

ESTUDOS ESSAYS

The Spectacle of Inês de Castro in Spanish Drama: Building on Maria Leonor Machado de Sousa's Premise

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In the summer of 2009, Maria Leonor Machado de Sousa was recovering from a muscle strain so our first meeting about Inesian literature was in her bedroom. I sat on a straight-backed chair holding a well-thumbed, post-it-note-filled copy of her unrivalled tome of literary criticism, *Inês de Castro, um Tema Português na Europa*, and the Professor sat propped up in bed answering my queries about the continuing fascination with Portugal's Dead Queen. I myself, a Portuguese-Canadian theatre artist and scholar intrigued by Inês and Pedro's love story, had staged Garcia de Resende's *Trovas à Morte de D. Inês de Castro*¹ bilingually in Toronto and was preparing to write my PhD dissertation, a feminist analysis of the subjectivity (or lack thereof) in the character of Inês in plays and films. Professor Maria Leonor warned me that although she was the granddaughter of Maria Lamas, she was not a feminist – but she would be happy to read and support my work. For the next twelve years we spoke on the phone frequently to debate and celebrate new Inesian texts – feminist or not – and met whenever I visited Portugal to talk about our beloved Inês. In March of 2020 I attended a CETAPS conference in Lisbon days before the pandemic forced physical distancing between friends; we

1. See Jordão 2009, 259-277.

hugged to celebrate the third edition of *Um Tema Português*. Professor Maria Leonor, with a twinkle in her eyes, showed me “Anexo V: Por Esse Mundo Fora” where my own North-American contribution to Inesian studies and theatre is noted:

[P]ela consistência que a difusão do tema tem demonstrado, temos que considerar o Canadá, sobretudo devido à acção de Aida Jordão que, enquanto preparava a sua dissertação de doutoramento *Inês de Castro in Theatre and Film: A Feminist Exhumation of the Dead Queen*, apresentada à Universidade de Toronto, em 2014, não deixou de organizar vários espectáculos, sobretudo de Teatro. (Sousa 491)

The Professor’s engagement with my work was steadfast. In our last phone conversation, while she lay in a hospital bed near the end of her life, I told her about my new play *I, Castro/Eu, Castro* and, ill as she was, Professor Maria Leonor expressed an interest in reading it. I will always remember her with deep “saudade”. This paper bears testimony to Maria Leonor Machado de Sousa’s indelible influence on Inesian criticism and on my own research and playwriting.

In the first chapter of *Inês de Castro: Um Tema Português na Europa*, Maria Leonor Machado de Sousa establishes the distinction between the Portuguese and Spanish traditions in Inesian literature by citing the poet and playwright of each nation who most influenced how Inês was perceived in Europe:

Na verdade, o episódio, na versão acabada que a Península Ibérica deu a conhecer à Europa através de Camões e Guevara, resultou de tendências características dos dois povos de que provieram tais impulsos – a saudade portuguesa e o gosto espanhol pelo espectacular. Os portugueses pensam na Castro como a linda Inês que receava a morte pelas saudades que teria do seu príncipe e filhos; para os espanhóis, ela foi sempre aquela que reinou depois de morta. (58)

As is evident in *Os Lusíadas* (1572), Camões created an Inês who grievously pleaded for her life:

[C]om tristes e piedosas vozes
 Saídas só da mágoa e saudade
 Do seu Príncipe e filhos, que deixava
 Que mais que a própria morte a magoava. (Canto III, stanza 124)

Conversely, about sixty years later, Luis Vélez de Guevara, in *Reinar después de morir*,² gave prominence to the “spectacular” mythic “coroação e beija-mão” with the Príncipe declaring that “[Inês] (...) en la muerte se corone”, placing the crown on her head and asking those present to “besad la difunta mano”. (III, 2454-55)

