

Absence and Presence: Performing (In) Visible Masculinities in Federico García Lorca's *La casa de Bernarda Alba* and Ernesto Caballero's *Pepe el Romano*

José I. Badenes
Loyola Marymount University

Abstract: Federico García Lorca's *La casa de Bernarda Alba* (1936) and Ernesto Caballero's *Pepe el Romano* (2003) are intertextually related plays. Whereas García Lorca's play populates mimetic space with the women from the Alba family and exiles men to diegetic space, Caballero's work reverses the spatial configuration and focuses on the men, thus apt plays to illustrate gender issues. Masculinity, embodied in both plays by their strongest link, Pepe el Romano, is used heuristically, supported by two scholarly traditions closely related to it, post structural gender analysis and masculinity studies, to demonstrate gender performativity and invisibility and comment on coercive and violent power relations.

Keywords: Gender, Intertextuality, Invisibility, Masculinity, Pepe el Romano

Federico García Lorca's *La casa de Bernarda Alba* (1936) and Ernesto Caballero's *Pepe el Romano*. *La sombra blanca de Bernarda Alba* (2003) are intertextually related plays. In a study about intertextual discourse, John P. Gabriele provides numerous "examples of the intricate and complex ways in which *Pepe el Romano* intersects textually, contextually, structurally, and thematically with *La casa de Bernarda Alba* ("A case of intertextual discourse" 133). On the one hand, García Lorca's play populates the space that spectators see with the women from the Alba family and exiles men to the area the play's characters refer to, invisible for the audience. On the other hand, Caballero's work reverses the spatial configuration and focuses on the men. Together both plays provide textual and performative evidence to illustrate gender issues, particularly masculinity. Embodied in both plays by their strongest link, the character of Pepe el Romano, masculinity is employed heuristically in this essay to interrogate gender, since "masculinity and femininity are not absolute, discrete, and independent categories, but rather derive from one another their meaning and significance" (Buchbinder 92). Masculinity is deployed

here to comment and analyze the invisible performance of power through gender.

García Lorca scholarship on gender and theater has traditionally focused on the women who populate the plays. When male characters have been analyzed independently from the female roles, it is not to talk specifically about their gender issues, but other aspects. According to masculinity studies' scholars, precisely because of their omnipresence, men "have been obscured by being too much in the foreground" (Brod 40-41), rendered invisible by ignoring the ethnic, social and sexual diversities that individuate them. Through their research, masculinity studies' scholars have sought to dispel men's invisibility by deconstructing universalizing presumptions and stereotypes, thus gendering men as well as women. Presently, there is very little scholarship on masculinities with regard to García Lorca's theater¹. Given their intertextual relationship and intrinsic thematic compatibility, comparative work on *La casa de Bernarda Alba* and *Pepe el Romano* employing masculinity as a lens with which to examine questions of gender and power contributes to expanding this area of scholarship.

La casa de Bernarda Alba is a three-act play about the repressive regime a rural matriarch has over her five daughters and of her youngest child's desperate attempt to break free of her mother's dictatorial regime with fatal consequences. Bernarda Alba has lost her second husband and has imposed a cloistered eight-year period of mourning on her five unmarried daughters as befits local custom. Pepe el Romano, a handsome and attractive suitor who is never seen in the play, courts Angustias, Bernarda's financially secure eldest daughter from her first marriage, while carrying on secretly with the youngest, rebellious Adela. The hidden affair is eventually discovered. Because of the lies of a jealous third sister, Martirio, who tells Adela that her mother shot and killed Pepe el Romano, the girl hangs herself. Bernarda is tyrannized by her concern for her and her household's public image. She, therefore, insists that her daughter died a virgin, imposing silence and eight more years of mourning on her family. Thus, *La casa de Bernarda Alba* is a play about oppression and repression. It is about the clash between an authoritative principle that silences, which Bernarda represents, and a principle of freedom, which Adela symbolizes.

