

MORAL DESCRIPTION OF THE AMERINDIAN IN THE SPANISH GOLDEN AGE THEATRE: SUBVERSIVE OR PROPAGANDA SPEECH

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- **ABSTRACTS:** This study examines the moral description of American Indians in plays of non-American theme as an indicator of cultural ideas about the conquest of America in the 17th century and the first years of 18th the theater is an important element in the process of communication between playwrights and its public that can transmit a propaganda or dissident discourse through the moral description. The bibliography insists that the natives are savages, cannibals, idol worshipers, and fools; this becomes propaganda that justifies the conquest of America. We also know that the authors have pointed out as part of a dissenting discourse that the natives are capable of being worthy opponents of the Spaniards for their nobility. Our objective is to provide data through the analysis of more than eight hundred works from the database of the *Teatro Español del Siglo de Oro* (TESO) on the number of times the Indian is mentioned and the tendency followed by different authors.
- **KEYWORDS:** Spanish Golden Age theatre. American Indians in plays of non-American theme. *Teatro Español del Siglo de Oro* (TESO).

The conquest and colonization of America and the encounter with the Amerindian meant an ideological controversy for the Spanish knowledge frameworks: is there any justification other than greed for gold in the colonization of the Colonization in the Americas? Who is the Indian? What moral characteristics define it with respect to the Spaniards? Is the native a savage barbarian or a subject who needs the protection of the Spaniards? The answers to these questions are related to the defence of the legitimacy of the conquest or the establishment of a dissident or subversive speech against the decisions of the king of Spain and other public authorities.

In the Spanish Empire of the Golden Age, the theatre reflects the aforementioned controversy and initiated a process of communication between the public and the authors with the aim of establishing a national awareness of the Spanish state based on propaganda and exaltation. As Boisen (2013) explains, the moral obligation of the Europeans towards the uncivilized was a constant argument during the centuries that we examined. This propaganda was not only produced by those in charge of the state, but also by the elites with economic interests. As interested parties, some families commissioned theatre

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pieces in order to disseminate through this medium the virtues of conquistadores such as Hurtado de Mendoza or those of the Pizarro family. In this communicative context, the indigenous is described as a literary character, as the personification of the cult of idols or as a devilish being who appears on the scene half naked, dressed in feathers, armed with bow and arrow, sometimes also accompanied by an exotic animal like a Caiman.

The indigenous Amerindians appears very little in the Spanish Golden Age theatre. Lacking the voracity for gold that identifies Spaniards as defended by González Barrera (2016), their presence on stage was not necessary for the dramatists to create a political discourse or present a social critique. In fact, for social criticism, playwrights use the figure of “Indian” as a person who returns from the Indies enriched with gold or silver, which the public considers to be outside traditional values. The theatrical stereotype of the Amerindian natives has two faces: if they are pagans they are wild, cannibalistic, depraved and cruel; and if they are Christians they are naive, passive and like children who always need the tutelage of Europeans to prevent them from falling back into paganism and barbarism. At the same time, Kirschner (1998) maintains that for the majority of the public, America constitutes a mythical, amorphous and distant reality, while Moreira (2000) and Ryjick (2011) argue that Spanish theatre in these centuries is an act of communication that instructs all social strata about a national consciousness.

The research problem addressed in this article concerns the moral description (mainly, psychological and moral traits, and vices and virtues) of American Indians in plays from the Spanish Golden Age, whose subject matter does not touch upon the Americas. Within this context where these figures are not literary characters, references are made in the dialogue to their values and anti-values, establishing their axiological system. The Indies did not interest the dramatists, although many authors had a clear relationship of some kind with it. As an example, it is known that Tirso de Molina lived as a monk in what is now the Dominican Republic; Lope de Vega aspired to reach the coveted position of Major Chronicler of the Indies, and Ruiz de Alarcón was born in Mexico. To explain this, Elliot (1970) has shown that there was a delay between the discovery of America and Europe’s coming to understand the Americas, concluding that this lengthy process of assimilation was not completed until the middle of the 16th Century. Morínigo (1949); Dellepiane (1968), Dille (1998) and Ruiz Ramón (1993) among others, show the lack of interest that audiences had in America and their preference for learning about what was taking place within Europe. Despite these observations, the moral descriptions are part of the history of peninsular Spanish ideas about Amerindian natives. If their humanity was never really in question, the nature of their conduct was. The theatre transmits cultural contents that constitute propaganda or dissident discourse through moral descriptions in the plays’ dialogue. If they are regarded as savages, cannibals, idol worshipers, and fools, the conquest of America is justified in a propagandistic way. The dissident discourse asks whether the king had the right to wage wars against the American Indians, especially if these indigenous Amerindians could live without the presence of the Spaniards.

