



JONATHAN WADE ¹

Meredith College - wadejon@meredith.edu

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MANUEL DE FARIA E SOUSA AND *COMEDIA* CULTURE: RESITUATING PORTUGAL ON THE EARLY MODERN SPANISH STAGE

RESUMEN:

Aunque muchos críticos han examinado la representación de Portugal en el teatro del Siglo de Oro español, particularmente en las obras de Tirso de Molina y Lope de Vega, pocos han sido los que han estudiado el papel prominente que los portugueses jugaron en la creación y perpetuación de este fenómeno. La vida y obra de Manuel de Faria e Sousa (1590-1649) capta algunas de las maneras en las que los portugueses participaron en la cultura de la comedia y ayudaron a crear una imagen positiva de Portugal. En general, Faria e Sousa ofrece un modelo de subjetividad portuguesa que va más allá de la representación tradicional de Portugal como objeto y promueve una aproximación intercultural al teatro español de la Edad Premoderna.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Portugal, España, *comedia*, Manuel de Faria e Sousa, Edad Premoderna.

ABSTRACT:

While numerous scholars have examined the place of Portugal in Spanish Golden Age theater, particularly in the works of Tirso de Molina and Lope de Vega, few have looked at the prominent role the Portuguese played in creating and perpetuating this phenomenon. The life and works of Manuel de Faria e Sousa (1590-1649) capture some of the ways in which the Portuguese participated in *Comedia* culture and helped create a positive depiction of Portugal therein. Overall, Faria e Sousa provides a model of Portuguese subjec-

¹ Jonathan Wade is Assistant Professor of Foreign Languages and Literatures at Meredith College in Raleigh, North Carolina. His work concentrates on the cultural cross-pollination occurring between Spain and Portugal during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Currently he is working on a book manuscript that examines the ways in which Portuguese authors born during the Iberian Unification (1580-1640) used their proficiency in Spanish to promote themselves and Portugal beyond its borders.

tivity that moves beyond the traditional portrayal of Portugal as object and that advocates for an intercultural approach to the early modern Spanish stage.

KEY WORDS: Portugal, Spain, *comedia*, Manuel de Faria e Sousa, early modern period.

Dozens of *comedias* related to Portuguese history and themes appeared throughout the Iberian Peninsula during the first half of the seventeenth century. Some of these were actually penned by Portuguese playwrights writing in Spanish, while many others were written by the Spanish. In simple terms, Portugal was en vogue at this time, acting as a muse for virtually every major playwright of the day. Heightened interest in Portugal as a dramatic subject can generally be attributed to the increased cross-cultural exchange between Spain and Portugal resulting from the various political unions of the sixteenth century. For the better part of two centuries, Portuguese authors widely published in both Spanish and Portuguese (with an increasing preference for the former over the latter). This amplified the visibility of Portugal in and beyond Iberia, giving Spanish playwrights, in particular, a new, yet familiar, world from which to draw inspiration for their own writings. While many critics have examined the place of Portugal in the works of Lope de Vega, Tirso de Molina, and Pedro Calderón de la Barca, few have pursued this topic from the perspective of the Portuguese. That is, too often these studies treat Portugal as object, ignoring Portuguese subjectivity altogether and its vast contribution to *comedia* culture.

One Portuguese author whose life and work impacted the Spanish stage was the poet-historian and commentator Manuel de Faria e Sousa (1590-1649). Some of his earliest literary interests, as he explains in his prose autobiography,² centered on Lope de Vega. Faria e Sousa would go on to write thousands of pages of poetry, history, and literary criticism, most of which is in Spanish. What is more, he eventually became a close acquaintance of Lope. Looking at his relationship with the *Fénix de los ingenios* and his impact on plays by Tirso (*Las Quinas de Portugal*) and Calderón (*El príncipe constante*), it is clear that Faria e Sousa contributed to the widespread presence of Portugal on the Spanish stage, and that the Portuguese, overall, were more directly involved in this Peninsular pastime than scholarship has previously acknowledged.

