GENDERING THE LATE MEDIEVAL AND EARLY MODERN WORLD

Emily Kuffner

# Fictions of Containment in the Spanish Female Picaresque

## Architectural Space and Prostitution in the Early Modern Mediterranean

Amsterdam
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Press

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# Gendering the Late Medieval and Early Modern World

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*Emily Kuffner*

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To Adrienne Laskier Martín, in gratitude for her support
and encouragement

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# Introduction

## Fictions of Containment

In 1450, León Battista Alberti, author of the first Renaissance architectural treatise, *On the Art of Building in Ten Books* [*De Re Aedificatoria*], stated that 'the building is a form of body' whose design should serve to reinforce social order.[1] Just as the body often served as a metaphor for the nation with the king as head, the house in Alberti's treatise is both a physical structure and a metaphor for the social body. Ideologies of gender and the body are deeply embedded in Renaissance architectural theory since treatises such as Alberti's instruct architects to design buildings that reflect the teleological order and symmetry of nature and of the male body. These texts gender ideal use of space by dividing masculine and feminine space within the home. For example, Alberti's treatise advocates the segregation of women within the innermost regions of the domestic interior, thus protecting the physical body of the wife through the reinforcement of house walls. Furthermore, Renaissance architectural theory draws direct correlations between bodies and buildings. Vitruvius's *De architectura* [*On Architecture*] (30–15 BCE), the only extant Roman architectural treatise and an important classical source for renaissance architects, asserts that the structure of temples should be based on the proportions of the ideal (male) body, a tenet that Leonardo da Vinci represented visually in his Vitruvian man drawing. Following this classical teaching, renaissance architects asserted that the design of churches and palaces should be based on the proportions of the human body.[2] Thus, Alberti's statement that buildings are bodies is literal; as Alberti's contemporary Francesco di Giorgio, who published the first vernacular translation of Vitruvius in 1470, put it, churches 'have the proportions and shape of the human body' so that the chancel is the head, the naves are the arms, and so on.[3] For this reason, early modern texts across genres demonstrate a 'symbolic transference from the body to architecture' such that architectural spaces serve as a metonymic body.[4] In the early modern period, 'theoretical concepts of architecture may be found in very

1 Alberti, *On the Art of Building*, 5.
2 Kruft, *A History*, 27.
3 Cited in Kruft, *A History*, 56; 66.
4 Agrest, 'Architecture from Without', 359–360.

complex literary contexts' since humanists regarded both literature and architecture as modes of artistic expression.[5]

In this study, I examine the discursive regulation of female sexuality through spatial discourse in didactic and fictional early modern texts from the standpoint that both space and gender are culturally constructed, historically contingent, and intertwined in complex ways. As Henri Lefebvre reminds us in his seminal work on spatial theory, space is not passive, but rather is a social construction shaped by power dynamics.[6] Although Lefebvre, writing in the seventies, focuses his analysis on class conflict and the capitalist system, feminist critics, queer theorists, and others have expanded upon his ideas regarding the social construction of space, drawing attention to the gendered and heteronormative assumptions that undergird domestic architecture.[7] Houses, to give but one example, are designed to accommodate a nuclear family. Consequently, 'the design, structure, and layout of homes can also be seen to reflect and reinforce notions of hegemonic heterosexuality, nuclear families, and men's, women's, and children's gendered roles and relations'.[8] The design of built space constrains and shapes the way bodies move through it, and which bodies can access it. Even as renaissance architects addressed the ideal construction of the home, prescriptive regulation of urban life sought to marginalize and segregate undesirable sectors of the population, such as prostitutes, from city centres. Architectural design both reflects and reproduces social relationships, and thereby manifests dominant ideologies regarding gender and sexual relationships. Therefore, as architect Mark Wigley contends, 'the sense of a building's detachment from sexual politics is produced by that very politics'.[9] Similarly, geographies of sexuality assert that 'there are no spaces that sit outside of sexual politics. Sex and Space cannot be "decoupled".'[10] Architectural space thus plays a part in generating and perpetuating gendered norms and shaping attitudes towards sexuality.

This book examines the interconnectedness of space and sexuality in the practice of literary prostitution. I focus on a time, the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, when most of Europe transitioned from regulating legalized prostitution through municipal brothels to prohibiting prostitution

5 Kruft, *A History*, 14.

6 Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 11.

7 See especially Colomina and Bloomer, *Sexuality and Space*; Duncan, *BodySpace*; Grosz, *Space, Time and Perversion*; and Johnston and Longhurst, *Space, Place, and Sex*.

8 Johnston and Longhurst, *Space, Place, and Sex*, 43.

9 Wigley, 'Untitled: The Housing of Gender', 331.

10 Johnston and Longhurst, *Space, Place, and Sex*, 3.

outright. In general, medieval society viewed prostitution as an unpleasant but necessary part of the social fabric whose regulation could curtail social disorder. However, in Catholic Europe, sixteenth-century reformist movements that sought to address perceptions of corruption and immorality increasingly called for the closure of government-sanctioned brothels. Consequently, in 1623 Spain's King Philip IV issued an edict that shut down the brothels in all the lands under his jurisdiction. In the same period, the Italian city-states gradually closed their municipal brothels, with some notable exceptions such as Venice. At the same time that official sanction of prostitution elicited increasing moral scrutiny, the humanist turn towards a 'literature of truth' that reproduced daily life led to an increase in literary representations of transactional sex across Italy and Spain. These works, whose influence appears in all the texts I examine here, eschew the fantastic landscapes and heroic action of the chivalric novels and epic genre, instead focusing new attention on urban space, the quotidian, and the marginalized.

As I demonstrate throughout the chapters that follow, many of the architectural spaces that appear in sixteenth-century didactic literature as sites of control over the female body and female sexuality figure in prostibulary literature as loci of carnal commerce. The house, for example, which Alberti describes as a 'body' designed to protect the chastity of the wife enclosed within it, can also be a house of prostitution that commodifies the female body. It is this seeming paradox between spatial design that aimed to contain female sexuality and erotic practices that utilized the same sites as points of sexual commerce that I explore in depth. I argue that the sexualization of architectural space demonstrates a complex economy of prostitution that utilizes spatial signifiers to negotiate economic value within a hierarchically structured transactional sexual economy, and that literary representations reference contemporary debates over the place of prostitution in early modern society, reflecting a range of authorial attitudes toward transactional sex.

I focus my study on a group of Spanish novels and novellas often denoted the female picaresque genre that appear principally in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries; these are the first works to feature marginalized women as protagonists, and to speak relatively openly about the sex trade. Their protagonists are not the first prostitutes to grace the pages of Spanish literature; marginalized women and prostitutes appear regularly in medieval literature, such as the go-between Trotaconventos of the *Libro de buen amor* [*Book of Good Love*] (Juan Ruiz, fourteenth century) and many of the characters of *La Celestina* (Fernando de Rojas, 1499). In the female picaresque, these female characters move from secondary characters to centre stage.

However, before delving into the female picaresque, we must first define the picaresque genre in a broader sense. Despite the enduring popularity of the picaresque genre, little critical consensus has been reached regarding its precise definition, though its most popular works— *Lazarillo de Tormés* (1554) and *Guzmán de Alfarache* (1599; 1604)— profoundly impacted the course of Spanish and world literature, inspiring picaresque novels throughout Europe such as the German *Lebensbeschreibung der Ertzbetrügerin und Landstörtzerin Courasche* [*The Runagate Courage*] (1670) or the English *Moll Flanders* (1722).[11] Among Spanish literary critics, the only novel that is universally accepted as picaresque is *Guzmán de Alfarache*; *Lazarillo de Tormés*, the genre's most well-known and widely taught classic, is often considered a precursor. The picaresque novels enjoyed great popularity; sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Spanish literature abounds with delightful variants on the picaresque narrative, and picaresque themes appear in many works of the period. I take a broad approach to what constitutes the picaresque, adhering to the model proposed by Ulrich Wicks, who suggests that we consider the picaresque as a mode of fiction that presents an 'unheroic protagonist, worse than we, caught up in a chaotic world, worse than ours, in which he is on an eternal journey of encounters that allow him to be alternately both victim of that world and its exploiter'; speaking generally, the Spanish picaresque novel narrates, often in first-person, the exploits of a marginalized rogue who makes his way in a hostile world through his own ingenuity.[12] I follow Wicks's suggestion to consider the picaresque as a mode of fiction rather than a genre, but also wish to distinguish between the picaresque with male protagonist and the female picaresque as two distinct variants of the picaresque mode.

Although the general definition of the picaresque mode encompasses the works of the female picaresque, when texts feature a marginalized female protagonist they differ fundamentally from narratives of their male counterparts given the limited mobility and social options available to early modern women. While the *pícaro* wanders about living off his wits, usually through robbery or deceit, the *pícara* makes her way in the world through the negotiation of her value as a sexual object. While some critics see these works as a derivative subgenre of the picaresque novel, my analysis follows the lead of feminist critics such as Anne J. Cruz and Enriqueta Zafra who trace their origin to *La Celestina*, and therefore read them as a parallel genre

11 On the definition and delineation of the picaresque as a genre, see especially Guillén, *Literature as System*, 71–106, and Wicks, 'The Nature of Picaresque Narratives'.

12 Wicks, 'The Nature of Picaresque Narratives', 242.

rather than a subgenre.[13] Some *pícaras* are active prostitutes; others exploit men through unfulfilled promises of sexual favour.

The focus on prostitution, along with the many references to *La Celestina* in the titles, frontispieces, and texts of the female picaresque make plain that Celestina, more than male rogues, inspires the portrayal of wily female tricksters. *La Celestina*, a Spanish masterpiece and bestseller throughout the Renaissance, recounts the love affair between Calisto and Melibea that is mediated by Celestina, a former prostitute and brothelkeeper who acts as a go-between on Calisto's behalf. Like Celestina, the *pícaras* draw from the stock type of the wily *alcahueta*, or procuress, who exploits male sexual desire to her own economic advantage, receiving rewards such as a gold chain in return for her efforts to win Melibea's favour.[14] Celestina's ability to negotiate a sexual relationship between Calisto and Melibea depends upon her spatial access to Melibea's home, and this spatial access is a defining characteristic of many female picaresque narratives. While Celestina is no longer an active prostitute, her successors are marked by their involvement in sexual commerce. Some, like *La Lozana andaluza* and Elena, *La hija de Celestina*, openly prostitute themselves. Others, such as *La pícara Justina*, deny any sexual impropriety even as the novel's erotic subtext and her syphilitic condition make clear her mendacity. Still others, such as Teresa of *La niña de los embustes*, employ a variety of survival strategies; at times, she is a faithful wife, while at other moments she engages in sexual commerce.