The research questions that we address are as follows: does an empirical analysis carried out on the works in TESO reveal any particular preference for any value or anti-value in dramas on non-American themes?; do these allusions come close to constituting

subversive discourse against the conquering actions of the Spaniards?, and, lastly, can the influence of Las Casas be detected in the descriptions of American Indians, or are they rather projections from mainland Spain with differing degrees of aesthetic value? As a result of this inquiry, we think that empirical examination of TESO helps to overcome possible biases when evaluating performances as subversive discourse, or not, aimed against the power of the Spanish empire, by means of an examination of the axiological system of Indian characters. In order to address the research questions outlined, an empirical exploration of the database containing TESO complete texts has been devised. The list of playwrights, in alphabetical order, is as follows (with the number of plays registered in TESO given in brackets): Calderón de la Barca (184 plays); Guillén de Castro (24); Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra (16); Juan de la Cueva (14); Juan Bautista Diamante (24); Juan de Matos Fragoso (12); Agustín de Moreto (36); Juan Pérez de Montalbán (24); Luis Quiñones de Benavente (47); Francisco de Rojas Zorrilla (24); Lope de Rueda (15); Juan Ruiz de Alarcón y Mendoza (20); Antonio de Solís (9); Tirso de Molina (68); Lope de Vega (314) and Antonio de Zamora (17).

The few Baroque pieces which portray American Indian characters to a Spanish audience do so through specific axiological and aesthetic codes, which the audience recognise within the world of fiction. This is the starting point for our research using the *Teatro Español del Siglo de Oro* (TESO) database, which contains full texts. Utilization of this digital repository leads to answers to interrogations that have only received partial responses, thanks to the new, more global perspective offered by the opportunity to consult more than eight hundred pieces in order to respond to the question of how indigenous Amerindians are described when mentioned in [the hundreds of?] plays whose subject matter does not touch upon the New World. This database, which allows full texts to be consulted, includes works considered fundamental regarding Golden Age theatre. These pieces are largely first editions, with a few exceptions where this is impossible due to the poor condition of preserved documents. This corpus has restricted access and can be found using the following link: <http://teso.chadwyck.com/> (TESO, 1997).

This study aims to complement those already carried out on the twelve or so theatrical pieces within which American Indians feature as characters. Morínigo (1949); Dellepiane (1968), Dille (1968), Dixon (1993), Ruiz Ramón (1993), Castillo (2009) and Kluge (2017) analyse the *mise-en-scène* from the distinct perspectives of the various authors of works on American themes: Lope de Vega; Ávila, Turia; González de Bustos; Andrés de Claramonte; Tirso de Molina; Enríquez Gómez or Fernando de Zárata and Castronovo; and Calderón de la Barca who introduce the figure of the Native in honour dramas, plays based on the lives of saints (*comedia de santos*), mythology and the exaltation of a hero. Although a degree of apparently dissident content is present, it can always be justified given the importance of the process of evangelization. Most specialised literature has claimed that there is a common description across different pieces, given that Baroque theatre adopted, albeit partially, the legal-theological-philosophical discourse [1550] of Vitoria and Las Casas and the controversy with Sepúlveda over the just war against the indigenous Amerindians, although each dramatist introduced aboriginal figures and the theme of their play in a different way.

Adorno (2007) and Carman (2016) conclude that *Las Casas* insists on several questions that could be considered subversive: the wars with the Indian territories were unjust; the king could not justify wars; the sharing out of booty or the wealth that ended up in Spain was unlawful, as they were all stolen goods; restitution is needed to ensure salvation; the Indians had the right to fight the Spaniards. The imperial project is finally successful in the theatre when Spain accepts its providential destiny, as explained by Jauregui (2008), Quiroz Taub (2012) and Orique (2016). Given the adoption of these tenets, the question arises as to whether or not certain works constitute subversive discourse against the actions of Spaniards. Researchers have also found that authors use indigenous characters to analyse the problems present within Spanish society, or to recount the bloody conquest of Peru or Chile from the point of view of the conqueror. Carreño-Rodríguez (2009) considers that biblical allegories constituted a textual resource, enabling Tirso de Molina to present contemporary concerns, such as exacerbated religious piety, ethnic cleansing, the fervour of the pure Spaniard, and the primacy of Castile.