Beyond the primary motifs of religion, love, and honor put forward by Margaret Wilson (*Spanish* 42), scholars have spent decades establishing and defining

² Faria e Sousa wrote two autobiographies, one in prose (*Fortuna de Manuel de Faria e Sousa*) and another in verse («Patria y vida,» which appears in the second volume of his seven-part poetic masterpiece *Fuente de Aganipe, o Rimas Varias*).

categories for organizing the thousands of *comedias* written during the Golden Age. There are, of course, familiar designations such as cloak and dagger, honor plays, historical pieces, etc. David Castillejo's *Guía de ochocientas comedias del Siglo de Oro* takes the next step, dividing Lope's *comedias*, for example, into sixty-seven different groupings (96-110). Although an important *comedia* sub-genre, the body of Portuguese-themed works is surprisingly absent from Castillejo's work and other similar studies. He offers «La historia de España» as a category in his section on Lope, but unless by «España» he means to invoke the classical meaning of «España» as Iberia, the designation hardly resolves Portugal's categorical absence. We might say that a similar trend runs through *comedia* criticism altogether, where the Portuguese are often left out of the conversation despite their best efforts to speak the language.

Two main waves define sixteenth- and seventeenth-century dramatizations of Portugal. The first includes Gil Vicente and the school of playwrights that preceded the annexation of 1580, including António Ferreira and Bartolomé de Torres Naharro. It is difficult to overestimate Vicente's influence on Golden Age Theater in general and the outpouring of early seventeenth-century interest in Portuguese-themed drama in particular. The second wave—what we might appropriately call a tidal wave—consists of Lope de Vega and the *comedia nueva*. Lope and the new school that he ushered in produced numerous historically motivated dramatic works, many of which are specifically related to Portugal. Spanish and Portuguese dramatists had looked to Portugal for artistic inspiration in the past, but during the second half of the annexation, the Portuguese nation had become a legitimate dramatic impetus, feeding the frenzy that was Spanish Golden Age Theater. Despite the relatively scarce attention their works have received, Portuguese playwrights such as Jacinto Cordeiro, Manuel de Galhegos, and Juan Matos Fragoso rode the popular wave of the *comedia nueva* with their Spanish contemporaries, including a variety of works specifically related to Portugal.

Just as Gil Vicente paved the way for Portuguese playwrights of the seventeenth century who likewise would choose to write about Portugal in Spanish, Spanish dramatists of the Golden Age could find a homegrown precedent for writing about Portugal in the works of Bartolomé de Torres Naharro, to say nothing of Gil Vicente's pervasive impact beyond his native borders. Torres Naharro, in fact, was one of the first Spanish dramatists to take up Portuguese themes in his plays. His polyglot play *Tinelaria* (1517), for example, not only incorporates Spanish, Portuguese, Catalan, French, and Italian characters, but also has them speak their respective languages and embody, with a certain degree of essentialism, their respective nationalities. Most of the play takes place during a meal at the servants' eating quarters of some great palace. The setting and dialogue are very picaresque. For the most part, the work revolves around the conversation taking

place between the various characters at mealtime. One of the more entertaining exchanges in the play occurs between Francisco of Castile, Mathía of Seville, and an unnamed Portuguese:

FRANCISCO. ¡Gran Castilla!
Que si saca su cuadrilla
no hay, par Dios, quien se le acueste.
MATHIA. Que solamente Sevilla
puede sacar una hueste.
PORTUGUES. Eu vos fundo
e vos concedo o segundo,
que Sevella he muyto boa;
mais Sevella e tudo o mundo
he merda para Lisboa. (1.60-69)

While the conversation begins with talk of the military strength of various peninsular regions, the Portuguese servant takes advantage of the moment to make a general comment about Lisbon's superiority above all other cities in the world. Some of the other characters add their voice to the discussion, but none of them challenge what the Portuguese has said nor make such an audacious claim of their own. That said, the Portuguese character's comment about Lisbon pales in comparison to what he later says about the relationship between God and Portugal: «Naun zumbés, / que Judas foi cordovés / e muyto ben se vos prova; / e Deus foi portugués / de meu da Rua Nova» (2.110-14). God, according to the Portuguese, is so Portuguese that one can trace his roots to Lisbon's early modern equivalent to Main Street—Rua Nova—the heart of Lisbon, and by extension, the Portuguese nation.³ In these verses, Torres Naharro captures Portugal's elevated self-concept; an attitude he may have picked up from his Peninsular contemporary Gil Vicente and his many Luso-centric works (e.g., *Auto da Lusitânia*, *Auto da festa*). The influence of his Portuguese counterpart is particularly evident in Torres Naharro's *Comedia Trofea*, a likely spinoff of Vicente's *Auto da fama* (Figueiredo 37).