Even though many *pícaras* do not sell sexual favours in the conventional sense of the term, the female picaresque genre marks *pícaras* as prostitutes through a number of strategies and cultural associations that will be examined throughout this study.[15] Therefore, the question of early modern

13 Cruz, *Discourses of Poverty*, 135; Zafra, *Prostituidas por el texto*, 17. Critics such as Guillén, Dunn, and Rico tend to portray the female picaresque novels as derivative. Dunn, for example, states that 'through the picaresque woman the [picaresque] novel turns into literature of crude entertainment' (*The Spanish Picaresque Novel*, 133); on the other hand, Rey Hazas (*Picaresca femenina*), Friedman (*The Antiheroine's Voice*), Cruz, and Zafra classify the female picaresque as a distinct genre, yet one in which the female voice is subjugated to the male author.

14 Celestina's antecedents include Trotaconventos in the *Libro de buen amor* (1343) and similar figures in Arabic and classical literature (see Armistead and Monroe, 'Celestina's Muslim Sisters'; Rouhi, *Mediation and Love*). Studies of this masterful work are too numerous to include in their entirety; Lida de Malkiel set the foundation of modern criticism of the novel (*La originalidad artística de La celestina*), Lacarra examines prostibulary discourse (*Como leer 'La Celestina'*), and Gerli's recent study, *Celestina and the Ends of Desire*, examines the role of desire in the novel.

15 For in-depth studies of the *pícara* as prostitute, see Zafra *Prostituidas por el texto*; Cruz, *Discourses of Poverty*, 134–144; Hsu, *Courtesans in the Literature of Spanish Golden Age*; and Cooley, *Courtiers, Courtesans, Pícaros, and Prostitutes*.

cultural constructs of prostitution in these texts demands further critical inquiry and reveals a rich source of information on early modern attitudes towards sexuality. Recent studies of the female picaresque that distinguish these novels from the picaresque with male protagonist have tended to see the novels as didactic in nature, censuring the female protagonist for her sexual improprieties. As Cruz asserts, female picaresque novels 'advocate women's control and enclosure by exploiting the protagonist's sexuality as a lure to the male reader' while 'proposing that women utilize their bodies for their social and economic benefit'.[16] Similarly, Zafra argues that the *pícara* is 'utilizada por su autor, con más o menos virulencia, como un ejemplo que atestigua la necesidad de la comunidad de atajar las escapadas sexuales de estas mujeres' [used by her author, with more or less virulence, as an example that attests to the community's need to keep the sexual escapades of these women in check], and that the discourse of prostitution in the female picaresque demonstrates 'estrategias narrativas que revelan otras formas en las que la sociedad patriarcal creadora del discurso hegemónico controla a la mujer fuera de lugar' [narrative strategies that reveal other ways in which the patriarchal society that creates hegemonic discourse controls the out-of-place woman].[17] While I agree that these female protagonists are projections of male erotic fantasy, their texts also convey a wealth of cultural information about the practice of prostitution, an area about which we have little if any primary source information from the women involved. Moreover, while Cruz and Zafra assert that the authorial voice censures and textually encloses the prostitute, I demonstrate in the following chapters that these texts convey a range of authorial stances that reflect cultural debate over the place of prostitution in Catholic society.

While there is no consensus regarding what constitutes the Spanish picaresque genre, there is even less concerning which texts belong to the female picaresque. For the purposes of this study, I define the female picaresque as a mode of fiction that centres on a non-elite wandering female protagonist who exploits male sexual desire in order to survive, whether through prostitution, procuring, or deception of male characters through deceit that uses the promise (explicit or implied) of sexual favours.[18] The novels I examine

16 Cruz, *Discourses of Poverty*, 134–135.

17 Zafra, *Prostituidas por el texto*, 7–8; 16.

18 The prostitutes I discuss are all cisgender females. Naturally, other types of prostitutes operated in the early modern world; however, save for a few indirect references such as *La vida y costumbres de la madre Andrea* in which male prostitutes appear in one scene (132), and *La Lozana andaluza* (366) wherein she refers to her acquaintance 'Galazo', a hermaphrodite who 'era hombre y mujer, que tenía dos naturas, la de hombre como muleto, y la de mujer como de

include: *La Lozana andaluza* [*Portrait of Lozana: The Beautiful Andalusian*] (Francisco Delicado, 1528), *La pícara Justina* (Francisco López de Úbeda, 1605), *La hija de Celestina* [*The Daughter of Celestina*] (Alonso Jerónimo de Salas Barbadillo, 1612), *Las harpías en Madrid y coche de las estafas* [*The Harpies in Madrid and Swindling Coach*] (Alonso de Castillo Solórzano, 1631), and *La niña de los embustes, Teresa de Manzanares* [*The Swindler Girl, Teresa of Manzanares*] (Castillo Solórzano, 1634). I also include a number of stories and short plays with female picaresque themes, including *El vizcaíno fingido* [*The False Vizcayan*] (a one-act play by Miguel de Cervantes, 1615), *La tía fingida* [*The False Aunt*] (a novella attributed to Cervantes, seventeenth century), and novellas by María de Zayas (seventeenth century).[19]

Not all of these works have been deemed part of the female picaresque by previous critics; *La Lozana andaluza*, when mentioned in discussions of the female picaresque, is generally regarded as a precursor.[20] *La hija de Celestina* and *La niña de los embustes* are usually included in studies of the female picaresque, while the other works I study, such as *Las harpías en Madrid* and *El vizcaíno fingido*, are canonical texts that are not generally considered to be exemplars of the female picaresque. The novella *La tía fingida* survives in two distinct versions, whose divergences are discussed in Chapter 4. The novel's attribution to Cervantes has been a matter of critical debate for more than a century, though sadly the work has received little critical attention beyond the question of authorship. Therefore, I focus my analysis on the text itself, particularly the treatment of prostitution, rather than on its authorial attribution.[21] As shall be seen, the work reveals a number of similarities in theme with other works of the female picaresque.

vaca' [was both a man and a woman as he had two genitals, the male one like a mule and the female like a cow], literary prostitutes are female.

19 López de Úbeda's authorship of *La pícara Justina* is questioned (see Zafra, 'Ir romera', 484). All translations are my own except where otherwise noted. In the case of *La vida y costumbres de la Madre Andrea* I have used Cruz's translation, which captures the nuance of erotic jests and explains them in detailed footnotes.

20 See Damiani, '*La Lozana andaluza* as Precursor'.

21 See Aylward, 'Significant Disparities', for a concise overview of the debate. I concur with Cervantes scholar Adrienne Laskier Martín, who states: 'I find *La tía fingida* to be overwhelmingly Cervantine. Its content, themes, style, and tone clearly identify the author as Cervantes', particularly in its treatment of prostitution (*An Erotic Philology*, 3). As Martín continues, 'the protagonist of this novella embodies one more species of prostitute among the diverse cast of *semi-doncellas* who populate the prose and dramatic works of Cervantes' (ibid., 3). However, my analysis will refer to 'the author' rather than Cervantes to avoid entering the authorship debate. I rely primarily on the Porras de la Cámara version, yet also note any significant discrepancies between the two versions.

Examining the female picaresque as a mode rather than a genre allows me to focus on the construction of female sexuality in these works rather than definitions or precise boundaries of genre. I also reference works of the picaresque genre such as *La vida de Lazarillo de Tormés* and Mateo Alemán's *Guzmán de Alfarache* that include prostitutes as secondary characters, and Italian works from the period such as *I ragionamenti / Ragionamento Dialogo* [*The Dialogues*] (Pietro Aretino, 1534–1536) that feature prostitutes as protagonists. Though early *pícaras* such as Lozana (*La Lozana andaluza*) and Nanna (*I ragionamenti*), both of whose tales are set in Rome at a time that prostitution was legal and unregulated in the city, openly prostitute themselves, later *pícaras*, whose tales recount illicit acts of prostitution, generally adopt the dress and bearing of elite women to execute their *burlas* or tricks. An analysis of the spaces of prostitution in the female picaresque reveals many commonalities between these early prototypes and the later *pícaras*. Consequently, broadening the canon to include works that are not typically studied as female picaresque suggests commonalities in authorial strategies that reveal cultural ideologies regarding the practice of prostitution.

I argue that in these portrayals of prostitution, spatial signifiers play an important role in *pícaras*' erotic strategies, whether through mimicry of the domestic enclosure of elite women or as a site to subtly advertise their sexual availability. The protagonists of these works often reject social strictures governing female behaviour, and reclaim not only the intimate spaces of the home and its boundary areas but also the public sphere of the city streets, which was theoretically prohibited to women. Literary prostitutes subvert the same spaces imagined in didactic texts as sites to contain and regulate female sexuality to maximize the economic profits of their sexual labour. Throughout this study, I assert that prostitution and architectural space serve as ideal sites to disentangle contradictory cultural constructions of female sexuality, revealing a deep-seated insecurity over the potential for sexual desire to subvert patriarchal authority. Authors of the female picaresque frequently denounce their protagonists as evil women, yet simultaneously give voice to the debates over the place of prostitution in Catholic society since some depict the practice of prostitution as necessary to social order and male wellbeing even as individual prostitutes and courtesans elicit condemnation.

Cruz and Zafra, the two scholars who have most diligently studied the female picaresque from a gender studies perspective, argue that the purpose of female picaresque fiction is to reinscribe patriarchal control over the female body through authorial condemnation of the prostitute-protagonist.

Cruz in particular sees picaresque fiction as part of an effort in which the 'polarization of virgins and whores was based on a social infrastructure that required both, so long as each remained readily identifiable'.[22] Yet, at the same time many of these works are profoundly ludic, relying on an eroticized subtext that undermines their supposed didactic intent, utilizing double-entendres that appeal to the complicity of an educated elite alongside badinage that relies on folk humour derived from oral traditions. Therefore, my analysis differs from Cruz and Zafra's in that I argue that the cumulative result of this linguistic ambiguity is to minimize male involvement in transactional sex as a minor transgression in a manner that often appeals to contemporary arguments regarding the necessity of prostitution as a regulatory mechanism of social order, with the prostitute often serving as the butt of the joke, sometimes vilified yet at other times escaping textual consequences for her transgressions.

