Queer Iberian Intimacies:

Constructing Early Modern Dissident Sexual Cultures

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Esteban Alejandro Crespo Jaramillo

Dissertation Director: Jesús R. Velasco

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Chapter One

Introduction: A Tenuous Resistance

This thesis analyzes the presence of sexual and gender variance in the Iberian Peninsula and the viceroyalties of Mexico and Peru in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The thesis of this thesis is simple and twofold. On the one hand, I argue that early modern Iberian cultures incorporated dissident sexualities and gender variance in richer, more quotidian ways than only through policing systems, including mainstream culture; hence, I aim to "de-Inquisitorialize" the study of early modern dissident sexual cultures, treating them not only as a set of curious exceptions. On the other, this thesis demonstrates that such incorporation of dissident sexuality was ubiquitous on both sides of the Atlantic. I develop and deploy the concept of "queer intimacies" to critique traditional historical and literary canons, which have proposed a monolithic early modern Iberian society obsessed with piety and heteronormativity. I frame my project within recent scholarship that examines queer Iberian people through the othering lenses of medicine, comedy, and the law, all major discourses of the period. Historiography has traditionally turned to the highly mediated legal archives whose very devices offer indispensable informa-

tion about queer identities. The study of early modern queer lives has almost exclusively relied on sources that, after being created under the purview of civil and ecclesiastical law, were accumulated and managed by those same laws in various, invaluable archives. However, my dissertation builds upon and goes beyond these discourses of criminalization, pathologization, colonization, and mockery of queer bodies. Contemporary Argentinian philosopher and trans activist Marlene Wayar explains this starkly clear when theorizing the concept "trava proxeneta" ("transvestite pimp") in her dictionary-treatise *Furia travesti: Diccionario de la T a la T*. "We suffer epistemic and hermeneutical violence," writes Wayar taking the voice of all "travas," "in that conjunction between medicine and the legal sciences where our own words are rendered invalid to speak about ourselves, to interpret our own vital experiences[1]."

Early modern queer archives exist as a triple paradox. First, and as many archives, they preserve that which they originally intended to persecute and ultimately erase. Second, while the law that created these archives was public and affected all of society, the archives themselves were secret and were access only by a minority. With some exceptions, like the *autos de fe,* the archives' documents—particularly the Inquisitions'—were strictly secret and classified. Inquisitorial processes were produced, circulated, and consumed almost exclusively by legal professionals, and everyone involved had to swear an oath of silence[2]. Thus, the archives' actual influence upon and contact with culture was not direct nor frequent. And, third, early modern queer archives seem to bring forth queer subjectivities intimately confessing their vital experiences, while they mostly contain calculated responses to socially isolated contexts designed to invalidate queer subjectivities.

I take Wayar's admonishment as an invitation to displace my focus away from the

intersection of socially isolated policing discourses and to look elsewhere and with other methods. Since legal archives were mostly kept secret, they were thus unknown to and untouched by audiences at the time of their production. Under this fundamental yet commonly overlooked contingency of queer archives, the role of legal texts in shaping early modern Iberian culture becomes secondary. A handful of professions associated to archival production—bailiff, prosecutor, or surgeon—and the few modes of reading and writing it welcomed—notarial script, legal summaries, secret depositions—have been over represented in scholarly discussions. Taking heed of Wayar's admonishment and the burgeoning *teorías travestis,* I have thus aimed to displace the archive—both as method and source—as the central focus of my attention. Less policed and more intimate texts and spaces appeared. Some of them were only transmitted in manuscript from, and effectively avoided governmental control: theatrical and poetic texts, personal correspondence, biography. These texts provide access to expressions of sexuality and gender identity removed from the strictures of legal and medical officers and discourses. I thus construct a more private, less policed space, the library. In this privileged intersection, the restricted legal archive is enriched by texts that actually informed and were informed by society. By centering the intimacy of libraries and their users, from the king to the servant, this dissertation engages with repositories of materials whose circulation through all the technologies of reading and writing—from aural and communal reading to writing done in one's silent cell—truly shaped culture. This allows me to engage with early modernity's own categories and to theorize how individuals experienced and conceived their intimate affective worlds.

This dissertation's three chapters explores various aspects of queer experience in the Iberian world, including a theatrical subgenre I dubbed 'homo by bewitching' that depicts

supernatural instances of dissident desire; the presence of trans individuals in Iberian societies; the complex interactions between converting lovers and American indigenous peoples. I close with an epilogue about 'sapiosexual lesbians' in the historical and literary records, and written expressions of intimate love between men in the fringes of empire. This dissertation also aims to give queer people of Hispanic and Iberian affiliation, descent, and affinity, a history that complements twentieth century "Anglo" thought. This history aims to supersede the theories constructed by inquisitors and doctors in the imperial centuries and that then the nineteenth-century apologetic scholars used in the mythologization of Spain and Latin America.

The unlimited, forbidden, and unnatural, dwelt not only at the inquisitorial interrogation, but also within the intimate, wicked, witty texts that I study. Legal sources do provide a plethora of such scenes, and inquisitors and prosecutors were particularly apt in obtaining juicy depositions. I aim to complement and build on the vast and rigorous scholarship devoted to such abundant materials. Those instances constitute snippets of life where desire and love got translated into genitally-forward legalese so it could enter the archive and, luckily, be preserved for centuries. Desire seems to have moved differently before and after a witness enunciated the words that the scribe would commit to paper through their quill, and before—not always after—a defendant spent months at the Holy Office's secret prisons, sporadically leaving their cell to talk to the judge and sign official papers. Before and after the law, or in the fringes of the law, or "without the veneer of rationalization[3]"—which here means genitalization—, desire moved differently. A widow had a dream of lesbian sex. Men erotically flatter the bodies of other men. The Spanish king's secretary had clerkish gay fantasies. All the men of a theater audience might have feared they could desire a man. A woman fell in love with another woman's intellect. For

the law, the only relevant bodily technology were the genitals, much like for some people today. Beyond that reductive rationalization of orgasm and reproduction, many bodily universes existed. Intimacy encompassed pollution but also the lips and the eyes and a conversation, of all which could also become sites for the most intense erotic fantasies.

This introduction will first theorize archives and its relation with prisons and gay raves. It will then explain the "queer Iberian library" as a methodology and the words that inform the corpora this dissertation studies.

1.1 Furtive Gazes

During a research stay in Mexico City in the summer of 2023 I spent many days—and a night—in prisons. It was an unlikely turn of events for an early modernist, but I was looking for queer folks. Not just in any prison, but in the city's three most prominent spaces for surveillance and biopolitical control, I found myself tracking down kindred souls. Unbeknownst to me at first, I ended up taking a transhistorical tour of prisons. Had the same soul and flesh that I embody been meandering through those halls and corridors some twenty, eighty or three hundred years ago, I would have been a prisoner just because of who I am. *Cárceles secretas*, panopticons, and *reclusorios*, throughout their history they have all housed sexually dissident people, or *jotos, bujarronas, travas,* as the Spanish language calls some of us. Mind you, the imposing and labyrinthine architectural machines in which I spent days on end had been deactivated already. They now house archives, museums, and gay raves. I have long inhabited these spaces of intellectual and bodily excitement, but by embodying at least two selves. One is the button-down-shirt researcher and, radically disjointed from him, the sleeveless party-goer who dances

until it hurts is the other. In Mexico these two selves finally lived simultaneously. Not unlike the Templo Mayor next to the Zócalo, where layers of ancient Mexica pyramids layer one atop of another, history had also layered the prisons I visited with archives, raves, and museums, one atop of another. This existence of different pasts in the same space blurred the boundaries of the multitudes one contains and had embodied. Better described as diachronic intermingling, my transhistorical experiences in Mexico afforded fundamental theorizations for this research, supplementing lacunae and orientating my inquiry. I thus begin with a reflection on the empowering and surprising ways prisons, archives, and raves have morphed into and out of each other, and how counterproduction of dissident cultures reclaims spaces, institutions, and pasts.