While unique in Torres Naharro's day, references to Portugal in Spanish-authored plays became commonplace among Peninsular dramatists by the seventeenth century. Many scholars have studied this phenomenon as it relates

³ Rua Nova appears frequently in the literature of the time, including Gil Vicente's theater, Camões's *El-rei Seleuco*, Tirso's description of Lisbon in *El burlador de Sevilla*, Francisco Manuel de Melo's *Apólogos Dialogais*, and António Vieira's *Cartas* (Davies). The exaltation of Lisbon in Torres Naharro's work anticipates the outpouring of Portuguese fervor for their capital city so commonly found in Portuguese annexation literature (see, for example, António de Sousa de Macedo's *Flores de Espanha, Excelencias de Portugal*). Ares Montes points out that these grandiose characterizations of Lisbon were also widespread among the Spanish («Poetas» 16).

to specific authors, including Lope, Tirso, and Calderón.⁴ Some of these studies suggest that many of the *comedias* that deal with Portugal were written specifically for a Portuguese audience. It is worth noting that from 1580 to 1610 few Spanish authors took interest in their longtime peninsular neighbor. The final decades of the annexation, however, saw both an outpouring of Portuguese-themed *comedias* and an increased interest in Lisbon as a destination for theater companies from Madrid (Rennert 194; Vázquez Cuesta 634). Notwithstanding the surge in Luso-leaning works, it is the consistently positive view of Portugal coming from these Spanish-authored texts that most surprises. Even Faria e Sousa, who seems to have—or at least pretend to have—an answer for everything, does not know why the Spanish are disproportionately more generous in their view of Portugal than the Portuguese are of Spain: «la experiencia ha enseñado estar los Castellanos más fáciles a la alabanza de los Portugueses, que los Portugueses a la suya. No sé porque» (*Lusiadas* 4.568).

The concentration of Portuguese-themed plays during the second half of the annexation coincides with the rise in popularity of the *comedia* as well as the increasingly active participation of the Portuguese in Peninsular culture. Overall, Portuguese authors born into a unified Iberia were more likely to adopt the Spanish language in their writings than their predecessors, which explains, at least in part, the reason for the increase. I would argue, in fact, that by producing works about their native history and culture in Spanish, Portuguese authors could stimulate more interest in their homeland. The idea was that the Portuguese already knew how great Portugal was; writing in Portuguese, therefore, would be redundant. It was the rest of the world that needed to know, and the rest of the world did not speak Portuguese. Spanish, on the other hand, could reach not only audiences across Iberia, but also throughout Europe. In his investigation of seventeenth-century Portuguese attitudes towards language, Edward Glaser explains that «[f]ealty to Portugal is for our authors not incompatible with employing Spanish for literary purposes. Those who espouse the foreign tongue are wont to emphasize common sense reasons for their doing so such as the need for reaching the largest conceivable audience» («On Portuguese» 117).⁵ It became almost conventional, as

⁴ For a general survey of this trend, see José Ares Montes's «Portugal en el teatro español del siglo XVII.» For studies specifically related to Lope, see Edward Glaser's «El lusitanismo de Lope de Vega,» Fidelino de Figueiredo's «Lope de Vega: alguns elementos portugueses na sua obra,» Elvezio Canonica-de Rochemonteix's *El poliglottismo en el teatro de Lope de Vega*, and Hipólito Raposo's chapter «O sentimento português em Lope de Vega» from his critical work *Aula régia*. For a look at this same phenomenon in Tirso's canon, see Alonso Zamora Vicente's «Portugal en el teatro de Tirso de Molina,» Manoel de Sousa Pinto's *Portugal e as portuguesas em Tirso de Molina*, and Edwin Morby's «Portugal and Galicia in the Plays of Tirso de Molina.»

⁵ Glaser's article surveys the diverse perspectives on language spilling out of Portuguese-authored texts at this time, showing some of the complexities and consequences resulting from this choice.

a result, for Portuguese authors writing in Spanish to include some apologetic statement in the introductory pages of their writings that explains the need to use Spanish as a means of spreading *Portugalidade*. As the literary language of prestige and the *lingua franca* of the *comedia nueva*, the Spanish language was clearly the means by which Portuguese authors could make their presence felt. They used, therefore, the economic, artistic, and political realities inherent to their circumstances to export Portugal's grandeur beyond her borders.