In what remains of this Introduction, I first situate the origins of the female picaresque within the rise of prostibulary literature in Italy, then set out a rationale for examining Spanish literature through a Mediterranean frame. Subsequently, I examine the rhetoric of prostitution in prescriptive literature to assert that extreme rhetoric invoking a binary distinction between honest women and promiscuous whores serves to construct the sexually available woman as irredeemable, and therefore expendable; however, the insistence in these same texts that all women are inherently sexually deviant undermines the cultural project of identifying and enclosing prostitutes. I then outline the early modern medical model of the human body that reflects similar cultural concerns over the need to contain women, but also conflicts with prescriptive advice on sexuality. After setting out this historical context for understanding the female picaresque mode, I delineate the critical frameworks that inform my analysis and summarize previous approaches to prostitution in Spanish literature. As we shall see, cultural constructs of prostitution in early modern Spain advocate spatial separation of the prostitute from the rest of society. However, the same texts reveal a fundamental belief that this endeavour is doomed to failure since female sexuality is ultimately ungovernable. Literary portrayals of *pícaras* as debased predators who pass for respectable members of society reveal anxiety over the inability to distinguish between virtuous and sinful women; nonetheless, some works also fit within a cultural narrative of prostitution as a 'necessary evil' that minimizes male patronage of prostitutes as a minor peccadillo even as it vilifies individual prostitutes. Frequently, the

22 Cruz, *Discourses of Poverty*, 142.

stereotype of women as sexually insatiable serves to excuse male involvement in transactional sex by depicting women as sexual aggressors and men as victims of female deception.

## Prostibulary Fiction

The Spanish female picaresque draws on the late medieval bestseller *La Celestina* for inspiration but is also part of a broader trend of prostibulary fiction that appears principally in Italy in the sixteenth century. While non-elite female characters appear in medieval Spanish literature and its precursors, it is not until the sixteenth century that the prostitute moves from secondary character to protagonist. In this era, the humanist drive to depict the mundane details of daily life among the non-elite, no doubt also influenced by the popularity of *La Celestina*, led to a burgeoning literature about prostitutes and prostitution, much of it originating in Rome. Like the courtesan culture that also arose in the city in this period, and which I examine in the following chapter, the profusion of late sixteenth-century prostibulary literature grew in part from the humanist rediscovery and emulation of classical literature and culture.[23] The two portraits of Roman prostitutes that I examine from this period, *La Lozana andaluza* and *I ragionamenti*, drew on classical models such as Lucian's *Dialogues of the Courtesans* (second century).[24] As in Renaissance Rome, in classical Greco-Roman culture legalized prostitution was hierarchical in structure, with elite courtesans at the apex. Prostitutes often featured in classical comedies and fictional works such as the *Satyricon* (first century), a work that some consider a precursor to the Spanish picaresque novel.

Along with these classical sources, prostibulary literature drew on *comedias a noticia*, or urban reality plays, that often featured lower-class characters, produced by Spanish humanists residing in Rome such as Bartolomé Torres Naharro.[25] Though not centred on prostitution, these comedies contain scenes of unbridled and unrepentant eroticism between members of various social classes.[26] Torres Naharro, like Francisco Delicado, author of *La Lozana andaluza*, was a Spanish priest who relocated to Rome in the early sixteenth century; furthermore, Torres Naharro was a *converso*, or

23 Hunt 'Introduction', 26.
24 Findlen, 'Humanism, Politics, and Pornography', 53.
25 Damiani, *Francisco Delicado*, 37.
26 For a study of eroticism in humanist comedies see Castillo, 'Natural Love'.

convert from Judaism, as Delicado probably was also.[27] Torres Naharro's work appears in Delicado's novel, wherein the protagonist invites a client to her home to read several works to her, including *La Celestina*, the *Carajicomedia*, and Torres Naharro's *Comedia Tinellaria*. The humanist plays produced in Rome also drew on Iberian sources such as the *Carajicomedia* (published in the *Cancionero de obras de burlas provocantes a risa / Anthology of Works of Jokes that Will Provoke Laughter*, 1519), one of the works owned and enjoyed by Lozana, that parodies Juan de Mena's *Laberinto de Fortuna* [*Labyrinth of Fortune*, 1444] by recounting the tale of an impotent penis who revisits the prostitutes he has known in youth in an unsuccessful effort to restore his virility. Delicado's innovation in *La Lozana andaluza* was to focus his work on a prostitute as protagonist, a move popularized by later texts such as *I ragionamenti* and that defines the Spanish female picaresque genre. Moreover, Delicado positions his work as a successor to *La Celestina*, promising to deliver 'munchas mas cosas que *La Celestina*' [many more things than *Celestina*] by tracing the life story of his protagonist from her humble origins in Andalusia through her career in Rome and eventual retirement from prostitution.[28] Thus, humanist interest in reviving classical culture, spurred also by the enormous popularity of *La Celestina*, led to a burgeoning of prostibulary literature in Rome in both Spanish and Italian.

Following the publication of *La Lozana andaluza*, Italy saw an explosion of novels, poems, and other texts with prostitutes as protagonist, of which the most widely read Italian work is *I ragionamenti* by Pietro Aretino. Aretino, though a writer of devotional literature, shared Delicado's interest in the erotic; he scandalized Rome by publishing the *Soneti lussuriosi* [*Lecherous Sonnets*], a collection of lewd poems which accompanied *I modi* [*The Positions*], Marcantonio Raimondi's set of sixteen engravings of sexual postures first printed in 1524, then reprinted with Aretino's accompanying sonnets

27 Very little is known about the biography of either of these authors, though both left the Iberian Peninsula around the time of the expulsion of the Jews, causing modern critics to theorize that they were *conversos* (converts from Judaism or their descendants). See Vélez-Sainz, *Bartolomé de Torres Naharro*, 15–16. Many critics have argued that Delicado was a *converso*, based on the knowledge of Jewish customs displayed in the novel, the prevalence of the surname Delgado among *conversos*, and Lozana and many of the novel's other characters' probable *converso* origins (see Márquez Villanueva, 'El mundo converso'). This opinion is shared by Damiani (*Francisco Delicado*, 13–14), Serrano Poncela (*Del Romancero a Machado*, 39–41), del Val ('Prólogo', 13–14), and Hernández Ortíz (*Génesis artística*, 15), among others. The fact that Delicado chose to relocate to Venice rather than return to Spain after the sack may support this view. Manuel da Costa Fontes, 'Anti-Trinitarianism', goes further, arguing that *La Lozana andaluza* is a crypto-Jewish satire of Christian doctrine, especially that of the Trinity.

28 Delicado, *La Lozana andaluza*, 165.

in 1527. *I ragionamenti* (1534) recounts the life of a Roman whore named Nanna, who shares many similarities with Lozana. Indeed, Delicado and Aretino may have known each other through their mutual friend Andrea Navagero, or due to the fact that they both published at the same press in Venice.[29] Other pseudo-biographies or pseudo-autobiographies of prostitutes from this period include Aretino's *La cortigiana* [*The Courtesan*] (1525), a satire of Castiglione's *Il libro del cortigiano* [*The Book of the Courtier*], the work of Aretino's disciple Lorenzo Venier, who wrote *La puttana errante* [*The Errant Whore*] (1532), and a variety of anonymous works such as the *Dialogo di Maddalena e Giulia* [*The Dialogue of Magdalena and Julia*] (1531) and the *Ragionamento dello Zoppino fatto frate* [*The Dialogue of Zoppino Become a Friar*] (1539, anonymous though sometimes attributed to Delicado or Aretino), and many more. These lives of whores were only one genre of the vast erotic Italian literary output in this period, including priapic tales, erotic novellas, poetry, and re-tellings of erotic classical myths.[30] Delicado and later authors of the Spanish female picaresque combine the pseudo-biography or pseudo-autobiography of the prostitute with the picaresque mode popularized by *Lazarillo de Tormés* (1554) and *Guzmán de Alfarache* (1599; 1604).

## Mediterranean Spain

As the discussion of the rise of prostibulary fiction implies, the frontiers of Spain have shifted significantly from the early modern period to the present. 'Golden Age' (sixteenth- and seventeenth-century) Spanish authors wrote at a time when Spain had not fully coalesced as a nation-state. Prior to and during the Reconquest of the Iberian Peninsula after the Moorish invasion (711–1492), what are now the various autonomous regions of Spain (Castile, Galicia, Aragón, Catalonia, etc.) were independent kingdoms. The marriage of the Catholic monarchs Ferdinand and Isabella in 1469 brought together the crowns of Aragon and Castile, thus uniting Spain territorially for the first time. However, the two crowns and the various kingdoms that comprised them, though united by marriage, remained politically separate. Furthermore, their territories encompassed not just the kingdoms of the Iberian Peninsula that make up modern Spain, but also certain areas of Italy, such as the Kingdom of Naples, ceded by Louis XII of France to Ferdinand

29 Ugolini, *Nuovi dati*, 487; Damiani, *Francisco Delicado*, 15.

30 See Findlen, 'Humanism, Politics and Pornography'.

in 1504, and various other holdings such as Milan. The Kingdom of Naples in the early 1500s included the modern regions of Abruzzo, Molise, Campania, Basilicata, Apulia, and Calabria. As a result, significant areas of the Italian Peninsula belonged to imperial Spain.

Moreover, the Spanish proudly declared themselves Europe's most Catholic nation, and looked on Rome as the capital of Christendom that united the Catholic Mediterranean. Politically, Rome was part of the Papal States, controlled by the Pope in his capacity as a temporal ruler, and therefore never fell under the direct control of the Spanish despite the considerable influence they built up in the city and other parts of the Italian Peninsula in the fifteenth and early sixteenth century through what Thomas J. Dandelet terms 'soft imperialism' in which tens of thousands of Spanish migrated to Rome, forming an important and influential sector of the population that comprised nearly a third of the city's residents in the early sixteenth century.[31] Spain was both Rome's generous benefactor and defender of the Papal States. In return, the Spanish enjoyed a favoured relationship with the Holy See that bolstered their reputation as champions of the faith. Though Rome 'formally remained an autonomous monarchy, by the middle of the sixteenth century the Spanish monarchs looked upon it almost as a part of their own state'.[32] From 1492 to 1503 the papacy was in the hands of the Spanish Pope Rodrigo Borja, or Borgia, who took the title Alexander VI, and the Spanish community grew in both number and influence during his pontificate. Following King Ferdinand's death in 1516, his grandson, Charles V, united the lands of the Holy Roman Empire with the Iberian and Italian territories and continued to exert Spanish influence in Rome.