Based on the omission of this ceremony in royal chronicles – especially in Fernão Lopes’s intricate description of the *trasladação* of Inês’s corpse – Sousa observes that the coronation of the exhumed body of Inês is “a única criação puramente literária dos elementos que compõem a história dos amores de Pedro e Inês”. (*Tema* 49) In her ensuing analyses of sixteenth and seventeenth century Spanish plays about Inês de Castro, Sousa claims that most of the elements of the legend of Inês and Pedro as we know it today were established in Portugal and Spain by 1577, the year Jerónimo Bermúdez’s *Nise Laureada* was published. (*Tema* 57)³ Notwithstanding the enduring influence of Vélez de Guevara’s Inesian play, Bermúdez was the first known tragedian to include a scene where Inês’s skeletal remains are crowned after her body is exhumed from the Convent of Santa Clara and transferred to the royal tomb in the monastery of Alcobaça. Rey Pedro declares, “Y tú, señora mía, que lo has sido, / y lo serás em muerte, como en vida, / recibe esta corona y este esceptro”. (Act III) This morbid figuration of Inês, echoed in later tragedies, differs indeed from the Inesian writings of Portugal’s Golden Age by Garcia de Resende, Camões and António Ferreira who, while focusing on Inês as a figure of “saudade”, mention that Inês de Castro will be

2. Performances during Vélez’s lifetime have been recorded as early as 1635 in Valencia (Bolaños qtd. in Larson 20); the play was published posthumously by Paulo Craesbeek in Lisbon in 1652 in *Doze comedias las mas grandiosas que hasta aora han salido, de los mejores, y más insignes poetas. Quarta parte...*Lisboa. En la officina Craesbeekiana...M.DC.LII (Vélez 42). Forwith I will sometimes refer to play as *Reinar*.

3. *Nise Laureada* is the sequel to Bermúdez’s *Nise Lastimosa*, the alleged translation of António Ferreira’s *Castro*.

Queen after death but omit the legendary ceremony of the “coroação e beija-mão”.

Resende’s *Trovas que Garcia de Resende fez à Morte de D. Inês de Castro* claim that Inês’s queenship was bestowed by law and that her statue on the royal tomb bears the crown:

[C]omo o príncipe foi rei
 sem tardar mas mui asinha
 a fez alçar por rainha
 sendo morta o fez por lei.
 (...)

 Em todos seus testamentos
 a decrarou por molher
 e por s’isto melhor crer
 fez dous ricos moimentos
 em qu’ambos vereis jazer:
 rei, rainha coroados
 mui juntos não apartados
 no cruzeiro d’Alcobaça. (Lines 241-245, 271-278)

In Ferreira’s *Castro*, Pedro swears Inês will be his Queen and only hints at a different kind of crowning:

PEDRO: Rainha te verei deste meu Reino,
 D’outra nova coroa coroadada,
 Diferente de quantas coroaram
 Ou de homens ou mulheres as cabeças. (Act V, lines 32-38)

Camões’s often cited lines from the Inesian episode in *Os Lusíadas* likewise do not literally describe a posthumous coronation:

O caso triste e dino da memória
 Que do sepulcro os homens desenterra,
 Aconteceu da mísera e mesquinha

Que depois de ser morta foi rainha. (III, 118)⁴

On the contrary, as Sousa shows, the Spanish tragedies where Inês is crowned follow the Castilian Inesian romances of previous centuries that clearly illustrate the “coroação e beija-mão”. In “Don Pedro a quien los crueles” the body of Inês is on the throne and Pedro,

Sentóse a su lado, y luego
 Los fidalgos y la plebe
 Y el reino besó en cenizas
 La mano que nieve fué. (*Tema 52*)

In “A la Reyna de los cielos” the ceremony is explicit:

(...) sobre su cabeza
 puso la corona sacra
 y luego todos sus grandes
 besaron la mano blanca. (53)

After Bermúdez, who likely had the romances as sources, (52) Mexía de la Cerda’s 1612 *Tragedia famosa de Doña Ynés de Castro, Reyna de Portugal*, perpetuated the staging of the posthumous coronation of Inês. Inês is unburied and then there is a double coronation of King Pedro and Queen Inês in the final act:

Tocan chirimias y sacan dos coronas cada una en una fuente

AYO: Todo el reyno determina
 darte Corona gloriosa
 a ti, y a tu amada esposa,
 mostrad, cored la cortina.

