava” (vv. 1367-68). As she has become a slave and no longer has control over herself, she also does not keep her virtues in check. Medea realizes that just as the Trojans dishonored Greece by taking Elena, so now she is in a like manner dishonoring her own country, and she is proud of it (vv. 1661-67). Medea’s passions took control of her and caused her to lose control of her virtues.

For his part, Jasón is also imprisoned by his feelings for Medea. Although he arrives in Colchis and strikes up a good relationship with Oeta who accepts him as his guest, he is later driven to break these bonds which violates his honor and that of his host. He admits to having lost his self-control when he tells the beasts that he is unable to resist the power of Medea: “¿Qué resistís su poder, / si yo con alma no puedo” (vv. 2045-46). As he is now under the power of someone else and no longer has authority over himself, he does not act honorably and even his nobility is called into question (vv. 2097-105).
One final example of the overpowering nature of emotions involves the passion and jealousy of Fineo. Medea tries to tell him that he is losing his prudence because his emotions are controlling him, but he does not listen:

Tanta desesperación
es indigna de hombre sabio,
ni querer formar agravio
que no se funde en razón. (vv. 775-78)

Helenia, even when speaking of her own shame brought about by her desire for Fineo, is still able to insult the prince’s excessive and foolish passion: “Tan necia y burlada quedo / como ya tu amor lo queda” (vv. 1900-01). Later, after Jasón and Teseo flee Colchis with Medea and Fenisa while the other Greek sailors make off with their own ladies, Fineo is so outraged and full of jealousy that it blinds him to the facts of what has been happening and he falsely accuses Helenia and Friso of being witnesses but not alerting anyone:

Fineo Perdidos somos: aquí
tienes, señor, los que fueron
testigos desta desdicha.

Helenia Engañado te han los celos,
que yo y mi hermano, señor,
ninguna cosa sabemos. (vv. 2161-66)

Because of his overwhelming passion and jealousy, Fineo loses control over himself and is not able to use his prudence.

Therefore, in *El vellocino de oro*, Lope includes several examples of princes that act as they should by controlling their emotions and actions and also by keeping the
proper balance of their virtues. Other princes, however, suffer because they fall under the control of their passions and under the sway of “amor, / tirano de las potencias” (vv. 1091-92). When a prince is able to keep his qualities at an appropriate level, he is able to accomplish great deeds; however, when he sets one aside or loses control over them, he begins to make grave errors. Despite the errors that some of the princes make and the light in which they are seen that makes them appear foolish, these princes and princesses are still praised. In fact, this play is used as a way to praise the monarch who was reigning at the time of its presentation. The imperfect princes of the play receive praise and Jasón is excessively glorified. This imperfect hero was still able to gloriously conquer the Golden Fleece which then hung around the neck “del gran Felipe cuarto” (v. 638).

4. Los tres mayores prodigios by Calderón de la Barca

The fourth play, *Los tres mayores prodigios* by Calderón de la Barca, includes an immense number of princes who all have trouble maintaining proper self-control. In fact, O’Connor declares, “What *Prodigios* strongly suggests is that public deeds, such as the exploits of the three heroes, do not necessarily symbolize self-domination and self-control” (*Myth* 150). He later adds, “Both *Laurel* and *Prodigios* dramatize that masculine power does not solely depend on the manifestation of strength and daring, but on the balancing of great feats of boldness with the inner domination of those destructive tendencies we all carry within us” (151-52). They are sometimes out of balance in regards to their virtues, at other times they are overwhelmed by different emotions, they are physically deprived of freedom by being imprisoned, and sometimes they even are
magically enchanted. Through all of these dangers that the princes and princesses must navigate, some of them do actually manage to succeed in getting control of their lives and accomplishing a great *prodigio*. These imperfect princes who suffer a loss of control in so many ways are still able to accomplish great things and are celebrated and glorified for it.

This *comedia* includes a vast number of characters, and there are many ways to organize an analysis of them. The order followed here will be the secondary princes and princesses first which includes Pasifae, Heles, Nerida, Friso, Absinto, and Aetes. The next group, although not technically princes, includes the Centaur Neso and the Centaur-like Lidoro. The last group of characters includes the central heroes: Jasón and Medea; Teseo, Ariadna, and Fedra; and Hércules and Deyanira. After examining the self-control of these different characters, the final area of analysis will be the three *prodigios* and how the prince’s self-control was instrumental in accomplishing these feats.

The characters in the first group are the secondary ones, and often not much information is given about them except for their lack of self-control which caused them to commit some type of error. Pasifae, for example, is described as lacking perfection.22 Her lack of perfection involved her abandonment of her honor—“ha perdido la vergüenza” (1563) and her prudence—she developed an “Irracional amor” (1564). Having no regard for either honor or prudence and in that way not having control over herself, she gave herself over to her passions which produced the Minotaur and her death (1564). Heles, on the other hand, did not have such a striking imbalance in her qualities but rather did not have enough authority over herself to control her whims. Because of her “liviano antojo”

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22 Lidora describes her in these terms: “Bella era, no era hermosa; / que entre hermosura y belleza / hay distinción, si se advierte / que hermosura dice entera / perfección, belleza no; / y Pasifae, poco honesta, / sin entera perfección, / no era hermosa, sino bella” (1563).
(1550) and despite the explicit instructions to not do so, she looked back towards land to see how far she and Friso had come on the back of the ram while traveling over the sea. When she lost her control and gave in to this whim, she immediately fell off the back of that ram and drowned. One final secondary female character who gave in to her emotions and lacked balance in her characteristics was Nerida, the stepmother of Friso and Heles. In the *comedia*, although the more common irresistible passion is love, Nerida, on the other hand, is overcome by her hate for her two step-children: “a los dos aborreció / con tal rencor, con tal odio” (1549). In her plot to get rid of them, she goes to such an extreme that she causes a famine in her own country by providing “en vez de espigas, aristas; / en vez de mieses, abrojos” (1549). She then bribed the priests of Ceres to blame Friso and Heles and thus, by destroying the harvest of her subjects, she was able to exile them. Therefore, the hate of Nerida, the whim of Heles, and the imbalance of Pasifae were all left uncontrolled and all resulted in negative consequences for themselves and those around them.

In addition to these three princesses, three secondary prince characters also show a lack of self-control in some but not all areas. Friso, for example, was able to control his whims and his grief after Heles had fallen off the ram and arrived safely in Colchis. Later, when the inhabitants of Colchis are for the first time ever seeing a ship come to their land, both Friso and the king Aetes are able to control their fear and stand ready to face whatever danger is coming. On the other hand, Absinto is overcome by his fear, loses his self-control, and begins to flee: “Huyamos, que el que el mar tan veloz yerra, / ¿cómo andará en llegando a tomar tierra?” (1553) Aetes, however, calms the situation down by noting, “Aguarda, que en las ondas se ha quedado” (1553). Despite their general
though not perfect success in controlling their emotions, at the end of their act, they all lose their self-control when Medea puts them under an enchantment. In order to protect herself, Medea says, “podrá el ingenio mío / hacer que todos confusos / peleen contra sí mismos” (1560). When she does this, Aetes, Friso, and Absinto all lose control over themselves and begin fighting one another instead of Jasón (1561).

The next group of characters includes the Centaur Neso who has robbed Deyanira and the Centaur-like Lidoro who tries to rob Ariadna. Both of these characters act rashly and do things that they should not because they have lost control of their passions and this loss has clouded their prudence, valor, and honor. They no longer care about honor as they abduct or try to abduct women which would put them in the situation of having a dishonored woman and tainting them with dishonor. They lose their valor as Neso is fleeing from Hércules instead of facing him and Lidoro wants to abandon Crete for “extrañas jurisdiccciones” (1572). They also act imprudently and rashly in many of their decisions by not thinking through the consequences. Because of their overwhelming feelings, Lidoro and Neso also are under the control of that lust and feel that they must do things for Ariadna and Deyanira. Lidoro, for example, tells Teseo that he has joined Crete and betrayed his homeland of Greece because “la soberana belleza / de Ariadna, hija de Minos, / a que le sirva me fuerza” (1564). Neso, too, has been under the power of Deyanira even though she is the one who has been captured: “mi amor desesperado / te robó. En poder mío, / dueño has sido también de mi albedrío” (1578-79). Deyanira is able to use this power to not only defend her honor and keep Neso from taking advantage of
her, but also gets Neso to take her to shore when he is drowning in a river. Lastly, their cowardice also takes control of them. Lidoro, for example, says that “es fuerza” that he must traitorously capture Teseo and Pantuflo “para que así aseguremos / nuestras vidas con las vuestras” (1564). Also, when Neso fears for his life, he does not hesitate to use another to defend his own. He tells Hércules that Deyanira “mi escudo ha de ser” (1580). Therefore, both Lidoro and Neso demonstrate that they lack self-control in several areas and even though they try to get away with their cowardice, they are both killed (1572, 1582).

The third group of characters are the principal heroes: Jasón and Medea; Teseo, Ariadna, and Fedra; and Hércules and Deyanira. Despite being the heroes of these ancient myths, they still struggle to control themselves. In his “Nota preliminar” to the comedía, Valbuena Briones briefly mentions the lack of control from which four of the characters suffer: “los celos de Hércules responden al concepto de honor que rige su conducta, de acuerdo con la mentalidad barroca. […] Calderón ha dado énfasis a la caracterización de los personajes femeninos. Cada uno de ellos viene a representar una falta sicológica. Medea, la soberbia; Ariadna, la pasión; y Deyanira, los celos” (1548). Thus, Hércules is “ruled” by his honor instead of balancing it with his other virtues, and the three princesses are all dominated by some emotion. A closer examination of the characters reveals much more about the way in which they are not able to control themselves.