Subtitled "drama de mujeres en los pueblos de España", the play focuses on "the social and historical confinement of women" (Gabriele, "Mapping the Boundaries of Gender" 385) by populating mimetic space, "the space that is visually represented onstage" (382), exclusively with women and assigning all men to diegetic space, "the space to which characters make reference to" (382). The play's dramatic tension is "the

¹ To my knowledge, Christopher James Sherwin's MA thesis "The representation of masculinity in the theatre of Federico García Lorca" (2005) and José I. Badenes' "Staging the Senex: Aging Masculinities in the Theater of Miguel de Cervantes and Federico García Lorca." *Romance Notes*. 54.3 (2014): 335-46 are the only two articles that have dealt specifically with masculinity issues in García Lorca's theater.

result of an interplay of mimetic and diegetic space” (382), between female and male elements. Thus, García Lorca “relies on spatial narrative to...speak politically about gender” (381), the focus of John P Gabriele’s article “Mapping the Boundaries of Gender: Men, Women and Space in *La casa de Bernarda Alba*”.

However, although the play’s focus may be women and their historical and social plight seen through the drama brewing inside the house of the Alba family, García Lorca makes sure that masculinity also be given “maximum attention” (Sherwin 27) by how he represents it and what he has to say about it. He does so “not through male presence, but male absence” (27), the subject of Christopher James Sherwin’s thesis.

The play offers many examples of instances where men are the objects of the female subjects’ attention, interest and gaze despite their absence from the stage, in particular Pepe el Romano. In Act I, upon remarking to Angustias that Pepe el Romano “estaba con los hombres del duelo” (García Lorca 125), a girl attending Bernarda’s second husband’s funeral is contradicted by the matriarch by refuting that “[a] Pepe no lo ha visto ella ni yo” (125) and proclaiming that “[l]as mujeres en la iglesia no deben de mirar más hombres que al oficiante, y ese porque tiene faldas” (125). Later on in the act, Angustias gets scolded by her mother for watching Pepe and the men who attended her stepfather’s funeral through a door while her sister Martirio declares to her other sibling, Amelia, that “es preferible no ver a un hombre nunca” (136) because she is afraid of them. La Poncia, Bernarda’s head servant, then tells her mistress about the men who abducted Paca la Roseta, who willingly left with them, and how the townsmen “les gusta verlo y comentarlo” (133). When towards the end of the act, the maid announces that Pepe el Romano “viene por lo alto de la calle” (142), the women run to their bedroom windows to catch a glimpse of him. In Act II, the daughters engage in conversation with La Poncia about when Pepe el Romano left their home the night before and the servant later on regales the girls with tales about her husband Evaristo el Colín. When the reapers arrive singing, Adela leads her sisters in “verlos por la ventana de mi cuarto” (161). Towards the end of the act, the disappearance of Pepe’s picture from his fiancée’s bed occasions a quarrel among the sisters. In Act III, the conversations between Bernarda and Angustias, Bernarda and La Poncia, and Martirio and Adela all revolve around Pepe, meriting the demented grandmother María Josefa’s ironically lucid remark that “Pepe el Romano es un gigante” (193).

Precisely because only women are seen onstage and men are never seen, García Lorca manipulates the audience so that their critical gaze coincides with a female point of view (Sherwin 42). Men are therefore distanced from the audience and constructed as idealized eroticized passive objects of the female subjects’ sexual desire. For example, Pepe el Romano “es el mejor tipo de todos estos contornos” (García Lorca 140), whom everyone enjoys looking at, whether through doors, windows or in a photograph. He grows to be “un gigante” (193) in the imagination of the Alba women and by extension the audience’s. Another example is La Poncia’s account of her husband Evaristo’s

courtship, which is sexually charged---“Entonces Evaristo se acercó, se acercó que se quería meter por los hierros, y dijo con voz muy baja: ‘¡Ven que te tientel!’” (151)---, as well as her description of the reapers---“[c]uarenta o cincuenta buenos mozos” (159)---, in particular one of them, “un muchacho de ojos verdes, apretado como una gavilla de trigo” (159). Notably, there is a difference in the play between praising masculinity and contemplating the male body.

