

A Study of Women's Distorted Identity and Men's Discourse

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◆ ABSTRACT

Along with warfare to regain territory in the 13-14th centuries, an effort was made to integrate the Arabic culture of Al-Andalus into Christian areas. Rather than inculcating the Christian ideology or morality, Don Juan Manuel's *Count Lucanor* conveys the popular and worldly human affairs of southern Spain, where the worlds of Islam and Christianity coexisted. This study aims to grasp the objective of the narrative in light of the Christian values and Islamic views on marriage, focusing on one of the 51 short stories in the collection: the story of a defiant and disobedient woman, and her husband who tries to tame her. This study also aims to shed light on the patriarchal fantasy of dominance over women, by applying Bakhtin's principle of polyphony to the analysis of the narrative structure of *Count Lucanor*, which exhibits the characteristics of oral narratives that were popular in the Arabic world.

Key Words : oral tradition, Arabic culture, dowry, Bakhtin, Don Juan Manuel, male domination, patriarchal marriage system

I . Introduction

Count Lucanor (Libro del conde Lucanor) by Don Juan Manuel (1282-1348) is a collection of 51 prose pieces. It is structured around episodes in which Count Lucanor seeks the advice of his counselor Patronio when he

needs to make a decision. Patronio explains different yet similar cases to Count Lucanor, who, satisfied, records Patronio's stories in written form and adds a few simple epigrams as moral lessons.

Some treatments of the influence of Eastern stories transmitted from India, Persia, and the Arab world to Spain are "Early Medieval Prose and Arab Literature's Adab"¹⁾ and "Focusing on Medieval Spanish Manuscripts of Kalila wa -Dimna".²⁾ These articles emphasize the openness, secularity, and popularity of Arabic oral literature in the medieval Arab world and provide background on the pro-Arab orientation of Juan Manuel. Based on such research, this study analyzes the "taming of the wife" in Tales 27 and 35 of *Count Lucanor*. In doing so, this study aims to clarify the implications of these tales for our understanding of the relationship between men and women in that time and place, examining whether they reproduce an oppressive ideology of patriarchal discerned a more open ending expressing the principle of love and trust between two people.

I argue that such an open ending can be found in this work, and that the attitude of informing it stems from the fact that while Juan Manuel contributed greatly to the Reconquista as a soldier and politician, he also embraced the traditional narrative culture and history of multicultural Al-Andalus in *Count Lucanor*.³⁾ Therefore, rather than conveying the religious conviction and political ideology of the aggressive Christian polity that had taken up the northern half of the Iberian Peninsula, the *Tales* convey the complicated, diverse reality displayed by daily life in Al-Andalus.

Moreover, I argue, the "frame story," as a structural characteristic of this

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- 1) Sun wook Kim, *La literatura de Adab y el origen de la primitiva prosa española*, CSWL, 2008, vol., no.23, pp. 317-336.
 - 2) Seung-wook Baik, Estudio sobre "La transmission y La transformacion del texto Literario -a traves de Las versiones espanolas de Calila y Dimna-," *ARABIC LANGUAGE & LITERATURE*, vol. 12, num. 1, p.59.
 - 3) Peter Linehan, "At the Spanish Frontier," *The Medieval World*. London: routledge, 2018, p.53.

work, also functions as a basis for open interpretation. Juan Manuel wrote *Court Lucanor* in Castilian, adopting the traditional Andalusian narrative model for the first time to a European language; in the adoption of the Arab model he was in partial imitation of *Sendebār* (1253), a frame story by Fadrique (1223–1277), younger brother of Alfonso X (r. 1252–1284). The Arab-influenced narrative form was suitable for “boundary writing,” emphasizing flexibility and openness of thought rather than a hidebound ideology.⁴⁾ Peter Dunn has pointed out that the narrative structure of the *Conde Lucanor* leads to a mutual exchange between the author and the readers as well between reality and fiction by stimulating the desire for a non-didactic narrative with a corresponding open structure.⁵⁾ The implications of the lack of an authoritarian monologue on the part of the author will become clearer if we consider the *Tales* in relation to MM Bakhtin's theory of *dialogism* and specifically the principle of *polyphony*.

In Bakhtinian analysis, the novel, as a “polyphonic” genre, is a place for conflict and conversation among diverse social languages.⁶⁾ All the narrative threads and even seemingly unimportant characters in a novel have their own voices, forming parts of larger, more complex and indirect sets of values and ideas that the novel conveys, generally by showing how they interact and converse within the work. As described by Wook-dong Kim,

[e]ach individual element that forms the language of a certain novel is determined by subordinate stylistic unities to which the narrator's realistic voice, letters, or other things belong, whether it is a dialogue with the stylistic personality of the characters or not. [...] The dialogic

4) Walter D. Mignolo, *Local Histories/Global Designs: Coloniality, subaltern Knowledges, and Border Thinking*. Princeton: Princeton UP. 2000. p. 266.

5) Peter Dunn, “Framing the Story, Framing the Reader: Two Spanish Masters,” *The Modern Language Review*, Vol. 91, No. 1 (January 1966), pp.95-96.