4. It is interesting to note that Landeg White’s 1997 translation of *Os Lusíadas* states that the corpse of Inês was in a regal ceremony: “But now the tragic history unfolded/ Of her whom men disinterred from the grave/ And, in a pitiful and macabre scene, / Only after her death *was enthroned* as queen” (italics mine). It can be argued that “Que do sepulcro os homens desenterra” refers to “O caso triste e dino da memória”, not to Inês herself, but White has chosen the latter. See *The Lusíads*. Translated by Landeg White, 1997, 71.

Corren la cortina, y parece doña Ynes de Castro difunta sentada en una silla.
[n.p.]

Bermúdez's and Mexía de la Cerda's tragedies remain of interest mainly to scholars, but it is Vélez de Guevara's *Reinar después de morir*, performed and published regularly in the seventeenth century and adapted by European playwrights and filmmakers for the next three centuries that Sousa suggests "tem que ser considerado o de maior vitalidade" of the Inesian Spanish Golden Age plays. (*Tema* 44)⁵ So influential was Vélez de Guevara's play that it may have been a source for historian Manuel de Faria e Sousa's account of the coronation of Inês de Castro:

La mataron: i el Principe no dexò de amarla muerta: i assi, luego que murió su padre, i empuño el Cetro, hizo desenterrar a D. Ines, i colocarla en un Trono adonde fue coronada como Reyna; i alli hizo sus vasallos besassen aquellos huessos, que avian ya sido manos bellas; publicando primero con juramento, i otros actos solenes, queavia [*sic*] sido su muger legitima. (*Apud* Sousa, *Tema* 95)

Sousa is cautious on this point, noting that *Europa Portuguesa* was published in 1637 and, although it is believed that Vélez de Guevara, who died in 1644, probably composed *Reinar* in the 1630s, there is no certainty of its influence on Faria e Sousa. (96) Jorge de Sena, however, resolutely states that this history "foi rescrita sob a influência de Guevara, no passo que trata de Inês de Castro". (Vol II, 227) In any case, Sousa notes that the royal archive on which Faria e Sousa based his history has never been found (*Mito* 86-87 and *Tema* 107) and that a coronation would have been only symbolic "visto que em Portugal os reis não eram coroados. As estátuas jacentes representavam-nos de facto com coroa mas (...) [s]ó em 1428, por bula de Martinho V, de 16

5. As if to prove this statement true in the twenty-first century, Vélez de Guevara's play was produced by Companhia de Teatro de Almada in 2019 and Sousa was invited to discuss "A lenda através da história" in one of the theatre's "Conversas com o público"; I describe the staging of the coronation scene in the conclusion to this paper.

de Maio, D. João I obtém o direito de ser ungido e coroado". (*Mito* 113-114) Nevertheless, with his description of Inês's coronation Faria e Sousa "sancionou, pela sua autoridade de historiador, a cerimónia da coroação que até aqui fora apenas uma apoteose encenada por autores mais ousados". (Sousa, *Tema* 94) Thus, there is a strong probability that Faria e Sousa had Vélez de Guevara and other fictional accounts as sources.

Where the historian and playwright differ dramatically is in the timeline of historical events leading up to Inês's alleged coronation. While Faria e Sousa respects the historical fact that Inês de Castro was buried and exhumed only when Pedro became King, Vélez de Guevara condenses the historical action of several years into one day so that Inês is not buried before she is crowned Queen of Portugal. The assassination of Inês in 1355, Afonso IV's death and Pedro I's ascension to the throne in 1357, and the subsequent capture and torture of Inês's assassins happen within a few hours in the play. Since Inês is not buried the "trasladação" of her corpse to Alcobça *circa* 1362 is necessarily omitted. In the final scenes of Vélez de Guevara's "jornada tercera", Doña Inés is killed, el Rey dies suddenly (possibly of a stroke),⁶ Don Pedro learns of his father's death, the rival Infanta de Navarra gives Don Pedro the news of Inês's death, the assassins Alvar González and Egas Coello are imprisoned and killed, a grandiose funeral procession is planned, and Inés is crowned Queen. As literary critic Juan Luis Alborg observes, to Vélez, "la Historia era solo un depósito generosamente colmado de acontecimientos y tipos de excepción, en donde proveerse para urdir conflictos de comedia". (*Apud* Sousa, *Tema* 104) Sousa decries the playwright's conflation of historical time as "[um] grande desrespeito pela verdade histórica" (*Tema* 102) but concludes that, "[e]sta compressão dos acontecimentos foi muito utilizada na literatura inesiana subsequente, porque facilitava o respeito pelas unidades e também em certos casos podia criar novas linhas de tensão dramática".(103) Decidedly, the denouement of Vélez de Guevara's tragedy with Inês being crowned *before* she is buried is