Not only was their relationship with Rome important to Spain's politico-religious self-image, but the Spanish presence in Rome during this period also had profound and lasting implications for Spanish literature. In the early sixteenth century, Spanish was an important literary language in Rome, with books written in Castilian for consumption on the Italian Peninsula, plays produced and performed in Spanish, and the development of new literary styles.[33] As I argue in the next chapter, the prostibulary literature produced in Rome during this period left its mark on the later *pícaras*. Therefore, examining the Spanish female picaresque in the context of the early pseudo-biographies of whores produced on the Italian Peninsula demonstrates important similarities among works that, as I argue throughout

31 Dandelet, *Spanish Rome*, 9.

32 Ibid., 6.

33 See Damiani, *Francisco Delicado*, 13–15.

the following chapters, reflect a common culture of elite sex trade that catered to wealthy and powerful men and that influences and informs fictional representations of *pícaras*. Furthermore, as I examine in detail in the next chapter, the reformist movements such as the Jesuits that protested against the tolerance of the sex trade in Spain, leading eventually to the abolition and closure of the brothels, had their roots in Rome during the same era. The spread of these reformist ideologies from Rome to Spain lent impetus to the drive to reform prostitutes and confine them in custodial institutions. Consequently, though Rome was not a part of Spain territorially, the cultural interchange with Rome and of Mediterranean Catholicism profoundly influenced Spanish literature. Throughout the early modern period, Spain and Italy enjoyed considerable cultural exchange that influenced the literature of both countries.

Mediterranean studies, as an interdisciplinary conceptual field, 'has provoked a reconsideration of the nation-state model and of continental and civilizational paradigms that up to now have been accepted *a priori* as the fundamental building blocks of history and culture' that moves beyond the grouping of literary texts on a national language basis.[34] For the early modern period, in particular, classifications based on language do not entirely hold given the polyglot nature of many texts. *La Lozana andaluza*, for example, contains sentences and phrases in Latin, Italicisms, and other non-Spanish idioms. On the other hand, texts like *La vida y costumbres de la Madre Andrea* test the boundaries of Spain in a different way; though composed in Spanish (albeit with many words in Portuguese), it was published in the Low Countries, part of the Spanish empire under Charles V. As these examples demonstrate, there was significant linguistic overlap among the various vernacular languages and influence from the Latin texts used by the educated elite across Europe, making the early modern Mediterranean a 'polyglossic space, in which many authors composed their works in more than one language and worked in and were influenced by several literary traditions'.[35]

What I examine here is not the Mediterranean *per se*, but rather Mediterranean Spain as part of the Catholic Mediterranean. I do not address the rich overlap between Christian, Ottoman, and other cultures, though several scholars have pointed to influence from the Arabic tradition in the picaresque genre and the celestinesque tradition.[36] Instead, my focus is on

34 Hamilton and Silleras-Fernández, 'Iberia and the Mediterranean', ix.

35 Ibid., x.

36 See Armistead and Monroe, 'Celestina's Muslim Sisters'; Rouhi, *Mediation and Love*.

the Spanish literary tradition with the conviction that the Spanish canon is deeply influenced by cultural overlap with what is now Italy and the Vatican City State. By analysing Spain beyond its current borders, for example examining *La Lozana andaluza* as a Hispano-Roman text in dialogue with the Italian authors and other Hispanic writers living on the Italian Peninsula, we can appreciate the considerable parallels with Italian literature and the influence of Italian pseudo-biographies of prostitutes with the works of the Spanish female picaresque and the continuity of the tolerated courtesan culture of Rome in depictions of clandestine courtesan culture in Madrid and other Iberian spaces.

## Containing Early Modern Sexuality

Intriguingly, the flourishing of literary texts on prostitution in Italy and Spain in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries coincides with a shift in official policy toward prostitution from regulation toward prohibition and closure of the brothels, stemming in large part from reform movements that responded to perceived social decadence with calls to amend public morality, leading to the Reformation and Counter-Reformation.[37] The sixteenth century was a period of transition for the politics of both space and sexuality, due in part to growth in urban population. Architectural design emerged as a field of study even as cultural anxiety regarding female sexuality's potentially disruptive force gave rise to discursive efforts that sought to define or enforce the proper use of space by women. Conduct manuals, or guides to proper social comportment, education, and childrearing, some written for women or their male guardians, posited a model of female behaviour that equated chastity with immobility and enclosure. Fray Luis de León's influential manual for wives, *La perfecta casada* [*The Perfect Wife*] (1583), written to his young niece on the verge of matrimony, uses the book of Proverbs to explain women's ideal role in married life. Fray Luis, like the other moralists of his day, is deeply concerned with the need to control women's access to space, and repeatedly advises restricting women's freedom of movement, stating that 'su andar ha de ser en casa, y [...] ha de estar siempre allí presente, por eso no ha de andar fuera nunca' [her movement should be in the house, and ... she should be always there, and for that reason should not walk outdoors

37 Religious reforms began in Spain before the Protestant Reformation and coalesced into the Counter-Reformation following the Council of Trent, which sought to reaffirm Catholic doctrine and strengthen and unify the Catholic Church (see Cruz and Perry, 'Introduction', xiv–xv).

ever].[38] The perfect wife, in Fray Luis's opinion, should remain spatially segregated from physical or even visual contact with the outside world. Italian prescriptive texts, such as Alberti's *Della famiglia* [*On the Family*] (1432) and Francesco Barbaro's *Re uxoria* [*On Wifely Duties*] (1417), likewise enjoined enclosure and seclusion for virtuous wives.[39] Didactic praise for domestic confinement envisioned the house as a protective fortress that would safeguard female chastity by providing architectural reinforcement of the female body's limits.

Alberti's seminal treatise, *On the Art of Building*, lays out the fundamentals of spatial design in such a way as to reveal a preoccupation with preserving the social order and reifying social and gender differences, objectives shared by the many contemporary prescriptive texts that sought to constrain and dictate female behaviour. This enterprise focused on protecting female chastity, supposedly the defining characteristic of womanly virtue, by controlling movement and spatial practice to keep women in their 'natural' place within the protective confines of the home. In the fifth book of his treatise, Alberti explains that the private house should be designed, in part, to contain and protect female sexuality within its walls through a division into 'public, semi-private, and private zones' so that the portions of the house occupied by women can be kept 'out of bounds to all but the closest kin' and, moreover, 'any place reserved for women ought to be treated as though dedicated to religion and chastity'.[40] Thus, as Wigley reminds us, in Alberti's architectural manifesto 'the house is literally understood as a mechanism for the domestication of [...] women' that both regulates and produces the chastity expected of the elite woman.[41] The home's construction and design permits patriarchal surveillance of women by defining certain (interior) parts of the house as private female zones in contrast with more accessible masculine areas. Safeguards such as window bars, locks on doors, and other measures delimit the female body by preventing intrusion and circumscribing female access to the exterior.

Architectural containment and regulation of spatial practice aimed to control female sexuality by curtailing mobility in the public sector. Much of the literature of the period utilizes the term *recogimiento* [enclosure or gathering in] to designate female domestic enclosure and refers to the virtuous woman as *recogida* [enclosed]. This term refers to reflective spiritual practices as

38 León, *La perfecta casada*, 157.
39 Cohen, 'To Pray', 292–294.
40 Alberti, *On the Art of Building*, 117–119.
41 Wigley, 'Untitled: The Housing of Gender', 332.

well as physical isolation from the outside world, and therefore implied moral attributes such as self-denial, modesty, and mental purity as corollaries of spatial separation. As Margaret Boyle demonstrates, *recogimiento* is at once a 'theological concept, a virtue, and an institutional practice'.[42] Women's adherence to the principle was a private practice, yet one that was publicly visible through the maintenance of carefully honed appearances. Enforcement of enclosure relied on a variety of strategies– institutional, familial, matrimonial and personal– to circumscribe female movement. Since modesty and chastity were so closely tied to domestic confinement, in early modern literary output a woman outside the domestic confines is, at least implicitly, sexually mobile.[43] For this reason, 'the normative house of the Christian treatises functioned as a spatial metaphor because it defined the virtuous, industrious woman (inside the house) in contrast with the evil one (outside the house)'.[44] Thus, the house plays a multifaceted role as physical container, reinforcement of bodily limits, and moral marker in which architecture serves to regulate the performance of gender. Female domestic enclosure attempted to produce 'docile, domesticated' women by using architecture as 'an accomplice in the exercise of patriarchal authority'.[45] As a result of the insistence on enclosure as a marker of female virtue, movement in public space elicited censure to the extent that the term 'public woman' was synonymous with prostitute. Conversely, the solution to perceived problems of public morality relied on the enclosure of uncontained women in custodial institutions as a strategy to control their sexuality.

The sort of domestic enclosure prescribed by moralists was untenable for the non-elite who must enter public space to carry out domestic and work-related tasks. Yet even for elite wives and daughters, *recogimiento* as a moral ideal clashed with the reality of daily life since only the aristocracy, who could afford private chapels, could live entirely secluded in their homes. In fact, political displays often required the visibility of elite women. For example, Cesare Vecellio's costume book (*Habiti antichi et moderni / Ancient and Modern Clothing*) describes social custom in Italian city-states, asserting that noblewomen were expected to stay indoors, but also to be a visible presence on state occasions to impress foreign visitors.[46] Even the moralists who recommended domestic enclosure recognized the impossibility of its

42 Boyle, *Unruly Women*, 21.
43 Mártinez Góngora, *La utilización masculina*, 14.
44 Gamboa, 'Architectural Cartography', 184.
45 Ibid., 194–196.
46 Rosenthal and Jones, *Clothing of the Renaissance World*, 32.

effective enforcement. Though conduct manuals caution that women's natural place is in the home and that the virtuous wife has no reason to leave the house, they also include chapters on how women should properly conduct themselves in public (a subject I explore in more depth in Chapter 2). The extent to which enclosure was enforced varied by location, individual family customs, and class since non-elite women had less impetus to protect familial honour. Historian Mary Elizabeth Perry, for example, argues that in sixteenth-century Seville male emigration due to the colonization of the 'New' World meant that 'Seville's women participated actively in the life of the city' though 'male officials [...] took action to check the developing female confidence and to reinforce a male-dominated gender order'.[47] Despite rigid moral proscriptions, in practice Spanish women of all classes often accessed the public sphere.