García Lorca’s strategy of having female subjects praise male characters *in absentia* “attempts a separation of sex (with its locus in the male body) and gender” (Sherwin 31), therefore inviting the audience to critique “conventional understandings of gender being determined entirely by sex” (32). In fact, the play evidences a “masculine construction of femininity” (McDermid 172), particularly Bernarda’s and Adela’s, away from the male body. Bernarda’s authoritarianism, which the rod she carries symbolizes, meriting her epithets like “¡[m]andona!, ¡[d]ominanta!” (García Lorca 119); the assumption of her deceased husband’s role as head of the household and overseer of the land and its workers, seen when one of the mourners asks her as if she were a man “¿[h]abéis empezado los trabajos en la era?” (124); her obsessive preoccupation with public image, so dear to fathers in Golden Age plays, particularly her daughter Adela’s virginity---“¡Nadie diga nada! Ella ha muerto virgen” (199); and her strict patriarchal mindset---“Hilo y aguja para las hembras. látigo y mula para el varón” (129)--- align her with constructions of stereotypical masculinity. Adela also exemplifies traits of masculinity in her behavior. Her forceful demeanor when talking to Martirio about Pepe---“He tenido fuerza para adelantarme...he salido a buscar lo que era mío, lo que me pertenecía” (194)--- and her increasing strength capable of “a un caballo encabritado soy capaz de poner de rodillas con la fuerza de mi dedo meñique” (196) which breaks in half her mother’s rod---“Esto hago yo con la vara de la dominadora” (197)--- reveal traits associated more with masculine conduct than feminine comportment.

Bernarda and Adela are examples of what Judith Halberstam has termed “female masculinity”. By their gender transgressive behavior, both “challenge hegemonic models of gender conformity” (9) and “afford us a glimpse of how masculinity is constructed as masculinity” (1). However, whereas Adela’s masculinity is associated with positive traits despite her dependence on Pepe that leads her to take her own life, Bernarda’s is linked with negative ones such as “power and legitimacy and privilege” (2), thus replicating “misogyny within femaleness” (9). With Adela’s suicide, it is sadly Bernarda’s negative version of female masculinity that triumphs, a version that replicates rather than challenges maleness.

Drag performances of the play are, therefore, not surprising, given the gender issues it raises. Directors have at times conceived the role of Bernarda as a male figure. For example, Angel Facio’s 1976 Madrid production of *La casa de Bernarda Alba* had male actor Ismael Merlo play the matriarch, whose face “was heavily made up so that [it] became a “mask” (McDermid 178). A dance version of the play produced by

Antonio Gades in 1998 featured an all-male cast performing the female roles, with the exception of the dancer who took on the character of María Josefa. In Gades' interpretation of the play, "gender was viewed as visibly imitative with selected signs of femininity...serving to locate the feminine on the male performing body" (Delgado 116). Thus, drag performances of *La casa de Bernarda Alba* "open up, rather than close down, innovative inroads of understanding into the play's text and communication with the audience" (McDermid 179) by creating discontinuity and dissonance "between the body of the performer, the sex of the character and the gender role enacted by the character" (182).

La casa de Bernarda Alba's deeper resonances problematizing conventional understandings of gender, in particular the relationship between sex and gender, which imaginative interpretations of the work reveal, can be examined through a poststructuralist gender lens. According to Gail Bederman, poststructuralist gender analysis is not interested so much in the invisibility of masculinity as in deconstructing the lack of visibility of the sex/gender system which masks its cultural constructedness with layers of coercive essentialized naturalness. The play's strict separation of gendered spaces, the invisibility of the male element, and the performing discontinuity between body, sex and gender invite interpretations aligned with the theoretical premises articulated by scholars such as Judith Butler and Judith Halberstam, based on post-modern literary and philosophical theory that question binary categories. However, if a poststructuralist gender lens can be employed to analyze gender dynamics in *La casa de Bernarda Alba*, a strictly masculinity studies' perspective can be used to frame Ernesto Caballero's interpretation of García Lorca's drama.