6) Mikhail Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination*. Trans. Carly Emerson and Michael Holquist Austin: U of Texas P. 2006, p. 220.

directivity of discourse is an attribute of all discourse and is naturally pursued by all living discourse. All words are bound to meet other words on various ways toward the target, and such encounters are made within vivid interactions filled with tension.⁷⁾

This study aims to verify the presence and effect of this multilayered and ambivalent value system, very different from that of “classic” medieval patriarchal ideology, and moreover to explore the possibility of various interpretations of the *Tales*, by showing that there are narratives that conflict dialogically with the dominant thread, in which a poor young Muslim man marries a rich Muslim merchant’s daughter and tames her from the first day of the marriage. To this end, this study examines how the preface of the work, the conversations between Lucanor and Patronio throughout, and the voices of different characters in various of Patronio’s fables create a forum for conversation among different values, while bending, weakening, or refuting the nearest thing the work has to a dominant narrative. To support this argument, this study will first examine the ideological background of the *Tales*.

II. The Open and Dynamic Arab-style Traditional Narrative.

Ron Barkai points out that *Count Lucanor* complicates the religious and political ideologies that surround its production by taking the frame story form imitated from the open and dynamic Arab-style traditional narration, as has been discussed above. In studying the transnational and ultra-imperialistic culture of decolonization in Iberia, he raised the question of the institutional hegemony of language. Barkai is of the opinion that the frame story form was adopted from the traditional Arab literature of Al-Andalus, a perspective that helps to deconstruct the colonial hegemonic Reconquista narrative of

7) Kim Wook Dong, *Bakhtin and Dialogism*, Seoul: Nanam Publications. 1990. p.296.

writers like Caldera.⁸⁾

Moreover, it has been argued that there is an anticlerical bent to *The Book of Good Love* of Juan Ruiz, and that it too has pro-Arab characteristics; the term *maurofilia* has even been applied to the attempt to accept Al-Andalus's narrative tradition as long as it does not go against the Christian principle.⁹⁾ Considering these two points, the moral values expressed by Juan Manuel in the preface to the *Tales* can be placed in the context of a legitimate movement of similar convictions. It was an impossible mission to embrace different ethnicities pursuing different religious ideals under the single religious ideology of Christianity, but by valorizing the traditional Andalusian culture, Juan Manuel indirectly dramatized the gap between the Christian religious message revealed outwardly and the daily life embodied in the still-living cultural tradition of Al-Andalus.¹⁰⁾

I argue that this focus in Manuel's work amounts to an implicit plea for tolerance and compromise. The lack of religiosity in the *Count Lucanor* and its secular, worldly focus (instead of a focus on the Christian afterlife or Christian morality), while adhering to a surface Christianity, is in fact evenly influenced by Christianity and Islam.

As has been mentioned above, another reason for *Count Lucanor's* open and dynamic power can be found in the traditional Arab literary form, oral narration.¹¹⁾ One article analyzing the characteristics of oral literature in the Maghreb and Spain argued that the oral literature of the Moriscos, as the

8) Ron Barkai, *Cristianos y musulmanes en la España medieval: el enemigo en el espejo*, Madrid: Rialp, 1984, p.89.

9) Maria Rosa Menocal, "Visions of al-Andalus," *The Literature of Al-Andalus*, Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2000, p.23.

10) Maria Rosa Menocal, "Life Itself: Storytelling as the Tradition of Openness in the Count Lucanor." *Oral Tradition and Hispanic Literature: Essays in Honor of Samuel M. Armistead*, New York: Garland, 1995, pp.257-259.

11) Walter J. Ong, *Orality and Literacy*, translated by Lee Gi-woo and Lim Myoung-jin. Seoul: Moonye Publishing Co., Ltd. 2004. p.55.

Arabs were called after their banishment from Spain, expresses moral lessons through the addition of proverbs or epigrams at the end of Moorish tales, as are found in each chapter of *Count Lucanor*.¹²⁾ The following epigram appears at the end of Tale 35: “If you don't show who you are right from the outset, you will never be able to do it later, when you would like to” (Si desde un principio no muestras quién eres, nunca podrás después, cuando quisieres)¹³⁾. Similarly, the following is seen in Tale 27: “A man should teach his wife right from the start how he intends her to spend her life” (Desde el comienzo debe el hombre enseñar a su mujer como se ha de portar)¹⁴⁾. Such epigrams sum up the aforementioned story or Patronio's advice to Lucanor, but their content is strongly secular, because Juan Manuel shows a strong personality and creativity by quoting proverbs derived from the tradition of Arab oral culture, not the Christian or Western world.¹⁵⁾

The epigrams in *Count Lucanor* are thus, like the stories, amenable to the application of Bakhtinian dialogism. Bakhtin's theory is based on the idea that languages in contact form a space of conflicts and conversation between their diverse worldviews and values. Characters that do not initially seem important in the stories all have their own voices, leading to the emergence of the values displayed by the novel by influencing or conversing with one another. The taming of the disobedient wife that forms the main theme of Tale 35 seems to end in success; but as the woman's father-in-law tries unsuccessfully to tame his own wife, this success is not absolute.

12) Khemais Jouini, “Fórmulas de apertura y clausura en los cuentos populares magrebies y españoles”, *Albabis.net* (La Revista de Educación), Enero de Número, 8(2006), p.21.

13) Juan Manuel. *El conde Lucanor*, Biblioteca Digital Ciudad Seva, <http://www.ciudadseva.com/textos/cuentos/esp/juanma/lucanor/lucanor.htm>, 10 nov. 2010, Hogar electrónico del escritor de Luis López Nieves, p. 141.(2018, 3.10)

14) *Ibid.*, 118.