23 Neso explains, “pues desde el primer día / que la violencia pudo hacerte mía, / viendo tu sentimiento, / a robarte también el alma atento, / te di palabra (bien te la he cumplido) / de adorarte rendido, / por ver si mi fineza / merecía un favor de tu belleza” (1579).
24 Neso tells her, “Hermosa mujer, no temas / que he de dejar que las ondas, / aunque son patria de Venus, / hoy en su centro te escondan” (1582).
First, Jasón and Medea are not able to maintain a proper balance among the princely virtues that they should have and they also are ruled by different emotions. In regards to their different qualities, Medea knows that they should be balanced and says, “intento / dar algo al entendimiento: / no todo ha de ser valor” (1558). Despite this knowledge, however, both she and Jasón privilege their valor at the expense of especially their prudence. When Jasón first arrives in Colchis and no one knows whether or not he represents a threat, Medea tells him that she will rely on her courage instead of her wisdom to repulse the attack:

\[
\text{yo sola}
\]
\[
\text{con este arco y estas flechas,}
\]
\[
\text{primero que del ingenio}
\]
\[
\text{me he de valer de la fuerza. (1553)}
\]

Jasón also privileges his valor over his prudence and when Medea is trying to hold her “academia,” he resorts to physicality instead of intelligence and admits, “mejor que argumento lidio” (1559). Medea and Jasón, therefore, both privilege their valor at the expense of maintaining their other virtues.

In addition to not controlling their characteristics as they should, Medea and Jasón do not control their emotions very well either. Medea is depicted as being overcome by her anger and controlled by her pride. Her pride causes her to resent Friso’s sacrifice to Marte and claim superiority over Marte, Venus, and Amor: 25

\[
\text{Ni Marte con su poder,}
\]

25 Calling herself a goddes, Medea says, “no hay deidad que mayor sea” (1551), and also exclaims, “No es posible que mi furia / sufra las voces que oigo, / miente la música aleve, / miente el plectro, miente el tono, / que ajena deidad celebra / en este monte, que solo / es templo de mi deidad / y de mi belleza adorno” (1548).
ni con su hermosura pura

Venus, ni Amor con su ser,

han de humillar ni vencer

mi ser, poder y hermosura. (1551)

Meanwhile, when Friso is about to sacrifice the Fleece to Marte, Medea’s ire overcomes her and she angrily asks him, “¿te atreves (¡rabio de enojo!) / a sacrificar a Marte / haciéndome a mi este oprobio?” (1549) Despite there being “Poca ocasión” for this fury, Medea still exclaims vehemently “Por la boca y por los ojos / áspid soy, ponzoña vierto; / Etna soy, llamas arrojo” (1550-51). In addition to the control that her pride and anger exert over the princess, both Medea and Jasón are controlled by their desires for each other. Although Medea had thought that she would escape from Marte, Venus, and Amor, she realizes that they have conquered her in a way which surprises her but that she cannot resist:

Yo rendí

mi altivez desde que vi

a ese joven extranjero,

que, venciendo el monstruo fiero

del mar, tomó tierra aquí. (1557)26

Medea has surrendered herself because of love, but Jasón also demonstrates that he is controlled by his desire to follow Medea. Despite being so well received by Aetes, Absinto, and Friso who all offer him their support, assistance, lives, and arms in

26 Although both Jasón and Friso conquered the sea—Jasón in his ship Argos and Friso on the ram Aries—Medea is here referring to Jasón as it is revealed in the “academia” (1558-59).
friendship (1555), he takes the sacrifice that they had made to Marte because of a flippant statement made by Medea. He is obligated by her and tells her “Los acasos de las damas / son acasos muy precisos” (1559). He then flees with Medea and brings about a war with the very people who had welcomed him so openly (1560-61). Thus, in addition to not maintaining equilibrium in their virtues, Medea and Jasón both go to extremes and give up their self-control because of various emotions.

The second act centers on Teseo, Ariadna, and Fedra and shows that they too do not maintain authority over themselves. Although at times their emotions are to blame, at other times they physically lose power because they are imprisoned. When Teseo first meets Ariadna and Fedra, Fedra tells him, “vivimos las dos, no sé / si festejadas o presas; / pues aquí encerradas” (1562). Although they have been given a beautiful place to live, their freedom is restricted and they cannot control everything that they do. Later, Teseo and his servant Pantuflo are taken captive by Lidoro and his soldiers. Teseo, seeing Ariadna and Fedra and thinking that they will speak on his behalf so that he may regain authority over himself, calls out to the princesses to speak for him to Minos. They do not dare to tell the truth, however, because as Fedra reminds Ariadna, “licencia las dos nunca tuvimos / de salir de la torre en que vivimos, / y que será culparnos el libralle” (1566). The princesses, therefore, are physically trapped in their tower and are afraid to do anything publicly against that authority.

As was mentioned just above, Teseo and Pantuflo are also physically deprived of their freedom and authority over themselves when Lidoro traitorously captures them, puts them in the chains with the prisoners from Athens, throws them in jail to wait to be fed to the Minotaur, and then sends them into the Labyrinth to be eaten by the monster. Teseo
and Pantuflo are very restricted in these situations and have lost control of many aspects of their lives. Their responses, however, are very different and show that Teseo, as opposed to Pantuflo and even Ariadna and Fedra, does not succumb to his fear. While they are in the Labyrinth, Pantuflo becomes so frightened that he loses the thread: “El hilo con el espanto / perdí: no sé si he de hallarle” (1570). Whereas Pantuflo freezes in the Labyrinth, Teseo pushes forward, defeats the Minotaur, and returns to find Pantuflo. Although both of them have physically lost control over their freedom, Teseo does not allow his fear to also control him.

In addition to being taken captive physically, Teseo, Ariadna, and Fedra are also taken captive emotionally and fail to keep control of their passions. The first situation arises because Ariadna and Fedra will not be able to control Teseo’s horse but will be “arrastradas” (1570) and controlled by it. Since the horse cannot take all three of them and the two ladies cannot escape on their own, they both try to persuade Teseo which one to save. Teseo sees himself as caught between two choices, both of which have strong arguments in their favor:

**Ariad.** Ese gusto, y este honor,

y podrá vivir un hombre

bien en el mundo, sin ser

amante; no sin ser noble.

**Fedra.** Nobleza es aventurar

trofeos, famas y honores

por su dama, porque amando

no hay yerro que no se dore.
Ariad. Eso es dejarse vencer
un hombre de sus pasiones;
esto otro vencerlas. Mira
¡cuál trae aplausos mayores,
ser vencido o vencedor! (1573)

Teseo is caught between his passion and his honor, and according to the arguments of the princesses, they are necessary to one another and complement each other. Teseo can either overvalue his honor or let himself be conquered by his passions. In the end, Teseo decides “son soberanas pasiones” (1573).

After Teseo chooses Fedra and leaves Ariadna, Ariadna forgets her own advice about controlling one’s emotions and is overwhelmed by her own feelings of passion and vengeance. Much more than the affront of having been left, Ariadna is overpowered by her jealousy. At first she begins to roundly call down curses upon Teseo and Fedra, then she later changes her mind suddenly and says, “No lleguen / nunca a ti mis maldiciones” (1574) and blesses their union: “envidiando eternamente / las tórtolas tus amores” (1575). She continues to be tossed back and forth by the waves of her emotions and finally decides, “Yo te seguiré, yo misma / vengaré tus sinrazones” (1575). In all of the back and

27 See the chapter on honor for the argument of why Teseo is not obligated by his honor to save Ariadna again since he has already saved her from the bear, which she paid back by freeing him from prison, and now he has added the additional rescue from Lidoro who was about to abduct her. Furthermore, had he chosen Ariadna, he would have been in the same predicament as Hércules: his lady would have been captured by another.
28 Although O’Connor interprets this play in a subversive manner, he sees the power that passions can wield over the heroes and declares, “What makes their doom appear inevitable is not so much that the stars determined their lives as that they allowed their passions to place them on a bearing whose journey’s end was destruction” (Myth 151).
forth changes that this princess goes through, it is clear that her emotions have taken over her mind and that she has abandoned her prudence and control over herself.

In the third act, Hércules and Deyanira take the stage and they too fall under the control of various emotions. First, Hércules is suffering terribly because his wife has been abducted by the Centaur Neso. His honor, therefore, has taken a drastic hit and is completely out of balance. Because he has lost so much honor, he reacts with fury and out of jealousy to those around him and he begins to privilege his honor too much. In his jealousy, he even lashes out at the inhabitants of the mountain Oeta who are trying to help him and explains his extreme conduct saying,

\[
\text{porque si Hércules con dichas} \\
\text{fue horror, fue pasmo estupendo} \\
\text{de los hombres y las fieras,} \\
\text{¿qué será Hércules con celos? (1576)}
\]

He then causes all of the inhabitants to flee from him in terror when his anger takes control and he exclaims,

\[
\text{huid, huid de mi fuego;} \\
\text{que basta un suspiro mío} \\
\text{para volver en incendio} \\
\text{este monte; porque el Etna,} \\
\text{el Vesubio, el Mongibelo,} \\
\text{afeitados de la nieve,}
\]

---

29 Hércules tells the inhabitants of the Mountain Oeta, “Este pues (¡ay infeliz!), / fiado en el bruto ligero, / trae una dama robada. / (¿Cómo pronunciarlo puedo, / ¡ay de mí!, sin que mi vida / salga deshecha en mi aliento?)” (1576)
no ocultan, no guardan dentro
de su vientre tanta llama,
como el volcán de mi pecho
respira con cada soplo,
aborta con cada aliento. (1578)

Once Hércules has taken out his jealousy and anger on Neso by slaying the Centaur, he falls into the trap of overvaluing his honor instead of returning it to its proper place. He tells Deyanira that they should never see each other again so that everyone thinks that she has died and in this way he thinks that he will be able to preserve his public opinion. Deyanira tells him how ridiculous this idea is and also points out that it is completely unnecessary. He has cleansed his honor and everyone will be satisfied with that.30

Deyanira asks him,

¿Por qué has de pensar de ti
tan vilmente, que antepongas
la satisfacción ajena,
mi bien, a la tuya propia?
¿Por qué has de pensar que al verme

---

30 Deyanira’s point that everyone will be satisfied is proved true by the comments of the other princes. Floro tells him that he has earned “tanta dicha” and wants Hércules to accompany him to his home so that he can “ver mi corte venturosa” (1584). Jasón and Teseo call him, “el más noble caudillo” and “el mejor varón” (1587), respectively, indicating that his honor has been completely restored. Jasón confirms this, telling him, “ya / que está tu ofensa vengada” (1587). As Watson puts it, Hércules’s “sense of shame is totally irrational since no one at any stage blames Hercules in any way for having spared Deianira, and indeed Prince Floro regards it as an honour to invite them both to his Court. […] Hercules’s fear of ridicule is totally unfounded; he is suffering from a self-destructive and false sense of shame—a kind of phobia engendered by fear of gossip at his expense” (781).
contigo, siendo tu esposa,  
te han de murmurar[?]