Pepe el Romano. La sombra blanca de Bernarda Alba, inspired and staged by director Mikel Gómez de Segura on November 3, 2000 and written post-production by contemporary playwright Ernesto Caballero, is, according to its author, a homage to García Lorca. Unlike other interpretations based on García Lorca's *La casa de Bernarda Alba* and its female characters, it focuses exclusively on the males that occupy diegetic space in the Lorcan rural tragedy: Pepe el Romano, detonator of the Alba family tragedy; the Viudo de Darajalí, who according to Bernarda was at her husband's funeral in close proximity to a young mourners' aunt; Maximiliano, who happily brings the sexually satisfied Paca la Roseta back home after leaving her husband behind the night before to have fun with the townsmen; and Evaristo Colín, La Poncia's unnamed son whose mother gives him money to enjoy the favors of an out of town dancer. They are joined by two others who are not featured in the play: *La casa de Bernarda Alba*'s author Federico García (Lorca) and Cano, the town fool. The play revolves around these six men, their interactions with one another and the unseen women of the house, paralleling events that take place in the García Lorca play. Like *La casa de Bernarda Alba*, *Pepe el Romano* ends tragically. Adela's death in the García Lorca play mirrors the murder of Pepe el Romano by the Viudo de Darajalí, as an avenger in love with the betrayed Angustias.

Caballero's play is an "explicit and implicit reflective and self-reflective referentiality between his play and [García] Lorca's (Gabriele, "A case of intertextual discourse" 133), resulting "in a much more comprehensive, complete and profound work" (119) that is far from being an imitation of the rural drama. While the focus of *La casa de Bernarda Alba* is the women the audience sees onstage, Caballero's adaptation, according to Gómez de Segura's idea, seeks to tell a story about men at the service of masculinity in order to go deep within each man's soul and reclaim masculinity (Gómez de Segura, *Pepe el Romano*, Introducción). Each of the six male characters is individually delineated: Pepe el Romano is an attractive, self-interested, manipulative hypocrite; the Viudo de Darajalí is wise because of his age, but cowardly; Federico García is an intelligent, sensitive, educated gay man who suffers in silence his attraction towards Pepe; Maximiliano is an unscrupulous man without conscience who rejects anyone who is not like him; Evaristo Colín is a false and cowardly opportunist who is the only one who has access to Bernarda's house; and Cano's foolishness full of dreams and illusions makes him an endearing character. According to Gómez de Segura, together, they represent "Man" in its totality.

Caballero's and Gómez de Segura's desire to render visible the invisible male element in the García Lorca play in their work align them with a masculinity studies 'viewpoint. As summarized by Bederman, masculinity studies scholars' purpose was to "unmask the invisibility of masculinity" (22), as pioneered by Michael J. Kimmel's 1993 article "Invisible Masculinity". As a result, men's insight into their own invisible gendered attributes propelled a wide range of studies of men as individuals. By enfleshing the diegetic male element in García Lorca's plays with a couple of additions and focusing on individual personalities and how they relate with each other, *Pepe el Romano* provides a dramatic example of the masculinity studies 'agenda.

The director notices that just as there are hierarchies inside Bernarda's domain, so there are power distributions among the men in Caballero's play. The manner in which power is distributed among men is the focus of the work of R.W. Connell, one of the leading scholars in masculinity studies. According to Connell in the groundbreaking work *Masculinities*, there are four positions that describe power relations among men: hegemonic, complicit, subordinated, and marginalized. The hegemonic position is "the currently accepted male ideal within a particular culture at a particular time...[that] functions more as an ideal or fantasy of the masculine than as a reality that actual men may embody" (Buchbinder 92). The complicit position refers to men who "accept and participate in the system of hegemonic masculinity" (92), enjoying its privileges such as power over women and men that do not fit the hegemonic ideal. Subordinate men deviate from the norm consonant with the hegemonic system and ideology in their gender behavior. Marginalized men, usually men of other races or with disabilities, "cannot even aspire to hegemony" (93).