By far the oldest prison of my unintentional prison tour was the *prisiones secretas* [secret prisons] of the Holy Office of the Inquisition's Mexican Tribunal. Once known as the Palacio de la Inquisición, the building now belongs to the School of Medicine of the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, and houses a Museum of the History of Medicine and of the Inquisition. Regal and grand, the main patio comes first. A Mexican baroque palace built in the 1730s, its stone and woodwork bedazzles the visitor by dimming the vicious summer sun into a pleasant gleam. Still a bit secret, the spaces that used to house Inquisitorial jails extend beyond the second and third patios. I had to negotiate with the security guard so he would let me in those halls where Mariano de Aguilera, Erauso, and other people—or their signatures—, whom I have met through their signatures and depositions, were transformed into the matter of history. On the inside, one can see the same thick walls and iron bars that contained those intimate lives, today barely accessible through old ink-blotted papers. On the outside, an imposing and exquisite corner stone doorway greets the visitor. On the lateral façades, red and black *tezontle* bricks draw

the cross, the olive branch, and the sword of the infamous Spanish Inquisition's seal. Next to it, the Iglesia de Santo Domingo and its ample plaza serves as a reminder of the monopoly that the Dominican Order had upon all things inquisitorial. The Holy Office was abolished in 1820 in Mexico. And yet, as long as the red and black volcanic stone bricks continue to bolster up those walls while perpetually drawing the Inquisition's seal, the building inextricably signifies the Inquisition. No matter it now houses a museum. Beyond the back patios, the prisoners shared the building with the scribes, bailiffs, and judges that interrogated, prosecuted, and sentenced them. Although remodeled to exude a quaint colonial aura, the building and its grand stone corner doorway makes it easy to imagine what stepping through that threshold must have felt—the dread of being about to loose everything, for ever. The dread of the public humiliation, of wearing a *sambenito* and being destitute, of the lashes, of burning in the *quemadero de la Inquisición* across the street, of the blood, of the prohibited love that caused monumental tears—the stones and the lime plaster walls seem to whisper all of this. However thrilling and rich and all-consuming those stories are, this dissertation is not about them. It is about what happened before and after the cross, the olive branch, the sword.

I visited the Mexican Inquisition with a fellow queer and scholar, whom I had befriended in the morning, at the second oldest prison of my involuntary pilgrimage. Once called Palacio Negro de Lecumberri, that second oldest prison had been until 1976 the most important and biggest in the country. A strictly executed panopticon, it now houses the Mexican Archivo General de la Nación. Planned by autocratic president Porfirio Díaz, the Palacio Negro de Lecumberri was inaugurated in 1900. Less than a year later, on Sunday, November 18, 1901, the infamous raid of an exclusive, all-male ball in Mexico City, known as "Baile de los 41," took

place. Rumor and public opinion had it that Porfirio Díaz's son-in-law himself was among the jailed homosexuals, making it, really, a "Baile de los 42." Due to that *joto*'s [faggot's] prominence, the number quickly changed to 41. Lavish and attended by the country's elite "faggots," this ball is the first recorded gay modern party in Mexico. But it also marks, following Carlos Monsiváis astute reading, the invention of Mexican homosexuality, protected by its elitism and thus anonymized. "No matter how secretly they guard their orientation," theorizes Monsiváis, "after the Raid, the homosexuals of Mexico City no longer feel alone; in some way, in the spirit of the interrupted party, Los 41 accompany them, a signal of the tribe's existence[4]." Many sodomites were imprisoned in the Palacio Negro. An urban myth assigns "Pabellón J" [Wing J] to the queers, as in J for *jotos* [faggots]. The almost three centuries worth of archives of the Mexican Inquisition, which includes many tribes of *jotos*, are not housed in the *tezontle* building next to the Dominican plaza. Fittingly, these papers are located in one of the best preserved wings of the Palacio Negro. Two microfilm projectors fill each cell, and a bigger hall houses the main reading room. Almost everything changed in this panopticon, a true architectural machine. What once must have been a bleak, boisterous, and inhumane prison, is now a top research center, squeaky clean, silent, and luminous—librarians, archivists, and researchers instead of sentenced felons. However, since the labyrinth opened its doors in 1900, three presences have never stopped meandering those halls, in their life either as a prison or an archive. First, the police forces, peppered throughout, they have patrolled the halls, overseeing the rooms, letting people in and out, controlling our behavior. Second, dissidents folks, meanderings through those same halls and constructing parallel stories, like mine or Mariano de Aguilera's. And third, two signaling[5] systems that allow for both police and dissidents to inhabit their own reality and, at the

same time, to survive that shared space. In a panopticon, as in archives and dissident spaces (such as gay raves), the *gaze,* then, becomes a paramount tool of survival and success.

Observed by those tall, brawny policemen of the Archivo General de la Nación, I spent many days meandering with my eyes through archival signatures, microfilms, boxes, and folders. In prisons, in archives, and in dissident spaces, my eyes' gaze acquired a transcendental function, akin to gay cruising, where furtive gazes tower over as the most eloquent form of communication. To theorize this convergence of dissimilate spaces in the singularity of the gaze, I engage with the seminal and canonical ethnography of gay cruising, Humphreys' *Tearoom Trade: Impersonal Sex in Public Places*. There, the Episcopal priest and sociologist whose methods of collecting data continue to be critiqued and criticized, explains what defenses "homosexuals" have developed against outsiders, "like any deviant group": "secrecy about their true identity, symbolic gestures and the use of the eyes for communication, unwillingness to expose the whereabouts of their meeting places extraordinary caution with strangers[6]." Later, Humphrey elaborates on a fundamental aspect of symbolic gestures, or "signaling":

> The eyes now come into play. The prospective partner will look intently at the other's organ, occasionally breaking his stare only to fix directly upon the eyes of the other. "This mutual glance between persons, in distinction from the simple sight or observation of the other, signifies a wholly new and unique union between them." [From George Simmel, *Soziologie*,as quoted in Goffman. Behavior in Public Places (New York: The Free Press, 1963), p. 93[7]].

My gaze through these prisons' halls and papers was powered by an analogous desire and followed a similar ritual. In fact, I met Mariano de Aguilera, from Ayotla, in the main reading room. A self-proclaimed "andrógino," he was supported by his parents, Juan Francisco and María

López, in a gender transition that he would have wished ended in marriage with his beloved Clara Ángela López. In the 1759 *pedimento* where I met Aguilera, he explained that "he found … in his conscience to be of the Male sex[8]." Thus, he requested to be recognized as such by the authorities so he could marry Clara Ángela[9]. They both had already been physically intimate, making him responsible of protecting her honor, according to their current legislation. I felt my gaze was furtive. A secret to the policemen, to everyone altogether, it reminded me of the secrecy Humphrey theorizes. Particularly when inspecting the folios of the genital examination, when "I look intently at the other's organ," I only broke my stare to try to fix directly my gaze upon the eyes of Mariano, and did not find them. Tender and perfect for inspecting viceregal notarial handwriting, in the past two-hundred years the room's light had shined on those pages only a couple of times since they were written. Maybe only once more before, to my knowledge[10]. After transcribing Mariano de Aguilera's entire legal process (to be found in the Appendices), an awkward feeling took over me. I was reminded of how Argentinian trans writer Camila Sosa Villada novelized the advent of public lighting in a Córdoba park and how that impacted on the lives of the *travestis* that worked there. "We are not creatures of light," she narrates, "we are shade animals, of furtive movements and tenuous reverberations, as tenuous is our resistance. Light gives us away, expels us[11]."