..............................
¿Por qué has de pensar de ti  
que habrá en el mundo persona  
que piense de ti, que has dado  
ensanchas a tu deshonra?

Ten de ti satisfacción,

tendránla las gentes todas (1584).

Hércules, however, cannot view equitably his honor and he over-privileges this virtue to  
the point that he cannot think of anything else. Watson says, “it was a stroke of pure  
genius to choose the strongest man in the Classical world to play the part of the Slave of  
Public Opinion” (783).\(^\text{31}\) Thus, Hércules is controlled by loss of honor, his anger, his  
jealousy, and finally his disproportionate consideration of honor.

Deyanira, for her part, is also unable to control her jealousy, and this lack of  
control eventually leads to Hércules’s inability to control his body because of the Hydra’s  
poison. When Deyanira begins to fear that she will lose her husband, she is so overcome  
by her envy that she believes what Neso had told her about the enchantment of his skins.  
She uses “inadvertida y loca / de hechizos, para traer / a sus brazos lo que adora” (1584).  
Because she was overcome by her jealousy, she has Hércules put on Neso’s skins which

\(^{31}\) O’Connor mentions a similar episode in another Calderonian play that involves  
Hercules: “In Fieras afemina Amor [we have…] the debasement, the effimination of  
Hércules, the greatest of all Greek heroes” (“Politics” 174).
are tainted with the blood of the Hydra. When Hércules does this, he loses control over his body:

Solo sé que el corazón
a pedazos se me arranca
del pecho, y que pavorosa
no me cabe dentro el alma.
¡Ay de mí! ¡Todo soy fuego!
¡Ay de mí ¡Todo soy rabia! (1588)

As he cannot control his body, he throws himself into the fire and Deyanira follows because she realizes that she has brought about his death since she could not control her jealousy (1589).

Thus, in *Los tres mayores prodigios*, the three Greek heroes Hércules, Teseo, and Jasón all at various times lose their authority over themselves. Yet, in spite of this imperfection, they are still very much celebrated in their three incredible feats. These three feats are accomplished, however, after they have regained control over themselves or once they have balanced out their qualities. In the first act, Jasón must conquer the Golden Fleece by defeating “una serpiente / y dos toros de metal, / escupiendo viva llama” (1551). In order to do this, he relies on all three qualities. Spurred on at least in part by his honor and the possibility of gaining “triunfos” (1587), Jasón enters the fray accompanied only by his valor—“ solo entraré / mi valor vaya conmigo” (1560)—and is able to gain victory because he also depends on the prudence of Medea: “Las gracias de esto / debo a la docta, a la sabia / Medea” (1587). Through the combination of honor,
prudence, and valor, Jasón is able to gain this great, glorious, and celebrated victory of the Golden Fleece.

Furthermore, Teseo also must use all three virtues in order to defeat the Minotaur and emerge victoriously from the Labyrinth. In order to be able to navigate his way through and leave from the Labyrinth, Teseo had to utilize the knowledge that Dédalo was able to give him. Once he had gained this prudence, he was able to use “la contracifra / de ese caos oscuro y ciego” (1567) to make his way through the maze. While in the Labyrinth, however, he also had to employ his fortitude when he meets up with the Minotaur. Dédalo gives him some powder to disorient the beast, but his only weapon is a dagger. Through his valor, which is strongly contrasted with the cowardice of Pantuflo, he is able to kill the Minotaur. Thus, by employing both his prudence and valor, Teseo is able to gain the honor of this great wonder: “Venci el horror, el prodigio / mayor del mundo, y más grave” (1570).

Finally, Hércules is only able to defeat his enemy Neso when he is able to conquer his passions and is in control of his emotions. When Hércules finally comes upon Neso and Deyanira after a year of searching for them, Neso seizes her and uses her as a shield to protect himself from Hércules. He also grabs the knife that Deyanira had been holding and threatens to kill her with it if Hércules shoots. Deyanira encourages him to restore his honor by using his prudence and valor: “Venga con valiente brio / tu agravio prudente y sabio” (1580); however, Hércules hesitates and does not immediately take action because he fears for his beloved wife: “no te he de matar” (1580). Deyanira sees that his desire to keep her alive is getting in the way of the restoration of his honor and is also affecting his valor. She asks him, “¿cómo tienes valor / de verme en tantos
desvelos / en otros brazos?” (1580) Hércules has a very difficult time overcoming his conflicting emotions, but he is eventually able to take control of himself. He is able to act once he sets aside his raging passions: “hoy me vengo, aunque sea a costa / de mi amor” (1581). Having dominated his emotions and taken control of himself, he is able to kill the Centaur without harming Deyanira at all (1581-82). Therefore, once Hércules had control over his love, he was able to act and save it.

Thus, in *Los tres mayores prodigios*, many characters suffer from an imbalance in their qualities or from losing control of their liberty or emotions. Sometimes a character will privilege one virtue at the expense of the others as Hércules does with his honor and Jasón does with his valor. At other times, they may abandon a quality which they should maintain as Pasifae did when she set aside her honor and prudence. Many different emotions take control over the characters in this *comedia* such as a simple whim, their anger, jealousy, pride, love, and hate. Although they may be imperfect, many of these same characters are celebrated and honored. Hércules, Teseo, and Jasón especially are praised for their great feats of capturing the Golden Fleece, killing the Minotaur, and killing Neso. Although at times they struggled mightily with keeping their self-control, they were able to accomplish these feats precisely because they were able to assert their authority over their emotions and balance their virtues. Despite the imperfections of the princes, they are still the glorified heroes of ancient mythology, and their presence in this play fortifies the crown.

32 Neso was also swimming across a river instead of holding the knife to her throat, but she still could have drowned if the Centaur had not swum her to shore, saving her life instead of letting her die.
33 In this way, he is similar to the Teseo and Antiopía of *Las mujeres sin hombres*. They can only enjoy their love more and benefit from it once they have stopped being controlled by it.
The fifth play is *El labyrinto de Creta* by Juan Bautista Diamante. For the most part, in this drama the characters do a good job of either keeping control of themselves or regaining that authority. The control of the different characters is threatened on various fronts such as their own emotions, other people, enchantments or spells, and nature. Additionally, Bautista Diamante focuses much more on destiny, chance, or the gods than the other playwrights and how a prince is controlled by them or can regain some freedom while working within them. The princes and princesses of this play frequently have to deal with challenges to their self-control and do not always have complete authority over themselves. In spite of these imperfections, they are still defended and glorified, and they are also able to reach the form of a prince by reclaiming power in whatever situation they find themselves.

The first area in which the rulers face challenges to their self-control is from their emotions. To begin with, Teseo and Hipolita both face similar emotions when they meet on the battlefield. At first they are overcome by their anger which Hipolita explains saying that she was “ciega del enojo” (170). In spite of this blindness, they were able to “ver la ossada / ceguedad de mis errores” (170), but in overcoming their anger, they both surrender themselves to love: Teseo says that he is “vencido” and that he is the “prisionero” (167), while Hipolita declares that she was glad when she found herself “su prisionera” (171). They do manage to conduct this love well and plan to marry one another (172). Next, when the two of them find themselves in the Labyrinth and in a
situation in which they are briefly ensnared by their fears because of the songs, they are able to overcome them by their courage—“el valor ossado emprenda / la victoria” (189)—and slay the Minotaur with the help of Ariadna and Fedra. Another reason that they are capable of this feat is that they balance their virtues and rely on their honor, valor, and prudence. They both speak openly about their honor and valor:

Tes. Vea el Cielo en mi que borro
todas las viles estampas
del temor, quando valiente
con presuncion, a tan ardua
empressa me sacrifican
los anhelos de mas fama.

Hip. Vea el cielo en mi, que firme
y altiva, quando contrastan
riesgos, y amor mi fineza,
los temores auassalla,
pues por librar a Teseo,
pero digalo mi fama. (176-77)

In order to defeat the Minotaur, they also use their prudence by accepting wise counsel: Hipolita says, “Esta advertencia observemos” (189) and Teseo similarly declares, “porque assi lo ordena / al auiso generoso,” (189). Thus, they must use their prudence, honor, and valor in order to defeat the Minotaur. Finally, Egeo is also able to reclaim control of one of his emotions through his valor. When Teseo is being sent to Crete to be

34 For more information about the types of enchantments and songs that control characters, see below.
fed to the Minotaur, he is overcome by his anger; however, just as Teseo and Hipolita
were able to conduct their passion for one another to a beneficial end, so also Egeo is able
to use his anger to inspire the Athenians to regain control over themselves:

Llorese ofendida Creta,

del furor de nuestras armas,
inunden sus campos rios
de infeliz purpura humana.

Arda Creta a nuestras iras. (177)

Thus, although Teseo, Hipolita, and Egeo all lose control of their emotions at least
briefly, they are also all able to regain control of them and direct them to an advantageous
conclusion.

The second area in which a character may suffer from a lack of authority over
himself or herself is when they are under the control of another person or group of
people. The Amazons, for example, subjugate the men of their territory. For these men, it
is as if they were in a “Calabozo” (168). The Amazons themselves, however, are also
controlled by their nature as Hipolita alludes to when she says that she was able to throw
off that external influence: “Blandi el fresno, temple el bruto” (170). Hipolita is thus able
to gain control over her Amazonian nature, and Teseo is also able to free the men from
the yoke of Amazonian servitude: “Restituidos quedaron, / contra su observado orden, /
los hombres su dominio,” (171). Another case of people being subject to another person
is Ariadna and Fedra who receive orders from their father Minos. Although they have
been enjoying following the model of Diana by hunting and remaining single, Minos now
commands them to marry, but he also allows them some freedom within these demands:
Thus, despite the orders of their father, Ariadna and Fedra are still able to exert some control over themselves and their future. One final example is Minos, who although he took control of his daughters, is also controlled by his enemies. When the Athenians conquer Crete and Egeo takes possession of the island, Minos has nowhere to turn except to Teseo. In the end, however, although he gives up control to his enemies, this authority is returned to him by Teseo who gives the kingdom back to him. Therefore, although the men and women were controlled by the Amazons, Ariadna and Fedra were controlled by their father, and Minos was controlled by his enemies, they are all able to reassert at least some measure of power over themselves and their situations.