6. "CONDESTABLE: (...) de repente/ le sobrevino el ultimo accidente/ de su vida"; (III, 2208-2210) editors Manson and Peale explain 'accidente' as "enfermedad, o indisposición". (Vélez 174)

effective theatrically (as I shall show) and is a dramaturgical choice markedly different from its Spanish predecessors. In Bermúdez's *Nise Laureada*, Inés's body is exhumed years after she has died and Don Pedro crowns her publicly; (Act III) in Mexía de la Cerda's tragedy, Inés is also unburied before the double coronation mentioned above.

Sousa stresses that "Guevara atenua os traços macabros da cena" (102) as Inés's coronation in *Reinar* occurs simply with Pedro's squire Nuno de Almeida handing Pedro the crown he gave Inês when they married and Pedro uttering,

PRÍNCIPE. De otra manera entendí
que fuera Inés coronada
mas, pues no lo conseguí,
en la muerte se corone. (III, 2450-2454)

Significantly, the body that is crowned is not in a state of decomposition, an aspect of Inesian drama that has endured in several future incarnations. In two eighteenth-century tragedies, Manuel José de Paiva's *Só o Amor Faz Impossíveis* (24) and Nicolau Luís's *Tragedia de Dona Ignez de Castro*, (III, iii, 29) Inês is discovered sitting on a throne-like chair shortly after her death. In Henry de Montherlant's 1942 *La Reine Morte*, the Prince places the crown on Inês's pregnant belly hours after she is killed. (157) Alejandro Casona, in his Vélez-inspired Inesian tragedy *Corona de Amor y Muerte* (1955), also crowns a beautiful Inês: "En el trono, INÉS tal como apareció en el bosque – sin el chal rojo – cubierta de velos blancos. Ni ten crespón ni una solo nota lúgubre *Es una muerte bella y joven, vestida de novia (...)*. Todos se arrodillan mientras PEDRO ciñe la corona a INÉS". (96, italics mine) Sousa rightly identifies *Reinar* as "[a] obra dramática sobre [Inês de Castro] que maior vitalidade demonstrou" (*Tema* 109) and nowhere is this more evident than in the staging of the coronation with a fresh unblemished corpse.

What we may ask at this point, if we probe the representation of Inês de Castro and indices of subjectivity in the character, as my research does, is: what is the performative effect of the condensation

of historical events in Vélez de Guevara's tragedy and how does that alter the figuration of the Dead Queen?

As Sousa notes, the conflation of events into one day in the final act of *Reinar* could be a nod to the precept of the unity of time⁷ in classic tragedies to connect key events for dramatic tension. Editor Francisco Induráin agrees that accelerating the action creates a simple, dramatic line and "el final se produce en un clima tensísimo". (28) Especially for spectators familiar with the story, Vélez de Guevara may have wanted to thwart the predictable story of Inês made Queen seven years after her death and create a more immediate, more emotional, and surprising ending. Induráin speculates, moreover, that in fusing the death and coronation of Inés, "las últimas escenas resulten recargadas por el deseo de hacer seguir a la muerte de la protagonista, su exaltación". (28) This is evidenced by Don Pedro's wish for a grand funeral procession that will forever ennoble his Doña Inés:

PRÍNCIPE. Vos, Condestable, adverted
 que os encarguéis del entierro,
 llevándola desde aquí
 a Alcobaza con gran pompa,
 honrándome en ella a mí
 Y porque yo gusto de ello,
 el camino haréis cubrir
 de antorchas blancas que envidie
 el estrellado zafir
 todas diez y siete léguas. (III, 2436-2445)