Perhaps no other Portuguese author offers a more fascinating look at the cultural cross-pollination occurring throughout Iberia more than Manuel de Faria e Sousa. Part of what makes Faria e Sousa such an important part of this intercultural narrative is, as Fernando Bouza points out, the rich reserve of autobiographical writings he produced: «Como pocos, Faria se muestra proclive a hablar de sí mismo y de este oficio suyo, dejándonos numerosos testimonios y noticias que convierten a sus escritos en una de las fuentes más ricas a este respecto que quepa imaginar. Seguirlos permite conocer con algún detalle las que debieron ser prácticas habituales de un autor ibérico en el Siglo de Oro» (29). Bouza identifies in Faria e Sousa a valuable point of reference for the early modern Iberian experience, particularly as it pertains to the Portuguese. Born in 1590, Faria e Sousa showed great literary promise at an early age. He wrote so well at the age of ten that within a few years he was hired by the Bishop of Porto to be his secretary. Under his tutelage, Faria e Sousa spent the next ten years reading everything he could get his hands on (Barbosa Machado 250). He spent much of this period reading and trying to emulate the writings of Lope, Cervantes, Barros, Montemayor, and Camões, among others (Faria e Sousa, *Fortuna* 140). In his autobiography, in fact, he reflects on some of his early experiences with Lope: «[M]e empezaron a embarazar entonces las comedias de Lope de Vega, que ya embarazaban a cabezas que eran más obligadas que la mía a la cordura, y apréciame que quedaba en grande obligación a quien por su gusto me mandaba que copiase de muy buena letra una comedia; y la primera que copié fue *La de Ursón y Valentín*» (*Fortuna* 136). At this point in his young life, the aspiring writer could not have imagined the friendship that would ensue between him and the «monstruo de la naturaleza.» While some (Marín; Heiple; Rodríguez; Glaser, «Lope») have examined the relationship between Lope and Faria e Sousa, their studies overlook some details pertinent to this study. What is more, they fail to situate Faria e Sousa within the greater *comedia* culture of early modern Iberia.

Considering all the life writing he has produced, it is strange that Faria e Sousa never describes the circumstances surrounding his first encounter with Lope. While the beginning of their association is unclear, that they were friends and had high regard for one another is unmistakable. When Faria e Sousa broke onto the literary scene in 1623 with publications in Madrid and Lisbon, he dedicated one

of his works, *Narciso e Echo*, to Lope de Vega, «prodigio dos engenhos passados y presentes.» Lope answered his dedication with the following *Décima*, which appears in the introductory section of Faria e Sousa's *Noches Claras, divinas y humanas flores* (1624):

Peregrina erudición
De varias flores vestida,
Enseñansa entretenida,
Y sabrosa correccion:
Fuerças de ingenio son
Dulce pluma docta mano
De un Filosofo Christiano
Sosa de las letras sol
Demosthenes Español,
Y Seneca Lusitano. (n. pag.)

Beyond the general praise of erudition, wit, and religiosity one might expect from such a poem, Lope associates him with Demosthenes, the famed Greek orator, and Seneca, one of the great writers of the Roman tradition. This poem proved to be only the first of several appearances Faria e Sousa would make in Lope's writings and vice versa. Lope dedicated *El marido más firme* (1627) to his Portuguese friend, for example, and praised him in *Laurel de Apolo* (1630) as Portugal's finest poet and historian (3.155-59).

Nowhere, however, does Lope's esteem for Faria e Sousa stand out more than in the introductory section he wrote for the Portuguese author's master work: a two thousand-page critical edition of Camões's *Lusiadas* (1639-1640) including critical commentary and a translation to Spanish. Lope describes it as «un trabajo invencible,» adding that «deste genero de estudios no logra nuestra lengua semejante escrito; ni de las estrañas ay otro que se lo pueda justamente aventajar» («Elogio al comentador» 2).⁶ In Lope's assessment, no critical commentary in any language can compare with Faria e Sousa's work. Lope manages, however, to extend his praise even further by comparing Faria e Sousa's critical undertaking with Camões's epic: «Como Luis de Camoes es Principe de los Poetas que escrivieron en idioma vulgar, lo es Manuel de Faria de los Comentadores en todas lenguas» («Elogio» 1). Although not as laudatory, Lope makes an important observation regarding the reception of Faria e Sousa's work: «No ay duda, que el Poema de Luis de Camoes tuvo siempre estimacion de grandes: pero desde

⁶ Although this section does not include pagination «Elogio» continues for ten pages and consists of twenty-six numbered parts of varying lengths. The numbers in the parenthetical references, therefore, correspond to the parts.