The third area in which people lose control is when they fall under the power of some type of spell or enchantment. Although it is not fully explained, there appears to be some type of spell or at least prophecy relating the Minotaur to Minos and his kingdom. As Fedra says,

Si los alientos vitales
del monstruo, son la defensa
del imperio, al acabarse
la vida que la defienda,
fuerça es que Creta se acabe. (185)
According to this enchantment, as long as the Minotaur is alive, Minos and Crete are safe; however, when the monster is destroyed, so will be the king and country. If something happens to the Minotaur, Minos explains that it “amenaza / la ruina de mi imperio” (174) and “pues en su ruina, contemplo / mi ruina” (175). Despite these dire warnings, Ariadna and Fedra help Teseo and Hipolita to destroy the Minotaur and break this enchantment. Crete is thus freed from this enchanted slavery, but when this happens, it is conquered by Athens. Nevertheless, because of the compassion of the princesses, after Crete has been conquered and Minos has faced his ruin, Teseo restores Minos and Crete to their former state with the one notable exception that they are now free from the control that the Minotaur and its enchantments had held over them (189).

A second enchantment that claims control over people is the spell in which the singing voices entrap people. Minos explains that Atlante was the powerful sorceress who put the enchantment in place and taught the princesses how to control it with their voices:

las vozes, que le defienden [al Minotauro],

por el propio Atlante hecho

su encanto, que no ay oydo,

a donde lleguen los ecos,

que amortecido, no rinda

los sentidos al efecto

de aquella musica adonde

es la suauidad el riesgo.

Bien que a este peligro sois
Thus, anyone who hears these voices will be controlled by them. In fact, Flora and Cominos recognize the “encantadas / vozes” and run away so as not to fall under the spell (184). When Teseo and Fedra, however, are thrown into the Labyrinth, they fall under the control of these voices and “El hechizo de este acento” (188). Fortunately for Teseo and Hipolita, however, Ariadna and Fedra have power over the other voices: “nuestras / vozes las suyas deshaze / el encanto” (186), and they are able to make the other voices stop singing. When the enchantment of the other voices ends, Teseo and Hipolita regain control over themselves: “de las prisiones violentas / suelta el alma se recobra / de sentidos, y potencias” (189). Therefore, just as the control of the spell of the Minotaur is broken, so also is the control of the enchanted voices. Although these enchantments had exerted power for a time, those under their control are able to escape from them and assert their own authority over themselves.

The fourth area in which the characters in this *comedia* must struggle to maintain their self-control is when they face the difficulties of nature, specifically the sea. Teseo and Hipolita make two voyages during this play, and both times they run into severe difficulties. As the drama begins, Teseo and Hipolita are just able to escape “del furioso combate de las hondas” to “la piadosa tierra” (167). It had been difficult to keep control in the tumultuous sea, but they are able to safely make it to land in Athens. When they later make the voyage to Crete in two separate ships, they again find it very difficult to control themselves because of the turbulence of the waters. Teseo is able to maintain control of his ship while Hipolita cannot:
Veo que una [nave] se resiste
atrauessed, y sugeta,

otra sin ley, ni gouierno,
a su ruina se acerca. (179)

Eventually, her ship crashes and she and her servant Irene are thrown into the sea. At this point, Ariadna and Fedra plead for someone to help them, and Polidoro and Licomedes respond to their call “Y a los estoruos rompiendo / con pies y con braços reman” (180). Therefore, even when nature claims control over Hipolita and Irene’s ship, they are able to regain control with the help of Polidoro and Licomedes. It proves very difficult to maintain control in the sea, but the characters are able to resist and break through the “estoruos.”

The final area in which it is difficult to exert self-control and in which this play is unique with this special emphasis is when a character or group of characters is confronted by destiny, chance, the gods, or some similar supernatural force. The first set of forces are all related to sending people to be fed to the Minotaur. The entire city of Athens, for example, has been forced by the gods into sending its young men and women to be eaten by this monster as Egeo explains when he says that they must pay the “tributo vil que los dioses / impusieron en Atenas” (172). Next, when the Athenians cast lots to see who will be sent to Crete, Teseo is chosen by “la suerte” and says that “el Cielo lo ordena” (176). Furthermore, the “astros” have demanded that people be fed to the Minotaur in several situations. First, Minos explains that

lo que conciertan

los Astros, toca a los Astros:
los Dioses mandan que muera
........................................
este joven, con expressa
ley, de que el primer humano
que por el mar llegue a tierra
ha de morir, y a mi solo
me toca hazer lo que ordenan. (181)

In addition to the first person to arrive to Crete from any shipwreck, the stars are also
blamed for the Athenian tribute: “essa necia / imposicion, que los Astros / hizieron”
(181). In the play, all of these different entities claim control over who must be fed to the
Minotaur. They are all, however, nullified when the Minotaur is killed at which point
Athens and Minos regain their freedom.

The next group of forces center around the characters Ariadna and Fedra and what
they are forced to do. First, after their father says that they must marry, a nymph comes
out and prophecies that they will follow this order. Next, the nymph goes on to say that
the gods have decided that the Minotaur will die and that Crete will be brought to ruin.
She explains to them that the prisoner who is supposed to be fed to the Minotaur will
instead rule Crete: “quedando dueño / de Creta, que por tributo / vendrá al Labyrintho
ciego” (176). Upon hearing this, Ariadna asks what they should do, and Fedra tells her,
“Que haremos? / seguir al destino, dando / a sus leyes cumplimiento” (176). Here they
seem to be giving in to the control of the gods and to destiny. Later, however, the two
princesses have made up their own minds. In regards to their destiny to become wives,
they are still able to control whom they marry, and they are able to choose based upon
what Polidoro and Licomedes have done on their behalf. Furthermore, speaking of the Minotaur, they resolve to “quitar del mundo, el feo / lunar” (185), though Fedra says that it may be that the goddess Diana “nos violenta al cumplimiento / de los decretos fatales” (185). In both cases, despite the control that destiny or the gods may be exerting over them, they are also able exert their own authority. The way in which they follow destiny does not only bring about their forced marriages and the ruin of Crete. Ariadna and Fedra choose the prince who has earned their “afectos” (189) and because of “la clemencia / […] de sus piadosas hijas” (189), Crete is not brought to ruin but is instead restored to its former glory with the additional benefits of not being under the control and strictures of destiny. The key to being able to reclaim control of oneself in these situations is that, according to Teseo, “a los hados / la ossadia se adelanta” (176).

Therefore, in *El labryinto de Creta*, Bautista Diamante includes many instances of people and princes being under the sway of something other than themselves. They lose control to their emotions, to other people, to enchantments, to nature, and to destiny. In these situations, the princes are shown to be imperfect and to lack the ideal form of a sovereign ruler. Despite these imperfections, Bautista Diamante has the princes regain control of their lives by using their emotions to their own beneficial ends, regaining authority over themselves from other people (or their own nature in the case of the Amazons), breaking the control that the enchantments have over them, overcoming the challenges of nature, and ending the rule of the stars or following their demands in such a way as to change the outcome to their own benefit. In this way, these imperfect princes are able to accomplish glorious feats for which they are praised and which confirm and defend their reign.
6. *Amor es más laberinto* by Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz and Juan de Guevara

The final play, *Amor es más laberinto* by Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz and Juan de Guevara, again returns to the myth of the Labyrinth of Crete but also tells of the many other Labyrinths of love and confusion that develop around the characters. At times, the characters are trapped within these physical, emotional, or mental mazes and most find their way out in order to regain control of themselves. De la Cruz and de Guevara include descriptions and depictions of several balanced princes, but they also incorporate portrayals of unbalanced ones. Finally, several outcomes are possible when a prince faces an enemy and potentially can come under his control. In this drama, although the princes are not always able to maintain their self-control by keeping their emotions in check and by upholding a proper balance of their virtues, they are still praised and their positions are defended.

To begin with, Sor Juana includes an example of a balanced prince right at the beginning of her *loa* to the viceroy. She praises Jano for his honor (“héroe ilustre”), valor, and prudence: “Jano fue, entre los romanos, / héroe ilustre, altivo y fuerte, / prudente, apacible y sabio” (707). Then, after praising this king who became a Roman god for his balance, she praises the viceroy who was watching the *comedia* for the same balance calling him a retrato de las excelsas virtudes que en Su Excelencia miramos (de prudencia y de valor, de majestad y de agrado) (708).
In this opening *loa*, the playwright also encourages the prince to moderation and temperance in his dealings: “El hielo el ardor os temple” (711). Therefore, during the first lines of the show, Sor Juana describes an ideally balanced monarch and transfers that praise of the harmony of virtues to the ruler in the audience.

During the *comedia* about the Labyrinth, Minos and Teseo also are said to be in equilibrium or demonstrate a balanced approach to what they do. Minos, for example, is praised for all three qualities by first Ariadna and later by Teseo. Ariadna tells him,

Felices edades vivas
porque vean que no empaña
en ti el ardor del acero,
la prudencia de las canas (718).

Here she praises his valor and prudence, and also alludes to his fame because other people will see that he is upholding his virtues. For his part, Teseo says that Minos has accomplished “gloriosos hechos” and is a “glorioso Legislador” (720). This glory has also caused his fame to spread so that he is known for these abilities:

podrá tu justicia,
valor, rectitud y celo,
introducir la concordia
en el mismo desconcierto (720).

Thus, Minos is praised by other characters for his equilibrium in his virtues.

Teseo, on the other hand, demonstrates his balanced approach in two situations that he faces. The first is his conquest of the Labyrinth and the Minotaur. Although this takes place in between the first and second act, Teseo must use his prudence and his valor
to gain this honor. Once he has received the knowledge of the “industria” (771) given to
him by Ariadna, he can then add to the prudence his valor to defeat the monster:

Es sutil,
porque con un hilo sólo,
ha de triunfar y vivir;
pues en la lid,
sabrá al fiero monstruo soberbio rendir. (729)

The second action in which he demonstrates the harmony of his qualities is in his defense of Minos. Teseo follows the prudence of several “razones” when he steps in and saves Minos’s life from his Athenians who have come to avenge him:

y cuando aquesta razón
no me moviera, la misma
acción hiciera, por dar
a entender mi bizarría,
que tiene más valor quien
perdona, que quien castiga.
Y así, haz, Licas, recoger
la gente. (773)

Teseo here is advancing the fame—“por dar / a entender”—of his valor by using the prudence of his reason. He here turns the tables on Minos who has this same opportunity
at the beginning of the play but refuses it. Thus, whereas Minos is praised for his balance, Teseo actually demonstrates it in at least these situations.