Vélez de Guevara eliminates the historically documented burial of Inês de Castro in the Convent of Santa Clara and the intervening years before her remains are transferred to Alcobaza but is faithful

7. This does not, however, apply to the entire tragedy; the unity of place is disregarded, and the unity of action somewhat muddled by the introduction of a rival Princess. In his study of *Reinar* as classical Spanish tragedy, Henry Sullivan argues that Lope de Vega locked and threw away the keys of classical precepts as they don't apply to Golden Age *comedia*; Lope proposes instead a unity of theme, structure and imagery. (144-47)

to Fernão Lopes's account of the pomp of the "trasladação" where, "pelo caminho stavom muitos homeens com çirios nas mãos, de tal guisa hordenados, que sempre o seu corpo foi per todo o caminho per antre çirios açesos; e assi chegarom ataa o dito moesteiro, que eram dalli dezassete legoas". (200) In *Reinar*, the Príncipe's plan of a royal funeral procession for Inés will ensure "su exaltación".

Moreover, holding the coronation ceremony hours after the assassination of Inês, conjoins "reinar" and "morir" in the performative act that illustrates the contradictory title of the play. With its active verb, "reinar después de morir" becomes a literal impossibility, much more so than Camões's "depois de ser morta foi rainha" which can imply a plausible legal chance of status.⁸ By crowning Inês hours after her death, that is, before she is buried, Vélez de Guevara seems to suggest that she will physically 'reign' at least until her funeral. Don Pedro plays "el rey de armas" and proclaims Doña Inés's Queenship:

PRÍNCIPE. ¡Silencio, silencio! Oíd:
 Esta es la Inés laureada,
 esta la reina infeliz
 que mereció en Portugal
 reinar después de morir. (III, 2458-62)

The repetition of "esta" stresses that 'this' Inés is the one who should be remembered: 'this' is the crowned Inés for the history books; 'this' is the unhappy Queen who deserved to reign (the word "mereció" indicating that Doña Inés has primacy in having married Don Pedro before his arranged marriage to the Infanta de Navarra). Ten lines later, a self-referential version of these lines is repeated by the Condestable to connect "esta" Inés to the poet/playwright⁹ and again insist that she could "reign after death":

8. As noted above, García de Resende said as much with the verse, "[C]omo o príncipe foi rei/sem tardar mas mui asinha/a fez alçar por rainha/sendo morta o fez por lei". (Lines 241-245)

9. I disagree with Manson and Peale who suggest that "el poeta" evokes both Bermudéz, who titled his second Inesian tragedy *Nise Laureada*, and Mexía de la Cerda who ended his tragedy with these words. (Vélez 176)

CONDESTABLE. Esta es la Inés laureada,
 con que el poeta dio fin
 a su tragedia, en que pudo
 reinar después de morir. (III, 2473-76)

Earlier, the Infanta bitterly recognizes Inés's power saying the hunted "garza" who "perdió la vida, volvió a vivir (...) de nuevo" (II, 1479-80) and unknowingly voices "o anúncio da vitória final de Inês, que conseguiu 'reinar depois de morrer'". (Sousa, *Tema* 106) Moreover, as Don Pedro evokes when he instructs the Condestable to "[c]ubrid el hermoso cuerpo", (III, 2465) this Dead Queen is not only lifelike and apparently able to reign, she is a beautiful corpse.

In death, Vélez de Guevara's Inés is always sublime, never grotesque. When we first see her after she is killed, the stage directions indicate that the Príncipe and the Condestable "Descubren a DOÑA INÉS muerta, sobre unas almohadas". (III, 2400)¹⁰ This line echoes the first description of the heroine by Brito, "sobre las almohadas se incorpora". (I, 202) This dead Inés is not a decomposing corpse, but a beautiful woman, seemingly asleep on her pillows, waiting for the enchanted prince to give her the kiss of life. As Donald R. Larson notes, Inés is "ensangrentada, pero todavía hermosa". (36) In his "spectacular" staging of the final scene, Vélez de Guevara does much to preserve Camões's ode to the beauty of Inês de Castro, "Estavas, linda Inês, posta em sossego", (III, 120) and her proverbial "colo de garça" where the assassins plunged their swords, "No colo de alabastro, que sustinha/ As obras com que Amor matou de amores/ Aquele que depois a fez Rainha". (III, 132)