Moreover, some historical documents suggest that women may have actively resisted enclosure. Early modern visitors to Spain, such as Madame D'Aulnoy (*Memoires de la cour d'Espagne / Travels into Spain*, 1690) and Andrea Navagero (*Viaje a España / The Voyage to Spain*, 1526), challenge the normative view of female confinement, admiring over the surprising liberty afforded to Spanish women, including the elite. Though D'Aulnoy observes that ladies and gentlemen are very careful not to mix with those of an inferior class, she describes Spanish noblewomen travelling the streets in their coaches with relative freedom.[48] She further remarks that Spanish women subvert enclosure, asserting that 'the great constraint they live under puts violent desires in them to enjoy some freedom, and their very amorous nature makes them witty to find out means to bring about their designs'.[49] She attributes their successful evasion of social constraints to female solidarity, describing how:

> The ladies visit one another frequently, and there is nothing more easy for them than to wear a veil and by the back door go into a chair and be carried where they will. And this is the more practicable because all the women agree to keep one another's secrets inviolably.[50]

The network of female complicity and resistance described by D'Aulnoy may be exaggerated, yet feminist historical work undertaken over the last few

47 Perry, *Gender and Disorder*, 14.
48 D'Aulnoy, *Travels into Spain*, 206.
49 Ibid., 223.
50 Ibid., 327.

decades has revealed ample evidence that early modern women frequently did not adhere to the passive models laid out for them in prescriptive texts, instead resisting control and exerting influence on their society through a variety of methods.[51]

Similarly, in literary texts and other cultural production, female characters frequently challenge the idealization of domestic confinement. Spanish literature abounds with cross-dressed female warriors, powerful queens, witches, *alcahuetas* [procuresses], adulterous wives, disobedient daughters, and all manner of wayward women, attesting to a cultural recognition that women, and the female body, would always escape male control. For example, the excessively jealous husband who locks his wife in the home, attempting to protect her chastity with locks on the door and bars on the windows, is a common literary trope. In the case of Cervantes' *El celoso extremeño* [*The Jealous Extremaduran*], the jealous older husband fashions a seclusion so extreme that he blocks off all the windows to the street, employs a eunuch to guard the entryway, and bans all male presence from his house, including domestic animals.[52] However, regardless of how many precautions he takes, how many walls he constructs, and how many locks guard the doors and windows, these tales always end with the cuckolding of the husband. Such literary portrayals of the subvention of enclosure reflect the early modern view of women as 'that treasure which, however locked up, always escapes'.[53] This perception that women cannot be trusted to regulate their own sexuality leads to an insistence in didactic texts on a need for absolute mental purity to ensure chastity, and an architectural discourse across genres that underscores the need to spatially segregate potentially disruptive women from the social order.

Control over sexuality served to reinforce the patrilineal family system, and therefore focused on regulating the behaviour of elite women on whose reproductive capacity that system depended, leading to the fictionalization of non-elite women as unchaste and sexually available. Male chastity, while a spiritual ideal, was not a social necessity. As the prescriptive writer Juan Luis Vives cautions in *De institutione feminae cristianae* [*The Education of a Christian*

51 The field is bountiful. A few notable examples include: Cruz, *The Life and Writings*; Cruz and Suzuki, *The Rule of Women*; Vollendorf, *The Lives of Women*; and Lehfeldt, *Religious Women* to name but a few.

52 Cervantes, *El celoso extremeño*, 268–271. For other variations on the theme of the jealous husband whose extreme enclosure drives a previously virtuous wife to adultery, see Cervantes' *El viejo celoso*, Castillo Solórzano's *La niña de los embustes*, and María de Zayas's novella *El prevenido, engañado*.

53 Stallybrass, 'Patriarchal Territories', 128.

*Woman*, 1523], a conduct manual dedicated to Catherine of Aragon (Queen of England and daughter of the Catholic monarchs Ferdinand and Isabella) that examines female behaviour according to marital status (virgin, wife, or widow), wives should simply overlook their husbands' infidelity since 'human laws do not require the same chastity of the man as they do of the woman. In all aspects of life, the man is freer than the woman.'[54] While a religious vocation necessitated chastity, faithfulness within marriage was not expected of elite men. Moreover, conduct manuals and other early modern sources that mandate proper female behaviour were not directed to women in general, but rather to elite women, upon whose chastity the social order depended.

Prescriptive writers sought to contain the sexuality of elite wives, daughters and nuns, but female sexuality could not be removed entirely from circulation. As I examine in the next chapter, authors dating back to Saint Augustine defended the necessity of allowing legalized prostitution to control lust. Consequently, early modern thought portrayed male sexual desire as a potentially disruptive force that necessitated the existence of some form of transactional sexual economy even as the protection of elite women rested on the portrayal of non-elite women as sexually available and promiscuous. Yet, as I argue throughout the chapters that follow, even as laws attempted to limit the sinfulness of prostitution by regulating who could engage in or patronize transactional sex, literary and historical sources indicate a sexual marketplace in which virginity or a semblance of modesty commanded a higher price, indicating a fetishization of the very chastity that moralists sought to enforce.

Prescriptive writing demonstrates the contradictory and ambiguous place of prostitution and female chastity in early modern Spanish thought that attempted to erect a binary opposition between 'good' and 'bad' women. Both León and Vives contend that distinctions between women can only be maintained through sexual purity. However, their divisions of women into diametrically opposed categories (chaste or unchaste), based on sexual behaviour, are constantly undermined by implying that all women are potential harlots, drawing on stereotypes of women's deceitful nature. Fray Luis declares that he does not call the good wife chaste, but rather presupposes that she must be, since

> El ser honesta una mujer no se cuenta ni debe contar entre las partes de que esta perfección se compone, sino antes es como el sujeto sobre el cual todo este edificio se funda, y, para decirlo enteramente en una palabra,

54 Vives, *The Education*, 232.

> es como el ser y la substancia de la casada; porque, si no tiene esto, no es ya mujer, sino alevosa ramera y vilísimo cieno, y basura lo más hedionda de todas y la más despreciada.
> [Honesty in a woman is not counted and should not be counted among the qualities of the perfect wife, rather it is the foundation upon which the edifice is built, in a word, it is the being and substance of a wife; because, if she lacks this, she is no longer a wife, but a treacherous whore and a vile mud pit, and the most revolting and reviled trash.][55]

Fray Luis's invective insists that a woman's worth is entirely dependent on her chastity, and clearly delineates between two diametrically opposed models of femininity: virtuous wife or whore. The non-elite woman, who could not live up to these strict standards of behaviour, is implicitly defined as sexually suspect.

Despite the efforts of prescriptive writers to make a radical distinction between female virtue, based on chastity, and vice, equated with promiscuity, the same texts that seek to reify this moral binary include frequent slippages that underscore the fundamental paradox of female identity; since women as a category were lustful and promiscuous; even the most seemingly pure wife could harbour secret mental corruption. For didactic authors, it is not enough for a woman to protect the integrity of her body; to avoid whoredom she must maintain absolute purity of thought. When Vives states that 'a woman's only care is chastity', he utilizes the Latin term *puditicia*, which invokes not merely chastity as sexual abstinence, but rather complete mental purity.[56] He tells unmarried girls, 'those who preserve the body intact but whose mind is defiled foolishly arrogate to themselves the name or the praise proper to virginity [...] they will not be so [virgins] to God, who is a spirit and sees with the spirit'; in other words, even if the body is virginal, the mind can be prostituted by impure thoughts.[57] In prescriptive texts, chastity derives not from specific behaviour, but rather is a socially constructed reputation that can be undermined by the opinions of others. Vives further states that by labelling a woman unchaste 'with this one word you have removed all. She is left naked and loathsome.'[58] Even the aristocratic wife or the seemingly chaste virgin is in constant danger, if her virtue is called into question, of becoming a whore since a chaste body can

55 León, *La perfecta casada*, 90.
56 Vives, *The Education*, 232.
57 Ibid., 80–81.
58 Ibid., 86.

mask a hidden interior uncleanliness. Thus, didactic writers' insistence that a virtuous woman's chastity must be above all suspicion was undercut by their assertion that any infraction, even if not acted upon, made a woman unchaste. Consequently, terms such as "prostitute" in these texts denote not a set of behaviours, but rather a corrupt mental state that cannot necessarily be observed through conduct.

The displacement of chastity to the intangible realm renders its loss invisible; only the woman herself could know her innermost thoughts, and since women were notoriously deceptive, this created great anxiety among prescriptive writers. Similar insistence on mental purity appears in *La perfecta casada* as well. According to Fray Luis de León, just as a traveller who takes the first step down a pilgrimage route is a pilgrim, a woman who is unchaste even in thought is a whore; as he states:

> Ramo de deshonestidad es en la mujer casta el pensar que puede no serlo [...] y, cierto, como al que se pone en el camino de Sanctiago, aunque no llegue, ya le llamamos allá romero; así sin duda es principiada ramera la que se toma licencia para tratar destas cosas que son el camino.
> [It is a growth of dishonesty in the chaste women to think that she could be something other ... and, truly, just as he who puts a foot on the road to Santiago, even if he does not arrive, is already called a pilgrim; so without doubt she is a fledgling whore who takes licence to ponder these things that are on the path.][59]

The enterprise of delineating clearly between good and bad women therefore fails due to a fundamental aporia in cultural stereotypes of female nature; even the most virtuous woman was in constant danger of sliding into whoredom if she left her thoughts unguarded. Moreover, the effacement of ontological boundaries between virtuous and unchaste women often occurs through architectural or spatial metaphors. Fray Luis's ideation of a road to whoredom is a frequently employed trope that correlates spatial access with sexual licence, observed in the popular proverb *Ir romera y volver romera* ('She who goes wandering comes back a whore'), and in a similar manner the spaces of the house are often utilized to display anxiety about female unruliness. Throughout the following chapters, I demonstrate that authors of the female picaresque portray a network of female duplicity founded on the view of women as secretive, manipulative, and deceptive that makes true virtue impossible. Some *pícaras* openly prostitute themselves, but all

59 León, *La perfecta casada*, 91.

women are sexually suspect even as male engagement in transactional sex is naturalized and excused.

## The Uncontainably Erotic: Approaching Prostitution and Sexuality

As we have seen, prescriptive literature insisted on the need for architectural reinforcement of the body's limits, leading to a metonymic equivalency between architecture and the body that will be examined throughout the following chapters. The belief that the female body, more than the male, could not adequately maintain its limits stems in part from medical epistemologies that often conflicted with moral dictums. According to early modern understandings of the physical body, male and female genitalia were identical but inverted, a model that coexisted with humoral theory, which drew distinctions between male and female makeup. Early moderns did not conceive of the sexed and gendered body in strictly binary terms—accepting hermaphrodites, for example, as part of the natural gender order; but since the fictionalized bodies and authorial positions discussed herein conform to a male/female binary I will limit my remarks to binary gender identities.[60] Thomas Laqueur demonstrates that the premodern 'one-sex' model of human anatomy envisioned the female body as identical to the male except that the female sexual organs were located inside the body.[61] Consequently, medieval and early modern medical texts frequently refer to the ovaries as female testicles, and depict the uterus as a sort of inverted penis, a bodily model reflected in Madre Andrea's reference to women as the 'sexo concavo' [concave sex].[62]

Laqueur's theory profoundly influenced the study of biological sex in the Renaissance, but early modern conceptions of the body placed as much emphasis on the humoral fluids that made up the body as its organs. Gail Kern Paster and others added nuance to Laqueur's model, arguing that unseen humoral forces are as important as or perhaps even more important than the external body in determining human constitution and sex difference.[63] Humoral theory described the body as having a specific complexion, or

60 For an analysis of non-binary gender in early modern Spain, see Vollendorf, *The Lives of Women*, 11–31; Velasco, *Lesbians in Early Modern Spain*, 68–89.