15) Marín, “El elemento oriental en D. Juan Manuel: Síntesis y revaluación,” *Comparative Literature*, vol. 7, Num. 1.Winter 1995, p.2.

Pasados unos días, quiso su suegro hacer lo mismo que su yerno, para lo cual mató un galló; pero su mujer le dijo:

-En verdad, don Fulano, que os decidés muy tarde, porque de nada os valdría aunque mataseis cien caballos: antes tendríais que haberlo hecho, que ahora nos conocemos de sobra.(114)

Thus, the patriarchal ideology is balanced and resisted by other voices that fight against it. In fact, however, a female voice appears in Tale 35 only twice. The first time is when the bride, the morning after the wedding, yells at her parents, father-in-law, and relatives who have come running with concern for their son and son-in-law: "Are you all insane? What are you doing here? How dare you all show up at the door? Aren't you afraid to talk? Shut up, or we shall all die, you and me!" The fearful bride demands silence not only from the relatives but, paradoxically, from herself. Some recent feminist critics criticize medieval society for its imposition of silence on women and valorize women who tried to use authoritative "male-like" discourse as a challenge to male authority.

The voice of the bride's mother, in contrast, presents a new frame of interpretation that can alleviate or even overturn the male chauvinism that is the dominant narrative in Tales 27 and 35. She boldly declares to her husband, who also tries to use violence to tame her, that this trick does not work on her now. This indicates that the story is representing the son-in-law's taming as merely a trick, and at the same time shows a covert intention to weaken and disrupt the medieval ideology of male dominance by exposing it. The resisting voices of the daughter and mother are the harbingers of a multiple, multilayered, polyphonic challenge that emerges in the Renaissance. The mother-in-law's words are added to Patronio's story in order to tacitly reveal the cultural conflicts between men and women as well as between generations that may occur in the transition between medieval times and Renaissance. Moreover, Patronio's epigrammatic message to Count Lucanor at the end also implies polyphonic movement within the

patriarchy of the time.

Vos, señor conde, si vuestro pariente quiere casarse con esa mujer y vuestro familiar tiene el character de aquel mancebo, aconsejadle que lo haga, pues sabrá mandar en su casa; pero si no es así y no puede hacer todo lo necesario para imponerse a su future esposa, debe dejar pasar esa oportunidad. También os aconsejo a vos que, cuando hayáis de tartar con los demás hombres, les deis a entender desde el principio cómo han de portarse con vos.(124)

This open-endedness renders the taming of the wife fictional, a fantasy of male dominance through violence. In *Sexual Politics* (1970), Kate Millett shows that the genders are in a political power relationship of dominance and subordination, and that this relationship is obscured by the patriarchal consciousness and the deployment of patriarchal texts in society. According to Millett historical social systems have relied on a the process of “internal colonization” established most deviously, more obstinate than any racial discrimination, and stricter, more uniform, and more perpetual than class discrimination; in this understanding, sexual domination provides the most fundamental concept of power in our culture.¹⁶⁾ Bakhtin’s polyphony can be understood in the same context with feminist point of view. For Bakhtin, a mature subject should learn to reject authoritative discourse and have a responsible discourse contrary to the mythological or one-dimensional consciousness.

The next section examines how an individual’s social identity is formed fictionally by this discourse of dominance, maintaining the fantasy of male dominance over women.

16) Kate Millett, *Sexual Politics*, Columbia University Press, 2016, p.26.

III. Women's Identity through Domination by Men's Discourse

In the Western imperial discourse, women's identity has been represented as artificial and fictional, like that of colonized subjects. Patriarchy has distorted women's identity according to men's desire. Men produced the discourse that women are physiologically inferior to men, which has then been inculcated into women's identity as the very essence of femininity, expressed as stylized self-abasement by obedient women. Tale 27 in the *Count Lucanor* expresses this fabrication and intervention in an exaggerated, burlesque manner.

The two parts of Tale 27 conflict to some extent. The former is the story of a queen who lost her life for not listening to the emperor, while the latter is about Vascañana, who became a favorite with Fanes and gained his confidence by listening to him.

The woman in the former story is hot-tempered, so her husband, Emperor Frederick, decides to divorce her and goes to the Pope to secure the necessary permission. But he cannot get a divorce, as it is against canon law; therefore, he instead decides to tame her, but the more he tries, the worse his wife's temper becomes. As the emperor goes on a deer hunt, he advises her in front of his vassals not to use an ointment made with poisonous herbs. But the queen, thinking that the emperor is lying to her, applies the ointment despite the tearful dissuasion of the vassals and dies. Her death is the miserable death of a woman who did not obey but rather ignored her husband's authority and repute.

Alvar Fáñez, in contrast, marries the third daughter of Pedro Anzúrez, Vascañana, who accepts his proposal with joy and not fear, unlike her two sisters. Monika Karpinska states that in Genesis, Adam's loss of paradise is compensated for by his possession of the woman's body by means of which he was expelled from the Garden; as the temptation of a beautiful woman to a man must be controlled by the system of marriage, so in marriage women are defined and their positions determined by their husbands.¹⁷⁾ In this

Christian view, for a woman to refuse marriage meant refusing the social norms of patriarchy; thus, Vascañana's acceptance of marriage indicates obedience to these norms. Alvar was a drunk and violent, so women were afraid to marry him; but despite his weaknesses, Vascañana promises absolute obedience so as to preserve her husband's honor in front of others. In the following, this study aims to explore the true color of men's desire for dominance over women within the patriarchy as well as the anxiety lying behind it by comparing the taming of the wife by a man married to a hot-tempered woman and the taming of the husband by a woman married to a violent man. On this basis, this study aims to examine what an absurd fantasy the ideology of male dominance over women actually is.