The identification of Inés with a "garza" is a motif that Vélez de Guevara establishes in the "segunda jornada" when a white heron is hunted by Don Pedro's royal bride, the Infanta de Navarra. The playwright here renders Inês as "uma bela ave sobre a qual impende a fúria humana de matar e destruir". (Sena Vol. II, 272) The Infanta, brought

10. This is a seventeenth century convention meant to shock the spectators with the 'discovery' or uncovering of a stage area hidden until then.

to Portugal by Rey Alonso as wife to Don Pedro, has been rejected because of his love for Doña Inés. Before returning to Navarra, she goes hunting and, upon meeting a haughty Inés, compares her imminent demise to the fall of a “garza” attacked by a falcon:

INFANTA. Inés,
 suspended un poco el vuelo
 con que altiva habéis volado.
 Reducíos a vuestro centro,
 y sírvaos de corrección,
 de aviso y de claro ejemplo,
 que a una blanca garza, hija
 de la hermosura y del viento,
 volé esta tarde, y altiva,
 cuando ya llegaba al cielo,
 la despedazó en sus garras
 un gerifalte soberbio. (II, 1403-1414)

This, and the Infanta’s later allusion to Inés’s graceful nape when she describes her wounds, “arroyos de coral vi desatados/ de una garganta tan hermosa y bella” (III, 2293-95) evoke the legendary “colo de garça”. Don Pedro, also, reinforces the image suggested in the song that warns him of Inés’s death, “tu querida esposa/ muerta es, que yo la vi/ (...) Su garganta es de alabastro/ y sus manos de marfil”, (III, 2265) when he laments that Inés’s throat was slit, “Por su cuello, ¡pena fiera!./ corre la púrpura helada/ en claveles desatada”. (III, 2409-2411) By showing Inês as lifelike in the coronation scene, Vélez de Guevara maintains the iconic image of the “colo de garça” that the Portuguese so revere and that is a central motif of his tragedy.

In more macabre representations of Inês de Castro, the corpse subverts the symbol of sublime female beauty that Inês evokes, replacing it with the grotesque. I suggest that Vélez de Guevara’s refusal to exploit the coronation of a decomposing skeleton by eliminating the burial and exhumation of the historical Inês de Castro’s body, develops his characterization of Inês as subject, not abject. As Larson

asserts, Vélez de Guevara created an Inés that is the emotional centre of the play (22) and Sousa emphasizes “a importância de Guevara é ter criado uma tradição definida de uma Inês diferente, mais activa e cujo carácter revela simultaneamente ternura e altivez, traço que os portugueses nunca lhe atribuíram”. (*Tema* 113) Accordingly, the playwright employs a dramatic structure that represents Inês as an active character right up to the last scene.¹¹

In *Reinar*, Inés first enters the stage as the “bella cazadora” of Spanish Golden Age drama carrying a blunderbuss (I, 623) and defying a passive feminine construction. Alborg explains that, “La aludida propensión de Vélez hacia lo heroico desmesurado explica también la abundancia en su obra de personajes femeninos de varonil carácter”. (*Apud Sousa, Tema* 104) “*Varonil*” does not, however, imply that Inés is manly. In her study of female characters in Spanish Golden Age plays, Melveena McKendrick avoids the literal translation of *mujer varonil* as “manly woman” suggesting instead “the woman who departs in any significant way from feminine norm of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries”. (*Woman ix*) *La bella cazadora* (the beautiful huntress) is a prototype of this character with attitudes and activities beyond the conventional role of devoted mother and passionate mistress. Disregarding the evident anachronism of a fourteenth century woman hunting with a blunderbuss,¹² by depicting Inês as the “*mujer varonil*” Vélez de Guevara disrupts the fixity of a binary representation and relates subjective identity to cultural representation. (Scott 1067-68) Then, the figuration of Inés wearing the crown as a “*hermoso cuerpo*” in the final act reinforces this approach. This is not to say that subjectivity is necessarily endowed by beauty or that there is subjectivity in death (a highly problematic concept), but that Vélez de Guevara attempts to make Inês look alive to create an illusion:

11. This would not be true of later dramatic versions of the story where Pedro I's pursuit of Inês's assassins is the climax of many plays and films.