Cañadas (2002), Castillo (2009) and Wise (2015) show that it is in Lope de Vega's *Nuevo Mundo descubierto por Cristóbal Colón* (1598-1603) that the American Indian first appears with dual features, being both savage and honourable. This last description also appears in some intellectuals such as the Jesuit Jose de Acosta, as Imbruglia (2014) explains. Concurrently, Carey-Webb (1992), Dille (1998) and Kirschner (1998) have attempted to present a Lope who was subversive in the face of the homogenous rhetoric of the Spanish monarch, as is [clearly?] the case of *La Conquista de México*, a piece written by a converted Jew under the pseudonym Fernando de Zárate y Castronovo in 1668. These two pieces respectfully criticize the greed of those who accompanied Columbus and Cortés, who themselves remain free from greed. Theatre presents them in a way which is linked to the providential idea that, having been chosen, they are conscious of the importance of the conquest of America as the only way for the indigenous to cease being uncivilised idol worshipers. The work of Dille (1998) and Castillo (2009) adds to this the idea that *La Conquista de México* is a more dissident text than *Nuevo Mundo*, perhaps as a result of its creator's being persecuted by the Inquisition. This does not influence the description, found in both pieces, of Amerindian as naïve, ugly (as a result of being savage), cowardly, cruel and pagan.

Study of Antonucci (1995) and Mata Induráin (2015) on *La beligerá Española*, published in 1616, emphasizes the lack of information offered by Ricardo de Turia (the pseudonym of Pedro Rejaule y Toledo) in the context of the bloody war taking place in Chile. This is despite the fact that this piece invokes a historical event, within which a female soldier, Mencía de los Nidos succeeding in compelling her contemporaries to fight against the Araucanian Indians. The first mention of this heroine appears in canto VII of *La Araucana* by Ercilla, although the speech appealing to the lady in the epic poem does not produce the same result as in the play. *La beligerá española* is used to introduce indigenous characters [from Ercilla's epic?] Lautaro, Guacolda and Rengo, immersed in a clichéd love triangle, without a specific role and detached from the American theme. The historical figure of Juan Juárez de Gallinato, appearing in Claramonte's *El Nuevo Rey*

Gallinato y la ventura por desgracia (1599-1601), provides another perspective through which the situation within the Iberian Peninsula is put forward. This piece shows the wedding of a Spanish man and an Indian princess, while also presenting a monarchy, in the form of the main player Gallinato, as the ideal situation for the New World. Rodríguez López-Vázquez (2001) claims that Claramonte puts forward the idea of the true American myth as that of a land where everyone is equal and which renounces anything that gets in the way of individual progress and the recognition of effort. According to Mcgrath (2001), indigenous Amerindians are described using adjectives that had already been applied to the Moors, referring to them as idol worshipers, savages, and ridiculing their language. All this took place within the context of denouncing the socio-political situation found in mainland Spain, putting forward the need to re-establish the values of the true nobility in the face of the newly-rich *Indianos*.

Lope de Vega's *Brasil Restituido* [1625], according to Sánchez-Jiménez (2008), shows two ideological systems that enter into friction: purity of the blood legitimates and the representation of a new merchant as a good servant of the King. In this case, the theme of the West Indies is used to stage a social problem in peninsular Spain. The baptized native is no longer seen as an opponent, but appears alongside the Spaniards in opposition to the heretics, Dutch Protestants and Portuguese Jews.

This does not mean that there is any change in the trend of showing indigenous Amerindians as rivals. In fact, as a result of the wars fought against the indigenous Chileans, in *Arauco domado* [1625] Lope presents the Araucanians as defenders of their freedom: “¿Por qué vienen a Chile los cristianos,/pues que no vamos los de Chile a España?”. These characters are shown to be brave warriors with elements of cruelty: *la más indómita nación que ha producido la tierra*. They are compared to lions and tigers for their being wild and having links to cannibalism. This excess of pride and arrogance is seen in the dialogue between two Natives, Gualéua and Millaura:

Ay Millaura mia
 quando Tucapel porfia
 no es tan inuencible el mar.
 Bien sè que Rengo es vn Tigre
 mas mi esposo es vn Leon,
 y temo en esta ocasion,
 que por su furia peligre (TESO, 1997).