In front of his nephew Alvar tests how absolutely Vascañana believes and obeys him. He stubbornly insists that the cow is not a cow but a mare, to which Vascañana agrees. She also agrees when he insists that the river flows backwards.

Quando doña Vascañana oyó decir esto a su sobrino, aunque a ella también le parecían vacas, pensó que, si su marido decía que eran yeguas, no podía estar equivocado y, por tanto, tenían que ser yeguas, aunque todos afamaran lo contrario.[...] Cuando le contaron la discusión que tío y sobrino mantenían, aunque a ella le parecía verdad la opinión del sobrino, no se dejó llevar de su propio juicio y pensó que era verdad lo que decía su marido. Y buscó tantas y tan buenas razones con que apoyarlo que el sobrino y todos los acompañantes creyeron que aquella era la única verdad. Y desde aquel día quedó como refrán que, si el marido dice que el río corre aguas arriba, la buena esposa así lo debe creer y decir que es verdad. (115)

The tale states that she thought otherwise but believed that her husband

17) Monika Karpinska, "Early Modern Dramatizations of Virgins and Pregnant Women," *SEL* 50(2010), p.438.

was telling the truth, so she was busy finding excuses to persuade the nephew. Vascañana does not believe her five senses are the truth but instead distorts the truth by relying on her husband's words. The only truth for Vascañana is artificially fabricated by an external authority and imposed on her by another person. Alvar says that he married his wife because she unconditionally believes and obeys his words and brags that "she does not do what she wants to do but only does what I want her to do.(nunca la vi hacer o decir algo en su propio provecho o deleite, sino sólo lo que yo quisiere"¹⁸) It can be seen here that Vascañana is establishing the identity as a wife that the male-dominant society demands she adopt. A woman who is disobedient and headstrong and who stands against the domination and self-righteousness of men is a woman of which patriarchy typically is wary. What Vascañana fears is that, even if she has everything, if she refuses to embrace the model of femininity demanded by the patriarchal society she will be isolated by it. This situation thus reflects back on how the wife of Emperor Frederick dies for not believing her husband.

Alvar's confession, "If someone believes me (Alvar) and does what I say, I would love and respect and follow their advice even if they are Muslims across the sea,(Creo que, si un moro del otro lado del mar hiciese esto por mí, yo lo debería amar, estimar y seguir sus consejos"¹⁹) shows that the male desire to deconstruct the active female identity produces social norms that lead to negative judgments of women's speech and autonomy.²⁰ Female virtue is possible in a patriarchal culture only when it does not deviate from the value structure regulated by men; when it does, negative attitudes toward and oppression of women gain legitimacy. Women's subordination is thus not an inevitability but stems from the socialization process; that is, from a contrived process of identity formation following social norms that

18) Manuel, *op.cit.*, p.117.

19) *Ibid.*, p.117.

20) Dale Spender, *Man Made Language*, London: Routledge, 1988, p.12.

facilitate male dominance.

Importantly, Vascuñana decided to marry of her own accord, but as can be seen from Alvar's testament above, she still has to contend with the negative discourse surrounding women's speech surrounds her. Alvar's expectation of his wife is obedience and silence; he embodies the negative male outlook on female talkativeness and desire to restrict female speech.

Luce Irigaray has said that men's fantasy becomes the law, and in turning fantasy into law, the "speech function" follows.²¹⁾ Human beings are unconsciously dominated and determined by language, which is the means of expression in their society. Yet, language that is restricted is language that has its meaning determined or distorted according to the will of the ruling class. When Alvar stubbornly insists that the cow is a mare, Vascuñana agrees to her husband's unreasonable argument regardless of her experience; Alvar's temporal authority here causes a "re-signification." And this model is reproduced; Alvar's nephew feels daunted by the unreasonable world view put forward by his uncle and aunt, which clouds his judgment on what is actually true.

Thus, women have been systematically excluded from the creation of meaning in patriarchal society, and language has been a means to classify the world, introduce order, and exert power. Men have systematically spread the outlook that they are superior to women; language has been a means to maintain men's authority in patriarchal society and to make that authority seem natural and fair. Therefore, women accept and imitate men's voices, as they must express themselves with the language created by men.

In Tale 27, Vascuñana loses her voice to Alvar, who embodies the patriarchal ideology through his language; thus, she is welded to his linguistically determined version of reality. The part where Alvar brags to his nephew about how much his wife believes and obeys him reveals the meaning of identity formation, exemplified in Vascuñana's adoption of

21) Luce Irigaray, *This Sex Which is Not One*, translated by Lee Eun-min. Seoul, 2002, p. 115.