12. This is not unusual for Golden Age theatre where sixteenth- and seventeenth-century dress and objects were commonly used regardless of the period in which the *comedia* was set. (McKendrick, *Theatre* 194-195) Claude-Henri Frèches humorously describes Inês's entrance as “en costume d'amazone chasser-esse, sportive et à la mode” (“in the costume of an Amazon huntress, sporty and in style”). (262)

that his Dead Queen has the agency to “reign after death”. As Sena affirms, this coronation scene “não é de modo algum, uma coroação indigna da evolução de Inês de Castro”. (Vol II, 281) Vélez de Guevara thus alters the Spanish tradition of sensational morbidity while still maintaining Maria Leonor Machado de Sousa’s contention that “para os espanhóis, [Inês] foi sempre aquela que reinou depois de morta”. (Tema 58)

In the 2019 Companhia de Teatro de Almada’s co-production¹³ of *Reinar depois de morrer*, director Ignacio García stages the coronation of the dead Inês with both tenderness and savagery, in a minimalist setting that privileges the raw emotions of the protagonists. The set, devoid of furniture or objects that may suggest a realistic space, is a half-pipe of the sort we see in a skateboard park. This bare stage is painted in a blue and white “azulejo” pattern that extends over two curved ramps on either side, leading to openings for actors’ entrances and exits. Upstage there is a suggestion of a dark forest with bright blossoms. Downstage is a channel with a stream of water that runs close to the audience, evoking the Mondego and the iconic Fountain of Love in Coimbra. The play begins with a wailing musical chorus that accompanies Inês as she, in a flowing white dress, runs towards the audience and up the ramps; when other characters emerge, she interacts with them; she then lies lifeless with her hand in the stream; Pedro picks her up and carries her offstage. The final scene reverses this prophetic introduction. Pedro emerges from the forest carrying Inês’s body into the light. He lays her down by the stream, kisses and touches her neck uttering, “Do pescoço, dura pena, corre a púrpura gelada (...)” but there is no blood on the corpse. Inês is immaculate in a white silk dress and though she is not discovered “sobre unas almohadas” she appears to be sleeping in Pedro’s arms. Also differing from Vélez de Guevara’s script, Nuño and the Condestable are cut

13. With Madrid’s Compañía Nacional de Teatro Clásico./ Director: Ignacio García/ Adaptation: José Gabriel Antuñano/ Translation: Nuno Júdice/ Cast: José Neves (Pedro), Margarida Vila-Nova (Inês), João Lagarto (Rei Afonso IV), Ana Cris (Blanca de Navarra), David Pereira Bastos (Álvaro Gonçalves), Leonor Alecrim (Violante), Maria Frade (Aia), Pedro Walter (Brito), Diogo Moura and Gonçalo Saraiva (filhos de Inês e Pedro)/ Set design: José Manuel Castanheira/ Costumes and props: Ana Paula Rocha/ Lighting design: Guilherme Frazão.

from the play; instead, three women are present to witness Pedro's grief, the Infanta de Navarra, and Inês's ladies-in-waiting.¹⁴ Pedro asks Violante to bring him the crown that he gave Inês when they married and promises his Queen a grand funeral procession with the way lit by "tochas brancas que invejem a estrelada safira". Violante runs up a ramp and returns with the crown, a delicate laurel wreath of gold. Pedro, smiling madly, tells Inês "de outra maneira entendi que fosses coroada mas não consegui". He tenderly adjusts the crown on Inês's head and kisses her but, in a rage, forces Violante to kiss Inês's hand, "beijais a defunta mão". Then, in a bold departure from Vélez de Guevara, Pedro whispers the proclamation of Inês's Queenship and Violante repeats the lines in the first person:¹⁵

PEDRO/VIOLANTE: Eu sou a Inês laureada,
eu sou a rainha infeliz
que merece em Portugal
reinar depois de morrer.