While some characters are praised for the equitable distribution of their attributes, others show that at times they cannot balance the princely virtues. First, although Minos is praised for his balance, at times he privileges one above the others. For example, although the general practice is for a condemned man not to see the face of the king, Minos allows this breach of form in the case of Teseo because he is “incitado de su fama” (719). Later, although he tries to employ his prudence to find out how to best defend his city, when he discovers the dishonor that his daughters are being secretly stolen away to the docks, he loses all control and focuses only on his honor and valor by ordering that Baco, Teseo, Ariadna, and Fedra all be killed while he imprudently forgets the coming attack and his valor thus suffers when he is defeated. In addition to Minos, Baco also demonstrates a lack of perfection in maintaining all of his virtues. He imprudently follows the advice of his servant to court Fedra although he knows that such an action is unwise:

aunque tus locuras toco,

no es razón que a nadie espante

el ver que apetezca un loco

consejos de un ignorante. (730)

35 The Athenian ambassador begs Minos, “Perdón os pido postrado, / Señor, pues si perdonáis, / con perdonarle, quedáis / más noblemente vengado; / y no sin satisfacción, / porque antes, la tendréis doble, / que no hay para un hombre noble / castigo, como el perdón” (723). His pleas, however, are to no avail. Furthermore, when Teseo asks that his death be the end of Minos’s vengeance and that no other Athenians be fed to the Minotaur after him, Minos refuses even that: “no me podrá ablandar” (723).
When Baco abandons his prudence, this act brings about a further imbalance in not only him but also in Lidoro. Instead of using their minds to discover what is actually going on in all the confusion, they privilege their valor and immediately draw their swords against each other at every opportunity. Even Teseo gets caught up in this favoring of valor (731, 753, 755-56, 758). Therefore, although the princes are said to be great and demonstrate good qualities, they also show their imperfections through the lack of harmony in their virtues.

This imperfection is not contained only in an imbalance of their qualities, but rather it also extends to an inability to control their emotions. First, many of the princes and princesses surrender themselves to their love. At the beginning of the play, Baco and Lidoro already are consumed by their love for the princesses, and although Baco says this, it could have been said by either: “¿Tal agravio llego a ver / y persevero en vivir?” (729). They could not imagine living without their princesses. Although neither is yet overwhelmed by love, Ariadna is beginning to appreciate Baco, but Fedra wants nothing to do with Lidoro (716-17). When Teseo shows up, however, the situation changes dramatically. Both of the princesses immediately are captured by their desires for the Athenian prince (720), and they would both rather die than see Teseo dead: Ariadna says, “¡Oh! ¡Acabe yo, y él no acabe!” and Fedra concurs, “¡Oh! ¡Muera yo, y él no muera!” (724) Even her servant notes the loss of control that Ariadna has suffered by telling her, “aunque sea de tu hermana / amante, al que tú a rendir / has llegado tu albedrío” (729). Finally, Teseo has also lost his authority over himself as Fedra has stolen his soul: “pues ha de quitar la vida / por fuerza, quien roba el alma” (725). All five of these princes and
princesses, therefore, have given up their control over themselves because of their passions.

In addition to all of them being overcome by their love, they are also all dominated by the pervasive confusion that affects all of their actions. No one can figure out who another person is or with whom they are talking, dancing, fighting, or escaping. All three princes are presumed or found dead at different points which further muddies the waters. In all of the confusion Minos, Ariadna, Fedra, Baco, Lidoro, and Teseo all make mistakes and think that they are doing one thing when in reality their confusion is causing them to do something else. Uncertainty and misunderstanding seem to reign supreme throughout the second act and almost entirely through the third when people’s identities finally become clear as the play draws to a close. The obvious loser in the lack of self-control because of their love and their confusion is Lidoro. Although many princes and princesses lose control due to these factors, Lidoro actually loses his life as well.

A third set of emotions which overcomes one of the characters is anger and vengeance which dominate Minos and completely take away the authority he has over himself. Minos is consumed by his desire for vengeance and says early on, “pues el ofendido, solo / cuando se venga descansa” (717). He thinks he will be able to rest after Teseo has been fed to the Minotaur, but he does not stop the revenge he is taking on Athens (723). Even when he thinks he has satisfied his vengeance by killing Teseo, his passion and anger continue to consume him (733). Then, as the play is drawing to a close, he discovers that not only has Teseo not been killed, but that the Athenian prince and Baco are both stealing his daughters and thus dishonoring him. At this discovery, he

36 DiPuccio argues that the creation of these “silent phantoms” (196) weakens the control that the princes have over themselves (196-99).
completely succumbs to his vengeance and rage. Although Minos shows some moderation when it is only Baco who is dishonoring him by not commanding his daughter to die as well (770), when his fury explodes upon finding Teseo also, he loses all temperance and goes to the extreme of condemning the princes and his daughters and exclaims,

Hidra que mi enojo encitas,

pues cuando mi enojo piensa

matar contigo una ofensa,

con tantas me resucitas:

¿Por qué mi cólera irritas?


Todos perderéis la vida (771).

In his wrath, Minos does not pay attention to anyone else as Ariadna and Fedra note. Ariadna says, “Nada su crueldad escucha” and Fedra states, “Nada atiende su rigor” (771). This anger contributes to Minos’s unbalanced qualities and his defeat at the hands of the Athenians. Had he been able to control his lust for vengeance and his rage, he would have been more nobly avenged (723) and he would have been able to defend his kingdom more effectively.

The final way in which a prince can lose his control that appears in this play is by losing power over oneself to one’s enemies. The principal examples of this occur in Minos and Teseo. First, when Minos is overcome by his fury, he is also defeated by his

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37 There are a couple brief allusions to other possibilities. The role of “la suerte airada” (718) is mentioned in the selection of Teseo as the victim for the Minotaur, and Baco finds himself forced to obey the king instead of attend the duel he had set up with Lidoro: “Mas fuerza / es seguir al Rey ahora” (757).
enemies: “Ocupado tu Palacio / todo está ya de enemigas / escuadras” (772). In this defeat, Minos calls out for someone to help him. He has been conquered by his enemies, and only by the help of his enemy Teseo is he able to survive. Teseo, however, changes their relationship from enemies to friends and pardons his life. Minos is then obligated to fulfill Teseo’s request for Fedra’s hand (773). Because of his loss in battle, the enemies of the Cretan king are able to command authority over his actions.

Secondly, Teseo also comes into combat with many enemies in which he is in danger of losing his power over himself. Unlike Minos, however, Teseo maintains his self-control in these confrontations. First, in his battle with the Amazons, he is able to defeat an enemy that “aprisiona con la vista / y lidia con el acero” (721). He thus conquers his enemies’ womanly charms and their ferocious weapons. Next, although he was able to resist the passions of love when it came to the Amazons, he did allow his friendship with Piritoo to control some of his decisions:

Por darle gusto a este mismo
amigo, que con imperio
gobernaba mis acciones
tanto como mis afectos,
bajando al Abismo, quise,
a pesar del Cancerbero,
robar a Plutón su esposa (722).

Teseo claims glory in this instance even though they were unsuccessful in their original attempt, and although Piritoo could not leave, Teseo did escape from the Abismo and the
authority of death and Plutón. Furthermore, another enemy that Teseo tells of in his narration of his exploits and the one for which he is the proudest is himself:

Pero la mayor victoria
fue, Señor, que amante tierno
de la belleza de Elena,
la robé: no estuvo en esto
el valor (aunque el robarla
me costó infinitos riesgos),
sino en que, cuando ya estaban
a mi voluntad sujetos
el premio de su hermosura
y el logro de mis deseos,
de sus lágrimas movido
y obligado de sus ruegos
la volví a restituir
a su Patria y a sus deudos,
dejando a mi amor llorando
y a mi valor consiguiendo
la más difícil victoria,
que fue vencerme a mí mismo. (722)38

38 There is at least one version of the myth that states that Theseus did not control himself this way. According to this exceptional version, Theseus and Helen had a daughter Iphigenia. When Helen’s brothers Castor and Pollux rescued her, Helen gave her daughter to her sister Clytemnestra to raise. Clytemnestra pretended that Iphigenia was
Thus, before the play even begins, Teseo has been able to keep control over himself when he faces a wide range of enemies. The final enemy that he defeats occurs at the end of the drama. Minos and Crete control Teseo at the beginning of the play and send him to the Minotaur. He is able to escape this fate, and later he takes control of his enemies by commanding his soldiers to spare the life of Minos (772). Thus, although Teseo is not always in control during a battle or when facing enemies, he does end up in control of the situation.

Therefore, in *Amor es más laberinto*, the princes and princesses go through an array of options when it comes to keeping control of themselves. They are sometimes able to maintain a proper equilibrium in their qualities of honor, prudence, and valor; however, at other times, the princes lose control of these characteristics and the harmony of their virtues is disrupted. They can sometimes control their emotions but sometimes fall prey to them. At times they conquer their enemies, but at other times they are controlled by their adversaries. The princes are not perfect in their self-control. Despite not being able to sustain the authority that they should have over themselves, these princes are still praised. Even when Minos is conquered, he is confirmed in his kingdom.

Conclusion

In conclusion, these six mythological plays which include Theseus all demonstrate that a prince should ideally be in control of himself; nevertheless, even when this proves impossible for a ruler, he is still praised and confirmed as a prince. Following the Aristotelian idea of a unifying formula, the ideal prince will unite all of the princely her own daughter (Martínez Berbel 132n; Brown; Parker, “Dioscuri;” and Sourvinou-Inwood).
virtues and assure that they are in communion, tied together, or all composed of each other in himself and that he participates in them. The pattern of controlling one’s passions and balancing one’s emotions is set forth in the *arbitristas* and in the playwrights of the time, and these six plays include many examples of adherence to as well as departure from the ideal. Although the form of a prince is to maintain authority over oneself and not succumb to external control, a prince who lacks this form is still a prince. These flawed princes still contain the matter of a prince, and in these plays show that with the matter, they can progress to reach the form by regaining the control that they had lost. These mythological plays demonstrate that even when princes lack their complete form, they are still glorified and their position is still defended.
Chapter Six

Conclusion

As this dissertation draws to a close, it will seek to do a few things. First, there will be a review of the results of this study and a defense of the worth of this project. Next, there will be a discussion of the differences between the different authors which will include some of the incidents that prove most problematic for this type of interpretation. Finally, there will be some speculation on areas of further lines of investigation.