Mariano de Aguilera's movements through the obscure legal machinery of the Spanish Empire tried to be furtive and his resistance, tenuous. He strove to do the correct thing, supported by his parents. And yet, doctors and authorities expelled him from society, denied his desire to marry, and barred him from seeing Clara Ángela ever again. He could lead his life as a man, but never marry. His genitals lack *hombría,* "manhood." In my transcribing of the process, was I

expelling Mariano and giving him away, again? How not to do it? I had seen the furtive gaze of Mariano de Aguilera and I acted on it, trying not to react to the legal apparatus that unfolds in his process. I called it a day at the Archivo General de la Nación, housed in that remodeled panopticon. When I was picking up my things from the lockers in the unassuming lobby, past the metal detectors, a similar furtive glance happened, but with a queer of flesh and blood. He was French and shy. To break the ice, I commented on the heat of that summer day and the need of rest. We ended up satiating our thirst together, in the *zona rosa.* Although a twentieth-century environmental historian himself, he later agreed to join my pilgrimage to the place of torture and death of so many of our fellow queers—el Palacio de la Inquisición. To my satisfaction, he was also moved by the stories I told him, some of which I will tell in these pages. After we said goodbye, sharing the early evening's contentment, he fixed his gaze directly upon mine and disappeared behind the Templo Mayor.

This dissertation is about such pilgrimages, prompted by the intimacy of furtive gazes that go beyond the indictments against queer desire and pleasure. For those who know how to gaze upon and find kindred clandestine eyes, strict spaces transform into intimate expanses. Almost entirely constructed upon surreptitious eye and body movements, gay cruising subverts public spaces. The intimacy of gay cruising overlaps and coexists with the public places in which it emerges. Those uninitiated would not even imagine that this library corner or that hallway regularly welcomes dissident intimacies. Sexually dissident cultures have found ways to tenuously transform the architectural machines of their times. Prisons, much like libraries and archives, entail strictures according to which subjects are classified and ordered. Following the halls or the traditions or the rubrics of such spaces will silence voices and overlook the existence

of other, more intimate expanses. Thus, this dissertation's resistance is tenuous, its movements through archives and books, furtive.

Another kind of furtive glance brought me to the third and last prison. Unknowingly, I had booked part of my research trip during June, the month which the global LGBTQ+ pride movement has declared to be its own. It commemorates the Stonewall Riots in 1969 in New York City, effectively sacralizing a gay bar in the Village above all other sexually dissident experiences in the world. Although the subsequent U.S. gay movement was led by white, middle- and upper-class gay men, the original U.S. queer movements were initially more diverse, and two trans black and brown women, Silvia Rivera and Marsh P. Johnson, were some of the leading voices in the Village. By the time the high queer feasts of late June came around in Mexico City in that summer of 2023, I had already befriended Andrés, a lawyer, and his group of gays. I got invited to what they said was *the* party. Called "Pervert," this rave synthesized what pride month has become for middle- and high-class gay men—to say it with Pedro Lemebel:

> una tonelada de músculos y físicoculturistas, en minishort, peladas y con aritos, las parejas de hombres en patines … en este barrio del sexo rubio … en esta fiesta mundial en que la isla de Manhattan luce embanderada con todos los colores del arco-iris gay. Que más bien es uno solo, el blanco. Porque tal vez lo gay es blanco

> a ton of muscles and bodybuilders, in short shorts, bald and with hoop earrings, couples in skates … in this neighborhood of blond sex … in this world-wide party where the island of Manhattan sports flags with all the colors of the gay rainbow. Which is, rather, just one color, white. Because, perhaps, what is gay is white.

"Pervert" did not represent Mexico's ethnic and cultural diversity. I could have been in Brooklyn or Berlin or Montreal. However, I was not. The venue served as a permanent reminder of what

pride used to represent. We were at the Reclusorio Sur of the Sistema Penitenciario de la Ciudad de México (South Prison of the City of Mexico Prison System). Unlike the Palacio de la Inquisición or the Palacio Negro de Lecumberri, both deeply reengineered to feel more humane, this third and youngest prison had been left mostly intact. The metal bars, the windows with chicken wire, the labyrinthine hallways with endless glossy baby blue walls, it all was the same as a decade or so ago when they served imprisonment's purposes. Homosexuality continued to be officially a crime in Mexico—as in Ecuador, my home country—until 1997. Before then, many *jotos* must have spent nights upon end right there, in the same place where that summer-time night I was openly celebrating my *jotería* ("faggotry"). While gaily meandering through the hallways of the prison, exchanging furtive gazes, satiating my hunger and thirst while dancing, I thought about the libraries and archives I had been visiting. I realized my gay body and my friends' gay bodies, and above all our gazes, were deeply reshaping this place, much like I had been trying to reshape libraries and archives. *Jotos, putos, enchaquirados, cuilones*—no raids endangered our reinvention of homosexuality, and yet we were still joined by Los 41 who actually ended up doing forced labor in Yucatán. "Pervert" protected us from the cross, the olive branch, and the sword, so we could be whatever we were before and after being perverts. Our sheer *emplumada* presence, as Lemebel would put it, our tenuous movements, made prison bars a sign of desire, prison halls a place of lustful encounters, and the endless inmate dining area became an endless, shirtless summer rave. Reminiscent of Tom of Finland's erotic parody of biopolitical mechanisms and actors, this *jotear* in a Mexican ex-prison prefigured the kind of theoretical intervention I want to achieve here[12]. To my fervent and intoxicated mind, meeting Mariano de Aguilera through his eighteenth-century legal process bore no essential difference to

spending time with the French historian at the ex Inquisitorial jail nor to dancing with Andrés the lawyer and his friends in the ex-reclusorio sur. I since have felt emboldened by a queer furtive gaze powerful enough to deactivate carceral and archival discourses and thus counterproduce itineraries through reshaping the strictures that have pathologized, criminalized, and mocked me and my kin.

This anecdotal theorization of the archive serves as a point of departure and a hint towards how the intimate emotional lives of queer people inhabit the early modern world. Unlike other theorizations of queer intimacies, most importantly Tim Dean's *Unlimited Intimacy: Reflections on the Subculture of Barebacking*, these pages do not aim at an ethnography of queer life. That kind of ethnographic work requires a methodology of data collection as direct as possible—in the first person. However, such methodology is insufficient and impossible for as a highly mediated source as the legal and literary archives I study. My anecdotal narrative serves the purpose of theorizing the spaces that the queers I study inhabit now—texts—and how the many past and after-lives of those spaces shape the queer lives of today. The sodomites were more than sodomites, and our bodies were also minds and souls: "hallo en mi conciencia," as Mariano de Aguilera whispered. People were freely expressing and exploring themselves and each other, reaching for and finding pleasure, recognition, pride. I have applied a similar meandering to my visits to libraries and archives. My exploration of bodies of knowledge in dusty hallways have allowed me to follow personal logics that aim to reconfigure the oftentimes stern and insufficient archival architectures. This is what I call the Queer Iberian Library, the tenuous resistance this dissertation is based on.