The ferocity or cruelty attributed to them transform them into worthy subjects of the king. Despite being an anti-value, these attributes can also be seen as positive qualities, worthy of admiration. Something similar can also be seen with the use of the term cannibal in plays. This, Lauer (2005) expounds, can be used to refer to a diet or to a tradition, to a threat or an act of hatred and to a (physical or metaphysical) transformative act. This diversity of epithets transferred to other values and anti-values proved very useful in order to explain to the Spanish audiences the different meanings that can be taken on by the axiological system used to represent the local people. As the decades went by following the discovery of the New World, the recreation of values and anti-values of

the indigenous Indian appear solely in the realm of aesthetics, in line with the theme of the national drama. This is the case with the women who appear in the staging of the conquest of Peru. According to Cowling (2015), their presence makes it possible to personify the Amerindian in three different guises: “Other as Other,” the “Other as Same,” and the “Double Other”. In the first portrayal, native women are portrayed as different from their Spanish counterparts and are described together with symbols that are accepted by the audience, such as their wealth, and the different types of food, fauna and geography associated with them.

Thus, any question relating to Spanish society can become part of the plot in an aboriginal setting. When the “Other as Same” approach is adopted, native women are portrayed as equals and the dramatist is thus free to explore subjects such as honour. And, lastly, in the case of the “Double Other”, characters are created in accordance with the understanding of the Spanish audience, ensuring widespread acceptance for the playwright. Stickney (2008) adds that the female characters in Tirso de Molina’s work establish a similarity between America and its women. The latter do not get married, just as the New World escapes capture and control, because is a different reality, as opposed to Spain. Kirschner (1998), Lauer (2005), Castillo (2009) and Kluge (2017) that the different ways in which the natives are described reveal a duality characteristic of the Spanish Golden Age theatre.

Moral descriptions are of vital importance for social propaganda, because they either confirm or belie the evangelizing, civilizing mission of Spain. Criticism of actions of Spaniards in America were quick to appear in plays, as Jauregui explains in his analysis of *Cortes de la Muerte* [1557], depicting conquerors driven by greed as, perverse tyrants, demons and thieving wolves, among others. At the same time, the action and dialogue confirm the moral, cultural and intellectual inferiority of the indigenous people. Amid these negative portrayals of colonized and colonizers, a direct narrative against the king of Spain is always avoided.

The reinforcement of the collective self in Spain includes the moral description of the Indian as a saint. This role fell to Caupolicán, whose figure unifies the virtue and nobility of the saints and the barbarism of a savage. Mata Induráin reminds us that in the theater his nobility it is compared to that of Jesus Christ, because he dies as a martyr (ROMANOS, 1993). Also, *Algunas hazañas de las muchas de don García Hurtado de Mendoza, Marqués de Cañete, de nueve ingenios* and in *El gobernador prudente* by Gaspar de Ávila, Caupolicán offers the other indigenous soldiers some of their own blood to drink, to give them enough courage to fight. Once again, the communicative process of cultural content indicates that the public wishes to hear the exaltation of the Catholic faith of the Spanish empire. His presence can be seen as a fictional character in *Algunas hazañas de las muchas de García Hurtado de Mendoza* [1622]; *El gobernador prudente* [1624-1625] by Gaspar de Ávila; *Arauco domado* [1625] by Lope de Vega; and *Los españoles en Chile* [1655] by González de Bustos (SIMERKA, 2004). Similarly, in *La Aurora in Copacabana* [1664-1665] in which the Indians appear as literary characters, Calderon seeks to convey Catholic values and moralizing in the theatre, in which the native personified the missionary’s thought.

To summarise, we can say that plays, like the official documents, accept the ideas of Las Casas as far as evangelical subjects are concerned, provided that the centralist, autocratic policies of the Habsburg dynasty in Spain are not rejected. As Ruiz Ramón (1993) and Martinengo (2001) conclude, the Dominican friar's arguments (such as that of natural goodness) appear in the epic poem *La Araucana* [1569-1590], although the fighting, war-faring nature appropriate for the idea of a deserving adversary for the Spaniards is also underscored. Jauregui (2008) indicates that the "Other and its courages other is exalted in order to glorify the victory of the empire. As Las Casas does in the Caribbean, Ercilla turns resistance by the indigenous Indians into part of God's work which, thus, corrects the excesses and sins of the conquerors. Martínez (2017) concludes how over several decades Ercilla tried to model a discourse that would be accepted by publishers. Perhaps for this reason it is a model text used by playwrights to impose the re-establishment in the theatre the idea of the tropology of the savage as hugely cruel with the morals of a monster. The Indigenous are no long just victims of the Spaniards, as Las Casas posited, and so potentially subversive discourse was abandoned, particularly after the fighting that the Spaniards were still engaged in against the South American Aboriginal in Peru and Chile.