61 Laqueur, *Making Sex*, 1–113.

62 Ibid., 25–63; *La vida y costumbres*, 98.

63 See Kern Paster, 'The Unbearable Coldness'.

balance of the four humours (black bile, yellow bile, blood, and phlegm) with their accompanying qualities (hot, dry, wet, and cold). The body was healthy when in its natural balance and unhealthy when the balance was disturbed. Each body had its own complexion that placed the individual somewhere within a spectrum of temperaments (melancholic, phlegmatic, choleric, sanguine), but in general the female body was marked by a wet and cold disposition in contrast to the hotter and drier male. This gendered humoral differential explains the genital variation between male and female on which the one-sex model relies; the heat in the womb that causes the foetus to become male pushes the genitals outside the body, while the cooler conditions that form the female body pull the genitals inwards.

The humoral model vindicated the 'natural' inferiority of the female body by associating vital heat, the defining characteristic of the male, with reason. In contrast to the contained male body, the less restrained female body released fluids through menstruation, childbirth, and breastfeeding. Likewise, the virgin body was held up as a model of restraint and order whose orifices remained closed in contrast to the grotesque body of the sexually active female that was 'unstable, permeable and overflowing'.[64] Early modern thinkers described women, particularly non-virginal women, as leaky vessels whose 'internal boundaries […] cannot be maintained […] because her fluid sexuality endlessly overflows and disrupts them'.[65] Because of this inherent corporeal overflowing, female sexuality and reproductive capability demonstrated women's incapacity for self-control, requiring external reinforcement such as the architectural boundaries of walls, windows, and doors.

The humoral ecology of the body was in constant flux due to external as well as internal factors. As Gail Kern Paster explains, 'the quantity of humours not only depended on such variables as age and gender, but also differed from day to day as the body took in food and air, processed them, and released them'.[66] Early moderns could regulate their complexion by attention to the non-naturals: factors such as sleep and alimentation that could keep the humours in balance. Likewise, medical practices such as

64 Miller, *Medieval Monstrosity*, 2. For more information on humoral theory see Kaye, *A History of Balance*, 128–240; Arikha, *Passions and Tempers*; and Siraisi, *Medieval and Early Renaissance Medicine*, 1–6. The Bakhtinian construct of the 'grotesque' body, while leaving a fruitful legacy in early modern studies, sets up what I consider to be a false dichotomy between 'high' and 'low' culture that often limits understandings of the female picaresque. For a detailed analysis of the carnivalesque in *La Lozana andaluza*, see Bubnova, *F. Delicado*.

65 Wigley, 'Untitled: The Housing of Gender', 335.

66 Kern Paster, *The Body Embarrassed*, 9.

bleeding and purging could return the body to stasis by releasing excess humours, as could, in certain cases, the discharge of humours during coitus. Since complexions varied, coitus affected different body types in distinct ways, and seasonal variations also influenced its effects since coitus released hot humours and was therefore more propitious in summer. Medical texts concur that coitus could be therapeutic for bodies with an excess of hot and wet humours. The *Tractado del uso de las mugeres* [*Treatise on the Use of Women*] (1572), for example, states that '[durante] el coito [...] se expelle lo superfluo de la postrera digestion, ordenado para la conseruacion del indiuiduo y especie [...] necesario para la salud del cuerpo y la gouernacion y regimiento del' [During coitus, ... the superfluities of the final digestion are expelled, ordered for the conservation of the individual and the species ... and necessary for the health of the body and the governance and regulation of it.][67] However, these texts are explicit that humoral release during coitus also posed grave dangers for certain complexional types, leading to illness or even death. Thus, in galenic medicine, the release of humours during coitus could either serve a hygienic function to restore balance or could imbalance the humours. For this reason, coitus occupied a complex and contradictory place in medical epistemologies that, I argue in later chapters, influences the contradictory literary portrayals of prostitutes in the female picaresque.

Moreover, coitus affected the male and female body differently. Male 'seed', the generative substance we would now call semen, like the male body, was hotter and drier than the normative female complexion. Thus, coitus heated the female body and this heat, in turn, made the woman more lustful, creating stereotypes of the sexually active woman as insatiable.[68] Conversely, by engaging in coitus, male partners could lose vital heat and potentially become more effeminate. Furthermore, the seed produced by both male and female partners during coitus, if not used for procreation, remained in the female body and could become corrupted in the womb, creating disease that could, in turn, infect male lovers. Humoral theory that represents 'female biology as pathological and dirty', especially that of the sexually active woman, undergirds fictional representations of prostitutes that rely on cultural narratives of woman as inherently corrupt and deviant, and of sexual sin as infectious.[69]

The paradoxical construction of sexuality in early modern medical epistemologies, in which the female body is pathological but coitus can be

67 Nuñez de [C]oria, 'Tractado del vso de las mugeres', fol. 1v.
68 Sienna, 'Pollution, Promiscuity and the Pox', 564.
69 Ibid., 557.

therapeutic in certain circumstances, subtly undergirds justifications of prostitution as a repugnant necessity examined in depth in Chapter 1. Mary Douglas's seminal theories of the symbolism of order and disorder argued that nothing is inherently dirty, but rather 'dirt is essentially disorder', something which is out of its natural place.[70] Prostitution is metaphorically entrenched in concerns about order; analogies frequently equated prostitution with a sewer that funnels immorality away from the orderly city/space. The prostitute's body was often defined as a receptacle for waste— receiving the humoral excess engendered by male sexual desire and funnelling it away from 'decent' society so that while the individual prostitute is disorderly, the collective disorder of prostitution as an institution serves a hygienic function to preserve social order. Arguments both for and against the legalization of prostitution in early modern Spain asserted that prostitution 'polluted' urban space and should be spatially segregated from 'decent' society, either in a brothel isolated from the city centre or in a reform institution. The prostitute represents a transgression of hegemonic space, and therefore her characterization reveals core concepts about the regulation of sexuality and exposes the slippage of ontological categories.

On the other hand, studying the female picaresque through the lens of prostitution can be problematic since the protagonists of the Spanish picaresque are not always explicitly defined as prostitutes. Some, such as Elena of *La hija de Celestina*, are labelled whores, but others do not engage in sexual activity. Lozana even claims in one scene to be a virgin, as do several other *pícaras*; *La pícara Justina*, for example, extols her virginity throughout her narrative, despite her syphilitic condition and the many double-entendres in her encounters with male characters that belie her assertion.[71] In her first excursion, for example, she recounts an encounter with a *tocinero* or sausage-maker (whose profession is a clear phallic signifier in itself) in which she relates that 'iba tan junto conmigo, como si tuviera de tarea el injerir su bobería en mi picaranzona' [he was as near to me as if it were his task to insert his silliness in my sauciness].[72] Similar veiled erotic double-entendres appear throughout her encounters with the opposite sex.

The term *prostituta* [prostitute] does not appear in any of the fictional or didactic texts studied here; instead, a variety of synonyms roughly equivalent

70 Douglas, *Purity and Danger*, 2.

71 Delicado, *La Lozana andaluza*, 230; Justina's infection with syphilis clearly demonstrates that she is not the virgin she claims to be, and the erotic badinage in many encounters also reveals that her liaisons with men are not chaste, true to López de Úbeda's promise in the Introduction that he will not talk openly of sexual matters.

72 López de Úbeda, *La pícara Justina*, 318.

to the English 'whore' are used sporadically, such as *ramera* or *meretriz* (from the Latin *meretrix*); but more frequently the works of the female picaresque utilize a rich semantic field of erotic double-entendres in which seemingly benign words mask erotic subtext. For example, words such as *buena* [good woman], *mujer libre* [free woman], or *amiga* [friend] are used as synonyms for prostitute. As Louise O. Vasvári explains in her study of jest in *La Celestina*, such 'linguistic ambiguity' relies on obscene wordplay that enacts a 'simultaneous hiding and uncovering, meant ultimately to reveal rather than to conceal'.[73] Since the sexual activity in the female picaresque is not overt but rather outlined through erotic subtext, the question of what it means to call these characters prostitutes will require detailed exploration throughout the following chapters.

The term 'prostitute', along with all its many synonyms and allusions, has been vaguely defined both historically and presently. To designate prostitution as a sexual act performed in exchange for money, even if one can precisely determine what constitutes a sexual act, does not suffice to describe the range of activities socially classified as prostitution. In the early modern period, as we have seen in the preceding examples from didactic literature, terms such as prostitute and whore frequently served merely to censure women who did not strictly adhere to cultural standards. For example, all the terms used to designate a prostitute in legal parlance, such as *meretrice* or *mujer pública*, could also be employed simply as slurs.[74] In the works of the female picaresque, transactional sex is not an explicit exchange of sex for recompense, but rather a rhetorical interchange in which payments are generally described as gifts. Additionally, many of the acts of sexual trickery in the female picaresque genre remain unconsummated. The terminology of prostitution serves not merely as behavioural descriptors; rather, terms such as 'whore' function rhetorically to regulate and censor female sexual practices. The line that separated prostitutes from chaste women in the early modern period, while sharply delineated in legal documents and prescriptive writing, was often more nebulous in social practice.

Early modern prostitution, as an institution and a practice, has been understudied within emerging histories of heterosexualities. Ever since Foucault famously declared that homosexuality as an identity category emerged in the nineteenth century, gender studies and queer theory have revised and refined the Foucauldian theory that premoderns had sex but

73 Vasvári, 'Glosses', 171. Vasvári concentrates her study on Calisto's supposed toothache, arguing that this supposed euphemism is in fact a dysphemism meant to elicit laughter (173).
74 Karras, 'Prostitution in Medieval Europe', 244.

not sexuality, investigating how sexual acts and identities were understood in ways that both differ from and resemble modern sexual identities. The process of queering histories of sexuality has yielded fascinating research that denaturalizes modern identity categories, including heterosexuality.[75] Recent critiques within queer theory highlight the tendency in earlier iterations of early modern queer theory to contrast the queer with a presumed normative heterosexuality producing distorted and presentist views of a heteronormative premodern, and leading to new studies that attempt to avoid the presumption of heterosexuality in the past. Though the sex acts (whether consummated or not) in the female picaresque primarily involve male and female bodies, 'the fact that Renaissance men and women had sex with each other' does not 'tell us anything about their sexual identity', which is necessarily historically contingent.[76] This realization has led to new critical efforts to denaturalize heteroerotic identities in the past; however, the laudable recent critical trend to trace the histories of heterosexualities have been hampered by the tendency to leave prostitution unmentioned, perhaps because transactional sex problematizes the history of sexuality as a history of erotic desire, which the prostitute may not feel.[77] However, histories of sexualities remain incomplete until they encompass deviant heteroerotic proclivities as well as normative practices.