1.2 The Queer Iberian Library

I want to evoke two awkward, queer archives, or rather libraries—one historical and one fabulated. In 1992, the renovation of an old house in the little town of Barcarrota, in central-western Spain, resulted in an extraordinary discovery. A secret library of eleven books published in the sixteenth century, most of them prohibited, was found in a hidden chamber inside a wall. Yes, it was *inside* a wall, in the vein of *Don Quijote*'s library, it too walled up and sealed off eventually, but by don Quijote's friends weary of his nonsensical adventures. Both places, the historical Biblioteca de Barcarrota as it is now known, as well as Cervantes's walled-in fabulation, suggest the unbridled potency of libraries and the illusion of restraining them. Never mind the archival items were sealed off. Don Quijote still had his chivalric romances consigned to memory, while many other copies of the eleven books at Barcarrota still made the rounds among sixteenth-century readers. The Queer Iberian Intimacies this dissertation proposes to think through are not unlike these apparently secret libraries. I propose to piece together the fragments that make up a textual corpus representative of early modern queer Iberia (plays, personal letters, poems, biographical prose, trials), in order to theorize an emotional archive that nineteenth- and twentieth-century scholarly trends sealed off and that current historiography has started to examine.

I thus propose a shift of focus from the traditional archives towards the library in order to contend with the literary canon, to critique discourses of criminalization, pathologization, and mockery, and to ultimately treat archives as subjects and not only as sources. Recent outstanding scholarship on the subject has examined queer Iberian people as seen through the othering lenses of medicine, comedy, and the legal archive, all major discourses of the period. However, I

propose looking at intimate, less mediated expressions of sexuality and gender identity. Historiography has traditionally turned to the highly mediated legal archives. Its very devices—most prominently civil and Inquisitorial trials—provide indispensable information about queer identities but muffle the protagonists' voices. Although they are now public, these archives are mostly composed of documents that at the time of their production were only readable by the prosecutors and inquisitors, thus kept unknown to audiences of the time. Yet books and personal manuscripts were intimate artifacts much more accessible to wide audiences, not to talk about the performance of plays. As personal objects that belonged to individuals or institutions, library items went unbridled from hand to hand, shaping ideas, relaying concepts, and gathering marginalia. Furthermore, I do not propose to overlook historiography or traditional archives. Neither do I aim to simply address lacunae, or to be solely powered by a recuperative drive that only seeks to repair historical injury. Instead, my project thinks through these and other archives from the queer perspective of the library, both as a concept and a methodology, in order to engage early modernity's own categories and thus theorize how individuals experienced their intimate affective worlds.

The queer aspect of this archival practice and methodology has to do with the meandering paths I propose, from genre to genre, traversing different authors and geographies, from Spain, Peru, Mexico. It also has to do with how we approach the more traditional archives and with the movement from what Ann Stoler terms "the archive-as-source to the archive-as-subject." This movement can also reconnect the wonderful scholarly work done by historians and literary scholars, oddly divorced when addressing Iberian queer early modernities.

I do not see the archive either as a place that is hiding something or someone that needs

to "come out" or be diagnosed. Instead, I see this dissertation as "inviting in." The plays, poems, and letters I study are not only surprisingly accessible but also incredibly abundant. There is no shortage of such texts. They only *appear* to be secret, like the walled-in archives of Don Quixote or at Barcarrota. My project proposes to tear down, as it were, the plastered walls of the superabundant queer library to reveal what Anjali Arondekar eloquently called the "archival poetics of ordinary surplus[13]." This is an invitation to enter these libraries. These queer archives inhabited the houses, even within their walls. As a result, my project not only presents a new corpus, but also asks what the history of the book and textual scholarship can teach us about the history of sexuality and queer studies, and viceversa.

Archives famously share many of prisons's origins and characteristics as tools that create and were created by the State. Libraries tend to offer a similar yet alternative system of knowledge control, inasmuch their private nature contend with archives' claim to the *res publica.* This dissertation proposes to complement both. However, the generic, geographical, and archival variety that I welcome can seem disorienting and promiscuous. But orientation is to be found *within* the sources. The intimacy of queer lives and dissident sexual cultures in the Iberian worlds urges a disavowal of the archives' and the canons' mono-lithic, mono-graphic, and mono-gamic logics. This way of entering the Iberian worlds is what I dubbed the 'queer Iberian library.' Iberian archives' superabundace could entail disorientation, at least momentarily, and transdisciplinary studies do entail intellectual promiscuity. In the archives of Mexico City, but also in Quito, Madrid, New Haven, and London, and in the hundreds of pages of impervious hand writing, I have rarely lost my way. The disorienting part of those archives and of the canons they buttress has most commonly been the invisible structuration of cisgender's, straightness's, and

whiteness's apparent coherence, transparency, and chastity—their claim to being the normative place, the "here." Unassumingly, a self-proclaimed clear telos organizes the archival and the canonical. Anything and everyone who was born "con una alita rota" as Pedro Lemebel poetically put it, is made to stand out, relegated to a farther side[14]. The sources I gather here shimmer within their archives and canons. Sometimes literally through rubrication, sometimes by sheer silence they obtrude their contexts. And yet, such stark visibility does not correspond to structuration within their repositories. The paths that this dissertation follows aim to offer structuration from within. Therefore these paths are not inspired by the red rubrics in the catalogue that alert visitors of yet another *contra naturam* case; nor they are fortuitous and accidental. Meticulously crafted, this corpus is inspired by inhabiting uncomfortable spaces, not "here" but "there". Embracing disorientation through meandering and intellectual promiscuity is how one can find and recreate the queer library.

This dissertation's sources have mostly lived disjointed afterlives, controlled by systems that relegated them to oddities. However, other wayfinders have elucidated for me new ways of reading. Like Jesús Velasco by way of Michel de Certeau, I too see myself as a strange poacher, who "*enters* illegally into the territories of foreclosed times" and gazes *furtively*. With the booty of that hunt I too want to ask difficult questions, and maybe even "openly transform [the booty's] genetic code[15]." Similarly, Nicholas R. Jones theorization of *habla de negros* as a palimpsest allows him to reckon with the scholarly tradition while finding its lacunae. He employs the concept of "radical" in his methodology, "enlisting the insights of Africana studies in the service of Early Modern studies—and vice versa[16]." I aim to a similar path, enlisting the insights and methodologies of queer studies. Within queer studies themselves, Gayle Rubin's application of

archaeological methods to cultural anthropology, particularly the concept of "cultural variation" and "settlement pattern" as applied to non-normative sex has been fundamental. By tracing "the shifting locations of gay sex," Rubin was able to make sense of the geography of gay subcultures in 20th century San Francisco and their complex interconnections with urban development[17]. I aim to trace the shifting locations of the untimely queers in the archives, who dazzle and bedazzle, perpetually out of place and fictitiously disjointed from one another. One could also equate this wayfinding to Tim Dean's theorization of the epitome of gay spaces, cruising[18]. Dean defines gay cruising as a "distinctive ethic of openness to alterity[19]." My methodology also evokes Sara Ahmed's elucidation in her *Queer Phenomonology,* that "to be orientated is also to be turned toward certain objects, those that help us to find our way." Orientation here does not come from an exterior point of reference, an external *origo*, but by a succession of intimate objects that were deemed outsiders. Wayfinding actively creates this queer library—provided one understands promiscuous meandering not as synonym of loss but as an aggregation of anchoring points driven by desire. A different way to enter these worlds is possible, a crooked and labyrinthine hunting path, radically open to variety, alterity, and promiscuity, whose orientation comes from within—the queer Iberian library, in which the first orientating objects are words.