In the light of the above, we have found that the critical / scholarly literature has not entirely resolved the extent to which Golden Age plays included dissident discourse vis-à-vis centralist policies imposed by the Spanish monarch. At the same time, the value system attributed to the characters of the Indians became an aesthetic argument. An example of this can be seen in the fact that idol worship is an anti-value but, when a love intrigue is defined, it becomes a positive attribute. Fierceness or foolishness are portrayed as anti-values while, at the same time, justifying the conquest. In this study, we believe that the description of the Natives in these dramas appears with an axiological system that leads us to differing meanings; it will therefore be the data compiled from the largest number of plays that shed light on this interrogation.

Accessible texts of some of these plays are very difficult to find, while in some cases the way they have been edited has caused controversy amongst experts in the field. Carrying out inquiries on a corpus with an acknowledged level of quality across editions may be a way of avoiding the subjective nature of some investigations. Also, TESO makes it possible to show a new interpretative model of applied investigation with a number of limitations, such as that of the number of works per author, in which data is sourced from a larger number of texts in order to determine empirically the research question at hand (ALLEN, 2001). For this reason, before carrying out our research, we believe that TESO will enable us to carry out a study that will be reliable, valid and replicable, but not definitive (BIBER, 1993). TESO has enabled us to carry out a number of searches in plays on different, non-American themes: firstly, searching for the key words "indio" and "india", and subsequently, working on whole texts. In this search, mentions to East Indians or the Indies have been omitted. The results obtained in response to the previous interrogations put forward are shown in Table 1.

Table 1 – Results of allusions to American Indians in plays

| TESO plays | idolater | greedy | barbarian | cannibal | fierce | ugly | foolish | rich |
|---|----------|--------|-----------|----------|--------|------|---------|------|
| <i>La quinta de Florencia</i> (1609) (L) | x | | | | | x | | |
| <i>Los Bernabides</i> (1609) (L) | x | | | | | | | |
| <i>La boda entre dos maridos</i> (1614) (L) | | | | | | | x | |
| <i>La obediencia laureada</i> (1615) (L) | | | | | x | | | |
| <i>El Animal de Hungría</i> (1617) (L) | | | x | | | x | | |
| <i>D. Lope de Cardona</i> (1618) (L) | | | x | | x | | | |
| <i>El amante agradecido</i> (1618) (L) | | | | | | | | x |
| <i>Obras son amores</i> (1618) (L) | | | | | | | | x |
| <i>El marqués de Mantua</i> (1619) (L) | | | | x | | | | |
| <i>Ello dirá</i> (1619) (L) | x | | | | | | | |
| <i>La firmeza en la desdicha</i> (1619) (L) | | | | | x | | | |
| <i>Las flores de D. Juan</i> (1619) (L) | x | | | | | | | |
| <i>La viuda valenciana</i> (1620) (L) | | | x | | x | | | |
| <i>Los españoles en Flandes</i> (1620) (L) | x | | | | | | | |
| <i>Pedro Carbonero</i> (1620) (L) | x | | | | | x | | |
| <i>El primer rey de Castilla</i> (1622) (L) | x | | | | | | | |
| <i>El príncipe perfecto</i> (1623) (L) | x | | | | | | | |
| <i>La pastoral de Jacinto</i> (1623) (L) | | | | | | x | x | |
| <i>El pretender con pobreza</i> (1623) (G) | x | | | | | | | |
| <i>Lo cierto por lo dudoso</i> (1625) (L) | | | | | | | | |
| <i>La villana de Vallecas</i> (1631) (T) | | | | | | | x | |
| <i>Quien calla otorga</i> (1631) (T) | x | | | | | | | |
| <i>La manganilla de Melilla</i> (1634) (R) | | x | | | | | | |
| <i>Los templarios</i> (1635) (P) | | | | | | x | | |
| <i>Celos con celos se curan</i> (1635) (T) | x | | | | | | | |
| <i>La bella aurora</i> (1635) (L) | | | | | | | | x |
| <i>El mejor alcalde, el rey</i> (1635) (L) | | | x | | | | | |
| <i>La santa Juana</i> (1636) (T) | x | | | | | | x | |
| <i>Marta la piadosa</i> (1636) (T) | x | | | | | | | |
| <i>Porfiar hasta morir</i> (1638) (L) | x | | | | | | | |
| <i>El robo de Dina</i> (1638) (L) | | | | | | | | x |
| <i>El profeta falso Maboma</i> (1640) (Z) | x | | | | | | | |
| <i>Los peligros de la ausencia</i> (1641) (L) | x | | | | | | | |
| <i>S. Nicolás de Tolentino</i> (1641) (L) | | | | | | | x | |
| <i>El talego</i> (1645) (Q) | | x | | | | | | |
| <i>Sin honra no hay amistad</i> (1645) (Z) | x | | | | | | | |
| <i>Con amor no hay amistad</i> (1658) (M) | | | | | | x | | |
| <i>La esclava de su galán</i> (1647) (L) | x | | | | | | | |
| <i>Lo que ha de ser</i> (1647) (L) | | | | | | | | x |
| <i>Mañana de abril y mayo</i> (1664) (C) | | | | | | | x | |
| <i>La niña de Gómez Arias</i> (1674) (C) | x | | | | | | | |
| <i>El alcalde de Zalamea</i> (1683) (C) | | | | | | | | x |
| <i>La desdicha de la voz</i> (1683) (C) | x | | | | | | | |
| <i>Mañana será otro día</i> (1683) (C) | x | | | | | | | |
| <i>A Dios por razón de estado</i> (1717) (C) | | | x | | | | x | |
| <i>Amar y ser amado</i> (1717) (C) | | | | | | | x | |
| <i>El cubo de Almudena</i> (1717) (C) | | | | | | | | x |