The evidence that I draw on primarily discusses male/female sex acts, though Chapter 5 examines some allusions to homoerotic female encounters. Fictional prostitutes are a projection of their (usually male) author and represent cultural stereotypes of debased and hypersexualized women. Curiously however, the male author frequently projects himself into the text, either in a literal sense as a fictionalized author-character who is a client of the prostitute/protagonist, as in *La Lozana andaluza* and *La vida y costumbres de la Madre Andrea*, or in a more voyeuristic sense in which the narrator extols the protagonist's erotic appeal. As I demonstrate throughout the chapters that follow, prostitution symbolically polices the limits of female sexuality by censuring and often dehumanizing the protagonist even as it excuses male participation as insignificant, trivial, and often amusing. Avoiding the

75 Katz, *The Invention of Heterosexuality*, traces the emergence of the term 'heterosexual', though his work is rightly criticized for failing to account for the fact that a concept can exist without being named.

76 Phillips and Reay, *Sex before Sexuality*, 58.

77 Histories of heterosexuality that do not mention prostitution include Blank, *Straight*; Bach, *Shakespeare and Renaissance Literature before Heterosexuality*; and Jackson, *Heterosexuality in Question*.

presumption of heterosexuality in the past allows us to see transactional sex as one form of early modern illicit sex, but one which is not defined against a normative heterosexuality. The prostitute has frequently been studied as a homogenous identity category in discussions of the female picaresque. Didactic texts construct 'whore' as an identity, but, as we have seen, not a stable one. Destabilizing *prostitute* as an early modern identity allows us to appreciate the wide variety of types of transactional sex in historical and literary sources, and a range of reactions to and stances towards prostitution that reveal the instability of ontological borders between the 'whore' and her more respectable sisters and demonstrate the continuance of ideologies of prostitution as social hygiene.

Destabilization of sexual identity categories must likewise lead us to re-examine other categories of analysis that are too frequently presumed stable, such as sex and the erotic. Foucault alleged that in the premodern period there was sex but not sexuality; however, linguistically speaking there was no *sex* in early modern Spain either to serve as a singular category of analysis; rather, sexual acts were defined in terms of *lujuria* or lust. The word *sexo* (sex) as it appears in early modern Spanish texts denotes biological sex (male / female) but not sexual acts. Instead, terminology ranges from the academic 'coitus' through morally inflected terms like 'fornication', but more commonly appears in literary texts through allusions such as *gozar* (to enjoy), *conversar* (to converse), and other double-entendres.

If *sex* as a descriptor did not exist, did the early moderns conceive of sex or the erotic as a singular category? As Mark D. Jordan demonstrated in *The Invention of Sodomy* (1997), premodern theologians concerned themselves with an array of sins of lust, such as fornication, adultery, and sodomy, that operated along a continuum of greater to lesser sinfulness. Licit sexualities included chastity or procreative marriage, but many acts existed in a liminal space between licit and illicit. For example, many texts asserted that taking pleasure in marital coitus was sinful; however, medical understandings of procreation dictated that conception could not occur without mutual orgasm to release seed. Pleasure, therefore, should be a byproduct of procreative sex, but to engage in coitus for pleasure, even within the bounds of marriage, was sinful. Similarly, the sin of sodomy could occur within a marriage if partners engaged in anal sex or other non-procreative sex acts.

Since the bounds of licit sexuality were so narrow, Karma Lochrie proposes to read premodern sexualities as what she terms 'heterosyncrasies'; she asserts that there was no normative premodern identity category to serve as a contrast to deviant sexualities, but rather sexualities in the premodern world distinguished between natural and unnatural sexual acts, even as

desire in premodern texts 'is not heterosexual, that is, it is not called into being by the sex of the object of desire'.[78] This is especially evident in early modern discussions of prostitution; proponents of legalized prostitution asserted that access to transactional sex prevented sodomy, while detractors accused prostitutes of performing sodomy, clearly demonstrating that sodomy could be performed with either a male or female body.[79] Within the hierarchy of sins of lust, prostitution was a relatively minor transgression of simple fornication if both partners were unmarried, particularly when the prostitute was already corrupted and sinful. Furthermore, as I examine in Chapter 1, men frequently misunderstood Church teachings, testifying before the Inquisition that they did not believe that prostitution was a sin since the Church condoned it.[80] Consequently, early modern attitudes towards sexuality encompass a spectrum of sins of the flesh, and the didactic nature of early modern texts is tempered by the greater sins, particularly sodomy, that are left unmentioned yet menacingly possible if lust is not kept in check. Moreover, it must be remembered that marriage itself was a lesser evil since it was (as Paul asserts) better to marry than burn (1 Corinthians 7: 9). However, since early modern elite males generally married late, if they married at all, a large sector of the population had no access to any licit form of sexuality. Consequently, as I argue throughout the following chapters, ideologies of prostitution must be understood not in contrast to a presumed heterosexual licit intramarital sexuality, but in the context of greater or lesser sins of lust.

As will be seen throughout the following chapters, sexuality and the erotic are concepts that are impossible to fully define or describe, largely due to the epistemological opacity of 'what people *did* or what specific bodily acts *meant to them*'.[81] Moreover, what is perceived as sexual or erotic varies between cultures and across temporalities. Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick defines sexuality as 'the array of acts, expectations, narratives, pleasures, identity formations, and knowledges, in both women and men, that tends to cluster most densely around certain genital sensations but is not adequately defined

78 Lochrie, *Heterosyncrasies*, xiv.

79 Fray Gabriel de Maqueda's *Invectiva en forma de discurso* (1622), for example, accuses prostitutes of performing sodomy with their clients and with each other (19v). Theologians who accepted prostitution as a necessary evil, like Francisco Farfán, assert that brothels are necessary to prevent sodomy (*Tres libros contra el pecado*, 730).

80 Zafra cites several examples (*Prostituidas por el texto*, 39).

81 Traub, *Thinking Sex*, 14 (emphasis in original). In the context of early modern Spain, Lisa Vollendorf attempts to untangle some of how early modern women conceived of their own sexuality through sources such as Inquisition records ('Good Sex, Bad Sex').

by them'.[82] As this definition indicates, precisely what constitutes an erotic act or erotic language is unclear. Valerie Traub asserts that 'within the bounds of early modern [texts] one cannot safely assume that a given word, phrase, speech, or bodily act is erotic—or, for that matter, not erotic'.[83] This often leads to leaving the erotic undefined, something one simply knows when one sees it, as for example when Víctor Infantes defines erotic literature as 'la que el lector siente como tal' [what the reader perceives as such].[84]

This leaves us with epistemological uncertainty regarding what an early modern reader would have perceived as erotic, coupled with the representational problem that nearly all texts on prostitution are authored by men, and therefore represent what may have been perceived as erotic by a *male* author and implied reader. Male and female experiences of early modern coitus represent distinct fields of inquiry since male/female sexual encounters are so deeply embedded in systems of power, particularly when sex is transactional. Studying the erotic presents further difficulty since erotic expressions are scarce and mediated through cultural constructs of acceptable expressions of sexuality and Inquisitorial censorship.[85] Early modern women's expressions of sexual desire are especially difficult to locate given the extreme proscriptions against the experience of sexual pleasure by women that meant women simply could not express corporeal pleasure in a socially licit manner. While men could write of love and even sexuality more openly, their expressions of desire are mediated by the acceptable limits of sexual expression such as proscriptions against 'sodomy' as well as generic considerations. Though, as Traub contends, 'sex may be good to think with', our interpretation of premodern sexuality is inevitably mediated by the inability to escape our own modern imaginary of sexual expression, and by the dearth of sources that lead to the 'all too presumable' superimposition of modern identity constructs over the premodern cultural imaginary.[86]

The methodology that I utilize to approach the female picaresque is promiscuous, leaning heavily on cultural and gender studies, and borrowing

82 Sedgewick, 'Gender Criticism', 275.

83 Traub, *Thinking Sex*, 10.

84 Infantes, 'Por los senderos de Venus', 23.

85 Of course, these texts could be labelled 'pornographic' rather than erotic. This is apropos since the original French term *pornographe* describes writing about prostitution (Hunt, 'Introduction', 13). However, this term did not emerge until the nineteenth century (Moulton, 'Erotic Representation', 208), and although 'pornographic' is as vaguely defined as 'erotic', it generally implies a visual medium (photo or video) in modern usage. I opt for 'erotic' out of a desire to avoid the value judgements implicit in the term 'pornographic' (Hunt, 'Introduction', 13).

86 Traub, *Thinking Sex*, 5; 14.

from other interdisciplinary fields, but resting on the conviction that the ludic erotic content of the female picaresque frequently undermines its supposed didacticism. Throughout the chapters that follow, I analyse the spatial discourse of prostitution in the female picaresque within its historical context, and therefore recent critiques of the place of historicism in sexuality studies influence my argument. New historicism (and its recent iterations, 'new new historicism') encourages us to see literature as a manifestation of intellectual history that should be understood within the context of a range of other material practices and cultural manifestations. Thus, I draw from medical theories, prescriptive writing, and a range of sources that would not be considered literary to understand early modern culture. However, I am also cognizant of recent 'unhistoricist' critiques that the present is not a 'stable epistemological point from which to view and diagnose the past's unstable sexualities'.[87] I share the unhistoricist conviction that periodization is an artificial construction, and I attempt to avoid the pitfall of constructing a teleological view of history although I do not share the unhistoricist goal of effacing the boundaries between past and present. While some parallels could certainly be drawn between early modern and modern approaches to prostitution, my concern lies with recognizing the multivalence and instability of early modern ontological categories. I share the new historicist belief that the past can teach us *something*, even if that something is unstable. One of my main concerns throughout the chapters that follow is to underscore the instability of prostitution symbolically and, to the extent that can be determined from the scarcity of sources, in practice.