The men in Caballero's play exemplify these four positions. Though clearly an ideal type and thus representing the hegemonic fantasy because of his invisibility in *La*

casa de Bernarda Alba, Pepe el Romano loses his larger-than-life status in Caballero's work once enflashed. He, along with Maximiliano, represents the complicit position. Their macho posturing—"Los que hablan claro son los hombres de verdad" (Caballero 50) ---, womanizing habits---"[q]uedan muchas mozas que no tienen dueño...a acechar a las mujeres más hermosas (88)---, aggressive behavior---"dime qué ves con esos puñeteros ojos vacíos" (44)---, misogynous comments—"Las mujeres tienen sólo dos cosas que vender: la honra y la hacienda" (48)---, and homophobic innuendoes---"mejor con mujeres que con medio mujeres" (45)--- align them with a stereotypical Iberian masculinity to whose rules of comportment they subscribe. However, both Evaristo Colín and the Viudo de Darajalí fall in the subordinate ranks. Though they mostly exhibit gender appropriate behavior, certain traits set them apart from the hegemonic ideal. For example, the Viudo is old and a coward---"[d]etrás de este cuerpo que antes fue fuerte, se escondió siempre una inmensa cobardía" (73)---while Evaristo has easy access to female space, and betrays a non-confrontative attitude and dependence—"me acuso de estar cansado, de no enfrentarme con nadie, de ser un correveidile que no aspira a mucho más que a vivir como un perro zalamero" (66). They are clearly subordinate to Pepe and Maximiliano's more dominant characters. Lastly, Federico García and Cano occupy marginalized positions within this male hierarchy, Federico because of his same sex preferences and Cano because of his mental disability.

According to masculinity studies 'scholars, there are many ways of being a man. However, this spectrum of possibilities is dominated by the hegemonic ideal, which is always unattainable. Thus, those men wishing to approximate the hegemonic position make sure that they maintain and enforce the power and dominance associated with it by subordinating and marginalizing women and those men who are not like them. However, those men in subordinate and marginalized positions contest the hegemonic ideal and its complicit behaviors because it clearly disadvantages them, thus allowing "new constellations of what may count as hegemonic masculinities...to come into being" (Buchbinder 180). By killing Pepe, a representative of complicit masculinity, the Viudo de Darajalí's subordinate status is reversed and the play ends with perhaps a wiser, less hypocritical, more loving model of masculinity, which the Viudo represents, taking over. Nevertheless, the last line of the play uttered by Maximiliano---"Hay que ser hombre para seguir la vida. Hay que ser hombre. Hay que ser hombre" (93)---stresses the underlying fact that in the long run it is about being *men*, not men and women, not people, precisely what the focus of masculinity studies is.

As evidenced thus far, gender-based interpretations of *La casa de Bernarda Alba* seem to be ultimately linked to a gender analysis perspective that deconstructs the "coerciveness and naturalness of gender" (Bederman 22), while *Pepe el Romano* benefits from a masculinity studies 'approach of "un mask[ing] the invisibility of masculinity" (22) when the play visibly represents the male-dominated diegetic space of the García Lorca play. The issues both plays raise about gender, power, invisibility and performance through masculinity can be better appreciated precisely because of the

intimate intertextual relationship between them. Together both plays comment powerfully on the denaturalization of masculinity and femininity to reveal how gender is performed and how it is made invisible in order to structure power relations between human beings in ways that are coercive and violent. Masculinity, understood as a construct that promotes a certain kind of maleness intent on advancing gender conformity and subordinating alternative gender performances, is the specific analytic tool deployed for such purpose.

The character of Pepe el Romano, the visible and invisible protagonist of *Pepe el Romano* and *La casa de Bernarda Alba* respectively, is the strongest link between the two plays and therefore best illuminates the relationship between gender, invisibility, performativity and power seen in the plays by embodying masculinity as oppressive and repressive maleness in relationship to other gender performances. Because he embodies this kind of masculinity, Pepe then functions as an ideal heuristic device with which to demonstrate the invisible power dynamics behind gender performativity in both plays.