This study has delved into the six Golden Age plays in which Teseo, the Greek hero Theseus, appears on stage as a major character. Although there had been studies on most of these plays individually or some of them in combination, there was not a monograph that sought to put all of them together in one study. The primary issue of this study was the figure of the prince in these plays seen from the controversy of whether or not these plays were propaganda for the monarchy or subversive attacks on the monarchy. In order to analyze this question, the primary theoretical framework has been the hylomorphic theory and theories of mythology’s demonstrating, encouraging, or providing a worldview. These plays show that regardless of the audience, a prince may not always appear as a perfect ruler, but he can develop into one or start acting like one again.

The hylomorphic theory analyzes people or things based upon whether or not they are fulfilling their function or have arrived at their completed or perfected state. If a prince does not act as he ideally should, then at that moment he is only the matter or the potentiality of a prince; however, if he develops or changes so as to begin behaving as he

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should, then he reaches the form or actuality of a prince. In these plays, there are many instances of a prince’s not being one in form but rather only being the potentiality of a prince. He may have the capacity to do what he ideally should, but he is not exercising that ability. A prince may fall short by not maintaining his honor, by not using his prudence, by acting cowardly as opposed to with valor, or by not maintaining control over himself and his qualities. At times during these plays, many princes fall short in one or all of these ways. Seen hylomorphically, however, they are still princes and they are able to achieve their actuality. Even these at times seriously flawed monarchs are still defended and are allowed to reach their form. One reason for the flaws in these mythological princes and heroes is that they are flawed in the source material (Kidd 93). Despite the fact that the authors of Antiquity depict them as tragically flawed people, Theseus, Hercules, and Jason still become great heroes worthy to be held up as models.¹ In the *comedia* as well, despite the presence on stage of imperfect princes, these rulers are still celebrated and glorified in the dramas. As the allegorical character Poesía says in the *Loa* for *El vellocino de oro*, “Soy la Poesía / que a los Reyes este día / vengo a alabar y servir” (vv. 211-213).

One frequently recurring theme among the many definitions of mythology is its importance or its authority. Mythology means something to its society. Regardless of whether or not the narrative is true or false, any story may become a myth if it is invested with meaning by a group of people. This meaning will give an insight into the worldview

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¹ Perhaps one reason why these heroes are all depicted in Antiquity as being flawed is because of the norms of Greek tragedy. These plays depicted the upper ruling class and ended in tragedy based on flaws in the characters. Thus, all of the great heroes are depicted in these tragedies as having imperfections. Recognizing that the mythological heroes all had a tragic side, O’Connor notes, “In the deeds of the great heroes are sown seeds that, with time, will bring about their eventual downfall” (*Myth* 150).
of that particular culture. It reveals some of the ontological underpinnings and the ideological background of that society. The *comedia* in seventeenth-century Spain seemed to have the worldview that even when a prince was imperfect, he was still a prince and worthy to be praised. These plays in particular where there are many princes and they are particularly active in keeping tension in the plot demonstrate this ideology. Although these dramas do not seem to be part of a well-thought-out secret court-sponsored plan of forced indoctrination of the masses, they do participate in a mythology that glorifies the king and invite the spectators to share this perspective.

One important consideration in this debate of the propagandistic campaign of the *comedia* is the audience. Some of the plays researched in this project were written for and performed before the commoners in the *corrales* while others were written for and performed in front of the court. One, *El vellocino de oro*, was originally written for the *corrales* and then later modified for representation for the king. Others were done originally by Lope for the commoners and later rewritten by other dramatists for the court. McKendrick claims that there is absolutely no glorification of the monarchy in the *comedia* with the exception of the court theater which was written specifically for this purpose. Contrary to this view, however, these plays which were written for both the court and the *corrales* show amazingly similar characteristics in the matter and form of the prince. Irrespective of the audience, these plays kept the viewers’ interest in the plot by having princes who do not always conform to their actuality. This dramatic tension has been seen by some investigators as a subversive attack on the Crown, but these plays still maintain the ideology that despite his flaws, the prince is still defended, celebrated, and glorified.
In speaking about another non-Spanish phenomenon that appears in the *comedia*, Castillo says,

Siguiendo a José Antonio Maravall, podríamos decir que el Barroco es una estructura histórica; en nuestro discurso, un sistema que funciona como una red informática alimentada por conceptos matrices como el honor, la sangre, la honra, el rey y Dios. En el momento en que ese circuito se pone en contacto con el fenómeno indio, el sistema colapsa, se producen cortocircuitos, interferencias, contradicciones; lo indio no pertenece a la estructura histórica del Barroco y no se sabe cómo subsumirlo integrándolo dentro de la red general sin perturbar las coordenadas fundamentales de dicha red. Ése es el trabajo de la comedia como catalizador químico, el disolver: *Katalusis* (“subsumir, asimilar”) otros cuerpos sin sufrir él mismo modificación, esto es, disolver “lo indio” en el organigrama barroco sin alterar profundamente las coordenadas de éste que operan a través del drama. Las comedias aquí analizadas van a mostrar claramente el intento del sistema de llevar a cabo la “catálisis,” la asimilación que se requiere: la apropiación e inserción del elemento “indio” (*Otro*) dentro de la red articulada de lo *Uno*, algo visto como necesario por el sistema mismo para que la red o estructura histórica funcione. Por tanto, la catálisis de ese elemento desestabilizador indio ayuda al sistema informático a re-articular y perpetuar de forma más efectiva sus modelos ideológicos. (*Indios* 4)
Just as “lo indio” did not naturally fit into the Spanish *comedia* but had to be assimilated into it, so also do the Greco-roman mythological elements. As Martínez Berbel, Sánchez Aguilar, and others have said, when the Greco-roman myths were inserted into the Spanish *comedia*, there were ideological clashes as a result of the different worldviews of the societies. The playwrights, however, appropriated the stories and made the heroes act as early modern Spaniards to a great extent. The tragic flaws inherent in the heroes were not completely eliminated, though, and these short circuits have been interpreted by some as subversive elements. Nevertheless, by using heroes that do not naturally fit the mold and assimilating these destabilizing elements into the Spanish *comedia*, the playwrights are able to reinforce even more so the seventeenth-century Spanish mythology.

Up to this point, this dissertation has pointed out many of the passages and actions of the dramas which support the theories expounded here. It has been a fairly monolithic interpretation and has not considered some of the differences in how the playwrights approached the representation of Greco-roman myths on the Spanish stage. There are, however, variations among the dramatists both in their privileging of certain princely qualities and in a few things that happen in the plays which potentially present some difficulties to this type of interpretation of them.

First, the playwrights in their various plays seem to focus on different qualities as being more important in a given play. Lope, for example, emphasizes the importance of honor to the prince. In *El laberinto de Creta*, he invented the entire third act because in the original Greek sources, Minos never recovered his honor in the way an early modern Spaniard would. Lope adds the character Oranteo as well who joins Minos in the quest to restore their lost honor because of Teseo’s having stolen Ariadna and Fedra. Teseo also
does not act as dishonorably in Lope’s version as he legitimately marries Fedra and does not sully the honor of Ariadna by causing her to lose her virginity. In his *Las mujeres sin hombres*, the primary conflict for the Greeks and the Amazons is the choice between following love or honor. As DiPuccio affirms, “Although the characters do end up with the one they love, they do not blindly sacrifice honor for love. The existence of that love depends on the preservation of individual honor” (83). In Lope’s third play, *El vellocino de oro*, it appears as if it would have followed the model of *El laberinto de Creta* in the restoration of the honor of the relatives of Medea since she and the other ladies of the palace had been stolen; however, in the version presented before the sovereign of the Order of the Golden Fleece, the hero related to the Fleece, Felipe IV, and his family receive all of the glory, honor, and fame. Thus, for Lope, the principal princely characteristic seems to be his honor.

For Calderón in his *Los tres mayores prodigios*, the focus seems to shift some. Honor is still important as the three heroes seek out Hércules’s stolen wife Deyanira to restore his honor; however, the emphasis that Calderón places on the figure of the Centaur privileges the virtue of prudence. The Greek heroes are contrasted to this creature that opposes civilization by its abhorrence of the exchange of goods (commerce) and the exchange of women (marriage). The obvious Centaur is Neso who appears in the third act. In the second act, Lidoro acts very much like Neso by attempting to abduct Ariadna and by stealing Teseo’s horse. Teseo describes himself as a noble Centaur, and this would be Chiron, the lone one of his kind to marry and live peaceably with men. In Greek mythology, Theseus opposed the Centaurs at the wedding of Hippodamia, and in

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2 DiPuccio even entitles her chapter on the play, “*Las mujeres sin hombres*: A Question of Honor” (72).
this play, he opposes the Centaur-like Lidoro. In the first act, Friso acts like a Centaur in that he does not understand the laws that govern the exchange of goods.\(^3\) Thus, all three Greek heroes must defeat a Centaur or Centaur-like opponent either in a physical or mental contest. By staging these contrasts between the heroes and their adversaries, Calderón is emphasizing the importance of prudence to a prince.

Next, in Bautista Diamante’s *El labyrinto de Creta*, the key to understanding the play seems to be the ability to be in control of oneself. The characters in this play are in danger of losing power in their lives to a variety of different forces. Some of these are their own passions, the stars, the gods, and enchantments. Crete seems to be held captive by the Minotaur and the Labyrinth because of the decrees of the gods, and within and even in the area surrounding the Labyrinth, people are controlled by the enchanting voices. In the end, however, Ariadna and Fedra are able to defeat the other enchanting singers, and Teseo and Hipolita are able to kill the Minotaur. This frees Athens from the burden placed on it by the heavens. Minos is also able to regain control of himself and his kingdom when Teseo gives it to him. The final situation of all involved has drastically improved and they are no longer under the pall of the Labyrinth.