Alvar's absurd statements. Vascañana to Alvar is merely a means to have his own fame and status recognized; again, the creation of socially powerful men depends on women.²²⁾

Y, para ella, cualquier cosa, que yo decida, siempre será lo mejor; además, cuanto debe hacer por su estado o porque yo se lo pido, lo hace muy bien, buscando siempre mi honra y provecho y queriendo que, de esta forma, todos sepan que yo soy el señor y como tal debo ser obedecido y honrado;(117)

During the reign of King Alfonso X in Castile, a certain freedom emerged from the narrow and monophonic medieval outlook on the world, accompanied by a pluralism and religious and cultural tolerance—but nevertheless, not with a loosening of the strictures of patriarchy. The culture of Al-Andalus, Arab-dominated but not exclusively Arab or Muslim, led to a gap between the reality and the monophonic religious ideal, and Juan Manuel, exposed to Arab culture, accepted and even valued it as long as it did not go against Christian principles. Moreover, there was a contemporary political conflict between 14th-century Castilian aristocrats and royalty, and it was also a period of social transformation and economic hardship.²³⁾ In such circumstances, the strong patriarchy counterbalanced and in some ways allowed the acceptance of Al-Andalusian culture, ultimately as part of the larger justification of the absorption and subjugation of Islam by Christianity.

Attention should be given here to the subtle words of Alvar, who says that he can respect and love even Muslims if they believe and obey him, placing them in a sense at the same subordinate (but valued) level as women within the male- and Christian-dominant patriarchy. The reverse is also true:

22) Coppelia Kahn, *Man's Estate: Masculine Identity in Shakespeare*, Berkeley: U. of California P. 1981, pp.117-118.

23) Valdón Baroque, Julio Josep M. *Feudalismo y consolidación de los pueblos hispánicos (siglos XI-XV)* Barcelona: Labor, 1980, pp.53-81.

the Muslims remained a feared enemy, and it can of course be assumed that there was great repulsion toward and anxiety regarding a disobedient wife. Patronio's words at the end of the tale bring into question whether doña Vascañana is truly under Alvar's control, whether this attempt to defuse the patriarchal anxiety is successful.

Even though her subjugation is a brutal fact, Vascañana perceives that it is impossible to refuse her husband's legal, customary, and institutional authority and accepts all his demands. This resignation is also displayed in her answers to the three questions asked by Alvar when he proposes to her. Asked whether it is okay that Alvar is fastidious and easily loses his temper, she answered that "he will not abuse her as she will not provide the motive for him to lose his temper; and if he abuses her, she will just resign herself and live with him. (le contestó que no debía preocuparse, porque ella no le daría motivo y, si alguna vez la maltrataba, lo llevaría con resignación)"²⁴⁾

Satisfied with Vascañana's answer, Alvar marries her, as he has been looking for a woman who will voluntarily save her husband's face in front of other men. Vascañana not only believes and obeys her husband's unreasonable argument in front of the nephew, but she also persuades him to accept her husband's thoughts as a fact, saving Alvar's face. Alvar's voice gains strength in that Vascañana blindly believes his words; but Patronio, as he tells this story to Count Lucanor, focuses on her intelligence. "Because She (Vascañana) is really a wise and strong-willed woman that She made Alvar love and honor her.(porque ella demostraba siempre tan buen juicio y tomaba decisiones tan acertadas, la amaba y honraba don Fáñez"²⁵⁾ In this sense of the word, the wife demonstrates Bakhtin's dialogical principle, which is counterposed to the monologism characteristic of traditional writing. In monologism, one transcendental perspective or consciousness integrates the entire field, and thus integrates all the signifying ideologies, values and

24) Manuel, *op.cit.*, p.114.

25) *Ibid.*, p.114.

desires that are deemed significant. For Bakhtin, dialogism characterises the entire world. Authentic human life is an open-ended dialogue and multi-voiced whole. Doña Vascañana rejects authoritative discourse and adopts only those parts of others' perspectives which fit with her values and experiences. According to Bakhtin, she symbolizes a subject who would have an active, independent and responsible discourse, respecting the alien word in autonomy society.

Vascañana's wisdom, as pointed out by Patronio, derives from her awareness that fighting with men is an irrational game, but also simply a game of words. Cloaked in the fantasy of male dominance, Vascañana gives blind faith and obedience to his husband, just as he desires. There is a subversive power hidden behind the female obedience that forms the basis of male dominance; while Alvar is confident that he is able to control his wife, indulging in the fantasy that his wife blindly believes him, Vascañana grasps that the absurd wife-taming game, and the husband's whole fantasy of dominance over women, is premised on the idea of the wife's dependence on the husband; by pretending to submit, she maintains some level of agency.

Alvar's reference to women and Muslims being on the same level is symbolic, in a way further eliminated by Juan Goytisolo's view of medieval Iberian history. Goytisolo rejects a Western-oriented perspective and instead sees medieval history as a mosaic of open, hybrid, and dynamic power.

La historia nos enseña en efecto que no existen esencias nacionales ni cultura sin trínsecamente puras como sostenían los cristianos viejos y sostienen los extremistas serbios de hoy. El mosaico de países que componen el espacio común europeo se ha configurado a lo largo de los siglos con el choque seminal de influencias opuestas, mediante fenómenos de hibridación, permeabilidad, contraste y emulación. La irrupción de lo heterogéneo es a la vez la del espejo en el que nos vemos reflejados y un incentivo imprescindible. Cuanto más viva sea una cultura, mayores serán su apertura y avidez respecto a las demás. Toda cultura es a fin de cuentas la suma total de las influencias que ha recibido.²⁶⁾

When viewed from Goytisolo's perspective, Tales 27 and 35 in the *Count Lucanor* show the fantasy of male dominance while demonstrating at the same time the fantasy of unifying the medieval Iberian Peninsula, with its diversified and hybrid cultural identity, under the monologic Christian ideology of the time.