In *La casa de Bernarda Alba*, Pepe, despite the fact that he is never seen, is the *raison d'être* of the tensions between the Alba women and therefore the driving force behind the plot and its tragic denouement. He is constantly on the minds and lips of the female characters whose viewpoint, especially about him, the audience progressively accepts. Though a passive object of desire of Bernarda's daughters' sexual subjectivity, Pepe is nonetheless an active principle whose omnipresent absence and silence speak loudly about the kind of masculinity he represents, a maleness associated with power and privileges whose invisibility idealizes him to the extent that he achieves hegemonic status—"Pepe el Romano es un gigante" (García Lorca 193). For example, his physical attraction is described in superlative terms—"es el mejor tipo de estos contornos" (140). His good looks give him power over women, who want to take a look at him every chance they can get—"Criada: Pepe el Romano viene por lo alto de la calle/Magdalena: ¡Vamos a verlo!" (142)---, who fight with one another to have a piece of him---"¿Dónde está el retrato de Pepe que tenía yo debajo de mi almohada?" (163)---, and even, in the case of Adela, forego public reputation---"y me pondré la corona de espinas que tienen las que son queridas de algún hombre casado" (195)---and life itself, because as she lets La Poncia know when the servant comments on how much she likes him: "¡Tanto! Mirando sus ojos me parece que bebo su sangre lentamente" (156). The freedom he enjoys because of his sex and gender---"A Pepe le gusta andar con la luna" (164)--- also empowers him to court both Angustias and Adela, one for her money---"Vino por el dinero" (194)---and the other for her looks---"sus ojos los puso siempre en mí" (194). When he is first mentioned in the play, he is in church attending Bernarda's husband's funeral---"Pepe el Romano estaba con los hombres del duelo" (125)---, but progressively gets closer to the house and by the end invades it. The photograph of him over which the sisters fight is a symbolic reminder of the extent of his omnipresent power over their lives. He is first found in the patio with the other men who attended the funeral, then we see him approaching the house to ask Angustias' hand in marriage,

next he is at the windows to speak with his fiancée and dalliance with Adela, and finally in the corral for his tryst with Adela. His careful penetration of the female enclosure ends up fulfilling the grandmother María Josefa's prophecy: "Él os va a devorar a todas porque vosotras sois granos de trigo"(193). He is a soul-less man—"hombre sin alma" (194)---who selfishly seeks "la tierra, las yuntas y una perra sumisa que les dé de comer" (137), enjoying freedom denied to others---"te irás corriendo vivo por lo oscuro de las alamedas" (199). He embodies the kind of masculinity associated with maleness and patriarchy.

Pepe's invisibility despite his performing omnipresence emphasizes two ideas. On the one hand, his lack of visibility is a commentary on the power hegemonic male masculinity has over other sexual/gender performances, notably women, precisely because of its invisibility, an important premise articulated by masculinity studies scholars like Kimmel. It is a power that is connected with oppression and violence. It is a power that is enforced by creating dissension among those lorded over, dividing and conquering, as happens between the sisters. On the other hand, Pepe's absence emphasizes the disassociation between sex and gender, that masculinity need not be housed in a male body, an important thesis championed by poststructuralist gender scholarship. From the very first moment that Pepe is mentioned in the play, thus invoking his presence despite his physical absence---"Pepe el Romano estaba con los hombres del duelo" (125)---, Bernarda immediately denies it---"Estaba su madre. Ella ha visto a su madre. A Pepe no lo ha visto ella ni yo" (125) ---, thus negating his appearance and therefore power of presence. The battle between Bernarda and Adela is ultimately about Pepe and the kind of masculinity he embodies in his absent presence. While Adela allows him inside the female domain, Bernarda tries to keep him out. With the death of the only male element in the house, her husband, Bernarda now takes over. When La Poncia lets Bernarda know that she will dispose of her late husband's clothes, Bernarda prohibits her: "Nada, ¡ni un botón!" (134). It is as if she has literally and metaphorically stepped into her husband's shoes. Bernarda is now the "man" of the house. Pepe's encroaching presence therefore becomes a threat to her power. Unfortunately, as already mentioned, rather than proposing an alternative masculinity, Bernarda's masculinity replicates the stereotypical masculinity associated with maleness that is about stoicism, control, repression and oppression manifested through abuse and physical force. Her phallic rod symbolizes this stereotypical masculine power, which Adela breaks to no avail. Yet, despite the fact, that she attempts to kill Pepe with her gun, Bernarda misses and he escapes into darkness. Bernarda may continue being the "man" of the house, but heteronormative male masculinity still lurks in the dark threatening her masculine power for alpha status, similar to competing relationships between hegemonically complicit men. By being complicit with this model of masculinity and replicating it, Bernarda unfortunately seals her fate, preventing life-giving opportunities to emerge with new ways of embodying masculinity.