In the final play, *Amor es más laberinto* by Sor Juana and de Guevara, the playwrights, especially Sor Juana, seem to focus on temperance, or moderation. Most of the time, though, it is through examples of the opposite conduct. Minos, for example, cannot quench his thirst for vengeance on Athens. Also, although Ariadna had begun to love Baco, when Teseo came, she was unable to control her surging emotions. Baco and

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\(^3\) As previously mentioned, Hernández Araico argues that Teseo and Jasón are like Centaurs because they take the princesses Fedra and Medea, respectively (qtd. in Kidd 112); however, their actions actually uphold their honor and civilization because they marry the princesses.
Lidoro must be restrained by the king from attacking one another. When Minos finds out that his daughters are being spirited away from Crete, he completely loses all moderation and compares his anger to the many-headed monster Hydra. Teseo provides two of the infrequent examples of a prince’s demonstrating the appropriate restraint and temperance. First, while listing his long litany of achievements, he says that his greatest is when he was able to temper himself and his passion for Elena and restore her to her relatives.\(^4\) Secondly, when the Athenian army arrives, conquers Crete, and delivers Teseo from danger, Teseo could have demanded a similar vengeance on Minos as the Cretan king had imposed on Athens. Instead of following this negative example, however, Teseo shows his temperance by pardoning Minos and returning the kingdom to him. Therefore, through negative and positive examples, Sor Juana and de Guevara demonstrate the immense importance of moderation.

Thus, the various authors have different focuses in the various plays. Whereas Lope concentrates on honor, Calderón’s emphasis is on prudence, Bautista Diamante privileges self-control, and Sor Juana and de Guevara place a premium on temperance. The other princely virtues still appear and are important in all of the plays, but they do not have an equal spotlight placed on them. These emphases are not the only differences among the plays, however. As mentioned above, there are certain episodes in the dramas which seem to be an attack on the monarchical system, and these too demonstrate the differences in the playwrights. Some of these differences and difficulties arise when a

\(^4\) In the ancient sources, Theseus left Helen with his mother and Castor and Pollux had to come rescue her (Arafat, “Theseus;” and Parker, “Dioscuri”). Here, however, Teseo’s victory over himself is much greater. As he puts it, “la volví a restituir / a su Patria y a sus deudos, / dejando a mi amor llorando / y a mi valor consiguiendo / la más difícil victoria, / que fue vencerme a mí mismo” (722).
prince is sent to his death or when he actually dies, either by killing him or herself or by being killed in a duel by another prince. At first glance, these occurrences seem to completely disprove the defense and celebration of the Crown that occurs in the plays, but they can all be explained and understood from that perspective.

First, with Lope’s plays, some scholars have interpreted some of the things that happen in a subversive manner. In El laberinto de Creta, Teseo seems to praise the Athenian democratic system. Kidd has pointed to this as a subversive element, but as Martínez Berbel and Sánchez Aguilar have pointed out, this is not the case. Teseo is conditioned by the Greek antecedent Theseus who supposedly established the Athenian democracy. His servant Fineo, however, is not weighed down by tradition and can freely express the opinion of that time which was that democracy was an absurdity (Sánchez Aguilar 109-10). Secondly, El vellocino de oro comes to its abrupt end with the princes of Colchis still wallowing in the mud of dishonor. It is interesting to compare the version presented before the king with what was likely to have been the original version of the play. In the corrales, these princes would have recovered their honor emphasizing that princes can reach their form. Before the king, however, these characters would not have regained their honor. Even these severely flawed characters of Colchis have become great heroes of mythology. Felipe IV was not as bad as they are; instead he is more like the glorious though still imperfect Jasón, victor over the Golden Fleece which would have hung from Felipe IV’s neck. Finally, in Las mujeres sin hombres, although many of the princes, and especially Teseo, are openly mocked by each other, they are also definitively praised and celebrated.
Next, another possible attack on the monarchy occurs in Calderón’s *Los tres mayores prodigios* when at the end of the play Hércules throws himself onto a pyre and kills himself. When Deyanira sees her husband offer himself as a sacrifice to Júpiter in this way, she too follows his lead and throws herself onto what has turned into a funeral pyre. De Armas interprets this play as having laudatory images of the Crown but also veiled criticism and subversion of the myths. According to De Armas, Medea, who represents Olivares, stands by watching as Hércules, one of the heroes who represents the monarch, is burned in a sacrificial pyre (return 149-63).\(^5\) How can this play be a celebration of the monarchy when “el más noble caudillo” (1587) and his wife both kill themselves?

Although he interprets the play as a veiled censure of Felipe IV’s reliance on Olivares, de Armas also provides a key to how this play glorifies the king. Both Calderón’s *El mayor encanto, amor* and his *Los tres mayores prodigios* were performed before the king on St. John’s night, in 1635 and 1636, respectively. One of the traditional activities of this festival is to light bonfires: “The sun is at its most exalted position during the summer solstice. The forces of darkness have no power on St. John’s night. This is a time when bonfires are built” (de Armas, return 149). In *El mayor encanto, amor*, the play ends with an erupting volcano which represents the traditional bonfire,\(^6\)

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\(^5\) De Armas writes, “Calderón’s *comedia* should celebrate the *rey-planeta*’s power. Instead the first act of *Los tres mayores prodigios* presents a witch who controls the two principal moments of the sun’s descent. Just as the sorceress controls half of the sun’s path, the Conde Duque has a hold over much of the kingdom” (155).

\(^6\) De Armas writes, “Its flames are the play’s ritual bonfire for St. John’s night. The solar hero has triumphed. For him, and for his followers, this is a ‘noche felice’ (p. 1545). Ulises has followed the path of the greatest luminary from exaltation to its lowest point in the winter or slumber in Circe’s arms, and has climbed back to a new position of prominence” (149).
and in *Los tres mayores prodigios*, the play ends with a sacrificial pyre which “is also part of this folk ritual” (163). During this festival a bonfire exalts the power of the sun at its height during the time of the solstice. Similarly, in this play the fire exalts the power of Felipe IV, the *rey-planeta* who was “a solar and martial ruler according to his panegyrists” (158). The *Loa* points to this connection as well calling Felipe IV the “Quarto Planeta de España” (9). This bonfire praising the king, however, is no ordinary fire. Here, the strongest hero of Antiquity is being sacrificed to strengthen Felipe IV and exalt even more his great reign. Thus, Felipe IV is even superior to the great hero Hercules.⁷

Another possible interpretation of this play is given by Fernández Mosquera. He describes many of the studies that have been done about *Los tres mayores prodigios* which generally emphasize the tragedy of honor and an almost exclusively political reading of the play. Fernández Mosquera, however, reminds everyone that this drama was written for and performed as a celebration of St. John’s night, and many people have not taken into account its festive nature: “En esta obra, el enfoque predominante es de tipo cortesano o festivo, en tonos no siempre claramente marcados como humorísticos mientras que los aparentemente más trágicos son excesivos y por lo tanto caricaturescos, o resultan anulados por las intervenciones directas de los graciosos” (169). The primary goal of this play was not to comment politically or even extol the monarchy but to celebrate St. John’s night. Many interpretations with a “negación de lo lúdico” (174) have sought a politically transcendent meaning; however, Calderón wrote the play primarily so

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⁷ Additionally, the funeral pyre is another connection between the Hapsburgs and Hercules. Hercules died in a pyre, and a symbolic funeral pyre was constructed for Carlos V in Brussels in 1558 (Rose, “arte” 252).
that the audience would enjoy the grand effects and the celebratory music and marches. Thus, According to Fernández Mosquera, this comic celebration does include some projection of the power of the monarchy, but was primarily written for the enjoyment of the ruler and nobles (172-76).

In the next play, *El labryinto de Creta*, Bautista Diamante includes one significant divergence from the other versions of the play. In Lope’s, Teseo includes himself in the drawing to see who will go to Crete; in Calderón’s, Teseo is not even an Athenian and is traitorously seized by Cretans; and in Sor Juana and de Guevara’s, similarly to Lope’s, Teseo is chosen by chance among all the Athenians. On the other hand, in Bautista Diamante’s where fate plays such a large role in many other areas, the selection of Teseo is not quite as random. In Bautista Diamante’s version, the “vulgo” decides that they want to include Teseo in the drawing. Speaking to his son, Egeo says, “pretende el vulgo indócil / de Atenas que sorteado / seas tu” (172). The people are thus responsible for putting their prince in potential danger.

In this situation, however, the same development in the people can be observed as is so prevalent in other plays in relation to the prince. The prince must reach his form and sometimes only has the matter of the ideal prince. Similarly, here the people act in their potentiality and not in their actuality. Immediately after Teseo is chosen by the “Hado cruel” or “Cielos soberanos” (176), no one seems to be very keen on sending him to Crete. The people only insist on sending him when thunders roar and “el Cielo se muestra ayrado, / porque no se ha ejecutado / su decreto” (176). In this play, the heavens have selected him because they had already determined to kill the Minotaur and defeat Minos (175-6). Immediately after the vulgo sends Teseo to Crete, however, they are convinced
by Egeo to repent, fulfill their duty as subjects, and reach their form. Egeo encourages them by saying,

Eg. Y vosotros, Atenienses,
de la ingratitud tirana;
arrepentidos, seguid
las huellas de mi amenaza.
Llorese ofendida Creta,
del furor de nuestras armas,
inunden sus campos rios
de infeliz purpura humana.
Arda Creta a nuestras iras.

Caxas, y clarines, Egeo, y musica todo junto.
Todos. Arda Creta, al arma, al arma;
al arma Atenienses sigan
a las penas las venganças;
arma, arma, arma,
que el dolor es disculpa de la saña. (177)

Here the people repent of having put their prince in the position to be chosen by lot to be fed to the Minotaur and admit that it is a “pena” to lose their prince. To achieve their form, in the second act they arrive in Crete with Egeo and are able to save their prince.

Finally, in Sor Juana and de Guevara’s Amor es más laberinto, the prince Lidoro is killed by another person. The title of DiPuccio’s chapter on this play is actually “The Subversive Threads of Amor es más laberinto,” and she speaks of the silencing of the
princes either by their supposed deaths, or in Lidoro’s case, by his actual death. DiPuccio states, “Murder is another surefire technique for further weakening the male presence in Amor. Sor Juana, however, does not literally kill off all the men in the play. Rather, she creates situations in which one or more characters draw faulty conclusions as to whether or not Teseo, Baco and Lidoro are dead or alive” (196). Although not all of the men die, one prince, Lidoro, does, and of his death DiPuccio declares, “Unlike most Golden Age male protagonists, Lidoro dies without purpose or justification” (197). The unwarranted death of a prince would certainly fly in the face of a defense of the Crown.