oy la tendra de grandissimo, con los Comentarios de Manuel de Faria i Sousa» («Elogio» 1). He adds, «Todos lo teniamos por mayor en las Rimass varias, i agora fia comparación es mayor en este Poema, con lo que su Comentador descubre» («Elogio» 3). According to the latter passage, Faria e Sousa's critical commentary illuminated Camões's epic to such a degree that the reading public would never again see Portugal's most cherished poet in the same way. Anecdotally, Lope concludes his «Elogio» with a friend's astute observation: «Que Luis de Camões avia nacido solo para escribir esta Poesia, i Manuel de Faria para comentarla» (26). Before the actual commentary begins, however, Lope's name appears one last time. In a metafictional turn reminiscent of Cervantes, Lope has fun with one of the dedicatory poems, using four lines from *Os Lusíadas* to praise Faria e Sousa in the name of Camões as if they had been written for his commentator in the first place.⁷

While interesting in its own right, the friendship between Lope and Faria e Sousa is more of a means to an end than an end itself. I am particularly interested, for instance, in Lope's unequivocal statement about Faria e Sousa's impact on the reception of Camões in Spain. To what degree, we may ask, did Portuguese authors writing in Spanish influence their Spanish contemporaries and their depictions of Portugal? I contend that what Lope says concerning the impact of Faria e Sousa's commentary can also be said of other works by the author and many of his Portuguese contemporaries. They altered the way Portugal was perceived in Spain and conceived within Spanish literature.

One work that captures the impact the Portuguese could and did have throughout the peninsula is Faria e Sousa's *Epítome de las historias portuguesas*. First published in 1628, *Epítome* is Faria e Sousa's most recognized historiographical work. Only after converting the work from verse to prose and from Portuguese to Spanish, however, would it be published. He describes some of the process in the following stanza from his autobiographical poem:

Todavía, esta ultima, que estava
 en la metrica lira numerosa,
 I mas, de alguna suerte, me agradava,
 reduce, con fatiga, a culta prosa;
 de Lusitano Epítome, con nombre,
 que a pesar del Livor me da renombre. («Patria y vida» 128.1-6)

⁷ The lines Lope cites come from canto 4, stanza 66, wherein Camões extols the virtues of Manuel I: «Parece que guardava o claro Ceo / A Manuel, e seus merecimentos / Esta empresa tam ardua, que o moveo / a subidos, e ilustre pensamentos» (4.66).

A number of important details appear in these lines. The author, for one, makes reference to the magnitude of the work (*numerosa*). While in many ways an abbreviated version of the more ambitious historiographical projects he would pursue throughout his life, *Epítome* still contains more than seven hundred pages. A hint as to the content of the book appears in the third line, wherein Faria e Sousa speaks of the pleasure he took in this particular work. It is impossible to determine all that «me agradava» might mean, but based on the many proto-nationalist writings that would follow, it is safe to say that the high praise of his homeland Faria e Sousa delivers is at least partly responsible for his contentment. Finally, it is worth noting the antithetical reaction to the work: on the one hand celebrity (*renombre*), on the other malice and envy (*Livor*). While all other action within the stanza is situated in the past, the recognition that comes from having written *Epítome* remains present despite those who would have it otherwise.

Two ideas seem to inform Faria e Sousa's approach to *Epítome*. On the one hand, he believes that no amount of paper is sufficient to capture Portuguese greatness in its entirety, yet on the other, even a succinct consideration of the topic must be thorough enough so as to not diminish his homeland. That is not to say that the author measured success solely by the number of pages written—although there is some indication that he derived much self-worth from this very thing. While the amount of Portuguese deeds was incalculable in the author's eyes, it was the quality of their heroics that exalted Portugal above all other nations. In other words, the point of *Epítome* is not to say everything, but to say enough so as to convince the reader of his implicit thesis: that no history can compare with that of Portugal. Overdramatizing the history of Portugal would make it easier for Spanish playwrights to envision the dramatic potential of his writings and develop them for the stage. The challenge of Faria e Sousa's task, then, was to maintain a certain degree of brevity without diminishing Portuguese accomplishments. In a number of instances the author reflects on the incomprehensibility of Portuguese history, a perception that does not make his task any easier. As he states, «Si se detiene un rato el pensamiento a ponderarlo, antes parece sueño que discurso» (115). While difficult to capture dreams in writing, Faria e Sousa does not offer this comparison as an apology, but rather to provide an explanation as to why Portuguese history seems imaginary. He cloaks Portuguese history with an air of mystery and intrigue as if it were heavenly or beyond this world. Overall, *Epítome* stands as a testament of the author's proto-nationalist tendency to hyperbolize the past, divinize all things Portuguese, and promote a collective sense of identity.