In *Pepe el Romano*, Pepe's invisibility in the García Lorca play is materialized. As a result, as previously stated, he moves from an idealized hegemonic status to a flesh-and-blood complicit position. His traits are removed from their fantasy-based superlativeness, yet they remain aligned with oppressive patriarchal Iberian maleness. He is cocky, aggressive, womanizing, misogynous, hypocritical, opportunistic, insensitive, self-centered, and self-sufficient. He is clearly the dominant male in his circle who finds validation in his crony Maximiliano's equally macho behavior and subservience in the others. He represents a stereotypical male masculinity. However, it is interesting to note that Pepe is aware that he is performing a role when Cano comments on his "costume": "Cano: A mí me gusta tu disfraz de Pepe el Romano"/Pepe el Romano: "A mí también, Cano, lo que pasa es que solo es un disfraz y no sé lo que hay debajo" (Caballero 72). His awareness is consonant with poststructuralist theories of gender performativity. The hierarchical homosocial environment in which he moves supports his gender performativity aligned with a patriarchal mindset. However, though his is a heteronormative male-gendered performance that connects sex with gender, it contrasts with other more fluid gendered performances in the play that create dissonance between male body, feminine costume and masculine behavior.

Cano and Evaristo, a marginalized and a subordinate male respectively within the male hierarchy of the play, perform femininity when they take on roles associated with the unseen Alba women in the house. For example, at the end of the first act, the men amuse themselves by covering Cano with a white tablecloth who "finge pose de damisela cursi" (56) and pretends to get married. Later on in the play, he invokes Adela's presence when he echoes her lines clamoring for freedom: "No puedo estar encerrada. No quiero que se me pongan las carnes como a vosotras; no quiero perder mi blancura en estas habitaciones; mañana me pondré mi vestido verde y me echaré a pasear por la calle. ¡Yo quiero salir!" (71). He also dons the grandmother María Josefa's nightgown and replicates the old woman's poetic interjections against Bernarda: "Bernarda, cara de leopardo..." (81). Meanwhile, Evaristo comes out with the colorful fan Bernarda rejected in the García Lorca play imitating the matriarch's recrimination: "¿Es este el abanico que se da a una viuda? Dame uno negro y aprende a respetar el luto de tu padre" (82). If in the García Lorca play the male element intruded the all-female space by constant references to Pepe, by his photograph, by the sound of his horse, and by his cough and whistle, in Caballero's adaptation the female element is equally present in the transvestite performances of two of its male characters. Despite the strict gender-based spatial separation, each play manages to play with gender fluidity and communicate the lack of correspondence between sex and gender.

In *La casa de Bernarda Alba*, Pepe---and by extension the patriarchal male masculinity he represents---manages to escape the deadly consequences of his two-timing behavior to continue wreaking havoc "por lo oscuro de las alamedas" (García Lorca 199). However, Bernarda's wish of a future fall---"pero otro día caerás" (199)---

is prophetically fulfilled when the Viudo de Darajalí murders Pepe at the end of *Pepe el Romano*: “Le ha disparado ella, pero lo he matado yo” (Caballero 91). If in García Lorca’s play female agency is powerless against masculine entitlement, Caballero’s work gets rid of this kind of masculinity complicit with male hegemonic ideals of power by another type of male masculinity subordinate to it that will take its place. Nevertheless, this new type of masculinity that the Viudo represents, though wiser and more honest, is also linked with the violence associated with patriarchal male masculinity. However, though at first it seems that a new symbolic possibility opens up for men with Pepe’s murder, Maximiliano’s parting words--- “Hay que ser hombre para seguir la vida. Hay que ser hombre. Hay que ser hombre” (93)---trap men into stereotypical masculine roles, just like Bernarda’s imposition of cloistered silent mourning on her daughters at the end of *La casa de Bernarda Alba* entraps females. Both are doomed to repeat their culturally assigned gender performances.