(C): Pedro Calderón de la Barca; (G): Castro de Guillén; (L): Lope de Vega; (M) Juan de Matos Fragoso; (Q): Luis Quiñones de Benavente; (R): Juan Ruiz de Alarcón y Mendoza; (T): Tirso de Molina; (Z): Francisco de Rojas Zorrilla.

Source: Own elaboration.

We identified forty-five works on non-American subjects in which a direct reference to the Indian appears (all cited according to the TESO version). If we consider that our database includes 879 works and we subtract from that figure the 4 specifically American works, we can say that the direct references to the Indian in order to describe it are found in less than 6% of all works included in TESO. This corroborates the work of other researchers, since the presence of the West Indies is not significant. The author with the highest number of allusions is Lope de Vega; however, this conclusion is limited by the large number of plays by this author. It is also evident that the descriptions about the Indian are very negative, so that the argument that justifies the conquest of the New World is continually reinforced.

The Indian appears as the owner of vast wealth on several occasions, but priority is given to honour over riches: *que más estimo mi honor, / que todo el Indio tesoro: sin honra pierde el valor* in *El amante agradecido* [1618], and similar mentions are made in *Obras son amores* [1618], *La bella aurora* [1635] and *El robo de Dina* [1638]. Similarly, Calderón in *Alcalde de Zalamea*, says America's gold no *vale tanto* (is worth less) than the recognition of others, and then fame, following Aylward [1987]. Another mention of the wealth of the Indies can be found in *El talego* [1645] by Quiñones de Benavente, where we see: *Al ganarlo estudiè en Indio, y al gastarlo en Español* (TESO). However, perhaps the most novel example comes from Ruiz de Alarcón, who, as Sandoval Sánchez (1995) explains, when writing about the Moors, has Azen give the following description of the New World, contrasting with the Spaniards' greed:

Quantas riquezas estima
el Indio auaro, tendrás,
si tu lengua no me engaña
en nueva tan venturosa.
La manganilla de Melilla [1634].

Table 1 shows just how often the idol-worshipping of the Indian appears in dialogues between courting couples, which confirms Kallendorf's (2004) premise:

Y si como fuera vn Indio
dexè engañar mi razón/
de afeyte, gala, y criados
vencido de proprio amor.
San Nicolás de Tolentino [Lope de Vega, 1641].

si sabes lo que passa quiereme a mí que en Indio me trásformas,
pues Idolo te formas de marfil,
La esclava de su galán [Lope de Vega, 1647].

Likewise, the attributes of idiocy or simple-mindedness are mentioned frequently, with the aim of making him look stupid:

Líbreme el cielo de estado,
donde como el Indio necio,
he de dar el oro a precio
de corcho, y papel pintado,
La santa Juana [Tirso de Molina, 1636].

Love-sickness complaints appear to give rise to the following claims:

Con tal celo obedeciera
vna obligacion tan clara,
que como el indio adorara
su Sol, aunque sombra fuera.
El pretender con pobreza [Guillén de Castro, 1625].

Si à la Marquesa no adoro,
mas que al Sol el opuesto indio.
más que el iman à su estrella,
mas que la flor al rocío.
Celos con celos se curan [Tirso de Molina, 1635].

Or to clamour in the face of injustice:

De mis agravios diras,
aguarda villano fiero,
Indio barbaro, animal
sangriento, carille, Scita
môstro del mûdo.
D. Lope de Cardona [Lope de Vega, 1618].