Although this act is certainly the most direct attack on a ruler in these six plays, certain factors allow it to occur while still praising the Crown. The first factor is that when a prince enters battle, he can be killed. This fact heightens his valor if he does fight, but in war, casualties occur. The basis of the entire play (as well as Lope’s and Diamante’s versions) is that because of a war, a prince will now be killed by being fed to the Minotaur. When Lidoro accepts the challenge of the duel, he is freely putting himself at risk. The people are not rising up against their king, but rather the ruler is entering a fight knowing that he could perish. The second factor is the opponent who kills him. Lidoro accepts a duel from an equal from another country. He is not fighting with one of his subjects. Although he thinks that the foreign prince that he is fighting is Baco, it is actually Teseo; but either way, his adversary is not someone abandoning his position in society to usurp someone else’s. The final factor involves the Greco-Roman myths that were the sources for Sor Juana and de Guevara. The Golden Age authors do some telescoping of the myths in order to have a love triangle between Teseo, Ariadna, and
Fedra. In the source myths, Theseus escapes from Crete with Ariadna but then abandons her. She is then found by Bacchus who marries her (Rose, Robertson, and Dietrich). Later in Theseus’s life, he marries Phaedra. In Lope’s version, Teseo marries Fedra while Oranteo marries Ariadna. In Calderón, Teseo marries Fedra while Lidoro is killed for trying to take Ariadna by force. In Bautista Diamante’s, Teseo marries the Amazon Hipolita while Ariadna and Fedra marry their suitors Polidoro and Licomedes, respectively. In Sor Juana and de Guevara’s, Teseo marries Fedra and Baco (Bacchus) marries Ariadna. This version is the closest to the mythological sources. Lidoro, however, is still the fifth wheel that gets caught in the crossfire. As DiPuccio mentions, he does not follow the lead of Calderón’s Lidoro by acting dishonorably; however, Sor Juana and de Guevara are following several sources here. They follow the Greco-Roman ones by having Teseo and Fedra together and Ariadna and Baco together. They also follow Calderón by having Lidoro die. Like the Centaurs, both Lidoros, especially the one in Calderón’s but also to a lesser extent the one in the New Spaniards’, do not understand the norms of the exchange of women. Although he is not obviously a Centaur, he does still act like one by trying to force his way into the exchange, and Teseo’s victory over him further increases the Athenian’s glory. Finally, looking at the situation from Teseo’s point of view, even though a prince kills someone in a duel, he is not punished.

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8 The playwrights generally combined at least two stories from two different parts of Theseus’s life: “In classical mythology both Ariadne and Phaedra loved Theseus but at different times. The young prince of Athens escaped with Ariadne from Crete; years later, as an aged king, he married Phaedra. In all likelihood, Phaedra had not even been born yet when Theseus slew the Minotaur and ran off with Minos’s eldest daughter” (DiPuccio 182).
9 Laguerre mentions that this play has an especially Hellenic flare not only in aspects such as its plot but also in things like its use of choruses (189).
10 Soons mentions that (Po)Lidoro is actually a rival to Teseo in all four versions of the myth written between 1636-1736 (4).
Therefore, in each of these plays, something happens which could be construed as a serious attack on the monarchy or as a subversive element. *Amor es más laberinto*, the farthest from Lope both temporally and spatially, even shows the death of a prince at the hands of someone else on stage. All of these incidents, however, can be viewed in a positive light as well once they are understood. Lope’s plays still defend and glorify the monarchical system and the individual rulers. The self-sacrifice of Hércules exalts Felipe IV as the sun king. Using the hylomorphic theory, Bautista Diamante shows that not only can princes develop from matter to form, but his subjects can as well. In *Amor es más laberinto* which was performed in the colony of New Spain where indigenous princes had fought and died, Lidoro also fights and is killed by Teseo, the great hero of culture. Even these occurrences—which could be seen negatively and present the most difficulty to an interpretation of glorification of the prince—still celebrate the Crown.\\footnote{One final example from a play which does not include Theseus comes from *El tirano castigado* by Bautista Diamante. In this play, Osman usurped the throne from his brother Mustafâ and acted almost as tyrannically as possible in as many ways as Bautista Diamante could include in the play. Although he is killed and Mustafâ is restored to the kingdom, Mustafâ says this during the funeral in praise and celebration of this terrible prince: “Llevad el cadauer frío, / siga el acompañamiento / su orden, la pompa exceda / las que Romanos, y Griegos / hizieron a sus Augustos, / y a sus Patroclös hizieron, / que aunque en vida fue Inconstante / en sus dichos, y en sus hechos, / poco dichoso en las guerras, / y en la paz cruel, y fiero / fue en efeto, Gran Señor” (132).}

Additionally, as mentioned in the introduction, it is precisely in these difficult situations that myth becomes necessary. Myths arise when there are irreconcilable oppositions within a society, and these myths seek to provide some sort of mediation to these problems. If there were a simple solution, there would be no need to resort to a myth. These precise situations demonstrate the need for a mythology of the prince. Not all princes are perfect, but according to the time period, they were necessary for society
because they provided honor for everyone else and because that was the best way to organize a civilization. Without a prince to give honor, promote culture, and defend against forces that threatened it, barbarity would thrive, no one would have honor, and the society would break apart. Therefore, princes are vastly important to their culture even when they cause problems by not reaching their form.

This study has put forth many answers to questions about the image of the prince in the *comedia*, but many other questions still remain to be answered. With a background of this study, several other areas of investigation could be considered. First, this dissertation has laid out one possible systematic approach to organize a study about the characteristics of the prince. The various qualities of a prince have been grouped together into four categories: honor, prudence, valor, and self-control. As with any categorization, this process can be arbitrary and reductional. There are many other possible ways for determining whether or not a ruler is acting as he ideally should. Although they are combined here for reasons explained previously, one obvious possibility for a different approach would be to separate justice from prudence. Additionally, although the final chapter seeks to integrate all of the virtues back together into a cohesive whole, any division is artificial. It would be possible to research more fully the overall conduct of a prince and see how everything works together in concert. It is hoped that this project has established an outline of some areas where it is possible to see whether or not a king is living up to his form, and from this baseline, further studies could reveal more about the characteristics that were vital to the early modern prince.

A second area for future investigation to which these plays especially lend themselves is in the area of gender studies comparing the prince and the princess. As
Colburn notes, the use of ancient stories on the Spanish stage frequently involved women: “The themes most frequently employed are the exploits, tragic and romantic, of the ancient heroines: Philomela and Procne, Daphne, the Amazons, Electra, Alcestis, Dido, Lucretia, Virginia, Cleopatra” (158). This study has not compared very much the different expectations between male and female rulers, but these plays put many princesses on stage in addition to the princes. These women are more active than some in the comedia as Ariadna and Fedra help Teseo in the different plays of the labyrinth, Medea helps Jasón in the dramas of the Golden Fleece, and Amazons appear in some of the plays. With all of these very active female leaders, researching the role and position of the princess as contrasted with that of the prince could yield some interesting results.

Although there are other further lines of investigation which could be followed, one final area is the realm of the different types of mythology and ideology. This dissertation has focused on the use of Greco-Roman mythology in the comedia as it reveals the seventeenth-century Spanish mythology of the prince. Using these same ideas, it would be possible to apply them to different areas of the comedia, whether it is plot, characters, themes, or spaces. It would also be possible to compare the findings of the mythology of the hylomorphic prince in the comedia to other genres to see how they relate or differ. Greco-roman mythology and seventeenth-century ideology are not the exclusive property of the comedia, and they appear in many other works of the epoch as well.

In conclusion, this dissertation has shown that these plays in particular, regardless of the audience, mythologize the image of the prince and demonstrate that even imperfect monarchs are still worthy of the praise of their people. Having analyzed the abilities of
the prince as they appear in the *arbitristas* and in the *comedia* in regards to honor, prudence, valor, and self-control, an examination of these six plays shows that they match up with that perspective and demonstrate that a prince in matter can still arrive at his form. Although there are some episodes in these plays which provide challenges for this interpretation, even these scenes can be shown to fit into this mold. Having finished this study, the investigation of these plays and these topics is by no means closed. It is hoped that future studies will be able to benefit from what has been accomplished here as they delve more deeply into these questions. Finally, as Barthes says, “Is this a significance which *I* read into them? In other words, is there a mythology of the mythologist? No doubt, and the reader will easily see where I stand” (12).
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Welles, Marcia L. “‘The Rape of Deianeira’ in Calderón’s El pintor de su deshonra.” Stoll and Smith 184-201.


Vita

EDUCATION

2009-2012 M.A. in Hispanic Studies, University of Kentucky
2002-2006 B.A. in Spanish and B.B.A. in International Business, Harding University, with distinction

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

2010-2014 Graduate Teaching Assistant, Hispanic Studies, University of Kentucky
2008-2009 Adjunct Instructor, Foreign Languages, Harding University
2007-2008 Language Consultant, Go English

CONFERENCE PARTICIPATION


AWARDS, HONORS, AND FELLOWSHIPS

2013 Hispanic Studies Graduate Student Association Award for Community Service
2011-2012 Graduate School Academic Year Fellowship, Graduate School, University of Kentucky
2009-2012 Daniel R. Reedy Quality Achievement Fellowship Award, Graduate School, University of Kentucky
2009-2010 Kentucky Opportunity Fellowship, Graduate School, University of Kentucky
2006 Honors College Graduate, with Distinction, Harding University
2001 National Merit Scholar

ACADEMIC SERVICE

2013 Reviewer, Nomenclatura: aproximaciones a los estudios hispánicos

EXTRACURRICULAR UNIVERSITY SERVICE

2008-2009 Sponsor, TNT Social Club, Harding University
2008-2009 Sponsor, Harding Ultimate, Harding University

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PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

Modern Language Association

HONOR SOCIETIES

Sigma Delta Pi National Collegiate Hispanic Honor Society
Alpha Chi National College Honor Scholarship Society
American Studies Institute Honor Society
Delta Mu Delta International Honor Society in Business