IV. The Hybrid Outlook on Male Violence

The preface to *Conde Lucanor* states Juan Manuel's motivation for writing the book and as well as how it will influence the author and request. Here, the author expresses the Christian outlook on the world before specifically clarifying his motivation for creating the *Conde Lucanor*. By casting the book in a specifically Christian light right from the preface, Juan Manuel subtly implies that he does not want his readers' interpretations to substantially deviate from Christian dogma.

Este libro fue escrito por don Juan, hijo del muy noble infant don Manuel, con el deseo de que los hombres hagan en este mundo tales obras que les resulten provechosas para su honra, su hacienda y estado, así como para que encuentren el camino de la salvación. Con este fin escribió los cuentos más provechosos que él sabía, para que los hombres puedan guiarse por medio de ellos, pues sería extraño que a alguien le sucediera alguna cosa que no se pareciera a alguna de las contadas aquí.(2)

According to "Genesis" in *Bible*, women was created from man's body to soothe his loneliness; and as would have been familiar to Juan Manuel's

26) Juan Goytisolo, "El egado andalusí: Una perspectiva occidental." Ministerio de Educación y Cultura: Centro Nacional de Información y Comunicación Educativa. 1 Dec. 1997. http://www.cnice.mecd.es/tematicas/juangoytiso-lo/1997_12/1997_12_andalus.html. (2017.10.21.)

audience, Eve, the first mother of mankind, was tempted by the serpent, who said that she would be equal with God, into committing the sin of arrogance, causing the Fall of Man. Moreover, "Proverbs" clearly show how wives should treat their husbands through parables of disobedient wives: "Better to live on a corner of the roof than share a house with a quarrelsome wife"; similarly, "A quarrelsome wife is like the dripping of a leaky roof in a rainstorm; restraining her is like restraining the wind or grasping oil with the hand".²⁷⁾

Nonetheless, it can be seen from the despairs of Count Lucanor and innuendos by Patronio that husbands suffered from disobedient wives at that time, too. In particular, the story of a disobedient queen in Tale 27 shows the recklessness of standing against the king's, or the husband's, authority and dignity.

In the Christian moral view implied by the preface, Tales 35 and 27 show how a young man married to a violent woman from a different religion and linguistic community succeeds in "taming" her and integrating her into his culture, and how the wife's transformation demonstrates the virtue of obedience; all of this gives the impression that the author supports the Christian patriarchal view that a wife should follow her husband, and acquiesces to the surrounding male-dominated culture. There is a view that this taming of a disobedient wife signifies the consolidation of the monarchy as an extended patriarchy based on the Christian outlook—extending by analogy to the political intention for integration within Christianity of the Arabs, their culture, and customs.²⁸⁾ Ermanno Caldera says that negative stereotypes of Muslim incompetence and corruption or critical views of the Andalusian culture were imposed to support the legitimacy of the Reconquista during the period when Juan Manuel

27) *La Biblia*, Génesis 2:22, Sabiduría 21:9, 27:15-16, San Pablo: Edición Revisada, 1995.

28) Linehan, *History and Historians of Medieval Spain*, Oxford: Clarendon, 1993, pp. 506-507.

lived and wrote.²⁹⁾

Tale 35 is a story of a poor young Arab man taming an Arab woman who had not been marriageable due to her violent personality. The first half of Tale 27, in contrast, relates the story of the wife of the (Holy Roman) Emperor Frederick being stubborn and not listening to her husband; she ends up applying poisonous ointment and dying as a result. The latter part shows Alvar Fáñez, puffed with conceit on having forcibly caused his wife to agree to his ridiculous statements in front of his nephew. The two tales clearly show that in *Count Lucanor*, men own women and women are owned by men; indeed, even Alvar's marriage is arranged by means of a bargain between his wife's father and himself.

In Tale 35, similarly, the rich Arab's daughter does not have the freedom to determine her own marriage; instead, the man's father-in-law, who was a friend of his father's, decides on the marriage. Here, it can be seen that women in a patriarchal society are only possessions of their husbands; it is a closed culture where self-expression and accomplishment are not open to women. However, the frame of the closed patriarchal cultural paradigm of Christianity is not sufficient for a complete analysis of this tale, because the characters are not Christians, but Arab Muslims. One important difference between Christian and Arab marriage is the dowry system in the Arab world, which makes women into a form of property. The next section will consider the concept of "taming" women as expressed Tale 35 in light of the Arab outlook on marriage.

The motive for marriage by the young man at the beginning of Tale 35 was economic; the poor young man decides to accept a miserable marriage to survive, despite counsel to the contrary. In addition, the father-in-law is friends with the young man's father; thus, the situation is quite different from the bourgeois marriage play in which the father-in-law bargains with

29) Ermanno Caldera, "Arabes y judíos en la perspectiva cristiana de Juan Manuel.," *Salina: Revista de Lletres* 13 (1999), p. 37.

the groom-to-be over the bride.