The dramatic, or perhaps, overdramatic style of *Epítome* that historians take exception to, is precisely what made the historical work a rich source from which playwrights could and did draw inspiration. As scholars have long pointed out, both Tirso's *Las Quinas de Portugal* and Calderón's *El príncipe constante* borrow

from Faria e Sousa's text.⁸ Tirso and Calderón not only reproduced the historical facts laid out in *Epítome*, but also captured the patriotic zeal of the work. *Las Quinas de Portugal*, for example, recounts the legendary feats of Afonso Henriques and the founding of Portugal. What is more, it imagines the same collective identity cast by Faria e Sousa in *Epítome*: a list that includes invincibility (478, 675), valor and fidelity (528, 755-57, 1125-26, 1569, 2042, 2404), their quantitative inferiority and qualitative superiority (723-30, 854, 890, 1083-97), and their electness (1743-49, 1840-41, 1890-1985, 2030-33).⁹ These same characteristics appear in Calderón's *comedia* as well, not to mention, to varying degrees, all the other *comedias* about Portugal written in Spanish.

These and numerous other Spanish-authored *comedias* include Portuguese characters, take place partially or entirely in Portugal, are related to Portuguese history, and contain other references to Portugal. In some instances, a single figure from Portuguese history inspired a series of dramatic works. This was certainly the case with Inés de Castro and King Sebastian. As José Ares Montes observes, what these works may lack in historical fidelity they make up for in theatricality: «No importa que la fidelidad histórica se disluya en la inventiva poética; la historia de Portugal está ahí, vista con admiración y cantada con entusiasmo, así como elogiado en extremo la belleza de las portuguesas y el valor, generosidad y fidelidad de los portugueses» («Portugal» 15). With very few exceptions, critics call attention to the goodwill demonstrated by Spanish dramatists towards the Portuguese in their *comedias*. This is partially due to the fact that they were writing for Portuguese audiences, but that's not where it ends: «En Madrid los corrales de comedia resonaban frecuentemente con los aplausos a héroes lusitanos» (Asensio, «España» 104). Portugal's rich folkloric tradition and high output of works about Portugal in Spanish made it an easy source from which early modern dramatists could draw. Portuguese history and themes offered a degree of familiarity and novelty that both playwrights and audiences from across the Peninsula could appreciate.

Given their widespread popularity and the category of dramatists who took interest in their creation, it would be difficult to trace the specific number of Portuguese-themed *comedias* that were penned during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and their particular impact on Iberian culture. While significant work has been done from the Spanish side of the equation, the

⁸ A. E. Sloman locates Calderón's work at the end of 1628, while Tirso scholars have not been able to situate *Las Quinas* any earlier than the decade following the publication of Faria's *Epítome*. At the end of the *Quinas* manuscript, Tirso specifically identifies *Epítome* as one of the primary sources of his play. Margaret Wilson's «The Last Play of Tirso de Molina» offers a close look at Faria e Sousa's contribution to *Las Quinas*.

⁹ The numbers here refer to the line numbers in Tirso's play.

Portuguese dramatists writing *comedias* about Portugal remain on the margin of *comedia* scholarship. Part of the problem is that we still conceive of the Spanish and the Portuguese as if they were mutually exclusive categories when the *comedia* is clearly an Iberian legacy. We cannot celebrate Gil Vicente, for example, and at the same time ignore Jacinto Cordeiro, «considerado en su tiempo a la altura de los más notables comediógrafos españoles» (Vázquez Cuesta 637). In briefly looking at Manuel de Faria e Sousa's relationship with Lope and his impact on two well-known plays about Portugal, I hope to have made a case for a more centralized place for the Portuguese in early modern Iberian studies. As history validates, the degree to which Portugal permeates the Spanish stage is directly proportionate to the number of Portuguese authors writing in Spanish. Portugal figured so prominently on the Spanish stage during the first half of the seventeenth century thanks to the Portuguese dramatists who directly contributed to theater as well as those Portuguese authors, as we have seen in the case of Faria e Sousa, whose Luso-centric writings proved a fertile ground for dramatic impetus. The *comedia* culture of the seventeenth century was not, therefore, entirely Spanish. It was a phenomenon that swept across the entire peninsula, counting on the center, the periphery, and everything in between for its creation, diffusion, and consumption. Portugal may have lacked autonomy, but the Portuguese did not lack subjectivity. They were active participants in the Iberian intercultural that defined the era, even if their participation is generally misrepresented and misunderstood.

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