American Indians are also depicted as *bozal*, in the sense of “simple-minded, stupid, an idiot), who are moreover neither educated nor civilised (i.e. uncouth);

Viendo,
que aquèl que de brutas pieles,
por significar su afecto,
en lo barbaro del traje,
Indio bozàl, y grosero
se muestra, es el Atheismo.
A Dios por razón de estado [Caderón de la Barca, 1717].

Indio bozàl, que no cree
vn solo poder immenso,
causa de todas las causas,
ni que ay mas alma en el cuerpo,
que nacer, y que morir.
Amar y ser amado [Caderón de la Barca, 1717].

The importance attributed to the Indian by Ercilla when ennobling him and his value as a warrior in order to glorify the victory of the king of Spain appears partially in the plays analysed in TESO. The Native as a cannibal is also referred to once:

Si aqui puede quedar su autor bien quisto,
en que difieren el que nombre toma
de la ley, Euangelio, y Fè de Christo,
al que sigue los passos de Mahoma,
en que Egipto, en que Scitia el mundo ha visto,
a donde el Indio carne humana coma,
que vn hòbre, sea el que fuere, hombre atreuido,
por gozar la muger mate al marido?

El marqués de Mantua [Lope de Vega, 1619].

Cannibalism is an accepted stereotype, perhaps because it is considered to be part of the ferocity of the fighter, as Lauer (2005) put forward. This moral description can also be seen in Lope in his plays written between 1615 and 1620: *fiero rigor que en tus entrañas moralno tienes más piedad q vn Indio vn Moro* (*La obediencia laureada* de Lope de Vega, 1615). Other references allude, once again, to courting contexts:

Eres tu el hijo cruel,
que, por dar vida a este viejo,
has mandado degollar
a tus hijos, y a mis nietos?
Eres tu aquel, que ochenta años
que estan de morir vn dedo,
truecas por doze, y por treze,
o eres algun indio fiero?
¿Eres algun Bracamano?
eres algun monstruo horrendo?

La firmeza en la desdicha [de Vega, 1619].

He hecho cosas por verla,
que no pienses, que soy corto,
que huuieran enternecido
vn indio, vn barbaro, vn monstruo
Ya fingiendome morir,
con suspiros, y solloços,
ya jurando de no vella,
con juramentos, y votos.
Pero ni por mis ternezas,
ni por mis rabias, y enojos,
se ha dexado ver, y assi,
[850] estoy encantado y loco.

La viuda valenciana [Lope de Vega, 1620].

Or to describe the quality of a woman's character, once again in a dialogue in a comedy set in Seville at the time of the *Reconquista*:

Que fiera
India, que barbara Turca
no le respondiera al Rey,
¿Casada estoy?

Lo cierto por lo dudoso [Lope de Vega, 1625].

This testimonial has already appeared in relation to Amerindian characters, as we can see with Calderón de la Barca in *La aurora en Copacabana*, where the comic figure Tucapel, fearing the recently-arrived Spaniards, suggests that Glauca stand in front of them all, as *si te coge la primera / a ti, de ti quedará / tan abito, que no tenga / hambre para los demás*. También Tirso escribe en *Amazonas en las indias* el siguiente fragmento: “a los hombres nos comemos, [...] carne humana es el manjar/que alimenta nuestra vida” (TESO, 1997).

The first (positive) value attributed to the American Indian in TESO appears in the 18th century, in a holy sacramental piece calling for piety “El cubo de la Almudena” [1717], where generosity appears as a synonym of nobility:

O tũ, valiente Africano!
O tũ, generoso Indio!
En quien de ambas Religiones
hè imbocado los auxilios,
porque de tu Idolatria,
y tus armas necessito
para la gloriosa empresa,
que yà con los dos consigo

El cubo de la Almudena [Calderón de la Barca, 1717].

This idea had already been expressed by Lope de Vega in *El Nuevo Mundo descubierto por Cristóbal Colón*, in the words of the Indian Dulcanquellín, in illicit pursuit of Tacuana's love:

(H)Ay Cacique en esta tierra
tan generoso y gallardo,
desde el Occidente pardo,
donde nuestro Dios se encierra (TESO, 1997).

And in the third act, Tacuana – an Indian woman – refers to her kidnapper in the same way:

Yo soy Tacuana de Hayti,
que he viuido desde entonces
sin mi esposo, a quien Dulcan
me robò la misma noche.
Que Clapillan padre mio
me le dio, para que goze
del Indio mas generoso
q ay desde el Sur a los Triones (TESO, 1997).