By juxtaposing two plays intertextually dependent on each other, Federico García Lorca’s *La casa de Bernarda Alba* and Ernesto Caballero’s *Pepe el Romano*. *La sombra blanca de Bernarda Alba* are apt plays to illustrate gender issues. As seen, whereas García Lorca’s play populates mimetic space with the women from the Alba family and exiles men to diegetic space, Caballero’s work reverses the spatial configuration and focuses on the men. Masculinity has been defined in the essay as a construct that promotes a certain kind of maleness intent on advancing gender conformity and subordinating alternative gender performances, as embodied in both plays by their strongest link, *Pepe el Romano*. Masculinity has been used here heuristically, supported by two scholarly traditions closely related to it, poststructural gender analysis and masculinity studies, where the former focuses on unmasking the unnaturalness of the binary gender system and the latter on the relationship between men and their gendered invisibility. Supported by textual evidence, the essay has analyzed how gender is performed and how it is made invisible to speak about power relations having to do with “human beings who are ‘men’....[and] human beings who are *not* men” (Bederman 15) that are coercive and violent. As the end of both plays evidence, entrapment for *both* men and women into culturally constructed sex and gender roles continues in the plays as in life, despite attempts at freedom. However, there is hope that by unmasking and exposing patriarchal masculinity’s invisible power, Bernarda’s words to the fleeing Pepe that “otro día caerás” (García Lorca 199) come true.

WORKS CITED

- Badenes, José I. “Staging the Senex: Aging Masculinities in the Theater of Miguel de Cervantes and Federico García Lorca.” *Romance Notes* 54.3 (2014): 335-46. Print.
- Brod, Harry, ed. *The Making of Masculinities: The New Men’s Studies*. Boston: Allen &

- Unwin, 1987. Print.
- Bederman, Gail. "Why Study 'Masculinity,' Anyway? Perspectives from the Old Days." *Culture, Society & Masculinities* 3.1 (2011): 13-25. Print.
- Buchbinder, David. *Studying Men and Masculinities*. New York: Routledge, 2013. Print.
- Caballero, Ernesto. *Pepe el Romano. La sombra blanca de Bernarda Alba*. Murcia, Spain: Universidad de Murcia, 2003. Print.
- Connell, R.W. *Masculinities*. 2nd ed. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2005. Print.
- Delgado, Maria. *Federico García Lorca*. New York: Routledge, 2008. Print.
- Gabriele, John P. "A case of intertextual discourse: Ernesto Caballero's *Pepe el Romano* and Federico García Lorca's *La casa de Bernarda Alba*." *Journal of Iberian and Latin American Studies* 19.2 (2013): 117-37. Print.
- . "Mapping the Boundaries of Gender: Men, Women and Space in *La casa de Bernarda Alba*." *Hispanic journal* 15.2 (1994): 381-92. Print.
- García Lorca, Federico. *La casa de Bernarda Alba*. Eds. Allen Josephs and Juan Caballero. 22nd ed. Madrid: Ediciones Cátedra, 1995. Print.
- Gómez de Segura, Mikel. *Pepe el Romano. La sombra blanca de Bernarda Alba*. Introducción. Traspasos Kultur. Charo Fernández. 2000. Web
- Halberstam, Judith. *Female Masculinity*. Durham, North Carolina: Duke UP, 1998. Print.
- Kimmel, Michael S. "Invisible Masculinity." *Society* 30.6 (1993): 28-35. Print.
- McDermid, Paul. *Love, Desire and Identity in the Theatre of Federico García Lorca*. Norfolk: Tamesis, 2007. Print.
- Sherwin, Christopher James. "The representation of masculinity in the theatre of Federico García Lorca." MA thesis. Durham theses, Durham University. 2005. Web.