A women's chorus wails as Pedro picks Inês up from the floor to carry her off. But as he turns away from us, her hand moves behind his back and she frees herself from his hold to stand apart. Inês, very much alive, begins to run across the stage, up and down the ramps, with her long hair and silken white dress flowing behind her. Baroque music crescendos and flowers bloom brightly against a dark sky. A bell tolls and Inês stands still centre stage looking around and then at the audience, as the lights dim to blackout.

Ignacio García's direction aims to present Inês as an active figure who, contrary to a conventionally passive feminine construction, can claim subjectivity:

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14. It is common for twenty-first century producers of classic plays to reduce the number of characters and therefore employ less actors. In this production of *Reinar*, it also corrects the gender imbalance of Spanish Golden Age *comedias* where male actors dominated the profession. José Gabriel Antuñano's adaptation has an equal number of adult male and female characters and one male child.
15. This is not a convention without precedent. Teatro O Bando's 2011 staging of Miguel Jesus's *Pedro e Inês* had Teresa Lourenço, Pedro's mistress and mother of João I, manipulating Inês's corpse and speaking for her.

“O facto de Inês de Castro estar convicta de que estava a proceder de forma correta, preferindo ser a rainha infeliz do que renunciar ao matrimónio, não cedendo à sua dignidade, foi o que a fez reinar depois de morrer”, argumentou o encenador. Foi “*pelos seus atos e não pela herança de sangue*” que Inês de Castro “continua hoje a ser conhecida e, de alguma forma, continua a ser rainha”. É isso que “ainda hoje lhe confere legitimidade como rainha”, enfatizou. (*Lusa italics mine*)

In death, she is seen unblemished, is given voice through Pedro and Violante, and moves joyfully through space.¹⁶ She is the final image spectators see, seemingly reigning after death, not as the macabre Dead Queen but wholly and beautifully incorporated. García honours Vélez de Guevara’s condensed historicization to avoid the morbid spectacle of the Spanish tradition. His Inês “*pensa que a transcendência na vida é mais importante do que a própria vida*”. (*Lusa [n.p.]*)

This remarkable staging of Inês’s “transcendent” life in *Reinar* confirms Vélez de Guevara’s impact on Inesian drama. The popularity the play and its adaptations throughout the four-hundred-year span since its composition, changed the reception of the story of Inês and Pedro by shifting the thematic focus from political to romantic intrigue¹⁷ and, significantly for a feminist reading, endowed Inês de Castro with agency. The play’s enduring influence effectively altered her historical figuration in life and in death. *Reinar* conclusively proves that the staging of the *coroação e beija-mão* of the Dead Queen need not feature a decomposing corpse that induces fainting and vomiting. Rather, we are reminded, as Maria Leonor Machado de Sousa suggests, of Inês de Castro’s “*beleza que parece dever considerar-se incomparável*”. (11) Belying the macabre “*gusto espanhol pelo espectacular*” (58) demonstrated by his compatriots, Vélez de Guevara has given us a more sublime, more dignified and more active Inês.

16. The actor’s graceful movements belie the physical demands of walking and running on a set of steep skateboard ramps. In an interview for *Sábado* magazine, Margarida Vila-Nova stresses that her role was “*fisicamente exigente*”. (Bertrand)

17. Jorge de Sena notes that Vélez “*despolitiza o drama*”; (vol II, 256) as the amorous triangle of Pedro, Inês and the Infanta de Navarra takes precedence, there is little trace of the Love *vs* Reason of State theme of the Portuguese Renaissance poets.

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Video of Theatre Performance

Reinar Depois de Morrer. Co-produção Companhia de Teatro de Almada e Companhia Nacional de Teatro Clássico. Texto de Luis Vélez de Guevara; adaptação de José Gabriel Antuñano; tradução de Nuno Júdice; encenação de Ignacio García. Realização do vídeo: Cristina Antunes. Gravação integral com público: Teatro Municipal Joaquim Benite, Novembro 2019.