1.3 Words, Things, and Statistics: From Sodomita to Puto

In mapping the queer Iberian library, I have found a lack of reflection on the complexity of words relating to dissident sexualities. Archives are mostly made of words, and to unlock them one must fully understand the meaning of the most salient of them. Quoting early modern lexicographers does not immediately amount to a sound philological and historically accurate

source. Argentinian author, Camila Sosa Villada, shares this opinion when referring to herself and the *travestis*.

> The Dictionary of the Royal Spanish Academy does not do us justice: "Person, usually a man, who dresses and characterizes himself as someone of the opposite sex." Now go read this book by Marlene and know how complex, deep, diverse, important and changing our meaning is in the world. And how much the Academy has simplified with that shitty definition[20].

Sosa Villada is referring to Marlene Wayar's *Furia Travesti: Diccionario de la T a la T,* a lexicographic *travesti* theorization and experimentation from one of Latin America's most powerful and authentic *travesti* thinkers. By naming the world anew from her own experience, Wayar counterproduces language. She travesties dictionaries and philosophy, because neither are sufficient.

Before I continue further, I would like to provide a provisional overview of some of the ways in which one can theorize the words for sodomites in Imperial Spain. For a collection of sins and crimes called *nefandus* (i.e., unfit to be spoken of), the ways in which Early Modern Spanish can name them make up a numerous and oftentimes fuzzy, contradictory collection of words. From the *crónicas de Indias* to poetry and plays, but also legal processes that used words describing what today we would call queerness, this section aims to discuss the implications that the imperial project had on sexuality and on the definitions of nature (*contra naturam, nefandus*, etc.), and vice-versa. In order to make sense of the truly innumerable sources I used, I have harnessed the power of sociolinguistics and basic statistical analysis, in a small sample: the usage of the words *sodomita* and *puto* in printed texts from the fifteenth to the eighteenth centuries.

Basic issues of historical sociolinguistics and "glottopolitics" can enrich this dissertation,

at its outset—the meaning of words within a past society and their interactions with our present. To say it with José del Valle, I've felt the need to see the historicity of my sources' language "not only as evolution along different positions in a chronological empty grid, but as a dynamic relationship with context[21]." In this methodological context, many a problem arises. One of the first and most obvious obstacles to access such "intimate affective worlds" is the absence of the affective subjects, or rather their fragmented presence in the abundant archives and libraries. We only have their words—and highly mediated if at all. If the past already comes to us haphazardly as an unsystematic collection of sources, the fragmentation and erasure through which one can glimpse queer folks from the past amounts to a big epistemological and methodological problem. They emerge from the shadows of the past in a letter found by chance, or a sonnet, or as a secondary character in a play, and then they disappear again, leaving nothing but vestiges. They abound, but in fragments. Coeval dictionaries provide insufficient material which does not lend itself to the reconstruction of the language, the nuances, and the societal contexts I am after. The sources I examine have keywords and expressions whose value is outstandingly complex to locate within "language's particular configuration of orderly heterogeneity[22]."

Take the word *sodomita*. For the Holy Office, *sodomita* meant, in the best of cases, hundreds of lashes, and in the worst, death by fire. For Gregorio López, the glossator of the *Siete partidas* and member of the Council of the Indies, it was a legal fiction that shall also include women. For Quevedo it is a joke. It is an insult when translated into the language of the indigenous Cuevas people in Panamá, as *camaioa*[23], according to Barcia when reading Oviedo. Nebrija, who translated the word in his 1495 *Vocabulario español-latino,* divided *sodomita* in two, according to who does what. The "sodomita puto que haze" [sodomite who does] and the

"sodomita que padece" [sodomite who receives]. However, both translations—*paedicus*, and *pathicus cynaedus,* correspondingly—are indistinguishable from generic lewdness and its associated pederasty in the classical world. Nebrija's lexicographic classification provides yet another word, still well and alive almost six centuries later—*puto*, literally "male prostitute" but also similar to the English *bugger*, but not quite the same.

Poignant texts have been written with those two words, *sodomita* and *puto*, and many queer people have experienced their specific stings and delicate differences. But our coeval dictionaries do not account for those nuances that we, speakers, know so well. Our *Diccionario de la lengua española* indicates that *puto* is "malsonante," that is, a cacophonous word, while it explicates that *sodomita* is an adjective commonly used as a noun. This dictionary bases its definitions on linguistic corpora, but also on other past dictionaries, which based their definitions on yet other past dictionaries, until we arrive to Nebrija who uses *sodomita* and *puto* almost interchangeably. So the issue remains while further questions arise. What has *sodomita* meant through time? Who used it and when and where and for what purposes? How do that word's uses and meanings relate to similar words, like *puto*? Which word should one use in scholarly prose today? If we were to rely exclusively on the early modern Spanish dictionaries to ascertain the values of *puto* and *sodomita*, we would be misled. The fourteen, mostly bilingual dictionaries that have the word *puto* between 1495 and 1737 make it seem that it is a synonym of *sodomita*. To the learned reader this may seem suspicious but acceptable—after all, Quevedo used both[24].

In 1713 the Spanish linguistic imperial project took effect by the foundation of the Royal Spanish Academy and the publication of its *Diccionario de Autoridades*, beginning in 1726 and ending in 1739. Other publishing projects preceded *Autoridades,* from Elio Antonio de Nebrija's

1492 famous grammar and its avowal of language as a helper of empire to lexicographers such as Covarrubias and the authors of bilingual dictionaries of American languages. Since the 16th century, Spanish has been the language of people that call places beyond Europe, such as Quito, San Juan, or Cuyo, home. Already around the 1650s the population of the non-European Spanish empire was the same as that of the peninsula[25] (see figure 6). And it just kept growing. By the 1950s there were as many Spanish speakers in the Iberian Peninsula as there were in Mexico alone. However, this demographical history has not been reflected in the politics of language and lexicography. Only since 2001 the non-Iberian academies have been able to officially collaborate in producing the most authoritative, yet sometimes infamous, *Diccionario de la lengua española.* That is to say, until 2001 only the Royal Spanish Academy had a say—or rather, thought it had—in deciding which words are actually words.