However, although he is an honourable Indian, she appeals to the civilising activities of the Spanish conquerors:

[...] seamos todos Españoles.
Que me librey del tyrano
Cacique, barbaro, y torpe,
que aqui me tiene cautiuua
entre sus braços disformes (TESO, 1997).

The profile of Indians tends to allude to the moral side of their character (idol-worshippers, greedy, barbaric, cannibals, fierce, generous and foolish) although some physical descriptors have also been found, referring to the darkness of their skin, befitting of sun-worshippers: *mas necio, feo y negro que vn Etiope*. In “Con amor no hay amistad” [1658], reference is made to the Indian wife of Juan Matos Fragoso, the description of her ugliness coinciding with the approach to the Other as Other, as per Cowling:

India fea,
anda vè, y dile, que sea
cortès al que te conquista;
que me tiene tan mohino,
que si èl agora llegara,
lo colerico aplacara
con ponerle lo sanguino (TESO, 1997).

The “Other” according to the European point of view entailed fear of anything belonging to a cultural universe that was different from that of the view holder, in which anything different and unknown was considered as something akin to going against that natural order. Thus, in plays, physical images of ugliness or the blackness of the Ethiopian personified the paradigmatic model of ugliness. These performances are first seen in the *Diario de Colón* and continue in the theatre.

Conclusions

This research constitutes a contribution to the presence of the American Indian world in Golden Age Plays. An Amerindian comic figure may appear on stage as a Pagan,

i.e. as a constant worshipper of idols, a man-eater, a cruel, depraved, wild tyrant. If he has been baptised, despite his noble character or natural generosity, he is naïve, passive and behaves like a child in need of Spanish tutelage in order to ensure that he does not fall back into heresy and barbarianism. The Indian as an allusion maintains this system, and is repeatedly portrayed as an Idolater, with the semantic value of a worshipper of the sun or of the beauty of their loved one. Another common anti-value is that of foolishness, which adds further depth to the idea of the aesthetic value of Indian characters. A combination of these two descriptions leads us to ideas proving the just nature of the Spanish conquest. This may constitute an argument with specific data to corroborate the idea that the theatrical works examined here do not entail a subversive discourse that is critical of Spanish expansion in the New World, particularly in the case of the plays of Lope de Vega or Tirso de Molina, rather than a number of meanings are maintained. This complexity stems from accommodating Lacanian ideas in the social and aesthetic context of new comedy.

Our search for data in more than eight hundred plays confirms that allusions to the American Indian are always to men, very rarely to women (COWLING, 2015; CONNOR, 2016). In all of them there is a reaffirmation of the collective self in relation to the native as Ryjick (2011) affirmed. Our study also confirms the conclusions of Elliott (1970), which describes the difficulties of the Europeans to assimilate the novelty of the New World because they felt overwhelmed despite their earlier contacts with Moors and Blacks.

Finally, we conclude that the Spanish theater in these centuries is an act of polyphonic and polyvalent communication that includes the transmission of ideas, so we propose that we look for data such as those we have obtained in our examination in other plays in order to answer our questions as widely as possible.

CÁCERES-LORENZO, M. -T. Descrição moral do amerindiano no Teatro da Idade de Ouro Espanhola: discurso subversivo ou propaganda. **Revista de Letras**, São Paulo, v.58, n.2, p.123-139, jul./dez. 2018.

- **RESUMO:** *Este estudo examina a descrição moral dos índios americanos em peças de tema não americano como um indicador de idéias culturais sobre a conquista da América no século XVII e os primeiros anos do século 18 o teatro é um elemento importante no processo de comunicação entre dramaturgos e seu público que pode transmitir uma propaganda ou discurso dissidente através da descrição moral. A bibliografia insiste que os nativos são selvagens, canibais, adoradores de ídolos e tolos; isso se torna propaganda que justifica a conquista da América. Sabemos também que os autores apontaram como parte de um discurso dissidente que os nativos são capazes de serem oponentes valiosos dos espanhóis por sua nobreza. Nosso objetivo é fornecer dados através da análise de mais de oitocentos trabalhos da base de dados do Teatro Espanhol do Sino de Ouro (TESO) sobre o número de vezes que o índio é mencionado e a tendência seguida por diferentes autores.*
- **PALAVRAS CHAVE:** *Teatro da Idade de Ouro Espanhola. Índios americanos em peças de tema não americano. Teatro Espanhol do Siglo de Oro (TESO).*

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