One article analyzing *The Taming of the Shrew* in light of the contemporary bourgeois outlook on marriage argues that Katherina's father and his son-in-law Petruchio weigh the bride's dowry as if bargaining over an object.³⁰⁾ On the contrary, because the young Muslim man's father-in-law and his father are friends, it is difficult to identify the same mercenary relation. Rather, people in the story including the father-in-law are more worried about the young man's situation than about marrying off the daughter. The young man assures his father-in-law that he will maintain the marriage well by taming his wife, and chooses "the beneficial marriage" (*matrimonio ventajoso*).³¹⁾ This "beneficial marriage" is not just materialistic, a fact that is easier to understand when considered in relation to the dowry system in Islamic society.

Marriage in Islamic society is a social as well as religious obligation; the Koran and the Hadith, or sayings of Muhammad, encourage and recommend marriages that establish love and sympathy between human beings, maintain human virtue, and propagate the race. Therefore, marriage is seen as a contract and promise between men and women.³²⁾ The dowry provided to the bride-to-be by her husband or husband's family differs by the man's social status and wealth and the woman's social status; the Koran specifies that the dowry be fixed according to the man's ability.

The prophet provided dowries in various sums to the wives, and set the minimum sum as an iron ring. Poor men who cannot give even that much shall are to teach the Koran to their wives as a dowry.³³⁾ Also, there were rare cases of paying dowry not in material wealth but in labor; and if the

30) Moon Gyu Kim, "The Boursoiesie Marriage and the Taming of the Shrew: The Taming of the Shrew," *Journal of Humanities*, 1996, vol., no.3, p.20.

31) Manuel, *op.cit.*, p.136.

32) Hee-soo Lee, *Islam*. Seoul: Chunga Books. 2002. p.102.

33) Hee-seun Cho, *Understanding Islam Women: Beyond Misconception and Prejudice*, (Seoul: Sechang Publications). 2009, p.139.

bride was a slave, the husband could give her her freedom instead of paying the dowry. In other words, the amount of the dowry can be adjusted according to the economic ability of the bridegroom; in addition, marriage without a dowry had no legal validity, and thus the dowry was an essential element of marriage in Arab society. The young man in the story was so poor that he could not pay the dowry as instructed by the Koran, which made it difficult to get married; however, it was also unacceptable not to get married at all, which made the choice he took necessary. Moreover, from the perspective of the wife, she must receive a dowry from her husband, but as her father confessed, no man wanted to marry her, which made it impossible to demand a dowry.³⁴⁾

On the wedding night, the young husband in the story was unreasonably violent and ignored his wife's personality; though he did not apply force to her directly, he terrorized her indirectly.

Al ver su mujer que mataba al caballo, aunque no tenía otro, y que decía que haría lo mismo con quien no le obedeciese, pensó que no se trataba de una broma y le entró tantísimo miedo que no sabía si estaba viva o muerta. Él, así, furioso, ensangrentado y colérico, volvió a la mesa, jurando que, si mil caballos, hombres o mujeres hubiera en su casa que no le hicieran caso, los mataría a todos.(135)

The wife, who had lived in a rich family and had never pleaded with or begged anyone for anything, had never had the opportunity to be tamed by social norms; but as a wife her taming was necessary. The husband's violent actions are indirectly targeted at the wife, at making her aware that she is a slave to her husband; by degrading his wife into a slave, he confers legitimacy to his marriage without paying a dowry.

34) Wacks David, "Reconquest Colonialism and Andalusi Narrative Practice in the Conde Lucanor," *Diacritics* Vol. 36, No. 3-4, 2006, p.95. Project MUSE Web 21, Jan., 2011, [http://www.muse.jhu.edu/\(2018.11.10.\)](http://www.muse.jhu.edu/(2018.11.10.))

The husband's cruelty and violence in Tale 35 can be interpreted as indicating the violent nature of Andalusian Muslims, but this interpretation derives from the narrow-minded ideological climate of medieval Spain that manipulates negative stereotypes of Arabs to justify Christian cultural dominance over them.³⁵⁾ Instead, Juan Manuel, familiar with Islamic society and culture, placed Muslim characters in his stories to help give rise to a hybrid cultural identity that "crosses the border" (*adelantado de la frontera*) between the Al-Andalusian and Christian traditions.³⁶⁾ This hybridity of Andalusian society embodies Bakhtin's concept of *heteroglossia*, which emphasizes the diversity of styles and voices, assembled into a structured artistic system which arranges difference. Bakhtin criticizes those who view language as a closed system with an elevation of a particular hegemonic language, which suppresses the heteroglossia of multiple speech-community. According to heteroglossia, speech is always directed towards or through a field of 'alien words' and 'alien value-judgements. And so, an active and engaged understanding of others' discourse incorporates the other's perspective into one's own frame, giving it new inflections and nuances. From this point of view, in society of Andalusia, the social frame of Christianity undergoes defiance by assimilating Muslim's perspectives and at the same time that of Muslim suffers a discursive struggle. There is a term that describes this hybridity of medieval Spanish history: the *morada vital* or "vital dwelling place." This term indicates a reality in which different cultures coexist, not a place where a certain exclusive, legitimized culture reigns and dominates. Américo Castro was feeling nostalgic about time when Muslims, Jews, and Christians harmoniously coexisted, before the reclamation of the Iberian Peninsula.

35) *Ibid.*, p.95.

36) María Rosa Lida de Malkiel, "Tres notas sobre Don Juan Manuel." *Romance Philology* 4.2-3. (1950): pp.155-94.