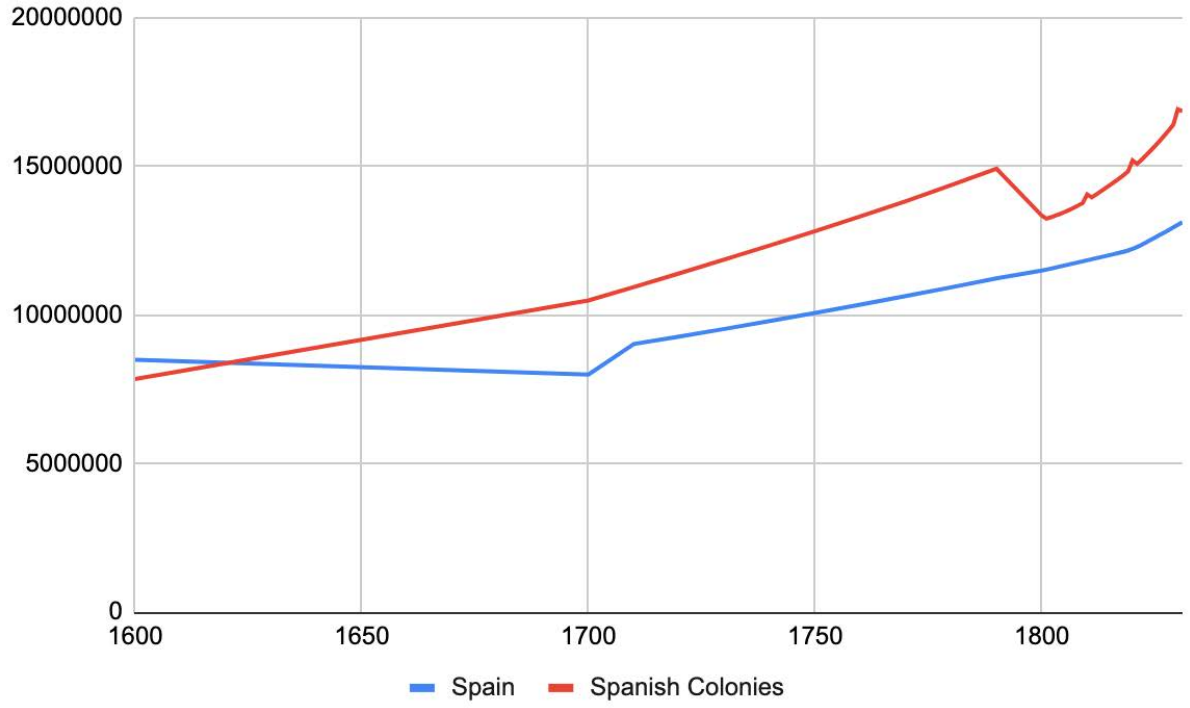

Figure 6. Populations of Spain and its colonies (aggregation of the populations of within the borders of present-day Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican

Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Puerto Rico, Uruguay, and Venezuela). Raw data source: Our World in Data, "Population, 1600 to 2021" (Graph and data processing by Esteban Crespo, 2024).

One of the latest lexicographic projects of the RAE is its *Historical Dictionary of the Spanish Language*. I learned how this dictionary is being produced last summer, at the Academia Ecuatoriana de la Lengua, the third oldest such academy of the Spanish language, where I was invited to collaborate in the dictionary. Every so often, the Royal Academy in the Metropolis sends a message whereby it entrusts each peripheral academy with a set of words to be diachronically defined. The Royal Academy also offers training in lexicography and historical grammar, via videoconferencing. All the dictionary entries thus produced are gathered together in Madrid, edited, vetoed and then uploaded to a website. I inquired if we could request that the Ecuadorian Academy be entrusted with the word *sodomita.* After all, Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo, and many other chroniclers of the Indies after him, reported that among the Huancavilcas of the northern coastal Peruvian provinces—that is, Ecuador—, a group of *enchaquirados* were known for their unspeakable sins. Furthermore, one of the presidents of the *Real Audiencia* of Quito was tried for sodomy in the late 1600s. What would it mean, then, for a group of Quiteños, in the peripheries of empire, to research, describe, and define the word *sodomita* and its derivations? What did that word mean throughout time and within its various historical contexts? The questions and troubles and obstacles I want to think through are not unlike the ones posed by this anecdote.

Two parallel systems are in operation. One, the official, legal, imperial rule, and then the other, daily usages of speech. Due to the ways in which the past makes itself present, the former system seems so much more abundant than the latter, when in actuality it was probably just as

strong. The former, that is the daily usages of language, the taste of a turn of phrase, the childhood memory, the experience we all have with our words, those are acts of speech with a powerful synchronous presence but a precarious diachronic one. What to do in the absence of speech? Maybe turn to the politics of language, to quote again from the Del Valle's Introduction to *A Political History of Spanish:* "This is precisely historical sociolinguistics' intent: In the absence of actual speech, historical sociolinguists must devise ways to treat the archival material so that it will lend itself to the reconstruction of the language's particular configuration of orderly heterogeneity at any time and to the field's signature quantitative approach."

One could argue that there is a disconnect between my project at large and this specific part of it. How can one reconcile historical sociolinguistics' quantitative approaches with the theorizations about the intimate affective worlds of queer individuals? Is there a non-sentimental yet respectful place to remember all those *cuilones, lindos, sométicos, nefandas, mujeriles, maricas, mariones, maricones, marimachos, hombrunas* and *sodomitas* shamed and lashed and lost to the flames in Mexico or Quito or Madrid because of the ways in which they looked for and found sexuality, gender, fun, pleasure, maybe identity, and certainly love? To attempt an answer to this question, I have applied quantitative analysis restrictively, as a lexicographic and sociolinguistic tool. In other words, this kind of analysis can enhance our understanding of words in their early modern contexts by, among other analyses, assessing linguist variation, within the three traditional parameters of diatopic, diastratic, and diaphasic variation. My aim is to supplement the traditional methodologies of historical inquiry, literary studies, and contemporary critical thought, based mostly on dictionaries and the scholar's aesthetic experience, so I have a solid foundation and a space to theorize more freely.

And now comes the time to explain the parameters of the analysis, which will bring us back to the Real Academia Española via its linguistic corpora. Besides having monopolized the politics of a language mostly spoken outside the metropolis, this institution also has provided a set of linguistic corpora of enormous value to all Spanish speakers. Two of the corpora I worked with are managed by the Academy: the CDH (*Corpus del Diccionario histórico de la lengua española*) and the CORDE (*Corpus diacrónico del español*). Another Academy-run, freely accessible online resource, not a corpus but a collection of dictionaries, is the *Nuevo tesoro lexicográfico de la lengua española* (NTLLE). Beside those two corpora, I also work with Google Books, through Advance Search and the Ngram viewer, as well as with Mark Davies's *El corpus del español*. This amounts to data sets containing hundreds of millions of words within thousands of texts from printed books that circulated mostly freely and that have been preserved in libraries and archives. Early modern linguistic corpora tend to be created from materials that could have been found in libraries of the period, because those are the most abundant printed texts. Some databases are classified by lemmatization or tags, some are not, but all lend themselves to basic statistical analysis and count graphs, which is what informs my results. This is but a fraction of what can be done with data analysis[26].

The steps for this particular analysis are pretty straightforward. After selecting the corpora, and the time frame, which in my case is 1450 to 1750, a glossary of terms has to be defined. For best results, the frequency of the selected words ought to be high throughout the period and corpora selected—neither too frequent nor exceedingly rare. Hence, the resulting sample will more easily lend itself to the aimed analysis. Semantically, the words can be polysemous but their primary meaning should be distinctly associated with non-normative

sexuality and gender. A first inspection of this could be done through the coeval dictionaries, despite their insufficiency. For the two words I selected, *sodomita* and *puto*, its frequency is average and its meanings are complex and nuanced, but still semantically contained. Another possible word could be *lindo,* used to refer to effeminate men in general and sometimes to sodomites in particular. The problems with *lindo* are twofold. Not only its frequency is very high, but also its primary meaning, 'sweet, cute,' is terribly generic. The resulting sample was noisy—populated with irrelevant occurrences, that is. Words like *lindo*, whose usage exceeds the semantic limits of the search, need further filters and data cleaning, which so far exceeds my the current objectives of this project. On the lower end of the frequency spectrum we have words like *cuilón* and *enchaquirado*. Both are *hapax legomenon,* or *hapax*—that is, a term of which only one instance of use is recorded. Hapax are unique words with very low occurrences in all corpora, sometimes even only one occurrence. Since the power of historical sociolinguistics comes from sample size, an *hapax* cannot be analyzed successfully under this methodology. But *sodomita* and *puto* afford good samples within most of the linguistic corpora available.