Turning to the narrower field of Spanish literary theory, the sexual content of Golden Age literature and of the female picaresque has been slow to be recognized, and has often caused these works to be dismissed by literary critics, as for example when Menéndez y Pelayo famously declared that *La Lozana andaluza* 'es un libro inmundo y feo' [is a filthy and ugly book] whose analysis 'no es tarea para ningún crítico decente' [is not the work of a decent critic], leading to a critical tendency to overestimate their didacticism.[88] Critics have, generally speaking, identified various modes of erotic expression: exaltations of love, the eroto-didactic, and the satirical or

87 Friedlander, 'Desiring History', 8. For critiques of historicism, see Menon, *Wanton Words*, and *Unhistorical Shakespeare*; Freccero *Queer/Early/Modern*; and Goldberg, *Sodometries*. For a defence of historicist methods in the face of these critiques, see Traub, 'The New Unhistoricism'. Freccero, Menon, and Traub's subsequent forum in *PMLA*, 'Historicism and Unhistoricism in Queer Studies', also lays out the arguments on both sides.

88 Menéndez y Pelayo, *Orígenes de la novela*, 54.

burlesque.[89] The first of these categories encompasses love poetry and other expressions of admiration for the beloved, and is often classified as 'high' art. The second includes mystic poetry and other expressions *a lo divino* [in the divine mode] that utilize human love as a metaphor for spiritual devotion; many pages have been devoted to the attempt to parse whether these writings can properly be termed erotic.[90] The last category is the one that will occupy us here since the female picaresque is primarily satiric.

With the rise of prostibulary literature, erotica mainly circulated among an elite (often clerical) audience; however, with the invention and dispersion of the printing press, and the increasing availability and affordability of printed material, mass-produced erotic materials reached a wider readership, provoking inquisitorial censorship. The Council of Trent (1563) prohibited 'lascivious' or 'obscene' books, which frequently appear thereafter on the Index of banned books. However, this did not halt their production; in fact, it often increased their value as clandestine black-market items.[91] Modern criticism frequently imposes certain categories on the erotic that often reproduce class differences by imposing a 'high art' versus 'low art' distinction that would not necessarily have been recognized by early moderns 'who did not necessarily distinguish Titian's eroticism—produced for courtiers and humanists—from popular pornography' like the images of courtesans sold in the streets.[92] In terms of literature, the same authors produced 'high' art like sonnets and 'low' scatological poems and other obscene writing. Though early modern authors often dismissed their own erotic writing as minor, or published works anonymously (as Francisco Delicado did with *La Lozana andaluza*), the fact that they produced so many obscene and bawdy works indicates their importance to the literature of the era.

In 1967, Keith Whinnom denounced what he regarded as critical prudery that led to a view of Spanish Golden Age literature as staid and didactic, and accused Hispanists of disregarding the rich erotic tradition and frequent obscenity of their field of study.[93] In the past two decades, erotic literature

89 See for example Profeti, 'La escena erótica', 22–23; Díez Fernández, *La poesía*, 15.

90 See Salih, 'When is a Bosom Not a Bosom?'

91 Findlen, 'Humanism, Politics and Pornography', 27.

92 Ibid., 64.

93 Whinnom, *Spanish Literary Historiography*, 19–24. While Whinnom's remarks address medieval literature, and he states that 'puritanism set in in Spain in the late fifteenth century' and gained strength during the Counter-Reformation, the tradition of medieval humour that utilizes the grotesque, scatological and erotic continues, if not quite as openly, well after the Counter-Reformation began (19). Though much progress has been made since the time that Whinnom wrote in the publication of erotic literature, many critics continue to 'studiously ignore' the significant erotic literary output and erotic subtext of canonical writers (ibid., 22).

has begun to receive the critical inquiry it merits. Essay collections such as *Erotismo en las letras hispánicas* (López-Baralt and Márquez Villanueva, 1995), *Queer Iberia* (1999), *Venus venerada* (2006; and *Venus venerada II*, 2007), and anthologies such as *Poesía erótica del siglo de oro* (2003) have begun to uncover the wealth of erotic texts from the period, enriching the field of sexuality studies; yet much work remains to be done. Many texts denounce worldly pleasures yet undermine their supposed didacticism with erotic subtext and double-entendre. As Adrienne Laskier Martín declares, 'much of pre- and early modern Spanish literature is not, in fact, didactic, at least not in the moralistic, admonitory sense in which didacticism has been interpreted'; instead, many works 'reflect the existence of a complex set of surprisingly tolerant attitudes toward the literary representation of sexuality and eroticism in early modern Spain'.[94] I explore this ambiguity in order to reveal that texts on prostitution display a range of authorial attitudes that frequently include the minimization or excusal of transactional sex. Cruz asserts that 'proposing that women utilize their bodies for their social and economic benefit' is one of the textual strategies used by male authors to circumscribe female autonomy by depicting literary *pícaras* as inherently 'bad' women.[95] Transactional sex in the early modern period was undoubtedly marked, as it is today, by extremely high levels of violence and coercion; yet the portrayals of literary *pícaras* reflect the reality of a deeply misogynist culture rather than the individual misogyny of particular authors, and their portrayals as a whole indicate a sense of male fragility faced with female sexuality that threatens to destabilize male autonomy.

*Pícaras* frequently utilize *burlas* or tricks that exploit male sexual desire to effect a desired outcome, whether economic gain in the form of money or jewellery or simply the humiliation of the male. However, the Spanish term *burla* conveys much more nuance than the English 'trick'. The *burla* demonstrates the wit and ingenuity of the trickster; thus, *pícaras* often vaunt the renown their machinations gain them. Justina, for example, states that her first *burla*, in which she evades the advances of a ruffian and leaves him drunk in the town square, 'súpose y divulgóse [...] en toda la comarca' [was known and discussed throughout the region].[96] Consequently, the *pícara*'s goal is not merely to extort money from her male victim, but also to demonstrate her superior cunning and to humiliate her target, as when Teresa of Manzanares tricks a pair of doctors who come to examine her by

94 Martín, *An Erotic Philology*, 170–171.
95 Cruz, *Discourses*, 135.
96 López de Úbeda, *La pícara Justina*, 405.

giving them wine in place of her urine; their gullibility, based on the literary stereotype of greedy or inept doctors, leads to their humiliation, which Teresa publicizes through an *entremés* or ludic one-act play. At other times, the *pícara*'s deceit leads to the sexual humiliation of her victim, as when in the final episode of *Las harpías en Madrid* Dorotea leaves her male victim naked, tied up in a blanket, hanging from the balcony of a rich acquaintance accompanied by a mocking poem. These texts denounce the protagonists' pride and vanity, and portray men as their victims, yet also depict women as diabolically cunning and resourceful. Some *pícaras* are punished for their deceit, but others, such as Rufina of *La garduña de Sevilla* [*The Marten of Seville* (Castillo Solórzano, 1642)], who marries the man she loves and runs a successful business with him, end relatively happily.

Recent studies of the geography of sexualities reveal that 'sexuality—its regulation, norms, institutions, pleasures and desires—cannot be understood without understanding the spaces through which it is constituted, practised, and lived'.[97] Throughout the chapters that follow, I trace the discursive relationship between literary prostitution and architectural space to demonstrate that the belief that the female body needs external reinforcement in the form of architectural confinement in order to properly police its boundaries leads to the displacement of sexuality onto space. Chapter 1 analyses the historical shift from tolerance to prohibition that informs early modern depictions of prostitutes. I demonstrate that, despite changes in official policy towards prostitution, both positions depend on an ideology of spatial containment that focuses on segregating the prostitute through enclosure in the brothel during the period of toleration, supplanted by a focus on enclosure in custodial institutions as a strategy of prohibition. A Mediterranean approach demonstrates connections between the Spanish female picaresque and the courtesan cultures more typical of Italian city-states that create a stratified sex trade. While prostitution was legal and unregulated in the Rome of *La Lozana andaluza*, later *pícaras* operate as clandestine prostitutes in Spain, forcing them to adopt more deceptive self-fashioning. After detailing the historical context, I track the discourse of containment through a series of spaces used in erotic negotiations in order to demonstrate that the emphasis on spatial enclosure of unruly female sexuality clashes with an ideology of the female body and sexuality that portrays both as impossible to effectively regulate.

Chapter 2 discusses the use of public space, such as streets and plazas, as contrasted with the domestic space of the home. I argue that rejection

97 Brown, Browne, and Lim, 'Introduction', 4.

of public space becomes an economic strategy by which courtesans and *pícaras* manipulate the economic value of their sexual services. Through this and the following chapters, I argue that the distinction between public and private space is itself a fiction since the emphasis on enclosure enacts it as a public display in which private space is defined by public acts. I then turn to domestic and liminal spaces as loci of sexual commerce. Chapter 3 analyses the use of carriages by literary *pícaras*, which allow them both spatial mobility and a semblance of modesty and elite status. This ability to move easily while shielding her identity often leads to depictions of the *pícara* as a predator who hunts unwitting male victims.

Examination of the mobile private space of the coach is followed by an analysis of the sexualization of liminal spaces of the house. Chapter 4 investigates the window's place in advertising prostitution and marking the subtle gradations within a hierarchical sex trade and as a space for erotic enticement. Chapter 5 examines the erotic potential of the doorway as entrance to the home and the female body. This analysis reveals a metonymic relationship between the female body and the domestic space of the home, especially its liminal spaces, that relies on a ritual symbolism of the orifices of house and body demonstrated by their use in love magic. Attention to the multivalent discourses of space and sexuality, and to the stratification of the sex trade, further reveals a fetishization of virginity that gives erotic value to the semblance of virtue and modesty, and that elides ontological distinctions between categories of femininity; virginity does not exist without prostitution to serve as its constitutive other, yet the extreme rhetoric used to police female sexuality and the cultural suspicion of deceptive female appearances portrays all women as inherently deviant.

Throughout my analysis of these particular spaces, I underscore the heterogeneity of the sex trade as a stratified system in which distinctions are made between different types of practitioners. All the spaces examined (streets, houses, carriages, windows, doors) demonstrate that the manipulation of appearances, of what is seen and unseen, is a key tool used by *pícaras* to negotiate erotic capital. *Pícaras* often construct a pretence of inaccessibility and withdrawal from public space that piques the interest of men who are then exploited and deceived, thus portraying women themselves as a false façade, recasting them as controlling and manipulating men, which in turn posits men as the prey of sexually manipulative women, placing the blame for sexual transgressions on women. However, attention to the discourse of space and female mobility reveals a number of authorial postures that comment on the ongoing cultural debates regarding the place of prostitution in early modern society, and the containment of female sexuality. At other

times, erotic diversion is portrayed as harmless when not upsetting the social order. These divergent authorial strategies, sometimes appearing in the same text, create a multivalent morality that extends interpretive responsibility to the reader. Narratives alternate between defences of and attacks upon carnal commerce; but ultimately, whether authors argue for containment in brothels or outright prohibition of prostitution (sometimes within the same text), they portray women as sexual aggressors, minimizing male involvement in the flesh trade.