Los dos autores (Sánchez-Albornoz y Américo Castro) se enfrentaron en cuanto al origen de lo que Castro llama la morada vital hispana y Sánchez-Albornoz: *contexture vital hispana*-términos que serán utilizados como sinónimos a lo largo del trabajo-y en sus manifestaciones. Esa morada vital se define como “el hecho de vivir ante un cierto horizonte de posibilidades y de obstáculos [...] o puede referirse al modo como los hombres manejan su vida” y “toman conciencia de existir en ella”. La morada vital es, entonces, esta manera de pensar y de actuar dentro de una colectividad porque uno se identifica con ella. Incluye esas características que hacen que un pueblo es lo que es y que no es idéntico a otro pueblo.³⁷⁾

Morada vital appears under the background of this philosophical background of Américo Castro. As pointed out by María Rosa Lida, Juan Manuel felt a certain regret about the vanishing Arab-dominated, but multicultural, world of Al-Andalus, and had a positive view of their customs and culture. She argues that Juan Manuel felt empathy with the Arabs, admiring their military skills and showing respect toward Arab kings. She notes that he quoted Arab proverbs even when writing about a concept as close to the Christian cultural core as the Assumption of the Virgin.³⁸⁾

The Arab influence on *Count Lucanor* can be seen in its lyrical and autobiographical characteristics, which are common features of Arab literature and stand in stark contrast to the didactic and epic genres, with their anonymous collective characteristics, that appear in the medieval West. In contrast to these works, the first person was occasionally used in Arab works at the time.

Américo Castro described these characteristics in *Count Lucanor* as constituting a worldview of “existential totality” between oneself and one’s surroundings, leading to a practical, worldly thinking that focuses on the

37) José Luis Gómez-Marínez, *Américo Castro y el origen de los españoles: Historia de una polémica*. Madrid: Editorial Gredos, 1975, p.64.

38) María Rosa Lida de Malkiel, *op.cit.*, p. 178.

external rather than the internal.³⁹⁾ *Count Lucanor* thus expresses tolerance for the Arab world and adopts a world view that is congruent with the Muslim culture of Al-Andalus—showing, in a hortatory sense that combines with his use of the frame story that has been described in Bakhtinian terms above, a larger compatibility between the Islamic and Christian worlds.

V. Conclusion

This study analyzed two of the *Count Lucanor* with reference to Bakhtin's principle of polyphony. It examined the male-dominant social norms of the time through the story of an Arab husband taming an (Arab) woman daughter who could not get married due to her disobedient and violent character, as well as the story of a wife who blindly believes everything her husband says.

Count Lucanor has an open, dynamic narrative structure, imitating the forms of traditional Andalusian Arab literature. It reflects the secular, tolerant practicality in the tradition of popular Arab oral literature, rather than the moral lessons characteristic of contemporary European literature. Juan Manuel, despite his status as a major figure of the Reconquista, valued the hybrid, diverse aspects of Arab Al-Andalus.

In the last part of Tale 35, the mother-in-law says to her husband that the trick used by her son-in-law to tame her daughter will not work on her; this shows the possibility that the male chauvinism that subjugates disobedient women can be alleviated or turned over while also prefiguring the challenge to medieval patriarchy by the polyphonic Renaissance. Tale 27 casts a negative light on the social norms that judge women's language according to men's active desire to deconstruct women's identity. As the meaning of

39) Américo Castro, *España en su historia*, Buenos Aires, 2001, Crítica, p.315.

language is determined and distorted by the will of the ruling class, men (the “ruling class” in a gender context) restrict and distort the speech of women as if only the male has the right to be an autonomous agent of discourse. This shows clearly how the social identity of an individual is formed in an essentially fictitious manner by the dominant discourse or ruling power, as reflected in Alvar’s words. However, the blind faith and obedience of Vascañana in the face of this situation convey that Alvar’s fantasy of ruling women with language is just that, a fantasy maintained only by the “obedient” woman’s stylized self-deprecation and undermined by Patronio’s insinuations. The fantasy of male dominance over women stands in symbolically for the admonishment not to fall into the fantasy that a single ideology can dominate the multicultural medieval Spanish society.

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❖ 국문초록

왜곡된 여성정체성과 남성담론에 대한 연구

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스페인 중세 알 안달루시아의 문화가 스페인 사회 속에 스며들면서 아랍 문화의 전통과 기독교 문화전통 사이의 혼종적인 문화 정체성이 형성되었다. 돈 후안 마누엘의 루카노르 백작은 원래 기독교적 이데올로기나 도덕관을 심어주기 위한 것이었지만, 실제로 스페인 남부지방의 대중적이고 세속적인 인간사를 전하고 있다. 이번 논문에서는 반항적이고 남편에게 불순종하는 여인을 길들이는 아랍태생 남편의 이야기를 중심으로 이슬람의 결혼관과 가부장적 가치관이 스페인 중세서사에 어떤 영향을 끼치고 있는지를 살펴보고자 한다. 한 개인의 정체성이 그 사회의 가치관이나 지배 담론에 의해서 허구적으로 형성되어짐을 살펴봄으로써 안달루시아 무슬림 문화전통이 기독교적 가치관과 어우러져서 스페인 중세의 다원적인 문화형태를 이루어감을 확인하게 된다.

주제어 : 아랍의 결혼관, 결혼지참금, 돈 후안 마누엘, 바흐진, 가부장적 결혼체제

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