I said that if we were to rely exclusively on early modern Spanish dictionaries to ascertain the values of complex words within their particular configuration of orderly heterogeneity we would be misled. This is particularly true with keywords associated with obscenity or lewdness like the ones that interest me, because of censure and prudishness. Of the fourteen important dictionaries I have consulted, only two have a sort of definition: Nebrija's *Vocabulario* (1495) and the *Diccionario de Autoridades* (1727). Nebrija does with *puto* what he did with *sodomita.* He divides both words in two and gives the same exact translations to the corresponding word according to who does what. The other bilingual or trilingual dictionaries tend to follow

Nebrija. *Autoridades* also builds synonymy between *puto* and *sodomita*. It does so by means of a third term, *pecado nefando,* or the unspeakable sin. *Puto* is defined as *pecado nefando*. In turn, *pecado nefando* is defined as that of Sodom, that is that of the *sodomitas*. Hence, *puto* is analogous to *sodomita*. In other words, by the transitive property of propositional logic, an identity between Puto and Sodomita is formed, thus:

Puto ≈ *Pecado Nefando*
Pecado Nefando ≈ *Sodomita*
∴ *Puto* ≈ *Sodomita*

Autoridades does quote the textual authorities upon which it is based, i.e., its corpora. For *pecado nefando* it gives a Moreto play, but Quevedo is the source of choice for both *puto* and *sodomita*[27].

With the insufficient and incomplete information that dictionaries provides us, what could one conclude? Well, first, that *puto* and *sodomita* were considered synonyms. Secondly, it seems both words could be used interchangeably, meaning that variation was low across social class (diastratic), speech register (diaphasic), and probably space (diatopic) and time (diachronic). I, like many other scholars, had been reading my materials under these assumptions, and formulating theories and close readings based on what little I could obtain from Nebrija and *Autoridades*. If I read *sodomita* instead of *puto,* I would not have assumed anything particularly interesting stood before my eyes. However, I was missing these vestiges' fundamental details, lost through these dictionaries' enormous gaps. Quoting Covarrubias or Nebrija or *Autoridades* is not enough.

Let us first see the results of Davies's *Corpus del Español* (Figure 1 and Figure 2) and of Google Books Ngram Viewer (Figure 3) for the words *puto* and *sodomita.* Since these corpora

are not fully lemmatized or fully edited yet, the orthography of *puto* sometimes becomes entangled with other words, such as "pūto" (pu[n]to = "point") or the Latin verb "puto", meaning "I think." This is why for the Ngram Viewer I have also added the word *nefando*, unmistakable, to compare its frequency and keep an accurate reading.

SECTION	ALL	1200s	1300s	1400s	1500s	1600s	1700s	1800s	1900s	ACAD	NEWS	FICT	ORAL
FREQ	207	0	0	30	47	61	11	0	29	0	1	21	7
WORDS (M)	100	7.9	3.0	9.7	19.7	14.8	11.5	23.1	22.8	5.0	5.0	4.8	4.2
PER MIL	2.07	0.00	0.00	3.68	2.76	4.94	1.12	0.00	1.27	0.00	0.20	4.40	1.65

Figure 1. Frequency for the word *puto*, data from *Corpus del Español*.

SECTION	ALL	1200s	1300s	1400s	1500s	1600s	1700s	1800s	1900s	ACAD	NEWS	FICT	ORAL
FREQ	9	0	0	4	1	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
WORDS (M)	100	7.9	3.0	9.7	19.7	14.8	11.5	23.1	22.8	5.0	5.0	4.8	4.2
PER MIL	0.09	0.00	0.00	0.49	0.06	0.32	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Figure 2. Frequency for the word *sodomita*, data from *Corpus del Español*.

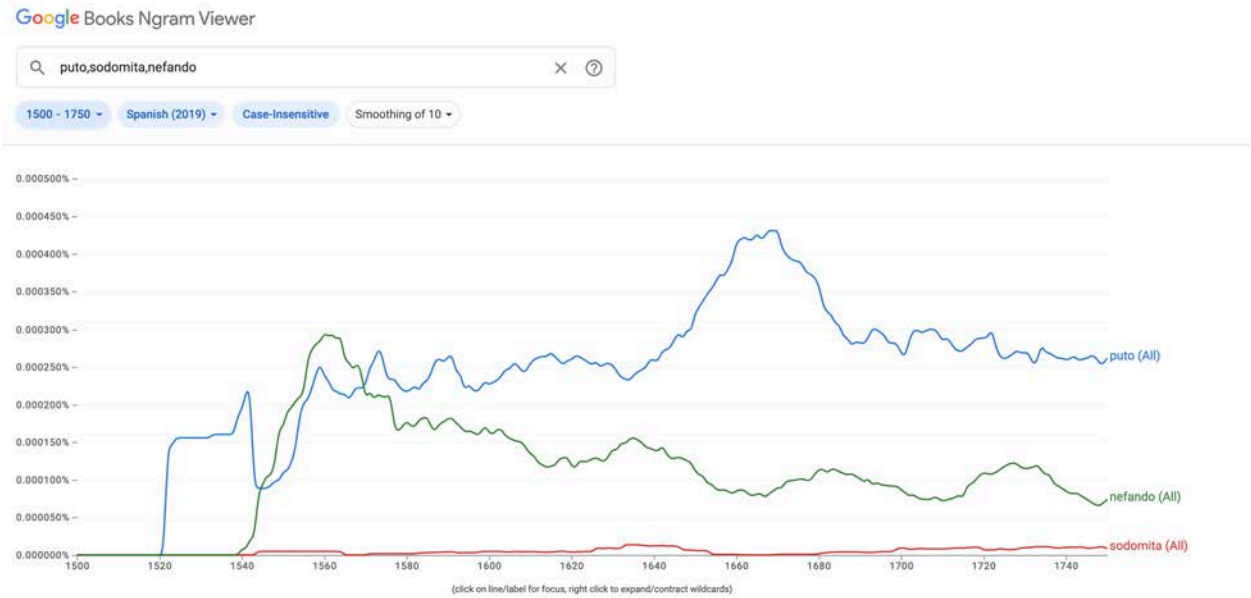

Figure 3. Frequency for the words *puto, nefando, sodomita*, data from *Google Ngram Viewer.*

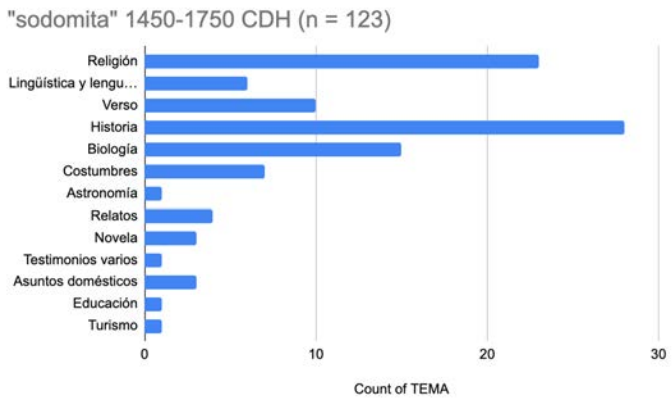

Figure 4. Frequency for the word *sodomita* in the CDH (Esteban Crespo, 2024).

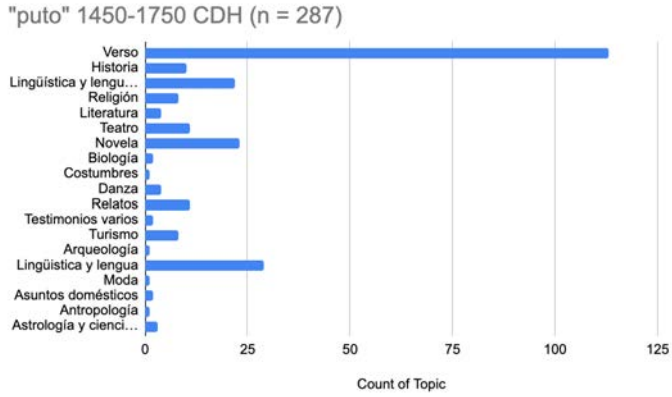

Figure 5. Frequency for the word *puto* in the CDH (Esteban Crespo, 2024).

