

Agency As Resistance Through Self-Governance And Implicit Power

A recurring and seemingly important theme within the assigned readings this week is that of resistance. Many of the assigned readings discuss women resisting the oppressive structures and people designed to force them into roles of subservience. In chapter 5 of Kelly Hayes' *Holy Harlots*, we learn about Nazare's life as a Zelador, but also as a woman who was mistreated because of her desire to have normal experiences. Nazare had given up very many things to be seen as the "supermother" that she knew herself to be, though it seemed impossible for her to escape the warped perception her father and husband held of her. Through passive experiences with spirit possession, Nazare managed to retain a considerable amount of her agency if we measure it in terms of autonomy (self-governance) and power, even though her existence was plagued by sadness, mistrust, and abuse.

Though it seemed to her father that she was rebellious, which often led to him physically abusing her, Nazare just wanted to have fun and do things that were typically of kids her age. We see this to be evident when Hayes writes, "Nazaré's accounts of her childhood emphasized the clash between a lively young girl desirous of the typical experiences of adolescence and an autocratic father who, in enforcing his conservative standards of family life, quashed, at times physically, these innocent desires" (Hayes 135). It's pretty clear through

Nazare's recollections of her childhood and memories of her early possessions that the relationship she had with her father was very troublesome, but Nazare's relationship with the spirits proved to be beneficial in the way that they protected her from as much of her father's abuse as possible, providing her with power over her situation implicitly.