Two conclusions can be reached from the results of the figures from Google Book's, Davies's, and the CDH's corpora (for these see the *n* values below, (Figure 4 and Figure 5). The first and clearest conclusion has to do with the frequency. *Puto* is by far more frequent than *sodomita* in these corpora. Even if the data of *puto* was noisy, the distance in frequency between both words would far surpass a high deviation. In other words, this most important difference between *puto* and *sodomita* entails their abundance in these corpora, representative of the written and published materials in early modern Spanish. Such a stark difference of frequency in the written record may suggest that the word *puto* was also more present in oral, everyday use.

Secondly, a diaphasic, very basic analysis of the two words in the CDH corpus can yield

further conclusions (Figure 4 and Figure 5). *Puto* is preferred in poetry, fictional prose, and theatre, while *sodomita* is abundant in historical, religious, and biological treatises. Similar results are yielded from the CORDE corpus, *puto* being the more frequent one. *Puto* is also preferred by texts written in verse, while prose tends to choose *sodomita,* and the Davies corpus reflects that (Figure 1), since most occurrences are in fictional texts (4.40 per mil). The picture thus formed is more complete and nuanced. *Sodomita* and *puto* may be semantically analogous, but in their contexts they served different purposes. *Sodomita* seems to have been preferred in more formal, prestigious registers, while the creative subjectivities and acts of speech conjured by poetry, fiction, and theatre were inclined to the word *puto*. Early modern lexicography, so frequently developed in connivance with the imperial project, not only would have scuffed at such delicate nuances, but it probably would have not seen them.

Anyone familiar with Spanish archives would be surprised by these two first conclusions, because *sodomita* is the most common word used in those archives. Let us remember, however, that linguistic corpora of early modern languages mostly consist of texts produced during that period, set to print, and allowed to run freely from library to reader to library, until they reached us in the present. Linguistic corpora aim to reflect the broadest usage of language, and legalese constitutes a specific sociolect, limited to a few professions.

Yet a third conclusion can be derived if to this discussion one includes archival databases, not normally included in linguistic corpora, and certainly not included in the ones I analyzed. *Puto* is not a legal, technical, or medical word, but *sodomita* is. In the indexes and search tools of all Spanish archives, the words that abound when referring to queer lives is *sodomita* and *sodomía*, not *puto.* In fact, the usage frequency of our two words in two legal databases (Portal

de Archivos Españoles [PARES] and Archivo General de la Nación, Mexico [AGN]) diametrically opposes the corpora results, as figures 24 and 25 show. Using the same parameters used upon the linguistic corpora (years 1450-1750), the PARES database shows that "sodomía" (and the derived "sodomita") is associated with 189 documents, while only 4 documents contain the word "puto" in their bibliographical record. For the national Mexican archives, the numbers are 57 for "sodomita" and only 2 for "puto." These results do not derive from searches through the whole text but only through the paratexts—title, location, and general details—that organize the database and its corresponding archive. However, the difference is radical.

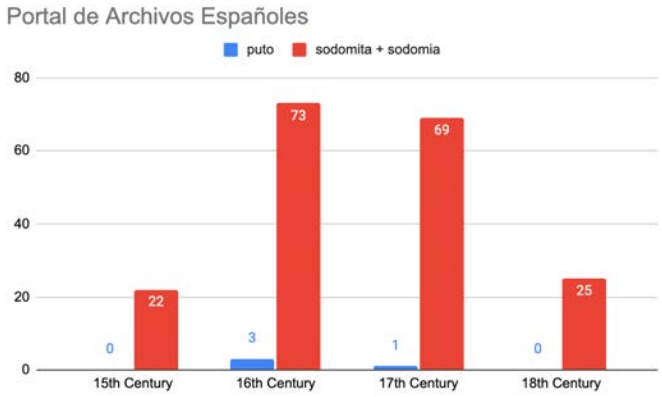

Figure 24. Frequency for the words *sodomita* + *sodomia* and *puto* in the PARES database by century (Esteban Crespo, 2025).

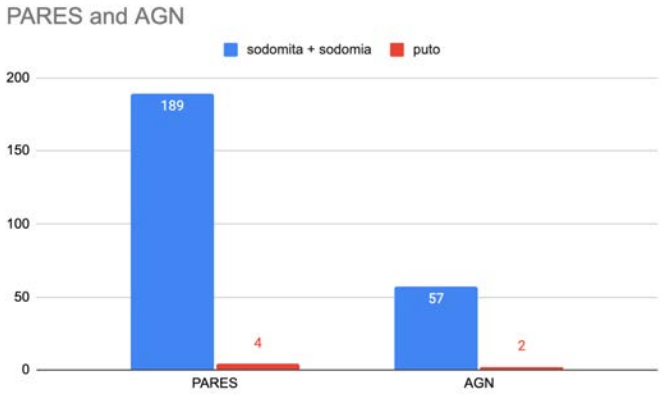

Figure 25. Frequency for the words *sodomita* + *sodomia* and *puto* in the PARES and Archivo

General de la Nación (AGN) databases (Esteban Crespo, 2025).

The third conclusion is a confirmation, to a granular level, of the legal archives' limited influence and impact upon culture and society in the early modern Iberian worlds. The legal archives and the linguistic corpora diametrically differ in their use of the words *puto* and *sodomita.* They show two radically different linguistic realms, and a textbook example of diaphasic (that is, in speech register) linguistic variation. It seems that the legal lexicon associated with *sodomita* did not penetrate society and culture, while the colloquial word *puto* only appears when enunciated by people not associated with the legal professions. Archives' congenital secrecy have kept them, centuries after their creation, still disjointed from their culture and society. Encountering the words *sodomita* and its derivations means encountering the public voice and the language of legislators, inquisitors, judges, bailiffs, medical doctors, surgeons. This word should invoke the secrecy, violence, and abuse of the inquisitorial processes and the Ancien Regime trials. Instead, reading the word *puto* entails the colloquial, lewd, and at times insulting context of the street, but also theater's imaginations and the playfulness of poetry. A bailiff would have managed the *sodomita* during the secret inquisitorial trials, but at the public square would have yelled "¡puto!," just like an *entremés* I study in the next chapter shows. Although archives have been isolated from society, they continue to be over-represented in scholarly work.

I ask again, how can one reconcile historical sociolinguistics' quantitative approaches with the theorizations about the intimate affective worlds of queer individuals? How can one account for all the *enchaquirados, sodomitantes, marimachas, monstruos de natura, bujarronas, maricotes, doncellos, putos,* and *afeminados* of the past without echoing the pathologization,

criminalization, and mockery they probably underwent in Seville, Quito, Cuyo? One way is to actually say gay, realizing that the politics of language and the language of politics have continued to debate, censure, defend, and use words like these in everyday life, inside Missouri classrooms and within the confines of libraries in Tampa, and during dinners at Mar-a-Lago. Some debates around these early modern words sadly continue to be relevant and urgent in our times. Thinking critically, alongside colleagues and across fields enriches projects like this one. That is precisely why I have felt this need to turn to a systematic and quantitative analysis of the many corpora we have available. By that kind of data analysis one can try to recuperate the nuances lost to the flames of time.

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